



A reputation assessment of Orange River Cellars using the Reputation Quotient®

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ABSTRACT

Having a good corporate reputation is exceedingly advantageous. However, organisations' corporate reputations are under severe pressure today, because they are under the constant scrutiny of a variety of stakeholders. A corporate reputation comprises the overall perceptions that stakeholders acquire of an organisation over time; thus, organisations should know how stakeholders perceive them. In this study, corporate reputation management and measurement were investigated, in particular the value of performing annual reputation assessments, understanding stakeholders' views and implementing strategies accordingly. By managing and measuring corporate reputation, organisations can identify how they are perceived by stakeholders and enhance their corporate reputations by rectifying their past failures and shortcomings.

The focus of this study was Orange River Cellars, a wine-producing organisation that had been in the industry for more than 50 years. Its corporate reputation management history was undetermined, because its management team had never conducted a reputation measurement assessment. Therefore, it was likely that the organisation's corporate reputation might not be strategically managed. In light of this objective, the primary research question that guided the study was to determine the various stakeholders and management's perceptions of the overall corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars.

A literature review was conducted to explore various components of corporate reputation and related topics, including corporate communication, corporate reputation management and corporate reputation measurement. The literature study was also utilised to establish the history of global wine, South African wine and the background of Orange River Cellars. To determine Orange River Cellars' stakeholders and management's perceptions of the organisation's corporate reputation, a mixed-methods research design, with both qualitative and quantitative methods, was utilised. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 members of Orange River Cellars' management and an online e-mail survey was sent to all the relevant stakeholders. The Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) measurement instrument was utilised for the survey, together with constructs from the corporate reputation literature.

The results of the interviews indicated that Orange Rivers Cellars' management team had knowledge of corporate reputation management and measurement but had not executed a corporate reputation assessment for the organisation. The results of the survey revealed that the stakeholders respected Orange River Cellars, but that the organisation could improve on the

results of the vision and leadership, and financial performance dimensions of the *Reputation Quotient*®.

This study provides insight into Orange River Cellars' current corporate reputation and could aid the organisation to implement future strategic decisions based on the feedback from the stakeholders. It also serves as a guide for Orange River Cellars in terms of measuring and managing its corporate reputation effectively to develop new strategies to compare its image to those of competitors. The study also demonstrates the importance of attaining a strong corporate reputation.

Keywords: *Corporate communication, corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement, Orange River Cellars, Reputation Quotient*®, stakeholders

OPSOMMING

'n Goeie korporatiewe reputasie is besonder voordelig. Organisasies se korporatiewe reputasie is egter vandag onder swaar druk omdat dit deurlopend ondersoek word deur 'n verskeidenheid belanghebbendes. 'n Korporatiewe reputasie bestaan uit die algehele persepsie wat belanghebbendes mettertyd van 'n organisasie ontwikkel; organisasies moet dus weet hoe belanghebbendes dit ervaar. Hierdie studie ondersoek korporatiewereputasiebestuur en -meting, in die besonder die waarde daarvan om jaarlikse reputasiebeoordelings te doen om die indrukke van belanghebbendes te verstaan en dan strategieë daarvolgens te implementeer. Deur die bestuur en meting van korporatiewe reputasie, kan organisasies identifiseer hoe belanghebbendes hulle ervaar en hulle kan hul korporatiewe reputasie verbeter deur hul vorige mislukkings en tekortkominge reg te stel.

Die fokus van hierdie studie is Oranjerivier Kelders, 'n wynproduserende organisasie wat al meer as 50 jaar in die bedryf is. Die geskiedenis van hulle korporatiewe reputasie is onbekend omdat die organisasie se bestuurders nog nooit 'n reputasie-meting uitgevoer het nie. Daarom is dit waarskynlik dat die organisasie se korporatiewe reputasie nie strategies bestuur word nie. In die lig van hierdie agtergrond was die primêre navorsingsvraag wat die studie gelei het om die verskillende belanghebbendes en bestuur se persepsies van die algehele korporatiewe reputasie van Oranjerivier Kelders te bepaal.

'n Literatuuroorsig is gedoen om verskillende komponente van korporatiewe reputasie en verwante onderwerpe te ondersoek, insluitend korporatiewe kommunikasie, korporatiewereputasiebestuur en korporatiewereputasie-meting. Die literatuurstudie is ook gebruik om die geskiedenis van wêreldwye wyn, Suid-Afrikaanse wyn en die agtergrond van Oranjerivier Kelders vas te stel. Om die belanghebbendes van Oranjerivier Kelders en die persepsie van die bestuur van die organisasie se korporatiewe reputasie te bepaal, is 'n gemengde navorsingsbenadering gebruik, met sowel kwalitatiewe as kwantitatiewe metodes. Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude is gevoer met 12 lede van Oranjerivier Kelders se bestuur en 'n aanlyn-e-posopname is aan al die betrokke belanghebbendes gestuur. Die Harris-Fombrun en Van Riel se *Reputasie Kwasiënt*® (2007) meetinstrument is gebruik vir die opname, tesame met konstrukke uit die literatuur oor korporatiewe reputasie.

Die resultate van die onderhoude het aangedui dat Oranjerivier Kelders se bestuurspan kennis dra van bestuur en die meting van korporatiewe reputasie, maar dat hulle nie 'n 'n evaluering van die korporatiewe reputasie van die organisasie gedoen het nie. Die resultate van die opname het aan die lig gebring dat die belanghebbendes Oranjerivier Kelders respekteer, maar dat die

organisasie die resultate met betrekking tot die visie en leierskap en die finansiële prestasie-dimensies van die *Reputasie Kwosiënt®* kan verbeter.

Hierdie studie bied insig in Oranjerivier Kelders se huidige korporatiewe reputasie en kan die organisasie help om toekomstige strategiese besluite te implementeer op grond van die terugvoer van die belanghebbendes. Dit dien ook as 'n riglyn vir Oranjerivier Kelders om sy korporatiewe reputasie effektief te meet en te bestuur om nuwe strategieë te ontwikkel om sy beeld met dié van mededingers te vergelyk. Die studie demonstreer ook die belangrikheid van die vestiging van 'n sterk korporatiewe reputasie.

Sleuteltermes: *Korporatiewe kommunikasie, korporatiewe reputasie, korporatiewereputasiebestuur, korporatiewereputasiemeting, Oranjerivier Kelders, Reputasie Kwosiënt®, belanghebbendes*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS I**
- ABSTRACT II**
- OPSOMMING IV**

- CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1**
- 1.1 Introduction 1**
- 1.1.1 Problem statement..... 3
- 1.2 Research questions..... 4**
- 1.2.1 General research question 4
- 1.2.2 Specific research questions..... 4
- 1.3 Research aims 5**
- 1.3.1 General research aim 5
- 1.3.2 Specific research aims..... 5
- 1.4 General guiding arguments 5**
- 1.5 Research approach 7**
- 1.5.1 Mixed-methods research design..... 7
- 1.5.1.1 Qualitative research methods 8
- 1.5.1.1.1 Literature study 8
- 1.5.1.1.2 Semi-structured interviews 9
- 1.5.1.1.3 Semi-structured interview sample..... 10
- 1.5.1.1.4 Method for analysing responses from interviews: Qualitative content analysis..... 11
- 1.5.1.2 Quantitative research methods..... 12

1.5.1.2.1	Online e-mail survey	12
1.5.1.2.2	E-mail survey sample	13
1.5.1.2.3	Data analysis of the quantitative research methods	13
1.6	Ethical considerations	14
1.7	Limitations of the study	14
1.8	Significance of the study	14
1.9	Key terminology in this study	15
1.10	Chapter layout.....	16
1.11	Conclusion	17
CHAPTER 2: CORPORATE REPUTATION: ELEMENTS, MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT		18
2.1	Introduction.....	18
2.2	Corporate communication: A contextual and conceptual framework.....	19
2.2.1	Defining corporate communication	19
2.2.2	Principle foundations of corporate communication	22
2.2.2.1	Management communication.....	22
2.2.2.2	Marketing communication.....	24
2.2.2.3	Organisational communication	29
2.3	Corporate reputation	31
2.3.1	A historical overview of corporate reputation.....	32
2.3.2	Defining the concept of corporate reputation.....	34
2.3.3	Stakeholder relations in corporate reputation	35
2.3.4	Fundamental elements of corporate reputation.....	37

2.3.4.1	Corporate identity	38
2.3.4.2	Corporate image	40
2.3.4.3	Corporate branding	41
2.3.4.4	Corporate personality	43
2.3.4.5	Corporate behaviour, ethics and culture	45
2.3.5	Corporate reputation management	47
2.3.5.1	Corporate reputation management: Clarifying the construct	47
2.3.5.2	Corporate reputation management principles	49
2.3.5.3	The importance of managing corporate reputation risks	53
2.3.6	Corporate reputation measurement	55
2.3.6.1	Measurement instruments	57
2.3.6.1.1	Most Admired Companies in America	57
2.3.6.1.2	Reputation Institute's <i>RepTrak</i> ®	59
2.3.6.1.3	The Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ®	60
2.3.7	Advantages of a strong corporate reputation	66
2.3.7.1	Corporate reputation is a valuable asset	67
2.3.7.2	A good corporate reputation generates financial value	68
2.4	Conclusion	69
CHAPTER 3: THE WINE INDUSTRY AND ORANGE RIVER CELLARS		72
3.1	Introduction	72
3.1.1	Global wine production	72
3.1.2	The South African wine industry	76

3.1.2.1	The history of South African wine	76
3.1.2.2	The current overview of South African wine	77
3.1.3	Orange River Cellars	81
3.1.3.1	History.....	82
3.1.3.2	Wine production.....	83
3.1.3.3	Orange River Cellars' awards and achievements.....	87
3.2	Conclusion	89
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....		90
4.1	Introduction.....	90
4.2	Mixed-methods research approach	90
4.2.1	Qualitative approach.....	91
4.2.2	Quantitative approach.....	92
4.3	General research design.....	93
4.4	Research methods.....	99
4.4.1	Qualitative research method.....	99
4.4.1.1	Semi-structured interviews	99
4.4.1.2	Sampling of the semi-structured interviews	101
4.4.1.3	The interview schedule	101
4.4.1.4	The interview process.....	102
4.4.1.5	Analysis of information collected from the interviews	104
4.4.2	Quantitative research method.....	106
4.4.2.1	Online e-mail survey	106

4.4.2.2	Research instrument.....	107
4.4.2.3	Sampling of the online e-mail survey.....	109
4.5	Data analysis of the online e-mail survey results.....	110
4.5.1	Frequency tables	110
4.5.2	Validity of the quantitative data.....	111
4.5.2.1	Confirmatory factor analysis	111
4.5.3	Reliability of the quantitative data.....	112
4.5.3.1	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	112
4.5.4	Associations with demographic variables.....	113
4.5.4.1	Spearman rank-order correlations.....	113
4.5.4.2	T-test.....	114
4.5.4.3	ANOVA	115
4.6	Limitations of the study	115
4.7	Validity and reliability of the overall study.....	116
4.8	Ethical considerations	117
4.9	Conclusion	118
CHAPTER 5: CORPORATE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT:		
EMPIRICAL FINDINGS		
5.1	Introduction.....	119
5.2	Biographical profile of Orange River Cellars' management.....	119
5.3	Corporate reputation: Defining the term	121
5.4	Fundamental elements of corporate reputation	123
5.4.1	Identification of the fundamental elements of corporate reputation.....	123

5.4.2	Management's understanding of corporate identity.....	123
5.4.3	Management's understanding of corporate image	125
5.4.4	Management's understanding of corporate branding	127
5.4.5	Management's understanding of corporate personality.....	128
5.4.6	Management's understanding of corporate ethics, culture and behaviour	130
5.5	Stakeholder relations	133
5.6	The understanding of corporate reputation management.....	134
5.6.1	Corporate reputation management: Who should be held responsible?	135
5.6.2	The role of corporate reputation management in achieving goals.....	135
5.6.3	Corporate reputation management principles	136
5.7	Corporate reputation measurement.....	137
5.7.1	Management's understanding of corporate reputation measurement	137
5.7.2	The Reputation Quotient® dimensions	139
5.7.2.1	The overall feeling of Orange River Cellars.....	139
5.7.2.2	The overall perception of Orange River Cellars' products and services.....	139
5.7.2.3	The overall view of the vision and leadership of Orange River Cellars	140
5.7.2.4	The overall perception of Orange River Cellars' work environment	141
5.7.2.5	The view of Orange River Cellars' overall financial performance	142
5.7.2.6	The overall perception of Orange River Cellars' social responsibility.....	143
5.8	Advantages of a good corporate reputation.....	144
5.9	The Global and South African wine industry	145
5.10	General remarks of Orange River Cellars and corporate reputation.....	146
5.11	Conclusion	147

CHAPTER 6: STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS OF CORPORATE REPUTATION: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS	151
6.1 Introduction.....	151
6.2 Demographic information of the respondents.....	151
6.2.1 Frequency table: Age.....	152
6.2.2 Frequency table: Gender	152
6.2.3 Frequency table: Language	153
6.2.4 Frequency table: Involvement with Orange River Cellars.....	154
6.2.5 Frequency table: Alcohol consumption frequency.....	155
6.2.6 Frequency table: Daily alcohol consumption	155
6.2.7 Frequency table: Alcohol preferences	156
6.3 The <i>Reputation Quotient</i>® results	157
6.3.1 Emotional appeal dimension.....	158
6.3.2 Products and services dimension.....	159
6.3.3 Vision and leadership dimension	160
6.3.4 Workplace environment dimension.....	161
6.3.5 Financial performance dimension.....	162
6.3.6 Social responsibility dimension.....	164
6.4 Validity of the <i>Reputation Quotient</i>®.....	165
6.5 Reliability of the measurement model.....	168
6.6 Evaluation of the effect of the demographic variables of the <i>Reputation Quotient</i>®	170
6.6.1 Spearman rank-order correlations.....	170
6.6.2 T-test: Gender and language.....	172

6.6.3	ANOVA of the demographic factors.....	175
6.7	Conclusion	186
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		189
7.1	Introduction.....	189
7.2	Conclusion to the study.....	190
7.2.1	Conclusion to specific research question 1	190
7.2.2	Conclusion to specific research question 2	194
7.2.2.1	Management’s understanding of corporate reputation and the fundamental elements	194
7.2.2.2	Management’s understanding of stakeholder relations	196
7.2.2.3	Management’s understanding of corporate reputation management and the principles involved	197
7.2.2.4	Management’s understanding of corporate reputation measurement	198
7.2.2.5	Management’s understanding of the advantages of corporate reputation.....	199
7.2.2.6	Management’s understanding of the global and South African wine industry ..	199
7.2.3	Conclusion to research question 3	200
7.3	Answering the general research question	203
7.4	Recommendations for Orange River Cellars to manage and measure its corporate reputation	204
7.4.1	Recommendations for Orange River Cellars’ management	204
7.4.2	Improving on the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® dimensions and attributes	205
7.4.3	Corporate reputation management principles and objectives for Orange River Cellars	207
7.5	Limitations of the study	209

7.6	Significance and future research	210
7.7	Conclusion	210
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	212
	APPENDICES.....	245
	APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND QUESTIONS	245
	APPENDIX B: ONLINE E-MAIL SURVEY	249
	APPENDIX C: ORANGE RIVER CELLARS' LETTER OF CONSENT	252
	APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW LETTERS OF CONSENT.....	253
	APPENDIX E: DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING.....	265
	APPENDIX F: ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY	266

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2-1:	Different academic perspectives on corporate reputation.....	32
Table 3-1:	OIV wine production in countries over one million hectoliters.....	74
Table 3-2:	A general overview of the South African wine regions for 2018	79
Table 4-1:	Qualitative research framework for the study	94
Table 4-2:	Quantitative research framework for the study	97
Table 4-3:	The <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® (2007) adjusted to Orange River Cellars.....	108
Table 4-4:	A framework for the correlation scale	112
Table 4-5:	Spearman rank-order correlations' scale	113
Table 4-6:	The interpretation of effect sizes.....	114
Table 4-7:	The interpretation of effect sizes.....	115
Table 5-1:	Participants' employment years/months at Orange River Cellars.....	120
Table 5-2:	Participants' understanding of corporate reputation – verbatim responses	121
Table 5-3:	Participants' understanding of corporate identity – verbatim responses.....	124
Table 5-4:	Participants' understanding of corporate image – verbatim responses	125
Table 5-5:	Participants' understanding of corporate branding – verbatim responses ...	127
Table 5-6:	Participants' understanding of corporate personality – verbatim responses	129
Table 5-7:	Participants' understanding of corporate ethics, culture and behaviour – verbatim responses.....	131
Table 6-1:	Respondents' ages	152
Table 6-2:	Respondents' gender.....	153

Table 6-3:	Respondents' language	153
Table 6-4:	Respondents' involvement.....	154
Table 6-5:	Respondents' alcohol consumption frequency	155
Table 6-6:	Respondents' daily alcohol consumption.....	156
Table 6-7:	Respondents' alcohol preferences.....	157
Table 6-8:	Respondents' perceptions of the emotional appeal dimension.....	158
Table 6-9:	Respondents' perceptions of the products and services dimension	159
Table 6-10:	Respondents' perceptions of the vision and leadership dimension	161
Table 6-11:	Respondents' perceptions of the workplace environment dimension	162
Table 6-12:	Respondents' perceptions of the financial performance dimension.....	163
Table 6-13:	Respondents' perceptions of the social responsibility dimension	164
Table 6-14:	Correlations for the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® dimensions.....	167
Table 6-15:	Goodness of fit for the measurement model of the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® ..	168
Table 6-16:	Reliability of the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® dimensions.....	169
Table 6-17:	Spearman rank-order nonparametric correlations of the ordinal demographic variables with <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® dimensions.....	171
Table 6-18:	T-test for the effect of gender on the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® dimensions.....	173
Table 6-19:	T-test for the effect of language on the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® dimensions .	174
Table 6-20:	Analysis of variance for respondents' involvement and the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® dimensions.....	176
Table 6-21:	Analysis of variance for the respondents' alcohol preference and the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® dimensions	182
Table 7-1:	The <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® ranking scores.....	203

Table 7-2: A condensed recommendation structure for the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes of Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel (2007) 206

Table 7-3: Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation recommendations 207

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1-1:	Orange River Cellars' management team.....	11
Figure 2-1:	Corporate communication foundations	22
Figure 2-2:	The marketing communication mix	25
Figure 2-3:	The fundamental elements of corporate reputation	38
Figure 2-4:	A corporate personality scale to assess internal and external views of reputation	44
Figure 2-5:	Comprehensive reputation management.....	50
Figure 2-6:	Corporate reputation measurement timeline.....	56
Figure 2-7:	The six dimensions and 20 attributes of the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ®.....	61
Figure 3-1:	An illustration of the major wine producers in 2017	73
Figure 3-2:	Wine-producing regions of South Africa	78
Figure 3-3:	List of wine-producing districts.....	79
Figure 3-4:	Orange River Cellars' different locations	82
Figure 3-5:	Orange River Cellars' production sites, from left: Upington, Keimoes, Kakamas, Grootdrink and Groblershoop	84
Figure 3-6:	Wines and juices of Orange River Cellars	85
Figure 3-7:	Orange River Cellars' wine industry stakeholders	86
Figure 3-8:	Orange River Cellars' awards and achievements.....	88
Figure 4-1:	The interview process	103
Figure 4-2:	The researcher's steps for the qualitative content analysis	105
Figure 6-1:	The measurement model of confirmatory factor analysis for the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ®	166

Figure 6-2: Spearman rank-order correlations' scale 170

Figure 7-1: The *Reputation Quotient*® score of Orange River Cellars 203

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Over the years, academics have conducted vast amounts of research on corporate reputation (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013; Aula & Mantere, 2008; Davies *et al.*, 2003; Firestein, 2006; Hirsch, 2017; Kaul & Desai, 2014; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). Corporate reputation has been seen as the overall image on which stakeholders assess an organisation and in turn, form an overall perception based on evaluations made over time (Aula & Mantere, 2013:341; Helm, 2011b:7). Organisations should keep in mind that corporate reputation is something that changes over time and is determined by its stakeholders (Kaul & Desai, 2014:6). Fombrun (2012:sec. 121) adds that corporate reputation is also about the attractiveness that an organisation presents to its stakeholders. Not only is corporate reputation about attractiveness, but also relates to whether stakeholders view the organisation as credible and trustworthy (Trček, 2018:16; Van der Waldt, 2015:104). These evaluations made by stakeholders are the absolute root that creates believability in the organisation and should be reinforced to obtain a positive corporate reputation (Caruana, 2008:204; Gray & Balmer, 1998:697; Holladay, 2013:23). Therefore, a good corporate reputation could be one of the most valuable contributors to a sustainable business (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013:222; Doorley & Garcia, 2015:3; Firestein, 2006:25; Helm, 2011b:3).

The role of corporate reputation management and the importance thereof in organisations have increased significantly in relation to how leading organisations make industry-related decisions (Nielsen, 2016:6; Van der Waldt, 2015:104). Organisations need to recognise the necessity of corporate reputation management and understand that it is evolving and cannot be ignored (Hirsch, 2017:54; Robinson, 2010:40). Corporate reputation management should be considered an integral part of an organisation's strategies. It entails not only managing the organisation's image in relation to a variety of stakeholders (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:2; Goldring, 2015:250; Helm *et al.*, 2011:5), but also establishing the organisation's identity and corporate reputation to achieve organisational goals and improve business performance (Esenyel, 2020:31). Organisations are constantly scrutinised by various stakeholder groups; whose observations ultimately determine their perceptions of the organisation. The latter can be formed through direct involvement with products and services, how a company communicates messages and word of mouth from existing consumers (Nielsen, 2016:6; Reputation Institute, 2017:7). Thus, encouraging positive perceptions is a crucial aspect of managing the organisation's corporate reputation successfully (Erdal, 2017:157). Maintaining a sturdy corporate reputation is the responsibility of the organisation's corporate communication department (Van Riel, 2018:4).

Corporate communication, in turn, can be seen as a strategic management function, the focus of which is sending a consistent message to an organisation's stakeholders (Aula & Mantere, 2008:91; Gray & Balmer, 1998:696; Van Riel, 2018:4). It involves all communication activities that are initiated within and outside the organisation (Nagyová *et al.*, 2017:88). Its primary function is to help the organisation to concentrate on building and maintaining long-term relationships with a variety of stakeholders (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 24; Schultz *et al.*, 2005:11; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:9). When corporate communication is done successfully, stakeholders will be influenced to support the organisation (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:59-60). A favourable corporate reputation is conveyed through corporate communication, which eliminates uncertainty and thus constitutes an intangible organisational asset (Kaul & Desai, 2014:9). For corporate reputations to be constructed in stakeholders' minds, and to maintain and enhance corporate reputation, organisations have to pay attention to and communicate with their stakeholders following corporate communication strategies (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 91). Corporate communication strategies help the organisations to achieve to their corporate objectives (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:288), such as managing or measuring corporate reputation.

In order to manage corporate reputation, an organisation has to measure corporate reputation first by determining stakeholders' perceptions. The majority of organisations do not know the details of their corporate reputations; however there are measurement methods that can be utilised (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:5) to determine stakeholders' perceptions. These stakeholders might include management, employees, customers, suppliers, government, the media and the overall public (Skinner *et al.*, 2013:40; Van Heerden, 2019b:sec. 234). By focusing on these stakeholder groups, organisations can gain an exact and accurate picture of their corporate reputations, because a wide range of stakeholders would have been considered when measuring them (Pirez & Trez, 2018:56; Raithel *et al.*, 2010:397), as long as organisations that consider managing their corporate reputations start with a suitable measurement approach (Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:3-4,21). Measurement provides organisations with rich information about stakeholders' perceptions (Reputation Institute, 2018), which they can utilise to improve their corporate reputations.

A strong corporate reputation provides a competitive advantage over other organisations (Wepener, 2014:22). Competitiveness is always an important factor in the South African wine industry and the only organisations that survive are those that constantly change in response to new situations and advance in innovation (Esterhuizen & Van Rooyen, 2006:484). Orange River Cellars was selected as the case study for this research because it had been a wine producer in the industry for a long time. The organisation has had an uninterrupted history of wine producing since 23 December 1965. It is situated in the Northern Cape, with its main office in Upington. In

the mid-1970s, its wine production extended into Groblershoop, Grootdrink, Kakamas and Keimoes in the Northern Cape. Grape juice manufacturing is done at separate facilities in Kanoneiland, Grootdrink and Kakamas, also in the Northern Cape region. Orange River Cellars uses wine grapes from 750 specialist grape farmers along the Orange River. The intake from farmers has grown from 5,182 tons in 1968 to a record of 184,000 tons in 2004 (Orange River Cellars, 2017). Although Orange River Cellars is one of the main wine producers in the Northern Cape, it has never performed a corporate reputation assessment. Thus, the organisation might have only partial knowledge of corporate reputation management and measurement.

In summary, the general focus of this research is corporate reputation management and measurement within corporate communication, since corporate reputation management is an established aspect of corporate communication strategies (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 150; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:13). The particular focus is the corporate reputation management and measurement of Orange River Cellars.

1.1.1 Problem statement

Management of a corporate reputation is one of the main issues encountered in an organisation (Tshivase & Kleyn, 2016:269; Van der Waldt, 2015:6). If an organisation does not have a corporate reputation management strategy as part of its corporate communication strategy, its managers might overlook opportunities and fail to prevent future threats.

With Orange River Cellars having been operating in the wine industry for more than 50 years now, it is essential that its managers implement several strategies to manage and measure the organisations' corporate reputation effectively. Because it offers an extensive range of wines, the opportunity to focus exclusively on products and services constitutes the basis of a strategy to achieve an advantage over its opponents (Amis, 2003:189; Mahon, 2002:420; Mora, 2016:10). However, it is not just the quality of the product or service that drives strategies in wineries, but leaders who have a market-oriented approach, and who therefore consider stakeholders' needs and pay attention to competitors (Flint *et al.*, 2016:33). Since the domestic and international wine industry in which South Africa operates is both challenging and unpredictable (Kirkman, 2010:159; Richter, 2019), it is all the more important that Orange River Cellars should measure its corporate reputation in order to increase its organisational performance.

Orange River Cellars might have a limited vision of the benefits of corporate reputation management, since the company does not have a corporate reputation management strategy and has never performed a corporate reputation assessment. Therefore, it is possible that Orange River Cellars' management do not understand stakeholders' perceptions of the organisation or

the value of corporate reputation. This omission could hamper opportunities to assess the cellar's corporate reputation and market position in relation to leading wineries in South Africa. A fundamental problem found in the measurement of corporate reputation is whether stakeholder groups classify a company's status in a similar way or if differing opinions have been formed (Govender & Abratt, 2016:235; Helm *et al.*, 2011:106; Mittins *et al.*, 2011:408). Since stakeholders do not base their perceptions solely on a single element during the purchase process, organisations must monitor all aspects of corporate reputation. For this reason, Orange River Cellars' management team should focus on all aspects of managing and measuring the cellar's corporate reputation.

Since this study was motivated by the fact that Orange River Cellars had never conducted a corporate reputation assessment, the current researcher attempted to determine its stakeholders' perceptions by measuring Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation by utilising the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument, with a view to enabling it to become a more reputable firm.

In light of the problem statement above, the following research questions and aims were formulated.

1.2 Research questions

The general and specific research questions for this study were derived from the above problem statement, in particular the need to determine the stakeholders and management's perceptions regarding Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation:

1.2.1 General research question

Given the problem statement above, the general research question that guided the study was:

What are the various stakeholders and management's perceptions of the overall corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars?

Three specific research questions were formulated to assist in answering the primary research question:

1.2.2 Specific research questions

1. What does corporate reputation management and measurement entail, according to the corporate communication literature?
2. What is Orange River Cellars management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement?

3. What are the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' reputation according to the *Reputation Quotient*®?

1.3 Research aims

The research aims of the study refer to the general research aim and the specific research aims.

1.3.1 General research aim

The purpose of this study was to gain insight, through research and analysis, of how the corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars was perceived. Thus, the general research aim of the study was: *To determine the perceptions of the various stakeholders and management of the overall corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars.*

In order to achieve the general research aim, specific research aims were determined.

1.3.2 Specific research aims

1. To determine what corporate reputation management and measurement entails. This objective was achieved by conducting a corporate communication literature study.
2. To determine what Orange River Cellars management's approach is towards corporate reputation management and measurement. This question was answered by means of semi-structured interviews, in which the questions asked were based on the corporate reputation literature and the theory related to the dimensions of the *Reputation Quotient*®.
3. To determine the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' reputation according to the *Reputation Quotient*® as an assessment method. A survey was conducted to evaluate perceptions across the various corporate reputation dimensions of the *Reputation Quotient*®.

1.4 General guiding arguments

- Corporate reputation comprises the overall perceptions of an organisation of a person or group of people (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:34). Corporate reputation could be valuable and should be managed within the corporate communication context of the organisation, since corporate reputation management is determined by corporate communication strategies (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:13). To establish the organisation's corporate reputation, it is vital that organisations identify the key stakeholders that play a fundamental role in achieving organisational objectives (Nielsen, 2016:4). Identifying and building relationships with these key stakeholders are crucial, since stakeholders determine the corporate reputation.

Therefore, no matter the industry, management should realise that, to develop and nurture the organisation's corporate reputation, they have to pay attention to and communicate with a wide variety of stakeholders (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 91). Thus, corporate reputation and stakeholder relations are viewed as valuable assets that should be managed effectively within the organisation (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:29; Schreiber, 2011; Van Riel, 2018:4).

- In order to succeed in achieving excellent corporate reputations, organisations should manage their corporate reputations successfully (Potgieter & Doubell, 2018:136). Corporate reputation management requires an organisation to establish its corporate reputation, corporate image and corporate identity to achieve its organisational goals and improve business performance (Esenyel, 2020:31). Corporate reputation management might be an essential skill that practitioners should learn. It requires an effort to build and uphold an organisation's corporate reputation (Van der Waldt, 2015:122). Stakeholders pay attention to organisations and form their judgments in a given timeframe with limited information; therefore, the organisation should manage its corporate reputation in advance to maintain control of a favourable corporate reputation (Diermeier, 2018:19). Effective corporate reputation management also contributes to improved business performance, and improved performance attracts eligible resources such as funds, good employees, and government support (Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:8). However, for adequate management of corporate reputation to take place, organisations should first measure their corporate reputation (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:170; Punchedva-Michelotti & Michelotti, 2010:250).
- Corporate reputation measurement might be crucial; therefore the organisation should know the perceptions stakeholders have about them and be familiar with how they judge their corporate reputation (Reputation Institute, 2018). Stakeholders' satisfaction with the organisation has to be measured to determine the corporate reputation of an organisation. If the satisfaction level of stakeholders is low, they might terminate their affiliation with the organisation and the organisation will lose the support of a good corporate reputation (Matuleviciene & Stravinskiene, 2016:208-209). The measurement instrument for this study, the *Reputation Quotient*®, is an assessment method used to determine an organisation's corporate reputation. The *Reputation Quotient*® measures six dimensions with 20 attributes. The measurement of each dimension can help the organisation to assess current challenges in the various dimensions. Measuring and monitoring corporate reputation makes it possible to determine which dimensions are distinguished and which dimensions are at risk, predict stakeholders' actions and expose what drives organisational success (Reputation Institute, 2018).

- Orange River Cellars should measure its corporate reputation to determine its stakeholders' perceptions of its corporate reputation. Orange River Cellars' management have never conducted a corporate reputation assessment during its 50 years of existence. The outcome of this investigation will provide guidelines for Orange River Cellars in terms of managing and applying corporate reputation principles needed for future development. The results of the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument will offer detailed information within the various dimensions that can aid in the formulation of strategies for future implementation (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 150; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:251). Hence, the obtained results will Orange River Cellars a multitude of information on stakeholder perceptions and its corporate reputation, thus enabling its management team to further enhance and build the company's corporate reputation.

1.5 Research approach

A mixed-methods research design was adopted for this study.

1.5.1 Mixed-methods research design

The evidence for the empirical study was collected by means of a mixed-methods design, in which both qualitative and quantitative research methods were utilised.

Qualitative research is a flexible and open approach in which techniques such as interviews are utilised to elicit information on the participants' feelings and desires in relation to a specific topic (Creswell, 2009:4; Kothari, 2004:3; Kumar, 2014:sec. 60-61). Other qualitative techniques include observations, open-ended surveys or the use of diaries (Zohrabi, 2013:254). Vogt *et al.* (2012:12) argue that qualitative research is appropriate for generating speculation and theories for a study, and that the actual testing of these theories is best done through quantitative research. The semi-structured interviews with Orange River Cellars' management team, provided an in-depth understanding of their approach to corporate reputation management and measurement. Orange River Cellars was employed as the company of reference and permission was given by the organisation to access the data and documents needed for the context of this study.

Quantitative research, on the other hand, is more structured and planned. It involves the use of methods to measure variables in larger sample sizes to ensure reliability and validity, and presents analytical findings from which to draw conclusions (Kumar, 2014:sec. 60-61). Creswell (2009:4) defines quantitative research as an unbiased theory for which certain elements are measured and at the end can be measured by various instruments. Quantitative research would be any applicable type of measurement study involving quantities or numbers (Goertzen, 2017:12; Kothari, 2004:3). In addition, this type of design includes surveys to examine and decode

sets of data (Zohrabi, 2013:254). In this study, the quantitative approach was conducted by applying the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007), which determined all the relevant stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation.

Using a mixed-methods research design guided the researcher to comprehend complicated facts qualitatively and clarify quantitative data using numerical analysis, graphs and numbers (Creswell, 1999:455; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:sec. 259-260; Hesse-Biber, 2010:3). In essence, the outcome of the qualitative and quantitative methods provided insight into Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation, as perceived by its stakeholders. The gathered information revealed vulnerabilities within the organisation's reputation and offered guidance to Orange River Cellars on how to strengthen its corporate reputation. The investigation of Orange River Cellars' reputation provided a foundation for building strategies to help manage its stakeholders' perceptions (Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:8).

1.5.1.1 Qualitative research methods

The literature study was conducted on corporate reputation, and the management and measurement of corporate reputation within organisations. Guidelines for the semi-structured interviews were drawn from the corporate reputation literature and the concepts and constructs of the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007).

1.5.1.1.1 Literature study

The literature study was guided by an extensive review of academic journals, books, conference papers and internet sources, using the following databases: NWU library catalogue, Nexus, JSTOR, SAePublications, EBSCOhost, eBook Central, Sage, Taylor and Francis, and Google Scholar. The main focus of the search was on studies within the corporate reputation management and measurement field. The literature offered a general overview of the existing theories and perceptions, and there was adequate material from which to build a framework for the study.

Many researchers have focused exclusively on corporate communication, corporate reputation, corporate reputation management and corporate reputation measurement, and the role they play within organisations. The focus of one of the main studies identified, titled *Essentials of corporate communications: Implementing practices for effective reputation management* (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007), was on all aspects and the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument. Studies identified in the field of corporate communication were: *Corporate communication: A guide to theory and practice* (Cornelissen, 2017); *Research in corporate communication: An overview of an emerging field* (Van Riel, 1997); and *Assessing the excellence of the corporate*

communication department (Van Riel, 2018). Studies in the field of corporate reputation included: *Corporate reputation as a strategic asset* (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013); *The building blocks of corporate reputation: Definitions, antecedents, consequences* (Fombrun, 2012); and *Multiple stakeholder management and corporate reputation in South Africa* (Govender & Abratt, 2016). Research identified in the field of corporate reputation management included: *Strategic reputation management: Towards a company of good* (Aula & Mantere, 2008); *Reputation management: The key to successful public relations and corporate communication* (Doorley & Garcia, 2015); *Reputation management and the board* (Diermeier, 2018); and *Reputation 2020: Ten trends driving reputation management* (Van Riel & Baumann, 2015). Research in the field of corporate reputation measurement related to this study included: *The global Reputation Quotient project: First steps towards a cross-nationally valid measure of corporate reputation* (Gardberg & Fombrun, 2002); and *The 2018 Harris Poll RQ® summary* (The Harris Poll, 2018). Only one relevant study was found on wine and corporate reputation management, namely *Strategic winery reputation management – exploring German wine guides* (Dressler, 2016). However, no studies were found on the South African context with regard to corporate reputation management or measurement in wineries. This constituted one more reason for the current researcher to present evidence in this regard.

The literature and framework of Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient®* (2007) was utilised as an attempt to understand the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation.

1.5.1.1.2 Semi-structured interviews

A case study design guided the research, since only Orange River Cellars' management team was interviewed. A case study design is characterised by a unit, group or community being used as a selected case, which becomes the foundation of a detailed, all-inclusive and in-depth investigation of the viewpoints the researcher hopes to discover (Kumar, 2014:sec. 279). Thus, the units of analysis were the semi-structured interviews with Orange River Cellars' management, which generated a deep understanding of corporate reputation management and measurement within Orange River Cellars.

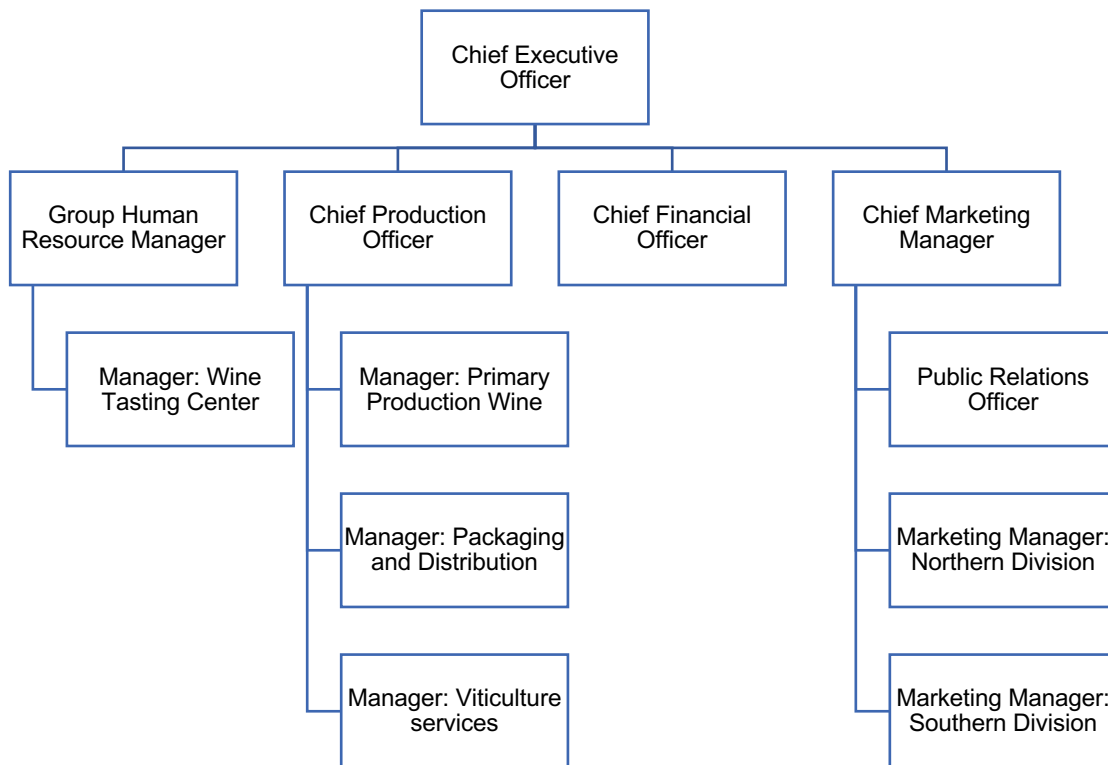
Zohrabi (2013:256) states that semi-structured interviews are adaptable and enable the researcher to elicit extensive information from the interviewees without being too rigid. Guidelines to structure the interviews were drawn from the corporate reputation literature and the concepts and constructs of the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient®* (2007). The interview schedule for the interviews with the Orange River Cellars' management team was based on the literature presented in Chapter 2 and the elements of the *Reputation Quotient®* (paragraph

2.3.6.1.3). The interview schedule (Appendix A) was followed meticulously to guide the interview process with the participants and served as a guide to code the responses of the participants. Hence, the concepts and constructs of the literature served as a basis to obtain the relevant information from the participants through open-ended questions. The participants had the freedom to discuss the questions, but within the limits of the construct that was assessed. Despite the fact that the interviewees had the freedom to discuss the various constructs, there were constraints such as the specific interview schedule and questions that guided interviewees to remain within the limits of corporate reputation literature and Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) measurement instrument (see Appendix A for the interview schedule and questions).

Interviews took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, so a few participants were unavailable for face-to-face interviews. The researcher accommodated these participants with their preferred method, namely telephonic interviews (paragraph 4.4.1.4). With the permission of the participants, all the interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed by the researcher. The interviews were transcribed straight after the interviews, while the information was still clear in the interviewer's mind.

1.5.1.1.3 Semi-structured interview sample

The sample for the semi-structured interviews consisted of 12 members of Orange River Cellars' management (see Figure 1-1):



Source: Author's own interpretation

Figure 1-1: Orange River Cellars' management team

The participants' perceptions of the constructs (see Table 4-1) were determined with a view to developing an understanding of corporate reputation management and measurement within Orange River Cellars.

1.5.1.1.4 Method for analysing responses from interviews: Qualitative content analysis

A qualitative content analysis was conducted on the feedback from the semi-structured interviews with Orange River Cellars' management. A qualitative content analysis was used as a tool in this research to establish the occurrence of specific words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. According to Schreier (2012:8), the method is "systematic, flexible and it reduces data". Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017:94) agree that a qualitative content analysis aids in transforming a large amount of information and structuring the data from the transcribed interviews into categories to provide an accurate summary of the results. Thus, qualitative content analysis is a method for describing the meaning of qualitative material systematically. It was done by classifying the material as instances of the categories of a coding frame. Qualitative content analysis was therefore performed to code the responses of Orange River Cellars' management regarding their approach to corporate reputation management and measurement.

The qualitative research method will be discussed thoroughly in Chapter 4.

1.5.1.2 Quantitative research methods

An online e-mail survey was utilised as a quantitative research method to determine the corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars from stakeholders' perceptions.

1.5.1.2.1 Online e-mail survey

A corporate reputation measurement survey was conducted, applying the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) (see Appendix B). As stated above, this measurement instrument has been tested and re-tested since 1999 to guarantee accurate responses from participants regarding an organisation's corporate reputation (Stacks *et al.*, 2013:564; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248). Thus, the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument was best suited to this study to determine the corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars based on perceptions related to the specific dimensions, namely "*emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, social responsibility, and financial performance*" (The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248-249). The *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument measures corporate reputation by analysing 20 items that are rated by the participants on a five-point Likert scale, categorised across six dimensions. The following six dimensions were assessed in relation to Orange River Cellars (The Harris Poll, 2018; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248-249):

- **Emotional appeal:** admire, respect, trust and feel good about the organisation.
- **Products and services:** innovative, high quality, good value for money and the organisation stands behind its products and services.
- **Vision and leadership:** the organisation capitalise on market opportunities and has excellent leaders with clear visions for the future.
- **Workplace environment:** an organisation that is appealing to work for, has qualified employees and rewards employees fairly.
- **Financial performance:** the organisation outperforms competitors, portrays investment value, is a low risk investment and shows prospects for future growth.
- **Social responsibility:** the organisation supports good causes, shows responsibility to the community and safeguards the environment.

The *Reputation Quotient*® results will serve as a guide for Orange River Cellars in managing and measuring its corporate reputation and by guiding communication strategies to specific targets in

the industry, especially improving on the dimensions that had a low rating in the outcome of this study (Kitchen & Laurence, 2003:116; Schreiber, 2011; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:106).

1.5.1.2.2 E-mail survey sample

The stakeholders included in this study were the business's surrounding community, consumers, employees, export wholesalers, grape farmers, investors, management, stockists, dealers and suppliers.

The sampling frame consisted of an all-inclusive survey of Orange River Cellars' stakeholders older than 18 years who were on the organisation's database and consumers who had supplied their e-mail addresses at the wine tasting centre in Upington. The aim was to obtain a total of 200 answered surveys from the contacted stakeholders. A sample size of at least 200 stakeholders was recommended to present the study with statistical power and 10 responses per item relating to the attributes of the *Reputation Quotient*® in order to do a confirmatory factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001:966). These stakeholders were from all the provinces in South Africa, but mainly from the Northern Cape region, particularly Upington, Kakamas, Keimoes, Groblershoop and Grootdrink.

A non-probability availability sampling technique was employed, whereby the researcher contacted all the individuals whose e-mail addresses were provided by Orange River Cellars. This sample was considered a non-probability sample, since bias exists due to the fact that visitors who were not on the database or did not supply e-mail addresses were not included in the sample (Kumar, 2014:sec. 426-427; Tustin *et al.*, 2005:344). Selected individuals received a survey link via e-mail to complete online. The respondents' anonymity was maintained, ensuring honest responses. The surveys provided the researcher with an overall indication of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation according to the *Reputation Quotient*®.

1.5.1.2.3 Data analysis of the quantitative research methods

Descriptive statistics were used to explain the data (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:21). For internal consistency, the coefficient Cronbach's Alpha test was conducted to determine whether the measurement instrument was reliable and a confirmatory factor analysis was performed to determine construct validity; that is, whether the instrument measured what it was supposed to measure (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:260-261). Spearman rank-order correlations, t-tests and ANOVAs were used to determine the association of demographic variables within the *Reputation Quotient*®. Since an online e-mail survey was used, the quantitative data was processed by the Statistics Consultation Department of the North-West University's Potchefstroom Campus. The quantitative research methods will be examined thoroughly in Chapter 4.

1.6 Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations relevant to this study involved obtaining permission from Orange River Cellars to access information through semi-structured interviews and the online e-mail survey. An agreement was reached with the board of directors to conduct this study and a letter of consent was signed by the chief executive officer of Orange River Cellars (Appendix C). However, each interviewee gave individual written consent to participate in the interviews (Appendix D). None of the participants were forced to participate in a face-to-face interview during the COVID-19 pandemic, by which the researcher made additional arrangements (paragraph 4.4.1.4). As specific individuals of management were chosen, the guarantee of anonymity was not a 100% feasible. However, the focus was based purely on corporate reputation management and measurement within the organisation. The participants did not have to answer any questions based on alcohol consumption or any related question. Furthermore, no response was directly linked to an individual when reporting on the interviews.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The study was conducted in a single country within a single industry setting, which limits the generalisability of the findings. However, conducting research in a single setting provided the researcher with optimal control, and an in-depth understanding of the *Reputation Quotient*® and reputation management and measurement within Orange River Cellars. In the future, this study's theory could be applied to other organisations in the wine industry. As the *Reputation Quotient*® was the only measurement instrument used for the quantitative research, a study providing a detailed investigation of all elements affecting corporate reputation management was not possible, because constructs could have also been used, such as the organisation's online corporate reputation via Social Media. Thus, other constructs were not used since the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument is a set and standardised instrument developed by Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel (2007). Therefore, the elements of the measurement instrument could be changed by the researcher. A practical limitation of this study was that the empirical research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the government's lockdown regulations restricted the researcher from reaching out personally to different stakeholder groups.

1.8 Significance of the study

The Harris Interactive research firm of Harris Fombrun measures reputations of the most visible companies in the US. Since 1999, they have measured reputations in over 26 countries, including South Africa (Davies, 2011:53; Stacks *et al.*, 2013:568; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248). Research done thus far indicates that corporate reputation measures have not been implemented

in the South African wine industry, which makes this study unique. However, the South African wine industry has constantly striven to position itself to increase awareness in the competitive market.

This study thus contributes not only to the corporate communication and corporate reputation management literature but could also guide Orange River Cellars and other wineries to implement strategies to sustain and build a favourable corporate reputation. The study could also serve as a guide for practitioners who manage corporate reputations. The findings expand Orange River Cellars knowledge and thus enhance their understanding of corporate reputation management and measurement. It also contributes to their understanding of the perceptions and concerns of their stakeholder groups with regards to the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. This researcher aimed to have a positive impact on Orange River Cellars that would provide strategic value to the organisation.

Although this study was based on Orange River Cellars, the framework for this study could be applied to other wine cellars. The research could help them to change their focus to manage corporate reputation effectively and highlight aspects of building strong reputations so that the public will recommend and buy their products, ensure that employees deliver on the intended corporate reputation strategy and provide investor support. The recommendations could also serve as a framework for Orange River Cellars and other wine cellars in their efforts to avoid corporate reputation problems in the future. This study could also aid employees, departments or corporate reputation managers in the wine cellar industry to manage and measure corporate reputations accurately. A corporate reputation management study has not been conducted in a South African wine industry context; thus this study could serve the distinct purpose of guiding wine cellars in future attempts to manage and measure their reputations.

1.9 Key terminology in this study

The following key terminology is utilised in this paper:

- **Corporate communication:** Could be viewed as a framework to connect all internal and external communication throughout a variety of organisational divisions to develop, maintain and establish a favourable corporate reputation with dependent stakeholder groups (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 36-37; Mazzei, 2014:222).
- **Corporate reputation:** Might be perceived as any information about an organisation that affects the perceptions of stakeholders and on which basis assessments are made over a given timeframe (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1050; Alniacik *et al.*, 2012:7; Burke, 2011:3; Diermeier, 2018:19).

- **Corporate reputation management:** Includes all members of the organisation who wish to achieve the desired reputation and balance all stakeholders' needs to develop and maintain a justifiable corporate reputation (Goldring, 2015:785; Robinson, 2010:40).
- **Corporate reputation measurement:** Corporate reputation measurement might involve any assessment method to determine and measure the perceptions of an organisation's different stakeholder groups.
- **Reputation Quotient®:** A corporate reputation measurement instrument, developed by Harris Fombrun and Van Riel (2007).
- **Stakeholders:** Refer to individuals who influence or are influenced by the behaviour of a specific organisation (Dowling, 2016:214; Freeman *et al.*, 2010:26).

1.10 Chapter layout

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

The first chapter comprised an overview of the study, including the background, problem statement, the general research question and aims, the specific research questions and research aims, the guiding arguments, the research approach, ethical considerations, limitations, significance, and key terminology of the study.

CHAPTER 2: CORPORATE REPUTATION: ELEMENTS, MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT

The second chapter provides a theoretical foundation on corporate communication, corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement, the significance of the *Reputation Quotient®* (2007) and the advantages of a strong corporate reputation.

CHAPTER 3: THE WINE INDUSTRY AND ORANGE RIVER CELLARS

The third chapter comprises an overview of the global wine industry, South African wine industry and Orange River Cellars, which contextualises this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research approach and methods used to gather the data and information for the study are described.

CHAPTER 5: CORPORATE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

In the fifth chapter, the results and the analysis thereof are presented, along with a discussion of the qualitative research results from the interviews with Orange River Cellars' management.

CHAPTER 6: STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS OF ORANGE RIVER CELLARS' CORPORATE REPUTATION: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

In the sixth chapter, the results of the quantitative research are presented and the *Reputation Quotient®* measurement instrument that was filled in by Orange River Cellars' stakeholders, are discussed.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The final chapter is a summary of the research process and recommendations. The general research question was answered, the recommendations for a framework to manage and measure Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation was provided, and the limitations and future research of the study was put forward in this chapter.

1.11 Conclusion

Chapter 1 laid a foundation for this study by presenting the topic and context of the study. The research problem was defined and the primary and sub-questions were defined, as well as the specific research questions and aims. The guiding arguments were provided and the methodology was described. Semi-structured interviews and the online e-mail survey were presented as the research methods employed in this study.

The ethical considerations and limitations of the study were clarified and the significance of the research, as well as recommendations for future research within corporate reputation management, were discussed. Key terminology was explained, whereafter an overview of the paper was provided.

The following chapter is an examination of corporate communication, corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, and corporate reputation measurement, together with other related concepts such as the advantages of a strong corporate reputation.

CHAPTER 2: CORPORATE REPUTATION: ELEMENTS, MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT

2.1 Introduction

Numerous academic scholars and professionals have acknowledged the significance of corporate communication research over the years and have started realising how valuable it is to receive information about strategies to determine the general outline of the organisation's corporate reputation (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 180). The need to know various stakeholder groups' perceptions of an organisation's corporate reputation goes hand in hand with the corresponding need for management of corporate reputation in today's corporate world. Van Riel (2018:4) emphasises that organisations should regard corporate reputation management as a vital strategic asset. Furthermore, corporate reputation management should be part of an organisations' corporate communication strategies.

As noted in the previous chapter, the purpose of this study was to determine the stakeholders and management's perceptions of the overall corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars. A theoretical foundation is provided in this chapter, which includes the background on corporate communication, defining corporate reputation and the fundamental elements thereof, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement, and the advantages of a strong corporate reputation. These constructs were investigated to provide an answer to the specific research question:

What does corporate reputation management and measurement entail, according to the corporate communication literature? (see 1.2.2)

Answering this research question necessitated defining the concept of corporate communication; explaining the principle foundations of corporate communication; clarifying the historical overview of corporate reputation towards a definition of corporate reputation; explaining the fundamental elements of corporate reputation; considering stakeholder relations in corporate reputation; and exploring corporate reputation management and the measurement thereof, with specific reference to the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument. To begin with, clarification and examination of the theory of corporate communication was considered necessary to lay the foundation for the understanding of corporate reputation in this context.

2.2 Corporate communication: A contextual and conceptual framework

Communication professionals and top management started taking cognisance of corporate communication as an essential factor in the 1980s (Forman & Argenti, 2005:245; Van Bekkum *et al.*, 2008:84; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:22). Bronn (2013:53) explains that researchers discovered corporate communication as an essential field of study only in the past 20 years, although it has been practised in the organisational context for a while. Even now, corporate communication managers are not perceived as esteemed members of an organisation's top management and are often in a disadvantaged position to contribute to strategic decision making on an executive level (Beger, 2018:3; Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 35-36). However, the main goal of communication is to build relationships and ensure the successful functioning of an organisation (Tankosic *et al.*, 2017:2). Therefore, corporate communication managers should be involved in decision making. Moreover, all the elements of corporate communication should be integrated into an organisation's strategic organisational decisions. Hence, a comprehensive definition will first be provided to lay the foundations for a solid understanding of the concept of corporate communication.

2.2.1 Defining corporate communication

Everything a company communicates and stands for shapes the perceptions of its stakeholders (Reputation Institute, 2016:1). For this reason, mastering good communication is of utmost importance to any company. In fact, corporate communication has become a weapon that is used to create competitive advantage for many organisations (Dolphin & Fan, 2000:100; Miletić, 2010:119; Nwabueze & Mileski, 2018:63). It is thus regarded as making an undeniable contribution and as essential for any organisation to function correctly (Guru *et al.*, 2013:134; Meintjies *et al.*, 2009:78). When considering the specific term "*corporate*" in the field of communication, the focus is on what the organisation stands for by projecting a unified and unique image to all stakeholders (Christensen, 2002:162; Guru *et al.*, 2013:135). Thus, communication in a broader organisational context involves all departments being "*connected*" via some form of interaction (Tench *et al.*, 2017:1). Mulder (2015:1) consequently emphasises that communication is vital for any organisation to function successfully.

Corporate communication, as a single component, is the combined message an organisation conveys to its stakeholders in the media that communicates the company's true identity (Gray & Balmer, 1998:696; Van Riel, 2018:4). Media can refer to any medium, such as newspapers, magazines, billboards, television, and social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Forman and Argenti (2005:246) define corporate communication as the implementation of strategies through communication, but emphasise that a specific department should implement

these strategies within the organisation. Van Riel (2018:4) stresses that an organisation must have a corporate communication department to implement and communicate all strategies to stakeholders. In general, corporate communication involves all the internal and external communications of an organisation. These need to be managed, coordinated and distributed to obtain and enhance a favourable image in the eyes of dependable stakeholders (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 121; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:25). Internal communication comprises messages shared internally. It includes the interpretation of messages and providing and receiving orders within the organisation (Romenti & Illia, 2013:184-185; Varey, 1998:183). If internal communication is performed effectively and frequently, managers will be better decision makers and convey a unified message about the organisation (Goldring, 2015:788). Managers should also maintain a good rapport with employees, since the latter are the backbone of every organisation (Chanda, 2018:5). Employees play a prominent role when sending messages to external audiences; therefore, they can be regarded as ambassadors who should reflect the true image of an organisation to the outside world (Goodman, 2001:120; Harvey & Morris, 2012:sec. 364; Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:6). This means that employees should not be neglected, but rather cherished and well trained, because they are among the primary communicators who convey the correct message to the public.

External communication serves as a connection to the outside world by including all external stakeholders, such as shareholders, consumers and investors (Chanda, 2018:1; Rayudu, 2009:26). Often organisations fail to recognise the expectations of the public, which could raise many questions about how they operate. This could place their reputations at risk (Diermeier, 2018:18; Dowling, 2004:28). To avoid reputation risks, communication specialists need to familiarise themselves with the changing environment to cater to current needs. This will facilitate good relations between their organisations and their stakeholders (Gupta, 2011:114; Meintjies *et al.*, 2009:60). Ultimately, corporate communication provides a competitive advantage by creating benefits for both the organisation and its audience (Dolphin & Fan, 2000:100; Meng & Berger, 2013:314). Some organisations are not aware of the significance of excellent communication, or that they have to alter the way they communicate with their stakeholders in response to changing trends (Karaosmanoglu & Melewar, 2006:196). As a whole, Mazzei (2014:222) considers corporate communication to be the element that connects all internal and external communication throughout a variety of organisational divisions to develop, maintain and constructively transform an organisation's image. It is therefore vital that both internal and external stakeholders should be considered in corporate reputation. Companies should therefore accurately prioritise stakeholder needs and determine who should be regarded as vital at any specific point in time (Aula & Mantere, 2008:40; Chun, 2005:94). In short, for communication to take place effectively,

relationships must be managed with a wide variety of stakeholders (Kitchen & Laurence, 2003:106; Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:8).

Based on the preceding discussion, the following definition of corporate communication was used as a contextual framework for this study:

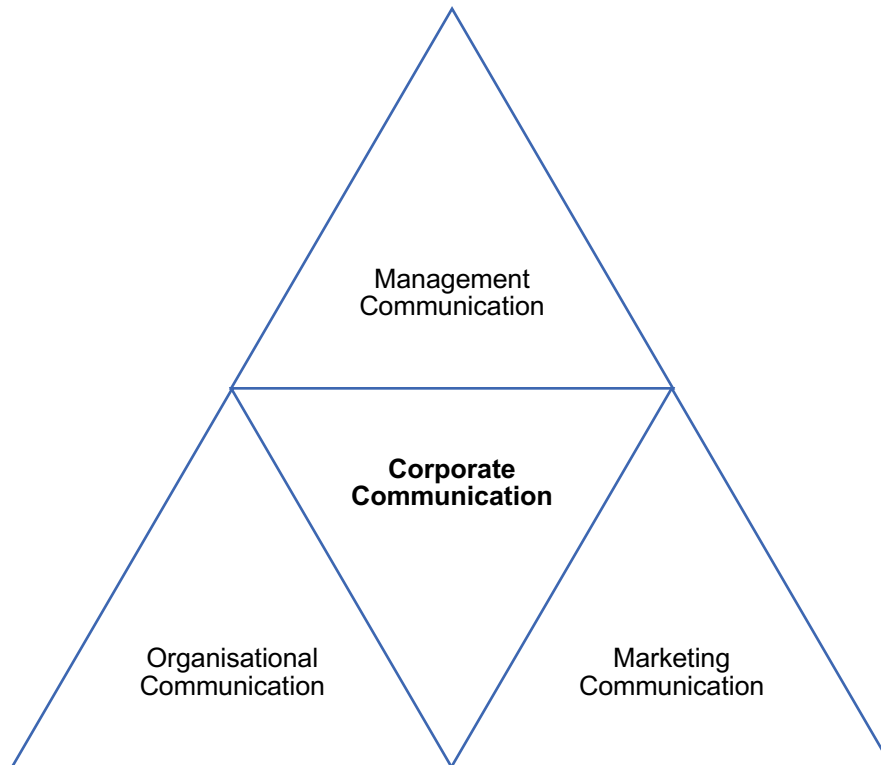
Corporate communication is a strategic management task that involves connecting all internal and external communication throughout an organisation. It requires a strategic communication approach that is integrated with the overall strategy of the organisation to develop, maintain and establish a favourable corporate reputation in the minds of all stakeholder groups (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 36-37; Mazzei, 2014:222; Van Riel, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:13-14).

There are three principle foundations of corporate communication; namely, management communication, marketing communication and organisational communication. These foundations play a vital role within an organisation. Van Riel and Fombrun (2007:13-14) identified the principle foundations as the communication link between internal and external stakeholders.

The principle foundations of corporate communication are reviewed in the following section.

2.2.2 Principle foundations of corporate communication

In order to better understand corporate communication, Van Riel and Fombrun (2007:14) identified the following three clusters as the principle foundations of corporate communication.



Source: Adapted from Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007:17

Figure 2-1: Corporate communication foundations

The three foundations illustrated in Figure 2-1, namely, management communication, marketing communication and organisational communication, can be strategically coordinated to match the corporate communication vision of the organisation and serve as a link between all internal and external stakeholders (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:14-15). The three principle clusters are described in the following subsections.

2.2.2.1 Management communication

Communication is intrinsic to nearly all organisational structures, and an organisation can be represented truthfully only when all parties have adequate communication skills (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:15). Muscalu *et al.* (2013:74) confirms that the communication procedures used play a fundamental role in the success of organisations. However, despite the increasing difficulties, growing dynamics and the escalating growth of corporate communication, many corporate managers still consider corporate communication to be a profession that requires little expertise (Beger, 2018:3). On the contrary, Van Riel (2018:18) highlights that communication

managers should have multitasking expertise in fields such as communication skills, stakeholder integration skills, leadership skills, business skills, corporate awareness and change management skills.

Management communication plays a central role in corporate communication (O'Rourke, 2013:72). Consequently, management has an essential role to play in organisations in terms of directing and controlling communication (Tench *et al.*, 2017:xxii). Management can be defined as the work of any willing individual that includes elements such as preparation, consolidating, synchronising and monitoring (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:15). However, management is merely one aspect of corporate communication (Illia & Balmer, 2012:429). Any successful manager should regard communication as a state of mind and a useful organisational tool (Muscalu *et al.*, 2013:75). Managers have to take note of the critical role corporate communication plays in forming relationships between stakeholders and the organisation (Meintjies *et al.*, 2009:60; Steyn & De Beer, 2012:50). A corporate communication manager should also consider when it would be best to engage with stakeholders, and whether this should be through appropriate active or passive communication actions and determine which private and public stakeholders can circulate the organisation's messages (Beger, 2018:61).

Kitchen and Laurence (2003:106) emphasise that the CEO is the midpoint of all communication activities. Although the CEO plays the central role, the organisation cannot rely solely on managers for communication responsibilities; specialists are needed to offer support to managers to enhance communications (Van Riel, 2018:8-9; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:16). Furthermore, there should be agreement between all the members of the organisation and the communication executive (Dolphin & Fan, 2000:100). In other words, all communication disciplines and activities should be integrated throughout the organisation and involve all of its members (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 52). However, aligning employees' with a company's values and goals can be a challenging task (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001:101; Hart, 2016:11). Organisations should keep in mind that employees can spread any data or knowledge about the company through online communication channels without any control from the specialists responsible for corporate communication (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 74).

Relationships between the organisation and individuals are created through mutual collaboration. Moreover, people management should be grounded in trust, sincerity and good communication (Rogala & Bialowas, 2016:34). Thus, management's communication is a means of forming appropriate relationships with and between employees and external stakeholders, which relies on using communication methods accurately.

Marketing communication, the second foundation of corporate communication, is assessed in the next section.

2.2.2.2 Marketing communication

Marketing and communication specialists have debated integrating their two functions for more than 20 years now (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:169). Mukherjee and Das (2016:4-5) state that marketing communication originated in the 20th century and became a crucial component of corporate communication in the 1950s. Marketing plays a central role in organisational ventures (Moore & Pareek, 2010:9), and communication lies at the heart of what any organisation accomplishes with all its organisational endeavours (Alexandrescu & Milandru, 2018:268). The primary task of marketing *per se* is to attract and maintain new customers by offering them products that cater to their specific wants and needs (Moore & Pareek, 2010:16). Thus, the main function of marketing is to recognise what customers value and then present it to the market segment to which it appeals the most (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:250-251).

Marketing communication originated as part of the promotional element of marketing (Alexandrescu & Milandru, 2018:273) and involves the integration and coordination of all the classic tools of marketing communication (Mukherjee & Das, 2016:4-5). Marketing communication could thus be viewed as a sub-section of marketing that has to be strategically managed within an organisation. Marketing communication supports all types of communication concerning products and services (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:17), and organisations can use it as a useful tool to communicate with their stakeholders. Marketing communication is also defined as a way of changing the views of potential and existing customers by using all available communication networks to inform, remind and persuade them to purchase a company's products rather than those of its competitors (Guru *et al.*, 2013:138; Mráček & Mucha, 2017:231; Todorova, 2015:368; Varey, 1998:181). Thus, marketing communication is a basis to introduce and offer products and services to the global market (Mukherjee & Das, 2016:6; Mulder, 2015:15).

Determining the most suitable market to which a product or service should be presented requires following a process of market segmentation, target marketing and positioning. Market segmentation refers to the procedure of employing statistical methods to identify potential customers based on their wants, needs and preferences (Hunt, 2010:411). Market segmentation is thus part of a marketing strategy that categorises consumers into groups of individuals with similar characteristics and needs (Plessias *et al.*, 2017:524; Tomczak *et al.*, 2018:7). However, communication used as a marketing instrument has to be adapted to the specific target market an organisation wants to address (Tomczak *et al.*, 2018:191). Determining the target market involves assessing each segment carefully and choosing a specific group to attain its intended

goal, in combination with the marketing mix, namely price, product, place and promotion (Hunt, 2010:423; Moore & Pareek, 2010:50; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:163). Once the target market has been identified, the positioning process has to take place. Positioning requires the organisation to develop a distinct marketing mix in order to influence stakeholders' perceptions and assessments of the product or service offered (Tomczak *et al.*, 2018:46). As such, the organisation should position itself within the minds of its target audience (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 189-190).

To be able to reach differing stakeholders, organisations make use of the marketing communication mix indicated in the following figure.



Source: Adapted from Rensburg, 2019: sec. 20-22

Figure 2-2: The marketing communication mix

As shown in Figure 2-2 above, the marketing communication mix involves advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, personal selling and sponsorship (Connett, 2004:2; Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 55-56; Daniel & Anca, 2012:176; Mulder, 2015:15; Rensburg, 2019:sec. 19). However, scholars also recently started including publicity and digital communication as part

of the marketing communication mix (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 19). A brief description of the eight marketing communication elements is provided below:

- **Advertising** could be seen as a coordinated medium used to convey information about a product or service and which is designed to reach a specific target audience without personal contact (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 20). It is also viewed as a paid medium used by corporate communication practitioners to reach an organisation's stakeholders as part of a coordinated organisational strategy (Beger, 2018:544). Advertising was originally seen as a general concept of corporate communication. It became more noticeable after the 1980s and escalated even more after the 1990s (Eagle *et al.*, 2015:7). Advertising involves any message about a product or service, delivered through any mass media form that is paid for (Rifon *et al.*, 2013:42). Advertising could also be perceived as a highly visible communication activity and as a formal attempt to target external stakeholders (Burke, 2011:10). Advertising would typically involve delivering positional, communicated messages to specific stakeholders, who are frequently referred to as a target audience (Daniel & Anca, 2012:177; Sephapo, 2019a:sec. 61-62). The target audience is reached via various advertising mediums and is characterised by one-way communication to get the message across (Connett, 2004:12; Schultz & Malthouse, 2017:19). These formats include television, magazines, newspapers, radio, internet, social media sites and several other print mediums (Connett, 2004:12; Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 55-56; Hackley, 2005:107; Rensburg, 2019:sec. 20; Todorova, 2015:370). Advertisers aim to enlighten, remind and influence differing stakeholder groups in order to expand their market share (Erasmus-Kritzinger *et al.*, 2000:103; Schultz, 2016:277; Sezgin & Telingün, 2016:2153).
- **Personal selling** is a verbal demonstration of a product, service or new concept to potential consumers, with an expectation that a transaction will occur (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 20). Personal selling is also a method that is used, on an individual level, to identify the needs of a potential customer and to try to fulfil the person's needs by recommending a suitable product or service, and ideally leads to a face-to-face purchase (Antczak & Sypniewska, 2017:40; Connett, 2004:13; Rizomyliotis *et al.*, 2017:50). Antczak and Sypniewska (2017:40) point out that personal selling is not only face-to-face; other platforms are also used to interact with potential customers, such as e-mail, telephone and online conference calls. However, organisations should keep in mind that the first contact that the customers has with the product or organisation is through the representative or salesperson (Mulder, 2019:sec. 166).
- **Sales promotion** is a short-term incentive directed towards potential customers to encourage them to buy a product or make use of the organisation's service (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 21). It involves introducing a product or service to the general public through a special offer to inform

them of its benefits (Alexandrescu & Milandru, 2018:269; Crosier, 2003:420). Sephapo (2019b:sec. 187) emphasises that sales promotions can include a variety of strategic marketing methods and various media platforms to draw individuals to the product. Methods used in sales promotion to secure purchases from stakeholders might involve basics such as samples, coupons, competitions, complimentary handouts, discounts or any other promotional material, such as stationery or clothing (Blakeman, 2018:sec. 24; Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 381).

- **Publicity** is a non-paid method of influencing the public through the media by using a newsworthy product, service or cause to gain free coverage on the offering (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 21). Van Heerden (2019b:sec. 230) divides publicity into two categories, namely corporate publicity and marketing publicity. Corporate publicity is seen as communication in the form of stories, news articles, statements or editorials produced by the organisation, or its opinions on issues and events. It is not paid for and is presented to the general public. Marketing publicity is communication such as news articles and statements or editorials about the brand, products and services of the organisation. Cornelissen (2017:sec. 203) deems the news media to be one of the most vital channels by which to gain publicity, since a wide variety of stakeholders can be reached and influenced by the media coverage.
- **Public relations** involves maintaining a mutually-advantageous relationships with the public (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 21). Communication is used to maintain and enhance relationships with individuals and other companies (George, 2014:442; Skinner *et al.*, 2013:4). Public relations became popular from 1897, when the term appeared in a yearbook called *Railway Literature* (Newsom *et al.*, 2010:21). However, the focus of public relations research underwent a shift in the 1990s, when it became geared more towards strategic management and corporate communication (Dühning, 2017:165). Public relations, in general, is an essential aspect of all activities of an organisation and involves all communication being used to emphasise the attractiveness of the organisation as a whole (Todorova, 2015:371). One of the main techniques used as a public relations strategy is to identify and categorise stakeholders into segments in order to satisfy their communication needs (Van Heerden, 2019b:sec. 230). Thus, public relations research in an organisation might aid in identifying the attitudes of stakeholders and assessing whether public relations' programmes are effective (Michaelson *et al.*, 2017:3; Newsom *et al.*, 2010:2). Many scholars regard public relations as a vital element of corporate communication and corporate reputation management.
- **Sponsorship** has become increasingly popular in South Africa over the past 30 years (Skinner *et al.*, 2013:228). Sponsorships involve donating resources or making a contribution to a particular endeavour such as a sports, education or arts event (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 22).

The organisation would expect a specific benefit in return, such as media coverage, from the sponsored party, with the expectation of an increase in sales (Connett, 2004:14; Crosier, 2003:420; Skinner *et al.*, 2013:228). The type of sponsorship will determine what the organisation aspires to achieve. For example, if an organisation sponsors a charity event, then a sense of kindness and compassion is illustrated; if an organisation sponsors a sports event, its popularity might increase; and if an organisation sponsors future research, it might demonstrate innovation (Beger, 2018:64). In all previously-mentioned instances, the main goal of sponsorship entails the organisation receiving the right to present its name, logo or products at the sponsored activity or event (Van Heerden, 2019a:sec. 266). Consequently, sponsorship reveals an organisation's values and establishes the visibility of the organisation as a whole.

- **Direct marketing** involves recommending services or products via e-mail, cell-phone, the postal service or personal visits (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 22) in an attempt to persuade the receiver to purchase or answer directly to the promoter of the company (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 360-361). Direct marketing also entails individual contact, but is explicitly aimed at a specific target market of potential customers (Crosier, 2003:420; Daniel & Anca, 2012:176). Of all the marketing communication techniques, direct marketing provides the best response because the targeted individual can give the sales representative an instant answer (Blakeman, 2018:sec. 24). Direct marketing might be the most expensive method of communication; nonetheless, it is considered extremely useful, particularly when it takes the form of face-to-face interaction with possible customers (Alexandrescu & Milandru, 2018:271).
- **Digital communication**, the last element of the marketing communication mix, involves *“electronic communication such as the internet”* and is often described as wired (computers) or wireless communication (cell-phones) (Hung-Joubert, 2019:sec. 322). The previously-mentioned author also emphasises that the internet plays an integral role in digital communication. As the technological age has changed communication drastically, so have communication technologies developed rapidly (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 22). Van der Waldt (2015:118) agrees that the rapid increase of social media, cell-phones and the wide variety of internet devices available have undeniably begun to play a prominent role in the corporate world.

In conclusion, for marketing communication to be effective, messages have to be distributed via the most suitable marketing channel using the most appropriate approach (Mukherjee & Das, 2016:5). By investing in the most suitable marketing communication activities, communication managers can directly influence customers to purchase by offering information about the product (Schultz & Malthouse, 2017:21). The optimal channel or activity would refer to utilising the

appropriate elements of the marketing communication mix mentioned above to ensure that the preferred stakeholder group is reached and communicated with suitably. All the elements of marketing communication play a vital role in delivering the best image of an organisation possible, thus helping the organisation to communicate with its stakeholders successfully.

Organisational communication, the third foundation of corporate communication is described in the following section.

2.2.2.3 Organisational communication

Organisations have an influential role in society and stakeholders simultaneously influence how organisations conduct business (Rogala & Bialowas, 2016:29). Spaho (2011:392) asserts that organisational communication plays a significant role in building relationships and emphasises that effective communication is a success factor in any organisation. However, Remke (2013:33) disagrees with the notion that organisational communication can be regarded as all communication within an organisation. The author states that the types of communication differ within the organisation, each with its own unique set of qualities. Hence, organisational communication should not be seen as one single element. Organisational communication, as the third foundation of corporate communication mentioned by Van Riel and Fombrun (2007:20), has four main characteristics that can be regarded as relevant today: **(1)** It targets corporate audiences such as investment analysts, shareholders, legislators, financial journalists and supervisors; **(2)** It concerns a long-term view that is not necessarily focused on creating sales; **(3)** The means of communication differ considerably from those of marketing communication, because a straightforward type of communication is used, rather than false appraisal and overstated messages; **(4)** People from an external environment instigate organisational communication. This might entail external stakeholders pressuring organisations to reveal information that was not necessarily meant to be shared. However, in order to achieve an exceptional corporate reputation, organisations have to align their employees' performance and actions to the organisation's desired outcomes and reputation (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:155). The latter-referenced authors also explain that aligning all employees with the organisation's desired outcomes involves strategic internal communication within the organisation.

Communication takes place in several directions within an organisation to ensure its effective transmission within the organisation. These directions include the following:

- **Downward communication:** This type of communication is the flow of communication from management to employees. Thus, the person who occupies the highest position has the power to direct communication actions to the lower strata of employees (Barker & Angelopulo,

2006:75; Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 64-65; Erasmus-Kritzinger *et al.*, 2000:49; Rogala & Bialowas, 2016:50).

- **Upward communication:** This type of communication is the flow of communication from employees to management and is often associated with a specific type of feedback from subordinates (Barker & Angelopulo, 2006:75; Erasmus-Kritzinger *et al.*, 2000:49; Rogala & Bialowas, 2016:50).
- **Horizontal communication:** This type of communication is the flow of communication between employees who are at the same organisational level. Communication would usually occur between departments to coordinate and integrate work procedures (Barker & Angelopulo, 2006:75; Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 64-65; Erasmus-Kritzinger *et al.*, 2000:49; Rogala & Bialowas, 2016:50).
- **Diagonal communication:** This type of communication is the flow of communication between people with no direct relation to each other and who are not on the same hierarchical level within the organisation (Barker & Angelopulo, 2006:75; Erasmus-Kritzinger *et al.*, 2000:49; Rogala & Bialowas, 2016:50).

Organisations might differ in terms of how they use organisational communication within their business endeavours. Organisational communication includes messages being created, converted and transmitted through formal or informal networks to achieve enhanced collaboration between staff members by way of written material, and non-verbal or verbal communication (Rogala & Bialowas, 2016:43). Communication methods used for organisational communication include face-to-face communication, emails, meetings, reports and business letters (Rajhans, 2012:81; Spaho, 2011:390). Hence, organisational communication might be of a corporate nature. Sales do not play a big part and the style of communication is generally formal (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:20). However, although sales do not play an enormous role in this form of communication, organisations that do not communicate effectively to educate people will harm the organisation in the long run (Cacciattolo, 2015:80). Managers often make the mistake of following a profit-orientated approach and should instead focus on the effect communication has on the performance of an organisation (Muscalu *et al.*, 2013:75). Successful communication might not be necessary only for individual relationships; it is also an essential trait of a profitable business (Spaho, 2011:390).

Organisational communication is a multidimensional process in which the welfare of an extensive range of internal and external recipients needs to be considered. Thus, implementing a consistent organisational communication approach throughout the organisation might be an exceedingly

challenging task (Rogala & Bialowas, 2016:37). Additionally, if there is an ineffective flow of communication throughout the organisation, organisations will possibly not function effectively. It should therefore be an absolute necessity that organisational communication becomes one of management's priorities (Muscalu *et al.*, 2013:75).

In a broad sense, corporate communication can be considered as managing an organisation's communication through strategically-planned images of a united front and entity (Christensen & Cornelissen, 2011:387). Corporate communication is an essential component of getting the message across to all stakeholder groups. Furthermore it combines the welfare of stakeholders with that of the organisation, to maintain and enhance its corporate reputation (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 91; Shamma, 2012:154). In the corporate industry, corporate communication specialists should use the necessary principles (as discussed above) to achieve an effective strategy for corporate reputation management. This implies that the concept of corporate reputation is examined within the framework of corporate communication and that corporate reputation can be viewed as a strategic asset within corporate communication to aid in achieving a positive reputation in stakeholders' minds (Aula & Mantere, 2008:11,164-165).

In the following section, the focus will be on the corporate reputation constructs and concepts deemed important for this study, because corporate reputation is the motivation for corporate reputation management and measurement.

2.3 Corporate reputation

Building and maintaining a successful corporate reputation has been acknowledged by managers since the 1980s (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:3; Gotsi & Wilson, 2001:99; Kitchen & Laurence, 2003:103; Lammers & Guth, 2013:222). Corporate reputation is now more evident than ever before and its value has increased immensely (Alsop, 2004:21; Barnett & Pollock, 2012:sec. 24-25). As a result, emphasis has been placed on the topic of corporate reputation in many research articles and academic books. It has consequently become a well-established topic in the workplace and academic circles (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013:220; Aula & Heinonen, 2016:4-5). Corporate reputation has not only gained attention, but would also be regarded as important for any governmental, non-profit or commercial organisation (Diermeier, 2018:18; Kitchen & Laurence, 2003:115; Watson & Kitchen, 2008:122). It is thus imperative for organisations to know what constitutes corporate reputation and how it is possible to achieve a good one (Hirsch, 2017:54).

2.3.1 A historical overview of corporate reputation

Corporate reputation has been approached from a variety of academic perspectives and in the context of several academic disciplines (Tischer & Hildebrandt, 2014:1008). The latter include the accounting, economics, marketing, sociology, organisational, strategic and corporate communication views. The differing emphases historically associated with each academic discipline have all contributed to the current understanding of corporate reputation. Thus, an overview of the differing academic perspectives on corporate reputation is presented in the Table 2-1 below:

Table 2-1: Different academic perspectives on corporate reputation

Academic backgrounds	Perspectives
Accounting view	In the accounting view, the emphasis is on investments that help to determine the reputational value of an organisation. Intangible assets such as research and branding are part of these reputational endeavours. The particular focus is on the difference between the reported earnings and the market value (Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997:9-10; Larkin, 2003:41; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:50; Wepener, 2014:31).
Economic view	The economist's viewpoint involves signals or attributes that facilitate and illustrate an organisation's presumed behaviour to external stakeholders. They regard the value and quality of an organisation's product or service as the main elements of reputation. Corporate reputation could thus be seen as an element the organisation can invest in to increase its economic value (Aula & Mantere, 2008:49; Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997:6; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:50; Wepener, 2014:31).
Marketing view	In the marketing view, the focus is on the images formed in stakeholders' minds. The latter might form their opinions based on the interactions they have had with the organisation, or their experiences of its products or services. The primary audience considered in a marketing perspective is the consumers of the product or service (Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997:7; Larkin, 2003:41; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:50; Wepener, 2014:31).
Organisational view	In terms of the organisational view, employees are regarded as valuable internal stakeholders in corporate reputation. Elements such as corporate culture, values and identity guide how the organisation structures its procedures and routines. These procedures and methods guide relationships with key stakeholders and might influence how internal stakeholders view the organisation's corporate reputation. Observers also use this as a type of reputation " <i>sense-making</i> " and managers aid in " <i>sense-giving</i> " (Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997:8;

Academic backgrounds	Perspectives
	Larkin, 2003:41; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:50; Wepener, 2014:31).
Sociological view	The sociological view comprises a focus on the importance of communication and interaction between the organisation and stakeholders. Organisations can influence stakeholders' assessments by means of communication activities. Scholars identify several evaluators who employ a diverse set of criteria in evaluating organisations. Reputation assessments are based on past experiences, standards and the prospects of an organisation within an institutional setting (Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997:9; Larkin, 2003:41; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:50; Wepener, 2014:31).
Strategic view	In terms of the strategic view, it is emphasised that when a good corporate reputation is established it might be difficult to replicate because of the organisation's distinct internal traits, hence providing the organisation with a competitive advantage over others. Corporate reputation and the management thereof could be a strategic resource for organisations. The strategic view also highlights that it takes time to develop a good corporate reputation within stakeholders' minds (Aula & Mantere, 2008:29-30; Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997:7; Larkin, 2003:41; Wepener, 2014:31).
Corporate communication view	In corporate communication, an organisation's individualities aid in the relationship between stakeholders and the organisation. Communication is thus observed between all external and internal stakeholders. Organisations can strategically arrange all communication to suit the needs of all stakeholders (Aula & Mantere, 2008:164-165; Larkin, 2003:41; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:14; Wepener, 2014:31).

As can be seen in Table 2-1 above, corporate reputation takes many forms in the various research disciplines. A variety of perspectives and definitions are consequently provided by scholars. In each of these disciplines, corporate reputation is viewed as a valuable strategic asset that has several benefits for an organisation (Marquina Feldman *et al.*, 2014:55-56; Raithel *et al.*, 2010:399). Each discipline utilises corporate reputation as a distinct type of strategic asset that affects distinct features in the value creation of the organisation. Combining the differing dimensions can aid in establishing the global value of an organisation's corporate reputation (Rindova & Martins, 2012:sec. 45-46). Corporate reputation can thus be seen as a multidimensional construct that can be observed from the perspective of various academic fields, and thus provide academics and corporate citizens with valuable information about an organisation's corporate reputation. However, the focus of this study is specifically the corporate

communication view, since corporate communication is regarded in this study as a strategic communication approach to establishing and maintaining a beneficial corporate reputation in the stakeholders' minds (paragraph 2.2.1) (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 36-37).

The historical overview of corporate reputation constitutes a theoretical background to the viewpoints of corporate reputation from the differing academic perspectives. In the next section, the theory of corporate reputation is explicated in more detail.

2.3.2 Defining the concept of corporate reputation

The definition of corporate reputation has been refined by various scholars over multiple disciplines. Corporate reputation relates to any information about an organisation that affects perceptions about it (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1050; Alniacik *et al.*, 2012:7; Burke, 2011:3; Diermeier, 2018:19). Robinson (2010:40) states that corporate reputation is the true emotional associations that stakeholders make with an organisation. Corporate reputation could also be viewed as people's overall estimation of whether companies are good or bad (Dowling, 2004:20; Dowling & Gardberg, 2012:sec. 58-59). Thus, an organisation's corporate reputation is dependent on the combined perspectives of stakeholders (Remke, 2013:37).

Shared perceptions of an organisation are formed on the basis of its trustworthiness and credibility (Van der Waldt, 2015:104). Thus, if an organisation shows itself to be reliable, it is likely to maintain relationships and inspire positive perceptions for a favourable corporate reputation. In the past, the concept of corporate reputation was seen to relate primarily to one-to-one relationships, but now a network of relationships is considered (Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:9). Thus, the corporate reputation of an organisation is based on the collective interpretations and perceptions of individuals who assess the organisation (Aula & Mantere, 2008:21; Doorley & Garcia, 2015:34; Smudde & Courtright, 2013:408; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:43). Individuals evaluate an organisation on the basis of the type of relationships they have with it, knowledge about its services or products, its appeal and the organisation's manner of doing business (Dowling, 2004:21; Van Riel, 2013:15). Their perceptions can also be influenced by what the media communicates, the organisation's messages and actions, and individuals' experiences with the entity (Robinson, 2010:40). These individual experiences generate differing perceptions among various stakeholder groups, because each individual is concerned with distinct aspects of the organisation (Barnett & Leih, 2018:964; Gray & Balmer, 1998:698; Matuleviciene & Stravinskiene, 2016:217). For this reason, stakeholders generate multiple reputations of the same organisation (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1050; Chun, 2005:94; Dowling, 2016:214).

Corporate reputation is also affected by how an organisation presents itself through communication, actions and imagery (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001:29; Romenti & Illia, 2013:191). It is not just about the external presentation, but also how it projects the nature of its management, culture, individuals and internal systems (Janson, 2014:sec. 45-48; Resnick, 2004:35). Stakeholders set expectations based on an organisation's corporate reputation and, in turn, personally choose whether they want to associate themselves with the company (Dowling, 2004:26). This suggests that there might be a relationship between corporate reputation and a comparison to competitors (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013:220; Kaul & Desai, 2014:266). Thus, the need to protect one's corporate reputation against competitors is crucial to creating a positive image of the organisation in stakeholders' minds. However, research has demonstrated that corporate reputation is not something that is built in a short period; it might take years to develop and can be destroyed in only a few seconds (Benchan, 2008:2; Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 90-91; Diermeier, 2018:18). Nevertheless, the argument stands that a good corporate reputation will always be an intangible asset for an organisation (Fombrun & Low, 2011:22; Van Riel, 2018:4; Watson & Kitchen, 2008:84).

For the purpose of this study and from the current researcher's view, corporate reputation can thus be defined as:

The overall perceptions of the stakeholders of an organisation over a given timeframe. These assessments stem from direct experience of an organisation's products and services (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:17) and interaction with the organisation through diverse communication methods that deliver evidence of the organisation's deeds in relation to those of competitors (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001:29; Varey, 2013:108). Corporate reputation should be regarded as a vital asset for any organisation (Van Riel, 2018:4).

The above theory indicates that corporate reputation remains a valuable asset that requires constant observation. Hence, maintaining strong relationships with stakeholders plays an integral role in upholding an excellent corporate reputation (Fiedler, 2011:127; Govender & Abratt, 2016:243). Therefore, the concept of stakeholder relations is assessed in further detail in the next section.

2.3.3 Stakeholder relations in corporate reputation

Many organisations became aware of the significance of stakeholders in their strategy development during the late 1970s (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:35). The first research on stakeholder relations became well known in 1984, when Freeman (1999:234) suggested that organisations should actively manage relationships with stakeholders to develop organisational strategies.

There has been a substantial universal change in how organisations deal with their relationships with citizens and specific individuals since the concept of corporate reputation was first mooted (Steyn & De Beer, 2012:30). Luoma-Aho and Vos (2010:315-316) argue that this is because there has been a drastic change in how organisations think about stakeholders since new technological ways have been developed for optimal interaction. Moreover, communicating with stakeholders has moved into a new phase of uncontrollability, which stems from stakeholders having 24-hour access to information (Nielsen, 2016:1).

Most companies are evaluated by numerous stakeholders (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 35). Davies *et al.* (2003:sec. 76-77) explain that although the emphasis is placed on customers, they are not the only group that should be considered. They highlight the fact that stakeholders refer to "*any individuals or groups who may benefit from or be harmed by the actions of the organisation*" (Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 76). Stakeholders are thus any citizens who influence or are influenced by an organisation's behaviour (Dowling, 2016:214; Freeman *et al.*, 2010:26). The part stakeholders play, or the stake they have in the company, can be seen as any share, significance or influence related to the organisation (Luoma-Aho & Vos, 2010:317). The most crucial aspect organisations have to take into account is to identify stakeholders who play a fundamental role in enabling them to achieve their organisational objectives (Nielsen, 2016:4). The research thus far specifies that an organisation's corporate reputation is dependent on the combined perspectives of stakeholders (Remke, 2013:37).

Organisations represent themselves to various stakeholders, including employees, managers, customers, the media, the government, investors, suppliers, the community and financial experts (Fiedler, 2011:127; Page & Fearn, 2005:305; Van Heerden, 2019b:sec. 234). However, some researchers classify stakeholders into primary and secondary groups (Freeman *et al.*, 2010; Goldring, 2015; Govender & Abratt, 2016). Primary stakeholders are perceived as employees, consumers, society, investors and suppliers (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:24; Goldring, 2015:785). Primary stakeholders could also include the government, which is responsible for infrastructure and taxes (Govender & Abratt, 2016:238). Secondary stakeholders, on the other hand, refer to competitors, media, groups with unique interests, industry trade groups and advocacy groups (Goldring, 2015:785; Govender & Abratt, 2016:238). Secondary stakeholders might often influence the organisation's primary stakeholders (Freeman *et al.*, 2010:26).

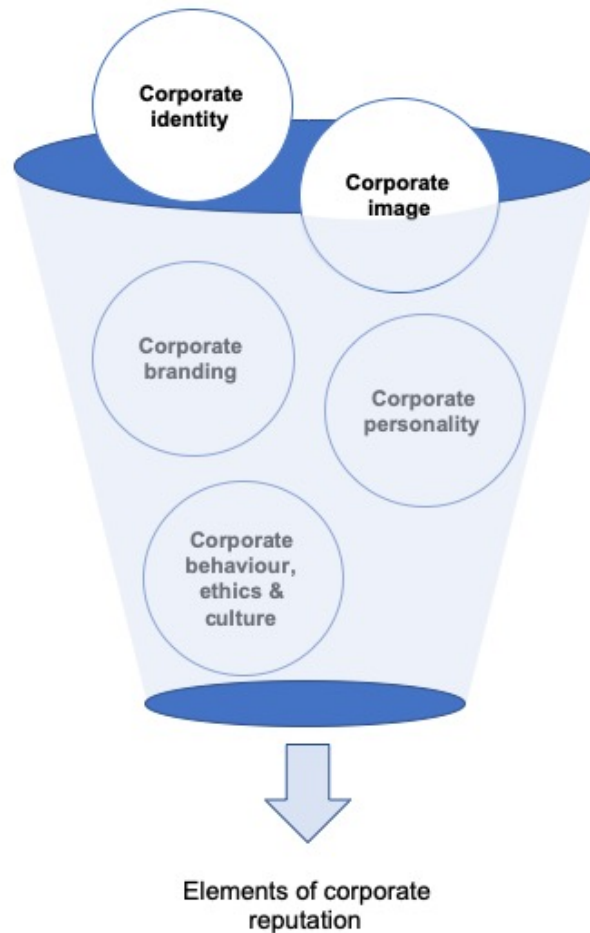
Organisations have a plethora of stakeholders and it is essential to treat each stakeholder group in an equal manner to make it attractive to all stakeholders (Mcmillan, 2011:164). It is therefore essential for management to single out each set of stakeholders that has an impact on the organisation (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 96; Govender & Abratt, 2016:244). This determination enables the company to communicate specific information to each stakeholder group, which in

turn makes it possible for stakeholders to feel that their needs are being met, thus enhancing relationships with stakeholders. Good relationships can also be achieved by the CEO anticipating future problems with the organisation's essential stakeholders and taking steps to counter such difficulties (Balmer, 2017:1482; Hodges, 2011:183). If there is little respect and trust between the organisation and stakeholders, the latter will be hesitant to support the business (Robinson, 2010:40). What has been noted overall is that establishments that have a relationship of trust with their stakeholders are among those with the strongest corporate reputations.

In short, stakeholder relations contribute to determining the corporate reputation of an organisation. All stakeholders should be identified and their needs met to create a strong corporate reputation. This means that every organisation has to pay attention to stakeholders to develop and nurture its corporate reputation (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 91; Stewart, 2006:480). Managing relationships with stakeholders with a view to establishing and manage an organisations' corporate reputation requires a multi-pronged approach, in which it is necessary to take several fundamental elements of corporate reputation into account. Therefore, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation are described in the next section.

2.3.4 Fundamental elements of corporate reputation

The fundamental elements of corporate reputation are corporate identity, image, branding, personality and corporate behaviour, ethics and culture. In fact, corporate reputation is often considered to be synonymous with identity and image (Stacks *et al.*, 2013:563). As noted above, the corporate image in stakeholders' minds is created through their involvement with the corporate brand (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1050). Van Riel and Fombrun (2007:40) view image and brand as vital components that affect stakeholders' assessments of an organisation's corporate reputation. Against this backdrop, communication is seen as a combining and coordinating element for many intangible resources because it serves as a connection between factors such as image, identity and reputation (Biraghi & Gambetti, 2015:268). The importance of aligning an organisation's corporate identity, image, brand, personality and behaviour, ethics and culture through communication might be essential for any organisation's reputation.



Source: Author's own interpretation

Figure 2-3: The fundamental elements of corporate reputation

The above five fundamental elements are analysed and reviewed below due to their vast impact on corporate reputation.

2.3.4.1 Corporate identity

Corporate identity became a contributing factor in the past 20 years after various specialists and academics started noticing this concept as an essential organisational element (Balmer, 2017:1473; Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006:847). In 1997, Van Riel and Balmer (1997:352) already predicted that corporate identity would become an important consideration in organisations worldwide. Similarly, Van Riel and Fombrun (2007:61) are renowned for including corporate identity in their research and portraying it as an essential aspect of both reputation management and corporate communication. Corporate identity can be discerned in an accurate representation of a company (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:9; Van der Waladt, 2015:106). As such, corporate identity is frequently seen as the visual components utilised to promote the image of an organisation. However, these images should not merely confirm what the organisation is, but

portray its true identity and simultaneously influence stakeholders' perceptions of the business (Nagyová *et al.*, 2017:88). Corporate identity not only represents the company, but also serves as a resource that could be applied strategically to target employees in order to achieve loyalty, retain employees and attract potential employees (Bravo *et al.*, 2017:3; Vella & Melewar, 2008:4). Identity, in this sense, is about identifying and understanding the values of the organisation (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:256). Researchers have found that a strong identity also places an organisation's products and services apart from those of its competitors, helps it to secure future investments, serves as a motivation for its employees and establishes the organisation's place in the market (Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006:846).

Van Riel and Fombrun (2007:68) classify corporate identity into three categories, namely communication, behaviour and symbolism. Firstly, they argue that organisations' identities are revealed through verbal, communicated messages and signals; secondly the behaviour of an organisation and its initiatives reveal its specific identity to stakeholders and, thirdly, identity is also illustrated by means of audible and graphical symbols that serve as a means of identification (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:68). Furthermore, having a strong identity drives communication, behaviour and performance within the organisation (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:12). An organisation's corporate identity is therefore reflected through communication to the outside world (Tench *et al.*, 2017:45). Thus corporate identity is not based only on the internal values and performance of the organisation (Da Camara, 2011:48), but can also be interpreted by means of visual communication and symbols (Da Camara, 2011:48; Kaul & Desai, 2014:9). The latter are elements such as the organisation's slogan, logo, corporate colours and any other graphic elements (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1051; Alessandri, 2013:133; Van den Bosch *et al.*, 2005:108), also known as an organisation's visual or "*symbolic identity*" (Van der Waldt, 2015:106). In this regard, Van der Waldt (2015:106) explains that symbols are used as a graphic representation of identity. Thus, organisations generate detailed images that contribute to its corporate reputation over time.

Furthermore, the corporate identity of an organisation is connected to corporate reputation (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:101). An organisation might have several reputations, both internally and externally (Alniacik *et al.*, 2012:7; Gotsi & Wilson, 2001:28; Van der Waldt, 2015:106). Thus, the crucial task is to manage its corporate identity with a view to obtaining a positive reputation in the eyes of both external and internal stakeholders (Arendt & Brettel, 2010:1474; Vella & Melewar, 2008:11). The objective would be to influence and educate stakeholders on the organisation's identity, since the organisation's identity is what makes its brand exclusive (Glanfield *et al.*, 2017:153-154; Harris & De Chernatony, 2001:442). Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006:846)

note that most organisations seek to establish a noticeable and distinguishable identity that also reveals its culture and beliefs (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1053).

Additionally, the management of corporate identity involves constant observation. Considering that corporate identities are not absolute and might evolve, it is vital that the management thereof is handled by the senior directors (Balmer, 2017:1474-1475). If corporate identity is successfully managed, an organisation's image will automatically be seen as good (Van der Waldt, 2015:107; Van Heerden, 2019b:sec. 243).

2.3.4.2 Corporate image

The relationship between corporate image and corporate reputation became a prominent field of study only in 2011 (Da Camara, 2011:47). However, Gray and Balmer (1998:697) had already made the critical connection between image and reputation, and how stakeholders' views affected an organisation in 1998. An enormous amount of organisational research has since been dedicated to the correspondence and relations between reputation and image (Varey, 2013:104). Skinner *et al.* (2013:253) consider image to be an authentic impression reflected through all corporate communications. Accordingly, organisations should understand that there is a connection between corporate reputation, identity and image, as demonstrated by Olmedo-Cifuentes and Martínez-León (2014:224-225). Reputation and image are often seen as similar, but they are, in fact, two distinct elements. Reputation is a result of and represents an entity in itself, whereas an image is distinct from the entity itself; it is rather an external projection of the entity (Olmedo-Cifuentes & Martínez-León, 2014:225-226; Stewart, 2006:484). In other words, corporate image acts as a mirror that reflects the actual identity of an organisation (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:26).

Van der Waldt (2015:108) explains that "*corporate image refers to the set of beliefs, ideas, and impressions stakeholders hold about an organisation*". It is also the stakeholders' combined assessment of an organisation's identity (Arendt & Brettel, 2010:1481; Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006:848). Organisations therefore purposely send signals to external stakeholders to influence stakeholders' opinions about the organisation (Da Camara, 2011:49; Van Heerden, 2019b:sec. 244). Stakeholders might also judge an organisation based on its principles, involvement, understanding, viewpoints, imitations and associations (Vella & Melewar, 2008:11). These observations and judgments contribute to shaping the image of an organisation. If the organisation makes a connection with individuals, this image might change over time, provided that the organisation does not just reach out to its stakeholders once but interacts with them several times (Van der Waldt, 2015:107). Observing external stakeholders and

comprehending corporate image are strategic elements that lead any organisation towards success (Sequeira *et al.*, 2015:42).

An organisation that manages its image well, together with its corporate reputation, can experience an escalation in market shares and decrease various risks (Ponzi *et al.*, 2011:27; Vella & Melewar, 2008:11). Strategies for managing corporate reputation might involve multiple attempts to persuade stakeholders to accept the preferred image of the organisation; attempting to comprehend the views of each other through discussions; and cooperating by suggesting solutions that will satisfy the needs of both parties (Harquail, 2011:246). An emotional bond will develop with an organisation if it is presented as appealing and positive, which will result in a sense that it is superior to its competitors (Varey, 2013:107). Continuously offering a distinct and visible image to stakeholders will help organisations to succeed in creating a superior reputation (Stacks *et al.*, 2013:569; Van Heerden, 2019b:sec. 244). In short, an organisation's image supports its corporate reputation and is revealed through overall corporate communication outcomes (Balmer, 2017:1484; Vella & Melewar, 2008:11).

Stakeholders' viewpoints on corporate reputation and image exist in their minds, which can be challenging to manage (Ihlen, 2013:250). The manner in which the organisation projects its image through symbols will determine whether people regard it as positive or negative (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:26). A negative image could harm the organisation by causing it to lose potential investors and consumers (Benoit, 2013:213). Negative images, in turn, might be due to inadequate communication, that is, a failure by an organisation to project a favourable image of itself (Varey, 2013:115). Thus, inadequate communication can harm an organisation's corporate image and corporate reputation (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:3). For a positive organisational image to be projected into stakeholders' minds, several interactions have to occur with the organisation (Van der Waldt, 2015:107). These interactions are achieved by developing a corporate image programme to create loyalty, awareness and a strong corporate reputation (Van Heerden, 2019b:sec. 244). Planned organisational images are created through corporate communication and are aimed at a specific stakeholder target group (Backhaus, 2011:117). Balmer (2017:1484) argues that the outcome of all communication is that it builds a corporate reputation and corporate image. Moreover, if a respectable image is maintained over time, a strong reputation will develop and will, in turn, assist in building the organisation's brand (Van der Waldt, 2015:108).

2.3.4.3 Corporate branding

The topic of corporate branding began to be investigated by scholars in communication, marketing and management approximately 30 years ago, and over the years became a well-researched

subject in the academic world (Biraghi & Gambetti, 2015:262). However, it has only been associated with corporate reputation for the past 15 years (Huber, 2018:2). Branding refers to the mental image formed in stakeholders' minds (Beger, 2018:507; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:39). It is mediated to all stakeholders by means of the presentation of a company's products or services (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1052; Watson & Kitchen, 2008:125); that is, the symbols, identity and corporate name that connect a set of products to a specific organisation (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 122-123; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:107). A brand should constitute a symbol that provides on expectations, a guarantee, self-assurance and reliability (Sequeira *et al.*, 2015:36).

Biraghi and Gambetti (2015:271) assert that a corporate brand serves as a connection between customers and employees. Hence, a corporate brand serves as a bridge between an organisation's identity and its stakeholders, because it comprises images and communicates the organisational identity to all (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1053). Building a strong corporate brand has become a necessity nowadays (Biraghi & Gambetti, 2015:260). As the management of brands has become more sophisticated, the number of personnel tasked with coordinating the processes involved in achieving it has grown, and all of them play a vital role in communicating the brand's emotive value to all the relevant stakeholders (Harris & De Chernatony, 2001:441; Koporcic & Halinen, 2018:403).

One of the essential roles of a brand is to shape stakeholders' outlooks on an organisation (Van der Waldt, 2015:108). Ideally, the corporate brand represents an assurance that the organisation's actions will support and align with the expectations of stakeholders; it should thus enhance an organisation's reputation (Biraghi & Gambetti, 2015:268). Corporate reputation is strongly associated with corporate branding, because building and maintaining a reputation is based on stakeholders' continual evaluations of an organisation's brand (Karmark, 2013:456). A corporate brand plays a fundamental role in developing a corporate reputation; thus it should be targeted, not only at consumers, but at all stakeholders who are involved with the organisation (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1052). The ultimate goal for organisations would be to achieve a positive corporate reputation. Therefore, if organisations can develop a well-defined brand, it will have a positive impact on stakeholders' assessments of its products, which will in turn generate a respectable corporate reputation (Van der Waldt, 2015:108).

Branding is a strategic tool that organisations can use to distinguish themselves from their competitors (Da Camara, 2011:55; Koporcic & Halinen, 2018:400; Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2006:859). Thus, having a sustainable brand requires an emphasis on the unique difference in one's products from those of one's competitors (Sephapo, 2019b:sec. 190). The brand involves associations that stakeholders have with the organisation or product, and stronger brands positively influence their perceptions (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 24). Organisations want to target all

stakeholders in their corporate branding, and thus should also include stakeholders' perceptions of their reputation as an essential aspect of the brand itself (Karmark, 2013:448). As such, the corporate brand represents the image that stakeholders have of the organisation, which is reflected in the organisation's corporate identity, name, logo and additional visual components. A robust, admirable brand establishes a sense of the superiority of the organisation in the minds of its stakeholders and steers them in a direction whereby loyalty is established (Sequeira *et al.*, 2015:36). An organisation's identity and image, which is reflected in its branding is, in turn, shaped by its corporate personality.

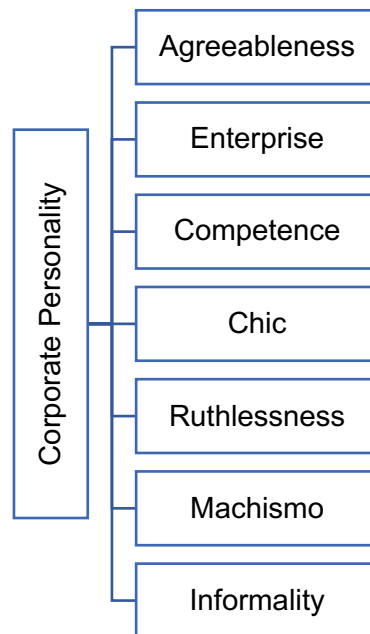
2.3.4.4 Corporate personality

Every organisation has an image or personality, whether regional or international, that helps shape its corporate reputation (Nelson & Kanso, 2008:142). An organisation's identity is inherently shaped and influenced by its corporate personality (Van der Waladt, 2015:109; Van Heerden, 2019b:sec. 244). A corporate personality that is familiar can almost convey the impression of the company being an actual human being, by humanising it in such a way that it is identifiable to others (Rifon *et al.*, 2013:47). Kuenzel and Halliday (2010:169) also found that customers often linked their own personalities to the specific brand personality of the organisation. A corporate personality comprises certain identifiable qualities of an organisation that are revealed through particular characteristics such as honesty and innovativeness (Einwiller, 2013:297).

Corporate personality is made up of certain qualities and attributes that are observed by consumers. They should consequently be aligned with the organisation's core values (Sequeira *et al.*, 2015:43). Corporate personality also represents an organisation and reveals a solid understanding of the core values that the organisation stands for (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 124), such as trustworthiness, which is regarded as one of the most fundamental traits of a corporate personality (Einwiller, 2013:302). Thus, a corporate personality could be seen as a representation of an organisation's values, communication and emotional competence (Varey, 2013:111).

Along with the various reputation measurement instruments found in the literature, personality scales are used as a method to measure corporate personality (Caruana, 2008:203). The first personality research started with Aaker in 1997. It began with research into human personality and evolved into studies on corporate personality. In this context, measuring instruments were developed to measure the brand personality of organisations (Aaker, 1997:354). One of these was the corporate personality scale developed by Davies *et al.* (2001:124-125), who utilised a personality metaphor to reveal how various stakeholders perceived an organisation's reputational aspects, such as image and identity. Moreover, the authors attempted to expand on previous

measures of personality by attempting to obtain the participants' views of corporate identity from an internal perspective and corporate image from an external perspective (Caruana, 2008:203). The focus of their personality scale was on elements such as "agreeableness, enterprise, competence, chic, ruthlessness, machismo and informality", which they called "the seven pillars of corporate personality" (Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 166-167):



Source: Adapted from Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 170

Figure 2-4: A corporate personality scale to assess internal and external views of reputation

The first pillar, agreeableness, relates to whether organisations are socially responsible and dependable; the second pillar, enterprise, involves whether organisations appear to be innovative and exciting; the third pillar, competence, is to do with consumer and employee satisfaction; the fourth pillar, ruthlessness, relates to discouraging aspects such as selfishness, aggressiveness and authoritarianism; the fifth pillar, chic, is about the status of an organisation with respect to elements such as sophistication, prestige and being snobbish; the sixth pillar, machismo, represents masculinity and ruggedness; and the seventh pillar, informality, brings to mind a casual and comfortable atmosphere (Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 169-175).

An essential factor in managing a brand's personality is to ensure that there is consistency in its communication, both between the organisation's staff members and in the messages sent to the public (Harris & De Chernatony, 2001:444; M'zungu *et al.*, 2010:610). As stakeholders become involved with organisations, they start associating with its brand. Stakeholders will start judging the brand on the basis of personality traits and brand promise, with their primary concern being whether their expectations and needs have been met (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1051). Organisations

should, therefore, equip employees with the necessary training, attend to their needs, and communicate the precise personality traits and the standards that each employee should abide by (Keller & Richey, 2006:81). Stakeholders might assess an organisation's personality characteristics in order to decide whether they can rely on the organisation and whether they feel at ease with it (Einwiller, 2013:301). Consequently, a strong corporate personality will establish beneficial relationships with associates, customers, the media, suppliers and the government (Van Heerden, 2019b:sec. 244).

Organisations' personalities, in turn, stem from their organisational values, culture, adequate communication, employee participation and consistency in their images, identities and brands. In the end, assessments made on an organisation's personality attributes might influence how stakeholders evaluate the organisation (Einwiller, 2013:302; Ingenhoff & Fuhrer, 2010:14; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010:174). Stakeholders will also assess an organisation on the basis of its behaviour, ethics and culture, which will be dealt with in the next section.

2.3.4.5 Corporate behaviour, ethics and culture

Corporate ethics, corporate responsibility and corporate behaviour are currently deemed vital, since engaging in moral behaviour in society is considered to be a key strategy to achieve a good reputation (Terec-Vlad & Cucu, 2016:192,197). Corporate ethics and behaviour has a vast influence on the creation of the corporate image of any organisation (Tran *et al.*, 2015:99; Van der Waldt, 2015:110). As such, corporate behaviour relates to ethics and is often exploited publicly (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:49). Similarly, the direction of an organisation's behaviour is guided by its values, methods, norms and culture (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:112). Managers should therefore focus on establishing an ethical corporate culture within the organisation. Corporate culture would be the implied communal ordering of an institution that influences behaviours and attitudes, by which individuals accept, encourage, discourage and reject specific norms within a group (Groysberg *et al.*, 2018:4). Corporate culture also relates to how employees perceive the identity of an organisation and how the other stakeholders perceive its external image (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 135-136). Ethics, on the other hand, relates to how an organisation does business, whether its intentions are good or bad, suitable or unsuitable, and relates to moral values and beliefs (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 24).

Carelessness about corporate behaviour, ethics and culture could harm the corporate reputation, product demand, stock price, productivity, the morale of employees and trust in the executives (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:49). Persuasion from managers plays an essential role in convincing employees to work towards an organisation's goals (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:15), in this case to achieve a strong corporate reputation. Consequently, management needs to encourage

employees, manage strategic coalitions, ensure excellent customer service and promote a strategic integration of communication throughout the organisation (Van der Waldt, 2015:110). Similarly, aligning corporate culture with individual values, desires and demands can have a remarkable amount of power in terms of motivating mutual persistence and making the best use of the capabilities of an organisation (Groysberg *et al.*, 2018:4). As a whole, corporate culture cultivates a “*good spirit*” and good character lies at the core of every great organisation (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:100).

According to Van Riel and Fombrun (2007:57), organisational scholars regard employee's experiences as the root of reputation, and argue that an organisation's culture, identity and relationships influence and shape its business procedures. It is thus vital to make employees aware of the critical part they play in affecting corporate reputation every day (Alsop, 2004:23; Helm, 2011a:657). Employees who project a favourable image to external stakeholders are of immense value to an organisation. Corporate reputation is often measured in terms of overall ethical behaviour. It therefore contributes to a respectable reputation in the stakeholders' minds (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013:223). Additionally, Da Camara (2011:48) asserts that an organisation's performance is directly related to its culture and behaviour. In general, what an organisation stands for and the culture it represents has a significant influence on both the organisation's identity and image (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 124; Nelson & Kanso, 2008:146). Consequently, corporate behaviour, ethics and values could affect what the organisation stands for in stakeholders' minds.

Corporate behaviour, ethics and culture are considered to be interrelated concepts that are vital to an organisation's corporate reputation, because they reveal the organisation's internal values, standards and ethical norms to the public. Consequently, the organisation's image, values and culture should also be aligned to its corporate communication strategies. It is essential for organisations to communicate their values and culture to all stakeholders (Govender & Abratt, 2016:238). The more an organisation is recognised for its transparency and ethical behaviour, the more it is likely to generate trust and approval in stakeholders' minds (Ponzi *et al.*, 2011:7).

Throughout the previous section, corporate reputation and its fundamental elements have been discussed in detail. Consequently, the first specific guiding argument can be specified as follows:

Specific guiding argument 1

Corporate reputation is a multi-disciplinary construct and is seen as stakeholders' overall perceptions of an organisation. Managing corporate reputation should be regarded as an essential component of an organisation's corporate communication strategy. Corporate reputation is built on core fundamental elements such as corporate identity, corporate image, corporate branding, corporate personality and corporate behaviour, ethics and culture, all of which play a vital role in establishing the foundation of corporate reputation.

In the previous section, the fundamental elements that play a significant role in corporate reputation were examined. The following section comprises an evaluation of corporate reputation management as a construct in its own right to highlight the role it plays within an organisation.

2.3.5 Corporate reputation management

This section serves as a guide to the corporate reputation management construct. Corporate reputation management has progressed fast and cannot be ignored by organisations (Robinson, 2010:40). Organisations have to take into account that assumptions are made based on the good or bad behaviours of companies (Dowling, 2008:181; Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:6). Therefore, it is vital that organisations manage their corporate reputations meticulously to ensure that the image they portray is represented accurately and is seen as favourable by all stakeholders.

2.3.5.1 Corporate reputation management: Clarifying the construct

"One thing is certain, as recent business scandals have demonstrated in the sharpest relief: reputations can surely be mismanaged and, in many cases, not managed at all" (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:19).

Reputation is not something that just happens; it stems from good leadership, adequate management, high-quality services and products, increased stakeholder relationships, organisational procedures and excellent communication with proper feedback channels (Liehr-Gobbers & Storck, 2011b:17,19; Watson & Kitchen, 2008:123). Corporate reputation is built on actionable strategies by the organisation. Achieving these results requires persistence and adequate management. Attaining a good corporate reputation is a long-term endeavour that relies heavily on how organisational activities are assessed and perceived by internal and external stakeholders (Derun & Mysaka, 2018:113). On the other hand, management is premised on a body of knowledge regarding how to best coordinate the activities of an enterprise to achieve effectiveness (Chanda, 2018:3). Corporate reputation management, in particular, includes all the participants of the organisation who wish to participate in achieving the desired reputation. They

need to base their decisions on achieving the desired reputation, and balance all stakeholders' needs to develop and preserve a justifiable corporate reputation (Goldring, 2015:785). Corporate reputation could be regarded as a scarce resource and a unique component that differentiates organisations from each other by means of non-tangible goods (Raithel *et al.*, 2010:390). If an organisation wants to succeed in obtaining a good reputation, its managers have to manage it meticulously by performing various activities (Potgieter & Doubell, 2018:136).

Building and maintaining a good corporate reputation is essential, especially in an environment in which building a brand is expensive, customers' loyalty is inconsistent, differentiation from competitors is difficult to maintain and in which the company is constantly scrutinised by stakeholders who want to determine whether the organisation is behaving ethically (Goldring, 2015:784). Abratt and Kleyn (2012:784) argue that the success of a strong corporate reputation stems from top management's behaviour, internal stakeholders and the perceptions and experiences of external stakeholders. If a strong corporate reputation is achieved, stakeholders will be supportive and improved performance will be achieved by the organisation (Robinson, 2010:40). Moreover, trust will be promoted and faith in the organisation will be created (Diermeier, 2018:18; Dowling, 2004:20). However, trust is not fostered only when stakeholders experience high-quality products, services and good communication (Aula & Mantere, 2008:14; Aula & Heinonen, 2016:184; Worcester, 2009:583). Managing corporate reputations is a 24-hour responsibility and specific departments and managers should be designated to perform this task (Alsop, 2004:23; Aula & Heinonen, 2016:138). Varey (2013:108) states that managing corporate reputation is all about respecting and fulfilling the promises it has made to stakeholders.

Management of reputation entails a company specifically aligning its individual actions with its specific stakeholder groups, since stakeholders have diverse views about what is important (Bechan, 2008:6; Robinson, 2010:40). Although actions can be aligned, the majority of successes are due to stakeholders' identification and making sure that they buy into the specific messages or actions of the organisation (Shamma, 2012:161; Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:1). As Balmer (2017:1480) asserts, stakeholders and corporate communication should be prioritised. The latter author emphasises that both these aspects, together with focusing on stakeholder needs, is necessary for organisational survival and success. Similarly, corporate reputation can only be positive if the organisation's directors understand their stakeholders and how they evaluate each dimension of reputation (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1051; Robinson, 2010:41). Van Riel and Baumann (2015:2) highlight this point by emphasising the importance of creating a special bond with stakeholders. They argue that, if this is achieved, the organisation will gain a superior competitive advantage. Cornelissen (2017:sec. 91) agrees that directors should understand that the organisation has to attend to and communicate with a wide range of stakeholders with the purpose

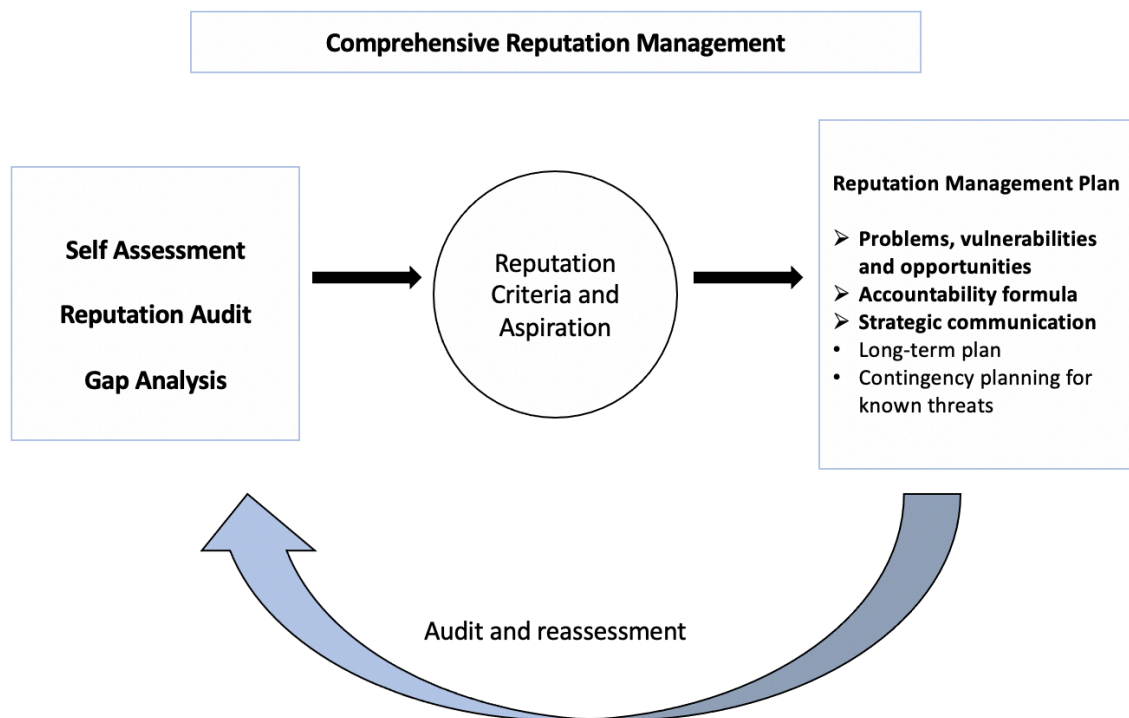
of building and maintaining its corporate reputation. Thus, in order to fulfil all stakeholder needs, specific managers should be appointed to manage corporate reputation. These experts, in turn, need to formulate and apply strategies to increase the company's reputation among stakeholders (Shamma, 2012:164).

Thus, the next section comprises an exploration of corporate reputation management strategies that the organisation should consider managing and build a strong corporate reputation.

2.3.5.2 Corporate reputation management principles

Corporate reputation management principles have been formulated to assist organisations to manage their corporate reputations. Doorley and Garcia (2015:5) advocate a measurable approach to corporate reputation involving the meticulous management, measurement and monitoring of reputation liabilities and assets. They argue that organisations should invest in a strong comprehensive reputation management plan, whereby organisations thoroughly manage, measure and audit corporate reputation as a long-term strategic asset (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20; Potgieter & Doubell, 2018:135). Corporate reputations could be managed with a specific strategy in mind, with a view to achieving important organisational goals (Aula & Mantere, 2008:11; Aula & Heinonen, 2016:70). Corporate reputation goals could be anything from achieving a better reputation to something more specific, such as sustainable growth, attracting highly qualified employees, maintaining profitability, providing better customer service or outperforming competitors.

Doorley and Garcia (2015:20-21) emphasise that organisations should employ a **comprehensive reputation management plan** to ensure a long-term strategy for reviewing, measuring and managing corporate reputation. Their corporate reputation management plan, illustrated in Figure 2-5, will serve as a framework for the principles of corporate reputation management in this section.



Source: Adapted from Doorley & Garcia, 2015:22

Figure 2-5: Comprehensive reputation management

Doorley and Garcia (2015:20-21) explain that organisations should consider comprehensive reputation management by implementing seven major activities:

- Create a customised reputation template of what the organisation wants to achieve, for example to assess its corporate reputation or increase financial performance (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22). Similarly, the organisation should identify concerns and perceptions that can potentially affect the organisation’s corporate reputation in the future (Esenyel, 2020:31). The latter will indicate that the organisation should manage its corporate reputation thoroughly and, in this component, establish an action plan to reach the desired goal.
- A reputation audit of internal and external stakeholders should then be conducted to assess perceptions. Reputational gaps will be identified in the views of the stakeholders (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22). Organisations can measure corporate reputation through audits or assessments by means of surveys, publicity or social media statistics (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:164). Various measurement instruments exist, such as the Fortune’s Most Admirable Companies Survey (Fortune, 2018), the *Reputation Quotient*® (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248), the Corporate personality scale (Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 170) and the *Reptrak*® system (RepTrak, 2019), which will be reviewed in paragraph 2.3.6.

- The organisation should then determine its reputational capital goals, such as to establish the organisation as an industry leader or simply to achieve a better corporate reputation (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22). After the reputation audit is completed, the organisation should focus on strategic decisions. These decisions could relate to what corporate reputation the organisation wants to achieve, what corporate reputation gaps need the most attention, how much capital is needed to achieve the goal and who should be held responsible for implementing it (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:170). Organisations with a vulnerable corporate reputation should be particularly persistent about achieving organisational goals (The Harris Poll, 2018:3).
- An accountability formula can be implemented with respect to the original customised template. That is, if the organisation is struggling to attain a goal, a person or department can be allocated to improve on areas in which there has been negligence (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22). Organisations should have a proactive approach when it comes to managing corporate reputation, serving the expectations of stakeholders, and alleviating risks by carrying through on corporate reputation promises (Reputation Institute, 2019:12). A qualified employee or specific department should be appointed to this task. This will be elaborated on in the subsequent section.
- A reputation management plan should now be formulated to achieve the desired corporate reputation for the organisation. The plan might include summaries of the internal and external audits or measurements completed (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22). The significance of the measurement results is that they assist in narrowing the reputational gaps (Sequeira *et al.*, 2015:54). The summaries could serve as a guide for the organisation, to aid in the implementation of reputational goals and addressing problem areas. This supports the next step, which is to write up a report of the challenges and problematic areas of the organisation (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22), since, the issues raised by stakeholders should be addressed (The Harris Poll, 2018:3). The individual opportunities, goals, and corporate strategies should also be included in the reputation management plan (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22). Managing corporate reputation systematically provides the organisation with an understanding of reputation risks, establishes opportunities to expand its reputational capital and increases its organisational value (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:145). Goals and strategies are often determined to establish what the organisation wants to accomplish. As such, corporate reputation management strategies are put in place to reduce the possibility of risk or problems in the future (Diermeier, 2018:20). In general, the reputation management plan will serve as a short and long-term guideline for the organisation (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22) to manage its corporate reputation effectively.

- An annual follow-up audit and reassessment will be completed following the desired specifications of the reputation management plan (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22). Corporate reputation management demands patience, wisdom and expertise, and has no worth if not evaluated and monitored (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:165,170). Unfortunately, in our growing technological age, damaging news could spread faster than good news within the corporate environment. This necessitates performing regular reputation assessments and developing an action plan for the area that demonstrates weakness (Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:3-4; Resnick, 2004:36). Thus, managing corporate reputation is seen as a recurring process that takes time and requires constant re-examination to obtain new results.
- The last component is a stakeholder overview, whereby the organisation identifies stakeholders and its weaknesses, objectives, expectations and strategies for each of the specified stakeholder groups (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:20-22). Identifying stakeholders is important, since stakeholders form their opinions of the organisation's corporate reputation over time. Organisations focused on four groups in the past, namely consumers, employees, shareholders and officials; however, that era has past and organisations will have to extend their focus to take account of a multitude of stakeholders (Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:8). Correspondingly, the last-referenced authors argue that the more individual contact a company has with its stakeholders, the more it will influence their impressions of the organisation and create a personal experience for them (Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:3). Corporate reputation is thus gradually attained by influencing stakeholder engagement and involvement with the organisation (Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:3).

To better manage corporate reputation, more **specialised employees or departments** need to be responsible for maintaining and building the long-term corporate reputation (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:32-33; Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:5). Long-term strategies, which should be implemented by organisations' communication departments, are also strongly recommended for adequate corporate reputation management (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:32-33). However, a favourable reputation is not just the responsibility of employees; it is also senior management's responsibility to put systems in place in order to maintain a positive image and build a positive reputation (Gray & Balmer, 1998:701; Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:6). Moreover, corporate reputation management needs to be performed outside the corporate communications department and take place at the heart of the company. Managing corporate reputation appropriately means to reduce any irregularities between management, the shareholders and stakeholders (Sánchez & Morales de Vega, 2018:1242). Burke (2011:11) argues that if an organisation does not have an internal reputation manager, it can solicit the services of one of the many external companies that offer

reputation management consulting services to improve and maintain a satisfactory corporate reputation.

One aspect of corporate reputation management is **handling future crises**. If one does occur, the biggest mistake an organisation can make is to try to cover it up (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:125). Regrettably, incidents can happen and scandals can harm an organisation's reputation. When accidents or scandals occur, it might endanger relationships with stakeholders and lead to negative perceptions of the organisation (Rhee & Kim, 2012:467-468). In a reputational emergency, the organisation can lose control because decisions have to be made under severe time constraints; however, if proper corporate reputation management is done in advance, the organisation will be less vulnerable to such incidents (Diermeier, 2018:19). Thus, the importance of implementing a corporate reputation management plan for future emergencies and achieving organisational goals seems necessary as a corporate reputation management strategy.

In the next section, the focus is on the importance of managing corporate reputation to avoid future reputational risks within the organisation.

2.3.5.3 The importance of managing corporate reputation risks

In today's world, an organisation's corporate reputation can be damaged within a few hours or even minutes due to an increase in social media platforms globally (Janson, 2014:sec. 14-16). Even if strategies are changed after an incident, it could take years for the company's reputation to recover. The event could even cause permanent damage (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012:1057). The importance of identifying potential reputational risks is therefore vital. Reputational risk can be seen as an internal or external risk that could harm the organisation's reputation through a single action (Janson, 2014:sec. 20-22). In effect, the weak points of an organisation can impact the stronger areas of the organisation (Shamma, 2012:154).

A decent reputation is often damaged due to a lack of skills or hardships (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013:221). The consequence could be that stakeholders lose their trust, respect and appreciation for the organisation. Losing stakeholders, in turn, can stand in the way of achieving continued organisational success (Robinson, 2010:41). Hence, dealing fairly with all stakeholders might be challenging and being able to fulfil the needs of every stakeholder might be impossible, but organisations should tolerate criticism, whether truthful or not (Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 91-92; Steyn & De Beer, 2012:38). Aula and Heinonen (2016:111) refer to this as relationship management.

In some cases, corporate reputations are highlighted only once endangered. Some stakeholders might not know about the organisation and only learn about it when negative incidents occur.

They then learn about it from others and the negative media reports (Barnett & Leih, 2018:963; Helm, 2011b:11; Mahon, 2002:431). The media, in this case, is of particular concern for corporate reputation because of its versatility as a global medium of communication (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:30; Davies & Miles, 1998:21; Szwajca, 2017:161). However, organisations must consider where the criticism comes, from since the media is known for its tendency to sensationalise issues (Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 91-92). On the other hand, although the media is a significant resource for providing information about an organisation's corporate reputation, the experience stakeholders have with the company can also influence their perception (Burke *et al.*, 2011:50). Janson (2014:sec. 22-23) explains that it is therefore not just the media that should be monitored for reputation hazards; organisations should also seek to attain profound knowledge of criticism, consumer satisfaction, competitors and employees' views. In addition, organisations should be aware of reputation threats in the industry.

A company with a strong corporate reputation might suffer less reputational damage than its lesser-known counterparts. On the other hand, a superior reputation creates above average expectations and, consequently has higher reputation risks (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:159). Superior reputations are often linked to larger organisations and stakeholders tend to have more knowledge about these companies (Raithel *et al.*, 2010:397), which also makes them particularly susceptible to reputation risks. The repair process following corporate reputation damage is imperative; however, if the organisation responds inappropriately after the event, it can damage the organisation further and result in further negative stakeholder perceptions (Rhee & Kim, 2012:467-468). Corporate reputation failure generates a loss of stakeholders' emotional relationship with the organisation (Robinson, 2010:41) and should, therefore, be responded to promptly (Burke, 2011:23). This is why Doorley and Garcia (2015:5) assert that it is imperative to foster a strong corporate reputation; because it will enable the organisation to withstand threats to its reputation.

In conclusion, organisations that suffer reputational risk might struggle to restore their images. However, frequent measurement, regular communication and robust management tools can enable an organisation to prevent a crisis (Diermeier, 2018:18).

In general, corporate reputation management should be included within an organisation's values and corporate culture, because it could assist the organisation to achieve its desired goals.

Having examined corporate reputation management, the second specific guiding argument is formulated as follows:

Specific guiding argument 2

Corporate reputation management involves the organisation aligning its strategic goals with the expectations of stakeholders. Corporate reputation management establishes and maintains an organisation's corporate reputation by attracting beneficial resources and steering the organisation in the direction of the goals it wants to achieve. Corporate reputation management is a long-term activity, whereby specific principles should be applied as part of a strategic management function implemented by a specific department or individual within the organisation. Orange River Cellars should manage its corporate reputation to improve on overall organisational performance.

However, implementing corporate reputation management has no worth if it is not evaluated and monitored (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:170). In fact, the use of a suitable corporate reputation measurement instrument is one of the most important steps in managing corporate reputation (Puncheva-Michelotti & Michelotti, 2010:250). The outcomes of these assessments might in turn help an organisation to perform better and improve its corporate reputation. Thus, in the next section, the focus is on corporate reputation measurement in general and the measurement instrument employed in this study.

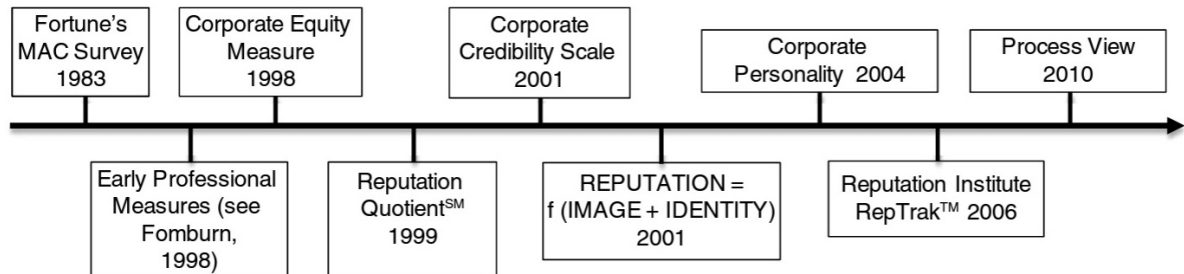
2.3.6 Corporate reputation measurement

Researchers and academics have taken a great deal of interest in the measurement of corporate reputation (Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:3; Helm & Klode, 2011:100; Ponzi *et al.*, 2011:15; Sarstedt *et al.*, 2013:329; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:207). Furthermore, respected establishments and academic scholars have made a concerted effort to create corporate reputation measurement instruments that accommodate all the dimensions of corporate reputation (Olmedo-Cifuentes & Martínez-León, 2012:891; Ponzi *et al.*, 2011:17). Corporate reputation measurement is essential for an organisation, because organisations should know the perceptions stakeholders have about them and be familiar with how they judge and feel about the organisation's reputation (Reputation Institute, 2018). However, it seems impossible to gather all the data about every relevant corporate reputation occurrence and measure the direct impact on the value of the organisation (Raithel *et al.*, 2010:390).

The Reputation Institute started a global initiative in 1998 to interpret and measure the various aspects of corporate reputation (Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:4). The focus is on gathering information on the images in stakeholders' minds with the primary purpose of evaluating individuals' perceptions of the organisation (Araci, 2015:110; Pirez & Trez, 2018:59; Puncheva-Michelotti & Michelotti, 2010:250; Van Riel, 1997:296; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:208). Several methods and

approaches have been developed over time to measure corporate reputation. These range from comparisons to assessments and financially-oriented approaches (Sequeira *et al.*, 2015:42). Additional methods to aid in measuring corporate reputation involve surveys, opinion polls, interviews and focus groups (Esenyel, 2020:31). However, the most popular measurement instruments involve eliciting the perceptions and feelings of stakeholders about the various dimensions of corporate reputation by means of surveys (Helm, 2011b:11).

Among the most familiar measurement instruments noted in the literature are the *Fortune's Most Admirable Companies Survey* (Fortune, 2018), *The Reputation Quotient®* (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248), the *Corporate personality scale* (Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 170) and *Reprtrak® system* (RepTrak, 2019). Most of these measurement instruments are focused on concepts such as openness and transparency, reliability, customer orientation, financial performance, attitude towards competitors, market leadership, quality of products and services, credibility, ethical behaviour and market leadership (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013:223). The abovementioned concepts provide organisations with a global reputation score and influence how both internal and external stakeholders view them (Barnett & Leih, 2018:964). Figure 2-6 shows the various corporate reputation measurement instruments that were developed over a specific time frame.



Source: Adapted from Stacks *et al.*, 2013:564

Figure 2-6: Corporate reputation measurement timeline

As seen in Figure 2-6, several measurement rankings have been developed over the years. Measurement rankings are among the highly recognised measures of corporate reputation. They are often made public by the media (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2017:316). Measurement can take the form of a single- or multiple-item approach. However, a far larger number of measurement instruments have been developed using a multi-faceted approach (Shamma, 2012:163). Conventional corporate reputation measurement instruments are focused on eliciting the perceptions of stakeholders but, unfortunately, these perceptions cannot be linked to stakeholders' intended behaviour or actions (Puncheva-Michelotti & Michelotti, 2010:252).

However, the measurement of corporate reputation has progressed and now provides all the necessary tools for businesses and academics (Dowling & Gardberg, 2012:sec. 56).

Corporate reputation measurement could thus be seen as defining a variety of reputation concepts in measurable components and testing variables through the application of specific reputation instruments. The most popular measurement instruments are described in the next section.

2.3.6.1 Measurement instruments

As mentioned above, various corporate reputation measurement instruments have been developed over the years. The following ones are the most commonly used. The *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument, which was utilised in this study, will be described last and in detail.

2.3.6.1.1 Most Admired Companies in America

The Most Admired Companies in America (AMAC) measurement instrument is widely used in academic research. The AMAC results were first published in the well-known *Fortune* business magazine (Araci, 2015:107; Derun & Mysaka, 2018:114; Dowling, 2016:207; Wepener, 2014:10). The idea of corporate reputation has gained much attention since *Fortune's* initiative in 1982 (Ponzi *et al.*, 2011:17; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:41). *Fortune* magazine's AMAC subsequently became one of the most frequent standardised quantitative measurement approaches in the corporate reputation field (Helm & Klode, 2011:104). Other reputation rankings began to be published soon thereafter, in 1988, such as in *US Business Schools* and *Business Week* (Dowling & Gardberg, 2012:sec. 66; Trotta & Cavallaro, 2012:23). Today such rankings are published annually by leading publications *Forbes* and *Fortune* (Cheng *et al.*, 2017:394; Dowling, 2016:216). Other smaller rankings also appeared in *Asian Business*, *Financial Times* and *Manager Magazine*, which were all spawned by *Fortune's* AMAC, which was seen as one of the most noticeable reputation evaluations at that time (Gardberg & Fombrun, 2002:305; Stacks *et al.*, 2013:566).

Since the late 1990s, the AMAC market has expanded to 13 other countries and 24 trades (Trotta & Cavallaro, 2012:23). The *Fortune's* AMAC ranking was determined utilising quantitative measures using a survey that targeted market analysts and business directors in the US (Cheng *et al.*, 2017:379; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:41). The AMAC sample comprised business directors, external directors and financial specialists, who completed surveys based on nine principles, namely "*innovation, quality of management, long-term investment value, social responsibility, people management, quality of products, financial soundness, use of corporate assets and global*

competitiveness", from which a total score was determined for an organisation's corporate reputation (Barnett & Leih, 2018:967; Dowling & Gardberg, 2012:sec. 67; Schreiber, 2011; Trotta & Cavallaro, 2012:23). The respondents rated the attributes of each company by providing a score from zero (indicating poor), to 10 (indicating excellent) and at the end an overall score was disclosed (Davies, 2011:52).

Fortune has collaborated with Korn Ferry, a consultant, since 1997, to help conduct research for the World's Most Admired Companies list and completed the final selection by taking the following steps (Fortune, 2018):

- The research was initially based on 1,000 large organisations, ranked by an income of \$10 billion or more.
- Executives from the organisations carefully examined each organisation and narrowed them down to 680 organisations in 29 countries.
- The most esteemed organisations in that list, which represented a variety of industries, were carefully chosen and participants were selected from the 680 organisations to assist in determining the final top 50.
- The final top 10 organisations were then verified by approximately 3,900 directors, managers and analysts who had participated in the original industry survey.
- The participants chose from a list of the previous year's top 25% organisations and organisations that were in the top 20% in the current year's list.

Once the assessments were completed, a final reputation score was revealed for each organisation and published by *Fortune*. Although the measurement instrument used for *Fortune's Most Admired Companies* list is regarded as one of the most esteemed measures (Goldring, 2015:784), it is believed that the AMAC is recognised only on the basis of financial soundness and the nine principles mentioned above (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 191; Laskin, 2013:377). The main criticism of the AMAC is that it was designed to elicit only the views of those who are regarded as senior management; it does not account for the views of stakeholders who play a significant role in the business environment, mainly the customers (Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 86; Raithel *et al.*, 2010:391; Stacks *et al.*, 2013:566). Nevertheless, the AMAC is a reputable measurement instrument that has been used for many years to provide reliable corporate reputation information for practitioners in the industry (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:246-247).

2.3.6.1.2 Reputation Institute's *RepTrak*®

The Reputation Institute's *RepTrak*® measurement instrument is a simple corporate reputation instrument that quantifies stakeholders' emotions (Ponzi *et al.*, 2011:16; Reputation Institute, 2019; Rifon *et al.*, 2013:41). The Reputation Institute was established in 1997 and performs yearly studies on corporate brands and corporate reputations (Sadlovska, 2015:2). Since 1999, the Reputation Institute has invested in further reputation dimension research. It developed the *RepTrak*® instrument to manage corporate reputation in relation to a wide variety of stakeholders (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:254,282). Fombrun and his companions reviewed the *Reputation Quotient*® and generated a modernised version named *RepTrak*® (Dowling, 2016:216), which was finalised in 2006. It offers organisations a diagnostic measurement instrument to track and measure the perceptions of stakeholders (Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:4). The Reputation Institute conducts research in more than 30 countries and announces the outcomes of the *RepTrak*® instrument once a year (Trotta & Cavallaro, 2012:24). This particular measurement instrument's main focus is the feelings of stakeholders. It measures respect, good impressions, trust and their degree of overall admiration for an organisation (Janson, 2014:sec. 152-153).

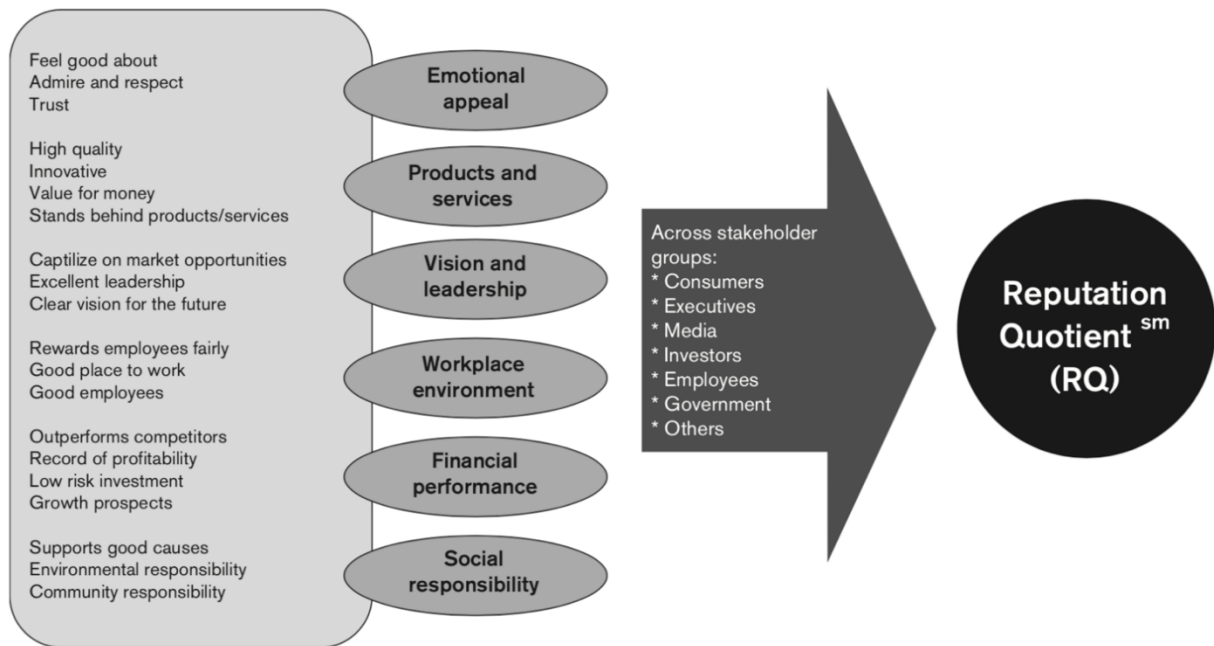
The *RepTrak*® instrument was grounded in the concepts of the *Reputation Quotient*® (Helm & Klode, 2011:105). The institute measures an organisation's global reputation by using the *RepTrak*® Pulse to evaluate stakeholders' emotional connection in relation to distinct dimensions and elements (Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:4). The extensive *RepTrak*® instrument has 23 elements within seven dimensions, namely "*products and services, innovation, performance, governance, workplace, leadership and citizenship*" (Dowling, 2016:216; Reputation Institute, 2018; Sadlovska, 2015:5; Trotta & Cavallaro, 2012:24; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:282). These seven dimensions refer to whether the organisations' products and services are admirable and whether it strives for innovation, is an attractive company to work for, conducts its work in an ethical manner, demonstrates corporate responsibility, has a reputation of excellent leadership and is financially sound (Kliger, 2014:2; Mirvis, 2011:94; Reputation Institute, 2018). The distinct dimensions each have a differing significance in terms of their weights in relation to each specific trade (Sadlovska, 2015:5). The *RepTrak*® instrument assesses the stakeholders' feelings and levels of trust, appreciation and general impression of the organisation via an online survey (Trotta & Cavallaro, 2012:24). The Reputation Institute follows the storyline of organisations and tracks the perceptions of various stakeholders digitally. It thus helps organisations to use reputation to its fullest capacity (Reputation Institute, 2018).

The *RepTrak*® instrument is a universal measurement instrument (Dowling & Gardberg, 2012:sec. 68-69). Organisations that utilise it can use the analytical information generated in the

various dimensions to attend to the revealed weaknesses and strengths (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:282). However, Nielsen (2016:6) argues that organisations often battle to use the information to formulate action plans within the organisation. Ideally, corporate reputation measurement should serve as an objective indicator to evaluate how the organisation should conduct its business within a society (Van Riel, 2018:20). In essence, the *RepTrak*® instrument provides organisations with measurements of the strengths and weaknesses of a variety of reputation drivers to assist in the management of the organisation by providing the information needed to formulate successful action plans (Hirsch, 2017:55; Nielsen, 2016:9). The *RepTrak*® instrument is not suitable for this study since the institute uses the *RepTrak*® Pulse as a paid medium to continually measure corporate reputation on a digital basis. Therefore, the *Reputation Quotient*® is a more appropriate option to measure Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation as a once-off measurement.

2.3.6.1.3 The Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*®

The most favoured measurement instrument is the *Reputation Quotient*® that was developed by Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel (Laskin, 2013:377; Shamma, 2012:163). Numerous measurement instruments soon followed that were grounded in the theory that underpinned this instrument (Shamma, 2012:163). The *Reputation Quotient*® was developed between 1999 and 2005 as an initiative of Fombrun and research company Harris Interactive in New York (Davies, 2011:53; Stacks *et al.*, 2013:568; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248). Since then, Fombrun and the Harris Interactive firm have used the corporate reputation measurement instrument in 26 countries (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248). The *Reputation Quotient*® has also been used widely in academic research. The instrument has also been offered to multiple organisations for corporate reputation measurement (Dowling, 2016:215). The *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes identified by Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel are illustrated in the subsequent figure (Figure 2-7).



Source: Adapted from Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249

Figure 2-7: The six dimensions and 20 attributes of the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's Reputation Quotient®

The *Reputation Quotient*® is a measurement instrument used to determine the corporate reputation of an organisation. The Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) has 20 attributes in six dimensions. The dimensions are “*emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, social responsibility and financial performance*” (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:13; Dowling, 2016:215; Hannington, 2004:8-9; Kanto *et al.*, 2016:411; Sarstedt *et al.*, 2013:331; The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Trotta & Cavallaro, 2012:24; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248). Each dimension represents several factors that stakeholders assess in relation to a specific organisation. The 20 attributes of the *Reputation Quotient*® were gathered mainly from existing measurement rankings, reputation literature and image narratives (Davies, 2011:53). The factors include whether: stakeholders can trust and admire the organisation; the organisations' products and services are of high value; the organisation demonstrates good leadership; it performs decent environmental work and rewards employees fairly; it supports good causes; and is a profitable and low-risk investment (Hannington, 2004:8-9; The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249). The rating for each measurement within its various dimensions is added up to achieve a score out of a 100 for an organisation (Dowling & Gardberg, 2012:sec. 68). Thus, the final reputation score is determined by combining the scores for the various dimensions (Stacks *et al.*, 2013:568; The Harris Poll, 2018:5).

The dimensions and attributes can be explained in-depth as follows:

- **Emotional appeal**

The emotional appeal dimension involves stakeholders feeling good about the organisation, and admiring, respecting and trusting the organisation (Fombrun *et al.*, 2000:253; The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249). Emotional appeal plays a significant role in the formation of stakeholders' perceptions, since the general public as a stakeholder would have fewer facts and rely on their feelings about the organisation (Raithel *et al.*, 2010:397). Aula and Heinonen (2016:16) believe that emotional appeal might be the most critical factor an organisation should focus on because stakeholders' emotions ultimately shape an excellent corporate reputation (Fombrun & Low, 2011:20; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010:169).

Emotional traits within corporate reputation might also differentiate organisations' competitiveness in various industries and markets (Raithel *et al.*, 2010:397). As noted above, organisations will gain a competitive advantage if a strong emotional bond is formed with stakeholders (Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:3). In summary, emotional factors are considered important in establishing an organisation's image in stakeholders' minds. Without emotions, stakeholders will not be able to form a connection with the organisation (Tran *et al.*, 2015:91).

- **Products and services**

The products and services of an organisation comprise one of the main dimensions used to determine corporate reputation (Liehr-Gobbers & Storck, 2011a:29). Stakeholders might perceive the organisation's products and services as being of high quality, innovative and/or good value for money. They also take note of whether the organisation is supportive and if it stands behind its products and/or services (Fombrun *et al.*, 2000:253; The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249). According to Hornby (2015:1188, 1368), a product refers to "*a thing that is grown or produced, usually for sale*", whereas a service is "*a system that provides something that the public needs, organised by the government or a private company*". Overall, the organisation's main purpose should be to provide exceptional products and services to stakeholders. The organisation's corporate reputation serves as an indicator of the quality of the products and services it provides (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 120).

Direct experience with the organisation's products and services helps to shape stakeholders' perceptions and thus assists in the formation of corporate reputation (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:17). However, the various stakeholders might have differing views on the products and services (Guru *et al.*, 2013:138). Nevertheless, an organisation with a good corporate reputation can improve perceptions by offering quality products or services at a price that the consumer deems good value for money (Esterhuizen & Van Rooyen, 2006:469; Marquina Feldman *et al.*, 2014:56). Similarly, organisations that are directly linked to innovation and adapt to change will gain more admiration from stakeholders (Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:6).

Innovation could set the organisation apart from others, hence gaining an enhanced corporate reputation. In general, the organisation should keep in mind that stakeholders need information about products and services, and that they cannot be transferred or sold without utilising proper corporate communication channels (Rensburg, 2019:sec. 19).

- **Vision and leadership**

Vision and leadership play a tremendous role in terms of the capabilities of the organisation's leaders to identify market opportunities and thus gain an advantage for the future (Gabbioneta *et al.*, 2011:218). The dimension of vision and leadership relates to an organisation capitalising on market opportunities by taking advantage of new opportunities, demonstrating excellent leadership abilities and having a clear vision for the future (Fombrun *et al.*, 2000:253; The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249). Excellent leadership and vision for the future is an essential dimension to measure when assessing corporate reputation (Araci, 2015:109), since the quality of an organisation's leadership can have a direct influence on its corporate reputation (Shamma, 2012:158). However, leadership consists of more than the qualities, capabilities, and behaviour of the leader; it also involves communication with followers, its influence in and how it is influenced by groups other organisations and the community in which they exist (De Lange, 2015:136).

The degree to which the organisation has excellent leadership, a well-defined vision for the future and secures new market opportunities affects the judgments made by investors and analysts (Gabbioneta *et al.*, 2011:218). A good leader should demonstrate courage, display keen observation skills and have the ability to stand aside when necessary (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:115). Correspondingly, leadership is one of the main tone setters for the whole organisation (Kleyn & Abratt, 2012:37). The vision of an organisation represents its distinct objectives. It enables it to maintain a consistent and clear image of its why it exists and what it stands for (Christensen & Cornelissen, 2011:387). As such, the vision presents what the organisation wishes to achieve and the direction in which it wants to move in the future (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 39). If strategies are planned without a clear vision, the organisation will not succeed in the organisational goal they want to achieve (Lubbe, 2019:sec. 48). Thus, securing a good corporate reputation involves active commitment from the leaders to inculcate the vision of the organisation throughout all departments (Koronis & Ponis, 2012:288).

- **Workplace environment**

The workplace environment dimension is about whether organisations reward employees fairly, is a good institution to work for and has good employees (Fombrun *et al.*, 2000:253; The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249). Wepener (2014:155) notes that questions arise regarding this dimension, such as whether the organisation is good to work

for, and whether it has competent employees, treats its employees well, attends to employees' needs and attracts employees with talent. When a work environment conveys a sense of being safe, positive and cheerful, the employees will contribute more towards the organisation (Murphy, 2015:16). If an organisation represents a sense of equality and respect, trust will develop. The latter is characterised by the recognition that each party can rely on one another to achieve mutual goals (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:27); in this case, a good corporate reputation.

The workplace environment has the most powerful effect on potential and current employees (Alniacik *et al.*, 2012:3; Vivader-Cohen, 2007:294). Establishing productive relationships between management, employees and members of all the subdivisions of the organisation will result in a thriving workplace environment (Rajhans, 2012:83). Moreover, the employees will adapt better to change if an optimistic atmosphere is created (Murphy, 2015:127). Job satisfaction is indeed related to the perceptions of corporate reputation, because the acknowledgment of the public will affect employees' evaluations of their work environment (Helm, 2011a:658). Moreover, the external public might evaluate the workplace environment in terms of its infrastructure, benefits and any information that the organisation reveals to the public about its employees (Alniacik *et al.*, 2012:14; Marquina Feldman *et al.*, 2014:60). In general, stakeholders will form their perceptions based on a well-managed organisation that appeals to skilled employees, treats employees it well and is a respectable company to work for (Araci, 2015:109; The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249; Wepener, 2014:155).

- **Financial performance**

Research on corporate reputation and financial performance has revealed a strong two-way relationship between both aspects (Wepener, 2014:36). As such, there is a co-existent relationship between financial performance and reputation rankings (Tischer & Hildebrandt, 2014:1007). The financial performance dimension determines whether the organisation outperforms its competitors, displays a record of profitability, is a low-risk investment and promises growth prospects for the future (Fombrun *et al.*, 2000:253; The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249). Financial success seems to be one of the most important factors for the business sector when it comes to a successful organisation (Davies, 2011:52; Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 157-158).

The following financial indicators could contribute to the success of corporate reputation management: market value, salary or fees, price-to-earnings ratio against competitors, recommendations from analysts, reduced marketing costs, staff revenue, the total of new customers and prospects, and customer profitability (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:178). The influence of an organisation's financial performance on its reputation might vary significantly

from the perspective of various stakeholders (Derun & Mysaka, 2018:121). Nevertheless, if an organisation communicates its intentions justly and thoroughly, it will reduce reputational risks, which will ultimately lead to superior financial performance to that of its competitors (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:95). Barron and Rolfe (2012:sec. 186-187) argue that organisations that reflect a strong financial performance over time will excel in other reputational areas as well.

- **Social responsibility**

Debates on the importance of being a socially responsible organisation have raged since 1990, when the concept became an important subject in the corporate sector (Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 31-32). Organisations have to consider the innovative role they play in society and that people's assumptions are based on the good or bad behaviours of companies (Dowling, 2008:181; Fombrun *et al.*, 2015:6). The social responsibility dimension involves whether the organisation supports good causes, is environmentally responsible, and is accountable and considerate to the community around them (Fombrun *et al.*, 2000:253; The Harris Poll, 2018:4; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249). Agarwal *et al.* (2015:504) emphasised that activities characterised by the abovementioned three points should all benefit the society in some other way.

Social responsibility is often incorporated into the organisation's culture and strategy, and is strongly associated with how the organisation represents itself (Terec-Vlad & Cucu, 2016:196). An organisation that is socially responsible will always act like a "*good citizen*" and will optimistically influence environmental and societal values, as well as catering to the needs and expectations of all stakeholders (Beger, 2018:58). In conclusion, corporate social responsibility is an essential segment in corporate reputation that should be managed and implemented by the corporate communication specialist to increase organisational awareness by supporting good causes in the community above the standard legal requirements (Chanda, 2018:5).

Knowing how organisations' reputations' are established through stakeholder perceptions provides organisations with vital information to improve their reputation with stakeholders through specific corporate communication strategies (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 150; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:251). By measuring and tracking an organisation's corporate reputation, they can determine whether the stakeholders' expectations are indeed met (Hannington, 2004:9; Sarstedt *et al.*, 2013:329; Schreiber, 2011). Therefore, by using the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument, organisations can be sure to obtain valid and reliable information (Gardberg & Fombrun, 2002:306; Groenland, 2002:314; Kanto *et al.*, 2016:412). In conclusion, the *Reputation*

Quotient® has been proved to be an essential tool in aiding organisations with unknown risks, identifying new opportunities and managing corporate reputation (The Harris Poll, 2018:2).

On the basis of the above, the third specific guiding argument is as follows:

Specific guiding argument 3

Corporate reputation measurement involves an assessment method to determine and measure the perceptions of various stakeholder groups. Measuring corporate reputation can aid the organisations with current and future challenges in the reputation dimensions measured. Utilising the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument, which consists of the dimensions of emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, financial performance and social responsibility, will generate information that will assist Orange River Cellars to further manage and improve its corporate reputation.

The previous section comprised an exposition of corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, corporate reputation management and corporate reputation measurement, with an emphasis on the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument that was utilised for this study. In the course of explaining these constructs, it was noted that corporate reputation is an organisational asset. That is, a strong corporate reputation has numerous advantages for an organisation. These will be described in detail in the following section.

2.3.7 Advantages of a strong corporate reputation

Although it is a complex task to establish a strong corporate reputation, mastering it has immense value for any organisation (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013:221; Aula & Heinonen, 2016:8; Davies & Miles, 1998:16; Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:7). A good corporate reputation results in a beneficial relationship between the organisation and its stakeholders, which, in turn, establishes an emotional link between them (Amis, 2003:190; Kliger, 2014:1). Thus, the goal of any organisation should be to have a positive and flawless reputation in the minds of stakeholders (Gray & Balmer, 1998:697; Koronis & Ponis, 2012:286).

Generating confidence in the company among customers, investors, analysts and other stakeholders is vital for any organisation's long-term existence (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:5; Resnick, 2004:30). Sequeira *et al.* (2015:37) affirm that corporate reputation is highly valued and can be difficult to imitate by competitors. Although it is sometimes difficult to maintain corporate reputation, if managed properly it can be a remarkable tactical weapon. Corporate reputation could indeed be seen as an intangible asset that creates value by providing evidence of an organisation's intangible characteristics (Rindova & Martins, 2012:sec. 38-39). Hence, a

comprehensive exposition of corporate reputation as a valuable asset follows as part of the argument on the advantages on corporate reputation.

2.3.7.1 Corporate reputation is a valuable asset

Good corporate reputations is considered a valued and strategic intangible asset because it reduces uncertainty in stakeholders' minds about an organisation's performance, gives a company a higher competitive advantage, inspires confidence and establishes the organisation's superiority from competitors (Alniacik *et al.*, 2012:5; Ural & Cengel, 2007:6; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:47; Vivader-Cohen, 2007:280). By having a strong corporate reputation, an organisation will have a superior status to that of its competitors (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013:221; Davies *et al.*, 2003:sec. 84-85). Good corporate reputations can even build on trust, which in turn establishes an emotional bond with stakeholders (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:27; Dowling, 2004:34).

Organisations should bear in mind that once a good corporate reputation is established with stakeholders through proper management, attracting resources will occur automatically (Fombrun & Low, 2011:22). A good corporate reputation will appeal to high-quality employees, which will result in an effort to produce good quality work and in turn gain the interest of possible consumers (Davies *et al.*, 2003:84-85; Mittins *et al.*, 2011:408-409). The result could be that clients will continue to believe in the organisation even when its reputation is damaged. If an organisation is built on a respectable reputation and serves stakeholders by giving them value over time, the stakeholders will be more understanding if failures occur (Sohn & Lariscy, 2015:252). Highly valued organisations are trusted and appreciated by stakeholders. This could result in instances in which stakeholders have a strong desire to be involved with the company (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:27). Moreover, having a strong and respectable reputation makes it difficult for competitors to replicate its uniqueness (Adeosun & Ganiyu, 2013:221). Once an organisation has a competitive advantage, corporate reputation becomes a valuable asset with social complexities that are challenging to duplicate, impersonate or substitute (Siano *et al.*, 2010:69).

While it is known that an organisation's performance has a significant influence on the perceptions of stakeholders (Govender & Abratt, 2016:236; Sarstedt *et al.*, 2013:329), the success thereof is measured by its corporate reputation (Kaul & Desai, 2014:180; Laforet, 2010:235-236). In fact, corporate reputation provides clarity on a business' overall performance and would be an indispensable asset for any executive in the future (Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:7), since a good reputation makes it easier to manage and maintain stakeholders' faith in an organisation (Dowling, 2016:208). Similarly, a strong corporate highlights the fact that the organisation is trustworthy (Davies *et al.*, 2003:90-91; Diermeier, 2018:18). People can easily put a value on something that is tangible, such as an organisation's assets or buildings, but it might be difficult to attribute value

to something that is intangible, such as corporate reputation. However, a strong corporate reputation could be considered one of the most valuable intangible resources an organisation could have (Pirez & Trez, 2018:52).

Finally, a corporate strong reputation might also influence financial performance and add more value to an organisation's corporate reputation in the future.

2.3.7.2 A good corporate reputation generates financial value

Financial performance is repeatedly noted as a factor within corporate reputation (Backhaus, 2011:118; Laskin, 2013:376; Yang *et al.*, 2015:578). Davies *et al.* (2003:sec. 88-89) explored the notion that an organisation's financial performance was connected to its corporate reputation. Financial performance is a set of markers built on financial statements to describe the profitable achievements of an organisation and make the forecasts on its company model (Derun & Mysaka, 2018:116). Financial capital is often referred to as liquidated assets or money to buy buildings, equipment and other resources, frequently described by economists as investments (Siano *et al.*, 2010:69). As such, financial capital has a direct impact on an organisation's financial performance.

Financial performance is characterised as the degree to which stakeholders trust the organisation to outperform its competitors, make comprehensive financial decisions, attract respectable investors and demonstrate profitable future growth (Wepener, 2014:163). Furthermore, good corporate reputations generate financial value for the organisation (Fombrun & Low, 2011:22; Robinson, 2010:41). When a corporate reputation is managed well, it will not only add value but also increase capital, establish support from government and help the company to gain a competitive advantage (Fombrun & Low, 2011:22; Van Riel & Baumann, 2015:8). It might seem easy to understand what precisely financial performance means and how it might influence an organisation's reputation. However, corporate reputation is not the only element that influences financial performance directly; it can be achieved only if all the components of the company function accurately and successfully (Yang *et al.*, 2015:83).

As noted above, a good corporate reputation in the minds of stakeholders could be potentially linked to an organisation's financial performance and could set the organisation apart from its competitors. However, Davies (2011:52) deems it more likely that financial performance influences views on corporate reputation rather than the other way around. Strong financial performance could influence an organisation's corporate reputation, because profitability, increased sales and market success serve as a signal to stakeholders that the organisation is a highly reputable firm (Esenyel, 2020:29). The value attributed to financial performance as a

corporate reputation indicator might vary among consumers and investors, given that potential investors would focus more on the organisation's financial performance than other stakeholders (Derun & Mysaka, 2018:121). Nevertheless, managers should realise that excellent financial performance would be a reliable indicator that an organisation remains on the right path (Aula & Heinonen, 2016:76).

In conclusion, both corporate reputation and financial resources are managed according to similar basic standards. The processes involved include collaboration, organisational development, decreasing risks and crisis management (Siano *et al.*, 2010:71). Therefore, organisations should consider the advantages of a strong corporate reputation, and consequently manage and measure corporate reputation by formulating organisational strategies and maintaining a positive corporate reputation in stakeholders' minds. *"In the end, financial success equals firm success"* (Doorley & Garcia, 2015:365).

2.4 Conclusion

The aim of Chapter 2 was to answer the first specific research question:

What does corporate reputation management and measurement entail, according to the corporate communication literature? (see 1.2.2)

The literature on corporate communication, corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantages of a strong corporate reputation was reviewed in this chapter. It was found that corporate communication played an integral role in corporate reputation; thus, corporate communication strategies should be established to aid in managing and measuring an organisation's corporate reputation.

Corporate communication strategies should be part of the organisation's overall strategy. This means ensuring adequate internal and external communication with stakeholders in order to enhance or achieve a favourable corporate reputation. Principle foundations of corporate communication, such as management communication, marketing communication and organisational communication, all contribute to the foundation of corporate reputation. Management communication serves as a link to between employees and external stakeholders, thus making it possible achieve satisfactory relationships. Marketing communication involves the marketing communication mix, advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity, public relations, sponsorship, direct marketing and digital communication, all of which contribute to presenting the best possible image of the organisation and to establishing successful

relationships with stakeholders. Organisational communication facilitates adequate communication within the organisation, which in turn contributes to its optimal functionality.

Corporate reputation is comprised of the stakeholders' overall perceptions of an organisation over a given timeframe. Hence, good stakeholder relations are central to establishing a strong corporate reputation. As mentioned previously, relationships with stakeholders could be established through adequate communication strategies. The fundamental elements of corporate reputation are corporate identity, image, branding, personality, and behaviour, ethics and culture. These are all interrelated components that play a role in the formation of corporate reputation.

Scholars insist that corporate reputation management is essential and consists of aligning the strategic goals of the organisation to the needs of stakeholders. Corporate reputation management enables the organisation to attract valuable resources and should be managed by a specific individual or department. It also involves determining how stakeholders perceive an organisation's corporate reputation. Various measurement instruments exist; however, specific emphasis was placed on the *Reputation Quotient*® of Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel (2007), which is the measurement instrument to be utilised in this study (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). The six dimensions (emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, social responsibility and financial performance), with their 20 attributes will determine the relevant stakeholders' overall perceptions of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation (presented in Chapter 6). The advantages of a strong corporate reputation are that it attracts skilled employees, gives organisations' an advantage over their competitors and increases stakeholder trust. A good corporate reputation could also generate financial value by creating customer loyalty and attracting potential investors. Thus, a good corporate reputation might provide numerous benefits for an organisation.

Chapter 2 also laid the foundation for constructing the interview schedule (Appendix A) that was utilised to determine Orange River Cellars' approach to corporate reputation management and measurement within the organisation. The constructs examined above, namely corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantages of a strong corporate reputation were assessed and the empirical results are presented in Chapter 5.

Corporate reputation management and measurement is considered essential to sustaining and improving an organisation's corporate reputation. It was therefore deemed critical to evaluate Orange River Cellars' management's knowledge of these constructs and to determine its stakeholders' perceptions of its corporate reputation by way of the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument.

However, it is first expedient to provide the historical context for the study. Thus, in the following chapter, the focus is on the global wine industry, the South African wine industry and Orange River Cellars in particular.

CHAPTER 3: THE WINE INDUSTRY AND ORANGE RIVER CELLARS

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter laid the theoretical foundation for the study with a presentation of the theory on corporate communication, defining corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantages and strategic value of a strong corporate reputation. In this chapter, the global and South African wine industry is described, with an emphasis on Orange River Cellars. This constitutes the background to the empirical component of the study of Orange River Cellars' approach to corporate reputation and corporate measurement. Although the wine industry as a whole will not be included in the empirical research, it is necessary to understand how Orange River Cellars' fits into the overall wine industry setting.

A list of the wine industry bodies cited in this chapter is provided to facilitate clarity:

- OIV: International Organisation of Vine and Wine
- SALBA: South African Liquor Brand-Owners Association
- SAWIS: SA Wine Industry Information & Systems
- VINPRO: (*not an abbreviation*) Vinpro is an organisation that aids and offers skills in management and people development
- WIETA: Wine and Agricultural Ethical Trade Association
- WOSA: Wines of South Africa

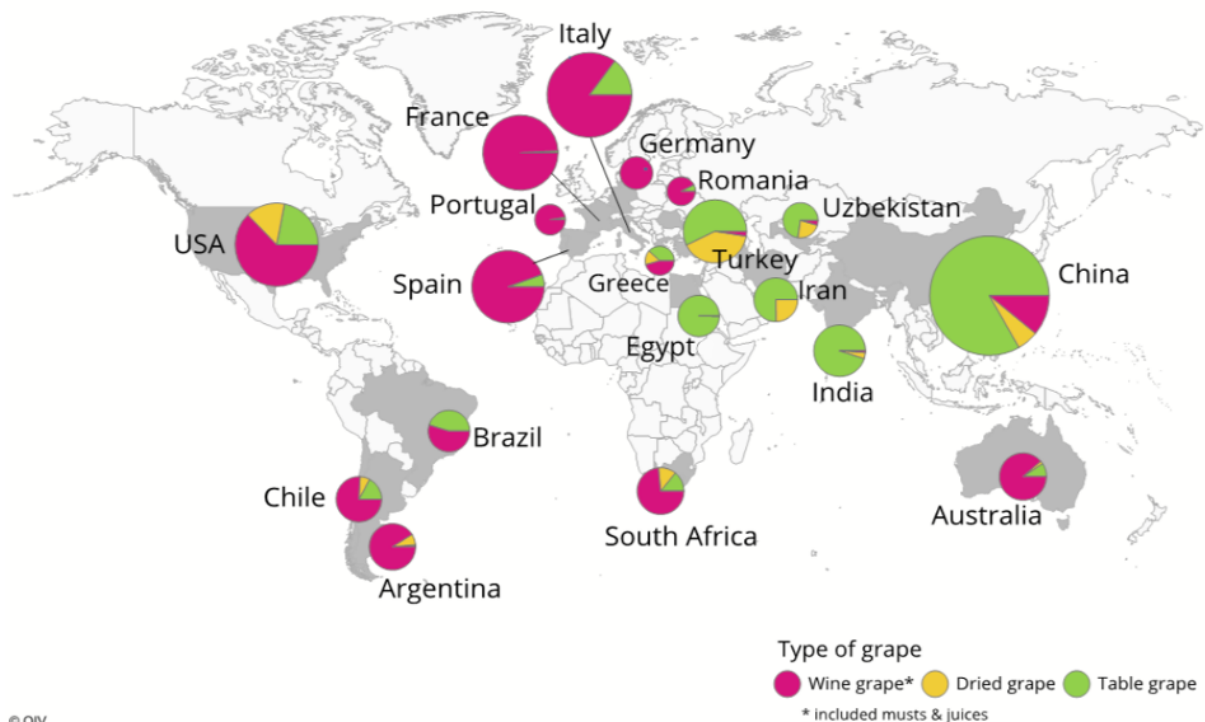
An overview of the representative wine industry bodies indicated above is provided in paragraph 3.1.2.2 below. Global wine production is reviewed first, after which the South African wine industry is described.

3.1.1 Global wine production

Wine production is a centuries-old practice and wineries are part of an organised trade that has existed for centuries (Flint *et al.*, 2016:2). Wine production began with only a few types of wine, one red wine, one white wine, and specialties such as port and champagne (MacNeil, 2015:sec. 50-51). Since the 1950s, global wine production has grown exponentially and the variety of wines has increased significantly. In the 1950s, wine producers started producing wine for the

international market, and wine consumption trends led to a change in production from a focus on quantity to providing quality wines for all (Mora, 2016:2). Wine production became more sophisticated in the 1960s, with improved equipment that made the winemaking process increasingly controlled, resulting in the development of specialised wines with distinct finishes, aromas, tastes and textures (MacNeil, 2015:sec. 50-51). The diversity of grapes also increased and has been refined to such an extent that certain regions have become known for their distinct wine offerings (Flint *et al.*, 2016:3). The exports of global wine grew exponentially after the 1980s and reached its peak of over 25% by 2004 from a mere 3% in the past (Robinson, 2015:sec. 390). Exports increased from countries beyond Europe in the 1990s and wine began to be exported in bulk to make it more affordable to consumers who could not afford speciality wines (McIntyre, 2019:1).

Wine is now produced, sold and consumed by a variety of wholesalers and consumers internationally. Wine producers have to satisfy the diverse needs of consumers from different cultures and economic backgrounds (Mora, 2016:2). A variety of wines are renowned in international trading; consequently, certain countries and areas are known for their wine production. The most prominent export countries, which are known for exporting nearly half of their production volumes, are France, Italy and Spain (Mora, 2016:3; Robinson, 2015:sec. 390). However, various other countries are starting to erode these leading countries' market share. Figure 3-1 shows the leading countries that produce wine, dried grapes and table grapes.



Source: International Organisation of Vine and Wine, 2018:10

Figure 3-1: An illustration of the major wine producers in 2017

As can be seen in Figure 3-1, Italy, France, Spain and the US are the four major wine-producing countries. Countries such as China, India, Turkey, Iran and Egypt are more known for producing table grapes, and Turkey, Iran and the US for the majority of dried grapes. A detailed review of the specific hectolitres produced by specific countries will be provided in Table 3-1 below.

Over the past 30 years, the winemaking industry has been characterised by rapid development. With the new advancements in science and technology, countries such as Argentina, Spain and Portugal have developed production methods that are superior to what some call “*rustic wine production*” (MacNeil, 2015:sec. 29-30). The wine countries that are considered to have a predominance of typically Old World wineries that are known for their traditional techniques are Italy, Spain, France, Austria, Romania, Spain and Slovenia (Flint *et al.*, 2016:4). In contrast, New World wine countries are modernised and science plays a more prominent role in the winemaking process. Such countries include the US, New Zealand and Australia (Banks & Overton, 2010:60; Flint *et al.*, 2016:4). Although some of the abovementioned countries have more exceptional corporate reputations than countries such as South Africa, New Zealand, Chile, Bulgaria and Eastern Europe, the latter have several benefits, such as fewer regulatory restrictions, reduced production rates, sufficient procurement processes and unrestrained marketing tactics (Mora, 2016:3).

Each country that produces wines has its own unique features, which impact their corporate reputation. Geographical attributes such as weather patterns, the quality of the soil, the landscapes and cultivar variants undeniably influence wine production (Flint *et al.*, 2016:2-3; MacNeil, 2015:sec. 29-30). These geographical attributes are known as the “*terroir*” in the wine manufacturing world. The word *terroir*, meaning “*a distinct location*”, originated in the French wine system (Banks & Overton, 2010:59; McIntyre, 2019:1). Hence, each country's features might play a unique role in the taste of its grapes and wine, making each country known for its particular wine. However, countries do not become renowned only for their particular wines, but also for their worldwide wine production. The International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) publishes statistics on an annual basis that are based explicitly on the wine production of different countries. Table 3-1 below provides an indication of internationally-known modern wine-production countries.

Table 3-1: OIV wine production in countries over one million hectoliters

Wine-producing Countries	2017 Provisional Data Million hectoliters	2018 Preliminary Data Million hectoliters	2017/2018 Volume Variation
Italy	42.5	48.5	6.0

Wine-producing Countries	2017 Provisional Data Million hectoliters	2018 Preliminary Data Million hectoliters	2017/2018 Volume Variation
France	36.6	46.4	9.8
Spain	32.5	40.9	8.4
USA	23.3	23.9	0.5
Argentina	11.8	14.5	2.7
China*	10.8	<i>Not available</i>	<i>NA</i>
Chile	9.5	12.9	3.4
Australia	13.7	12.5	-1.2
Germany	7.5	9.8	2.3
South Africa	10.8	9.5	-1.4
Portugal	6.7	5.3	-1.5
Romania	4.3	5.2	0.9
Russian Federation	6.3	3.9	-2.4
Hungary	2.5	3.4	0.8
Brazil	3.6	3.4	-0.2
New Zealand	2.9	3.0	0.2
Austria	2.5	3.0	0.5
Greece	2.6	2.2	-0.4
Moldova	1.8	2.0	0.2
Georgia	1.3	2.0	0.7
Bulgaria	1.2	1.1	-0.0
Switzerland	0.8	1.1	0.3
World	248	279	31

Source: Adapted from International Organisation of Vine and Wine, 2018:13

As noted in Table 3-1 above, Italy (42.5 million hectolitres), France (36.6 million hectolitres), Spain (32.5 million hectolitres), the US (23.3 million hectolitres), and Argentina (11.8 million hectolitres) were among the top five wine-producing countries in 2017. The global wine production industry has delivered a steady production flow over the past eight years, fluctuating around 260 million hectolitres (Rinaldi, 2015:5). Despite an oversupply of wine in the international market in 2017, it is still believed that wine is one of the most promising growth trends in the global market (Mora, 2016:5). As shown in Table 3-1, South Africa experienced a 12% decrease from the previous year's wine production. Despite the growing production, the harvest obtained in South Africa in 2018, namely 1,220,920 tons, was slightly smaller than in 2017 because of a countrywide drought. However, although the harvests were smaller in 2017, the country still produced quality wines.

Moreover, the dry weather conditions gave the crops an advantage, because it resulted in few diseases and pests in most provinces (VINPRO & SAWIS, 2018:1).

In conclusion, the business environment is continually changing due to new technological advancements and competitiveness between organisations has increased due to globalisation. The latter has altered views about New World and Old World wine-producing countries, because new countries have entered into the international wine market. Consequently, stakeholders' evaluations of a country and its wine could be based on the statistics presented, which, in turn, could influence how they perceive the country's corporate reputation.

In the next section, an overview is provided of the South African wine industry in general and Orange River Cellars in particular to establish a preliminary image of the winery's position in the South African wine industry.

3.1.2 The South African wine industry

The following section is focused exclusively on the South African wine industry. The history of South African wine will be reviewed first and a current overview of South African wine will follow.

3.1.2.1 The history of South African wine

The renowned Jan Van Riebeeck, a colonial Dutch administrator who landed in the Cape of Good Hope on 6 April 1652 with three ships, was the first commander of the Cape Colony. The first South African wine was made on 2 February 1659, according to Van Riebeeck's diary (Estreicher, 2014:509). However, Van Riebeeck and his collaborators did not have sufficient knowledge of wine and viticulture (Smit, 2016:2). Vines were planted only in the late 1670s, with the first wine grape vines being planted in the Constantia area by Simon van der Stel in the year 1679 (Hunter, 2017:49). Wine in South Africa started to develop further in 1680 when the French Huguenot refugees arrived in the country, bringing with them a rich understanding of brandy and wine production (Hunter, 2017:49).

Wine production escalated in the 18th century, with most of the wine produced being sold only locally (Estreicher, 2014:520). South African wine producers experienced difficulty regarding exports during the mid-19th century. This led to the establishment of the *Ko-operatiewe Wijnbouwers Vereniging* (Co-operative Winegrowers Association; KWV) in 1918, which assisted wine producers with sales to help them to secure a steady income (Hunter, 2017:50; Robinson, 2015:sec. 465). KWV developed a system to prevent a decline in price caused by overproduction; it bought grapes at a predetermined price from grape farmers, and manufactured and sold the wine to provincial and global markets (Smit, 2016:3). In 1940, the KWV stipulated that all wine

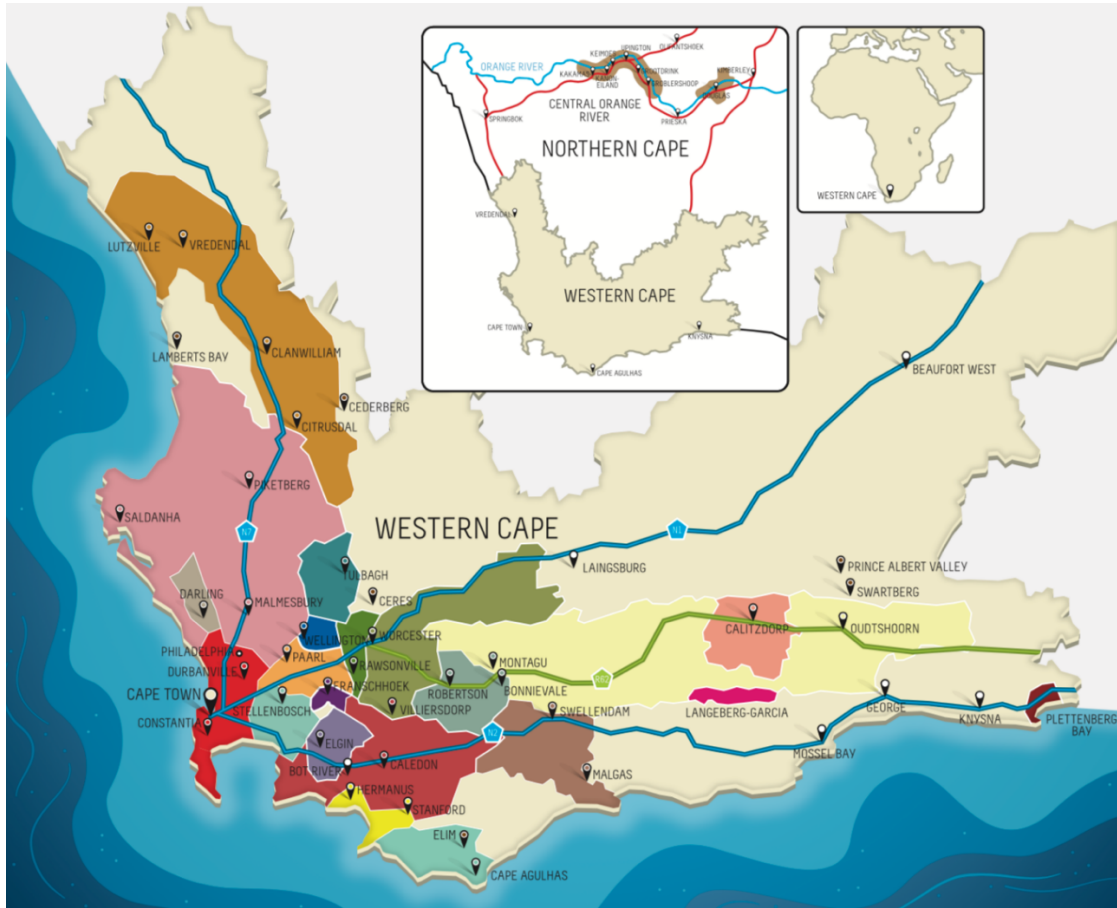
producers had to obtain a specific licence in order to produce wine. However, it did not permit producers to become innovators in their industry (Hunter, 2017:50). Moreover, high quality produce from certain grape producers did not receive any higher benefits due to KWV's fixed price (Smit, 2016:3).

The South African wine industry is relatively new in the international trade market, since exports stopped due to sanctions during the apartheid era. The international trade was renewed only after the abolition of the apartheid system in 1994 (Estreicher, 2014:529-530; Hunter, 2017:49). After the apartheid era ended, wine producers were no longer restricted by government regulations and the local wine industry started to develop significantly. In fact, wine cellars spread and increased in number by 52% between 1992 and 1999 (Hunter, 2017:50). Since wine cellars could register as privately-owned businesses, KWV came to be seen as an opponent rather than a market supervisor (Smit, 2016:3). At the beginning of 2012, 75% of the grapes produced in South Africa were used for wine, whereas others were used for fruit juice manufacturing and brandy distilling (Robinson, 2015:sec. 748). In the post-apartheid period, local wine manufacturers have become more acquainted with cost-effective wine-producing and have started pursuing opportunities to produce higher quality wines at reduced costs with the same volume of grapes.

Despite many challenges, South Africa has managed to produce a diversity of grape cultivars and exceptional wines throughout the years.

3.1.2.2 The current overview of South African wine

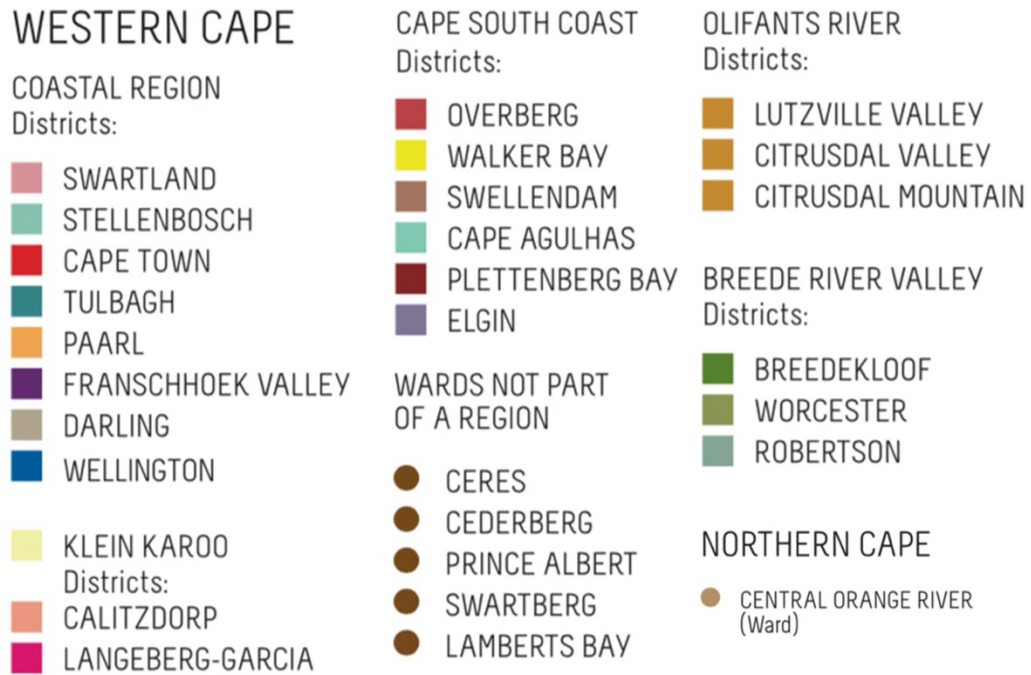
South Africa's diverse landscape provides a magnitude of grape produce, distributed over various provinces. Wineries in South Africa have about 99,463 hectares under vine across multiple regions (Agenbag, 2018:11). The winelands situated between the Indian and Atlantic oceans stretch over 700km throughout the Northern and Western Cape regions, where the majority of South Africa's wineries are located (Robinson, 2015:sec. 750-751; Smit, 2016:5). The reason for the abundance of wineries in these areas is that the climate is most suitable for producing grapes in those parts of the country. The geographical areas known for their wine-producing qualities are the *"Coastal region, Constantia, Elgin, Elim, Franschhoek, Groenekloof, Klein Karoo, Olifants River, Paarl, Robertson, Stellenbosch, Swartland, Tulbagh, Walker Bay, Wellington, the Western Cape and Worcester"* (Robinson, 2015:sec. 751-752). However, wineries are being established in new regions every year. The following figure shows the wine-producing regions across South Africa.



Source: WOSA, 2017:1

Figure 3-2: Wine-producing regions of South Africa

Figure 3-2 above illustrates the wine-producing districts by using differing colours to indicate the amount of wine production that takes place in each area. The following figure indicates what each colour used in Figure 3-2 represents. The wine regions that are presented are the Coastal, Klein Karoo, Cape South Coast, Olifants River and Breede River Valley districts, areas not part of a region and the Northern Cape. The focus of this study was specifically the Northern Cape region along the Orange River.



Source: WOSA, 2017:1

Figure 3-3: List of wine-producing districts

As noted in Figure 3-3 above, the Northern Cape region (Central Orange River) is the main area for Orange River Cellars' wine production. South Africa's regional information, which was published in 2018, follows the previous identification of the wine-producing districts. The South African regional information also provides the theory on Orange River Cellars' production in 2018, in comparison with that of other wine regions (Table 3-2).

Table 3-2: A general overview of the South African wine regions for 2018

Breedekloof	A bigger wine crop was produced due to new plantations for Pinotage and Colombard grapes. The environment was healthy overall, with favourable conditions.
Klein Karoo	The crops in this region were relatively smaller, but they produced a richer red wine due to their undersized berries.
Northern Cape	The crops in this region experienced frost damage, which led to smaller Colombard production. However, their Chenin Blanc showed an increase in production.
Olifants River	This region experienced the worst drought conditions, with strict water shortages, which resulted in lower production rates.
Paarl	The berries in this area were much smaller than in previous years, which resulted in lower production in the dryland vineyards.
Robertson	Although the harvest was much smaller, they still experienced favourable results.
Stellenbosch	With a considerable amount of irrigation problems and reduced harvests, they still produced exceptional wines.

Swartland	The water shortage was challenging, but they still produced good quality wine with a smaller harvest.
Worcester	This was one of this area's most problematic years due to frost and water restrictions. However, they still had decent wine production.

Source: Adapted from VINPRO & SAWIS, 2018:3

The South African wine industry, regardless of the small crops, produced high-quality wine from their 2018 harvests (VINPRO & SAWIS, 2018:1). The South African winelands (as noted in Table 3-2) have an exceptional diversity, with their prehistoric geology, mountains, coastline winds, inland slopes and it more than 10,000 species of natural vegetation (Hunter, 2017:52; Robinson, 2015:sec. 750-751). South Africa is also known for its wine exports to countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Denmark and Russia (Smit, 2016:7). Numerous industry bodies represent South African wines, and these bodies also provide assistance to help market wine cellars' products to stakeholders. These independent bodies also aid Orange River Cellars in selling its products locally and internationally. Moreover, they provide liquor trading guidance, and aid in overall management and development.

The following bodies represent South African wines:

- **SAWIS:** The South African Wine Industry Information Systems gathers, administers and circulates material on the South African wine industry by publishing an annual leaflet called South African Wine Industry Statistics (SAWIS, 2019).
- **SALBA:** The South African Liquor Brand-owners Association takes care of the welfare of members in the manufacturing and distribution of all liquor products. Its focus is also on transformation and social responsibility, illegal liquor trading and the prevention of alcohol abuse (SALBA, 2019).
- **VINPRO:** This representative body offers strategic management skills and people development, such as advice on BEE, viticulture, soil science and the agricultural economy. It represents 2,500 South African wine producers, cellars and other wine-related organisations (VINPRO, 2019).
- **WOSA:** Wines of South Africa has represented South African wines internationally since 1999. It aids with wine exports through exhibitions and liaises with the media to provide accurate information. WOSA is responsible for the Cape Wine trade show, which is one of the most extensive and fruitful shows in the Southern Hemisphere (WOSA, 2019).

- **WIETA:** The Wine and Agricultural Ethical Trade Association advocate for ethical trading. With its code of conduct established in 2002, it assists members by obligating them to abide by the Ethical Code of Good Practice (WIETA, 2019).

These bodies also provide annual information on wine production and viticulture in South Africa. They also offer guidance to stakeholders by providing them with detailed information about Orange River Cellars. Information from the representative bodies enables researchers and stakeholders to gain a rich understanding of the various geographical regions, conditions, soil, grapes, produce and exports. International and regional media also play an essential role in transforming and expanding South African wines. They aid cellars and agriculturalists with the protocol for engagement with the media, help media partners to contact precisely the right source for information, safeguard wine manufacturing by offering truthful information, help to pinpoint the person responsible for communicating with the media and encourage partnerships to expand organisations (VINPRO & WOSA, 2018:2). Thus, the media offer assistance by communicating facts about the wine industry, help producers to sell their wines, emphasise the various challenges that cellars face and help to build the brands of specific cellars. The media thus aid in building a good corporate reputation and corporate image of the South African wine production industry (VINPRO & WOSA, 2018:3). In short, the representative bodies help the wineries to reach various stakeholders in the wine production industry and support Orange River Cellars with optimal exposure.

Having described the South African wine industry, the next section comprises a presentation of the distinct features of Orange River Cellars in the Northern Cape.

3.1.3 Orange River Cellars

The head-office of Orange River Cellars is in Upington, a town in the Northern Cape province of South Africa. The Southern Kalahari landscape is unique as a developing wine-producing region, with vineyards under irrigation from the Great Orange River. Agenbag (2018:13) notes that the Northern Cape is known for its farms, livestock, citrus fruit, pecan nuts, diamond mining, wine, raisins and grape manufacturing.

Orange River Cellars' vision is to be acknowledged as a role model that initiates wealth for all its producers. Its mission is to add value to all Orange River Cellars' management and stakeholders, through the successful and profitable processing and marketing of grape products. The organisation's fundamental values are integrity, truth, enthusiasm, patience, commitment, entrepreneurship, honesty, positivity, energy, dedication and teamwork (Orange River Cellars, 2018). Orange River Cellars is one of the biggest cooperative wine cellars in the Southern

hemisphere and a significant wine cellar in the global market (Agenbag, 2018:36). Figure 3-4 below provides a layout of the wine cellar's various locations:



Source: Orange River Cellars, 2018

Figure 3-4: Orange River Cellars' different locations

As seen in Figure 3-4 above, Orange River Cellars has various wine-producing sites (indicated by the grape icon), stretching from Upington, Keimoes, Kakamas, Groblershoop, Grootdrink. The differing wine locations will be discussed in further detail in the history and wine production sections.

The history of Orange River Cellars is presented in the next section, to provide the necessary clarification of how the organisation has grown over the past 50 years.

3.1.3.1 History

Orange River Cellars was registered as a South African company on 23 December 1965, but started harvesting grapes only in 1968. The first winemaker, Jan Neethling, produced the company's first wine that same year (Orange River Cellars, 2017). In the early 1970s, Orange River Cellars expanded its production from Upington to Keimoes, Kakamas, Grootdrink and Groblershoop. In the process, more than 350km of vineyards were established in these towns in

the Northern Cape alongside the Orange River (Figure 3-4). The river had been named after the Prince of Orange back in 1779 (Orange River Cellars, 2017). This waterway is one of the greatest rivers in South Africa. It curves across the area, covering a distance of over 2,300km (Agenbag, 2018:13). It is not just the river that makes the wine cellars so unique, but also the vast variety of cultivars produced in the red soil of the Kalahari Desert.

The cellars came was founded as a solution the problem that the Sultana grapes produced in the region could not be used for raisins. With its head office based in Upington, Orange River Cellars is the largest wine enterprises in the Southern Hemisphere and South Africa (Orange River Cellars, 2017). It initially produced only three wines but is currently selling more than 30 products. Over and above wine, it began producing grape juice in 1996 in Kanoneiland, Kakamas and Grootdrink (Orange River Cellars, 2017). Orange River Cellars also expanded its vineyards to facilitate raisin production in the early 2000s (Orange River Cellars, 2017). At the time of writing this paper, there were five wine-producing cellars (Groblershoop, Grootdrink, Keimoes, Kakamas, Upington) and one juice cellar (Kanoneiland), and Orange River Cellars was in the process of establishing its newest cellar, in Hartswater. It has distribution centres in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Free State, Northern Cape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Namibia.

Orange River Cellars now offers an extensive range of dry red, dry white, dessert, sparkling and natural sweet wines, which are marketed both locally and internationally. Orange River Cellars is also one of the largest grape concentrate producers in South Africa (Orange River Cellars, 2018). With the cellars' new wine tasting centre launched in 2017, customers can now experience Orange River Cellars' wines on a personal level. The available expertise, supported by proper planning and dynamic vineyard and cellar management, is effectively employed to utilise the *terroir* diversity of this wine production region.

3.1.3.2 Wine production

A short overview of the wine production process will be provided in this section. Wine production at Orange River Cellars starts with the farmers harvesting the grapes, usually from December to April each year. They are then transported by these diverse suppliers to the various cellars. The grapes are de-stemmed at the cellars, whereafter they are fed into special pressing machines. The juice is transferred to settling tanks for wine-producing and the rest of the pulp is shipped for a second pressing stage. The juice from the wine production is placed in yeast tanks to start the fermentation process, in which the sugars are converted into alcohol. The resultant wine is placed in storage tanks until the bottling process commences.

Orange River Cellars has a bottling capacity of 6,000 bottles per hour. The following amounts are delivered annually (Orange River Cellars, 2018):

- 42 million litres of good wine
- 8 million litres of rebate wine
- 25 million litres of grape juice
- 2 million litres of distilled wine



Source: Orange River Cellars, 2017

Figure 3-5: Orange River Cellars' production sites, from left: Upington, Keimoes, Kakamas, Grootdrink and Groblershoop

The wine cellars illustrated in Figure 3-5 produce specific amounts of grape juice and wine. The Upington cellar has a capacity of over 170,000 tons, Keimoes about 33,000 tons, Kakamas 40,000 tons, Groblershoop 14,000 tons and Grootdrink approximately 25,000 tons (Orange River Cellars, 2018). Harvesting in this region was relatively small in 2018 due to frost damage, drought and the uprooting of vineyards; hence, there was a higher production of raisins and table cultivars than in previous years (VINPRO & SAWIS, 2018:6).

The following figure shows the wines and juices that are produced by Orange River Cellars.

Red Wines	White Wines	Semi-Sweet Wines	Fortified Wines	Sparkling Wines and Juice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedgehog Cabernet Sauvignon • Lyra Shiraz Reserve • Lyra Nebula • Hedgehog Ruby Cabernet • Hedgehog Shiraz 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Omstaan Colombar • Lyra Quasar • Lyra Altair • Nouveau • Omstaan Sauvignon Blanc • Regopstaan Sauvignon Blanc • Hedgehog Chenin Blanc • Hedgehog Colombar • Hedgehog Sauvignon Blanc • Hedgehog Chardonnay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Sweet Red • Delush White • Delush Rosé • Delush Red • Hedgehog Nouveau • Hedgehog Rosé 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cape Ruby • Hanepoot • Old Brown • Red Jerepigo • Red Muscadel • Straw Wine • White Jerepigo • White Muscadel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brut Sparkling Wine • Delush Rosé Sparkling Wine • Doux Sparkling Wine • Rosé Sparkling Wine • Red Sparkling Grape Juice • White Sparkling Grape Juice

Source: Author's own interpretation

Figure 3-6: Wines and juices of Orange River Cellars

The grapes used for wine production in these regions are affected by the altitude, longitude and latitude of the area along the lower Orange River. Hence, the topography is one of the main factors affecting the quality of the grapes (Orange River Cellars, 2018). The flavour of Orange River Cellars' wines bears the distinct imprint of the unique topography of their vineyards, which are managed to produce multi-dimensional wines with character (Orange River Cellars, 2018). The variety of wines are produced to meet the needs of differing stakeholders. The latter's' expectations evolve over time and wine cellars have to develop strategies and policies to determine the positions they want to obtain in stakeholders' minds. Flint *et al.* (2016:191) explain that wine cellars should not only have strategies in place, but also identify the relevant resources and competencies required to achieve their desired outcome. Wine is an essential product and vital components are connected with it, such as regional brand building and wine tourism (Hunter, 2017:51). Producers have to realise that stakeholders' behaviours and lifestyles are changing, and wineries should be prepared to keep up with their demands by adjusting their processes and structures (Bezuidenhout, 2014:80).

In the past, wine was mostly connected with leisure and the hospitality industry (Bruwer, 2003:423). According to Hunter (2017:51), at present the South African wine industry is predominantly reliant on tourists and leisure guests for expansion and sustainability. Consumers play an important role in keeping the wine industry alive, and communicating and marketing has

changed dramatically due to social media. Wineries have to rethink their communication strategies to get their corporate reputation across to stakeholders. Consumers want to be in constant communication with wine cellars; hence, they do not want to be just buyers; they want to experience everything and be engaged with the producers on a regular basis (Flint *et al.*, 2016:235). The South African wine industry has several vital stakeholders. In 2017, the following were identified: 451 wine-route members, 21 wine routes, 566 private and producing wine cellars, and 3,232 grape producers (Hunter, 2017:52). A detailed list is provided in Figure 3-7, in which the key stakeholders of Orange River Cellars are identified:



Source: Author's own interpretation

Figure 3-7: Orange River Cellars' wine industry stakeholders

Due to new technological developments, communication in the wine industry has changed dramatically and stakeholder feedback is more accessible than ever before (Flint *et al.*, 2016:170). Thus, engagement with the abovementioned wine industry stakeholders is a necessary practice for Orange River Cellars.

With the vast expansion of wine all over the world, it has become difficult for winemakers and cellars to differentiate themselves from their competitors. What sets an organisation apart from its competitors is often displayed through awards and achievements. Orange River Cellars' wine continues to receive an abundant variety of awards and achievements, which indicates its uniqueness and quality.

3.1.3.3 Orange River Cellars' awards and achievements

The South African wine industry grants an array of prestigious awards in recognition of the high quality and/or exclusivity of certain wines. Figure 3-8 below comprises a list of Orange River Cellars' awards and achievements for only 2018.

John Platter Wine Guide 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>5 Stars</u> • White Muscadel 2016 • <u>4.5 Stars</u> • Straw Wine 2016 • <u>4 Stars</u> • Hanepoot 2016 • Red Muscadel 2016
Michelangelo International Wine Awards 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Double Gold</u> • Straw Wine 2017 • <u>Gold</u> • Colombard 2018 • Sauvignon Blanc 2018 • <u>Silver</u> • Red Muscadel 2017
Muscats du Monde France 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Gold</u> • Red Muscadel 2017
Old Mutual Trophy Wine Show 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Silver</u> • Red Muscadel 2017 • <u>Bronze</u> • Colombard 2018 • Lyra Vega 2016 • Lyra Vega 2015
Top 100 SA/National Wine Challenge 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Double Platinum</u> • Lyra Vega 2016 • <u>Double Gold</u> • Straw Wine 2017 • Lyra Vega 2015 • <u>Double Silver</u> • Colombard 2018 • Red Muscadel 2017

Ultra-Value Wine Challenge 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Double Gold</u> • Colombard 2018 • Ruby Cabernet 2016 • White Muscadel 2017 • <u>Gold</u> • Chenin Blanc 2018 • Sauvignon Blanc 2018 • Cape Ruby 2017 • Pinotage 2017 • <u>Silver</u> • Red Jerepigo 2017 • Red Muscadel 2017 • Shiraz 2016
Veritas 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Double Gold</u> • Colombard 2018 • Sauvignon Blanc 2018 • Straw Wine 2017 • <u>Silver</u> • Red Muscadel 2017 • White Muscadel 2017 • Lyra Vega 2016
Wine Report 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Muscadel - 91 Points • Straw Wine 2016 - 90 Points • Straw Wine 2017 - Best Straw Wine with 91 points • White Muscadel - 90 Points
SA Young Wine Show 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HA Conradie Trophy SA Champion other white cultivar - Keimoes • HJ Etchelle Trophy SA Champion Dessert Wine - Groblershoop • John McDonald Trophy SA Champion Sauvignon Blanc - Keimoes • Pietman Hugo Trophy Best Overall Cellar with highest score - Keimoes • SBW Trophy SA Champion White blend - Keimoes

Source: Author's own interpretation

Figure 3-8: Orange River Cellars' awards and achievements

The many awards and achievements that Orange River Cellars has received or attained, clearly demonstrates its excellence and potential for growth.

3.2 Conclusion

This chapter began with an overview of the global wine industry in general and progressed to the distinctive wine industry in South Africa at present. In the last section, Orange River Cellars, which is the focus of this study, was described.

The wine industry has shown enormous growth over the years, which has resulted in a highly competitive environment in which wine cellars have to establish themselves and outperform their competitors. It is therefore important for Orange River Cellars to determine stakeholders' perceptions in order to enhance its corporate reputation and to take steps to manage it accordingly. As a result, the management team of Orange River Cellars should determine its corporate reputation, because they have never conducted a corporate reputation assessment in the 50 years of its existence.

With the nature of corporate communication, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantages of a strong corporate reputation literature having been explicated in Chapter 2, and the wine industry in Chapter 3, the theoretical basis of this and the contextual background of Orange River Cellars have been presented.

The next chapter comprises a description of the research approach and the methodology utilised for the empirical section of this study. The qualitative and quantitative research methods employed to answer the research questions are described. A description of the semi-structured interviews, which constituted the qualitative method used in this study, and the online e-mail survey, which was the quantitative method, is provided. Furthermore, specific emphasis is placed on the *Reputation Quotient*® as the quantitative measurement instrument that was used to determine the Orange River Cellars' stakeholders' perceptions of the company.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, the theoretical foundations of the study were presented. Corporate communication, corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantages of a strong corporate reputation were extrapolated. Chapter 3 contained an overview of the wine industry, with specific emphasis on South Africa and Orange River Cellars (see paragraph 3.1.3), to contextualise the empirical study. In this chapter, the research methods used in this study are described.

A description of the research methodology serves as a guide to how the research was conducted in a specific study. It indicates how the researcher performed the work of determining which methods to use when developing a suitable research strategy (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:sec. 46-47; Rajasekar *et al.*, 2013:5). The research strategy comprises the techniques and instruments employed in the study (Williman, 2011:1). Therefore, the mixed-methods research approach, research methods, additional information on the *Reputation Quotient*® as the measurement instrument, sample size, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitations of the study are described in the following sections.

4.2 Mixed-methods research approach

The researcher followed a mixed-methods approach comprising both qualitative and quantitative methods. A mixed-methods approach comprises the adoption of two or more approaches to gather and evaluate data related to the research problem (Hesse-Biber, 2010:3; Kumar, 2014:sec. 60-61). Since 1990, mixed-methods research has been conducted increasingly to overcome the shortcomings of qualitative and quantitative research methods when only one of the two methods is utilised (Flick, 2015:218). It involves incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methods, involving data, theoretical frameworks and philosophical hypotheses (Creswell, 1999:455; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:sec. 34-35).

Utilising both quantitative and qualitative methods is vital to prevent uncertainty and confusion (Flick, 2015:84). The empirical study was conducted in two stages: the qualitative research part consisted of semi-structured interviews with Orange River Cellars' management, whereas quantitative data was collected using an online e-mail survey targeting all the relevant stakeholders. Interviews, observations, and closed-ended questions are often associated with a mixed-method approach. Moreover, utilising a variety of procedures increases the reliability and credibility of the results (Zohrabi, 2013:254).

A qualitative approach is more adaptable than a quantitative one. The focus is on the feelings, insights and understandings of the participants rather than on collecting statistics (Kumar, 2014:sec. 60-61). Hence, a qualitative approach aided the researcher to understand Orange River Cellars' management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement by means of semi-structured interviews. Qualitative research involves focusing on a particular setting, asking questions related to the research topic and analysing the information in relation to specific themes to interpret the significance of the collected responses (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:sec. 34-35). By contrast, with the quantitative approach, the researcher plans and adheres to strict guidelines. The emphasis is on the measurement of elements and the results are communicated in a systematic way (Kumar, 2014:sec. 60-61). The data in quantitative research is presented in quantities and numbers (Goertzen, 2017:12; Kothari, 2004:3).

In short, a mixed-methods approach, using both quantitative data and qualitative methods, was chosen because it was expected to yield the best understanding of the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:sec. 40-41). Qualitative and quantitative methods were expected to guide research towards the assessment of the corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars.

4.2.1 Qualitative approach

Qualitative research generates narratives and descriptions of participants' judgments and familiarity, following a philosophy of openness and adaptableness (Kumar, 2014:sec. 60-61). Well-defined objectives and intentions are set out at the beginning of the research to gather and evaluate information on a specific issue (Silverman, 2013:sec. 49-50). This type of research consists of engaging in verbal communication, usually in the context of personal encounters in which information is gathered by posing open-ended questions on a particular research topic and later evaluated (Clark & Ivankova, 2016:sec. 35-36,38). In qualitative research, the researcher selects a smaller number of participants than in quantitative research with a particular purpose in mind (Flick, 2015:11). Qualitative research cannot be represented in a numerical form and requires different techniques (Williman, 2011:71). Qualitative research is appropriate for any studies that require speculation and developing theories (Vogt *et al.*, 2012:12). Various techniques, such as interviews, are used in qualitative research to uncover information about the emotions and desires of human beings in relation to a specific topic (Creswell, 2009:4; Kothari, 2004:3; Kumar, 2011:103). Other qualitative techniques involve observations, interviews with open-ended surveys and the use of diaries (Kumar, 2014:sec. 343-344; Zohrabi, 2013:254).

The aim of conducting research in a qualitative setting is to comprehend the situation of the participants by visiting them in their own environment. Information is collected in person to clarify the situation based on the investigator's knowledge and personal history (Creswell & Creswell,

2018:sec. 38-39). The advantage of a qualitative approach is that it facilitates a thorough examination of fewer cases. Moreover, it enables the participants to be open when answering questions and to explain what is applicable to them within the study's framework (Flick, 2015:12). The information gathered in qualitative research also facilitates a comprehensive interpretation of the findings, because it enables the investigator to discover and take note of irregularities or subdivisions in the collected dataset (Hesse-Biber, 2010:6).

With qualitative data collection, the researcher makes comparisons directly after each interview. Although researchers might have a prepared schedule, this will enable them to make certain adjustments in the next interview (Flick, 2015:84, 214). There is, however, no guarantee that qualitative techniques are error-free. Davies *et al.* (2003:sec. 163-164) explain that some participants might not abide by the rigorous procedures and some results might be inconsistent within the interpretations of the group. Another disadvantage of using fixed questions within interviews is that they might not cater for all the opinions of the participants (Flick, 2015:214). However, the interviews enable the researcher to have direct experience of interviewees, which assists in examining and decoding a diverse set of information. The statistical findings produced by the quantitative research are enlightened by the qualitative responses and thus support the quantitative results at the end of the analysis (Hesse-Biber, 2010:6).

4.2.2 Quantitative approach

A quantitative approach is a method in which one introduces a theory and confirms it by means of analysis. The sample is selected before the data gathering begins (Flick, 2015:84). It is often aimed at targets such as an organisation or people or who have a set of functional or interpretative attributes and/or relations between two entities (Carroll, 2013:124). Quantitative research is unbiased and the constructs can be tested using various instruments (Creswell, 2009:4). The research is conducted in a structured and planned manner to present measurements with precise and accurate results (Flick, 2015:9; Kumar, 2011:104).

The advantage of quantitative research is that it generates a considerable amount of data from a large number of respondents in a short time and provides an extensive level of generalisability (Flick, 2015:12). Organisations that have to repair their images after an incident might find quantitative research extremely useful (Benoit, 2013:219), because the data generated might be essential to strategy building. However, Cornelissen (2017:194) explains that, although quantitative research produces data that can be statistically directed, it might be less intuitive and informative about an individual stakeholder. Moreover, some facets might not have any relevance for respondents, resulting in an inaccurate representation of that particular aspect (Flick, 2015:12; Kumar, 2014:sec. 80-81). However, quantitative research is more structured because of the

planned and organised format, which makes it accessible and straightforward for respondents. Moreover, quantitative research is a more affordable option that covers a large geographical area and guarantees no manipulation by the interviewer (Williman, 2011:97).

4.3 General research design

The general research design for the study is outlined in this section. Tables are provided that illustrate both the qualitative (Table 4-1) and quantitative (Table 4-2) research methods. The former were semi-structured interviews guided by an interview schedule (see Appendix A) and an online e-mail survey was conducted for the quantitative part of the research (see Appendix B). The headings in the tables, namely *“research question”*, *“guiding theoretical arguments”*, *“theoretical concepts”*, *“constructs measured”* and *“research methods”*, indicate the comprehensive framework of the research design.

Table 4-1: Qualitative research framework for the study

Qualitative research framework				
Research question	Specific guiding theoretical arguments	Theoretical concepts	Constructs measured	Semi-structured interviews (number/s indicated reflect question numbers)
<p>Specific research question 2:</p> <p>What is Orange River Cellars management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement?</p>	<p>Specific guiding argument 1</p> <p>Corporate reputation is a multi-disciplinary construct and is seen as stakeholders' overall perceptions of an organisation. Managing corporate reputation should be regarded as an essential component of an organisation's corporate communication strategy. Corporate reputation is built on core fundamental elements such as corporate identity, corporate image, corporate branding, corporate personality and corporate behaviour, ethics and culture, all of which play a vital role in establishing the foundation of corporate reputation.</p>	The understanding of corporate reputation	Corporate reputation	3, 4
		Fundamental elements of corporate reputation	Corporate identity	5(a), 5(b)
			Corporate image	6(a), 6(b)
			Corporate branding	7(a), 7(b)
			Corporate personality	8(a), 8(b)
	Corporate behaviour, ethics and culture	9(a), 9(b)		
	<p>Specific guiding argument 2</p> <p>Corporate reputation management involves the organisation aligning its strategic goals with the expectations of stakeholders. Corporate reputation management establishes and maintains an organisation's corporate reputation by attracting beneficial resources and steering the organisation in the direction of the goals it wants to achieve. Corporate reputation management is a long-term activity, whereby specific principles should be applied as part of a strategic management function</p>	Management of stakeholder relations	Stakeholder relations	10, 11
		The understanding of corporate reputation management and the principles involved	Responsibility	12
			Achieving goals	13
Principles	14			

Qualitative research framework				
Research question	Specific guiding theoretical arguments	Theoretical concepts	Constructs measured	Semi-structured interviews (number/s indicated reflect question numbers)
	implemented by a specific department or individual within the organisation. Orange River Cellars should manage its corporate reputation to improve on overall organisational performance.		Corporate reputation risks	14
	Specific guiding argument 3 Corporate reputation measurement involves an assessment method to determine and measure the perceptions of various stakeholder groups. Measuring corporate reputation can aid the organisations with current and future challenges in the reputation dimensions measured. Utilising the <i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® measurement instrument, which consists of the dimensions of emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, financial performance and social responsibility, will generate information that will assist Orange River Cellars to further manage and improve its corporate reputation.	The understanding of corporate reputation measurement	Corporate reputation measurement	15, 16, 17
		<i>Reputation Quotient</i> ® measurement instrument	Emotional appeal	18
			Products and services	19
			Vision and leadership	20
			Workplace environment	21
			Financial performance	22
	Social responsibility	23		
	General questions	The understanding of advantages of corporate reputation	Advantages of corporate reputation	24, 25
Global wine industry		Orange River Cellars in the global wine industry	26	

Qualitative research framework				
Research question	Specific guiding theoretical arguments	Theoretical concepts	Constructs measured	Semi-structured interviews (number/s indicated reflect question numbers)
		South African wine industry	Orange River Cellars in the South African wine industry	27

Source: Author's own interpretation

Table 4-2: Quantitative research framework for the study

Quantitative research framework				
Research question	Specific guiding theoretical argument	Theoretical concepts	Constructs measured	Research method: Online e-mail survey (number/s indicated reflect question numbers)
<p>Specific research question 3:</p> <p>What are the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' reputation according to the <i>Reputation Quotient</i>®?</p>	<p>Specific guiding argument 3</p> <p>Corporate reputation measurement involves an assessment method to determine and measure the perceptions of various stakeholder groups. Measuring corporate reputation can aid the organisations with current and future challenges in the reputation dimensions measured. Utilising the <i>Reputation Quotient</i>® measurement instrument, which consists of the dimensions of emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, financial performance and social responsibility, will generate information that will assist Orange River Cellars to further manage and improve its corporate reputation.</p>	Emotional appeal	Feel good about the organisation	8
			Admire and respect the organisation	9
			Trust the organisation	10
		Products and services	High quality	11
			Innovative	12
			Value for money	13
			Stands behind its products and services	14
		Vision and leadership	Capitalises on market opportunities	15
			Excellent leadership	16
			Clear vision for the future	17

Quantitative research framework				
Research question	Specific guiding theoretical argument	Theoretical concepts	Constructs measured	Research method: Online e-mail survey (number/s indicated reflect question numbers)
		Workplace environment	Rewards employees fairly	18
			Good company to work for	19
			Good employees	20
		Financial performance	Outperforms its competitors	21
			A record of low profitability	22
			Low risk investment	23
			Shows growth prospects	24
		Social responsibility	Supports good causes	25
			Environmental responsibility	26
			Community responsibility	27

Source: Author's own interpretation

4.4 Research methods

A mixed-methods approach was adopted; that is, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were utilised for this study (refer to Table 4-1 and Table 4-2). The data collection methods enabled the researcher to obtain answers to the specific research questions mentioned in Chapter 1 (paragraph 1.2.2). This research on Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation management constituted the first time such a study had been done in the South African wine industry context. In the qualitative part of the research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with Orange River Cellars' management team to elicit their perspectives on corporate reputation management and measurement. Additionally, an online e-mail survey was employed as a quantitative research method, with the *Reputation Quotient*® being used as the measurement instrument to guide the research on stakeholders' perspectives of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation.

In the next section, the qualitative and quantitative research methods utilised in this study are assessed in detail.

4.4.1 Qualitative research method

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Orange River Cellars' management team to determine their approach to corporate reputation management and measurement. The rationale for utilising this method and choosing a case study design, the sampling for the semi-structured interviews, the interview schedule, the interview process and the analysis of the information collected from the interviews are described in detail.

4.4.1.1 Semi-structured interviews

A case study design was chosen to obtain in-depth knowledge of corporate reputation management and measurement within Orange River Cellars, since they had never conducted a corporate reputation measurement assessment. A case study methodology is frequently used in various academic fields and disciplines. A case study design is described by Kumar (2014:sec. 279) as a group or community used as a selected case that becomes the foundation of a detailed, all-inclusive and in-depth investigation of the viewpoints the researcher wants to discover. A case can be represented as one place, setting, institution or every person within it, which is often referred to as the unit of analysis (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017:27). In this instance, Orange River Cellars' management team represented the unit of analysis for this study.

There are various types of interview formats (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:152), but semi-structured interviews were chosen for this study because they are used extensively and their efficacy has

been well established over the years (Flick, 2009:150). Using semi-structured interviews afforded the researcher the flexibility required to elicit a wide range of opinions from the participants without being too strict (Rabionet, 2011:563; Zohrabi, 2013:256). Semi-structured interviews are used both in a “*structured and unstructured*” way (Williman, 2011:99). Using semi-structured interviews gives the researcher a great deal of independence and flexibility (Kumar, 2014:sec. 343-344), allowing for a detailed response on important aspects of the topic (Denscombe, 2010:175). Moreover, interviews are exploratory and are conducted when in-depth information is required on a specific topic (Denscombe, 2010:141; Williman, 2011:99). Interviewing Orange River Cellars' management team steered the researcher into a more in-depth understanding of management's perception of corporate reputation management and measurement.

Semi-structured interviews enables the researcher to be more adaptable and the participants to expand on the topic more broadly (Denscombe, 2010:175). However, in order to achieve this, the researcher had to ensure that the interviews were conducted in a relaxed atmosphere and that information was gathered without pressuring the interviewees to answer. Moreover, she had to be attentive and focus on being unbiased. The latter can be achieved by giving the interviewees the freedom to converse in an open manner (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:152). The latter enabled the researcher to maintain control while still managing the environment and discussions comfortably. There might be some concerns when conducting interviews, including the location, electronic voice recorders, the quality of recordings, the gender of the researcher and whether the researcher and interviewees are acquainted (Rabionet, 2011:565). It was the case with this study that the interviews took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, so a few of the participants were unavailable for face-to-face interviews. Although there might have been concerns as previously mentioned, the chosen location, voice recorders and background of the participants were thoroughly checked beforehand.

The corporate reputation theory detailed in Chapter 2 and the concepts underpinning the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) were the focus of the semi-structured interviews. The Orange River Cellars management team's views and perceptions on corporate reputation were expected to provide the researcher with an in-depth understanding of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation management and measurement, in particular the managers' feelings, judgments and rationalisations regarding the topic (Denscombe, 2010:141-142). Although corporate reputation theory was used to guide the interviews, the participants had the freedom to express their views in detail, but were guided to remain within the limits of the identified academic constructs.

4.4.1.2 Sampling of the semi-structured interviews

The target sample was all the available members of Orange River Cellars management team. An e-mail was sent to each member, explaining the study and inviting them to participate. All 12 members of Orange River Cellars' management agreed to participate in the study.

The following members were interviewed:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Chief Marketing Manager
- Chief Production Officer
- Group Human Resource Manager
- Manager: Packaging and Distribution
- Manager: Primary Production Wine
- Manager: Viticulture services
- Manager: Wine Tasting Center
- Marketing Manager: Northern Division
- Marketing Manager: Southern Division
- Public Relations Officer

The researcher interviewed all the members mentioned above of Orange River Cellars' management team, and the content was analysed by means of qualitative content analysis. The aim was to evaluate management's perceptions and approach to corporate reputation management and measurement.

4.4.1.3 The interview schedule

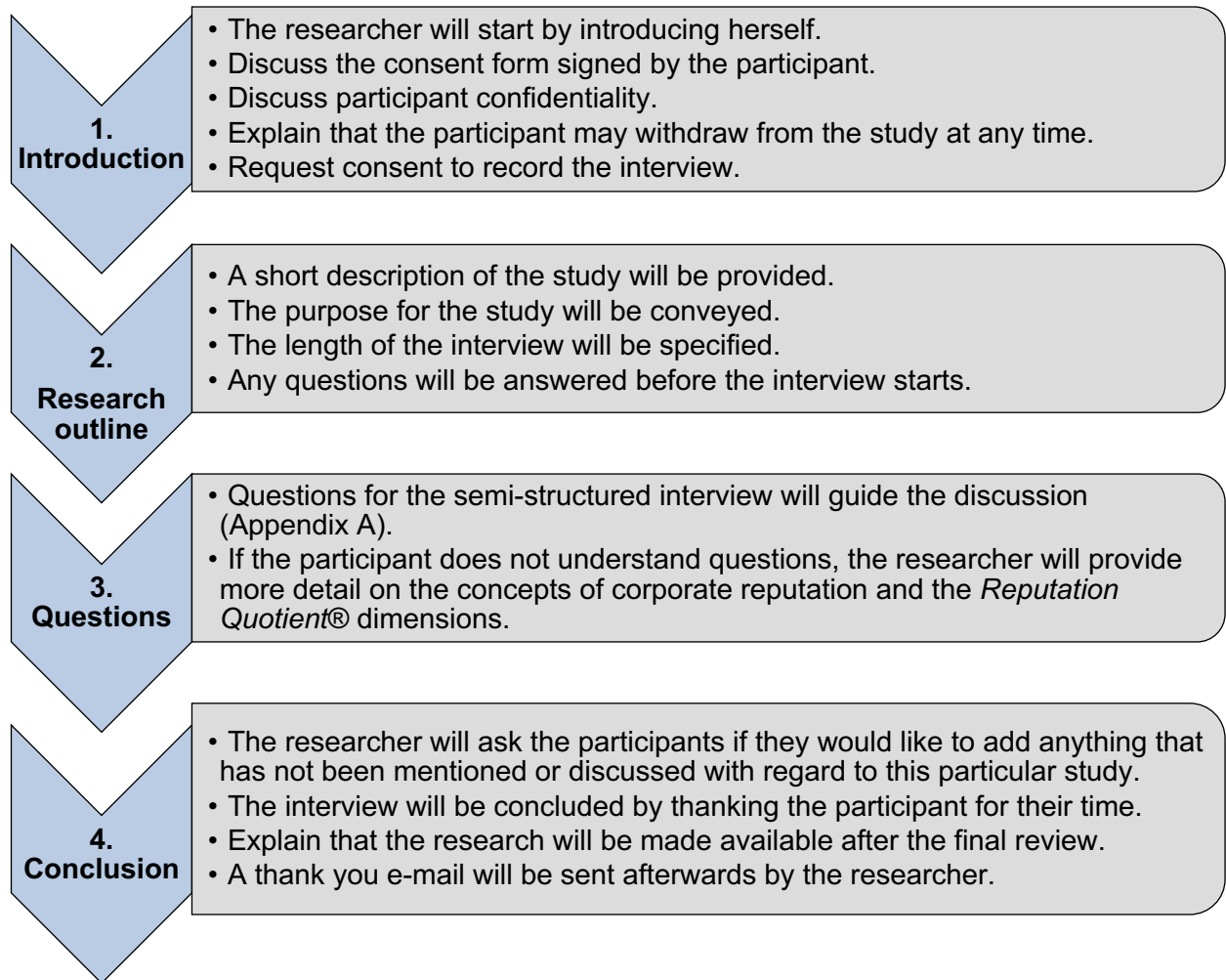
For the purpose of this study, an interview schedule was compiled (see Appendix A) as a reference for the researcher to ask each interviewee the same set of questions. When semi-structured interviews are administered, each one should be completed in one session with fixed

questions developed at an earlier stage in research (Flick, 2009:267). The questions were compiled by the researcher, utilising the theory discussed in Chapter 2. Open-ended questions were formulated concerning corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, stakeholder relations, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement, the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions, the advantages of a good corporate reputation, the global wine industry and the South African wine industry in general.

Through semi-structured interviews, the researcher established a relationship with each participant by means of conversation to obtain the perceptions of management on corporate reputation management and measurement within Orange River Cellars. Although they had the freedom to discuss the questions, the researcher guided the conversation away from unnecessary deviation from the topics and questions asked (see Appendix A).

4.4.1.4 The interview process

The researcher first requested consent from the chief executive officer and human resources manager to conduct the semi-structure interviews, after which the potential interviewees were contacted via e-mail to set up individual interviews. Most of the interviews were conducted face-to-face at Orange River Cellars' wine tasting centre offices for the participants' convenience and to ensure a controlled environment in which COVID-19 regulations and precautions could be adhered to. However, three of the 12 participants were situated in the Western Cape. Four of the 12 participants were interviewed telephonically, because this was the preferred method. Once the researcher had obtained consent to record the interview, the other preliminaries were taken care of. The interviews were structured according to a preprepared plan, which is shown in Figure 4-1:



Source: Author's own interpretation

Figure 4-1: The interview process

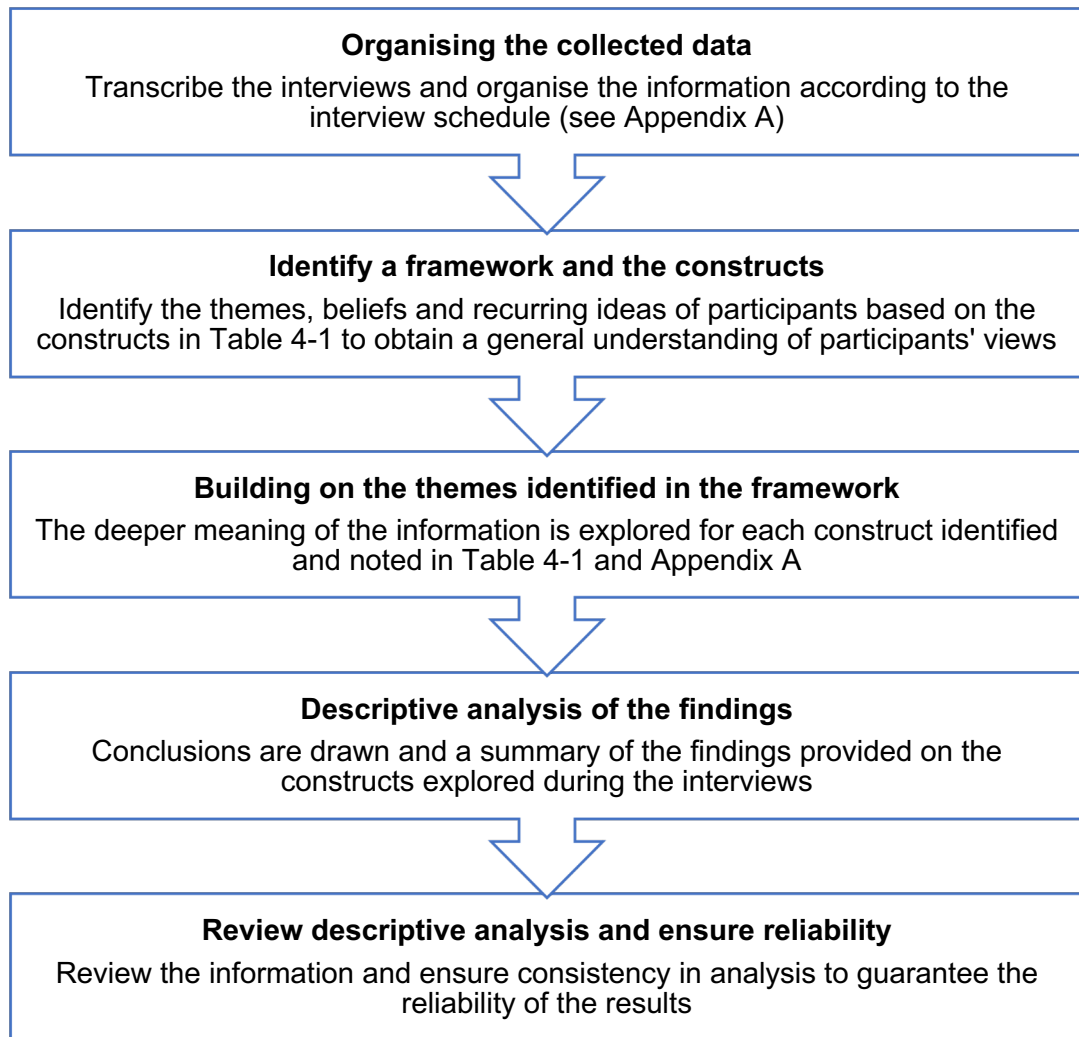
Once the introduction was completed, the interviewer and interviewees explored the concepts and constructs of corporate reputation management and measurement. The semi-structured interviews with Orange River Cellars' management were conducted in a prearranged manner, by asking the same questions with identical phrases, as specified in Appendix A. Asking questions in a structured manner, with identical phrases, provided the researcher with consistent information to guarantee comparable information (Kumar, 2014:sec. 316-318). However, the participants still had the freedom to respond freely to the questions posed by the researcher.

Precautions were taken not to lead the participants to specific answers to suit the researcher's needs. However, when the participants did not understand particular questions, the researcher provided a better understanding of the theory mentioned in the previous chapters. The interviews were conducted during the months of May and June 2020 and each interview lasted between 30 minutes to an hour and 30 minutes. The interviews were electronically recorded, with the participants' permission, and were transcribed by the researcher straight after the interviews had

taken place. As per the theory mentioned in Chapter 4, the identities of the participants were not included in the transcriptions to ensure confidentiality.

4.4.1.5 Analysis of information collected from the interviews

The data from the recorded and transcribed interviews were analysed by the researcher by means of qualitative content analysis. The latter is a method for explaining the meaning of qualitative information scientifically. It is done by categorising the information as occurrences within a coding frame (Schreier, 2012:sec. 12-13). Coding, in a qualitative manner, merely refers to the categories or constructs identified in the interviews with reference to the designed interview schedule (refer to Table 4-1). Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017:94) state that the main objective of a qualitative content analysis is to thoroughly transform a considerable amount of information and to structure categories of the transcribed interviews in order to provide an accurate summary of the significant results. The steps involved are to transcribe and read the interviews, identify the main points and place them into categories (codes), continuously analyse the data and reflect on and rework data to integrate the themes (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017:94-97; Kumar, 2014:sec. 542-545). The researcher's own adaption of the steps for the qualitative content analysis for this study is provided in Figure 4-2.



Source: Author's own interpretation

Figure 4-2: The researcher's steps for the qualitative content analysis

As indicated in Figure 4-2 above, conclusions were drawn from the attitudes and opinions of each member of Orange River Cellars' management team to provide a descriptive analysis of the findings. The interviewees' perceptions and judgements of corporate reputation management and measurement were analysed, after which conclusions were drawn. The interview schedule served as a guide when conducting the content analysis, and the research question and sub-sections were compared to the answers of each participant. Constant comparison guaranteed accuracy in the summary of the results.

The next section comprises a description of the quantitative research method employed in this study, to determine the perceptions of Orange River Cellars' stakeholders of its corporate reputation.

4.4.2 Quantitative research method

A quantitative research method was applied to determine the perceptions of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation. The *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument was utilised to determine the perceptions of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation via an online survey. The e-mailed survey, research instrument, sampling for the online e-mail survey and the data analysis of the results of the survey are described below.

4.4.2.1 Online e-mail survey

Technological developments have made it easy to conduct surveys online (Kumar, 2014:sec. 322-324). Surveys are one of the most general research techniques used in data gathering (Rowley, 2014:308), primarily because of the limited time constraints to deliver the survey to individuals (Williman, 2011:97). Online e-mail surveys are only one of the many types of procedures a researcher can use to gather data (Rowley, 2014:321). However, implementing a survey via an online method presented an affordable way of securing feedback from respondents on the corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:228). Applying this method enabled the researcher to communicate with a sizeable audience distributed over distant locations (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:225; Rowley, 2014:309; Williman, 2011:97). The online e-mail survey did not involve any direct contact between the researcher and the respondents.

The disadvantages of online e-mail surveys are that the researcher might not receive a 100% response rate, since potential respondents can decide to answer the survey in their own time or reject it, resulting in a low response (Williman, 2011:97). A low response could have an impact on the representativity of the chosen sample. Another disadvantages could be that the respondents might provide an overall positive or negative response and that they might interpret questions differently (Flick, 2015:212). Consequently, if questions are misunderstood or difficult to comprehend, they will not be answered truthfully (Rowley, 2014:314). This means it is extremely important to ensure that the respondents understand the questions. This can be achieved through simplicity and transparency (Kumar, 2014:sec. 317-319).

A corporate reputation management survey based on the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) was utilised. The survey started with questions about the demographics of the respondents. These were followed by questions grounded in the six dimensions of the *Reputation Quotient*®. Using this survey made it possible to generate rich data in a numeric form that indicated the various feelings and attitudes of the respondents (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:sec. 42-43). The answers to the survey were collected via an online e-mail link

and processed by the Statistics Consultation Department of the North-West University's Potchefstroom Campus.

A total of 2,725 online surveys were sent via email during the months of May and June, of which 2,371 emails were delivered. The respondents had four weeks to complete the survey and one additional week was used to follow up on possible responses. The survey could be completed instantly, since it took a maximum of four minutes to fill in.

The research instrument employed in this study are described in the next section.

4.4.2.2 Research instrument

The measurement instrument for this study was the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) (Chapter 2, paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). Corporate reputation was measured across 20 attributes over six dimensions. The variables specified in the survey were based on the following dimensions: emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, financial performance and social responsibility (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248-249). The respondents assessed Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation in relation to these six dimensions and 20 attributes. The scores for each dimension were added up to provide a final score out of 100 (Dowling & Gardberg, 2012:sec. 68; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249). Hence, the final corporate reputation score was determined by combining each dimension's individual score.

As mentioned above, each dimension has various factors on which an organisation is assessed. Although other models also measure reputations, they might omit certain aspects, whereas the *Reputation Quotient*® was invented to comprehensively measure how an organisation is perceived in a modern environment (The Harris Poll, 2018:3). It is worth noting that the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) measurement instrument is a set and standard instrument. Therefore the standard *Reputation Quotient*® questions were applied to Orange River Cellars; the researcher did not formulate or adapt any questions. Table 4-3 illustrates how the *Reputation Quotient's*® dimensions and attributes were applied to Orange River Cellars (see Appendix B for the specific online e-mail survey questions):

Table 4-3: The Reputation Quotient® (2007) adjusted to Orange River Cellars

RQ® Dimensions	RQ® Attributes	RQ® Attributes applied to Orange River Cellars
Emotional appeal	Feel good Admire and respect Trust	I <u>feel good</u> about Orange River Cellars. I <u>admire and respect</u> Orange River Cellars. I <u>trust</u> Orange River Cellars.
Products and Services	High quality Innovative Value for money Stands behind products/services	Orange River Cellars offers <u>high quality products and services</u> . Orange River Cellars develops innovative products and services. Orange River Cellars offers products and services that are <u>good value for money</u> . Orange River Cellars <u>stands behind</u> its products and services.
Vision and leadership	Capitalise on market opportunities Excellent leadership Clear vision for the future	Orange River Cellars <u>capitalises on market opportunities</u> . Orange River Cellars has <u>excellent leadership</u> . Orange River Cellars has a <u>clear vision</u> for the future.
Workplace environment	Rewards employees fairly Good place to work Good employees	Orange River Cellars <u>rewards employees fairly</u> . Orange River Cellars is a <u>good company</u> to work for. Orange River Cellars has <u>good employees</u> .
Financial performance	Outperforms competitors Record of profitability Low risk investment Growth prospects	Orange River Cellars <u>outperforms competitors</u> . Orange River Cellars has a <u>record of profitability</u> . Orange River Cellars is a <u>low-risk investment</u> . Orange River Cellars has <u>growth prospects</u> for the future.
Social responsibility	Supports good causes Environmental responsibility Community responsibility	Orange River Cellars <u>supports good causes</u> . Orange River Cellars is <u>environmentally responsible/friendly</u> . Orange River Cellars shows <u>community responsibility</u> by maintaining high standards in the way it treats people and society.

Source: Adapted from Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:248-249

The Reputation Quotient's® survey was conducted in English. It was sent to all the stakeholders whose e-mail addresses were provided by Orange River Cellars. The researcher aimed to obtain distinct evaluations and assessments on corporate reputation from the various stakeholders: the

employees were expected to assess the organisation from the perspective of workers, the investors were expected to focus on the financial aspects of investing in the organisation, customers would assess the organisation based on the services and products, and the community would assess the organisation based on its general performance (Dowling, 2016:208-209). Moreover, every stakeholder was expected to have his or her own set of opinions and levels of education, which would influence how the questions were answered (Rowley, 2014:328).

The respondents were asked to rate each of the 20 attributes based on a five-point Likert scale rating from one to five, with one being “*strongly disagree*” and five being “*strongly agree*”. With the highest score for each item being five per attribute, the highest possible score was 100 (Dowling & Gardberg, 2012:sec. 68; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:249). The Harris Poll (2018:5) organisation categorises the following scores as excellent to critical:

- 80+: Excellent
- 75-79: Very good
- 70-74: Good
- 65-69: Fair
- 55-64: Poor
- 50-54: Very Poor
- 0-50: Critical

Any organisation’s objective would be to achieve a score of above 70, which would indicate a decent corporate reputation. By measuring Orange River Cellars’ corporate reputation, the organisation was expected to be guided to improve its communication strategies to target any weak points identified by the *Reputation Quotient*®. The next section comprises a description of the sampling procedure for the online e-mail survey.

4.4.2.3 Sampling of the online e-mail survey

The sampling is typically done in advance, before the researcher commences with the data collection (Flick, 2015:84). A meticulous approach was followed for the sampling, since specific participants were selected from a manageable target population (Du Plooy, 2009:108). A population comprises the entire number of features or entities used for research, such as an organisation, individuals and objects (Williman, 2011:94).

A non-probability availability sampling method was employed by targeting all the individuals who had provided their e-mail addresses to Orange River Cellars. A non-probability sample involves only a specific target group, suggesting that not every individual in the population will have a fair chance of being selected and the researcher might struggle to gather a sample frame (Williman, 2011:122). In this case, stakeholders who had not supplied their e-mail addresses were not invited to participate in the study. The individuals included in this study were all stakeholders above the age of 18 years who supplied had Orange River Cellars with their e-mail addresses. The age criterion was due to the fact that alcohol consumption is allowed in South Africa only when one is above that age. The sample consisted of stakeholders mainly from the Northern Cape region, especially Upington, Kakamas, Keimoes, Groblershoop and Grootdrink.

All e-mail addresses provided by the Orange River Cellars database, including those gathered from visitors to its wine tasting centre in Upington, were used. Stakeholders from other provinces in South Africa were also included if they had supplied their e-mail addresses. This sample was selected due to its convenient availability and because it included the entire Orange River Cellars' relevant stakeholder group. The aim was to achieve a minimum of 200 responses to give the study statistical power (paragraph 1.5.1.2.2). To achieve this sample, a total of 2,371 surveys were sent via email to the various stakeholders. It was determined that more respondents would be recruited if a sample size of 200 was not reached. However, this was unnecessary because a total of 263 respondents returned completed the online email surveys.

The stakeholders consisted of the community, consumers, employees, export wholesalers, grape farmers, investors, management, stockists and dealers, and suppliers. The *Reputation Quotient*[®] is especially crucial in this sense that it accommodates all stakeholders and not just organisational advisors and managers used in other measurement instruments (Marquina Feldman *et al.*, 2014:58-59).

In the next section the data analysis methods used for data processing are described.

4.5 Data analysis of the online e-mail survey results

Frequency tables, confirmatory factor analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha-Coefficient, Spearman rank-order correlations, T-tests and an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were utilised for the data analysis process.

4.5.1 Frequency tables

Frequency tables, which are often referred to as univariate tables, generally include information about a categorical variable (Kumar, 2014:sec. 575-576), such as respondents by age, as part of

demographic information about the selected sample. Frequency tables aid the researcher to manage large amounts of data and to draw the necessary conclusions. Basically, frequency analysis provides clarity by depicting data in statistical tables.

The data summarised in the frequency tables shows the demographic information of the respondents in relation to variables (categories of the specific question), the frequency (number of respondents) and the percentages. This facilitates the interpretation of the results. The results obtained from the *Reputation Quotient*® were separated into categories of participants' opinions, from strongly disagree to disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree. The mean and standard deviation of the respondents' perceptions for each *Reputation Quotient*® dimension was also provided. The mean indicated the respondents' average rating on each attribute and the standard deviation demonstrated how much the respondents differed from the mean value of the representative sample.

Statistical tables were used to clarify the data obtained from the online e-mail surveys.

4.5.2 Validity of the quantitative data

The validity of the quantitative data was assessed via a confirmatory factor analysis and correlations to determine the statistical significance of the measurement model.

4.5.2.1 Confirmatory factor analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to verify the estimates of factors and loadings of the measured indicator variables on predetermined theory (Garson, 2018a:10). It was also used to assess the dimensions and attributes of the *Reputation Quotient*®. Moreover, the confirmatory factor analysis tested the validity in terms of what the constructs were intended to measure. Standardised estimates were determined if the measurement model was statistically significant. Statistical significance indicated whether the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes fitted well within the constructs they were supposed to have measured. A value of above 5% usually indicates that the standardised estimate is statistically significant.

The correlations between the dimensions of the *Reputation Quotient*® instrument were tested to determine whether the constructs were statistically meaningfully related. Correlations (Table 4-4) also determined whether the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions had strong relations with each other. The closer the scores are to 1, the more strongly it relates to the construct to determine statistical significance.

Table 4-4: A framework for the correlation scale

Correlation scale	Interpretation
0.1-0.29	Small correlation
0.3-0.49	Medium correlation
> 0.5	High correlation

Source: Author's own interpretation

The Chi-square test for goodness of fit also verified that the proposed measurement model displayed a good fit with the data. The Chi-square test of goodness of fit is often viewed as stringent, but it is traditionally applied to evaluate data-model fit (Bandalos & Finney, 2010:109). A measure of model fit was established by dividing the Chi-square test statistics by the degrees of freedom (CMIN/DF) (Statisticssolutions, 2020). Mueller and Hancock (2010:379) assert that it is important that the researcher presents numerous fit indices drawn from “*three broad classes*”. A Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value of above 0.90 indicates an excellent fit (Mueller & Hancock, 2010:379; Sreejesh & Mohapatra, 2014:92). Hence, for the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), an acceptable value limit for the model is typically less than 0.10 and should not be accepted if above 0.10 (Blunch, 2008:116; Garson, 2018b:57). All the above-mentioned factors should indicate a valid and satisfactory score of *Reputation Quotient®* dimensions and attributes to indicate a good model fit. These will be specified in Chapter 6. Because this is an existing survey, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed to test the validity of the survey in the current context.

4.5.3 Reliability of the quantitative data

The reliability of the quantitative measurement instrument was determined by the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient in this study.

4.5.3.1 Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

The Cronbach's Alpha is a universal measure to test the reliability of the measurement instrument (Bonett & Wright, 2014:3; Cho & Kim, 2015:207). The coefficient Cronbach's Alpha test checks internal consistency to determine whether the measurement instrument has truly measured what it was intended to measure (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:260-261); that is, if the survey items measured what they were proposed to measure.

The Cronbach's Alpha is regularly used as a consistency coefficient to assess and give an estimation of the validity of the true score. Performing the Cronbach's Alpha test is easier than testing and re-testing (Streiner, 2003:99).

The researcher used the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient to determine the internal validity of the sub-scales used in the study. The internal validity of the study was expressed through the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient using numbers between 0, suggesting weak, and 1, suggesting strong. The optimal values that variables should achieve range between 0.7 and 0.9 (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:sec. 207-208; Garson, 2018b:117). According to Kline (cited by Field 2009:675), the overall accepted value for cognitive tests, including intelligence tests, is usually 0.8 and the appropriate cut-off range for ability tests would be 0.7. The latter authors also stipulate that a value of below 0.7 is possible when psychological constructs are involved due to the variety of constructs that are measured.

4.5.4 Associations with demographic variables

The effect of the ordinal demographic variables of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions were assessed using Spearman rank-order correlations, T-tests and ANOVAs.

4.5.4.1 Spearman rank-order correlations

The Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient determines the linear relationship between two ordinal variables on a measurement scale (Christmann, 2014:175; Geher & Hall, 2014:65). The Spearman correlation can range between -1.00 and +1.00, and can be interpreted in the following manner:

Table 4-5: Spearman rank-order correlations' scale

Correlation scale	Interpretation
0.1-0.29	Small correlation
0.3-0.49	Medium correlation
> 0.5	High correlation

Source: Author's own interpretation

The main intention of this test is to establish to which degree the two variables are similar or contradictory (Kothari, 2004:139). In general, the two variables' relationship is determined by the strength revealed through numerical values, while the direction of the relationship is given by the sign of the correlation (Table 4-5). For this study, the Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient

tested whether the correlation revealed the statistical significance of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions.

4.5.4.2 T-test

The T-test, originally developed by William Sealy Gosset in 1908, is a statistical method used to describe figures and draw conclusions from the comparison of two samples obtained from the studied population (Rutherford, 2011:2). The T-test makes it possible to identify the differences in the sample means of the population they represent (Geher & Hall, 2014:264). Thus, a T-test presented the opportunity to compare the statistical significance between two independent population groups' mean scores, for example regarding gender or language. T-tests' *p*-values suggest that if a *p*-value of above 0.05 is achieved, there is no statistical significance between the variables (Ellis & Steyn, 2003:51). Effect sizes are also provided by T-tests to determine practical significance. The interpretation of the effect sizes is shown in Table 4-6.

Table 4-6: The interpretation of effect sizes

Effect size	Interpretation
0.2	Small effect
0.5	Medium effect
0.8	Large effect

Source: Adapted from Cohen, 1988:25-26

As seen in Table 4-6 above, an effect of 0.2 represents a small effect. This is often found in new research. On the other hand, a 0.5 medium effect that is large enough to be detected could indicate practical significance. Lastly, a 0.8 large effect indicates practical significance (Cohen, 1988:25-26). An expected method to clarify practical significance would be to “*use the standardised difference between the means of two populations, that is, the difference between the two means divided by the estimate for standard deviation*” (Ellis & Steyn, 2003:52).

The effect size demonstrates the power of inferences about group variations or the relationship between the variables within quantitative findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:sec. 211). In general, the calculation of effect sizes indicates the practical significance of the results, where a small effect size represents no practical significance and a large effect size of above 0.5 is seen as practically significant.

4.5.4.3 ANOVA

Originally formulated by Sir Ronald Fisher in 1918 (Christmann, 2014:141), the ANOVA test is one of the most frequently used methods in statistical analysis. ANOVA refers to “*Analysis of Variance*” and is a technique used to compare the statistical difference between more than two groups of means (Christmann, 2014:141).

The ANOVA test is used to determine statistical significance between group means and is often summarised in an F statistic that is converted into a *p*-value. A *p*-value of above 0.05 indicates that there is no statistical significance between the researched variables (Ellis & Steyn, 2003:51). The F statistic “*compares between-group variability with within-group variability*” (Geher & Hall, 2014:290). The ANOVA test was used in this study to determine the differences between the mean scores of the differing demographics of Orange River Cellars’ stakeholders.

The Cohen effect sizes serve as a guideline in the ANOVA test and is provided in Table 4-7 below (Cohen, 1988:25-26):

Table 4-7: The interpretation of effect sizes

Effect size	Interpretation
0.2	Small effect
0.5	Medium effect
0.8	Large effect

Source: Adapted from Cohen, 1988:25-26

As seen in Table 4-7 above, the effect size represents the practical significance between variables. One of the assumptions of the ANOVA is that the variances of the groups should be equal. The equality was tested with the Levene’s test of equality of error variances. If a high variance is achieved, the test establishes the equality of error variance and recognises it as a valid analysis.

4.6 Limitations of the study

According to Hornby (2015:878), limitation is “*the act or process of limiting or controlling*”. Concerning this study, the generalisability of findings are limited since the main focus was a company in a specific country and industry setting, namely Orange River Cellars in the Northern Cape, South Africa, which is in the wine production industry. However, research done in this particular setting provided the researcher with an in-depth understanding of corporate reputation management in general and measuring corporate reputation with the *Reputation Quotient*®.

There might be other possible elements to measure with respect to corporate reputation, but only the concepts and constructs of the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) were measured in this study. However, the *Reputation Quotient*® has been refined through rigorous testing; it thus constitutes a reliable, consistent and valid measurement instrument (Fombrun *et al.*, 2000:254; Kanto *et al.*, 2016:410; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:43).

4.7 Validity and reliability of the overall study

Two critical factors in research designs are validity and reliability (Abbott & McKinney, 2013:45; Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008:2276). Validity implies the appropriateness of the research elements and whether the instrument measured what it was intended for (Drost, 2011:114), whereas the reliability of research refers to whether the technique applied produces consistent results every time. Achieving reliability in quantitative research is straightforward, since numerical data is used. However, in qualitative research, achieving identical results is rather challenging because it is more subjective and descriptive (Zohrabi, 2013:259). The validity and reliability of the qualitative part of this study is examined first, followed by a discussion of the quantitative research.

In qualitative research, validity can be more problematic, because researchers work with familiarities, emotional states, assessments, narratives and goals (Kumar, 2014:sec. 379-380). Since the participants have diverse personal beliefs and viewpoints, the reliability of the results and measurement might be compromised. The specific factors that might affect validity are the setting, where the interview takes place, vagueness in the researcher's questions, the feelings of the participants that particular day, the attitude or emotions of the interviewer, collaboration with participants and a change of heart regarding the answer to a previously asked question (Drost, 2011:107; Kumar, 2014:sec. 384-386). However, to ensure validity, the researcher conducted all the interviews, recorded each interview, took notes of the points emphasised during interviews, transcribed all the interviews and conducted an intensive content analysis of all the participants' feedback to ensure reliability.

With quantitative research, validity refers to the accuracy of the measurement (Abbott & McKinney, 2013:45) and whether the measurement instrument measured what it was supposed to measure (Abbott & McKinney, 2013:45; Drost, 2011:114; Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008:2278; Kumar, 2014:378-379). Reliable research instruments should provide a constant, unchanging, anticipated and exact measure (Kumar, 2014:sec. 383-384). Replication in measurement is essential, such that if the same items are measured in diverse instances and circumstances, the measurement should still be unaffected (Drost, 2011:106). As a result, the emphasis is placed on

the measuring instrument being consistent and producing consistent results every time it is used (Abbott & McKinney, 2013:45).

In research, reliable measurements might not be automatically valid (Drost, 2011:107). The current researcher was assisted by the Statistics Consultation Department of the North-West University's Potchefstroom Campus to limit the possibilities of these instances, and to increase validity and reliability. Having said that, the *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) was found to a reliable and valid measurement instrument for this study (Fombrun *et al.*, 2000:254; Kanto *et al.*, 2016:410; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:43). The Cronbach's Alpha was utilised to test the reliability of the measurement instrument (paragraph 4.5.3.1). Similarly, a confirmatory factor analysis (see 4.5.2.1) was performed to test the validity of the *Reputation Quotient*® in the specific context. Moreover, the fact that the constructs of the *Reputation Quotient*® have previously been measured many times contributes to the validity of utilising this instrument.

The study of stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation is valid because two research methods were used to test the relevance of the data (see paragraphs 4.4.1 and 4.4.2).

4.8 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations play a significant role in any research endeavour. Ethics are the means by which we function and represent values that help differentiate between good and bad (Centre for Innovation in Research and Teaching, 2018). Ethics aid researchers to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Matters regarding ethics are emphasised in all studies (Silverman, 2013:sec. 26). Numerous issues related to ethical considerations have to be brought to the attention of researchers and are generally revealed in the study's development (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:sec. 130-131).

As noted by the Centre for Innovation in Research and Teaching (2018), ethical considerations are vital when working with human beings in research. The participation of selected individuals should always be voluntary and there should never be any pressure from the researcher (Le Roux, 2010:209). Creswell and Creswell (2018:sec. 130-131) agree that the researcher should never insist on participants consenting to participate, should avoid disrupting the location when collecting information, treat all participants the same and always ensure the confidentiality of the participants' personal details. Regardless of the line of work, all researchers are steered by ethical codes, and these codes have developed over time (Kumar, 2014:sec. 486-488). Unethical behaviour in research might entail breaching the contract, violating agreements, not keeping

information confidential and/or falsifying outcomes (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:28). Consequently, the researcher did not force any participant or respondent to participate in the study.

For this study, agreements were reached with Orange River Cellars regarding accessing files, conducting interviews and disseminating surveys. The full anonymity of the survey respondents was ensured; in particular, they were not asked to provide their names. They were assured that none of their personal details would be made public. However, it was difficult to give a 100% guarantee of anonymity to the interview participants, since the management members were acquainted with one another. However, the focus of the questions was purely on corporate reputation management and measurement within the organisation. Sensitive questions, such as those regarding alcohol consumption or the abilities of the other management members, were not posed in the interviews.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter comprised a description of the research methodology employed for this study. A mixed-methods approach ensured that the researcher could generate rich and relevant information from the participants and respondents by means of semi-structured interviews and the *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) survey respectively. A research framework was provided for both the qualitative and quantitative research methods utilised in the study (Table 4-1 and Table 4-2).

The quantitative data was captured by the Statistical Department of Potchefstroom, North-West University, with assistance from IBM SPSS and AMOS software. The quantitative data analysis included frequency tables, confirmatory factor analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha-Coefficient, Spearman rank-order correlations, T-tests and the ANOVA. An interview schedule (Appendix A) was formulated to guide the semi-structured interviews and content analysis steps (Figure 4-2) were followed for the qualitative content analysis.

The results of the semi-structured interviews, the topic of which was Orange River Cellars' management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement, are described in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: CORPORATE REPUTATION MANAGEMENT AND MEASUREMENT: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The research methods utilised in this study were described in the previous chapter. The difference between qualitative and quantitative research was clarified and the research procedures described. In this chapter, the findings from the qualitative part of the research are presented. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Orange River Cellars' management team as the qualitative research method in this study, with a view to answering the following specific research question:

What is Orange River Cellars management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement? (see 1.2.2)

The interview format facilitated flexibility in the discussions with the participants about the predetermined constructs (Table 4-1). The interviews were therefore expected to generate an in-depth understanding of the participants' knowledge of corporate reputation management and measurement (paragraph 4.4.1.1).

The chapter is divided into several sections, based on the participants' answers to distinct questions, which were in turn based on certain concepts (see Appendix A). The demographic profile of Orange River Cellars' management team is presented first. The subject of the second section is corporate reputation and that of the third is the fundamental elements of corporate reputation. The focus of the fourth section is stakeholder relations, while corporate reputation management is dealt with in the fifth section. In the sixth section, the concept of corporate reputation measurement is addressed. The seventh section concerns the *Reputation Quotient*[®] measurement instrument, and the subject of the last section is the global and the South African wine industry. General remarks by the participants regarding corporate reputation and Orange River Cellars will conclude the findings for the semi-structured interviews.

5.2 Biographical profile of Orange River Cellars' management

The first two interview questions, Questions 1 and 2 (see Appendix A), related to the biographical aspects of the participants as they pertained to the work environment at Orange River Cellars. They were asked how long they had worked for Orange River Cellars and what their current positions at Orange River Cellars were.

As mentioned above, a total of 12 interviewees participated in this study. Of the 12 management members, 10 were male and two were female. The participants in this study differed in their degrees of knowledge and experience of the organisation. The months and years that they had worked for Orange River Cellars were taken into consideration when analysing their answers. The participants' employment months and years are illustrated in the table below.

Table 5-1: Participants' employment years/months at Orange River Cellars

Participants	Employment year/month
Participant 1	6 months
Participant 2	6 years
Participant 3	2 years and 6 months
Participant 4	12 years and 6 months
Participant 5	11 years
Participant 6	12 years
Participant 7	2 months
Participant 8	34 years
Participant 9	11 years
Participant 10	4 years and 6 months
Participant 11	1 year and 6 months
Participant 12	15 years

As indicated in table 5-1 above, half of the management team had been with Orange River Cellars for more than six years, which provided the organisation with stability and possible knowledge of corporate reputation management and measurement. The other half had been with the company for less than six years; however, they had all motivated innovation and change at Orange River Cellars over the past three years. The job descriptions of the 12 participants are listed below.

- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Chief Marketing Manager
- Chief Production Officer
- Group Human Resources Manager

- Manager: Packaging and Distribution
- Manager: Primary Production Wine
- Manager: Viticulture services
- Manager: Wine Tasting Centre
- Marketing Manager: Northern Division
- Marketing Manager: Southern Division
- Public Relations Officer

The participants' identities have been kept confidential; therefore, they are simply referred to as "Participant 1, 2 and so on".

5.3 Corporate reputation: Defining the term

Corporate reputation was examined as the first construct in the semi-structured interviews (see Question 3 in Appendix A). The participants were asked what corporate reputation meant to them. In the theory mentioned in Chapter 2 (see paragraph 2.3.2), corporate reputation was seen as the overall perceptions' stakeholders had about an organisation. It therefore seemed necessary to first find out what the participants' thought corporate reputation was. They were also given the freedom to add their comments on the subject. Their responses are provided in Table 5-2 below:

Table 5-2: Participants' understanding of corporate reputation – verbatim responses

- **Participant 1:** *"It will mean what reputation you maintain and what view customers and consumers have given your corporate environment."*
- **Participant 2:** *"It is your company name and products, the perception that the people in our market have."*
- **Participant 3:** *"There are two aspects, one external, number one the public, and the other internal, who is either a shareholder of the business or employee, their experience or how their perception is of the organisation, relative to their frame of reference."*
- **Participant 4:** *"Integrity. As simple as that."*
- **Participant 5:** *"I would think it would be looking after your customers, your providers, to the people that see the organisation."*
- **Participant 6:** *"It is the image that the community and the broad community, and your clients and suppliers, and everyone has of you."*

- **Participant 7:** *"It's basically how the public or client sees them... so it is basically what people think of them and how they see them."*
- **Participant 8:** *"It is the organisation's image to the general public."*
- **Participant 9:** *"The perspective that the people of your company or your institution have outside and what they think of your company."*
- **Participant 10:** *"Corporate in my head is a company, an institution... you set the example, and reputation is something you build in time."*
- **Participant 11:** *"It's the image that the company portrays outwards and inwards to the clients, suppliers, to the staff... so how people view the company."*
- **Participant 12:** *"It is your shareholders as well as your consumers' opinion about the business."*

Most of the participants were aware that corporate reputation revolved around stakeholders' perceptions of the organisation; however, two respondents did not have the same view. One participant focused on the aspect of integrity and the other viewed the concept as formal and a reputation that was built over time. While these aspects might still play a role in corporate reputation, the two participants did not connect it to the perceptions of stakeholders. They were somewhat vague in their definitions of corporate reputation.

The point was also raised that corporate reputation was not just about the views of the customers, but also those of the industry in which a company competed. For example, participant 5 stated that *"we are in the wine industry and it is also how other organisations in the wine industry view us"*. Some notions about Orange River Cellars were also expressed. Two participants stated that the organisation's corporate reputation might be viewed as unfavourable. For example, one of the participants said that Orange River Cellars was seen as an *"old cooperative cellar"* and participant 7 felt that there might be a misconception of Orange River Cellars, because if the organisation *"adds a different label to the same bottle of wine, people will suddenly like it"*. In paragraph 2.3.1 above, it was argued that corporate reputation management was an essential component of an organisation's corporate communication strategy. However, none of the participants said anything about including corporate reputation in an organisation's corporate communication strategy.

From the participants' feedback above, it appears that they perceive corporate reputation as the view or perception people have of the organisation. Some participants claimed that it was the *"image"* portrayed to the public. Only one participant did not have a clear picture of what corporate reputation involved. Therefore, most of the participants had sufficient knowledge of what corporate reputation was and understood that it involved the perception people had of an organisation (cf. paragraph 2.3.2).

5.4 Fundamental elements of corporate reputation

As mentioned in in paragraph 2.3.4 above, corporate reputation is built on core fundamental elements such as corporate identity, corporate image, corporate branding, corporate personality, and corporate behaviour, ethics and culture.

In this section, the participants were asked to name the elements that constituted corporate reputation (see Question 4 in Appendix A), whereafter the focus was placed on each of the fundamental elements of corporate reputation.

5.4.1 Identification of the fundamental elements of corporate reputation

Most, if not all, of the participants were uncertain about how to answer this particular question and there was some hesitation in their answers. Elements that were revealed during interviews were aspects such as *“responsibility”*, *“reliability”*, *“the integrity of the organisation and service delivery”*, *“perception”*, *“values”*, *“quality”* and *“communication”*. Participant 5 stated that it was *“how people see you in the market”*, but no connection was made to the corporate image of the organisation. Similarly, participant 2 claimed that it involved *“the organisation’s name, the products, employees and social media”*, but did not mention the organisation’s identity or brand. Participant 4 said that *“a high-quality product”* was a vital element and that it was the *“image that the product portrays”* to the community, which relates to a part of only one of the elements, namely corporate image.

While most of the participants did not mention any of the fundamental elements mentioned above, three participants included features of the elements corporate behaviour, ethics and culture. They alluded to elements such as *“ethical values”*, *“creating a family culture”* and, as participant 6 stated, *“the ethical way to do business”* as part of their understanding of the elements of corporate reputation. Participant 3 specified that *“the culture of the institution is a big element”* of corporate reputation. In general, the participants hesitated when asked what elements constituted corporate reputation and only a few of them commented on ethical values and culture.

The questions following question 4 related to the fundamental elements noted in the literature as they applied to Orange River Cellars (see Questions 5–9 in Appendix A). The first question, (a) required the participants to provide a definition or understanding of the concept and the second question (b) focused explicitly on Orange River Cellars.

5.4.2 Management’s understanding of corporate identity

In the literature review, corporate identity was identified as one of the elements of corporate reputation. Thus, the researcher first asked the participants how they would define corporate

identity (see Question 5a in Appendix A), from which further discussions followed. The participants' viewed corporate identity are indicated in Table 5-3 below:

Table 5-3: Participants' understanding of corporate identity – verbatim responses

- **Participant 1:** *"It is your value chain... what you stand for as a corporate company."*
- **Participant 2:** *"It has to be the company name, the image... the prestige, the name in the market."*
- **Participant 3:** *"Purely your perception of that business... in a broad sense, your experience."*
- **Participant 4:** *"In the wine industry, there are two identities. The typical estate cellar with a Cape Dutch house and the so-called producing cellars."*
- **Participant 5:** *"How we are viewed as positive or negative. Our identity comes from our history."*
- **Participant 6:** *"Our identity in terms of our image... the image [of what] we should be."*
- **Participant 7:** *"Your identity is what you do that sets you apart, that defines what you are."*
- **Participant 8:** *"I look at it from a cooperative identity and not corporate... it means to be profit-driven."*
- **Participant 9:** *"...it is a status symbol."*
- **Participant 10:** *"...the product that goes out to the public."*
- **Participant 11:** *"What the company stands for... how people see the company from the outside."*
- **Participant 12:** *"How the consumers, suppliers see Orange River Cellars."*

As seen in paragraph 2.3.4.1, corporate identity includes all the **visual components** of the organisation that aid in promoting the image and creating a lasting impression in stakeholders' minds. It was clear from the participants' answers above and the discussions with them that no one could provide a clear definition of what corporate identity was. Although some had a general idea of the concept, they could not provide the standard definition. They referred, in general, to how people "see" the organisation.

The next question was about how the participants viewed Orange River Cellars' corporate identity (see question 5b in Appendix A). It soon became apparent that Orange River Cellars' identity was seen as "old school" and extremely conservative in the way it did business. Some associated Orange River Cellars' identity with that of a "cooperative farmer community" and sometimes being too "traditional with traditional values". However, most of the participants stated that they were working on changing the organisation's identity into a more positive one because there had been a "negative connotation" with the brand. Participant 10 said that Orange River Cellars had an "old

way of packaging and bottling but has changed it now to fit in with the new way of doing things". Even though the organisation's identity had somewhat changed, participant 9 felt that "there is still old damage or an old reputation that exists".

Some participants mentioned that the newly-appointed CEO, who had joined the company two years ago, had made dramatic changes to improve the identity of Orange River Cellars. Although there might be negative connotations, participant 12 believed that they were "unique, because we are the only wine supplier or distributor in the Northern Cape". In general, the overall feeling of the participants was that Orange River Cellars had a unique corporate identity in the market, but that it needed to change from its traditional image and strengthen its identity beyond its regional markets. Although the participants made general statements about corporate identity, the researcher found that they often confused corporate identity with the corporate image.

5.4.3 Management's understanding of corporate image

The participants were then asked what corporate image meant to them and how they would apply it to Orange River Cellars (see Question 6a and 6b in Appendix A). Corporate image, as explained in paragraph 2.3.4.2 above, refers to the **mental picture** or impressions stakeholders have of an organisation. The participants' views on what corporate image was are shown in Table 5-4 below:

Table 5-4: Participants' understanding of corporate image – verbatim responses

- **Participant 1:** "The day-to-day operations that the business emits to its clients and consumers."
- **Participant 2:** "All the perceptions that people have."
- **Participant 3:** "It is the perception of the organisation... the role you play in the industry."
- **Participant 4:** "Integrity, professionalism... being honest in the way you do business."
- **Participant 5:** "The image of the organisation, I think, is to look after your manufacturer... typically everything."
- **Participant 6:** "It means you have to be the type of person that people want to identify with."
- **Participant 7:** "It is important that you have an image of prestige... how you present yourself should be classy."
- **Participant 8:** "It should be a recognisable brand... if you see the sign, you should know exactly what it is."
- **Participant 9:** "How you present yourself as an employee... people associate you with the organisation."
- **Participant 10:** "An image is an example you set."

- **Participant 11:** *“The image is what the organisation presents to clients... in other words, how people view the organisation.”*
- **Participant 12:** *“It is how the manufacturers or clients or any person identify with the place.”*

The views shown in Table 5-4 indicate that the participants had some idea of what corporate image was. Although none of them used the words *“mental picture”* or *“impression”*, they still made the association with stakeholders’ perceptions of an organisation. Half of them were somewhat vague with respect to a precise definition, whereas the other half all mentioned the *“view”* or *“perception”* people had of the organisation. Again, it seemed the participants found it difficult to distinguish between corporate identity and corporate image. Although they struggled to provide a concrete definition of corporate image, they nevertheless regarded it as a vital component. Participant 10 emphasised that *“everything you do, everything you are and everything you portray to the public is the image you set forward and it should be precise”*. On this note, participant 6 claimed that an organisation’s corporate image was also *“what the organisation wants to be, but that you need money to endorse it... this is the biggest challenge”*. Participant 3 speculated that corporate image was *“the social role you play in society, the financial role you play towards shareholders and stakeholders, the role you play with your employees and producers, your role in the industry... and this is your image”*.

As explained in Chapter 2, a negative image can harm the organisation. Participant 9 specified that *“people associate you with the business, and if your image is weak, they will associate your business as weak”*. This suggests that employees also have a role to play in the corporate image of the organisation. The participants made the connection between image and stakeholders’ views or perceptions, but only one participant mentioned the importance of communication and maintaining a strong image over time that would create a strong corporate reputation.

When the interviewees were asked how they viewed Orange River Cellars’ corporate image (see Question 6b in Appendix A), most of them felt that there was more work to be done to strengthen the corporate image of Orange River Cellars. As participant 3 stated, *“we are busy going through a great deal of change... at this stage, we have an identity crisis”*. Participant 1 similarly claimed that Orange River Cellars *“had taken too long on the old image as a cooperation that produces bulk wines and is known for cheap wine”*. On the other hand, participant 2 felt that the organisation’s image was known only for specific traits: *“People know our fortified wines well, but they do not associate us with good wine or winemakers”*.

Most of the participants referred only to particular products or brands that had a strong image. They often referred to the Delush and Hedgehog wines as having a strong image. However, it seemed that they wanted to move away from the connection to Orange River Cellars' overall image and instead focus on the individual brands that were doing well in the market. Contradictory answers with regard to the corporate image of Orange River Cellars were often expressed; some participants claimed the image was professional and others disagreed. Some of the participants felt the corporate image had changed and others said it was still in the process of changing. In general, the participants disagreed with each other about the corporate image of Orange River Cellars.

5.4.4 Management's understanding of corporate branding

The next construct in the semi-structured interviews was corporate branding. The interviewees were asked to explain what corporate branding was all about (Table 5-5) and, thereafter, to apply it to Orange River Cellars (see Questions 7a and 7b in Appendix A). According to the theory in paragraph 2.3.4.3, a corporate brand is the external presentation that represents the organisation through **visual components** such as the organisation's name, symbols and identity. The participant's views of corporate branding are shown below:

Table 5-5: Participants' understanding of corporate branding – verbatim responses

- **Participant 1:** *"The brand comes from the product you sell."*
- **Participant 2:** *"First, you have to make the distinction between the organisation's name and the traditional or various wine brands."*
- **Participant 3:** *"What you buy where... why do you exist, that is a corporate brand for me?"*
- **Participant 4:** *"Our generic value proposition is a valued product, high-quality product... against a good value."*
- **Participant 5:** *"There are two brands, the different wines and then your organisation... basically the name of your business."*
- **Participant 6:** *"It is the physical brands in terms of various products."*
- **Participant 7:** *"It is what you see first... if it looks nice, it will grab the client's attention."*
- **Participant 8:** *"Something that is immediately recognised on all levels... if the logo appears, you immediately recognise it."*
- **Participant 9:** *"The connotation with a brand can harm the organisation."*
- **Participant 10:** *"It starts with the name and then the label you put on the wine. It can be a specific name or just a wine."*
- **Participant 11:** *"What your organisation stands for... what makes you unique."*

- **Participant 12:** *"If you mention a brand, you associate it with, let's say, a top Sauvignon Blanc."*

The interviewees' views on what a corporate brand was were tremendously vague. Two participants had some idea of visual recognition; for example, the logo was mentioned. However, no one could provide a clear definition of the term. The participants associated the brand with products. However, they did draw the conclusion that a good brand would give the organisation a better position in stakeholders' minds. Participant 8 felt that a corporate brand should be instantly recognised. Some of them also thought that the consumer often bought wine based on what they saw and not necessarily on their palate. Even though the discussion led to the idea that consumers *"buy with their eyes"*, participant 12 believed that consumers would always *"come back to that specific wine"* they preferred. In general, the management team could make a connection with the organisation's brand; however, most of them had difficulty with the definition of a corporate brand.

The next question (see Question 7b in Appendix A) was on how the participants saw Orange River Cellars' corporate brand. Participant 1 felt that the Orange River Cellars brand was *"old"* and *"it doesn't create any excitement"*. Participant 11 also stated that Orange River Cellars' brand was *"old fashioned and traditional"*. Again, the participants reduced the original Orange River Cellars' brand to that of the Delush and Hedgehog wines, which are seen as brands in their own right. Participants 3 and 6 considered Orange River Cellars' brand to be strong in terms of its bulk production, but said that *"five years ago we did not have strong consumer brands"*. Certain participants believed that Orange River Cellars had a unique brand because of its regional exclusivity and the nostalgia about the Northern Cape, which the Western Cape did not have. Participant 5 highlighted that there might be confusion about the organisation's brand because there was an Orange River Cellars, Orange River Wines and many other aspects that caused confusion in stakeholders' minds. Participant 7 emphasised that Orange River Cellars should be *"aware of falling behind"*, meaning that it should fall in line with technology and new changes in the industry. Generally, the interviewees believed that they should move away from Orange River Cellars' traditional brand and focus on the brands that make a difference, such as the Delush, Hedgehog, Omstaan and Lyra wines. None of the participants made the connection between a good corporate brand and a strong corporate reputation.

5.4.5 Management's understanding of corporate personality

The next fundamental element of corporate reputation is corporate personality. According to paragraph 2.3.4.4 above, corporate personality is the **values** that an organisation stands for. The

participants' definitions of an organisation's corporate personality (see Question 8a in Appendix A) are shown in Table 5-6 below:

Table 5-6: Participants' understanding of corporate personality – verbatim responses

- **Participant 1:** *"It is the aura that you reveal, exactly what the word says... personality."*
- **Participant 2:** *"It is probably the values and what the company stands for, their integrity, their image outside."*
- **Participant 3:** *"The profile of your company... if you want to put it blatantly, introvert or extrovert... is it a company that thinks expansionistic[ally]?"*
- **Participant 4:** *"How we deal with each other on a day-to-day basis."*
- **Participant 5:** *"I would think of a person's personality – if a person is an introvert or extrovert."*
- **Participant 6:** *"It is who you are, what your persona reveals."*
- **Participant 7:** *"The feeling you have when you deal with the company... that impression."*
- **Participant 8:** *"Professionalism, in all areas."*
- **Participant 9:** *"Wow, not sure. People struggle to distinguish between corporate personality and private life."*
- **Participant 10:** *"There must be good communication... respect and communication."*
- **Participant 11:** *"...if the organisation was a person, how would that person be?"*
- **Participant 12:** *"Personality is both internal and external. Internal is how the employees feel about the company; external is what role the company plays towards a hundred or thousands of people that work in South Africa."*

Only one participant made the connection between corporate personality and the values of the organisation. Although some of them did not use the word "value", they mentioned personality traits such as "professionalism" and "respect". Regrettably, most of the participants could not provide a clear definition or explanation of corporate personality. Furthermore, no one mentioned that an organisation's corporate personality could influence stakeholders' perceptions. As stated in paragraph 2.3.4.4., organisations have personalities that stem from their organisational values, culture, adequate communication, employee participation and consistency of image, identity and brand. None of the interviewees mentioned any of these elements.

When asked to describe Orange River Cellars' corporate personality (see Question 8b in Appendix A), participant 11 answered, *"An old Afrikaans man... that is scared of change."* Participant 5 also mentioned *"an old farmer affair"*. However, participant 5 said that they were trying to move away from this stigma. Participant 9 stated that Orange River Cellars was trying to do business in an "ethical" and "sincere" manner. Some interviewees felt that the stakeholders

identified with Orange River Cellars' corporate personality, but others disagreed. Participant 12 replied that the corporate personality had *"decreased over some time... because of a re-evaluation process of facilities and personnel"*. Similarly, participant 10 claimed that changing Orange River Cellars from a cooperative approach to a more formal corporation was *"somewhat of a let-down for producers"*.

Even though negative comments were made, participant 4 said that *"we have the same value system"* and participant 8 felt that their management team led by example in terms of Orange River Cellars' values. Due to the changes that had been made, they had become *"growth-oriented"*, according to participant 3, and *"our values should be driven financially because that is what the producers' needs are"*. As noted above, Orange River Cellars strives for an *"open, honest communication system, where people communicate the truth even if it is not pleasant to hear."* This was reiterated by participant 6. This seems important, since a trustworthy organisation is one of the main traits of corporate personality (paragraph 2.3.4.4). Participant 1 also claimed that *"clients and consumers are very welcoming towards Orange River Cellars; in other words, they like our personality"*. However, there were differences in opinion regarding Orange River Cellars' corporate personality.

In general, the interviewees tried to understand the concept in terms of a person's personality, but they could not apply the theory accurately to an organisation's personality. They struggled to comprehend what corporate personality meant, so a definite conclusion could not be drawn from their answers with specific reference to Orange River Cellars. However, some participants did feel that Orange River Cellars' corporate personality was old fashioned and in the process of undergoing change. Although negative comments were made, some participants felt that Orange River Cellars strove to establish open communication and strong ethical values.

The next section is on corporate ethics, culture and behaviour.

5.4.6 Management's understanding of corporate ethics, culture and behaviour

The last fundamental element of corporate reputation is corporate ethics, culture and behaviour (paragraph 2.3.4.5). As explained above, corporate behaviour relates to ethics and is guided by the organisation's **values, standards and culture**. It often relates to what the organisation **stands for**. The participants' understanding of corporate ethics, culture and behaviour (Table 5-7) are provided below, followed by opinions that were revealed in further discussion:

Table 5-7: Participants' understanding of corporate ethics, culture and behaviour – verbatim responses

- **Participant 1:** *"There are ethical guidelines, especially in the alcohol industry... we have an obligation to act ethically towards clients."*
- **Participant 2:** *"That's what I do and what I say... to carry it out; in other words, we do not do suspicious deals behind everyone's backs. "*
- **Participant 3:** *"It is your frame of reference, in terms of your principles... your ethical norms."*
- **Participant 4:** *"It is your way of doing things; for example, no blame-shifting."*
- **Participant 5:** *"Matters will be done in the correct way.... ethics is basically what you do when no one is watching."*
- **Participant 6:** *"How business is done above the table... we have an ethical system."*
- **Participant 7:** *"You have the work ethics to do something to the best of your ability... and culture is the work culture you create."*
- **Participant 8:** *"There are certain ethical values within the wine industry that are enforced by law."*
- **Participant 9:** *"It is one of the building blocks in the organisation... poor ethics and weak values will be a given in the failure of your business."*
- **Participant 10:** *"How ethical people are and culture... let's say... if you become very comfortable your culture is also of such."*
- **Participant 11:** *"It is the nature and the attitude of people within the organisation."*
- **Participant 12:** *"It is the way you do business, internal and external. Internal how you handle your employees... external, if you say you'll pay within 30 days, then you have to pay within 30 days."*

Most of the interviewees understood the meaning of corporate ethics and culture. The majority applied the notion directly to Orange River Cellars without providing a clear definition of corporate ethics, culture and behaviour; however, they still understood the concept. Participant 11 believed that the ethical aspect of an organisation entailed *"how people act towards each other, how people act outside the company is all connected to culture"*. Participants 4 and 7 placed emphasis on the organisation's ability and responsibility to cultivate that specific culture among employees. Participant 12 highlighted that corporate ethics was about keeping a promise, suggesting, *"can someone trust you to pay their salary, can a producer trust that the budget would be paid out on time?"*. This ultimately comes down to the standards that an organisation sets or the values they believe in, as discussed in Chapter 2. The ethical procedures and values cited by participant 10 indicated that it was *"what is right and wrong"* in the organisation. However, participant 3 claimed that employees would apply individual standards of what they believed was appropriate, which might not fit in with the organisation's standards. However, none of the participants mentioned

that corporate behaviour, ethics and culture could influence an organisation's corporate reputation, as referred to in Chapter 2.

When asked how they would describe the current ethics and culture within Orange River Cellars, the majority of the interviewees claimed that the organisation's ethical code and values were a top priority and highly ranked. As participant 8 said, "*Ethics, trustworthiness and integrity play a big role in our ethical values*". Participant 1 also explained, "*We have a responsibility to be ethical with the product we place in the market, to follow laws and there are no grey areas*". Similarly, participants 4 and 9 stated that being ethical was especially important when one trades with alcohol. Participant 6 emphasised that within Orange River Cellars, "*there is never an easy way out and we never do business under the table*". When culture was analysed, various participants said that Orange River Cellars maintained a cooperative culture or business approach. Correspondingly, participant 3 revealed that a cooperative culture or approach "*could dilute the responsibility or liability of making decisions... since the board of directors provides the direction*" and the cooperative culture or mentality "*is not always in the best interests of the producer... whereas a pure commercial business would find a balance*". However, participant 5 believed that the organisation's cooperative culture was busy changing and that "*senior management have made the mind shift, but middle management is still holding back*". Interestingly, participant 10 felt that the corporate culture of Orange River Cellars was a "*man's world*" and that "*women exist, but they don't really have a say*". However, the participants had fairly good knowledge of corporate ethics and behaviour in relation to their understanding of corporate culture. Although there were a few disagreements about the culture of the organisation, all of them felt that Orange River Cellars had always been ethical in the way it did business.

In summary, most of the participants could not name any of the fundamental elements of corporate reputation provided in Chapter 2 above when asked what constituted corporate reputation. However, a few participants mentioned values and ethics, which relate to the corporate ethics, culture and behaviour element. Confusion existed with corporate image and identity, because the participants overlapped the two concepts and could not perceive them as distinct constructs. In terms of the corporate brand, the interviewees mostly referred to individual products' brands and only a few referred to Orange River Cellars' overall corporate brand. They struggled to explain corporate personality and could not accurately apply it to the organisation's personality. Although they could not articulate a theoretical explanation of corporate ethics, culture and behaviour, they did understand what the notion entailed. However, none of the respondents mentioned that any of the individual fundamental elements could affect the organisation's overall corporate reputation.

The next section concerns stakeholder relations with Orange River Cellars, since identifying stakeholders, establishing relationships with them and meeting their needs are all vital to creating a strong corporate reputation (see paragraph 2.3.3).

5.5 Stakeholder relations

During the interviews, an emphasis was placed on Orange River Cellars' stakeholders and stakeholder relations (see Questions 10 and 11 in Appendix A). In Chapter 3, a total of nine key stakeholders were identified that play a role in Orange River Cellars, namely the community, consumers, employees, export wholesalers, grape farmers, investors, management, stockists and dealers, and suppliers (see Figure 3-7). It has also been established that engaging with stakeholders is vital for an organisation, because stakeholders have certain expectations of the company. To achieve this engagement with stakeholders, organisations should engage in appropriate communication and manage relationships with these stakeholders. Thus, it was necessary to identify how Orange River Cellars managed its relationships with the above stakeholder groups.

When the participants had to identify the stakeholders associated with Orange River Cellars, eight of them identified only two to four stakeholders, namely grape farmers, consumers, employees and suppliers. Two participants could name between five and six, such as the community, grape farmers, consumers, employees, suppliers and investors. Only one participant could identify eight of the nine stakeholder groups mentioned above, but this interviewee also identified the government as a stakeholder, because it was responsible for alcohol regulations. However, the majority of the participants acknowledged only the producers or grape farmers and consumers. They seemed to neglect the other stakeholder groups, such as the community, employees, export wholesalers, investors, management, stockists and dealers, and suppliers.

When asked how Orange River Cellars managed relationships with the stakeholders they had mentioned, the majority of the interviewees said that the grape farmers, frequently referred to as "*producers*", were the most important group to consider, although participant 5 noted that relationships with the producers were the "*most difficult*", because the producers measured the wine industry against other agricultural industries such as the dried raisin industry in the Northern Cape and not against similar wine cellars in the Western Cape. Participant 7 confirmed that the "*company carries the interests of grape farmers at heart and the new CEO reaches out more to them and is more accessible*". Participant 11 also said that "*it's difficult to keep a balance between a good business plan and the producer's needs*", since Orange River Cellars is trying to focus on a profitable business model by shifting the focus from just the producers to all stakeholder needs. Additionally, participant 8 reasoned that the wine industry was at a particularly low point now and

that producing table grapes and raisins was more profitable than producing grapes for wine. Participant 6 and 10 felt that Orange River Cellars had a solid approach to stakeholders and felt that their organisation had always communicated openly and honestly with its stakeholders.

Participant 3, who could name most of the stakeholder groups, said that *"we have the responsibility of allocating resources... and it is important to find a responsible balance between stakeholders' needs"*. What was discussed during the interview with this specific participant was that the balance would be to produce a product that was affordable for the consumer without undermining the producers' sustainability. What also came to light was that the organisation had to be *"a responsible citizen to the community"* but that the organisation currently had too many employees, which made it impossible to pay them the current market rates. Still, participant 4 felt that internal communication with employees was effective regarding *"what the challenges are and where we are heading"*. In general, the participants felt that although there were challenges, the organisation managed relationships well through proper feedback sessions and personal communication with the stakeholders.

In summary, most of the participants could not name all of the stakeholders identified in chapter 3, namely the community, consumers, employees, export wholesalers, grape farmers, investors, management, stockists and dealers, and suppliers (see Figure 3-7). However, some participants could name about four stakeholder groups. One participant specifically added the government. The most attention was paid to the producers or grape farmers and consumers, with little consideration of the other stakeholder groups. Most of the participants believed that Orange River Cellars managed its relationships with stakeholders well.

Management's understanding of corporate reputation management is assessed in the following section.

5.6 The understanding of corporate reputation management

Corporate reputation management, as noted in paragraph 2.3.5 above, requires persistence from the organisation to align its strategic goals with stakeholder groups, which can only be achieved through adequate management. Interview questions 12, 13 and 14 specifically addressed the corporate reputation management construct (see Appendix A). The primary focus was on who should be responsible for managing corporate reputation, what role it played in achieving goals and what the principles of corporate reputation management were.

5.6.1 Corporate reputation management: Who should be held responsible?

As indicated in paragraph 2.3.5.2, organisations should appoint specialised employees, such as internal reputation managers, to maintain and build a corporate reputation. The responsibility does not lie with management alone, but management should steer the organisation in the direction that they want it to go.

Most of the interviewees communicated that *“every employee”* is responsible for managing the organisation’s corporate reputation. Although the word *“everyone”* was mentioned, participant 8 clearly stated that it *“must be communicated from the top management’s side”*. Participant 11 felt that if management did not drive corporate reputation, the rest of the employees would not follow. Overall, eight participants agreed that the organisation’s management team should drive corporate reputation management. Participant 2 explicitly stated that although the desired corporate reputation should be driven by management, every employee had the responsibility to *“protect the corporate name and the organisation’s products”*.

Participant 3 also said that the *“CEO should provide the direction and management should drive it in their different departments”*. However, participant 1 felt that every employee should be allowed to provide *“input”* in managing the organisation’s corporate reputation. Only two participants mentioned that, over and above management’s direction, a specific department or employee should be appointed to manage the organisation’s corporate reputation. In particular, participant 5 believed that the *“marketing department plays an important role”* in managing corporate reputation, and participant 6 acknowledged that the public relations officer should monitor the company’s corporate reputation. This contradicts the theory that not only management should be responsible, but specific employees should be appointed to maintain and build corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.5.2). However, the participants were not incorrect in emphasising that every employee was also responsible, since *“everyone is an ambassador”*, as stated by participant 4.

In summary, the majority of the participants felt that every single person in the organisation was responsible for managing Orange River Cellars’ corporate reputation. However, they did mention that the corporate reputation should be steered by management first and then be directed towards the employees. Only two participants acknowledged that a specialised department or employee should manage corporate reputation.

5.6.2 The role of corporate reputation management in achieving goals

A corporate reputation that is managed well can attract eligible resources to aid the organisation in achieving its desired goals. Corporate reputation management assists the organisation to

achieve goals such as gaining a better corporate reputation, attracting qualified employees, achieving sustainable growth, being profitable and outperforming competitors (paragraph 2.3.5.2). When the participants were asked what role corporate reputation management played in achieving organisational goals, they all instantaneously said that it was vital.

Participant 5 mentioned that there had to be measurable goals and that one should *"listen. Are we good or bad... and if not good, what should change"*. Participant 2 also said that the organisation should be *"consistent"* with the messages it sends to the public and often mentioned that one could not achieve goals if one did not put work into it. On the other hand, participant 11 did view corporate reputation management as a *"high priority"* and something that should be managed *"actively"*. Similarly, participant 9 said that *"if you do not measure your reputation well or maintain it... then you will miss your target market"*. Participant 12 also stated that corporate reputation management was critical to achieving organisational goals: *"It is decisive how you do business, with whom you do business and who wants to do business with you... Reputation management is critical in the wine industry because it is such a highly competitive market"*. Participant 7 argued that, in general, the organisation should establish goals to *"maintain its reputation"*. Participant 10 specifically said that there were *"guidelines from management"* that employees or departments should follow to achieve goals. However, the latter did not specifically relate to corporate reputation management guidelines that should be followed to achieve organisational goals. Participant 8 also emphasised that goals should be established and pursued by everyone, from management down to the last employee in the organisation.

In summary, the answers to the question about the specific role that corporate reputation management played to achieve specific goals within the organisation were somewhat vague. None of the participants mentioned anything regarding corporate reputation management that would help the organisation to attract eligible resources to help achieve organisational goals and improve on its overall performance.

5.6.3 Corporate reputation management principles

Corporate reputation management principles assist organisations to manage and improve their corporate reputations (paragraph 2.3.5.2). It came to light during the interviews that the participants misunderstood what the principles of corporate reputation management were. They did not specify the process required to manage an organisation's corporate reputation or what principles should be applied to achieve the desired corporate reputation.

Most of the interviewees understood the construct to be about the beliefs or moral behaviour of the company, such as *"being ethical"*, *"honest"*, *"responsible"*, *"loyal"*, *"values"* and *"transparent"*.

They had little knowledge of what corporate reputation management principles involved. None of the participants indicated that a reputation **audit or assessment** should first be completed to determine stakeholders' perceptions of the organisation. Nor did any of them state that the principles would involve compiling a **comprehensive reputation management plan** to aid in achieving goals. Although most found it difficult to say what principles were involved in corporate reputation management, participant 12 asserted that the principles were about **managing relationships** with the public, which still had some relevance to the general corporate reputation theory outlined in Chapter 2. During the interviews, none of the participants argued that a **specific employee or department** should be responsible for managing corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.5.2). Similarly, none of the participants mentioned that corporate reputation management was a strategic management function that enabled companies to avoid **reputational risks** (paragraph 2.3.5.3).

Only participant 3 said that "*principles are a function of your goals, both short and long term*" and that if an organisation is unsuccessful in a specific area, the principles should be adjusted. This participant was the only one who referred to a **plan or goal** that should be implemented to manage corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.5.2), but the interviewee did not mention a specific principle that should be implemented. Orange River Cellars' management team needs to understand the importance of corporate reputation management principles, since principles guide the organisation to achieving the desired corporate reputation. It seems that Orange River Cellars does not manage its corporate reputation as an element in its own right but merely focuses on building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders.

The next section will focus on management's understanding of corporate reputation measurement and their general perception of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions applied to Orange River Cellars.

5.7 Corporate reputation measurement

The participants were asked what corporate reputation measurement entailed, why it was important to measure corporate reputation and how often an organisation's corporate reputation should be measured (see Questions 15, 16 and 17 in Appendix A). The following questions on corporate reputation measurement, which are questions 18 to 23 in Appendix A, were based on the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument.

5.7.1 Management's understanding of corporate reputation measurement

In contrast to the theory presented in paragraph 2.3.6, namely that corporate reputation measurement involves using an assessment method or instrument to measure and determine the

perceptions of stakeholders, the interviewees saw corporate reputation measurements as the “*perception*” or “*feedback*” obtained from the market. They understood that measurement involved the perceptions of stakeholders; however, only six participants mentioned something about measuring perceptions through “*ratings*”, “*surveys*” and “*a temperature test*”. The other six did say the organisation should be measured on certain factors. As participant 4 argued, stakeholders did not just look at the product, because “*they [also] want to know your service level... how personnel is experienced... high quality... packaging and much more*”. Participant 7 also said that “*it is all about client satisfaction*” and participant 3 explicitly stated that measurement rating “*is the norm... it is the future*”.

Participant 6 felt that it was “*extremely important to know what someone thinks of you so that you can determine how you will act*”. As noted in paragraph 2.3.6, measuring corporate reputation enables organisations to improve on aspects that received a low rating. Participant 9 confirmed that “*if you do not measure, you will never know... you will not be able to identify weak points*”. A total of seven participants emphasised that once you measure and know your weak points, you can make the necessary changes. They all individually agreed that corporate reputation measurement determined the success of an organisation. Three participants also viewed measurement as an important aspect because it helped the organisation to see whether or not it had attained its goals. Again, participant 11 stipulated that it was “*important to measure your corporate reputation*” so that one could see what the views were from the outside. Then the organisation could take corrective action in the areas that needed it.

Three participants felt that corporate reputation should be monitored and measured on a continuous basis. Participant 8 revealed that “*there are smaller sections that should literally be measured day by day, week by week, month to month... but it goes back to finances*”. By contrast, one participant claimed that Orange River Cellars should measure its corporate reputation twice a year because “*this type of business is seasonal... depending on when the grape farmer gets paid... the feedback will vary*”. Five participants believed that it was necessary for Orange River Cellars to measure its corporate reputation only once every financial year. On the other hand, two participants said it was necessary three times a year and one said only once every five years.

Thus, the participants gave contradictory answers on how often Orange River Cellars should measure its corporate reputation. However, most of them believed that Orange River Cellars had never measured its corporate reputation.

Orange River Cellars’ management’s view on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions are discussed in the next section.

5.7.2 The Reputation Quotient® dimensions

The interviewees were asked to describe their overall perception of Orange River Cellars based on the dimensions of the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) measurement instrument (see Figure 2-7) that was used for the online e-mail survey in this study. Questions 18 to 23 related to the constructs based on the measurement instrument (see Appendix A). In this section, the participants were asked to provide an overall feeling or perception of each dimension; hence, the discussions were not focused on the dimensions' individual attributes.

5.7.2.1 The overall feeling of Orange River Cellars

The emotional appeal dimension is the first dimension in the *Reputation Quotient*®. For this question (Question 18 in Appendix A), the managers were asked to provide their overall feeling about Orange River Cellars as a whole.

Their overall feeling about Orange River Cellars was generally good. Most of the participants had a positive feeling. Participant 6 felt Orange River Cellars was a *"sustainable business"*. Participant 11 saw it as a business with great potential, with good employees, and participant 2 felt *"we are known in the market, but we are not one of the big role players"*. Participant 12 said that Orange River Cellars was an excellent company to do business with and a good company to work for. Participant 8 also had a positive feeling about Orange River Cellars and asserted that clients were *"positive about the way we manage the organisation"*.

Although most of the remarks were positive, participant 9 emphasised that *"everyone is worried, the wine industry has been under pressure for the last 15 years"*. Similarly, participant 3 claimed, *"there are concerns and uncertainties, both short and long term"*. Again, it came down to Orange River Cellars being an *"old cooperative"* business, which made change difficult to implement. As participant 5 said, *"I feel good about our company, but everything can always improve"*. Participant 7 also claimed that although a good feeling was experienced about the organisation, *"the perception from outside is not good"* in terms of the quality of the wines produced.

Even though there were a few negative remarks, all the participants had a generally good feeling about the organisation. Only a few of them had some concerns.

5.7.2.2 The overall perception of Orange River Cellars' products and services

The products and services dimension is the second dimension in the *Reputation Quotient*®. The interviewees were asked what their overall perceptions were of Orange River Cellars' products and services (see Question 19 in Appendix A).

In terms of products, participant 8 mentioned that *"we have good products... the perception has changed dramatically in the last four to five years"*. Participant 2 had a satisfactory overall perception of Orange River Cellars' products and added that *"familiarity is especially strong in the Northern Cape area"*. Participant 7 noted that the *"new series and new products"* were doing particularly well in the market. Participant 9 felt that Orange River Cellars had good wine, but that it could work on the packaging to provide a more updated design that fitted the market. Participant 5 claimed that *"we can still improve on the product side"* and participant 1 felt that the products were *"old"* and needed *"revival"*. However, participant 3 emphasised that Orange River Cellars was in the process of focusing on producing a product that the consumer desired. Participant 10 gave a confusing response, claiming that Orange River Cellars had *"average drinking wine... but also produced unbelievable wines, especially over the last three years"*.

On the service side, some participants felt that Orange River Cellars' service required attention. This was reiterated by participants 4, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 12. Participant 6 claimed that the *"mentality of people"* should change in terms of service delivery. Furthermore, participant 4 specifically said that the service issue revolved around geographical factors: *"Transport is difficult and temperatures are high"*, which affected delivery and wine quality. Participant 10 declared that there was an immense struggle with the distribution of products and that this led to poor service. On the other hand, participant 3 believed that Orange River Cellars had excellent service delivery. Participant 1 also had confidence that *"services are good... delivery service, after-sale and sales support"*.

In summary, most of the participants had confidence in Orange River Cellars' products, but felt that the perceptions of those outside the organisation might be challenging. On the service side, there were discrepancies in the feelings of the participants, because some believed that the services were excellent, while others did not share this view. Although there were a few concerns, most of the interviewees had an overall good feeling about Orange River Cellars' products. Some of them believed that the cellar's services required attention, but that factors such as geographical limitations complicated the process.

5.7.2.3 The overall view of the vision and leadership of Orange River Cellars

The vision and leadership dimension is the third dimension of the *Reputation Quotient*®. For this question (Question 20 in Appendix A), the participants were asked to provide their overall view of the vision and leadership of Orange River Cellars.

When asked what their perceptions were of the vision and leadership of Orange River Cellars, eight interviewees immediately said that it was *"very good"* and that the company had *"visionary"*

people". Most of them felt that the new CEO had changed the vision dramatically in the last two years. As participant 9 stated, *"The CEO has brought a new perspective"* following a five-year stagnation period before the new management members were appointed. This participant also claimed that the new CEO *"keeps the creative juices flowing"*. Participants 2 and 7 agreed that the CEO *"has a clear direction for the future"*. However, the other four participants did not feel quite so positive about the vision and leadership of Orange River Cellars. Participant 6 declared that others might not be as vigilant *"when it comes to high standards"* and were struggling to move forward. Participant 4 added that *"at this stage, we are going through a difficult time... restructuring and change, and people do not always experience change that well"*. Similarly, participant 11 claimed *"it is sometimes difficult for the CEO to get everyone to believe in the same vision"*, especially changing ways from a *"cooperative"* business mentality to a corporation stance. Participant 3 revealed that *"in terms of Orange River Cellars' vision, there is confusion"*; people were indeed struggling to move away from the *"cooperative"* mentality by placing the producer first and not shifting *"the focus to the consumer"*. However, the participant also felt that adjusting this cooperative mentality would take years.

In general, the participants' morale was strong in terms of the vision and leadership of the Orange River Cellars' leadership. The participants felt that Orange River Cellars was moving towards a better vision with the new CEO. Only a few concerns were raised; in particular, that it might take a few years to align the new CEO's changes with the organisation's distinct vision.

5.7.2.4 The overall perception of Orange River Cellars' work environment

The workplace environment dimension is the fourth dimension in the *Reputation Quotient*®. The participants were asked what their overall perception of the Orange River Cellars' workplace environment was (Question 21 in Appendix A).

Most of them felt that Orange River Cellars' work environment was *"good"*, *"positive"* and *"pleasant"*. Participant 2 did note that *"the wine industry is challenging"*. Participant 4 also said it was challenging, but that everyone at Orange River Cellars *"has a consolidated determination to get through difficult times"*. Five of the 12 participants were not situated at the head office in Upington but agreed that Orange River Cellars was a distinguished organisation to work for and that it had excellent employees. Participant 3 explained that the work environment had to be divided into two categories, *"the commercial side and the operational side"*. This participant explained that the operational side was undergoing immense change, which made it an unpleasant work environment at this stage. The commercial side was also under pressure, but they were more used to changes in the work environment. Participant 11 emphasised that Orange River Cellars *"provides a strong entrepreneurial environment... they give you the freedom to be*

innovative... pleasantly challenging". Participant 1 added that even though Orange River Cellars was a large organisation, decisions could be made and executed instantly. However, this participant, together with participant 7, argued that they could not say much about Orange River Cellars' workplace environment since they had only worked for the organisation for a short time.

During the interviews, none of the participants mentioned anything about being rewarded fairly, which was determined to be an important aspect of the work environment dimension (see Figure 2-7) in the literature review. However, the participants might not have known that this specific point was included in the work environment dimension. On the whole, the interviewees said that there were always challenges in any organisation, but that they were pleased with their work environment at Orange River Cellars.

5.7.2.5 The view of Orange River Cellars' overall financial performance

The financial performance dimension is the fifth dimension of the *Reputation Quotient*®. For this question (Question 22 in Appendix A), the participants were asked to provide their overall views of the financial performance of Orange River Cellars.

Three participants immediately claimed that they did not have any knowledge of the financial situation of Orange River Cellars. Participant 4 did say that *"the wine industry in total is extremely challenging to function in... you sit with overproduction and poor trade agreements"*. Participant 12 also mentioned that a few things should change in South Africa and that *"the next 24 to 36 months will be a difficult time"*. What made it particularly difficult for Orange River Cellars was that *"the wine side of Orange River Cellars is at a big risk, because you sit with a credit risk"*, as participant 3 shared. Moreover, this participant explicitly stated that the challenge lay in the *"amount or tons that grape farmers produce"*, which was never consistent and seemed to be lower each year. Four participants were concerned about the financial situation, but what also came through during the interviews was that this was the norm in the wine industry.

Participant 9 said that even though there were concerns, Orange River Cellars had tried to produce *"specific consumer brands"* to aid the organisation's financial situation. Most of the interviewees' also raised the issue of the COVID-19 pandemic and the attendant ban of the sale of alcohol, which was placing the alcohol industry under immense pressure at the time of the interviews. Nevertheless, what came to light with Orange River Cellars' financial situation was again the *"cooperative"* mentality in which they function. Participant 3 openly stressed that a cooperative approach gave the organisation *"a risky profile"*. However, they were trying to change the situation so that the producers would be at risk and not the cellars itself.

In summary, the participants were concerned about the financial situation but were “*cautiously optimistic*” for the future. Orange River Cellars wanted to change the cooperative approach by shifting the risk obligation to the producers. The COVID-19 pandemic had affected profitability drastically for the alcohol industry, and it might take years for the organisation to recover from this setback. Most of the participants’ felt that the primary challenge in the future would be to improve Orange River Cellars’ financial performance following the global pandemic.

5.7.2.6 The overall perception of Orange River Cellars’ social responsibility

The last dimension, social responsibility, is the sixth dimension in the *Reputation Quotient*®. The interviewees were asked what their overall perception of Orange River Cellars’ social responsibility stance was (Question 23 in Appendix A).

All the participants considered social responsibility to be a vital but complicated and sensitive component of the organisation. Participant 5 saw social responsibility as a problematic notion “*because it is a product that can be misused*”. Participant 8 added that because the organisation produced alcohol, “*you have to accept responsibility for what your product does to the environment*”. Participant 4 argued that there were two sides to this coin, namely that Orange River Cellars “*has the responsibility to produce a good product that is safe... but the public has the responsibility to use it with moderation*”. Participant 6 said, “*We give money to FAMSA for family wellbeing and provide career counselling*” for the youth. Participant 1 also stipulated that Orange River Cellars was a “*member of the Alcoholic Responsibility Association*”. Participant 2 stated that they are involved in community projects, “*but within a framework and a budget to provide support*”.

Numerous answers from the participants indicated that social responsibility in the alcohol industry was complicated. Participant 12 noted that the organisation was selling a product that could cause problems in society. Participant 6 added “*that the government should be more involved*” with assisting communities and being environmentally responsible, primarily because of the enormous amount of tax paid by the organisation. Participant 3 felt that “*the culture in the wine industry is reactive*” and that “*multinationals*” such as South African Breweries have a more proactive role in discouraging alcohol abuse. This participant argued that Orange River Cellars had “*never had the resources*” to implement a plan of action, but that they were working on improving support related to alcohol abuse. The participants said that they were obviously more involved in the Northern Cape region because their offices were situated in that area.

In summary, the participants believed that Orange River Cellars was indeed involved in the community in terms of charity and viewed themselves as belonging to an organisation that was

environmentally responsible. What came to light is that an alcohol-producing institution can only achieve so much in terms of community involvement and providing a safe product to people. Hence, the organisation had no control over the use and abuse of alcohol. The participants felt that they were especially involved in the Northern Cape region, but that budget constraints meant the organisation was limited in terms of the number of projects it could implement.

In the next section, the focus is on the management's perspectives on the advantages of corporate reputation.

5.8 Advantages of a good corporate reputation

The theory of this construct is that having a strong corporate reputation provides an organisation with an advantage over other organisations (paragraph 2.3.7); that it is a **valuable asset** (paragraph 2.3.7.1); and it **creates financial value** (paragraph 2.3.7.2) for an organisation. In this section, the participants' knowledge of the advantages of corporate reputation (Questions 24 and 25 in Appendix A) is examined.

Most of the management team mentioned that when an organisation had a strong corporate reputation, stakeholders would *"trust"* it. Participant 3 said that the organisation already had a reputation, but that it was the reputation one *"wants"* that made the difference. This participant also argued that *"if your reputation is established, it is much easier to achieve goals within the organisation"*. Participant 7 asserted that when an organisation had a strong reputation, *"you achieve growth and growth means more clients, more business, expansion and financial security"*. Participant 11 added that the organisation would be able to accomplish more and would have an opportunity for better negotiations related to the *"law and export liability"*. Numerous participants felt that once the organisation had a good reputation, they would have *"consumer preference"* and would be better able to negotiate for *"shelf space"* in the large supermarket chains. Participant 6 added that an organisation had a *"sustainable"* business when it had a *"good image"* in the market. Participant 12 stated that without any reputation, *"you will struggle to stay in this competitive industry"*.

Participant 2 felt that a strong corporate reputation provided stakeholders with *"peace of mind"* that the organisation provided high-quality products and superior service. As mentioned previously, the participants said that a strong reputation created trust and, in turn, established loyalty. Participant 3 argued that *"if the consumer is satisfied with your product and they start being loyal to you, then everyone will be satisfied in the value chain... the farmer, the producer, employees, shareholders and everyone else"*. The vital fact that participant 1 revealed was that *"you can build a reputation over the years and break it down in two minutes, and then it will take*

you years to salvage it". Participant 4 also felt that *"it is critical to maintain your reputation"*. The participants had a clear indication that a strong corporate reputation could improve the organisation's overall **financial performance**.

Overall, the participants did not specifically use the words **"valuable asset"**, but understood that having a strong corporate reputation held many benefits for any organisation, including aspects such as having substantial relationships with stakeholders, generating financial value and attracting investors, in accord with the literature (paragraph 2.3.7). Only one participant, participant 4, stated that a strong corporate reputation would attract highly qualified employees, as mentioned in paragraph 2.3.7 above. Nevertheless, all the participants understood the advantages of a strong reputation and that it would provide the organisation with a competitive advantage over other cellars in the wine industry.

In the next section, the focus is on Orange River Cellars' management's view of the global and South African wine industry.

5.9 The Global and South African wine industry

This last section, on the global and South African wine industry, merely serves as additional information and is not necessary for answering the research question regarding management's approach to corporate reputation management. During the interviews, the participants were asked to give their perception of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation in the global and the South African wine industry (Questions 26 and 27 in Appendix A). An overview of global wine production and the South African wine industry was provided in paragraphs 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 above, as well as some background information on Orange River Cellars.

None of the participants believed that Orange River Cellars had a sufficiently good corporate reputation to compete in the global wine industry. In fact, participant 4 claimed that *"our impact is small"* worldwide. Participant 8 went as far as to say that Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation was *"non-existent"* in the global industry. Participants 1, 2 and 7 expressed concerns that they genuinely could not give an opinion about Orange River Cellars in the international market. However, all the participants said that Orange River Cellars had started to explore the market in China. Participant 3 mentioned that the organisation had tried to *"export in the past, but then, after a while, it would fall flat"*. Thus Orange River Cellars had now taken a considerable *"risk, to open offices in China"*. Some participants thought that Orange River Cellars might have a better corporate reputation in terms of bulk production, but that its *"bottled wines are underdeveloped"*, as stated by participant 11. Participant 5 stated what made the global industry challenging was that *"South Africa produced less than 10% of the wine"* in the world. The seemed

to contradict that fact that, in Chapter 3, it was indicated that South Africa provided 9.5 million hectolitres of the wine produced in 2018 and was ranked among the top 10 wine-producing countries (see Table 3-1).

The majority of the interviewees considered Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation in the South African wine industry to be adequate. Although they felt it was good, participants 8, 11 and 12 revealed that Orange River Cellars could not compete with the more prominent *"box wine brands, such as Robertson, Four Cousins, Namaqua and Distell"*. Participant 12 added that Orange River Cellars' might be best known as a *"big role player... as a large cooperative cellar"*. Participant 3 blatantly specified that the perception of Orange River Cellars was not good, especially if you *"ask someone from the Western Cape"* and that *"there is a predetermined perception of the consumers of Orange River Cellars"* that the wine is made for quantity and not quality. Nevertheless, the participants added that Orange River Cellars had made changes over the past five to seven years to improve its image and shift consumers' perceptions. It was evident that the interviewees were focused only on the image of Orange River Cellars and did not recognise it as only part of the organisation's corporate reputation.

In short, the participants believed that Orange River Cellars did not have a strong corporate reputation globally, but noted that they were exploring the market in China. Most of them said that its international market was underdeveloped and that more export options could be explored. Most of the management team felt that Orange River Cellars was a well-known establishment with loyal clients in the South African wine industry, but could improve its overall corporate reputation.

5.10 General remarks of Orange River Cellars and corporate reputation

Most of the participants felt that there was a stigma attached to wine produced in the Northern Cape and that the Western Cape was seen as the district that produced superior wines. Participant 3 did state that the agricultural industry was difficult *"because your farmers and suppliers are also your clients"*. Overall, the interviewees said that Orange River Cellars had transformed its way of doing business over the past 10 years. However, with the new CEO appointed two years ago, many changes would still be made and would take many years to implement.

Participant 5 emphasised that it was indeed *"important to focus on your corporate reputation... we have to give it more attention because that is where the potential lies"*. Similarly, participant 6 expressed that *"it is important that we manage and improve our image... to be transparent so that we can be sustainable and plan for the future, so that we can examine the market better"*. The

participants displayed uncertainty about the management of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation and uneasiness about the fact that the organisation had never conducted a reputation assessment.

The last section of this chapter comprises a summary of the qualitative research findings on Orange River Cellars management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement.

5.11 Conclusion

The focus of this chapter was on Orange River Cellars' management's approach to corporate reputation management. The results answered the following specific research question:

What is Orange River Cellars management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement? (see 1.2.2)

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all 12 members of Orange River Cellars' management team, who were asked to answer the question mentioned above. Thus, an overall view of the management's perceptions can be provided from the findings presented in the previous sections.

Their biographical information was provided first, after which the qualitative results were presented in seven sections. The constructs that were assessed included corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, stakeholder relations, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement with the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions, the advantages of a strong corporate reputation, and the global and South African wine industry.

The results obtained from the semi-structured interviews indicated that the participants had sufficient knowledge of what corporate reputation involved. They were able to identify that corporate reputation was how people perceived the organisation. The fundamental elements of corporate reputation identified in the literature review are corporate identity, image, branding, personality, behaviour, ethics and culture. However, the participants struggled to identify the fundamental elements of corporate reputation. Only three participants could identify corporate ethics and culture.

The interviewees were questioned about each individual element. They were asked to define each concept and apply it to Orange River Cellars. The first fundamental element, corporate identity, was merely defined as how people see the organisation; the participants did not associate the concept with all the visual components of the organisation, as specified in the literature. The overall feeling about Orange River Cellars' corporate identity was that it was unique, but the

interviewees felt that the traditional way of executing business should be changed to strengthen the cellars' corporate identity. The participants had some idea of what corporate image was; although they did not necessarily use the expression "*mental picture*", they knew that corporate image was how stakeholders perceived or viewed the organisation. They did consider that Orange River Cellars' corporate image needed work, because it was often viewed as old fashioned. Some participants felt that the corporate image of certain Orange River Cellars' brands were strong. However, they often confused or overlapped corporate identity and image.

The interviewees' views on the corporate brand were especially vague, since most of them could not define a corporate brand as all the visual components, such as the organisation's name, symbols or identity. However, two participants had some idea of visual recognition, because they mentioned that the organisation's logo was part of the corporate brand. When applied to Orange River Cellars, the participants wanted to move away from the original Orange River Cellars brand and focus more on creating individual wine brands that would suit the particular needs of consumers. Most of the participants struggled to provide a clear definition of corporate personality. Only one participant made the connection between corporate personality and the values that an organisation stood for. The corporate personality of Orange River Cellars was viewed as old fashioned, but the participants mentioned that the corporate personality was in the process of changing.

Corporate ethics, culture and behaviour was the last fundamental element of corporate reputation. In this case, most of the participants understood the meaning of corporate ethics and culture. They could identify that it was what an organisation stood for in terms of values and culture. The participants viewed Orange River Cellars' ethical values and behaviour as a top priority and of a high standard. In this aspect, culture was viewed as the cooperative mentality or approach that Orange River Cellars adhered to. Nevertheless, the newly-appointed CEO was trying to move away from the cooperative culture of a producer-owned cooperation. In general, the participants did not make the connection between the fundamental elements and their role in creating a strong corporate reputation.

Concerning stakeholder relations, some participants could not name all of Orange River Cellars' stakeholders. The consumers and producers, or grape farmers, were considered by most of the interviewees to be the primary stakeholders of the organisation. However, all the participants felt that Orange River Cellars managed relationships with stakeholders well through appropriate communication. They all agreed that corporate reputation management was important to achieve organisational goals. However, their answers to the question about what role corporate reputation management played in achieving organisational goals were vague. The participants were unclear about the principles of corporate reputation management and did not mention the process it

involved; they understood this concept to be merely about the beliefs or morals of the organisation. None of the participants mentioned that managing corporate reputation could enable organisations to avoid future reputational risks.

The management team was familiar with the corporate reputation measurement construct and understood the importance thereof. However, most of them noted that Orange River Cellars had never conducted a reputation assessment. There were also contradictory views on how often the organisation's corporate reputation should be measured, but it was emphasised that their corporate reputation should be measured. The *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument's dimensions were analysed and applied to Orange River Cellars. In terms of the first dimension, emotional appeal, all the interviewees had a generally good feeling about the organisation. In terms of the second dimension, products and services, the participants had confidence in Orange River Cellars' products, but there were some concerns about the quality of its service. However, these were related to geographical limitations in delivery and distribution. With respect to the third dimension, vision and leadership, all the participants had confidence in the organisation's vision and leadership capabilities. They mentioned often that the new CEO was striving for a better vision.

The discussions about the fourth dimension, work environment, revealed that although challenges were experienced, they were satisfied overall with their work environment. The participants did not mention any section of the organisation that rewarded employees reasonably, but they might not have known that the concept was part of the work environment dimension. In relation to the fifth dimension, financial performance, the participants were particularly concerned about the alcohol industry's financial situation in general. The concern originated from the government's COVID-19 regulations, which included a prohibition of the sale of alcohol, which had an immense impact on the alcohol industry. Discussions on the last dimension, social responsibility, revealed that Orange River Cellars was involved in the community and tried to be responsible with respect to the environment and community. The only concern was that the organisation did not have any control over alcohol abuse by individuals, but felt that the government should also support alcohol-producing institutions in this regard.

The second last construct was the advantages of corporate reputation. The participants had respectable knowledge that an excellent corporate reputation would provide the organisation with numerous benefits. They focused primarily on the fact that financial performance would increase if the organisation had a superior corporate reputation to other wine cellars. More prominent shelf space for products when an organisation had a good corporate reputation was another advantage that was emphasised by many of the participants. The last topic of discussion was the global and South African wine industry, which generated additional information that did not have direct

bearing on answering the research question (see 1.2.2). The participants believed that Orange River Cellars did not have a strong corporate reputation in the global market, but said that it had explored the market in China by establishing offices in the country. Overall, the interviewees felt that Orange River Cellars was well known in the South African wine industry, but that there was a misconception that good wine was produced only in the Western Cape region.

In the next chapter the quantitative findings relating to the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars, as indicated by the results of the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument, are presented.

CHAPTER 6: STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS OF CORPORATE REPUTATION: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

The results from the interviews with Orange River Cellars' management were presented in the previous chapter. The quantitative research results for this study on the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars are presented in this chapter. As indicated in Chapter 4, the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument was used to measure the perceptions of Orange River Cellars' stakeholders (see paragraph 4.4.2.2). This part of the research was aimed at answering the following specific research question:

What are the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' reputation according to the *Reputation Quotient*® (see 1.2.2)

The survey, in which the *Reputation Quotient*® had been applied to Orange River Cellars, was emailed to the stakeholders. The e-mail addresses were provided by Orange River Cellars. However, the researcher was not allowed to receive the e-mail addresses of the grape farmers and investors, so Orange River Cellars' office sent the survey on behalf of the researcher. An attempt was made to send a total of 2,725 e-mails, of which 408 e-mails failed to send. Thus, a total of 2,371 e-mails were sent to the stakeholders, from which 263 responses were received. A minimum of 200 respondents was necessary for this study to provide it with statistical power (paragraph 1.5.1.2.2), which was achieved with the total response of 263 completed surveys.

This chapter contains the descriptive and inferential statistics of the variables in the survey (see Appendix B). First, the respondents' demographic information is presented, followed by the *Reputation Quotient*® results. In the third part, the reliability and validity of the measurement model are assessed. Finally, the effects of the demographical variables of the *Reputation Quotient*® are evaluated.

The results of the online e-mail survey will be analysed in detail in the subsequent section.

6.2 Demographic information of the respondents

The following frequency tables constitute a summary of the respondents' answers with relation to the questions asked in Section A of the survey (see Appendix B). Each demographic question is associated with a variable, the number of respondents (frequency) and the percentage (%) of the total respondents.

6.2.1 Frequency table: Age

The following table contains the ages of the respondents, which were categorised into seven groups, starting at 18, since the study concerned an alcohol-producing institution and only individuals above 18 years old are legally permitted to consume alcohol in South Africa.

Table 6-1: Respondents' ages

Question 1: Please indicate your age		
Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
18–24 years old	8	3.0
25–34 years old	66	25.1
35–44 years old	72	27.4
45–54 years old	60	22.8
55–64 years old	42	16.0
65–74 years old	13	4.9
75 years or older	2	0.8
Total	263	100

As can be seen in Table 6-1 above, the largest group of respondents was between the ages of 35 and 44, years which represented 27.4% of the sample. Followed by this group were the 25 to 34 year olds at 25.1% and the 45 to 54-year old group, which represented 22.8% of the sample. The groups were relatively evenly distributed. The 55 to 64 year old age group comprised 16% of the sample and the 65 to 74 year olds only 4.9%. The two lowest percentages were for the 18 to 24 age group at 3% and the 75 years and older participants at only 0.8%.

6.2.2 Frequency table: Gender

The following table shows the gender, frequency and percentage of the respondents who completed the online e-mail survey.

Table 6-2: Respondents' gender

Question 2: Please indicate your gender		
Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Female	121	46.0
Male	142	54.0
Total	263	100

As indicated in Table 6-2 above, about the same number of females and males completed the survey. The females represented 46% of the sample and the males slightly more at 54%. Hence, the sample almost had an equal representation of both genders.

6.2.3 Frequency table: Language

The following table shows the home languages of the respondents. The total number of respondents is given in the frequency column and is represented as a percentage in the last column.

Table 6-3: Respondents' language

Question 3: Please indicate your home language		
Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Afrikaans	219	83.3
Dutch	1	0.4
English	33	12.5
IsiNdebele	1	0.4
isiXhosa	2	0.8
isiZulu	2	0.8
Northern Sotho	1	0.4
Tshivenda	2	0.8
Xitsonga	1	0.4
Missing	1	0.4
Total	263	100

As noted in Table 6-3, the majority of the respondents' home language was Afrikaans at 83.3%, followed by English at 12.5%. The rest of the respondents' home languages varied between 0.4% and 0.8%, constituting the minority in the sample. Missing data was rated 0.4%, which indicated

that the specific respondent did not specify his or her home language. Since most of the respondents' home language was Afrikaans, it could be inferred that the latter was the preferred language of the respondents from the Northern Cape who are involved with Orange River Cellars.

6.2.4 Frequency table: Involvement with Orange River Cellars

The following table indicates the respondents' involvement with Orange River Cellars. It is divided into nine stakeholder groups, namely community, consumer, employee, export wholesaler, grape farmer, investor, management, stockist and dealer, and supplier. The number of respondents is given in the frequency column and is indicated by percentage in the last column.

Table 6-4: Respondents' involvement

Question 4: Which of the following best describes your involvement with the company		
Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Community	32	12.2
Consumer	161	61.2
Employee	31	11.8
Export wholesaler	1	0.4
Grape farmer	9	3.4
Investor	2	0.8
Management	9	3.4
Stockist and dealer	12	4.6
Supplier	5	1.9
Missing	1	0.4
Total	263	100

As seen in Table 6-4 above, the largest portion of the sample was the consumers at 61.2%. This was followed by community members at 12.2% and the employees at 11.8%. The stockists and dealers were 4.6% and the grape farmers and management represented only 3.4% of the sample. The rest of the stakeholder groups were below 2% of the sample, with the export wholesaler group being the smallest group at 0.4%. Missing data in this section was 0.4%, which indicates that one respondent did not complete the question. In general, the majority of the respondents in this sample were the consumers of the organisation.

6.2.5 Frequency table: Alcohol consumption frequency

The following table provides the alcohol consumption frequency. The respondents were asked how often they consumed alcohol in a week.

Table 6-5: Respondents' alcohol consumption frequency

Question 5: How often do you consume alcohol in a week		
Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Teetotaller	24	9.1
Once a week	82	31.2
Twice a week	63	24.0
3-5 times a week	75	28.5
Every day	18	6.8
Missing	1	0.4
Total	263	100

As shown in Table 6-5 above, 31.2% of the respondents consumed alcohol once a week and 28.5% three to five times a week, while 24% of the sample consumed alcohol twice a week. The latter groups were almost equally distributed in this sample. At the extremes, the teetotallers, comprised 9.1% of the sample and those who consumed alcohol every day only 6.8% of the sample. The missing data indicates that one respondent (0.4%) did not answer this question.

6.2.6 Frequency table: Daily alcohol consumption

The following table indicates the quantity or units of alcohol the respondents consumed per day.

Table 6-6: Respondents' daily alcohol consumption

Question 6: If you consume alcohol, how many units of alcohol do you consume per day		
Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
0	22	8.4
1	73	27.8
2	96	36.5
3	34	12.9
4	20	7.6
5	9	3.4
Missing	9	3.4
Total	263	100

As seen in Table 6-6 above, the largest percentage was 36.5% of the respondents, who consumed two units of alcohol per day. Following this, 27.8% of the respondents consumed only one unit per day and, in third place, 12.9% consumed three units of alcohol per day. Those who consumed the most, four to five units per day, comprised 7.6% and 3.4% respectively. The respondents who did not consume any alcohol daily represented 8.4% of the total sample. The missing data indicates that 3.4% did not answer the question.

6.2.7 Frequency table: Alcohol preferences

The last demographic question was on the respondents' alcohol preferences, which are indicated in the table below:

Table 6-7: Respondents' alcohol preferences

Question 7: If you do consume alcohol, which do you prefer		
Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Beer	35	13.3
Ciders	11	4.2
Depends	1	0.4
Hard liquor	35	13.3
None	8	3.0
Wine	172	65.4
1 day hard liquor the other day wine	1	0.4
Total	263	100

As seen in Table 6-7 above, 65.4% of the respondents preferred wine and only 13.3% preferred beer or hard liquor. The rest of the variables were below 5%, with the lowest percentage (0.4%) being for depending on what they preferred that day. A total of 3% verified that they did not drink alcohol. Generally, the majority preferred wine over other types of liquor.

In summary, the respondents' ages were moderately distributed between the ages of 25 to 34 years, 35 to 44 years and 45 to 54 years. The genders of the respondents were almost evenly distributed, with only an 8% difference between males and females. However, the consumers formed the majority of the stakeholders who completed the online e-mail survey. As mentioned in paragraph 3.1.2.2 above, consumers play an essential role in the profitability of the wine industry in general. Furthermore, South Africa is among the top 10 wine-producing countries in the world (Table 3-1), which could relate to the popularity of wine consumption in this sample. As indicated in Table 6-7, the majority of the respondents (65.4%) preferred wine over other forms of liquor, which places wine in a superior position to other types of liquor in this study.

In the next section, the results obtained from respondents' responses to the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) measurement instrument are presented.

6.3 The *Reputation Quotient*® results

The Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) has **six dimensions** with **20 attributes** that were applied to Orange River Cellars. One of the main objectives of this study (paragraph 1.3.1) was to gain insight into the perceptions of the various stakeholders of Orange River Cellars overall corporate reputation, based on the *Reputation Quotient*® attributes within the wine industry context. The six dimensions were: emotional appeal, products and services,

vision and leadership, workplace environment, financial performance and social responsibility (see paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). The results of the online e-mail survey are explored in relation to each dimension below.

The first section is a presentation of the descriptive statistics of the items in Section B of the survey (see Appendix B). The respondents were asked to select, from a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree; (2) disagree; (3) neither agree nor disagree; (4) agree; (5) strongly agree, the option that best suited their opinions. Every table includes the mean value and the standard deviation for each of the *Reputation Quotient*® attributes.

6.3.1 Emotional appeal dimension

The first dimension, emotional appeal, had three attributes: *feel good* about the organisation, *admire and respect* the organisation and *trust* the organisation (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). The respondents were asked to assess how these applied to Orange River Cellars. The respondents' responses are shown in the table below:

Table 6-8: Respondents' perceptions of the emotional appeal dimension

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
8: I <u>feel good</u> about Orange River Cellars	3.8%	3.8%	7.2%	45.6%	35.4%	4.2%	4.10	0.98
9: I <u>admire and respect</u> Orange River Cellars	3.4%	3.8%	8.4%	47.5%	32.3%	4.6%	4.06	0.95
10: I <u>trust</u> Orange River Cellars	3.4%	3.4%	9.9%	40.7%	37.6%	4.9%	4.11	0.98

As noted in Table 6-8 above, trust in Orange River Cellars had the highest mean score (4.11) of the three attributes in the emotional appeal dimension. This revealed that the respondents trusted Orange River Cellars, with 40.7% agreeing and 37.6% strongly agreeing. The majority of the respondents (81%) also had a good feeling about Orange River Cellars. Only 7.6% did not have a good feeling about the organisation. This attribute had a relatively high mean score of 4.10, indicating that respondents are in an overall agreement about having a good feeling about Orange River Cellars. The attribute with the lowest mean score of 4.06 related to whether the respondents admired and respected the organisation. Although this attribute might have had a lower score, it

still had a strong percentage of respondents agreeing (47.5%) and strongly agreeing (32.3%) with this attribute.

It was indicated in paragraph 2.3.6.1.3 above that stakeholders would rely on their feelings and emotions to guide their perceptions of an organisation’s corporate reputation. The results in Table 6-8 indicate that the stakeholders had an overall positive perception of Orange River Cellars in the emotional appeal dimension, with an average mean of above four for all three attributes. Hence, the stakeholders *feel good* about the organisation, *admire and respect* the organisation, and *trust* the organisation.

6.3.2 Products and services dimension

The products and services dimension had four attributes against which the respondents had to assess Orange River Cellars: whether the organisation offered *high-quality* products and services, developed *innovative* products and services, offered products and services that were *good value* for money and whether the organisation *stood behind* its products and services (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). The perceptions of the respondents can be seen in the table below:

Table 6-9: Respondents’ perceptions of the products and services dimension

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
11: Orange River Cellars offers <u>high quality</u> products and services	4.6%	5.7%	9.5%	34.6%	41.8%	3.8%	4.08	1.09
12: Orange River Cellars develops <u>innovative</u> products and services	3.8%	7.2%	19.0%	34.6%	30.4%	4.9%	3.85	1.08
13: Orange River Cellars offers products and services that are <u>good value for money</u>	4.6%	2.7%	3.4%	39.2%	46.0%	4.2%	4.25	1.00
14: Orange River Cellars <u>stands behind</u> its products and services	3.4%	1.9%	8.4%	44.1%	36.9%	5.3%	4.15	0.93

As Table 6-9 above indicates, the highest mean score (4.25) obtained was that Orange River Cellars offered products and services that were good value for money, with 39.2% respondents agreeing and 46% strongly agreeing. Close to this mean was that the respondents believed Orange River Cellars also stood behind its products and services, with a mean score of 4.15. There was also a high level of agreement, 76.4% in total, that the organisation offered high-quality products and services, with a mean score of 4.08. The lowest mean score (3.85) in the products and services dimension was that only 65% of respondents believed Orange River Cellars developed innovative products and services. Although the mean score was low, and 11% believed it did not offer innovative products and services, the majority of the respondents agreed with the statement.

As noted in paragraph 2.3.6.1.3, organisations that offer high quality services and products that are good value for money can influence stakeholders' perceptions positively, resulting in a good corporate reputation. As seen in Table 6-9 above, the stakeholders believed that Orange River Cellars offered *high-quality* products and services, as well as products and services that were *good value* for money, and that it *stood behind* its products and services. A slightly lower mean value was achieved for developing *innovative* products and services; however, the majority of the respondents agreed with this proposition. Orange River Cellars have to keep in mind that innovative products and services could also influence stakeholders' perceptions positively, resulting in a strong corporate reputation.

6.3.3 Vision and leadership dimension

The vision and leadership dimension had three attributes against which the respondents were asked to assess Orange River Cellars, namely whether the organisation *capitalises on market opportunities*, has *excellent leadership* and has a *clear vision* for the future (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). The respondents' perceptions are disclosed in the table below:

Table 6-10: Respondents' perceptions of the vision and leadership dimension

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
15: Orange River Cellars <u>capitalises on market opportunities</u>	4.2%	9.5%	23.6%	37.3%	19.0%	6.5%	3.61	1.06
16: Orange River Cellars has <u>excellent leadership</u>	3.8%	4.6%	27.8%	30.4%	27.8%	5.7%	3.78	1.05
17: Orange River Cellars has a <u>clear vision for the future</u>	4.2%	5.7%	28.1%	34.2%	21.3%	6.5%	3.67	1.04

According to Table 6-10 above, the highest mean score (3.78) obtained was for Orange River Cellars having excellent leadership. However, 27.8% of the respondents had a neutral feeling about this attribute. A lower mean was achieved for Orange River Cellars having a clear vision for the future (3.67) and the lowest score (3.61) was for capitalising on market opportunities. For all three attributes in the vision and leadership dimension, more respondents returned a rating of “neither agree nor disagree” (27.8%, 34.2% and, 37.3%) than for the previously-mentioned dimensions. More respondents disagreed with the statements about market opportunities (13.7) and a clear vision for the future (14.1%) than with the one about belief in excellent leadership (8.4%), which had the highest mean score of all three.

It was indicated paragraph 2.3.6.1.3 that vision and leadership within an organisation play a tremendous role in gaining market opportunities, because leadership guides the organisation in the right direction. From Table 6-10 above there were somewhat lower mean values than for the previously-mentioned dimensions; however, the respondents still agreed that Orange River Cellars *capitalised* on market opportunities, and had *excellent leadership* and a *clear vision* for the future.

6.3.4 Workplace environment dimension

The workplace environment dimension had three attributes against which the respondents were asked to assess Orange River Cellars: whether the organisation *rewarded* employees fairly, was

a *good company* to work for and had *good employees* (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). The respondents' perceptions are quantified in the table below:

Table 6-11: Respondents' perceptions of the workplace environment dimension

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
18: Orange River Cellars <u>rewards employees fairly</u>	4.2%	5.7%	45.2%	22.8%	15.2%	6.8%	3.42	0.98
19: Orange River Cellars is a <u>good company</u> to work for	3.0%	5.3%	36.1%	28.1%	18.6	8.7%	3.59	0.99
20: Orange River Cellars has <u>good employees</u>	3.4%	3.0%	16.7%	45.2%	24.0%	7.6%	3.90	0.95

As seen in Table 6-11 above, the attribute with the highest mean score (3.90) was that Orange River Cellars' employees were good, with 45.2% agreeing and 24% strongly agreeing with the statement about this attribute. Second to this was a general feeling on Orange River Cellars being an excellent company to work for, with a mean score of 3.59. The lowest mean value in the work environment dimension was 3.42 for Orange River Cellars rewarding employees fairly. Although this particular mean score was lower, the majority of the respondents in this section had a neutral opinion of 45.2% for "*neither agree nor disagree*", with only 9.9% strongly disagreeing.

According to the literature (see paragraph 2.3.6.1.3), the workplace environment plays a central role in corporate reputation, with employees as the main stakeholder group, whereas external stakeholders might base their perceptions on the knowledge they have of the organisation and its employees. Thus, although the majority of the respondents had a neutral feeling about Orange River Cellars *rewarding employees fairly*, since most of the respondents were the consumers, they might not have enough knowledge about the compensation side of the organisation to provide useful answers. The same applies to the majority agreeing that Orange River Cellars was a *good company* to work for and that Orange River Cellars had *good employees*.

6.3.5 Financial performance dimension

The financial performance dimension had four attributes against which the respondents were asked to assess Orange River Cellars: whether the organisation *outperformed its competitors*,

had a record of *profitability*, was a *low-risk* investment and had *growth prospects* for the future (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). The respondents' perceptions are recorded in the table below:

Table 6-12: Respondents' perceptions of the financial performance dimension

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
21: Orange River Cellars <u>outperforms competitors</u>	4.2%	12.5%	37.3%	30.8%	9.9%	5.3%	3.31	0.98
22: Orange River Cellars has a <u>record of profitability</u>	4.2%	6.8%	44.9%	23.2%	14.1%	6.8%	3.39	0.98
23: Orange River Cellars is a <u>low-risk investment</u>	5.7%	12.2%	44.1%	20.5%	11.4%	6.1%	3.21	1.02
24: Orange River Cellars has <u>growth prospects for the future</u>	4.6%	5.7%	26.6%	38.8%	17.5%	6.8%	3.63	1.01

As shown in Table 6-12 above, the highest mean score (3.63) was for the statement that Orange River Cellars shows growth prospects for the future, with 38.8% agreeing and 17.5% strongly agreeing with this attribute. Close to this was both Orange River Cellars outperforming competitors (3.31) and showing a record of profitability (3.39). The majority of the respondents tended towards agreeing on both previously-mentioned attributes, with a rating of 37.7% for the outperforming competitors attribute and 44.9% for the record of profitability attribute. The lowest mean score was 3.21, for Orange River Cellars being a low-risk investment. However, most of the respondents had a neutral feeling in this regard, with 44.1% neither disagreeing nor agreeing with the statement relating to this attribute. Even though a neutral feeling was revealed, there was still a total of 17.9% who disagreed that Orange River Cellars was a low-risk investment.

As noted in paragraph 2.3.6.1.3, financial performance contributes to the formation of an organisation's corporate reputation. The majority of the respondents had a feeling tending towards agreeing that Orange River Cellars *outperformed competitors*, had a *record of profitability* and was a *low-risk* investment. The respondents did, however, have a higher mean value (3.63) regarding Orange River Cellars showing *growth prospects* for the future. This could highlight that

the respondents believed Orange River Cellars could expand or advance into a financially sustainable organisation.

6.3.6 Social responsibility dimension

The last dimension, social responsibility, had three attributes against which the respondents were asked to assess Orange River Cellars: whether the organisation *supported good causes*, was *environmentally responsible/friendly* and showed *community responsibility* by maintaining high standards in the way it treated people and society (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). The perceptions of the respondents are disclosed in the table below:

Table 6-13: Respondents’ perceptions of the social responsibility dimension

Question No.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
25: Orange River Cellars <u>supports good causes</u>	3.8%	3.8%	32.7%	39.9%	12.5%	7.2%	3.58	0.92
26: Orange River Cellars is <u>environmentally responsible</u>	3.4%	2.3%	27.4%	41.4%	18.6%	6.8%	3.75	0.93
27: Orange River Cellars shows <u>community responsibility</u>	3.8%	3.4%	23.6%	41.8%	21.7%	5.7%	3.79	0.97

As noted in Table 6-13, the last attribute scored the highest mean value of 3.79. The respondents agreed (41.8%) and strongly agreed (21.7%) that Orange River Cellars showed community responsibility in the way it treated people and society. They also perceived Orange River Cellars to be an environmentally-responsible organisation; with a mean score of 3.75; 41.4% agreed and 18.6% strongly agreed. The attribute with the lowest mean score (3.58) was how Orange River Cellars was perceived to support good causes: 39.9% agreed and 12.5% strongly agreed; however, a bigger majority had more a neutral feeling (32.7%) than for the previously-mentioned attributes.

It was argued in paragraph 2.3.6.1.3 that the manner in which organisations treat the community and environment could play a tremendous role in establishing a strong corporate reputation. In Table 6-13 above, the majority of the respondents indicated that they believed that Orange River

Cellars *supported good causes*, was an *environmentally responsible* organisation and demonstrated *community responsibility*.

In general, the results indicated that the respondents had positive feelings with respect to the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes, as applied to Orange River Cellars. There was overall agreement in the *emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, financial performance, and social responsibility* dimension. The results provide Orange River Cellars with sufficient knowledge of the perceptions of stakeholders and how they assessed each dimension with its attributes. However, because none of the attributes gained a superior mean value of five, Orange River Cellars' management could utilise the results provided above to improve on the dimensions and attributes they deem important.

In the next section, the validity of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes are evaluated.

6.4 Validity of the *Reputation Quotient*®

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted, utilising AMOS statistical software, to assess the dimensions and attributes of the *Reputation Quotient*®. The six dimensions are abbreviated in Figure 6-1 as follows:

- EA: Emotional appeal
- PS: Products and services
- VL: Vision and leadership
- WE: Workplace environment
- FP: Financial performance
- SR: Social responsibility

A confirmatory factor analysis was also used to test the validity of the constructs.

The confirmatory factor analysis measurement model is shown in Figure 6-1 below:

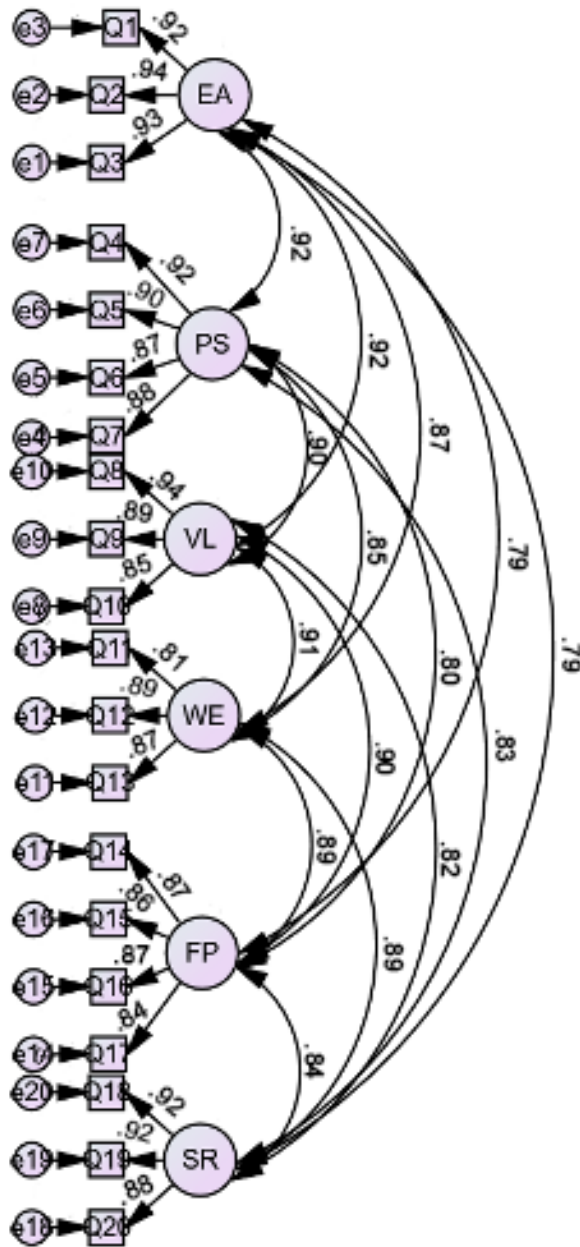


Figure 6-1: The measurement model of confirmatory factor analysis for the Reputation Quotient®

As can be seen in Figure 6-1, all the standardised estimates of the measurement model were statistically significant, with values above 0.81. The closer the scores are to 1, the stronger it relates to the construct (see paragraph 4.5.2.1). Thus, the dimensions and attributes fitted well within the constructs they were supposed to measure.

As seen in both Figure 6-1 above and Table 6-14 below, correlation values of 0.79 and above were achieved for both the dimensions and attributes of the *Reputation Quotient*®. In addition, all the values of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes were statistically meaningful.

The dimensions have a strong relevance (correlation) with each other. In a South African and wine context, these aspects have a substantial connection, indicating that fewer factors could have been used in this measurement. However, the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument was utilised unchanged for this study (see paragraph 4.4.2.2).

Table 6-14: Correlations for the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions

Dimensions	Estimate
EA<--> PS	0.92
EA<--> VL	0.92
EA<--> WE	0.87
EA<--> FP	0.79
SR<--> EA	0.79
PS<--> VL	0.90
PS<--> WE	0.85
PS<--> FP	0.80
SR<--> PS	0.83
VL<--> WE	0.91
VL<--> FP	0.90
SR<--> VL	0.82
WE<--> FP	0.89
SR<--> WE	0.89
SR<--> FP	0.84

In general, the correlations between variables were statistically significant, with a value of above 0.79. The strongest correlations of above 0.90 were emotional appeal and products and services; emotional appeal and vision and leadership; products and services and vision and leadership;

vision and leadership and work environment; and vision and leadership and financial performance. However, the other dimensions also had a strong correlation of above 0.80.

The lowest correlations were emotional appeal and financial performance, and social responsibility and emotional appeal, with correlations of 0.79. Although the two correlations were below 0.80, they can still be considered strong statistically significant variables.

A model fit summary is provided in Table 6-15 below:

Table 6-15: Goodness of fit for the measurement model of the *Reputation Quotient*®

Minimum Sample of Discrepancy divided by Degrees of Freedom (CMIN/DF)	Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA)	Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA) LO 90	Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA) HI 90
3.509	0.930	0.098	0.089	0.107

As noted in paragraph 4.5.2.1, the Chi-square test of goodness of fit is traditionally utilised to evaluate data-model fit (Bandalos & Finney, 2010:109). Similarly, the Chi-square test statistics are “divided by the degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) as a measure of model fit” (Statisticssolutions, 2020). As indicated in Table 6-16 above, the measurement model displayed a good fit with the data, where a Minimum Sample Discrepancy divided by Degrees of Freedom (CMIN/DF) value of 3.5 was achieved. The value was deemed acceptable, because a value of above 3 is regarded as a good model fit. However, Mueller and Hancock (2010:379) believe it is important that the researcher presents numerous fit indices drawn from “three broad classes”. The developed model provided a Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value of 0.93, which indicates an excellent fit, because a CFI value of above 0.90 is usually preferred (Mueller & Hancock, 2010:379; Sreejesh & Mohapatra, 2014:92). The Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA) value achieved was 0.098, with a lower 90% confidence limit of .089 and a higher limit of 0.107. For the RMSEA value, an acceptable value limit for the model is typically less than 0.10 and should not be accepted if above 0.10 (Blunch, 2008:116). All the above-mentioned factors indicate a valid and satisfactory score of model fit for the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes.

6.5 Reliability of the measurement model

Of the 263 completed online e-mail surveys, 257 were deemed reliable for the study. One of the methods used to test the study's reliability was the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (see paragraph

4.5.3.1). A Cronbach's Alpha value of above 0.70 is typically preferred (Mueller & Hancock, 2010:381) in reliability statistics. The following table specifies the reliability of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions (variables), the Cronbach's Alpha values, the mean values and standard deviation of each variable.

Table 6-16: Reliability of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
RQ_EA	0.94	1.00	5.00	4.08	0.94
RQ_PS	0.93	1.00	5.00	3.94	0.95
RQ_VL	0.91	1.00	5.00	3.68	0.97
RQ_WE	0.87	1.00	5.00	3.64	0.87
RQ_FP	0.91	1.00	5.00	3.39	0.89
RQ_SR	0.93	1.00	5.00	3.70	0.87
Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
RQ	0.96	1.00	5.00	3.69	0.89
RQ_percentage	0.96	20	100	73.84	17.77

As seen in Table 6-16 above, all the variables had a Cronbach's Alpha value of between 0.87 and 0.94. The closer the Cronbach's Alpha is to 1.0, the stronger the factors group together. All six dimensions, namely emotional appeal (0.94), products and services (0.93), vision and leadership (0.91), work environment (0.87), financial performance (0.91) and social responsibility (0.93), displayed high Cronbach's Alpha values, which signifies high internal reliability.

The highest mean value achieved was for the emotional appeal (4.08) dimension and the lowest mean value was for the financial performance (3.39) dimension. However, a mean value of 3.39 is not necessarily inferior; the respondents, on average, had a feeling that tended towards agreeing. All the mean values of the other dimensions were above 3, which indicates that the respondents agreed with the attributes in that specific dimension.

The last section of Table 6-16 shows the overall *Reputation Quotient*® score that the organisation achieved in relation to the respondents' differing perceptions. The overall corporate reputation score that Orange River Cellars achieved was **73.84%**. In paragraph 4.4.2.2, it was suggested that a reputation score of between 70 and 74 is "good", according to the *Reputation Quotient*® standards provided by Harris Poll statistics (The Harris Poll, 2018:5). However, an overall

reputation score of 75 to 79 is seen as very good and a score of 80+ as excellent. This means that Orange River Cellars can still improve its overall corporate reputation. In general, all the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions achieved adequate reliability levels, ensuring a reliable measurement model.

The demographic variables of the *Reputation Quotient*® are presented in the next section.

6.6 Evaluation of the effect of the demographic variables of the *Reputation Quotient*®

The evaluation of the effect for the ordinal demographic variables of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions are illustrated and discussed below. The ordinal demographic variables represent the respondents' ages, genders and languages. The effect of these variables on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions were evaluated using the Spearman rank-order correlation test, together with the t-tests and ANOVA.

6.6.1 Spearman rank-order correlations

Spearman rank-order correlations aid in determining the relationship between the ordinal variables. The statistical correlations for the ordinal demographical variables of the *Reputation Quotient*® were verified, as shown in Table 6-17. The interpretation of correlations can be found in Figure 6-2 below:

Small correlation	• 0.1-0.29
Medium correlation	• 0.3-0.49
High correlation	• >0.5

Figure 6-2: Spearman rank-order correlations' scale

Overall, the correlations determine the relationships between variables and specify whether or not they have statistical significance in relation to the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. Included in Table 6-17 are the variables, respondents ages, alcohol consumption frequency (how often the respondents consume alcohol in a week) and alcohol consumption quantity (how many units of alcohol they consume per day).

Table 6-17: Spearman rank-order nonparametric correlations of the ordinal demographic variables with *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions

Variables		Age	Alcohol consumption FREQUENCY	Alcohol consumption QUANTITY
RQ_EA	Correlation Coefficient	0.12	-0.145*	-0.057
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.07	0.02	0.377
	N	252	251	243
RQ_PS	Correlation Coefficient	0.03	-0.228**	-0.066
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.68	0.00	0.303
	N	253	252	244
RQ_VL	Correlation Coefficient	0.09	-0.164**	-0.023
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.16	0.01	0.725
	N	250	249	241
RQ_WE	Correlation Coefficient	0.05	-0.08	-0.012
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.45	0.23	0.849
	N	245	244	236
RQ_FP	Correlation Coefficient	0.08	-0.189**	-0.072
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.23	0.00	0.262
	N	251	250	242
RQ_SR	Correlation Coefficient	0.06	-0.10	0.013
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.36	0.11	0.843
	N	248	247	239
RQ	Correlation Coefficient	0.04	-0.194**	-0.039
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.47	0.00	0.542
	N	257	256	248

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) /** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

In Table 6-17, age and alcohol consumption frequency has the following symbol (*) to indicate whether or not the correlation has statistical significance in relation to the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. The strength of the relationship between alcohol consumption frequency and the

Reputation Quotient® dimensions products and services (-0.228), vision and leadership (-0.164), and financial performance (-0.189) indicated a negative correlation. The negative correlation indicates that the less frequently the respondents consumed alcohol, the more positive they felt about the products and services, vision and leadership, and financial performance *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and vice versa. The emotional appeal dimension was statistically significant (0.02) at below the 0.05 level. However, the alcohol consumption frequency correlation was negative and represents a weak linear relationship of -0.145, which means that the less frequently the respondents consumed alcohol the more they agreed with the emotional appeal dimensions and vice versa. On the other hand, the work environment (0.23) and social responsibility (0.11) dimensions had no statistical significance in the alcohol consumption frequency section. In general, there was a negative correlation (-.194) between alcohol consumption frequency and the overall *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. The less the respondents consumed alcohol during the week, the more positive the relationship with the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions.

As noted in Table 6-17, the respondents' ages and alcohol consumption quantities did not have a statistically significant effect on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. This means that the respondents' ages and amounts of alcohol consumption had no effect on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions.

In the next section, the results of the t-tests for the effect of gender and language on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions are presented.

6.6.2 T-test: Gender and language

The results of t-test for the effect of gender on the *Reputation Quotient*®, together with the descriptive statistics and effect sizes, are provided in the table below. Both tables illustrate the statistics by means of variables, gender or language, the number of respondents (N), the mean value, standard deviation, *p*-value and effect size.

In paragraph 4.5.4.2 it was noted that a *p*-value of above 0.05 indicated that the results were not statistically significant. The effect size is presented as follows: 0.2 = a small effect, 0.5 = a medium effect and 0.8 = a large effect (Cohen, 1988:25-26). An effect size of above 0.5 indicates that the relationships between variables have no practical significance.

Table 6-18: T-test for the effect of gender on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Effect size
RQ_EA	Male	138	4.05	0.93	0.65	0.06
	Female	114	4.11	0.95		
RQ_PS	Male	138	3.93	0.89	0.84	0.02
	Female	115	3.95	1.01		
RQ_VL	Male	138	3.61	0.98	0.25	0.14
	Female	112	3.75	0.95		
RQ_WE	Male	133	3.67	0.89	0.52	0.08
	Female	112	3.60	0.84		
RQ_FP	Male	137	3.37	0.90	0.72	0.05
	Female	114	3.41	0.88		
RQ_SR	Male	136	3.71	0.89	0.88	0.02
	Female	112	3.69	0.86		
RQ	Male	140	3.68	0.88	0.78	0.04
	Female	117	3.71	0.91		
RQ_percentage	Male	140	73.55	17.54	0.78	0.04
	Female	117	74.19	18.12		

As indicated in Table 6-18 above, the *p*-values were above 0.05, which indicates that there was no statistical significance in the given variables. Therefore, the respondents' gender had no impact on how the questions were answered. In other words, gender had no influence on answers to the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions.

All the dimensions presented small effect sizes of between 0.02 and 0.14. Thus, there was no practical significance of the effect sizes between males and females. The results indicated that there was a small difference of less than 5% between males and females. Since there was no practical significance, the respondents' gender did not have an effect on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions.

The next table provides the t-test results for the effect of language on the *Reputation Quotient*®, together with descriptive statistics and effect sizes:

Table 6-19: T-test for the effect of language on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions

Variable	Language	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Effect size
RQ_EA	Afrikaans	210	4.01	0.97	0.01	0.41
	English	31	4.41	0.73		
RQ_PS	Afrikaans	210	3.92	0.96	0.50	0.13
	English	32	4.04	0.94		
RQ_VL	Afrikaans	209	3.63	0.98	0.10	0.32
	English	30	3.94	0.95		
RQ_WE	Afrikaans	205	3.59	0.87	0.02	0.45
	English	29	3.98	0.79		
RQ_FP	Afrikaans	211	3.31	0.90	0.00	0.63
	English	29	3.88	0.67		
RQ_SR	Afrikaans	208	3.67	0.90	0.14	0.26
	English	29	3.91	0.77		
RQ	Afrikaans	214	3.65	0.90	0.13	0.29
	English	32	3.91	0.90		
RQ_percentage	Afrikaans	214	73.01	17.90	0.13	0.29
	English	32	78.22	18.02		

As seen in Table 6-19 above, some differences were noted between the respondents' home languages. In the emotional appeal dimension, the respondents who preferred English (4.41) had a higher mean value than the Afrikaans (4.01) respondents. The emotional appeal dimension also indicated statistical significance, with a *p*-value of 0.01, because a *p*-value of less than 0.05 was required. Similarly, practical significance was achieved with a medium effect size of 0.41. Practical significance is thus indicated by the effect size and whether a relationship is found between two variables. This implies that the respondents who preferred English rated the emotional appeal dimension higher than those respondents who preferred Afrikaans.

The English respondents also had a more agreeable response to the work environment (3.98) and financial performance (3.88) dimensions. A satisfactory *p*-value (0.02/0.00) and effect size (0.45/0.63) was achieved, indicating that both dimensions had statistical and practical significance. Thus, the English respondents gave higher ratings for both the work environment and financial performance dimensions than the Afrikaans respondents.

The products and services, vision and leadership, and social responsibility dimensions, and the overall *Reputation Quotient*® had *p*-values of above 0.05, which suggested no statistical significance and small to medium effect sizes with no practical significance. Hence, there was no effect of language on the products and services, vision and leadership, and social responsibility dimensions. Similarly, the effect of language on the overall *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions had no statistical or practical significance regarding differences between English and Afrikaans respondents' responses to the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions.

6.6.3 ANOVA of the demographic factors

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to establish the impact of the demographic factors on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions (see paragraph 4.5.4.3). The two demographic factors were the respondents' involvement with Orange River Cellars and their alcohol preferences. The tables show the statistics by way of the variables, involvement or preference, the number of respondents (N), the mean value, standard deviation, *p*-value and effect size.

Again, the ANOVA test is used to determine the statistical significance between means of groups. A *p*-value of above 0.05 indicates that there is no statistical significance between the variables researched, whereas an effect size of above 0.5 indicates that the relationships between the variables are practically significant. The guidelines for the practical significance of the effect size are as follows: 0.2 = small effect, 0.5 = medium effect and 0.8 = large effect (Cohen, 1988:25-26). Table 6-20 (involvement) will be illustrated and discussed first, followed by Table 6-21 (alcohol consumption frequency).

Table 6-20: Analysis of variance for respondents' involvement and the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions

Variable	Involvement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Effect size					
						Community with	Consumer with	Employee with	Grape farmer with	Management with	Stockist with
Emotional Appeal	Community	32	3.96	0.95	0.54						
	Consumer	155	4.05	0.99		0.09					
	Employee	31	4.27	0.83		0.33	0.22				
	Grape farmer	8	3.96	0.65		0.00	0.09	0.37			
	Management	9	4.07	1.22		0.09	0.02	0.16	0.09		
	Stockist and dealer	10	4.00	0.35		0.04	0.05	0.32	0.06	0.06	
	Supplier	5	4.80	0.18		0.89	0.76	0.64	1.29	0.59	2.28
	Total	250	4.08	0.94							
Products and Services	Community	32	3.73	1.05	0.17						
	Consumer	157	3.91	1.02		0.18					
	Employee	31	4.30	0.61		0.55	0.38				
	Grape farmer	8	3.71	0.59		0.02	0.20	0.98			
	Management	8	3.91	0.53		0.17	0.01	0.65	0.34		
	Stockist and dealer	10	3.73	0.40		0.00	0.18	0.95	0.03	0.34	
	Supplier	5	4.50	0.68		0.74	0.58	0.29	1.16	0.87	1.13
	Total	251	3.93	0.95							

Variable	Involvement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Effect size					
						Community with	Consumer with	Employee with	Grape farmer with	Management with	Stockist with
Vision and Leadership	Community	32	3.67	1.02	0.28						
	Consumer	153	3.64	1.00		0.03					
	Employee	31	3.88	0.96		0.21	0.24				
	Grape farmer	9	3.09	0.97		0.56	0.54	0.81			
	Management	8	3.83	0.50		0.16	0.19	0.05	0.76		
	Stockist and dealer	10	3.57	0.39		0.10	0.07	0.33	0.49	0.53	
	Supplier	5	4.33	0.78		0.65	0.69	0.47	1.28	0.64	0.98
	Total	248	3.67	0.97							
Work Environment	Community	32	3.45	0.90	0.004						
	Consumer	149	3.54	0.88		0.09					
	Employee	31	4.06	0.84		0.68	0.60				
	Grape farmer	8	3.67	0.79		0.24	0.15	0.48			
	Management	8	4.33	0.40		0.98	0.91	0.32	0.84		
	Stockist and dealer	10	3.67	0.44		0.24	0.15	0.48	0.00	1.50	
	Supplier	5	4.27	0.60		0.91	0.83	0.24	0.76	0.11	1.01
	Total	243	3.64	0.87							

Variable	Involvement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Effect size					
						Community with	Consumer with	Employee with	Grape farmer with	Management with	Stockist with
Financial Performance	Community	32	3.40	0.88	0.27						
	Consumer	153	3.35	0.95		0.05					
	Employee	31	3.60	0.61		0.22	0.26				
	Grape farmer	10	3.35	0.91		0.05	0.00	0.27			
	Management	8	3.41	0.33		0.01	0.06	0.31	0.06		
	Stockist and dealer	10	2.85	0.88		0.62	0.53	0.85	0.55	0.64	
	Supplier	5	3.95	0.69		0.62	0.63	0.51	0.66	0.78	1.26
	Total	249	3.38	0.89							
Social Responsibility	Community	32	3.70	0.77	0.47						
	Consumer	152	3.63	0.98		0.07					
	Employee	31	3.88	0.65		0.24	0.26				
	Grape farmer	8	3.88	0.73		0.23	0.25	0.01			
	Management	8	4.00	0.59		0.39	0.38	0.18	0.17		
	Stockist and dealer	10	3.63	0.48		0.08	0.00	0.38	0.33	0.62	
	Supplier	5	4.27	0.43		0.74	0.65	0.59	0.53	0.45	1.31
	Total	246	3.70	0.88							

Variable	Involvement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Effect size					
						Community with	Consumer with	Employee with	Grape farmer with	Management with	Stockist with
Reputation Quotient®	Community	32	3.65	0.87	0.26						
	Consumer	158	3.64	0.95		0.01					
	Employee	31	4.00	0.64		0.40	0.38				
	Grape farmer	10	3.52	0.79		0.15	0.13	0.61			
	Management	9	3.66	1.05		0.01	0.02	0.33	0.13		
	Stockist and dealer	10	3.57	0.38		0.09	0.07	0.66	0.07	0.08	
	Supplier	5	4.35	0.50		0.81	0.75	0.55	1.06	0.67	1.55
	Total	255	3.69	0.89							
Reputation Quotient® Percentage	Community	32	73.00	17.41	0.26						
	Consumer	158	72.73	19.10		0.01					
	Employee	31	79.99	12.83		0.40	0.38				
	Grape farmer	10	70.33	15.71		0.15	0.13	0.61			
	Management	9	73.15	20.91		0.01	0.02	0.33	0.13		
	Stockist and dealer	10	71.47	7.59		0.09	0.07	0.66	0.07	0.08	
	Supplier	5	87.06	10.06		0.81	0.75	0.55	1.06	0.67	1.55
	Total	255	73.80	17.82							

Table 6-20 in the previous section shows the results of the ANOVA that was conducted to determine the relationship between the respondents' involvement with the organisation and the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. The highest mean value (4.80) for the **emotional appeal dimension** was given by the suppliers, who were a small representative group within the sample; thus this result cannot be generalised to a bigger population. The group with the lowest mean value (3.96) was the community and grape farmers. The stockists and dealers, and suppliers demonstrated the biggest difference in perceptions on the emotional appeal dimension, with a large effect size of 2.28. This is not statistically significant, since the *p*-value (0.54) indicated that there was no difference in the respondents' involvement or emotional appeal dimensions. Hence, in spite of the large effect, there was no statistical significance with respect to the respondents involvement in the organisation or emotional appeal dimension.

In the **products and services dimension**, the suppliers' (4.50) and employees' (4.30) responses also had a higher mean value than for the other stakeholders. The grape farmer group had the lowest mean value of 3.71. Thus, the largest effect size (1.16) was between the suppliers and the grape farmers. In practice, the suppliers gave a higher rating, but this cannot be regarded as statistically significant because the *p*-value (0.17) was higher than 0.05. Thus, the stakeholders' involvement with Orange River Cellars had no statistical significance in the products and services dimension.

With the **vision and leadership dimension**, a large effect size (1.28) was achieved between the suppliers and grape farmers. The suppliers had the highest mean value (4.33) and the grape framers the lowest (3.09) in the vision and leadership dimension. Therefore, the biggest difference was between the suppliers and grape farmers. However, the *p*-value (0.28) obtained indicated that there was no statistical significance between the vision and leadership dimension, and the respondents' involvement.

The **work environment dimension** was the only dimension that had a statistically significant *p*-value (0.004) of below 0.05. Statistical significance was found between the involvement with Orange River Cellars and the work environment dimensions. The management team had the highest mean value (4.33), together with suppliers (4.27) and employees (4.06). The community (3.45) and the consumers (3.54) had the lowest mean values. However, the management, and stockist and dealer groups showed the biggest difference in perceptions on the work environment dimension, with a large effect size of 1.50, Thus, management differed more in their perceptions of the work environment dimension than the stockists and dealers.

With the **financial performance dimension**, the suppliers had the highest mean value (3.95), and the stockists and dealers the lowest mean value (2.85). This indicates that the stockist and

dealer stakeholder group had the lowest regard for the financial performance of the organisation. Again, the suppliers, and stockists and dealers showed a larger difference in the dimension, with a large effect size of 1.26. Likewise, the financial performance dimension was not statistically significant because a p -value of 0.27 was achieved.

In the last dimension, **social responsibility**, did not have statistical significance, with a p -value of 0.47. The suppliers had the highest mean value of 4.27 and management had a mean value of 4.00. The lowest mean value of 3.63 was for the consumers, and stockist and dealers. As with the other dimension, the effect size (1.31) was large between the suppliers, and stockists and dealers. This means that there was a big difference between the suppliers' perceptions of the social responsibility dimension and those of the stockist and dealer stakeholder group.

In general, the suppliers gave an overall higher rating (4.35) on each *Reputation Quotient*® dimension than the other stakeholder groups. In contrast, the grape farmers had the lowest mean value of 3.52. Nonetheless, there was no statistically significant relation between with the involvement of the stakeholders and the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions, since most of the p -values were above 0.05.

Furthermore, the Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances has shown that there is equality of variances in the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions ($p > 0.05$). This merely recognises that the ANOVA provided a valid analysis of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions.

The next table shows the analysis of variance for the alcohol preferences of the respondents in relation to the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. Table 6-21 presents statistics by way of the variables, alcohol preference, the number of respondents (N), the mean value, standard deviation, p -value and effect size.

Table 6-21: Analysis of variance for the respondents' alcohol preference and the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions

Variable	Alcohol Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Effect size			
						Beer with	Ciders with	Hard liquor with	None with
Emotional Appeal	Beer	35	4.21	0.96	0.86				
	Ciders	11	4.03	0.50		0.19			
	Hard liquor	35	3.98	0.93		0.24	0.05		
	None	7	3.90	0.60		0.32	0.21	0.08	
	Wine	162	4.08	0.98		0.13	0.05	0.10	0.18
	Total	250	4.08	0.94					
Products and Services	Beer	35	4.16	0.85	0.48				
	Ciders	11	3.66	0.71		0.59			
	Hard liquor	35	3.84	0.90		0.35	0.20		
	None	7	4.11	0.67		0.06	0.63	0.29	
	Wine	163	3.92	1.00		0.24	0.26	0.08	0.19
	Total	251	3.94	0.95					
Vision and Leadership	Beer	35	3.88	1.05	0.30				
	Ciders	11	3.33	0.91		0.52			
	Hard liquor	35	3.49	0.93		0.37	0.17		
	None	8	3.42	1.02		0.44	0.08	0.07	
	Wine	159	3.71	0.96		0.16	0.39	0.23	0.29
	Total	248	3.67	0.97					

Variable	Alcohol Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Effect size			
						Beer with	Ciders with	Hard liquor with	None with
Work Environment	Beer	35	3.75	1.03	0.95				
	Ciders	11	3.61	0.59		0.14			
	Hard liquor	35	3.61	0.87		0.14	0.00		
	None	7	3.55	0.72		0.20	0.08	0.07	
	Wine	155	3.63	0.86		0.12	0.03	0.02	0.09
	Total	243	3.64	0.87					
Financial Performance	Beer	35	3.64	0.83	0.09				
	Ciders	11	3.34	0.63		0.35			
	Hard liquor	35	3.06	0.98		0.59	0.29		
	None	8	3.56	1.01		0.07	0.22	0.50	
	Wine	160	3.40	0.88		0.27	0.07	0.35	0.16
	Total	249	3.39	0.89					
Social Responsibility	Beer	35	3.91	0.87	0.56				
	Ciders	11	3.70	0.59		0.25			
	Hard liquor	35	3.56	0.94		0.38	0.14		
	None	7	3.67	0.54		0.28	0.05	0.11	
	Wine	158	3.69	0.89		0.25	0.01	0.13	0.02
	Total	246	3.70	0.88					

Variable	Alcohol Preference	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value	Effect size			
						Beer with	Ciders with	Hard liquor with	None with
Reputation Quotient®	Beer	35	3.93	0.84	0.53				
	Ciders	11	3.61	0.60		0.37			
	Hard liquor	35	3.59	0.82		0.40	0.03		
	None	8	3.55	0.78		0.45	0.08	0.05	
	Wine	166	3.67	0.94		0.27	0.07	0.09	0.13
	Total	255	3.69	0.89					
Reputation Quotient® Percentage	Beer	35	78.50	16.80	0.53				
	Ciders	11	72.22	12.00		0.37			
	Hard liquor	35	71.81	16.32		0.40	0.03		
	None	8	71.01	15.58		0.45	0.08	0.05	
	Wine	166	73.49	18.76		0.27	0.07	0.09	0.13
	Total	255	73.81	17.84					

Table 6-21 shows the results of the relationship between the respondents' alcohol preferences (beer, ciders, hard liquor, none and wine) and the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. The analysis of variance that was conducted indicated that the first dimension, **emotional appeal** had no statistical significance, with a p -value of 0.89. There was also no practical difference between the respondents' alcohol preferences and emotional appeal dimension.

In the **products and services dimension**, the respondents who preferred beer (4.16) or no alcohol (4.11) presented the highest mean value. The lowest mean value (3.66) was given by respondents who preferred ciders. The respondents who preferred ciders and respondents who preferred no alcohol had the highest effect size in the **products and services dimension** (0.63). However, the products and services dimension had no statistical significance, since the p -value (0.48) was above 0.05.

The **vision and leadership dimension** had a high mean value (3.88) for the respondents who preferred beer and a lower mean value (3.33) for the respondents who preferred ciders. Thus, the respondents who preferred ciders had the lowest regard for the vision and leadership of the organisation. There was a medium effect size (0.52) between the respondents' preference for beer and respondents' preference for ciders. However, there was no statistical significance in this dimension, since a p -value of 0.30 was attained.

With the **work environment** dimension, nothing was statistically significant, since a p -value of 0.95 was obtained. No practical difference was found in relation to the respondents' alcohol preferences concerning the work environment dimension.

In the **financial performance dimension**, a medium to a large effect size of 0.59 was found between the respondents who preferred beer and those who preferred hard liquor. The respondents who preferred beer had the highest mean value (3.64) and the hard liquor respondents had the lowest mean value (3.06). Nevertheless, the financial performance dimension had no statistical significance because the p -value obtained was 0.09.

The last dimension, **social responsibility**, also had the highest effect size (0.38) between the respondents who preferred beer and those who preferred hard liquor. The respondents with a beer preference had the highest mean value of 3.91 and those with a hard liquor preference had the lowest mean value of 3.56. Again, there was no statistical significance, since a p -value of 0.56 was obtained.

In general, the respondents who preferred beer gave an overall higher rating on each *Reputation Quotient*® dimension, with a mean value of 3.93. Those with the lowest mean value (3.55) were

the stakeholders who preferred no alcohol. However, the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions were not statistically significant, since the p -value was above 0.05.

The Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances indicated that there was equality of variances in the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions ($p > 0.05$). Again, a valid analysis is recognised within the ANOVA and *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions.

Generally, the ANOVA results demonstrated that there were no significant differences in terms of the respondents' involvement with Orange River Cellars in the emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, financial performance and social responsibility dimensions. The work environment dimension was the only *Reputation Quotient*® dimension with a statistically significance p -value of below 0.05. In this dimension, management and the stockist and dealer groups had the biggest differences in perceptions about the work environment dimension. Overall, the suppliers (4.35) gave the highest ratings for the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and the grape farmers (3.52) the lowest mean values. However, there was no statistical significance for the stakeholders' involvement in Orange River Cellars and the dimensions, since the majority of the p -values were above 0.05.

With regard to alcohol preferences, the respondents who preferred beer over other types of liquor gave overall higher ratings on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions (3.93). The respondents with the lowest mean value were those who preferred no alcohol (3.55). In general, there was no statistical significance for the alcohol preferences of Orange River Cellars' stakeholders and the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions, since all the p -values were above 0.05.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter contained the empirical results for the quantitative part of this research. An online e-mail survey was administered to facilitate answering the third specific research question:

What are the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' reputation according to the *Reputation Quotient*®? (see 1.2.2)

The survey results were presented in five sections. The respondents' demographic information was provided first. The consumers were the largest group of respondents and the majority of the respondents preferred wine to other types of liquor.

The predominant factors that were analysed were the six *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and 20 attributes. The dimensions were emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, work environment, financial performance and social responsibility.

A confirmatory factor analysis verified the validity of the *Reputation Quotient*®. The *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions showed a strong correlation with each other and the correlations between the variables were statistically significant, because correlational values of above 0.79 were achieved. The *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions had a more substantial connection (correlation) with each other in the South African wine context. Similarly, goodness of fit for the measurement model of the *Reputation Quotient*® presented a valid and satisfactory score of model fit (CMIN/DF 3.509; CFI 0.930; RMSEA 0.098) for the six dimensions and 20 attributes. The *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions were, therefore, a valid measurement instrument to measure the perceptions of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation.

The reliability of the measurement instrument was determined by the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which revealed strong reliability levels within the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. According to the measurement instrument's standards, the overall corporate reputation score that Orange River Cellars achieved was 73.84%, which is considered a good reputation.

The effect of the demographic variables on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions was assessed using Spearman rank-order correlations, T-tests, and ANOVAs. The Spearman rank-order correlations were drawn between alcohol consumption frequency and alcohol consumption quantity with the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. In particular, alcohol consumption frequency had a negative correlation (-.194) with the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions, which signified that the less respondents consumed alcohol during the week, the more positive the relationship with the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions were. However, alcohol consumption quantity did not have statistically significant data, since the respondents' ages and alcohol consumption quantity had no effect on their ratings of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions.

T-tests were performed to test the effect of gender and language on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. They indicated that there was no effect of gender or language on the statistical or practical significance of the overall *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. Consequently, ANOVAs were conducted to establish the impact of stakeholders' involvement with the organisation and their alcohol preferences on their responses to the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions. However, no impact on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions was determined due to their involvement or alcohol preferences, since the *p*-values were above 0.05.

In summary, the statistics for the emotional appeal dimension revealed that the stakeholders had positive feelings about the organisation. The majority of them had a good feeling about, admired, respected and trusted Orange River Cellars. In the products and services dimension, the majority of the stakeholders felt positive about its high-quality products and services, innovative products

and services, and felt that the organisation stood behind its products and services. The stakeholders also agreed or tended towards agreeing, in the vision and leadership dimension, that Orange River Cellars capitalised on market opportunities, and had excellent leadership and a clear vision for the future. In the workplace environment section, the majority of the stakeholders were neutral about the statement that the organisation rewarded its employees fairly and was an excellent company to work for. However, more respondents felt positive about Orange River Cellars having good employees. In the financial performance dimension, most of the stakeholders neither agreed nor disagreed that Orange River Cellars outperformed competitors, had a record of profitability and was a low-risk investment. On the other hand, they felt more positive about Orange River Cellars showing growth prospects for the future. The last dimension, social responsibility, showed that the majority of the respondents agreed that Orange River Cellars supported good causes, was an environmentally responsible organisation and demonstrated community responsibility by maintaining high standards in its treatment of people and society.

The recommendations and conclusions for the study are provided in the next chapter, as well as the answer to the primary research question of this study, namely: *What are the perceptions of the various stakeholders and management of the overall corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars?*

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of Orange River Cellars' stakeholders and management regarding the corporate reputation of the organisation, since its management team had never conducted a corporate reputation assessment. The primary research question was answered with the aid of the previous chapters, which provided the theoretical foundation for the constructs that were measured in this study, the wine industry context, particularly the background of Orange River Cellars, the research methods employed in this study and the qualitative and quantitative research results.

In Chapter 1, the background, objectives, and the general and specific research questions were presented and the layout of this dissertation was outlined. Chapter 2 comprised a review of the literature on corporate communication, corporate reputation and its fundamental elements, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantages of a strong corporate reputation. The study was contextualised in Chapter 3, in which the background of the global wine industry, the South African wine industry, and Orange River Cellars was explained. In Chapter 4 the research approach and methods employed in this study were described, with particular reference to the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument. The empirical results were presented in chapters 5 and 6. Chapter 5 comprised a presentation of the qualitative results obtained from the semi-structured interviews with the Orange River Cellars' management team, and the quantitative results of the online e-mail survey were presented in Chapter 6.

In this chapter, conclusions are drawn from the completed research and recommendations are made on how Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation could be managed. The overall purpose of this chapter is to answer the general research question in Chapter 1:

What are the various stakeholders and management's perceptions of the overall corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars? (see paragraph 1.2.1)

Specific research questions (paragraph 1.2.2) were also formulated and will be answered in this chapter:

- What does corporate reputation management and measurement entail, according to the corporate communication literature?

- What is Orange River Cellars management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement?
- What are the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' reputation according to the *Reputation Quotient®*?

The conclusions drawn from the literature, semi-structured interviews and online e-mail surveys are analysed first, where after the recommendations and limitations and future work of the study is explained.

7.2 Conclusion to the study

The first section comprises an exposition of the conclusions drawn from the literature on corporate communication and corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantages of a strong corporate reputation. This is followed by an assessment of the semi-structured interviews on management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement. In the third section, the overall perceptions of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation, based on the responses to the *Reputation Quotient®* survey, are presented. The previously mentioned sections all serve as a reference for answering the general research question. The final section will be on the suggestions and limitations of the study.

7.2.1 Conclusion to specific research question 1

The answer to the first specific research question was found in the literature, which was reviewed in Chapter 2:

What does corporate reputation management and measurement entail, according to the corporate communication literature? (see 1.2.2)

This question is answered on the basis of a literature study (Chapter 2), in which the focus was on corporate communication, corporate reputation and its fundamental elements, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantages of managing corporate reputation.

The corporate communication literature indicates that an organisation's overall strategy should include corporate communication strategies to enhance and achieve a favourable corporate reputation (paragraph 2.2.1). Management communication, marketing communication and organisational communication are regarded as the principle foundations of corporate communication, and in turn constitute the foundation of establishing an organisation's corporate reputation. Management communication presents the opportunity to achieve satisfactory

relationships between external stakeholders and employees through appropriate coordinated communication methods (paragraph 2.2.2.1). Marketing communication involves utilising the marketing communication mix, that is, advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity, public relations, sponsorship, direct marketing and digital communication, to present the best possible image of the organisation and establish positive relationships with stakeholders. All the elements of the marketing communication mix contribute to presenting a strong corporate reputation to stakeholders by aiding the organisation to communicate successfully with stakeholders (paragraph 2.2.2.2). Organisational communication, on the other hand, contributes to achieving optimal communication and functionality within the organisation through effective downward, upward, horizontal and diagonal communication (paragraph 2.2.2.3). The latter principle foundations of corporate communication all assist in directing the intended message to specific stakeholders. Hence, corporate communication is an essential component of getting the message across to all stakeholders and, together with the principle foundations, is implemented on the basis of corporate communication strategies that are used to enhance the organisation's overall corporate reputation (paragraph 2.2.2.3).

Corporate reputation can be viewed as the overall perceptions that stakeholders have about an organisation (paragraph 2.3.2). These perceptions can be established over a given timeframe through interaction with the organisation, which is imperative since stakeholders play a central role in forming a strong corporate reputation. Corporate reputation is also viewed as a multidimensional construct that can be viewed from the perspective of various academic fields that provide valuable information on the elements that are taken into account when an organisation's corporate reputation is formed. However, this study's focus was specifically on the corporate communication view. As mentioned previously (paragraph 2.3.1), an organisation utilises corporate communication strategies to improve the corporate reputation of the organisation. To improve and maintain a favourable corporate reputation, organisations should invest time in creating long-term relationships with stakeholders (paragraph 2.3.2 and 2.3.3).

Stakeholder relations play an essential role in corporate reputation, since organisations that manage and have trustworthy relationships with stakeholders tend to have a more substantial corporate reputation. An organisation should identify all the stakeholders of the organisation to determine their needs with a view to strengthening corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.3). Stakeholders base their perceptions on various fundamental elements of corporate reputation. This is seen as the foundation of an organisation's corporate reputation.

Fundamental corporate reputation elements such as corporate identity, corporate image, corporate branding, corporate personality, and corporate behaviour, ethics and culture contribute to the organisation's corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.4). The corporate identity of an

organisation is defined as all the visual components that promote the image of an organisation (2.3.4.1). As such, the corporate image is the mental picture or feelings that stakeholders have of the organisation (paragraph 2.3.4.2). Corporate branding signifies the image that stakeholders have of the organisation and is revealed through the organisation's corporate identity, name, logo and additional visual components (paragraph 2.3.4.3). Corporate personality, on the other hand, stems from an organisation's values, culture, communication, employee participation and consistency in its image, identity and brand (paragraph 2.3.4.4). Corporate behaviour, ethics and culture reflect the organisation's internal values, standards and ethical norms that are demonstrated to the external public (paragraph 2.3.4.5). Hence, aligning all these fundamental elements through communication is essential for an organisation to establish its corporate reputation in stakeholders' minds (paragraph 2.3.4). Since the fundamental elements of corporate reputation serve as the foundation of corporate reputation, it should be managed diligently to achieve the desired corporate reputation in stakeholders' minds.

The above understanding of **corporate reputation management** requires the organisation to build and maintain its corporate reputation through actionable results (paragraph 2.3.5.1). Corporate reputation management leads the organisation in the intended direction it wants to go and aids in attracting beneficial resources. In order to achieve the goals that the organisation wants to achieve, a specific department or specialised employee should be appointed to assess, manage and maintain the organisation's corporate reputation. The organisation should align its strategic goals to stakeholders' expectations, because corporate reputation is a determining factor of organisational success that should be diligently managed. When managing the organisation's corporate reputation, specific principles should be applied as part of a strategic management function by a specific person or department (paragraph 2.3.5.2). A comprehensive corporate reputation management plan would involve actions such as determining what the organisation wants to achieve, conducting a reputation assessment, determining reputation goals, implementing the plan for the desired corporate reputation, doing follow-up assessments and audits, and developing strategies for each stakeholder group (paragraph 2.3.5.2). A corporate reputation management plan is a necessary strategy that should be implemented as part of an organisation's corporate reputation management principles. Corporate reputation management also involves the organisation handling corporate reputation risks. Damage to the organisation's corporate reputation creates a negative perception in the stakeholders' minds. If corporate reputation is not managed properly, it could be at risk of its reputation being damaged and a loss of its stakeholders' trust (2.3.5.3). However, corporate reputation management would be impossible if the organisation did not conduct a corporate reputation measurement audit or assessment, since the organisation would have insufficient knowledge of the perceptions of stakeholders without doing one.

Corporate reputation measurement is performed to determine stakeholders' perceptions of an organisation's corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.6). When corporate reputation measures are utilised, the organisation's reputation is assessed by means of an instrument or assessment method in which stakeholders assess the organisation in relation to specific variables. Hence, the organisation usually receives a score or ranking that the stakeholders attribute to them and thereby determines whether it has a strong corporate reputation. Several measurement instruments are described in the academic literature; however, the Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel's *Reputation Quotient*® (2007) was used for this study. The *Reputation Quotient*® has 20 attributes over six dimensions, against which the stakeholders measure an organisation. The dimensions are *emotional appeal, products and services, vision and leadership, workplace environment, social responsibility and financial performance*. This measurement instrument was preferred because it had been tested since 1999 across 26 countries by the Fombrun and the Harris Interactive research organisation in New York (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). A more comprehensive discussion of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes is provided below (paragraph 7.2.3). Managing and measuring an organisation's corporate reputation can provide the organisation with an advantage over its competitors.

Having a **strong corporate reputation** has many advantages; therefore, organisations should invest time in improving and nurturing their corporate reputations (paragraph 2.3.7). A strong corporate reputation attracts highly qualified employees, improves financial performance and creates believability among its stakeholders. Hence, a strong corporate reputation can help the organisation to survive reputational risks, since stakeholders would continue to believe in the organisation even after its corporate reputation has been damaged. Strong corporate reputations generate financial value for the organisation by attracting additional funds and achieving a competitive advantage over competitors. Stakeholders often link the corporate reputation of an organisation to its financial performance (paragraph 2.3.7.2).

It can be concluded that, according to the literature, corporate reputation management and measurement are a significant aspect of corporate communication. As such, corporate reputation management and measurement should be included in Orange River Cellars' corporate communication strategies. Strategies can assist the organisation to build strong relationships with its stakeholders and enhance its overall corporate reputation. Corporate reputation measurement is a necessary part of this process, because it will enable the organisation to determine the perceptions of its various stakeholder groups. Moreover, the organisation should appoint a specialised employee or department, to manage its corporate reputation effectively. A strong corporate reputation could place Orange River Cellars in an advantageous position relative to that of its competitors.

Orange River Cellars' management's understanding of corporate reputation management and measurement is outlined in the following section.

7.2.2 Conclusion to specific research question 2

In this section, the specific research question 2 on Orange River Cellars' management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement is answered:

What is Orange River Cellars management's approach to corporate reputation management and measurement? (see 1.2.2)

The data to answer this research question was sourced by means of semi-structured interviews with 12 members of Orange River Cellars' management team. The concepts addressed were based on the literature on corporate reputation management and measurement, with guidance from the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument. The results were presented in Chapter 5.

7.2.2.1 Management's understanding of corporate reputation and the fundamental elements

A primary focus of the interviews was whether Orange River Cellars' management team understood what corporate reputation entailed and whether the fundamental elements of corporate reputation could be identified and evaluated.

Corporate reputation was recognised by Orange River Cellars' management as the perceptions or views people have of an organisation (paragraph 5.3). As the literature indicates that corporate reputation relates to the overall perceptions' stakeholders have of the organisation (paragraph 2.3.2), Orange River Cellars' management had sufficient knowledge of the topic and understood what corporate reputation was.

Corporate reputation is built on core **fundamental elements**, namely corporate identity, corporate image, corporate branding, corporate personality, corporate behaviour, ethics and culture (paragraph 2.3.4). Orange River Cellars' management had a limited vision of the fundamental elements of corporate reputation and found it challenging to identify the specific elements (paragraph 5.4.1). However, three members of the management team could identify corporate ethics and culture as part of fundamental elements of corporate reputation.

Corporate identity, the first fundamental element, was not associated with all the organisation's visual components (paragraph 2.3.4.1). It and was merely defined as how people see the organisation (paragraph 5.4.2). However, according to the literature, corporate identity is not how

people see an organisation; it rather comprises the visual components that aid in promoting the image to create a lasting impression in stakeholders' minds. However, none of the participants could provide a clear definition or relate the concept to all the visual components. The management team viewed Orange River Cellars' corporate identity as unique, but felt that there were old, traditional components that could change, such as its old-school appearance, especially with bottling and packaging (paragraph 5.4.2).

Corporate image could be somewhat defined by Orange River Cellars' management team, although they did not specifically describe it as the mental picture stakeholders have in their minds (paragraph 2.3.4.2). However, they could indicate that the corporate image was how people perceived the organisation (paragraph 5.4.3). Again, the majority of the management team felt that Orange River Cellars' image was old fashioned and needed work, but considered individual brands' images, such as those of the Hedgehog and Lyra wines, to be excellent. Corporate identity and corporate image were often confused and should rather be viewed by the management team as two distinct elements.

Corporate branding was not perceived as visual components such as the organisation's name, symbols or identity (paragraph 2.3.4.3). None of Orange River Cellars' management referred to the corporate brand as a fundamental element that created an image of the organisation in stakeholders' minds through its visual components, such as its name and symbols. Instead, they identified individual brands within Orange River Cellars, rather than the organisation's complete corporate brand (paragraph 5.4.4). It seemed as though management wanted to move away from the Orange River Cellars brand and instead focus on distinct brands to suit individual customers' needs.

Corporate personality could not be identified as the organisation's values and what it stood for (paragraph 2.3.4.4). Most of Orange River Cellars' management team indicated that it was an unfamiliar term (paragraph 5.4.5) and did not make the connection between the corporate personality of an organisation its corporate reputation. Orange River Cellars' corporate personality was viewed as old fashioned by most members. Although they could not provide a clear definition of corporate personality, some of the management team members were under the impression that it was in the process of changing. However, if the management team could not provide a clear definition, it might signify that they do not know what has to change.

Corporate ethics, culture and behaviour could be identified by Orange River Cellars' management as what the organisation stands for, the values, the ethical way of doing business and the culture within the organisation (paragraph 2.3.4.5). The participants considered Orange River Cellars' values and behaviour a top priority. They insisted that high standards were imperative (paragraph

5.4.6). The culture of Orange River Cellars was viewed as that of an old cooperative mentality, which the management was trying to move away from. The new CEO, who was appointed two years ago, aspires to change the culture from that of a cooperative approach to that of a corporate entity. In terms of a cooperative mentality, the board of directors provide the direction, which could lead to diluted decisions (paragraph 5.4.6), since senior management might not have a say with respect to balancing the interests of all stakeholder groups. Certain participants revealed that shifting from a cooperative approach or culture to a corporate culture would take the organisation a few years. Overall, the participants' views on corporate ethics and behaviour were discussed more freely than corporate culture. In particular, Orange River Cellars' management team should familiarise themselves with the fundamental elements of corporate reputation to better understand how to manage these elements and what stakeholders pay attention to when assessing an organisation's corporate reputation. Consequently, these fundamental elements all play an essential role in building a strong corporate reputation.

In summary, most of the participants understood what the corporate reputation construct was, namely that it is the overall perception that stakeholders develop of the organisation over time. Unfortunately, most of the participants could not identify any of the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, but some members could identify ethics and values, which relate to the last element of corporate ethics, namely culture and behaviour. There were misperceptions about corporate identity and corporate image, whereby the management team overlapped the two constructs. They did not recognise that they were distinct fundamental elements. Most of Orange River Cellars' management referred to individual corporate brands or products produced by the organisation, but did not place emphasis on the overall corporate brand of Orange River Cellars. It is vital to establish an overall corporate brand in order to create an image of the organisation in stakeholders' minds. The management team struggled to provide a clear definition of corporate personality and were unfamiliar with the construct. However, when asked about the corporate personality of Orange River Cellars, most of them viewed it as old fashioned and insisted that it should be changed. Although the participants did not provide a clear explanation of corporate ethics, culture and behaviour, they nevertheless understood what the element involved. Overall, none of Orange River Cellars' management remarked that the fundamental elements could have an effect on the overall corporate reputation of the organisation.

7.2.2.2 Management's understanding of stakeholder relations

Stakeholder relations play an important part in corporate reputation management, since organisations that manage stakeholder relationships well have a more substantial corporate reputation than those who do not (paragraph 2.3.3). Management focused mainly on the consumers and grape farmers or producers as the primary stakeholders of the organisation

(paragraph 2.3.3). Although they can be considered significant, Orange River Cellars' management team should identify and acknowledge all the organisation's stakeholders. The literature indicates that the stakeholders who are important for Orange River Cellars are the community, consumers, employees, export wholesalers, grape farmers or producers, management, stockists and dealers, and suppliers (Figure 3-7).

The identification of stakeholder groups was somewhat vague; however, the management team claimed that Orange River Cellars managed its relationships well through effective communication (paragraph 5.5). If all the stakeholders relevant to the organisation are not identified, then the organisation will not communicate appropriately with all its stakeholder groups. Communication with all stakeholder groups is necessary to ensure that all stakeholders are well informed and their needs are met in order to establish a strong corporate reputation.

7.2.2.3 Management's understanding of corporate reputation management and the principles involved

Corporate reputation management entails persistently working on building and maintaining the organisation's corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.5.1). In order to do so, the organisation should appoint a **department or specialised employees**, such as an internal reputation manager (paragraph 5.6.1). The Orange River Cellars' management team argued that all the employees were responsible for managing the organisation's corporate reputation, but felt that the direction should come from management. Only two management members said that a specific person or department should be responsible for managing the organisation's corporate reputation, as indicated in the literature (paragraph 2.3.5.2).

Orange River Cellars' management agreed that corporate reputation management was vital to **achieving organisational goals**. Organisational goals could be to gain a better corporate reputation, attract qualified employees, achieve sustainable growth, be profitable or outperform competitors (paragraph 2.3.5.2). However, although Orange River Cellars' management agreed that corporate reputation management was vital to goal achievement, they could not identify the exact role a corporate reputation manager should play in the organisation (paragraph 5.6.2).

Corporate reputation management principles involve aiding the organisation to manage its corporate reputation, which requires implementing strategies such as developing a corporate reputation management plan or appointing specialised employees to manage corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.5.2). Orange River Cellars' management was vague about corporate reputation management principles and did not indicate the actual process that it involved (paragraph 5.6.3). The members understood this concept as the beliefs or morals to which the

members of the organisation subscribed, which does not relate to the theory discussed in paragraph 2.3.5.2. Corporate reputation management also involves managing risks that could harm the organisation's corporate reputation. **Managing corporate reputation risks** is vital, since the organisation's reputation can be lost within seconds (paragraph 2.3.5.3). If Orange River Cellars manage their corporate reputation, they can avoid reputation risks. However, the Orange River Cellars management team did not mention anything about corporate reputation management enabling an organisation to avoid future reputational risks, which indicates a knowledge gap in the company.

7.2.2.4 Management's understanding of corporate reputation measurement

Corporate reputation measurement comprises identifying measurable concepts and testing those variables by applying a specific corporate reputation measurement instrument (paragraph 2.3.6). The participants understood what corporate reputation measurement entailed and the importance thereof. However, they revealed that Orange River Cellars had never conducted a corporate reputation assessment or audit (paragraph 5.7.1). There were discrepancies in their views about how regularly the organisation should measure its corporate reputation, especially with financial implications. Not measuring an organisation's corporate reputation according to a pre-set schedule could be detrimental to a company, because it could lose touch with the perceptions of its stakeholders. There are various corporate reputation measurement instruments that an organisation can use to measure its corporate reputation.

The **Reputation Quotient**[®] measurement instrument's dimensions were analysed and applied to Orange River Cellars (Figure 2-7). There was an overall positive feeling about Orange River Cellars in the emotional appeal dimension (paragraph 5.7.2.1). With the products and services dimension, the management team displayed confidence in Orange River Cellars' products, but they did voice concerns about service delivery issues that were related to distribution and geographical limitations (paragraph 5.7.2.2). The management team had high regard for the vision and leadership within Orange River Cellars. Admirations was expressed for the newly-appointed CEO, who is determined to steer Orange River Cellars in a more positive direction (paragraph 5.7.2.3). There was overall agreement that the work environment was favourable. The management team did not mention anything about rewarding employees fairly, which is part of this dimension (paragraph 5.7.2.4). However, they might not have known that this factor was part of the work environment dimension. In the financial performance dimension, there were some concerns due to the alcohol industry being under severe pressure because of the government's COVID-19 regulations (paragraph 5.7.2.5). The old cooperative approach or mentality was also a concern, which some participants felt that placed the organisation at risk. However, as stated above, management is trying to move away from a cooperative mentality. Social responsibility

was regarded as important. The management team felt that they were involved in the community. They made it clear that they aimed to behave responsibly towards the community and environment (paragraph 5.2.7.6). Their only concern was that they did not have any control over alcohol abuse in communities.

7.2.2.5 Management's understanding of the advantages of corporate reputation

The Orange River Cellars' management team acknowledged that a good corporate reputation would provide the organisation with various benefits. In particular, they noted that the financial performance of the organisation would increase, which is in accord with the theory in paragraph 2.3.7.2 above that a good reputation generates financial value. Another aspect considered an advantage would be that the wine cellar would have more, or more prominent, shelf space for products, which could have a positive impact on sales.

Corporate reputation is seen as a valuable asset (paragraph 2.3.7.1) and the management team agreed that a strong corporate reputation would provide the organisation with an advantage over its competitors. They emphasised that the stakeholders would have higher trust in the organisation and that it would enable the company to attract investors (paragraph 5.8). Only one of the management members added that a good corporate reputation would attract qualified employees. However, they understood that corporate reputation would give the organisation a competitive advantage.

7.2.2.6 Management's understanding of the global and South African wine industry

The last section on the global and South African wine industry was not required to answer the research question regarding management's approach to corporate reputation management. It rather served as additional information on the wine industry. The management team did not feel that Orange River Cellars had a distinguished corporate reputation in the **global wine industry** (paragraph 5.9). A number of them even felt that they had no corporate reputation in the global wine industry. However, Orange River Cellars has started to explore the market in China by launching offices in that country, which might open doors for the international wine market. The participants also said that global production was challenging, because South Africa produced less than 10% of the wine in the world (in accord with the literature; see Table 3-1). The international market is thus underdeveloped and export opportunities can be investigated more.

Orange River Cellars' management perceived their corporate reputation in the **South African wine industry** as respectable but emphasised that the public might have a misconception that no quality wine was produced in the Northern Cape region (paragraph 5.9). There is a perception that high-quality wines are produced only in the Western Cape, which, in their view, is not the

case. Although the management team felt that their organisation had a respectable corporate reputation, they believed that Orange River Cellars could improve its status.

In summary, the Orange River Cellars' management team had some knowledge of what corporate reputation entailed; however, they had only vague ideas about the fundamental elements of corporate reputation. The management team was familiar with the corporate reputation management construct, but they had limited knowledge of corporate reputation management principles. Similarly, they acknowledged that it would be beneficial to measure the organisation's corporate reputation; however, Orange River Cellars had never conducted a corporate reputation assessment or audit. Corporate reputation management and measurement are essential aspects of an organisation and should be implemented as part of the organisation's corporate communication strategies to achieve a favourable corporate reputation.

In the next section, the perceptions of Orange River Cellars' stakeholders will be outlined.

7.2.3 Conclusion to research question 3

The third research objective was to examine the perceptions of Orange River Cellars' stakeholders by applying the *Reputation Quotient's*® dimensions to the organisation. The corresponding specific research question was:

What are the stakeholders' perceptions of Orange River Cellars' reputation according to the Reputation Quotient®? (see 1.2.2)

The **emotional appeal dimension** related to whether the stakeholders had a good feeling about Orange River Cellars, admired and respected it, and had trust in the organisation (see Figure 2-7). In the emotional appeal dimension, the majority of the respondents had a good feeling (mean value 4.10) about Orange River Cellars (paragraph 6.3.1). The majority of them also admired, respected (mean value 4.06) and trusted (mean value 4.11) Orange River Cellars. Overall, Orange River Cellars was positively perceived within the emotional appeal dimension. As Aula and Heinonen (2016:16) state, the emotional appeal of an organisation might be the most critical trait to focus on because stakeholders' emotions are what ultimately shape an excellent corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). Thus, the fact that Orange River Cellars' stakeholders had an overall good feeling about the organisation indicates a favourable corporate reputation.

In the **products and services dimension**, the stakeholders' perceptions were examined in relation to whether they believed Orange River Cellars had high-quality products and services; had products and services that were innovative; offered products and services that were good value for money; and was an organisation that stood behind its products and services (see Figure

2-7). The stakeholders had a positive perception of the products and services (paragraph 6.3.2). The majority of them perceived Orange River Cellars' products and services as high quality (mean value 4.09), innovative (mean value 3.85) and good value for money (mean value 4.25), and felt that the organisation stood behind its products and services (mean value 4.15). Orange River Cellars might consider improving its innovation capabilities, because this was the attribute with the lowest mean value, although it was still on the positive side. As indicated in paragraph 2.3.6.1.3, the fact that Orange River Cellars' products and services were perceived as good serves as an indicator to stakeholders that the organisation provides worthy products and services (Cornelissen, 2017:sec. 120).

In terms of the **vision and leadership dimension**, the stakeholders' perceptions on whether Orange River Cellars capitalised on market opportunities, had excellent leadership and had a clear vision for the future (see Figure 2-7) were assessed. The respondents tended towards agreeing that Orange River Cellars capitalised on market opportunities (mean value 3.61), had good leadership (mean value 3.78) and displayed a clear vision (mean value 3.67) for the future (paragraph 6.3.3). Although this dimension obtained lower scores than the previous one, there was still a tendency towards agreeing. Orange River Cellars' management should keep in mind that if strategies are not planned without a clear vision, they will not achieve the intended organisational goals (Lubbe, 2019:sec. 48), as mentioned in paragraph 2.3.6.1.3 above. Orange River Cellars should keep in mind that vision and leadership play a role in organisations gaining market opportunities and that the leadership of Orange River Cellars guides the organisation into the right direction.

In terms of the **workplace environment dimension**, the stakeholders were asked to consider whether Orange River Cellars rewarded employees fairly, was a good company to work for and had good employees (see Figure 2-7). The stakeholders had a rather neutral perception of Orange River Cellars rewarding employees fairly (mean value 3.42) and being a good organisation to work for (mean value 3.59), but had a more positive feeling about the organisation having good employees (mean value 3.90) (see paragraph 6.3.4). Orange River Cellars have to keep in mind that the workplace environment is an important dimension of corporate reputation, as noted in paragraph 2.3.6.1.3, because stakeholders form positive perceptions about well-managed organisations that have skilled employees (Araci, 2015:109). However, the low scores could simply indicate that the respondents did not have sufficient knowledge of Orange River Cellars' work environment.

In terms of the **financial performance dimension**, the stakeholders' perceptions were assessed in relation to whether Orange River Cellars outperformed its competitors, displayed a record of profitability, was a low-risk investment and promised growth prospects for the future (see Figure

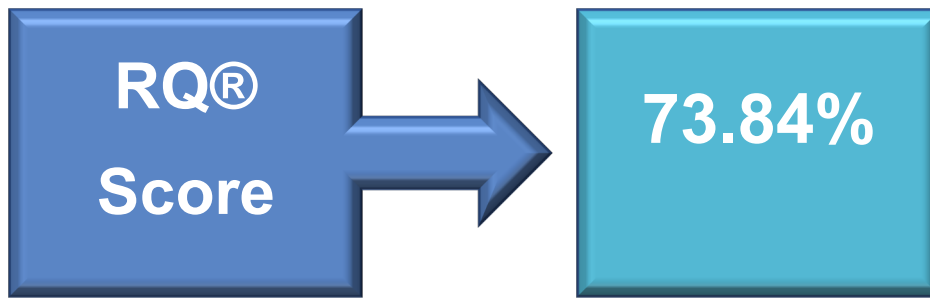
2-7). The stakeholders' tended towards agreeing that Orange River Cellars outperformed its competitors (mean value 3.31), that it had a record of profitability (mean value 3.39) and was a low-risk investment (mean value 3.21). However, the stakeholders were more positive about Orange River Cellars' growth prospects (mean value 3.63) for the future (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). Since the ratings were higher in the growth prospect attribute, it could indicate that the stakeholders believe Orange River Cellars can still expand and develop into a financially sustainable organisation (paragraph 6.3.5). Orange River Cellars' management should keep in mind that the financial performance of an organisation has a significant impact on its corporate reputation, since the financial performance strongly influences stakeholders' judgments and decision-making processes (Derun & Mysaka, 2018:121), as discussed in paragraph 2.3.6.1.3.

In the **social responsibility dimension**, the respondents were asked whether the organisation supported good causes, was environmentally responsible and showed community responsibility (see Figure 2-7). There was an overall positive feeling that Orange River Cellars supported good causes (mean value 3.58), was environmentally responsible (mean value 3.75) and was involved in the community (mean value 3.79) through the way it treats people and society (see paragraph 6.3.6). As noted in paragraph 2.3.6.1.3, corporate social responsibility is an essential factor in building a good corporate reputation that should be managed and implemented by Orange River Cellars. It could increase organisational awareness by supporting good causes in the community in a way that supersedes the standard legal requirements (Chanda, 2018:5). The stakeholders general view is that Orange River Cellars does support the community and is environmentally responsible.

The statistics indicated that the standardised estimates for the measurement model of the confirmatory factor analysis for the *Reputation Quotient*® fitted well with the constructs the instrument was intended to measure. All the values were statistically significant and above 0.81 (paragraph 6.4). The closer the scores are to 1, more strongly it relates to the construct (see paragraph 4.5.2.1).

Moreover, all the Cronbach's Alpha values were high for the dimensions, which signifies high internal reliability, since the closer the Cronbach's Alpha is to 1.0, the more strongly the factors group together (paragraph 6.5). The Cronbach's Alpha values were as follows (refer to Table 6-16): emotional appeal dimension (0.94); products and services dimension (0.93); vision and leadership dimension (0.91); workplace environment dimension (0.87); financial performance dimension (0.91); and social responsibility dimension (0.93). Thus, the stakeholders had a positive feeling about all the dimensions of the *Reputation Quotient*®. None of the dimensions received negative ratings from stakeholders.

Orange River Cellars achieved a total corporate reputation score of:



Source: Author’s own interpretation

Figure 7-1: The Reputation Quotient® score of Orange River Cellars

As indicated in Figure 7-1 above, Orange River Cellars achieved a suitable or “good” score (refer to Table 7-1 below). According to the corporate reputation ranking of The Harris Poll (2018:5) on the Reputation Quotient®, the following corporate reputation scores represent the organisation’s ranking as follows (Chapter 4, paragraph 4.4.2.2):

Table 7-1: The Reputation Quotient® ranking scores

Ranking description	Percentage
Excellent	80-100
Very good	75-79
Good	70-74
Fair	65-69
Poor	55-64
Very Poor	50-54
Critical	0-50

Source: Adapted from The Harris Poll, 2018:5

As seen in Table 7-1 above, Orange River Cellars can still improve on its corporate reputation. Since a total corporate reputation score of **73.84%** was achieved, which represents a “good” score, Orange River Cellars could still improve if it wants to receive either a “very good” or an “excellent” Reputation Quotient® score. Thus, recommendations are made in the next section for Orange River Cellars to improve, manage and measure its corporate reputation for future success.

7.3 Answering the general research question

In light of the above finding, the general research question for this study can be answered. The general research question was:

What are the various stakeholders and management's perceptions of the overall corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars?

The empirical results indicated that the stakeholders and Orange River Cellars' management perceived the company's corporate reputation as "good". The above-mentioned findings indicate that Orange River Cellars can still improve on its corporate reputation. This is especially true in light of the fact that most organisations are vulnerable to corporate reputation challenges and risks, and that an excellent reputation enables organisations to withstand such setbacks. Therefore, the organisation should implement corporate communication strategies to achieve an enhanced corporate reputation. Managing and measuring the organisation's corporate reputation continually would place the company in a better position to ensure future reputational and organisational success.

Detailed practical recommendations, which are intended to serve as a framework for Orange River Cellars to manage its corporate reputation, are presented below.

7.4 Recommendations for Orange River Cellars to manage and measure its corporate reputation

The theoretical basis for this study was provided in Chapter 2 and the context of the study was provided in Chapter 3. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Orange River Cellars' management team and an online e-mail surveys using the *Reputation Quotient*® was conducted, in which the stakeholders' perceptions of the organisation were elicited. In light of both the theory and the results of the empirical research, the following recommendations are made to assist Orange River Cellars' management to improve the organisation's corporate reputation.

7.4.1 Recommendations for Orange River Cellars' management

Orange River Cellars should consider having a training session in which both the management team and employees receive instruction on what corporate reputation entails, including the fundamental elements (corporate identity, image, branding, personality and corporate behaviour, ethics and culture), corporate reputation management and corporate reputation measurement. It is essential to attend to all the previously-mentioned constructs when managing an organisation's corporate reputation. Orange River Cellars' management team and employees should be educated on the factors that shape the perceptions of stakeholders, which in turn comprise an organisation's corporate reputation. This information will help them to determine what corporate communication strategies should be applied to aid in achieving the desired corporate reputation.

Orange River Cellars' management team and its employees need to understand the role corporate reputation management plays in achieving organisational goals, since corporate reputation management can aid the organisation, for example, by attracting skilled employees and outperforming its competitors (paragraph 2.3.5.2). Moreover, Orange River Cellars should apply specific corporate reputation management principles to achieve its reputational goal (discussed in detail below 7.4.3). Some management members mentioned that Orange River Cellars was trying to move away from the cooperative approach of a producer-owned organisation. They could place emphasis on this goal to achieve optimal revenue for the organisation. Additionally, Orange River Cellars should identify all the important stakeholders of the organisation, rather than focusing primarily on the consumer and grape farmer or producers. If the organisation focuses on building and maintaining optimal relationships with all stakeholders, it could succeed in establishing greater loyalty among its stakeholders and thus achieve a better corporate reputation.

Orange River Cellars could also work on establishing its corporate reputation in the global wine industry and improving its corporate reputation in the South African wine industry. Orange River Cellars' management should work on a corporate communication strategy to influence stakeholders' perceptions regarding quality wine that is produced in the Northern Cape region in order to combat the perception that quality wines are produced only in the Western Cape. If the organisation manages the cellar's corporate reputation, it will attract beneficial resources such as financial investments. The first step would always be to measure an organisation's corporate reputation to obtain the perceptions of stakeholders. Only then can the organisation manage its corporate reputation effectively. Since a corporate reputation measurement assessment has been completed in this study, Orange River Cellars can focus on improving on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes (see the following section, 7.4.2) that were indicated to be weak areas in the results and apply the corporate reputation management principles outlined in paragraph 7.4.3 below.

The next section contains details that will guide Orange River Cellars to utilise the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes that stakeholders base their perceptions on.

7.4.2 Improving on the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes

Orange River Cellars should understand how stakeholders perceive an organisations' corporate reputation, which can be measured using the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes. The organisation can then improve on the dimensions in which an unfavourable rating was achieved. The following table provides a summarised version of the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes that Orange River Cellars should focus on.

Table 7-2: A condensed recommendation structure for the *Reputation Quotient*® dimensions and attributes of Harris-Fombrun and Van Riel (2007)

Dimension	Recommendations
Emotional appeal	Orange River Cellars should strive towards establishing an organisation in which stakeholders <u>feel good</u> about it. That is, to inspire <u>admiration, respect</u> and <u>trust</u> in the organisation. This will evoke a favourable overall feeling about the company, which will enhance its corporate reputation.
Products and services	Orange River Cellars' goal should be to maintain a standard of <u>high-quality</u> products and services. It should try to produce <u>innovative</u> products and services. The organisation should provide products and services that are <u>good value</u> for money. The organisation should portray itself as a company that believes in and <u>stands behind</u> its products and services to create a positive perception in stakeholders' minds about its products and services.
Vision and leadership	Orange River Cellars should focus on capitalising on <u>market opportunities</u> for the future. It should strive for <u>excellent leadership</u> to guide the organisation to success. If the organisation demonstrates a <u>clear vision</u> for the future with good leadership, the stakeholders will see the organisation as superior and an industry leader.
Workplace environment	Orange River Cellars will achieve enhanced employee relations if it <u>rewards</u> employees fairly and is a <u>good company</u> to work for. The organisation should employ <u>good employees</u> to aid in achieving a better corporate reputation. The employees should be seen as an important stakeholder group, since they project the internal image of the organisation to the outside world.
Financial performance	Orange River Cellars should strive to <u>outperform competitors</u> . The organisation has to achieve a good <u>record of profitability</u> and <u>low-risk investment</u> in order to attract potential investors. Orange River Cellars should attempt to achieve <u>growth prospects</u> for the future. Attracting potential investors will assist the organisation with future growth.
Social responsibility	Orange River Cellars should <u>support good causes</u> and be involved with the <u>community</u> to enhance its relationships with the community. The organisation should also be <u>environmentally responsible</u> and project a favourable image to the external public by maintaining high standards in the way it treats people and society.

As indicated in Table 7-2, the aim of Orange River Cellars should be to excel in all the dimensions and attributes of the *Reputation Quotient*®. From the statistical results obtained in Chapter 6, Orange River Cellars achieved an overall satisfactory corporate reputation score in the *Reputation Quotient*® results (paragraphs 6.3 and 6.5). However, the organisation can focus on the

dimensions or attributes that scored a lower rating to develop a strategy to improve its corporate reputation rating for those specific dimensions.

The only dimensions that scored the lowest were the workplace environment, vision and leadership and financial performance. However, since the majority of the respondents who completed the online e-mail survey were consumers, it could be that they did not have sufficient knowledge to provide suitable ratings for the workplace environment dimension (paragraph 6.3.4). Therefore, Orange River Cellars can focus on improving the vision and leadership dimension (mean value 3.68) and educate stakeholders on any new market ventures or opportunities, improve leadership capabilities and focus on developing a clear vision for the future (paragraph 6.3.3). Thus, Orange River Cellars could employ better communication strategies to educate stakeholders on its leadership and vision for the future. The other dimension with a slightly lower rating was the financial performance dimension (mean value 3.39), indicating that Orange River Cellars should focus on a strategy to outperform competitors and investigate why stakeholders say that they have an average belief in Orange River Cellars with respect to its record of profitability and investment opportunities (paragraph 6.3.5). Orange River Cellars should determine whether stakeholders have sufficient knowledge in this regard or why they believe the organisation has low profitability and might be a high-risk investment.

Orange River Cellars can only improve its corporate reputation if a proper reputation management plan is formulated to address reputation problems and improve in the dimensions that require attention. Thus, the following set of recommendations will aid the organisation to implement corporate reputation management principles to manage and measure its corporate reputation.

7.4.3 Corporate reputation management principles and objectives for Orange River Cellars

Corporate reputation management principles can aid the organisation to manage and measure its corporate reputation (see paragraph 2.3.5.2). With guidance from the theory and authors such as Aula and Heinonen (2016), and Doorley and Garcia (2015), the following table could serve as a corporate reputation management plan for Orange River Cellars to manage and measure its corporate reputation.

Table 7-3: Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation recommendations

Recommendation 1: Appoint a specific person or department to manage and measure corporate reputation
When asked who should be responsible for managing the organisation's corporate reputation, the majority of Orange River Cellars' management team stated that every employee was responsible (paragraph 5.6.1). However, according to the literature, the direction of the

desired corporate reputation should first be provided by management and a specialist or department should be appointed to implement the reputation goal (paragraph 2.3.5.2). Orange River Cellars should appoint a specific department or employee to manage and measure the organisation's corporate reputation. Orange River Cellars could hand over this responsibility to its marketing department and/or the public relations officer.

Recommendation 2: Identify important stakeholder groups that play a role in the organisation

To know who to target when reputation is managed, Orange River Cellars should identify all the stakeholders who have a stake in the organisation. As determined above, Orange River Cellars' stakeholders consist of the community, consumers, employees, export wholesalers, grape farmers, investors, management, stockists and dealers, and suppliers (see Figure 3-4). However, in Orange River Cellars' case, certain stakeholders might have an integrated role, such as the grape farmers, who could also fall into the investor or supplier category. Orange River Cellars should understand that stakeholders' expectations evolve over time. Moreover, wine cellars have to develop strategies to determine the corporate reputation they want to achieve in stakeholders' minds (paragraph 3.1.2.2). Orange River Cellars should foster relationships with its stakeholders, since stakeholders are a determining factor in the formation of the corporate reputation of the organisation (paragraph 2.3.3).

Recommendation 3: Implement a corporate communication strategy to achieve the corporate reputation goal

Orange River Cellars should implement a corporate communication strategy to assist it to achieve its desired corporate reputation (paragraph 2.2.1). Corporate communication departments should have strategies in place to communicate relevant messages to the intended stakeholder groups (paragraph 2.2.2). Similarly, Orange River Cellars could determine which marketing communication mix element should be used (paragraph 2.2.2.2) to communicate with the intended stakeholder group to enhance its corporate reputation.

Recommendation 4: Assess the corporate reputation areas that need attention

When a corporate reputation measurement audit or assessment is completed, Orange River Cellars should investigate the areas in which a low corporate reputation score has been achieved. Corporate reputation measures also enable the organisation to determine whether stakeholders' needs are indeed being met (paragraph 2.3.6.1.3). Once the areas or constructs are identified, the organisation should implement a strategy to achieve the desired goal.

Recommendation 5: Devise a corporate reputation management and measurement plan

Orange River Cellars should devise a corporate reputation management and measurement plan to achieve or to maintain its desired corporate reputation. The desired corporate reputation goal should first be determined on the basis of what the organisation wants to achieve. For example, Orange River Cellars could aim to improve its corporate reputation ranking from "good" to "very good" or "excellent" (see paragraph 4.4.2.1). Orange River Cellars focus area could be the vision and leadership (paragraph 6.3.3) and financial performance dimensions (paragraph 6.3.5) in light of this study's findings. However, the organisation could determine any desired goal that it wants to achieve, such as better financial performance, better service delivery or outperforming competitors. Determining the corporate reputation goal, that is, determining what the organisation wants to achieve to meet the expectations of stakeholders (paragraph 2.3.5.3), is the first step. After the corporate reputation goal has been determined, the organisation can devise steps to achieve the goal through adequate management and measurement.

Recommendation 6: Measure corporate reputation through an audit or assessment method

Orange River Cellars should audit or assess its corporate reputation every financial year. There are many measurable reputation concepts that Orange River Cellars could test by using a specific corporate reputation measurement instrument or assessment method (paragraph 2.3.6).

Measuring Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation should be a vital component, because investigating stakeholders' perceptions and interests will guide the organisation's efforts to make positive changes and thus achieve an excellent corporate reputation (paragraph 2.3.6).

Recommendation 7: Evaluate whether the goal has been achieved

Orange River Cellars should keep in mind that, in our growing technological age, damaging news could spread faster than good news in the corporate environment (paragraph 2.3.5.2). Thus, the organisation should constantly assess whether the desired goals have been achieved. The specific department or employee can re-evaluate the intended goal and, if it has not been met, convene a strategy session with management to develop a new strategy to achieve the desired results.

Re-evaluating the organisational goals would also assist the organisation to avoid reputation risks in the future. Orange River Cellars should keep in mind that if its corporate reputation is damaged, the stakeholders could lose trust in it (paragraph 2.3.5.3). Orange River Cellars' management team did not mention any aspect of corporate reputation management and measurement to mitigate corporate reputation risks; hence it would benefit the organisation to have knowledge of how to avoid such risks.

Source: Author's own interpretation

If it implements the above-mentioned corporate reputation recommendations in Table 7-3, Orange River Cellars could establish a strong and positive corporate reputation. The recommendations merely serve as a guideline to manage and measure Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation, hence the organisation can determine specific reputational strategies as stakeholders' needs change.

The limitations of the study and future research opportunities are presented in the next section.

7.5 Limitations of the study

This study was focused exclusively on a single country, South Africa and only the wine industry setting, which could limit the generalisability of the findings. Moreover, only Orange River Cellars' management team and stakeholders were sampled in this study and not the wine industry in general. Nonetheless, conducting this research in a single setting provided the researcher with firm control of Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation issues and facilitated a sound understanding of the *Reputation Quotient*® measurement instrument. Although a representative sample was achieved (263 respondents), the majority of the sample were consumers, which means the findings could not be generalised to all Orange River Cellars' stakeholder groups.

The online e-mail survey was conducted only in English, which could have made it difficult to comprehend for stakeholders who were not familiar with the language. A practical limitation in this study was that the empirical research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, which restricted the researcher from reaching out personally to different stakeholder groups.

A standardised measurement instrument was used; thus no other corporate reputation elements or constructs relating to corporate reputation could be included in the semi-structured interviews or online e-mail survey.

7.6 Significance and future research

This study contributes to a deeper understanding of theoretical constructs such as corporate communication, corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantage of a strong corporate reputation. Each construct plays a vital role in the foundation of corporate reputation in stakeholders' minds.

This specific study could also be replicated by using a different measurement instrument and a larger population, after which comparisons could be drawn to this specific study's findings. Orange River Cellars' management team can now expand their knowledge of corporate reputation management and measurement and utilise the findings to implement strategies to further enhance the cellars' corporate reputation. This study not only contributes to corporate communication and corporate reputation management and measurement but could also serve as guide to employees or departments who manage wine cellars' corporate reputations. Since corporate reputation management studies have not been done in a South African wine industry context, this study could serve the unique purpose of guiding wine cellars on corporate reputation management.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter first answered the three specific research questions presented in Chapter 1, after which the general research question was answered: *What are the various stakeholders and management's perceptions of the overall corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars?*

The outcome of this study indicated that utilising the *Reputation Quotient*® as a measurement, the instrument could be beneficial for Orange River Cellars to determine its stakeholders' perceptions and achieve positive outcomes in its overall strategy. Although Orange River Cellars had never conducted a reputation assessment before, it is a necessity for future success. This study also contributed a deeper understanding of theoretical constructs such as corporate

communication, corporate reputation, the fundamental elements of corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, corporate reputation measurement and the advantage of a strong corporate reputation. The appropriate management of each construct plays a vital role in the establishment of a strong corporate reputation in stakeholders' minds.

The recommendations and guidance in this study could aid Orange River Cellars and other wine cellars to improve the management and measurement of their corporate reputations to bolster their success and mitigate any future reputation risks.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND QUESTIONS

Introduction	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you for participating in this study. I know that your time is valuable. May I record this interview? This will enable me to transcribe your answers with the correct wording. • The questions asked in this interview do not have a right or wrong answer, so please feel free to answer and discuss them as you wish. Your views will be kept anonymous. 	
Research outline	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The theme of this study is corporate reputation. The focus of this interview is specifically on Orange River Cellars' corporate reputation, how it is managed, how it is measured and its value. • This research could guide all reputation managers and wine cellars to observe and maintain their corporate reputation in the future. • The length of this interview will be approximately one hour. 	
Questions	
Biographical Profile	
1.	How long have you worked for Orange River Cellars?
2.	What is your current position at Orange River Cellars?

Research Objective (for the researcher's own reference)		Interview questions
Corporate reputation		
Critically review the understanding of corporate reputation literature in general.	3.	What does the expression 'corporate reputation' mean to you?
Fundamental elements of corporate reputation		
Critically review the understanding of the fundamental elements of corporate reputation.	4.	What elements would you say constitute corporate reputation?

<p>Review the interviewee's basic knowledge of the fundamental elements of corporate reputation.</p> <p>Corporate identity (visual components)</p> <p>Corporate image (mental picture/ idea and impression of organisation)</p> <p>Corporate branding (visual components, such as symbols, identity and name)</p> <p>Corporate personality (represent org, core values and what it stands for)</p> <p>Corporate behaviour, ethics and culture (how it's perceived by people within the org)</p>	<p>5.</p> <p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p>	<p>(a) How would you define corporate identity? (b) How do you perceive Orange River Cellars' corporate identity?</p> <p>(a) What does corporate image mean to you? (b) How do you view Orange River Cellars' corporate image?</p> <p>(a) What does corporate branding entail in your mind? (b) How do you see Orange River Cellars' corporate brand?</p> <p>(a) What does an organisation's corporate personality include? (b) How would you describe Orange River Cellars' corporate personality?</p> <p>(a) How would you describe corporate ethics and culture within an organisation? (b) How would you describe the current culture within Orange River Cellars?</p>
Stakeholder relations		
<p>Critically review management's understanding of stakeholder relations within Orange River Cellars.</p> <p><i>(Stakeholders include community, consumers, employees, export wholesalers, grape farmers, investors, management, stockists and dealers, and suppliers).</i></p>	<p>10.</p> <p>11.</p>	<p>Who do you consider to be Orange River Cellars' stakeholders?</p> <p>How does Orange River Cellars manage its relationships with the stakeholders mentioned?</p>
Corporate reputation management		
<p>Critically review management's understanding of corporate reputation management.</p>	<p>12.</p>	<p>Who would you say should be responsible for managing corporate reputation within your organisation?</p>

	13.	What role do you think corporate reputation management plays in achieving goals within an organisation?
	14.	What are the principles of corporate reputation management?
Corporate reputation measurement		
(Corporate reputation measurement involves an assessment method to determine and measure the perceptions of differing stakeholder groups)		
Critically review management's understanding of corporate reputation measurement.	15.	What do you think the concept of corporate reputation measurement entails?
	16.	Why would you say it is important to measure your organisation's corporate reputation?
	17.	How frequently do you think Orange River Cellars should measure its corporate reputation?
Reputation Quotient®		
Critically review management's understanding of the dimensions and concepts of the <i>Reputation Quotient</i>®		
<u>Emotional appeal</u>	18.	What is your overall feeling about Orange River Cellars?
<u>Products and services</u>	19.	What is your overall perception of Orange River Cellars' (a) products and (b) services?
<u>Vision and leadership</u>	20.	What is your overall view of the (a) vision and (b) leadership of Orange River Cellars'?
<u>Workplace environment</u>	21.	What is your overall perception of Orange River Cellars' workplace environment?
<u>Financial performance</u>	22.	What is your view of Orange River Cellars' overall financial performance?

<u>Social responsibility</u>	23.	What is your overall perception of Orange River Cellars' social responsibility? <i>(to be environmentally responsible and treat the community well).</i>
Advantages of corporate reputation		
Critically review management's understanding of the advantages of corporate reputation.	24.	What do you perceive the advantages of corporate reputation to be?
	25.	What do you believe a strong corporate reputation offers an organisation?
Global wine production		
To gain a general overview of management's perspective on Orange River Cellars in the global wine industry.	26.	How do you perceive the corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars in comparison to that of other wineries in the global wine industry? <i>(excluding South Africa)</i>
South African wine industry		
To gain a general overview of management's perspective on Orange River Cellars in the South African wine industry.	27.	How do you perceive the corporate reputation of Orange River Cellars compared to that of other wineries in the South African wine industry?
General questions		
A general discussion on the elements that have not been mentioned.	28.	Is there anything you would like to add that has not been mentioned or discussed with regards to corporate reputation and Orange River Cellars?

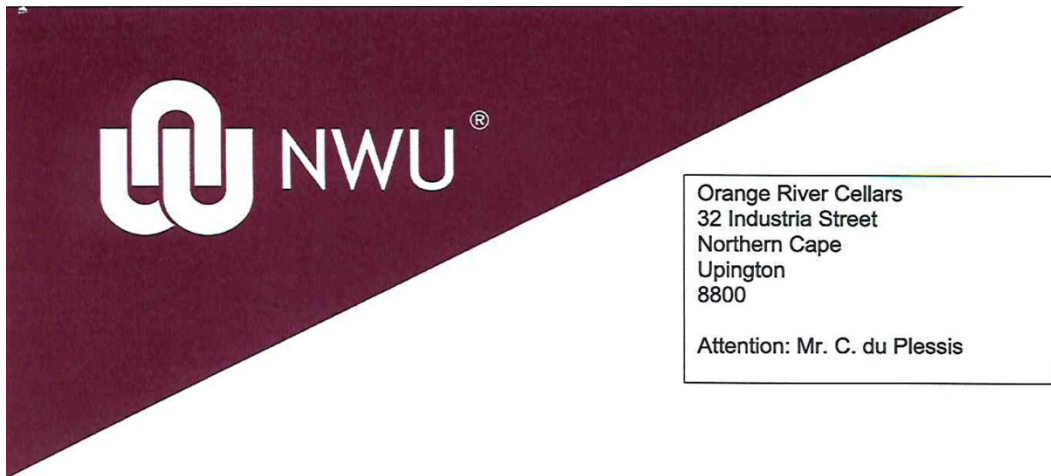
APPENDIX B: ONLINE E-MAIL SURVEY

Section A			
Demographic information			
1. Age: Please indicate your age (select one of the following answers)		18-24 years old	55-64 years old
		25-34 years old	65-74 years old
		35-44 years old	75 years or older
		45-54 years old	
2. Gender: Please indicate your gender. (select one of the following answers)		Male	
		Female	
		Other	
3. Language: Please indicate your home language. (select one of the following answers)		Afrikaans	Setswana
		English	isiXhosa
		Northern Sotho	isiZulu
		Southern Sotho	Other: Please specify _____
4. Orange River Cellars involvement: Which of the following best describes your involvement with the company. (select one of the following answers)		Community	Investor
		Consumer	Management
		Employee	Stockist and dealer
		Export wholesaler	Supplier
		Grape farmer	
5. Alcohol consumption frequency: How often do you consume alcohol in a week? (select one of the following answers)		Teetotaler	3-5 times a week
		Once a week	Every day
		Twice a week	
6. Alcohol consumption quantity: If you consume alcohol, how many units of alcohol do you consume per day? (1 unit = one glass of wine or one beer) (select one of the following answers)		0	3-4
		1-2	5-6
		2-3	6+
7. Alcohol preference: If you do consume alcohol, which do you prefer? (select one of the following answers)		Beer	Wine
		Ciders	None
		Hard liquor	Other: Please specify _____

Section B							
Reputation Quotient®							
Please select the option that best suits your opinion							
Dimensions	Attributes						
			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Emotional appeal	8.	I <u>feel good</u> about Orange River Cellars.	1	2	3	4	5
	9.	I <u>admire and respect</u> Orange River Cellars.	1	2	3	4	5
	10.	I <u>trust</u> Orange River Cellars.	1	2	3	4	5
Products and Services	11.	Orange River Cellars offers <u>high quality</u> products and services.	1	2	3	4	5
	12.	Orange River Cellars develops <u>innovative</u> products and services.	1	2	3	4	5
	13.	Orange River Cellars offers products and services that are <u>good value for money</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
	14.	Orange River Cellars <u>stands behind</u> its products and services.	1	2	3	4	5
Vision and leadership	15.	Orange River Cellars <u>capitalises on market opportunities</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
	16.	Orange River Cellars has <u>excellent leadership</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
	17.	Orange River Cellars has a <u>clear vision</u> for the future.	1	2	3	4	5
Workplace environment	18.	Orange River Cellars <u>rewards employees fairly</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
	19.	Orange River Cellars is a <u>good company</u> to work for.	1	2	3	4	5
	20.	Orange River Cellars has <u>good employees</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
Financial performance	21.	Orange River Cellars <u>outperforms competitors</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
	22.	Orange River Cellars has a <u>record of profitability</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
	23.	Orange River Cellars is a <u>low risk investment</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
	24.	Orange River Cellars has <u>growth prospects</u> for the future.	1	2	3	4	5

Social responsibility	25.	Orange River Cellars <u>supports good causes</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
	26.	Orange River Cellars is <u>environmentally responsible/friendly</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
	27.	Orange River Cellars shows <u>community responsibility</u> by maintaining high standards in the way it treats people and society.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C: ORANGE RIVER CELLARS' LETTER OF CONSENT



REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Dear Mr Charl du Plessis

My name is Karien Kitching, and I am a Corporate Communication student at the North-West University in Potchefstroom. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's dissertation involves, A reputation assessment of Orange River Cellars using the Reputation Quotient® measurement instrument of the well-known authors Fombrun and Van Riel. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof. DLR. van der Waldt and Prof. L. Holtshauzen.

Although you have granted permission verbally to conduct the study on Orange River Cellars, I hereby seek your formal consent to access information regarding the organisation and conduct interviews with Orange River Cellars' management.

Upon completion of the study, I will provide your organisation with a bound copy of the full research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If permission is granted, please sign the document below and return to my email address. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely



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APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW LETTERS OF CONSENT

TOESTEMMING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSINGSTUDIE

U word gevra om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingstudie uitgevoer deur Karien Kitching, student van die Kommunikasie Departement aan die Universiteit van Noord-Wes, Potchefstroom. Die verhandeling behels die volgende: **A reputation assessment of Orange River Cellars using the Reputation Quotient®**. U is as deelnemer van die studie gekies omdat u 'n rol speel in die bestuur van Oranjerivier Kelders.

DOEL VAN DIE STUDIE:

Die doel is om u mening te toets oor korporatiewe reputasie bestuur en die elemente daarvan. Ander vrae in die onderhoud sal ook oor die meetinstrument van *Fombrun en Van Riel se Reputasie Kwosient®* insluit.

PROSEDURE:

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Ek gee hiermee my vrywillige toestemming dat die navorser my as deelnemer kan gebruik in die studie.

NAAM VAN DEELNEMER

HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

21/05/2020

DATUM

Kitching

NAVORSER

Karien Kitching

0843506622

karienl@yahoo.com

TOESTEMMING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSINGSTUDIE

U word gevra om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingstudie uitgevoer deur Karien Kitching, student van die Kommunikasie Departement aan die Universiteit van Noord-Wes, Potchefstroom. Die verhandeling behels die volgende: **A reputation assessment of Orange River Cellars using the Reputation Quotient®**. U is as deelnemer van die studie gekies omdat u 'n rol speel in die bestuur van Oranjerivier Kelders.

DOEL VAN DIE STUDIE:

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Ek gee hiermee my vrywillige toestemming dat die navorser my as deelnemer kan gebruik in die studie.

NAAM VAN DEELNEMER

HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

24/6/2020

DATUM

NAVORSER

Karien Kitching

0843506622

karienl@yahoo.com

TOESTEMMING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSINGSTUDIE

U word gevra om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingstudie uitgevoer deur Karien Kitching, student van die Kommunikasie Departement aan die Universiteit van Noord-Wes, Potchefstroom. Die verhandeling behels die volgende: **A reputation assessment of Orange River Cellars using the Reputation Quotient®**. U is as deelnemer van die studie gekies omdat u 'n rol speel in die bestuur van Oranjerivier Kelders.

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NAAM VAN DEELNEMER

HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

25/05/2020

DATUM

Kitching

NAVORSER

Karien Kitching

0843506622

karienl@yahoo.com

TOESTEMMING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSINGSTUDIE

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NAAM VAN DEELNEMER


HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

27/5/2020.
DATUM


NAVORSER
Karien Kitching
0843506622
karienk@yahoo.com

TOESTEMMING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSINGSTUDIE

U word gevra om deel te neem aan 'n navorsingstudie uitgevoer deur Karien Kitching, student van die Kommunikasie Departement aan die Universiteit van Noord-Wes, Potchefstroom. Die verhandeling behels die volgende: **A reputation assessment of Orange River Cellars using the Reputation Quotient®**. U is as deelnemer van die studie gekies omdat u 'n rol speel in die bestuur van Oranjerivier Kelders.

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NAAM VAN DEELNEMER



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NAAM VAN DEELNEMER

HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

27.5.2020
DATUM

Kitching

NAVORSER

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0843506622

karieni@yahoo.com

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NAAM VAN DEELNEMER

HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

2020/05/28
DATUM

Kitching
NAVORSER

Karien Kitching

0843506622

karienl@yahoo.com

TOESTEMMING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSINGSTUDIE

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28.5.2020

DATUM

Kitching

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karienl@yahoo.com

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NAAM VAN DEELNEMER



HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

28/08/2020

DATUM

Kitching

NAVORSER

Karien Kitching

0843506622

karieni@yahoo.com

TOESTEMMING OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSINGSTUDIE

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NAAM VAN DEELNEMER

HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

28/5/2020
DATUM

Kitching
NAVORSER

Karien Kitching

0843506622

karieni@yahoo.com

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 /2

NAAM VAN DEELNEMER



HANDTEKENING VAN DEELNEMER

28/5/2020

DATUM

Kitching

NAVORSER

Karien Kitching

0843506622

karienl@yahoo.com

KENNISNAME OM DEEL TE NEEM AAN NAVORSING

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DOEL VAN DIE STUDIE:

Die doel is om die reputasie te meet van u kelders met behulp van die "Reputation Quotient®" as meetinstrument van Fornbrun en Van Riel. Daar is 6 afdelings (met 'n totaal van 20 vrae wat beantwoord word). Die inligting van die studie kan die organisasie help om die persepsies van alle belanghebbendes te interpreteer en 'n werklike verskil te maak in die afdelings waar dit mag nodig wees.

PROSEDURE:

Indien u gewillig is om aan die studie deel te neem, vra ek dat u uself beskikbaar sal stel, vir 'n onderhoud om die punte van die "Reputation Quotient®" te bespreek. Die onderhoud sal gelei word deur die vrae van Van Riel en Fornbrun se Reputasie Kwosient maar u kan ook u mening vrylik lig oor die verskillende punte.

Die onderhoud sal met u toestemming elektronies opgeneem word sodat ek die verwerkings later kan finaliseer. Die onderhoude sal in Januarie en Februarie 2019 geskeduleer word, wanneer u beskikbaar is. Ek as navorser, sal by u skedules inval.

Ek gee hiermee my vrywillige toestemming dat die navorser my as deelnemer kan gebruik in die studie.

Naam van proefpersoon/deelnemer

Handtekening van proefpersoon/deelnemer

29/05/2020

Datum

Vriendelike groete

Karien Kitching
0843506622
karien1@yahoo.com

APPENDIX E: DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

DR MICHELLE COETZEE
(D.Phil.Theology - St Augustine's College, 2014)
AUTHORISED LANGUAGE PRACTITIONER
(English)

45A Collins St, Brixton, 2092, RSA • Cell +27 (0)79-516-8067 • coetzee.michelle71@gmail.com

20 November 2020

Dear Karien Kitching

Language editing

This is to confirm that I edited your master's thesis, *A reputation assessment of Orange River Cellars using the Reputation Quotient®*, and that I indicated the necessary grammatical corrections.

Although I took all reasonable precautions to ensure that all grammatical and stylistic corrections are indicated, you remain responsible for the final product. Therefore, please check these suggested corrections before applying them and, if possible, again perform a spell check after you have implemented them, in order to eliminate typing errors.

Please contact me if there are any queries or if I can be of further assistance.

Yours sincerely



Michelle Coetzee

APPENDIX F: ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Fax: 018 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Research Ethics Regulatory Committee
Tel: 018 299-4849
Email: nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za

11 June 2018

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Arts Research Ethics Committee (AREC)** on 11/06/2018, the Arts Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-RERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: A reputation assessment of Orange River Cellars using the Reputation Quotient®																															
Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Prof DLR van der Waldt																															
Student: K. Kitching																															
Ethics number:	<table border="1"><tr><td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>4</td><td>3</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>8</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Institution</td><td colspan="5">Study Number</td><td colspan="2">Year</td><td colspan="5">Status</td></tr></table>	N	W	U	-	0	0	4	3	5	-	1	8	-	A	7	Institution			Study Number					Year		Status				
N	W	U	-	0	0	4	3	5	-	1	8	-	A	7																	
Institution			Study Number					Year		Status																					
<small>Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation</small>																															
Application Type: Single Study	Risk Category: <table border="1"><tr><td>Low</td></tr></table>													Low																	
Low																															
Commencement date: 11/06/2018																															
Expiry date: 11/06/2022																															
Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.																															

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

- Translation of the informed consent document to the languages applicable to the study participants should be submitted to the AREC (if applicable).
- Any research at governmental or private institutions, permission must still be obtained from relevant authorities and provided to the AREC. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these authorities.

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the AREC:
 - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and
 - without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.
- The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the AREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-RERC and AREC reserves the right to:
 - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;

- *to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;*
- *withdraw or postpone approval if:*
 - *any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;*
 - *it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the AREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;*
 - *submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or*
 - *new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.*
- *AREC can be contacted for further information or any report templates via 13128388@nwu.ac.za or 018 285 2301.*

The AREC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the AREC or the NWU-RERC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely



Prof Andre Duvenhage
Chairperson NWU Arts Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm
8 November 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.2