

Research Title: “The effect of brand sustainability initiatives in South Africa on the buying behaviour and brand loyalty of Durban consumers.”

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DECLARATION

I, Shivar Jaya Rajoo do declare that the information submitted in this academic paper for the Honors in Strategic Brand Communications by the Independent Institute of Education is of my own work. It has also not been submitted to any other institution previously for qualification purposes except where stated or acknowledged within the context of this paper.

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GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

- **Behaviorism:** The use of conditioning in order to influence the behaviour, thoughts or processes of a person.
- **Concept:** An idea or invention.
- **Conditioning:** Repeated usage or consumption.
- **Construction:** A representation or symbol representing something
- **Holistic:** From all points of view and across all touchpoints.
- **Hypothesis:** An explanation to a phenomenon based on limited evidence.
- **Maxim:** A rule or principle of how to act.
- **Paradigm:** Also known as a research traditions or world views. Allow theorists, researchers and scientists to conduct research in a specific manner while following a paradigm.

- **Phenomena:** Something which can be observed and studied.

ABSTRACT

Sustainability has now become a key driver of both businesses and consumer lifestyles. Harvard Business Review posits that as the expectations on corporate responsibility increases and as transparency becomes more prevalent due to the demand by consumers supporting brands who engage in both ethical and sustainable practices, there has been a shift in the consumer mindset from one that is focused on solely a product to one that can aid in building a sustainable future. Companies are therefore recognizing the need to act on sustainability where professional communications and good intentions are no longer enough to satisfy consumers (Whelan, 2016).

This study used data in the form of qualitative data to incorporate structured interviews, unstructured interviews, a survey and ethnography into understanding the extent towards which South African sustainability initiatives influence consumer buying behaviour.

Primary and secondary research concluded that a majority percentage of South African consumers are brand loyal to, and support brands engaging in sustainable initiatives parallel to their own beliefs and values. However, should brands engage in unethical or unsustainable practices, South African consumers are not hesitant to switch to alternative or competitor brands.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Research Title: “The effect of brand sustainability initiatives in South Africa on the buying behaviour and brand loyalty of Durban consumers.”

1.1 Introduction

This research aimed to collect accurate, qualitative data that represents South African consumers, along with aiming to gauge if local sustainable initiatives impact their buying behaviour, along with the extent of the impact itself (such as being heavily influenced by engaging with a brand or its products).

With a lack of secondary and primary data in the South African market, this research also aimed to be able to contribute to existing studies and frameworks within the South African marketing landscape, and possibly add new and updated insights into the mindset of South African consumers.

Finally, this research aimed to gain a deeper understanding into the morals, feelings, emotions and values of South African consumers, aiming to gauge the extent of their loyalty and retention towards sustainable brands.

1.2 Contextualisation

Managing Director for Nielson Africa attributes the momentum of quickly growing sustainable initiatives in South Africa to a rapidly changing media landscape. Attributed by internet penetration and globalisation reaching the country, consumers are now

starting to put more thought into not just how products are consumed, but the brands behind these products (Wilson, 2019).

This “push” for sustainability can be linked to the rise in man-made environmental destruction, with organisations such as the World Health Organization stating that approximately 12.6 million people die from environmental health risks annually (WHO, 2016). This statistic, aided by environmental degradation due to industrial practices has, states foresight specialist Regan Leggett, allowed consumers to change the way they spend their income in order to effect the change they want to see (Leggett, 2018).

1.3 Rationale

Business Insider states that the most paramount problems our world faces today include climate change, food and water security and inequality, all of which are in contrast to the definition of sustainability (Loudenback, 2018). CNN posits that innovation in Africa is not just a primary driver for local change, but for global change as well, with sustainable innovations such as drone based intelligent farming, faster solar energy absorption and biochemical disease prevention jackets all stemming from South Africa (CNN, 2018).

On a global scale, the modern-day consumer is attracted to brands which engage in ethical practices for both people and the planet. This is attributed to studies, such as renowned global strategy firm Roland Berger, stating that 75% of consumers take into account sustainable practices from brands, which have an effect on their purchasing behaviour (Isiaka, 2018).

Sustainability therefore plays a holistic role in South African marketing. However, while studies do provide evidence to support this statement, such as a 2016 academic study by the Vaal University of Technology, showing that there is a direct correlation between sustainable brand initiatives and loyalty, (using the Gautrain’s sustainable factors as a driving force towards consumers using it) (Chinomona, 2016) More academic studies

need to be conducted due to the lack of research available specifically relating to this research statement in South Africa, and the extent of which these sustainable practices influence buying behaviour and brand loyalty.

As when faced with a moral choice, many global consumers may identify as sustainable brand loyalists, but will still choose an alternative brand, or switch brands based on convenience, ease of access, or in emergency situations, disregarding its ethical and sustainable practices (Llopis, 2014).

This study needs to be applied to the modern, relevant South African consumer, described as being a consumer that is brand loyal based on price as a value indicator, focuses more on modern and well-known brands rather than independent ones, and prefers cheaper, value-based products over high end brand names (Hatting, 2016).

1.4 Problem Statement

While global studies, statistics and data can be relevant to the South African market, they cannot act as direct correlations to gauge accurate reflections of local consumers. And with data collection firms such as McKinsey and Company describing South African consumers as cautious buyers who are adjusting to a new social and political landscape (Hatting, 2016), more research needs to be conducted within this environment to measure their buying behaviour and loyalty with regard to sustainable brand initiatives.

What constitutes the definition of a “sustainably conscious South African citizen” also needs direct clarification. This can be attributed to a new emerging market in South Africa with a key focus on waste management, fair trade and environmental and NGO support, as described by Nielson (Wilson, 2019). With these initiatives naturally impacting consumers, the extent of this impact still needs to be analysed as a mental shift, a trend, and be compared to the global standard of a sustainable consumers.

1.5 Purpose Statement and Research Goals

This research aims to focus on the application of accurate data that is a true representation of its targeted area of study. In this case the city of Durban, South Africa.

With a lack of research in the South African market, more academic studies need to be conducted due to the lack of research available specifically relating to this research statement in South Africa, and the extent of which these sustainable practices influence buying behaviour and brand loyalty. The research also needs to accurately contribute to an academic body of knowledge, where researchers and analysts, both global and local, can use it in their studies.

The research will also analyse the state of both the South African and consumer market. Tackling issues of gaps in the market, ethics within businesses and theories and practices that affect consumer behaviour. It will provide insights on all of these concepts and possibly allow for new ways to interpret them. Lastly, the research will contribute to present studies as well, allowing the research and readers to gain a greater understanding of the topics dealt within the review.

1.5.1 Research Question

What is the extent to which consumers' loyalty and buying behaviour will be affected through sustainability initiatives by South African brands?

1.6 Objective/s

To contribute to existing studies and frameworks relating to consumer buying behaviour and brand loyalty, especially to studies relevant to South Africa, where more data collection is needed.

1.6.1 Hypothesis

A majority percentage of South African consumers are brand loyal to, and support brands engaging in sustainable initiatives parallel to their own beliefs and values. However, should brands engage in unethical or unsustainable practices, South African consumers are not hesitant to switch to alternative or competitor brands.

1.7 Chapter Outline

Chapter One: Introduction and Research Overview

Chapter one aims to introduce the problem and give context to why research is being conducted. Secondary research is used to rationalise the problem and contextualise the objectives. This chapter concludes with an educated guess, or hypothesis of an anticipated outcome that further research into the topic could produce.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter two acts as a dedicated search and evaluation of the research topic. It correlates and synthesises findings followed by a specific research tradition or paradigm

in order to demonstrate and critically analyse theories and points of views. This aids in formulating areas that can be further studied.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Chapter three combines secondary research discussed in the aforementioned chapters with qualitative data as the primary form of data collection. It further discusses how data will be collected and concludes with ethical and legal considerations that need to be taken into account to ensure data is credible, valid and trustworthy.

Chapter Four: Findings and Interpretation

Chapter four leads into insights derived from the findings of all research collected. Information collected from surveys, interviews and ethnography and further incorporated into frameworks such as triangulation to interpret and make sense of these findings.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

With a key objective of the research being to contribute to further academic studies and become utilised for future research initiatives, recommendations are made for what future

1.8 Conclusion

With the research problem being introduced, contextualised and rationalised, a literature review can be conducted. This will allow for theories and research traditions to be used in order to understand the research problem itself. This will be leveraged with data used in this chapter and further applied to primary data.

CHAPTER TWO: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

Focusing specifically on both brand sustainability and the consumer mindset, key theories and frameworks have been identified that specifically relate to these aforementioned elements. These frameworks are based on academic research conducted by renowned theorists, psychologists and marketing strategists.

2.1.1 Psychological Theory

Relating directly to consumer psychology, psychological theory will play a key role into the intrinsic perception, emotion and mindset of the consumer, with marketing psychologists such as Robert Cialdini outlining key consumer insights in his book *The Psychology of Persuasion* (Cialdini, 2009).

Psychological theory directly bears its roots within the profession of a marketing psychologist, aiming to examine how consumers perceive products and services. This is done using psychological concepts and principles such as cognition, learning, motivation and emotion (Clare, 2017).

Psychological theory has also become a distinct factor that is taken into account when brands implement sustainable initiatives. Annamaria Di Fabio, the department of Education Head in Florence, posits in her dissertation that psychological theory plays a key role in marketing sustainable initiatives, with a focus on making consumers feel part of natural, personal and social movements. Driving purpose within them, and with the consumer now contributing to sustainable well-being, their mindset shifts towards the brand being a driver for their positive actions and reinforces consumer retention (Di Fabio, 2018).

2.1.2 Behavioural Theory

Behavioural decision theory plays a key role in marketing, introduced in 1954 by psychologist Ward Edwards and is still being developed today by new psychologists and is paramount to understanding consumer behaviour (Edwards, 1954).

Behavioural theory is directly linked to the study of “sustainable consumer behaviour” within a marketing context. Being a recent concept that has gained traction since the year 2010, sustainable consumer behaviour, attributed by authors such as Kemper, Antonides and White, has aimed to prove how there has been a shift in brands and organisations to embed the mindset of sustainability into consumers, with attitudes norms and perceived behavioural control forming the crux of behavioural control in marketing (Kemper, 2019)

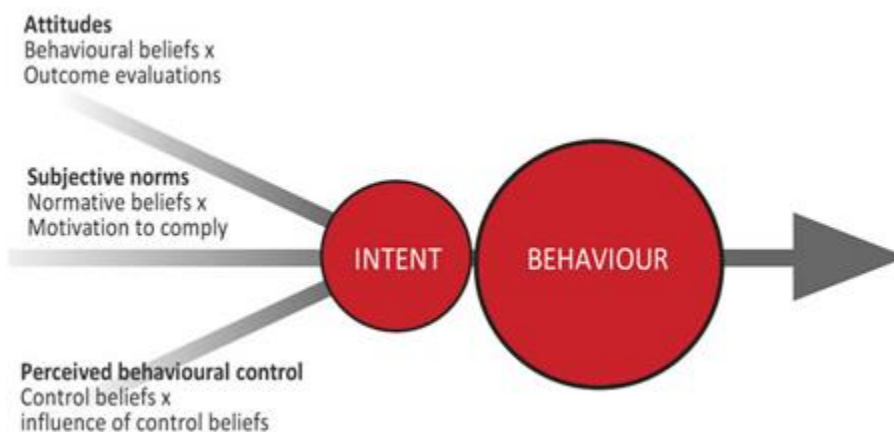


Figure 2.1: The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Moule, 2011).

With brands now implementing sustainability within the internal and external environments of their organisations, this has allowed sustainability to permeate marketing departments and their sustainable influences on society (Gordon, 2011).

By then analysing and studying behavioural habits, brands will be able to further predict and alter consumer behaviour. University of Boston graduate Remi Trudel supports this statement by stating that people are motivated to develop a sense of self-

identification that allows them to be different from others. Trudel further posits that this behaviour can be used by brands to allow the consumer to resonate with them and become brand loyal (Trudel, 2016)

2.1.3 Classical Conditioning

Coined by Psychologist Ivan Pavlov in 1897, this theory is constantly updated alongside new marketing trends and aims to show how marketing initiatives (such as sustainable ones) have given consumers a distorted view of reality for corporate gain (Stuart, Shimp and Engle, 1987).

In contrast to Trudel's study about enhancing a sense of sustainability that the modern-day consumer possesses, classical conditioning in parallel to sustainability in marketing relates to the exploitation of sustainability initiatives by brands for personal gain (Nielsen, 2018). Popular website BSR states that sustainability is a brand's greatest "weapon" in the modern day. With Nielsen stating that over 81% of consumers taking into account sustainable initiatives when analysing or researching a brand, brands can link sustainability and conditioning together to set the tone, feeling and emotions they want the consumer to possess in order to facilitate long term, profitable relationships with consumers (Nielsen, 2018).

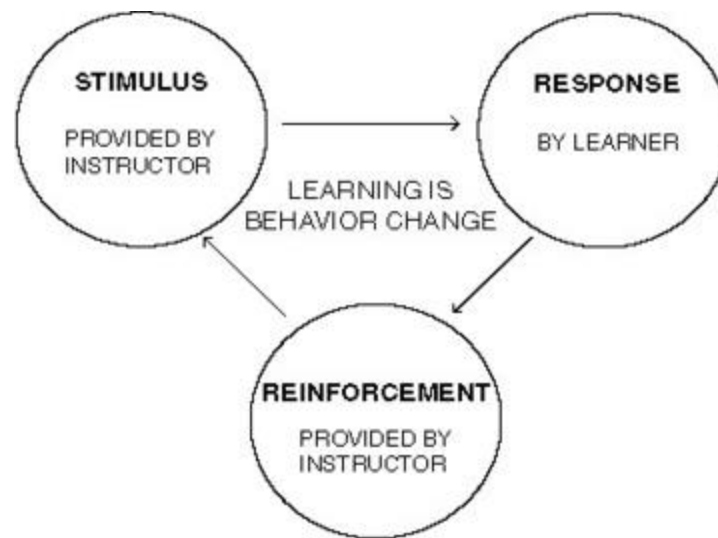


Figure 2.2: Illustration of conditioning (Tobeck, 2015).

Classical conditioning from these acts can then turn into operant conditioning. Conceptualised by behaviourist Burrhus Skinner, operant conditioning refers to the process of human behaviour changing as a result of a specific response to something, in relation to the research topic this would be due to actions by the brand such as an advertisement promoting environmental awareness (Robinson, 2013)

2.2 Literature Review

The literature review focuses on five key authors, along with the South African Government, which form the basis of understanding and addressing the problem statement. These authors are directly related to the aforementioned theories used for the purpose of this study and aim to attribute towards an in-depth analysis of both South African brand and the consumers aware of these brands.

2.2.1 Cialdini and “The Psychology of Persuasion”

Cialdini’s “The Psychology of Persuasion” (2015), attributed by psychological theory, plays a key role in consumer behaviour. All principles mentioned in the book, along with the fundamentals of psychological marketing will have an impact on consumer behaviourism, cognitive approaches, influences on purchase decisions and purchasing behaviour.

2.2.2 Izzo and “The Purpose Revolution”

In his 2018 academic book *The Purpose Revolution*: by John Izzo, purpose driven companies are shown as the future of marketing and paramount to customer satisfaction and loyalty (Izzo, 2018.). This can be attributed to credible media sources such as Impact Brand, which states that consumers do not just engage with brands purely for a product or service, but to also “feel a part of something bigger”, with 88% of consumers wanting to know that the brands they're supporting have a real impact (Moore, 2018).

The Purpose revolution aims to highlight these types of companies, showing how sustainability plays a key factor in not just driving social change, but environmental change as well. Using established brands such as Nestle, Apple, and Starbucks, the book does not stray from controversies associated to these brands. For example, tax evasion, poor working conditions below legal standards, and destruction to the natural environment. In so doing, these controversies have resulted in effects such as how new sustainable brand initiatives manage to shift consumer perceptions and still generate positivity and consumer retention (Izzo, 2018).

The book also aims to relate marketing strategy to these purpose driven initiatives, showing how strategies such as product differentiation, innovation, promotions and experiential “hands-on” initiatives can further reinforce positive consumer perceptions (Izzo, 2018).

2.2.3 Robinson and “Changeology”

Persuasion among brand therefore influences the consumers decision to support, forfeit or become loyal to a brand. Sustainability initiatives act as a persuasive tool, with author Les Robinson in his book *Changeology* stating that behavioural and psychological change is a science. Robinson further states that sustainability acts as an enabler by brands to further mindset changes within an individual whether they are aware of it or not. Regardless of small, incremental changes as opposed to long term improvements in the psychological state of the individual (Robinson, 2013), linking Robinson’s findings to sustainable initiatives and consumer retention will play a key role in establishing whether local consumers are actively or passively influenced by sustainable initiatives (are they aware or unaware of the influence brands have on their behavioural mindset), along with their motivations for being purpose driven to engage with these initiatives.

Further applied to sustainable initiatives, Robinson cites professor of psychology Dan Ariely (2016) in his novel, stating that brand initiatives can most influence the perception of consumers when making the consumer feel “as if they have worked towards something”, Ariely dubs this as “the IKEA effect”. Conceptualised after popular furniture brand IKEA, the brand encourages consumers who have purchased their furniture to build it from individual parts, allowing the consumer to feel a sense of satisfaction when taking part in this and saving the brand manufacturing time and money. Many sustainable initiatives require the work of the consumer’s time and effort (Lebowitz, 2016).

We can draw parallels between this act of contributing towards a reward and allowing the consumer to play a role in large scale sustainable initiatives. Brands can now reinforce positive perceptions of themselves by making the consumer “feel” as if they have contributed to a large-scale sustainable initiative (Lebowitz, 2016).

2.2.4 Diamond, “Upheaval” and “The Limits of Growth”

Bestselling author Jared Diamond has been described by many marketing experts as an entity that transformed their understanding on how nations operate, and how the state and health of the environment has influenced it.

Sustainability also needs to be clearly defined in an updated and relevant context. Seminal texts and authors that enforce sustainability in a modern context include environmentalists such as Jared Diamond, responsible for exploring key concepts relating humans to the natural environment, Diamond played a pivotal role in establishing what constitutes sustainability in a new millennium, focusing on traditional factors such as resource consumption and environmental protection however combines this with new and emerging factors that were never taken into account or limited in the past such as technology, the health and well-being of society and economic and social development.

Diamond has been supported but further seminal texts, including the Environmental Protection Agency’s recognition of technology and biotechnology (a combination of engineering and environmental biology) as the most prominent drivers of sustainability, and the World Summit on Social Development publishing the 3 Pillars of Sustainability in 2005. This set three core areas that contribute to the philosophy and social science of sustainable development. These “pillars” in many national standards and certification schemes, form the backbone of tackling the core areas that the world now faces. The Brundtland Commission described it as “a core framework that must be taken into account in order to focus on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs as well.”

Diamond, the Environmental Protection Agency and the 3 Pillars of Sustainability have been a key catalyst in the establishment of the United Nations’ “2030 Agenda” in 2012. Being one of the most influential objective driven frameworks implemented by businesses today, this agenda outlines 17 key “available and understandable” sustainable goals that need to be met by 2030 that outline modern sustainability.

Being adopted by over 150 businesses listed on the stock market in the United State of America alone, the 2013 Agenda has gone beyond businesses, with countries such as Mauritius aiming to uses it as a framework in the development of a “Smart City”, described by the government as an integrated, coherent Master Plan focusing on innovation, sustainability, efficiency and quality of life and, where appropriate, involving the creation of technopoles installed throughout the city to create an environment-friendly working, living and leisure space aiming at generating its own resources in terms of energy and other utilities and providing for state-of-the-art connectivity, smart modern transportation and reducing traffic congestion (South African Government, 2016).

Regarding the local state of knowledge however, the South African Department of Environmental Affairs acknowledges the state of a lack of sustainable initiatives in the country. The department further cites two seminal authors and companies to defend this statement. Firstly, the United Nations 2030 Agenda as a key influential factor that needs to be considered regarding sustainability in the country. Second is a 1972 report known as “The Limits to Growth” (South African Government, 2016).

The Limits to Growth, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation, was described by renowned researchers and analysts as a “pioneering report”, responsible for the foundation of modern-day sustainability. The study used a computer model to simulate the consequence of interactions between the earth and human actions on it. The study became a major contributing factor for the prediction of global food supplies, effects of industry and global services on the planet and the total population for the foreseeable future (the years 2020 to 2030). There however criticism facing the study, with it being seen by analytical experts as being too simplistic for a study that requires more complex data (South African Government, 2016).

2.2.5 The South African Government and the “National Framework for Sustainable Development”

The South African Government also places an emphasis on both brands and consumers within the country, especially South African citizens, to engage in sustainability. This is due to the country having a wealth of biodiversity and mineral resources, along with high concentrations of luminosity levels to take advantage of solar energy. With the government specifically stating that not many consumers are sustainable compared to the global standard, they apply Stafford and Brent’s Nested model of Sustainability towards South African consumers, stating that in order to be sustainably conscious, these consumers need to monitor and report activities which they feel threaten the natural and social environment, use natural resources sparingly, slowly implement activities into their lives that allow them to transition towards a “greener” lifestyle, act as influencers to change the attitudes and behaviours of people around them, and lastly respond effectively to climate change by aiming to reduce it in as many ways as possible (South African Government, 2016).

With the government now adopting global policies and frameworks into local sustainable initiatives, the country has adopted the National Framework for Sustainable Development in 2008, this framework, controlled by a departmental board, aims to implement strategic interventions to re-orientate South Africa’s development path in order to become a more

sustainable country. It looks at factors such as principles and trends regarding sustainability in the country, as well as a set of implementation measures, supported by mixed methodological data in order to approach sustainability regardless of continual changes in the field (South African Government, 2016).

The publishing of local data however needs to be accurate and ethical, and this data is published through annual sustainable reports released by the South African government in what is known as a State of Environment or SoE report. Focusing on the social, economic and biophysical environment within South Africa, this report aims to provide

readers with an indication of the health of the local environment and landscape. Social and economic information generally aim to serve and focus on information relating to any factors that affect the natural environment. It therefore aims to point out factors responsible for poor environmental performance or any impacts that can be ascribed to the good or bad performance of the environment, as well as key aspects of society that can be targeted in order to redress shortcomings (South African Government, 2016).

For example, an annual report in 2011 focused on looking at the ecological footprint of countries in relation to South Africa. It was found that while the ecological footprint of South Africa is below the global average of many other countries such as the United Kingdom, United States, Brazil, India and China. In comparing ecological footprints, South Africa compares poorly to Brazil which has a population size almost four times larger, and to Australia which has half the South African population size (South African Government, 2016), Showing how population (especially overpopulation) acts as a key deterrent to sustainability.

Compared to the international environment however, most governments such as the American Federal Government of the United States, rank countries using an Environmental Performance Indicator or an EPI, described as a verse set of socio-economic, environmental, and institutional indicators that characterize and influence environmental sustainability. This system looks at 76 factors that relate to environmental sustainability such as natural resource levels in a country, changing pollution levels over time, environmental management initiatives, contributions by the country to the protection and betterment of the natural and social environment that is effectively and consistently managed.

Applied to South Africa, the country ranks 93rd out of 146 countries listed in the indicator, attributed to water scarcity, contribution to climate change, air pollution, agricultural practices and poor public health. South Africa therefore definitely recognised the need for sustainability in the country, especially with the adoption of the National Framework for Sustainable Development, allowing the country to commit to a long-term programme of resource and impact decoupling (South African Government, 2016). The

Framework however, acknowledges that there is a growing stress on the country to meet the needs of both ever changing global brands and local consumers.

The country has continued to build on the Framework and several initiatives launched by key role players have adopted the National Strategy for Sustainable Development which redefined strategic pathways and means of implementation. The Strategy is seen to be making a worthy contribution towards the understanding and achievement of sustainable development in the South African context. Furthermore, its five strategic priorities set a high standard for future development and contains numerous indicators which are well formulated and measurable. There is however still significant work to be done to reverse the many prevalent negative trends identified in the measurement of environmental performance (South African Government, 2016).

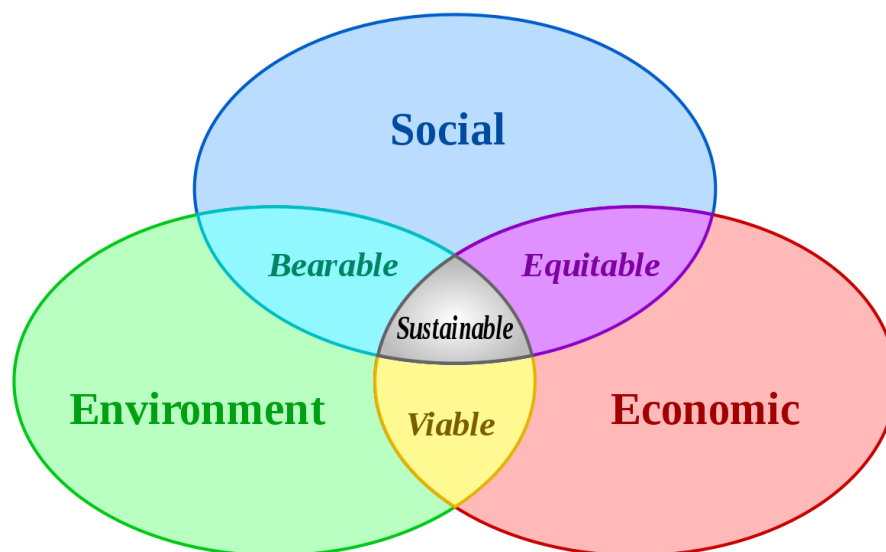


Figure 2.3: Factors which constitute the National Framework for Sustainable Development in the form of a venn diagram (UNECE, 2019).

2.2.6 Christelis and “The Local Landscape”

Regarding consumers and sustainability in the local landscape, while seminal articles are non-existent regarding the state of the modern-day sustainable South African consumers, academic journal articles and dissertations can be found, such as a 2013 study by Theodora Christelis. Christelis aimed to understand the South African consumer paramount to the “green business” sector in the country, finding that many South African consumers have been pressured into following sustainable practices by brands (Christelis and Dobrescu, 2013).

This can be attributed to South African consumers possibly not being able to adjust to an abrupt and hasty push for sustainability by brands in the country. Christelis further draws parallels between this movement and the “no-straw” movement, stating that many consumers choose not to take plastic straws not because of intrinsic personal feels but rather peer and societal pressure. This makes it difficult to discern the nature of the consumer regarding their perceptions of branding and sustainability, leading to the distortion of data. Christelis concludes by stating that this means more data collection is needed to back up her research (Christelis and Dobrescu, 2013).

However, Christelis still discusses the large amount of loyal South African consumers towards sustainable brands, stating that more and more South Africans are becoming attracted to businesses that engage in natural capitalism, namely, businesses and brands that operate based on productivity, that is investing in natural capital (reinvestments in restoring, sustaining, and expanding natural capital resources) (Christelis and Dobrescu, 2013). These all have the potential to generate multiple benefits and opportunities including the reduction of negative environmental impacts, the creation of economic growth, and alleviation of poverty through the creation of jobs.

This advent of both natural capitalism and the haste of green initiatives to penetrate the local market has also raised questions regarding the extent to which brands target local consumers. Green-washing has become a common term, describing the act of misleading consumers regarding sustainable practices in South Africa, with many local

companies (such as Nandos) causing controversy among their business practices and being dishonest and unethical regarding their practices (Christelis and Dobrescu, 2013).

Christelis states that there is no doubt that sustainability is consumer driven, attributing this statement to the 1970's where groups and communities rallied for not just political power, but social and environmental concerns. There is therefore a link between sustainability and product purchases and a company's environmental practices and consumer purchases. Therefore, a definite relationship exists of environmental concerns influencing consumerism and thus consumers have the ability to pose social pressures on companies to improve environmental performance; retail can be considered an indirect mechanism for greening industry and a component of creating a green economy (Christelis and Dobrescu, 2013).

Brands have such persuasive power however that they can influence consumer perceptions. Christelis uses the retail industry as an example, stating that with it being the biggest source of culture in the world today, this sector has the ability to control, and essentially dictate culture. This sector can enforce sustainability through biodegradable materials, sustainably developed clothing and eco-created problems that has no harm on the environment whatsoever. Combined with the sustainable consumer in South Africa this would act as a key driver for creating consumer retention or brand loyalty (Christelis and Dobrescu, 2013).

Christelis' paper is further supported by Antoinette Niekerk's 2018 academic aimed and promoting sustainable development in South Africa. Niekerk analyses the benefits of exports into the country, stating that brands don't just bring with them their products, but their messages and values as well (Niekerk, 2016). This translates to sustainable initiatives, where South African consumers are demanding more brands that coming into the country that focus on sustainable development. Consumers don't just have the power to enforce brand messages but now control the supply and demand chain of these brands.

It is also important to take into account demographic and psychographic variables regarding the South African consumer. With 56% living below the poverty line, many

consumers are forgoing sustainable products from brands in favour of price. With many sustainable initiatives products are given, such as being recyclable, this increases the price of products associated with it. This affects expenditure trends and product demand (Niekerk, 2016).

In a study by OnShelf Pharma however states that after the energy and water crises in South Africa in 2015, a massive mindset shift occurred among the South African consumer, causing more people country-wide to reconsider the effects of their actions on the planet. This crisis therefore enforced a sense of responsibility among consumers, however, longer term studies will need to be conducted to gauge the effects of this new-found responsibility. OnShelf Pharma however states that even though the country is experiencing industrialized growth and global investment, and South Africa continues to strive toward a more equal distribution of the economic wealth, poverty and inequities continue to persist in South Africa (OnShelf Pharma, 2018).

Information seeking behaviour plays a big role for the South Africa consumer, where they research a product before the purchase however OnShelf Pharma's study has shown that price dictates purchase among local consumers. And lastly regarding skepticism among environmentally friendly brands, South African's exhibit a large amount of skepticism and are "increasingly watchful of what companies do" (OnShelf Pharma, 2018).

Skepticism among the South African consumer is highlighted in a dissertation by Byron Vos, aiming to gauge the extent of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in South Africa based on in depth mixed methodological research among 10 South African brands. The dissertation highlighted the lack of control regarding local brands disclosing their sustainability reports compared to the global environment being stricter. Global sustainability reports by brands must disclose the targets and objectives that it sets in order to achieve environmental sustainability and look and both short- and long-term goals (Vos, 2014).

The dissertation concluded with only 2 out of the 10 companies abiding by the global standard of sustainable reporting. This suggested that South African companies do not

promote a transparent and ethical definition of sustainability, or that these companies are dishonest about the extent of their sustainability initiatives and if they can even be considered as sustainable (Vos, 2014). This means that consumers are right in showing skepticism and caution when questioning the sustainable ethics of a brand.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

With brand sustainability and the consumer mindset not just being a complex study that requires academic research, but primary research as well, specific data collection techniques were used to identify, process and analyse primary research.

3.2 Conceptualisation

Conceptualisation can be defined as the creation of specific meanings for the purpose of an academic research paper. This is attributed to refining concepts (usually abstract concepts) which can then become theories if they are meaningful. For the purpose of this research the majority of concepts used include behavioural concepts regarding both the brand and consumer.

Samples were briefed directly before participating in data collection on the theoretical foundation in order to firstly familiarise themselves with and understand the study itself. By then studying their perceptions and responses data could be collected in a subjective manner. This is especially important regarding phenomena and how participants perceived it.

3.3 Research Paradigm

Interpretivism will be the selected paradigm for this review. This is because consumer behaviour and brand loyalty require a deep understanding of the human mindset. Humans differ so much on a fundamental level, possessing unique intellect, complex brains and advanced behavioural patterns, that we cannot study them as we study

objects, as these three mentioned factors are causing them to change all the time (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017).

These factors are further accented by influencing circumstances (such as the social and political landscape). Phenomenology will be applied to consumers to see how brands have influenced the way they perceive the world. Phenomenology can link to consumer perceptions as understanding the meaning of the object can allow consumers to define the brand or product, the experience of the brand or product, and what meaning they can derive from it, and not simply how it is defined denotatively or directly (Mordecai, 2015).

Market Intelligence Specialist Vaughn Mordecai posits the importance of phenomenology on consumer behaviour, (allowing it to therefore become a key factor of interpretivism for the sake of the research topic) stating that a consumer's mindset goes beyond pure rationality, logic and reason. It is a mindset that must therefore be understood through interpreting emotional, phenomenological, and meaningful characteristics that lead to a purchase decision. Mordecai therefore applies Edmund Husserl's conceptualised definition of phenomenology to a marketing landscape (Mordecai, 2015).

Three key positions will also be applied to interpretivism. From an ontological position we will be able to analyse how brands act as a construction which influence consumers interactions with the social world. From a metatheoretical position we will be able to use previous findings and combine them with South African consumers (Edirisingha, 2012). The methodological position will allow for qualitative data collection to be a focus, aiming to gain insights into subjective qualities of the consumer (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017).

Ontology will be able to further look at the social interactions relating to brands and how they influence the social world. From a metatheoretical position we will be able to use previous findings and combine them with South African consumers (Edirisingha, 2012). The methodological position will allow for qualitative data collection to be a focus, aiming to gain insights into subjective qualities of the consumer (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017).

Interpretivism will also link directly to the subjected concepts relating to the theories for the research topic. This includes consciousness, aiming to interpret how responsive consumers are to sustainable brand initiatives that surround them in their daily life, along with constructivism, attributed by theorists to see how the landscape that organisations create change the way in which people perceive the world (Research Methodology, 2018).

Constructivism will also aim to decipher if consumers can discern between purely profit driven, or “bolted-on” sustainability initiatives for an organisation, or embedded sustainability initiatives where profits act as a consequence of a company’s actions, rather than a driver.

3.4 Research Design and conceptual approach

An experimental research design has been used for this purpose of this study. Aiming to establish a relationship focused on cause and effect, this design is based on causality. The dependent and independent variable of the study therefore becomes paramount to this type of design, with the dependent variable being what is primarily affected in an experiment as a response to an independent variable. Four independent variables have been identified as follows (with both consumer purchase and retention being the dependent variables):

3.4.1 Brand Awareness

Brand awareness plays a key role in changing the state and mindset of consumer behaviour. By changing the objective, intention or goal in mind that consumer purchase entails, more or less awareness can be created for the brand. With this study focusing on sustainability, marketing and communications professional Lisa Goller posits that sustainability acts as one of the strongest boosters for brand awareness in a Business to Consumer (or “B2C”) landscape. With awareness being a prominent factor throughout the study, the extent of awareness for samples used in data collection must be taken into account for every response gauged regarding sustainability and applied to their overarching mindset.

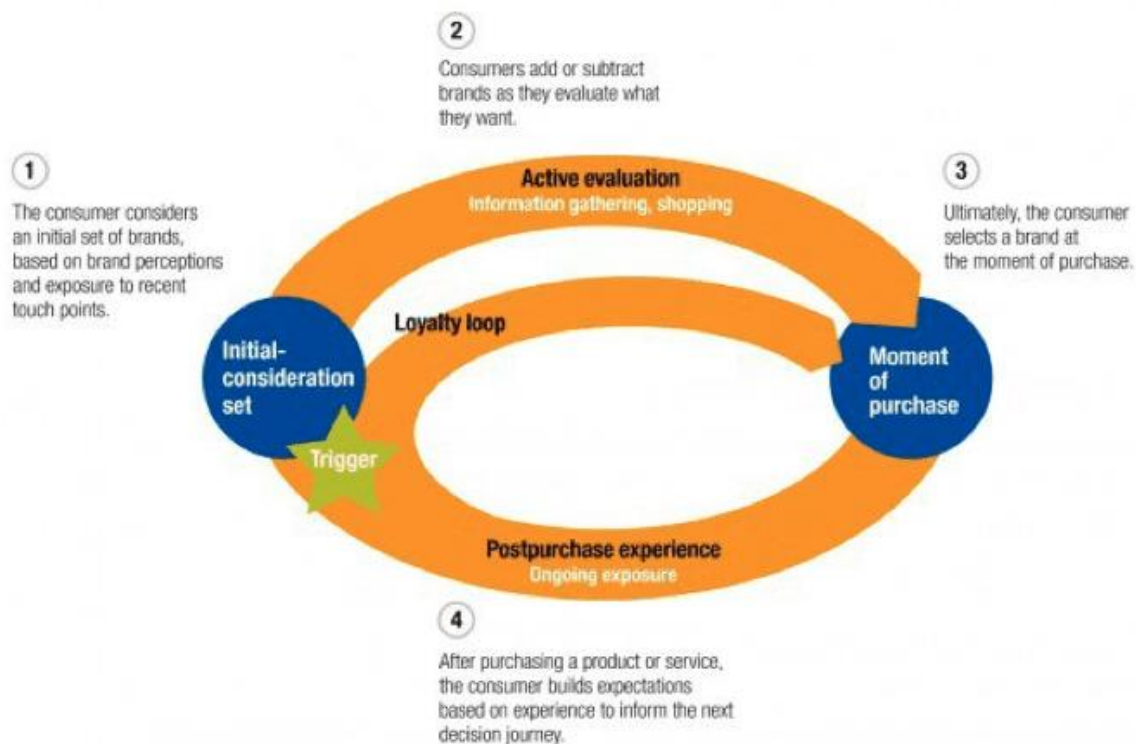


Figure 3.1: Illustration of McKinsey's consumer decision journey used to influence behaviour and awareness (Hanlon, 2019).

3.4.2 Culture Value

Traditions, values, beliefs, feelings and norms collectively constitute the definition of culture. As the second chosen independent variable, consumers can have specific alignments with brands influenced by their cultures which affect and influence purchase behaviour. This is especially relevant regarding sustainable initiatives, where Operations Management Lecturer in Cape Town, Hamieda Parker, cites the ongoing water crisis in Cape Town as an example of consumers engaging with sustainable brands. Parker further states with South Africans taking many consumables for granted in the country such as water, there has been a “wake up call” in the past decade to not just engage in eco-friendly activities, but support brand’s parallel to what she describes “green culture”.

3.4.3 The “interest effect”

Consumers engage with brands in multiple ways. This can be through direct factors such purchase or use of a service or indirectly such as through word of mouth. Parallels can be drawn between the level of engagement consumers have and their interest, or their drive to want to learn and know more about the brand. Forbes states that sustainability among brands in a modern age has consumer interest spurred through innovation, with companies finding new ways to use both innovation, combined with sustainability as a “pull marketing” mechanism to create an interest effect (the third independent variable)

3.4.4 Trust

While the aforementioned independent variables have focused on sustainable initiatives generating a positive connection between the business and consumer mindset, none

touch on the nature of the initiative itself, such as whether a sustainable initiative is done purely for marketing purposes or profit related reasons. As the last mentioned variable, trust acts as a firm belief in the reliability, truth and ability of these initiative itself which will affect consumer behaviour and retention.

3.5 Population

Population parameters include any South African citizens between the ages of 18 and 55. This will allow for three different generation types to be studied; Baby boomers, generation X and Millennials. This will also act as a method of non-probability convenience sampling due ease of access to many samples in this age range. This is due to, as marketing firm the Nielsen Company states, drastic marketing differences between different generations due to contributing factors such as family values and education (Nielsen, 2015). Different age samples are therefore a key factor that can impact consumer behaviour, perception and brand loyalty.

3.6 Sampling

Sampling will include both probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling will be in the form of simple random sampling to ensure that each element of the population has an equal chance of being selected and part of the sample. Systematic sampling will then be used to ensure that samples are chosen in a more random manner making a list and using a sample interval (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017).

Non-probability sampling will be done in the form of firstly convenience sampling due to lots of samples being conveniently accessible within the researchers local area, such as the nearest university. Accidental sampling will also be used due to the ease of access to find samples relating to the research study in the right place at the right time, such as in a market or mall. Quota sampling will be the last method of non-probability sampling, allowing the researcher to specially choose samples that they know directly relate to the

research study. This will be especially helpful if a certain variable still needs expansion upon such as an age demographic (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017).

A good balance of both probability and non-probability sampling methods will ensure a satisfactory amount of data can be collected while still not being distorted or influenced by bias.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Ethnography and observational research: Described by field worker and research specialist Ola Berta as being a data collection method core to understanding “lived human experiences” (Berta, 2017), ethnography acts as a systematic representation of culture.

Two primary locations were selected to conduct ethnographic and observational research best on contrasting factors regarding sustainability surrounding the brands associated with the stores. Popular food chain Kauai was firstly selected as a brand that has recently made a shift towards embedding sustainability into their brand values through in store initiatives. This “healthy planet initiative” aimed to build consumer loyalty and retention through switching from plastic to paper straws, offering reusable cups and giving consumers the choice of putting plastic cup cover tops on their drinks.

Contrasted to the second brand chosen whose store was used for observational and ethnographic research, Starbucks was chosen based on recent sustainably related controversies surrounding the brand. With the brand facing criticism on a global scale due to the mistreatment of employees and supply chain workers, not

Observational research was firstly used within both stores to ensure that the researcher was as unobtrusive as possible in order to not influence or distort data in any way by changing the habits of the participant. Ethnography was then further used to understand

buying habits of consumers and analysing exactly what items were used by them (such as if they took paper straws over plastic ones).

(Note that participants would be stopped outside of the store to comment on questions or detail their experiences asked by the researcher in order to avoid any forms of ethical clearance required for conducting interviews within the store)

Structured Interviews: Questions will be posed to participants aiming to gain detailed answers regarding consumer behaviour. Interviews will have a focus on being formal and structured in order to prevent participants from deviating into statements not relevant to the research problem and question.

Structured interviews further have the advantage

The qualitative survey:

3.8 Data Analysis Methods (Qualitative)

Conversation Analysis: Focusing patterns in language during interviews, focus groups and observations, conversation analysis will all for the use of linguistic factors such as intonation, pausing and phrasing, along with carefully analysing participants tones, expressions and pitches (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017). These patterns will allow for the gauging of feelings and emotions into consumer perceptions with regards to brands. Conversations will also be recorded, where they will be played back to be further analysed in greater detail.

3.9 Validity, reliability and/or trustworthiness

Three key types of reliability will be used in order to ensure that the same results will be produced if the research were to be repeated with a different researcher. This will also allow data to be credible and consistent. Inter-rater or inter-coder research will ensure different participants are used, but the same tool will be used. This will be important in focus groups and group interviews to allow for a measure of agreement among samples.

Test-retest reliability will mean that the same participants are used, however the method and instrument is administered at different times. This will act as a measurement of stability for participants and eliminate bias (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017).

The last type of reliability used will be internal consistency. This will allow for the correlation of data, aiding in gathering key findings and insights while also being able to eliminate irrelevant information or data not relevant to the research problem.

Since this specific research question outlined within the literature review needs more clarity regarding a specific answer, the application of internal validity must allow for no errors in the design of the research being conducted and that the research method must assist in answering the research question (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017). It must also be noted that the use of internal validity will also speak to errors in the results that may still emerge, even though measures will be put in place to prevent them from happening. Validity will ensure that the research measured what it was meant to measure. All types of validity will therefore be used to reflect the reality of the constructs being measured. Content validity or sampling validity will ensure that the test is representative. It will therefore focus on both sustainability, brand loyalty and consumer perfections. Face validity will ensure all tools are well designed and look like they are supposed to (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017). All research instruments and tests used on participants will therefore be well prepared in advance and include well thought out questions clearly aimed at collecting data relevant to the research problem.

Construct validity will ensure that there is an agreement between all theoretical concepts discussed and all specific measuring devices. The literature review therefore analyses all relevant and seminal frameworks and concepts related to all key theories and terms, such as understanding how the consumer mindset works when dealing with psychological theory.

Lastly, criterion-related validity or instrumental validity will aim to ensure that all test will be able to predict future behaviours> the literature review therefore needs to critically analyse the consumer mindset and not just see how it changes over time, but how sustainable initiatives change into the future and continue to affect this mindset (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017).

Trustworthiness will ensure the research conducted is credible. Credibility is paramount to regarding trustworthiness of this study due to the lack of academically relevant information relating to answering the research problem. Triangulation must therefore be applied throughout the research tool (such as interviews, focus groups and surveys) in order to correlate relevant and therefore credible data (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2017).

Regarding transferability. While the research is specifically catered to the South African environment, it can still act as an indicator to be used for and influence the global landscape.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Presentation of Findings

With the 3 data collection methods being used to collect findings, these have been presented under the following collection methods:

Ethnographic and observational research: With the first store where ethnographic and observational research was conducted being Starbucks at the Gateway shopping mall. Participants were firstly studied through unobtrusive observational research. With a focus being on how beverages were bought, rather than the product that was bought, it was noticed that out of 50 participants that were observed, Two opted to not have a plastic tops put on their cups, while seven did not take straws for drinks where straws were required. Three of these mentioned entities were asked to comment on their actions outside of the store.

Information from these participants yielded results specifically relating to psychographic factors, with their decision to not use plastic not stemming from any of the brand initiatives, but rather a conscious decision made due to their lifestyle habits.

This data contrasted with observational and ethnographic research using the same parameters at Kauai within the same mall, where 50 more participants were firstly observed. Out of 50 participants, seventeen did not take both plastic tops and straws for their beverages (it should be noted that plastic cup tops and straws, rather than being given by a server which Starbucks did, were placed on the counter and were advised not to be taken through a message above these tops). This showed a 16 percent increase in people choosing to engage in sustainable practices in Kauai over Starbucks. This data was further contrasted with Starbucks when these samples were further asked by the researcher to comment on their actions, with the majority of people citing

Kauai as a brand that these samples support over competitor food chains due to their sustainable practices.



Figures 4.1 and 4.2: Researcher Shivar Rajoo asking questions to samples with their verbal consent after conducting observational and ethnographic research (Source: Shivar Rajoo).

Structured Interviews: (Note that transcriptions for interviews can be found on page 51)

Seven structured interviews were conducted, with the goal of asking the exact same questions to respondents in order to compare and contrast responses. Aged between 24 to 30 years of age due to convenience sampling being the primary factor when collecting interview data, participants were all familiar with the concept of sustainability, each related to their own subjective definition. This included relating its definition to branding, philosophy and social and environmental issues.

Half of the respondents considered themselves as entities that live a highly sustainable lifestyle while two respondents consider themselves moderately sustainable, not supporting brands that are sustainably but rather being sustainable themselves regarding any convenient method such as recycling at home. The remaining participant did not consider themselves sustainable at all for, with participant Ryan Hodnet citing “selfishness” and “an anti-corporate mentality” (further elaborated upon within the interpretation of research section) (Hodnet, 2019).

The Qualitative Survey: (Note that survey result illustrations can be viewed on page 80) This type of survey aimed to gauge qualitative findings by focusing on beliefs, values, feelings and norms directly related to sustainability, loyalty and retention. 36 results were collected with fifteen participants aged between eighteen to 24, another fifteen aged between 25 to 34 and 5 samples aged 35 or above. 67 percent of participants were male while the rest were female.

The top 3 words associated with sustainability for samples were “health”, “safety” and “eco-friendly”, highlighting sustainably and something more environmentally related rather than social for these participants. The majority of participants (72 percent) consider themselves as environmentally. Every single participant (at 100 percent) believe that brands need to become more sustainable, or eco-friendly and socially

responsible, and the majority (67 percent) would not be afraid to switch to competitor brands should they over what samples consider as “more sustainable actions”.

4.2 Interpretation of Findings

Before data could be fully interpreted, a relevant framework needed to be used to allow for the interpretation of findings. With three data collection methods being used, “triangulation” could be used as a framework to correlate similarities and distinctions between data collected among all responses gained. Irrelevant data could be filtered out while common findings could be correlated in order to find fundamental human truths or insights (Santana, 2015).

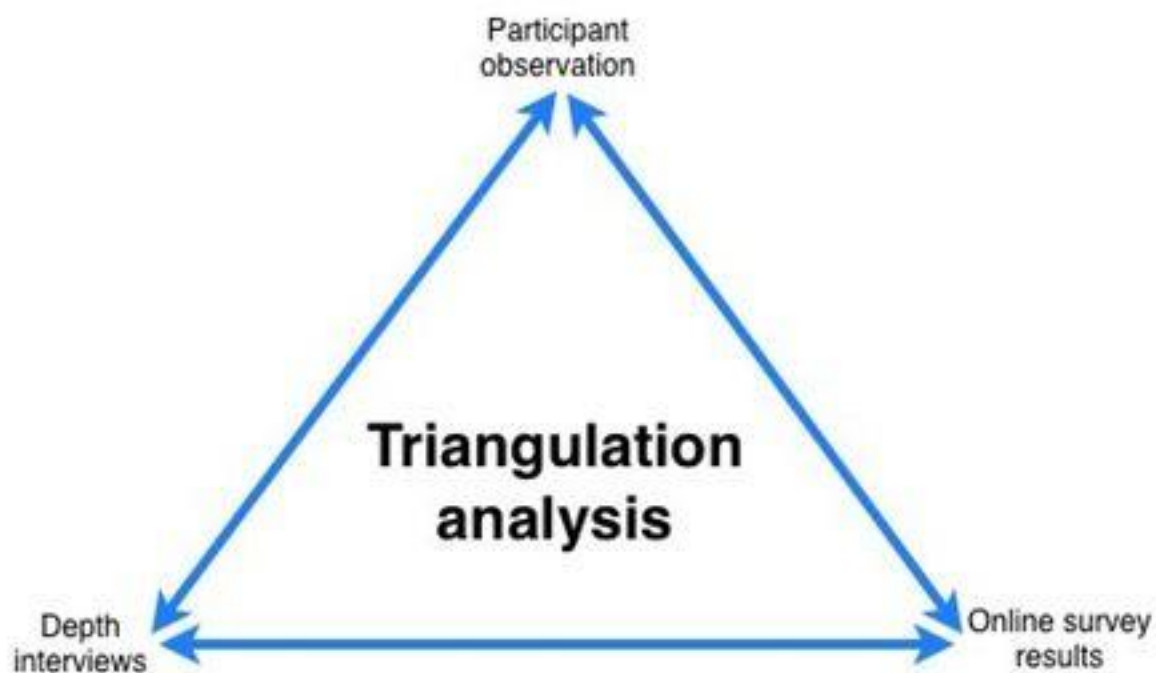


Figure 4.3: Illustration of an example of triangulation (Santana, 2015).

With all of the aforementioned presentations of findings, key findings could be gauged as follows using triangulation to filter out unnecessary data:

- The majority of these Durban-based consumers are well educated on sustainability related to branding and marketing in South Africa. While this research did not aim to find out a clear reason, it can be hypothesised that sustainable branding initiatives combined with globalisation and a post-apartheid society have had a major influence on this factor.
- This level of education not only leads to sustainably conscious citizens, but what has been dubbed as “corporate skeptics”. Durban-based consumers therefore appreciate sustainable efforts made by brands in the country, but can easily be inclined to question and doubt the extent towards which these brands pursue sustainable initiatives purely for environmental or social well-being.
- Regardless of age and gender, the majority (at a very high majority level) of Durban-based consumers do not just feel responsible for the social and environmental wellbeing of the planet and people within it, but believe brands in South Africa should have this obligation as well.
- Sustainable initiatives and marketing effects from brands operating in South Africa have an extremely strong influence on Durban-based consumers. However, while this posits a strong link between brand loyalty and retention, brands can easily lose these two factors if their competitors engage in sustainable initiatives considered objectively better by these consumers.

Furthermore, only one participant cited two different reasons for being unsustainable, the core reason for this pointed towards corporate skepticism, this reason correlates directly into the unanimously answered sixth interview question, where participants were essentially asked if profit does not act as a driver, but rather a consequence of actions behind brands, with all participants, regardless of their answer, still showing skepticism among these brands. The essence of this answer can be encapsulated in a response by

interviewee Veyank Naicker, who posits that a brand acts as a “middle-man” to leverage a consumers own ideals of sustainability, regardless of a brand doing it purely for profit or not. This proves that all participants used in the study can be considered corporate skeptics.

4.3 Research Question, Problem, Hypotheses/ Objectives Addressed?

With the aforementioned key findings collected, this study has fulfilled its research objective of aiming to not just contribute to existing studies and frameworks related to consumer behaviour and brand loyalty, but act as a local body of knowledge. This can be attributed by ensuring data was only collected among samples residing within South Africa, and, more specifically for the sake of the research question, Durban.

While the research question aimed to look at the extent towards which loyalty and consumer buying behaviour and loyalty were affected by sustainable initiatives, this could be rather difficult to quantify due to what constitutes the factor of extent and needs to be determined by the research. Extent was therefore measured using a basic extent measurement scale created by the researcher. Using numbers between one to five, every 20 percent of samples measured across all variables who were both in agreement with switching to competitor brands due to better sustainability initiatives, believed sustainable marketing contributed towards greater retention or consumers who became sustainably conscious because of brands would move the scale up by a higher number.

With the final number on the scale being a four out of five, this meant that 80 percent of consumers' consumer behaviour and loyalty have been influenced by brands, constituting the researchers definition of what can be considered as a “high-majority” , also mentioned in the interpretation of findings.

With this high extent being gauged, research has directly coincided with the hypothesis of the study, with a majority percentage of South African consumers being brand loyal to, supporting, and engaging with brands regarding sustainable initiatives parallel to their own beliefs and values. However, should brands engage in unethical or unsustainable practices, South African consumers are not hesitant to switch to alternative or competitor brands.

4.4 Ethical Considerations, Limitations, and Heuristic Value

Morals, ethics and a strict code of conduct followed by the researcher will ensure that:

- Participants feel safe and not threatened
- Results are not distorted
- Findings are credible and can be used as academic knowledge

Furthermore, informed consent for ethnographical and observational research and interviews will be done in the form of a document that participants can sign, stating the purpose of research. A gatekeeper's letter will also always be acquired to legally conduct research within facilities if the need arises

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As an ethical researcher I will also have to ensure that I do not:

- Falsify or fabricate and change research in any way or for any reason, not showing true results gained.
- Use inappropriate research methods such as do anything that is harmful to any participants (such as show pornography to young participants).

- Be dishonest or lie to participants in order to influence data or results in any manner possible.

- Incite any form of abuse, physical, verbal or emotional towards participants or extort them in any way.

Limitations have been listed as follows:

- Difficulty of travel making certain samples inaccessible.
- Financial constraints meant less financial resources could be used to seek out samples or purchase premium data collection software tools to sort and analyse data.
- Time taken to conduct the research took place over the course of seven months. More time means more data could be collected and interpreted.
- No samples between the ages of 34 to 44 could be collected. With an age group missing this could lead to the potential reflection of data that cannot be considered truly accurate or “pure data”

Delimitations and assumptions have been listed as follows:

- For the purpose of the study, no samples who have resided in Durban for under five years could participate in the study. This was done to ensure samples were not influenced by different locales they came from.
- It was assumed that consumers who used words such as “maybe”, “sometimes” or “I think so” when asked if they are loyal to specific brands would be interpreted as a weak amount of retention and loyalty. The researcher interprets this as a sign of hesitancy and non-commitment.

Heuristic value of the research:

This research has been analysed using popular theories and paradigms that have acted as frameworks for decades within research, this meant that, rather than aiming to generate new theories from specific outcomes, this research can be used to further build upon theories, frameworks and paradigms. Furthermore, it can be used by researchers relating theories to both the local and international landscape.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With Durban-based consumers being sustainably conscious yet skeptical on the actual true reason behind sustainable brand initiatives, brands need to focus on embedding sustainability within their value propositions and overarching vision that constitutes their reason for operation. This encourages holistic relationships with Durban consumers who are further exposed to ethical sustainable initiatives in return. This creates a further amount of awareness for environmental and social initiatives.

APPENDICES SECTION

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

Structured interview transcript with 24-year-old male: Veyank Naicker (See methodology)

Shivar: What does the word or concept of “sustainability” mean to you? Please elaborate.

Veyank: When I think about the word sustainability, I think about a balance between the rate of use and rate of renewal. What I mean is, whether our use of a resource is balanced out by how quickly it is renewable, or rather, how quickly it is restored. For instance, if we use a resource faster than we can find or make more of it, I’d consider it to be unsustainable. Conversely, a resource that may be produced faster and at a higher rate than it is used, that would be sustainable.

Shivar: Would you consider yourself to be a person that is sustainable? Please tell me why.

Veyank: I consider myself somewhat sustainable and consider my food consumption practices to be somewhat sustainable. For instance, food rarely goes to waste, if there are leftovers from a meal I will almost always save them to have as part of, if not solely as a future meal. However, I do not grow my own food, such as vegetables. All the food that I consume is either bought from a supermarket or eaten at a restaurant/ takeaway. My water usage is another practice whose sustainability I’d question. What I mean is,

while I seldom leave taps open, or let them leak, I rarely reuse water. Once I have used it/ consumed it, it is gone. Lastly, in terms of recycling, I would describe my habits as inconsistent. If I have the option to recycle in a convenient manner, I will do so. However, if there is no means to recycle when I am disposing of waste it will be junked.

Shivar: When purchasing a product, do social and environmental initiatives (such as saving the environment) of the brand the product is being purchased from affect your purchase decision? Please explain why.

Veyank: My answer here may come across as a bit odd. At face value, if I see that a brand that offers a good quality product, and who has implemented interventions; I would have a positive view of said brand, irrespective of whether I purchased their product. Similarly, I may still buy good quality products from a brand, despite them not having implemented environmental interventions or even outright poor environmental practices. I think what I'm trying to say is that my purchasing habits aren't solely influenced by a brand's efforts to support the environment or whether they negatively impact them. I feel that I'm more likely to further support a solid brand that chooses to implement interventions to support the environment, as opposed to supporting a brand that only has that going for them.

Shivar: Why do you think it is important for brands to become more sustainable?

Veyank: That's easy, if a bit cliché answer, is that we only have one planet, and a finite amount of resources. Once said resources are gone, that's it, they're gone. The more brands there are that attempt to follow more sustainable business practices, the less there are that do the opposite. I will say this though, I feel that convenience is often an important factor, both in terms of leading a sustainable lifestyle, as well as in terms of

selecting a brand to support. To me this means that the more brands there are that observe sustainable practices, the easier it will be for consumers to lead a more sustainable lifestyle by proxy, or even develop more sustainable habits as a result of this.

Shivar: If a brand that you are dedicated and loyal to has a competitor that starts to engage in more sustainable actions (such as their entire brand eliminating plastic and running on renewable energy), would you consider switching brands and why?

Veyank: I would consider switching brands, perhaps even going so far as to purchasing said brands product, but it would be more as a sampling than an immediate shift. If in the long run, I find that the new brand satisfies my needs the sure I'll consider a permanent switch. What I mean is, sure an environmental approach would get my attention and encourage me to switch; but at the end of the day it wouldn't be an overnight switch but rather a gradual one.

Shivar: Do you feel that brands force you to take an interest in sustainable and social initiatives or do you believe many brands have a genuine care for these issues? Please elaborate.

Veyank: The cynic in me does want to say that, at the end of the day, the end goal of all brands, and businesses, in general, is to make a profit. While some brands may genuinely care about the issues to which they are trying to bring attention to, I feel that some merely do it as a means of publicity; a way to draw more eyes to their brand. In doing so a prospective customer may go through the following line of thinking: "Oh look at this brand! They're supporting an issue that I am passionate about! Maybe I should look into them, and maybe I should tell my friends! Maybe we can all support this

brand!”. It is in this way that consumers, in an effort to support or address an issue, in this case, the environment and sustainability, inevitably supporting a brand as a middleman. However, I do acknowledge that some brands may genuinely have a passion for the issues for which they implement interventions. The challenge then for consumers is discerning brands who are being genuine and those that view said issues as a new way of turning a profit.

Shivar: What social or environmental factors do you think brands need to focus on in this day and age and why?

Veyank: Firstly, I strongly believe that brands should consider ways that encourage convenient and gradual changes, as humans can be creatures of habit and a tad lazy. While challenging their views may persuade some, an overly confrontational approach may result in people sticking to their guns and doubling down on their beliefs and current habits. Secondly, I think that furthering awareness regarding food wastage, particularly regarding the volume of food wasted, and the reasons behind wastage. I feel awareness into these factors may motivate people to learn more and do more regarding sustainable living, particularly when it comes to some of the frivolous reasoning behind food wastage, for example so-called ‘ugly veg’ (in essence vegetables deemed too ugly to sell in supermarkets, which are then disposed of).

Structured interview transcript with 25-year-old female: Tamara De Klerk (See methodology)

Shivar: What does the word or concept of “sustainability” mean to you? Please elaborate.

Tamara: Sustainability in the context of the environment means the ability to avoid using up all our natural resources and instead, find a way to balance our consumption of resources in a manner that would not be destructive to our ecosystems. It is about finding a balance. In an economic context it would be about maintaining a steady level or rate of growth. In addition, because I have a marketing background I understand the concept of brand sustainability as well. Brand sustainability is the idea that a company goes one step beyond their competitors in that their focus is not solely on their bottom line, but also on how they can impact social and environmental issues through their brand.

Shivar: Would you consider yourself to be a person that is sustainable? Why?

Tamara: I do not live the most sustainable lifestyle but I try to play my part in lowering my carbon footprint as much as I can. I have recycling bins in my home, I eat free range eggs and meat and I am conscious of the issues surrounding products I use. For example, after the Hong Kong protests and the banning of a professional Hearthstone because he spoke out in support of the protests, I uninstalled my Blizzard launcher in support of him and showing the company Blizzard that I will not support them in their act to silence freedom of speech. Another example is that I have stopped purchasing plastic packets from stores and instead use the same bag that is made from recycled material.

Shivar: When purchasing a product, do social and environmental initiatives (such as saving the environment) of the brand the product is being purchased from affect your purchase decision? Please explain why.

Tamara: It does affect my purchasing decision. I am more likely to purchase something if it is supporting a cause that I believe in. I think that brands, especially large, powerful brands have a responsibility to use their power for good because they have a lot of influence and if they want to be memorable in the minds of consumers they need to frame themselves as the best choice not only because their products are the best but because they help better the world. For example, SASOL's support of Banyana during the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup made them much more memorable in my mind than before they sponsored the team.

Women's soccer is very underdeveloped in South Africa, many of the women choosing to play overseas or never choosing to become professional as you need to have a full-time job to support yourself unlike their male counterparts. With SASOL and Energades sponsorships the team was given the limelight they deserved, raising awareness to the women's soccer scene in South Africa and at the same time, highlighted SASOL in a good light for giving them this opportunity. It has definitely made me look more favourably at them.

Shivar: Why do you think it is important for brands to become more sustainable?

Tamara: Brands have the largest carbon footprints and are responsible for a lot of the environmental and social issues that we have in the world. McDonalds cut away at the

Amazon Rainforest to make space for their grazing cattle; Nike has sweatshops around the world and fashion brands rely on tearing people down and then selling them their confidence back in the form of a product. These are but a few examples of what large brands have done that has impacted us as a society.

Therefore, it is important that they move away from these business practices and become more sustainable because people are starting to become wise to these tactics and are no longer tolerating these kind of acts. If your brand wants to survive in this age, you need to adapt to fit the more sustainable-minded consumer. If brands do this, they will build a loyal consumer base and be able to remain relevant in the market for longer.

Shivar: If a brand that you are dedicated and loyal to has a competitor that starts to engage in more sustainable actions (such as their entire brand eliminating plastic and running on renewable energy), would you consider switching brands and why?

Tamara: I would definitely consider switching to the competitor's brand but other factors would be taken into consideration before I made the switch. If the brands were close in price and quality for their products then I would definitely make the switch, no question. The idea of getting the same quality but with the additional benefit of supporting a brand that is conscious of their environmental impact is amazing because I am aware of the importance of sustainability and how if we want the world to be sustainable for future generations, we need to take care of it now. However, I will not pretend to be completely righteous as my opinion is based around the fact that the price and quality of the products are similar. I don't mind if there is a slight increase in cost but I would be hard pressed to change to a brand that would be of lower quality.

Shivar: Do you feel that brands force sustainability initiatives for the sake of marketing or do you believe they actually care? Please elaborate.

Tamara: I feel like there are some brands that genuinely care and then there are brands that are using initiatives as social clout amongst consumers. You are able to tell who are genuine brands by how their company model is structured. For example, Tony's Chocolonely is a Dutch confectionery company focused on producing and selling chocolate closely following fair trade practices in reaction to how many companies use slavery and child labour to reduce cost for their chocolates. The brand's vision is to make chocolate 100% slave free and to remove slave labour from the cocoa industry. This is a brand that actually cares because their entire brand is based around the initiative of eradicating slave labour and encouraging more companies to follow fair trade practices and is not just a one-time campaign or act.

In contrast, a brand such as Sainsbury could be seen as a brand that was just bandwagoning on a social movement to gain positive PR for themselves. Sainsbury released Pride greeting cards during Pride month as part of their vision to be the UK's most inclusive retailer. However, the greeting cards that celebrated pride was not met with unanimous joy as many were skeptical of the brand and whether they genuinely cared about being inclusive or if they were just piggybacking off the LGBT+ movement. This was response was because the cards were only released to 15% of the shops the proceeds were not being donated or to raise awareness. It felt an empty gesture as there was no real impact to be felt.

Shivar: What social or environmental factors do you think brands need to focus on in this day and age and why?

Tamara: Global warming is a huge threat to everyone and is mainly caused by large corporations who have excess waste and pollution from the production and distribution of their products. I think more brands need to focus their energies on cleaning up after themselves and finding more sustainable methods for production and distribution. There needs to be a push for the use of renewable energy, alternative packaging options to plastic and coming up with ideas to reduce the travelling miles of products.

Brands like to encourage consumers to reduce their carbon footprint but at the end of the day, consumers can't make up for the destruction that brands are creating. It is important for more brands to become sustainable so that future generations do not have to suffer because of our mistakes. It is also a better way to generate loyalty and motivation to consumers because people will be more willing to follow in the footsteps of those who are already acting.

Structured interview transcript with 30-year-old male: Pascal Naidoo (See methodology)

Shivar: What does the word or concept of “sustainability” mean to you? Please elaborate.

Pascal: Sustainability to me means continuation. it means the ability to simply carry on. It may be personal it may be in business or even creating a brand one would wish for that creation to carry on. sustainability in to me would mean a state of equilibrium. One must only take an equal amount that one can give.

Shivar: Would you consider yourself to be a person that is sustainable? Why?

Pascal: I would very much like to consider myself a sustainable being, however given my previous statement in essence give back as much as I take. What does try to do all one can but given our current global situation it is quite difficult.

Shivar: When purchasing a product, do social and environmental initiatives (such as saving the environment) of the brand the product is being purchased from affect your purchase decision? Please explain why.

Pascal: Yes. I always take into account the environmental and social impact of any product. I often ask myself, where a particular product was produced, was it harvested ethically, did they use local labour, is the product South Africa, if so is it produced in

South Africa, what social impact does this product have. Asking these questions often limits the shop and what products I can actually buy but in the end it's worth it.

Shivar: Why do you think it is important for brands to become more sustainable?

Pascal: This is rather simple, a population is in surplus, and it cannot sustain the amount of life upon it. Basically, if we do not practice ethical and sustainable ways of living we will all perish along with the planet.

Shivar: If a brand that you are dedicated and loyal to has a competitor that starts to engage in more sustainable actions (such as their entire brand eliminating plastic and running on renewable energy), would you consider switching brands and why?

Pascal: One would not just consider changing the brand one would definitely change the brand, should there their works be more sustainable. like I have stated previously we cannot simply go on without a thought the impact that we have. do we choose the path that would leave only destruction or do we do what we must to maintain life.

Shivar: Do you feel that brands force you to take an interest in sustainable and social initiatives or do you believe many brands have a genuine care for these issues? Please elaborate.

Pascal: it is my opinion that many brands engage in social and sustainable programs simply as a marketing strategy. with many people moving toward a more sustainable

ethical way of life voice but to embrace this moving forward they have a choice tiger change with the time or lose a huge customer base.

Shivar: What social or environmental factors do you think brands need to focus on in this day and age and why?

Pascal: More brands need to focus on eliminating single use plastics, plastic straws, unethical labour practices, community outreach initiatives. A brand cannot simply exist. A brand needs to be built into a pillar of the community, of a society. One who has worked to build loyalty and trust from its customer base is one who has succeeded in branding.

Structured interview transcript with 25-year-old male: Lukesh Naidoo (See methodology)

Shivar: What does the word or concept of “sustainability” mean to you? Please elaborate.

Lukesh: Sustainability, to me, means going through the various activities of human life in a way that does not burden the environment. By “burden” we can either take out more from nature than what can be replenished (e.g.: coal usage for electricity is not sustainable as it is not possible for the Earth to replenish it at a rate we are using it) or we can add to wastage at a rate that the environment cannot deal with in its natural course (e.g.: humans current plastic use)

Shivar: Would you consider yourself to be a person that is sustainable? Why?

Lukesh: Yes, I do consider myself a sustainable person (or sustainable as possible at least). The average person is limited in the impact they can achieve when it comes to sustainability. For many people it’s difficult to balance the need to be a sustainable consumer with the stress and goings-on of everyday life. In this regard I try my best to be sustainable. Turning off lights when I leave the room, being mindful of water usage, trying not to waste food, minimising plastic consumption, choosing the greener alternative between products, and even taking part in a beach clean-up every now and again are things I try to add to the cause of sustainability

Shivar: When purchasing a product, do social and environmental initiatives (such as saving the environment) of the brand the product is being purchased from affect your purchase decision? Please explain why.

Lukesh: Yes, they do. I am extremely environmentally conscious and fully support any brand that is doing something to further the cause of sustainability/environmentalism/etc. No matter what that brand's motives are I prefer to choose products that are involved in social and environmental initiatives and will often go out of my way to pick those products. That said I'm also conscious of brands that simply use environment branding and buzzwords to market to consumers without actually doing anything that contributes to sustainability. Being environmentally conscious means not only being aware of which brands are "green" and which aren't but also knowing which are genuine or not. If I know a brand is just using buzzwords and imagery to pander rather than actually being sustainable I will actually go out of my way to avoid those brands

Shivar: Why do you think it is important for brands to become more sustainable?

Lukesh: Yes, I do. Everyone has a responsibility to be sustainable, brands and companies especially. Brands and companies are massive polluters of the environment by means of actually manufacturing products and in turn are the ones that can actually make the biggest steps in the goal to a sustainable future. Sustainable production methods, using renewable resources and environmentally friendly packaging are all things brands can do that will make a bigger impact than any single person can. Brands also have the power to shape the public consciousness and have the ability to educate and motivate people to become environmentally aware.

Shivar: If a brand that you are dedicated and loyal to has a competitor that starts to engage in more sustainable actions (such as their entire brand eliminating plastic and running on renewable energy), would you consider switching brands and why?

Lukesh: Yes, I would. Part of what would make me dedicated and loyal to a brand would be their ability to engage in sustainable actions so if a brand I am using isn't doing that/a competitor is doing it better I would be very happy to support the competitor. Various other factors come into play when choosing a product (cost, quality of the product, etc.) but overall I see it as a big positive whenever any brand takes a more environmental initiative

Shivar: Do you feel that brands force you to take an interest in sustainable and social initiatives or do you believe many brands have a genuine care for these issues? Please elaborate.

Lukesh: Many brands are most definitely environmentally conscious and have an altruistic motive in mind. But companies by nature are also profit-driven and many wouldn't be supporting environmental issues if it wasn't popular to do so currently. However, for most I believe it's a mixture of these factors. Currently, we are in an opportune time for companies to really make a difference environmentally but also not sacrifice their bottom-line

Shivar: What social or environmental factors do you think brands need to focus on in this day and age and why?

Lukesh: There are many different factors that affect our environment currently and that a brand can focus on. However, in my opinion, the biggest is the lack of education and knowledge among the lay-person to what problems the Earth currently faces and what they should be doing to be more environmentally friendly. As much as society is becoming more conscious of environmental issues a large proportion of the population still think it a minor threat, non-existent or even a hoax. Like I said earlier, brands have the ability to shape public consciousness and to people who fall in the above category brands can help dissipate knowledge and bring environmental issues into the mainstream

Structured interview transcript with 30-year-old male: Ryan Hodnet (See methodology)

Shivar: What does the word or concept of “sustainability” mean to you? Please elaborate.

Ryan: Whether or not something is worth maintaining based on the benefits of the product outweigh the overhead and cost involved. If, at any stage, the cost outweighs the benefits, the resources should be re-allocated or the project re-evaluated.

Shivar: Would you consider yourself to be a person that is sustainable? Why?

Ryan: Yes. I have no interest in brand name products. If a product is able to deliver the same performance or level of quality as another, lesser known, brand then there is no reason to spend the extra money just to have a well-known brand on a piece of clothing or equipment. The extra money saved is better spent being invested in a future for myself and my family.

Shivar: When purchasing a product, do social and environmental initiatives (such as saving the environment) of the brand the product is being purchased from affect your purchase decision? Please explain why.

Ryan: No. At the end of the day I’m still looking out for myself. I’m still going to go for the cheapest and best option for my needs. If the product I’m purchasing happens to be

helping the environment or saving an endangered species then that's something I may feel good about, but it's not going to sway my choice.

Although at the same time I wouldn't feel comfortable buying something that has caused any suffering or mistreatment for example child labour or deforestation, but we both probably have clothes that a child made for a bowl of water, right? It's not openly broadcast to the world by the companies (obviously) that their product is made from human suffering, but if it was, I believe it would have a lot more impact than a company openly broadcasting the opposite.

Shivar: Why do you think it is important for brands to become more sustainable?

Ryan: If brands aren't sustainable, they'll die out or just be absorbed by other, bigger, brands. If a brand wants to be relevant and make a change in the long run it's in their best interest to ensure they have the tools needed to make an impact and gather enough of a following to grow.

Shivar: If a brand that you are dedicated and loyal to has a competitor that starts to engage in more sustainable actions (such as their entire brand eliminating plastic and running on renewable energy), would you consider switching brands and why?

Ryan: No. I answered this in Question 3.

Shivar: Do you feel that brands force you to take an interest in sustainable and social initiatives or do you believe many brands have a genuine care for these issues? Please elaborate.

Ryan: I don't feel brands force me to do anything.

I believe many brands do have a genuine care for these issues. But the majority of these are newer brands who have started with the whole "we care about the environment" bit. Brands that have already cemented themselves have enough of a following and this may not be an avenue worth exploring just yet.

Shivar: What social or environmental factors do you think brands need to focus on in this day and age and why?

Ryan: The current generation's way of thinking and socialising. They all want to stand out on some new social media platform so give them all a way of doing that. Then everyone will stand out.

I'm not sure if it's the right kind of answer but global warming. I still don't believe in brands but they could probably get a lot more pull if they roped in the guys that want to cool the world. It's all just whatever's trending on tik-gram or whatever.

Structured interview transcript with 26-year-old male: Mohammud Akoo (See methodology)

Shivar: What does the word or concept of “sustainability” mean to you? Please elaborate.

Mohammud: Whenever I hear sustainability I think of something that can sustain itself or run in the long term. Sometimes that means profitable, sometimes that means economical, I guess it depends on context. I also think it means something that has to do with resources and how it uses them, since there’s always going to be a cost involved and if something is sustainable it should be cost efficient

Shivar: Would you consider yourself to be a person that is sustainable? Why?

Mohammud: I’d like to think so but I’d word it differently, that’s not cheating is it? I would say I’m more efficient rather than sustainable in my life, yet if you want to talk strictly about sustainability I’d say the two are linked. I’ll give you an example, I reuse things like plastic packets since that means I don’t need to buy one again and that’s cost and time efficient, which I guess you could say is sustainable.

Shivar: When purchasing a product, do social and environmental initiatives (such as saving the environment) of the brand the product is being purchased from affect your purchase decision? Please explain why.

Mohammud: They typically don't, but I guess it's broad enough to say that some products do, such as milk that doesn't have growth hormone injected into the cows influencing whether I buy it or not as opposed to the ones that don't have it, but then some products that say it has recycled plastic is fine to buy for single use but if it's something that I'll be using a lot, I'd rather buy something that I'm certain is made with quality components rather than plastic that is recycled purely for the marketing of it

Shivar: Why do you think it is important for brands to become more sustainable?

Mohammud: I'd say going back to the efficiency point is relevant here since becoming more sustainable sounds to me like becoming more efficient in everything a brand does, from its marketing to its production to its paperwork. Everything it does internally will have an effect, and they can even externally say they're a more profitable business to investors, or more readily claim that they've got the best product if they have more resources to put into R&D now.

Shivar: If a brand that you are dedicated and loyal to has a competitor that starts to engage in more sustainable actions (such as their entire brand eliminating plastic and running on renewable energy), would you consider switching brands and why?

Mohammud: I wouldn't, there would have to be a lot more convincing reasons for me to switch. The competing brand doing that is all well and good, and it's not as though I don't support that, it's just that I chose a product from a particular brand for a reason that likely didn't have to do with sustainability and the other brand would have to provide the same thing or better for me to consider switching. That, or my main brand does something stupid like purposefully says they're polluting the water with chemical waste dumps will make me switch.

Shivar: Do you feel that brands force you to take an interest in sustainable and social initiatives or do you believe many brands have a genuine care for these issues? Please elaborate.

Mohammud: I think brands do it all as marketing to be honest, they're all businesses right? Businesses are in the game for money, so they don't really care about sustainability or social initiatives unless it can make them money through marketing and PR. Maybe there is a company out there that does genuinely care about it or is involved in it as their business, but that's definitely not the majority I'd say

Shivar: What social or environmental factors do you think brands need to focus on in this day and age and why?

Mohammud: It could be controversial (but what isn't these days?), I'd say climate change and things such as anti-vax movements, brands need to be careful about how they market to these demographics and how they deal with it since people have such varied opinions on it. There's lots more examples but those are the big things now I

think. There's also the plastic in the oceans but people are a lot more aware of it now and are using cardboard or pasta straws instead of plastic. If brands can create awareness or do something just like that in the right way they can pass the competition easily

CONSENT FORMS

Interview Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your information and your participation are greatly appreciated and is an important process for our research. Please be advised that participation for an interview group is strictly voluntary and, should the need arise, you are free to remove yourself from the interview/focus group should you feel any general need to leave, or feel any form of discomfort or threatened.

I, [Lukesh Naidoo](#) (full name), irrevocably consent to give full authorisation to the facilitator/s for the right and permission to use this information solely for research purposes and in our academic documentation.

Please sign and date below confirming your agreement to participate in this interview:

Signature: 

Date: [20/10/2019](#)

(Naidoo, 2019)

Interview Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your information and your participation are greatly appreciated and is an important process for our research. Please be advised that participation for an interview group is strictly voluntary and, should the need arise, you are free to remove yourself from the interview/focus group should you feel any general need to leave, or feel any form of discomfort or threatened.

I, Pascal Naidoo (full name), irrevocably consent to give full authorisation to the facilitator/s for the right and permission to use this information solely for research purposes and in our academic documentation.

Please sign and date below confirming your agreement to participate in this interview:

Signature: 

Date: 23/10/2019

(Naidoo, 2019)

(Hodnet, 2019)

Interview Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your information and your participation are greatly appreciated and is an important process for our research. Please be advised that participation for an interview group is strictly voluntary and, should the need arise, you are free to remove yourself from the interview/focus group should you feel any general need to leave, or feel any form of discomfort or threatened.

I, **Ryan Hodnet** (full name), irrevocably consent to give full authorisation to the facilitator/s for the right and permission to use this information solely for research purposes and in our academic documentation.

Please sign and date below confirming your agreement to participate in this interview:

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ryan Hodnet', written over a horizontal line.

Date: **20/10/2019**

(Naicker, 2019)

Interview Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your information and your participation are greatly appreciated and is an important process for our research. Please be advised that participation for an interview group is strictly voluntary and, should the need arise, you are free to remove yourself from the interview/focus group should you feel any general need to leave, or feel any form of discomfort or threatened.

I, **Veyank Naicker** (full name), irrevocably consent to give full authorisation to the facilitator/s for the right and permission to use this information solely for research purposes and in our academic documentation.

Please sign and date below confirming your agreement to participate in this interview:

Signature: *VNaicker*

Date: **19/10/2019**

Interview Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your information and your participation are greatly appreciated and is an important process for our research. Please be advised that participation for an interview group is strictly voluntary and, should the need arise, you are free to remove yourself from the interview/focus group should you feel any general need to leave, or feel any form of discomfort or threatened.

I, **Tamara De Klerk** (full name), irrevocably consent to give full authorisation to the facilitator/s for the right and permission to use this information solely for research purposes and in our academic documentation.

Please sign and date below confirming your agreement to participate in this interview:

Signature: 

Date: **23/10/2019**

(De Klerk, 2019)

Interview Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your information and your participation are greatly appreciated and is an important process for our research. Please be advised that participation for an interview group is strictly voluntary and, should the need arise, you are free to remove yourself from the interview/focus group should you feel any general need to leave, or feel any form of discomfort or threatened.

I, **Mohammud Akoo** (full name), irrevocably consent to give full authorisation to the facilitator/s for the right and permission to use this information solely for research purposes and in our academic documentation.

Please sign and date below confirming your agreement to participate in this interview:

Signature



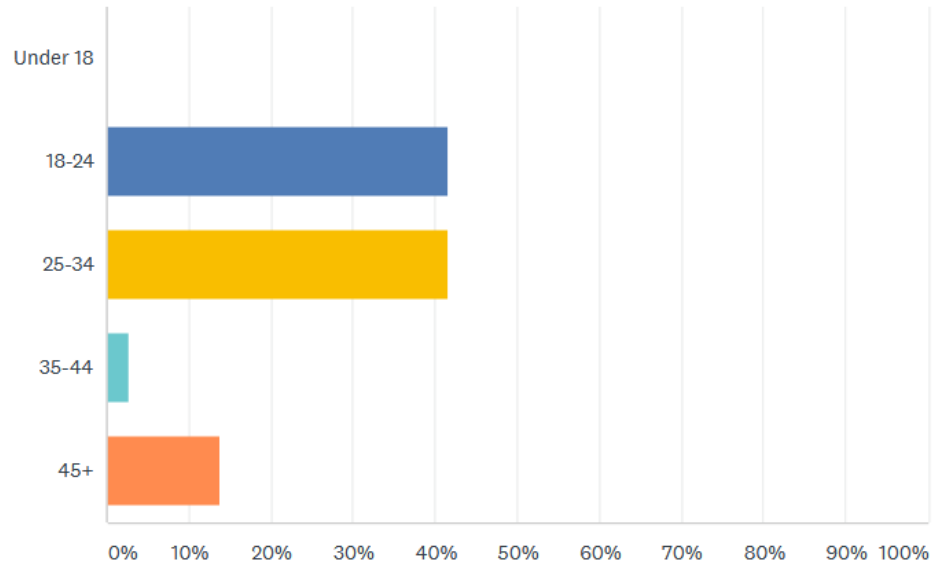
Date: **18/10/2019**

(Akoo, 2019)

SURVEY RESULTS (Source: Survey Monkey)

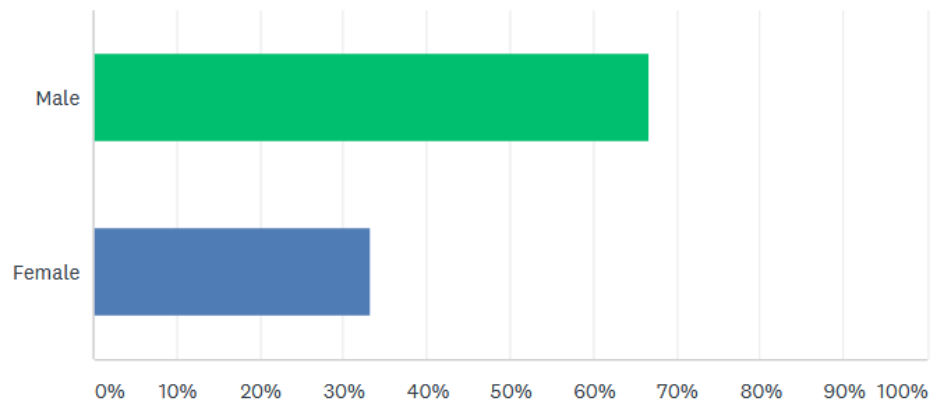
What is your age?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



What is your gender?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



In a word or phrase, what comes to your mind when you hear "sustainability"

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0

RESPONSES (36) WORD CLOUD TAGS (0)

Sentiments: OFF



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10/25/2019 10:31 AM

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☐ Longevity

10/25/2019 10:30 AM

[View respondent's answers](#)

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☐ Safety

10/25/2019 10:29 AM

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☐ Protection

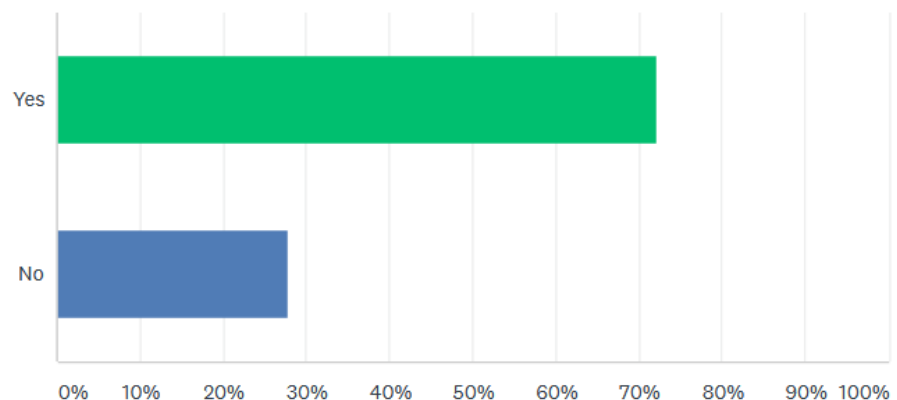
10/24/2019 11:46 PM

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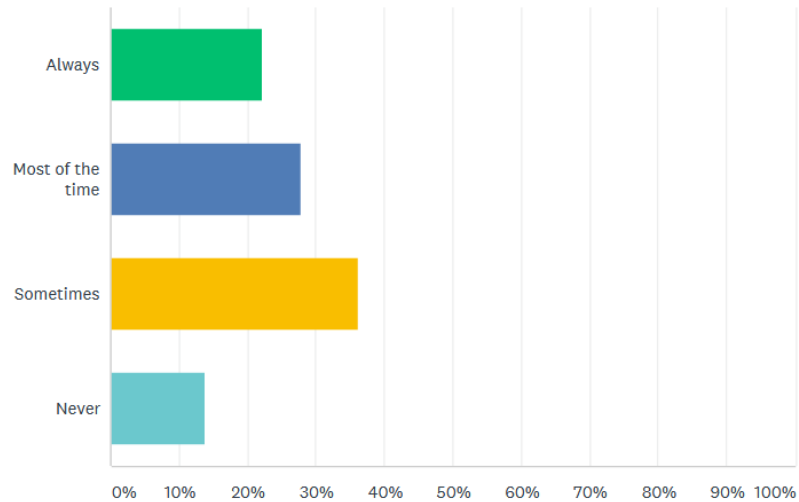
Would you consider yourself an "eco-friendly" person?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



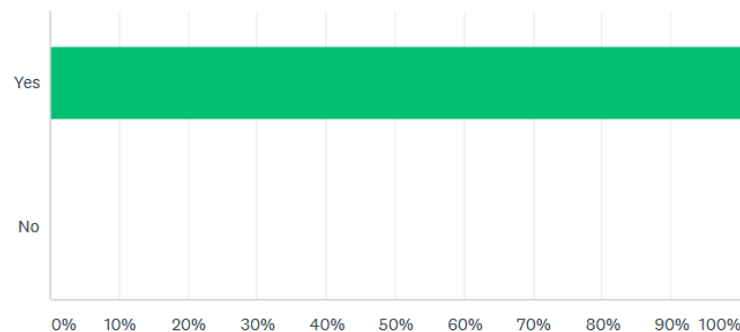
When purchasing a product, do social and environmental initiatives (such as saving the environment) of the brand the product is being purchased from affect your purchase decision?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



Regardless of your previous answer, do you believe brands need to become more sustainable, or eco-friendly and socially responsible?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



Why do you believe this?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0

RESPONSES (36) WORD CLOUD TAGS (0)

Sentiments: OFF



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Showing **36** responses

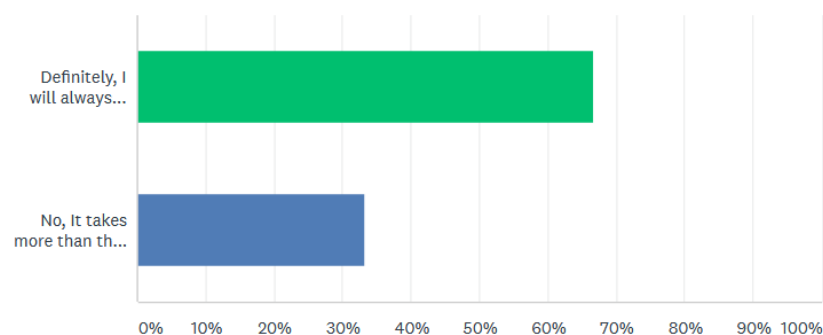
☐ We need the planet to survive to get more weeb stuff
10/23/2019 7:46 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags ▾](#)

☐ Because the planet is suffering from long term damage caused by humans so we need to make our parasitic impact far less than what it currently is.
10/23/2019 7:13 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags ▾](#)

☐ There is too much waste in the world at the moment so if things can be reused and recycled it would curb that and help the environment cope

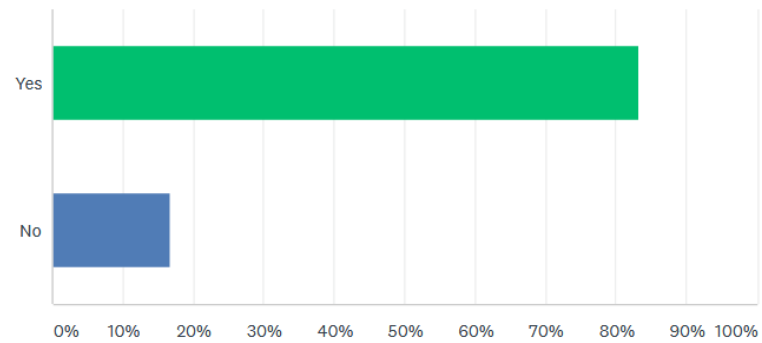
If a brand that you are dedicated and loyal to has a competitor that starts to engage in more sustainable actions (such as their entire brand eliminating plastic and running on renewable energy), would you consider switching brands?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



Last question. Do YOU feel responsible for aiding in creating a sustainable future for the people around you?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



ETHICAL CLEARANCE FORM



1 June 2019

Dear

ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and ethical considerations were reviewed by your supervisor and moderated by the campus research panel.

☒ Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns. We hereby provide you with ethical clearance to proceed with your research methodology.

OR

☐ Your research proposal posed the following minor concern:
Please mention how your research design will address this issue:

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

Supervisor Name: DR C. GREENSTONE

Supervisor Signature:

Campus Anchor Name: Alec Bozas

Campus Anchor Signature:

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