

Ocean Basket: Exploration Of The Impact Sustainable Fishing Practices Have On Brand Loyalty



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DECLARATION

I, Sherilee Steenkamp (19012637), hereby declare that the Research Proposal submitted for the Bachelor of Commerce Honours in Strategic Brand Management degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	ABSTRACT	5
2	INTRODUCTION.....	6
2.1	Context	9
2.2	Rationale	11
2.3	Problem Statement	13
2.4	Purpose Statement	14
2.5	Research Question	14
2.6	Sub-Questions	14
2.7	Research Objectives.....	14
3	LITERATURE REVIEW	15
3.1	Conceptualisation of Key Concepts	15
3.2	Theoretical Foundation	18
3.3	Literature Review & Review of Past Literature	20
4	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25
4.1	Research Design	25
4.1.1	Research Paradigm	25
4.1.2	Research Approach	26
4.2	Population.....	27
4.3	Sampling.....	27
4.4	Unit of Analysis.....	28
4.5	Data Collection	29
4.6	Data Analysis Method.....	30
4.7	Validity & Reliability	32
5	FINDINGS & INTEPRETATION OF FINDINGS	33
5.1	Findings & Interpretation.....	33
5.2	Research Problem, Purpose, Questions & Objectives Addressed.....	40

6	CONCLUSION	42
6.1	Ethical Considerations	42
6.2	Limitations	44
6.3	Anticipated Contribution & Heuristic Value	45
6.4	Recommendations.....	46
6.5	Concluding Remarks	46
7	REFERENCE LIST.....	47

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Updated Concept Document Table	51
Appendix B: Ethical Clearance Form	52
Appendix C: Measurement Instrument – Questionnaire	54
Appendix D: Ocean Baskets' SASSI & ROC In-Store Communication	59

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Data Analysis.....	33
Figure 2: Data Analysis.....	34
Figure 3: Data Analysis.....	35
Figure 4: Data Analysis.....	36
Figure 5: Data Analysis.....	37
Figure 6: Data Analysis.....	37
Figure 7: Data Analysis.....	38

1 ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers. Now that brands are being held accountable for their environmental impact and forced to address social issues, that the public sector fails to address; it is not clear whether brands benefit when making these strategic changes to be in harmony with the natural environment.

To address the research problem and determine whether consumers purposefully choose Ocean Basket for addressing overfishing, quantitative research will be used with a positivist paradigm and survey research design. The Theory of Reasoned Action will be tested to determine whether consumers' attitudes and behaviour change when learning about Ocean Baskets' commitment to sustainable fishing. Questionnaires will be used to collect data and capture the data in a cost- and time-effective way and will be analysed using a grid and coding system with cross-tabulation, to establish the association between the variables: sustainable fishing practices and brand loyalty.

It was found that sustainable fishing practices have a favourable impact on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket. This study contributes to how consumers resonate with environmentally sustainable brands and inspire further research on how brands can resonate with consumers by being in harmony with the natural environment.

Key Words: Overfishing, Sustainable fishing practices (SASSI), Brand loyalty, Ocean Basket

2 INTRODUCTION

Countries across the globe are faced with overpopulation where natural resources are overexploited and driven to extinction more rapidly than a few centuries ago. Ecosystems, all living organisms, and their physical environments are key to all living things on Earth (Population Matters, 2019). However, with the exploitation of these living organisms and their physical environments, these natural resources are threatened with extinction and loss of their physical environment, destroying the vital ecosystems that are needed to survive, not only for the species itself but also for humankind (Population Matters, 2019).

An ecosystem that faces rapid extinction, in particular, is marine life across the globe due to overfishing, illegal fishing, pollution, and mismanagement of waste (United Nations Environment Programme, 2019). Organisations such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) are governing this global threat with the implementation and management of innovative initiatives to address the problem while promoting sustainable ways of using these natural resources. The WWF and MSC promote sustainable fishing practices to set a standard of how these natural resources should be used and how to do so in a sustainable manner (World Wide Fund for Nature, 2019). It is however not only the responsibility of WWF and MSC to enforce these initiatives but also the responsibility of organisations whose core resources include ocean life.

In addition to this global problem that is snowballing at a rapid pace, Ocean Basket, - a proudly South African brand, committed to sustainable fishing practices realised the extent of this problem and how it can affect multiple environmental factors. This commitment is not only part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) but their commitment to the environment, marine ecosystems, and their consumers (Ocean Basket, 2019). Ocean Basket made it their core focus to support and promote sustainable fishing practices while guiding suppliers to adopt the same focus called Responsible Ocean Citizens (ROC). Being a Responsible Ocean Citizen, Ocean Basket is delivering on its commitment reflected in its brand values, brand promise, and purpose making it evident that it is a brand committed to doing good business and being a good corporate citizen (Ocean Basket, 2019).

The problem, however, is whether consumers are resonating with Ocean Basket and their commitment to sustainable fishing or not. It is not clear whether the values and brand promise of Ocean Basket is important to consumers who share similar values and if it is resulting in attracting and retaining consumers. But by changing the sourcing methods and implementing the WWF-SASSI initiative, which is currently only practiced by one seafood franchise, Ocean Basket, throughout South Africa, strategic change and a shift in the core business focus was required (Ocean Basket, 2019). It is not clear yet whether consumers purposefully choose Ocean Basket for this reason and whether it is attracting life-long¹ consumers or not. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the impact sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers.

To fulfil this purpose of this study and to determine whether sustainable fishing is affecting the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket, the document will give context to the study and provide a rationale for why the study was chosen and the importance thereof. The problem identified will be explained which will lead to the purpose of the study. The research questions will be presented to guide as to what the study will attempt to research where after the literature review will be provided.

The relevant theory that is integral to the study will be discussed in detail where a clear link will be established between the research problem and the literature review to argue the importance and the value of this study. Gaps in the literature review will be identified and a comparison will be drawn between the point of agreement and disagreement between the seminal sources.

Furthermore, this document will explore the methodology which will include the chosen paradigm, research design, and approach which will be provided in further detail in the research plan that will include the population, sample, methods, and analysis to determine the research findings.

The data gathered with the questionnaires will be analysed to determine the findings and to further interpret the findings in order to answer the research questions and to

¹ Life-long consumers refer to individuals that are loyal to a particular brand or product and will continue purchasing that product or from that brand for their whole lifetime irrespective of price increases or poor publicity. This is synonymous with brand loyalty.

address the research objectives. Logical conclusions will be drawn from the findings and insights will be gathered.

Lastly, a summary will conclude the document to ensure all the concepts are interlinked and communicated to provide an overview of the whole study. Herewith follows the context of the study, providing background information on the key concepts that are being used and studied.

2.1 Context

The continuously increasing demand for fish accompanied by technological advancement lead to fishing practices that are exploiting the fish population around the world (National Geographic, 2012). This results in overfishing where wildlife is taken from the ocean faster than what the species can reproduce. Globally 12% of consumers depend on fisheries where more than three billion people rely on fish for its nutritional values (World Wide Fund for Nature, 2019). Overfishing causes a decline in the population of productive fish, the capturing of sea animals that are unintendedly caught but cannot be used as well as the adverse effects on marine biodiversity (Jetson, 2019). The latter holds the biggest implication that could potentially destroy the environment and marine ecology while disrupting the food chain on a global scale. Furthermore, these effects are not only seen in fish populations but it has a chain effect on other species for example seabirds. Disrupting the marine ecology will have a domino effect on all living organisms (Jetson, 2019). In addition to this problem, sustainable fishing was introduced focused on three pillars that consist of sustainable fish stock, minimizing the environmental impact and effective fishery management (Marine Stewardship Council, 2019).

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) introduced an initiative called the South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) to combat this problem by managing and implementing sustainable fishing practices using a traffic light approach² This initiative is unique to South Africa and currently only practiced in Africa (WWF-SASSI, 2019). Ocean Basket pledged to support and promote sustainable seafood choices and to actively improve their sourcing methods to ensure sustainable fishing is practiced in 2014 and going forward. By 2017, Ocean Basket only sold fish products certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) or products categorized as green by WWF-SASSI (Blake, 2014).

² SASSI introduced a coloured category list to indicate the sustainability of fish products and whether consumers can proceed to consume it. This list uses a traffic light approach where the colour green indicates one can go ahead and eat the fish product, orange means the choice should be reconsidered as the product is under threat and red indicates the product is sourced in an unsustainable manner and from an endangered fish population with environmental implications (WWF-SASSI, 2019).

Further, for the study, consumer decision-making and consumer loyalty should be understood. The difference between a consumer who frequently purchases from a brand and a loyal consumer is the emotional bond the consumer has with the brand. It is important to understand that customer loyalty goes beyond rational decisions based on the quality, price, and performance of the product or service. It has more to do with the consumers' feelings and perceptions of the brand (Recklies, 2015). Brand loyalty means consumers favour a specific brand over other competing brands. When consumers feel the brand has similar values and beliefs as themselves, they grow an inner psychological commitment to the brand resulting in brand loyalty which is the ultimate measure of brand preference (Parumasur & Roberts-Roberts-Lombard, 2014: 337).

In light of the above discussion, the study will aim to determine the impact of the commitment Ocean Basket made as not only part of their CSR but as part of their values, beliefs and brand promise. Furthermore, the study will determine whether consumers are resonating with Ocean Basket's values and brand promise to give them a reason to buy and establish a relationship with them that will result in brand loyalty. The study will, therefore, aim to determine how this commitment is affecting the brand loyalty and preference of customers who share the same values and beliefs as Ocean Basket. Herewith follows the rationale detailing the importance and relevance of the study.

2.2 Rationale

In this ever-changing and hyper-competitive market environment where brands need to fight for their distinct place in the market, it is important to determine what is working for a brand and what not and further how the brand can resonate with its consumers to build and establish a relationship (Sinha, 2018). Many brands are competing in the market and can hardly create a differentiation that is unique to the particular brand which shifted the focus to how brands make consumers feel and share similar values and beliefs with them to create a psychological commitment and change their perception (Sinha, 2018).

Moreover, consumers are starting to hold brands accountable for their actions and expect them to address social issues that the government and public sector fail to address. In addition to this, one of the challenges brands face globally is putting their operations in harmony with the natural environment and to take responsibility for their impact on the environment (Silverthorne, 2019). All stakeholder groups demand brands to address the various environmental issues and to be transparent about their operations and day-to-day activities, however, it is not evident whether the demanding stakeholder groups are more committed to the brand for addressing the environmental issues or are they only part of the movement making the demands (Silverthorne, 2019).

The above-mentioned should, therefore, be studied to determine whether the sustainability initiatives implemented by brands have any effect on consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour. The research findings will deliver insights as to how consumers respond to their commitment and whether it will be worth their while to implement additional sustainability practices. This study is also relevant as the business industry moved into a market space where consumers hold brands responsible for the way they are operating and the effect they have on the environment (Khan, 2016: 10).

Therefore, this study is relevant in today's business world as it will explore the impact sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers. The commitment to sustainable fishing practices is part of Ocean Basket's values and brand promise and is, therefore, the differentiating factor as it is the only seafood restaurant currently engaging in this type of initiatives and using SASSI in South Africa (Blake, 2014). Furthermore, Ocean Basket's commitment to sustainable fishing practices shows the brands' commitment to put its operations in harmony with the

environment. This differentiating factor of Ocean Basket is the measuring factor that can help the brand determine its place in the market and the attitudes and perceptions of its consumers. However, no literature for Ocean Basket describes the results of being a responsible corporate citizen and taking accountability for its operations by implementing sustainable fishing practices.

This study was therefore selected as it will deliver insights on how consumers react to the sustainability practices of a brand and will contribute by gaining an understanding of how sustainability practices can be used by brands to resonate with their consumers and to build brand loyalty. Herewith follows the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research questions and objectives that the study will aim to address.

2.3 Problem Statement

Since stakeholder groups demand brands to address social issues and to be conscious of their impact on the environment, brands started changing their operation and sourcing methods to “be in harmony with the environment” (Silverthorne, 2019). This strategic shift that brands are demanded to make has not yet been measured to determine whether it creates a simultaneous shift in consumers’ attitudes and buying behaviour.

Further, it is also not clear yet whether brand resonance is achieved by being transparent about the brands’ values and beliefs and whether consumers can resonate more with brands whom they share similar values and beliefs with. In essence, the research problem is summarised as an uncertainty whether consumers choose brands purposefully for being environmentally accountable and addressing the key issues the consumers believe in, and whether this further lead to a psychological commitment that is being created resulting in an increase in the brand loyalty for the reason that the consumers and brand share similar values and beliefs.

Ocean Basket is committing to sustainable fishing practices although they do not know if consumers resonate with them as a brand for their values and choose them purposefully because of their sustainable fishing commitments. There is a gap in the current literature on how consumers respond to brands being environmentally sustainable, like Ocean Basket committing to sustainable fishing practices adding to the problem of uncertainty.

Therefore, the problem of this study is the uncertainty of whether or not consumers are aware of Ocean Baskets’ commitment to sustainable fishing practices, resonate with Ocean Basket and, therefore, purposefully choose them as their choice of restaurant.

2.4 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers.

2.5 Research Question

- What impact does sustainable fishing practices have on Ocean Basket's brand loyalty amongst consumers of the brand?

2.6 Sub-Questions

- What impact does the South African initiative, SASSI, have on consumers' choice of restaurant?
- How is the brand loyalty of restaurants affected by the implementation of sustainable fishing practices?

2.7 Research Objectives

- To gain an understanding of what role sustainable fishing practices have on Ocean Basket's loyalty towards its customers.
- To determine whether sustainable fishing practices influence consumers' choice of restaurant.
- To gain an understanding of how likely consumers are to rather support organisations committed to sustainability practices.

The chapter to follow hereunder details the conceptualisation of the key concepts as well as the theoretical foundation of the study and there after the literature review giving context to the study.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Conceptualisation of Key Concepts

Key Concept 1: Sustainable fishing practices

According to the Marine Stewardship Council (2019), sustainable fishing practices means leaving enough fish species in the ocean without harming their habitat and to further ensure individuals dependent on fish products can sustain their livelihood. The encyclopaedic entry on National Geographic additionally states that sustainable fishing is a way of sourcing fish products while guaranteeing that there will be fish species and ocean life for future generations (National Geographic, 2019).

Sustainable fishing practices can, therefore, be defined as the global concern with regards to the way fish species are sourced to prohibit overfishing and exploitation to prevent species becoming endangered while ensuring that unintentionally caught sea life are safely returned and the ocean's eco-systems are not damaged (World Wildlife Fund, 2019). Furthermore, sustainable fishing can be measured on three principles consisting of sustainable fish stock, minimising environmental impact and effective fisheries management (Marine Stewardship Council, 2019).

Sustainable fishing practices are the key to this study as that is the significant concept being studied to determine whether organisations like Ocean Basket implementing sustainable fishing practices gain an increase in brand loyalty purposefully from its consumers.

Further, this key concept is a trending topic in the business world at the moment since brands are being held accountable by stakeholder groups for their impact on the environment and operational methods to address environmental issues such as overfishing (Silverthorne, 2019).

Key Concept 2: Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty is a psychological commitment to a brand, meaning, a consumer has a strong, positive attitude towards the brand and further prefers the brand and its product offerings over another identical offer and are willing to pay a price premium for it (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2014: 328). Parumasur and Roberts-Lombard (2014: 328), further argues that brand loyalty is not only the repeat buying of a specific brand but rather a changed behaviour and attitude towards the brand. The attitude and behaviour of the consumer will not likely change if there is a price increase or a public scandal but will rather oversee the incident and price increase.

Brand loyalty occurs over time and is achieved through various stages including; brand awareness, brand trial, brand image, brand preference, brand habit and finally, brand loyalty (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2014: 335).

Furthermore, brand loyalty is achieved in the last building block of Kevin Lane Keller's (1993), Consumer Based Brand Equity Model where a relationship is established and brand resonance is created, referred to as the extent to which consumers feel 'in sync' with the brand. This type of brand loyalty is based on the cognitive approach which is measured against cognitive, affective and behavioural factors as components of the consumers' attitude (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2014: 338). Brand resonance is, however, not discussed as a separate concept as it is not being measured in this study, but merely referred to as it is a requirement to establish and achieve brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty is being explored in this study to determine whether an organisations' CSR commitment and its values in its brand promise have any impact on consumers, their behaviour and attitude towards the brand and further whether it will affect their resonance with the brand.

Further, the study will deliver insights as to how the stakeholder groups such as the consumers responded to Ocean Basket's commitment to sustainable fishing practices since the brand changed its operation methods to address the key environmental issue, overfishing, that is explored within this study. Therefore, the relevance of brand loyalty in this study is that it is being explored to see whether it is impacted by the sustainable fishing practices of Ocean Basket and whether consumers purposefully choose to commit to the brand as a result thereof.

Key Concept 3: Ocean Basket

Ocean Basket is a seafood restaurant that was established in 1995 in Menlyn Park, Pretoria. Ocean Basket is not only a franchise restaurant across South Africa but has franchise restaurants across Africa, Asia and Europe (Ocean Basket, 2019).

Ocean Basket is further also a Responsible Ocean Citizen (ROC) and one of the only South African seafood restaurants to engage in sustainable fishing practices while ensuring all their suppliers comply with their values by helping and managing them to source seafood in a sustainable manner (Ocean Basket, 2019).

The relevance of Ocean Basket in this study is that they are one of the only brands using the SASSI initiative and that practices sustainable fishing and are therefore the chosen brand to measure what impact their commitments have on their brand loyalty.

Lastly, Ocean Basket was chosen for the purpose of this study as they speak directly to African innovation in terms of their brand persona³ and initiatives (such as the SASSI initiative) implemented across all its franchises.

³ A brand persona refers to the human-like traits of a brand and can be defined as the brands' personality traits, attitudes, beliefs and values to connect with its target audience (Klopper & North, 2015: 74).

3.2 Theoretical Foundation

For the purpose of this study, the Theory of Reasoned Action created by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen will be used as this theory explains the relationship between individuals' actions and their attitudes (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015: 204). In this study, consumers of Ocean Basket's actions will be measured based on their attitude towards sustainable fishing practices and whether a favourable attitude towards this initiative will change their purchasing behaviour.

The theory is based on attitudes and behaviour with its roots in psychology. The basic premise of the theory is to predict how individuals will behave based on their pre-existing attitudes and behavioural intentions. An individual's decision to engage in a certain behaviour is based on the outcomes the individual expects to receive (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015: 205). For example, by supporting an organisation that is committed to the environment, like Ocean Basket in terms of sustainability in particular sustainable fishing who is doing it as part of their CSR and brand promise, will allow consumers who are sharing the same norms and values to get satisfaction from their intended behaviour as opposed to supporting an organisation contributing to the problem of overfishing and not taking accountability for their actions.

The principles of this theory include behaviour intentions, attitudes, and subjective norms, suggesting that an individual's behaviour intentions depend on their attitudes and subjective norms (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2014: 204). Attitude is defined as the sum of beliefs attributed to individuals while subjective norms refer to an individual's perception and how people they value think they should behave (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2014: 204).

These principles can be applied to the study in the following ways. Firstly, by understanding consumers' attitudes towards overfishing and the implementations of sustainable fishing practices. It can indicate how they will react to Ocean Basket's initiative to address this issue and commitment to combat the problem in their operations and sourcing methods. Furthermore, subjective norms can be evaluated in terms of consumer perception regarding sustainability influenced by their peers believing and valuing sustainability practices. Using these two principles, the intended behaviour can

be anticipated based on the attitudes and subjective norms and how it will influence and ultimately change their attitude towards Ocean Basket, which could result in the creation of a psychological commitment with Ocean Basket resulting in the creation and establishment of brand loyalty (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015: 206).

In light of the above discussion, this theory will allow the study to determine how the attitudes and behaviour of Ocean Basket's consumers shift once being made aware of their commitment and the role they play in addressing overfishing with sustainable fishing practices. The shift in the attitudes and behaviour will further be analysed with this theory to determine whether this shift will present an opportunity for the establishment of a psychological commitment that will lead to brand loyalty since resonance has been created with the sharing of similar values and beliefs between the consumers and Ocean Basket.

However, some of the limitations of this theory are that it allows for external influences to change consumer decisions, meaning it is influenced by individuals' feelings or interpretations. Another limitation includes that the theory focuses on the intended behaviour based on attitudes and subjective norms with no clear indication if the intended behaviour can result in loyal purchase behaviour irrespective of external factors or influences i.e. an increase in price or other product offerings from competing restaurants (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2014: 209). However, the theory can lead to making a conclusion on whether intended behaviour will result in repetitive purchasing behaviour which is synonymous with brand loyalty but furthermore whether or not it can result in a psychological commitment to the brand based on the cognitive approach which is measured against cognitive, affective and behavioural factors as components of attitude, as previously discussed (Parumasur & Roberts-Lombard, 2014: 338).

It is concluded that this theory is integral to the study as it will anticipate intended behaviour which will answer the research problem of whether sustainable fishing practices have an impact on Ocean Basket's brand loyalty based on consumers' attitudes and subjective norms or if it has no impact at all. Using this theory will allow the study to conclude whether or not Ocean Basket's initiatives influence the behaviour of consumers and ultimately their attitudes towards the brand to purposefully choose them over other restaurants.

3.3 Literature Review & Review of Past Literature

Being a sustainable organisation increases brand loyalty (Layne, 2018). To substantiate this thesis statement written by Rachel Layne (2018) from the Harvard Business School, the key concepts will be discussed concerning the respective research problem to argue for this statement. The following seminal authors were consulted; Harvard Business School, The World Wide Fund for Nature, The Marine Stewardship Council, seminal author K. Jetson from Marine Science, National Geographic, seminal author in brand loyalty Michele Costabile, David Aaker and Kevin Keller. However, only the following authors will be used for this study due to the sources being sufficient and consists of relevant information that is integral to this study; Business Harvard School, The World Wide Fund for Nature, The Marine Stewardship Council, Michele Costabile, David Aaker, and Kevin Keller.

Due to the increasing demand for fish products, fishermen are forced to fish more than what they did years ago resulting in more fish being caught than what stocks can replenish, this is called overfishing (World Wide Fund for Nature, 2019). Overfishing has resulted in one-third of the world's fisheries being pushed beyond their biological limits. Furthermore, overfishing has been linked to bycatch⁴ leading to severe marine threats causing a domino effect on other animal species and the surrounding environments. This is leading to a decline and extinction of certain fish species i.e. Bluefin tuna and also, degraded ecosystems. Although overfishing is being raised as a severe and threatening problem, the demand for fish products continues to increase (World Wide Fund for Nature, 2019).

In an attempt to address the problem of overfishing, initiatives have been implemented by concerned organisations including WWF with the SASSI initiative, the Marine Stewardship Council and local regulations enforced by laws. The WWF is a non-profit organisation founded in Switzerland 1961, that is operating as an independent conservation body concerned with the well-being of people, wildlife and the environment which are closely interlinked and globally recognised as the most respected independent conservation organisation. The WWF's mission is to guide individuals,

⁴ Referred to in the introduction, when unwanted sea animals are caught unintentionally. This has however result in sea animals being killed for no reason causing more damage added onto the problem of overfishing.

politicians, and organisations to live more sustainable in order to fight climate change through the implementation of their innovative initiatives based on scientific evidence (World Wide Fund for Nature, 2019). There are currently numerous initiatives and programmes implemented by WWF across the globe focused on different areas i.e. forestry, endangered species and more that needs to be urgently addressed including overfishing. The survival of the marine eco-systems is life-threatening to all living organisms and is currently being addressed by the WWF with numerous projects and initiatives including SASSI (World Wide Fund for Nature, 2019). SASSI was developed and implemented for the southern part of Africa to help address overfishing and unsustainable practices related to the sourcing of fish innovatively and sustainably (World Wide Fund for Nature, 2019).

Sustainable fishing is a concept where fishing practices are regulated in order to prevent overfishing and avoid the fishing of endangered species (Marine Stewardship Council, 2019). The MSC lists fish species that are endangered and should be avoided as well as which fish species is safe to catch. Furthermore, the WWF-SASSI initiative lists fish species in three categories using the traffic light approach which indicates whether it can be used as it was sourced sustainably and the species are not endangered or if it should rather be avoided because it is listed as endangered species and not being sourced in a sustainable manner (WWF-SASSI, 2019).

Overfishing is therefore addressed through sustainable fishing practices. However, organisations that make their profit through the buying and selling of fish products are hardly ever concerned about the environmental implications and are rather focused on profit maximization by delivering what consumers want (Layne, 2018). Organisations like Ocean Basket, a seafood restaurant, exists due to ocean life and make their profit through their fish product-offerings. Therefore, overfishing is an external threat to Ocean Basket and is something they should address sustainably to prevent over-exploitation of the resources that are currently available.

By doing good business, committing to the CSR and living up to their values, Ocean Basket is actively involved in addressing overfishing and committed to addressing overfishing by investing in sustainable fishing practices. Ocean Basket implemented the WWF-SASSI initiative in all its restaurants while supporting and investing in responsible

aquaculture operations and well-managed fisheries (Ocean Basket, 2019). The WWF-SASSI initiative is visible through their marketing communication and indicated on the food menus to help guide consumers when making decisions (Appendix D). Moreover, Ocean Basket is publicly committed to supporting and promoting sustainable seafood, protecting all stakeholders including the environment and enabling consumers to make informed decisions (Ocean Basket, 2019).

In light of the above discussion, it is clear that the threat of overfishing is being sustainably addressed by Ocean Basket. However, committing and implementing these initiatives require numerous resources but mostly capital. Not only is it a change in the way Ocean Basket used to operate, but a change in their sourcing methods, the way they recruit suppliers and more. Although it is an expensive exercise, Ocean Basket is committed to addressing this problem making the organisation a corporate citizen by doing good business (Blake, 2014). The problem however remains; is it worth it to make these commitments with a return on investment (ROI) in terms of brand loyalty or are Ocean Basket exerting resources that could have been used elsewhere and furthermore are their consumers resonating with them and purposefully choosing them above other seafood restaurants?

Before analysing the stages of brand loyalty is it necessary to first analyse how brand resonance is established and created as it is required to achieve brand loyalty. Brand resonance is analysed with the aid of Keller's (1993), Consumer Based Brand Equity Model consisting of various building blocks. Firstly, brand salience will be established through brand awareness by making the potential consumer aware of the brand and what it has to offer (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012: 66). After consumers are made aware of the brand, they will be persuaded to try the brand to satisfy their needs, which is where the brand performance will be evaluated by the consumer. This further includes what consumers experience, hear and see of the brand and relates to its intrinsic properties. Along with brand performance are brand imagery being evaluated relating to the extrinsic properties of the brand to meet the psychological needs of a consumer (Keller, *et al.*, 2012: 71).

Once the consumer is made aware of the brand and tries out the brand, the following building block can be evaluated, brand judgement, which focuses on the consumers'

opinion and evaluation of the brand and to what extent they are satisfied with their choice of brand. Along with brand judgement is brand feelings relating to the emotional responses the consumer has with the brand and what type of feelings the brand arouses (Keller, *et al.*, 2012: 75).

If the consumer is satisfied with their choice of brand and continues to purchase and consume the brand offerings, the final building block can be achieved, brand resonance. Brand resonance refers to the relationship the consumer has with the brand and to what extent they are “in sync” with the brand (Keller, *et al.*, 2012: 79). The achievement of brand resonance includes engagement with the brand, a sense of community between the brand and consumer and loyalty, however, brand resonance does not guarantee brand loyalty, it is merely a building block to create brand loyalty which can be achieved once brand resonance is established (Keller, *et al.*, 2012: 79). Once brand resonance exists for the consumer, brand loyalty can be established.

Brand loyalty consists of four stages that a consumer goes through before brand loyalty can be established. The first stage is cognitive loyalty referring to the knowledge the consumer has regarding the organisation (Costabile, 2019: 6). In the second stage, affective loyalty is achieved through repetitive purchasing behaviour where a favourable perception of the brand is created (Costabile, 2019: 6). In the third stage, conative loyalty is achieved through high involvement with the brand that is strongly intentional (Costabile, 2019: 6). The last stage is called action loyalty that is not only sustained in motivation but actions (Costabile, 2019: 6). By understanding the types of loyalty and the stages consumers go through allows for the conclusion as to what initiates the start of the brand loyalty process. It was found by Aaker's study conducted in 1991 that the following factors but are not limited to, initiates the brand loyalty stages; an established relationship between the organisation and consumer, continuous consumer satisfaction, brand-equity, organisations doing good business and sharing the same or similar values as consumers (Aaker, 1991).

Consumers that share the same values as Ocean Basket, with regards to sustainable fishing practices and being a good corporate citizen in terms of their ROC initiative, will be attracted to the restaurant. Furthermore, consumers valuing organisations engaging in good business and brand equity while satisfying their needs and wants are

established in Ocean Basket's organisation and will, therefore, attract consumers seeking these attributes in a brand. By engaging and committing to sustainable fishing, Ocean Basket serves a market of consumers who are actively involved in sustainability, valuing environmental sustainability especially sustainable fishing.

Therefore, it is assumed based on the above literature, that Ocean Basket engaging in sustainable fishing will attract consumers sharing the same values, which will initiate the brand loyalty stages increasing brand loyalty. It is therefore concluded that sustainable fishing is a key to Ocean Basket's brand loyalty resulting in a positive ROI in terms of brand loyalty by engaging in these initiatives.

There are however gaps in the literature regarding brand loyalty as it is not clear if it will result in brand loyalty as it will depend on the individual consumer, a generalisation in terms of brand loyalty for Ocean Basket cannot yet be assumed. The literature (seminal authors) however agrees on overfishing, sustainable fishing, and brand loyalty.

The following chapter will explain and detail the research methodology used for this study consisting of; the research design, research paradigm, the research approach, population, sampling and unit of analysis, the data collection and analysis methods, concluding with the validity and reliability of the study.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Design

The research design that will be used in this study is the survey design since it will be the most suited research design for the quantitative approach to provide a detailed overview of the data gathered and to answer the research questions previously mentioned (Creswell, Ebersöhn, Eloff, Ferreira, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen & Clark, 2018: 307). The survey research design will establish associations between the two variables and the research theory of this study to answer the research questions regarding these variables; sustainable fishing practices and brand loyalty and will be the most suited design to analyse the data gathered, discussed in more detail further on in the document (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 307).

4.1.1 Research Paradigm

The study will be conducted from a positivist paradigm because the purpose of the study is to explore the impact sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers. The ontological position of this paradigm is that reality is an external objective governed by laws (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 59). This aligns with the purpose of the study because the reality of the external objective includes objects of the physical environment. In this study, the physical environment refers to the conditions of the ocean due to overfishing and the implementation of sustainable fishing practices to address the problem (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 59).

Furthermore, the study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of how consumers' buying behaviour changes when they resonate with organisations' values and brand promise. Within this study, it will be applied to Ocean Baskets' commitment to practise sustainable fishing and whether it will result in a psychological commitment leading to the creation of brand loyalty. The study, therefore, aligns with the epistemological position of the positivist paradigm, since the positivist paradigm uses knowledge to discover generalizable laws to predict and control (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 59). The sustainable fishing practices of Ocean Basket can, therefore, be used to predict whether

it will increase the brand loyalty of their consumers allowing them to retain their consumers.

Moreover, the positivist paradigm values free-objectivity, which refers to the axiological position (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 59). Within this study, free-objectivity is valued because it is argued by Creswell *et al.* (2018: 22), that there are no biased influences in the positivist paradigm, only objectivity based on facts.

Since the aim of the study is to determine the impact on Ocean Basket's brand loyalty as a result of their commitment to sustainable fishing, a quantitative approach, and descriptive design is most suitable because the quantitative approach will allow for a breath overview of the study to determine the effect on brand loyalty while the descriptive research design will provide a detailed overview of the data gathered on the changes in brand loyalty based on consumers' reactions (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 59).

In this study, a deductive approach will be used where research questions will be used to narrow the scope of the study on existing theories that will be tested during the study. The aim is to test existing theories, in particular, the Theory of Reasoned Action, working from more general to specific observations and theories. This approach will assist in answering the research questions, fulfilling the research purpose which will allow for an in-depth understanding of the impact sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers.

4.1.2 Research Approach

A quantitative research approach will be used in this study as quantitative studies rely on numerical data to test certain variables. In this study, the variables being tested are the impact of sustainable fishing practices on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers (Creswell, *et al.*, 2018: 181 – 186). Quantitative studies can be either experimental or a survey study and will be surveyed through questionnaires for the purpose of this study in order to formulate associations between the variables and to test the variables as well. Furthermore, this quantitative approach will allow for a broad overview of the effects of the variables that will guide the study to answer the research questions (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 307). This quantitative research approach is most

suited for this study because it will rely on a positivist paradigm where a theory is being tested for a probable cause and effect (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 307). In this study, the cause is the commitment to sustainable fishing practices and the effect is the increase in Ocean Baskets' brand loyalty.

4.2 Population

The population will consist of Ocean Basket consumers at Springs Mall in Gauteng as they are the most qualified to answer the questionnaire. It will only include consumers at one Ocean Basket in such a specific area due to the time constraints of the research period for this study. The aim is to approach individuals between the ages of 20 – 40 years as it is found that individuals in that age group are more environmentally conscious and engages more in sustainability initiatives (Coughlin, 2018). Individuals between the ages of 20 – 40 are therefore more likely to resonate with Ocean Basket since it is found that individual in this group is more conscious about the environmental impact of brands such as Ocean Basket and how these brands operate to reduce their impact. There are no other key characteristics of the population that will exclude any race, culture, religion or gender other than the most important factor, they must be consumers of Ocean Basket in Springs Mall in Gauteng.

4.3 Sampling

Non-probability sampling is used in this research study as there is a time constraint on the study meaning results are required urgently within a short time frame, there are no or limited financial resources for this study while the measuring instrument requires testing before the definite data gathering (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 196). Furthermore, within the sample, all respondents are not known and are, therefore, less likely to negatively impact the results. This increases the objectivity of the results and also contributes to the ethicality of the study. The sample group will be chosen for a specific reason; therefore, the best-suited sampling method is purposive sampling.

Purposive sampling will be used as there is a specific purpose in mind, which is to determine the impact on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers as a result of

their commitment to sustainable fishing practices. Therefore, the sample group will be purposefully selected characterised by the age group and being an Ocean Basket consumer (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 198).

The sample group will consist of, Ocean Basket consumers at Springs Mall that is more or less in the age group of 20 – 40 as previously explained. However, only thirty respondents will be used for the data collection due to the time constraint of the study.

4.4 Unit of Analysis

The best-suited unit of analysis for this study is Ocean Basket's consumers. This unit of analysis will contribute to accomplish the purpose of the study and to further explore and determine whether or not the consumers' behaviour and attitude towards Ocean Basket changed since becoming aware of Ocean Basket's sustainable fishing practices and their commitment to being a ROC. The input and the insights gained from the questionnaire responses will allow the research project to fulfil its purpose by determining whether they developed a psychological commitment to Ocean Basket resulting in brand loyalty or whether the consumers are unaffected by their values, commitment and brand promise.

The consumers of Ocean Basket are the most qualified to answer the research questions through the completion of the questionnaire as their behaviour and attitude towards Ocean Basket needs to be measured to determine whether the sustainable fishing practices have an impact on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket. Therefore, the consumers of Ocean Basket were chosen as the unit of analysis since they are integral to this study and required to gather the correct information.

4.5 Data Collection

The data collection method to be used for this study is a questionnaire. Questionnaires were chosen as the data collection instrument because they are the most cost-effective way to collect data in a very short time. Time is a limitation in this study thus a time-effective data collection instrument is required. Additionally, the time required from respondents should also be kept in mind as they would resist participating if it will require too much of their time, therefore the questionnaire was designed to take up ten minutes of their time. Questionnaires are the best-suited method to capture the responses from Ocean Basket's consumers on how they feel about the brand and how their attitude towards it changed since being made aware of their commitment to sustainable fishing practices. The reason, therefore, is because large amounts of information can be obtained by the sample group where individuals' opinions are recorded.

Although questionnaires are the best-suited instrument for this study, people tend to give responses they think will look good or are desired by the researcher, which could potentially influence the outcome of the findings. Furthermore, with questionnaires, it is difficult to gain in-depth answers and insights. In order to address the weaknesses of the questionnaires, respondents will not be required to give any personal details and will be encouraged to answer as honestly as possible. Furthermore, for this study depth is not required and, therefore, the questionnaire is structured to gain the required data.

At first, a pilot study will be designed to determine if all the questions are clear, understandable and follow logically on one another while testing the time it takes to complete the questionnaire.

Once the pilot study is completed, the final questionnaire will be designed using the feedback received in the pilot study. The questionnaire will have guidelines with a section where respondents give their consent that they are willing to participate. Thereafter the questions will be divided into three sections namely; section A for general questions on the use of fish products and their awareness of sustainability practices, section B for questions specifically focused on sustainable fishing practices and finally section C focused specifically on Ocean Basket. Please refer to Appendix C to see the layout and content of the questionnaire. The respondents will be approached at the

Ocean Basket in Springs Mall in Gauteng and then asked if they are willing to participate in the study. After agreeing to voluntarily participate, they will be invited to the reserved table to complete the questionnaire. Should the individual refuse to participate will the next potential candidate will be approached until all the questionnaires are completed.

A variety of questions will be used to gather the data from the thirty respondents which includes filter questions, Likert scale questions, closed-open questions and follow up questions (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 181 – 186). Filter questions are questions with specific options that can be chosen to indicate the respondents' answer and in this specific questionnaire, it will be either yes or no. The Likert scale questions provide a measure of the respondent's attitude and include answers like strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree. Closed-open questions have a few options to choose from with the last option labelled as "other (specify)" where the respondent can provide their answer should one of the given options not be suited for them. Follow-up questions are asked after a question got a certain response to elaborate further on that topic (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 181 - 186).

4.6 Data Analysis Method

A simple grid will be created on Microsoft Excel to collate the data that was gathered in the questionnaires to make it easier to interpret the responses. Thereafter, a coding system will be created where the questions and answers will be populated accordingly. The data will then be captured on the grid where the responses of the respondents will be grouped and captured per question. The analysis process will then commence with the survey research design which will organise and summarise the data in a meaningful and numerical way by testing the cause and effect in order to answer the research questions (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 204).

The following statistical formulas will be used for the questions that can be attributed with numerical values; mode to determine the most frequent response, the median to find the middle point in the data, mean to determine the most common response and range to identify the difference between all the response (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 208).

Furthermore, cross-tabulation will also be used to analyse the relationship between the two variables and to determine the patterns of the different responses. With the cross-tabulation analysis, the cause and effect between the two variables can be established to determine the findings of the study (Wiid & Diggins, 2015: 261). This will allow the findings to ultimately answer the research question: “What impact does sustainable fishing practices have on Ocean Basket’s brand loyalty amongst consumers of the brand?”

These data analysis methods is best suited for the research study as it will take all the responses of the questionnaires into account and determine the numerical value thereof while further establishing relationships or patterns between the two variables being studied, sustainable fishing practices and the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket’s consumers, in order to determine whether consumers purposefully choose Ocean Basket for their commitment to sustainable fishing practices or not.

4.7 Validity & Reliability

The validity of this study will be ensured by using a reliable measurement instrument i.e. a questionnaire that will also be pre-tested and designed in such a way that consumers are not forced or guided to a specific answer to ensure all answers provided is their own opinion. The questionnaire will also be presentable and professional to ensure face validity. Moreover, criterion validity will be guaranteed as there will be a high correlation between the instrument (questionnaire) and the criterion. There will also be no manipulation taking place as the research design for this study is a survey research design (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 240). To further ensure validity, purposive sampling is used meaning not all respondents are known, which will less likely impact the results.

The reliability of this study will also be ensured through a consistent measuring instrument as all respondents will complete the same questionnaire. Internal reliability will be enforced as the same construction will be measured throughout the questionnaire (Creswell *et al.*, 2018: 238). The anonymity of the questionnaire is ensured and no personal information is requested ensuring that all respondents will answer the questions honestly.

The following chapter will consist of the findings and the interpretation thereof in terms of the information discussed in the previous chapters.

5 FINDINGS & INTEPRETATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Findings & Interpretation

This chapter details the findings from the data collection described in Chapter 4. The data was analysed using the grid and coding system and cross-tabulation. Only the key questions on the questionnaire were analysed to address the research problem. The findings are discussed below where the analysed data is presented in graphs to illustrate the findings and the relationship between the responses visually where after the findings will be interpreted in the context of the study.

In order to see the change in consumers' attitude towards Ocean Basket after being made aware of their commitment to addressing overfishing, the respondents were asked whether or not they consider themselves a loyal consumer to Ocean Basket. Figure 1 below indicates the responses where 53% of respondents already consider themselves loyal consumers to Ocean Basket while the remaining 47% of respondents do not consider themselves loyal to Ocean Basket. Although 47% of the respondents do not consider themselves brand loyal to Ocean Basket, the stages initiating brand loyalty has already commenced as these respondents are aware of the brand, they have tried the brand before and often eat there, they are, however, not loyal consumers yet meaning there is no psychological commitment with the brand and they further do not resonate with the Ocean Basket brand.

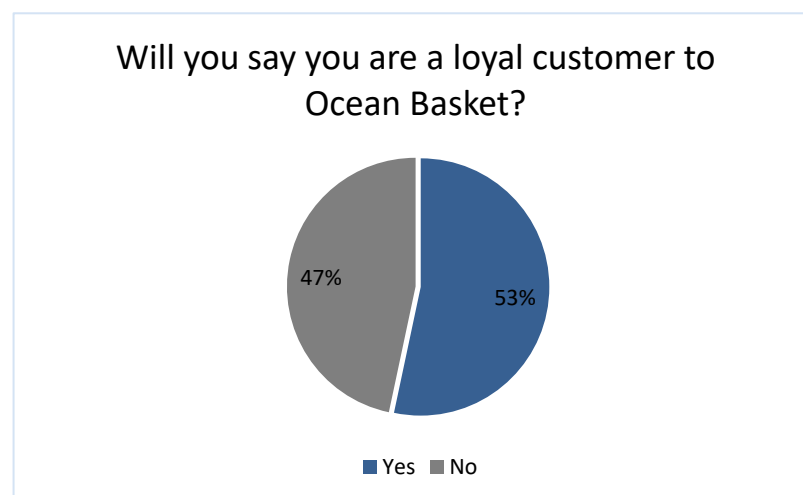


Figure 1: Data Analysis

It is now established who of the respondents are already brand loyal to Ocean Basket and who is not with the purpose to determine how the respondents change their perception and attitude towards Ocean Basket after completing the questionnaire.

The respondents were asked if they are aware of the conditions of our fishing resources where 57% of the respondents answered: “no, they are not aware of the conditions”. The respondents were then asked if they know about the SASSI initiative where 67% of the respondents indicated they do not know about the SASSI initiative. The purpose of these two questions was to determine whether or not the respondents are aware of the conditions such as overfishing and initiatives addressing these conditions such as the SASSI initiative. It is, however, clear that the majority of respondents are not aware nor educated on the threatening issues of the fishing resources and the consequences thereof. All respondents were informed about the conditions of the fishing resources and the purpose of SASSI before continuing with the questionnaire.

Respondents were then asked if they would rather consume fish marked green by SASSI as oppose to fish marked orange or red. Figure 2 below indicated the responses where seventeen of the respondents (56.6%) answered that they will only consume fish marked green by SASSI where a further six respondents (20%) said they are more like to consume fish marked green than red where only seven respondents (23%) are not bothered about the status of the fish products and will consume what they want regardless of the colour code.

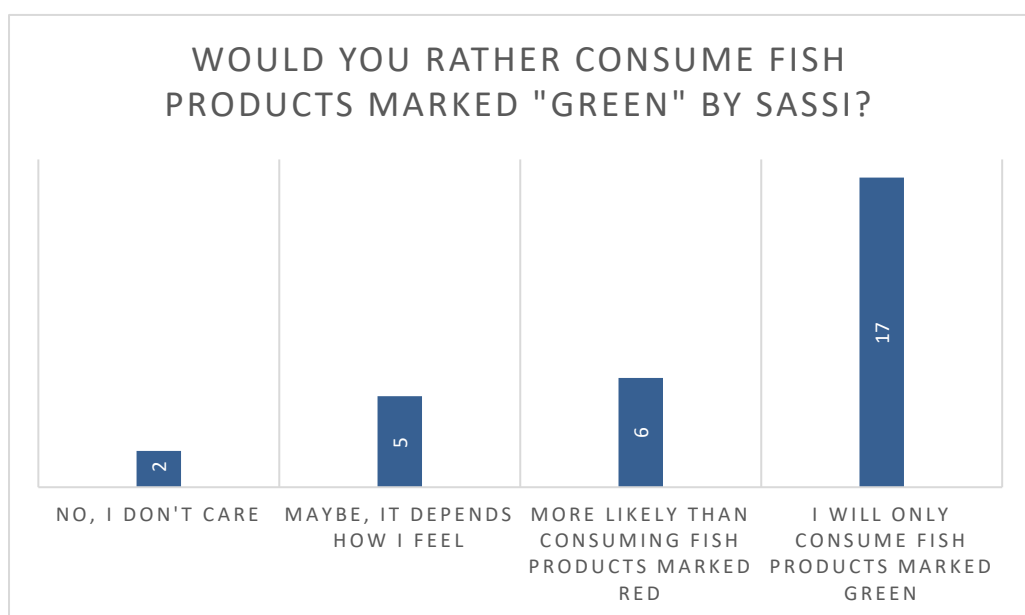


Figure 2: Data Analysis

Considering the responses, it can be deduced that the majority of the respondents' value sustainable sourcing of fish products, in particular, and are more likely to rather support and consume fish sourced sustainably as opposed to fish that is endangered. It is clear that with this question, the subjective norms of the respondents also play a role in their decision as they subconsciously make a choice that they think their peers would approve of. In terms of the Theory of Reasoned Action, the respondents' attitude towards overfishing and sustainable fishing practices is now understood as this indicates that they will respond positively towards Ocean Basket and their sustainable fishing practices.

Furthermore, with this theory, it can now be deduced that the respondents' consumption behaviour will align with their attitude towards sustainable fishing, as indicated, that they would rather going forward consume fish marked green as oppose to fish marked red. This insight that was gathered further indicate that their consumption choice now goes beyond the product, price or performance thereof. The respondents were further asked if restaurants should commit to sustainable fishing practices. Figure 3 below indicated the responses where all the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that restaurants should commit to sustainable fishing practices.

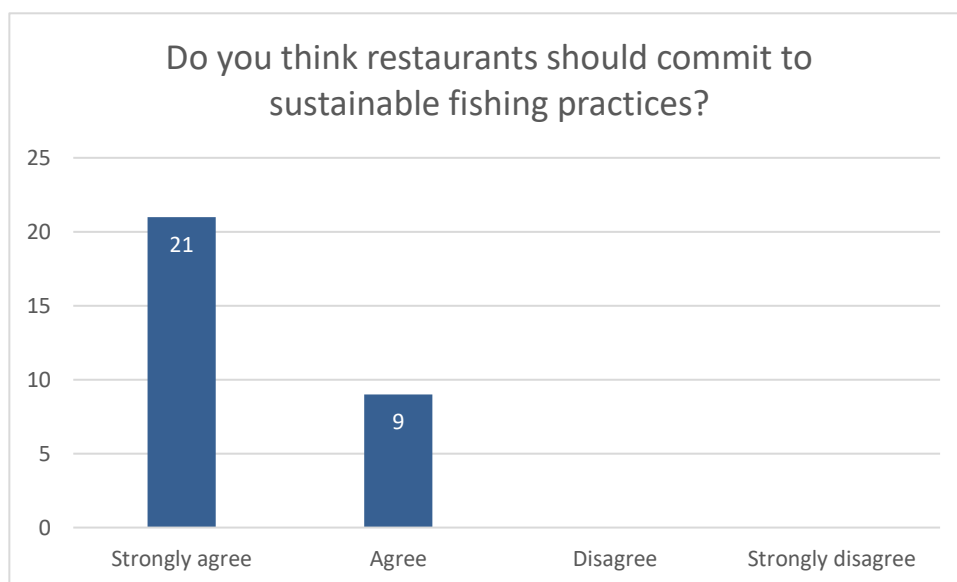


Figure 3: Data Analysis

It is evident that all the respondents agree that restaurants should commit sustainable fishing practices and that all the respondents' value sustainable sourcing despite the responses regarding only consuming fish marked green. The respondents' attitude and

subjective norms are now suggesting that they value sustainable fishing practices and their behaviour can now be predicted as explained by the Theory of Reasoned Action. It can be deduced that a psychological commitment between the respondents and Ocean Basket is forming as they are discovering that they value similar practices as Ocean Basket with regards to sustainable fishing. The Theory of Reasoned Action is evident as the respondents are shifting their attitude towards Ocean Basket and sustainable fishing practices as they are now aware of the pressing issue, the SASSI initiative to address the issue and finally Ocean Basket implementing the SASSI initiative.

The respondents do not only value sustainable fishing practices but 97% of the respondents also agree that restaurants should be held accountable for their sourcing methods with regards to food products as illustrated in figure 4 below. It is, therefore, evident that the respondents pay attention to the sourcing methods of restaurants and value the sustainability thereof.

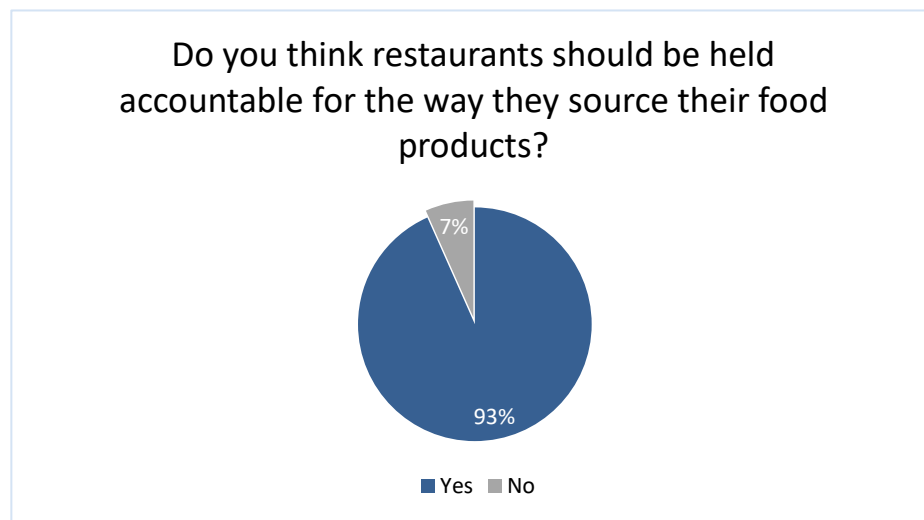


Figure 4: Data Analysis

Furthermore, the respondents were asked how likely are they too rather support Ocean Basket now that they are aware of their commitment to addressing overfishing and their sustainable fishing practices implemented such as the SASSI initiative. Figure 5 below demonstrates the response where 97% of the respondents are more likely to rather support Ocean Basket as opposed to other seafood restaurants. It can be deduced that a psychological commitment has been created between the respondents and Ocean

Basket as they value sustainable fishing practices like Ocean Basket values them meaning the respondents can now resonate with Ocean Basket.

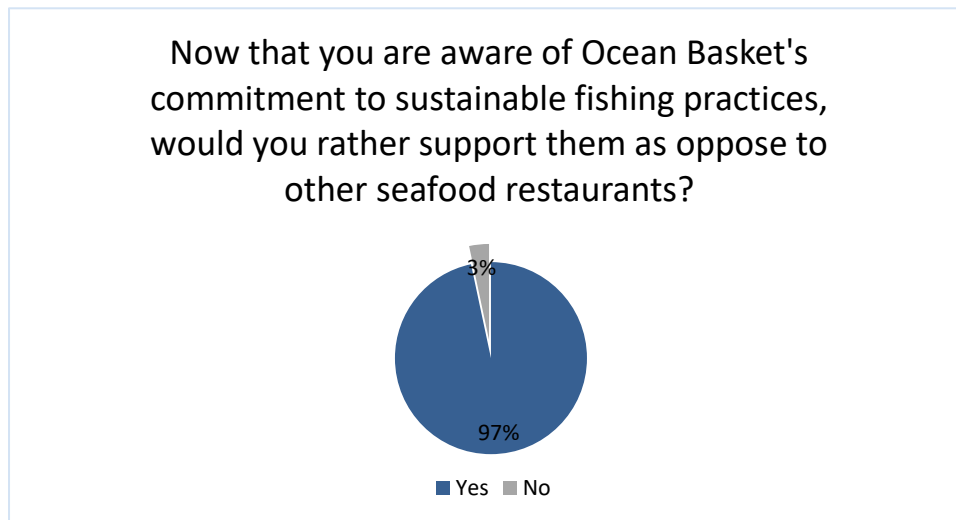


Figure 5: Data Analysis

The psychological commitment that has been established further indicated the potential increase in Ocean Basket's brand loyalty as indicated below in figure 6.

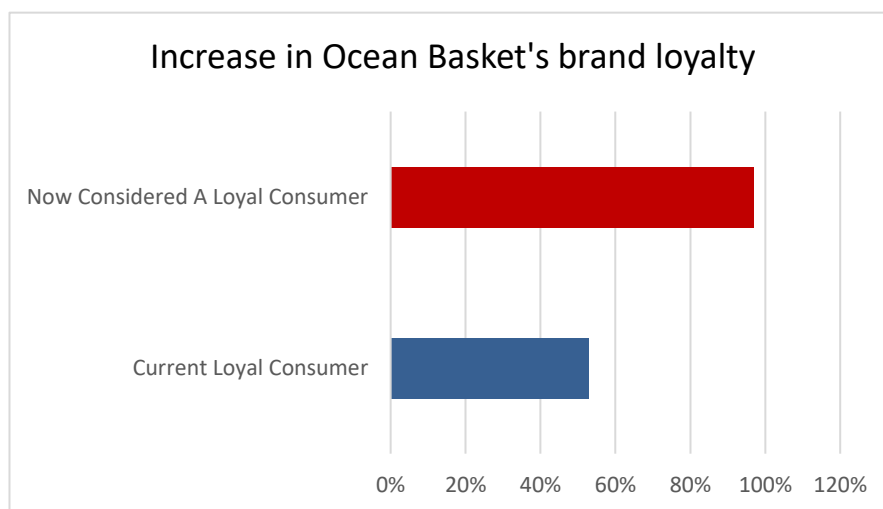


Figure 6: Data Analysis

The respondents who considered themselves loyal Ocean Basket consumers compared with the respondents stating they would rather support Ocean Basket going forward collectively increased with 44%. It is evident that the attitudes and behaviour of the respondents shifted after being made aware of Ocean Basket's commitment to

sustainable fishing practices and that this attitude- and behavioural shift presents an opportunity for the establishment of a psychological commitment between the respondents and Ocean Basket. The opportunity presented to create and establish a psychological commitment further indicated a 44% increase in brand loyalty that will be created.

Lastly, the respondents were asked how likely are they to rather support organisations in general that is committed to sustainability where the majority of respondents (86.6%) indicated that they would rather support the sustainable-driven organisation as illustrated below in figure 7. It can be assumed that a favourable attitude changes their consumer behaviour.

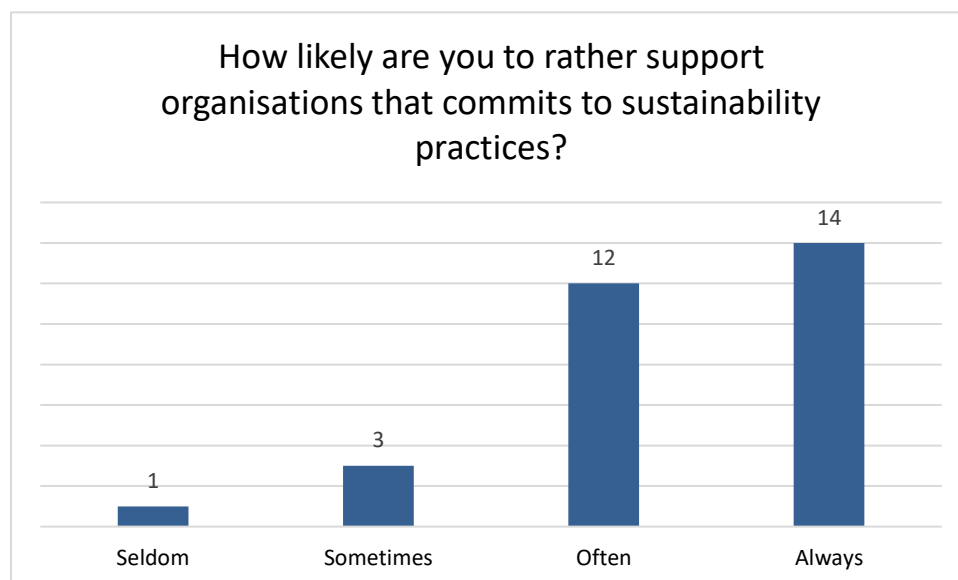


Figure 7: Data Analysis

In light of the above-discussed findings, Ocean Basket benefits from the strategic change to be in harmony with the natural environment as their strategic shift also caused a shift in the respondents' attitude. Ocean Basket chose to commit to sustainable fishing practices while the respondents now indicated they choose to commit to Ocean Basket for their sustainable fishing practices. This indicates that Ocean Basket's sustainable fishing practices will deliver a favourable ROI in terms of brand loyalty which could further lead to attracting life-long consumers.

It can now be concluded, considering the responses to the question "how likely are you to rather support organisations that commit to sustainability practices", the thesis

statement by Rachel Layne, from the Harvard Business School, argued for in the literature review is now substantiated as it is evident that being a sustainable organisation increases brand loyalty for this group of respondents.

5.2 Research Problem, Purpose, Questions & Objectives Addressed

In light of the above-discussed research findings the research problem, purpose, questions and objectives can now be addressed and answered.

Addressing the sub-questions and respective objectives first, it has been determined what influence the SASSI initiative has on consumers' choice of restaurant as the respondents indicated they would rather support a restaurant such as Ocean Basket that implemented and commits to sustainable fishing practices. The respondents further indicated they are more likely to eat fish marked green by SASSI. Therefore, the research question "what impact does the South African initiative, SASSI, have on consumers' choice of restaurant?", can now be answered. The South African initiative, SASSI has a favourable impact on consumers' choice of restaurant.

Furthermore, it is now understood that consumers are more likely to support restaurants that commit to sustainable fishing practices and sustainability in general as opposed to other restaurants answering the research question "how is the brand loyalty of restaurants affected by the implementation of sustainable fishing practices?". The respondents indicated they are more likely to support sustainable restaurants deducing that they will be more loyal to restaurants committing to sustainable fishing practices, however, brand loyalty to a specific restaurant cannot be assumed at this point.

In light of the above-mentioned research questions and objectives, the main research question can now be addressed. The main research question asked, "what impact does sustainable fishing practices have on Ocean Basket's brand loyalty amongst consumers of the brand?". As indicated by the research findings, 97% of the respondents indicated they are now more likely to support Ocean Basket as oppose to other seafood restaurants which further indicated a 44% increase in potential brand loyalty. It is therefore evident that sustainable fishing practices have a positive and favourable impact on the brand loyalty of Ocean Baskets' consumers.

This means the research problem has now been addressed as the uncertainty of whether or not consumers choose Ocean Basket purposefully for their commitment to sustainable fishing practices is now answered. Although most of the respondents did not choose Ocean Basket as their choice of restaurant before due to sustainable fishing practices, 97% of the respondents indicated they will now rather choose Ocean Basket

due to their sustainable fishing commitments. It can be deduced that these respondents are now purposefully choosing Ocean Basket as they share similar values with the brand in terms of sustainability and they now resonate with the brand.

Herewith it is concluded that the respondents representing the consumers of Ocean Basket value sustainable fishing practices and they resonate with Ocean Basket achieving the highest building block of Kevin Keller's Consumer Based Brand Equity Model. Furthermore, it is deduced that the consumers are more likely to support restaurants committed to sustainability and would rather support Ocean Basket as opposed to other seafood restaurants. The findings indicated a 44% increase in potential brand loyalty of Ocean Basket, hereby, achieving the purpose of the study, "to explore the impact sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers". It can be concluded that sustainable fishing practices have a positive and favourable impact on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers.

Hereunder follows the final chapter of this study, summarising the study to make logical conclusions while addressing the ethical considerations, limitations, and recommendations for similar studies to follow and providing the heuristic value of this study. A final conclusion will be drawn from the discussions in the previous chapters.

6 CONCLUSION

It is concluded that overfishing is a severe problem that is, however, being addressed through sustainable fishing practices and other initiatives. It is also evident that Ocean Basket is actively involved in addressing this issue by incorporating plans of actions to sustainably manage and resolve the problem in the planning and implementation of their strategic strategies. Ocean Baskets' commitment to sustainable fishing practices went beyond their CSR and can be seen as part of their values and brand promise. Furthermore, Ocean Basket did not only promise to address the issue but has committed to ensuring all its business practices and product-offerings are sustainable.

By exploring the literature, brand loyalty has been addressed in terms of how it is initiated and what spurs brand loyalty amongst consumers. Furthermore, the findings were analysed and tested against the research theory in order to answer the research questions through the data gathered and address the research objectives.

The following ethical considerations were taken into account.

6.1 Ethical Considerations

This study is not a high-risk study and will not involve any vulnerable respondents to participate in the research. Furthermore, to ensure this study is conducted ethically, the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents participating in the questionnaire will be enforced and ensured. Participating respondents will have the freedom to participate voluntarily with no obligation to continue with the questionnaire should they decide they do not want to participate. Respondents will be asked to give their written consent that they volunteer to participate in this study by completing the questionnaire.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

The questionnaire will be both anonymous and confidential as no personal information is requested on the questionnaire and no association will be made between the respondents completing the questionnaires and the data ensuring anonymity. Furthermore, the questionnaires will not be made available to the public domain ensuring confidentiality. Please refer to Appendix C where respondents are ensured of

the anonymity of their participation and the confidentiality of their completed questionnaire.

Voluntary participation

Respondents will participate in the questionnaire voluntarily and will not be obligated to complete the questionnaire should they feel they do not want to participate.

Informed Consent.

Although a signed consent form is not required for questionnaires, respondents participating in this study will give their consent on the first page of the questionnaire (Appendix C) where they will indicate that they read and understood the guidelines given and most importantly that they give consent to participate voluntarily in the study.

The Researcher

Ethical research will be ensured in this research project and throughout the study in the following ways:

- Ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents by designing the questionnaire in such a manner that no personal information is required and no association between the respondents and the data can be made.
- To only use respondents that volunteer to participate without forcing or encouraging unwilling individuals.
- Ask respondents for their consent to complete the questionnaire and to participate in the study.
- By providing respondents to withdraw from the study at any point with no obligation to continue with the questionnaire.
- Avoid all deceptive practices when doing the research and conducting the study.

There were also some limitations to the study which is detailed hereunder.

6.2 Limitations

Time constraint is the biggest limitation of this study as it is causing other implications such as a limit on the sample size that can be used for this study. The limited sample size of thirty (30) respondents is not giving a broad overview of the research findings but rather an overview of the consumers at the Ocean Basket in Springs Mall in Gauteng. This limitation also includes that the study was limited to one specific venue only which will deliver a representation of the consumers in that specific area only and cannot be generalised to include all Ocean Basket's consumers. This limitation will, however, be addressed in the research findings stating a small sample size was used to test the study and will determine whether the study will be appropriate to be tested on a larger sample size in more than one venue should the study be repeated within a longer time frame.

The method of this study (questionnaires) can also hold limitations to the study as respondents might not complete the questionnaire in full and as honestly as possible causing discrepancies in the data collection and research findings. To limit this potential limitation the respondents will be asked on the questionnaire to give consent that they read the guideline which will stipulate that all questions should be completed and answered honestly. Furthermore, data will only be used from the questionnaires that were completed in full to limit the discrepancy. The honesty of respondents can however not be controlled.

The way the data is collected also represents potential limitations to the study as the respondents will be approached in Springs Mall at the food court where the Ocean Basket is situated. That specific area in Springs Mall is however very busy and could cause respondents completing the questionnaire to get distracted by the noise and movement around them. Therefore, the respondents will be approached and invited to complete the questionnaire inside Ocean Basket at one of the tables where there are less noise and traffic around them, allowing them to complete the questionnaire without distractions.

The final limitation to be discussed includes access to literature as previously identified gaps in literature could be a misconception based on previous researchers'

understanding and their access to other sources and literature. Included in this literature is the gap identified where no literature is found focused on both concepts, sustainable fishing practices and brand loyalty, which could be another misconception or if correctly identified prohibit the study to fully integrate all sources identified. In order to minimise this limitation as much as possible research will be done to ensure previous literature gaps are fully researched. Furthermore, the literature gaps identified throughout this study will assist in contributing to academics by filling that gap.

Despite the limitations, the heuristic value of this study is detailed hereunder.

6.3 Anticipated Contribution & Heuristic Value

The anticipated contribution of this study is to gain an understanding of what impact sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers in Springs. By determining what impact, the sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket will lead to gain insights on how Ocean Baskets consumers resonate with the brand and how their consumption behaviour and attitude changed towards the brand. These insights can inspire further research i.e. what effects sustainability practices in a broader sense have on brands and their consumers and what happens to those brands not operating sustainably. This can be done on larger sample sizes in bigger regions to gain a bigger overview of the findings and insights.

In essence, this study will contribute to firstly, determine the impact of sustainable fishing practices on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers, secondly, give insights on how Ocean Basket's consumers resonate with the brand in terms of shared values and lastly, inspire further research regarding the impact sustainability practices to have on brands and their consumers.

6.4 Recommendations

For future studies, it is recommended to use a larger sample size in a larger area to get a broader overview of the behavioural and attitude changes of consumers. Although the sample size was relatively small and conducted in one area, the study was successful as the objectives were reached and the research questions were answered.

6.5 Concluding Remarks

In light of the above discussion, it is found that Ocean Basket will attract consumers sharing the same values that will support the organisation, initiating the process of increasing brand loyalty. It can, therefore, be argued that within the sample size used for this study, that sustainable fishing practices have a positive impact on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket's consumers and that the attitudes and behaviour of the consumers start to change once being made aware of the key concepts used in this study. It is therefore concluded that sustainable fishing is a key to Ocean Basket's brand loyalty resulting in a positive ROI in terms of brand loyalty by engaging in these initiatives.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Final Research Report Summary Table

Ocean Basket: Exploration Of The Impact Sustainable Fishing Practices Have On Brand Loyalty.

Research Purpose	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/ Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Key Findings	Recommendations
The purpose of this study is to explore the impact sustainable fishing practices have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Baskets' consumers.	What role does sustainable fishing practises have on Ocean Basket's brand loyalty?	To determine whether the sustainability initiatives implemented by brands have any effect on consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour.	The World Wide Fund for Nature The Marine Stewardship Council Michele Costabile David Aaker Harvard Business School Kevin Lane Keller	Theme 1: Sustainable fishing practises Theme 2: Brand Loyalty Theme 3: Ocean Basket Theme 4: African Innovation	Paradigm Positivism Epistemology Share with other organizations facing the same challenges. Ontology Combination of real and a social construct. Axiology Research should prove facts that is based on real data.	Quantitative	Questionnaires	Anonymity and Confidentiality Voluntary participation Consent given Avoiding all deceptive practices	- Most consumers are unaware of overfishing that Ocean Basket is addressing - Consumers would rather support environmentally sustainable brands - Brand loyalty is favourable impacted by Ocean Baskets' commitment	- To use a larger sample size in a larger area - To focus on environmental sustainability as a whole - To test the change in consumer behaviour with experimental studies
						Population				
						Parameters				
						Individuals in Springs, who eats at Ocean Basket in Springs Mall between the ages 25 – 40.				
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Sampling	Data Analysis Method(s)	Limitations	Key Contribution	
How consumers respond to Ocean Basket that is committed to sustainable fishing and how they can use this to resonate with consumers to create brand loyalty.	How is the brand loyalty of an organisation being affected with the implementation of sustainable fishing practices? What impact does the initiative, SASSI, have on SA restaurants?	Sustainable fishing practices Brand loyalty Ocean Basket	Theory of reasoned action			Probability Sampling method Purposive sampling Size 30	Unit of Analysis Ocean Basket's consumers at Springs Mall between the ages 25 – 40. Data Analysis Method(s) A grid and coding system Cross-tabulation	Small sample size Short time period The population was limited to Springs consumers only	Insight to how consumers feel about brands being environmentally sustainable To inspire further research on brands and their consumers with regards to environmental sustainability	

Appendix B: Ethical Clearance Letter



13 August 2019



Student name: Sherilee Steenkamp
Student number: 19012637
Campus: Vega Bordeaux



Re: Approval of Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) in Strategic Brand Management Proposal and Ethics Clearance



Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.



Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and we hereby provide you with ethical clearance to proceed with your data collection.

There may be some aspects that you still need to address in your proposal. If this is the case, feedback will be provided to you in writing. You will need to address these aspects in consultation with your supervisor.

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

We wish you all the best with your research!

Yours sincerely,

Elle-Sandra Rheeder
Supervisor

Dr. Franzél du Plooy-Cilliers
Campus Postgraduate Coordinator

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CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.

The Independent Institute of Education Pty Ltd, its associated companies, employees, contractors, representatives and directors, are indemnified against all claims which may arise in connection with or as a result of any loss, damage or injury to you as a researcher entering into an agreement with a participant in the course of your research, provided that such loss, damage or injury is caused by the gross negligence or intentional act(s) or omission(s) of The Independent of Institute Education Pty Ltd, its associated companies, employees, contractors, representatives and directors.

Wishing you the very best of luck.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Franzél du Plooy-Cilliers
Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies
The Independent Institute of Education

Appendix C: Measurement Instrument – Questionnaire

Ocean Basket: Exploration of the impact sustainable fishing practises have on brand loyalty

Research conducted by:

Sherilee Steenkamp - 19012637

Cell: 074 805 3270

Dear Respondent

You are herewith invited to voluntarily participate in an academic research study conducted by Sherilee Steenkamp, an honours student in the Bachelor of Commerce in Strategic Brand Management program at Vega, an IIE Institute.

The purpose of the study is to determine what role sustainable fishing practises have on the brand loyalty of Ocean Basket. The findings of this study will contribute to the understanding of how brand loyalty can be influenced with the commitment to sustainability initiatives as part of an organisations' corporate social responsibility.

Please take note the following:

- This is an anonymous questionnaire where no personal information is required and no association between respondents and data will be made.
- Please answer the questions in the attached questionnaire as completely and honestly as possible.
- The questionnaire will take a maximum of 10 minutes to complete.
- The study is intended for academic purposes only and not for any commercial purposes, the findings of the study can however be provided upon request.

Please sign below **or** indicate in the text box if you give your consent on the following:

- You have read and understand the information provided above, and
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.

Yes			Respondent's signature
No			

Dear Respondent

Thank you for your willingness to complete this questionnaire.

Please answer all the questions by marking the appropriate answer of your choice with an x in the appropriate block.

Section A: General questions

1. Do you eat at Ocean Basket?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

2. Will you say you are a loyal customer to Ocean Basket?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

3. How often do you eat fish products?

Weekly	
Now and then	
Never	

4. Which fish restaurant do you prefer?

Ocean Basket	
John Dory's	
Fish Aways	
Simply Asia	
Simply Fish	
Other (specify)	

5. Why do you prefer that specific restaurant?

The price is acceptable	
The food is good	
It is more convenient	
Because of the values and beliefs of the brand	
Other (specify)	

6. Are you aware of the conditions of our fishing resources?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

7. Are you aware of sustainable fishing practises?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

8. Do you know about the SASSI initiative?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If you answered no at question 8, please refer to the summary on SASSI below.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) introduced an initiative called the South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) to combat the problem of overfishing and endangering of fish species by managing and implementing sustainable fishing practises using a traffic light approach to indicate the condition of the specific fish species.

9. Do you engage in any other sustainability initiative?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If you answered yes at question 7, please complete the following question. If you answered no at question 8, you can continue with Section B on page 5.

10. Please specify the sustainability initiatives in which you are engaged.

Section B: Sustainable fishing practises

11. Would you rather consume fish products marked “green”⁵ by SASSI?

No, I don’t care	
Maybe, it depends how I feel	
More likely than consuming fish products marked red	
I will only consume fish products marked green	

12. Will you still consume fish products even though it is marked “red”⁶ by SASSI?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

13. Do you engage in sustainable fishing practises i.e. only purchase fish products that is sourced in a sustainable manner?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

⁵ Fish products marked green means it is safe to consume and it is a fish species that is not endangered and was sustainably sourced.

⁶ Fish products marked red means it is endangered and not sourced in a sustainable manner.

14. Do you think organizations should commit to sustainable fishing practises?

Strongly agree	
Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

15. Do you think restaurant should be held accountable for the way they source their food products?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Section C: Ocean Basket

16. Now that you are aware of Ocean Basket's commitment to sustainable fishing practises, would you rather support them as oppose to other fish restaurants?

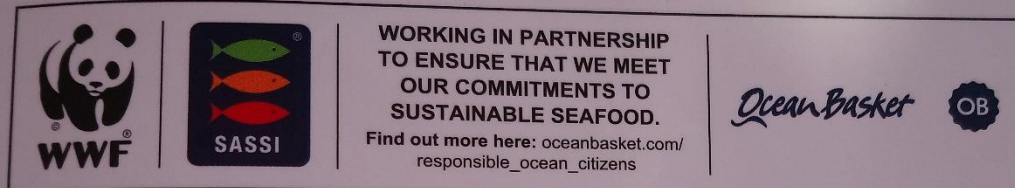
Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

17. How likely are you to rather support organizations that commits to sustainability practises?

Never	
Seldom	
Sometimes	
Often	
Always	

Thank you for your time to participate in this questionnaire and contributing to this study.

Appendix D: Ocean Basket's SASSI & ROC In-Store Communication



RESPONSIBLE OCEAN CITIZENS: The Ocean Basket philosophy

We have been working with WWF-SASSI to embed seafood sustainability into our day-to-day business and to ensure our seafood supply chain supports responsibly managed fisheries and farms.

Seafood is a live product from Mother Nature, which means each one is unique. Rest assured the RAW weight you enjoy will be the same. 200g of fish is 200g of fish, no matter how it is presented.

We try our best to remove all bones from the fish, but some small ones may remain.

The images on the menu are for reference; the size, shape and number of pieces may differ.

Not all kings are equal. While food safety regulations are governed by law for your protection, portion size is influenced by differences in the industry and species characteristics. Ocean Basket regulates this with stringent product specifications and verifies this through regular product checks. Due to these natural differences we may have to temporarily adjust the size and grading specification or origin to ensure continuity of supply.

Changes are always made under the strict control of the same food safety regulations.

A variety of seasonal vegetables are used for our roasted Med vegetables.

Allergens: Some menu items may contain / come into contact with nuts or nut derivatives.

Ocean Basket is a Vitality HealthyDining restaurant partner of Discovery Vitality. Ocean Basket is not responsible, nor has any control over the Vitality HealthyDining benefit or cash back related queries.