



The Effects of Covid-19 on Food Waste Management: A Qualitative Case Study on Food Lover's Market

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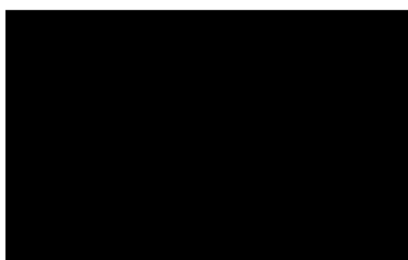
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Abstract

Food waste has been affecting the globe for many years and has been further challenged by the Covid-19 outbreak. A restructuring of the production and consumption of food will have to happen in order to adjust to the new way of life. The aim of this study is to assess the impact that Covid-19 has had on the food waste management behaviours of Food Lover's Market as well as the South African consumer and explore opportunities that may arise from this pandemic for meaningful and sustainable food waste management.

To evaluate Food Lover's current processes but also explore the changes and adjustments that Food Lover's has had to make or may be considering due to the pandemic an interview was conducted with a Food Lover's Market employee and the interview was then analysed and themes and patterns were developed. The results showed that not much has been changed in relation to food waste management due to Covid-19 and revealed that there is opportunity for improvement of systems in the supply chain.

To understand and gauge consumer knowledge and behaviour towards the issue, a questionnaire was distributed, and the results revealed that, consumers are not fully aware of the national food waste crisis and may not know how to properly manage their waste. This means that there is a gap and opportunity to educate and create awareness on the issue.

1. Introduction

By definition, food wastage refers to the discarding of food that is still fit and appropriate for human consumption. Food waste is an increasing global issue and the complexity of the issue lies with there being almost one billion people in the world who go to bed on a hungry stomach as of 2018 (WHO, 2019) whereas the amount of food wastage is enough to feed all those suffering from starvation. According to the World Health Organisation, Africa has the most 'alarming' rates of hunger in the world (WHO, 2019).

The intent of this research paper was to develop an understanding on the food waste culture in South Africa and more specifically look into Food Lover's Market as a brand. The manner in which they manage food resources was assessed, so as to understand the extent to which the organisation is or is not a meaningful brand in the context of food waste management.

Food Lover's was assessed, along with a general exploration of food waste management as a whole, in order to understand what the concept is about as well as its importance and impact on the environment or any other factors.

Context and Background

According to the South African National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey roughly a quarter of the population of South Africa goes to bed on an empty stomach every night and yet producers, food retailers, restaurants and consumers (who contribute to 5% of food waste in SA) remain wasteful of food produce (Reddy, 2020). According to the World Wide Fund for Nature, an estimated 31 million tonne of food is produced in South Africa per annum, and of that amount, 10 million tonne of it goes to waste (WWF, 2019). The correct management of this wastage could have an immensely positive impact, environmentally, socially as well as economically. The question would be

whether a well-known brand such as Food Lover's Market is a meaningful brand when it comes to food waste management, what they are doing to contribute to positive waste management as well as how they could add more value in sustainable management and use their impact and platform to raise awareness and participation of this issue to their community of consumers.

In order to determine whether or not Food Lover's is a meaningful brand in regard of the topic, the brand was measured against the criteria of a meaningful brand (Meaningful Brands Index, 2017), provided by Havas Group; which is one of the largest global communications groups. The Havas framework features an outline of elements of what brands need to focus on, in order to create a solid meaningful brand that associates with consumers and adds value. In one of their findings, the Havas Group established that brands that practice meaningfulness outperformed other companies by 206% in the stock market between 2006 and 2016 (Havas, 2017). This shows the benefit of being a meaningful brand as well as the link between a brand its consumer and the higher needs of the consumer. This framework will be further explored and used as a blueprint to determine whether or not Food Lover's is a sustainable brand and if its practices contribute to establishing a sustainable and positive South Africa.

1.1 Rational

The purpose of this rationale is to justify the necessity of this study, keeping in alignment to the chosen research paradigm and literature with methodological consideration.

To re-iterate, the aim of this study was to evaluate the food waste management of Food Lover's Market and consumers; and the impact that Covid-19 has had on this. This evaluation allowed for an exploration of any opportunities for meaningful food waste management that may arise as a result of the pandemic. This is an area that necessitates study as it looked into two global issues that are negatively impacting the human race as well as the economy; food waste

(which is a contributing factor to the world hunger epidemic) and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The research form used was qualitative research as this research will be non-experimental and rather looked into understanding the relationship between two variables by employing applied and exploratory research (McLeod, 2020) in this case, food waste and Covid-19 and their impact on Food Lover's Market and consumers; which brings in the element of personal experience and perception, thus aligning with the concept of the chosen paradigm, interpretivism, which as stated earlier, is of the notion that there is no one reality, but rather, that different reality co-exist based on individual experiences and therefore are ever-changing (Wahyuni, 2012). In this case this reality, as it relates to food waste has been changed or altered because of Covid-19; but still this change is different per individual experience.

1.2 Problem Statement

Main problem:

To analyse and evaluate the role and effect of Covid-19 on the food waste processes of food retailers in South Africa, with focus on Food Lover's Market.

Sub-problem:

To analyse the consumer's awareness and attitude towards food waste, its effects and how to positively contribute towards it, specifically during the times of Covid-19.

1.3 Research Goal

The goal of this study was to gain an understating of the impact that Covid-19 has had on the food waste management behaviours of Food Lover's Market as well as the South African consumer and explore opportunities that may arise from this pandemic for meaningful and sustainable food waste management.

This study explored a new phenomenon for an existing problem; the existing problem being food waste, which is now impacted by the new covid-19 pandemic. This allowed the researcher to be able to identify the relationship between different consumers as well as the Food Lover's Market brand and their management of waste during this pandemic and its impact.

The research was limited to Food Lover's Market and interviews were conducted with a Food Lover's Market manager so as to assess and understand their food waste systems.

Consumers were be utilised for data collection, as part of the goal, is to assess the impact from a consumer point of view. This helped to understand consumer's perspectives or realities as ontological interpretivist research is strongly impacted by personal perception or experience and it would allow for a wider understanding of how covid-19 has impacted the food waste management of different groups of people. Collecting data from consumers, helped to observe different behaviours and understandings of different consumers so as to discover patterns that could be used to gain an understanding on the wider topic. Because based on the framework chosen, there is no one reality, but rather, reality is based on individual perceptions and experiences. Regarding the consumer, this study was not mainly focused on finding out the consumer's view on Food Lover's Market's food waste management but rather finding out what they know about food waste and how they personally manage it, so as to find ways to create awareness and bring education to how they can contribute to the correct management of this food waste.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions were utilized in order to obtain knowledge and answers that are useful and necessary to achieve the research objective, while linking back to the problem statement and sub-problem stated in the above section.

Research Question 1:

What are the food waste management processes of Food Lover's Market and do they contribute towards them being a meaningful brand, even during Covid-19?

Retailers contribute 20% to food waste statistics of South Africa (Reddy, 2020) and it is important for FLM to be aware of current trends and changes in the country, such as Covid and be able to operate from a mindful standpoint while being meaningful in their management of food waste. This research question allowed for questions that explored Food Lover's current processes but also allows an exploration into the changes and adjustments that Food Lover's has had to make or may be considering due to the pandemic.

Research Question 2:

How has Covid-19 affected and influenced food waste patterns of consumers in South Africa in 2020?

As mentioned, due to lockdown regulations, consumer purchasing behaviour has altered. Some consumers are bulk buying due to uncertainty of the pandemic while some cannot afford to and are living hand to mouth due to job losses. Because of bulk buying, this also means that food needs to be able to stay fresher for longer, and this research question gave insight into how the consumer has been affected by the pandemic, what they know about food waste

and how they have and can contribute to the correct management of this waste. This is important as consumers contribute 5% to food waste in South Africa (Reddy, 2020) and because of the shift, this number has likely increased, making it important to ensure that consumers are aware of how to positively contribute, from how to shop mindfully to how to store food at home to keep it fresher for longer etc.

Research Question 3:

How can opportunities be created for sustainable food management for both consumer and brand?

This research question allowed for questions that explore the lessons that have been learnt thus far and explore any opportunities that can come from this pandemic on how to create awareness and initiatives to get not only the brands to have a positive action towards food waste but get consumers involved as well, whether through educating them or forming campaigns around the issue etc.

These research questions gave room for data collection that would then link back to the problem statement and give room for exploratory, predictive and interpretive questions to be asked in order to gain understanding of the topic, gather feedback from the parties in question and be able to understand and explore future outcomes.

2. Literature Review

A literature review is imperative in the undertaking of research as it assists the researcher to gain an understanding of existing research relating to a certain topic. It brings to light an understanding of the problem and gives insights on how it relates to reality, while identifying untapped areas of the topic to develop a new position and present new research supported by research conducted. This also assists with exploring different research methods and developing a theoretical framework that can be used in the gathering of information during the research process.

This literature review was done to assess Food Lover's Market's processes of the management of food waste in context of a meaningful brand.

Food Waste

This is a global issue that impacts the world on a social, economic and environmental level. The waste of food can result in contribution to global warming due to incorrect disposal. On a social level, millions of people suffer from starvation in the same world where so much food is incorrectly managed and disposed of whereas it is still fit for consumption. The cost of disposing of this food as well as energy costs show that poor food waste management does more harm than good for the environment as well as the economy. According to the WWF, a third of food in South Africa ends up in landfill and doesn't get to be consumed, which then accumulates constraint on the waste system (WWF, 2019). Again, all of this waste happens while millions don't have the means to access food. 20% of this waste happens during the distribution and retail process (WWF, 2019), and this is a sector that Food Lover's Market falls under, their contribution in this 20% was evaluated and assessed further in this paper. As of 2018 the South African government has made a commitment to halve the amount of food that goes to waste by the year 2030 (Frankson, 2018). This places more pressure on the government to create a space where new ideas and concepts will be put in place in order to honour this commitment. This

announcement is a step in the right direction as more can be done to curb this issue in South Africa, as seen in countries such as France where there are regulations and policies in place to ensure the redirection of surplus food and more than 100 000 tonnes of food gets redistributed each year (WWF,2019).

The World Hunger Organisation was used as a source of information regarding this topic as information from their website was all pulled from original sources who provide practice oriented information thus making them a credible source on the topic.

Another source that was used throughout this paper is the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). The WWF is a respected independent organisation and aims to protect South Africa's natural heritage. This source is reliable as its whole existence is centered around the sustainability of food, water and energy; and their research is based on that. It is also referenced by many other publications and research as a source of information. Information from the WWF brought more understanding on food waste, current initiatives and research on the matter as well as insight on its impacts on the country. South Africa has been a part of WWF for many years and the use of this source made food waste management information reachable in relating back to the chosen brand Food Lover's Market which is based in South Africa.

Food Lover's Market

Food Lover's Market is a supermarket chain based in South Africa operating under the Fruit & Veg City brand, offering fresh produce from vegetables and fruit, to meat and other general food stuffs. Food Lover's donated over 165 000 kilograms of excess food as part of its partnership with FoodForward SA during 2017 (Food Lover's Market). FoodForward is an organisation that provides food relief for over 600 non-profit organisations and collaborate with different partners (including Food Lover's) in such initiatives (FoodForward SA). Food Lover's is currently running a Hunger Month project in collaboration with FoodForward SA, where they will contribute 1% of their turnover toward the campaign to provide meals for those in need amidst the COVID-19 crisis (Food

Lover's Market). Collaborations such as this show that Food Lover's is to a certain extent a meaningful brand and does have an understanding of the current starvation problems facing the country and is willing to take part in its alleviation. However with all these positive efforts and light on Food Lover's, the brand has caught itself in some scandals over the past few years, such as in 2019 where consumers caught on video a rat in the 'fresh food' that was being sold to the public in Food Lover's Market (Pijoos, 2019). This not only raised flags on the hygienic practices of the brand but also the freshness of the food. Prior to that, a few Food Lover's consumers had taken to social media to express their complaints regarding the freshness of the food being sold by the brand (Pijoos, 2019). These instances both have a common factor, which is freshness of food. This is a cause for evaluation as one of the most common reason for food waste or the disposal of food is due to it being deemed expired or not fresh enough for consumption (WHO, 2019). This issue could lead to either Food Lover's having to dispose of a lot of produce or these not so fresh products being bought by consumers, then only after purchase; realising it's not fresh and then having to end up disposing of it after purchase, either way the end result is the same; food waste. This paper sought to understand the reasons behind this further in the paper.

The Food Lover's Market website was used and referenced as it is a direct source for information on the brand and therefore served as a reliable source for background information on the brand, as well as any projects that they have been involved in or direction they may take in the future.

Food Value Chain

Food waste happens at different scale within the food value chain. The statistics in South Africa are as follows;

- 26% happens at the stage of agricultural production
- 24% post-harvest handling and storage
- 25 % during processing and packaging
- 20% at the distribution and retail stage and;
- 5% at consumption

(WWF, 2019)

According to these statistics, consumers contribute the least to the wastage of food and 95% of food waste in South Africa happens before it is even reaches the consumer. This further highlights that Food Lover's Market will need to assess and evaluate its value chain process and meaningfully form new practices or improvements on their current practices in order to curb this food waste issue as well as avoid any future public scandals.

Theoretical framework

As mentioned above the food waste management processes of Food Lover's Market were measured against the criteria of a meaningful brand. This framework suggests that a meaningful brand is a brand that goes beyond just the product or service that they offer but also go the extra mile to positively impact the things that are important or helpful to their consumers (Havas, 2017). When a brand is meaningful it urges consumers to be more interested in the brand and even form a bond or develop a trust for the brand (Standlee, 2017). This is the benefit of being a meaningful brand, increased customer trust and share of wallet. The Meaningful Brand Index released by the Havas Group in 2017 served as a guideline for examining brand meaningfulness and developing solutions and suggestions that are in line with this framework. According to Brand Watch (Boyd, 2017), brand health can be measured in the following ways:

- Reputation of the brand - refers to how the brand is viewed by the public, which impact whether or not the consumer trusts the brand.
- Consumer awareness of the brand - talks to the extent to which the brand is known by consumers and whether they recognize the brand even from the imagery associated with the brand
- Brand equity - refers to the value of the brand, determined by customer experience which shapes their perception of the consumer.
- Delivery of promises - this refers to whether the brand delivers on the promises that they make, which if they do, also boosts consumer's trust in the brand and helps build a good reputation.

- Brand positioning – how the brand positions itself and wants to be seen by its target market
- Employee engagement - about creating positive attitudes and environment within the business amongst employees in order to create harmonious and better business operation

This was used to measure and identify which aspects of Food Lover's Market are meaningful and healthy, and which are not.

The use of this framework gave better insight on how Food Lover's Market can manage food waste in a meaningful manner and thus develop better and more meaningful relationship with their consumers. Using this framework to draw meaningful insight and utilise qualitative data in linking the brand and food waste was further explored while ensuring that meaningfulness is achieved.

3. Research Paradigm

Research paradigms refer to the research traditions and basic world belief systems in relation to the nature of existence. Paradigms provide perspective of how people absorb information and gives methods of interpreting and learning about world views (Khalid, Rehman, 2016). The three fundamental paradigms are; positivism, interpretivism as well as critical realism; from which there are five theoretical frameworks including; ontology, epistemology, methodology, axiology and metatheory (Wahyuni, 2012).

Because brands and consumer's interaction with food and their behaviours towards it, is inconstant, the paradigm selected for this study was interpretivism. This selection was due to the fact that interpretivism does not embrace ideas or standards which are unchanging and lack variety. It believes that people are continually changing and developing based on experience or surroundings (Khalid, 2016).

Food waste and the way it is handled and consumed is ever changing and influenced by various (sometimes unpredicted) factors. This paradigm was therefore best fitting and allowed for an open minded exploration of the processes and influences of those processes of food waste management for Food Lover's and provide diverse theories and solutions or ideas.

With the chosen paradigm, a theoretical framework of the philosophical positions was chosen, to best filter the research method and be able to conduct and gather information in the best fitting manner.

Epistemology of interpretivism:

Epistemology of interpretivism is an approach that gives information through perceived and interpreted knowledge based off an individual's judgement (Wahyuni, 2012). This paper was based off of not only individual and societal

knowledge but also on statistics and facts on food waste and because of this, epistemology was not the best suited philosophical position.

Ontology of interpretivism:

Ontological interpretivism recognises that reality is not a one size fits all concept and it is constantly changing as it is impacted by what is happening around it (Wahyuni, 2012). Food Lover's carries a wide range of products and has made a name for themselves as being the affordable choice, catering to people from all sorts of financial background, with their stores being located from high end areas all the way to lower end areas. This shows that this brand understands the changing needs of consumers and as a brand have placed themselves in a position where they fit into different consumer's realities. As Ontological interpretivism looks into different realities and continuous change, this position was most effective in diving into various ways in which food waste management can be delved into.

The purpose of this research paper was to explore food waste management of Food Lover's in the context of a meaningful brand. Therefore to uncover the different processes around food waste management, an understanding of human relationship with food management and its influences in relation to food waste was required. The metatheoretical position within interpretivism does not embrace a single objective perception of reality but welcomes the idea that multiple realities exist based on the subjective position of the person or group. Therefore by using the ontological position of interpretivism, knowledge regarding the current waste management practices of this brand were able to be unpacked through a methodological position of subjective qualitative research and allowed the research to explore further about any factors that may need to be considered in order to implement better management that will be sustainable within the everchanging environment and realities of the community and consumers. This exploration also allowed us to evaluate whether or not Food Lover's Market's current waste management practices are in alignment with the meaningful brand criteria and if not the investigation will give an opportunity to

see gaps and suggestions in terms of where they can improve and better align itself with the meaningful brand theory.

4. Research Methodology

Research methodology refers to the manner in which a study or research will be designed and carried out in order to provide and ensure reliable and valid results that link and address the research problem, aims and objectives. The research design highlights what data will be collected, how it will be collected as well as who it will be collected from and why (Saunders et al, 2009).

4.1 Research Strategy

Deciding on a research strategy or approach is an essential part to guiding the methods that will be utilized in the collection of data. The two main approaches are the inductive and deductive approach. The inductive approach involves a collection of data by the researcher and from that, a set of observations are formed; from which patterns can be picked up from the data and can then be theorised (Gabriel, 2013). The deductive approach on the other hand, pertains, the researcher starting with a theory from which a hypothesis is developed and then a collection and analysis of data is performed to test the hypothesis (Gabriel, 2013).

The inductive approach is most commonly associated with qualitative research and is the approach that was used in the data collection of this research paper. This approach was most appropriate as consumers were to be questioned in order to develop empirical generalisations of their experiences and begin to identify the relationships between the consumer's understanding and behaviours towards food waste management and how it relates and has been affected by COVID-19. The inductive approach is based on learning from experience and aligns with the chosen paradigm, which is interpretivism as it approaches research with the intention of understanding peoples experiences and alludes to reality being a socially construct which is subject to change based on what is happening around it. Interpretivism mostly depends on the participants thoughts and views of the topic or situation being researched and therefore does not begin with a set theory but passably develops a pattern of meanings and theory for the duration of the process of research and data collection from participants.

This correlates with the essence of what the inductive approach is about and that is why it was the chosen approach for this research. The aim was to understand the food waste management processes of food lovers market and also gain an understanding of how these processes have been affected by COVID-19. This while gaining an understanding of how it affected the consumers, in order to be able to analyse behavioural patterns towards food waste management as a result of the virus and be able to then theorise those patterns.

4.2 Research Design

The five research designs for qualitative research are phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, historical as well as case study.

The design to be used for this research was grounded theory. With grounded theory there is no precalculated hypothesis, but rather the theories are formed based on the data that is collected, which grants an insight into people's experiences and how they respond or adjust to events or surroundings (Scott, 2009). The purpose of this theory is to use the understanding and data collected about a new phenomenon to develop new theory (Scott, 2009). This design made sense for the research being conducted as it intent was to collect data and understanding about food waste management as it relates to a new phenomenon, Covid-19. The use of this theory meant that the information gathered and patterns identified could then be used to gain a deeper understanding on the topic and enable grounds to be able come up with new ways to approach the existing problem of food waste, factoring in how it has been affected by Covid. Food waste is not a new concept and there is existing literature on the topic, however there has been little work exploring this in relation to Covid-19 as it is a fairly new factor and is still being explored. This design allowed an exploration into how this phenomenon has changed the practices of Food Lover's Market and its consumers and how to move forward sustainably while considering the patterns observed from collecting data from these specific subjects.

4.3 Sampling Plan

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a suitable sample for an analysis or conducting of research. There are various ways of sampling, and the type of sampling utilized, depends on the kind of research and analysis being done. The types of sampling can be separated into two categories; probability and non-probability sampling (questionpro.com). Probability sampling can be characterized as a sampling method where the researcher picks samples from a bigger population utilizing a technique that is dependent on the hypothesis of probability. For a participant to be considered as a probability sample, they have to be chosen utilizing random selection. Non- probability sampling can be described as the opposite of probability sampling. In this method samples are chosen on the basis of the researcher's subjective judgement and greatly relies on the knowledge and proficiency of the researcher (questionpro.com). Because the samples are chosen by the researchers this would mean that not all members of the population have an equal chance or opportunity to participate in the study whereas in probability sampling everyone in the population receives an equal chance of being chosen for sampling.

In order to select to interview the manager at Food Lover's Market, purposeful (self-selection) sampling was used. In this sampling method, the researcher relied on their own judgement to choose a respondent to participate in this part of the study. Purposive sampling is utilised when a researcher wants data from a particular type of person relating to the real search and selects them based on that (Foley, 2018). The data collected from purposive sampling may not be statistically representative of every single Food Lover's Market store however the results will be able to be qualitatively generalized. The selection of interviewing a FLM manager was based on the fact that the manager is a person that holds authority and will have direct knowledge on the FLM brand, their food waste practices, the impact of Covid-19 on these practices as well as be able to give reliable insight on any challenges faced due to this. In order to recruit the

manager for the research, an email of request will be sent and from there an appointment will be made for the interview.

The questionnaires for consumers was done online and sent out at random, therefore a probability method of convenience sampling was utilized for this part of the research. This means that the sample was not handpicked by the researcher thus giving everyone in the population an equal chance of participation (questionpro.com). The population is diverse and as stated previously, everyone has had a different experience of food waste as a result of Covid-19 and this method will create a more accurately represented sample and reduce sampling bias.

These specific samples were purposefully chosen in order to answer back to the research purpose and questions. The employee given by the manager for the interview gave insight that is specific to Food Lover's Market and the consumer assisted in giving an understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on members of society. In combination this helped to pick up any patterns and be able to see gaps and areas of opportunities for sustainable and meaningful food waste management moving forward.

4.4 Data Collection Instrument

Led by the research question, the method of data collection used for the first part of the research was in the form of an interview, specifically, a semi-structured interview, which allowed the researcher to prepare questions beforehand as well as give an opportunity for the respondent to raise points that the researcher may not have considered, allowing for a deeper exploration of the topic at hand. This method provided flexibility and more control over the order of the questions. It also allowed for the researcher to gain an understanding of the respondent's point of view and enabled the researcher to be able to judge the non-verbal behaviour of the participant. It gave the researcher a deeper understanding of the social phenomena at hand as well as how it has specifically

affected Food Lover's Market and the measures that have been taken to work around it. This method gave opportunity for spontaneous additional questions to be asked based on the information that was being given by the participant during the course of the interview, which gave more depth to the topic and data collected.

An agenda for the interview was created beforehand, consisting of the questions that will be asked during the interview (see appendix B). The interview questions were organized in a specific order, starting off with more general questions and then building it up gradually, so as to allow a natural flow and comfortability for the participant. The interview took place at the Food Lover's Market in Sunninghill. The interview was recorded so as to allow the researcher to transcribe and analyse it at a later stage. An estimated time was communicated with the participant and the interview was timed so as to keep within the time limit that has been set and agreed upon, in order to respect the respondents time and participation.

The second part of the research was in the form of a questionnaire (see appendix C). The questionnaire was in an online format, in order to avoid physical contact due to COVID-19. Because it was online, it made it easier and quicker for the respondents and provided convenience. The questionnaire consisted of questions that were led by the sub-question of the main research and aimed to gain insight in accordance. It included mainly multiple-choice questions that aimed to find out the consumer's knowledge of food waste, their behaviour towards it, as well as how it has been impacted by COVID-19 and how they have adjusted. The questionnaire was conducted through Google Forms and took no longer than 10 minutes to complete, making it quick and easy for the respondents.

4.5 Data Processing and Analysis

In the analysing and processing of the interviews, and the data was transcribed word for word in order to reduce bias from the researcher. A thematic analysis approach was used for this part of the research. The purpose of a thematic analysis is to identify patterns and reoccurring themes in the interview data (Mortensen, 2020). The researcher went about this by; becoming familiar with the data, by listening and re-listening to the recordings, coding the data in order to easily describe and category its content, searching for patterns in the responses, reviewing and dissecting the themes and lastly relating them back to the research purpose and question. The data was coded based on the research question and aim as well as guided by the chosen theoretical framework.

To process and analyse the data, the completed questionnaires from Google forms was first obtained, in order to formulate a data set. The data collected from the questionnaires was then recorded and captured onto excel, in order to calculate the data. This data was then presented in the form of bar graphs, pie charts and tables.

The analyses data was then used to develop any patterns and insights that will drive the rest of the research paper. It also helped to understand consumer's perspectives which assisted in coming up with user centric solutions and suggestions for Food Lover's Market as according to Havas (Meaningful Brands Index, 2017), meaningful brands consider consumers and go beyond just the product or service that they offer but also go the extra mile to positively impact the things that are important or helpful to their consumers.

4.6 Research Reliability and Validity

The use of purposeful sampling ensured that the researcher was able to pick a participant that is relevant to the study and what it is trying to achieve. In this case a manager of Food Lover's Market was selected, ensuring reliability as they hold an authoritative position and will be able to provide meaningful insight. The

manager was unable to participate in the interview after agreeing to participate but however he delegated the interview to an employee that deals with food waste. Interviewing the employee that deals with food waste at Food Lover's Market provided validity, as he was assigned by the manager and was able to answer questions that speak to the main research question which gave better understanding and insight for the greater purpose of the research paper.

Using the literature and secondary research done for this research project, the validity of the questionnaire was secured by using questions that speak to the research question and sub question as well as the research aim. To ensure reliability, the questionnaire began by explaining what the research was trying to find out and from whom, this gave the respondents an opportunity to decide whether they form part of the target population or not, ultimately determine whether or not they should they should participate.

5. Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

This section gives an analysis of the finding gathered from the data collection. The data will be interpreted and discussed in the broader context of the research problem given earlier in the paper. The findings of this research have been presented in the form of bar graphs, pie charts and tables as well as an interpretation and insight discussion of the relevant findings and linked back to the literature and theory discussed in the literature review. Thereafter, recommendations will be made for future research that can be conducted on this topic

Interview analysis and presentation

Awareness

This refers to whether or not Food Lover's Market is aware of the national food waste problem and the questions around this were aimed at understanding whether the brand is aware of current trends and changes in the country, such as Covid.

As per the research findings (see Annexure B for interview transcripts), the interviewee stated that they (Food Lover's Market) was aware of the current food waste problem facing South Africa. It was stated that on a day to day basis, in the event of food waste, waste is placed in plastic bags and disposed of, thereafter a company that works hand in hand with Food Lover's market then collects that waste, however Food Lover's is not aware of what is done with that waste after it has been collected. It was also mentioned that food sometimes gets sent back to the suppliers if it is deemed unfit upon arrival, however the brand is not sure what the suppliers then do with the food or products that are sent back to them.

From this it can be gathered they may be a disconnect in the supply chain processes between supplier and retailer as the retailer is not aware of the

practices of the supplier and therefore can fully say that they are aware and fully active in trying to reduce food waste and improve their systems.

Effect

This aimed to gain an understanding of any effects that covid-19 may have had on the brand and its practices of food waste

The findings based on the response from the interview revealed that Food Lover's Market has not been greatly affected by the pandemic. The interviewee stated that the outlet adjusted pretty quickly and were able to continue operating as usual. It was also stated that food prices stayed the same due government regulations, however there was a demand for specific foods such as meat, toilet paper and potatoes at the beginning of the pandemic.

From this it can be said that Food Lover's Market food waste systems were not greatly affected. This can be an indication of a solid food waste management system or may also be an indication that the brand is not fully aware of the sustainability or meaningfulness of their process and that may be why they did not make any changes. They did however make changes in their hygiene processes as a result of Covid-19 and plan to carry that through even after Covid-19.

Opportunity

This was intended to delve into an exploration into the changes and adjustments that Food Lover's has had to make or may be considering due to the pandemic and discovered any opportunities for improvement. However, in the interview, it was stated that Food Lover's is currently happy with their systems and don't see the need to change their systems as they are currently working just fine for them. This may indicate again that the brand may not be fully aware of the national food waste crisis and how they can improve and change up their systems in order to be more active in positively contributing to sustainable food waste management. It was however stated, that they prioritize customer service and providing good quality products to their consumers. In order to be top of

mind food retailer. The brand also contributes to the community in which they serve, which shows that they are in that aspect a meaningful brand and go beyond the basic needs of their consumer.

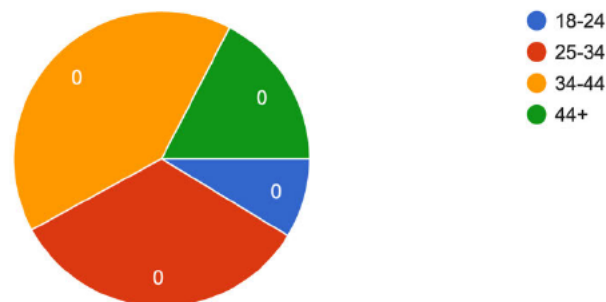
Questionnaire analysis and presentation

Demographics of respondents

The respondents were males and females between the age of 18 and 44. Below, a pie chart represents the gender of the respondents who participated in this study, where mostly female.

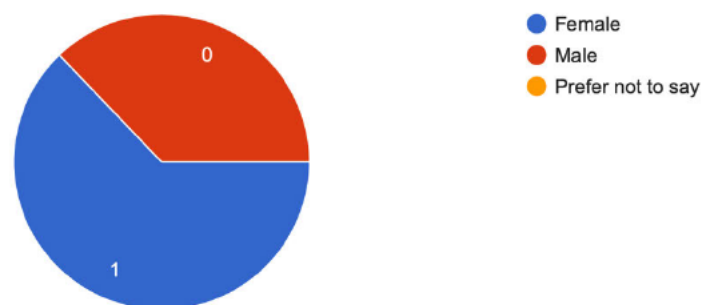
What is your age?

Figure 1



What is your gender?

Figure 2

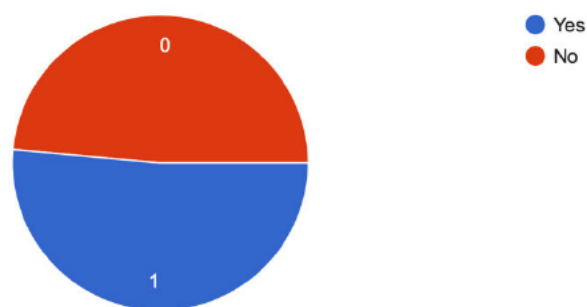


Do the respondents know about food waste and do they manage it efficiently?

Most of the respondents said to know of the national food waste problem however the percentage of those that are not aware, was not far behind. Figure 3 below indicates that the greater majority of people only sometimes manages waste efficiently, meaning that the management of waste is not consistent and may be affected by various factors.

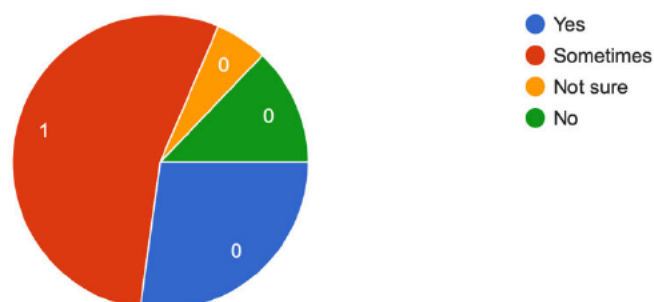
Are you aware of the national food waste problem?

Figure 3



Would you consider yourself as a person that manages food waste efficiently?

Figure 4

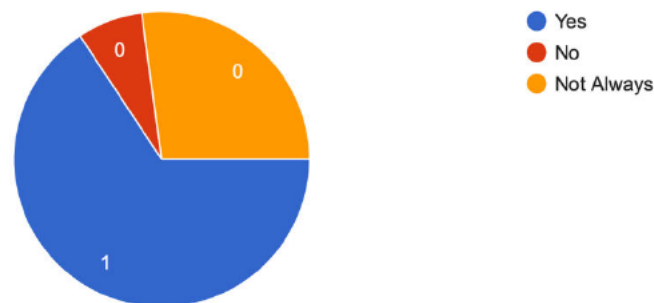


Are respondents aware of expiry dates and which products are disposed of the most in their homes?

Figure 5 shows that most people do check expiry dates when purchasing food, which is a good thing as expired food is a contributing factor as to why most food gets thrown out and goes to waste. When asked what foods gets disposed of more often, the most prevalent answer was, fruits and vegetables. This indicates that these are the products that most likely expire or go bad the fastest, therefor resulting in disposal. This is an opportunity for exploration into how this product can be preserved for longer, from the store (packaging) to the consumer (storage) in order to avoid disposal as much as possible.

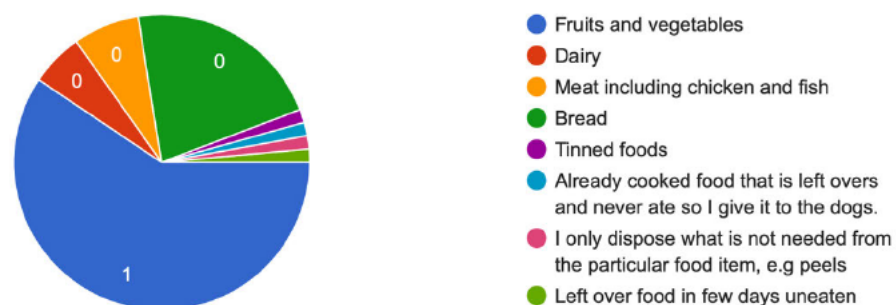
Do you check expiry dates when purchasing food?

Figure 5



When you dispose of food, what do you dispose of more often?

Figure 6

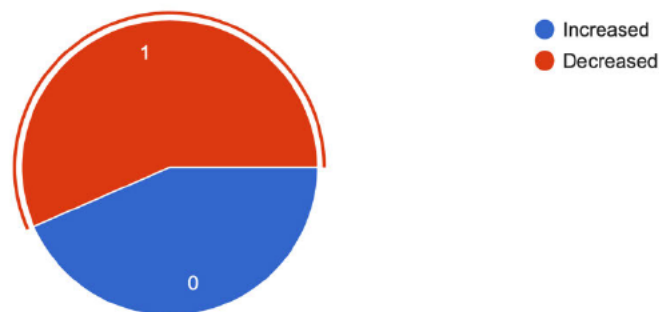


How has Covid-19 affected respondent's waste and disposal?

As seen in the pie chart below (figure 7), most respondents believe that food waste has decreased during Covid-19, however, when asked how they have been managing food that has expired, most stated that they have disposed of it, as opposed to other options such as donating or recycling. With this said though, most of the respondents still stated that due to Covid-19, they are disposing less than they did before.

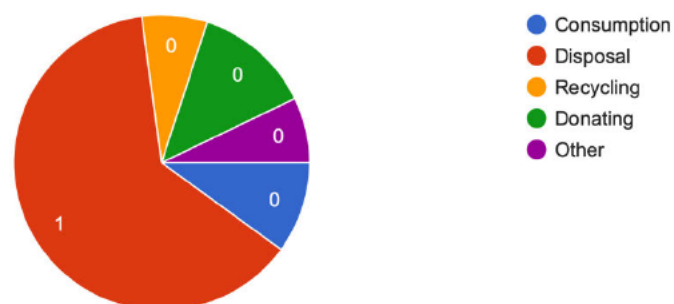
Do you think food waste has increased or decreased during Covid-19?

Figure 7



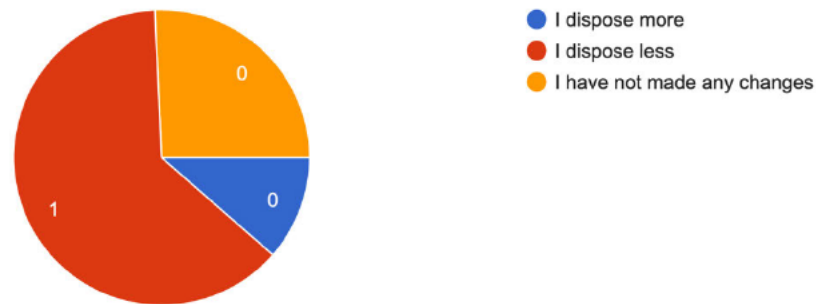
During the Covid-19 pandemic, how have you managed the food that has expired?

Figure 8



Have you made any changes to the quantity of food you dispose of due to Covid-19?

Figure 9

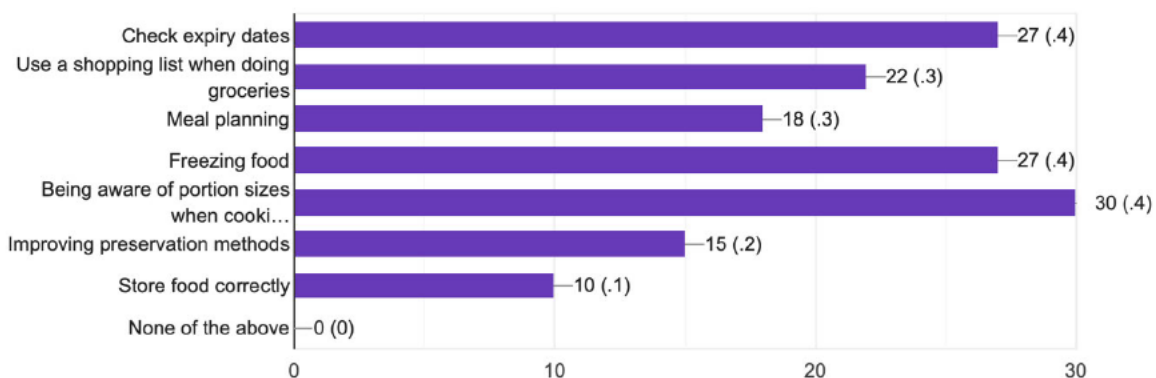


In what ways can we contribute to the reduction of waste?

The respondents were given a list of options as to how they would reduce waste and asked to pick two options. This question was put in place to strategically bring awareness and educate the respondents of the different ways in which they could reduce ways with simple actions. Most respondents said they would check expiry dates, freeze their food and start being aware of their portion sizes when cooking.

Figure 10

In which way would you reduce food waste during the Covid-19 pandemic? pick maximum of 2
70 responses



6. Discussion of Results

From the information gathered in the questionnaire, it can be said that consumers are not fully aware or informed about the national food waste problem, let alone the fact that it is a global issue as well. It can be said that most consumer, adjust based on their surroundings or situation at the time, as seen with most respondents stating that they have reduced their food waste due to Covid-19 . consumers adjust based on their reality and not necessarily because of their concern for the food waste epidemic or its effects. This is understandable in the climate of a country such as South Africa where millions of people are just trying to survive and are already struggling with the impacts of other social challenges . from the information gathered from the questionnaire, it can be said that education and awareness on food waste management is lacking and people slightly understand it but are not completely knowledgeable on the issue and its impacts and therefore may not be aware of how to positively and sustainably manage food waste, and may not even know the advantages this may bring to themselves as well as the country as a whole.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Ethical Considerations

Ethics alludes to the code of conduct which sets the tone and standard of a study. This code of conduct is important as it influences all the participants of the research including the researcher (oxfordmedicine.com). It is empirical for the research study to follow an ethical code of contact so as to maintain integrity and credibility throughout the research.

In the commencement of the collection of data for this research, ethical code of conduct was considered and practised throughout. The research that was carried out in order to gain insight for this research study maintained a respect for anonymity and confidentiality so as to protect the identities of the participants. The researcher insured that consent was received from all participants of the study and that said participants were informed on what the research is about and what it is for, beforehand. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the whole process and the personal information of respondents (e.g. name and surname) are only be known to the researcher and not disclosed to any other parties. To avoid any possible distortion of the results, respondents participated at their own discretion and had the option to disengage at any stage should they have felt the need to do so.

Consent forms were be attached to each questionnaire that is given to the participants of the study. This informed the participant of the topic and purpose of the research and to reassure that their identities will not be published or disclosed and their responses to the questionnaire would solely be used for the particular research study for scholarly purposes only.

Code of ethics was also adhered to while conducting interview with the Food Lover's Market management. Consent was received from the participants before the commencement of the interview. In line with ethics it is also important for the researcher to add here to the laws of the country considering the current Covid-19 pandemic. The country is currently under lockdown and movement is to be avoided where possible along with the

requirements to wear masks at all times. With these laws in place, the researcher will ensure physical comfort of participants and adhere to the wearing of masks and sanitisation during the interview. As with the questionnaire, the participants will be informed regarding the purpose of the research and ensured of confidentiality beforehand. The researcher will ask for permission to record the interview so as to be able to listen back and transcribe and will not do so without the consent of the participant. Additionally, questions that may be deemed as pressuring or too personal will be avoided so as to ensure the comfortability of the participant.

The participants of this research will be considered and respected throughout this process and objectivity and integrity will be maintained so as ensure reliability and trustworthiness.

7.2 Limitations and Trustworthiness

Limitations refer to any limits or constraints that the researcher is not in control of, that may have an effect on the research, how it is conducted as well as its findings.

The effect of Covid-19 on food waste management of Food Lover's Market, forms the scope of this research study, however it was not without limitations.

In relation to the study the methodological choices were constrained by limitations of time, access to information as well as lockdown rules and regulations. Due to the time set as well as the deadline for submission of the research, the researcher was unable to collect large amounts of information pertaining to the subject. The research intended to gather insight from consumers and understand their thoughts, behaviours and experiences in relation to the subject, however the time constraint limited the amount of participants that were able to be interviewed/questioned, thus, limiting the results, which may have an effect on its reliability. When interviewing the management of Food Lover's Market, time had to be monitored, as the

researcher had to make sure not to take up too much of the participant's time (as they had also expressed that they were quite busy) and still have to ensure that all essential information that was needed was covered, while respecting the participant's time. Due to lack of available data or trying to maintain company confidentiality, the results were not able to confirm the exact processes that have been put into place in the food supply chain of Food Lover's Market in relation to food waste management as affected by COVID-19 but a general scope of practices was given. The reliability of the data may have been impacted by not being able to visually record the interview, therefore not being able to capture the true essence and expression of the participant, however credibility was ensured by the researcher by voice recording the interview and transcribing it accurately and thoroughly.

The use of purposeful sampling ensured that the researcher was able to pick a participant that was relevant to the study and what it was trying to achieve. In this case a manager of Food Lover's Market was selected, but as stated above, the interview ended up taking place with an employee that is in charge of the food waste at Food Lover's Market Sunninghill. Although the interview did not take place with the manager, reliability was still ensured, as the employee was selected by the manager, who holds an authoritative position and was thus able to provide meaningful insight. Interviewing the employee provided by the manager provided validity, as the manager was able to answer questions that speak to the main research question which gave better understanding and insight for the greater purpose of the research paper.

Using the literature and secondary research done for this research project, the validity of the questionnaire was secured by using questions that speak to the research question and sub question as well as the research aim. To ensure reliability, the questionnaire began by explaining what the research would be trying to find out and from whom, this gives the respondents an opportunity to decide whether they form part of the target population or not, ultimately determine whether or not they should they should participate.

7.3 Recommendations

From the finding of the questionnaire, it can be said that consumers are not fully aware of the food waste crisis currently facing the country and are not informed on how to properly and efficiently deal with food waste. This comes down to awareness and knowledge.

One approach to reducing household food waste is through education campaigns. This can be done either through government or food retailers starting food waste awareness campaigns on social media by creating a hashtag for example, #foodfocused, where a food retailer could run a competition where consumers could take pictures showing how they positively manage waste and then hashtag using the hashtag, and stand a chance to win a prize. Throughout the campaign the food retailer will be educating its audience and with the chance to win a prize, it will appeal to more people and create hype around the campaign. The point is to get as many people involved and get people posting so as to raise awareness and share ways in which waste can be reduced in households

From the food retailer point, it is evident that the retailer is not really aware of the food waste systems of the supplier and if they worked together, they could have greater impact in reducing waste. It was revealed that food is thrown away when it is approaching expiry, however this surplus food could be redistributed. To avoid its disposal, this surplus food could be separated at the point when it is approaching expiry, so as to redistribution for human consumption for those in need. For this to happen, each step of the food supply chain needs to be aware and active in identifying, removing and redirecting.

7.4 Conclusions

Food waste affects a lot of global economic, social and environmental factors. It is also an unethical concept as millions of people suffer from starvation worldwide. The meaningful management of food waste is empirical and will have a positive impact on South Africa and the world.

The waste occurs at different stages of the food value chain process and an assessment of these stages with intent to come up with viable and sustainable solutions will be of great aid to the problem, as it is evident that they may not be fully aware of the impact of their processes.

Food Lover's Market forms part of the huge retail market and this market contributes to over 20% of food waste in the country. With the challenges that the brand has faced with customer complaints on the freshness of their food, will Food Lover's Market be able to overcome this and improve their processes in order to contribute to being a meaningful brand in relation to food waste management.

More awareness needs to be brought to this issue as consumers fully educated on the matter. This study has the potential to bring awareness to the issue of food waste during Covid-19 by highlighting the benefits of the correct management of waste as well as the impact of its ill-management. The study has considered the different participants' experiences and practices and from there, conclusions have been made regarding the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on both FLM and consumers. Guided suggestion have been made as to how sustainable and impactful practices and systems can be developed in order to positively manage waste during this time within the reachable ability and means of different individuals.

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Appendix A- Ethical Clearance Forms



18 August 2020

Student name: Minenhle Patricia Emily Ncube [REDACTED]

Campus: Vega Bordeaux

Re: Approval of Postgraduate Diploma in Brand Context Management **Proposal and Ethics Clearance**

PGDIP ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

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 your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

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!

GENERAL 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.

Supervisor: Mrs Mbali Rametse

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC): Dr Tish Taylor





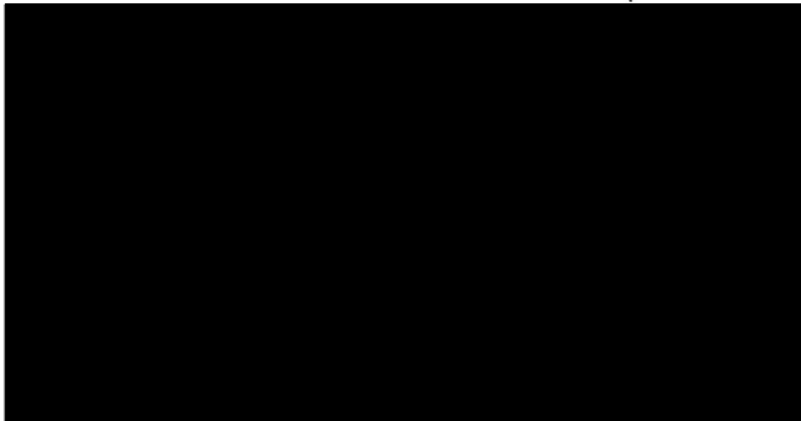
Gatekeepers letter/ Request to conduct research

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to ask your permission to conduct research at your Food Lover's Market outlet.

My name is Minenhle Ncube, a Postgraduate Diploma in Brand Contact Management student at Vega a brand of the Independent Institute of Education (IIE). The research I wish to conduct for my Postgraduate research report titled The Effects of Covid-19 on Food Waste Management: A Case Study on Food Lover's Market.

The aim of this study is to assess the impact that Covid-19 has had on the food waste management behaviours of Food Lover's Market as well as the South African consumer and explore opportunities that may arise from this pandemic for meaningful and sustainable food waste management. The research will be in the form of an interview with a Food Lover's Market store manager and will take a maximum of 25 minutes. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the whole process and your personal information will only be known to the researcher and not disclosed to any other parties.





Gatekeepers Approval

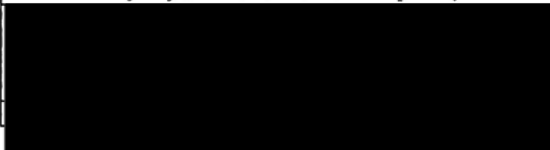
Consent form to conduct research at my company



Give my permission that Minenhle Ncube may conduct research at my company.
This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I reserve the right to withdraw this permission at any time. I also understand that research reports are available in the library and IIE Repository unless I indicate below that I would not

Select below:

- I request that my company's identity be kept confidential.
- My company can be identified in the study
- The study may never be available on the repository.
- The study may be made available on the repository.
- The study may be made available on the repository after months.



Date

21/07/20

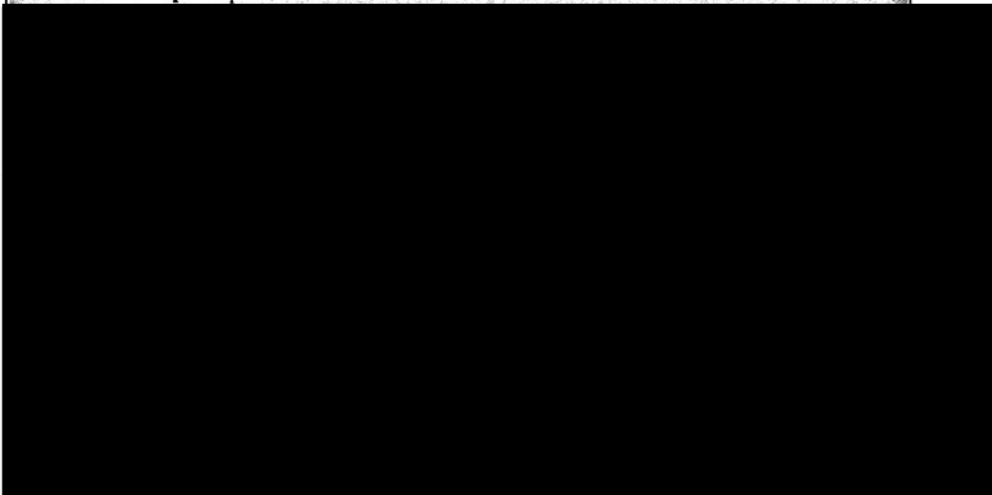


CONSENT FORM

Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants To whom it may concern, My name is Minenhle Ncube and I am a student at Vega. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Mbali Rametse about the impact that Covid-19 has had on the food waste management behaviours of Food Lover's Market as well as the South African consumer. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the effects of Covid-19 as well as explore opportunities that may arise from this pandemic for meaningful and sustainable food waste management. I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.
What will I be doing if I participate in your study? I would like to invite you to participate in this research because the research topic focuses on Food Lover's Market and as manager, your input would be greatly valuable to the research. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to interview you about the topic at hand. You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.
Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study? Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.
Do I have to participate in the study? • Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary; • If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so; • Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.
Will my identity be protected? I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.
What will happen to the information that participants provide? Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my Postgraduate Diploma in Brand Contact Management. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.
What happens if I have more questions about the study? Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate. You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed. My contact details are as follows:

CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING

Consent form for participants



Appendix B- Semi-structured interview questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The effect of Covid-19 on food waste management processes of Food Lover's Market

Thank you for your time and partaking in this interview, conducted by Minenhle Ncube, a post graduate diploma in brand contact management student at Vega. By participating in this interview it is anticipated that further knowledge on the food waste management processes of Food Lover's Market will be gained.

This interview aims to gain an understanding and give insight into the brand's experience and challenges with Covid-19 in relation to food waste management and how the brand has had to adjust its processes in order to positively contribute to food waste management

Please note, your participation in this interview is voluntary and you may withdraw from it at any time.

This interview should not take more than 25 minutes of your time and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the whole process and your personal information will only be known to the researcher and not disclosed to any other parties.

1. **Q-**Is the Food Lover's Market brand aware of the current food waste problem facing South Africa and the world?

A-Yes, we are aware and always alert about it.

2. **Q-**how does Food Lover's Market handle food waste on a day to day basis, are there specific processes put in place for waste management or is it spontaneous?

A-There is a system in place, if there is waste, we dispose of it in plastic bags and we have a company that we work with that then comes and collects that waste.

3. **Q-**Do you think the current food waste management systems or practices are meaningful and sustainable or do you think there is room for improvement (how would you improve them)?

A-There is improvement because, we take precaution and wear the necessary gear such as gloves, when handling food waste

4. **Q-**Outside of the in-store food waste practices, are there any other actions or initiatives that Food Lover's Market has implemented in order to positively contribute towards food waste management?

A-We have a bin outside the shop where customers can buy and contribute and we donate it to charity

5. **Q-**Food Lover's Market describes itself as being "the heart of good food", do you think that the brand lives up to that description and do the FLM consumers share the same sentiment with regards to the brand and its reputation?

A-Yes, we think so. Because for example, a lot of customers come through our doors each and every day and we're not having any complaints about our food. So we think we live up to that description and the customers agree.

6. **Q-**How has the Covid-19 pandemic affected the current food waste systems of Food Lover's market?

A-Not really because we managed to move with the situation, we prepared our processes and everything was done quickly because we are an essential service and didn't have time to close for preparation

7. **Q-**Has the pandemic affected food demand and has there been a rise in demand for any specific products?

A-Potatoes, meat, toilet paper but demand has now decreased compared to when Covid-19 first started. Things have calmed down.

8. **Q-**Have food prices been affected by the pandemic, how?

A-No, we didn't increase our prices because of the constitution and the rules put in place by the government. So our prices are still the same, we stuck with the same prices.

9. **Q-**How has Food Lover's Market responded to the Covid-19 outbreak?

A-We have been throwing away food that wasn't good, and other products that are not fit, we send back to the suppliers immediately.

10. **Q-**What opportunities are there post COVID-19 to re-orient food systems? What are the lessons learnt from the pandemic?

A-The pandemic has forced us to be more cleanly and hygienic in our processes and that's what will implement going forward. But other than that we will keep our systems the same because it is working for us

11. **Q-**Are there any measure that will be taken to improve their capacity to respond to eventual future crisis?

A-To be honest what we are doing here at Food Lover's Sunninghill Chilli On Top, we won't change the systems even after Covid-19, we will keep the same systems in place

12.**Q-**What has the COVID-19 pandemic revealed about the overall functioning of the food supply chain at Food Lover's Market and the food retail industry in general?

A-Nothing has to be changed because everything is in the right place, to be honest.

13.**Q-**Food Lover's Market is involved with the FoodForward initiative, how important is it for the brand to contribute to the community in terms of food aid and why?

A-It is important to give back to the community that we serve, especially with the situation right now of Covid-19.

14.**Q-**Are there any other initiatives that Food Lover's has partook in or is planning to launch as a result or reaction to Covid-19?

A-We have initiatives running for example in Diepsloot and we also give food to the people begging on the streets around the area however we give fresh food, not food that is expired or close to expiring. When food is close to expiring we dispose of it because it's not safe for consumption

15.**Q-**Are there any measures that have been or will be put in place to enhance customer experience during this time?

A-We make sure they are comfortable by making sure they see that we are taking necessary precautions, we sanitize them at the door, ensure all staff are wearing masks. And we ensure that our customer service is on point and make sure we help the customer find whatever it is they are looking for. Unfortunately we have had instances where a customer is not wearing a mask so we can't let them in the shop but we will get one if the

staff to get the products for the customer and then give it to them outside but we can't let them into the shop.

16. **Q**-How has the brand ensured that more consumers are aware of the brand and are on consumer's top of mind when it comes to food shopping, in general and during Covid-19?

A-First of all it's the customer service. Secondly it's the product, good quality we make sure there's no bad quality on the shelves and we have a wide range of products and nothing is expired.

17. **Q**-According to statistics, retailers contribute 20% of food waste in South Africa, how do you think Food Lover's Market can positively contribute to the meaningful management of waste so as to decrease these numbers?

A-Besides disposal, supporting charities and donating will help that number

Appendix C- Questionnaire

The effect of Covid-19 on food waste management behaviours and awareness of consumers

Thank you for your time and participation in this questionnaire, conducted by Minenhle Ncube, a Post Graduate Diploma in Brand Contact Management student at Vega.

This questionnaire aims to gain insight of the consumer's understanding of food waste management, their behaviour towards it and how it has been impacted by Covid-19.

Please note, your participation in this questionnaire is voluntary and you may withdraw from it at any time.

This questionnaire should not take more than 10 minutes of your time and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the whole process and your personal information will only be known to the researcher and not disclosed to any other parties.

1. What is your age?

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 44+

2. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male

- Female
 - Prefer not to say
- 3. What comes to mind when you hear "food waste" ? pick maximum of 2
 - recycling
 - disposal
 - food storage
 - garbage
 - compost
 - pollution
 - other
- 4. Are you aware of the national food waste problem?
 - Yes
 - No
- 5. Would you consider yourself as a person that manages food waste efficiently?
 - Yes
 - Sometimes
 - Not sure
 - No
- 6. When you dispose of food, what do you more often dispose of:
 - fruits and vegetables
 - dairy
 - meat including chicken and fish
 - bread
 - tinned foods
 - other
- 7. Do you check expiry dates when purchasing food
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not always

8. During the Covid-19 pandemic, how have you managed the food that has expired?

- consumption
- disposal
- recycling
- donating
- other

9. Do you think food waste has increased or decreased during Covid-19?

- Increased
- Decreased

10. Have you made any changes to the quantity of food you dispose of due to Covid-19?

- I dispose more
- I dispose less
- I have not made any changes

11. In which way would you reduce food waste during the Covid-19 pandemic? pick maximum of 2

- check expiry dates
- use a shopping list when doing groceries
- meal planning
- freezing food
- being aware of portion sizes when cooking
- improving preservation methods
- storing food correctly
- none of the above