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**[Exploring Woolworths consumer perceptions on a brand with purpose:
The case of Woolworths food waste management practices in
Johannesburg, South Africa]**

[Student name: Limpho Mokuku 

[Post Graduate Diploma in Brand Building]

[Module: RMET 8429]

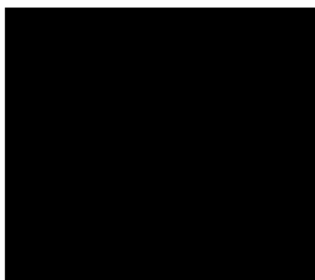
[Supervisor: Dr Tish Taylor]

[Date: 07 December 2021]

[11 600 words]

I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Post Graduate Diploma in Brand Building 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.

Signed



Abstract

The aim of this exploratory qualitative study was to determine if the food waste management strategies/practices of Woolworths contribute to Woolworths being considered a meaningful brand. Despite numerous academic literature evaluating food waste management strategies and the prevention of food waste in restaurants, retailers, along the supply chain and the food waste of consumer's, there was no academic literature available that considers any brands purposefulness using food waste strategies.

Food waste has become a global issue requiring significant research, specifically from a consumer's perspective of Woolworths strategies to minimise food waste as well as an understanding of whether these practices are known by consumers. As a result, to assist consumers in minimising their own food waste from Woolworths. It was therefore important to understand its consumers' view of Woolworths as being meaningful in the context of their food waste strategies/practices. Qualitative structured interviews were conducted by the researcher using eight Woolworths consumer participants which were purposively conveniently sampled.

The main findings indicate that Woolworths is a purposeful brand. However, when it comes to their food waste management strategies/practices from the consumers perspective, the findings indicate that consumers believe the brand is not doing enough on actively educating consumers on the food waste management strategies. From these findings, it is recommended that the Woolworths take more visible measures to educate and communicate to their consumers on food waste management practices of the brand. This would include education and communication on what consumers can do at home.

Key words

Brand with purpose, Woolworths, consumers, food waste

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Section A: Introduction

1.1 Background and contextualisation

Borma (2017) asserts that food waste is a global concern. Accordingly, nearly nine percent of the world's population go to bed hungry everyday (World Food programme, 2021). Consequently, the wastage of food affects people, the environment, and the economy (Waste wise products INC, 2017). According to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (2020) Africa will be home to over half of the worlds chronically hungry people in the world by the year 2030. Additionally, COVID 19 has resulted in a sharp and widespread rise of global food insecurity (The World Bank, 2021). In South Africa alone, about 12 million people go to sleep hungry every day, while South Africa's food waste rate is reported to be the highest in the African continent (Oelefse, Muswema & Ramaukhwatho, 2018). According to the World Wide Fund of Nature, 70% of fruits, vegetables, and grains account for waste and losses, mainly along the food supply chain (World Wide Fund of Nature, 2017). This waste contrasts with the millions of South Africans who are deprived of food and are starving (World Wide Fund of Nature, 2017). Nevertheless, South Africa has a vision that by 2030, the story of this country would have changed in many areas such as the food security and general wellbeing of its people (National Development plan, 2011).

Given the context above, mainly the contradictions relating to food wastage and high levels of hunger that emerge for the South African context, the researcher set out to find out about consumer perceptions on a meaningful brand/brand with a purpose. A particular case study being a retail store; Woolworths. The main focus being its practices on food waste management.

For the purpose of this research, the researcher defines a meaningful brand/ a brand with purpose according to Havas' healthy brand criteria. As such, it is defined as a brand that adds value to people's lives and is sustainable, (Cook, Enslin, Erwin & Carmody, 2010). In a similar manner, the researcher defines food waste management according to the food waste hierarchy and notes that the five levels of food management entailing disposal, recovery, recycle, reuse and prevention are presented by an inverse triangle (Paparagyropoulou et. al, 2014). Above all, the researcher notes that despite studies on food waste and food waste management that have been carried out, there is insufficient research relating to

food waste management practices of retail brands, particularly in relation to the contribution of the brands food waste management practices to being seen as a brand with value and purpose. Consequently, this presents an opportunity for further research to be carried out for this subject matter, particularly looking at the perceptions of the consumers. Therefore, the research topic is presented as exploring the perceptions of Woolworths consumers toward the retail brands food waste management practices, in order to determine if Woolworths can be considered to be a brand with purpose.

This study focuses on how Woolworths's retail brand consumers deal with food waste and the focus will specifically be on the retail brands fresh produce such as fruits, vegetables and grains. This is because the fresh produce forms part of 70% of the food wasted in South Africa highlighted above. The researcher will explore how the consumers perceive the food waste management practises of Woolworths in Johannesburg, South Africa and in return what they do with the knowledge attained from the retail store's practices of a brand with a purpose.

1.2 Rationale

Currently, academic research on food waste can be separated into distinct categories namely, the state of food waste and food loss at various stages of the supply chain (Keegan & Breadshell, 2021; Cuglin, Petljak & Naletina, 2017), as well as food waste management and practices as an attempt to limit food waste (Martin-Rios, Demen-Meier, Gössling & Cornuz, 2018). Lastly food waste and the implications thereof (political, environmental and social) (Papargyropoulou, Lozano, Steinberger, Wright & Ujang, 2014).

Food waste is essentially linked to the way we deliver and consume food, bearing in mind the material and socio-cultural context of food consumption and food waste production (Papargyropoulou, Wright, Lozano, Steinberger, Padfield & Ujang, 2016). Food waste is a global concern (Borma, 2017). As such as part of the global community, South Africa is affected by most of these studies that have been done, even if the context is not specific to it. Moreover, not much literature is available on a brands' food waste management practices such as Woolworths towards it being seen as a brand with purpose. Previous literature on food waste management practices outside of South Africa has been reviewed by the

researcher. For similar research to be conducted in South Africa the findings would be different because the country does not have food waste legislation around food waste and their retail policies are different. Despite the numerous studies on food waste and food waste management, there is a lack of research relating to food waste management and retail brand, particularly in relation to the contribution of these management practices to brand value and purpose. This presents an opportunity for more research to be carried out for this subject matter. Overall, the gap is that there is very little to no information about food waste management practices of a retail brand like Woolworths and the brand contributing to being a brand with purpose.

1.3 Problem Statement

The waste and management of food is an undeniable global concern (Borma, 2017). Worldwide, 690 million people do not have enough to eat, while a third of all food produced for human consumption worldwide is lost or wasted each year (Food and Agriculture Organisation FAO, 2020). Consequently, the FAO has become the main source of information for many researchers. However, the researcher shows that there are mechanisms for managing food waste and legislative framework of a brand, as brands can add value to people's lives. Food waste has had a negative impact not only on the environment, but also on the economy (Waste wise products INC, 2017). Food waste in developing countries occurs in the processing phase/ early stages of the supply chain due to the lack of advanced technology of storage and transportation limitations (Papargyropoulou *et al.*, 2014). Food waste management perpetuates inequalities and increases poverty (FAO, 2020).

Ten million tons of food are wasted in South Africa every year, that is a third of the 31 million tons produced annually in South Africa. Fruits, vegetables and grains account for 70% of the waste and losses, mainly along the food supply chain, this waste contrasts with the millions of South Africans who are starving (WWF, 2017). People and the environment are affected by food waste, the WWF (2017), has stated that approximately 90% of waste in South Africa is disposed of in landfills, where the food waste component results in the production of methane gas and carbon dioxide. Similar to WWF, the researcher posits that

successfully reducing food loss and waste is an improvement to reverse severe food insecurity affecting significant segments of the population (WWF, 2017). Large grocery retailers are uniquely positioned to address this global food problem because of their direct connection with farmers, processors, and consumers. In this way, they can influence all facets of the supply chain. As such the researcher finds it necessary to find solutions to put a stop to this problem and will use Woolworths's brand as a case study.

The 2021 HAVAS' Meaningful Brands Report of 2021 revealed that 71% of customers have little faith toward brands keeping their promise, a situation that is described by the Global Chief Strategy Officer mark Sinnock as the 'age of cynicism' (Havas group, 2021). On the other hand, Curtis and Theofilou (2020) argue that the Covid- 19 global pandemic has increased consumers expectations about brands. Brands can no longer just offer a service or a product they need to be seen by consumers as being responsible to responding to tough questions related to purpose wholistically on societal, economic, and environmental matters (Curtis & Theofilou, 2020). Food waste is a societal, economic, and environmental issue (Waste wise product INC, 2017).

As such the purpose of this research is to explore Woolworths consumers' perceptions on a brand with purpose in the case of Woolworths food waste management practices in Johannesburg, South Africa.

1.4 Research goal and questions

1.4.1 Research goal

The primary goal of this research is to gain a thorough understanding of the extent to which Woolworths's food can be described as a "meaningful" brand or a brand "with purpose" in context of food waste management practices.

1.4.2 Secondary objectives

The secondary research questions/ objectives for this study are;

1. What are the food waste management strategies/practices of Woolworths?
2. What are consumers perspectives of Woolworths food waste strategies as they relate to consumers food wastage?
3. What makes a brand meaningful/brand with purpose, specifically in relation to the Woolworths food waste strategies?

Section B: Literature review and contextualisation

2.1 Theoretical framework

There are several ways through which one can understand the research problem in a study (Bezuidenhout, 2014). In this way, a particular theory helps to support the findings. A theory provides principles that can help the researcher to make analysis (Bezuidenhout, 2014). For the purposes of this study, the food waste hierarchy is the theoretical lens that will be used to determine whether the Woolworths retailer contributes to being a meaningful brand or a brand with purpose. The aim of this framework is to gain the best environmentally friendly outcome (Paparagyropoulou *et al.*, 2014).

As briefly highlighted in the study background, the food waste hierarchy is presented in a form of an inverse triangle. Preventative measures form part of the largest component of this hierarchy and refers to avoiding food excess in the production and consumption of food. It is followed by Reuse, which refers to making use of excess food such as donations to food banks or animal shelters (Paparagyropoulou *et al.*, 2014). Recycling refers to excess food being recycled, such as compost or being used as animal feed (Paparagyropoulou *et al.*, 2014). Recovery refers to making use of the energy unavoidable food waste carries (Paparagyropoulou *et al.*, 2014). Lastly, the least favourable option is disposal, and it refers to the disposal of excess food waste to the landfill site (Paparagyropoulou *et al.*, 2014).

2.2 Literature review

There are several interventions that have been undertaken to address the issue of food waste and management within the different sectors, including retail sector (Holweg, Reiner & Kotzab, 2018). This mainly applies to the global landscape. Inevitably, the literature consulted and reviewed for this study has been on the phenomenon of food waste management practices. This was meant to understand efforts being undertaken in this regard.

Accordingly, the researcher has consulted secondary research on Woolworths retailer which will form the basis of the primary research of asking consumers'

perceptions of what the brands' food waste management practices are and what the brand is currently doing to contribute to being seen as a brand with purpose. Woolworths asserts that its purpose is to add value to people's lives. In this regard, they offer exceptional quality in every product they sell as well as every experience they offer their customers (Woolworths, 2021). Essentially, they pride themselves with a green heart as a symbol of the good they do to make a difference (Woolworths, 2021). Additionally, Woolworths's food waste and security positing statement 2021 alludes to the brands' commitment to reducing the amount of food that is wasted across the brands' supply chain and to find ways to promote food security (Woolworths, 2021). In this regard, the brand has combatted this by packaging their food in packaging that is most suitable so that when the food is being transported along the supply chain it is kept in tack, safe and hygienic, and as a result extending the food shelf life and consequently prevents food waste (Woolworths, 2021). The packing also has clear instructions/ labelling on how to store the contents of the food, how to prepare and how to cook the food and where possible Woolworths recommends the serving size of the food so that the consumer knows how much to serve in order to prevent food waste in their homes (Woolworths, 2021). The labelling of the packaging also has a clear labelling of date marking the food with "sell by", "best before" and "use by" dates (Woolworths, 2021). The labelling on the packaging is there to guide the consumer on how to buy and save food while the main the aim of the packaging is to reduce food waste (Woolworths, 2021).

Based on the information above, Woolworths can be seen as a brand with purpose as it gives invaluable information to the customers, so that they can make informed choices. For example, customers may know the period within which to use the food that they have purchased at Woolworths. Apart from this information given to customers, Woolworths donates food that have passed the "sell by date" but have not passed the "use by" date and "best before" date. Inevitably, such food would still be in in good condition to be consumed (Woolworths, 2021). Other measures include the fact that Woolworths has put forth recommendations to consumers on their website and YouTube platform on "Tasty ways to fight food waste" (Woolworths, 2021). The recommendations show consumers recipes to follow with their kitchen scraps like carrot peels and slightly squashed barriers (Woolworths, 2021). The Woolworths website also gives information on how the

consumer can play a role in reducing, reusing, and recycling food waste in their homes. This may be an indication that the brand is aware that food waste management is a collective responsibility, and the more customers are aware of their role, the better for the sustainability of food waste management. However, the researcher is keen to ascertain customers' perceptions in relation to Woolworths being seen as a brand with purpose.

2.3 Presenting the literature

The food waste hierarchy is presented by Papargyropoulou, Lozano, Steinberger, Wright, and Ujang (2014). Accordingly, the hierarchy has five levels of food management. These are presented in an inverse triangle shape in terms of being the least option to take. From the bottom, the levels are disposal, recovery, recycle, reuse and prevention (Papargyropoulou *et al.*, 2014). This therefore means that disposal is the least favourable option while prevention is the most preferred option. The aim of this framework is to get the best environmentally friendly outcome (Papargyropoulou *et al.*, 2014). As highlighted above, preventative measures form part of the largest component of this hierarchy and refers to avoiding food excess in the production and consumption of food. Reuse refers to making use of excess food such as donations to food banks or animal shelters (Papargyropoulou *et al.*, 2014). Recycling refers to excess food being recycled, such as compost or being used as animal feed (Papargyropoulou *et al.*, 2014). Recovery refers to making use of the energy unavoidable food waste carries (Papargyropoulou *et al.*, 2014). Lastly, the least favourable option is disposal, which refers to the disposal of excess food waste to the landfill site (Papargyropoulou *et al.*, 2014).

Research conducted by Papargyropoulou *et al.*, (2014) on the food waste hierarchy as a framework for the management of food surplus and food waste followed an interpretivist paradigm, making use of qualitative research. The context and the setting of this article highlights that food waste has global implications on environmental, social, and economic aspects. The sample consisted of 23 food waste specialists, divided into seven group interviews. The findings revealed that there were clear boundaries between the term's food surplus and food waste, avoidable and unavoidable food waste, waste prevention

and waste management. The gaps that are unavoidable to spot in this instance the proposed framework is not authenticated in real life simply because the cost benefit analysis was not included. Moreover, on the downside, the study is limited to the United Kingdom (UK) and that contributions from other parts of the world presents the study's generalizability shortfall. Overall, the paper is well written and informative, and the framework used will be valuable for study of food waste management practices as the researcher has chosen the food waste hierarchy as their theoretical framework. One limitation to note is that the study is conducted in the United Kingdom which is a developed country while South Africa is a developing country. As such, the researcher contends that they may not be feasible for the South African context.

Research on food waste conducted by Cuglin, Petljak and Naletina (2017), *explored* food waste generation and food waste prevention in the hospitality industry in Zagreb, Croatia the research followed exploratory face to face questionnaires with 28 empirical questions. The data was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. The context and the setting are restaurant, bistros, pizza areas and fast-food restaurants. The sample used was 20 respondents that were working in the hospitality sector. The main findings were that food most often wasted is 50% bread 40% vegetables 40% and meat being the most wasted. The study also shows that there are also unclear legislations and transport limitations around the issue of food waste recycling. The sample size was small and there were limitations on general conclusions. Overall small the sample size of this study is not fully reflective of the entire population and Zagreb forms part of a developing country. The researcher could draw some similarities for the South African context.

Research conducted by Keegan and Breadshell (2021), on *food waste and social practices* in Australian households, makes use of the social practice's theory. The study followed a mixed method approach, making use of both qualitative and quantitative research. The context and the setting of this research were 380 households in Australia. 21 participants completed food diaries and 64 completed surveys. As a result, the findings revealed that vegetables were the most disposed, inedible scraps and storage of food was the main reason for waste mostly thrown away. The gap is that it is bias with self-reported data. The researcher finds the paper to be informative as there is common thread to vegetables being the most wasted food. Therefore, there is a link between the findings of this paper and the

findings read on the previously mentioned literature by (Cuglin *et al.*, 2017). In self-reported data people can easily be dishonest. The survey included an online survey this would not work in South Africa because most of the systemic way of recording data is still done manually.

Research conducted by Oelofse, Muswema and Ramukhwath (2018), on *food waste of households* in South Africa, made some interesting findings. They made use of the triple bottom line, using a positivist paradigm, as well as quantitative research approach. The context and setting were households, in complexes and apartments. The findings of this research revealed that the food waste component of waste in Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg households was three percent and seven percent respectively. The data also demonstrates that the average food waste found is that starchy foods remain the most wasted foods in all income groups. With higher income groups wasting more and vegetables and rice than middle-income and low-income households. The study was limited to households in complexes and apartments and the waste that was measured was communal waste. Therefore, the results are limited due to bulk sampling from the waste collection service. The paper is set in South Africa which and is relevant to the country of study. However, there is still not enough literature written on food waste in South Africa. Urban households have been used for this study and 15% of south Africans the population is not a true reflection of the context of south Africa. In this regard, the researcher sees a common thread of vegetables being the most wasted food as previously mentioned by (Cuglin *et al.*, 2017) and (Keegan *et al.*, 2021).

Research conducted by Papargyropoulou, Wright, Lozano, Steinberger, Rory Padfield and Zaini Ujang (2016), on a *conceptual framework of food waste generation and prevention in the hospitality sector*, followed a mixed method approach. The setting and the context of the article is on investigating food waste in hospitality sector using the proposed conceptual framework. A case study of food waste generation at a hotel restaurant in Malaysia is used. The findings were that food waste is essentially linked to the way we deliver and consume food, bearing in mind the material and socio-cultural context of food consumption and food waste production.

Research conducted by Kilibarda, Djokovic and Suzic (2019) in the hospitality industry, on *food waste management reducing and managing food waste in hospitality*, made use of the supply chain and the triple bottom line, following a positivist paradigm, making use of quantitative research. The setting was in hospitality and managers were interviewed from a global scale. The findings revealed that food waste needs to be reduced in the hospitality sector. The gaps of this paper are visible because only managers were interviewed. As a result, the researcher and human resource and process of integration needs time the time was not specified.

Research conducted by Teller, Christoph, Holweg, Reiner and Herbert, (2018) on *Retail store operations and food waste*, made use of the food waste hierarchy and supply chain, following a positivist paradigm. The setting and context are retail and store operations across various store setups. The researcher's sample was conducted through case studies, including semi-structured interviews with store managers 28 cases across dominant retail stores and semi-structured interviews with 12 food waste experts. The findings were that certain subject matters around food waste such as replenishment policies, erratic demand, unwanted consumer behaviour differ across store systems and product classifications. Gaps were addressed in the findings. Research was confirmed by asking food waste experts. However, 12 is a small number. For similar research to be conducted in South Africa the findings would be different because the country does have food waste legislation around food waste, retail policies are different. Research only speaks to that setting not South Africa.

To conclude, the researcher reviewed literature on food waste although the topic is not food waste management practice of a specific retail brand. The literature still shows how consumers using food waste occurs. The researcher has also deduced that the most wasted type of food are vegetables as seen by the literature analysis above and as a result that will form part of an integral basis of this research. The literature reviewed by the researcher has taken either a qualitative approach, a quantitative approach, or a combination of the two. Lastly, most of the literature that the researcher reviewed are not within the South African context

because there is minimal research conducted on this subject matter therefore a gap arises for research to take place in this regard.

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Paradigm

Methodology forms an integral part of any study (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). As such, choosing the relevant tools to collect data needs to be carefully thought out (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). This choice would have to be in alignment with the paradigm or a world view on how one sees the world, a way of looking at the world or how one interprets the world (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). As highlighted in the theoretical framework, a theory is about the principles that helps the researcher to make analysis of given information (Bezuidenhout, 2014). Both the theory and paradigm guide the research approach. The paradigm influences the method of research, and the theory informs the interpretation of the research findings, which leads to informed recommendations (Bezuidenhout, 2014). In research, there are a number of approaches, all informed by a particular paradigm or theory. These includes Positivism, Interpretivism or Critical Approach.

The positivist holds the fundamental belief that society shapes the individual, whereas interpretivists believe that individuals shape society (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). In Critical Realism Approach, the researcher acknowledges the lived experiences of society and sees a need to bring about critical dialogue, conscientization, education, change or transformation (Freire, 1972). The choice of paradigm will influence the research design, research questions and research methods (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Similarly, the theory guides how information or data will be collected, analysed and interpreted (Bezuidenhout, 2014). Crotty (1998: 3, cited in Dammak, 2015) refers to ontology as “the nature of existence” while epistemology “deals with the nature of knowledge”. The positivist epistemologically believes in objectivity, and interpretivist epistemologically believe in subjectivity while Critical researchers epistemologically believe in subjectivity and change (Dammak, 2015).

An interpretivist researcher notes the powerful way in which an individual views the world by seeing all people as different based on time, environment, and contextual setting that they are in (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). As such the researcher’s methodology centres the experiences of individuals shaping society

because people that contribute to food waste along the supply chain play a role in shaping society (Welch, Swaffield & Evan, 2021). As a result, for this study, the research paradigm informing the research will be interpretivism. This research approach falls under the broad umbrella body of qualitative research in that it will use approaches that will look for the quality of information emerging (Demmak, 2015). Crotty (1998, cited in Demmak, 2015) suggests that interpretivists believe reality or truth is subjective, and that peoples' lived experiences are multi-layered and differ because all people are different. Consequently, people experience life differently based on their social context (Demmak, 2015).

Interpretivists collect qualitative data and there are several methods to do so (Demmak, 2015). For this research, the researcher will identify a retailer as a research design. Creswell (2008, cited in Demmak, 2015) highlights on the various methods of collecting data such as audio visual, open-ended questionnaires, observations, interviews, and documents. Based on academic literature articles focusing on food waste management this paradigm was generally not used in the topic area of food waste and looking at the consumers perspectives as well meaningful or purposeful brand.

The researcher therefore finds it appropriate to make use of interviews and questionnaires to gain a deeper understanding from Woolworths's consumers perceptions on a brand with purpose in the case of Woolworths food waste management practices in Johannesburg, South Africa. The researcher will ask design structured, semi structures and unstructured questions because they are open ended. This will allow the researcher to elicit information from the interviewees (Demmak, 2015). The researcher will make use of the type of interviews that relates to the retail brand; Woolworths contributing towards being a meaningful brand using the food waste hierarchy as the theoretical framework.

Therefore, the interpretivist paradigm will be most fitting for this researcher to gain insight on consumers perceptions on a brand with purpose in the case of Woolworths food waste management practices and to see whether the brand's green heart assertion or what the brand says they do align with the consumers experiences of the brand.

3.2 Nature of research design

A cross- sectional design is a study that takes place at a one point in time as a result the researcher collected the data from the respondents once (Cherry, 2019). The researcher saw this method appropriate as it allowed the researcher to look at several characteristics at once such as gender, income, age to name a few as well as consumers' food waste management practices of Woolworths. For the purpose of this research, the researcher found it appropriate to use an inductive approach as interpretivists would rather collect information, take time to analyse the information and then formulate a theory based on all the information that has been analysed by the researcher (Du Plooy- Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). The researcher therefore worked in an inductive manner by first undertaking secondary research on Woolworths' food waste management practices. Thereafter the researcher conducted primary research by asking consumers on Woolworths' food waste management practices toward the brand being seen as a brand with purpose. The researcher then analysed the information and allowed for themes to emerge from the data collected (Braun and Clarke, 2012). For this research the researcher used exploratory nature research because it allows the researcher to provide deep insights into a particular topic (Yousaf, 2021).

3.3 Population

The population is the whole group from which the researcher wants to draw conclusions about (Bhandari, 2020). For this research, the researcher's population consisted of Woolworths consumers known to the researcher who shop at any Woolworths food retail in Johannesburg, South Africa, as this was convenient and is within proximity to the researcher (Bhandari, 2020). The population parameters of the study consisted of both males and females who are above the age of 18. The researcher chose participants who are aware of Woolworths and can have an opinion of the brand because they have formed a perception on the brand.

3.4 Sampling

A sample is a definite group from which the researcher will accumulate data from (Bhandari, 2020). The size of the sample is always smaller than the total population (Bhandari, 2020). A small sample of eight participants that were known to the researcher were selected as this is what is required to conduct qualitative research. The characteristics that the researcher based their sample on were participants that are both male and female consumers who shop at Woolworths food.

3.5 Sampling method

The researcher will not gain access to the entire population because it is physically and practically impossible to do so, therefore the sample will be selected from an accessible population (Pascoe, 2014). As previously alluded, this study is qualitative research as such the researcher is interested in the lived experiences of individuals therefore, the researcher did not generalise to the larger population as a result non- probability sampling method was seen as fit for this study (Pascoe, 2014). This method was used in order to gain in-depth perceptions and understanding of the research problem that the researcher is exploring and in order to reach data saturation (Pascoe, 2014).

Convenience sampling is used when the researcher knows that the items in the sample and are easily accessible (Pascoe, 2014). Purposive sampling is selecting people with purpose (Pascoe, 2014). Therefore, the researcher selected participants that are Woolworths' consumers in Johannesburg South Africa. As a result, the type of non-probability sampling that the researcher will make use of is purposive convenience sampling.

As such the participants will be people that are known to the researcher and have some sort of contact with them (Pascoe, 2014). The researcher selected the participants with a purpose and participants that were convenient at the time. The researcher is aware that this method could be significantly biased and to avoid

this the researcher's supervisor was be consulted regularly to limit the method approach from being bias.

3.6 Data Collection Method

Data collection is a tool that assists the researcher in finding answers to the research problem (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014). For the purpose of this research, the researcher has made use of the data collection tool of interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the individual perceptions of Woolworths consumers food waste management practices. This was based on their lived experiences, as such structured interviews were used. (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:188) argue that "interviews are valuable sources of information and, if conducted correctly, they allow you to interpret and understand the meaning of participants' answers to specific questions". The researcher asked questions that brought out the perceptions that customers have in relation to Woolworths's food waste management practices in the context of a meaningful brand and using the food waste hierarchy as the theoretical framework.

The interview format was in a form of a flowing conversation between the interviewer and interviewee (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). The researcher made use of standardised open-ended interview approach, as such the researcher found this approach appropriate because all participants received the same set of questions, subsequently simplifying the thematic analysis of the interviews (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). Due to covid-19 strict regulations, the researcher conducted the interviews online. The researcher made sure to pre-test the data collection method before interviewing the sample participants (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014). The researcher did not ask leading questions, or questions that are unclear and double-barrelled questions (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014) to avoid bias.

Qualitative structured interviews were conducted. The interview questions were led by the theory and were compiled in such a way that answers the objectives of the study. Purposive sampling was used to sample eight participants that were known to the researcher. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic alert level four announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa during the time period of data collection the researcher therefore scheduled the interviews with each participant through

WhatsApp message as the participants were known to the researcher and the researcher had their contact details. The researcher emailed ethical clearance forms to participants to be signed and returned to the researcher before the scheduled interviews were conducted. Interviews were conducted through Zoom during the month of July. The researcher asked each participant for permission to record the interviews prior recording. The interview recordings were later transcribed and used for analysis.

3.7 Data Analysis Method

When data has been collected, its interpretation is very important, as such, choosing the right analysis method is important. For the purposes of this study, thematic analysis method was used. Braun and Clarke (2012) suggest a research data analysis method that systematically identify, organise and provide theme patterns in a data set, by focusing on the gist/ the meaning of a dataset. Thematic analysis enables the researcher to recognize and understand collective or shared meanings and experiences of the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Moreover, using thematic analysis is aligned to interpretivism in an inductive process where the researcher allows the themes to come from the data. In this way, the researcher did not decide on what themes will be reported on beforehand (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Consequently, the researcher has looked at the themes that have emerged and has looked at what previous literature that has been discussed. Thematic analysis is most commonly used in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2012). As such the researcher has used themes to present the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This data analysis method has assisted in finding the key issues that are under investigation on food waste management practices of Woolworths consumers in the context of Woolworths contributing towards being seen a meaningful brand or a brand with purpose.

Braun and Clarke (2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012) argue that there is a six-stage approach to thematic analysis that the researcher has made use of when analysing the data after the data collection process (Braun & Clarke, 2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012). The six stages are presented below:

Step 1: Familiarising with the data

The researcher familiarised themselves with the data collected by listening to the audio recording of the in-depth interviews repeatedly and taking time to transcribe the recorded version of the interviews and reading the answers repeatedly to submerge themselves into the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Step 2: Generating initial codes

The researcher generated the codes into themes based on what passed literature has said and based on the interviews common emerging terminology between participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Step 3: identifying for themes

The researcher has used the themes that have emerged from the coding to outline the discussion of the research (Braun & Clarke, 2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Step 4: Reviewing potential themes

The codes that the researcher found were combined and then labelled in such a way that they to create preliminary themes which were reviewed by the researcher, the researcher adapted and furthermore collated the preliminary themes into four main themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

The researcher defined the themes that emerged from coding, to do this the researcher clearly stated what is exclusive and specific about each and every theme by summing up the essence of each theme in a brief sentence and making sure that the theme aligns with the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Step 6: Interpretation of the findings and producing the report

The researcher interpreted the findings of the research and made sure to relate it back to the theory and the literature reviewed on food waste in general and Woolworths's food waste management practices in the context of a meaningful

brand. The researcher ensured that the report is clear and detailed with a well stemming argument that speaks to the research question of food waste management practices of Woolworths consumers in the context of a meaningful brand or a brand with purpose (Braun & Clarke, 2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012). This process entire six step process was repeated until data saturation was reached.

3.8 Trustworthiness, transferability, and validity

In qualitative research trustworthiness is the term used to determine the reliability and validity of a research study 'trustworthiness', is further divided into credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The researcher has aligned the data collection, analysis and interpretation, method to the research goal of exploring Woolworths's consumers food waste management in the context of a meaningful brand and research question as this ensures the trustworthiness of the study (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014)

Credibility

The Criteria for credibility include determining whether the results of qualitative research are reliable or believable from the perspective of research participants (William, 2021). The researcher has used structured interviews using the established method. The research pertaining to Woolworths's consumers food waste management practices in the context of a meaningful brand is academic research as a result the data is to be transformed into a reliable report. In this way, the researcher ensures that only the respondent is required to provide reliable answers without any consequences or financial rewards for biased answers.

Transferability

This criterion of transferability refers to the gradation of which findings of the qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contextual settings (William, 2021). Based on method and questions asked other researchers can find similarity connections between this study and other literature. This study is to therefore be transferable to any Woolworths brand and pertains to food waste management practices of Woolworths consumers in the context of a meaningful brand.

Dependability

This criterion of dependability emphasizes that researchers need to understand the constantly changing environment in which research is being conducted. The research is responsible for describing changes in the environment and how these changes affect researcher methods (William, 2021). The researcher has followed a structured method and reflection. Eight participants known to the researcher were asked to partake in the interview as a result this is not representative of the entire population of South Africa this therefore makes the dependability of the research fall short.

Confirmability

This criterion of confirmability refers to the degree at which the results of the research could potentially be verified or confirmed by others (William, 2021). For the research to be confirmed and to ensure that the research is trustworthy the researcher was transparent at all steps. The researcher made sure to do the best of their ability to adhere to all steps as honestly and accurately as possible. The researchers supervisor assisted to reduce bias so that the researcher does not ask unethical questions or questions that will manipulate the trustworthiness of the research.

Section D: Findings and Interpretation

In this section, the researcher will present the findings and interpret them through the emerging from themes that have emerged from the research. As suggested in the data analysis, method interpretation of the findings and producing of the report is the final stage (Braun & Clarke, 2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012). From the eight interviews conducted by the researcher, the researcher has identified four major themes as shown in table 1 below. Based on the questions that were asked, the researcher will discuss and draw interpretation of each theme below (Braun & Clarke, 2006 cited in Braun & Clarke, 2012):

Table 1: Summary of themes

Themes	Interview question	Objective
Theme 1: Quality	Question 3, 4 & 6	Objective 2
Theme 2: Consumer's food waste	Question 5	Objective 2
Theme 3: Meaningful brand	Question 9, 10 & 11	Objective 2
Theme 4: Consumer's awareness of Woolworths food waste	Question 7 & 8	Objective 3

4.1 Findings and interpretation of themes

Theme 1: Quality

Merriam Webster dictionary defines quality as how good or bad something is (Merriam Webster, 2021). Its synonyms include grade or calibre (Merriam Webster, 2021). For the purposes of this research, quality will be defined in relation to food. As such this would imply how good or bad the food is. It is important to add that as far as food is concerned, there are certain characteristics such as taste, grade and produce that may determine if the food is good or bad. Consequently, the theme of quality encompasses participants being asked on the reason why they shop at Woolworths food as this has implications on their perspective in relation to their view on food waste management strategies. As highlighted in the interview

question column in the table above, participants were asked three questions (see Annexure C) in relation to the reasons for shopping at Woolworths as well as the frequency of buying at Woolworths. Moreover, they were asked about words that they could associate with Woolworths's food.

When participants were asked on the reason why they shop at Woolworths's food. Most of the participants responded that they shop at Woolworths because of the quality and freshness of the brands' products. For example, Participant 1 asserted that it is "because their fresh food is unmatched in this country", while Participant 2 said "quality, fresh and very convenient" adding that "it is next to my house".

Freshness of the brand is important as it determines the shelf life of the products. As a result, when participants were asked on their frequency to Woolworths's food. Most of the participants responded that they frequent the retail store on a weekly basis. They said this is because they prefer their fruits and vegetables to be fresh. Participant 3 elaborated that "I can buy more fresh things so that's how I do it weekly". Participant 6's response revealed a higher frequency; "at least three times a week".

Consequently, quality was an important consideration for consumers shopping at Woolworths. Additionally, quality was the word that came up most often from most of the participants when asked for words associated to Woolworths (see Annexure E)

Interpretation of theme 1: Quality

As revealed in the finding above, Participant 1 strongly mentioned that Woolworths's food is "*unmatched in this country*". On the other hand, Participant 6 also mentioned that Woolworths's food is "*fresher*" and "*lasts longer*". This reaffirms that participants associate Woolworths with good quality. The researcher finds this important because from a food waste perspective it means that quality food is not going to perish easily. As a result, this means that the participants perceive Woolworths fresh produce to last longer than other retail brands in Johannesburg, South Africa. And this has a strong linkage with their green heart symbol.

Fresh fruit and vegetables being purchased weekly by participants suggest that they prefer their produce to be fresh and they want to limit wasting. This links with previous literature by Cuglin, Petljak & Naletine (2017) on fresh produce such as vegetables accounting for 40% of the most wasted food (Cuglin et al., 2017). In the researcher's opinion, this could suggest that the reason behind consumers buying their fresh fruits and vegetables is because they are aware of food waste, and they want to limit wasting food.

Theme 2: Consumer's food waste

Food waste refers to food that had been produced for human consumption that is not eaten (Food and Agriculture Organisation FAO, 2020). As such the consumers food waste refers to food that the consumer has purchased from Woolworths and is not eaten. As highlighted in the interview question column in the table above, this theme encompasses participants being asked on their food waste practices as per Annexure C. Most participants mentioned that they throw away their food waste. Most participants demonstrated a sense of guilt when answering the question this was analysed by the researcher in the tone of their voices and facial expressions. For example, in answering the question about food wastage in the consumers household there were notables pauses that participants such as Participant 5 revealed during the interview: "*[pause] we don't waste food we eat it*" and further said "*uhmm and I find it very offensive to throw away food*". Similarly, participant 6 said "*yeah guilty, guilty some of it does go into the bin*".

Interpretation of theme 2: Consumers food waste

The findings of this theme are important to the researcher when it comes to this research topic. This is because it shows what Woolworths's consumers are doing at home with food waste. For example in answering the question on food wastage in the consumers household, Participant 5 felt strongly against wasting food and even mentioned that she finds wasting food offensive "*I find it very offensive to throw away food*". Based on the responses to this question the researcher deduced that consumers are aware of the food that they waste at home. As a result, they try to limit their food wastage by freezing or blanching food as an example and

shopping their fresh produce on a weekly basis as previously mentioned in order to avoid wasting food.

On the same question, Participant 4 mentioned that they have a look at the 'sell by' or 'best before' date to determine whether to throw the food away or not. This links with previous literature that was discussed on the Woolworths website where labelling on the packaging is there to guide the consumer on how to buy and save food while the main aim of the packaging is to reduce food waste (Woolworths, 2021). Although only one out of the eight participants mentioned this strategy that Woolworths has in place, this has demonstrated to be effective in that aspect. From the analysis of body language and tone of the response toward the question of Woolworths consumers food waste management practices the researcher also deduced that the consumers do not practice the food waste management practices because of the brand but by their own lived experiences, and this was relative to each participant.

Theme 3: Meaningful brand

Meaningful brand refers to the participants' perception of the brand adding value to their lives (Cook et al., 2010). Consequently, the theme of meaningful brand encompasses participants being asked three questions as highlighted in the interview question column in the table above, and further elaborated in (see Annexure C). These questions were in relation to the consumer considering the brand to being meaningful and how the brand offers value to the consumer as well as how the consumer would be affected if the brand closed tomorrow.

A close ended question was asked to the participant regarding them considering Woolworths to being a meaningful brand. Most participants answered 'yes'. Only one participant (Participant 1) had mixed feelings to the question and answered both 'yes' and 'no'.

For example, Participant 1 mentioned how Woolworths had a great prepositioning of having a variety of readymade meals compared to other retail brands participant 1 said *"Uhhh and like also like readymade like fridge meals I don't think there's other supermarkets that has the variety that Woolworths does, obviously like Checkers is like catching up now with their simple truth or whatever but it's still not as good as Woolies"*.

On the other hand, they answered 'No' to Woolworths being a meaningful brand as the participant mentioned that some of the brands fresh goods are imported and therefore the brand is not doing enough to support local farming. Moreover, another respondent answered 'no' based on the negative experience they have had with Woolworths brand as a whole. This closed ended question was used as a lead to participants being asked a question on how the brand offers value to the consumer.

There were a variety of views when responding to the question. Three of the participants mentioned that the brand offers value through the quality of the brands products. For example, Participant 7 responded that this was evident *"Through the quality products that they sell"*, while Participant 5 asserted that *"They don't they are very expensive they don't offer any value they are just expensive"*. The participants were asked if they would be affected if Woolworths closed tomorrow. Most of the respondents answered 'yes' with reasoning. Toward this end, Participant 1 said *"I think I would really struggle to get like fresh fruit"* and Participant 6 said *"Yeah I definitely would [laugh] because it really is my preferred uhmm grocer"*.

Interpretation of theme 3: Meaningful brand

The researcher finds the responses important from a food waste perspective in the context of a meaningful brand. Based on the lived experiences of the participants. Covid 19 has brought a lot of economic uncertainty as such, for example, participant 5 felt that the brand does not offer value because Woolworths is expensive. This suggests that the participant associates' price with value/ meaningful brand, interestingly enough, even participant 5, who strongly felt that Woolworths is not a meaningful brand mentioned that they would be affected if the brand closed tomorrow. This shows that Woolworths through their 'quality and 'freshness' of their products as previously mentioned has offered great value to its consumers. This is something that the researchers find aligns to the core meaning of brand with a purpose (Cook et al., 2010).

Theme 4: Consumer's awareness of Woolworths food waste

For this study, Consumer awareness refers to the knowledge that Woolworths has provided consumers with on food waste. Consequently, the two questions highlighted in the interview question column in the table above, and further elaborated in Annexure C were asked. This theme encompasses the participants being asked questions on Woolworths's food waste management practices known by the consumer. As well as ways in which Woolworths has educated the consumer on food waste. When participants were asked on Woolworths's food waste management practices known by the consumer. The researcher observed that participants experienced problems in answering the question. For example, participant 2 associated food waste with plastic. As such the researcher changed the question to the remaining seven participants by providing examples to the question.

The research revealed that some of the participants are aware of the packaging practises of Woolworths. For example, one of the participants mentioned that the way that Woolworths onions are packaged is in such as a way that when one onion when rots, it does not affect the other. Some of the responses included Participant 1's observation about *"ready-made food section"*, while participant 3 asserted that *"I've heard they give it away maybe to like orphanages or something I'm not quite sure how true that is what I have heard."* On the other hand, Participant 7 mentioned that they don't know of any food waste management practices of Woolworths. The participants were asked a question on ways in which Woolworths educates consumers on food waste. Most of the participants were not aware of the ways that the brand has educated consumers on food waste.

Interpretation of theme 4: Consumer's awareness of Woolworths food waste

Woolworths seem no to be doing enough to communicate their food waste strategies. This is because most participants did not know what Woolworths's food waste management strategies were. For example, when the researcher asked the participants about Woolworths educating consumers on food waste Participant 3'

s response was "[Shake head] I don't recall of any" and Participant 7 responded "[Long pause] No never". As per the literature review, Woolworths has provided invaluable information to the customers, so that they can make informed choices (Woolworths, 2021). For example, customers may know the period within which to use the food that they have purchased at Woolworths. In the researcher's opinion there is a lack of active education to the consumer on how they have been meaningful based on their food waste management strategies.

Participant 6 mentioned: "[pause] uhmm I know that they had. I'm not sure if it was a campaign but where they were explaining the difference between uhmm 'use by' and 'expiry date' that the 'use by' is not necessarily like its off but it's very close to being to being off."

This therefore links with previous literature on the Woolworths website that Woolworths has used as a food waste strategy of the sell 'use by' and 'expiry date' that the 'use by' (Woolworths, 2021).

4.2 Conclusion of findings

Based on the information above, in general the consumers perceptions about Woolworths being a meaningful were positive, and they mainly related to the quality of Woolworths and the freshness of the brands produce. Consumers considered Woolworths to be a meaningful brand based on interaction from the four themes: Quality, Consumers Food Waste, Meaningful Brand and Consumer Awareness of Woolworths Food Waste. The theme of Quality of the food is important because the brand offers good quality through the freshness of their products as a result the food does not perish easily. The theme of Consumer food waste is important because of the type of food that consumers waste which are mainly fresh produce as related to previous literature. The theme of Meaningful is important brand because the participants said the brand has offered value through the quality and freshness of their products.

The theme of Consumer awareness is also important because it shows what Woolworths consumers are doing with food waste from the brand in their households.

Based on the information collected by the researcher from the literature review as well as the data analysis from the researcher's sample. The researcher has deduced that the consumers to this study perceive Woolworths to being a meaningful brand.

The main research objective questions of Woolworths' food waste management strategies, the consumer perspective of food waste management strategies as they relate to consumer for waste as well as what makes a brand meaningful/brand with a purpose, specifically in relation to Woolworths food strategies have been answered through the analysis of this data.

The practices were identified in the literature review and detailed Woolworths's food waste practices available on their website. The practices that they are currently doing include packaging their products in the most suitable way so that when the food is being transported along the supply chain it is kept in tack, safe and hygienic, and as a result extending the food shelf life and consequently prevents food waste (Woolworths, 2021). Moreover, the packing also has clear instructions/ labelling on how to store the contents of the food, how to prepare and how to cook the food and where possible Woolworths recommends the serving size of the food so that the consumer knows how much to serve in order to prevent food waste in their homes (Woolworths, 2021).

The research objective of the consumers perspectives of Woolworths food waste strategies as they relate to consumers food wastage was addressed. The main themes that were found were quality of food, consumer food waste, meaningful band, consumer awareness. Meaningful brand from the consumers perspective. Participants considers the brand to meaningful because of the freshness and quality of the brand products. These are therefore the perceptions of the consumers when it comes to Woolworths's food waste management practices. The research objective on what makes a brand meaningful/brand with purpose, specifically in relation to the Woolworths food waste strategies. From a consumer's perspective they consider Woolworths to be a meaningful brand because of the brands quality.

4.3 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the researcher recommends that in future, a quantitative study in relation to the food waste management strategies of Woolworths in the context of a meaningful brand to be conducted as it would be interesting to compare with demographics. Moreover, a larger sample size could give a different approach to this research topic. as such, a different perspective of interviewing the brand would be insightful for future research.

Based on the data from the consumers/ participants answers of the questions, the researcher answers yes to brand being meaningful. However, with regards to the food waste management practices of the brand the researcher suggests that the brand needs communicate their food waste practices more openly. This is because although the literature review shows that they have food waste management strategies, it appears that the consumers are not entirely aware of their efforts. For example, Woolworths has the 'tasty ways to combat food waste', but the participants in the study were not aware.

Ethical Considerations, Limitations and Trustworthiness

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Literature suggests that ethics refers to a perspective, method, and procedure on making a decision on how to proceed and analyse complex issues and problems when conducting research this also mean adhering to ethical principles such as honesty, objectivity, integrity, carefulness, openness, transparency, accountability and confidentiality when conducting research (David & Resnik, 2020). As previously mentioned, the researcher knew the participants of this study as such the analysis includes that knowledge. The researcher changed the one of the questions as the participants were relating food waste management practices with plastics. As such the researcher provided examples and definitions to participants when doing interviews because they did not understand some of the terminology. This could have had an effect of the researcher steering the direction of the answers to the research topic which could appear to be a bias. The researcher is aware that cognitive bias is an important consideration, as such the

researcher's thoughts/value/culture/gender has had major contribution on the way the data has been analysed.

3.5 Limitation & Trustworthiness of the study

Limitations refers to any possible challenges that the researcher anticipated for conducting the study (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The researcher has therefore identified limitations to this study that could impact the trustworthiness of this research. All the participants chosen for this study were known to the researcher. The researcher knew that the participants chosen shopped at Woolworths. The researcher chose participants that the researcher knew has a basic understanding of food waste management practices. The researcher knew that the participants would be open and honest in answering the questions because of the relationship that the researcher has with the participants chosen. As such, there were instances where the participants did not have to say certain phrases or even complete their sentences and the researcher knew what they were trying to say. Time was a limitation to this study. The time that the researcher used to put the research and to correspond with the participants was a limitation, and the Covid 19 restrictions added another pressure. The researcher had to rely on online communication such as Zoom and was not able to have a human face to face contact.

3.6 Conclusion

The research goal of gaining a thorough understanding of the extent to which Woolworths's food can be described as a "meaningful" brand or a brand "with purpose" in the context of food waste management practices was achieved. The research questions were set out in such a way that the findings, themes and interpretations of the questions asked would answer the objectives of the study.

The food waste management strategies of Woolworths were identified in the literature review. The consumers perspectives of Woolworths food waste strategies as they relate to consumers food wastage was achieved through the

three themes of Quality, Consumers Food Waste and Consumer Awareness of Woolworths Food Waste. The last objective of what makes a brand meaningful/brand with purpose, specifically in relation to the Woolworths food waste strategies was achieved through the theme of meaningful brand. It has been concluded by the researcher that Woolworths is a meaningful brand based on the quality and freshness of their products. When it comes to their food waste management strategies/practices, the researcher has concluded that the brand needs to actively communicate and educate consumers on their food waste management practices more visibly. This is because participants in the study, who are Woolworths consumers are not entirely aware of their food waste management practices. As mentioned, although the sample was small, the researcher argues that perhaps this lack of knowledge may apply to other customers.

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Annexure A

CONSENT FORM

Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants

To whom it may concern,

My name is Limpho Mokuku and I am a student at [Vega]. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of (Dr Tish Taylor) about [Exploring Woolworths consumers' perceptions on a brand with purpose: The case of Woolworths food waste management practices in Johannesburg, South Africa.]. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of [Woolworths food waste management practices in the context of meaningful brand]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 (insert reason). If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to (explain exactly what participation will involve).

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. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your (insert what you are examining). 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 [Woolworths], 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 [Post graduate diploma in brand building]. 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:

[Limphe Mokuku]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

[Dr Tish Taylor]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Annexure B

Participant or respondent consent

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by [Limphe Mokuku] about [Exploring Woolworths consumers' perceptions on a brand with purpose in case of Woolworths food waste management practices in Johannesburg, South Africa].

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

- I agree to be interviewed for this research.
- My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
- My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
- I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.

- 2.How old are you?
 - 3.Why do you shop at Woolworths?
 - 4.How often do you shop at Woolworths and why?
 - 5.Explain what you do with food waste in your household?
 - 6.When thinking of Woolworths, which three words come to mind?
 - 7.Please provide examples of Woolworths' food waste management practices that you know about.
 - 8.Please describe ways you can recall, if any, that Woolworths has educated consumers on food waste?
- A meaningful brand/ a brand with purpose according to Havas' healthy brand criteria; as a brand that adds value to people's lives and is sustainable, (Cook *et al.*, 2010).
- 9.Would you consider Woolworths to be meaningful brand or a brand with purpose?
 - 10.How does the brand offer value to the consumer?
 - 11.Would you be affected if Woolworths closed tomorrow and why?

Annexure D

The following table summarizes the results from the respondents from Question 3 to Question 11

FIRST ORDER CODING	Themes
Taste, fresh food, fruits, vegetables, last longer [unmatched]. Quality, fresh convenient Quality, taste, portion size, rare ingredients, exclusive Convenient, fresh Taste, fruit, spices [looks nice] Fresh, lasts longer Fresh, quality, fruit, vegetable Quality [reputable brand]	Quality
Three or four times a week, fresh fruit – every week, bulk once Twice a week, fruits, bread [kids lunchbox] Weekly basis- more fresh things Weekly, fresh food Weekly, fruit, salad [spontaneously] Three times a week Once a week, vegetables, once a month bulk Every three weeks [specific products]	Quality
Throw away Throw away, freeze, fruit, bread, shakes Throw away Expiry date, throw away Don't waste food [finds its offensive] Try no to throw away, garden Throw away, freeze, blanch Throw away	Consumer food waste
Delicious, fresh, sweet Delicious, fresh, premium Quality, pricey and taste fresh, delicious, quality Meticulous, clean, crooks Quality, fresh, pricy quality, value for money, good customer service Quality, organic, local	Quality
Readymade food Chucked away, plastics I don't know, donate to orphanage [I've heard] Readymade food, roasted chicken, sandwiches I think staff also is given a bit of a discount, donate to charity [I've heard] Employees buy certain food at discount, don't know None Packaging, plastics, ready made meals	Consumer awareness
Plastics Tv screen don't recall Haven't seen XXXX A campaign -'use by' and 'expiry date' that the 'use by' No Never Don't educate, not following- not interested [My School thing?]	Consumer awareness
Yes/No Yes Yes Yes Based on experience; No	meaningful brand

Yes Yes Yes	
Exclusive Donate, class, quality Value, service differentiated Quality, sustainable, packaging Expensive Sourced suitably, free range [less guilt] Quality, service locally sourced, economy, organic, environment	meaningful brand
Yes, fresh fruit fresh, choice, organic No, Checkers, Food Lovers [loose on prepared meals] Yes, save compared to Spar, Pick 'n Pay Yes, grapes, wings, sparkling grapefruit Yes, exclusive ingredient Yes, organic, quality No, Checkers	meaningful brand

Annexure E

Consumers assumption
of Woolworths food.

03



● Quality

Consumers frequency to
Woolworths.

04



● Quality

Consumers food waste
practices.

05



● Consumers food waste

Words associated with Woolworths food.

06

delicious
quality
fresh
sweet
pricy
value
good customer service
clean premium
crooks service
money
customer taste

● Quality

Woolworths food waste management practices known by consumers.

07

readymade
plastic
discount
employees
packaging
charity
premium
certain food
meal
chucked
none
roasted chicken
staff
bit

● Consumer awareness

Woolworths educating consumers on food waste.

08

Don't educate
Don't recall
plastics
tv screen
haven't seen
'expiry date'
'use by'
'sell by'
none

● Consumer awareness

Consumers considering Woolworths to being a meaningful brand.

09

yes
based no
experience

● Meaningful brand

How the brand offers value to the consumer.

10

quality locally
sourced value
sustainable organic
service
differentiated
packaging donate
class expensive free range

● Meaningful brand

Affected if Woolworths closed tomorrow.

11

prepared meal
yes fresh
Food Lovers quality
ingredients
choice save
Checkers exclusive
organic

● Meaningful brand