



**An exploratory study on the management of food waste through meaningful brands:
A Starke Ayres case study**

Melisca Louwrens

Student No: [REDACTED]

Navigator: Ivan Mkhomazi

Postgraduate Diploma in Brand Building

Module Code: RMET8429p

Research Report

Vega School: PTA Campus

1 August 2022

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

Abstract

Food waste is a rising global concern and impacts all people and the environment. It is crucial to address the issue of food waste to ensure a sustainable future with enough food to meet the ever-increasing food demand in the world. There are many food waste management techniques in use, but prevention is always better than cure. The F1 hybrid seeds produced by Starke Ayres, are a preventative solution to food waste as these hybrids have better disease resistance, fruit quality, and longer shelf life. However, the consumer does not understand what F1 hybrid seeds are and how it benefits the consumer and the environment. The researcher wanted to explore to what extent the brand can be described as meaningful and healthy and found that even though the brand has a strong purpose and offers products that are considered meaningful, it does not translate to the consumer. The researcher wanted to understand why the miscommunication between the brand and its consumer is happening and identify possible solutions for the brand to be truly meaningful and healthy. This study conforms to the applied research purpose and aims to uncover a practical solution for the Starke Ayres brand. The research was conducted using the interpretivism paradigm with an exploratory nature. The research for this study was conducted through three semi-structured in-depth interviews to gain a thorough and subjective understanding of the consumer's perceptions and behaviours in relation to food waste and the brand's solution, F1 hybrid seeds. The data were analysed using a thematic analysis approach to uncover themes and commonalities in the participant's responses. The findings of this study indicate that the brand lacks effective communication with the consumer. This study assists the brand to implement better communication strategies to educate the consumer and ultimately reduce or prevent food waste at all levels.

Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT.....	1
1.1. Research topic.....	1
1.2. Rationale.....	2
1.3. Problem statement.....	3
1.4. Aim of the research.....	4
1.5. Research questions.....	5
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	5
2.1. Theoretical framework.....	5
2.2. Food waste management.....	6
2.3. Consumer behaviour and food waste.....	7
2.4. Adding value through purpose-driven brands.....	8
2.5. Social media as a useful medium.....	9
3. METHODOLOGY.....	10
3.1. Interpretivist paradigm.....	10
3.1.1. Interpretivist ontology.....	10
3.1.2. Interpretivist epistemology.....	11
3.1.3. Interpretivist methodology.....	11
3.2. Research design.....	12
3.2.1. Population.....	12
3.2.2. Sampling.....	13
3.2.3. Data collection method.....	14
3.2.4. Data analysis method.....	15
3.3. Anticipated contributions.....	16
4. ANALYSIS OF DATA FINDINGS.....	16
4.1. Theme 1: Food waste management and consumer behaviour.....	16
4.2. Theme 2: Consumer perceptions of meaningful and healthy brands.....	18

4.3. Theme 3: F1 hybrids and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs).....	19
4.4. Theme 4: The use of social media.....	20
5. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	21
6. FEASIBILITY.....	21
6.1. Trustworthiness of the study.....	21
6.2. Ethical considerations.....	23
6.3. Limitations of the study.....	24
7. CONCLUSION.....	24
8. REFERENCE LIST.....	27
9. APPENDICES.....	34
9.1. Appendix 1: Research instrument.....	34
9.2. Appendix 2: Signed consent forms.....	37
9.3. Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance Letter.....	43
9.4. Appendix 4: Interview transcripts.....	45

List of tables

Table 1: Interview schedule.....	15
----------------------------------	----

1. Introduction and context

Food waste is defined as substances meant for human consumption but were rejected, discarded, deteriorated, or tainted (Giroto, Alibardi, and Cossu, 2015). Due to its environmental, social, and economic consequences, the extraordinary volume of food waste in global food supply chains is gaining recognition (Papargyropoulou, Lozano, Steinberger, Wright, and Ujang, 2014). Food waste leads to the excessive use of fossil fuels and freshwater. This, together with the methane and carbon dioxide emissions from decomposing foods, contributes significantly to climate change (Hall, Guo, Dore, and Chow, 2009). Moreover, food is an essential resource that requires a substantial number of funds to process and dispose of the third of food wasted globally (Slorach, Jeswani, Cuéllar-Franca, and Azapagic, 2019). Today, approximately one billion people are going hungry, which makes reducing food waste crucial for a sustainable future (Sánchez-Teba, Gemar, and Soler, 2019). Nelson (2018) estimates that by the year 2050, the world population will reach 9.7 billion people and increase the food availability need in the world by up to 70%.

This project aims to explore whether Starke Ayres can be described as a meaningful and healthy brand in relation to food waste management (The IIE, 2022). In addition, this project will provide recommendations as to how Starke Ayres can improve its food waste management system if needed. Furthermore, this project will explore how Starke Ayres can effectively communicate the importance and responsible practices to its consumers using its various social media platforms to reduce food waste's negative impact on the environment and the future.

1.1. Research topic

It's tough to give definitive instructions when it comes to identifying and selecting a study topic because there are so many options (Du-Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). There are many areas available in which a researcher might find inspiration for a research topic such as personal observation and experience, social contexts, tradition and culture, theories and existing research, and the media (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). Although there is very little guidance available to construct a good research topic, the topic must relate to the problem and the type of research being conducted (Luse, Mennecke, and Townsend, 2012).

The key concept for this project is meaningful and healthy brands in relation to food waste management. The brief requires the researcher to choose a brand in which to analyse whether the brand can be described as a brand with purpose within its food waste management efforts (The IIE, 2022). The chosen brand for this project is Starke Ayres, a vegetable seed supplier

in South Africa. The main issue identified in the literature review and problem statement is that the brand is not successfully communicating its main contribution to food waste management, which is breeding F1 hybrid seeds, to the consumer. For this reason, this project will conduct exploratory research to determine why there is a gap in the communication between the brand and its consumers. Furthermore, this project aims to identify any potential recommendations as to how the brand can improve its communications to influence the consumer perception and transform their behavior.

Therefore, the topic for this study is:

An exploratory study on the management of food waste through meaningful brands: A Starke Ayres case study

1.2. Rationale

Food waste has detrimental environmental, social, and economic consequences (Papargyropoulou, Lozano, Steinberger, Wright, and Ujang, 2014), which leads to the excessive use of essential resources such as fossil fuels and freshwater (Hall, 2009). Moreover, implementing effective food waste management systems is crucial for developing a sustainable future (Sánchez-Teba, Gemar, and Soler, 2019). It is estimated that the food availability need will increase by up to 70% in the next thirty years (Nelson, 2018). These statistics clarify that food waste management is a crucial topic that needs to be discussed to ensure a sustainable future. A large portion of food waste happens in the pre-harvest phase. Planting varieties that do not have disease resistance packages or do not have weather tolerance can cause low yield or most of the crop to be unusable (CropLife, 2020). Although there are many methods available to dispose of food waste, these methods are not fully sustainable, and each has its own environmental issues. Therefore, it is recommended that preventing food waste is the best option (Slorach, Jeswani, Cuéllar-Franca, and Azapagic, 2019).

It was also found that the consumers lack the appropriate knowledge of best practices on how to properly buy and store food (Farr-Wharton, Foth and Choi, 2014), and they do not fully comprehend the importance of living sustainably in the context of food waste management (Kraus and Emontspool, 2017). The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) was used to understand how the consumers form their perceptions and how the brand can help consumers adopt a more sustainable lifestyle. The interpretive paradigm was used to conduct the research for this project. The expected outcome of this study is not to quantify or generalise information, but to rather understand the consumer perception to identify why there is a

miscommunication with regards to F1 hybrid seeds. Since the focus is more on the consumer's perception, the interpretive paradigm allows for a more personalized and adaptable study (Edirisingh, 2012) to gain a deeper insight to fully comprehend the complex context of the study (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). Interpretivist believes knowledge is subjective, that reality is dynamic and unstable and shifts as people's perspectives shifts. It is what people accept it to be (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

This project conducted a case study on the Starke Ayres brand, specifically the brand's breeding programmes and how it contributes to food waste prevention. There seems to be a misunderstanding between the brand and its consumers. Many consumers do not grasp the concept of F1 hybrid seeds and confuse these seeds with Genetically modified Organisms (GMOs). According to Cook, Enslin, Erwin, and Carmody, (2010), meaningful brands need to have a strong purpose and communicate consistently and effectively to the consumer. Furthermore, it conducted a qualitative study to understand why the miscommunication is happening and how it can be resolved.

1.3. Problem Statement

Du-Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014) stipulate that a research problem should comply with the following requirements: answerability, feasibility, scope, theoretical value, and relevance. The problem statement is a crucial component that communicates the research problems and background (McGaghie, William, Bordage, and Shea, 2001). The key objective of interpretive research is to obtain a more profound truth and an empathetic comprehension of society and human behaviour (Du-Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

In the pre-harvest phase, plant diseases and pests are the number one cause of food waste, and natural disasters such as floods are the second largest cause of food waste (CropLife, 2020). Planting sub-par quality vegetable seeds can lead to damage during handling and transport (Fadji, Coetzee, Chen, Chikwu and Opara, 2016), low resistance to pests and diseases, and vegetables being rejected at retail stores due to imperfections such as ununiform shape, off colours, and bruising which all contributes to food waste (CropLife). An Open Pollinated Variety (OPV) is an old variety that many companies can sell. The seed is readily and cheaply produced, but they lack many disease resistances, are low yielding, and are usually not uniform or stable (Ascough, 2022). F1 hybrid seed is produced through hand-pollinating two different pure breeding varieties so that the good characteristics of both parents are combined in the hybrid. This means that F1 hybrids are higher-yielding, very uniform and stable, more adaptable, and have improved disease resistance. The F1 seed costs more to produce but ultimately benefits the farmer by producing a better-quality crop (Ascough, 2022).

The biggest misconception among consumers is that the F1 hybrid seed equals Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO). There are no vegetable or flower GMOs in South Africa; the only GMOs planted are maize, soybean, and cotton (Ascough, 2022). According to Hsu (2016), it is the responsibility of a purposeful brand to address issues that influence human needs and communicate the impact effectively to the consumer (Cook et al, 2010).

Food waste is a rising global concern with various social, environmental, and economic impacts. Many methods are available for reducing and preventing food waste, such as breeding sustainable vegetable crops. As mentioned, environmental responsibility and compelling communication are requirements for a brand that aims to be meaningful (Cook et al, 2010). Starke Ayres claims to have invested heavily in its research and development department to breed F1 hybrid seeds with better yields, better disease resistance, higher fruit quality, good uniformity, and longer shelf life to combat food waste at the pre-harvest, handling and transport, retail, and consumer household phases (Ascough, 2022). However, there seems to be a miscommunication between the brand and its consumer as the consumer does not fully understand the concept and benefits of F1 hybrid seeds.

The purpose of this study is to explore whether Starke Ayres' vegetable breeding programmes positively impact food waste management and therefore reinforce the brand's vision of "growing together for a sustainable future" (Starke Ayres, 2022). Furthermore, through qualitative methodology, this study explores whether the brand is communicating the benefits of purchasing F1 hybrid seeds compared to open-pollinated varieties to the consumer and identify ways in how the brand can be more effective in communicating this to its consumers and possibly influence their perceptions and behaviour.

1.4. Aim of the research

The objective of applied research is to look at real-world problems and develop effective and practical answers (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). The applied research aims to enhance our insight into a particular issue with the purpose of contributing to its resolution (Hedrick, Bickman, and Rog, 1993). Applied research is either goal-oriented or practical (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). Therefore, qualitative approaches are essential in applied research since they allow for more in-depth analyses and understandings of the human consciousness (Watkins, 2017). Exploratory research is typically defined as studying an unfamiliar area (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2010). By navigating through a research topic, the exploratory analysis aims to discover something novel and fascinating (Swedberg, 2020). However, this form of research is riskier because it is impossible to predict whether something new will emerge (Swedberg, 2020). Since the research design must be adaptable to facilitate insight into an

unknown topic of research, reliability and validity are typically not scientific requirements in exploratory research (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

The IIE (2022) provided the following objectives for this project:

1. To explore whether Starke Ayres can be regarded as a purposeful brand in relation to food waste management (The IIE, 2022).
2. To explore the consumer's perspective of the Starke Ayres seeds (The IIE, 2022).
3. To identify effective communication methods to educate the Starke Ayres consumer (The IIE, 2022).

1.5. Research Questions

Research questions help us refine a vast issue to a specific area that research should focus on (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014, cited in Neuman, 2011). The researcher must speculate on the research's likely results and if the evidence required can be obtained promptly (Khoo, 2013). The difficulty in formulating an acceptable research question is establishing whether issues can or should be investigated and justifying the need for such a study (Farrugia, Petrisor, Farrokhyar, and Bhandari, 2010). This paper will follow the exploratory research aim, and therefore exploratory questions strive to answer the 'what' (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

The research questions for this study are:

- RQ₁: To what extent can Starke Ayres be described as a purposeful brand in relation to its breeding programmes (F1 hybrid seed)?
- RQ₂: What is the consumer's understanding of the Starke Ayres F1 hybrid seeds?
- RQ₃: How can Starke Ayres effectively communicate the value and impact F1 hybrid seed has on managing food waste to the consumer?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical framework

This project adopted the theory of planned behaviour, the researcher attempted to understand consumer motivators and intentions in relation to food waste management and how Starke Ayres can effectively convince the consumer to adopt a more sustainable approach through purchasing sustainably bred vegetables and changing food waste behaviours after purchase.

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) has been a favourite theoretical framework used by many researchers over the years to better understand health-conscious consumer behaviour (Sniehotta, Presseau, and Soares, 2014). The intention of an individual to undertake a specific behaviour is the TPB's crucial concept (Ajzen, 2011). Intentions are thought to convey the motivating variables that impact behaviour and to reflect how much somebody is willing to attempt or how much effort they are willing to put out to do the behaviour. Armitage and Conner (2001) added that intention prediction may vary depending on factors such as situation and behaviour. In terms of forecasting human behaviour, it is one of the most well-supported social psychological theories.

The primary idea is that behavioural decisions are the outcome of a rational process in which attitudes, norms, and perceived behaviour control impact behaviour (Sommer, 2011, cited Ajzen, 1991). Attitudes refer to how positive or negative a person's assessment of the behaviour is. Social norms are the perceived societal pressure to undertake or not execute the behaviour and the simplicity or complexity of carrying out behaviour is referred to as perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 2011).

TBP assisted this study by allowing the researcher and the brand to (1) understand how consumer perceptions are formed, (2) understand what motivates consumer behaviours, (3) to understand how the brand can influence consumer perception, to (4) change the consumer mindset and ultimately (5) change consumer behaviour in relation to food waste management.

2.2. Food waste management

Fruit and vegetable waste is an issue that is becoming increasingly prevalent around the world. A crop field is the first stage where loss can occur; according to CropLife (2020), plant diseases and pests can cause up to 50% of crops to be wasted. Between 2006 and 2016, drought caused an 83% food loss of the global crops planted, and between 2005 and 2015, an estimated \$96 billion worth of food was wasted due to natural disasters in the pre-harvest phase (CropLife, 2020). Damage during the handling and transporting of fresh produce is a major contributor to food loss and waste in the postharvest phase (Fadji, Coetzee, Chen, Chukwu and Opara, 2016). Many crops are rejected for cosmetic reasons when it reaches supermarkets. The fruit and vegetables might be perfectly good to consume, but supermarkets can reject the crops for being imperfect in the sense of shape, colour or bruising (CropLife, 2020).

There are many methods available to manage food waste. Slorach et al (2019) evaluated food waste's environmental and economic implications through four treatment methods, namely,

landfilling, incineration, anaerobic digestion, and in-vessel composting. The research has found landfilling to be the most expensive solution, with incineration being the cheapest option but not eco-friendly. Furthermore, the research found in-vessel composting to be unsustainable and anaerobic digestion proved to have the lowest impact on the environment. Anaerobic digestion tools make it easier to convert food waste into potential energy and fertiliser supplies while also reducing pollutants (Ji, Kong, and Mei, 2017). Plant nutrients, primarily from agriculture, can be found in food waste. For crop fields to preserve their fertility, the depletion of these nutrients must be replaced. Recycling these plants back into the soil is an easy method to replace the nutrients (Chiewa, Spångberga, Baky, Hanssona, and Jönsson, 2015). Despite these findings on managing food waste, prevention would result in a significantly larger economic and environmental reduction (Slorach et al, 2019).

A preventative method of managing food waste is to breed sustainable crops, known as F1 hybrid seeds. There are two types of seed available, open-pollinated varieties or F1 hybrids. When a seed is naturally pollinated by natural processes, it is referred to as open-pollinated (McDonalds Seeds, 2019). An F1 hybrid is created by crossing two distinct variants of the same crop to create a new, better variety (Sow Seeds, 2022). Syngenta Seeds, a division of the agricultural technology and global science supplier, Syngenta Group, believes that through its research and development of sustainable crops, it can reduce food waste in the long run (Syngenta Group, 2020). Syngenta has developed vegetable varieties that have improved transportability and longer shelf life, which means more vegetables will make it to the market and last longer in the consumers' fridges while retaining its natural flavour (Syngenta Group, 2020). Another example of how sustainable crops can reduce food waste is the global player, Enza-Zaden. Enza-Zaden has recently introduced a new cucumber variety with better disease resistance, longer shelf life, and improved postharvest qualities to combat vegetable food waste (Maxwell, 2021).

2.3. Consumer behaviour and food waste

There is an increasing concern rising regarding consumer food waste; approximately half of food waste occurs in consumer households (Hebrok and Heidenstrom, 2019). It is argued that consumer behaviour has a major impact on household food waste (Farr-Wharton, Foth and Choi, 2014). Farr-Wharton et al (2014) conducted a study to understand the reason for food waste in domestic households and found three contributing factors. The first identified factor is improper storage and lack of preserving food knowledge which causes food to expire before consumption. The second factor identified is ill-informed purchasing practices and the third

factor identified is cooking more food than needed and discarding the leftovers rather than consuming the food later on (Farr-Wharton et al, 2014).

Consumer behaviour plays an important role in food waste but understanding consumer attitudes is equally important. Even though sustainable consumption practices are preferable, many people do not follow them in reality. Kraus and Emontspool (2017) identified three responses to sustainable consumption. The first response is apathetic; the respondents are aware of the concept but do not engage with sustainability. The second response is overwhelmed; respondents are aware of the concept but feel that being sustainable is a daunting task. The third response is pragmatism; respondents are strongly in favour of sustainable consumption, such as purchasing seasonal, local, or organic items. Nonetheless, they restrict their efforts to reduce food waste, noting that you can't be fully responsible (Kraus and Emontspool, 2017). Based on the research, it is evident that the major problem in consumer behaviour with regard to food waste is the lack of knowledge of best practices and understanding of the importance of sustainable living.

2.4. Adding value through purpose-driven brands

Brands are expected to do more than sell a good product in today's world. Kramer (2020) explains that brands can no longer focus on its unique selling proposition as the market is saturated with an abundance of competitors offering the same product. Therefore, for a brand to be truly differentiated, it needs to focus on its unique value proposition. Cook, Enslin, Erwin, and Carmody (2010) argue that consumers want brands to add value to not just their lives but also consider the effect it has on the environment, all people, and animals. In comparison, Edmans (2018) further argues that brands need to change its mindset, where it is believed that for brands to do good, it must forfeit some of its profit. Investing in doing good for all people and the environment will ultimately grow profits and in turn, benefit all stakeholders as well as the shareholders. Edmans' argument focuses more on corporate social investment (CSI), whereas Cook et al (2010) believe that a healthy brand entails much more than just simply CSI, a brand's purpose, rather than its product or service, is what should define the brand and bring it to life. The purpose is the driving force in every aspect of the business (Cook et al, 2010). Kramer (2020) added that there is plenty of evidence to prove that a strong brand purpose can increase profit, and consequently many brands are reshaping its purpose to achieve maximum income.

Hsu (2016) states that it is critical for a brand purpose to address human needs and correlate with the consumer's beliefs. Cook et al (2010) further argue that when the purpose is shared by the brand and its consumers, effective communication occurs. A meaningful brand is an

excellent communicator at every brand contact point. Healthy brands offer goods that add value to the lives of consumers, create a fulfilling work environment for its employees, and build a sustainable planet (Edmans, 2018). A brand's sustainability means addressing current needs without jeopardising the future (Cook et al, 2010). The world is amid a radical shift in which purpose is becoming vital to business on all levels (Zackiewicz, 2022).

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, research showed that Unilever's purpose-driven brands are growing almost 70 percent quicker compared to some of its other brands. The pandemic has made consumers aware of the critical need to tackle sustainable issues (Zackiewicz, 2022). Consumers are adopting an optimistic response and behaviour in terms of purchasing items that are produced sustainably as their understanding of global social and environmental challenges develops (Kataria, Mukherjee, Biswas, and Garg, 2016). Shelton Group Inc (2014) agrees with the growing positive consumer attitudes toward sustainable brands but states that purchasing sustainable brand products does not align with the attitudes. Vermeir and Verbeke (2006) further argue that consumer attitude towards sustainable food products is positive but agrees that the intention to purchase these products remains low, stating that product availability, social norms and values contribute significantly to low purchase intention. Brands can reverse this decline in responsible purchasing by emphasising its relevance in lower-level necessities like security, wellness, and safety and placing responsible solutions more competitively versus non-sustainable options (The Shelton Group Inc, 2014). Vermeir and Verbeke (2006) further suggest that more accessible products and increasing consumer involvement through social pressure can certainly persuade more consumers to change their behaviours. These studies indicate that it is a brand's responsibility to lead and educate the consumer on purpose-driven sustainability to change their attitudes and mindsets regarding food waste and sustainability.

2.5. Social media as a useful medium

A purpose-led brand delivers consistent, genuine, and compelling communication (Cook et al, 2010). It is important for brands to communicate effectively to its audience to maintain position and differentiation in the mind of the consumer (Lekushoff, 2016). Studies have found that brand storytelling is effective in developing brand equity and brand recognition (FungHwa, Yang and Wooldridge, 2021).

Social media has transformed the way people communicate and how brands tell their stories (Powell, 2020). With more than 3.6 billion social media users globally (Statista, 2022), consumers' daily lives have become increasingly reliant on social media (Voorveld, 2019). Building consumer relationships are the primary goal of brand communication on social media.

Through access to key information, the interactive element of social media marketing brings depth to a brand's customers (Dwivedi and McDonald, 2020).

In addition to brands being able to communicate directly to the consumer, social media has also regenerated word-of-mouth marketing (Voramontri and Klieb, 2019). Social media provides its users with a participatory environment which makes it a constructive platform enabling people to join social movements, create awareness, and easily spread content to a vast audience (Hwang and Kim, 2015). Although Hwang and Kim (2015) discuss how social media can assist social movements, the same can be said for brands wanting to educate consumers on food waste management and sustainable living. Social media allows for accessibility to instant information and allows its users to discuss and collaborate with topics that interest them (Dewing, 2012).

3. Methodology

3.1. Interpretivist paradigm

A paradigm is the conceptual framework and belief system that assists researchers in understanding and communicating the nature of reality, what is known and how to obtain this knowledge (Rehman and Alharthi, 2016).

For the purpose of this project, the interpretivism paradigm was used. Researchers use the interpretive paradigm to see things through the eyes of the participants' views and experiences (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). As humans produce deeper meanings than physical phenomena can, interpretivism is more interested in in-depth characteristics and context-related aspects (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). The purpose of interpretivism studies is to identify cultural and social phenomena (Toloie-Eshlaghy, Chitsaz, Karimian, and Charkhchi, 2011). According to interpretivists, it is essential to comprehend the context of any type of research in order to properly interpret the information obtained (Thanh and Thanh, 2015).

3.1.1. Interpretivist ontology

Ontology has long been seen as a philosophical study concerned with the nature of being (Kroeze, 2012). It is the process of determining the truth or solution to a research topic by pointing to known forms of knowledge (Alharahshes and Pius, 2020). The reality of this project is that food waste is a global issue that is impacting the sustainability of the future. This project aims to evaluate whether the chosen brand, Starke Ayres, is making a positive impact on food

waste management with its sustainable breeding programs and provide insight as to how the brand can communicate this to its consumer to reduce food waste at the consumer level.

3.1.2. Interpretivist epistemology

Epistemology can be defined as the researcher's understanding of reality, it seeks to discover knowledge to arrive at reality (Alharahshes and Pius, 2020). Separately or collectively, humans generate perceptions of truth in their heads from concepts and opinions, and that truth is open to interpretation (Hiller, 2016), which means in the interpretative ontology there are multiple realities since individuals interpret events differently creating different perspectives (Mack, 2010). For the researcher to determine the reality, all viewpoints or perspectives must be examined and interpreted to fully understand the social phenomena (Mack, 2010). For the researcher to analyse the brand and make recommendations, the researcher must conduct a thorough analysis of the consumers' mindsets and beliefs to gain a deep understanding of the different consumer perspectives, behaviours, and attitudes in relation to food waste management and F1 hybrid vegetable breeding.

3.1.3. Interpretivist methodology

Methodology refers to the approach used to conduct the research and how the data will be collected (Alharahshes and Pius, 2020). It includes the design, techniques, approaches, and processes performed for a well-planned study (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Interpretivist mainly uses qualitative methods to gather data; it is believed that qualitative methods provide deeper insights that assist the researcher in fully comprehending the complex contexts of reality (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). Interpretivist favour more personalised and adaptable study frameworks than the rigid frameworks used by positivists (Edirisingh, 2012), which means participants have enough autonomy to choose what is constant for themselves. Therefore, even the most intricate subjects can be simply comprehended (Rahman, 2020). Since the researcher conducting qualitative data has the ability to engage with the participants, it provides the researcher with more thorough and subjective data (Rahman, 2020).

Although interpretivism provides the researcher with more insightful data, it has a tendency to create a gap in verifying the accuracy and authenticity of the findings (Pham, 2018), which means it's common to overlook situational sensitivity in favour of focusing on interpretations and emotions (Rahman, 2020), not being able to generalise or quantify the information, and the in-depth nature of the study does not allow for large-scale sampling which is just a few common issues researchers face when conducting qualitative research (Wijesinghe, 2011).

Furthermore, qualitative data collection and interpretation can be very time-consuming and complex to discuss (Rahman, 2020). Wijesinghe (2011) states that these issues can be managed and overcome through applying appropriate methodology and a thorough understanding of quantitative analysis methods.

3.2. Research design

As mentioned previously, Starke Ayres breeds F1 hybrid varieties with better characteristics as opposed to open-pollinated varieties, however, the consumer does not fully comprehend the concept of F1 hybrid vegetables and confuses the term with genetically modified organisms (GMO). The aim of this project is to explore the consumer perspectives on F1 hybrid vegetables and attempt to identify where the confusion comes in. Furthermore, the researcher did identify possible solutions and provide recommendations as to how the brand can improve and communicate the importance to the consumer to reduce food waste (The IIE, 2022). Therefore, this study made use of a cross-sectional qualitative method, which provided the researcher with an opportunity to experience the problem through the participants' eyes (Thanh and Thanh, 2015), and gain more in-depth and subjective data by engaging with the participants in person (Rahman, 2020).

3.2.1. Population

The complete set of persons or entities from whom data is needed is referred to as a population (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). The target population for this study will be every consumer that purchases Starke Ayres seed. Starke Ayres is a global company headquartered in South Africa; the brand operates in over sixty countries (Starke Ayres, 2022). Starke Ayres has two main categories in which it divides its consumers. The first category is commercial farmers, who plant on a large scale for the fresh and processing markets. The second category the brand calls the retail consumer, which refers to the home gardener (Starke Ayres, 2022).

The research population to which the researcher can apply their findings is known as the accessible population (Elite Institute, 2019). The Starke Ayres commercial farmer consumer is seen as an educated consumer and therefore fully comprehends the need for and importance of F1 hybrid vegetable varieties (Ascough, 2022). This excludes the commercial farmer from the accessible population and this study. The accessible population for this study will be the retail consumer. The misconception of the F1 hybrid varieties lies with the retail consumer (Ascough, 2022). The retail consumer, also known as the home gardener or hobby

gardener, refers to the consumer who purchases and grows the vegetable seeds for personal use as a hobby or to be self-sustainable (Ascough, 2022).

Based on the Starke Ayres retail audience report, conducted through the Meltwater audience application, the largest demographic for the retail consumer consists of both males and females between the ages of 18 – 35, who resides in Johannesburg (Starke Ayres, 2022). This focused on participants who are between the ages of 18 – 35 that live in Johannesburg and are home gardeners that have bought and planted Starke Ayres vegetable seeds.

Therefore, the nature of the population are people who have bought and used any of the Starke Ayres retail seed packets. The target population are people between the ages of 18 to 35 that reside in Johannesburg that are retail consumers of the brand which makes the accessible population three consumers that resides in Johannesburg that the researcher has convenient access to.

3.2.2. Sampling

Since the brand operates in over 60 countries, it is nearly impossible to identify the full population, therefore non-probability sampling methods were used to conduct this research (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). Non-probability sampling methods were developed for cases where assumptions lacked adequate requirements, which some researchers felt was problematic (Vehovar, Vaska, and Steinmetz, 2016). Regardless of these reservations, research has demonstrated that when proper procedures are used to overcome its weaknesses, non-probability sampling can produce findings that are as effective as probability-based samples (Lamm and Lamm, 2019). In comparison to quantitative studies, the goal of qualitative research is not to create a broad generalisation, but rather use a smaller sample size to gain a deeper in-depth understanding, therefore, non-probability sampling methods are mainly used for qualitative studies (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

Due to budget and time constraints, this study made use of the convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling refers to the population of individuals who are available to the researcher and it is cost-effective (Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim, 2016). Du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014) added that the participants used in convenience sampling are often people that the researcher knows or has contact with. The researcher for this project conducted three in-depth interviews with known Starke Ayres retail consumers that fall within the 18 – 35 age group in Johannesburg that the researcher has access to.

3.2.3. Data collection method

Any type of data collecting that provides subjective or non-numerical information is referred to as qualitative research (Carter and Henderson, 2005). Qualitative researchers are interested in all the subjective and personal features that characterize personal experiences and interpretations linked with a phenomenon (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

This project made use of face-to-face in-depth interviews with three participants to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' views in relation to the Starke Ayres brand and its breeding programmes. Interviews are useful since they enable the researcher to understand and interpret the significance of participants' responses to specific questions if they are handled correctly (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). Social cues can be utilized in face-to-face interviews, the interviewee's visual interactions, such as voice, facial expression, and body language, can provide the interviewer with a wealth of additional information (Opdenakker, 2006).

The interviews followed a semi-structured interview guide with a set of open-ended questions. The semi-structured guide allowed the researcher to maintain consistency through all three interviews and remained flexible for follow up questions and discussions based on responses given by the interviewee. The interview questions were structured to gain an in-depth insight into the consumer perspectives on the concept of sustainable vegetable breeding to prevent food waste, their understanding of the importance of F1 hybrid varieties and the difference between F1 hybrids and GMOs, and lastly how social media can be used to communicate these concepts to the consumers in an effective manner.

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014), the following will need to be considered when designing the interview questionnaire:

- The focus of the questions should shift from broad to narrow. The interview will start with a general understanding of sustainability in the context of food waste and move to the key focus, which is sustainable breeding (F1 hybrids).
- The questions will be asked in a clear and easy to understand manner.
- All questions will have a single focus so as not to confuse the concepts or the interviewee.
- The questions are open-ended so that the interviewee can express his or her own assumptions and understanding.

The below table details the interview schedule with the participants:

Table 1: Interview schedule

Collection method:	Participant:	Date:	Start time:	End time:	Job title:	Place:
In-depth interview	Participant A	07/07/2022	9:00am	9:18am	Housewife	Participant's house
In-depth interview	Participant B	08/07/2022	9:00am	9:21am	Office Admin	Participant's house
In-depth interview	Participant C	08/07/2022	14:00pm	14:28pm	Financial Manager	Participant's house

3.2.4. Data analysis method

The nature of qualitative research is to obtain a better understanding of participants' subjective experiences (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). This implies that the data necessitates a number of explanations (Alhojailan, 2012). For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the thematic analysis (TA) method to analyse the data collected. TA is a technique for methodically detecting, organizing, and interpreting patterns and themes in a set of data (Braun and Clarke, 2012). It depicts the facts in considerable detail and uses interpretations to cover a wide range of topics (Alhojailan, 2012). Accessibility and flexibility are the two key reasons to adopt TA method (Bruan and Clarke, 2012). The accessibility of TA makes it easier for those unfamiliar with qualitative research and simplifies qualitative methods that can otherwise appear unclear, perplexing, theoretically tough, and complex (Braun and Clarke, 2012), and the flexibility of TA is versatile enough to be employed in both inductive and deductive techniques (Alhojailan, 2012). Inductive reasoning requires making predictions about new cases based on prior information or observations (Hayes, Heit, and Swendsen, 2010). This project has already established that Starke Ayres is attempting to prevent food waste through its sustainable breeding programmes (F1 hybrids), but the retail consumer does not fully understand the concept. Therefore, this project followed the inductive reasoning approach to establish why the miscommunication is happening.

The researcher adopted the six-step TA approach to analyse the data collected as defined by Braun and Clarke (2012):

1. First, the researcher got familiar with the data (Braun and Clarke, 2012). Once the interviews have been concluded, the research transcribed the data to fully engage with the data collected.

2. Secondly, the researcher identified codes in the collected data based on commonalities and differences in the participant's responses.
3. Thirdly, the researcher organized the data into themes.
4. The research determined whether the themes are indeed themes and not codes, examined the boundaries of the themes, and looked at whether the data is meaningful and coherent.
5. Once the themes have been established and reviewed, the researcher defined and named the themes appropriately.
6. Lastly, the researcher wrote an integrated report on the data collected and the findings.

3.3. Anticipated contributions

This study will provide recommendations for practice for the Starke Ayres brand. Practice recommendations are frequently based on particular findings and outcomes that specify what may or should be done in actuality (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). This project aimed to provide recommendations to the brand on how it can improve its communications to the consumer in order to prevent any misconceptions about the brand offerings and operations. The goal is to establish whether the brand can be described as a purpose-driven brand (The IIE, 2022) and coherent communication is one of the most important factors that need to be considered for meaningful and healthy brands (Cook et al, 2010).

4. Analysis of data findings

The research for this study was conducted through in-depth interviews with three participants and the data was analysed using a thematic analysis approach. The data was organized into four themes namely, food waste management and consumer behaviour, consumer perceptions of meaningful and healthy brands, F1 hybrids and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), and the use of social media. The four themes are discussed in detail below.

4.1. Theme 1: Food waste management and consumer behaviour

Theme 1 is focused on answering RQ₁; to what extent can Starke Ayres be described as a purposeful brand in relation to its breeding programmes (F1 hybrid seeds). It has been established that the F1 hybrid seed prevents food waste in all four phases identified in the

literature review (Ascough, 2022). Still, to be able to determine the extent to which the brand can be seen as a meaningful brand, all aspects must be analysed. A meaningful brand is an excellent and coherent communicator (Cook et al, 2010). The main issue identified in the problem statement is that there is a miscommunication between the brand and the consumer on the brand's solution to food waste management, the F1 hybrid seeds. To fully comprehend why the consumer does not fully understand the solution (F1 hybrid seed) the brand is offering, the researcher wanted to explore whether the consumers understand the problem to the solution which is food waste.

The major concern regarding food waste is the detrimental social, environmental, and economic consequences it has on the planet (Papargyropoulou et al, 2014). The researcher asked the participants what their understanding of food waste was without giving context; this was done intentionally to see if participants fully understood the concept and its consequences. All the respondents related the issue to unnecessarily wasting perfectly edible food within their households, and participant 3 referred to food waste as people being "unthankful". It seems participants do not fully comprehend the true impact of food waste. However, all three participants did understand that it is essential to manage food waste for two reasons; 1) there are millions of people starving that need to be fed and 2) the cost of living is so high that people can't afford to waste anything. Another interesting discovery is that none of the participants was aware of any food waste management techniques. Participants 2 and 3 mentioned working vegetable waste back into the soil or making a compost heap but were unsure whether that could be described as a food waste management technique. All the participants were uncertain in their answers, making it clear that the concept, impact, and consequences are not fully understood.

To further explore the consumer's understanding of the problem, the researcher wanted to identify the consumer's attitude and behaviour in relation to managing food waste and living sustainably. The literature review identified the three main issues in consumers' behaviour: improper storage knowledge, ill-informed purchasing practices, and cooking more food than what the consumer can consume at a time (Farr-Wharton et al, 2014). The participants related to Farr-Wharton et al's (2014) reasoning by stating that food expires in their households due to overbuying and cooking. Participant 1 mentioned that buying the correct amount of fresh produce is difficult to establish because sometimes the family consumes the product quickly and other times, no one seems interested, which causes the product to expire. Participant 2 mentioned that the household circumstances changed recently from a family of four to a family of just two, and the participant struggles to cook smaller meals for just two people. Both examples are understandable and show that consumer behaviour concerning food waste is not an exact science as circumstances and needs change often.

Regarding consumer attitudes towards sustainable living, the literature review identified three attitudes: apathetic, overwhelmed, and pragmatic. The two feelings identified in this study were overwhelmed and pragmatic (Kraus and Emontspool, 2017). Participant 1 stated they do like the idea of living sustainably but that they are too lazy to put in the effort to be more sustainable, which shows that the participant feels that sustainable living is a daunting task which correlates with Kraus and Emontspool's (2017) findings. Participants 2 and 3 both contribute to sustainably somewhat by recycling waste and growing their own produce. Although this can be considered sustainable living, food waste is still happening in the consumer's households making these participants' attitudes pragmatic. The evidence suggests that the research findings are aligned with Kraus and Emontspool's (2017) studies. The research shows that consumer is not fully aware of what it means to be sustainable; their perception of living sustainably is narrow and only focuses on specific aspects which causes food waste to still occur within their households.

In theme 1, the research showed that participants did not adequately understand the concept of food waste management and sustainable practices. These concepts need to be explored further, and the consumers need to be made more aware of the consequences and how they can be part of the solution.

4.2. Theme 2: Consumer perceptions of meaningful and healthy brands

Theme 2 is aimed at answering RQ₁. To establish whether the brand can be described as meaningful and healthy, the researcher wanted to explore the consumer perceptions of meaningful and healthy brands. The literature review found that consumers prefer brands with a strong purpose that considers the environment (Cook et al, 2010) and that consumers nowadays focus more on the brand's unique value proposition rather than the unique selling proposition (Kramer, 2020). Participants were presented with the opinions of Cook et al (2010) and Kramer (2020) and asked what their perspectives were on the concept of Meaningful and healthy brands. Participants 1 and 2 agreed that they do like the concept of meaningful and healthy brands. Participant 2 mentioned that they are 'very brand orientated', noting that they want to support brands adding value within their communities. In comparison, participant 3 felt indifferent toward the concept and stated, "I believe they all do the same thing". When the participants were asked if this was an essential factor for them when making a purchasing decision, all three participants did not agree, stating that price is the ultimate deciding factor.

The evidence suggests that although most participants prefer the concept of meaningful and healthy brands when it comes down to purchasing, all three participants choose to buy the cheapest products. This proves that the findings of this study do not fully support research

findings in the literature review. Meaningful and healthy brands grab the consumer's attention, but with the increasing cost of living, consumers can't afford to select products based on brands with a good purpose.

4.3. Theme 3: F1 hybrids and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)

Theme 3 aims to identify the consumers' understanding of F1 hybrid seeds and how it can be beneficial in combating food waste related to RQ₂; what is the consumer's understanding of the Starke Ayres F1 hybrid seeds? The concept was presented to the participants as an explanation of sustainable vegetable breeding and its benefits without mentioning that the process is called F1 hybrid seeds. This was done to see how the participants felt about the concept when only the benefits were presented. Participants 1 and 2 both agreed that the idea is good, and participant 2 even mentioned that they feel it is something that "everybody needs to know about." Participant 3 did not immediately discard the concept but said that they prefer organically grown vegetables. This suggests that participant 3 did not fully understand the concept of sustainable vegetable breeding, as F1 hybrid is a natural method of breeding vegetables.

After that, participants were introduced to the term F1 hybrid and asked if they had any understanding of the topic. Participants 1 and 2 had heard the term but did not know exactly what it was, and participant 3 mentioned that they had never heard of it before. The researcher used the explanation the brand gives on their website to explain what an F1 hybrid was to the participants to see if the provided explanation was sufficient; all participants did agree that the explanation cleared the concept to them, however when asked to describe the difference between an F1 hybrid seed and Genetically Modified Organism (GMO), none of the participants was able to do so. This shows that the participants did not fully grasp the concept of either an F1 hybrid seed or a GMO variety. Participants expressed that they believe GMOs have a negative connotation but do not fully understand what exactly it is. Participant 2 did mention that they know that GMOs have a purpose but could not express this purpose to the researcher.

Relating this to RQ₁, where the literature review states that meaningful and healthy brands are excellent communicators (Cook et al, 2010), the brand has attempted to explain the concept of F1 hybrid seeds to the consumer by posting a short, one-paragraph declaration on its website to state that their seeds are not GMO and gives a brief description of what an F1 hybrid seed is, but is not successful in its efforts to help the consumer understand the concept and its importance. Therefore, even though the brand offers meaningful products that prevent food waste, the brand cannot be fully described as meaningful and healthy as the brand is not

an effective and coherent communicator. The findings also corroborate Ascough's (2022) opinion that the consumer misunderstands what a F1 hybrid seed is.

4.4. Theme 4: The use of social media

Theme 4 relates to RQ₃; the researcher attempted to identify ways Starke Ayres can effectively communicate the value and impact F1 hybrid seed has on managing food waste to the consumer. The researcher wanted to explore the participant's social media habits and identify whether the use of social media would be the most effective platform for the brand. The literature review stated that consumers' daily lives have become increasingly reliant on social media (Voorveld, 2019) and that building consumer relationship is the primary goal of brand communication on social media (Dwivedi and McDonald, 2020). The findings proved that the preferred social media platforms are Facebook and Instagram and that the participants use social media to follow their favourite brands for more information and to get insight into who the brand is and what it stands for. Participant 3 did mention that they do not use social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram but rely solely on WhatsApp to stay connected with friends and family. Participants 1 and 2 expressed that they believe it is essential for brands to have a social media presence to keep in touch with consumers. The evidence suggests that using social media is an excellent platform to educate the consumer on the use and benefits of F1 hybrid seeds. Still, since not all consumers are on social media, the brand cannot solely rely on these platforms to communicate its messages.

Furthermore, the participants expressed that the brand needs to communicate the issue and the solution in simple, easy-to-understand terms to the consumer and describe how it can benefit their everyday lives. The findings of this study suggest that the cause of the miscommunication is not just a misunderstanding of the concept of F1 hybrids but also that the consumer does not fully comprehend why it is a solution as the problem is not clearly identified and described to the consumer. Participant 2 stated, "I think food waste management needs to be put out there more because I think everyone believes their own little way of trying not to waste food". Participant 3 added that people need to be aware of the issue causing food waste before they can be presented with the solution. Many of the participant's responses indicated that their understanding of the problem, the concept, and the solutions are vague and inadequate, leaving them with insufficient information to adapt their attitudes and lifestyles to be more sustainable and address food waste in any meaningful way.

5. Recommendations

The aim of this study was to explore to what extent the Starke Ayres brand can be described as a meaningful and healthy brand. It has been established that the brands' F1 hybrid seeds actively prevent food waste at almost every phase of the product cycle, however, the brands' retail consumers do not understand the product and how it benefits them. The findings discovered that the misunderstanding between the brand and the consumer lies much deeper than just describing what an F1 hybrid seed is to the consumer. For the brand to effectively communicate the importance and benefits of the F1 hybrid seed, it needs to make the consumer aware of the problem to which the brand is offering a solution.

It is recommended that the brand create a communication strategy that clearly describes the issue, which is the devastating effects food waste has on the environment as a whole and make the consumer aware of why it is important to manage food waste. Thereafter, the brand should offer the solution, which is the F1 hybrid seed and explain the process of cross-pollinating and why it is not considered a GMO and how F1 hybrids benefit the farmer, the retail market, and the consumer households. Although the findings suggest that social media is a good platform for communication, the brand needs to utilise other media as well, as it is not guaranteed that the entire target audience is on social media.

6. Feasibility of the study

Feasibility entails a description of the thought-out consideration regarding the research methodology and how it relates to the objectives (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). Since the objective is to gain a thorough understanding of the consumers' mindset and understanding of the concept of F1 hybrid seeds, the data collection method chosen is conducting in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews are a qualitative method that provides the researcher with subjective data (Carter and Henderson, 2005) that is based on the participants' personal experiences and interpretations of the problem (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). Therefore, the researcher believes that in-depth interviews will be the best-suited method to ensure the feasibility of the study. Furthermore, the feasibility also considers the trustworthiness of the study, the limitations and delimitations, the ethical considerations and anticipated contributions of the study that is described in detail below.

6.1. Trustworthiness of the study

The purpose of qualitative research is to develop insights into a particular phenomenon in a specific setting, rather than generalizing findings to a larger population (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al,

2014). The importance of establishing trustworthiness in a study is to give merit to findings (Carcary, 2009). To establish trustworthiness in a study, the researcher needs to address the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the research.

6.1.1. Credibility

The precision whereby the researcher evaluated the data presented by the participants is referred to as credibility (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). It asks the question how well the findings match reality (Shenton, 2004). The in-depth interviews will allow the researcher to spend enough time with the participants to gain deep insights to understand the participant's perspectives and realities. To verify findings, the triangulation technique will be applied by comparing the responses of the participants who have been asked the same questions to detect common patterns.

6.1.2. Transferability

The capacity to apply the findings to a similar circumstance and produce similar outcomes is referred to as transferability (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). The findings must be interpreted considering the brands' unique qualities, as well as the geographic area where the research was conducted (Shenton, 2004). The key demographics on which this study will focus have been clearly stipulated in the population and sampling. The problem identified is the miscommunication between the brand and the retail consumer on the concept of F1 hybrid varieties are unique to the brand and do not in any way translate to other brands offering similar solutions.

6.1.3. Dependability

To address the issue of dependability more directly, the study's methodologies should be described in detail, allowing future studies to duplicate the work (Shenton, 2004). The methodology described in this project clearly outlines the methods that was taken to collect the data through in-depth interviews with three participants and the analysis method, which followed the six steps described in the Thematic Analysis (TA) approach that aligns with the problem statement, research questions and objectives.

6.1.4. Confirmability

Steps must be taken to ensure, as far as feasible, that the work's conclusions are the outcome of the participants' experiences and thoughts, rather than the researcher's perspectives and preferences (Shenton, 2004). During the interview process, the researcher remained neutral and ensured that the questions asked did not form any bias from the researcher in the minds of the participants.

6.2. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are the professional and moral code of conduct that the researcher needs to adhere to throughout the process of research (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). This code of conduct applies to the researcher, the participants, and the brand.

6.2.1. Ethics regarding the researcher

The research will not exploit or mislead the participants in any way and build trust with the participants. The researcher will not distort or falsify any data collected and only present the true findings in the data. Furthermore, the researcher will not influence any interpretation of the data or allow any bias to form part of the findings or misuse any of the information. The researcher will use appropriate research methods that ensure the trustworthiness of the study and include all ethical considerations belonging to the participants and the brand in this study.

6.2.2. Ethics regarding the participants

All participants in this study will receive a written consent form that clearly outlines the terms of this study. The consent form informs the participants of the reasoning, methodology and how the data will be used. The research questions that will guide the interviews do not include any instance where the participant might have to reveal sensitive or potentially embarrassing information. The researcher will not harm or cause harm in any shape or form to the participant. The confidentiality of the participant will be protected in every step and the only form in which the respondent's identity can be identified is through the signed consent form. The data analysis and findings will not be linked to any one person, meaning the findings and report will not define any names but rather refer to participants 1, 2, and 3. After the interview has concluded, the researcher will debrief the participants appropriately and give them the opportunity to communicate their perceptions of the data collection method.

6.2.3. Ethics regarding the brand

The researcher will ensure to uphold the image of the brand, Starke Ayres, and will not ask any questions that will paint the brand in a negative light. Furthermore, the researcher will not attempt to conduct any research without written ethical clearance from the researcher's

navigator to ensure that all parties involved are protected. The researcher has also received written consent from the brand to conduct the research.

6.3. Limitations of the study

6.3.1. Limitations

Constraints or boundaries in the research project that are outside the researchers' control are referred to as limitations (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). The limitations of this study include budget and time constraints. The researcher is conducting this research as a part-time student at Vega School and therefore does not have a provided budget to complete the research. The researcher is making use of accessible resources that do not require any financial aid. Furthermore, as a part-time student with strict deadlines, the researcher does not have sufficient time to conduct the research on a larger sample size and therefore will only be able to interview three participants. All three participants were female with similar socio-economic status and ethnicity. It is recommended that future studies on this topic should include a larger population and sample size that includes more diversity in the participants to further validate the study.

6.3.2. Delimitations

Delimitations are the consequence of the researcher's clear and distinct decisions about the scope of a proposed study (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014). This study will solely focus on the Starke Ayres brand and does not extend to any other brand that has similar offerings. Furthermore, this study will only include findings on the Starke Ayres retail customers in Johannesburg and does not include the commercial, small-scale or any other consumers outside of Johannesburg. Lastly, the study will also only focus on the Starke Ayres F1 hybrid vegetable seed and does not include any other brand product offerings including open-pollinated vegetable varieties, herb, flower, or lawn seed, plant foods or growing mediums.

7. Conclusion

Food waste has devastating effects on not just South Africa, but the whole world. It is imperative that food waste needs to be addressed ensure the sustainability of future generations. The literature review analysis has identified various methods to manage food waste, but each method has its pros and cons, therefore the literature review found that preventing food waste is the only sustainable solution. The research topic for this project was chosen to reflect the central concept and linked with the problem statement in which it described the consequences and importance of food waste and the prevention thereof and how meaningful and healthy brands can make a positive impact on food waste. The problem

statement identified a communication issue between the brand, Starke Ayres, and its consumer.

The research questions and objectives constructed are aimed at discovering whether the brand can be seen as meaningful, understanding the consumer perceptions and attitudes, and identifying a possible solution for the miscommunication between the brand and the consumer. Since the aim is to identify a possible solution, this study conducted applied exploratory research to find solutions to the research questions and objectives. The research rationale justified the interpretive paradigm utilising qualitative methodology, in the form of in-depth interviews, as the best practice as it is important for the brand to understand the consumer perspectives and behaviours fully to enable the brand to implement effective communication strategies.

The in-depth interviews were analysed through a thematic analysis approach. They were categorised into four categories: food waste management and consumer behaviour, consumer perceptions of meaningful and healthy brands, F1 hybrids and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), and the use of social media. The first theme showed that consumers did not understand food waste or sustainable practices correctly. Therefore, it is recommended that the brand focus on creating awareness around these issues and how the consumer can be a part of the solution.

With the second theme, the literature review stated that consumers want brands to be meaningful and healthy, but the findings proved that although consumers appreciate meaningful brands, they still buy the cheapest product regardless of who the brand is. The brand can still convince the consumer to purchase the F1 hybrid seed, even though it is more expensive than open-pollinated varieties, by making the consumer feel that they can be actively part of the solution if they fully understand the difference it will make, not just in their lives, but with the environment as well.

The third theme aimed to describe the extent to which the brand can be described as meaningful and healthy. It was established that the brand's F1 hybrid seed could be considered meaningful, but the participants did not understand the concept of F1 hybrid seed. The literature review stated that effective communication is one of the most critical factors of a meaningful and healthy brand (Cook et al, 2010). With the lack of communication from the brand and the consumers' inadequate understanding, the brand cannot be considered meaningful and healthy. Therefore, it is recommended that the brand works on its communication by applying effective communication strategies that cover the problem, the impact, the process, and the solution in simple, easy-to-understand terms.

The last theme wanted to identify whether social media will be the best platform for effective communication with the consumer. The findings suggest that social media is a great platform for brands to communicate directly to the consumer, but the brand cannot rely social media alone and need to implement the communication strategy using various platforms and media to ensure all consumers receives the message and only then can the brand be considered truly meaningful and healthy.

8. Reference list

- Ajzen, I., 2011. The theory of planned behaviour: Reactions and reflections. *Psychology & health*, 26(9): 1113-1127. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08870446.2011.613995>
- Alharahsheh, H.H. and Pius, A., 2020. A review of key paradigms: Positivism VS interpretivism. *Global Academic Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2(3): 39-43.
- Alhojailan, M.I., 2012. Thematic analysis: A critical review of its process and evaluation. *West east journal of social sciences*, 1(1): 39-47.
- Ascough, G. 2022. Email to Melisca Louwrens, 6 May 2022.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V., 2012. Thematic analysis. *APA handbook of research methods in psychology*, 2: 57 -71. DOI: 10.1037/13620-004.
- Carcary, M., 2009. The research audit trial—enhancing trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 7(1): 11-24.
- Carter, S. and Henderson, L., 2005. Approaches to qualitative data collection in social science. *Handbook of health research methods: Investigation, measurement and analysis*. Berkshire; Open University Press.
- Chiew, Y.L., Spångberg, J., Baky, A., Hansson, P.A. and Jönsson, H., 2015. Environmental impact of recycling digested food waste as a fertilizer in agriculture—A case study. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 95:1-14. [Online]. DOI: 10.1016/j.resconrec.2014.11.015 [Accessed 29 March 2022].
- Cook, G., Enslin, C., Erwin, K. and Carmody, P. 2010. *How healthy is your brand?* The encyclopaedia of brands and branding in South Africa. Auckland Park: Affinity Advertising and Publishers. Available at: <https://ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=63226380&site=ehost-live> [Accessed 2 April 2022].
- CropLife. 2020. Food loss, food waste, and the impact of plant science, 23 April 2020. [Online]. Available at: <https://croplife.org/news/food-loss-food-waste-and-the-impact-of-plant-science/> [Accessed 3 April 2022].
- Dewing, M., 2010. *Social media: An introduction*. Vol. 1. Ottawa: Library of Parliament.

Du Plooy-Cilliers, F., Bezuidenhout, RM., and Davis, C. 2014 *Research Matters*. Claremont: Juta and Company [Pty] Ltd.

Du Plooy-Cilliers, F., Bezuidenhout, RM., and Davis, C. 2014 *Research Matters*. Claremont: Juta and Company [Pty] Ltd. Cited in: Neuman, WL. 2011. *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 7^h ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Dwivedi, A. and McDonald, RE. 2020. Examining the efficacy of brand social media communication: a consumer perspective, *Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice*, 28(4): 373–386. DOI: 10.1080/10696679.2020.1768870. [Accessed 5 April 2022].

Edirisingha, P. 2012. Interpretivism and positivism (Ontological and epistemological perspectives), 14 March 2012. [Online]. Available at: <https://prabash78.wordpress.com/2012/03/14/interpretivism-and-positivism-ontological-and-epistemological-perspectives/> [Accessed 10 April 2022].

Edmans, A. 2018. The purpose of profit, *London Business School Review*, 30(2/3), pp. 18–21. doi: 10.1111/2057-1615.12304. [Accessed 4 April 2022].

Elite Institute. 2019. Target population differs from an accessible population, 26 September 2019. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.elitemv.com/2019/09/target-population-differs-from.html#:~:text=The%20target%20population%20usually%20has,researchers%20can%20apply%20their%20conclusions.> [Accessed 20 May 2022].

Etikan, I., Musa, S.A. and Alkassim, R.S., 2016. Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American journal of theoretical and applied statistics*, 5(1): 1-4.

Fadiji, T. Coetzee, C., Chen, L., Chukwu, O., and Opara, UL. 2016. Susceptibility of apples to bruising inside ventilated corrugated paperboard packages during simulated transport damage, *Postharvest Biology & Technology*, 118: 111–119. DOI: 10.1016/j.postharvbio.2016.04.001. [Accessed 3 April 2022].

Farrugia, P., Petrisor, B.A., Farrokhyar, F. and Bhandari, M., 2010. Research questions, hypotheses, and objectives. *Canadian journal of surgery*, 53(4): 278.

Farr-Wharton. G., Foth, M. and Choi, J. H. 2014. Identifying factors that promote consumer behaviours causing expired domestic food waste, *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 13(6): 393–402. DOI: 10.1002/cb.1488. [Accessed 3 April 2022].

FungHwa, H., Yang, J., Wooldridge, BR., and Bhappy, AD. 2022. Sharing consumers' brand storytelling: influence of consumers' storytelling on brand attitude via emotions and

cognitions, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 31(2): 265–278. DOI: 10.1108/JPBM-07-2019-2485. [Accessed 5 April 2022].

Giroto, F., Alibardi, L. and Cossu, R., 2015. Food waste generation and industrial uses: A review. *Waste management*, 45, pp.32-41. [Online]. DOI: 10.1016/j.wasman.2015.06.008 [Accessed 29 March 2022].

Hall, KD., Guo, J., Dore, M., Chow, CC. 2009. The progressive increase of food waste in America and its environmental impact, *PLOS ONE*, 4(11): e7940. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0007940> [Accessed 29 March 2022].

Hayes, B.K., Heit, E. and Swendsen, H., 2010. Inductive reasoning. Wiley interdisciplinary reviews: Cognitive science, 1(2): 278-292. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcs.44>.

Hebrok, M. and Heidenstrøm, N. 2019. Contextualising food waste prevention - Decisive moments within everyday practices, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 210: 1435–1448. DOI: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.11.141. [Accessed 3 April 2022].

Hedrick, T.E., Bickman, L. and Rog, D.J., 1993. *Applied research design: A practical guide*. California: Sage Publications.

Hiller, J., 2016. Epistemological foundations of objectivist and interpretivist research, *Epistemological Foundations*. [s.l.]. 100 – 127.

Hsu, C.K.J., 2017. Selling products by selling brand purpose, *Journal of Brand Strategy*, 5(4):373-394. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/hsp/jbs/2017/00000005/00000004/art00005> [Accessed 4 April 2022].

Hwang, H. and Kim, K. 2015. Social media as a tool for social movements: the effect of social media use and social capital on intention to participate in social movements, *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 39(5): 478–488. DOI: 10.1111/ijcs.12221.

Ji, C., Kong, CX., Mei, ZL. 2017. A Review of the Anaerobic Digestion of Fruit and Vegetable Waste. *Applied Biochemistry and Biotechnology*, 183:906–922. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12010-017-2472-x> [Accessed 30 March 2022].

Kataria, A. Mukherjee, J., Biswas, S., and Garg, R. 2016. An Exploration of Consumers' Perceived Value of Sustainable Brands in India, *Asian Journal of Business Research*, 6(2): 52–69. DOI: 10.14707/ajbr.160026. [Accessed 3 April 2022].

Khoo, E.M., 2013. Research questions and research objectives. *The Family Physician* 2005, 13(3): 25 – 26.

Kivunja, C. and Kuyini, A.B., 2017. Understanding and applying research paradigms in educational contexts. *International Journal of higher education*, 6(5): 26-41. DOI: 10.5430/ijhe.v6n5p26

Kramer, M. 2020. Driving profit and doing good: The transformational power of purpose, *Journal of Brand Strategy*, 9(3), pp. 231–239. Available at: <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=147961974&site=ehost-live> [Accessed 2 April 2022].

Kraus, K. and Emontspool, J. 2017. Guilt and Loathing in the Kitchen Why Sustainable Consumers Waste Food, *Advances in Consumer Research*, 45: 438–442. [Online]. Available at: [https://search.ebscohost-com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=131892687&site=ehost-live&scope=site](https://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=131892687&site=ehost-live&scope=site) [Accessed: 3 April 2022].

Kroeze, J.H., 2012. Postmodernism, interpretivism, and formal ontologies. In *Research methodologies, innovations and philosophies in software systems engineering and information systems* (pp. 43-62). IGI Global.

Lamm, A.J. and Lamm, K.W., 2019. Using non-probability sampling methods in agricultural and extension education research. *Journal of International Agricultural and Extension Education*, 26(1): 52-59. DOI: 10.5191/jiaee.2019.26105

Lekushoff, A. 2016. The Importance of Strong and Differentiated Brand Communications, *Public Relations Tactics*, 23(6): 13. [Online]. Available at: [https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=115842972&site=ehost-live&scope=site](https://search.ebscohost-com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=115842972&site=ehost-live&scope=site) [Accessed 5 April 2022].

Mack, L., 2010. The philosophical underpinnings of educational research. *Polyglossia*, 19: 5-11.

Maxwell, M. 2021. Enza Zaden launches ToLCNDV resistant cucumber, *Fruitnet*, 3 August 2021. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/article/185942/enza-zaden-launches-tolcndv-resistant-cucumber> [Accessed 30 March 2022].

McGaghie, W.C., Bordage, G. and Shea, J.A., 2001. Problem statement, conceptual framework, and research question. *Academic medicine*, 76(9): 923-924.

Nelson, S. 2018. One Man's Trash: How Blockchain Can Target Food Waste to Help End World Hunger, *Material Handling & Logistics*, 73(3):28–30. [Online]. Available at: <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=130412758&site=ehost-live&scope=site> [Accessed 29 March 2022].

Opdenakker, R., 2006, September. Advantages and disadvantages of four interview techniques in qualitative research. In *Forum qualitative sozialforschung/forum: Qualitative social research*, 7(4).

Papargyropoulou, E., Lozano, R., Steinberger, J.K., Wright, N. and bin Ujang, Z. 2014. The food waste hierarchy as a framework for the management of food surplus and food waste. *Journal of cleaner production*, 76:106-115. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2014.04.020>. [Accessed 29 March 2022].

Pham, L.T.M., 2018. Qualitative approach to research a review of advantages and disadvantages of three paradigms: Positivism, interpretivism and critical inquiry. *University of Adelaide*.

Powell, DFD. 2020. Creating a tribe for social media storytelling and brand co-creation at small higher education institutions, *Journal of Education Advancement & Marketing*, 5(2): 152–161. [Online]. Available at: <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=145731055&site=ehost-live&scope=site> [Accessed 5 April 2022].

Rahman, M.S., 2020. The advantages and disadvantages of using qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in language “testing and assessment” research: A literature review, *Journal of Education and Learning*, 6(1). DOI: 10.5539/jel.v6n1p102 [Accessed 10 April 2022].

Rehman, AA., Alhathi, K. 2016. An introduction to research paradigms, *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 3(8): 51-59. [Online]. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325022648_An_introduction_to_research_paradigms [Accessed 4 April 2022].

Sánchez-Teba, E. M., Gemar, G. and Soler, I. P. 2021. From Quantifying to Managing Food Loss in the Agri-Food Industry Supply Chain, *Foods*, 10(9). doi: 10.3390/foods10092163. [Accessed 29 March 2022].

Shelton Group Inc. 2014. The Widening Attitude/Behavior Gap: The Curse of an Improving Economy, *SB Communications Weekly*, [Online]. Available at: [https://search-ebscohost-](https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=145731055&site=ehost-live&scope=site)

com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=97369210&site=ehost-live&scope=site [Accessed 3 April 2022].

Shenton, A.K., 2004. Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for information*, 22(2): 63-75.

Slorach, P., Jeswani, HK., Cuéllar-Franca, R., and Azapagic, A. 2019. Environmental and economic implications of recovering resources from food waste in a circular economy, *Science of the total environment*, 693. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2019.07.322> [Accessed 29 March 2022].

Sniehotta, F.F., Presseau, J. and Araújo-Soares, V., 2014. Time to retire the theory of planned behaviour. *Health psychology review*, 8(1): 1-7. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17437199.2013.869710>

Sommer, L., 2011. The theory of planned behaviour and the impact of past behaviour. *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER)*, 10(1): 91-110 [Online]. Available at: https://hshe-soh.iiums.ac.ir/files/hshe-soh/files/predicting_Health_beh_avior.pdf#page=187. Cited in: Ajzen, I. 1991. The theory of planned behaviour. *Organizational behaviour and human decision processes*, 50(2): 179–211. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/074959789190020T> [Accessed 10 April 2022].

Starke Ayres. 2022. About Us. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.starkeayres.com/about-us> [Accessed 7 May 2022].

Starke Ayres. 2022. Retail audience: audience intelligence report.

Statista. 2022. Number of social network users worldwide from 2017 to 2025. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/#:~:text=In%202020%2C%20over%203.6%20billion,almost%204.41%20billion%20in%202025>. [Accessed 5 April 2022].

Swedberg, R., 2020. Exploratory research. *The production of knowledge: Enhancing progress in social science*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Syngenta Group, 2020. Food innovation makes your holiday dinner more delicious and sustainable, 17 December 2020. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.syngentagroup.com/en/media/syngenta-news/year/2020/food-innovation-makes-your-holiday-dinner-more-delicious-and> [Accessed 30 March 2022].

Thanh, N.C. and Thanh, T.T., 2015. The interconnection between interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods in education. *American journal of educational science*, 1(2): .24-27.

The IIE. 2022. Research Objective [RMET8429 Part 1 Brief]. The Independent institute of Education: Unpublished.

Toloie-Eshlaghy, A., Chitsaz, S., Karimian, L. and Charkhchi, R., 2011. A classification of qualitative research methods. *Research Journal of International Studies*, 20(20):106-123.

Vehovar, V., Toepoel, V. and Steinmetz, S., 2016. Non-probability sampling. *The Sage handbook of survey methods*, 26(1): 329-45.

Voorveld, HAM. 2019. Brand Communication in social media: A Research Agenda, *Journal of Advertising*, 48(1): 14–26. DOI: 10.1080/00913367.2019.1588808. [Accessed 5 April 2022].

Voramontri, D. and Klieb, L., 2019. Impact of social media on consumer behaviour. *International Journal of Information and Decision Sciences*, 11(3): 209-233.

Watkins, D.C., 2017. Rapid and rigorous qualitative data analysis: The “RADaR” technique for applied research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1). DOI: 10.1177/1609406917712131

Wijesinghe, S., 2011. From interpretivism to positivism: a methodological approach to the research in human resource management (hrm). *International Conference On Business Management*, 10: 433 – 438.

Zackiewicz, A. 2022. Consumers Embrace Community, Empathy and Purpose-driven Brands, *WWD: Women’s Wear Daily*, 3 January 2022. [Online]. Available at: <https://search-ebshostcom.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=155531764&site=ehost-live&scope=site> [Accessed 3 April 2022].

Appendix 1: Research Instrument

1. What is your understanding of food waste?
 - a. Why do you think it is important to manage food waste?
2. What food waste management techniques are you familiar with?
3. How often do you throw away fresh produce?
4. For what reasons do you think you have to throw away?
5. How do you store your fresh produce at home?
6. I am going to read you a passage on the importance of food waste and then ask you two questions afterwards:

Food waste has detrimental environmental, social, and economic consequences which leads to the excessive use of essential resources such as fossil fuels and freshwater. Moreover, implementing effective food waste management systems is crucial for developing a sustainable future. It is estimated that the food availability need will increase by up to 70% in the next thirty years.

- a. What is your perspective on living sustainably?
 - b. How do you contribute to living sustainably in your life?
7. I am going to read you a passage on what it means to be a meaningful and healthy brand and ask you a question afterwards:

Brands are expected to do more than sell a good product in today's world. Brands can no longer focus on its unique selling proposition as the market is saturated with an abundance of competitors offering the same product. Therefore, for a brand to be truly differentiated, it needs to focus on its unique value proposition. Consumers want brands to add value to not just their lives but also consider the effect it has on the environment, all people, and animals. In comparison, it is further argued that brands need to change its mindset, where it is believed that for brands to do good, it must forfeit some of its profit.

- a. What is your perspective on brands aiming to be meaningful and is this an important factor when you decide which brand to purchase from?

8. I'm going to read you a passage on sustainable vegetable breeding and ask you a few questions:

A preventative method of managing food waste is to breed sustainable crops. Sustainable crops have better disease resistance, longer shelf life, and improved postharvest qualities to combat vegetable food waste.

- a. What are your thoughts on the concept of sustainable vegetable breeding?

9. I am going to read you a passage from the Starke Ayres website, once I have read it to you, please tell me what your thoughts on this passage are?

"Any company that develops their own varieties 'owns' the genetics. They're allowed to produce and sell seeds since they spent the time, effort, and resources in developing that variety. These varieties are legally protected by local and international Plant Breeder's Rights act and are called F1 hybrid seeds" (Starke Ayres, 2022).

10. Have you ever heard the term F1 hybrid seeds and what do you think it means?

11. I am going to read another passage from the Starke Ayres website, once I have read it to you, please tell me what your understanding of the term F1 hybrid seeds is?

"A hybrid seed just means that two different parents of the same crop, for example, sweet corn, were crossed together. Hybrid seeds are more resilient and produce higher yields than regular seed" (Starke Ayres, 2022).

12. Many people confuse F1 hybrid seeds with genetically modified organisms (GMOs), what is your understanding of GMOs and how do you think it differs from F1 hybrids?

13. What are your thoughts on GMOs?

14. What would you recommend is the most effective way for the brand to communicate the concept and importance of F1 hybrids to its customers?

15. Which social media platforms do you use the most and why?

16. For what reasons do you follow your favourite brands on social media?

17. What type of content do you like to see from these brands?

18. What do you think is the role of social media for brands?

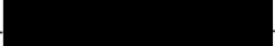
19. In your opinion, how can social media be used to educate people on the importance of food waste management?

Closing:

20. What are your final thoughts on the topics discussed today in this interview?

Appendix 2: Signed Consent Forms

CONSENT FORM

I,  agree to participate in the research conducted by Melisca Louwrens called 'an exploratory study on the management of food waste through meaningful brands: A Starke Ayres case study'.

This study has been broken down for me, and I am aware of what my involvement in it will entail in terms of its requirements. I understand that:

1. I consent to being interviewed and recorded for the purpose of this study.
2. My privacy will not be compromised in any way. My name and any other identifying information you provide will be kept confidential.
3. My involvement in this study is entirely optional, and I reserve the right to opt out of further involvement in the study at any time. Should I decide to opt out of participating in the study, my decision will not have any impact on the outcome.
4. During the course of the research interview, it's possible that I won't answer any of the questions that are posed to me.
5. When the findings of the study are published, it is possible that I may be explicitly cited; however, my name will be concealed.

My contact details are as follows:

Melisca Louwrens



The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Ivan Mkhomazi



Signature



Date 7-7-2022

POPIA ACT CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PROCESS PERSONAL INFORMATION IN TERMS OF THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT, NO. 4 OF 2013 (POPIA)

The purpose of the POPIA is to protect personal information of individuals and businesses and to give effect to their right of privacy as provided for in the Constitution. By signing this form, you consent to your personal information to be processed by Vega and consent is effective immediately and will remain effective until such consent is withdrawn.

1. I [REDACTED], a natural person "herein referred to as the Data Subject" hereby give my consent to Vega "herein referred to as the Responsible Party" to collect, process and distribute my personal information where Vega is legally required to do so.
2. I understand my right to privacy and the right to have my personal information processed in accordance with the conditions for the lawful processing of personal information.
3. I understand the purposes for which my personal information is required and for which it will be used and consent to third parties accessing my personal information and to Vega sharing my personal information strictly for reporting/educational purposes.
4. I understand that should I refuse to provide Vega with the required consent and/ or information, Vega will be unable to assist me.
5. I declare that all my personal information supplied to Vega is accurate, up to date, not misleading and that it is complete in all respects and will be held and/ or stored securely for the purpose for which it was collected and that I will immediately advise Vega of any changes to my Personal Information should any of these details change.
6. I also understand that I have the right to request that my personal information be corrected or deleted, if it is inaccurate, irrelevant, excessive, out of date, incomplete, misleading, or obtained unlawfully or that the personal information or record be destroyed or deleted if the responsible party is no longer authorised to retain it.

Signed at Kempton Park this 7 day of 7 2022

[REDACTED]

Signature of data subject / designated person

CONSENT FORM

I, [REDACTED], agree to participate in the research conducted by Melisca Louwrens called 'an exploratory study on the management of food waste through meaningful brands: A Starke Ayres case study'.

This study has been broken down for me, and I am aware of what my involvement in it will entail in terms of its requirements. I understand that:

1. I consent to being interviewed and recorded for the purpose of this study.
2. My privacy will not be compromised in any way. My name and any other identifying information you provide will be kept confidential.
3. My involvement in this study is entirely optional, and I reserve the right to opt out of further involvement in the study at any time. Should I decide to opt out of participating in the study, my decision will not have any impact on the outcome.
4. During the course of the research interview, it's possible that I won't answer any of the questions that are posed to me.
5. When the findings of the study are published, it is possible that I may be explicitly cited; however, my name will be concealed.

My contact details are as follows:

Melisca Louwrens

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Ivan Mkhomazi

[REDACTED]

Signature

[REDACTED]

Date 8 July 2022

POPIA ACT CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PROCESS PERSONAL INFORMATION IN TERMS OF THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT, NO. 4 OF 2013 (POPIA)

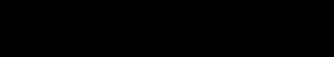
The purpose of the POPIA is to protect personal information of individuals and businesses and to give effect to their right of privacy as provided for in the Constitution. By signing this form, you consent to your personal information to be processed by Vega and consent is effective immediately and will remain effective until such consent is withdrawn.

1. I, [REDACTED] natural person "herein referred to as the Data Subject" hereby give my consent to Vega "herein referred to as the Responsible Party" to collect, process and distribute my personal information where Vega is legally required to do so.
2. I understand my right to privacy and the right to have my personal information processed in accordance with the conditions for the lawful processing of personal information.
3. I understand the purposes for which my personal information is required and for which it will be used and consent to third parties accessing my personal information and to Vega sharing my personal information strictly for reporting/educational purposes.
4. I understand that should I refuse to provide Vega with the required consent and/ or information, Vega will be unable to assist me.
5. I declare that all my personal information supplied to Vega is accurate, up to date, not misleading and that it is complete in all respects and will be held and/ or stored securely for the purpose for which it was collected and that I will immediately advise Vega of any changes to my Personal Information should any of these details change.
6. I also understand that I have the right to request that my personal information be corrected or deleted, if it is inaccurate, irrelevant, excessive, out of date, incomplete, misleading, or obtained unlawfully or that the personal information or record be destroyed or deleted if the responsible party is no longer authorised to retain it.

Signed at Benoni this 8th day of July 2022

[REDACTED]
.....
Signature of data subject / designated person

CONSENT FORM

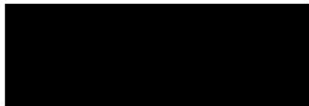
I, , agree to participate in the research conducted by Melisca Louwrens called 'an exploratory study on the management of food waste through meaningful brands: A Starke Ayres case study'.

This study has been broken down for me, and I am aware of what my involvement in it will entail in terms of its requirements. I understand that:

1. I consent to being interviewed and recorded for the purpose of this study.
2. My privacy will not be compromised in any way. My name and any other identifying information you provide will be kept confidential.
3. My involvement in this study is entirely optional, and I reserve the right to opt out of further involvement in the study at any time. Should I decide to opt out of participating in the study, my decision will not have any impact on the outcome.
4. During the course of the research interview, it's possible that I won't answer any of the questions that are posed to me.
5. When the findings of the study are published, it is possible that I may be explicitly cited; however, my name will be concealed.

My contact details are as follows:

Melisca Louwrens

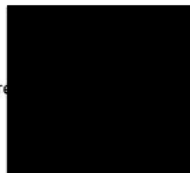


The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Ivan Mkhomazi



Signature

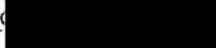


Date 8/7/2020

POPIA ACT CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PROCESS PERSONAL INFORMATION IN TERMS OF THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT, NO. 4 OF 2013 (POPIA)

The purpose of the POPIA is to protect personal information of individuals and businesses and to give effect to their right of privacy as provided for in the Constitution. By signing this form, you consent to your personal information to be processed by Vega and consent is effective immediately and will remain effective until such consent is withdrawn.

1. I,  natural person "herein referred to as the Data Subject" hereby give my consent to Vega "herein referred to as the Responsible Party" to collect, process and distribute my personal information where Vega is legally required to do so.
2. I understand my right to privacy and the right to have my personal information processed in accordance with the conditions for the lawful processing of personal information.
3. I understand the purposes for which my personal information is required and for which it will be used and consent to third parties accessing my personal information and to Vega sharing my personal information strictly for reporting/educational purposes.
4. I understand that should I refuse to provide Vega with the required consent and/ or information, Vega will be unable to assist me.
5. I declare that all my personal information supplied to Vega is accurate, up to date, not misleading and that it is complete in all respects and will be held and/ or stored securely for the purpose for which it was collected and that I will immediately advise Vega of any changes to my Personal Information should any of these details change.
6. I also understand that I have the right to request that my personal information be corrected or deleted, if it is inaccurate, irrelevant, excessive, out of date, incomplete, misleading, or obtained unlawfully or that the personal information or record be destroyed or deleted if the responsible party is no longer authorised to retain it.

Signed at Kenypton Park this 8th day of July, 2020..

.....
Signed  / designated person

Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance Letter



Date: 23 June 2022

Student name: Melisca Louwrens

Student number: [REDACTED]

Campus: Vega Pretoria

Re: Approval of RESE8419/RMET8429 Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS/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.

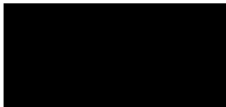
Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research. The only merits examined are the use of The IIE as a sample.

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 name: **Ivan Mkhomazi**



Signature:

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC) name: **Ria Van Zyl**



Signature:

Appendix 4: Interview Transcripts

Participant 1 – Interview (Thursday, 7 July 2022, Participants house)

Interviewer:	Thank you for agreeing to partake in this study, before we begin, please confirm you understand all conditions stipulated in the consent form?
Participant 1:	Yes I do
Interviewer:	Thank you, let's begin. What is your understanding of food waste?
Participant 1:	It is food that is being wasted unnecessarily
Interviewer:	Why do you think it is important to manage food waste?
Participant 1:	Everything is so expensive so you can't really afford to waste anything.
Interviewer:	Are you familiar with any food waste management techniques?
Participant 1:	No I am not familiar with any techniques, but I make banana bread when my banana's goes off.. if that counts?
Interviewer:	Yes it does count. How often do you through away fresh produce?
Participant 1:	On a monthly basis
Interviewer:	For what reasons do you have to through away this produce?
Participant 1:	Because they have either rotten or expired because no one ate it in time. Some months my family eats it quickly and other months no one wants to eat it.
Interviewer:	How do you store your fresh produce at home?
Participant 1:	I keep everything in the fridge
Interviewer:	I am going to read you a passage on the importance of food waste and then ask you two questions afterwards: <i>Food waste has detrimental environmental, social, and economic consequences which leads to the excessive use of essential resources such as fossil fuels and freshwater. Moreover, implementing effective food waste management systems is crucial for developing a sustainable future. It is estimated that the food availability need will increase by up to 70% in the next thirty years.</i> What is your perspective on living sustainably?
Participant 1:	I think sustainable living is a very good idea and it is necessary
Interviewer:	So how do you contribute to living sustainably in your life?

Participant 1:	I do not do anything at the moment, I would like to but to be completely honest.. I am bit lazy.
Interviewer:	That's understandable.. I am going to read you a passage on what it means to be a meaningful and healthy brand and ask you a few questions afterwards: <i>Brands are expected to do more than sell a good product in today's world. Brands can no longer focus on its unique selling proposition as the market is saturated with an abundance of competitors offering the same product. Therefore, for a brand to be truly differentiated, it needs to focus on its unique value proposition. Consumers want brands to add value to not just their lives but also consider the effect it has on the environment, all people, and animals. In comparison, it is further argued that brands need to change its mindset, where it is believed that for brands to do good, it must forfeit some of its profit.</i> What is your perspective on brands aiming to be meaningful and is this an important factor when you decide which brand to purchase from?
Participant 1:	Well, I like the idea but for me the important factor is the cost of the product. I always go for the cheapest option.
Interviewer:	I get that. I am going to read you another passage on sustainable vegetable breeding and ask you a few questions: <i>A preventative method of managing food waste is to breed sustainable crops. Sustainable crops have better disease resistance, longer shelf life, and improved postharvest qualities to combat vegetable food waste.</i> What are your thoughts on the concept of sustainable vegetable breeding?
Participant 1:	I think it sounds very nice..
Interviewer:	I am going to read you another passage from the Starke Ayres website: <i>"Any company that develops their own varieties 'owns' the genetics. They're allowed to produce and sell seeds since they spent the time, effort, and resources in developing that variety. These varieties are</i>

	<i>legally protected by local and international Plant Breeder's Rights act and are called F1 hybrid seeds" (Starke Ayres, 2022).</i> Have you ever heard the term F1 hybrid seeds and what do you think it means?
Participant 1:	I have heard about it but I don't really understand the concept
Interviewer:	Ok, I am going to read you another passage from the Starke Ayres website, once I have read it to you, please tell me what your understanding of the term F1 hybrid seeds are: <i>"A hybrid seed just means that two different parents of the same crop, for example, sweet corn, were crossed together. Hybrid seeds are more resilient and produce higher yields than regular seed" (Starke Ayres, 2022).</i> Did that explain the concept of F1 hybrid seeds?
Participant 1:	Yes it did.
Interviewer:	Many people confuse F1 hybrid seeds with Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), what is your understanding of GMOs and how do you think it differs from F1 hybrids?
Participant 1:	I think F1 hybrid are more natural because it is from the same crop? It doesn't change genetics?
Interviewer:	What are your thoughts on GMOs?
Participant 1:	I don't know exactly what GMO is but I heard it has a bad reputation
Interviewer:	What would you recommend is the most effective way for the brand to communicate the concept and importance of F1 hybrids to its customers?
Participant 1:	They need to explain to the customers exactly what is a GMO and a F1 hybrid and why it differs
Interviewer:	Which social media platforms do you use the most and why?
Participant 1:	Facebook mostly because it is where everybody I know is on and it's the only one I really know how to use
Interviewer:	Ok, for what reasons do you follow your favourite brands on social media?
Participant 1:	For more information, to see what they have going on and learn more about the brand

Interviewer:	What type of content do you like to see from these brands?
Participant 1:	To understand what the brand is about and more information on the products with some tips and tricks and even DIY projects for inspiration
Interviewer:	What do you think is the role of social media for brands?
Participant 1:	Everybody uses social media and everything is online so brands must also be there as I think it is the best way to advertise and get information out to your customers
Interviewer:	In your opinion, how can social media be used to educate people on the importance of food waste management?
Participant 1:	Explain to them how your product works and why it is better and how it would help you better your life and the environment?
Interviewer:	Ok, just before end off, do you have any final thoughts on the topics we discussed today?
Participant 1:	I think this is all very amazing but it won't help if it's not cost-effective for everybody involved.. But I do think I should stop being lazy and live more sustainable because it would be more effective and cost-friendly
Interviewer:	Ok, thank you very much
Participant 1:	Thank you

Participant 2 – Interview (Friday, 8 July 2022, Participants house)

Interviewer:	Thank you for agreeing to partake in this study, before we begin, please confirm you understand all conditions stipulated in the consent form?
Participant 2:	I understand yes.
Interviewer:	Thank you, let's begin. What is your understanding of food waste?
Participant 2:	Food waste for me is when you are just chucking away food that is still edible, still good enough to eat and you are just throwing it away in the dustbin when there are so many starving people out there, that to me is food waste.
Interviewer:	Why do you think it is important to manage food waste?
Participant 2:	Because you can feed more people. If you've got left over food that you don't want the man on the street that's starving can eat it. So to help feed people

Interviewer:	Are you familiar with any food waste management techniques?
Participant 2:	No not really I do whatever I feel is best. In my house if we do cook more we have it for leftovers the next day or the dogs get some, the maid can take some home, but not any formal techniques.
Interviewer:	How often do you through away fresh produce?
Participant 2:	Very rarely
Interviewer:	For what reasons, if you have, do you have to through away this produce?
Participant 2:	If I cut it open and it's rotten inside I would through it away or it has gone off. We used to be a family of 4 but both my daughters moved out so now it is just me and my husband and it's difficult to just cook for two so sometimes we cook too much food, or we still buy for a family of 4. But I actually don't through it away, it goes into the vegetable garden as compost.
Interviewer:	Ok, that's quite nice. How do you store your fresh produce at home?
Participant 2:	Depending on what it is, it is either sitting in the fruit bowl, like bananas and oranges. But vegetables and stuff go into the fridge.
Interviewer:	I am going to read you a passage on the importance of food waste and then ask you two questions afterwards: <i>Food waste has detrimental environmental, social, and economic consequences which leads to the excessive use of essential resources such as fossil fuels and freshwater. Moreover, implementing effective food waste management systems is crucial for developing a sustainable future. It is estimated that the food availability need will increase by up to 70% in the next thirty years.</i> What is your perspective on living sustainably?
Participant 2:	Living sustainable is to try use every resource that you can like planting fresh veg, herbs, we have a lemon tree where we pick our own lemons, try and not, uhm, I don't want to say not support but, you know, live off what you can do
Interviewer:	So how do you contribute to living sustainably in your life?
Participant 2:	I have a vegetable garden that we plant some veggies in, the ones we eat often, like spinach, the herbs, lettuce, tomatoes, so we try and do

	that as much as we can and that's why any 'waste' goes back into the garden.
Interviewer:	I am going to read you a passage on what it means to be a meaningful and healthy brand and ask you a few questions afterwards: <i>Brands are expected to do more than sell a good product in today's world. Brands can no longer focus on its unique selling proposition as the market is saturated with an abundance of competitors offering the same product. Therefore, for a brand to be truly differentiated, it needs to focus on its unique value proposition. Consumers want brands to add value to not just their lives but also consider the effect it has on the environment, all people, and animals. In comparison, it is further argued that brands need to change its mindset, where it is believed that for brands to do good, it must forfeit some of its profit.</i> What is your perspective on brands aiming to be meaningful and is this an important factor when you decide which brand to purchase from?
Participant 2:	So I am very brand orientated, I like to know which brands are which and obviously the ones that are contributing or adding value, I will support. So like Woolworths, they have a really good brand and meaning of their brand so I like to support them. Any other product with the branding behind them is important. But at the end of the day if I am standing in front of a shelf with products I do look at my brand first but if there's something that's more affordable or on sale then I would rather go for price. So brand first, then price.
Interviewer:	I am going to read you another passage on sustainable vegetable breeding and ask you a few questions: <i>A preventative method of managing food waste is to breed sustainable crops. Sustainable crops have better disease resistance, longer shelf life, and improved postharvest qualities to combat vegetable food waste.</i> What are your thoughts on the concept of sustainable vegetable breeding?

Participant 2:	I think it's a good thing, I think its something everybody needs to know about and I think there should be more literature about it, because I think in the coming years it is going to be more harder or more expensive so people need to be able to sustain themselves by planting their own vegetables.
Interviewer:	I am going to read you another passage from the Starke Ayres website: <i>"Any company that develops their own varieties 'owns' the genetics. They're allowed to produce and sell seeds since they spent the time, effort, and resources in developing that variety. These varieties are legally protected by local and international Plant Breeder's Rights act and are called F1 hybrid seeds"</i> (Starke Ayres, 2022). Have you ever heard the term F1 hybrid seeds and what do you think it means?
Participant 2:	Ok to be honest I am actually not too sure what it means. To me its some special seed that has been bred in a breeding programme that probably offers a higher resistance to disease. But I wouldn't be able to describe exactly what F1 hybrid means
Interviewer:	Ok, I am going to read you another passage from the Starke Ayres website, once I have read it to you, please tell me what your understanding of the term F1 hybrid seeds are: <i>"A hybrid seed just means that two different parents of the same crop, for example, sweet corn, were crossed together. Hybrid seeds are more resilient and produce higher yields than regular seed"</i> (Starke Ayres, 2022).
Participant 2:	So then that means that they taking two different seeds putting it together so it has a higher yield, uhm and is better?
Interviewer:	Many people confuse F1 hybrid seeds with Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), what is your understanding of GMOs and how do you think it differs from F1 hybrids?
Participant 2:	It's two totally different things because I do understand that GMOs are genetically modified so that's understandable, I think it's a total different subject to F1 hybrids.

Interviewer:	So how do you think they differ?
Participant 2:	I actually don't know. Now that you ask that, I understand what a GMO is and now you throwing that sentence in there so its making it a bit confusing.
Interviewer:	What are your thoughts on GMOs? Are you against it?
Participant 2:	No not really, because if you are feeding the nation uhm, you need GMOs seeds to keep up with the demand. But if its for your own crop, then uhm, I'm against it. It's a really hard one because you don't know if its right or wrong. You are lead to believe that GMOs are bad, but I think they must have a reason for being so they can't be that bad?
Interviewer:	What would you recommend is the most effective way for the brand to communicate the concept and importance of F1 hybrids to its customers?
Participant 2:	I think they need to put out a statement or press release explaining it in lament terms exactly what it means I think a lot of people think they know what it means and everybody's got a different meaning of what it means but uhm, I think putting it out there in the simplest way for people to understand
Interviewer:	Which social media platforms do you use the most and why?
Participant 2:	I use Facebook and I use Instagram and a very little bit of LinkedIn but I like the social aspect of it, I like that you learn things from it uhm you can see what's new on the market. You can see what's trending. I do like Instagram for the very social side of it where Facebook is a little bit of a negative connotation to it because there's sometimes bad news on it. If I had to choose one I prefer Instagram.
Interviewer:	Do you follow any of your favourite brands on social media and for what reasons do you follow them?
Participant 2:	Yes I do, and uhm, I follow them because they have meaning behind their brand. They have got a vision and mission and uhm if I believe in them then I want to see what they doing and it makes me even more want to be more brand aware uhm even though price does beat that but yes I do like to see what they are doing.
Interviewer:	What type of content do you like to see from these brands?
Participant 2:	I like to see what they doing within the environment, what they doing for people, uhm what they contributing to the world I suppose. Are they

	making a difference in people's lives and then obviously they point for them is to make a profit so ja.. oh and if they are producing a really good product.
Interviewer:	What do you think is the role of social media for brands?
Participant 2:	Advertising, brand awareness. Probably more brand awareness than anything else. You don't want product thrown in your face all the time but what do they stand for, so yes more brand awareness.
Interviewer:	In your opinion, how can social media be used to educate people on the importance of food waste management?
Participant 2:	Again, just putting simple little messages out there and uhm, you know, people when, I think they read social media, they don't want to read a whole story but simple little points often make a difference. So yes, educate people on social media with simple short messages to make them aware.
Interviewer:	Ok, thank you very much, before end, do you have any final thoughts on the topics we discussed today?
Participant 2:	I think food waste management actually needs to be put out there more uhm because I think everyone believes their own little way of trying not to waste food but if there is any techniques or any, you know, ways of managing, people need to know that. I need to know that
Interviewer:	Thank you
Participant 2:	Thank you

Participant 3 – Interview (Friday, 8 July 2022, Participants house)

Interviewer:	Thank you for agreeing to partake in this study, before we begin, please confirm you understand all conditions stipulated in the consent form?
Participant 3:	Yes
Interviewer:	Thank you, let's begin. What is your understanding of food waste?
Participant 3:	Uhm, I would say if you prepare food for your family and they just don't eat it because they don't like it. That's sort of uhm unthankfulness
Interviewer:	Why do you think it is important to manage food waste?
Participant 3:	Because there are millions of people that don't have food
Interviewer:	Are you familiar with any food waste management techniques?

Participant 3:	No not really uhm I'm always referring back to my household I always sort of uhm force them to eat it (laughs)
Interviewer:	How often do you through away fresh produce?
Participant 3:	Hardly ever because if something did go off a bit I will put it back in the ground I've got a compost heap and I just put it back.
Interviewer:	For what reasons, if you have, do you have to through away this produce?
Participant 3:	Because it is uneatable, but even the peels that are not edible things, or any sort of waste of food I will try to put back in the earth
Interviewer:	How do you store your fresh produce at home?
Participant 3:	I've got containers in the fridge
Interviewer:	I am going to read you a passage on the importance of food waste and then ask you two questions afterwards: <i>Food waste has detrimental environmental, social, and economic consequences which leads to the excessive use of essential resources such as fossil fuels and freshwater. Moreover, implementing effective food waste management systems is crucial for developing a sustainable future. It is estimated that the food availability need will increase by up to 70% in the next thirty years.</i> What is your perspective on living sustainably?
Participant 3:	I try to grow my own food in my vegetable garden, rather plant fruit trees. And then my compost heap in my opinion is very sustainable because nothing gets wasted.
Interviewer:	Besides the compost heap and growing your own, how do you contribute to living sustainably in your life?
Participant 3:	I don't know if this counts but I like to google what to do with left overs or the parts of the fruit and vegetables we can't eat. For example, I soak orange peels and put it in a spray bottle to use as an organic pesticide in my garden. I don't waste anything. I believe everything can have a purpose.
Interviewer:	I am going to read you a passage on what it means to be a meaningful and healthy brand and ask you a few questions afterwards:

	<i>Brands are expected to do more than sell a good product in today's world. Brands can no longer focus on its unique selling proposition as the market is saturated with an abundance of competitors offering the same product. Therefore, for a brand to be truly differentiated, it needs to focus on its unique value proposition. Consumers want brands to add value to not just their lives but also consider the effect it has on the environment, all people, and animals. In comparison, it is further argued that brands need to change its mindset, where it is believed that for brands to do good, it must forfeit some of its profit.</i> What is your perspective on brands aiming to be meaningful and is this an important factor when you decide which brand to purchase from?
Participant 3:	Uhm, no not really. I just go by price, whichever is more affordable – the cheapest one available, as I believe they all do the same thing.
Interviewer:	I am going to read you another passage on sustainable vegetable breeding and ask you a few questions: <i>A preventative method of managing food waste is to breed sustainable crops. Sustainable crops have better disease resistance, longer shelf life, and improved postharvest qualities to combat vegetable food waste.</i> What are your thoughts on the concept of sustainable vegetable breeding?
Participant 3:	Uhm I like the more organic vegetables as the way God created it to be and people must just uhm, I know our lifestyles have changed and you can't buy day by day. I won't say I would totally disregard with what they doing with trying to preserve food but I don't think it's a good thing for human consumption in the long run.
Interviewer:	I am going to read you another passage from the Starke Ayres website: <i>"Any company that develops their own varieties 'owns' the genetics. They're allowed to produce and sell seeds since they spent the time, effort, and resources in developing that variety. These varieties are legally protected by local and international Plant Breeder's Rights act and are called F1 hybrid seeds" (Starke Ayres, 2022).</i>

	Have you ever heard the term F1 hybrid seeds and what do you think it means?
Participant 3:	I've never heard of that and I have no idea what it means
Interviewer:	Ok, I am going to read you another passage from the Starke Ayres website, once I have read it to you, please tell me what your understanding of the term F1 hybrid seeds are: <i>"A hybrid seed just means that two different parents of the same crop, for example, sweet corn, were crossed together. Hybrid seeds are more resilient and produce higher yields than regular seed"</i> (Starke Ayres, 2022).
Participant 3:	I just need to grasp my mind around it what hybrid is and uhm
Interviewer:	Do you want me to read it to you again
Participant 3:	Yes please
Interviewer:	<i>"A hybrid seed just means that two different parents of the same crop, for example, sweet corn, were crossed together. Hybrid seeds are more resilient and produce higher yields than regular seed"</i> (Starke Ayres, 2022).
Participant 3:	So it's the same thing you use to create something better? That sounds good to me
Interviewer:	Yes, many people confuse F1 hybrid seeds with Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), what is your understanding of GMOs and how do you think it differs from F1 hybrids?
Participant 3:	GMOs uhm, I am not happy about that at all. Because that definitely interferes with what God created the earth to be and what he gave humankind to live off of healthily. I do believe that is where our cancers and lot of illnesses comes from uhm so comparing that to the hybrid seeds I would say uhm I'll prefer the hybrid if it is not genetically modified. I don't like GMOs at all. I think F1 hybrids are more natural?
Interviewer:	Ok so have answered the next question regarding your opinion on GMOs so we'll move on to the next question What would you recommend is the most effective way for the brand to communicate the concept and importance of F1 hybrids to its customers?

Participant 3:	I think they have to make a definite statement that it is not GMO uhm because there is will just disregard anything that is genetically engineered and just do more advertising on that. Because I have never heard of F1 hybrids
Interviewer:	Which social media platforms do you use the most and why?
Participant 3:	WhatsApp.. because it's easy to communicate. I don't like Facebook or any other platform because it takes my focus off of what I like to do. So just WhatsApp to be in touch with the people I care about
Interviewer:	So you don't have any social accounts to follow your favourite brands on, I am correct?
Participant 3:	Yes you are correct, but for people like me, may I make a suggestion?
Interviewer:	Yes please do
Participant 3:	I would say it is important where you advertise your product to maybe have a pamphlet or something that people can take and read but to make it sort of important it must be something like 'Did you know we don't genetically engineer our products' - that will grasp my attention immediately
Interviewer:	What type of content do you like to see from these brands?
Participant 3:	Product information, specials, that sort of stuff
Interviewer:	Even though you are not on social media, what do you think is the role of social media for brands?
Participant 3:	For advertising and educating people
Interviewer:	In your opinion, how can social media be used to educate people on the importance of food waste management?
Participant 3:	Uhm I think most people are very much aware of the hunger need in the world uhm, that's always in my opinion the worst just to think that people are going to bed without food. But you don't want to be reminded of that each and every day but it needs to be brought under people's attention and what can be done about it. So creating awareness around the issue and the solution.
Interviewer:	Ok, thank you very much, just a final question, do you have any final thoughts on the topics we discussed today?
Participant 3:	No, I think I have said all that I can say about the topics
Interviewer:	Thank you very much
Participant 3:	Thank you