EXPLORING THE CRITICALITY OF BRAND EQUITY DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICAN NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

by

ODUETSE ARTHUR MASHEGWANE

[redacted]

RESEARCH [RESE8419]

Qualification: BCOM Honours in Strategic Brand Management

Supervisor: Dr ROSE MATHAFENA

Declaration: I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the Bachelor of Commerce in Strategic Brand Management honours degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

Word Count: 14974

ABSTRACT

Lack of stakeholder engagement is one of the biggest challenges South African NPOs currently face. Upon realising the importance of stakeholders in organisations and aiming to build long-term relationship with stakeholders, local NPOs are learning ways to engage effectively with stakeholders. The purpose of this research study was to determine if South African NPOs developing brand equity results in an effective engagement with different stakeholders or not. A qualitative study approach was adopted, while primary data was gathered using online open-ended questionnaire. Research participants were purposely chosen as per non-probability sampling guidelines. Thematic analysis was used to analyse both primary and secondary data. The interpretive paradigm prominently facilitated the analysis and the interpretation of research findings. Four themes came from findings, namely 1) brand equity; 2) stakeholder engagement; 3) benefits of a healthy brand equity for NPO; and 4) practices of improving NPO brand. Whilst it was found that stakeholders engage with local NPOs because of the quality of the service and products they provide to stakeholders and not necessarily on having brand equity. Future research could explore more ways that will help local NPOs to build long-term relationships with all stakeholders.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Contextualisation/Background

Academics like Lehohla (2017) refers to a non-profit organisation (NPO) as independent of government and aims at solving public welfare issues locally, nationally, and internationally. A critical role played by South African non-profit organizations in today's world consists of alleviating humanitarian, social, and educational problems (Gross, Helmig & Wymer, 2016). South Africa has seen an increase in the number of registered non-profit organizations in the past decade (Lehohla, 2017), hence there is an increasing competition among non-profit organizations in terms of finance and human support (Nguyen, 2020). Studies by Lloyd (2017) and Barnard (2021) suggest that South African non-profit organizations such as charities, churches, old age homes, schools, and other social services are becoming more and more overcrowded and competitive due to the increased need for organisations to provide human services to citizens or otherwise give back to the society. Consequently, the authors contend, the growth of non-profit organizations has made it increasingly difficult to maintain relationships with donors (financial), communities, and volunteers from corporate and governmental organizations (Barnard, 2021; Lloyd, 2017). As such, it is important for NPOs to recognize how Brand has become a term that almost everyone understands today and appears in many aspects of everyday life and businesses (Gross et al., 2016), hence the importance of this element to individuals and organizations cannot be overstated (Nguyen, 2020). For example, a brand like Global Citizen, a non-profit organization that has taken use of developing its brand equity to attract and maintain its relationship with different stakeholders (its partners, volunteers, and communities around the globe) (McCarthy, 2019).

According to Becker and Boeng (2016) strong brands provide stakeholders with direction and quality, hence branding efforts are no longer limited to raising revenue (McCarthy, 2019), and non-profits need to recognize the importance of branding activities, more so if they hoping to connect and form meaningful relationships with individuals, communities, and corporates (Gross et al., 2016). Furthermore, Bhasin (2020) emphasizes that how stakeholders view a brand plays an important role in making decisions about volunteering and donating. By building a strong brand equity, a non-profit organisation(NPO) can clarify what it stands for and can acquire more resources (Nguyen, 2020). Other aspects related to a strong brand equity could be quality of service, good governance, transparency on how the organization is managed, legal compliance, ethical conduct, and good management of resources (McCarthy, 2019). Therefore, organizations have the challenge of having to differentiate themselves and establish a unique brand identity, appearance, and personality to capture the attention of donors and sustain themselves (Becker, Clement, Langmaack & Shehu, 2017).

This research study is set out to state the criticality of brand equity in South African non-profit organisations to help NPOs to attract and maintain relationships with its stakeholders, by looking at some of the advantages that comes with successful NPOs building their brands, their brand equity and inevitably engage with different stakeholders to ensure survival.

1.2. Rationale

Due to the increase in the number of NPOs operating in South Africa with different missions and visions (StatsSA,2021), the NPO industry has become more challenging and competitive in attracting and maintaining relationships with stakeholder (Nguyen, 2020). As such, NPOs find it challenging to attract and maintain good connections with different stakeholders (Lehohla, 2017), and this is when developing brand equity becomes more essential and impactful for any NPO (McCarthy, 2019). FundsForNGOs (2021) asserts that when an organisation develops a strong brand equity and sufficiently understand its brand it might succeed in achieving diverse aspects such as fundraising, building trust, and increasing advocacy.

Studies from McCarthy (2019) and FundsForNGOs (2021) have shown that successful NPO like Global Citizens and Unicef have developed their brand equity and have outlined few benefits to NPOs having strong brand equity like an effective engagement with different stakeholders. Nguyen (2020) notes that for a non-profit organization to have a relationship with its stakeholders is hugely impacted by the NPOs brand.

Lloyd (2017) contends that funding has been a tough challenge for South African non-profit organisations, and the Council on Foundations (2020) states that the constant failure of government to provide for some basic services and products has resulted in an incline in the number of non-profit organizations in South Africa. Therefore Lethole (2017) affirms that there is an increased need to demonstrate credibility, quality, performance, and sound financial governance, which when well communicated contributes significantly to building brand equity which helps in attraction of stakeholders.

Lloyd (2017) further notes that to gain stakeholders favour and undoubtedly form relationships with stakeholders, some of South African NPOs are starting to differentiate themselves through creating distinctive brands, therefore, by creating a brand for their organisation that specifically communicates the mission, value, and uniqueness can assist South African NPOs that have not constructed their brand equity to make certain that they remain relevant, competitive, and different as they compete for limited financial and human resources within the local and international stakeholders (Nguyen, 2020). By identifying the needs and interests of individuals and understanding how the brand is meaningful to stakeholders, non-profit organizations can better build relationships (Schwartz, 2017).

Branding appears to be at a pivotal point in the non-profit sector (Madiga, 2019), even though many non-profits still think of brand management as a fundraising tool, more and more are shifting their focus to uncovering the broad, deep roles that branding can play to advance broad, long-term social goals while strengthening organizational identity, image, awareness, cohesion, and capacity (Paige, 2019). Iwankiewicz-Rak and Mróz-Gorgoń (2017) reveals that non-profit organizations have no choice but to compete for increased financial, human, and material resources. The role of non-profit organisations discerning themselves from other organizations to erect a sustainable public image is caused by organizations paying serious attention in developing a unique brand identity (Paige, 2019).

It is recognized that some NPOs use brand equity as a differentiation tool to raise brand awareness and brand image (Gross et al., 2016), however, existing research has not made clear on stakeholders' decision-making to have a relationship with a specific NGO is entirely based on having brand equity (Iwankiewicz-Rak & Mróz-Gorgoń, 2017). Yet, while studies by Lehohla (2017) and Madiga (2019) have been conducted on brand, branding, and brand orientation, Lloyd (2017) asserts that there have been few on how brand equity can help non-profit organisations have an effective relationship with its stakeholders.

1.2.1. Why should the problem be investigated?

The non-profit field in South Africa is becoming more and more populated and as it stands there is lack of support (funding and volunteers) for the already existing organisations in this field (Council on Foundations, 2020). This then now forces NPOs to differentiate themselves and be unique through creating brand awareness, developing brand identity and brand image that will encourage effective relationships with stakeholders (donors, volunteers, beneficiaries, and communities) (Nguyen, 2020), but will also determine the extent to which stakeholders engage with a specific NPO is solely based on the NPO's brand equity or mealy on the services provided by the NPO. Iwankiewicz-Rak and Mróz-Gorgoń (2017) state that these insights may provide local non-profit organisations with advantages of having brand equity (Becker et al., 2017). In addition, it may provide tools, strategies, and lessons that were previously unknown or unavailable to NPOs for developing their brands (Madiga, 2019). Becker et al. (2017) all note that it is inevitable that these lessons will be of assistance to local NPOs currently and in the future in terms of differentiation, funding, securing volunteers, and ultimately ensuring long-term survival in a highly crowded and competitive market. Lethole (2020) notes that having ensured their survival, South African NPOs might then be able to continue pushing for sustainable development and tackling many social challenges that our country is going through.

1.3. Problem Statement

An incredibly significant number of non-profit organizations in South Africa are still yet to respond to the criticality of developing brand equity (Lloyd, 2017). Studies that were done before having shown that if NPOs invest in their brand equity (McCarthy, 2019), then their brand identity, brand image, and how they create brand awareness will need to be developed as this could be a way stakeholders engage with NPOs more effectively (Nguyen, 2020). Because of many South African NPOs not developing their brand equity (Lloyd, 2017), this might make it harder for NPOs to engage with stakeholders and has an influence in the security of funds and volunteers (Madiga, 2019). Lehohla (2017) states that an increase in the South Africa non-profit sector forces NPOs to differentiate themselves and build their brand equity to compete for private and public funding, as well as recruitment of corporate and government volunteers, plus individuals and communities.

Nguyen (2020) argues that since the business language manifests usefulness in the non-profit organisations, it must not be surprising that non-profit brand is defined in the for-profit language, as branding in the non-profit sector is at a turning point in its development, and that since it is challenging for non-profit organizations to maintain and attract donors and volunteers, branding helps in diverse aspects such as fundraising, building trust, and increasing advocacy (Lehohla, 2017). While McCarthy (2019) argues that non-profit organizations such as Global Citizen and Unicef are succeeding in their efforts of building brand identity, brand awareness and creating brand awareness for effective relationships with stakeholders.

1.4. Research Goals/Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research study was to determine if South African NPOs developing brand equity results in an effective engagement with different stakeholders or not, and then determine the extent to which brand equity can be utilised by local NPOs to sustain and attract new or potential donors, and volunteers. Ultimately, this study aimed to provide local NPOs with significant tools for how NPOs can engage effectively with different stakeholders to ensure long-term relationships.

1.5. Research Question

The primary research question:
Why is it critical for South African non-profit organisations to build brand equity for effective stakeholder engagement and to what extent can building brand equity improve/ sustain financial stability, attract volunteers, and secure operational continuity in meeting social needs of communities?

The secondary research questions for this study are:

1. What, if any, are the advantages of having brand equity for non-profit organisations?
2. How can South African non-profit organisations implement/ build brand equity?
3. How can having brand equity for South African non-profit organisations create long lasting relationships with stakeholders?

1.6. Research Objectives

1. To identify, if any, the advantages that come with non-profit organisations having brand equity.
2. To identify ways or process/es that South African non-profit organizations can use to implement brand equity.
3. To determine if South African non-profit organisations having brand equity can create long lasting relationships with stakeholders.

1.7. Theoretical Foundation

While building brand equity for South African NPOs is important, the organisations needs to understand the significance of how to engage with different stakeholders and to fully understand this, a theoretical basis of knowledge regarding stakeholder theory by Freeman (2010) is applied.

Freeman (2010) defines stakeholder theory as the process where an organisation considers all stakeholders if they want to succeed, by creating value for all stakeholders and not just shareholders. Both Freeman (1984) and Dashpande (2010) defines stakeholder as any group or individual like customers, suppliers, employees, governments, shareholders, and communities who are affected by or can affect the achievement of an organisation goals. Freeman (2010) further asserts that a business cannot consider one stake or stakeholder in isolation, since the interest of the client, supplier, community, employee, and financiers must all be aligned, as an organisation finds a way to make those interests co-mingle. For an organisation to be successful, each of these groups of stakeholders must be satisfied, and if an organisation loses its edge with its customers by having products or services they do not desire, then the business will stagnate (Freeman, 2010). Freeman (2010) continues unpacking the stakeholder theory by stating that, when an organisation is managed in such a way that its suppliers do not improve it and they just take orders and sell stuff, instead of trying to innovate or grow, or an organization whose employees are not willing to be at work every day, or who are not giving 100 percent of their attention, energy, and creativity to make their organization better, then this will result in the organisation being in a holding pattern and possibly on its way to declining.

If an organisation is not being a good citizen in the community and routinely ignores or violates local custom in law or does not pay attention to the quality of life in the community, and pays no attention to issues of corporate responsibility, then the organisation will soon be regulated into decline (Freeman, 2010). Same thing as an organisation that does not create value and profits for its financiers, shareholders, or banks, then this organisation will be in a decline (Freeman, 2010).

Stakeholder theory is the idea that each one of these groups (customers, suppliers, employees, governments, shareholders, and communities) are important to the success of the organisation and figuring out where their interests go in the same direction is what the managerial task and the entrepreneurial task is all about (Freeman, 2010). According to Freeman (2010) stakeholder theory says if the organisation is only focused on financiers, they will miss what makes capitalism tick and what makes capitalism tick is that shareholders and financiers, customers, suppliers, employees, communities can together create something that no one of them can create alone.

Freeman (2010) argues that unless NPO directors recognize the needs and concerns of different stakeholder groups, they will not be able to put together corporate objectives which would sustain the necessary support for the continued survival of the NPO. As such, the historical stakeholder concept as adopted in figure 1 below, and is made up of corporate planning, systems theory, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and organisation theory (Freeman, 2010). In this case, the stakeholder concept according to corporate planning it is used to collect intelligence so that environmental opportunities and threats can be predicted accurately as it provides organisations with information at a generic level about traditional "relatives" of stockholders such as employees, managers, suppliers, consumers, and the public (Freeman, 2010).

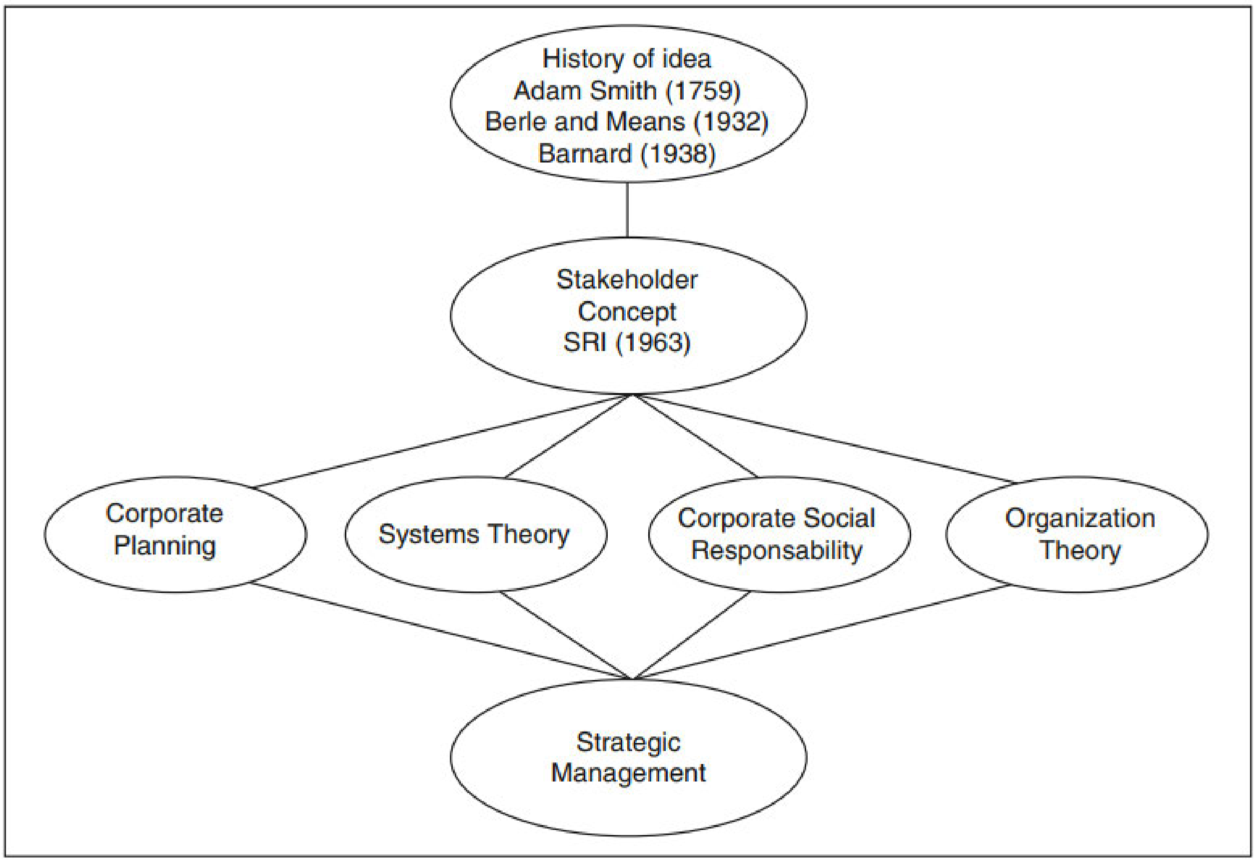

Figure 1: History of the stakeholder concept

Systems model according to Freeman (2010), argues that different stakeholder groups and the organisation need to plan the future and solve system-wide problems of the organisations together. With CSR being part of the theory, Freeman (2010) argues that

CSR puts less emphasis on satisfying owners/directors and focuses more on the public, the community or employees. Lastly Freeman (2010) argues that with the organisation framework completing the stakeholder theory, it focuses on the relationship the organisation has with its environment.

Furthermore, the way Freeman (2010) has stipulated the stakeholder theory fits the study perfectly since understanding what makes stakeholders engage with different South African NPOs is of great significance. The existence of non-profit organisations does not only serve the interests of directors or beneficiaries of NPOs, but again interests of other stakeholders (Freeman, 2010). It is important that not only should South African NPOs know how to identify different stakeholders, but then they should also know how to communicate, connect, value, and develop or maintain relationships with these stakeholders (Freeman, Harrison, and Wicks, 2007 cited in Freeman, Harrison and Sá de Abreu, 2015). The Freeman’s theory offers ways on how South African NPOs can adopt to identify all stakeholders affected by the NPOs operations directly or indirectly, and they will be able to develop methods/strategies on how to engage and create value for every single group of stakeholders that will last for years (Freeman, 2010). Since NPOs want to build solid relationships with different stakeholder groups, the theory of Freeman (2010) states that if NPOs are effective in valuing all stakeholders, then they will tend to reciprocate with positive behaviour towards the organisation, including sharing useful information, making purchases, donating, offering tax breaks, or negotiating better financial terms or remaining loyal to the organisation during difficult times. The stakeholder theory strategy works because it entails how to mobilize the efforts of stakeholders to help the organisation achieve its goals Freeman et al. (2015).

In conclusion, Freeman et al. (2015) stated that stakeholder theory assumption is that the purpose of the organisation is to create and distribute value to a plurality of stakeholders, and that the achievement of this purpose depends on the cooperation and support of the stakeholders themselves (Freeman 2010). Lastly, Freeman (2010) emphasizes that an organisation’s long-term survival is directly tied to its value creation for stakeholders, which is its core responsibility as a manager, since a value statement guides managers' actions.

2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This literature review critically analyses relating past literature research by highlighting how South African non-profit sector is increasing, and how it is becoming difficult for NPOs to engage with all stakeholders (Lloyd, 2017). With NPOs realising that one of few factors contributing to the difficulty of stakeholders engaging with them, is a result of not having brand equity or a brand that resonates with stakeholders (Nguyen, 2020). It can be understood why creating a unique brand for South African NPOs is important to differentiate themselves (Lethole, 2017).

2.2. Non-profit Organisation

NPOs are defined as trusts, companies, associations of persons formed for a public purpose and whose income and property are not distributed to its members and executives, except for reasonable compensation for services rendered (Department of Social Development, 2016). Becker and Boenigk (2016) defined non-profit organisation as a firm that primarily exist not because it aims to make profit, whether that be directly or indirectly, but they exist because of accomplishing social issues needs. Nguyen (2020) asserts that non-profit organizations even if they gain financial surplus for a particular year, Lehohla (2017) states that the surplus would not be considered as profit and there will be no pay-out of dividends to the organization's governing board, directors, founders, or members, but then it will be ploughed back into the main mission of the organization.

Adding to the definition, Nguyen (2020 have previously noted that non-profit organisation are institutions that are separate from government, and that, South African NPOs do not exercise government rules and laws within their own right, and as much as they are legal entities formed by the process of law, their existence is noticed independently of the people, corporation or government units that formulate finance or manage them (Lloyd, 2017). Though non-profit organisations may receive finance support from the South African government and have public officials to their board (Lehohla, 2017), NPOs still have enough discretion in this sense to the management of both its services and the use of funds, and its finance cannot be involved into finances of the government (Nguyen, 2020; Lloyd, 2017).

Lehohla (2017) also stated that non-profit organizations control their own activities since they are not under any effective control of any other entity and the contribution of time and funds plus membership/s are not enforced by law or any form of citizenship condition. Lethole (2017) then adds that this means non-profit organisations are their own bosses because they can easily dissolve themselves or implement new bylaws or even alter their goal, mission, and vision without requiring any permission from any authority. Non-profit organizations can exist in different fields like sports, education, religion, tourism, conservation (water, wildlife), science, etc (Lehohla, 2017).

2.3. Stakeholders within the NPO sector

Bonnafous-Boucher and Rendtor (2016) describes stakeholders as individuals or groups which can affect or are affected by the achievements of an organization. A non-profit stakeholder is any person, group, organization, community, government, or institution that affects, or is affected by one or more non-profit organizations (Bonnafous-Boucher & Rendtor, 2016). Dicke, Heffner and Ratliff (2016) view the term 'stakeholder' with the private sector and corporations, as it reveals its relationship between the world of business and the public sphere. Corporations operate not only in an economic and legal environment, but also a social, political, cultural, and ecological one, it illustrates the difficulty of separating various interests and interestingly, the term 'stakeholder' is no longer restricted to the realm of corporate governance (Dicke et al., 2016).

According to Freeman et al., (2015), stakeholders are defined as groups without whom an organization would not exist, and these groups include customers, employees, suppliers, political action groups, environmental groups, local communities, the media, financial institutions, government bodies, and many others. According to this viewpoint, a company is an ecosystem of interdependent groups, and all these groups must be considered and kept happy so that the business remains successful (Simon, 2016). The stakeholders that this research paper is focusing on currently are volunteers, donors, beneficiaries of NPOs, and communities. Ralser (2019) notes that donors could be seen as an individual or organization that typically provides products or financial support, depending on the type or functions of an NPO.

Study by Paço, Rodrigues, and Rodrigues (2016) shows that volunteers represent a significant part of the workforce for many organizations, with many of them depending solely on volunteers, and a lot depends on how effectively NPOs can obtain volunteers if they are to maintain their prestige. Nguyen (2020) states that many organizations depend on volunteers to carry out their daily operations or to deliver services. As such Lethole (2017) says that volunteers are therefore a valuable resource for all types of organizations, and that while some volunteers' contributions are only incidental to the running of an organization, others are essential. The importance of volunteers is that some of them provide non-profit organisations with skills and expertise that aim to reduce operating costs, increase the manner and the quality of NPO's service delivery (Becker et al., 2016).

Beneficiaries are individuals or communities that benefit from the services rendered by non-profit organizations (Groza & Gordon, 2016). The stakeholder management theory provides a guideline as to how organizations need to be aware of its stakeholders, and it underscores that stakeholder need to be treated with fairness, honesty, and even generosity (Freeman et al., 2015). As Harrison, Bosse and Phillips (2017) put it, for business to succeed, it needs to allocate more resources to satisfy the needs and demands of its legitimate stakeholders than to manage the activities of its productive agents adequately.

2.4. Brand Equity

Brand equity is defined as the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumers' responses towards a brand (Keller,1993). Aaker (1991) argues that brand equity forms value for both the organisation and the consumer. This study seeks to determine the extent to which the brand equity of non-profit organization affects the engagement of stakeholders. Aaker (1997) asserts that brand equity describes the value premium generated by a company from a product with an identifiable name, as opposed to one that's generic and to create brand equity, companies need to ensure their products are highly memorable, easily recognizable, and have outstanding quality and reliability.

Becker, Clement, Langmaack and Shehu (2018) argue that the financial, strategic and management advantages of the brand represent the value the brand holds for an organization. Marketing efforts include the different elements that make up a brand and brand equity is very dependent upon consumer awareness, their relationship with the brand, and its monetary value (Keller, 2008; Bhasin, 2020). In contrast, Tarrant (2018: 55) highlights the fact that brands that consumers will genuinely invest in are a limited number that empower them to build meaningful personal relationships with. Based on what Tarrant asserts, people develop deep relationships with others, but have shallow relationships with brands (Tarrant, 2018).

To measure brand equity, Aaker looks at everything associated with a brand, such as its name, logo, and symbols that add or take away from its value (Aaker, 1991). Aaker (1991) advocated the existence of four drivers that ensure consumers receive good experiences with a brand's products and services, thereby promoting the hope that they will feel associated with the brand. These four brand asset drivers are: brand awareness, brand association, brand loyalty, and brand quality (Aaker, 1991).

As stated by Keller (2013), brand equity is positively correlated with customer loyalty, commanding greater profit margins, growing the effectiveness of marketing communications, increasing licensing opportunities and increasing the support of brand extension. According to Keller (2013), researchers before from both academia and for-profit companies have been measuring and defining brand equity for years and these studies have led to marketers and academics coming up with various brand equity models that aim at breaking down the concept of brand equity into multiple dimensions through which an organization can actively manage its brand and its equity.

Although many researchers have developed their own approaches to conceptualizing brand equity (Madiga, 2017), Keller (2013) argues that while they may differ in their specific details, they all tend to share a similar goal being to build an organization’s brand in the minds of its targeted audience and stakeholders. Keller (2013) developed the concept of customer-based brand equity (CBBE), a contrary view of brand equity. Keller (2013) states that brand equity can be measured by maintaining or improving customer experiences over time and by assessing the marketing activity of the organisation. Consumers may be more willing to pay more for products that resonate with them, which is a bias to behave toward the brand (Keller, 2013). The concept of brand equity identified by Keller (2013) relies on brand knowledge, which in turn depends on brand awareness and brand image.

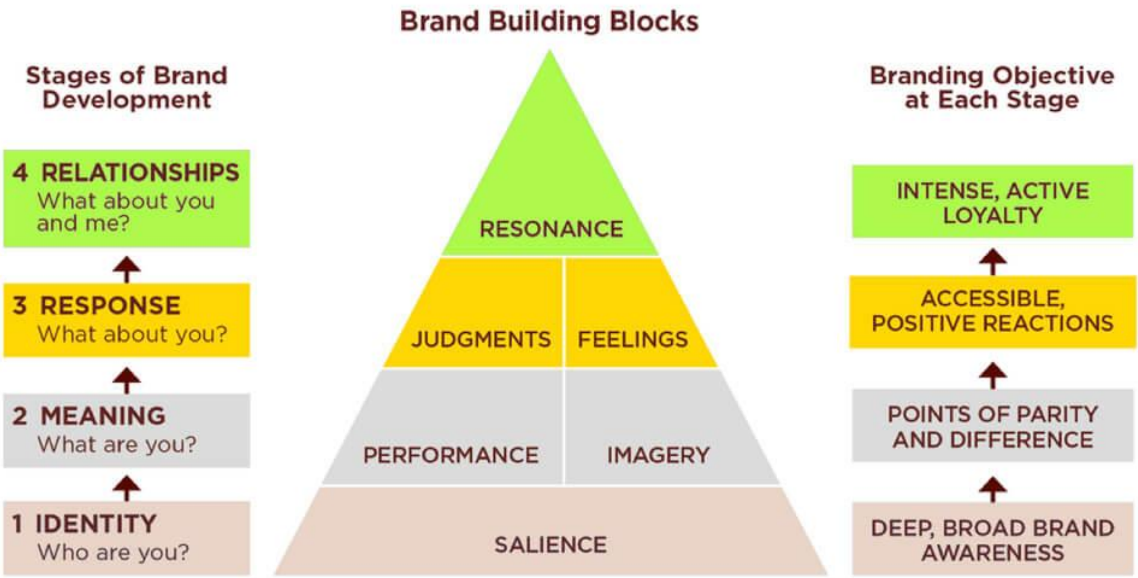

Figure 2: Brand Resonance Pyramid (Keller, 2013)

In order to create successful brands, organisations need to establish six brand-building blocks; salience, performance, images, judgements, feelings, and resonance (Keller, 2013). The first step is Identity and according to Keller (2013) this is when brand awareness is created. He further notes that it is important to ensure that the brand organisations are recognizable by customers, and they can be understood. Second step is Brand Meaning, and this means that an organisation's brand should represent what the company is about and what it stands for.

Additionally, in most situations, other factors such as the meaning or appearance of the brand are also considered by most customers, in essence establishing a brand image is key to establishing brand meaning, which defines what the brand represents to customers (Keller, 2013). The third step is Brand Response, Keller refers to it as organisations being able to determine what consumers think and feel about the brand, its marketing efforts, and other sources of information. Last step is Brand Resonance which according to Keller (2013) this is a measure of the way that customers feel about a specific brand and how deeply they connect with it.

2.5. Brand building and brands as differentiators in non-profit organisations

Helmig et al. (2018) and Paco et al (2016) accept that branding is at a critical stage of its development in the non-profit sector, and organizations are shifting away from using brands as a means of just communication but also uses brands as strategic instrument to engage with different stakeholders and raise funds. Llyod (2017) acknowledges the increasing interest in brand building in the non-profit sector, and that the strategic framework and management tools available to these non-profits for brand benefits are inadequate. This has forced non-profits to borrow models and theories from profit making organisations (Paco et al., 2016). Although commercial branding and marketing strategies are essential to non-profits in their fundraising and recruiting of new donors and volunteers, these brand building activities cannot be imported directly from corporate companies into NPOs, but must adapt these strategies to their own needs, focusing on the needs of their core users and sponsors (Becker & Boenigk, 2016).

It has been demonstrated that brand equity is important for any organisation, more especially in South African non-profit organisations, since there has been an incline in the number of NPOs (Lethole, 2017). Hoeffler and Keller study (cited in Keller, 2009) showed that having a strong brand will benefit an organisation in the following ways:

- Improved perceptions of product performance.
- Greater stakeholder loyalty.
- Less vulnerability to competitive marketing actions and marketing crises
- Larger financial donation margins.
- More elastic stakeholder response.
- Greater trade or intermediary cooperation and support.
- Increased marketing communication effectiveness.
- Additional licensing and brand extension opportunities.

Becker-Olsen and Hill (2016) stated that branding is a mechanism that creates lines of identification for non-profit stakeholders, enabling them to find information in a more efficient manner. In addition, as Becker-Olsen and Hill (2016) asserts, it is often the case that non-profit organizations, in trying to differentiate themselves from their counterparts globally and locally, use a more professional marketing approach to secure international and local funding and other support. In essence, branding for NPOs serves as an indicator of transparency, responsibility, and reliability by showing organisations' core values, beliefs, intentions integrity, responsibility, and accountability (Arnett et al., 2003; Morgan and Hunt, 1994, as cited in Voeth & Herbst, 2008).

Individuals often base their decision about whether to associate with a non-profit organization on what they perceive the organization is doing or to be (Frumkin, 2015), and according to Becker-Olsen and Hill (2016) when people have a personal relationship with a non-profit organisation, they are more likely to make donations, volunteer, and recommend the NPO to other parties (Groza & Gordon, 2016). The authors argue that developing a strong brand is essential for most South African non-profit organisation, especially when the competition for funding is increasing (Groza & Gordon, 2016). Lethole (2017) and Madiga (2019) support these ideas arguing that non-profit branding distinguishes the organization from other non-profit organizations seeking support, broadens its audience, creates a positive brand image that can be leveraged to gain more support, and strengthens a relationship with donors and volunteers.

But Stock (2019) adds that even so with the number of non-profit organisations increasing, usually these organisations have very limited budgets and suggests that they should only use marketing if there are funds available and if it is aligned with the purpose of the NPO. Stock (2019) further states that the marketing purpose of an NPO might be to inform stakeholders about the services the organization provides, but this type of marketing should be targeted at a specific audience. Alternatively, the NPO may wish to encourage potential donors to make financial donations or provide other resources (Biria, 2019). Again, this marketing type should target only potential donors (Biria, 2019). Ultimately, not all non-profit organizations must use marketing since the most part of it depends on the budget and the purpose of the NPO (Stock, 2019).

2.6. Increase in the number of South African Non-profit Organisations

Lehohla (2017) says that non-profit organisations in South Africa that are registered have passed the 200 000 number and again an estimated 75 000 NPOs are not registered. Given how South African government lacks leadership, Nguyen (2020) states that because of the number of social issues South Africans are facing, these NPOs are in attempt to rectify these social issues and imbalances (Lehohla, 2017). Because of these issues and lack of Corporate Social Investment (Hershey, 2013; Lu, 2015; Warshawsky, 2016), the non-profit sector in South Africa has been increasing and as a result these non-profit organizations are experiencing problems with funding, donations, and volunteers (Gross, Helmig & Wymer, 2016).

Llyod (2017) and Nguyen (2020) argues that in the case of social issues like sports, education and health, South Africa continues to fall behind in responding to meet the needs and as a result, an incline in the number of non-profit organizations fills in the gap.

Maboya and Mckay (2019) notes that a decline in funding from donors and volunteers has forced NPOs to start paying attention to their own brand equity by creating brand awareness, brand image and brand identity to help stakeholders easily know who/ what the organisation is all about, with the aim for effective engagement with their stakeholders. Maboya and Mckay (2019) asserts that marketers try to convince customers that their products and/or services are valuable by telling them about the benefits of our products, likewise, even NPOs need to engage the masses to guarantee the success of their social projects (Jharkhand, 2019). Hence, various non-profit organizations like Global Citizen and Unicef have already established their brand equity to ensure that they are able to engage with all stakeholders effectively (McCarthy, 2019).

2.7. Conclusion

In the context of the above studies conducted by different authors about how critical it is for non-profit organisations to have their own brand equity, it is safe to note that there has not been any study done on how having brand equity can help non-profit organisations to engage with all stakeholders. As such, there is a gap, and this study will aim to bridge this research gap.

2.8. Conceptualisation

2.8.1. Brand Awareness

Brand awareness, or access to the brand, refers to the ability of the stakeholder to recall the brand and measures how strong the anchor point is (Aaker 1991). Developing non-profit brand awareness is an essential component of non-profit brand equity (Keller, 2013; Juntunen et al., 2013) and is fundamental to further engagement with the brand, such as the building of trust in the brand. (Keller 2013). To succeed, non-profit organizations need widespread public awareness, and a well-known non-profit brand can serve as an orientation tool for stakeholders (McCarthy, 2019). Even though a strong non-profit brand might be well known to the public and stakeholders, it may remain weak in nature due to negative associations (for example, due to a scandal within the non-profit sector) (Wymer et al., 2015). Considering this, the authors contend that a strong non-profit brand must also be perceived favourably (McCarthy, 2019).

2.8.2. Brand image

According to Keller (2013), individuals' perceptions of non-profit brands are influenced by their mental associations with non-profit brands and seem to appeal simultaneously to both emotional and rational factors. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2009) note that brand image refers to the impression that new and existing consumers or the public has about an organisation. Non-profit brand image is acknowledged as a critical element of a (charity's) promotional program (McCarthy, 2019) to drive charitable donations, given the intense competition non-profit organizations face to secure individuals' monetary and time donations (Michel & Rieunier, 2012; Michaelidou, Micevski & Siamagka, 2015). More specifically, McCarthy (2019) argue that the image of charities provides cues as to how well the charity represents its donors, thus charities which are perceived as effective will be more successful in influencing donations including money and time contributions (Michaelidou, Micevski & Siamagka, 2015).

2.8.3. Engagement

Referring to the traditional meaning of engagement, Maddy (2012) defines engagement as a personal commitment or partnership, which in business reality supports a two-way approach between employer and employee. Maddy (2012) further adds that engagement is the continuous development of an emotional relationship and not just a standard emotion that comes to mind of love and hate, but more towards an emotive grounding sense of belonging, feeling part of something and gaining something in return (Edward, 2019), whether that be increased trust, confidence, knowledge, understanding or commitment (Edward, 2019). In business sense, it is the emotional level a stakeholder has with an organisation or its organisational functions (Maddy, 2012).

Coleman, Manindo, Mukuru, Parker and Schultz (2019) notes that businesses get it wrong by referring to engagement as an action rather than aiming to implement it as a cultural norm or expectation. Maddy (2012) states that there is no hard or fast set rule on the most effective way to engage stakeholders for organisations, but Coleman et al. (2019) notes that through an organisation knowing its people, business sector, culture and values, then, they can be able to align these factors to their engagement strategy and processes that will link the organisation's stakeholders to the environment an organisation wishes to create and work within.

Edward, (2019) discusses that a starting place is to look at; how effective internal communication is? do stakeholders have a voice? Are stakeholders dictated to, or are they involved in the decision-making process? Then, by being able to answer these questions, Coleman et al. (2019) asserts that an organisation can consider engagement as a truly fundamental element to driving organisational success, not just for the immediate time but for future growth and profitable results.

Coleman et al. (2019) also adds that for SMEs, there is an opportunity to set a framework for engagement that suits the organisation by continuously developing and securing relationships with stakeholders from day one of operations. Maddy (2012) notes that effective engagement, when done properly, can create a working environment of dedicated, motivated and committed stakeholders who know where they fit in the organisation, what is it they need to contribute and what they will get back in return.

3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Paradigm

Paradigms aid researchers define and shape their abstract beliefs, thereby affecting how they interpret and act in the world (The Business Research Methodology, 2020). Antwi and Hamza (2016) defines paradigm as a collective of beliefs that influence what should be researched, how to conduct it, and how to interpret findings to sufficiently understand how critical it is for South Africa non-profit organisations to build brand equity to be able to engage effectively with stakeholders (Hamza, 2016). Thus, it can be comprehended how paradigms help in creating meaning from the data collected, based on the researcher's point of view (The Business Research Methodology, 2020).

The interpretivist paradigm was suited for this research study as the researcher explored the criticality of brand equity development in South African non-profit organizations for effective stakeholder engagement (Patterson and Williams (2002:5). Nieuwenhuis (2016) says that according to interpretivism, reality itself cannot be determined objectively, but is created by social construction (The Business Research Methodology, 2020). Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. (2015) states that this paradigm argues that humans cannot be understood by conventional methods of studying objects but by observing how participants interpret how critical it is for South African NPOs to develop brand equity.

The Business Research Methodology (2020) and Antwi and Hamza (2016) jointly states that by immersing oneself in a population's environment, interpretivism seeks to understand the people's behaviours from a deep empathetic perspective. In this paradigm, social action is described as meaningful and human interactions as interpretive (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014), and Nieuwenhuis (2016) asserts that, its perceptions and interpretations play a critical role in understanding humans' social reality. As a result, the concept of ontology and epistemology was adopted by the researcher.

Saunders et al. (2009) suggests that as ontology views how one perceives reality, then they can perceive the existence of reality as external and independent of social players and interpretations of it. Authors also note that with ontology the truth is subjectively based on experiences of participants (Saunders et al., 2009). For example, stakeholders of Global Citizen can form opinions of the brand that are outside existing brand perceptions and external influences (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2019). In an ontological sense, this has assisted the research in rethinking the problem, its significance, and how it can contribute to the body of knowledge (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Thus, by engaging this research, the study has explored participants' subjective views, perceptions, and meanings, depending on their interaction with NPO integrating marketing communications strategies (Nieuwenhuis, 2016), which ultimately informed the research questions and objectives (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014: 295).

Epistemology is defined as a set of beliefs concerning the process of generating knowledge that is deemed valid and acceptable, as well as techniques for evaluating and utilizing that knowledge (Saunders et al., 2009: 175). Authors also asserts that with epistemology the truth can be discovered through interviewing (Saunders et al., 2009: 175). For instead if it were known that South African NPOs misuse donor funds and steal from beneficiaries, sponsors might be discouraged from contributing to NPOs as sponsoring can be seen as a risk (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2019: 176).

Using interpretivism as an epistemic framework, allowed the researcher to derive meaning from participants by building understanding from their data (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017), hence common sense, reasoning, intuition, and experiences are considered subjective ways of generating knowledge when they were employed to create information (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

Kivunja & Kuyini (2017) notes that reality is understood from the perspective of participants in the study by being immersed in the environment and views of participants. This study utilized a qualitative research design to gain insights into stakeholders' thoughts and values on South African NPOs by achieving an in-depth understanding of brand equity development impact on South African NPOs' and their relationships with stakeholders (Strydom and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

3.2. Design/Conceptual Approach

The Business Research Methodology (2020) explains that the approach to research informs the gathering, analysis, and interpretation of data. Hence before this research was conducted, a suitable and relevant research design approach needed to be selected (Davis, 2014). In addition to interpreting data, qualitative research will be used to understand brand resonance from the unique and subjective meanings stakeholders attach to brand (Davis, 2014; du Plooy Cilliers, 2014).

According to Creswell (2009), there are three general approaches to research design that can be used as a standard research design. These research designs can however be useful in some circumstances depending on the type of study and the characteristics of the design approach used (Creswell, 2009). These research designs are: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Artino, Konje & Park, 2020). In short, the difference between qualitative and quantitative approaches depends on the method of selecting, collecting, analysing, and interpreting data that will serve as evidence, as well as the method of collecting and analysing data (Claybaugh, 2020). Bezuidenhout (2018) concludes that quantitative research presents quantitative data, while qualitative research presents interpretation of that data.

There are two major topics covered in this study, which were subsequently combined to form one study. The first part of this paper is designed to explore the criticality of brand equity development in South African non-profit organisations. The second part of this paper is designed to explore the effectiveness of how stakeholders choose to engage with South African non-profit organizations. As such, this study will apply the exploratory research design to be able to explore the rich, qualitative data from these topics. (Dudovskiy, 2019; Lewis, 2015). According to Cuthill (2002: 107) exploratory research relies upon the study to investigate the outcome of a research study since the existing problem needs to be clearly defined. Whilst building brand equity within the non-profit sector is a subject that has not being ignored entirely by researchers (Lehohla, 2017), there is still not enough research regarding how NPOs having brand equity can influence how stakeholders choose to engage with a particular NPO (Lloyd, 2017).

This research design aims to provide the study with a background into brand building within the non-profit sector and how this will affect stakeholder engagement. Exploratory design is beneficial to this study due to the anticipated outcome of attaining understanding of the topic (Nieuwenhuis, 2016), as it has helped the research study to attain ways or strategies that non-profit organisations can adopt to engage with its stakeholders. This research approach, together with the interpretivist paradigm that has already been stated, has enabled the study to gather qualitative, in-depth, and rich data on the topic of effective stakeholder engagement because of having brand equity within the non-profit sector.

3.3. Population

Population is composed of individuals, institutions, and objects that have similar or the same characteristics that interest a researcher, and as such it is safe to state that the population is all the individuals or units of interest (Statistics Solutions, 2018). A population is defined by Nieuwenhuis (2016) as the total group of people or entities from whom information is required. If the study population suffers from sampling error, the study population may not represent the target population correctly (Vonk, 2016). When researchers formulate different operational definitions of the target population, the findings will vary, resulting in apparent contradictions in the data (Vonk, 2016). The research population can be subdivided into the target and accessible population based on specific population criteria.

Since this study is looking at the criticality of South African NPOs developing brand equity to effectively engage with its stakeholders, the target population or the unit of analysis for the population for this research study had to be limited to South African non-profit organisations operating in different fields (sports, religious, health, education, etc.), individuals who are beneficiaries of these NPOs, volunteers that have offered their time, and skills to the organisations, and lastly people or firms that have donated money or products to non-profit organisations.

Because this study is ethically bound, for every individual who participated in the open-ended online questionnaire, they all had to be 18 years and above, and this study included both men and women of any race.

3.4. Sampling

Researchers states that sampling is the process where smaller sets of data is drawn from a larger population by a researcher using a pre-defined selection procedure (Maree & Pietersen 2016). Pascoe (2014) asserts that by decreasing the amount of population that a researcher can access to a manageable number, then this process is understood as sampling. For this research study, it is therefore fitting to use non-probability sampling method, which is defined by Maree and Pietersen (2016) as a process of, rather than selecting samples based on random selection, this sampling technique places emphasis on the subjective interpretations of the researcher.

Due to the constraints in time, resources, and difficulty of accessing the relevant population, it was thus important for the researcher to consider that having to use non-probability sampling, the study did not generalize the results of the population (Maree & Pietersen 2016). For the study to be able to gain an in-depth understanding of the criticality of South African NPOs having branding equity for effective engagement with their stakeholders, a purposive sampling technique suited the study best.

Steinmetz, Toepoel and Vehovar (2016) suggests that when a researcher chooses elements for a sample based on their knowledge and judgement, then this is known as a purposive sampling method. Authors also argue that the selection of participants is based on the needs of the research study and those who do not meet the requirements of the study are to be rejected (Steinmetz, et al., 2016).

The proposed scope of this qualitative study is of small scale, hence the restricted access size of the study's population is not too critical since this is not a quantitative study (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). From the sample that has experience with a non-profit organisation/s, a total number fifteen participants took part in the study, consisting of five females and ten males between the ages of 18 and 55 from South Africa, and for the sake of achieving the objectives set out in Chapter 1, participants were divided into four different groups of stakeholders: the donors, beneficiaries, directors or managers, and volunteers.

There were five directors/managers representing different NPOs, four beneficiaries, four volunteer, and three donors. Because of time purposes and availability of resources, the research focused only on non-profit organisations that were situated in Gauteng and North-West provinces, but as for other stakeholders like beneficiaries, donors, and volunteers, they were not limited and could be from anywhere in South Africa. Participants were assigned a code, namely P1 to P15. Because of research ethics, the principles of confidentiality and anonymity were applied to prevent the identification and disclosure of the participant's identity. Table 1 provides an overview of the participants' profile:

Table 1:

Participants Demographics

Participant Name	Age group (Years)	Gender	Level of Qualification	Length of experience with an NPO(Years)	Role in an NPO	Residing Province

Participant 1 (P1)	18-24	Male	Bachelor's degree/Advanced Diplomas/Post Graduate Certificate & B-tech (NQF 7)	1–4	Donor/Volunteer	Gauteng
Participant 2 (P2)	25-35	Female	Honours degree/Post Graduate diploma & Professional Qualifications (NQF 8)	1–4	Director/Manager	Gauteng
Participant 3 (P3)	18-24	Male	Bachelor's degree/Advanced Diplomas/Post Graduate Certificate & B-tech (NQF 7)	1-4	Donor/Volunteer	Gauteng
Participant 4 (P4)	36-44	Male	Bachelor's degree/Advanced Diplomas/Post Graduate Certificate & B-tech (NQF 7)	5-9	Beneficiary	Gauteng
Participant 5 (P5)	25-35	Male	Honours degree/ Post Graduate diploma & Professional Qualifications (NQF 8)	1-4	Donor/Volunteer	Gauteng
Participant 6 (P6)	25-35	Male	Honours degree/ Post Graduate diploma & Professional Qualifications (NQF 8)	1-4	Director/Manager	Gauteng
Participant 7 (P7)	25-35	Male	Honours degree/ Post Graduate diploma & Professional Qualifications (NQF 8)	5-9	Beneficiary	Gauteng
Participant 8 (P8)	18-24	Female	Honours degree/ Post Graduate diploma & Professional Qualifications (NQF 8)	1-4	Director/Manager	Gauteng
Participant 9 (P9)	25-35	Male	National Diploma (NQF 6)	5-9	Donor/Volunteer	Gauteng
Participant 10 (P10)	25-35	Male	Bachelor's degree/ Advanced Diplomas/ Post Graduate Certificate & B-tech (NQF 7)	1-4	Donor/Volunteer	Gauteng
Participant 11 (P11)	25-35	Male	Bachelor's degree/ Advanced Diplomas/ Post Graduate Certificate & B-tech (NQF 7)	1-4	Beneficiary	Gauteng
Participant 12 (P12)	45-55	Female	Honours degree/ Post Graduate diploma & Professional Qualifications (NQF 8)	1-4	Director	Gauteng
Participant 13 (P13)	45-55	Male	Grade 12	10 years and more	Beneficiary	North-West
Participant 14 (P14)	36-44	Female	Bachelor's degree/ Advanced Diplomas/ Post Graduate Certificate & B-tech (NQF 7)	5-9	Exco Leader	Gauteng

Participant 15 (P15)	25-35	Female	Honours degree/ Post Graduate diploma & Professional Qualifications (NQF 8)	1-4	Donor/Volunteer	Gauteng

3.5. Data-Collection Method

Data collection methods are instruments that a researcher applies or uses when data must be collected for the sake of the research study (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). The author adds that these instruments aid the researcher collect data about the criticality of South African NPOs developing brand equity for effective stakeholder engagement from the targeted population sample (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

As much as there are different methods/instruments of collecting data from a sample of participants (Maree & Pietersen, 2016), the instrument that was used to collect data for this qualitative study was an online open-ended questionnaire. Allen (2017) defines an online open-ended questionnaire as a free-form survey that consists of open-ended questions that allow respondents to answer in their own words according to their knowledge and understanding of questions without having been given a set of answer choices. Participants were able to answer the questionnaire online through accessing a link shared to them by the researcher.

Utilizing an online open-ended questionnaire setting allowed more of holistic and comprehensive view on the purpose of the research study and allowed participants to state if it is critical or not for South African NPOs to develop their brand equity as a result of effectively engaging with stakeholders (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). As a result, this gave the data more diversity and gave answers to questions that the research study had asked, while simultaneously allowing participants to help the study meet its objectives (Nieuwenhuis, 2016).

The online open-ended questionnaire was considered the best way to collect data because, the researcher wanted the participants to able to complete the questionnaire at their own time without the rush of a in-person, telephonic or video interview. Dr Brenner (2021) asserts that individuals are able to give their full honest experience or opinion about any matter or issue if they are given time and the privacy they need. This allows for participants to freely state their point-of-view on any matter without having to think that they will be judged for pronouncing some words differently, this then now create a place where participants are able to respond freely to an online open-ended questionnaire (Dr Brenner, 2021).

Qualitative questionnaire allowed the researcher to observe and record the participants' experiences relating to the study's issue (Maree & Pietersen, 2016). Since the questionnaire was an online it allowed participants to deliver honest answers in full detail while their thinking process was revealed on the matter that was greatly beneficial to the study (Maree & Pietersen, 2016). It was through the questionnaire that the researcher was able to identify if the reason behind stakeholders choosing to engage with South African NPOs is solely based on a non-profit having brand equity or not.

Questions that respondents answered from the questionnaire were formulated in line to objectives the study wants to accomplish. These questions were based on the foundation of wanting to understand the criticality of South African NPOs developing brand equity for effective stakeholder engagement. The questionnaire was created by the researcher using google forms software. Google forms allowed the researcher to ask various types of research study questions that allowed responded to give their answers in a paragraph text format and checkboxes format (Love, 2021). The researcher was again able to give respondents the ability to skip questions they were unable or might not have wanted to answer, and besides being easy to use for the researcher and respondents, Google forms permitted the researcher to create a professional looking form with multiple ways that the researcher was able to administer the form.

Upon the completion of drafting the questionnaire, a link was then generated by the software (Love, 2021). The researcher was unable to pilot test the questionnaire before getting ethical clearance from IIE Vega to start collecting data. Upon receiving the ethical clearance from IIE Vega, the researcher began piloting the questionnaire by sending the questionnaire to two board of directors of Phanda Sports Foundation, which eventually was then sent to the research study's identified sample.

3.6. Data Analysis Method/s

Data analysis method is a particular procedure that is used by the researcher to give a detailed examination of raw data collected (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). In qualitative research, data analysis refers to the systematic search, observing notes, and other non-textual materials that the researcher accumulates to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of brad equity on South Africa NPOs (Wong, 2008). The author adds that coding or categorizing qualitative data is a major part of the analysis process (Wong, 2008). Nieuwenhuis (2016) asserts that by principle, data mining involves reducing the number of raw entries, then identifying patterns, then drawing meaning from the data, and finally building a logical chain of evidence from it.

To be able to understand the reason why South African NPOs can engage effectively with stakeholders is based on a developed brand equity or not, thematic analysis method was applied using the inductive approach to be able to come-up with common or shared meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2017). With an inductive method to the thematic data-analysis, Nowell (2017) asserts that themes are permitted to materialize from the data itself, hence this study saw a range of different answers and responses from the open-ended questionnaire on how much weight does brand equity have in stakeholders deciding to engage with different South African NPOs (Nowell, 2017).

Kiger and Varpio (2020) defines thematic analysis as a method of analysing qualitative data through searching a set of data to find, analyse, and report on repeated patterns. While it is a way to describe data, Kiger and Varpio (2020) further notes that thematic-analysis entails interpretation in the process of selecting codes and putting them together as themes. In addition to its ability to be applied to a range of study questions, designs, and sample sizes, thematic analysis is flexible enough to be used within a broad range of theoretical and epistemological frameworks (Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

Methods used to analyse data collected for this study is fitting, due to the realization that this research study had to involve reducing the amount of qualitative data (opinions, words, perceptions, views, beliefs, motivations, etc.) by taking apart, segmenting, and reassembling data to identify significant trends, themes and coming up with meaningful insights (Braun & Clarke, 2017). The analysis used by this study allowed for some lucrative information to be taken away from data (Nowell, 2017), as the research recorded themes that were found and that were identified in literature, such as brand equity and stakeholder engagement, and the inductive analysis of the data identified concepts that kept on repeating, such as the participants' understanding of the term 'brand equity', how stakeholders understand brand equity of their NPOs, and whether if it is due to NPOs having brand equity that makes them as stakeholders engage with the NPO.

From these concepts, similar patterns and themes were then available and revealed for the researcher to draw deeper meaning and understanding from sample answers (Nieuwenhuis, 2016). The outcome from the sample answers showed the most important information and notable themes that were identified during the stage of primary research and from there insights were identified (Nowell, 2017). The researcher then organized and grouped these different codes into clusters that were used to represent general patterns, and trends in this study, which are more meaningful and focused (Nowell, 2017). Clustering the information allowed the researcher to reduce the information into smaller pieces, which made it easier to understand and analyse (Nieuwenhuis, 2016), by selecting appropriate tables to represent data and analyse collected data (Margin, 2020).

Since the researcher adopted the thematic analysis method outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), this method consists of steps that the study followed:

• Step 1; Researcher getting familiar with the data

Since respondents completed the online questionnaire at different times, the researcher was able to look at each response as it was reflecting on Google forms, and this allowed the researcher to be able to absorb and study the answers without having the pressure of having too many words to focus on. Soon after all the collection of data using Google forms had been completed, the data was then transferred to a spreadsheet where then the researcher started studying all fifteen responses couple of times just to be aligned appropriately to all responses.

• Step 2; Coming-up with initial codes

The researcher used Microsoft word to note points from analysing and identify words/concepts and short sentences and plotted a map of codes that were grouped inline with how participants responded to different questions, while trying not to have codes that overlapped with other identified codes.

• Step 3; Looking for themes

Themes were established by scrutinizing contrasting how codes that were identified in step 2 related. Since the researcher used inductive analysis, the themes were taken directly from the data that had been coded and resulted with the study having themes that linked very closely to the main original data.

• Step 4; Going through identified themes

The data that was previously coded is perfectly lined and suited every theme that was identified. For example, the researcher identified “Branding is how an organisation wants to be known” as one of the codes and identified “brand image” as the theme that perfectly fits the code. Secondly, the researcher had to analyse thoroughly if the identified theme/s is in-line with answering the research question/s.

• Step 5; Naming and explaining themes

All themes that were in line with answering both primary and secondary questions of the research study were listed. Every theme was analysed and its description to make sure it answered all research questions adequately and that an understanding of the research purpose is met.

• Step 6; Delivering report manuscript

The researcher went through two different cycles of coding in this study, with the purpose of exploring the criticality of South African non-profit organisations developing brand equity for effective stakeholder engagement. The first cycle consisted of the initial coding and recording of data, whereas the second cycle included the categorizing, emphasizing, conceptualize and build of theory.

4. CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on primary data collected from research participants, as well as results of secondary data adapted from existing literatures (Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi & Wright, 2010:265). The fifteen participants questionnaire responses provided a diverse and rich data for a lengthy analysis. Four themes were identified and nineteen sub-themes using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. These findings will be discussed in relation to the study's research objectives as well as existing literature.

4.2. Presentation of Findings

The questionnaire had seven questions excluding the demographic questions. From the three set objectives in Chapter 1, the first objective being "To identify, if any, the advantages that come with non-profit organisations having brand equity". Questions(Qs) that were asked in the questionnaire that came from this objective and relevant responses from participants are;

- Q10: How will a healthy brand equity (respected, known, reputable) support /promotes stakeholder (directors/managers, beneficiaries, volunteers/ donors) engagement?

  "When a NPO has positive brand equity, various stakeholders especially donors are more willingly donate more, even though they could get the same thing from a competitor for less. Because the cause/purpose behind that NPO represents that values of all stakeholders involved" **[Participant 4]**

  "It will add/subtract value depending on societies perception" **[Participant 12]**

- Q11: There are currently over a thousand registered NPOs in South Africa. How important do you think it is for the NPO at hand to have a strong brand equity, especially in comparison with other NPOs in South Africa?

  "It is crucial to have strong equity in South Africa with so much competition. Therefore to attract a loyal following and audience there needs to be more accessible and reliable for consumers." **[Participant 5]**

“An NPO's has to have a strong brand equity in order to attract the relevant stakeholders which will allow them to conduct their mandate” **[Participant 7]**

- Q12: What benefits (if any) to Non-Profit Organisation(NPO) do you think may come about from having a brand equity in the NPO market?

  “Increased differentiation for sure. Greater consumer trust in the organization and a willingness to participate” **[Participant 6]**

  “The NPO will attract the interest of volunteers and donors, and this will help the NPO to reach its objectives” **[Participant 8]**

Second objective of the research study was “To identify ways or process/es that South African NPOs can use to implement brand equity”. One question(Q) was derived from this objective, and fifteen responses were recorded:

- Q13: How can a Non-Profit Organisation improve their brand building and its brand equity (respect, awareness, reputation)?

  “Build a particular and meaningful purpose of the brand. Be transparent and lives its purpose in all that it does. Create distinctive identity that is engaging, authentic and coherent communicator.” **[Participant 3]**

  “Through strong visibility, and communication that is inspiring, thought-provoking, and action-igniting” **[Participant 9]**

Last set objective was to “Determine if South African non-profit organisations having brand equity can create long lasting relationships with stakeholders”, and from this objective two questions came from it:

- Q8: As a person who is/has been involved with a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO), what would you say is the current brand equity of the NPO, and what would you say is the reputation the NPO holds in general?

“The current equity is low as the NPO is still new. The reputation is also still to be established. The collective strength of the team is it’s strongest offering at the moment.” **[Participant 7]**

“Known for good Corporate governance and the reputation is positive. The public associate the brand with high moral authority” **[Participant 10]**

- Q9: According to you, is it the service (what the NPO is doing) or how the Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) is branded that encourages you to be or want to be associated with the NPO?

“It’s what they do and how they help the community” **[Participant 9]**

“The service, the branding complements it.” **[Participant 10]**

From all fifteen responses, the researcher had to acquaint himself with the data to be able to come up with codes and themes and relate those themes according to the research study objectives (Deborah, Jill, Lorelli, Moules, Nancy, Norris, Nowell and White, 2017).

Table 2:

Themes and Sub-Themes

NO.	THEMES	SUB-THEMES
1.	Brand Equity	• Brand Image • Logo/Brand Name/Symbol • Brand Value • Identity/Recognition
2.	Stakeholder Engagement	• Loyalty • Brand Association/ Relationships • Experience • Caring Organisation • High/Positive Reputation • Purpose and Role
3.	Benefits of a Healthy Brand	• Reliability and Trust

	Equity for an NPO	• Increased funding • Professionalism • Increased brand awareness
4.	Practices of improving NPO brand	• Transparency • Improving the culture • Marketing • Avoiding scandals • Consistency

4.3. Interpretation of Findings

There were four themes uncovered from the data collected. Themes were labelled (1) NPO Brand Equity; (2) Stakeholder Engagement; (3) Benefits of a Healthy Brand Equity for an NPO; and (4) Practices of improving a brand. From the identified themes there were nineteen sub-themes identified as illustrated in Table 2 above.

4.3.1. Theme 1: NPO Brand Equity

This theme was derived from the data found in participants' responses, when they were asked "What do they understand by branding and brand equity?". This question was asked by the research-study to explore the understanding of participants' knowledge on branding and brand equity in general. Developing a strong brand is one of the main objectives for most organisations with the aim of being successful (Keller, 2001). Most participants showed a similar and solid understanding of these terms while there were two participants [participant 10 and 13] who did not know or showed less understanding of branding and brand equity.

"I don't understand much about it." **[Participant 10]**
"I don't know, isn't it the name of my nonprofit?" **[Participant 13]**

However, from the other thirteen participants there was evidence of understanding branding and brand equity. Participants frequently referred to; (1) brand image, (2) Logo/Brand Name/Symbol, (3) Identity/Recognition, (4) service provided and (5) brand value, when defining both branding and brand equity. For example, responses from participants 7 and 11 illustrated how the research study arrived to the four above listed sub-themes under theme 1.

“Branding sums up who the organization is and who they are to me in particular. Brand equity is the commercial value of that brand based of consumer perceptions, associations and actions.” **[Participant 7]**

“Branding is a process of shaping people's perception of your brand and brand equity in simple terms is the brand worth” **[Participant 11]**

4.3.2. Theme 2: Stakeholder Engagement

Question 8 and 9 were formulated with objective number three as the foundation. All responses that emerged from these questions were then analysed and theme2 was produced which consisted of six sub-themes. Holistically thirteen participants who understood brand equity as the quality of service given by local NPOs, stated that it is because of the strong brand equity that the NPO has that makes them want to associate with the organisation, and also if the NPOs’ operations are fair and transparent,

4.3.2.1. Loyalty

Participants identified that it is mostly the role that an NPO plays in the community more than the branding of the organisation that encourages them to be loyal to the NPO:
“So, I have been part of this organisation for years now and they have gotten to be my family, so I would say what they are doing to the community and me personally matters the most, not this brand what what.” **[Participant 13]**

“The service, the branding complements it” **[Participant 9]**

4.3.2.2. Brand Association/ Relationships

Participants who were mostly donors of NPOs associated themselves with NPOs that were able to share their success with the public.

“We create sustainable developmental relationships with our target audience, not only for the specific service we offer but also taking care of their holistic wellbeing.” **[Participant 9]**

"About average brand equity the brand could do a lot more. The reputation is a good one amongst people who are aware of the non-profit." **[Participant 5]**

4.3.2.3. Experience

The participant has noted that the first time experience they have with an NPO is of importance as to whether they will decide to engage with the NPO again or not;

"For me it is more about the course and the reason behind it. Purpose is key for me in the NPO I would want to be associated with. I would be lying if I said I dont care much about how it looks because I am in the creative industry. Showcasing your brand (NPO) in a credible way for me is also key also" **[Participant 5]**

4.3.3. Theme 3: Benefits of a Healthy Brand Equity for an NPO

There were four sub-themes that aroused from theme three that are discussed here:

4.3.3.1. Reliability and Trust

A number of participants highlighted how a healthy brand equity assures them that they can trust and rely on the operations and values of a particular NPO;

" Stakeholders are more inclined to participate and invest in NPOs that are seen as more trustworthy and reputable because it is easier to acknowledge the cause and understand how the proceeds will be used. Stronger brand equity contributes to more engagement and greater contributions which would make investing much more appealing." **[Participant 3]**

"Healthy brand equity will give confidence to all stakeholders to stand out and talk about their organization and also their reputation as stakeholders." **[Participant 4]**

4.3.3.2. Increased funding

Participants who are managers/directors of the NPO and donors, were the ones that believed the most that there are high chances for an NPO to get more funding because of having healthy brand equity;

“NPO's mostly get funded by donations form individuals and other organisations , sponsorship from private corporations and funding from the government. these stakeholders I mentioned I don't think would want to be associated with a brand that has a negative or unhealthy brand equity. Having a positive brand equity makes stakeholders want to be associated and be more involved with the NPO.” **[Participant 4]**

“When a NPO has positive brand equity, various stakeholders especially donors are more willingly donate more, even though they could get the same thing from a competitor for less. Because the cause/purpose behind that NPO represents that values of all stakeholders involved.” **[Participant 2]**

4.3.3.3. Professionalism

Participants have identified that for NPOs to have brand equity, makes the organisations appear professional.

“Brand integrity comes from strong brand equity in the NPO market. More stakeholders will feel that there are positive changes and real impacts being made by the NPO. This is because the NPO will showcase integrity and make sure they uphold their values and try their best to complete their missions. This helps with engagement and investing in NPOs.” **[Participant 3]**

“Brand equity in the NPO market would serve to inspire others to also want to be part of the market and make a difference.” **[Participant 12]**

4.3.3.4. Increased brand awareness

Participants stated that NPOs who had a unique brand equity, stakeholders are much more aware of them as to who they are and what they do.

“People could resonate with the brand and business would want to associate themselves with the brand which would lead to more donations.” **[Participant 5]**

“Increased differentiation for sure. Greater consumer trust in the organization and a willingness to participate.” **[Participant 7]**

“Increased brand awareness, and more control of the positioning the NPO would land in the target market's mind.” **[Participant 15]**

4.3.4. Theme 4: Practices of improving NPO brand

This theme has incorporated participants’ understanding on ways they believe if they were applied by NPOs can improve their brand and brand equity. From this theme, five sub-themes came out as a result, and will be discussed below.

4.3.4.1. Transparency

Participants have identified that if NPOs practice an open way to operate and honestly disclosing information to all stakeholders, will aid the brand gain value:

“Build a particular and meaningful purpose of the brand. Be transparent and lives its purpose in all that it does. Create distinctive identity that is engaging, authentic and coherent communicator.” **[Participant 2]**

4.3.4.2. Improving the culture

After the researcher analysed the collected data, participants expressed how unique the NPO needs to be in order to be noticed by stakeholders, and how everything from the service to the branding of an NPO needs to work in harmony:

“Get back to the basics, do the ground work depending what type of NPO. Get policies in place and channel the funds correctly.” **[Participant 4]**

“NPOs need to have a clear vision and differentiation to what they provide and how they will do it. This should create equity that resonates with the audience and showcases a purposeful and meaningful cause. This can lead to a better reputation and provide more integrity to their approach which will increase respect but also encourage engagement.” **[Participant 6]**

“Find out what the specific target audience needs and serve that in alignment with the brand offering.” **[Participant 9]**

4.3.4.3. Marketing

Participants also noted that if NPOs were to start promoting their services or purpose of their existence through advertising could also improve their brands:

" Marketing interviews with corporate partners, volunteers and top management over public platforms to garner trusteorthiness and publicity." **[Participant 1]**

" By improving on their marketing." **[Participant 8]**

"Invest in corporate identity and a PR/ Communications agency." **[Participant 14]**

4.3.4.4. Avoid Scandals

Participants asserted that they personally would not be associated with a brand that has bad reputation or press:

"I think by being genuine, in SA we have a problem with corruption and sometimes NPOs serve as fronts. Where the NPO doesn't deliver anything they've set out and money disappears" **[Participant 5]**

4.3.4.5. Consistency

Participants have said that a brand that is able to meet its stakeholders at their level and always being able to consistently deliver on the brand promise, improves brand value:

"Be consistent and deliver a consistent brand message throughout which ties into the activities, people/volunteers and culture of the NPO." **[Participant 15]**

4.4. Findings in Context

The researcher on this section wanted to establish a relationship between the findings that this study found from primary data to those of the current existing literature, in aim to contribute to the body of knowledge on the criticality of developing brand equity for South-African NPOs for effective stakeholder engagement. Findings for this study were classified under themes listed in ***Table 2*** on the previous section, which will be explored based on literature findings of this study.

4.4.1. Brand Equity

As much as developing brand equity would allow an organisation to engage more effectively with its stakeholders (Madiga, 2017), Keller (2013) and Aaker (1991) looks at developing a strong brand equity from the outside in and also from the inside out respectively. The research-study findings mentioned previously briefly confirms that some participants do acknowledge that brand equity is able to create value for both the organisation and its stakeholders through the use of identifiable name, logo/symbol, and brand identity (Aaker, 1996), but majority of participants associates brand equity with the quality of service or product an NPO is able to constantly deliver to stakeholders. The study also found that, how participants viewed or perceived an NPO is influenced by their mental associations with non-profit brands (Keller, 2013).

4.4.2. Stakeholder Engagement

The findings showed that the process by which NPOs communicates or interacts with its stakeholders to achieve a desired outcome where individuals become loyal to the organisation and enhance accountability (GIIRS, 2013), is also influenced by the type of relationship or experience individuals encounter with the NPO. When an NPO has a positive or good reputation in the community and is trusted for the role it provides in the society as a result of taking into account the needs of the community helps stakeholders to identify if they resonate with the brand or not. Hence, Maddy (2012) added that engaging with stakeholders is a continuous development of an emotional relationship and not just a standard emotion that comes to mind of love and hate, but more towards an emotive grounding sense of belonging, feeling part of something and gaining something in return. Edward (2019) supports the findings by asserting that participants as stakeholders of different non-profit organisations, it is because of the emotional level that they have with the NPO or its organisational functions that they choose to engage.

4.4.3. Benefits of a Healthy Brand Equity for an NPO

As per the research study's findings, majority of participants who understand brand equity, were able to state benefits that they felt came with an NPO having a healthy brand equity. In conjunction to the findings, the existing literature argues that developing a powerful brand for an NPO is essential (Groza & Gordon, 2016), as it will result in greater stakeholder loyalty and trust, increased financial donations, improved perception of NPO performance and an increased success opportunity (Hoeffler and Keller, 2009). Findings also revealed that the NPO is found to be more professional due to having a trusted brand equity. Becker, Clement, Langmaack and Shehu (2016) asserts that branding is a mechanism that creates lines of identification for non-profit stakeholders, enabling them to find information in a more efficient manner. In addition, Becker-Olsen and Hill (2016) also state that, it is often the case that non-profit organisations, in trying to differentiate themselves from their counterparts globally and locally, use a more professional marketing approach to secure international and local funding and other support.

4.4.4. Practices of improving NPO brand

The researcher found that not all participants were pleased with how some non-profit organisations lacked the completeness of a well-established brand equity. Though it was also found that for some NPOs they do not need branding to have successful operations. To measure and improving brand equity, Aaker looks at everything associated with a brand, such as its name, logo, and symbols that add or take away from its value (Aaker, 1991). Aaker (1991) advocated the existence of four drivers that ensure stakeholders receive good experiences with a brand's products and services, thereby promoting the hope that they will feel associated with the brand. These four brand asset drivers are: brand awareness, brand association, brand loyalty, and brand quality (Aaker, 1991).

4.5. Conclusion

In this chapter the research findings comprehensively outlined participants experiences and views on the criticality of South African NPOs developing their brand equity for effective engagement with stakeholders. Thematic analysis was adopted in this research-study, and the four major themes and nineteen sub-themes that emerged from the data set were discussed and integrated with existing literature analysis.

4.6. Validity, Reliability/Trustworthiness

When conducting qualitative research introducing the criteria of confirmability, credibility, authenticity, dependability, and transferability is crucial to define quality and rigour of the study (Cresswell, 2009). Positivist researchers refers to these criteria as validity and reliability, and their strategies were only adopted to ensure quality of data (Cresswell, 2009). Saunders et al. (2009) defines reliability as the consistency of results obtained from data collection procedures and data analysis procedures. (Saunders et al., 2009) regards validity of a study is determined by the fact that the data collection and data analysis process capture what the researcher claims which means that the findings stand for what they are meant to stand for. Since the questionnaire technique was employed in this study, validity and reliability are highly dependent on the questionnaire design, the questionnaire structure, and the rigor of pilot testing (Cresswell, 2009).

Credibility

Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014) refers to credibility as the process where the researcher interprets the data collected from participants with great amount of accuracy. The researcher interpreted data thoroughly to make a clear connection between the data and the interpreted data where themes reflected realities of participants regarding brand equity in South African NPOs.

Dependability

According to Claes, Goffin, Martinez, Raja and Szwejczewski (2012: 89), dependability in research is expressed through a transparent and clear manner highlighted in how data has been collected, analysed, theorised, and reported narratively. By disclosing raw questionnaire data and a detailed data analysis process that led to findings and coming up with human truths about the reason behind why stakeholders engage with different NPOs, clearly shows a proper and trusted documentation method of this research study.

Confirmability

Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014) asserts that with confirmability, how accurate data has been gathered advocates findings and interpretation. By doing a self-audit of working back and forth, allowed the researcher to ensure that the process of data and interpretation of findings was rigorous and approved.

Transferability

In a qualitative study, the extent to which findings and conclusions from one context can be used in another is known as transferability (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). The researcher has availed the open-ended questionnaire results for other researchers who would be interested in this topic to reproduce similar sample or results.

Authenticity

Claes et al. (2012: 90) asserts that authenticity in a qualitative study is when there is fairness and faithfulness in how the researcher has analysed, interpreted, and reported the data. The researcher in this study used the research questions of the study as outlined in chapter 1 as a guide to develop the questionnaire.

5. CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a holistic conclusion of this research study as it provides a brief synopsis of the study and highlights each research question asserted in Chapter 1 is answered with reference to the findings given in Chapter 4. Furthermore, it provides recommendations and contributions that can be potentially reached based on the data collected.

5.2. Research Questions

This study asked one primary research question and three secondary research questions. As the base to answer the overarching primary research question, three secondary research questions were used and each one will be addressed with concluding remarks.

5.2.1. What, if any, are the advantages of having brand equity for non-profit organisations?

The research findings identified the following advantages of having brand equity for South African NPOs:

- Increases NPO brand awareness and image.
- Builds trust or credibility among stakeholders and shows professionalism.
- Elevates the organisation’s value and integrity while being transparent.
- Aids stakeholders to easily resonate with the NPO brand.
- Increases more support from financial donors, volunteers, and management.

5.2.2. How can South African non-profit organisations implement/build brand equity?

From the local NPOs and other stakeholders’ responses gathered above, it was derived that whilst majority stakeholders regard brand equity of less significance in the local NPOs perspective and understanding the term ‘brand equity’ slightly different compared to Aaker and Keller definitions, they still argued that points below can help local NPOs develop their brand equity.

- Public/media interviews with corporate partners and volunteers.
- Delivering professional quality services/products and outstanding work.
- Invest in a distinctive corporate identity and public relations/communication agency.
- Digital presence (social media platforms).
- Avoid bad press or scandals and be transparent.

5.2.3. How can having brand equity for South African non-profit organisations create long lasting relationships with stakeholders?

From the insights gained above it can be concluded that South African NPOs do not really need to develop their brand equity to engage with stakeholders. In support to this research question, when participants were asked to explain how they see brand equity and the reputation of the local NPO they associate with, they referred mostly to what local NPOs are doing and the value they are giving stakeholders as a way of understanding brand equity, and they based reputation of local NPOs mainly on being caring and high moral authority organisations.

But when they were asked if it is because of brand equity or services NPOs provides that makes them engage with NPOs, findings revealed that the services that local NPOs are providing to different stakeholders is the reason why stakeholders choose to work or are part of a particular NPO and the branding complements the organisation. In essence according to findings, for local NPOs to have a long-lasting relationship with different stakeholders they need to make sure that they deliver on their promise to the public/community, be transparent, professional, and connect with stakeholders at an emotional level since the existence of local NPOs is based on social issues that are close to the hearts of people (Lethole, 2017).

5.3. Implications of findings for future practices

This study is theoretically supported by the Freeman (2010) stakeholder theory and as outlined in Chapter 2 it presents an ample account of the nature of stakeholder engagement with South African NPOs. Findings show that the Freeman stakeholder theory to some extent outlines the reason behind why stakeholders may associate themselves with a particular NPO, bearing in mind that Freeman (2010) view the level of how stakeholders might engage with an NPO is mostly relied on the organisation being able to identify and class different groups of stakeholders to be able to connect and relate to them in a manner that makes more sense to them.

The issue of South African NPOs lacking support from different stakeholders is purely based on the constant increase in the number of registered NPOs operating in the country (StatsSA, 2020), and lack of brand awareness. It is of significance for local NPOs to gain inspiration from organisations that has healthy and fruitful relationships with stakeholders for the success of the NPO's existence. Hence, these findings are useful not only to NPOs in Gauteng and North-West provinces but to local NPOs in general that are able to adopt advice, lessons, tools, and strategies from organisations that know how to engage with stakeholders. If an organisation wants to relate not only with funders and donors but also with communities, volunteers and other stakeholders they need to ensure that they deliver professional and quality services, and the way they connect with different groups of stakeholders must be tailed according to that specific group in order to resonate with them at their level, while keeping in mind that developing brand equity as discussed by Keller (2013) will just be a complementing the organisation. Furthermore, going on forward, local NPOs need to recognise that whilst they can learn much from the lessons and strategies learnt from more successful organisations, it is equally important for them to start applying these lessons for effective stakeholder engagement.

5.4. Anticipated Contribution

It is believed that the outcome and results of this study will provide a contribution towards both academia and the non-profit sector. In terms of academia, the outcomes of this study will provide a greater insight into the existing research and literature. This is because no research has been conducted on the criticality of brand equity development in South African non-profit organizations for effective stakeholder engagement. Therefore, this study will fill the gap that has been identified in the literature and positively contribute towards academia and existing literature. This study will also contribute towards the non-profit sector through the deeper understanding from findings and insights. Firstly, the study focused on the criticality of South African non-profit organisations building brand equity, as this provides not only non-profit organisations who do not have brand equity, but also individuals/corporates who want to associate themselves with a specific NPO. It provides NPOs with the insight of, what is the reason behind the effective stakeholder engagement.

5.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles play a crucial role in maintaining high-quality research and protect participants from any harm they might be exposed to due participating in the research. The University of Pretoria's code of ethics (2017) whilst also considering the ethical concerns outlined by the Human Science Research Council (2017) were applied in this study.

- Autonomy
  Respecting individuals equals respecting their autonomy and independence (Human Science Research Council, 2017). Individuals who took part in this study were informed about their freedom and choice to participate in the research, as well as their right to withdraw from the study at anytime without negative or harmful repercussions.

- Anonymity
  Human Science Research Council (2017) notes that participants have the right to remain anonymous, which asserts that their welfare, privacy, and dignity must be respected by the researcher. In this study, participants remained anonymous as well their information remained confidential throughout the research and the open-ended questionnaire did no harm to participant's dignity or human rights.

- Voluntary participation
  While conducting research, participants will be asked to participate voluntarily (Human Science Research Council, 2017). A thorough explanation of the background and purpose of the study was provided to the participants, since they were not compelled to take part in the open-ended questionnaire.

As the goal of this research was to produce honest and reliable results, the integrity of the study was always maintained by ensuring its irreproachable integrity. This plan ensured that the research is carried out with the highest standards of excellence, from the planning stage to the execution and the reporting. In addition, this research study-maintained transparency in the research process by holding the researcher responsible for the originality of his work, from the planning phase to the resulting findings.

5.6. Limitations

Limitations are described as restrictions or limits in a study that are out of control of the researcher, such as time, financial resources, and access to information (Enslin, 2014). The limitations the study encountered were time and number of participants. The fact that this research paper needed to be conducted within nine months was a challenge and Covid-19 also did not make it easier for the researcher to complete this study because of the lock-down regulations implemented. This meant stricter conditions to collect data, forcing the researcher resorting to online open-ended questionnaire as a data collecting tool. The biggest limitation with online open-ended questionnaires not all anticipated quantity of participants were able to complete the questionnaire because of mobile network data. This study was conducted over a short period and provided limited time for data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and presentation in the final report. The researcher would have preferred to have had a larger sample and enough time for data analysis and interpretation, so that this study would be more robust, especially regarding the sample size and transferability of the study.

5.7. CONCLUSION

In closing, from the beginning of the research study, the researcher aimed to find out if stakeholders' involvement or contribution towards local NPOs is solely based on the local NPO having brand equity or not. Now, with findings presented in this study, it was revealed that different stakeholders choose to engage or associate themselves with different local NPOs mostly because of the service/products or what the NPO is doing. Findings continued to reveal that if an NPO has brand equity then this just a 'cherry on top', meaning that for an NPO to build its brand equity will only be a complement to the value that the NPO is already providing to its stakeholders. Furthermore, organisations and individuals that participated in the research see brand equity or defines brand equity based on the quality of service the local NPO can provide or offer to its stakeholders and not necessarily on how Keller (2013) and Aaker (1997) defines brand equity.

6. REFERENCES

Aaker, D. 1991. Managing Brand Equity. New York: The Free Press.

Aaker, D., 1996. Building strong brands. New York: Free Press.

Allen, M. 2017. The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods. Los Angeles: Sage. [eBook]. Available on SAGERESEARCHMETHODS at: https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483381411.n608 [Accessed 03 September 2021].

Antwi, K.S. and Hamza, K. 2015. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Paradigms in Business Research: A Philosophical Reflection. European Journal of Business and Management; 7(3): 218. [Online]. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295087782_Qualitative_and_Quantitative_Research_Paradigms_in_Business_Research_A_Philosophical_Reflection [Accessed 03 April 2021].

Barnard, S. 2021. My story of helping Nonprofit Organisations use technology for social impact. *Samantha B*, 1 August 2021. [Blog]. Available at: https://www.samanthabarnard.co.za/ [Accessed 03 September 2021].

Becker, J., Clement, M., Langmaack, A. and Shehu, E. 2016. The Brand Personality of Nonprofit Organizations and the Influence of Monetary Incentives. Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht. [Online]. Available at: https://ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=118555338&site=ehost-live [Accessed 03 May 2021].

Bhasin, H. 2020. What is the Stakeholder Theory Strategy?, *MARKETING91*, 6 October 2020. [Blog]. Available at: https://www.marketing91.com/what-is-the-stakeholder-theory/ [Accessed: 30 March 2021].

Botman, Y., Greeff, M., Mulaudzi, F. M. Wright, S.C.D. 2010. *Research in Health Sciences*. 1st Ed. Cape Town: Pearson Education.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. 2016. Thematic analysis. In: Maree, K. eds. 2016. *First Steps in Research 2*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Chapelo, C. 2018. Brand ‘infrastructure’ in nonprofit organizations: Challenges to successful brand building?. Journal of Marketing Communications. 2(3): 199-209. [Online]. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2012.741609 [Accessed 03 May 2021].

Coleman, E., Manyindo, J., Mukuru, E., Parker, R. and Schultz, B. 2019. Impacts of community stakeholder engagement interventions in Ugandan oil extractives. [Online]. Available at: https://www.3ieimpact.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/IE97-Stakeholder-engagement-interventions-Uganda_0.pdf [Accessed 03 May 2021].

Council on Foundations. 2020. Getting Started With Grantmaking In South Africa, 8 August 2020. [Online]. Available at: https://www.cof.org/country-notes/getting-started-grantmaking-south-africa [Accessed 1 August 2021].

Cresswell, J.W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches.* 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage.

Deborah, E., Jill, M., Lorelli, S., Moules, F., Nancy, J., Norris, K., Nowell, H and White. 2017. Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *Sage Journals,* 42(1): 7–14. [Online]. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1609406917733847 [Accessed 1 August 2021].

Department of Social Development. 2016. 2014/15 State of South African Registered Non-profit Organisations. [Online]. Available at: http://www.dsd.gov.za/npo/index2.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=183&Itemid=39 [Accessed 3 June 2021].

Dr Brenner, A., 2021. *The Psychology of Comfort Zones.* [Online]. Available at: https://arraybc.com/the-psychology-of-comfort-zones [Accessed 1 August 2021].

Edward, H. 2019. Stakeholder engagement in ecological restoration: Case: Abandoned mine land rehabilitation. [Online]. Available at:

https://trepo.tuni.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/118594/HingertEdward.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y [Accessed 3 June 2021].

FundsforNGOs. 2021. Ten of the most innovative NGOs in the world. [Online]. Available at: https://www.fundsforngos.org/free-resources-for-ngos/ten-innovative-ngos-world/ [Accessed 3 April 2021].

Enslin, C. and Klopper H. 2016. A balanced perspective on brands. In: Klopper, H. North, E, eds. *Brand Management*. Cape Town: Pearson Education South Africa, Chapter 1: 2-30.

Faircloth, JB. 2005. Factors influencing nonprofit resource provider support decisions: applying the brand equity concept to nonprofits. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 13(3), pp. 1-15.

Freeman, E. R. 2010. Strategic Management. London: Pitman Books Limited.

GIIR. 2013. Giirs emerging market assessment resource guide: stakeholder engagement, GIIR RATINGS & ANALYTICS, June2013. [Blog]. Available at: https://bimpactassessment.net/sites/all/themes/bcorp_impact/pdfs/em_stakeholder_engagement.pdf [Accessed 19 September 2021].

Gordon, G. and Groza, M. 2016. The Effects Of Nonprofit Brand Personality And Self-Brand Congruity On Brand Relationships. The Effects of Nonprofit Brand Personality, 117-127. [Online]. Available at: https://ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=121363215&site=ehost-live [Accessed 01 May 2021].

Gross, H., Helmig, B. and Wymer, W. 2016. Nonprofit Brand Strength: What Is It? How Is It Measured? What Are Its Outcomes?. Springer. 27: 1448-1471. [Online]. Available at: https://ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=asn&AN=115269136&site=ehost-live [Accessed 03 May 2021].

Iwankiewicz-Rak, B. and Mróz-Gorgoń, B. 2017. The Role of Branding in the Nonprofit Organizations. Handel Wewnêtrzny, (2): 125–134. [Online]. Available at:

https://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bsu&AN=123298877&site=ehost-live [Accessed: 30 March 2021].

Keller, K. 2001. Building Customer-Based Brand Equity: A Blueprint for Creating Strong Brands. Cambridge: Marketing Science Institute, 3-17. [Online]. Available at: http://www.msi.org/reports/building-customer-based-brand-equity-a-blueprintforcreating-strong-brands/?login=required [Accessed 19 September 2021].

Keller, K. 2013. *Strategic Brand Management*. Boston: Pearson.

Klopper, H. B. & North, E. N., 2015. *Brand Management*. Cape Town: Pearson.

Kotler, P. & Keller, K. L., 2006. *Marketing Management*. 12th ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Lehohla, P. 2017. Statistics of the non-profit sector for South Africa, 2010 to 2014. National Accounts. [Online]. Available at: https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/D04072/D040722010.pdf [Accessed 01 May 2021].

Lethole, M. 2017. Exploring The Importance Of Brand Identity For Non-Profit Organisations. [Online]. Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/11622/245 [Accessed 30 March 2021].

Lloyd, C. 2017. Building brand equity in the non-governmental sector-lessons learnt from successful international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for South African NGO brands. [Online]. Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/11622/257 [Accessed 30 March 2021].

Maddy, S. 2012. How does Effective ‘Engagement’ Lead to Great Business Success and Performance?, *Staff Squared HR,* 15 June 2012. [Blog]. Available at: https://www.staffsquared.com/blog/effective-engagement-lead-great-business-success-performance-2/ [Accessed 24 May 2021].

Madiga, D. 2019. Exploring The Role Integrated Marketing Communications Has on Brand Resonance: A Checkers Perspective. [Online]. Available at: http://iiespace.iie.ac.za/handle/11622/376 [Accessed 30 March 2021].

Maree, K. and Pietersen, J. 2016. Surveys and the use of questionnaires. In: Maree, K. eds. 2016. *First Steps in Research 2*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

McCarthy, J. 2019. Brand. *Global Citizen, 17 November 2019.* [Online]. Available at: https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/topics/brand/ [Accessed 14 June 2021].

NGO Global Network, 2015. Definition of NGO. [Online] Available at: http://www.ngo.org/ngoinfo/define.html [Accessed 31 June 2021].

Nguyen, N. 2020. Measuring and Improving Customer-Based Brand Equity of a Non-Profit Organization Case Organization: MyData Global. [Online]. Available at: https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/348631/Nguyen_Ngoc.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y [Accessed 31 March 2021].

Nieuwenhuis, J. 2016. Analysing qualitative data. In: Maree, K. eds. 2016. *First Steps in Research 2*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Nieuwenhuis, J. 2016. Introducing qualitative research. In: Maree, K. ed. 2016. *First Steps in Research 2.* Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, Chapter 4: 50-69.

Paço, A, Rodrigues, R. and Rodrigues, L. 2016. Branding in NGOs- its Influence on the Intention to Donate. Economics and Sociology, 7(3), pp. 11-21. [Online]. Available at: http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/start?key=10.83.8.64_8000_1831318191&site=ehost [Accessed 31 March 2021].

Paige, C. 2019. The Impact of Rebranding on Customer-Based Brand Equity: An Exploratory Study on Absa Bank. [Online]. Available at: https://iiespace.iie.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11622/348/Final%20Research%20Report%201_2019-10-25-14-18-50_RESM8419%20_%20Assignment%205%20_%20Paige%20Collinson%20_%2015016324.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y [Accessed 22 April 2021].

Pascoe, G., 2014. Sampling. In: F. Du Plooy-Cilliers, C. Davis & R. Bezuidenhout, eds. Research Matters. Cape Town: Pearson, pp. 132-133.

Salkind, J.N. 2010. Encyclopedia of Research Design. California: SAGE Publications. [eBook]. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412961288.n108 [Accessed 19 September 2021].

Saunders, M, Lewis, P & Thornhill, A. 2012. Research Methods for Business Students. London: Pearson Education Limited.

Statistics Solutions. 2018. What is the Difference Between Population and Sample?- Statistics Solutions. [Online] Available at: http://www.statisticssolutions.com/what-is-the-difference-between-population-and-sample/ [Accessed 1 August 2021].

Steinmetz, S., Toepoel, V. and Vehovar, V. 2016. *The SAGE Handbook of Survey Methodology*. [eBook]. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781473957893.n22 [Accessed 10 August 2021].

Vonik, J., 2016. Sampling methods. [Online] Available at: http://wwww.jennifervonk.com/uploads/7/7/3/2/7732985/lecture_6_sampling.pdf [Accessed 10 June 2021]

7. ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Final Research Report Summary Document Table

Research Purpose/ Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/ Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Key Findings	Recommendations
The purpose of this research study was to determine if South African NPOs developing brand equity results in an effective engagement with different stakeholders or not, and then determine the extent to which brand equity can be utilised	Why is it critical for South African non-profit organisations to build brand equity for effective stakeholder engagement and to what extent can building brand equity improve/ sustain financial stability, attract volunteers, and secure operational	Lloyd (2017) contends that funding has been a tough challenge for South African non-profit organisations, and the Council on Foundations (2020) states that the constant failure of government to provide for some basic services and products has resulted in an incline in the	• Courtney Lloyd (2017) • NGOC TRUC NGUYEN (2020) • Chris Chapleo (2015) • Sara Borkent (2020) • Arasb Ahmadian , Manouchehr Ansari, & Frederic Bertrand. (2019)	• **Theme 1:** Brand Equity • **Theme 2:** Stakeholder Engagement • **Theme 3:** Benefits of a Healthy Brand Equity for an NPO • **Theme 4:** Practices of improving NPO brand	• The interpretivist paradigm • Ontology views how one perceives reality, then they can perceive the existence of reality as external and independent of social players and interpretations of it. • Epistemology - truth can be discovered through	Qualitative	Google Online open-ended questionnaire	While collecting data, the researcher encountered participant that were sceptical about doing the questionnaire thinking that their personal information will be shared publicly. The researcher familiarised participants that	• A healthy brand equity add/subtract value depending on societies perception. • An NPO's hasto have a strong brand equity in order to attract the relevant stakeholders which will allow them to conduct their mandate. • Benefits identified: Increased	• Stakeholders choose to engage or associate themselves with different local NPOs mostly because of the service/products or what the NPO is doing. • Brand equity based on the quality of service the local NPO can provide or offer to its stakeholders and not necessarily on how Keller (2013) and Aaker (1997) defines brand equity.

by local NPOs to sustain and attract new or potential donors, and volunteers. Ultimately, this study aimed to provide local NPOs with significant tools for how NPOs can engage effectively with different stakeholders to ensure long-term relationships.	continuity in meeting social needs of communities?	number of non-profit organizations in South Africa. Therefore Lethole (2017) affirms that there is an increased need to demonstrate credibility, quality, performance, and sound financial governance, which when well communicated contributes significantly to building brand equity which helps in attraction of stakeholders.			interviewing. For instead if it were known that South African NPOs misuse donor funds and steal from beneficiaries, sponsors might be discouraged from contributing to NPOs as sponsoring can be seen as a risk.			sceptical with the ethics document assuring them that they will remain anonymous if they participate.	differentiation for sure. Greater consumer trust in the organization and a willingness to participate. • People choose to be part of the NPO because of what they are doing, not of having brand equity.	
Research Problem	**Secondary Questions/**	**Key Concepts**	**Key Theories**			**Population**	**Data Analysis**	**Limitations**	**Key Contribution**	

	Hypotheses / Objectives						Method(s)			
An incredibly significant number of non-profit organizations in South Africa are still yet to respond to the criticality of developing brand equity (Lloyd, 2017). Studies that were done before having shown that if NPOs invest in their brand equity (McCarthy, 2019), then their brand identity, brand	• What, if any, are the advantages of having brand equity for non-profit organisations? • How can South African non-profit organisations implement/ build brand equity? • How can having brand equity for South African non-profit organisations create long lasting relationships with stakeholders?	• Brand Awareness. • Brand image. • Engagement.	Freeman Stakeholder Engagement Theory			South African non-profit organisations operating in different fields (sports, religious, health, education, etc.), individuals who are beneficiaries of these NPOs, volunteers that have offered their time, and skills to the organisations, and lastly people or firms that have donated money or products to non-profit organisations.	Thematic analysis method was applied using the inductive approach to be able to come-up with common or shared meaning.	Study encountered were time and number of participants.	• The outcomes of this study will provide a greater insight into the existing research and literature. • This is because no research has been conducted on the criticality of brand equity development in South African non-profit organizations for effective stakeholder engagement. Therefore, this study will fill the gap that has been	

image, and how they create brand awareness will need to be developed as this could be a way stakeholders engage with NPOs more effectively.									identified in the literature and positively contribute towards academia and existing literature.	
						Sampling				
						• Non-probability sampling. • Purposive sampling • 15 participants.				

Annexure B: Questionnaire

The purpose of this open-ended questionnaire is to state the criticality of building brand equity, creating brand awareness and brand identity for non-profit organisations in South Africa for effective relationship with stakeholders or how to engage with stakeholders. This questionnaire is being conducted by a student of the IIE Vega School of Brand Leadership, for assignment purposes.

By choosing to participate in this research study, your personal information (Name, Identification Number, Income, or photo) would not be required. Data collected by this study will be kept confidential and will only be used ethically for academical use to add to the body of academic knowledge.

NB; By participating in this questionnaire you give the IIE Vega School of Brand Leadership consent to use your responses. If you so wish to opt out at any given time while completing this questionnaire, you are able to do so at free will. this questionnaire will take 8 - 10 minutes to complete.

Thank you, for taking your time to participate in this research study.

Please indicate your age group *

- ◯ 18 - 24
- ◯ 25 - 35
- ◯ 36 - 44
- ◯ 45 - 55
- ◯ Above 56

Please indicate gender *

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female
- ◯ Prefer not say

Please indicate highest level of qualification *

- ◯ Grade 12
- ◯ Higher Certificate (NQF 5)
- ◯ National Diploma (NQF 6)
- ◯ Bachelor's degree/ Advanced Diplomas/ Post Graduate Certificate & B-tech (NQF 7)
- ◯ Honours degree/ Post Graduate diploma & Professional Qualifications (NQF 8)
- ◯ Other...

Please indicate your current residing province *

- Gauteng
- North West
- Other...

Please state length of experience with an Non-Profit Organisation *

- 1 - 4 years
- 5 - 9 years
- 10 years and more

Please indicate your role in Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) *

- [ ] Director/ Manager
- [ ] Beneficiary
- [ ] Donor/ Volunteer
- [ ] Other...

What do you understand by branding and brand equity *

Long-answer text

As a person who is/has been involved with a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO), what would you say is the current brand equity of the NPO, and what would you say is the reputation the NPO holds in general ? *

Long-answer text

According to you, is it the service (what the NPO is doing) or how the Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) is branded that encourages you to be or want to be associated with the NPO? *

Long-answer text

How will a healthy brand equity (respected, known, reputable) support /promotes stakeholder (directors/managers, beneficiaries, volunteers/ donors) engagement *

Long-answer text

There are currently over a thousand registered NPOs in South Africa. How important do you think it is for the NPO at hand to have a strong brand equity, especially in comparison with other NPOs in South Africa? *

Long-answer text

What benefits (if any) to Non-Profit Organisation(NPO) do you think may come about from having a brand equity in the NPO market? *

Long-answer text

Lastly, How can a Non-Profit Organisation improve their brand building and its positive brand equity (respect, awareness, reputation) ? *

Long-answer text

Annexure C: GATEKEEPER'S LETTERS

Organisation 1

Consent form to conduct research at company/organisation/association	
I, [redacted], in my capacity as [redacted] of [redacted], grant permission to [ODUETSE ARTHUR MASHEGWANE] to conduct research at the [redacted] This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve for the people I represent. I also reserve the right to remind the people I represent that their participation in this study is completely voluntary and that this permission does not imply their participation. I reserve the right to withdraw this permission at any time. I also understand that research reports are made available in IIE Libraries as well as on the IIE Repository. I indicate the conditions below.	
Conditions concerning the anonymity of the company/organisation/association:	
The company/organisation/association must be kept anonymous in the research report.	☐
The company/organisation/association may be identified in the research report.	☐
Conditions concerning the publication of the research report:	
The research report will be made available on the IIE Repository…	
Immediately after complete.	☐
After a specified number of months has elapsed.	☐
Number of months, if selected:	
[redacted]	14/07/2021
Signature	**Date**

Organisation 2

Consent form to conduct research at company/organisation/association	
I, [redacted], in my capacity as [redacted] of [redacted], grant permission to [ODUETSE ARTHUR MASHEGWANE] to conduct research at the [INSERT SPECIFICATIONS SUCH AS WHERE AND ON WHICH GROUP(S)]. This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve for the people I represent. I also reserve the right to remind the people I represent that their participation in this study is completely voluntary and that this permission does not imply their participation. I reserve the right to withdraw this permission at any time. I also understand that research reports are made available in IIE Libraries as well as on the IIE Repository. I indicate the conditions below.	
Conditions concerning the anonymity of the company/organisation/association:	
The company/organisation/association must be kept anonymous in the research report.	☐
The company/organisation/association may be identified in the research report.	☒
Conditions concerning the publication of the research report:	
The research report will be made available on the IIE Repository…	
Immediately after complete.	☒
After a specified number of months has elapsed.	☐
Number of months, if selected:	
[redacted]	15/07/21
Signature	**Date**

ANNEXURE D: Ethical Clearence Letter

THE INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Date: 20 July 2021

Student name: ODUETSE ARTHUR MASHEGWANE
Student number: [redacted]

Campus: Vega Bordeaux

Re: Approval of RESE8419 Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS 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: Dr ROSE MATHAFENA

Signature: [redacted] – 16 July 2021

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC) name: Dr Tish Taylor

Signature: [redacted]

Annexure E: Questionnaire Responses + Coding temp

	RESPONSES	RESEARCHER COMMENTS
What do you understand by branding and brand equity?	P1. Branding is how you market an entity to generate a unique selling point and recognizability in customer segments. Brand equity is a collective abstract marketing metric which refers to the value leverage upon an offering by a consumers brand perceptions. These perceptions include brand image, loyalty, perceived quality, brand associations and other proprietary assets. The collective sum of these 5 perceptions across a target market determine a brand's equity. P2. Branding is the actions you take to mold your brand. Your brand is the set of perceptions people have about your company. And branding is the set of actions you take to cultivate that brand. Brand equity is designed to establish the way in which brand value is created for a brand. P3. Branding is the way your organisation is showcased and advertised to the market. Brand equity is the way the market receives the organization and the influence, knowledge and engagement that it possesses to the audience. P4. It has the power to gain recognition from the client, brand power, building brand loyalty. P5. Brand is an asset that generates brand equity. P6. What people associate a product or service with. The	Brand Equity • Brand Perceptions • Brand Image • Logo • Brand Value • Recognition • Identity • Actions • Brand Worth

	tangible or non-tangible value of a brand The tangible and non-tangible value of NPO's representation in the society at large. P7. Branding sums up who the organization is and who they are to me in particular. Brand equity is the commercial value of that brand based off of consumer perceptions, associations and actions. P8. Brand equity Is to be determined, instead, by consumer perception and is driven by positive (or negative) customer experience. P9. The creation of an aligned visibility of the organisation to the outside world and ensuring awareness which brings return on investment. P10. I dont understand much about it. P11. Branding is a process of shaping people's perception of your brand and brand equity in simple terms is the brand worth. P12. String, positive brand reputation based on demonstrable value. P13. I don't know, isn't it the name of my nonprofit? P14. Corporate Identity and people's perceptions.	

	P15. The branding is in short the totality what the company/organisation stands for and is about in the eyes of the consumer.	
As a person who is/has been involved with a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO), what would you say is the current brand equity of the NPO, and what would you say is the reputation the NPO holds in general? OBJECTIVE 3 "Determining if South African non-profit organisations having brand equity can create long lasting relationships with stakeholders	P1. Very strong brand equity and market reputation. P2. Personally, I feel that a lot of NPO focus on their brand in terms of donors and not necessarily building the brand at hand. For some as long as they have a logo and standard paper work that makes them credible within the society ... then thats it. P3. African Angels Is an NPO focused on providing education to underprivileged and orphaned kids. Their brand equity is based on meaningful purpose and helping the community. Despite not having strong equity their reputation is a caring organisation looking to make significant changes. P4. In our country most of NPO reputation has been bad due to the scandals or rather corruption they are facing. So that painted NPO is this corrupt organizations. Which it's not fair for those who operate fairly P5. About average brand equity the brand could do a lot more. The reputation is a good one amongst people who are aware of the non-profit. P6. The tangible and non-tangible value of NPO's representation in the society at large.	Maybe note something like, "participants who understands what was meant by brand equity, were able to state the identified brand equity from respective NPOs" Stakeholder Engagement Creates Brand Value Brand Value Creates Stakeholder Engagement • Loyalty • Brand Association • market receives the organization • ~~Customer~~ Experience • Caring organisation • Fair Operations • High/Positive Reputation • Transparency • Relationships • Service/Act/Role • Purpose

	P7. I believe the brand equity of this particular organization to be high although their reputation is low amongst my immediate circle of friends who believe the NPO is a snobbish organization and communicates with their audience in a cryptic manner which deters me. P8. There's no brand equity in the industry regarding South African NPO websites don't clearly state what organisations do or the roll that people play in the organisation nor do they make it easy for people to donate or volunteer some organisations are used as corruption schemes NPO's that have brand equity are usually global giants that have been in the industry for decades. P9. We create sustainable developmental relationships with our target audience, not only for the specific service we offer but also taking care of their holistic wellbeing. P10. Not familiar. P11. Apart from the NPO's name and symbol I would say Value and assistance it adds to the community is the NPO's brand equity. In South Africa NPO's have a positive reputation, in most cases where the government lacks they helps fill that void. P12. The current equity is low as the NPO is still new. The reputation is also still to be established. The collective	•

	strength of the team is it's strongest offering at the moment. P13. I have no idea what it is meant by brand equity hey. P14. Known for good Corporate governance and the reputation is positive. The public associate the brand with high moral authority. P15. The NPO could do better with brand equity.	
According to you, is it the service (what the NPO is doing) or how the Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) is branded that encourages you to be or want to be associated with the NPO? The Act and Brand Equity can be the chosen Themes from Codes that will be identified.	P1. What they are doing. P2. For me it is more about the course and the reason behind it. Purpose is key for me in the NPO I would want to be associated with. I would be lying if I said I dont care much about how it looks because I am in the creative industry. Showcasing your brand (NPO) in a credible way for me is also key also. P3. It would be both to some extent. There is a need to resonate or impact the target market to contribute. This is through providing a solution or purpose for a good cause that is relatable or emotional to contribute towards. However, branding is as important to outline and advertise the NPO in a way that correlates with their beliefs and interests. But also showing the NPO as reputable and trustworthy by the proceeds being good quality and going to a good cause. P4. The service stands out for me, the impact that the organization is making in the society.	•

OBJECTIVE 3 “Determining if South African non-profit organisations having brand equity can create long lasting relationships with stakeholders	P5. It’s what they do and how they help the community. P6. The role that an NPO supposedly plays in society is basically to close the gap that is existent between the government and its people. P7. In the case of one organization, such as SANBUS, the answer is yest because of the positive associations the SANBUS brand holds for me which is selflessness in giving back to my community. In the case of the previous NPO I was talking about (a church) the answer is no. Their branding has no impact on me at all. Even though I'm proud to be Christian and strongly believe in our joint beliefs, the church branding dose not move me what so ever. P8. The service of the non profit. P9. The service, the branding complements it. P10. Is the service that the NPO. P11. It is the services the NPO is offering especially as a beneficiary because those services are there to provide assistance to me. To me as a beneficiary, the brand is not important long as I'm getting the assistance I need from the NPO.	

	P12. Both. P13. So, I have been part of this organisation for years now and they have gotten to be my family, so I would say what they are doing to the community and me personally matters the most, not this brand what what. P14. Both. P15. It does but better visibility on the brand and what the NPO stands for could make it more accessible and make one want to associate more with the NPO.	
How will a healthy brand equity (respected, known, reputable) support /promotes stakeholder (directors/managers, beneficiaries, volunteers/ donors) engagement	P1. Improved quality of internal HR as better prospects are attracted to work for stable brands. Brand equity is also a measure of reliability and trust in a brand (something that is very valuable for NPOs which are widely driven by ethics and not profit. P2. When a NPO has positive brand equity, various stakeholders especially donors are more willingly donate more, even though they could get the same thing from a competitor for less. Because the cause/purpose behind that NPO represents that values of all stakeholders involved. P3. Stakeholders are more inclined to participate and invest in NPOs that are seen as more trustworthy and reputable because it is easier to acknowledge the cause and understand how the proceeds will be used. Stronger brand equity contributes to more engagement and greater contributions which would make investing much more	Benefits of a Healthy Brand Equity • Improved quality • Reliability and trust • Willingness to donate/ Increased funding • Increased participation • Professionalism • Increased Referral • Distinctive Identity • Stands out • Credibility • helps build trust • Increased brand awareness

OBJECTIVE1 To identify, if any, the advantages that come with non-profit organisations having brand equity	appealing. P4. Healthy brand equity will give confidence to all stakeholders to stand out and talk about their organization and also their reputation as stakeholders. P5. Probably will help it be a better performing structure and also get more donations. P6. It will add/subtract value depending on societies perception. P7. Increase in customer usage of the brand. Increased refferal of the brand. Greater brand loyalty. Greater product quality perceptions. P8. Developing brand equity is vital as it allows stakeholders to effectively engage with their NPO in such a way that drives brand loyalty, allowing the business to grow further. P9. People stay with a specific brand based on trust, if the brand promises that then they'll stay and commit. P10. Healthy brand shows professionalism. P11. NPO's mostly get funded by donations form individuals and other organisations , sponsorship from private corporations and funding from the government. these stakeholders I mentioned I don't think would want to be	

	associated with a brand that has a negative or unhealthy brand equity. Having a positive brand equity makes stakeholders want to be associated and be more involved with the NPO. P12. Others will want to associate /or work with the NPO. P13. Over the years I have been part of this organisation and have seen many people become part of it and some have left, but what I know for a fact is that more people want to be part of us because of the rumor that has been going around for years that this organisation's good work in the community. P14. The integrity of the executive leadership and transparency. P15. By having a strong brand, stakeholders would already have an idea of what it is they are buying into.	
There are currently over a thousand registered NPOs in South Africa. How important do you think it is for the NPO at hand to have a strong brand equity, especially in comparison with	P1. Very important. P2. As stated previously credibility is key in such organisations. it is very important because a healthy or strong brand equity assist NPOs in identifying the folllowing: a healthy brand has a "particular and meaningful purpose"; it is transparent and lives its purpose in all that it does; the healthy brand has a "distinctive identity"; it is "an engaging, authentic and coherent communicator".	

other NPOs in South Africa? ***This section shows a part of benefits of having brand equity and also states or shows according to participants why it is critical for NPOs to have brand equity***	P3. It is crucial to have strong equity in South Africa with so much competition. Therefore to attract a loyal following and audience there needs to be more accessible and reliable for consumers. P4. NPO should get back to the basics, why are they NPO's ? What is their primary purpose. Go back and do what they are called to do. Funds shouldn't be a problem when coming through. P5. I think all NPOs are important however bigger NPOs have a stronger brand equity as they are well known. P6. An NPO's has to have a strong brand equity in order to attract the relevent stakeholders which will allow them to conduct thier mandate. P7. In the case of a church the answer is very much so because there are so many churches which are so similar and thus branding is of increased importance as it holds the ability to differentiate the NPO. in the case of SANBUS... not so much because it is a one of a kind NPO. P8. It's an essential that a NPO has a strong brand equity to entice donors and make it easily accessible for donors and stakeholders to understand the aims and purpose behind the NPO as as to make it easier for volunteers to engage with the NPO in a way that they would want to donate their money or time to the organisation.	

	P9. With so much competition which offers similar services, we always need to stand out. P10. We normally consider the NPO with strong brand to be the successful one. P11. In South Africa we have many organisations who claim they help people but are just a scam, having a strong brand equity helps build trust between the NPO's and its stakeholders that donate or sponsor towards the NPO. P12. Extremely important. The brand needs to draw the right attention and live up to its promise. P13. Like I said early on, I dont know what is brand equity. P14. NPOs rely on the support of people or other profit making organizations, so their brand is their currency, literally. P15 Very important as it could catapault you into major successes over other NPO's.	
What benefits (if any) to Non-Profit Organisation(NPO) do you think may come about from having a brand equity in the NPO market?	P1. Greater quality of internal labour and relationship marketing opportunities. P2. - Self-employment and financial rewards proportional to success. - Attract more donors and support from the community. - Credibility.	

	P3. Brand integrity comes from strong brand equity in the NPO market. More stakeholders will feel that there are positive changes and real impacts being made by the NPO. This is because the NPO will showcase integrity and make sure they uphold their values and try their best to complete their missions. This helps with engagement and investing in NPOs. P4. More funding and support. P5. People could resonate with the brand and business would want to associate themselves with the brand which would lead to more donations. P6. Having stakeholders on-board who will add value and enable your NPO to be effective in carrying out its mandate. P7. Increased differentiation for sure. Greater consumer trust in the organization and a willingness to participate. P8. Brand loyalty and strengthens competitive edge. P9. Return on investment, growth and trust. P10. It will attract more donors and investors. P11. In brand equity in terms of reputation, well known and well respected, it will help the organisation with funding, will build trust between the organisation and the stakeholders	

	including the community it serves. P12. Brand equity in the NPO market would serve to inspire others to also want to be part of the market and make a difference. P13. Still don't know what is brand equity. Haha. P14. The NPO will attract the interest of volunteers and donors, and this will help the NPO to reach its objectives. P15. Increased brand awareness, and more control of the positioning the NPO would land in the target market's mind.	
Lastly, How can a Non-Profit Organisation improve their brand building and its positive brand equity (respect, awareness, reputation) ?	P1. Marketing interviews with corporate partners, volunteers and top management over public platforms to garner trusteorthiness and publicity. P2. 1. Build a particular and meaningful purpose of the brand. 2. Be transparent and lives its purpose in all that it does. 3. Create distinctive identity that is engaging, authentic and coherent communicator. P3. NPOs need to have a clear vision and differentiation to what they provide and how they will do it. This should create equity that resonates with the audience and showcases a purposeful and meaningful cause. This can lead to a better reputation and provide more integrity to their approach which will increase respect but also encourage engagement.	Practices of improving a brand • Transparency • Genuity • Communication • Marketing • Avoiding scandals • Consistency

	P4. Get back to the basics, do the ground work depending what type of NPO. Get policies in place and channel the funds correctly. P5. I think by being genuine, in SA we have a problem with corruption and sometimes NPOs serve as fronts. Where the NPO doesn’t deliver anything they’ve set out and money disappears. P6. By carrying out their mandate and being present digitally. P7. Communicate better with their audiences! SANBUS is brilliant at it where as my church sucks at it. Show value to your participants as SANBUS dose by offering a gift/token of appreciation for your participation which makes you feel valued when participating - this combined with professionalism will definitely do the trick. Professionalism also makes people feel comfortable with actively participating. P8. By improving on their marketing. P9. Find out what the specific target audience needs and serve that in alignment with the brand offering. P10. By being professional in offering their good and service.	

	P11. Associating with other brands that have a healthy equity, staying away from negative publicity or scandals and doing a really good job when it comes to its beneficiaries. P12. Through strong visibility, and communication that is inspiring, thought-provoking, and action-igniting. P13. By continuing to serve our community without failure. P14. Invest in corporate identity and a PR/ Communications agency. P15. Be consistent and deliver a consistent brand message throughout which ties into the activities, people/volunteers and culture of the NPO.	