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Sustainable marketing practices and South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in Strategic Marketing

Supervisor: Dr Emmanuel Quaye

ABSTRACT

There is a noticeable gap in research conducted in developing markets regarding consumers' willingness to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours and although global organisations are increasingly adopting sustainable marketing practices, most of the existing research is from a developed market perspective (Amos, 2018; Singh & Pandey, 2012). As such, the research investigates the influence of sustainable marketing practices on South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. This research was adapted from a study conducted by Peterson et al. (2021) in the United States. The intention was to replicate and also advance the work by introducing socio-demographic characteristics as a lens through which to understand the buying behaviours of South African consumers regarding green products. A quantitative method with a survey design was used and data was collected from a sample size of 388 respondents in South Africa. This study confirmed that ecocentrism, attitude toward business benevolence and business contributions to my QOL directly influence behavioural intentions regarding green products in the South African context. The concern regarding ethical practices of the business and valuing social justice did not influence South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products. With regards to socio-demographic characteristics as moderating variables, the findings showed that gender moderates the relationship between ecocentrism and behavioural intentions confirming that females are more inclined to environmentally friendly behaviours than males. Ethnicity moderates the relationship between attitude toward business benevolence and behavioural intentions, over-indexing in people of colour. Multi-national organisations that operate in South Africa and by extension, the other SADC member states can use this research as a foundation for developing sustainable marketing strategies in these states. Marketing professionals developing sustainability strategies and NGOs involved in the well-being and enhancement of individuals' quality of Life (QOL) within the SADC communities can also use this research for developing sustainable marketing practices.

KEYWORDS: Sustainable marketing practices, Behavioural Intentions, Green products, Green Framework, Support for sustainable business

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Strategic Marketing at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

Name: Kwandisiwe Nondumiso Nhlapo-Chaoane Signature: K.Nhlapo-Chaoane

Signed at Kya Sand, Randburg

On the 15 day of December 2023.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research paper to my paternal grandmother, Andrina Mtobi Nhlapo who raised me after the passing of my mother. You may no longer be with us in the flesh but, your spirit lives on. My Uncle, Charles Raphoto stepped in as a father figure, ensuring that I had the resources, love, and support to complete my primary, secondary, and tertiary schooling. My Aunt, Khabonina Ramoupi, thank you for the motherly role you played and continue to play, you taught me how a lady behaves and carries herself in all settings. I am confident in myself today because you made me believe that I am great, thank you my Meddy.

To my mother Tshepiso Portia Raphoto, this one is for you, my darling. Mama, I made it!

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

GBE – Green Brand Equity

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

SADC – Southern African Development Community

QOL – Quality Of Life

CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of Purpose

Global organisations are increasingly adopting sustainable marketing practices and studies conducted in developed markets found that consumers are more aware of responsible sustainable practices resulting in a higher willingness to behave in an environmentally friendly manner (Singh & Pandey, 2012). However, there is a noticeable gap in research conducted in developing markets regarding consumers' willingness to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours (Singh & Pandey, 2012). Therefore, understanding the influence of sustainable marketing practices on South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics will build on to the body of work from a developing market perspective, one with a long history of social disparity (Hino et al., 2018).

1.2 Background of the study

Resource scarcity dates back to the 1960s (Raleigh & Urdal, 2007), a demand and supply issue where more natural resources are required than available. Although resource scarcity has been an ubiquitous aspect for humankind, modern society has taken this for granted for many years (Mehta & Zhu, 2016). Natural resource scarcity degrades the environment (Dyck & Manchanda, 2021; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2021) and results in inequality (Barbier, 2019). As a resource becomes scarce, the price of that resource rises resulting in unaffordability for the lower class due to buying power erosion (Evans, 2011), thus widening the gap between the poor and the rich; the consequence of which is inequality (Calvin et al., 2017). Inequality leads to unsustainable growth (Berg & Ostry, 2017) for businesses and the countries in which these businesses operate. For this reason, many companies seek to integrate sustainable marketing into their marketing and business strategy (Jones et al., 2008).

Businesses have adopted sustainable marketing practices for several reasons, namely, legislative (Żak, 2015) and regulative compliance. Due to the rising cost and the increasing scarcity of natural resources, consumer awareness of the importance of sustainable business practices, large-scale media coverage of environmental activists, and changing consumer values and attitudes (Jones et al., 2008) are very high. Businesses must aim to meet consumer expectations on adopting sustainable business practices to protect future generations (Trivedi et al., 2018). Businesses adoption of sustainable marketing practices also increases their propensity to target consumers who are environmentally conscious (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). Green marketing can also give businesses a competitive advantage over their rivals by offering a unique product or service that competitors are unable to replicate (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014). According to Mishra and Sharma (2014), there is evidence globally around the growing consumer concern for the environment thus the importance of the expansion of socially responsible and sustainable goods and services.

Żak (2015) proposes that businesses need to consider social responsibility from a sustainability perspective. There are three spheres of sustainability, namely social, environmental, and economic, or the triple bottom line (Isaksson, 2018; McWilliams et al., 2016; Żak, 2015) and sometimes referred to as the 3Ps, which stands for Profit, People, and Planet (KsiężaK & FischBach, 2017). The triple bottom line term was coined in the 1990s by business consultant John Elkington. He described the social, environmental, and economic investment value that can ensue outside a business's bottom line (Hammer & Pivo, 2017). The success of organisations can no longer be measured merely on its profits but its efforts towards societal welfare and environmental consciousness (Coşkun Arslan & Kısacık, 2017). According to Coşkun Arslan and Kısacık (2017), organisations need to be accountable to their shareholders and all other stakeholders, both internally and externally. Investors are also cognisant that the future value of organisations is affected by all three dimensions of the triple bottom line thus requesting their reporting structure include all aspects and not just the financial component (Milne & Gray, 2010). This form of accounting is also known as sustainability accounting as it incorporates the social, environmental and

economic evolution of the organisation, reputably known as the triple bottom line (Coşkun Arslan & Kısacık, 2017).

Through adopting sustainable business practices, businesses take on an important role in ensuring sustainable development, a global agenda that has been in action for over 30 years (Isaksson, 2018). Businesses use the triple bottom line concept to measure their sustainability performance and monitor whether they meet legislative requirements (Isaksson, 2018). Although many businesses, particularly in developed countries, have made strides towards reducing their environmental footprint through pollution reduction, human activity remains extremely unsustainable globally. This unsustainability is represented by the fact that 1.7 planets are required to meet yearly human production needs (Isaksson, 2018). However, sustainability cannot just be driven from a national and business level. Global warming is a clear sign of the urgent requirement for individuals to also be part of the change in driving the sustainability agenda (Isaksson, 2018; Williams et al., 2020).

According to La Rosa and Johnson Jorgensen (2021), several consumers think of environmental issues from a supply perspective or in other words, how the raw materials were sourced and not from an eco-system point of view which links supply, consumption and the degradation of the environment. Thus, Individuals also need to be mobilised in personally responding to sustainable practices through the adoption of eco-friendly initiatives such as purchasing eco-friendly products that have been produced using sustainably sourced ingredients and packaging material, adopting good recycling habits, and eco-driving (Barkenbus, 2010). To reduce their environmental footprint, businesses must implement sustainable initiatives and designs, track how ingredients and materials are sourced through supply chains, and educate consumers about how their sustainable initiatives and practices reduce their environmental impact (Borin & Metcalf, 2010). Businesses in the production industry have contributed to the problem regarding unsustainable production and consumption and thus must be part of the resolution (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2021). Kopnina (2015) postulates that for organisations to be part of the resolution they need to firstly articulate what

unsustainability is, secondly what the major challenges of unsustainability are and thirdly, what approach to employ to best address the challenges.

Conversely, whilst some companies are honest in their communication regarding the activities they have put in place to reduce their environmental footprint, some companies make inflated claims or outwardly proclaim their sustainable marketing efforts when, in fact, they have not adopted sustainable practices (Lim et al., 2013; Szabo & Webster, 2021). The falsifying of the adoption of sustainable initiatives is known as greenwashing (Furlow, 2010; Szabo & Webster, 2021). Businesses recognise that green marketing, also known as sustainable marketing (Oglinda, 2021), can create a sustainable competitive advantage for a Business by catering to the environmental changes and consumer needs whilst driving business growth (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014). Furthermore, companies are capitalizing on the growing trend to drive green brand equity (GBE) by incorporating sustainable marketing practices into the management of their overall brand equity (Qayyum et al., 2022).

Recent research also reveals that GBE can positively impact word of mouth (Bekk et al., 2016), consumer attitude towards a brand (Bekk et al., 2016; Khandelwal et al., 2019) and purchase intention (Górska-Warsewicz et al., 2021). Therefore, deliberately enhancing the ecological position of a brand through nature evoking advertising and communication can mislead consumers and persuade them into supporting the brand (Parguel et al., 2015), especially given that the purchasing behaviours of eco-conscious consumers are influenced by their concern for the environment (Wijekoon & Sabri, 2021). According to de Freitas Netto et al. (2020), research by Nielsen showed that 66% of consumers are prepared to pay extra for eco-friendly products. For these reasons, businesses may overstate their sustainability efforts, further cementing the notion that sustainable practices do have an influence on consumers' willingness to purchase, despite the criticism it may come with. The downside of greenwashing, particularly for consumers who become aware they are being deceived, is the negative impact on the brand's equity and purchase intention (Akturan, 2018; Braga et al., 2019). This research mitigates the “greenwashing” phenomenon by empirically testing the concern

about ethical business practices on consumer's willingness to purchase green products.

1.3 Research Problem

There is a noticeable gap in research conducted in developing markets regarding consumers' willingness to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours and although global organisations are increasingly adopting sustainable marketing practices, most of the existing research is from a developed market perspective (Amos, 2018; Singh & Pandey, 2012).

Sustainability in marketing has been a topic for over 20 years (Lunde, 2018). Although there are debates around whether marketing can be sustainable, given the true essence of the discipline of driving frequent consumption despite environmental limits, there is great potential for the marketing discipline to produce green products and advocate for consumers to adopt sustainable lifestyles (Kemper & Ballantine, 2019). Sustainable marketing has gained traction in recent years due to legislative regulations and requirements (Żak, 2015) and the recognition from businesses that unsustainable sourcing and production leads to inequality (Calvin et al., 2017) which in turn results in unsustainable growth (Berg & Ostry, 2017). Dating back to the conceptual development and implementation of the triple bottom line: profits, people and planet, businesses adopted the triple bottom line as a means to ensure that they support sustainability goals in their reporting (Slaper & Hall, 2011). The long and bountiful history of sustainable marketing (Groening et al., 2018), coupled with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), has called for organisations to accelerate their adoption of the "2030 agenda for sustainable development" (United-Nations, 2022).

The adoption of sustainable marketing practices by businesses is driven by legislative requirements (Żak, 2015) and businesses realisation that consumers are aware of the environmental situation, thus meeting customer expectations (Jones et al., 2008). Consumer perception, attitude and intention towards green marketing are representative of its effectiveness. As green marketing knowledge

and consciousness increase, this greatly influences patterns of consumption (Mahmoud, 2018; Sharma, 2021). Shabbir et al. (2020) highlight the value creation and importance of green marketing strategies for businesses as they are not only an effective means for promoting business ideas, goods, and services but also a tool that can be used to advocate for the preservation of natural resources and the environment. The three-pronged approach of preserving the environment (planet) whilst appealing to the eco-conscious consumer (people) and meeting business profitability objectives (profit) are the reasons why we see more businesses moving towards eco-friendly products (Shabbir et al., 2020).

Global organisations are increasingly adopting sustainable marketing practices and studies conducted in developed markets found that consumers are more aware of responsible sustainable practices resulting in a higher willingness to behave in an environmentally friendly manner (Singh & Pandey, 2012). However, there is a noticeable gap in research conducted in developing markets regarding consumers' willingness to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours (Singh & Pandey, 2012). Therefore, understanding the influence of sustainable marketing practices on South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products will build on to the body of work from a developing country with a long history of social disparity (Hino et al., 2018). Research has shown that consumers who value nature or hold a good attitude toward nature posit a better likelihood of consuming environmentally sustainable products or goods (Peterson et al., 2021; Taufique, 2022). Over and above valuing nature, Peterson et al. (2021) identified four additional constructs using the Green Sustainable Marketing Framework (Lunde, 2018). The research conducted by Peterson et al. (2021) in the United States (US) confirmed that valuing nature influences support for sustainable business, followed by consumers' attitude regarding the benevolence of a firm and, lastly, consumers' concern about the ethics of a firm. Firms valuing social justice and contributing to consumers' quality of life (QOL) did not index as influential on consumers' support for sustainable businesses.

This study assumes the above-mentioned results could be dissimilar within the South African context across socio-demographic characteristics, a developing country with a history of social inequality (Burns et al., 2017). Where access to

wealth cannot be stroked with the same paintbrush across ethnicity and race, remnants of Apartheid inequality have been carried into the post-Apartheid era (Hino et al., 2018). While 81% of the population are Black Africans (Statista, 2022), they remain the most marginalised across all societal levels (Mabaso et al., 2019). The research conducted by Peterson et al. (2021) was representative of the American population; the research within the South African context will use socio-demographic characteristics as a moderator, namely age, gender, level of education, income and ethnicity in the replication and advancement of work to determine whether sustainable marketing practices influence South African consumers' support for green products across socio-demographic characteristics. According to Abdullahi (2020, p. 1), "*Socio-demography of statuses reflects the demographic and social roles and achievements of an individual(s) in a population*" . Simply put, attributes such as level of education, income, natal sex, and age make up the socio-demographic characteristics which, when combined can be used to determine an individual's status position in a population.

1.4 Research Objectives

The primary research objective as outlined below for the purpose of this research was to investigate whether sustainable marketing practices influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics. The secondary research objectives were to investigate whether:

- Attitude toward business benevolence influences South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.
- Ecocentrism influences South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.
- Perceived business egalitarianism influences South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.

- Concern about business ethical practices influences South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.
- Business contribution to an individual's quality of life influences South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.

1.5 Intended contributions of the study

The player that will benefit from this research are multi-national organisations that operate in South Africa and by extension, other SADC member states as this research can be used as a foundation for the development of sustainable marketing practices in these member states. Marketing professionals who are developing their sustainable marketing strategies within the SADC member states can make use of this paper's nuanced findings to inform plans targeted at a specific race or gender. NGOs involved in tackling environmental issues within the SADC member states can also use these findings to identify the sustainable marketing practices that have the highest influence on consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. This can aid them in tailoring their educational campaigns to positively influence environmentally friendly behaviours which could ultimately result in reducing resource depletion.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

This study focuses on consumers' attitudes toward sustainable marketing practices and the values and beliefs that influence their support for sustainable business within the South African context. The study analyses the factors that influence consumers' behavioural intent regarding green or sustainable products and or businesses. However, the study does not cover sustainable education and behaviours that need to be mobilised post purchase and consumption, such as recycling or the promotion of a circular economy in which material is recycled, repaired, or reused in order to reduce wastage. Thus, the conceptual delimitation for the study is the circular economy (Kirchherr et al., 2017), an economy in which everything gets reused or repaired in order to aid the production of something

else, particularly in the South African context where only 7,2% of the population recycles (Strydom, 2018).

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 *Ecocentrism*

Ecocentrism, also known as stewardship (Liu et al., 2016) is the philosophy that places importance on all living things, without favouring humanity, despite their recognisable importance to human beings (Gray et al., 2018).

1.7.2 *Egalitarianism*

Egalitarianism relates to the concept that all individuals are equal and deserve equal opportunities (Temkin, 2003).

1.7.3 *Ethics*

Boaks and Levine (2018) define ethics as behavioural standards to which we hold ourselves and others against. In business, these include virtues such as trust, empathy, always doing what is right even if it means that the business goal might not be met

1.7.4 *1.7.4 Megatrend*

“The significant social, economic, political and/or technological movements that shape our lives” (Mittelstaedt et al., 2014, p. 254).

1.7.5 *Quality of life*

“Marketing practice designed to enhance the well-being of customers while preserving the well-being of the firm’s other stakeholders” (Lee & Sirgy, 2004, p. 44).

1.7.6 *Sustainable Marketing*

"Sustainable Marketing", a term coined and exclusive to the marketing field, "*is the strategic creation, communication, delivery, and exchange of offerings that produce value through consumption behaviours, business practices, and the marketplace, while lowering harm to the environment and ethically and equitably increasing the quality of life (QOL) and well-being of consumers and global stakeholders, presently and for future generations*" (Lunde, 2018, p. 94).

1.8 Assumptions

confirmed that valuing nature influences support for sustainable business, followed by consumers' attitude regarding the benevolence of a firm and, lastly, consumers' concern about the ethics of a firm. Firms valuing social justice and contributing to consumers' quality of life (QOL) did not index as influential on consumers' support for sustainable businesses in the US, therefore, this study has the following assumptions:

1.8.1 *Perceived Business Egalitarianism*

Support for firms valuing social justice will index higher in Black African South Africans. Given the long history of social inequality in South Africa (Burns et al., 2017), where access to wealth cannot be stroked with the same paintbrush across ethnicity and race, remnants of the Apartheid inequality have been carried into the post-Apartheid era (Hino et al., 2018). While 81% of the population are Black Africans (Statista, 2022), they remain the most marginalised across all societal levels (Mabaso et al., 2019).

1.8.2 *Ecocentrism*

Based on the value-belief-norm (Rahman & Reynolds, 2019) , it is assumed that eco-centrists or consumers who value nature will support sustainable businesses. The statistical significance of ecocentrism in relation to South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products is assumed.

1.8.3 *Quality of life*

According to Peterson et al. (2021), concerns about QOL are more serious for consumers with lower income and lower for consumers with higher income. Poverty and Income disparity are significant problems in South Africa (Burns et al., 2017) which leads to the assumption that consumers with lower income in South Africa will have higher concerns about a firm contributing to their quality of life.

1.9 Chapter Outline

This report is structured in an academic format and arranged into 6 chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction of the study. This chapter focuses on the purpose of the research, background of the study, the problem statement, and the subsequent gaps in the body of knowledge on sustainable marketing practices which this work will attempt to close. This was followed by an outline of the research objectives, intended contribution, delimitations, and lastly, the assumptions.

Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical framework. This chapter critically reviews existing literature relating to sustainable marketing practices and discusses the chosen theoretical framework upon which the constructs of this research are based. The conceptual framework is then presented and the objectives together with the relevant hypothesis are outlined.

Chapter 3: Research methodology. This section delineates the methodological selections made and highlights the process followed for the purpose of this study. It covers the research approach, research design, data collection method, population and sample, research instrument, data collection procedure and analysis strategies and interpretation, possible limitations of the study, the steps taken to ensure quality of the results and lastly, the ethical considerations.

Chapter 4: Presentation of results. This chapter summarises the findings from the data collection and is presented according to each hypothesis.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the results. This section reviews the results of the study relating to the extant literature. It delineates the results observed in relation to the study being replicated (Peterson et al., 2021) and adds to the body of knowledge by highlighting the nuances noted in the multigroup analysis which was conducted to determine the differences between the socio demographic groups.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations. This section summarises the research results and the implications thereof from a developing market context, particularly the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It also highlights the key focus areas that multi-national and local organisations operating in the SADC member states can concentrate on when employing sustainable marketing practices. Areas warranting future research are also outlined.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In the background of the study, the researcher set the scene by spotlighting the background of the research, the criticism of sustainable marketing practices known as greenwashing and stating how this criticism will be countered. The introduction briefly outlined the factors driving businesses' adoption of sustainable marketing practices in recent years, and the effectiveness of green products on consumer perception, awareness, and expectations (refer to Appendix A for the past study review). Five constructs developed by Peterson et al. (2021), namely; valuing nature, consumers' attitude towards business benevolence, consumers' concern about business ethical practices, firms valuing social justice and contributing to consumers' quality of life (QOL) are briefly outlined as they inform the research objectives of this study and advancement of work within the South African context.

The following chapter reviews existing literature on sustainability, the practices thereof and the constructs of the study to validate the research from an academic standpoint.

2.2 Analytical framework

The abundance of literature on green products and green marketing mirror the growing popularity of sustainable marketing (Sharma, 2021, p. 161). Although marketing research on sustainability has shown tremendous growth over the past twenty years, the field gained theoretical and conceptual clarity in 2016 when Lunde (2018) reviewed 25 leading journals between 1997 and 2016 to investigate how the field has evolved over time and clearly define what sustainability in marketing is. "Sustainable Marketing", a term coined and exclusive to the marketing field, "*is the strategic creation, communication, delivery, and exchange of offerings that produce value through consumption behaviours, business practices, and the marketplace, while lowering harm to the environment and*

ethically and equitably increasing the quality of life (QOL) and well-being of consumers and global stakeholders, presently and for future generations" (Lunde, 2018, p. 94). This definition does not only define sustainable marketing from an organisational or consumer perspective but does so holistically. Green Marketing or Sustainable Marketing are terms used interchangeably. In prior work, some researchers defined it from an organisational perspective as the actions an organisation takes to reduce the negative impact its products or services may have on the environment (Groening et al., 2018). Others have defined sustainable marketing from a consumer point of view as the management of post-consumption waste collection (Mont & Plepys, 2008). It is through the review and analysis of the conceptual and theoretical fragmentation in the Sustainable Marketing literature that the GREEN Framework of Sustainable Marketing (Lunde, 2018) was birthed.

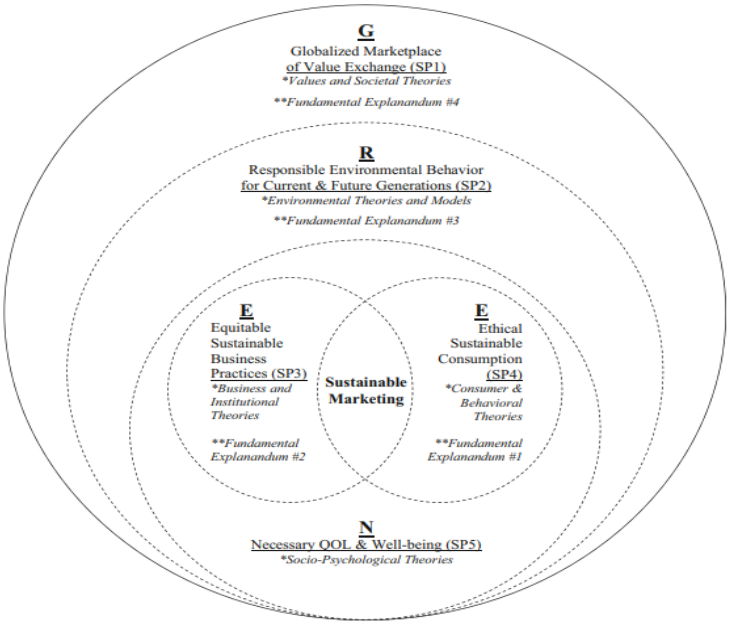

Figure 1: The GREEN Framework of Sustainable Marketing

Source: Lunde (2018, p. 96)

The word GREEN is an acronym for five constructs, namely "Globalised marketplace of value exchange", "Responsible environmental behaviour for current and future generations", "Equitable sustainable business practices",

"Ethical sustainable consumption", and "Necessary quality of life and well-being" (Lunde, 2018).

2.3 Theoretical Perspectives

2.3.1 *Theory of exchange*

Value exchange and the global marketplace form the foundation for the GREEN Framework of Sustainable Marketing (see in Figure 1). In the 70's, scholars such as Hunt (1971) , Kotler (1972), Bagozzi (1975) and others based the core function of marketing on the theory of exchange which denotes that the key objective of marketing is the "exchange relationship". Similarly, sustainable marketing is grounded on value exchange (Lunde, 2018). In addition to the grounding of sustainable marketing on value exchange and the extensive review of literature from two decades, Lunde (2018) suggests the sustainable marketing definition as the exchange of offerings that produce value through consumption behaviours, business practices, and the marketplace. However, in this instance, the exchange relationship is with nature and not a consumer (Lunde, 2018).

Globalised marketplace is the exchange relationships that create value for consumers, firms, and society with Lunde (2018) stating that sustainable marketing cannot exist without these exchange relationships. The rationale regarding a globalised marketplace being the foundation for sustainable marketing is, even the smallest businesses that produce goods and services for consumption have global stakeholders (Lunde, 2018). Whether it be a supplier who produces ready to sell products or supplies the business with raw materials, there is likelihood of cross-cultural and cross-border trade (Mittelstaedt et al., 2014). The rapid growth and evolution of the electronic economy, known as e-commerce has also allowed for consumers and customers to purchase products across borders (Nogoev et al., 2011), whether it be a business to consumer model or a business to business model, a globalised marketplace in a digitally led world is inevitable (Olson & Rödel, 2009).

Given the inescapable nature of a globalised marketplace, Lunde (2018) posits that both sustainable and unsustainable actions at a micro level have macro level consequences. Therefore, consumers, organisations, governments, and countries need to work together for the improvement of all stakeholders. This ties back to the founding principles of the sustainable development goals; achieving a better future through the development of healthy communities and the undertaking of sustainable initiatives to protect current and future generations (Saxena et al., 2021). Furthermore, Mittelstaedt et al. (2014) states that the exchange relationships in a globalised marketplace need to exist in more than just one firm, city, country and culture. It needs to exist "cross-culturally as a globalised macro-level 'megatrend' of complex issues, questions, and problems that impact all stakeholders" (Mittelstaedt et al., 2014, p. 254). In defining what a megatrend is Mittelstaedt et al. (2014, p. 254) went as far back as the eighties to understand how it first came about. A term coined by John Naisbitt, a megatrend is "the significant social, economic, political and/or technological movements that shape our lives". A megatrend may take some time to form, however, once established (Visconti et al., 2014). Based on the definition itself, Mittelstaedt et al. (2014) put forward a set of basic criteria in understanding the megatrend concept, (1) whether the emergence of sustainability can be followed with evidence of change in the economic, political, social, technological and cultural facets of society; (2) the seismic opportunity and impact of sustainability; (3) can sustainability be comprehended based on previous economic, political, social, technological and cultural facets and challenge the status quo. Based on the set criteria, Mittelstaedt et al. (2014) concluded that sustainability does indeed meet the megatrend criterion.

2.3.2 *Sustainable development theory*

Based on the GREEN Framework of sustainable marketing, responsible environmental behaviour for current and future generations is reliant on sustainable principal one also referred to as a globalised marketplace of value exchange (see Figure 1). As outlined in the previous section pertaining to a globalised marketplace of value exchange, the rationale for this theory is that even the smallest businesses have global stakeholders (Lunde, 2018).

Therefore, responsible environmental behaviour for current and future generations needs to be implemented at a macro level to reduce harmful environmental behaviour by all stakeholders (Lunde, 2018).

Sustainable development theory is founded on the notion that current generations should not compromise future generations in their attempt to meet their needs in the present day (Mensah, 2019). Founded on Elkington and Rowlands (1999) Triple Bottom Line (TBL) theory, sustainable development theory argues that in order for sustainability to exist, there needs to be an integrated relationship between three sphere's, namely; social sustainability, economical sustainability and environmental sustainability (Mensah, 2019).



Figure 2: Integrated sustainability relationships

Source: Mensah (2019, p. 21)

According to (Shi et al., 2019), civil society experiences disparate development difficulties at different times, however the sustainable development theory is the foundation from which the practices of sustainable development evolve. The sustainable development objectives have evolved from the "single-factor goal" which relates to using plant and animal resources in a sustainable manner to

“millennium development goals” addressing poverty and now, the global “sustainable development goals” (Shi et al., 2019, p. 8). The sustainable development goals are housed under four facets, namely; the economy, the environment, society and governance and encompass 17 goals and 169 sub-objectives (Shi et al., 2019).

We have seen the rise of global and local organisations adopting the sustainable development goals as recommended by the United Nations as a means of the global mobilisation of responsible environmental behaviour (Sachs, 2012). The global mobilisation of the sustainable development goals (SDG’s) has assisted in steering the world to a sustainable future and is an effective approach to achieve paramount social goals worldwide such as ensuring responsible environmental behaviour by all stakeholders (Sachs, 2012). Goals as identified by Lindenberg and Steg (2007) are the “main determinants of how a person looks at a given situation”, therefore when deciding on whether to behave in a responsible or irresponsible manner, the situation is defined from a psychological and sociological perspective (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007). It is therefore safe to denote that the Sustainable Development Goals have established a foundation from which to recognise responsible and irresponsible environmental behaviour. According to Farley and Smith (2020), harmful environmental behaviour by current generations can have a detrimental impact on future generations. Climate change (Minelgaitė & Liobikienė, 2021), soil erosion (Karamage et al., 2017) poor quality air due to air pollution (Colvile et al., 2004), deforestation (Butt et al., 2021), the lack of clean water (Daigger, 2009), the dissipation of biodiversity and the depletion of resources (Watson et al., 2008) are just a few reverberations caused by irresponsible environmental behaviour.

Inversely, taking care of the environment today can deliver positive sustainable results for future generations. Although responsible environmental behaviour from current generations positively impacts sustainable outcomes for the future (Hensen et al., 2016), research conducted by de Burgh-Woodman and King (2013) put forth that an inherent connection with “human/nature” is the driver for environmental concerns rather than the concerns around the depletion of resources for future generations. Furthermore, de Burgh-Woodman and King

(2013) state that this is a pre-existing and authentic connection with nature. However, Akintunde (2017) posits that sustainable behaviour can occur if there is an understanding of what this entails.

2.3.3 *Theory of knowledge deficit*

The behaviour change model presented by Akintunde (2017) outlines a correlation between environmental knowledge, attitudes or awareness and the action that may or may not be taken thus implying that sustainable behaviour can be influenced by the understanding thereof. The recurrent assumption is that unsustainable behaviour is a result of individuals lack of knowledge about the impact of their actions on the environment (Heeren et al., 2016). Therefore, the presupposition of the “knowledge deficit model" (Irwin & Wynne, 1996) is that, if the shortage of information or knowledge is addressed through education, individuals will be enlightened and better equipped to adopt sustainable behaviours. However, the theory of knowledge deficit has been investigated and found to be erroneous as it does not account for how knowledge and psychological aspects can impact behaviour (Dierkes & Von Grote, 2005; Wallace, 2002). Research carried out by other scholars suggests that knowledge is not enough when it comes to behaviour change, in addition to this, there needs to be a motivation from the individual to carry out the behaviour change. Ajzen et al. (2011), argues that the research carried out using the Knowledge-Motivation-Behaviour model does not show consistent results when it comes to knowledge shaping behaviour and thus proposes the theory of planned behaviour.

2.3.4 *Theory of Planned Behaviour*

Ajzen et al. (2011) proposes the “Theory of Planned Behaviour” as a framework for behaviour change as the research shows a stronger prognosis of “energy saving intentions” and “behaviour” which looks at “attitude towards the behaviour”, “subjective norm” and “perceived behavioural control” with the main factor of the theory being the intention to carry out a particular behaviour. Refer to Figure 3 for the depiction of the model that was first constructed by Ajzen (1991) in the early 90’s. The global proliferation of sustainable marketing

practices requires organisations to gain an in-depth understanding of what the intention to support such initiatives is. According to Xie et al. (2015), behavioural intentions summate purchase intention (PI), willingness to pay (WTP) and word of mouth (WOM). A predetermined measurement scale consisting of two items under PI, one item under WTP and two items under WOM can be used to predict a consumer's intention regarding a particular behaviour.

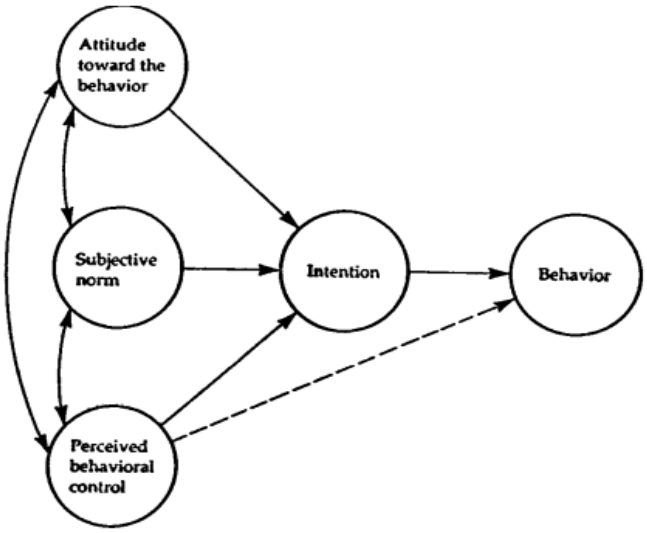

Figure 3: The Theory of Planned Behaviour

Source: Ajzen (1991, p. 182)

2.3.5 *Stakeholder theory and Shared responsibility theory*

Equitable sustainable business practices are founded on stakeholder theory and shared responsibility theory. Stakeholder theory denotes that organisations need to balance commercial and non-commercial ends of varied stakeholders and not merely be driven by self-serving intentions (O'Higgins, 2010; Seshadri, 2013). Shared responsibility theory is the allocation of responsibility to two or more parties (Nollkaemper, 2018). Therefore, Lunde (2018) defines equitable sustainable business practices as the interaction of sustainable firms with society, the societal impact of an organisation's and country's sustainable strategies and the societal focus on future generations. According to Baker and Lesch (2013),

sustainable business practices need to be just and sensible from both parties viewpoint in order to be equitable. Furthermore, Seshadri (2013, p. 765) came to the conclusion that sustainability is a "shared responsibility among diverse stakeholders". As such, organisations can be influential in driving the sustainability agenda with stakeholders such as consumers, other organisations and the government (Scandelius & Cohen, 2016). Similarly, stakeholders are also in a position to demand that the organisations they engage with and support, employ sustainable practices (Herold et al., 2019; Varadarajan, 2017). Therefore, the sustainable, or unsustainable behaviour of one stakeholder impacts the next.

Organisations are realising that to promote sustainability, their behaviour also needs to be sustainable and could furthermore, use their practices as a sustainable competitive advantage (Oglinda, 2021). Sustainable organisations do not just sell their products and services to consumers for financial gain, they promote sustainable practices amongst their employees, other organisations and society as a whole (Lunde, 2018). Sustainability is imbedded in the organisations triple bottom line and strategic initiatives, by taking into account the intertemporal exchange to deliver multigenerational equity (Sharma & Handa, 2021). The key objective should always be to create a value exchange for current and future generations through just and ethical practices (Peterson & Lunde, 2016). A great number of business leaders today more than ever, are recognising that they have a major responsibility in participating in the resolution of global issues associated with unjust and unsustainable business practices and are also aware that this is an expectation from their customers (Watson et al., 2008). Moreover, Lunde (2018, p. 99) posits that the key role of an organisation is the "strategic creation, communication, delivery, and exchange of value of offerings that produce value while ethically and equitably increasing quality of life (QOL) and well-being of consumers and global stakeholders". The key takeout here is all the activities of an organisation need to be delivered in a just and ethical manner for the organisation to be considered sustainable. This also means that the nature-culture divide that has harmed the environment and by extension, the quality of life of society needs to be bridged by organisations, by prioritising the conservation of the environment and social egalitarianism as opposed to just economic gains (Sharma & Handa, 2021).

Equitable sustainable business practices require organisations to be agile, innovative, and entrepreneurial to deliver against strategic initiatives that consider the triple bottom line which is a holistic approach encompassing profit, people and the planet (Kopnina & Blewitt, 2014). “It takes a strategic approach in applying the power of business methods and policies to address issues of global importance such as climate change, poverty, ecosystem degradation, and human rights” (Kopnina & Blewitt, 2014, p. 2). Innovations that drive sustainable practices do not only refer to the end product that is sold for consumption, but rather, (1) a value chain of technological advancements such as sustainable machinery that is used in the production process, (2) sourcing processes and procedures which stipulate the importance of acquiring raw materials that are sourced in an ecological and environmentally friendly manner from stakeholders who share the same vision of sustainability and (3) business model frameworks that outline how different functions in a business need to operate thus providing a holistic outlook of the organisations activities (Evans et al., 2017).

2.3.6 *Consumer and behavioural theories*

Ethical sustainable consumption relates to the need for all stakeholders, including but not limited to businesses and consumers, to behave in an ethically sustainable manner when it comes to their consumption behaviours (Lunde, 2018). According to Baker and Lesch (2013), ethical sustainable consumption calls attention to consumer behaviours that are based on morals and values and doing what is right for the environment, society and organisations. Given the subjectivity of the word ethical, this term relates to what both parties involved in a relationship exchange regard as moral and ethical. Ultimately, the value exchange between ethical sustainable businesses and ethical consumers should result in a sustainable society (Baker & Lesch, 2013). Moreover, Lunde (2018) denotes that an ethically sustainable business needs ethically sustainable consumers’, because without anyone to purchase the business’s goods and services, the sustainable efforts of an organisation are meaningless. At the core of ethical sustainable consumption is the value exchange relationship that exists between the organisation and the consumer resulting in sustainable societies (Borland, 2009).

As mentioned by Quoquab and Mohammad (2020), the quest for sustainable consumption through the implementation of extensive policies and interventions by environmental activists' spans over twenty years. Researchers have used a number of theories to understand what influences consumers to behave sustainably, one of these theories is the "ethical values paradigm" (Holt, 2012). This theory paradigm suggests that consumer choices are partly the cause of unsustainable consumption. Consumerism is what shapes consumer choices, the conceptual values held by consumers is what embodies consumerism, therefore, "sustainable value systems" need to be imported from the modern commercialised marketplace as a gateway to sustainable consumption (Holt, 2012). Holt (2012) argues that although the ethical values paradigm has guided the sustainable consumption concept for years, the conceptual framework is flawed as it has not produced impressive results. Therefore Holt (2012) puts forth the "Market construction paradigm", a specialisation in "Consumer Culture Theory" or CCT. The market construction paradigm states that we need to move away from the ethical values paradigm, as consumption cannot be governed by widespread ethical frameworks but rather, by an understanding of the sustainability nuances across differing markets.

"Consumption-based and "behavioural-based" theories are also the commonly used for sustainability research and include "the theory of planned behaviour (TPB)", and "the theory of reasoned action (TRA)" (Lunde, 2018, p. 100). The theory of reasoned action argues that an extensive background of elements may indirectly influence behaviour by influencing the "behavioural and normative beliefs" held by an individual (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011, p. 17). The theory of reasoned action was later used by Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez (2012) to assert that consumers' purchase intentions and attitudes towards sustainable or green brands and products are influenced by the depiction of nature-based imagery. Further to that, Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez (2012) state that functional environmental benefits and emotional benefits positively increase purchase intention and attitude towards green products. The theory of planned behaviour on the other hand prognosticates and delineates human behaviour in particular situations (Ajzen, 1991). A study conducted by Vermeir and Verbeke (2008) revealed that all consumers who bear values of a traditional nature such

as being humble, the respect for tradition, dedication and commitment are susceptible to purchasing sustainable goods and services whilst power seeking individuals, such as those in a position of authority are less susceptible to purchasing sustainable products. The researchers concluded that the individuals who were willing to purchase sustainable products wanted to "steer a middle course" whilst those who were not, had no business in adopting a behaviour that would not result in them obtaining power (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008, p. 549). Considerable amount of research has been conducted in the endeavour to establish how and why some consumers behave sustainably and some not (Giampietri et al., 2018; Johnstone & Lindh, 2018; Judge et al., 2019). According to Keshmiri et al. (2020, p. 1154), empirical evidence provided by these researchers connects "cognitive attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control". Furthermore, recent research pertaining to sustainable consumer behaviour highlights that "perceived control behaviour and subjective norms are the major factors that influence sustainable consumer behaviour" (Sheoran & Kumar, 2022, p. 103).

2.3.7 *Quality of life conceptual indicator evaluation framework*

Necessary quality of life and Well-being relates to the act of businesses engaging consumers who want to enhance their quality of life (QOL) and well-being (Lunde, 2018). Lunde (2018) argues that the above factors are a firm underpinning of responsibility for ensuring sustainable consumption and sustainable practices for current and future generations. Sustainable marketing also prioritises the QOL and well-being of current and future generations. Lee and Sirgy (2004, p. 44) define QOL as "marketing practice designed to enhance the well-being of customers while preserving the well-being of the firm's other stakeholders". Researchers have found that consumers are prone to behave sustainably if that behaviour enhances their QOL and well-being (Bahl et al., 2016). Moreover, Goldstein et al. (2008) examined the sustainable behaviours of consumers while staying at a hotel and ascertained that social norm signage appealed to guests to employ sustainable practices. So instead of the signage encouraging the reuse

of one's towel to protect the environment, signage which stated a lot of guests reused their towels to protect the environment, compelled other guests to behave sustainably by doing the same. According to Greenwood and Holt (2014), humans do their early learning in unofficial family units, markets and laws in order to establish social relationships and develop their well-being and quality of life, which explains why social norm signage appealed to the hotel guests.

As mentioned by Fuchs et al. (2020), gross domestic product has been used an indicator of quality of life for more than fifty years despite the fact that it was never intended for this. Fuchs et al. (2020) further argues that this indicator is flawed as it only focuses on an increase in total income (Greenwood & Holt, 2014). According to Greenwood and Holt (2014), economic growth has the potential to reduce the quality of life as it can lead to urban build-up, which ultimately increases public utility costs such as water and electricity leading to unsustainable development. With regards to sustainability, a large number of consumers do not understand how their sustainable behaviour can positively impact their quality of life therefore, they may settle for unsustainable behaviour (Yang et al., 2015), which presents an opportunity for organisations, governments and society to drive the agenda on sustainable development goals (Sachs, 2012).

What does this mean for organisations that would like to focus on quality of life and well-being of consumers? What indicators can they use to measure whether they are achieving what they set out to achieve? Fuchs et al. (2020) developed a "conceptual basis for indicator evaluation" model (refer to Figure 4) to measure and trace quality of life by categorising indicators based on the issues they relate to under well-being and sustainable development.

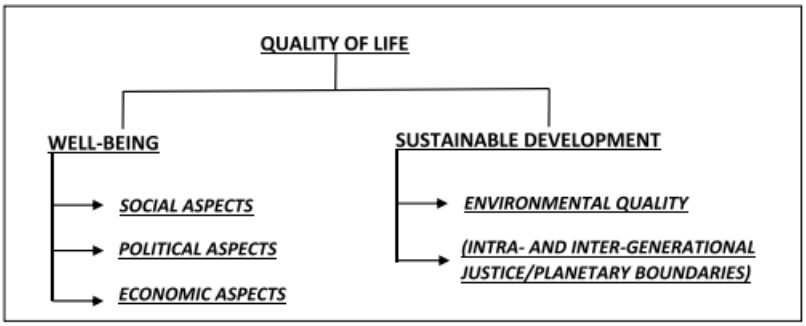

Figure 4: QOL: A Conceptual Basis for Indicator Evaluation

Source: Fuchs et al. (2020, p. 15)

Social, political, and economic aspects sit under well-being. As mentioned by Fuchs et al. (2020), social aspects include health and education which have been highlighted as playing a key role in individuals ability to build lives that are productive and meaningful. Political aspects refer to "a stable system of rule of law, the protection of fundamental rights and liberties, the potential for participation, and a functioning bureaucracy which sprovide the basis for human security and offer benefits that go far beyond social security or economic success" (Fuchs et al., 2020, p. 16). Lastly, economic aspects refer to income, generated from formal markets and informal markets as well as the creation of benefits by off market activities such as homemaking and childcare (Fuchs et al., 2020).

Sustainable development encompasses environmental quality which includes water, soil, air quality, the health of the forests and intra and inter-generational justice/planetary boundaries which is attributed to "pursuing human development while maintaining essential ecosystem services and not crossing planetary limits now or later," (Fuchs et al., 2020, pp. 17-18). The conceptual basis for indicator evaluation framework forms a solid foundation for businesses and marketing professionals who wish to pursue quality of life initiatives driving sustainable marketing practices for their respective products and services.

2.4 Conceptual framework

In 2021 Peterson et al. (2021) used the GREEN Framework in a study conducted in the US. In this study, corresponding constructs in the conceptual model were developed, as depicted in Figure 5 below. The research results for this study showed that the nature-based values of consumers influence their support for sustainable businesses the most, followed by attitude towards firm benevolence and consumers' concern relating to the ethical practices of the business. Valuing social justice and the recognition of businesses' contribution to one's Quality of Life (QOL) did not influence the consumers' support for sustainable business.

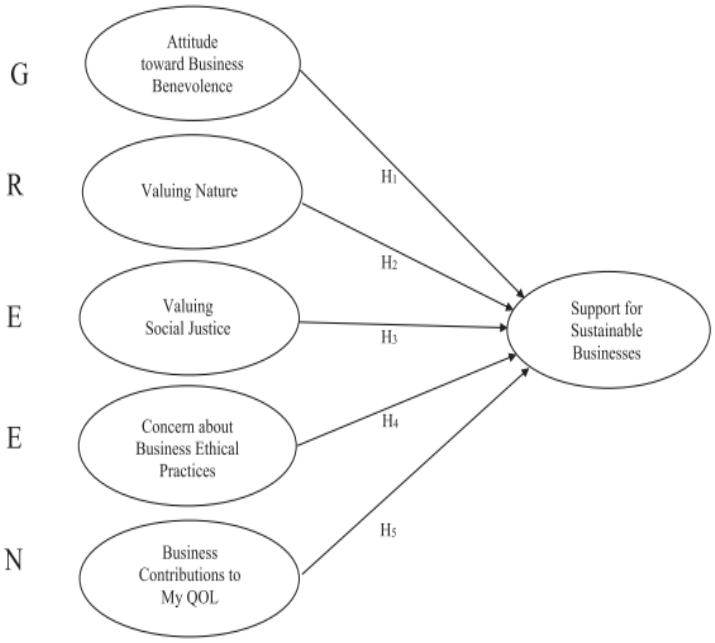

Figure 5: The GREEN Sustainable Marketing Framework (Lunde, 2018) and corresponding constructs in the conceptual model

Source: Peterson et al. (2021) 157 – 168

The abundance of literature on sustainable marketing practices reflects the increase in the adaptation of sustainable marketing practices across the globe. Whilst the acceleration of the adoption of sustainable marketing practices has been influenced by (1) legislative and compliance requirements (Żak, 2015), (2) the United Nations “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (United-Nations,

2022), and (3) consumer awareness of the environmental impact of goods that are not sourced responsibly thus their expectation of businesses to adopt sustainable initiatives (Jones et al., 2008), overstating sustainability initiatives by some businesses is a growing concern (Szabo & Webster, 2021) as they recognise the value that sustainable marketing can have on their business (Oglinda, 2021). Despite the greenwashing (Furlow, 2010) phenomenon, sustainable marketing practices have been shown to influence consumer purchase intentions and their inclination to pay extra for eco-friendly products (de Freitas Netto et al., 2020). The study being replicated and advanced as well as additional literature, confirmed that consumers who value nature are likely to buy eco-friendly products (Peterson et al., 2021; Taufique, 2022). Benevolence of a business and concern about a business's ethical practices also influenced consumers' support for sustainable businesses in the United States, however, social justice and contribution to quality of life did not have any influence on consumers' willingness to purchase green products (Peterson et al., 2021).

This study set out to replicate the study conducted by Peterson et al. (2021) in the United States (see Appendix G) and advance the work through the use of socio-demographic characteristics (refer to Figure 6) as moderating variables to investigate whether sustainable marketing practices influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products.

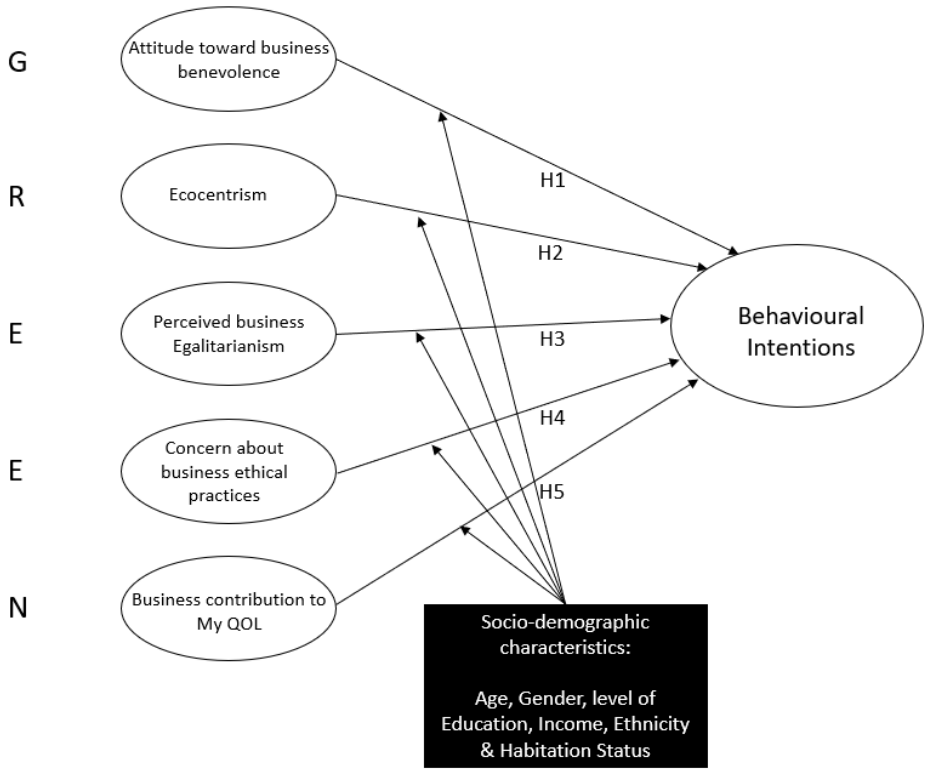

Figure 6: Conceptual Framework - The GREEN Sustainable Marketing Framework (Lunde, 2018), corresponding constructs and moderating variables in the conceptual model

2.4.1 *Attitude toward business benevolence and green purchase intentions*

Attitude toward business benevolence, a construct derived from the Globalised marketplace of value exchange from Lunde's (2018) GREEN Sustainable Marketing Framework, focuses not only on the exchange between a buyer and a seller but also on the society in which the business operates in. This insinuates that businesses contribute to societies and communities through philanthropic activities commonly referred to as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Peterson et al., 2021). CSR is the commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to the economy's development, improving the quality of life of employees, their families, local communities, and society (Moir, 2001). CSR can therefore be said to be the benevolence of businesses. Carroll (1991) outlines a

business's benevolent responsibilities under four categories: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic (refer to Figure 7).



Figure 7: Carroll's Pyramid of CSR

Source: Carroll (2016, p. 5)

Economic responsibilities are the foundation of the CSR pyramid presented by Carroll (1991) Carroll (1991). Without this foundation, the others become debatable because an organisation cannot contribute to the economy's development if it cannot sustain itself resulting in destitution as the business would not be in a position to continue its operations (Carroll, 2016). Furthermore, Carroll (2016, p. 3) states that "as a fundamental condition or requirement of existence, businesses have an economic responsibility to the society that permitted them to be created and sustained". The key economic responsibilities include performing in a fashion that seeks to maximize profits per share, ensuring continued and consistent profitability, maintaining a strong competitive advantage and efficiency in operations.

Society has not only allowed businesses to operate as authorised economic organisations but has also initiated the minimum rules and guidelines which businesses need to abide by to continue operations (Carroll, 1991, 2016). These rules and guidelines incorporate regulations and laws propagated by national and local government and authorities to ensure just business practices (Carroll, 1991, 2016). These legal responsibilities include, but are not limited to; (1) behaving in a manner that is in harmony with the expectations set forth by government, (2) demonstrating law-abiding corporate citizenship, (3) fulfilling legal commitments and (4) producing and selling products that comply with legal requisites (Carroll, 1991, 2016).

Despite the fact that economic and legal responsibilities incorporate ethical standards relating to just practices, ethical responsibilities refer to an organisations ability to accept the pursuits and operations that are expected or rejected by society regardless of there being no legal obligation to do so (Carroll, 1991, 2016). This includes (1) an organisations approval of evolving ethical practices, (2) consistency when it comes to ethical norms and practices, (3) ensuring that these ethical norms and practices are not jeopardised in order to achieve business objectives (Carroll, 1991, 2016). Behaving in an ethically and morally acceptable manner is an expectation placed upon businesses (Carroll, 2016).

Some studies argue that philanthropic initiatives take centre stage in the CSR initiatives of companies operating in developing markets, positively influencing consumers (Dobers & Halme, 2009; Frynas, 2005; Muthuri & Gilbert, 2011). According to Amos (2018), CSR initiatives in developing countries reflect the uniqueness of the social issues faced in these countries, thereby calling for organisations to adopt their philanthropic interventions accordingly. Philanthropic responsibilities are the benevolent actions taken by organisations in order to give back to the societies they operate in (Carroll, 2016). These actions and initiatives are non-compulsory and are at the discretion of the organisation. Although these actions and activities are voluntary, societies desire for organisations to demonstrate good corporate citizenship through such initiatives (Carroll, 2016). CSR positively impacts consumer's attitudes towards a company (Lii & Lee, 2012;

Nan & Heo, 2007); therefore, it is assumed that consumer's attitude toward business benevolence will positively influence their behavioural intentions regarding green products in the South African context across socio-demographic characteristics.

> ***H1**: Attitude towards business benevolence will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.*

2.4.2 *Ecocentrism and green purchase intentions*

According to Hoffman and Sandelands (2005), the major environmental issues we are faced with today are not as a result of economic or technological problems but rather, cultural and behavioural problems. An anthropocentric or human-centred approach in making use of resources has been adopted too often with little consideration for the environment (Hoffman & Sandelands, 2005). This has resulted in the loss of biodiversity, climate change and the overpassing of thresholds for the nitrogen cycle, subsequently causing issues to the earth's ecological integrity (Liu et al., 2016). Anthropocentrism is an approach that prioritises humans over any other biota in the ecosystem (Kortetmäki, 2013) where nature is considered an instinctual process versus the free-willed nature that humans possess (Kortetmäki, 2013) . Anthropocentricism places humans above all other life, where other forms of life are only considered as important to a certain extent, as and when they are of use to humanity. (Rahman & Reynolds, 2019). There is a common viewpoint that anthropocentrism is the key player in the obliteration of the environment, such as deforestation. The anthropocentric perspective only considers the positive reasons why trees are cut down, such as the building of homes, paper and money and not the intrinsic value that trees have on the ecosystem such as the cycling of water, the contribution of trees to the stability of the soil and providing shelter to animals (Liu et al., 2016). The one dimensional viewpoint of anthropocentrism is considered the main cause of the ecological plight we are witnessing today due to humans acting in a manner that compromises preservation of the environment (Liu et al., 2016).

On the contrary, ecocentrism, also known as “stewardship” (Liu et al., 2016) is the philosophy that places importance on all living things, without favouring humanity, despite their recognisable importance to human beings (Gray et al., 2018). Ecocentrism offers a vigorous “ethical analysis” (Gray et al., 2018, p. 130) which focuses on humanity adopting the role of “environmental stewards” (Liu et al., 2016, p. 1534) rather than the anthropocentric approach which highlights how humans are negatively impacting the ecosystem, and shows the destruction of resources and the unethical nature of depleting these resources (Gray et al., 2018). Stewardship in philosophy, particularly relating to ethics refers to the use of natural resources in a sustainable and responsible manner (Liu et al., 2016). It has also been highlighted as a way to articulate “environmental ethics” (Liu et al., 2016, p. 1534). According to Liu et al. (2016) the primary purpose of stewardship is entrusting one entity with the well-being of another, humanity in this case, being entrusted with protecting and preserving nature for both themselves and future generations. Stewardship can therefore be denoted as the foundation of an eco-centric ideology (Liu et al., 2016). Such a philosophy is centred around the role of humans as the responsible body for environmental stewardship and studies conducted by various researchers found that females are more inclined to environmentally friendly behaviours than males (Akgül et al., 2017; Alagoz & Akman, 2016; Altun, 2020). Despite humanity’s ability to dominate all the inhabitants of the earth, stewardship calls for humanity to actively care for and add to the environment, protect and live in harmony with all the inhabitants of the earth (Liu et al., 2016). “According to the eco-centric view, general principles of nature dictate the way people should behave as guardians of the ecosystem” (Liu et al., 2016, p. 1534). Eco-centric awareness is thus imperative in order to remedy the depletion of resources caused by anthropocentrism (Gray et al., 2018). Furthermore, Rahman and Reynolds (2019) make mention of the importance of environmental awareness as a key player in influencing human behaviours. In other words, making consumers aware of environmental crises can trigger their concern for the environment and prompt them to behave in an eco-friendly and sustainable manner. Based on the value-belief-norm (Rahman & Reynolds, 2019) , it is hypothesized that eco-centrists or consumers who value nature will support sustainable businesses.

H2: *Ecocentrism will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.*

2.4.3 *Perceived business egalitarianism and green purchase intentions*

Egalitarianism relates to the fairness of all individuals, or equal opportunities for all (Arneson, 2018; Roemer & Trannoy, 2015; Temkin, 2003). An egalitarian is an individual who supports the equal treatment of all people despite being born into a certain social class, ethnic group, or race (Hirose, 2014). Therefore, it is safe to say that a business which supports the equal treatment of all people can be referred to as an egalitarian as well. It is important to note however that egalitarianism is not a set of beliefs that calls for people's conditions to be made the same but rather that people should be treated as equals who possess equal dignity and worth, held to the same standards in terms of what is morally right or wrong (Fourie, 2012).

Perceived business egalitarianism is a construct derived from equitable, sustainable business practices from Lunde's (2018) GREEN Sustainable Marketing Framework. According to Baker and Lesch (2013), sustainable business practices need to be just and sensible from both parties viewpoint to be equitable. Equal opportunities for all are part of the founding pillars upon which egalitarianism was founded. This is a principle positing that individuals should be treated as equals regardless of their social status and titles, opposing the categorisation of individuals based on status rankings (Fourie, 2012; Martin & North, 2022). Equality also asserts that job applicants should not be discriminated against because of their ethnicity, age, gender and sexual preference (Beattie & Johnson, 2012). The borrowing of money for purposes of starting a business or purchasing a home should be assessed on a set criterion and awarded to individuals based on credit score ratings and not on race, status and location as is still being experienced by people of black origin (Rugh et al., 2015). With regards to a globalised marketplace, organisations should sell their goods and services to all willing consumers, and treat them as sources of

prospective financial returns, while, consumers purchasing goods and services should solely base their decision on price and quality and not the race, gender or sexual orientation of the seller (Arneson, 2002). In an ideal world, equality of opportunities would completely be fulfilled if wealth was passed down from generation to generation for all as this would organically result in a competitive playing field for all. Positions and job vacancies in this ideal world would be open to all and not just the individuals who have access to wealth thus better equipped to get the education needed to harness the skillset required for the jobs (Arneson, 2002). The great news is that a considerable amount of organisations are investing in their employees to ensure that they improve their skillset and move up the employment ladder (Kahn, 2018) Some societies have established educational systems in order to bridge the gap of social disparity, a commitment outlined in the sustainable development goals (SDG's) (Walker et al., 2019). The value-belief-norm indicates that people who value certain things under threat will support a movement that seeks to correct or mitigate that threat. Thus, it is hypothesized that consumers who value social justice will support sustainable businesses that also value it.

> ***H3:*** *Perceived business egalitarianism will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.*

2.4.4 *Concern about Business Ethical Practices and green purchase intentions*

Boaks and Levine (2018) define ethics as behavioural standards to which we hold ourselves and others against. In business, these include virtues such as trust, empathy, always doing what is right even if it means that the business goal might not be met. Ethics guide the manner in which we interact with internal and external stakeholders and shareholders who are affected by the organisations business practices (Boaks & Levine, 2018). These stakeholders include government, the community in which the business operates, the environment, suppliers, customers, employees, media, investors, competitors, clients and retailers (see Figure 8 below) (Boaks & Levine, 2018).

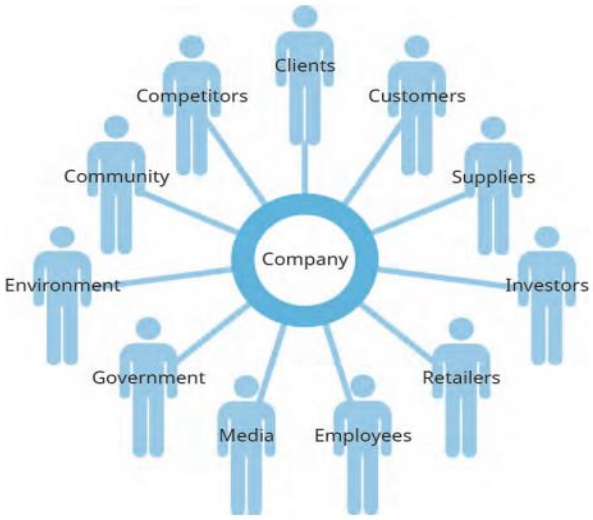

Figure 8: Company stakeholders

Source: Boaks and Levine (2018, p. 9)

Concern about businesses' ethical practices, is a construct derived from equitable, sustainable consumption from Lunde's (2018) GREEN Sustainable Marketing Framework. In 2015, the Member States of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals agenda (United Nations, 2022). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda provides a blueprint shared by all Member States, which calls for prosperity and peace for both the people and the planet in the present and the future. The SDGs aim to alleviate poverty, preserve the planet, and enable everyone to benefit profitably and peacefully (United Nations, 2022). endeavours such as the SDGs are considered ethical. Furthermore Kang and Hustvedt (2014) state that consumers' perception of a business's attempt to be open about their value chain and production, conditions of labour and philanthropic efforts builds consumer loyalty, impacting their future intentions to purchase. Due to this, it is assumed that the consumer concerns toward ethical practices of a business will positively impact their support for businesses that undertake sustainable business practices.

H4: *Concerns about the ethical practices of businesses will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.*

2.4.5 *Business Contribution to My Quality of life (QOL) green purchase intentions*

Quality of life relates to the act of businesses engaging consumers who want to enhance the value of their quality of life (QOL) and well-being (Lunde, 2018). Lunde (2018) argues that it's a firm underpinning of responsibility for ensuring sustainable consumption and sustainable practices for current and future generations. Sustainable marketing also prioritises the QOL and well-being of current and future generations. Lee and Sirgy (2004, p. 45) define QOL as "marketing practice designed to enhance the well-being of customers while preserving the well-being of the firm's other stakeholders". Researchers have found that consumers are prone to behave sustainably if that behaviour enhances their QOL and well-being (Bahl et al., 2016).

Fuchs et al. (2020) posits that there are two pillars which sit under Quality of life (QOL), namely well-being and sustainable development. Social, political, and economic aspects fall under the well-being pillars, and as mentioned by Fuchs et al. (2020), social aspects include health and education which have been highlighted as playing a key role in individuals ability to build lives that are productive and meaningful. Political aspects refer to "a stable system of rule of law, the protection of fundamental rights and liberties, the potential for participation, and a functioning bureaucracy provide the basis for human security and offer benefits that go far beyond social security or economic success" (Fuchs et al., 2020, p. 16). Lastly, economic aspects refer to income generated from formal markets and informal markets as well as the creation of benefits by off market activities such as homemaking and childcare (Fuchs et al., 2020).

Concern about a business's contribution to QOL is a construct derived from Lunde's (2018) necessary quality of life and well-being, a section in the GREEN Sustainable Marketing Framework. According to Peterson et al. (2021), concerns about QOL are more serious for consumers with lower income and lower for

consumers with higher income. Poverty and Income disparity are significant problems in South Africa (Burns et al., 2017) and given that the study was conducted in the US and the perception of businesses contributing towards My QOL had no influence on consumer's support for sustainable business; the assumption is that it will have a positive influence on consumers support for sustainable business with the South African context given the social disparity.

> ***H5:*** *Consumer perception of businesses' contribution towards My QOL will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.*

2.5 Conclusion of Literature Review

"Sustainable Marketing", a term coined and exclusive to the marketing field, "*is the strategic creation, communication, delivery, and exchange of offerings that produce value through consumption behaviours, business practices, and the marketplace, while lowering harm to the environment and ethically and equitably increasing the quality of life (QOL) and well-being of consumers and global stakeholders, presently and for future generations*" (Lunde, 2018, p. 94). This definition does not only define sustainable marketing from an organisational or consumer perspective but does so holistically. Green Marketing or Sustainable Marketing are terms used interchangeably. In prior research, some researchers defined it from an organisational perspective as the actions an organisation takes to reduce the negative impact its products or services may have on the environment (Groening et al., 2018). Others have defined sustainable marketing from a consumer point of view as the management of post-consumption waste collection (Mont & Plepys, 2008). It is through the review and analysis of the conceptual and theoretical fragmentation in the Sustainable Marketing literature that the GREEN Framework of Sustainable Marketing (Lunde, 2018) was birthed, a holistic review of sustainable marketing.

The word GREEN is an acronym for five constructs, namely "Globalised marketplace of value exchange", "Responsible environmental behaviour for current and future generations", "Equitable sustainable business practices",

"Ethical sustainable consumption", and "Necessary quality of life and well-being" (Lunde, 2018). This is the basis upon which Peterson et al. (2021) developed the five constructs for the study conducted in the United States, a study this work will replicate with the intention to advance the work by incorporating socio-demographic characteristics.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research methodology used for this study. The primary motivation for this research was to test the influence of sustainable marketing practices on consumers support for sustainable businesses/ green products in the South African context. Five dependent variables were specified in the proposed conceptual framework as well as the outcome variable. This chapter outlines the research approach and design that was best suited for the research, the data collection methods employed for the purposes of this research, the population and sample size, the research instrument used and how the constructs were measured, the data collection procedure and strategies, possible limitations and challenges of the study, quality assurance and ethical considerations that were upheld to ensure the ethical integrity of the research.

3.1 Research approach

The study made use of a quantitative research approach. A quantitative research design is a structured and methodical investigation of a social occurrence (Schindler, 2019), and is based on the assumption that social phenomena can be measured (Watson, 2015). Quantitative methods also allow for generalisability to the entire population or a segment of the population being measured (Rahman, 2020). Firstly, this study sought to measure the direct paths between the independent variables and dependent variable as per the replicated study. Secondly, to advance the work, the study went on to introduce socio-demographic characteristics as moderating variables, namely age, gender, level of education, income, and ethnicity, identifying similarities and differences across these socio-demographic characteristics.

A quantitative research approach was best suited as generalisability of the study was of paramount importance within the South African and developing market context given the noticeable gap in research conducted in these markets (Singh & Pandey, 2012). The relevance of this work is further attributed to the growing phenomenon pertaining to sustainable marketing practices (Żak, 2015), and the growing consumer concern for the environment thus the importance of the

expansion of socially responsible and sustainable goods and services globally (Mishra & Sharma, 2014).

3.2 Research design

A quantitative approach with a survey design was used for this research. An online survey instrument was used to collect data to test the five hypotheses. Surveys are commonly used to measure attitudes, perceptions, characteristics or behaviours of individuals within a larger group (Cook & Cook, 2008). The objective of a survey is to collect data that can be compared from all respondents to find similarities and dissimilarities (Schindler, 2019). Given that the researcher sought to understand the influence of sustainable marketing practices on South African consumers' behavioural intentions, the survey was best suited in measuring the behaviour of consumers in relation to sustainable marketing practices (Cook & Cook, 2008).

3.3 Data collection methods

The survey was created on the Qualtrics platform, a link was then generated and shared with 50 respondents via email and WhatsApp. The 50 respondents were part of the pilot study, which was used to test the measurement instrument (Hassan et al., 2006). Some of the issues highlighted by the respondents included the format and layout of the questionnaire and their inability to comprehend some of the instructions pertaining to the questions. This feedback was used to ensure that respondents were able to change their selection once chosen and ensure clarity with regards to what they needed, to answer the questions, particularly those on the Likert Scale.

A data collection agency was then employed to collect data from 420 respondents by use of an email containing a link to the survey. The target was 350 respondents post data-cleaning, to ensure a 95% confidence level. (Appendix B).

3.4 Population and sample

A population is made up of representatives of a group with one or more descriptive characteristic (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, a population is indicative of all members in a group from which a sample may be taken (Lewis & Saunders, 2012).

3.4.1 *Population*

The population of this study included all South Africans aged 18 years and above, across all socio-demographic characteristics including age, gender, ethnicity, education level, income, and habitation status. 39.39 million people in South Africa fall in this category as children aged 0 to 17 were excluded from the study.

3.4.2 *Sample*

A total of 427 responses were collected across different demographic areas in South Africa. Post-cleaning of the data, responses with more than 10% missing values were removed to avoid introducing bias (Dong & Peng, 2013). A total of 388 valid responses were obtained and used as the final empirical data for analysis. Of the respondents, 45.6% were youth aged 18 to 34 years, 39.4% were middle aged 35 to 54 years and the remaining 14.9% were 55 years and older. Of these respondents, 47.2% were female, 39.7% were male, 5.9% were non-binary, and 7.2% preferred not to say.

Black Africans comprised almost half of the sample with 48.8%. This was followed by White and Coloured respondents with 20.6% and 19.1%, respectively, with the remaining 11.5% of respondents being Indians, Asians, and other.

3.4.3 *Sampling method*

Due to the fact that collecting data from an entire population is not always possible or feasible, sampling is carried out (Tille & Matei, 2016). A sample is therefore a subset of the population (Etikan et al., 2016). A nonprobability sampling method was used for the purpose of this research as the researcher did

not have the means of accessing the list of all the individuals in the population (Tille & Matei, 2016; Wegner, 2010). Nonprobability sampling is a sampling method where it is unlikely for all members of a population to have an equal chance of being selected (Acharya et al., 2013). The nonprobability sampling technique used was quota sampling as the data collection agency was given parameters to follow in terms of the approximate number of respondents to recruit per race and per gender.

Total population of South Africa as of 2021 was 60.14 million with Black South Africans making up 81% of the population at 48.60 million (Appendix C). To have a representation of the population, the data collection agency needed to make sure most of the respondents were Black Africans. However, 17.38 million (Appendix D) of the 48.60 million Black South Africans are children aged between 0 and 17 years (making up 37% of the Black African population) and given that parental consent would have been required for all children, they were removed from the population. Thus only 39.39 million individuals aged 18 and above (refer to Table 1) were used to determine the number of respondents (350) required for a confidence level of 95%.

The other parameter given to the agency was to recruit 51% female and 49% male (Appendix E) however, the questionnaire also allowed for respondents who preferred not to reveal their gender and those who consider themselves as non-binary.

Although 78,2% of population aged 18 years and above is Black Africans, the researcher deliberately settled for a 50%, 20%, 20% and 10% split for Black Africans, Coloured, White, and Indian/Asian respondents respectively as the researcher considered that the smaller population groups would lack representation (BUCKLEY et al., 2022).

The primary research objective was to investigate whether sustainable marketing practices influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics. Thus, having a representation of the population was vital in answering the primary research objective and the sub-research objectives.

Table 1: South African Population by age and race

	2021	% Contribution
Total Population	60 142 000	
Black Africans African	48 640 000	80,9%
Coloured	5 295 000	8,8%
White	4 662 000	7,8%
Indian/ Asian	1 545 000	2,6%

	2021	% Contribution
Total Population (Aged 0 - 17)	20 749 000	
Black Africans African	**17 833 000**	85,9%
Coloured	1 694 000	8,2%
White	903 000	4,4%
Indian/ Asian	319 000	1,5%

	2021	% Contribution
Total Population (excluding all children)	**39 393 000**	
Black Africans African (Aged 18 and above)	30 807 000	78,2%
Coloured (Aged 18 and above)	3 601 000	9,1%
White (Aged 18 and above)	3 759 000	9,5%
Indian/ Asian (Aged 18 and above)	1 226 000	3,1%

	Total population 2021	Total Black Africans population 2021
Population	60 142 000	48 640 000
Black Africans children in relation to total population	**29,7%**	
Black Africans children in relation to total Black Africans population		**37,0%**

3.5 Procedure for data collection

Before commencing with data collection, an ethics clearance application was submitted and approved by the Wits Business School Ethics Committee (Appendix H). Once the ethics clearance was obtained, the researcher conducted a pilot study with 50 respondents, the survey link for the pilot study was distributed via WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and Facebook. The survey was then closed after

receiving responses from 50 respondents for testing and ensuring the workability of the survey.

After analysis had been completed for the pilot study, the researcher contacted a data collection agency that assisted with the distribution of the survey to respondents via email. The agency was provided with race and gender parameters to follow when sending out the survey link by email. They needed to send out the email using a 50%, 20%, 20%, 10% split to Black, White, Coloured, and Indian/Asian respondents respectively and a gender split of 51% female and 49% male.

3.6 The research instrument

A survey containing structured questions (Appendix F), also known as a questionnaire, was employed for the purposes of data collection (Edmondson & McManus, 2007).

According to Glasow (2005), the advantages of a survey as a data collection method are as follows: 1) it provides the researcher control to a certain degree 2) it is appealing for researchers who need to complete research undertakings within a defined time period 3) it is affordable to develop and distribute. However, the main disadvantage of this type of data collection is the lack of detail as compared to other data collection methods as respondents cannot provide unrepressed responses (Glasow, 2005).

Five of the six constructs were measured using the scales from the replicated study conducted by Peterson et al. (2021) in the United States. The five constructs consisted of 22 items (Appendix F), and approval to replicate the study was obtained from Peterson et al. (2021) (Appendix G):

Attitude toward business benevolence – A six item construct adapted from the five-item construct “perceived CSR” which focused on an individual business (Peterson et al., 2021). A five-point scale where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree was used to measure the six items.

Ecocentrism – Three items from the value survey that measure the extent to which nature is important to participants and guides their actions (Peterson et al., 2021). The three items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale where 1 is not at all important and 7 is extremely important.

Perceived business Egalitarianism – Three items from the value survey that measures the extent to which social justice is important to participants and guides their actions (Peterson et al., 2021). The three items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale where 1 is not at all important and 7 is extremely important.

Concern about business ethical practices – Peterson et al. (2021) developed a five item scale to measure the views of consumers regarding a business' ethical practices. A five-point Likert scale where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree was used to measure the five items.

Business Contribution to My Quality of life (QOL) – Peterson et al. (2021, p. 163) adopted a scale containing five items from a research study conducted in a developing market context (Peterson et al., 2010). This scale assesses consumers perceptions towards several businesses as contributing to the quality of life of consumers. The five items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale, 1 being very negative contribution and 7 being positive contribution.

For the ***sixth construct***, an existing scale (Xie et al., 2015) containing six items was used to measure behavioural intentions:

Behavioural Intentions – The scale was adopted from Xie et al. (2015). This scale assesses consumers' behavioural intentions regarding a particular action. The six items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale, 1 being strongly disagree and 7 being strongly agree.

The questionnaire comprised of two sections, the first section contained questions relating to socio-demographic characteristics and the second section asked questions relating to values and beliefs.

3.7 Data analysis strategies

Once data collection was complete, responses from the survey were exported from Qualtrics to Excel. Post-cleaning of the data, responses with more than 10% missing values were removed to avoid introducing bias (Dong & Peng, 2013). Of all responses, 388 were valid responses and used as the final empirical data for analysis which was shared with a qualified statistician for processing.

3.7.1 *Descriptive analysis*

Post cleaning, the data was analysed using IBM SPSS to understand the key characteristics of the data set which included:

a) Quantifying of respondents by percentage into the respective socio-demographic groups (age, gender, level of education, income, habitation status and ethnicity)
b) Assessing the spread of the data using mean and standard deviation.

3.7.2 *Correlation Matrix*

The correlation matrix analysis was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant relationship between the independent variables (Attitude toward business benevolence, Ecocentrism, Perceived Egalitarianism, Business Contributions to My QOL and Concern about Business Ethical Practices) and the dependent variable (Behavioural Intentions).

3.7.3 *Hypothesis Testing*

A structural model was analysed using Structural Equation Modelling with partial least square (PLS-SEM) from SmartPLS 4 to test the hypotheses determining the path coefficient of the model, including the demographic variables as the control variables. The analysis to test for significance was conducted with bootstrapping (Becker et al., 2023) with a sub-sample of 5,000. The model's explanatory power was analysed with R^2.

3.7.4 *Moderation Effect*

The research within the South African context firstly tested the direct effects of the hypotheses as per the replicated study to determine similarities or nuances (developed market versus developing market) and further went on to introduce socio-demographic characteristics as moderating variables, namely age, gender, level of education, income, and ethnicity to advance the work by identifying similarities and differences across these socio-demographic characteristics.

3.7.5 *Multigroup Analysis*

A multigroup analysis was conducted to determine where the differences between the disparate groups came from (Foster et al., 2018). This is important as sometimes only aggregating the data can lead to unrealistic results as the assumption is that of homogeneity. It is important to test the heterogeneity of the model as the perceptions and assessments of categorial latent variables (for example, age, gender, race and socioeconomic status) by individuals is likely different (Sarstedt et al., 2011; Sarstedt & Ringle, 2010) . It is assumed that the variance between the groups is not equal; as such, the non-parametric test using Welch Satterthwait test was used for the analysis (Cheah et al., 2020)

3.8 Quality Assurance

Validity and reliability of the research study will now be addressed.

3.8.1 *External validity*

According to Lynch (1999, p. 369) “In many behavioural domains of interest to consumer researchers, there is no way of completely enumerating the population of measures from which to sample. Instead, most implementable sampling plans involve sampling on those independent variables that we think might affect the estimate or that we think might serve as proxies for the true causal factors that influence the dependent measure. In such cases, because one's judgment of what must be considered in sampling is fallible, statistical sampling theory can make no rigorous statement about the generalisability of one's results”.

The researcher has opted for population representation as a means to ensure external validity (Ocumpaugh et al., 2014), however, based on the abstract from Lynch (1999), ones judgement of what must be included in sampling is prone to error, especially for behavioural and consumer territories. Therefore, accurate statements about generalisability of results cannot be made.

3.8.2 *Internal validity*

Confirmatory Composite Analysis (CCA) was conducted with authors (Hair et al., 2014; Hu & Bentler, 1999) recommending the use of root mean square residual (RMSR), which measures the mean absolute value of the covariance residuals for the overall fit of the composite model (Hair et al., 2014). The threshold value is 0.08, with values below this indicating no misspecification of the model ((Hair et al., 2014; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Convergence validity was analysed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The rule of thumb is that the AVE should be 0.5 or higher (Cheung et al., 2023).

The Discriminant validity of the first-order construct was analysed using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT). Based on the guidelines of Kline (2011), the HTMT should be less than 0.85 ($HTMT_{.85}$).

3.8.3 *Reliability*

The composite reliability was used to measure the internal consistency of variables and based on rho_a, rho_c and Cronbach Alpha, all constructs need to be higher than 0.7 to confirm reliability (Barbera et al., 2020; Hair Jr et al., 2021; Hussey et al., 2023).

The common method bias was analysed using the full collinearity test with VIF values of the inner model. Based on the guidelines of Kock (2015), issues with common method bias arise when values are greater than 3.3.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Strict ethical conduct was upheld throughout the process and the following steps were taken to ensure ethical integrity:

- All sources were referenced during the literature review process
- The methodology followed for data collection was substantiated to ensure data integrity
- All literature, conceptual models, and frameworks were referenced appropriately to mitigate the risk of plagiarism
- Approval to replicate the study conducted by Peterson et al. (2021) was obtained
- To ensure ethical research practices, the researcher obtained permission from both the institution (see Appendix H) and the survey participants (Appendix F) at the preface of the survey (Creswell, 2012)
- To ensure researcher bias was not present, a third-party data collection agency was tasked with finding the participants based on the parameters provided
- Participants could either agree or disagree to providing consent at the beginning of the survey. Answers from respondents who did not give consent yet proceeded to answer the survey were removed completely from the data set
- The privacy and confidentiality of respondents was maintained by not requesting any personal identification such as a respondent's name, surname, identity number, contact number and email address

CHAPTER 4. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to understand whether sustainable marketing practices influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. This investigation was conducted using the five-dimensional constructs from the GREEN framework (Lunde, 2018). These are ecocentrism, perceived business egalitarianism, consumers' attitudes regarding the benevolence of a firm, consumers' concern about a firm's ethics, and business's contribution to consumers' quality of life (QOL) in relation to support for sustainable business.

A total of 427 responses were collected across different demographic areas in South Africa. Post-cleaning of the data, responses with more than 10% missing values were removed to avoid introducing bias (Dong & Peng, 2013). There were a total of 388 valid responses which were used as the final empirical data set for analysis. This sample size adheres to the confidence level sought out at the commencement of the study (Appendix E).

This chapter presents the results of the data collection. Presentation of these results will be structured as follows:

(1) Demographic profile of the respondents.

(2) Descriptive statistics.

(3) Testing of the model's reliability and convergence validity, common method bias and correlation between constructs.

(4) Testing of the five hypotheses of the study with inferential statistics using partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) (Sarstedt & Cheah, 2019). The direct effects of the model are then presented, followed by results of the moderating effects. The support or rejection of the hypotheses are then delineated.

(5) Lastly, a multigroup analysis is presented to determine the differences between the disparate groups followed.

4.2 Demographic profile of Respondents

Six demographic variables, which were age, gender, highest education, monthly household income, ethnicity, and habitation status, profiled the respondents (refer to Table 2). Of the respondents, 45.6% were youth aged 18 to 34 years, with middle age (35 to 54 years) respondents constituting 39.4% of the total respondents, and 14.9% were 55 years and older. Of these respondents, 47.2% were female, 39.7% were male, 5.9% were non-binary, and 7.2% preferred not to say. Black Africans constituted x almost half of the sample with 48.8%, followed by White and Coloured with 20.6% and 19.1% respectively, and 11,5% of the respondents being Indians, Asians, and other people.

The other three demographic variables provided information on the socioeconomic status of the respondents. Of these respondents, 45.9% live in an urban area like Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, or Pretoria. In comparison, 34.4% live in an urban-suburban area such as Sandton, Umhlanga, Rosebank, or Lynnwood, and 19.7% live in a rural area like Nongoma, Ga-dikgale and Botshabelo.

Of these respondents, 30.2% had a degree (either a 3-year or professional) as their highest education, 26.6% were in possession of postgraduate degrees (Honours, Masters or Doctoral), and 22.4% had a matric (grade 12) or less. In comparison, 21.4% had a college qualification.

The monthly household income varied among these respondents with a bias toward higher-income earners, where 54,4% of the respondents had a household income of more than R30 000 per month, with 26.0% of the respondents having a household income of R10 000 - R30 000 and 19.6% with less than R10 000 per month.

Table 2: Demographic profile of Respondents

Demographic variables	Demographic characterisation	N
Age	18 - 34 years	177
	35 - 54 years	153
	55 years and older	58
Gender	Female	183
	Male	154
	Non-binary/ third gender	23
	Prefer not to say	28
Highest education level	Matric or less	87
	College	83
	Degree	117
	Postgraduate degree	101
Monthly household income	Less than R10 000	76
	R10 000 - R30 000	101
	More than R30 000	211
Ethnicity	Black Africans	187
	Whites	79
	Coloured	73
	Indians, Asians, and Others	44
Habitation status	Rural area	74
	Urban area	172
	Urban-suburban area	129

4.3 Descriptive statistics

There were a total of 19 independent variables from the five different independent constructs of the study (Peterson et al., 2021) and six from the dependent construct, behavioural intention (BI) (Xie et al., 2015). These were measured in either a 5-point or 7-point Likert scale in line with their original instrument (see Table 4).

The three ecocentrism (ECO) variables show a close mean range, M = 5.12 – 4.85 on the 7-point Likert scale, indicating that, on average, the respondents found the elements of ECO moderately important.

The respondents highlighted that perceived business egalitarianism (PE) is very important based on the 7-point Likert scale, with mean, M = 6.07 (SD = 0.932) for protecting others (caring for society's weak and vulnerable), M = 6.04 (SD = 1.007) for equality (equal opportunity for all) and M = 5.88 (SD = 1.044) for social justice (correcting injustice).

With regards to the consumers' attitudes regarding the benevolence of a firm (BB), the respondents "agree" to "strongly agree" with the statements with a mean range M = 4.13 – 4.39 within the 5-point Likert scale.

Focusing on the consumers' concern about a firm's ethics (BEP), the respondents indicated that they are concerned about businesses lobbying government officials (M = 4.37, SD = 0.775), they are also concerned about businesses using their funds to bribe government officials (M = 4.33, SD = 0,777). They also care that businesses pay their fair share in taxes (M = 4.18, SD = 0.904).

The business's contribution to consumers' quality of life (MQOL) in relation to support for sustainable business had an M = 5.14 – 5.75 (somewhat positive to positive contribution). The highest perceived contribution is the local business (M = 5.75, SD = 1.142).

With regards to the behavioural intentions (BI) mostly agreed with the statement "I will speak positively about sustainable businesses to others" (M = 5.54, SD = 1.042), and the statement they agreed with the least is "I am willing to pay a higher price for sustainable businesses over unsustainable businesses" with M = 4.55 (SD = 1.479).

Table 3: Abbreviated Constructs

Abbreviated Constructs	Full Meaning
BB	Attitude toward Business Benevolence
ECO	Ecocentrism
PE	Perceived Business Egalitarianism
BEP	Concern about Business Ethical Practices
MQOL	Business contributions to My quality of life
BI	Behavioural Intentions

Table 4: Descriptive statistics

Statement	Variable	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Unity with nature (fitting in with nature)	ECO_1	4,85	1,613
Protecting the environment (preserving nature)	ECO_2	5,38	1,375
Animal welfare (protecting all living creatures)	ECO_3	5,12	1,535
Social justice (correcting injustice)	PE_1	5,88	1,044
Equality (equal opportunity for all)	PE_2	6,04	1,007
Protecting others (caring for society's weak and vulnerable)	PE_3	6,07	0,932
I like it when businesses are willing to help nationally fortunate	BB_1	4,35	0,797
I think it is good when businesses provide relief to people who suddenly find themselves in need	BB_2	4,34	0,751
It is a favourable situation when businesses donate funds towards the development of others in society	BB_3	4,29	0,784
It is a good thing when businesses support local non-profit organisations dedicated to benefiting those in need	BB_4	4,39	0,741
I would like to work for a firm that has provided Opportunities for the disadvantaged in society	BB_5	4,29	0,784

Statement	Variable	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
I would like to invest in a firm that has paid its employees Up to five hours per month for volunteering in local Community service projects	BB_6	4,13	0,859
I care that businesses pay their fair share in taxes	BEP_1	4,18	0,904
Today, some CEOs make far too much money	BEP_2	3,88	1,158
I am concerned about businesses using their funds to bribe government officials	BEP_3	4,34	0,777
I am concerned about businesses lobbying government officials	BEP_4	4,37	0,775
I am concerned about corrupt business practices	BEP_5	4,59	0,693
New product developers	MQOL_1	5,16	1,331
Multinational enterprises	MQOL_2	5,14	1,251
National businesses	MQOL_3	5,32	1,139
Local businesses	MQOL_4	5,75	1,142
Marketing research companies	MQOL_5	5,4	1,185
I believe sustainable businesses are my first choice when making a purchase	BI_1	4,46	1,525

Statement	Variable	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
I will choose sustainable businesses next time when making a purchase	BI_2	4,82	1,28
I am willing to try products from sustainable businesses	BI_3	5,37	1,139
I am willing to pay a higher price for sustainable businesses over unsustainable businesses	BI_4	4,55	1,479
It is very likely that I will recommend sustainable businesses to people who ask for suggestions	BI_5	5,24	1,181
I will speak positively about sustainable businesses to others	BI_6	5,54	1,042

4.4 Measurement Model: Factor Loading, Reliability and Convergence validity

The measurement model was developed to assess the construct validity and reliability for the six first-order constructs that are based on reflective indicators (refer to Table 5).

Table 5: Measurement model with Factor Loading, Reliability and Convergence

	Standardised loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Attitude toward business benevolence		0,862	0,896	0,899	0,641
BB_1	0,843				
BB_2	0,885				
BB_3	0,802				
BB_4	0,769				
BB_5	0,691				
BB_6					
Business Ethical Practices		0,837	0,865	0,900	0,751
BEP_1					
BEP_2					
BEP_3	0,881				
BEP_4	0,849				
BEP_5	0,870				
Behavioural Intentions		0,864	0,877	0,897	0,591
BI_1	0,746				
BI_2	0,788				
BI_3	0,733				
BI_4	0,741				
BI_5	0,829				
BI_6	0,772				
Ecocentrism		0,858	0,872	0,913	0,778

	Standardised loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
ECO_1	0,880				
ECO_2	0,926				
ECO_3	0,839				
Business Contributions to My QOL		0,788	0,809	0,864	0,617
MQOL_1	0,803				
MQOL_2	0,887				
MQOL_3	0,785				
MQOL_4					
MQOL_5	0,648				
Perceived Business Egalitarianism		0,832	0,885	0,897	0,744
PE_1	0,809				
PE_2	0,869				
PE_3	0,907				

Items in bold are excluded in the final model. RMSR = 0.064.

Although there are mixed views of fit indices in the partial least square measurement models, authors recommend the use of root mean square residual (RMSR), which measures the mean absolute value of the covariance residuals for the overall fit of the composite model (Hair et al., 2014). The RMSR value of the model was 0.064, which is better than the threshold of 0.08, indicating that there is no misspecification of the model (Hair et al., 2014; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Table 5 presents the model showing factor loading, which is acceptable as they are 0.6 and more, with an average of 0.7 and more for all the constructs

(Shrestha, 2021). The convergence validity was analysed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The rule of thumb is that the AVE should be 0.5 or higher (Cheung et al., 2023), and this was met by all constructs, with the highest being 0.778 for ECO and the lowest 0.591 for BI (refer to Table 5).

The composite reliability based on rho_a and rho_c were all higher than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2019). They range between 0,809 – 0,896 for rho_a and 0,864 – 0,913 for rho_c. These, together with the Cronbach Alpha for all the constructs that are higher than 0.7, confirm reliability. Overall, the measurement model exhibited convergence validity for the six constructs.

The Discriminant Validity of the first-order construct was analysed using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) (refer to Table 6). The constructs had acceptable discriminant validity based on the guidelines of Kline (2011) that the HTMT should be less than 0.85 ($HTMT_{.85}$). The highest value was 0.626, which was lower than the 0.85 threshold.

Table 6: HTMT assessment for discriminant validity

	1	2	3	4	5
1. BB					
2. BI	0,236				
3. MQOL	0,228	0,340			
4. BEP	0,535	0,169	0,381		
5. ECO	0,217	0,348	0,450	0,311	
6. PE	0,291	0,290	0,425	0,394	0,626

4.5 Common Method Bias

Common method bias is a phenomenon that originates from the method of measurement used in Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and not the causal

nexus of the model that is being investigated (Kock, 2015). Common method bias may be caused by the instructions given by the researcher to participants at the beginning of a questionnaire which may influence the responses of different participants in a similar direction or, the indirect “social desirability” connected with the manner in which questions are answered (Kock, 2015, p. 3). To confirm the absence of common method bias in the measurement method, a full collinearity test with VIF values of the inner model was analysed. Based on the guidelines of Kock (2015), there was no issue with common method bias as all the values were less than 3.3 (refer to Table 7).

Table 7: Common method bias assessment with VIF

	1	2	3	4	5
1. BB		1,291		1,083	
2. BI					
3. MQOL	1,243	1,299		1,181	1,164
4. BEP		1,410			
5. ECO	1,488	1,493			
6. PE	1,458	1,524	1,000	1,208	1,164

4.6 Correlation Matrix

The correlation matrix analysis shows there was a statistically significant though weak, positive relationship between ECO and BI ($r = 0.294$, $p < .01$) based on the guidelines of Pallant (2020) (refer to Table 8). There was also a statistically significant positive, but weak, relationship between MQOL and BI ($r = 0.279$, $p < .01$), same with PE and BI ($r = 0.233$, $p < .01$) as well as BB and BI ($r = 188$, $p < .01$). There was also a statistically significant weak correlation between BEP and BI ($r = 135$, $p < .01$).

Table 8: Correlation Matrix

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	BI	4,997	0,987					
2	BB	4,330	0,619	.189**				
3	ECO	5,119	1,328	.294**	.186**			
4	MQOL	5,256	0,961	.279**	.189**	.371**		
5	BEP	4,436	0,650	.135**	.453**	.265**	.311**	
6	PE	5,997	0,860	.233**	.246**	.528**	.347**	.327**

** - $p < 0.01$ * - $p < .05$.

4.7 Hypotheses Testing

A structural model was analysed using Structural Equation Modelling with partial least square (PLS-SEM) from SmartPLS 4 to test the hypotheses determining the path coefficient of the model, including the demographic variables as the control variables (refer to Figure 9). The analysis to test for significance was conducted using bootstrapping (Becker et al., 2023) with a sub-sample of 5,000. The model's explanatory power was analysed with R^2, with results showing R^2 = 0.304 (see Table 9).

This means that 30.4% of the change in behavioural intentions can be explained by the statistically significant predictors of this model. This R^2 greater than 0.26 indicating the model's explanatory power is substantial (Cohen, 1988). The effect size, $f^{2,}$ which highlights the constructs' relationship strength, was negligible to small. The predictive relevance with Q^2 was greater than 0 (Q^2 = 0.061), confirming the model is well constructed with weak to moderate predictive relevance (Hair et al., 2013).

Table 9: Explanatory power of the model

	R^2	Q^2	f^2

Behavioural Intentions	0.304	0.061	
Attitude toward business benevolence			0,016
Ecocentrism			0,052
Perceived Egalitarianism			0,003
Business Contributions to My QOL			0,016
Concern about Business Ethical Practices			0,000

4.7.1 *Direct paths*

The result of the model shows that path ecocentrism → behavioural intentions was statistically significant (β = 0,257, t = 4,137, p < .001) (Table 10). There was also a statistically significant direct effect in the path of business contributions to my QOL → behavioural intentions (β =0,144, t = 2,057, p < .05). The path for attitude toward business benevolence → Behavioural Intentions also shows statistical significance (β = 0,146, t = 2,189, p < .05). There were no statistically significant paths with perceived egalitarianism → behavioural intentions and concern about business ethical practices → behavioural intentions with both p-values of the path coefficient greater than 5% and t-statistics less than ±1.96.

Although the direct path income →behavioural was not part of this model but rather, used as a moderating variable, it is interesting to note income → behavioural intention was statistically significant (β = -0,207, t = 3,071, p < .05).

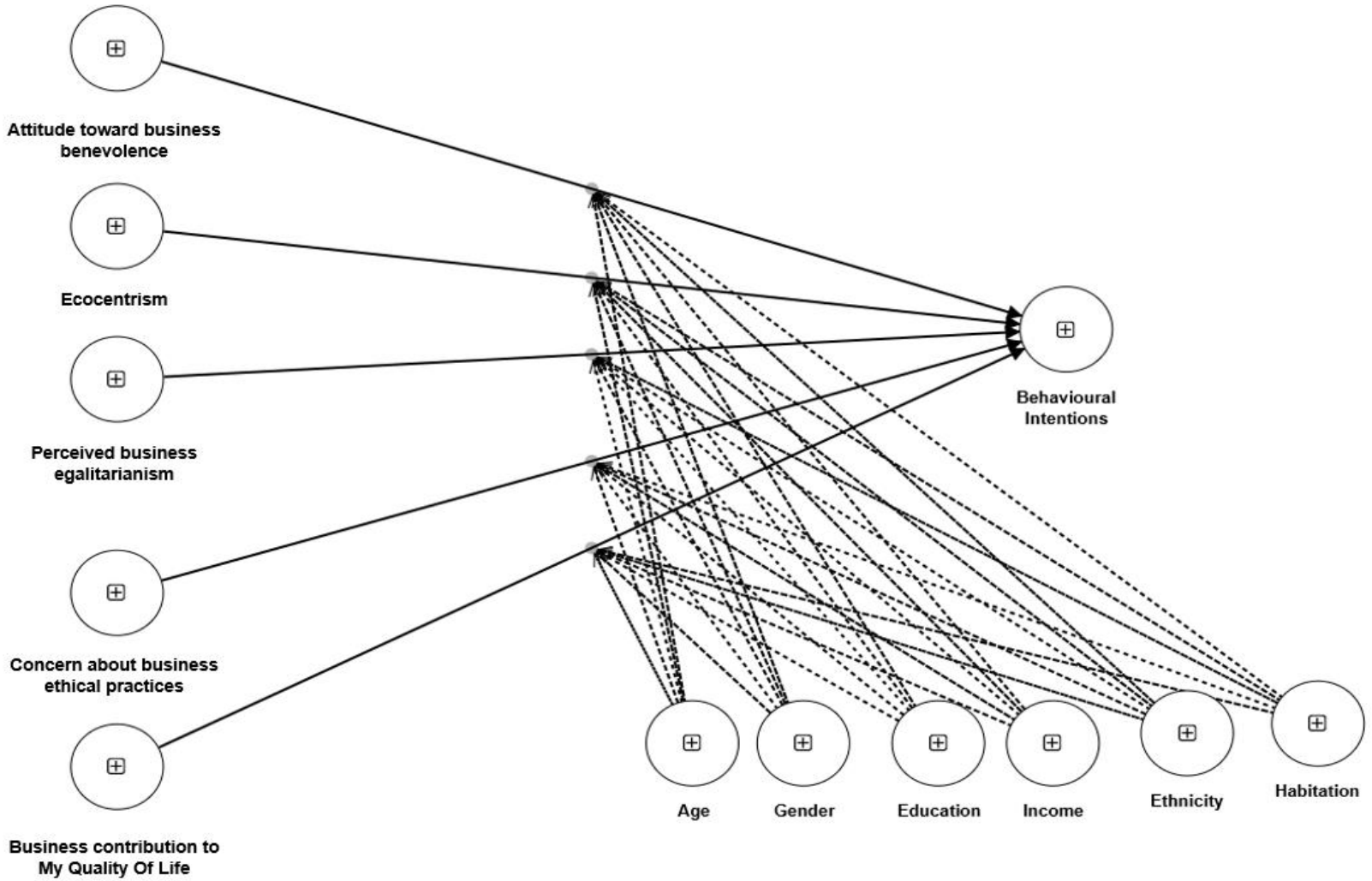

Figure 9: Structural model

Table 10: Structural path coefficients

	β	*t*- statistics	*p*- values	2.5%	97.5%
BB → BI	0,146	2,189	0,029	0,000	0,241
MQOL → BI	0,144	2,057	0,040	-0,013	0,240
BEP → BI	0,008	0,013	0,990	-0,136	0,109
ECO → BI	0,257	4,137	0,000	0,133	0,378
PE → BI	0,057	0,942	0,346	-0,063	0,181
Age → BI	0,071	1,455	0,146	-0,024	0,185
Gender → BI	-0,005	0,035	0,972	-0,095	0,112
Education → BI	0,126	1,827	0,068	-0,002	0,278
Ethnicity → BI	-0,036	0,684	0,494	-0,142	0,068
Income → BI	-0,207	3,071	0,002	-0,340	-0,076
Habitation → BI	0,075	1,333	0,183	-0,039	0,168
Age x BEP → BI	-0,015	0,091	0,927	-0,139	0,128
Age x PE → BI	0,044	0,752	0,452	-0,067	0,166
Age x MQOL → BI	-0,068	1,373	0,170	-0,187	0,026
Age x ECO → BI	0,023	0,370	0,711	-0,103	0,147
Age x BB → BI	0,058	0,933	0,351	-0,061	0,199
Gender x BEP → BI	0,080	1,573	0,116	-0,005	0,248
Gender x PE → BI	-0,039	0,584	0,559	-0,156	0,098
Education x BEP → BI	0,113	1,153	0,249	-0,078	0,302
Gender x MQOL → BI	0,065	1,009	0,313	-0,065	0,204
Gender x ECO → BI	-0,189	3,144	0,002	-0,308	-0,066
Gender x BB → BI	-0,016	0,379	0,705	-0,138	0,085
Education x PE → BI	-0,053	0,438	0,662	-0,211	0,164
Education x MQOL → BI	0,063	0,643	0,520	-0,117	0,213

Education x ECO → BI	0,008	0,062	0,950	-0,186	0,187
Education x BB → BI	0,019	0,188	0,851	-0,163	0,221
Income x BEP → BI	-0,107	1,257	0,209	-0,296	0,062
Income x PE → BI	0,073	0,779	0,436	-0,115	0,223
Income x MQOL → BI	-0,068	0,616	0,538	-0,202	0,131
Income x ECO → BI	-0,075	0,689	0,491	-0,226	0,140
Income x BB → BI	0,005	0,029	0,977	-0,185	0,159
Ethnicity x BEP → BI	-0,136	2,167	0,030	-0,295	-0,031
Ethnicity x PE → BI	-0,127	1,857	0,063	-0,261	0,009
Ethnicity x MQOL → BI	-0,030	0,429	0,668	-0,156	0,099
Ethnicity x ECO → BI	0,011	0,280	0,779	-0,099	0,153
Ethnicity x BB → BI	0,178	2,775	0,006	0,074	0,354
Habitation x BEP → BI	-0,068	0,919	0,358	-0,219	0,076
Habitation x PE → BI	-0,101	1,329	0,184	-0,226	0,046
Habitation x MQOL → BI	-0,002	0,000	1,000	-0,136	0,131
Habitation x ECO → BI	0,117	1,442	0,149	-0,046	0,255
Habitation x BB → BI	0,047	0,829	0,407	-0,079	0,203

4.7.2 *Moderation effects using simple moderation*

This study tested the direct effects of the hypotheses as per the replicated study to determine similarities or nuances (developed market versus developing market) and further went on to introduce socio-demographic characteristics as moderating variables. The socio-demographic characteristics were age, gender, level of education, income, and ethnicity and were chosen to advance the body of knowledge by identifying similarities and differences across these characteristics.

Ethnicity positively moderates attitude toward business benevolence and behavioural intention in the path Ethnicity x BB → BI significant (β = 0,178, t = 2.775, p = 0.01). A simple plot shows that there is a change in ethnicity as the BB increases (See Figure 10).

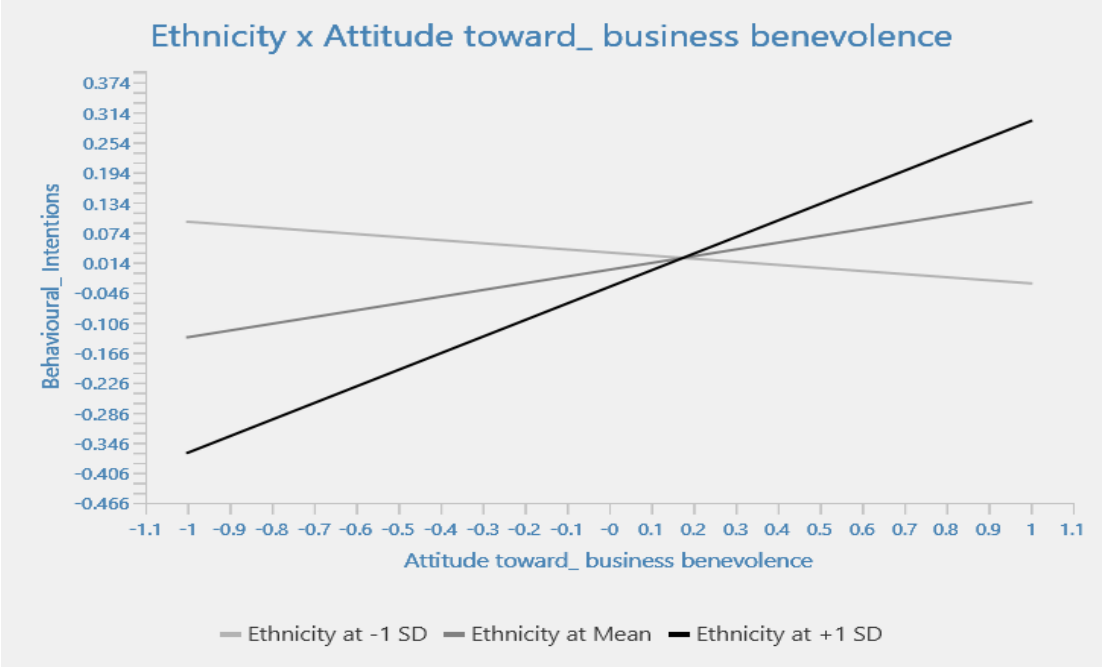

Figure 10: Simple moderation effect plot-ethnicity in BB and BI

The results show that gender negatively moderates the relationship between ECO and BI within the path Gender x ECO → BI is statistically significant (β = -0,136, t = 2.167, p = 0.01). This means that gender weakens the relationship between ECO and BI. A simple plot shows that there is a change in gender as ecocentrism increases (see Figure 11).

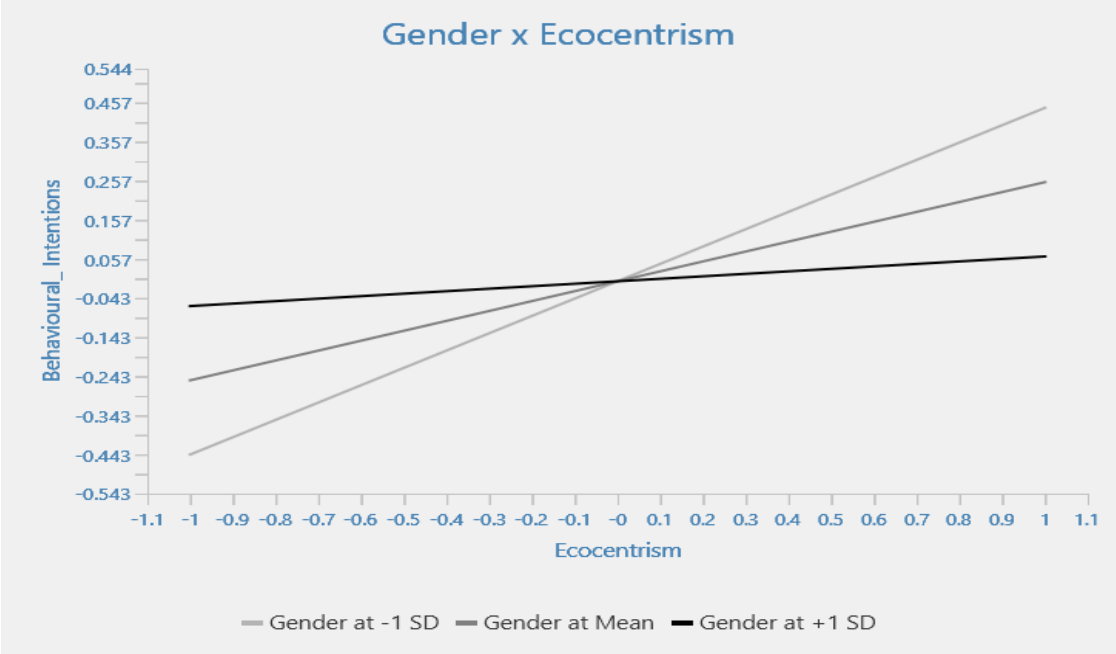

Figure 11: Simple moderation effect plot – gender in ecocentrism and behavioural intention

Additionally, the results show that ethnicity negatively moderates marketing practices and behavioural intention, with the path Ethnicity x BEP → BI (β = -0,189, t = 3.144, p = 0.05). A simple plot shows that there is a change in ethnicity as the BEP increases (see Figure 12).

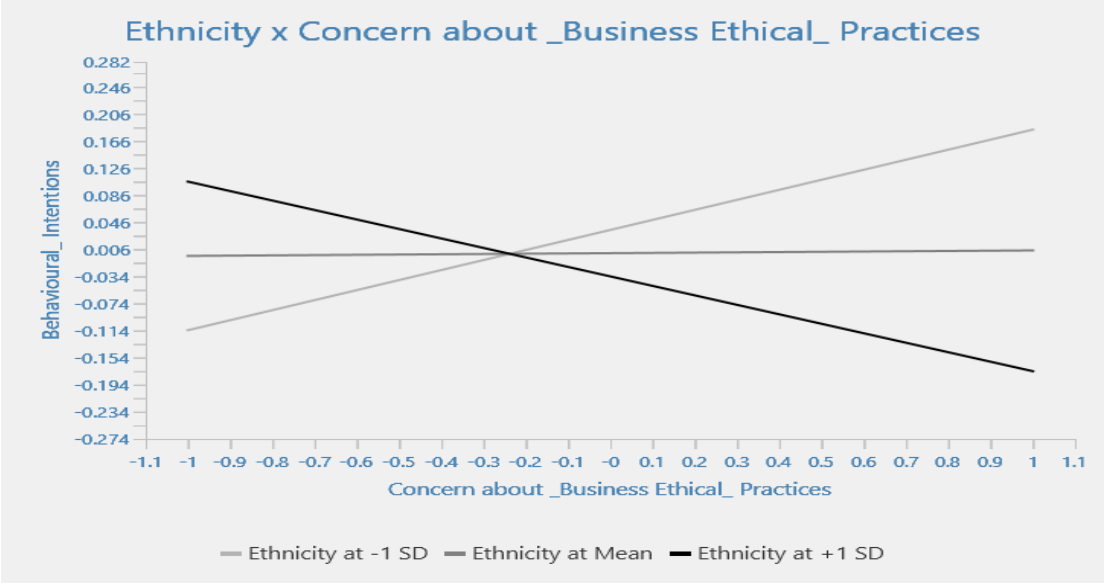

Figure 12: Simple moderation effect plot–ethnicity in BEP and BI

Income, age, education, and habitation were not found to have a moderating effect on the relationship between marketing practices and behavioural intention.

4.8 Results pertaining to each hypothesis

This research within the South African context firstly tested the direct effects of the hypotheses as per the replicated to determine similarities or nuances (developed market versus developing market) and further went on to introduce socio-demographic characteristics as moderating variables. These were age, gender, level of education, income, and ethnicity. Therefore, the results pertaining to each hypothesis will firstly report on the results of the direct effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable and then report on the moderating effect of the socio-demographic characteristics, as outlined above.

4.8.1 *Hypothesis 1: Attitude toward business benevolence and behavioural intentions regarding green products*

The result of the model shows statistical significance for the path attitude toward business benevolence → Behavioural Intentions (β = 0,146, t = 2,189, p < .05) (Table 10). The results also show that attitude towards business benevolence positively influences South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products, with only ethnicity moderating this relation within the socio-demographic characteristics (see Figure 10). As such, hypothesis 1 (*H1*) is differentially supported.

4.8.2 *Hypothesis 2: Ecocentrism and behavioural intentions regarding green products*

The result of the model shows statistical significance for the path ecocentrism → behavioural intentions (β = 0,257, t = 4,137, p < .001) (see Table 10). Therefore, ecocentrism positively influences South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. However, only gender as a socio-demographic characteristic moderates this relationship (Figure 11), and as such, this hypothesis 2 (*H2*) is differentially supported.

4.8.3 *Hypothesis 3: Perceived business egalitarianism and behavioural intentions regarding green products*

There was no statistical significance for the path perceived business egalitarianism → behavioural intentions as the p-value of the path coefficient was greater than 0.05 and t-statistics less than ±1.96 (see Table 10). Perceived egalitarianism does not positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products, and the socio-demographic characteristics do not moderate this relationship; as such, hypothesis 3 (*H3*) is not supported.

4.8.4 *Hypothesis 4: Concern about business ethical practices and behavioural intentions regarding green products*

There was no statistically significant direct effect in the path concern about business ethical practices → behavioural intentions as the p-value of the path coefficient was greater than 0.05 and t-statistics less than ±1.96 (see Table 10). Concerns about the ethical practices of businesses do not positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. However, ethnicity shows moderation in this relationship, thus hypothesis 4 (*H4*) is differentially supported.

4.8.5 *Hypothesis 5: Business contributions to MQOL and behavioural intentions regarding green products*

There was a statistically significant direct effect in the path of business contributions to MQOL → behavioural intentions (β =0,144, t = 2,057, p < .05) (see Table 10). Therefore, consumer perception of businesses' contribution towards My QOL will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. However, the socio-demographic characteristics do not moderate this relationship; as such, hypothesis 5 (*H5*): Consumer perception of businesses' contribution towards My QOL will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics is not supported.

4.9 Post Hoc analysis

A multigroup analysis was conducted to determine the source of the differences between the disparate groups (Foster et al., 2018). This is important as sometimes only aggregating the data can lead to unrealistic results due to the assumption of homogeneity. It is important to test the heterogeneity of the model as the perceptions and assessments of categorial latent variables (for example, age, gender, race and socioeconomic status) by individuals, is likely different (Sarstedt et al., 2011; Sarstedt & Ringle, 2010). It is assumed that the variance between the groups is not equal; as such, the non-parametric, Welch Satterthwait test was used for the analysis (Cheah et al., 2020).

4.9.1 Moderation effect of age using multigroup analysis

The analysis shows that there was no statistically significant difference between the age groups (see Table 11).

Table 11: Multigroup analysis based on different age groups

	Middle age - Older	Youth - Middle age	Youth - Older
BB → BI	-0.139	-0.086	-0.225
MQOL → BI	0.349	-0.094	0.255
BEP → BI	-0.129	0.087	-0.042
ECO → BI	-0.142	0.158	0.016
PE → BI	0.011	-0.100	-0.089

4.9.2 Moderation effect of gender using multigroup analysis

With regards to gender, the statistically significant effect of PE on BI was greater among females than males ($p < .05$) (see Table 12). The effect of MQOL on BI was higher for those who did not want to reveal their gender than those who classified themselves as non-binary, and it was also higher for those who did not want to specify than females for BB on BI.

Table 12: Multigroup analysis based on different gender groups

	Female - Male	Do not want to say - Female	Do not want to say - Male	Do not want to say - Non-binary	Female - Non-binary	Male - Non-binary
BB → BI	-0.023	0.435*	0.412	0.184	-0.250	-0.228
MQOL → BI	-0.093	0.291	0.197	0.882*	0.591	0.685
BEP → BI	-0.152	0.141	-0.011	0.203	0.062	0.215
ECO → BI	0.043	-0.465*	-0.422	-0.138	0.327	0.284
PE → BI	0.259*	-0.387	-0.128	-0.528	-0.141	-0.400

4.9.3 Moderation effect of education level using multigroup analysis

On education, the only significant difference was with college and degree, with the college group having a lower effect of BEP on BI than the group with degrees (see Table 13).

Table 13: Multigroup analysis based on education level groups

	College - Degree	College - Matric or less	College - Postgraduate	Degree - Matric or less	Degree - Postgraduate	Matric or less - Postgraduate
BB → BI	0.279	-0.002	0.060	-0.281	-0.219	0.061
MQOL → BI	-0.038	-0.055	-0.196	-0.017	-0.158	-0.141
BEP → BI	-0.457*	-0.436	-0.396	0.021	0.061	0.040
ECO → BI	0.231	0.326	0.260	0.094	0.028	-0.066
PE → BI	-0.067	0.146	0.133	0.213	0.200	-0.013

4.9.4 Moderation effect of ethnicity using multigroup analysis

On ethnicity, Coloureds have a higher effect of BB on BI than Black Africans ($p < .05$). Indians, Asians, and others have a higher effect of BB on BI than Black Africans (see Table 14).

Table 14: Multigroup analysis based on ethnicity groups

	Black Africans - Coloureds	Black Africans - Indians, Asians, and others	Black Africans - Whites	Coloureds - Indians, Asians, and others	Coloureds - Whites)	Indians, Asians, and others - Whites
BB → BI	-0.347*	-0.480*	-0.122	-0.132	0.226	0.358
MQOL → BI	-0.305	0.070	-0.065	0.375	0.240	-0.134
BEP → BI	0.410	0.038	0.219	-0.372	-0.190	0.182
ECO → BI	0.256	0.041	-0.114	-0.215	-0.371	-0.155
PE → BI	0.378	0.265	0.294	-0.113	-0.084	0.029

4.9.5 Moderation effect of income using multigroup analysis

The analysis showed there was no statistically significant difference between the income groups (see Table 15).

Table 15: Multigroup analysis based on income groups

	>R30 000 - R10 000 - 30 000	>R30 000 - R10 000 or less	R10 000 - 30 000 - R10 000 or less
BB → BI	-0.014	0.005	0.019
MQOL → BI	0.120	-0.040	-0.159
BEP → BI	0.081	-0.109	-0.190
ECO → BI	-0.086	0.102	0.189
PE → BI	0.084	-0.020	-0.104

4.9.6 Moderation effect of habitation using multigroup analysis

With regards to habitation, the urban has a lower effect with regards to ECO on BI than urban-suburban ($p < .05$). Also, the rural group has a higher effect on PE on BI than urban-suburban (see Table 16).

Table 16: Multigroup analysis based on habitation

	Rural-Urban	Rural - Urban-Suburban	Urban - Urban-Suburban
BB → BI	-0.116	-0.066	0.050
MQOL → BI	0.015	0.020	0.005
BEP → BI	0.135	0.167	0.032
ECO → BI	0.049	-0.290	-0.339*
PE → BI	0.192	0.366*	0.174

4.10 Summary of the results

This research within the South African context tested the direct effects of the hypotheses as per the replicated study to determine similarities or nuances in a developed market versus a developing market. The study analysed whether sustainable marketing practices influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. The results of the model show statistical significance for the following paths:

1) Attitude toward Business Benevolence → Behavioural Intentions
2) Ecocentrism → Behavioural Intentions
3) MQOL → Behavioural Intentions

These were in relation to support for sustainable business and were the main practices that predicted the behavioural intentions regarding green products within the South African context. Furthermore, the study went on to introduce socio-demographic characteristics as moderating variables, namely age, gender, level of education, income, and ethnicity to advance the work by identifying similarities and differences across these socio-demographic characteristics.

The results show that attitude towards business benevolence positively influences South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products, with only ethnicity moderating this relation within the socio-demographic characteristics and as such, hypothesis 1 (*H1*) is differentially supported.

The result of the model also shows statistical significance for the path ecocentrism → behavioural intention therefore, ecocentrism positively influences South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. However, only gender as a socio-demographic characteristic moderates this relationship, and as such, this hypothesis 2 (*H2*) is differentially supported.

There was no statistical significance for the path perceived egalitarianism → behavioural intentions therefore, perceived egalitarianism does not positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products, and the socio-demographic characteristics do not moderate this relationship; as such, hypothesis 3 (*H3*) is not supported.

There was also no statistically significant direct effect in the path concerned about business ethical practices → behavioural intentions as such, concerns about the ethical practices of businesses do not positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. However, ethnicity shows moderation in this relationship, thus differentially supporting hypothesis 4 (*H4*).

There was a statistically significant direct effect in the path of business contributions to MQOL → behavioural intentions. Therefore, consumer perception of businesses' contribution towards My QOL will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. However, the socio-demographic characteristics do not moderate this relationship; as such, hypothesis 5 (*H5*) is not supported.

Considering that only three of the hypotheses were partially supported, with some differences between the groups, a multigroup analysis was conducted to determine the differences between the disparate groups. Multigroup analysis revealed some differences between the groups, but these were generally few and far between. The meaning of these results are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Żak (2015) proposes that businesses need to consider social responsibility from a sustainability perspective. There are three spheres of sustainability: social, environmental, and economic, or the triple bottom line (Isaksson, 2018; McWilliams et al., 2016; Żak, 2015). The triple bottom line is a term coined in the 1990s by business consultant John Elkington and is sometimes referred to as the 3Ps, which stands for Profit, People, and Planet (KsiężaK & FischBach, 2017). Elkington described the social, environmental, and economic investment value that can ensue outside a business's bottom line (Hammer & Pivo, 2017). The success of organisations can no longer be measured merely on its profits but its efforts towards societal welfare and environmental consciousness (Coşkun Arslan & Kısacık, 2017).

However, researchers have called for innovative means of rigorously measuring sustainability across these three territories (Elkington, 2018). The author believes that the scales adapted by Peterson et al. (2021) using the GREEN framework developed by Lunde (2018) has managed to achieve this.

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the research, it conveys the results by addressing each research question in relation to its corresponding hypothesis:

Table 17: Research questions and corresponding Hypotheses

Research question	Related hypothesis
Question one: Does attitude toward business benevolence influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio demographic characteristics?	**Hypothesis one:** Attitude towards business benevolence will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.
Question two: Does ecocentrism influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics?	**Hypothesis two:** Ecocentrism will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.

Question three: Does perceived business egalitarianism influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics?	**Hypothesis three:** Perceived business egalitarianism will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.
Question four: Does concern about business ethical practices influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics?	**Hypothesis four:** Concerns about the ethical practices of businesses will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.
Question five: Does business contribution to an individual's quality of life influences South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics?	**Hypothesis five:** Consumer perception of businesses' contribution towards My QOL will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.

Furthermore, below is the updated structural model, the hypotheses highlighted in green are differentially supported, whilst the hypotheses highlighted in red are not supported. In the case of the differentially supported hypotheses, not all socio-demographic characteristics had a moderating effect on the direct path. For example, attitude towards business benevolence positively influences South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products, however, only ethnicity moderates this relation within the socio-demographic characteristics and as such, hypothesis 1 (*H1*) is differentially supported. There was also statistical significance for the path ecocentrism and behavioural intention therefore, ecocentrism positively influences South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. However, only gender as a socio-demographic characteristic moderates this relationship, and as such, this hypothesis 2 (*H2*) is differentially supported. Lastly, although there was no statistically significant direct effect in the path concern about business ethical practices and behavioural intentions, ethnicity shows a moderation effect in this relationship, thus differentially supporting hypothesis 4 (*H4*).

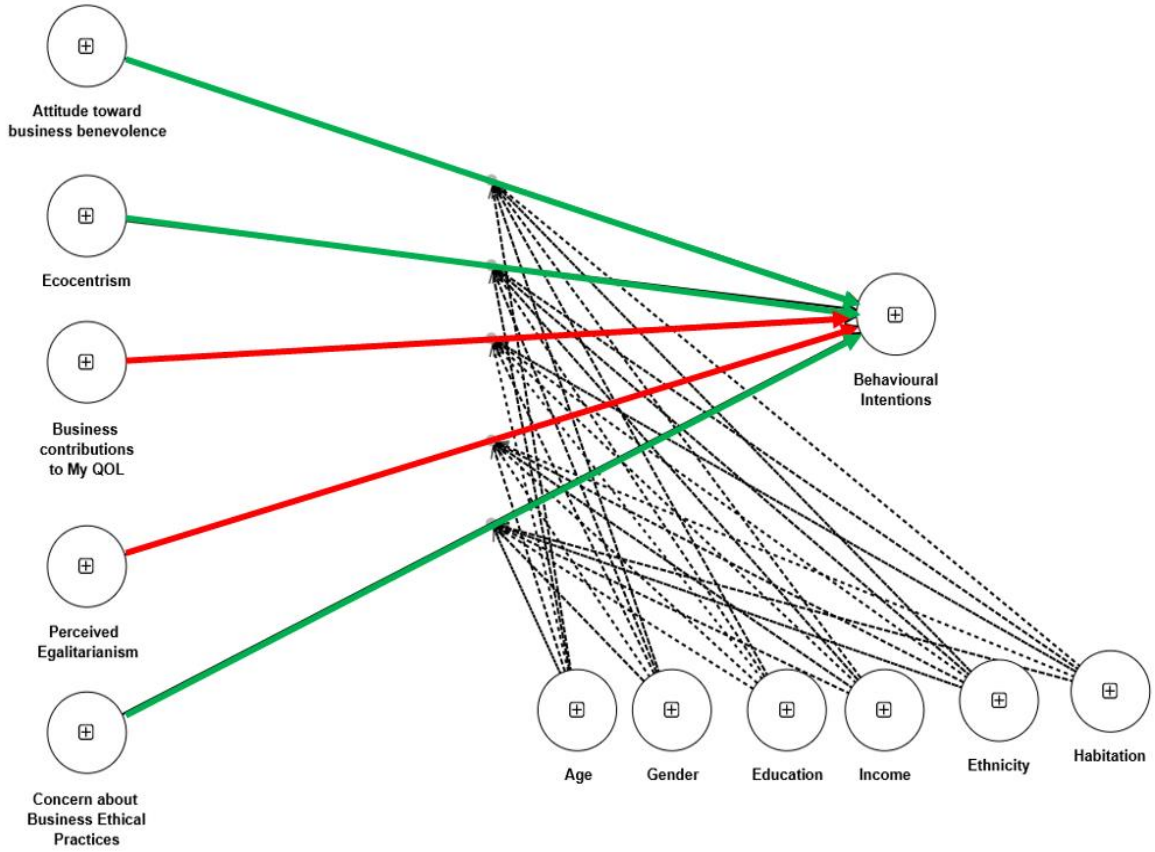

Figure 13: Updated Structural Model

5.2 Hypothesis 1: Attitude toward business benevolence and behavioural intentions regarding green products

Attitude towards business benevolence will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.

There was a statistically significant direct effect in the path of attitude toward business benevolence and behavioural intentions (β = 0,146, t = 2,189, p < .05). This result is similar to that of Peterson et al. (2021) in the United States. Philanthropic responsibilities are the benevolent actions taken by organisations in order to give back to the societies they operate and although these actions and activities are voluntary, societies desire for organisations to demonstrate good corporate citizenship through such initiatives (Carroll, 2016). Over and above this,

existing research confirms that corporate social responsible (CSR) initiatives positively impact consumer's attitudes towards an organisation (Lii & Lee, 2012; Nan & Heo, 2007), thus supporting this finding.

However, does attitude toward business benevolence influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio demographic characteristics?

The results showed that attitude towards business benevolence positively influenced South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products, with only ethnicity moderating this relationship within the socio-demographic characteristics and as such, hypothesis 1 (H1) was differentially supported.

Coloured and Indian/Asians are the two ethnic groups that showed to have a higher effect on business benevolence (BB) than Black Africans. Although Black Africans tailed behind these two ethnicities, it can be noted that BB has a statistical significance regarding behavioural Intentions (BI) amongst people of colour. Previous studies conducted in Kenya (Muthuri & Gilbert, 2011), Gulf of Guinea region (Frynas, 2005), Africa (Dobers & Halme, 2009) and Bangladesh (Werner, 2009) which are regions and countries with the highest population of people of colour, support the finding that philanthropic initiatives positively impact consumers as these initiatives reflect the uniqueness of the social issues faced in these countries. Therefore, any brand or organisation wanting to influence behavioural intentions regarding green products within the South African context and SADC region by extension, should explore aligning their sustainable marketing strategies with benevolent or philanthropic initiatives.

5.3 Hypothesis 2: Ecocentrism and behavioural intentions regarding green products

Ecocentrism will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.

The result of the model showed the path ecocentrism and behavioural intentions was statistically significant (β = 0,257, t = 4,137, p < .001). This result is similar to that of Peterson et al. (2021) in the United States.

However, does ecocentrism influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics?

Ecocentrism positively influenced South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. However, only gender as socio-demographic characteristics moderated this relationship, and as such, this hypothesis was differentially supported (H2).

Furthermore, the results show that gender negatively moderates the relationship between ECO and BI within the path Gender x ECO and BI and was statistically significant Further analysis using the multigroup analysis technique was conducted, this showed that ecocentrism was lower for those who preferred not to reveal their gender than females thus negatively moderating ecocentrism.

Based on the value-belief-norm (Rahman & Reynolds, 2019), it is assumed that eco-centrists or consumers who value nature will support sustainable businesses. Therefore, the statistical significance of ecocentrism in relation to South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products was assumed. This assumption was indeed supported by the results.

It then follows that any brand, product/service, or organisation wanting to influence behavioural intentions regarding green products within the South African context should look into aligning their sustainable marketing strategies with eco-centric marketing practices. This is especially true for brands and organisations targeted at female consumers as previous studies conducted by various researchers found that females are more inclined to environmentally friendly behaviours than males (Akgül et al., 2017; Alagoz & Akman, 2016; Altun, 2020).

5.4 Hypothesis 3: Perceived business egalitarianism and behavioural intentions regarding green products

Perceived business egalitarianism will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.

There was no statistically significant direct effect in the path perceived egalitarianism and behavioural intentions. This result is similar to Peterson et al. (2021), a study conducted in the United States focusing on sustainable marketing practices and consumer support for sustainable businesses.

However, does perceived business egalitarianism influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics?

Perceived egalitarianism did not positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products, and the socio-demographic characteristics did not moderate this relationship; as such, hypothesis 3 (H3) was not supported.

It was assumed that the support for firms valuing social justice would index higher in Black African South Africans given the long history of social inequality in South Africa (Burns et al., 2017). Especially since access to wealth cannot be stroked with the same paintbrush across ethnicity and race due to the remnants of the Apartheid inequality that has been carried into the post-Apartheid era (Hino et al., 2018). While 81% of the population is Black Africans (Statista, 2022), they remain the most marginalised across all societal levels (Mabaso et al., 2019). However, this assumption was incorrect as perceived business egalitarianism did not index higher in Black Africans. Perceived business egalitarianism does not influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products and socio-demographic characteristics do not moderate this relationship.

Therefore, perceived business egalitarianism is not a sustainable marketing practice brands and organisations operating in the South African market should focus on when developing sustainable marketing practices.

5.5 Hypothesis 4: Concern about business ethical practices and behavioural intentions regarding green products

Concerns about the ethical practices of businesses will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.

There was no statistically significant direct effect in the path business ethical practices and behavioural intentions. This result is different from findings by Peterson et al. (2021), as this variable had an influence on support for sustainable businesses in the United States.

Amos (2018) conducted a systematic review of literature which was based on 101 articles, and the primary focus of the review was on corporate social responsibility in developing countries. The prevalent concerns addressed in these articles were in order of decreasing attention-given (1) social issues in developing countries, (2) environmental issues and (3) ethical concerns and issues receiving the minimum attention. The reason for this is that social issues are the most apparent, seeking immediate intervention in developing countries versus developed countries (Amos, 2018). The Institute of Business Ethics (2021) conducted a survey on ethical business practices in South Africa to gain insights from employees regarding their perception of their organisation's ethical practices. The findings revealed a work ethic index of 84.0, stating that employees in South Africa have a positive perception regarding their organisation's ability to engage in ethical business practices internally and externally. This potentially explains why concerns regarding business ethical practices do not influence South Africa consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products as they have no concerns regarding ethical business practices.

However, does concern about business ethical practices influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics?

Concerns about the ethical practices of businesses did not positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across all socio-demographic characteristics. However, ethnicity showed moderation in this relationship, thus differentially supporting hypothesis 4 (H4).

Additionally, the results show that ethnicity negatively moderates marketing practices and behavioural intention, with the path Ethnicity x BEP and BI. A simple plot shows that there is a change in ethnicity as the BEP increases. Further analysis using the multigroup analysis technique was conducted, this showed that concern regarding business ethical practices was positive in Black Africans, Indian/Asians, and White consumers versus Coloured consumers who negatively moderated the relationship.

This is a unique nuance that may not necessarily impact the success of brands, products/services or organisations focusing their sustainable marking strategies on business ethical practices, given that Coloured consumers only made up 19,1% of the sample for this research. However, given that there was no statistically significant direct effect in the path business ethical practices and behavioural intentions, it is recommended that organisations focus their sustainable marketing efforts on other practices and not business ethical practices.

5.6 Hypothesis 5: Business contributions to MQOL and behavioural intentions regarding green products

Consumer perception of businesses' contribution towards My QOL will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics.

There was a statistically significant direct effect in the path of business contributions to my QOL and behavioural intentions. This result is different to that of Peterson et al. (2021) as the recognition of businesses' contribution to one's Quality of Life (QOL) did not influence the consumers' support for sustainable business in the United States.

According to Peterson et al. (2021), concerns about QOL are more serious for consumers with lower income and lower for consumers with higher income. Poverty and Income disparity are significant problems in South Africa (Burns et al., 2017), it was therefore assumed that consumers with lower income within the South African context would have higher concerns about a firm contributing to their Quality Of Life. However, even though there was a split of 54,4% / 45,6% of consumers earning above R30 000 and less than R30 000 respectively, the significance of the direct path was consistent across the board confirming the importance of this sustainable marketing practice in the South African context.

This could be influenced by several reasons, such as the cost of living which is negatively impacted by high interest rates. The South African interest rate rose to 5,9% in October 2023, which is just below the upper limit target of 6% (Trading Economics, 2023). The South African gross domestic product increased by 2% in 2022 versus 2021 (Stats SA, 2022), thus the assumption in an increase in quality of life. According to Fuchs et al. (2020) gross domestic product has been used an indicator of quality of life for more than fifty years despite the fact that it was never intended for this. Furthermore, Fuchs et al. (2020) argues that this indicator is flawed as its only focus is an increase in total income (Greenwood & Holt, 2014). According to Greenwood and Holt (2014), economic growth has the potential to reduce the quality of life as it can lead to urban build-up, which ultimately increases public utility costs such as water and electricity leading to unsustainable development. An increase in water, electricity and interest rate hikes in South Africa could potentially be the reason, even by higher-earning consumers regarding businesses' contribution to their Quality of Life (QOL), thus influencing their support for sustainable businesses.

However, do business's contribution to an individual's quality of life influences South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products across socio-demographic characteristics?

Consumer perception of businesses' contribution towards My QOL will positively influence South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products. However, the socio-demographic characteristics did moderate this relationship; as such, hypothesis 5 (H5) was not supported

However, given that marketing strategies focused on contributing towards consumers' quality of life have a direct influence on behavioural intentions regarding green products, these sustainable marketing practices should be used as a predictor to determine behavioural intentions for green products within the South African context.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the previous chapter, the research results were discussed in relation to previous literature to support these findings. The following chapter focuses on (1) highlighting the key findings of the study, (2) theoretical and managerial implications, (3) limitations of the study and (4) recommendations for future research.

6.1 Conclusion

This study confirmed that ecocentrism, attitude toward business benevolence and business contributions to my QOL directly influence behavioural intentions regarding green products in the South African context. With regards to ecocentrism and attitude toward business benevolence, these findings are similar to those found in the replicated study (Peterson et al., 2021). However, the direct path of businesses' contribution to one's Quality of Life (QOL) did not influence consumers' support for sustainable business in the United States but did so in the South African context. Inversely, the concern regarding ethical practices of the business did not influence South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products but did so for the consumers in the United States. The finding regarding perceived business egalitarianism or valuing social justice was consistent across both the United States and South Africa as it did not influence consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products.

Furthermore, the research conducted in South Africa used socio-demographic characteristics as moderating variables with the intent to identify any possible nuances within the South African context. The findings showed that gender moderates the relationship between ecocentrism and behavioural intentions confirming that females are more inclined to environmentally friendly behaviours than males, a finding supported by previous literature (Akgül et al., 2017; Alagoz & Akman, 2016; Altun, 2020).

Ethnicity moderates the relationship between attitude toward business benevolence and behavioural intentions, over-indexing in people of colour.

Previous studies conducted in Kenya (Muthuri & Gilbert, 2011), Gulf of Guinea region (Frynas, 2005), Africa (Dobers & Halme, 2009) and Bangladesh (Werner, 2009) which are regions and countries with the highest population of people of colour, support the finding that philanthropic initiatives positively impact consumers as these initiatives reflect the uniqueness of the social issues faced in these countries.

Ethnicity also moderates the relationship between concerns about the ethical practices of businesses and behavioural intentions. The results showed that concern regarding business ethical practices was positive in Black Africans, Indian/Asians, and White consumers versus Coloured consumers who negatively moderated the relationship. Given that there was no statistically significant direct path between concerns about the ethical practices of businesses and behavioural intentions, this is not a key sustainable marketing practice to focus on, especially because previous research shows that social issues need the most attention, followed by environmental issues (Amos, 2018). Ethical concerns are by far the least of consumers concerns in developing markets (Amos, 2018). The reason for this is that social issues are the most apparent, seeking immediate intervention in developing countries versus developed countries (Amos, 2018).

Another interesting and dissimilar finding from Peterson et al. (2021) was the statistically significant direct effect in the path of business contributions to my QOL and behavioural intentions within the South African market context. According to Peterson et al. (2021), concerns about QOL are more serious for consumers with lower income and lower for consumers with higher income and given the income disparity in South Africa (Burns et al., 2017) the assumption was consumers with lower income within the South African context would have higher concerns about a firm contributing to their Quality Of Life. However, this was consistent across all income brackets and not just lower income consumers. Due to none of the socio demographic characteristics moderating the relationship, the hypothesis was not supported. Given that marketing strategies focused on contributing towards consumers' quality of life have a direct influence on behavioural intentions regarding green products, these sustainable marketing

practices should be used as a predictor to determine behavioural intentions for green products within the South African context.

6.2 Implications

6.2.1 Theoretical Implications

Global organisations are increasingly adopting sustainable marketing practices and studies conducted in developed markets found that consumers are increasingly becoming aware of responsible sustainable practices (Singh & Pandey, 2012). As a result, there is a higher willingness from consumers to behave in an environmentally friendly manner (Singh & Pandey, 2012). However, there is a noticeable gap in research conducted in developing markets (Singh & Pandey, 2012). This research contributes to closing this gap from a developing market perspective with regards to consumers' willingness to behave in an environmentally manner. Furthermore, the research replicated a study conducted by Peterson et al. (2021) and the constructs for this research were developed using the GREEN Framework (Lunde, 2018) as the conceptual framework. This framework was constructed in 2018 after Lunde (2018) conducted a systematic review of 20 years of theoretical contributions in sustainable marketing. This was to define sustainable marketing from a holistic perspective and not just from an organisational or consumer perspective as is noticeable in previous research. A model which can be labelled as the first of its kind in sustainable marketing, has had scholars such as Peterson et al. (2021) confirm its validity in a developed market context and this research does so in a developing market context. Moreover, this research has added to the body of knowledge from a developing market perspective regarding (1) females being more inclined to environmentally-friendly behaviours than males (Akgül et al., 2017; Alagoz & Akman, 2016; Altun, 2020), (2) philanthropic initiatives positively impacting people of colour as these initiatives reflect the uniqueness of the social issues faced in these countries (Dobers & Halme, 2009; Frynas, 2005; Muthuri & Gilbert, 2011; Werner, 2009), and (3) presenting a different finding from that which exists in previous research regarding lower income consumers having higher concerns about a firm

contributing to their Quality Of Life (Peterson et al., 2021). In South Africa, this was not the case as concerns about a firm contributing to consumers Quality Of Life was consistent across all income brackets and not just for lower income consumers.

6.2.2 Practical Implications

The players that will benefit from this research are multi-national organisations that operate in South Africa and by extension, the other SADC member states as this research can be used as a foundation for sustainable marketing practices in these states. Marketing professionals who are developing their sustainability strategies within the SADC member states and NGOs involved in the well-being and enhancement of individuals' quality of Life (QOL) within the SADC communities can also use this research for developing sustainable marketing practices.

Multinational organisations

This research will aid multinational organisations in localising their sustainable marketing practices to drive relevance and engagement with consumers in South Africa and the respective SADC member states. Given that the SADC member states have higher populations of people of colour, the sustainable marketing practice; attitude toward business benevolence should be a key focus for multinational organisations operating in these member states as this practice indexed higher for people of colour.

Marketing professionals

This research provides nuanced results pertaining to gender and ethnicity with regards to sustainable marketing practices within the South African context, thus marketing professionals can make use of this research to inform their marketing strategies targeted at a specific gender or race. The research results showed that ecocentrism was higher in females than males, attitude toward business benevolence was higher for people of colour (Coloured, Asian/Indian and Black Africans) than White people. Concern about business ethical practices was also

moderated by ethnicity, however, only Coloureds indexed low on this sustainable marketing practice. This is a unique nuance that may not necessarily impact the success of brands, products/services or organisations focusing their sustainable marking strategies on business ethical practices given that Coloured consumers only made up 19,1% of the sample for this research and are also a small percentage of total South African population (see Appendix C). Organisations contributing to the quality of life of consumers are also of public importance within the South African market context. Therefore, marketing professionals can use this research as the foundation when developing their sustainable marketing strategies.

NGO's

The results show that ecocentrism records the most on behavioural intentions regarding green products and according to the literature, eco-centric awareness is thus imperative to remedy the depletion of resources caused by anthropocentrism (Gray et al., 2018). Furthermore, Rahman and Reynolds (2019) makes mention of the importance of environmental awareness as a key player in influencing human behaviours. In other words, making consumers aware of environmental crises can trigger their concern for the environment and prompt them to behave in an eco-friendly and sustainable manner. Given that NGOs are commonly known as the key players tackling societal issues, continuous eco-centric awareness by NGOs in partnership with local and global organisations in the SADC member states will have a positive impact in remedying the depletion of resources. Education and awareness of sustainable human behaviours will aid in ensuring that humankind does not sacrifice future generations for current gratification and benefits.

6.3 Limitations of the study

- The research was focused on South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products; thus, the population was a representation of the South African context. The population nuances in

other SADC regions may vary, therefore, the findings may need to be tweaked to roll out sustainable marketing practices in these regions.

- Due to the time frame in which the data was collected, getting respondents from all nine provinces was not possible.
- Although a quantitative study will provide fruitful data into South African consumers behavioural intentions regarding green products, a qualitative study follow-up may yield in-depth insights into this phenomenon.

6.4 Recommendations for further research

This study focused on consumers' attitudes toward sustainable marketing practices and the values and beliefs that influence their support for sustainable businesses within the South African context. The study analysed the factors that influence consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green or sustainable products and or businesses. However, the study did not cover sustainable behaviours that need to be mobilised in ensuring eco-centric awareness within the South African context. This is a topic that needs to be unpacked and researched in future.

In addition, the study did not cover sustainable education and behaviours that drive or limit the sustainable disposal of packaging post consumption of green products. These include recycling or the promotion of a circular economy in which material is recycled, repaired, or reused in order to reduce wastage (Kirchherr et al., 2017). Given that only 7,2% of consumers recycle in South Africa (Strydom, 2018), a very important section of the circular economy is missing within the South African context. The term of Sustainable Marketing posited by Lunde (2018) defines sustainable marketing holistically and not just from an organisational or consumer perspective. Therefore, research within the South African context that unpacks the sustainable marketing practices in relation to sustainable consumption (recycling) and re-use of green products is a recommendation for future research.

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Appendix A: Consistency table: research questions, propositions, data collection and data analysis

Reference	Topic or Object of Study	Sample or Method	Independent variables	Dependent Variables	Key Findings
Peterson et al. 2021	Sustainable Marketing and Consumer support for sustainable business	Survey method, Sample size: 304, Country: US	Valuing nature, Attitude towards benevolence of a business, valuing social justice, quality of life and ethical practices of a firm	Support for Sustainable Business	Nature-based values influenced consumer support for sustainable business the most followed by consumers attitude regarding benevolence of a firm and lastly consumers concern about the ethics of a firm. Firms valuing social justice and contributing to consumers quality did not index as influential on consumers support for sustainable businesses
Lunde, 2018	Sustainability in Marketing: a systematic review unifying 20 years of theoretical and substantive contributions (1997-2016)	Methodical/Systematic review, Sample size: 228sustainability article in the top 25 marking journal publications	Globalized marketplace, Responsible environmental behaviour and quality of life and well being	Equitable sustainable business, ethical sustainable consumption and sustainable marketing	The research spotlights the fragmented past in the sustainability research and the evolution of the theory. A new definition for "Sustainable marketing is proposed which encapsulates a holistic perspective rather than an organisational or consumer perspective. This research also birthed a conceptual framework dubbed the GREEN framework of Sustainable Marketing
Hassan and Valenzuela, 2016	Customer Perception of Green Advertising in The Context of Eco-Friendly FMCGs	In-depth interviews, 27 Shoppers, Country: Sydney	Green advertising exposure, Green advertising Trust	Purchase intentions	22,2% interview participants seldomly noticed green advertising, 44,4% participants passionately stated that they do not trust green advertising. Only 29,6% of respondents said that eco-friendly advertising influenced their purchase intentions.

Sharma, 2021	Consumers' purchase behaviour and green marketing: A synthesis, review and agenda	The researcher shortlisted 644 articles on green marketing, articles with an impact factor of 1.0 were considered for analysis	Green consciousness, awareness, knowledge, and situational factors. Green purchase attitude, intention, and trust. Product innovation and segmentation, green promotion, green branding, green supply chain management and green pricing	Green consumer behaviour, Green purchase, and green marketing functions	The abundance of literature available for green products and green marketing mirror the growing popularity of sustainable marketing. Consumer perception, attitude and intention towards green marketing is representative of its effectiveness. An increase in green marketing knowledge and consciousness greatly influence patterns of consumption. the disparity in knowledge relating to the environment, however, negatively influences consumer attitude and purchase intention
Groening et al.,2018	Green marketing consumer-level theory review: A compendium of applied theories and further research directions	Systematic review of theories relating to individual consumer level theories in green marketing literature. 900 published articles.	Environmental knowledge and values, affordance theory, Customer dominant logic theory	Beliefs, attitudes, Intention, motivation, social conformance, and green purchase behaviour	20 individual consumer level theories identified which relate to green marketing
Kronrod et al.,2012	Go Green! Should Environmental Messages Be So Assertive?	Study 1: Experiment of 146 respondents/ Study 2a: Experiment of 244 respondents, study 2b: 113 respondents. Country: Israel	Perceived issue compliance	Compliance with non-assertive environmental messages	Assertive messaging in advertising can be used for consumers who have a perceived level of importance towards the topic however, non-assertive messaging should be used for consumers who have a low concern for a topic

Shabbir et al.,2020	Green Marketing Approaches and Their Impact on Consumer Behaviour towards the Environment—A Study from the UAE	Questionnaire using a five-point Linkert scale, sample size: 359 respondents. Country: UAE	Eco-labelling, green packaging and branding, green product, premium and pricing, environmental concerns, and beliefs	Behaviour of consumer toward the environment	The research highlights the importance of Green Marketing and strategies for business. Eco-friendly products can create value for the organisation as sustainability continues to grow in its occurrence
Taufique, 2022	Integrating environmental values and emotion in green marketing communications inducing sustainable consumer behaviour	Questionnaire survey method, sample size: convenience sample of 381 participants, Country: Malaysia	Emotional affinity toward nature, environmental values, environmental knowledge	Attitude towards the environment, Green consumer behaviour	Consumers who value nature or hold an upright attitude towards nature posit a better likelihood to consume environmentally sustainable products or goods. Education relating to green consumption is important in driving awareness for green consumer behaviour.
Mahmoud, 2018	Impact of green marketing mix on purchase intention	Questionnaire method, sample size: 417 questionnaires distributed and 341 returned, Country: Sudan	Green price, green promotion, green place and green product	Purchase intention	Green Marketing Mix in relation to the 4 P's positively impacts consumers long term purchase intentions. The data also showed a correlation between consumers' willingness to pay more to preserve the environment.
Nadanyiova et al., 2020	Green Marketing as a Part of the Socially Responsible Brand's Communication from the Aspect of	Questionnaire survey method, sample size: 2035 (60% female and 40% male), Country: Slovak	Green Marketing principles	Purchasing decisions	There is a low dependency of age as a factor in the consumers perception of green marketing in their purchase decisions

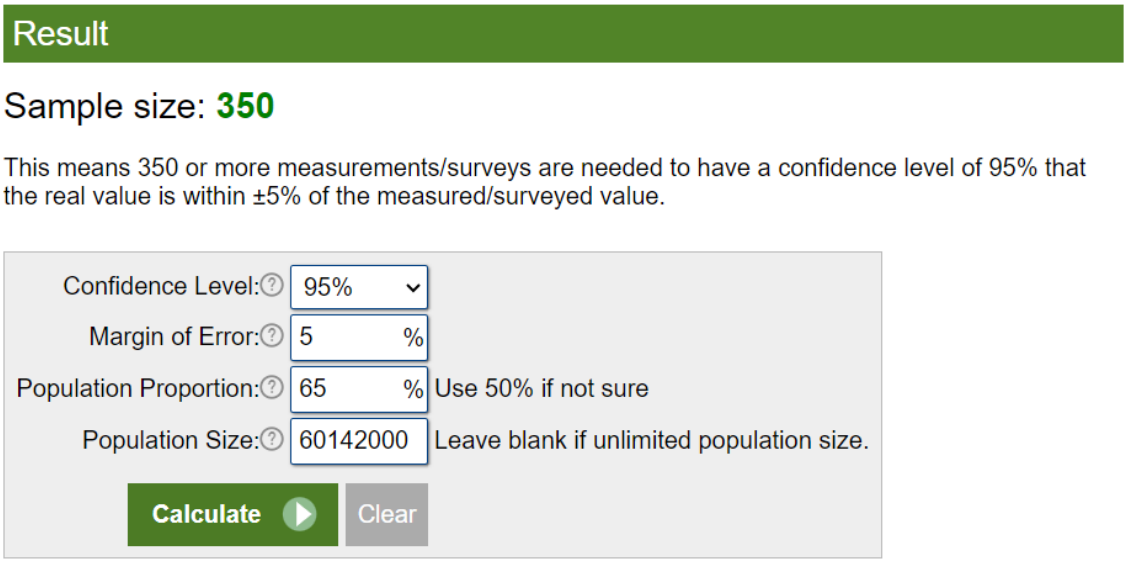
	Generational Stratification				

Appendix B: Sample size calculator

Population aged 18 years and over = 39 393 000 million

Total South African population = 60 142 000 million

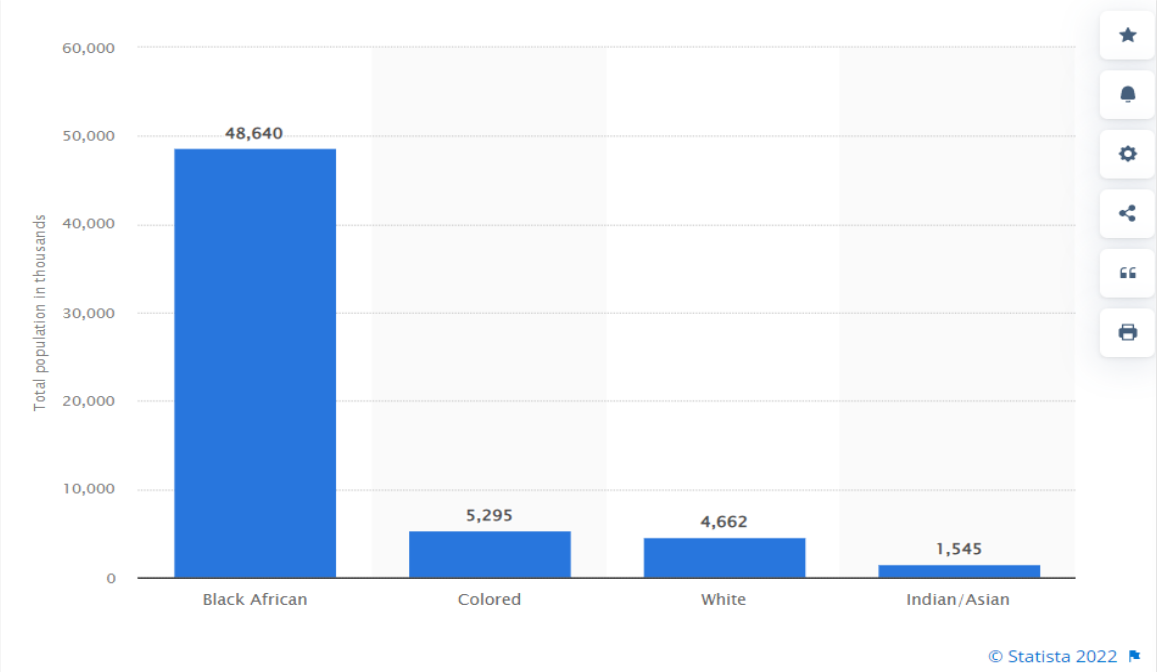
Therefore, population proportion is 65%



Source: Calculator.net (2022)

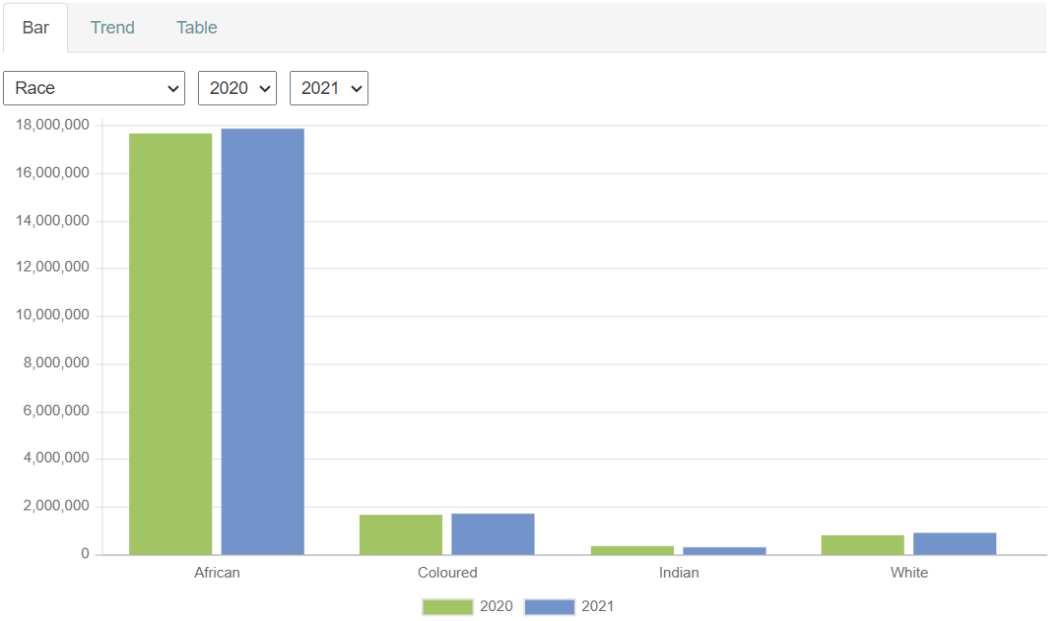
Appendix C: Total Population of South Africa in 2021 by ethnic groups

(In 1,000s)



Source: Statista (2022)

Appendix D: Children aged 0-17 by Race in South Africa



Data Source Statistics South Africa (2003 – 2022) General Household Survey 2002 – 2021. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Katharine Hall, Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.

Notes
1. Children are defined as persons aged 0 – 17 years.
2. Population numbers have been rounded to the nearest thousand.

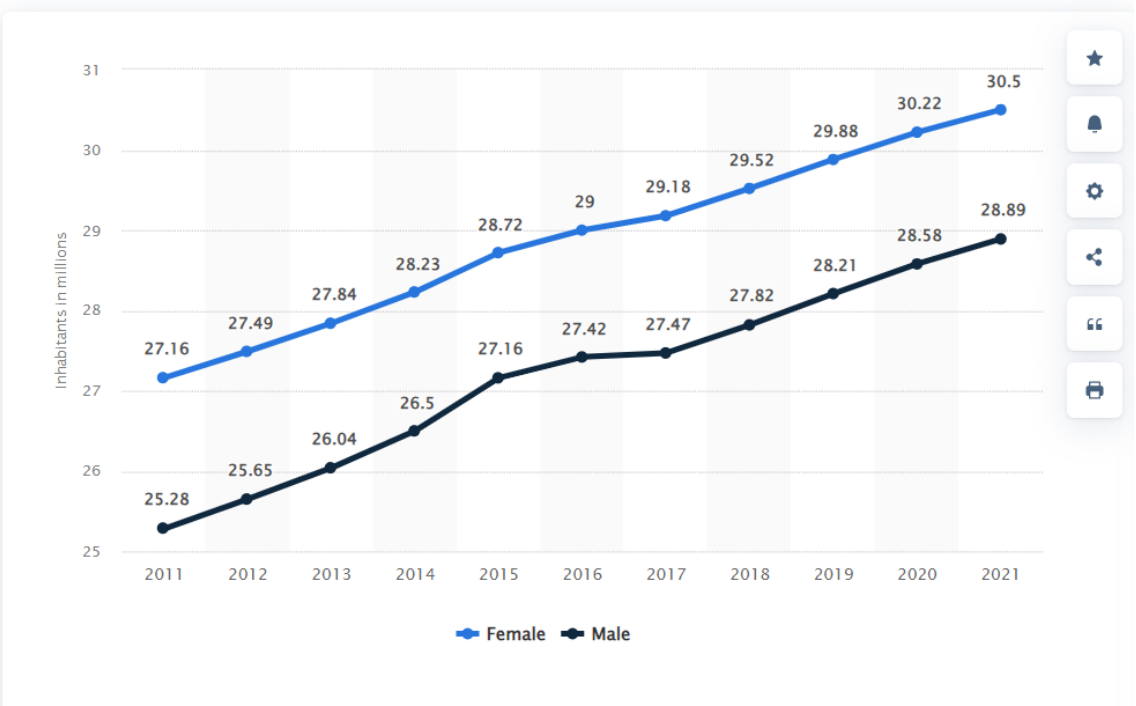
	African	Coloured	Indian	White	SA
2021	17,833,000	1,694,000	319,000	903,000	20,749,000
2020	17,654,000	1,664,000	348,000	829,000	20,496,000
2019	17,228,000	1,634,000	334,000	879,000	20,075,000
2018	16,912,000	1,639,000	325,000	866,000	19,741,000
2017	16,721,000	1,625,000	333,000	900,000	19,579,000
2016	16,405,000	1,623,000	329,000	910,000	19,266,000
2015	16,200,000	1,607,000	323,000	917,000	19,047,000
2014	15,977,000	1,580,000	325,000	912,000	18,795,000
2013	15,846,000	1,584,000	319,000	935,000	18,683,000
2012	15,672,000	1,577,000	320,000	933,000	18,502,000
2011	15,534,000	1,576,000	332,000	954,000	18,396,000
2010	15,375,000	1,533,000	332,000	969,000	18,210,000
2009	15,278,000	1,556,000	339,000	990,000	18,163,000
2008	15,223,000	1,567,000	339,000	981,000	18,110,000
2007	15,229,000	1,566,000	340,000	1,010,000	18,145,000
2006	15,120,000	1,558,000	351,000	1,027,000	18,056,000
2005	15,009,000	1,556,000	352,000	1,042,000	17,958,000
2004	14,946,000	1,550,000	343,000	1,060,000	17,899,000
2003	14,969,000	1,554,000	350,000	1,094,000	17,966,000
2002	15,093,000	1,553,000	362,000	1,121,000	18,129,000

Data Source Statistics South Africa (2003 – 2022) General Household Survey 2002 – 2021. Pretoria, Cape Town: Statistics South Africa. Analysis by Katharine Hall, Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.

Notes
1. Children are defined as persons aged 0 – 17 years.
2. Population numbers have been rounded to the nearest thousand.

Source: Statics South Africa (2003 - 2022)

Appendix E: Total population from 2011 to 2021, by gender



Source: Statista (2022)

Appendix F: Instrument

Consent:

This study focuses on consumers' attitudes toward sustainable business practices thus we are seeking your opinion on whether sustainable business practices influence your support for sustainable businesses.

Anonymity is guaranteed as no personal identifiers will be required for the completion of this survey.

You agree that the researcher may use data collected from your responses for the purpose of completing the research study “Sustainable marketing practices and South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products".

You consent for the data collected from you to be used anonymously for academic purposes.

You agree to answer all questions fully and truthfully.

Q1. Do you agree to participate in the survey?

- Yes
- No

Socio-demographic Characteristics

Q2: Please select your age bracket?

- 18 - 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44

- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 and above

Q3. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary/ third gender
- Prefer not to say

Q4. What is your highest level of education?

- Less than high school
- High school graduate
- Some college
- 3-year degree
- Honours degree
- Master's degree
- Doctoral degree
- Professional degree

Q5. Which income bracket best describes your monthly household income?

- Less than R10 000
- R10 000 - R20 000

- R20 000 - R30 000
- R30 000 - R40 000
- R40 000 - R50 000
- R50 000 - R60 000
- R60 000 - R70 000
- R70 000 - R80 000
- R80 000 - R90 000
- R90 000 - R100 000
- Above R100 000

Q6. What is your ethnicity?

- Black African
- Coloured
- Asian
- White
- Other

Q7. What is your habitation status?

- I live in a rural area (E.g., Nongoma, Ga-dikgale, Botshabelo)
- I live in an urban area (E.g., Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, or Pretoria)

- I live in an urban-suburban area (E.g., Sandton, Umhlanga, Rosebank, or Lynnwood)

In the next session, we will be asking you about your values and beliefs

Ecocentrism (Eco)

Report the extent to which the following values are important and a guiding principle of life where 1 = NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT, 2 = LOW IMPORTANCE, 3 = SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT, 4 = NEAUTRAL, 5 = MODERATELY IMPORTANT, 6 = VERY IMPORTANT AND 7 = EXTREMELY IMPORTANT:

- Unity with nature (fitting in with nature) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- Protecting the environment (preserving nature) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- Animal welfare (protecting all living creatures) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Perceived Egalitarianism (PE)

Report the extent to which the following values are important and a guiding principle of your life where 1 = NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT, 2 = LOW IMPORTANCE, 3 = SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT, 4 = NEAUTRAL, 5 = MODERATELY IMPORTANT, 6 = VERY IMPORTANT AND 7 = EXTREMELY IMPORTANT:

- Social justice (correcting injustice) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- Equality (equal opportunity for all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- Protecting others (caring for society's weak and vulnerable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

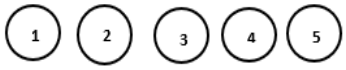
Attitude toward business benevolence (BB)

To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following where 1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE, 2 = DISAGREE, 3 = NEITHER AGREE NOR DIASGREE, 4 = AGREE AND 5 = STRONGLY AGREE:

- I like it when businesses are willing to help national organisations focused on assisting others less fortunate



- I think it is good when businesses provide relief to people who suddenly find themselves in need



- It is a favourable situation when businesses donate funds towards the development of others in society



- It is a good thing when businesses support local non-profit organisations dedicated to benefiting those in need



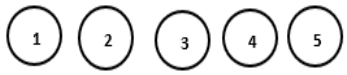
- I would like to work for a firm that has provided Opportunities for the disadvantaged in society



Concern about Business Ethical Practices (BEP)

To what extent do you agree/ disagree with the following where 1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE, 2 = DISAGREE, 3 = NEITHER AGREE NOR DIASGREE, 4 = AGREE AND 5 = STRONGLY AGREE:

- I care that businesses pay their fair share in taxes



- Today, some CEOs make far too much money



- I am concerned about businesses using their funds to bribe government officials 1 2 3 4 5
- I am concerned about businesses lobbying government officials 1 2 3 4 5
- I am concerned about corrupt business practices 1 2 3 4 5

Business contributions to My QOL (MQOL)

Rate the contributions of each of the following institutions to your quality of life where 1 = VERY NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTION, 2 = NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTION, 3 = SOMEWHAT NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTION, 4 = NEUTRAL, 5 = SOMEWHAT POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION, 6 = POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION AND 7 = VERY POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION.

- New product developers 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- Multinational enterprises 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- National businesses 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- Local businesses 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- Marketing research companies 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

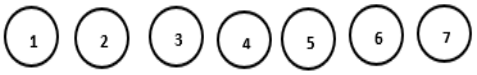
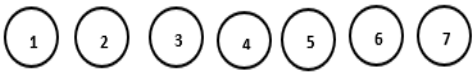
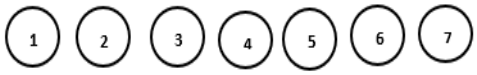
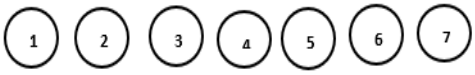
Support for Sustainable Businesses (SSB)

To what extent do you agree/ disagree with the following where 1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE, 2 = DISAGREE, 3 = NEITHER AGREE NOR DIASGREE, 4 = AGREE AND 5 = STRONGLY AGREE:

- I only purchase from companies that are committed to sustainable business practices 
- People have an obligation to support firms that are committed to sustainable business practices 
- I would be more likely to buy from a firm if I knew it it was involved with sustainable business practices 
- I would be more likely to recommend a firm to others if it was involved with sustainable business practices 
- I would be more likely to buy from a firm if I knew it was more committed to sustainable business practices than another competing firm 

Behavioural Intentions (BI)

To what extent do you agree/ disagree with the following where 1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE, 2 = DISAGREE, 3 = SOMEWHAT DISAGREE, 4 = NEAUTRAL, 5 = SOMEWHAT AGREE, 6 = AGREE, 7 = STRONGLY AGREE

- I believe sustainable businesses are my first choice when making a purchase 
- I will choose sustainable businesses next time when making a purchase 
- I am willing to try products from sustainable businesses 
- I am willing to pay a higher price for sustainable businesses over unsustainable businesses 
- It is very likely that I will recommend sustainable businesses to people who ask for suggestions 
- I will speak positively about sustainable businesses to others 

Appendix G: Replication study written approval

WITS UNIVERSITY

Kwandisiwe Nhlapo <0715516e@students.wits.ac.za>

Research Replication Study

Mark Peterson <markpete@uwyo.edu> 21 June 2022 at 22:54
To: Kwandisiwe Nhlapo <0715516e@students.wits.ac.za>

Kwandisiwe –

Thank you for your email. Yes, please replicate the study from SP&C in South Africa. The details for replicating are in the attached article. If you have other questions, please let me know.

Thanks!

Mark

MARK PETERSON

Professor of Marketing & Sustainable Business Practices

Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative Faculty Fellow

University of Wyoming College of Business,

Management & Marketing Department 3275

1000 E University Avenue • Laramie, Wyoming 82071

Phone: 307-766-2054 • Fax: 307-766-3488 • E-mail: markpete@uwyo.edu

web: www.sustainabilitysage.com

UW | COB
business.uwyo.edu

From: Kwandisiwe Nhlapo <0715516e@students.wits.ac.za>
Sent: Tuesday, June 21, 2022 2:11 PM
To: Mark Peterson <markpete@uwyo.edu>; Elizabeth A. Minton <eminton@uwyo.edu>; Deb62@psu.edu
Subject: Re: Research Replication Study

◆ This message was sent from a non-UWYO address. Please exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments from external sources.

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SP&C2021-PetersonEtAl-SptForSustainableBiz.pdf
1614K

Appendix H: Ethics Clearance approval

Graduate School of Business Administration
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Wits Business School

Wits Business School Ethics Committee
Constituted under the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical)

Ethics Clearance Certificate

Ethics protocol number: WBS/SM0715516E/774
This certificate is only valid with a legitimate ethics protocol number and signed by the Researcher (below)

Project title	Sustainable marketing practices and South African consumers' behavioural intentions regarding green products
Investigator / Researcher	Ms Kwandisiwe Nhlapo
Nature of Project	MM (Strategic Marketing)
Decision of the Committee	Approved, provided stakeholders and participants are guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality.
Issue Date of Certificate	14 11 2022
Expiry date	Date of submission of the project / research report
Chairperson	Prof Anthony Stacey ☎ +27 11 717 3587 +27 82 880 4531 anthony.stacey@wits.ac.za

Declaration by Researcher

One copy must be signed by the Researcher and returned to the Chairperson of the Wits Business School Ethics Committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature

15 November 2022
Date:

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