

**SPORT SPONSORSHIP AS A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOL:  
SPINNEYS DUBAI 92 CYCLE CHALLENGE**

by

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# ABSTRACT

## SPORT SPONSORSHIP AS A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOL: SPINNEYS DUBAI 92 CYCLE CHALLENGE

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**KEY WORDS:** sport sponsorship, community engagement, corporate social responsibility (CSR), CSR & corporate communication, brand management, corporate social performance, corporate social marketing, public relations

Community engagement is at the heart of this study and the main objective is to help organisations in the Middle East like Spinneys Dubai to build on their CSR strategy to impact community development more effectively by aligning themselves with the objectives and priorities of the UAE Government. As a UAE Government entity, the Dubai Sports Council encourages the development of sport such as cycling throughout the region with the aim of increasing community participation to fight against health issues such as obesity and diabetes, especially among local Emiratis. The UAE Government relies on corporate citizens such as Spinneys Dubai to engage with the community, including Emirati women and children, through educational health programmes; to empower these families to make better health choices; and to introduce them to recreational activities such as cycling.

Corporate citizens, Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, as the event organiser, and Spinneys Dubai, as the title sponsor of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, determined that the community in Dubai is interested in living an active and healthy lifestyle. They want to feel part of a group, however, needed a safe and stress-free outdoor environment to

exercise. Accordingly, they initiated sustainable sport initiatives, such as the weekly 'Dubai Cycle Safe' and monthly Spinneys Build-up rides, to help the community to build on their strength and to prepare for the main race in December, The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

The main purpose of this study is to determine which strategic corporate social responsibility (CSR), communication and social marketing strategies for sport sponsorship are being used by the food retailer Spinneys Dubai, to engage with the community; to encourage participation and motivate behavioural change; and to evaluate how effective and efficient these strategies are through all their communication channels including in store, radio, branding, social media, website, emails and public relations.

The investigation determines how Spinneys Dubai use sport sponsorship as an effective community engagement tool as part of their CSR corporate culture to build a positive brand image and drive customer loyalty. To support community development effectively, it is important that Spinneys Dubai offer meaningful social, hedonic and utilitarian experiences to build long-term relationships and trust, therefore the research determines how CSR communication is used by the organisation is to create community health, fitness and safety awareness.

The results of this study will provide more insight on how sport sponsorship can be used as a community engagement tool and how Spinneys Dubai can communicate with its stakeholder groups more effectively through strategic communication management and to ultimately grow the number of participants year on year in particular, and cycling as a sport in general, in the United Arab Emirates.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, organisations and management teams worldwide have come to realise that the survival and success of their businesses cannot be achieved through profit alone. As a result, they have changed their strategies to create brands that represent excellent customer service; follow responsible and ethical business practices; are loved and respected by their consumers; and are financially stable and successful. The challenge for these organisations is to identify an effective business strategy where consumers can be introduced to the brand and affiliate with it over a certain period of time to ensure maximum brand awareness and loyalty (Hsu *et.al*, 2012:72).

The greater challenge is to gain a competitive advantage through brand loyalty where customers support the brand and believe they can enjoy a unique experience and get value for their money – this leads to repeat purchases and creates a differentiation from other competitors (Hsu *et.al*, 2012:73). Research has shown that organisations who operate outside of the organisation and engage in community activities can achieve optimum brand loyalty by scanning the environment; understanding the needs of their community; and providing them with sufficient resources, and emotional and educational support to ultimately build brand love and long-term relationships (Hsu *et.al*, 2012:73).

For the purpose of this study, two main approaches have been identified to rationalise why corporate organisations invest in brand awareness and loyalty programmes such as a) sport sponsorship and b) corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives as part of their marketing and communication strategies. The relationship between the two approaches will be discussed to determine if the organisation's approach through sport sponsorship and corporate communication through CSR initiatives can co-exist and merge as one strategy to achieve overall organisational goals.

The main purpose of this study is to determine which strategic CSR communication and social marketing practices for sport sponsorship is being used by Spinneys Dubai to engage with the community; to encourage participation and motivate behavioural change; and to evaluate how effective and efficient these strategies are. The results of this study will provide more insight on how sport sponsorship can be used as a community engagement tool and how Spinneys Dubai can communicate with the community more effectively by means of strategic communication management through corporate communication, CSR Communication and PR activities.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND**

Dubai is known as a cosmopolitan centre located on the Eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula, in the south west corner of the Arabian Gulf, Middle East (Dubai Government, 2012). Dubai is one of the most multi-cultural cities in the world, with over 200 different nationalities living and working harmoniously together (Dubai Culture & Arts Authority, 2012; Dubai Government, 2012). The government of the United Arab Emirates has identified that various sporting events can bring communities together, promote a healthy lifestyle and create an international platform for the UAE to showcase their country as a renowned tourist destination (Dubai Government, 2012). To achieve their goal, the government has made significant contributions to provide assistance and financial support to a variety of national and international sporting events (Dubai Government, 2012). The United Arab Emirates and the Dubai Sports Council encourage sport development throughout the region with the aim of increasing awareness and community participation and to promote a healthy lifestyle, to, amongst others, fight against obesity and diabetes, which are the most concerning health risks among locals and expats (Dubai Sports Council, 2012).

In 2015 the Dubai sport industry contributed to a total economic expenditure of USD 1.7 billion and projected to sustain over 14 500 jobs across various industries; produce over 300 sporting events; raise over USD 100 million in sport sponsorships annually; and attract over one million spectators (Deloitte, 2015:7). Dubai is globally renowned for hosting seven major international sporting events, contributing to 70% of the total number of sport

sponsorships generated each year (Deloitte, 2015:4). The seven major Dubai sporting events include: the Omega Dubai Desert Classic Golf, Standard Chartered Dubai Marathon, Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships, Dubai World Cup horse racing, DP World Golf Championship, and lastly, the Emirates Airline Dubai Rugby Sevens which generates worldwide media exposure to promote the city as a desirable tourist destination and boosts economic growth (Deloitte, 2015:4, Visit Dubai, 2019). The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge is one of 90 local Dubai community sporting events each year, attracting 2 000 cyclists for the main race in December (Deloitte, 2015:13; Kilalea, 2016).

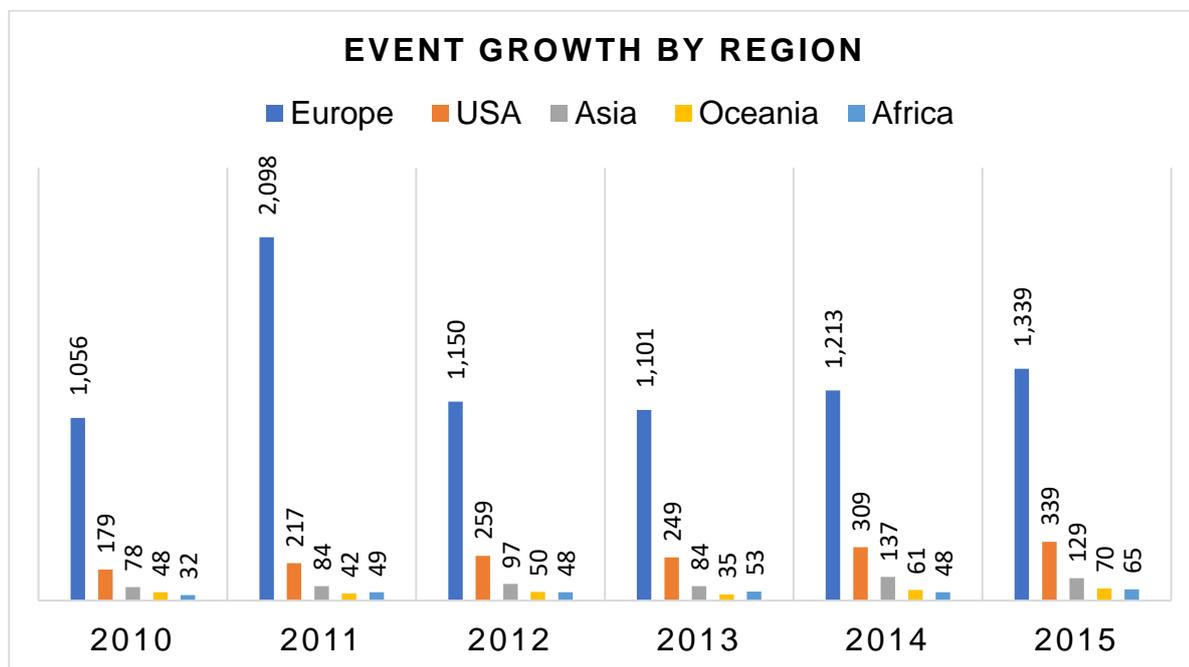
Many organisations across the globe invest in sport sponsorships as a community engagement tool to reach CSR and social marketing communication objectives (Tsiotsou, 2011:557). The amount of sponsorship investments worldwide has increased significantly from USD 2 billion in 1984 to USD 37 billion in 2007 (Tsiotsou, 2011:557). The Coca-Cola Company is an excellent example of identifying the long-term benefits of sport sponsorship and incorporating it into their CSR strategies. Since 1978 Coca-Cola has been the official sponsor of the FIFA World Cup. During this time, matches were broadcasted live to millions of people around the world watching how teams play in Coca-Cola branded stadiums (FIFA, 2017). In 2005 Coca-Cola and FIFA signed another long-term sponsorship contract until 2030, which also includes the sponsorship of other related FIFA sporting events, namely: FIFA Women's World Cup, FIFA under 20 and under 17 Men's and Women's World Cup and FIFA Confederations Cup (FIFA, 2017). The long-term relationship between Coca-Cola and FIFA illustrates that sport sponsorship can have a major effect on brand exposure and loyalty; and overall sport development and awareness, which benefit both parties involved.

In the world of cycling, The Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI), established in Paris, France in 1900, governs the sport across the globe in partnership with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to promote cycling as a highly competitive, clean sport; encourage health and fitness in communities; and elevate it as a sustainable and environment friendly method of transportation (UCI Annual, Report 2015:10). Over 100 years later, the UCI Centre is based in Aigle, Switzerland and represents “*185 National Federations, five Continental Confederations, over 1 500 professional riders, 500 000 licensed competitors, several million cycling enthusiasts and two billion bicycle users all over the world* (UCI Annual, Report 2015:10)”.

The UCI's major objectives to contribute to the further development of the sport globally include the following (UCI, 2017):

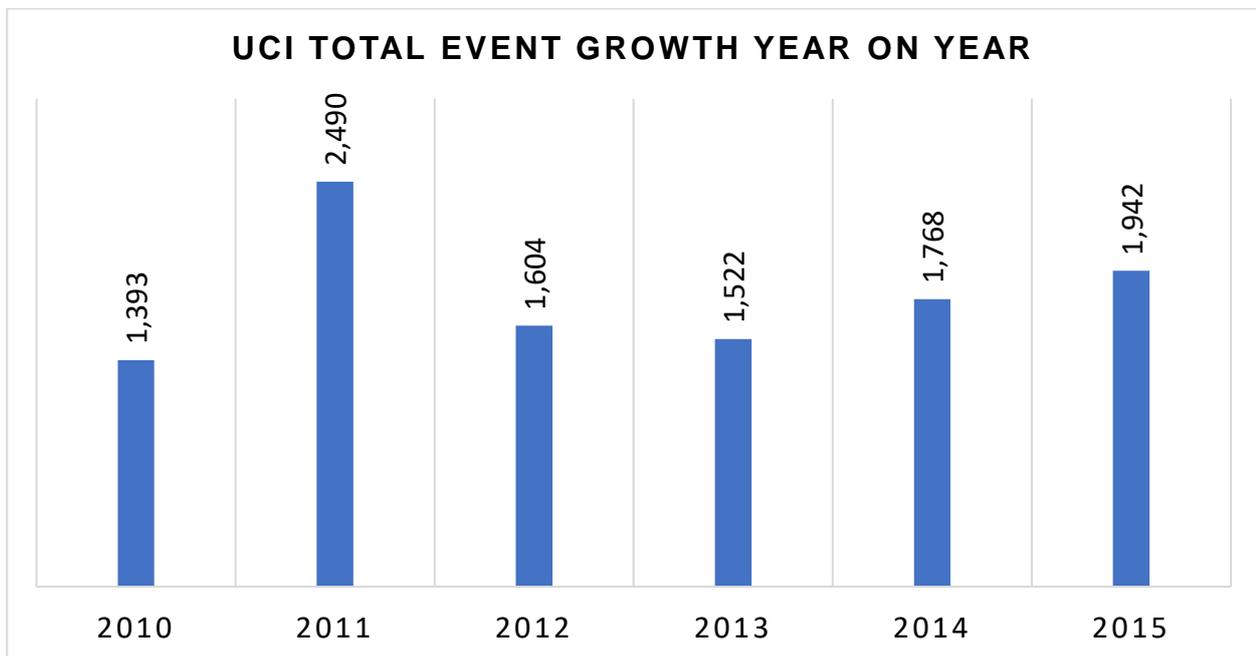
- Create opportunities for commercial investment and sport sponsorship
- Investment in product innovation and technology to boost athlete performance and promote high standards of safety
- Promote public health and safety and encourage cycling as a recreational activity
- Invest time and resources into the globalisation of the sport, to give all cyclists around the world equal opportunity to participate and develop their talent
- Regulate and create awareness on anti-doping policies to uphold fairness and competitiveness
- Regulate and govern standards for medical support at cycling events
- Drive the empowerment and development of para-cycling as well as women's cycling to increase global participation

**Figure 1: Global event growth by region, year-on-year**



Source: UCI Annual Report (2015:11)

**Figure 2: Total UCI event growth, across the globe, year-on-year**



Source: UCI Annual Report (2015:11)

Figure 1 and Figure 2 show that from 2010 until 2015, Europe and the USA have been at the forefront of hosting the majority of the world's UCI registered cycling events, followed by Asia, Oceania and Africa (UCI Annual Report, 2015:11). In 2015 the total number of global registered UCI cycling events hosted in one year reached 1 942, which is 174 events more, compared to 2014 (UCI Annual Report, 2015:11).

One of the most prestigious events on the UCI calendar is the UCI Road World Championships, and in 2015 the 88th edition was hosted in September in Richmond, USA (UCI Annual Report, 2015:30). The event generated USD 169.8 million, registered 913 athletes, including 253 women, attracted over 630,000 spectators over the course of a week and required the support of 7 400 volunteers to organise the event (UCI Annual Report, 2015:30). The event also received positive TV, press and social media coverage which generated a total of 1 498 hours 23 minutes in air time across 124 countries and reached over 142 380 million people worldwide (UCI Annual Report, 2015:30).

Up to 2015, the Middle East has not hosted any UCI registered cycling events, however, it has been noticed internationally for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (launched in

2010), as well as the Dubai Tour, as potential sporting events to include in the ICU portfolio (Kilalea, 2016, Dubai Tour, 2017).

The Dubai Tour is a highly competitive and prestigious cycling event in the region, which consists of four stages, including (Dubai Tour, 2017):

- Stage 1: Dubai Silicone Oasis to Fujairah, 137km
- Stage 2: Nakeel to Palm Jumeirah Dubai, 183km
- Stage 3: The Westin Hotel, Dubai to Hatta Dam, 172km
- Stage 4: Dubai Business Bay, 137km
- Total: 629km across the four stages

In 2015, H.E. Saeed Hareb, Chairman of the Organising Committee of the Dubai Tour, and Lorenzo Giorgetti, CEO of RCS Sports and Events released the following statement to the press (Dubai Tour, 2017):

***H.E. Saeed Hareb, Chairman of the Organising Committee of the Dubai Tour:*** “Our challenge is to be one of the top races in the world. There is no end of possibilities and no end to the dream. If you can organise four stages, it’s not more difficult to organise more than 12 stages. We need to grow with what we have. We are not in a hurry, but we want to grow.”

***Lorenzo Giorgetti, CEO, RCS Sports and Events:*** “I think that we will know in 2017 what rules will set the new standards in UCI professional races. I know the UCI is talking to riders, teams and organisers but some of the criteria are already clear: they include rider safety, the quality of TV production, and the quality of hospitality.”

In 2017, the Dubai Tour did not manage to become an official registered UCI event, however, they did follow UCI standards for health and safety when event organisers decided to officially cancel the 4th stage of the race on 3rd February due to hazardous weather conditions to protect cyclists from harm (Dubai Tour, 2017). The Dubai Tour also successfully managed to gain international TV coverage, in line with UCI standards, not only to promote cycling as a sport, but also to promote Dubai as a tourist destination (Dubai Tour, 2017). Valuable air time was smartly incorporated into the race to promote iconic landmarks

and new tourist attractions, including the Dubai Marine Club for national and international water sports, The Beach - the latest Dubai family lifestyle estate, as well as the new Expo 2020 Dubai development, where the World Expo will be hosted over a period of six months and attract nations across the globe that will present the latest in architecture, science and technology development (Dubai Tour, 2017).

Spinneys Dubai is one of the first leading supermarket chains in the UAE, with more than 50 years of retail experience and over 60 stores located in key communities across the UAE (Spinneys Dubai, 2017). Spinneys Dubai is locally owned by Mr. Ali Albwardy, a well-known Emirati of the community, who has built his organisation's reputation on quality fresh food and customer service (Spinneys Dubai, 2017). In 2010, Spinneys Dubai agreed to be the title sponsor of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge to contribute to the social development of the community and awareness of cycling as a sport in the region with the main objective of promoting a healthy lifestyle (Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, 2017). The race includes a challenging route of 92km, where all cyclists from amateur to professional can enjoy the unique sites of Dubai's most famous landmarks such as the Burj Al Arab and Burj Khalifa (Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, 2017). The main objectives also include providing the community with a safe, stress-free and challenging environment to exercise and to increase the number of participants each year (Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, 2017).

In 2010, 450 cyclists entered the first Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and in 2016 the number of participants increased to 1 850 which illustrates the popularity of cycling as a sport and the rapid growth of cyclists that are participating in the Dubai event every year (Kilalea, 2016). For the first time in 2016, an additional event was introduced: The Sony Action Cam 53 Cycle Challenge as a fun and social ride, as well as the UCI Gran Fondo World Series which is now forming part of the official Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, attracting semi-professional cyclists from around the world (Kilalea, 2016; UCI, 2017).

The UCI Gran Fondo World Series is hosted in various international countries and include 20 qualifying events for cyclists of various age groups who are highly talented and have the ambition to keep fit and healthy and who would like to participate in the UCI Gran Fondo World Championships (UCI, 2017). Two days prior to the main event day, parents had the

opportunity of introducing their children to cycling at The Junior Cycle Challenge for children ages seven to seventeen and the 400m Kiddie Challenge for children ages two to six, a great way to encourage the whole family to lead an active and healthy lifestyle (Kilalea, 2016).

There are a few important event stakeholders that make such an event possible, including the second title sponsor and media partner Dubai 92 radio station; the event organisers Promoseven Marketing Agency; various supporting sponsors; as well as the Dubai Police, Dubai Sports Council and the UAE Cycling Federation (Kilalea, 2016).

**Figure 3: Official event sponsors**

<p>Title Sponsors</p>  					
<p>Title Sponsor 53 km Cycle Challenge</p> 		<p>Under The Auspices Of</p>  		<p>Official Supporters</p>  	
<p>Official Bike Retailer</p> 	<p>Official Travel Partner</p> 	<p>Official Bike Partner</p> 	<p>Official Print Media Partner</p> 	<p>Secure Bike Park Partner</p> 	<p>Official Vehicle Partner</p> 
<p>Official Medical Provider</p> 	<p>Official Fitness Partner</p> 	<p>Official Indoor Training Partner</p> 	<p>Official Suppliers</p> 		
<p>Support Sponsors</p> 					

Source: Kilalea (2016)

As a retailer, Spinneys Dubai aims to engage with the community through sport sponsorship and promote a healthy lifestyle through their ‘Eat well, Live Well’ food campaign to create brand awareness and to gain the trust and loyalty of customers in the region (Spinneys Dubai, 2017). To introduce and develop cycling as a new and sustainable sport in the UAE,

Spinneys Dubai identified that, to motivate ordinary people from the community to participate in the main event, they needed a safe, stress-free and competitive environment to mentally and physically prepare for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge on a weekly basis (Kilalea, 2016).

To encourage social behaviour to change and increase active participation within the community, the weekly Cycle Safe Dubai initiative and the monthly Build-up rides of 30km, 40km, 60km and 80km from August to November, were initiated. These training events give all members of the community, from amateur to professional, the opportunity to exercise and build on their strength for the main cycling event in December, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (Kilalea, 2016). These community events are the perfect platform for Spinneys Dubai to promote their products and their 'Live Well, Eat Well' lifestyle campaign (Spinneys Dubai, 2017).

The greater challenge for Spinneys Dubai is to master community engagement, relationship building and trust to ultimately achieve brand loyalty. As a food retailer competing with other retailers in the UAE, excellent customer service is an important benchmark for Spinneys Dubai to differentiate itself from its competitors (Hsu *et.al*, 2012:75). Spinneys Dubai should establish a community identification concept where people can easily associate themselves with the cycling community and feel emotionally connected to a group, especially expats that are new to the country and who want to form new friendships. Secondly, Spinneys Dubai should evaluate how their CSR and sport sponsorship activities affect the participants' experience of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, which can be classified into three types (Hsu *et.al*, 2012:75):

**Table 1: Utilitarian, Social and Hedonic Experiences**

<b>Utilitarian</b>	This experience refers to functional or practical benefits that make it possible for participants to train in a safe, stress-free environment along with other cyclists to achieve their health and fitness goals (Hsu <i>et.al</i> , 2012:76).
<b>Social</b>	This experience refers to the interpersonal need of a participant to interact and connect with other cyclists and form friendships (Hsu <i>et.al</i> , 2012:76).
<b>Hedonic</b>	This experience refers to how much the cyclists enjoy participating in each event and the ability of Spinneys Dubai to keep the community continuously engaged throughout the year, from weekly rides, monthly Build-up rides to the main race in December, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (Hsu <i>et.al</i> , 2012:76).

Source: Hsu *et.al*, (2012:76)

Hsu and Huang's (2011:75) theory as depicted in the Table 1 is an important measuring tool to evaluate the level of engagement that Spinneys Dubai offers the community in which they operate. Evaluating the quality of the retailer's community engagement will also give the reader more insight into how Spinneys Dubai manage their key stakeholders and how they build community trust through their planned CSR activities.

Over the years, giant food retailers across the globe have also engaged in the sport sponsorship of cycling events to gain a competitive advantage in the market and to engage with their stakeholders more strategically, including the French retailer Carrefour who sponsored Tour de France since 1993 and South African retailer Pick and Pay who sponsored the Cape Town (Argus) Cycle Tour since 1991 (Le France Tour, 2013; Cape Town Cycle Tour, 2017). It is important to understand how international cycling events and sponsorships have contributed to the overall growth and development of the sport and how retailers have used this strategy historically to engage with the communities in which they operate to gain a competitive advantage.

The French retailer, Carrefour has been a title sponsor of the well-known European cycling event, Tour de France for many years (Le France Tour, 2013). The Tour de France, which celebrated its 100th race in 2013, is a challenging and highly competitive race of 3,500km, endured in 20 stages over a period of three weeks throughout local cities and towns in France (Le France Tour, 2013). According to BBC News (2013) sponsors of the event and of cycling teams, participating in the Tour de France can reap great benefits such as brand awareness and positive returns on their investments through major mass media coverage – live broadcasting over 200 channels worldwide to an audience of four billion people over a period of three weeks. From an overall business perspective, Carrefour’s CSR strategy is at the core of their business model which states that as a retailer they will continue to “*improve each year on sustainable development initiatives through responsible social and environmental performances, from product sourcing and packaging, customer service and human resources to community engagement activities such as the Tour de France* (Carrefour Annual Activity & Responsible Commitment Report 2012:57).” It can be argued that Carrefour integrated their sport sponsorship initiative into their CSR strategy to engage with the community in a responsible, ethical and sustainable way, while gaining brand awareness and loyalty at the same time to justify their investment or money spent.

Another example is the South African retailer Pick and Pay which has been a title sponsor for the Cape Town Cycle Tour since 1991 and today the race is renowned as the world’s largest cycling event and for its breath-taking on route views of Table Mountain and the surrounding coastal lines (Pick and Pay Sustainable Living Report, 2016:4). Secondly, the Cape Town Cycle Tour event not only attracts cyclists, but their families as well, and therefore encourages children between the ages 1 to 12 years old to participate in the Junior Cape Town Cycle Tour with races from 1.3km up to 7km for different age groups (Cape Town Cycle Tour, 2017).

On 12th March 2017, over 35 000 people entered to participate in the 40th Cape Town (Argus) Cycle Tour of 109km, however due to dangerous wind speeds, community fires in Hout Bay and political unrest, the event organisers decided to stop the race to ensure the safety of all cyclists (Cape Town Cycle Tour, 2017). The event organisers, The Cape Town Cycle Tour Trust issued a second press release on the event day to address the crisis and all their stakeholders involved including the cyclists and the community, the city of Cape

Town, Metro Police and related traffic, fire and safety authorities, Medi-Clinic for their medical services, all the sponsors, volunteers and charity organisations (Cape Town Cycle Tour, 2017).

The Cape Town Cycle Trust illustrated timely communication and effective stakeholder relationships with CSR partners which prevented serious injuries and loss of life, kept all parties informed and actively involved with the latest developments of the crisis and provided them with the opportunity to identify and correct issues (Cooper, 2004:188). The timely CSR communication and public relations management of the event organisers enabled all stakeholders involved to determine what their responsibilities were, what actions needed to be taken within a specific time-frame and also encouraged them to provide their extended support to the Hout Bay community affected by the fires.

The Cape Town Cycle Tour Trust issued the following statement on Sunday 12th March to address all their stakeholders involved (Cape Town Cycle Tour, 2017):

*“The Cape Town Cycle Tour Trust wishes to extend its immense gratitude and thanks to the City of Cape Town and all those services involved at our JOC in Tygerberg. This includes Disaster Management Services, the Events Office of the City of Cape Town, Fire and Safety, Traffic Authorities and Metro Police as well as our medical services, Medi-Clinic, the Provincial EMS and South African Police Services. These relationships have been developed over many years and it is in times of crisis that the measure of these relationships is truly tested. I would particularly like to single out the Executive Director of Safety and Security, Mr. Richard Bosman as well as the Executive Mayor’s office for the tremendous support under these trying circumstances”.*

*“To all our sponsors, who have backed our decision 100%, our eternal gratitude for your understanding and support. Lastly, to the participants who have invested time, effort and resources in getting to the start line, our heartfelt thanks – ultimately this decision was made in the interests of your safety. To the Rotary Clubs and volunteers who have been standing on the route in difficult conditions, we appreciate your tireless effort and sacrifice”.*

*“We are humbled by the outpouring of offers to assist and donate food, product and resources to those in need as a result of us stopping this Cycle Tour. We are in the process of coordinating efforts to ensure that goods reach those in need in the fire-affected areas in Hout Bay. We encourage the public wishing to donate to please contact Thula Thula in Hout Bay to donate non-perishable goods. The Mayor of Hout Bay has opened the Hout Bay Sports Centre in readiness to receive perishable goods for immediate distribution into the community”.*

Pick and Pay’s CSR policy states that they support communities in which they operate, as a way of giving back to their customers to overcome social and cultural needs (Pick and Pay Sustainable Living Report, 2016:4). As a fresh food retailer Pick and Pay has committed to stock healthy, affordable and sustainably sourced food and continue to provide customers with information that can support healthy food choices to promote their health and well-being in support of the fight against chronic conditions including obesity, diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease (Pick and Pay Sustainable Living Report, 2016:4). The retailer also supported various sport events throughout 2016 including a series of walk events attracting over 25,000 female participants and raising over 1 million Rand for breast cancer awareness (Pick and Pay Sustainable Living Report, 2016:4). As a title sponsor of the 2017 The Cape Town Cycle Tour, Pick and Pay also informed the community that the event has been cancelled and urged cyclists not to approach the start line, as well as extended their full support to the displaced community members of Hout Bay by asking the public for donations and delivering fresh food, drinks and groceries, illustrating their level of commitment to support the communities in which they operate (Pick and Pay Facebook Page, 2017).

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The owners and stakeholders of Spinneys Dubai expect its top management to be responsible for the strategic management of all CSR activities, including the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. The organisation relies on their event partner Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency to directly communicate and engage with the community, limiting meaningful community development especially amongst Emirati women and children.

The purpose of sport sponsorship is to create brand awareness, to engage with the community more effectively and to ultimately grow the business through trust and loyalty. Therefore, as retailer, Spinneys Dubai needs to strategically engage with the community (as their stakeholder) more effectively, by using sport sponsorship as an engagement tool to increase customer loyalty. To be a title sponsor of a community or sporting event requires effective and strategic partnerships to contribute to the overall execution plan and to drive business objectives. These business objectives include driving corporate social performance and communicating with the community through various communication channels more effectively in a competitive retail market.

From a brand perspective, it is important to understand how Spinneys use sport sponsorship as an engagement tool to build new and to maintain existing stakeholder relationships, especially with the community, who are interested in living an active and healthy lifestyle; have the need to exercise in a safe and secure environment; and socialise to feel part of a group. The researcher will, therefore, further investigate how the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge can provide the community with a *utilitarian*, *social* and *hedonic* experience. Furthermore, it is essential for Spinneys Dubai to use strategic communication to encourage community participation and to motivate the community to change their behaviour and to choose an active and healthy lifestyle through sustainable sport initiatives such as the weekly Dubai Cycle Safe and monthly Spinneys Build-up rides, in order to prepare for the ultimate race in December, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

The researcher will, therefore, investigate and evaluate current marketing and communication business practices including branding, corporate social marketing, CSR communication and activities, social media and public relations and further explore how sport sponsorship can be used as a community engagement tool to provide Spinneys Dubai with more insights and recommendations.

## 1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

How can sport sponsorship be used as an effective community engagement tool for Spinneys Dubai?

### SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Research question 1: How does Spinneys Dubai strategically use sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool to build a positive brand image and grow customer loyalty?
2. Research question 2: How does Spinneys Dubai offer *social, hedonic* and *utilitarian* experiences through their CSR activities to engage, build relationships and trust within the community they operate?
3. Research question 3: How does Spinneys Dubai use CSR communication and public relations to strategically communicate with the community when creating community health, fitness and safety awareness?

**Table 2: Concepts and constructs of the research study**

<b>SPORT SPONSORSHIP</b>	<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b>	<b>COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>Strategic Partners</b>	CSR Activities	CSR Communication
<b>Brand Image</b>	Community Relationships	Public Relations
<b>Customer Loyalty</b>	Social, Hedonic & Utilitarian Experience	Health, Fitness & Safety Awareness
<b>Community Engagement Tool</b>	Community Trust	Community Relations

## 1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this study, a qualitative approach was followed. The researcher has conducted semi-structured interviews to investigate how sport sponsorship is being used as a community engagement tool. An in-depth analysis of the findings was conducted according to the Leximancer results and compared to a theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 3, Table 3 to critically evaluate the performance or nature of Spinneys Dubai's current strategies and practices. Final suggestions and recommendations were provided in this research study and to the organisation for their consideration.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2008:270), the qualitative research method is used to describe human behaviour in detail and to understand respondents fully through an in-depth study of their actions or behaviour. In a broader sense, this design is appropriate when the intent is to examine the "properties, values, needs or characteristics that distinguish individuals, groups, communities, organisations, events, settings or messages" (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:88).

Semi-structured interviews with the top 16 decision makers and executors were sampled from Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports and Marketing Agency gave the researcher the advantage of steering the conversation in a specific direction by asking questions on specific topics to ultimately understand how sport sponsorship can be used as a community engagement tool (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:288). Furthermore, du Plooy (2009:198) argues that a semi-structured interview is a good combination of a structured questionnaire and an in-depth interview. This combination gave the researcher the advantage of understanding the respondents' pattern of thought, as well as gaining specific answers on items of the semi-structured interview (Du Plooy, 2009:198). The findings of the semi-structured interviews form part of the final conclusions and recommendations that will be discussed in Chapter 7.

## **1.6 ACADEMIC VALUE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

The importance of CSR activities, strategic stakeholder management, effective corporate communication and social marketing strategies were researched to give the reader a critical in-depth and theoretical overview of each business practice and to provide a critical evaluation and propose possible management solutions according to the findings.

This research study investigated the nature of sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool, with specific reference to the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. The phenomenon was studied in the UAE within the context of its political, economic and social background to also give the reader an in-depth understanding of the environment in which Spinneys Dubai operates.

## **1.7 DELIMITATIONS**

The focus of the study is based on sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool within a specific sport and area; therefore, this study is limited to only one sport in the UAE, namely cycling, as well as a specific series of cycling events (Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, Weekly Cycle Safe Rides and monthly Spinneys Dubai Build-up rides) that are associated with this initiative.

The qualitative methodology allowed the researcher to only interact with the management team of Spinneys Dubai and the event organisers, Promoseven Sport Marketing and Communication Agency, and not with other stakeholders involved in the event management, in the sponsorship or taking part in The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

This study has been limited to a qualitative research methodology only that focused on a certain experience or perception of the management teams of both Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sport Marketing and Communication Agency, rather than generalising results that are more statistical and numeric in value.

From a literature review perspective, this study has primarily been limited to three main academic disciplines, namely business management, marketing and corporate communication. The theoretical framework includes following theories: strategic management, stakeholder theory, corporate social responsibility, corporate social performance, sport sponsorship, corporate social marketing, brand management, corporate identity and corporate communication as discussed in chapters.

The three major concepts only include community engagement, sport sponsorship and corporate communication with the following constructs: community trust, stakeholder relationships, social, hedonic, utilitarian experience, people, planet, profit, brand image, customer loyalty, CSR communication, public relations and corporate reputation.

## **1.8 CHAPTER DEMARCATION**

In Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study, giving the reader a summarised version of the background and outlines the problem statement, purpose statement, research questions, the methodology, academic value and delimitations.

Chapter 2, the researcher will give the reader additional background information on the context of the study and will provide an in-depth understanding of the UAE's social, economic and environmental setting, in which Spinneys Dubai operates.

Chapter 3, the importance of sustainable business management, including corporate and CSR communication will be discussed; and how these strategies create a balance between economic, social and environmental impact to align the interests of all stakeholders involved, especially the community (King Report, 2002:6).

Chapter 4 the researcher will discuss how effective strategic sport sponsorship and community engagement can support community development and deliver brand awareness through media exposure, drive sales and gain a competitive advantage and reputation over its competitors (Dounis *et al.*, 2008:214).

Chapter 5 the researcher will share the research process and methodology used to investigate sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool, followed by Chapter 6 that will give the reader insights into the results established through semi-structured interviews and extracted through Leximancer and finally Chapter 7 will present the findings of the study by answering the research questions which will provide final conclusions and recommendations for Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sport Marketing and Communication Agency to consider for future strategic business management and communication.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

The world of professional and recreational sport has vastly developed over the last 100 years into a multi-billion-dollar industry, creating valuable commercial and sport sponsorship opportunities, which contribute to positive economic impact; drive competitiveness and the development of world-class talent; motivate and improve the health and fitness of ordinary communities; and generate endless media coverage and entertainment on multiple communication channels across the globe.

Large community food retailers show great interest in the sport sponsorship of cycling events to engage with the communities in which they operate more effectively and to motivate them to live a healthy lifestyle. Commercially these retailers also benefit through brand and product awareness; gain a positive and responsible brand image and reputation through their CSR activities, and ultimately grow a loyal customer base as a return on investment. Lastly, it is evident that the health and safety of competing cyclists, as well as the overall well-being of the community, is a top priority for all stakeholders involved, including the government, organisations such as Carrefour, Pick and Pay and Spinneys Dubai and the media.

In the Middle East, it is evident that cycling is still relatively new to the region both recreationally and competitively, in numbers and UCI accreditation. Therefore, it is still a developing sport when compared to Europe and the USA. With cycling events, such as the

Dubai Tour and the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, Dubai shows promising potential to become one of the world's leading destinations for cycling.

Ultimately, this study will focus on investigating which CSR communication and social marketing strategies for sport sponsorship are being used by Spinneys Dubai to engage with the community to encourage regular participation and to motivate healthy behaviour change. Finally, the researcher will evaluate how effective and efficient the Spinneys Dubai strategies are to provide the retailer with more insights for future strategic planning and consideration.

# **CHAPTER 2**

## **POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF DUBAI**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

To explain the political, economic and social environment in which Spinneys Dubai operates, a comprehensive literature review has been provided to give the reader greater in-depth knowledge and understanding of the overall business setting in the UAE and to an extent in the Middle East. Chapter 2 will discuss the history of Dubai as well as how the country has modernised over the years, outlining UAE corporate governance and the UAE retail market. Furthermore, the social background of the UAE will be discussed to give the reader more insights into the local Emirati culture and the social development of its people and how The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge is making a difference within the community it operates.

### **2.2 POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND**

To appreciate the history and the rapid development of Dubai, it is important to discuss the political and economic background of the country first.

#### **2.2.1 History of Dubai**

Over two centuries ago, in 1833 around 800 members of the Bani Yas tribe lived and worked on the main land next to the Creek, governed and ruled by the royal Maktoum family (Sheik Mohammed, 2017; Dubai Government, 2017). During this time, the Creek, known today as Deira Creek, greatly contributed to the economic growth of the community and established profiting businesses such as pearling, fishing and a sea trade (Dubai Government, 2017). In the 1930's, over a century later, Dubai's population had grown to nearly 20 000 people,

of whom many people also worked in the souk (Arabic word for market) in Deira, with over 350 shops, which catered to tourists passing through the port (Dubai Government, 2017). In the 1950's, the late Ruler of Dubai, His Highness Sheik Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum, realised that the port and its infrastructure was too small and underdeveloped to handle the number of ships that needed to pass through the region and as a result slowed down the trading and the economic growth of Dubai (Dubai Government, 2017). The decision was made to dredge the Creek and to build a bigger port, to create ample space for ships that specialise in cargo trading, to pass through the region with the aim of improving its economic growth (Dubai Government, 2017). Dubai only started to experience great economic and infrastructural growth years later when oil was discovered in 1966 (Dubai Government, 2017). During this time, Sheik Rashid, together with the royal council, greatly developed the infrastructure through the building of schools, hospitals, telecommunication network hubs, roads, an airport, and a new harbour - the largest of its kind during that time in Jebel Ali (Dubai Government, 2017). Dubai become renowned for its *“visionary leadership, high-quality infrastructure, an expatriate-friendly environment, zero tax on personal and corporate income and low import duties and quickly became a business and tourism hub for a region that stretches from Egypt to the Indian sub-continent to South Africa (Dubai Government, 2017)”*.

On 2 December 1971, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was established as a sovereign country when six of the independent Emirate states, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al Qwain and Fujairah formed as one federation and on 10 February 1972 Ras Al Khaimah joined the UAE as the seventh Emirate state - governed by Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, then ruler of Abu Dhabi and the President of the UAE, and Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum, ruler of Dubai (Dubai Government, 2017; Sheikh Mohammed, 2017). Along with the royal family it was established that the governing body of the UAE consists of four councils that would govern the country into the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Sheikh Mohammed, 2017). The highest ruling and decision-making body within the country is the Supreme Council, which consists of the seven rulers from each Emirate (Sheikh Mohammed, 2017). The second layer of authority is the President that represents the capital of the UAE, Abu Dhabi, and the Vice President, which represents Dubai (Sheikh Mohammed, 2017). Thirdly, the Cabinet, with over forty members representing the seven Emirate regions, and lastly the Federal Supreme Court, which enforces and protects the constitution of the UAE (Sheikh

Mohammed, 2017). Together, the rulers of the royal family established an independent Arab state, protecting its natural resources, such as oil, from their neighbouring countries and using it to enhance the lives of the local Emiratis through free education, housing, health care and social aid, giving the UAE a fair opportunity to fully develop into a first world country (Sheikh Mohammed, 2017).

In the 1980s to the early 1990s, the government of Dubai realised that to compete with other first world countries and to attract foreign investments and tourism, a drastic and modern infrastructural change would be required (Sheikh Mohammed, 2017). The governing body strategically developed the country into an international tourism hub, transforming the UAE *“from one of the least developed countries in the world to a modern nation state within less than three decades (Sheikh Mohammed, 2017)”*.

### **2.2.2 Modern Dubai**

Dubai is one of the leading cities in modern technology and infrastructure, topping world records with its impressive and luxurious hotels, malls and man-made islands and beaches and unique architecture. It is also renowned for hosting international entertainment and sporting events (Sheikh Mohammed, 2017). More specifically, Dubai is known for its architectural landmarks and tourist attractions such as the Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world with a total of 828m in height as well as the Burj Al Arab, known as one of the most luxurious hotels in the Gulf (Burj Khalifa, 2017; Dubai Government, 2017; Burj Al Arab, 2017).

From a modern leadership perspective, Sheikh Mohammed (2017) ruler of Dubai believes *“humility and tolerance runs deep in the Maktoum family and it is important to serve one’s people”* to focus on fighting poverty, generating better education, and creating opportunities to improve the quality of people’s lives in the UAE, as well as in neighbouring countries. In 2013 the UAE’s population had grown to an astonishing figure of 9.4 million people that include over 200 different nationalities living and working together in harmony, offering residents and businesses a safe environment with low crime rates, tax free salaries, a well-developed and modern infrastructure and efficient, conservative and fair governance (UAE

Government, 2017). Dubai, along with the private sector, is focused on providing people with excellent living conditions and a good quality life that is seldom possible in other parts of the world. This model is focused on “*excellent infrastructural facilities, low crime, clean environment, tolerance and cultural environment, cosmopolitan life style, modern public administration, availability of a wide range of consumer goods and services, a mild winter and clean, palm fringed beaches* (Dubai Government, 2017).”

One of Dubai’s key advantages is that the country is located strategically on the world map, which overlaps with the business hours and time zones of Europe, Africa, Asia and neighbouring Arab countries in the Gulf, creating an international hub for trade and exports in natural resources such as oil (Dubai Government, 2017). Dubai is also one of the most visited and accessible countries in the world, providing the international community access to 120 shipping lines and 85 airlines that link Dubai directly and indirectly with 130 other global destinations, giving it the opportunity to encourage tourism and business development in the region (Dubai Government, 2017).

The UAE also benefits from the pre-determined exchange rate to the US dollar, \$1 = 3.678 AED, giving the country more economic stability and security in the international market (Dubai Government, 2017). The economy of Dubai only gains 3% margin from oil exports year on year, which will not sustain the economy for much longer. However, 30% is gained from *tourist attractions with the support from manufacturing and trading and other sectors such as hospitality, technology and transportation* (Sheikh Mohammed, 2017)”. Dubai also hosts various international sporting events, such as the Dubai Desert Classic Golf Tour, the Dubai Open for tennis and the Dubai World Cup for horse racing, attracting thousands of tourists and supporters to the country every year (Dubai Government, 2017).

It is evident that Dubai is focused on being a leader in modern technology and infrastructure development and takes great initiative to ensure that the local and international community can benefit from their modern and future focused leadership, infrastructure and corporate governance.

### 2.2.3 UAE corporate governance

According to the King IV Report (2016:20) good corporate governance and ethical business management is essentially about effective and efficient corporate leadership that drives organisations to be competitive in a global market; to behave honestly and with integrity; to address social concerns through responsible activities; and to be transparent and accountable for all actions taken on behalf of an organisation. The main purpose of organised corporate governance is to implement and cultivate an ethical culture and excellent business performance through strategic planning, policy and decision-making to ensure business units take full ownership and deliver on business objectives (King IV Report, 2016: 21).

In 2017, the UAE ranked 10th globally in the IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook (published by a Swiss research group at the IMD Business School since 1989) and surpassed countries such as Germany, Canada, Norway and Finland, (Gulfnews, 2018). Each country is evaluated by using 260 indicators, which include data about national employment, trade statistics and the opinion of over 6 000 corporate citizens on the quality of life of employees, as well as the general perception on corruption and environmental impact (Gulfnews, 2018). Hong Kong ranked first; followed by Switzerland in second place; and Singapore in third place (Gulfnews, 2018). Countries like the UAE that ranked highly, was the result of strategic governance that created business-friendly environments and encouraged organisational efficiency and productivity; while low ranking countries such as the Ukraine (60), Brazil (61) and Venezuela (63) received low scores due to political and economic instability and poor management (Gulfnews, 2018). In the Gulf region the UAE achieved the highest position next to Qatar in 17th and Saudi Arabia in 36th place, making the UAE the most attractive place for international organisations to establish their brands in the Middle East (Gulfnews, 2018). Every year the UAE celebrates its independence as the country with the following milestones and achievements as a nation (The Gulf Today, 2018).

Developed country: The UAE was ranked as one of the most developed countries in the world, because of *“happy and content citizens and other residents, as well as sustainable growth in many other fields, including the economy, trade, investment and communications, in addition to information, technology, tourism, infrastructure and human and social*

*development. It has also shown impressive growth in gender equality and in the political and economic empowerment of women (The Gulf Today, 2018)."*

Economic development: UAE's GDP grew from AED 6.5 billion in 1971 to AED 1.54 trillion in 2014. The Gross National Expenditure for the governments' annual budget increased from AED 201 million in 1971, to AED 100 billion in 2015, indicating the large and rapid shift in the development of the country to provide quality infrastructure and services for Emiratis and expat residents (The Gulf Today, 2018).

Strategic governance, leadership and partnerships: The founding fathers of the UAE, namely, Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan and Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed al Maktoum, established the country in 1971 and built its foundation through strategic partnerships with countries around the globe and accordingly formed the local economy and political policies to serve the interest of their nation, while displaying cultural openness and hospitality to other nationalities to help build a stable haven for people in the Middle East (The Gulf Today, 2018). The current rulers: 1) President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Commander of the Armed Forces, 2) His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, have further developed the nation into a first world country by establishing diplomatic relationships with over 190 countries; having over 50 investment treaties, 168 air transport and 75 bilateral tax agreements with nations across the globe (The Gulf Today, 2018). The UAE rules have managed to build a world-class infrastructure and economy that is known for its luxurious airports, mass scaled ports and shipping fleets and the Middle East business hub for over 25% of the world's top 500 largest global organisations (The Gulf Today, 2018). President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan said: *"Our economy is constantly evolving, and indicators of security and stability in the UAE are among the best in the world, and the well-being of our citizens is our top priority (The Gulf Today, 2018)"*.

Global Competitiveness Report: Among 137 countries, the UAE achieved 17th place in 2017, with Switzerland, United States and Singapore taking the top three spots, indicating that the country is highly rated on strategic governance and leadership that drive economic growth, competitiveness and productivity (Global Competitiveness Report, 2018). The UAE

is considered to be a world-class country in terms of infrastructure, such as the quality of roads, airports and government facilities, low crime, effective financial governance, trade policies, customs procedures and an excellent place to attract a highly trained and experienced skill force from around the world to boost the economy (The Gulf Today, 2018). The report has also identified that the UAE will have to significantly invest in digital technology and upgrading education systems to be more competitive on a global stage in the future (Global Competitiveness Report, 2018). According to the Global Competitiveness Report (2018) economic development requires policy-makers to have a 'human-centric' approach that promotes long-term sustainability, prosperity and is focussed on society's welfare by providing the best possible health, education and security, which goes beyond the measurement of the country's GDP status (Global Competitiveness Report, 2018).

The UAE ranked first place in the following categories: 1) 'efficiency of government spending'; 2) 'annual inflation rate'; 3) 'absence of effect of taxation on investment of taxation on incentives to invest'; 4) 'quality of roads'; 5) 'Tuberculosis incidents'; and 6) government procurement of advanced technology products (Global Competitiveness Report, 2018). With the announcement of the 2018 Global Competitiveness Report results His Highness Sheik Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Rules of Dubai and UAE Minister of Finance said: *"These achievements and first place rankings are a source of pride for our country and its citizens, emphasising the great trust international organisations have in the UAE government. Such acknowledgments also recognise the success of the efforts exerted by the Ministry to improve the administrative structure and financial and monetary policies of the nation in accordance with the highest international standards. Since its establishment, the ministry has built itself upon organised and directed action, accurate data, and realistic economic forecasts to develop and implement financial and monetary policies that meet the aspirations of our government, our people and that ensure a prosperous future for our children"* (Arabian Business, 2018).

The Human Development Report: Among 188 countries the UAE is positioned at 42 in 2015 on the Human Development Index (published by the United Nations and considered as a leader in human development) which stipulates that the average schooling years of the population are 13.3 years for people aged 25 years or older; secondly, the average life expectancy is 76.6 years old; and thirdly, that citizens can enjoy a decent standard of living

compared to other nations, especially in the Middle East (The Human Development Report, 2018; The Gulf Today, 2018). Furthermore, the report also highlights issues such as the empowerment of women through education and the job market, gender discrimination, as well as social restrictions imposed by family or political legislation (The National, 2018, The Human Development Report, 2018). In 2018 the UAE ranked 46th place (also the highest ranking for an Arab country) among 188 countries for gender equality, followed by Bahrain (48) and Saudi Arabia (50) (The National, 2018, The Human Development Report, 2018). In April 2018 the UAE Government announced equal pay for women and men through newly drafted legislation, and accordingly, The National Newspaper published the following statement from His Highness Shaik Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai who said: *“With the force of the law and wisdom, there are no exceptions in providing equal opportunities between the sexes. Our Constitution includes the equal rights and duties of genders, and we seek to enhance, enforce and guarantee this constitutional right through the new law”* (Gulf News, 2018).

The Human Development Report (2018) said: *“The UAE attained remarkable achievement and progress in the empowerment of Emirati women, narrowing the gender inequality gap compared to its regional and global scale with a great development in women’s education at rates that exceeded those of men. The ratio of woman’s representation in the labour market is still below aspirations, especially in the field of vocational and technical jobs, as well as the legislative and higher administration positions.”* In response to the results of the Human Development report, the UAE Government entity, named ‘Gender Balance Council’ launched ‘The Gender Balance Guide: Actions for UAE Organisations’ in association with the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to empower the private and public sector to create equality in their workforce (Gulf News, 2018).

United Nations World Happiness Report: In 2018, among 156 countries, Finland ranked as the happiest country globally and the UAE ranked 20th (World Happiness Index, 2018). The UAE is also ranked as the happiest Arab country, which is remarkable, considering that neighbouring Gulf countries Qatar (32), Saudi Arabia (33), Bahrain (43) and Kuwait (45) are positioned lower on the World Happiness Index (Khaleej Times, 2018; World Happiness Index, 2018; UAE Government of Future Happiness, 2018). The UAE ranked high in the following categories: “personal safety, basic requirements and opportunities, access to

higher education, personal freedom and freedom of choice (The Gulf Today, 2018)". In 2016 the UAE Government appointed the country's first Minister of Happiness and Well-being to promote community positivity through programmes that include happiness in policies and services of all government entities; to encourage communities to live a lifestyle that is positive; and lastly, to govern the measurement and reporting of happiness in society through annual indexes, surveys and reports to evaluate happiness in all community segments and corporate environments (UAE Government of Future Happiness, 2018). The UAE's population consists of 87% international expatriates, and with the announcement, the national newspaper, Khaleej Times, asked multiple residents why they believe the country is one of the happiest countries in the world. Accordingly, the top response was safety, especially when considering how unstable other Arab countries are due to political conflicts (Khaleej Times, 2018).

Khaleej Times (2018) reported the following comments from UAE residents as to why they think the UAE is a happy country:

- *Egyptian Nourhan Maher who's been residing in UAE for the past 24 years said it is by far the "best country to live in. Everything is there for you with full convenience, accessibility and safety, what more could one ask for?*
- *Maher, who has been to many countries around the world, said UAE is a place where authorities make sure they implement law and justice regardless of race, religion or colour and maintain discipline. "Only in the UAE you can leave your bag temporarily in a coffee shop and come back to find it," she added.*
- *Indian Swati Sengupta who said UAE is a great place that grants equal opportunities especially for women. "Coming from India, the level of security I enjoy here for both work and pleasure, in the day as well as at night, is incredible."*
- *Palestinian-Canadian Mousa Nimer, UAE resident since 1996, said the remarkable code of ethics, discipline, tolerance, safety and cleanliness is what kept him in the country. He said leaders clearly listen to the needs of the population and provide opportunities accordingly.*
- *Dubai-resident for the last 26 years, Farah Nada, from Egypt, said two reasons lie behind her happiness in the country. "I always feel safe and because there is such diversity of experience. I hope these two factors never change."*

Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Report: For the fifth consecutive year in 2018 the UAE Government maintained its reputation for being the ‘world’s largest donor (AED 19.3 billion) for foreign aid’ in relation to its gross national income of 1.31% (Gulf News, 2018). Gulf News (2018) reported the following statement that was published on His Highness Shaik Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai’s Twitter page: *“For the fifth consecutive year, the UAE is the largest donor of humanitarian aid in the world, relative to its national income, where our assistance reached more than 147 countries. The UAE’s generosity is for the entire humanity... This is the nation which was founded by the late Shaikh Zayed Bin Sultan”*. The OECD is a forum that was established in the year 2000 to bring world leaders including corporate citizens and the academia together to find solutions for global economic and social issues that divide societies and countries and to focus on the common things that brings people together (OECD Forum, 2018).

The three issues that have been globally identified to resolve are: 1) international co-operation; 2) inclusive growth; 3) and digitalisation (OECD Forum, 2018). The international co-operation strategy is focussed on stakeholder relationships that contribute to finding the best possible solutions on global issues. such as: *“anti-corruption, development, digitalisation, climate change, migration, taxation, trade and the need to rebuild trust in each other and democratic institutions (OECD Forum, 2018)”*. Furthermore, stakeholders are pressured for limiting environmental impact by finding solutions to produce low carbon energy and for protecting biodiversity through sustainable conservation and the use of ecosystems, as well as investing in data management to ensure both the private and public sectors to empower communities and to improve quality of life through effective government services and access to information (OECD Forum, 2018).

Secondly, the inclusive growth strategy is focussed on *“opportunity for all through better access to education, employment, healthcare and housing, making sure that growth is truly inclusive”* as well as to *“promote gender equality and diversity, migrants’ integration, and intergenerational equity (OECD Forum, 2018)”*. Globally, governments and corporate citizens need to find solutions for communities that face issues such as mass migrant integration, for example the refugee crisis in Europe, the ‘urban-rural divide’ between the rich and poor; and how to close the gap to ensure fair distribution of opportunities, as well

as unemployment for people under the age of 25 years old who have lost their faith in governmental institutions and ultimately engage with these communities effectively to help formulate appropriate solutions that are right for them (OECD Forum, 2018).

The third and final strategy is to focus on digitalisation transformation to empower communities by offering workers flexibility, especially for the disabled, managing bias HR recruitment and evaluations as well as closing the gap on the digital divide by discussing legislation on digital rights to promote skills, create jobs and sustain the economy (OECD Forum, 2018).

As for the Gulf region the following trends are considered as CSR priorities including (Sustainability Academy, 2018):

- Climate change COP21 pledge: In 2015 an agreement was signed by 195 countries including six Gulf countries, namely: UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain to commit to a long-term action plan to limit global warming. The UAE pledged to invest in 24% clean energy by 2021; and neighboring country Oman pledged a 2% decrease in harmful pollution by 2030.
- Sustainability reporting: only 30% of the largest companies in the UAE produced sustainability reports in 2015 with a slow increase of 5% year on year. According to the Global Reporting Initiative's (GRI) report named 'Sustainability and Reporting Trends in 2025: Preparing for the Future' organisations will be obligated to report on CSR because they will be held accountable by stakeholder groups and organisational leaders more than ever before. Business owners and decision-makers will be obligated to smartly incorporate sustainability practices into their strategy, policies and practices and to communicate openly and honestly with internal and external stakeholders in real-time to give all stakeholder-groups a fair opportunity to raise their concerns for example on issues such as climate change. By the year 2025 data technology will support organisations to be more transparent with reporting throughout the year, instead of only publishing results annually.
- CSR is only sustainable and perceived as genuine when organisations purposely choose to invest in activities and incorporate it into their annual budget plan and activities. According to a survey conducted by Ernst & Young and GreenBiz Group,

only 65% of organisations confirmed that their CFO (Chief Financial Officer) is actively involved in sustainability issues and therefore organisations in the UAE will trend towards integrating their monthly and yearly financial reporting with CSR activities to further engage CFO's and to ensure they have a more prominent role within the organisation's sustainability strategy to ultimately enforce a CSR corporate culture.

- Measuring sustainability and corporate responsibility will become a necessity especially for the Gulf region where exponential population and economic growth is expected, which means that governments will be at risk in terms of power and water supply, as well as high food prices. Accordingly, corporate citizens need to contribute to sustainable growth in the following ways: incorporate energy-efficient practices, invest in clean fuel and renewable energy that is efficient, as well as water desalination and agricultural land internationally.
- Gulf countries are already investing in green real estate projects, that are classified as low-cost operational construction, that is free from pollution and sustained through renewable energy. Dubai is leading the way, as the Emirate already owns 40% of the total green buildings in the city through its government buildings and accordingly encourages the private sector to follow in its footsteps through municipality regulations.
- Gulf countries own almost 40% of the world's oil and 22% gas reserves, and yet have already consumed over 74% with another projected increase of up to 15% by the year 2020. The UAE has committed to the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change and plans to produce 7% of its energy from renewable energy in Abu Dhabi by 2020 and 5% in Dubai by 2030.
- Finally, governments across the Gulf region have incorporated legislation to regulate the economic, social, environmental impact on society to achieve the UAE's vision for 2021 and to rely on corporate citizens such as Spinneys Dubai to align their business strategy accordingly to achieve this goal and to benefit from it by setting themselves apart from their competitors.

The following UAE Government initiatives have been established to encourage CSR activities and to drive CSR excellence (The Year of Giving, 2017; Emirates Business, 2017):

- CSR workshops and Events: To engage with the business community and to provide training programmes on how to establish a responsible corporate culture
- CSR Smart Platform: An advanced communication tool for organisations to align themselves with the government on projects that need urgent support
- CSR Coordination Forum: To connect the private sector and non-profit or charity organisations to form partnerships to *“exchange information, agree on priorities and manage joint investments”*
- CSR Research and National Statistics: Annual reporting will capture data on CSR initiatives to share findings on new industry trends and to share best practices.
- CSR National Index: Annually, the government will rank organisations who actively participate in CSR activities to recognise top performance and to encourage active participation.
- CSR Mandatory Disclosure: To renew annual organisational trade licenses; the government will require full disclosure on CSR contributions (The Year of Giving, 2017; Emirates Business, 2017).
- Responsible Procurement Initiative: The UAE Government will reward highly rated CSR contributing organisations with supplier contracts.
- Driving CSR PR Media Coverage: To support the national agenda the media and social influencers are encouraged to create awareness; to engage with the community; and to foster a love for community-volunteering.

The researcher will recommend the above CSR activities in Chapter 7 to Spinneys Dubai to ensure that their objectives are in line with the UAE Government’s CSR strategy for corporate citizenship; to ensure that they lead the way in the UAE on CSR strategy; and to gain competitive advantage as a community retailer.

According to Dubai Customs (2017), the Dubai CSR Department, together with Community Affairs and the Government Partnership Division, is responsible for the planning, implementing and monitoring of CSR compliance, risk management, environmental management and social development management. This is achieved by encouraging and enforcing local businesses to integrate or accommodate issues such as religion and diversity within the community, marketplace or workplace through their business operations and communication with their stakeholders to benefit the greater society (Dubai Customs, 2017). The foundation of the Dubai Custom's CSR policy is based on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, enforcing continued improvement in human values, environmental practices, business ethics and working conditions to establish sustainable growth in the region (Dubai Customs, 2017).

CSR activities in the UAE are highly motivated by Islamic principles or values that focus on philanthropy - investing and contributing responsibly to the social welfare of the people living in the UAE (Dubai Government, 2017). The country's CSR values benchmark international standards and are focused on the triple bottom line, including the workplace, environment, and community which greatly affects the relationships of stakeholders and overall business ethics and operations (Dubai Customs, 2017). According to Dubai Customs (2017) the government's commitment to CSR is demonstrated through continued improvement, good values, responsible business ethics, best environmental practices and providing good working conditions for all with regards to current and future sustainable growth opportunities within the country. The UAE Government provides the public with a well-developed infrastructure, a variety of municipal services, education, healthcare and a free income tax to ensure economic and social stability and to encourage the private sector to contribute to and support CSR initiatives such as the Emirates Foundation, Dubai Cares, International Humanitarian City and Dubai Chamber (Dubai Government, 2017; Ronnegard, 2009).

A major CSR topic for the UAE Government is the use of clean energy, which is frequently promoted and encouraged among organisations and the larger community, to protect and preserve the environment for the future (Dubai Global Energy Forum, 2013). According to the Chairman of the Supreme Council for Energy, Saeed Al Maktoum, clean energy is important for social and economic development, not only for this region but also for countries around the globe. They, therefore, encourage the international community to come together

to discuss and discover possible solutions for alternative energy generation, while addressing environmental issues such as the decarbonisation of fossil fuels (Dubai Global Energy Forum, 2017). The forum governs international practices and organisational policies for oil, gas, clean coal and renewable energy; the peaceful and responsible use of nuclear energy; as well as the way in which organisations could invest in sustainable development programmes to drive and encourage the use of clean energy (Dubai Global Energy Forum, 2017). According to Dubai Integrated Energy Strategy for 2030, a strategic long-term plan has been established to “*secure the sustainable supply of energy, water, power and fuel, while meeting sustainable and environmental objectives by limiting and measuring consumption through pricing strategies, policies and regulations and encouraging the development and use of solar, clean coal and other renewable sources of energy* (Dubai Global Energy Forum, 2017)”.

It can be argued that the government regulates and enforces good corporate governance through regulated laws to enable organisations such as Spinneys Dubai to strategise, implement and practise responsible business activities, so that top management can be held accountable for all decisions made or actions taken. Good corporate governance can enforce or motivate the private sector to participate in achieving the same governmental goals and objectives for social, environmental and economic development or to align their CSR strategies with the development priorities of the state (Zappalá, 2003:2).

Research has shown that the UAE is highly dependent on the skills, knowledge and expertise of expatriates, who account for 80% of the population and make up 95% of the UAE’s workforce, to develop and implement CSR initiatives (Ronnegard, 2009, Dubai Government, 2017). The Chamber’s Centre for Responsible Business established that, among managers working in the UAE, 52% were highly aware of concepts relating to CSR, but only 30% of organisations in the UAE actively participated in CSR initiatives (Gulf News, 2017). The current low level of CSR involvement is a result of CSR being a relatively new concept to the Middle East. It was only introduced within the last decade by expats or organisations from Western countries (Ronnegard, 2009). To regulate and implement CSR initiatives within the region, the Dubai Government has appointed the organisation Dubai Chamber in 2004 as a centre for responsible business development to recognise and award

CSR best practices and to educate organisations on sustainable development, ethical standards and corporate governance (Dubai Government, 2017).

The Department of Economic Development, Dubai, enforces good corporate governance for small and medium enterprises through the following CSR principles (Dubai Government, 2012):

- *“Adopt a formal corporate governance framework outlining roles of all key stakeholders”*
- *“Conduct a succession planning process”*
- *“Establish a timely, open and transparent flow of information with shareholders”*
- *“Set up a formal Board of Directors to accompany the growth of the company”*
- *“Develop a clear mandate for the Board of Directors to oversee operational performance”*
- *“Maintain a credible book of accounts, annually audited by an external auditor”*
- *“Set up an internal control framework and conduct a regular review of risk”*
- *“Recognise the needs of stakeholders”*
- *“Formulate a framework setting out the family's relationship with the business”*

Spinneys Dubai can be evaluated for good corporate governance according to these principles; therefore, it is the responsibility of top management to implement and enforce strategic management policies, decisions and activities to be aligned with the UAE Government's expectations. For the purpose of this study, it can also be argued that Spinneys Dubai should enforce and apply these principles to the strategic management of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge as a CSR activity.

Among the top CSR priorities within the UAE are philanthropy, Emiratisation (employment of UAE nationals within the private sector), environmental impact, safety and the health of the community (Ronnegard, 2009). A major health concern within the UAE is obesity. According to Bin Zaal *et al.* (2009:437) obesity, especially among children in the UAE, have drastically increased over the past few decades and show much higher levels or dangerous life-threatening cases when compared to America and Europe. With the great economic construction boom, that started over two decades ago, obesity became a major problem in

the UAE as a result of easy availability of fast foods, unhealthy food consumption, inactivity and passive exercise patterns, which are similar to the unhealthy habits of Western countries like America (Bin Zaal *et al.*, 2009:438).

To promote a healthy lifestyle and educate the community on how to manage obesity and related diseases such as diabetes, the UAE Government has made significant contributions to provide financial support to a variety of CSR sport initiatives for walking, running, cycling and swimming to enforce sport development throughout the region and to target male and female Emiratis to be active (Dubai Sports Council, 2017). A variety of national and international sport events are supported by the Dubai Government to bring the community together and to establish a passion for sport activities including the Dubai Marathon, Dubai Duty Free Tennis, Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, Dubai International Horse Racing Championship and Dubai Desert Classic Golf Tournament (Dubai Sports Council, 2017).

It is evident that CSR is still relatively new to the region, suggesting that not all organisations are aligned with or follow the government's CSR business programme for sustainable development. It needs to be determined how Spinneys Dubai contributes to improving the overall health and fitness of the community in which they operate.

#### **2.2.4 UAE retail market**

On a global front and especially in the UAE, the overall retail industry has made a strong recovery since the economic crisis between 2008 and 2010 (Alpen Capital, 2011:5). With many contributing factors such as "*high disposable incomes, expanding population base, growing aspirations, a consistent flow of tourists, financial support from the government and private investments,*" the UAE retail industry has transformed immensely from traditional souks and individual stores, to large and modern one-stop-shop malls that contain hypermarkets, consumer goods, and family entertainment centers (Alpen Capital, 2011:5). In contrast with developing nations who face great economic uncertainty, extreme poverty, and poor infrastructure development, the UAE has become a leader in providing people with the latest modern technology and infrastructure to improve their everyday living and to

develop a need for buying the latest trends, modern technology, and luxurious brands available in the market (Alpen Capital, 2011:5).

The UAE is considered the best country in the Gulf for retail and dominates the industry with its multiple luxurious shopping malls and annual shopping festivals such as the Dubai Shopping Festival and Dubai Summer Surprises that greatly contributes to the total sales of the retail sector every year (Alpen Capital, 2011:14; Alpen Capital, 2015:11). The total net worth of retail sales in 2010 was estimated at USD 46.8 billion, gradually increasing every year at 7.6% year on year to USD 52.1 billion in 2013 which contributed to 9.0% of the country's GDP (Alpen Capital, 2015:10).

With the opening of The Dubai Mall in 2008, also known as the largest mall in the world, Dubai capitalised on creating and transforming shopping into a unique experience that offers customers an all-under-one-roof shopping destination (Alpen Capital, 2011:14). The Dubai Mall has over 1 200 retail stores to choose from, including a large Gold Souk, luxurious clothing and household brands, an additional large fast food court, family entertainment centers, restaurants and a Waitrose Supermarket (Alpen Capital, 2011:14). Since the Expo 2020 announcement, the UAE accelerated their spending on construction, including new malls, hotels, transportation and infrastructure to ensure the country is at the forefront of the retail industry (Alpen Capital, 2015:11).

Catering to the needs of over 200 different nationalities living in Dubai, UAE food retailers need to stay on trend and compete against food retail giants such as the American retailer Walmart, French retailer Carrefour, German retailer Metro AG and British retailers Tesco and Waitrose (Alpen Capital, 2011:8). To provide food for the UAE market and to compete with the standards of global food retailers are challenging, as the desert environment with its extreme hot climate and poor soil conditions limits the sustainable production of a variety of foods and forces retailers to import from around the globe against fluctuating food prices (Alpen Capital, 2011:8). Despite the environmental challenges and unpredictable food prices, in 2010 UAE food retailers such as supermarkets and hypermarkets gained a generous market share of 41.5% with the total sales of USD 19.4 billion and growing annually (Alpen Capital, 2011:14). Conveniently, UAE food retailers also benefit from its strategic location on the world map and can import a variety of products within eight hours

of flight from some of the major parts of the world, making it easier to cater to the needs of the local market (Alpen Capital, 2011:14).

Over the past decade, UAE food hyper and supermarkets have sustainably grown to reach new developing communities and to prepare for the high demand during the six-month period of the Expo 2020 (Alpen Capital, 2015:44). Multiple retailers, including Spinneys, Carrefour, Geant, Lulu Hypermarket, Choithrams and Al Maya have adapted their business models to accommodate people's high-paced daily lives by offering convenient ready-made foods, smaller outlets in newly developing communities, as well as online shopping solutions like click-and-collect or home deliveries (Alpen Capital, 2015:44). Shoppers, especially in the GCC region, are considered as well travelled and educated; expect excellent products and customer service; and are considered to be internet and tech-savvy, "*showing record growth of 1,404.7% in the number of internet users between December 2000 and June 2011, outperforming the global rate of 487.7% (Alpen Capital, 2011:47)*". The need for online grocery shopping and home deliveries has also grown rapidly in the UAE market, providing consumers with a service that offers convenience and saves time and effort, especially for people who have limited access to transportation or have physical disabilities (Alpen Capital, 2011:48). From a business perspective, retailers gain the advantage when online shoppers browse through their website, introducing them to a whole range of products on offer, including promotions or the launch of new products in-store (Alpen Capital, 2011:48).

Food retailers also have the responsibility to promote healthy food choices, and stock healthy options that are organic; gluten-free; wheat-free; low in fat, sugar and salt such as health bars; and freshly prepared salads, vegetables and cooked meals that offer convenience and save time (Berge Farrell Design, 2013). To gain a competitive advantage, food retailers Pick and Pay, South Africa, and Carrefour in France not only promote healthy food choices, but also focus on promoting a healthy and active lifestyle through the sponsorship of sporting events such as the cycling events The Cape Town Cycle Tour and Tour de France, to encourage community participation in these two countries respectively (Carrefour, 2017; Pick and Pay, 2017). Spinneys Dubai has also followed the trend of sport sponsorship and the promoting of a healthy and active lifestyle with the initiation of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge in 2010 (Spinneys Dubai, 2017).

Another exciting trend for shoppers in the UAE is the use of smartphones and tablets to shop online or to use it while in-store to browse through the various categories, comparing prices and reading more about products before buying it (Alpen Capital, 2011:49). Mobile commerce is an excellent strategy to create a distinctive and unique shopping experience and to build trusting relationships with customers. The use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have also shown promising results and has transformed into a popular platform for food retailers to interact and engage with customers more informally about products and recipes and to attract the attention of potential future shoppers (Alpen Capital, 2011:50). Retailers have the opportunity to use social media to their advantage by promoting products, providing customer service, addressing complaints, understanding customer needs and perceptions and to use these insights to make strategic decisions (Alpen Capital, 2011:50).

It is evident that the UAE offers customers a unique and competitive retail market that consists of the latest product, communication and marketing trends and where customers have a certain expectation that retailers will behave responsibly towards the well-being of the community and the environment in which they operate. Food or grocery retailers have an important role to play in the everyday lives of the people living in their community and need to initiate interactive communication channels, platforms or activities to build long-term and trustworthy relationships to gain competitive advantage.

### **2.2.5 Spinneys Dubai**

Spinneys is a locally owned and managed UAE food retailer with a rich history within the gulf and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2012 (Superbrands, 2012:95). In the early 1960s, a significant number of people were already living and working in the surrounding area of the Deira Creek, and during that time, Arthur Rawdon Spinneys identified the pressing need and demand for fresh imported food (Superbrands, 2012:95). In 1961, Arthur Rawdon opened the first Spinneys store in Al Nasr Square in Deira, back then known as “The Frozen Chicken,” selling fresh food and frozen products and catering to the upper-class community of Dubai, such as the royal Maktoum family (Superbrands, 2012:95).

Today, Spinneys is a premium supermarket and owns over 60 stores that are strategically located in various communities across the seven Emirates, offering convenience, customer service, food safety and quality, which is also the foundation and tagline for the Spinneys brand – “The Fresher Experience” (Superbrands, 2012:94). Spinneys caters to the needs of over 200 different nationalities and serves over 60 000 customers on a daily basis, offering “*a wide variety of products ranging from fresh meat and fish, produce and delicatessen items to packaged food, home necessities and outdoor products* (Superbrands, 2012:94)”. The Spinneys senior management team is responsible for the effective and efficient management of over 3 000 Spinneys employees, along with a network of multiple local and international suppliers, to ensure that Spinneys continues to “*exceed customer expectations in terms of service, quality and range on a daily basis* (Superbrands, 2012:95)”. Spinneys also follows a strict product sourcing policy that focuses on building long-term relationships with suppliers that meet local and international food standards and are pre-approved by the Spinneys Food Safety and Hygiene department, through regular audits (Spinneys Dubai, 2017).

To achieve the efficient and timely replenishment of products, Spinneys manages a complex supply chain that consists of state-of-the-art meat, bakery and deli production facilities or factories where products are specially prepared and packed at a central location and dispatched to stores across the region (Superbrands, 2012:95). The Spinneys Central Warehouse, managed by the Logistics Department, handles local or imported fresh, frozen and ambient products where modern and regulated cooling storage units are used to store and organise products temporarily before dispatching and transporting it to stores through a highly organised delivery system. Stores are also considered to be highly organised and have their own in-house bakery, butchery and deli sections that are managed by store managers, well-trained staff and food specialists, known among customers for their excellent customer service and friendly nature (Superbrands, 2012:95).

As a food retailer, Spinneys aims to effectively engage and build relationships with customers, especially living in the UAE, and to achieve a renowned reputation for offering specialised food knowledge and inspiration on topics such as healthy eating and well-being, recipes, tips and easy meal solutions through their monthly Spinneys Food magazine, website, food blog and social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

(Spinneys Dubai, 2017). As a locally owned business with stores located in multiple key communities across the UAE, Spinneys believes it is important to support the needs and interest of the people located in the area in which they operate (Superbrands, 2012:94). As a community-based supermarket, Spinneys believes in maintaining the environment and encouraging customers to use eco-friendly products, as well as the various recycling centres available across the region (Superbrands, 2012:94). Spinneys generously makes donations to many local and international charities through fundraising events such as the Spinneys Charity Golf Day, and actively promotes health and well-being through the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge to encourage customers to be active and live a healthy life style (Superbrands, 2012:94).

To gain competitive advantage in the UAE food retail market, Spinneys continuously needs to monitor local competitor and French food retailer, Carrefour. In 1959 Carrefour opened its first supermarket in Annecy, France and establishment the first hypermarket in Europe in 1963 (Carrefour, 2017). In the 1980's Carrefour introduced its own private labelled products which made the company a leading pioneer in product development and marketing and later in the 1990's Carrefour expanded their business to other international markets in Europe, Latin America, and Asia and in recent years in the Middle East (Carrefour, 2017). In 1995 Carrefour opened the first hypermarket in the UAE in Deira City Centre, Dubai, and further expanded the business to other Middle East countries, North Africa and Central Asia (Carrefour, 2017). In 2016, the giant retailer boasted with a total 11 953 stores spread across 30 countries globally (Carrefour, 2017).

Carrefour is the largest retailer in Europe and the second largest international retailer, after the American retailer Walmart, and is renowned for being a leader in quality and low-priced products (Carrefour, 2017; Gulfnews, 2013). Part of the winning Carrefour marketing strategy is to offer private labelled products that create brand loyalty and financial growth as well as a "*wide range of low-priced, quality choices in food, personal care, communication, entertainment and household goods,*" that are available in Carrefour Hypermarkets, Supermarkets, as well as small convenient stores located in key communities (Carrefour, 2013).

Carrefour has successfully established a reputation for being a good corporate citizen and contributing to the sustainable development of its business and employees, the community and the environment in which operates (Carrefour CSR Report, 2012:52). As a group, Carrefour contributes to the sustainable development of the community and the environment through the Carrefour Corporate Foundation, while stores help to drive these initiatives through donation campaigns; support the development of farm production; promote career opportunities; provide food and supplies when environmental disasters occur; and manage food-aid programmes in poor communities across the globe (Carrefour CSR Report, 2012:52). According to the Carrefour Foundation Annual Report (2013: 5) the retailer focuses greatly on food solidarity and the education of healthy eating and have donated over 77 million meals, 30 tonnes of essential supplies and 300 000 litres of water to poor communities in 2013 alone. The healthy eating programmes, funded by the Carrefour Corporate Foundation, have reached over 33 000 children in 136 various schools with the presentation of 500 workshops to teach children and their parents how to eat healthy foods and balanced meals and to encourage them to exercise and be active (Carrefour Foundation Annual Report, 2013:23). The Carrefour Corporate Foundation also focuses on sustainable development programmes that encourage Carrefour employees to participate in professional integration programmes, stop food wastage and support humanitarian aid, while partnering with non-profit organisations to help resolve these issues in the regions they operate in (Carrefour Foundation Annual Report, 2013:5).

Carrefour cares about the environment and has committed to reduce its impact on the planet by managing initiatives that are focussed on climate change and preserving natural resources (Carrefour CSR Report, 2012:24). The French retailer has started to develop stores that are eco-friendlier, using less water, energy and carbon dioxide, while encouraging recycling and effective food waste management on store level (Carrefour CSR Report, 2012:24). Carrefour also has strict policies on responsible sourcing and commits to food programmes such as sustainable fishing, preserving species that are endangered by gradually discontinuing stock, and refraining from selling it to customers (Carrefour, 2017).

Part of the Carrefour marketing and communication strategy is to invest in the sport sponsorship of the Tour de France, a global sport and commercialised cycling event that is supported and followed by millions of people, such as cyclists, sponsors, the media and

fans, over a period of three weeks (Carrefour, 2017; BBC News, 2013). To justify the return on investment, the Tour de France provides sponsors or local businesses with an international platform to create brand awareness and exposure that is observed by millions of people or spectators through tourism, television, internet and advertisements (BBC News, 2013). The sport sponsorship approach, along with modern technology such as a website, social media and online shopping through the use of the internet and mobile applications for smartphones have made it easier for Carrefour to engage and communicate with customers more frequently, efficiently and effectively (Carrefour CSR Report, 2012:23; Carrefour 2017).

It is evident that both retailers, Spinneys and Carrefour, care about their customers, the environment and the sustainable development of their business; however, Carrefour appears to be more transparent about their CSR activities through their annual CSR and Corporate Foundation Reports.

### **2.2.6 Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency**

Promoseven is one of the most reputable agencies in the Middle East and specialises in sporting event management, marketing, public relations, media operations and sponsorship sales for world renowned sporting events such as the Fina Arena Swimming World Cup, IRB Sevens World Cup, Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championship, Emirate Airlines Dubai Rugby Sevens, Fina Midea Diving World Series as well as The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, 2017).

In 2010 Promoseven, partnered with Spinneys Dubai and agreed that the retailer would be the title sponsor and Promoseven would take full ownership of managing the event, from operations and logistics to marketing and public relations; and to stakeholder management (Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, 2017; The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge UAE, 2017). Promoseven has worked closely with the local authorities, including The Dubai Sports Council, UAE Cycling Federation, The Dubai Police and RTA (Road Traffic Authority) to secure event approvals and the safety of the cyclists, not only during events, but also during weekly rides, and as a result opened two community cycling venues in 2014 to

promote health and fitness in the region (Promoseven Sports, 2017; The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge UAE, 2017). The 86km Dubai Cycle Path in Al Qudra was one of the first of its kind to open in the region, followed by the Nadd al Sheba Cycle Park; built to ensure that cyclists can exercise in a safe and stress-free environment. In partnership with Promoseven, Spinneys Dubai used the cycling community platforms to promote their campaign 'Eat Well, Live Well' to engage with the local community, encouraging them to live a healthy and active lifestyle (The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge UAE, 2017).

Weekly, monthly and annual rides managed by Promoseven:

- Friday and Saturday social rides with 600 cyclists on average and managed by Promoseven's Cycle Safe Dubai initiative independently at The Dubai Cycle Path in Al Qudra (Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, 2017; Dubai Roadsters, 2017).
- Monday Cycle Safe Dubai at the Nad al Sheba Cycle Park with a choice of a 4km, 6km and 8km on and off-road loops (Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, 2017; Dubai Tourism 2017). According to Dubai Tourism entry is free all week round with *"additional air-conditioned changing room, shower and locker facilities as well as a separate children's cycle tract that includes street signs, speed bumps and roundabouts to teach youngsters about road safety (Dubai Tourism, 2016; Dubai Roadsters, 2016)"*.
- Tuesdays YAS Marina Abu Dhabi 5.5km Circuit managed independently by Promoseven, providing a free of charge, safe and stress-free environment giving the Abu Dhabi community an opportunity to be active, while promoting the Spinneys Build-up rides and The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, 2017; Dubai Roadsters, 2017).
- Wednesday Cycle Safe Dubai at the 2.7km Dubai Autodrome with 250 cyclists on average, from 6 to 9pm in the evening. Spinneys Dubai is the main sponsor of the venue, making it possible for the families in the community to cycle for free in a safe and stress-free environment without any vehicles (Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, 2017, Dubai Roadsters, 2017).
- Monthly Build-up rides: August 35km, September 45km, October 65km and November 85km to ensure cyclists are prepared for the main race in December (Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency, 2017; The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge UAE, 2017).

- Annually, The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge is the largest amateur race in the region. To increase the number of participants, Promoseven added a 53km challenge sponsored by Sony Cam, as well as two Junior Cycling Challenges, a 15km and 30km race for children under the age of sixteen years old in 2015 to ensure cyclists of all ages and fitness levels have the opportunity to participate during the main challenge in December (Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, 2017; The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge UAE, 2017).

Year on year the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge attracts people who reside in the UAE, as well as international professionals, to participate in a 92km ride around Dubai's famous landmarks, making it one of the largest cycling events of its kind in the region. Promoseven's long-term vision is to use The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge platform to promote Dubai as a sporting destination and to attract more cyclists from around the globe to participate in the main challenge in December (Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, 2017; The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge UAE, 2017).

Next, the social background of the people living in Dubai, UAE will be discussed to understand their needs and how society in this region operates to equip the reader with the knowledge on how organisations should be sensitive towards the local culture, religious belief system and social issues. It also needs be identified how organisations operating in this region should integrate solutions into their everyday business operations to accommodate the needs of people living and working in the UAE.

## **2.3 SOCIAL BACKGROUND**

It is important to explain the social background of Arabs in the region and how the local culture and religion influence social behaviour such as participating in community sport events such as cycling.

### 2.3.1 Traditional Emirati culture

The UAE and its people, Emiratis, are known for their rich Arab, desert and tribe like culture, which is based on the rules and guidelines of their religion, Islam (UAE Interact, 2017). Many years ago, the traditional way of living was considered as primitive, conservative and collective, where families, formed tribes and lived in villages; used camels and horses as means of transport; and where known to be excellent fishermen and farmers of palm trees that carry dates, which, until today, is considered as a local sweet fruit that is traditionally served dried with Arabic coffee (UAE Interact, 2017). Over 40 years ago, pearling was considered a great discovery and encouraged multiple tribal families to move and settle near coastal towns and villages with the hope of making a decent living, but the discovery and export of oil in 1966 drastically changed the course of traditional village type living into a modern, futuristic, state of the art and cosmopolitan type living (UAE Interact, 2017). Regardless of the modern and transformed environment, until this day, the desert continues to play a significant role in the UAE culture and social heritage of its people where locals still enjoy camping, barbecuing, dune bashing, sand boarding and encourage tourists to experience their culture through local organised desert safaris (UAE Interact, 2017). Deeply rooted in the UAE culture is their passion for animals and training these animals to participate in annual national and international sporting events including professional horse and camel racing; and falconry, which focuses on hunting (UAE Interact, 2017). It is evident that the desert environment is integrated into the culture of the local Emiratis and that it plays an important role in their history, as well as their present and future.

Over the last 30 years the UAE and local Emiratis have gone through a significant transformation and had to drastically adapt to a new social setting that includes a vast variety of nationalities, cultures, religions and beliefs, while still preserving their own culture and values (UK Government, 2017). The UAE Government and local Emiratis are considered to be accommodating, welcoming, tolerant, peaceful and open-minded people that actively encourage and educate tourists and the expat community to respect their local and religious values and traditions (UK Government, 2017). *“The culture and laws in the UAE are designed to ensure that everyone is respectful of each other regardless of their faith and nationality. Visitors and residents alike should avoid types of improper conduct and behaviour which can otherwise lead to fines, imprisonment and deportation (UK*

Government, 2017)". These behaviours include zero tolerance for drinking and driving, the use of narcotics, physical or mental abuse, sexual behaviour in public or outside of marriage, road rage and working without a legal visa (UK Government, 2017).

The UAE law and the values of their people are based on the religion of Islam, where Muslims need to pray five times a day in mosques that are freely and conveniently available in every community (UK Government, 2017). Every year, during the month of Ramadan Muslims are obligated to fast from dawn to sunset and where non-Muslims are also encouraged not to eat or drink anything in public during the day or as an alternative to use the privacy of their homes or specially allocated public rooms for consumption (UK Government, 2017). According to the UAE Government (2017) Ramadan is a holy month for all Muslims across the globe and holds great significance as the Quran was revealed to Prophet Mohammed during this time, while fasting represents one of the five pillars of Islam that empowers restraint and the spiritual being. The month of Ramadan is also associated with goodwill or CSR programmes, where organisations and communities greatly contribute or donate to charitable causes or the raising of funds through events (UAE Government, 2017). Their values also include a strict and conservative dress code that encourage women to completely cover their bodies and in extreme cases cover their face, hair, hands and feet in a black dress and scarf known as a 'abaya', while in public or in the presence of other males who are not considered as direct family (UK Government, 2017). The expat community and tourists visiting the country are encouraged not to wear clothing that is revealing, too tight or display offensive pictures or slogans, especially in public places such as malls, parks and restaurants (UK Government, 2017).

The rights of women in the Middle East have been openly criticised and challenged by the western community for not treating women as equals or giving them the same educational or professional job opportunities and exposure as for men (Human Rights Watch World Report, 2013). In neighbouring countries such as Saudi Arabia, women endure severe discrimination, where they have to abide by the Saudi guardianship system which states it is forbidden to travel, conduct official business or undergo certain medical procedures without the permission of a male guardian such as a husband, brother or father (Human Rights Watch World Report, 2013). Women are still banned from certain professions and only in 2012 women were granted the opportunity to obtain a licence to practise law. Prior

to that, women were only allowed to study law and act as consultants (Human Rights Watch World Report, 2013). Only recently, the Saudi Ministry of Labour granted women the opportunity to work in certain low skilled occupations such as cashiers in clothing stores or preparing food in amusement parks, without having to get permission from their official guardian (Human Rights Watch World Report, 2013).

Women are also banned from participating in any sport, however, in 2012 at the London Summer Olympics, for the first time in Saudi's History, two women were granted special permission to participate and compete on an international level, however, a large part of society found it extremely hard to accept that women should participate in sports and the women were still obligated to cover their hair and travel with male guardians (Human Rights Watch World Report, 2013; The Week, 2018). Women are also banned from driving; have no rights to protect themselves against domestic abuse; and are not allowed to have access to police stations which are not administrated by women (Human Rights Watch World Report, 2013). In September 2017, it was announced by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman that women would be allowed to drive from 24th June 2018 onwards as well as have the freedom to enter sport stadiums for the first time, however, they had to sit in their own female only section (The Week, 2018).

From a retail perspective, women are not allowed to try on clothes in the store, as well as read uncensored fashion magazines and advertisements, which makes it challenging for brands to engage with women in Saudi (The Week, 2018). Other challenges for women include the guardianship system where women need the permission of men to make everyday decisions including travelling, applying for a passport, marriage or legal agreements. However, in 2017 it was announced that women can now make their own decisions if they want to attend university and work, or if they want surgery (The Week, 2018). Women's rights groups are still protesting the guardianship system by using the hashtag 'IAmMyOwnGardian' through social media campaigns. In terms of public spaces, there is complete segregation of men and women, for example, separated entrances need to be used for offices, banks and universities; as well as female-only transportation, parks, beaches and amusement parks are enforced; and women are usually punished harsher for illegal mixing (The Week, 2018). Unlike western communities, these women are not empowered to live and work completely independent and do not have the equal rights that

men enjoy in their country. The fact that all women are not allowed to participate in sport, is an indication of an unhealthy or unbalanced society that do not consider the interests and well-being of all individuals equally.

In 2007, the UAE Government admitted that the social development of women needs to be addressed to give them an equal position in society and to “*exercise their right to participate in the labour market and decision-making process (UAE Yearbook, 2007:238)*”. Women in the UAE have the constitutional right to enjoy the same “*legal status, claim to titles, access to education, healthcare and welfare and have the right to practice the same professions as men (UAE Yearbook, 2007:238)*”. The UAE Constitution states: “*The family is the basis of society, which shall be responsible for protecting childhood and motherhood. Laws shall be formulated in all fields to observe this protection and care, in a way which safeguards the dignity of women, preserves their identity and secures for them the conditions appropriate for a prosperous life and suitable work which is in accordance with their nature and capabilities as mothers and wives and as workers (UAE Yearbook, 2007:238)*”. According to the Human Rights Watch World Report 2013, the UAE has been criticized for discriminating against women by forbidding Muslim women, but not men, from marrying non-Muslims and providing women with limited support against domestic abuse and violence as the Federal Supreme Court has “*upheld a husband’s right to “chastise” his wife and children with physical abuse.*” According to the UAE Yearbook (2007:240), the UAE law protects the rights of women, including expatriates, “*against all forms of violence, domestic violence, exploitation, and trafficking with severe penalties for infringement.*”

The conservative and Islam driven culture of the UAE has proven to evolve over the years, without compromising on the heritage and core values of the local Emiratis, which, until this day, are kept preserved for future generations. It is evident in the way women are treated in their society, especially when compared to their neighboring country, Saudi Arabia, that their standards of living and consideration for human rights have greatly improved over the years. The ever-changing and rapidly developing environment also plays a significant role in the social development of the country and poses multiple challenges and issues that need to be addressed and resolved.

### 2.3.2 UAE social development

Since the inception of the UAE in 1971, the royal family and the UAE Government have greatly invested in the wealth of the nation through social development initiatives that focus on healthcare, education and human resources services, as well as the empowerment of women and social welfare programmes to support the less fortunate and disabled (UAE Yearbook, 2007:213). The UAE has successfully developed a culture that care about the community and strives to match or outperform international standards on human welfare and human rights issues (UAE Yearbook, 2007:213).

According to 'Action for Happiness', a British organisation that specialises in cultural values and how societies can live happier lives, the 2013 UAE National Value Survey concluded that the UAE is a society that can live together in harmony, despite its diverse cultural mix (UAE Interact, 2017). In recent years, Dubai has transformed into a modern city with a mix of 200 different nationalities and a population of over 2 million people living and working together in harmony (Dubai Government, 2017; UAE Interact, 2017). The high expatriate population is a result of a high demand for business professionals and growth opportunities offering high income, tax free salaries in a safe and well-governed environment, with a fully developed infrastructure that is ideal for young families (UAE Interact, 2017; Dubai Government, 2017).

The 2013 National Value Survey interviewed 4 096 respondents, that consisted of 57% UAE nationals and 43% expatriates, of which 54% were male and 46% female (UAE Interact, 2017). The survey included a variety of positive values, such as ethics, concern for future generations, respect and family, that were rated by UAE residents, to determine their level of happiness (UAE Interact, 2017). *"The UAE was one of two countries among eighteen in total that had all the positive values in its top ten current values, indicating that people in the UAE are highly satisfied with the current living situation in the country (UAE Interact, 2017)".* The results also revealed that UAE residents are happy and satisfied living in the UAE, as a result of wise leadership; strategic and responsible governing, which has created strong social values that are based on Islamic values such as love and kindness; and the Emirati local culture (UAE Interact, 2017).

Within the Middle East, Dubai is classified as a country that promotes peace and the health and well-being of people through sport with the vision of creating a unique sporting community that can bring people together (Dubai Sports Council, 2014:118). During the annual 2013 Peace and Sport Dubai Forum, a variety of well-known international athletes and sport specialists gathered to discuss possible solutions on how to ensure that children across the globe can have access to sport and education (Dubai Sports Council, 2014:118). The Peace and Sports Foundation Dubai actively promotes the “*practice of sport and sporting values to educate youth and help foster stability, reconciliation, and dialogue between communities to create sustainable peace*” (Dubai Sports Council, 2014:119). The sustainable peace initiative is unique in the sense that active sportsmen and sportswomen are appointed as champions of peace to travel around the globe to support and promote the development of sport participation and peace among communities (Dubai Sports Council, 2014:119). The Dubai Sport Council also greatly encourage sport participation and competitiveness among the youth of Dubai through the annual Commercial Bank of Dubai (CBD) Youth Athletics tournament with the aim of nurturing innovation and talent among boys and girls aged between 14 and 17 (Dubai Sports Council, 2014:125). In 2013, The CBD Youth Athletics tournament attracted over 2 000 students from over 90 different schools in Dubai, educating them on the principles of sport, such as hard work and dedication to improve the level of sport talent in the UAE (Dubai Sports Council, 2014:127).

The annual Dubai Corporate Sports Tournament, held on 18 November 2013, was organised by the Dubai Sports Council to encourage organisations to participate in various sport activities such as athletics, football, cricket, basketball, touch-rugby and ten-pin bowling, to encourage “*teamwork between employees, enhance their confidence and morale, improve communication and relationships within teams and encourage honourable competition among companies, as well as promoting health and fitness in the work place*” (Dubai Sports Council, 2014:123)”. Sport sponsorship is greatly encouraged by the Dubai Sports Council which gave sponsors a dedicated space at the event to promote their brands (Dubai Sports Council, 2014:124).

Dubai is known for hosting some of the world’s top international sporting events such as the Dubai Rugby 7s, Dubai International Swimming Championship, World Cricket Championship, Dubai World Cup Carnival, and Dubai World Cup to attract thousands of

tourists every year with the aim of building a stronger economy through tourism (Dubai Sports Council, 2017; Dubai Sports Council, 2014:5). The development and sponsorship of sport will further be discussed in Chapter 4.

In 2013, it was announced that Dubai won the bid for the 2020 World Expo, an event that will greatly contribute to the social and economic development of the UAE over the next few years (Dubai Expo 2020, 2014). The World Expo 2020 is an event that will be hosted in Dubai, targeting international communities and organisations to come together and to “*share innovations and make progress on issues of international importance such as the global economy, sustainable development and improved quality of life for the world’s population* (Dubai Expo 2020, 2014)”. The World Expo is hosted every five years in a different city over a period of six months and attracts millions of visitors with the purpose of attending various exhibitions and seminars, discovering the latest technology and research (Dubai Expo 2020, 2014). The UAE Government released an official statement that the Dubai World Expo 2020 has the potential to boost the economy with USD 23 billion and to promote the city as a global tourist and business destination, attracting over 25 million visitors over a period of six months, while creating over 277 000 jobs in the region (Dubai Expo 2020, 2014).

The Shanghai 2010 World Expo attracted over 73 000 million people, based on the theme ‘Better City, Better Life’, while the 2015 World Expo 2015 hosted in Milan, Italy, focused on “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life” (Dubai Expo 2020, 2014). Dubai 2020 World Expo will be focusing on the theme “Connecting Minds, Creating the Future” based on the theory that the world is a highly-interconnected place that requires individuals, communities and countries to work together to form new partnerships to achieve sustainable development for the future (Dubai Expo 2020, 2014).

According to Helal Al Marri, Director General of the Department of Tourism, Commerce and Marketing, CEO of Dubai World Trade Centre and a member of the Higher Committee for Dubai Expo 2020, Dubai will implement a complex and advanced environmental initiative that will ensure that 50% of the energy used during the 2020 World Expo will be sourced from renewable energy (Dubai Expo 2020, 2014). The Dubai World Expo 2020 will be the world’s “*first large-scale application of Building-Integrated Photo Voltaic and Solar technology, setting a new benchmark for future mega-events* (Dubai Expo 2020, 2014)”. The

project will also be managed to limit harmful environmental impact through the monitoring of carbon footprints, water use and recycling (Dubai Expo 2020, 2014).

In addition to the Dubai Expo 2020 (in contributing to the social, economic and environmental development of the country) the UAE Government and Dubai Chambers of Commerce announced that 2017 is the Year of Giving through strategic CSR initiatives (The Year of Giving, 2017; Gulfnews 2017). The three pillars of this strategic national agenda are based on ethical social responsibility, community volunteering and servicing the nation through both the private and government sector to ensure that CSR form the foundation for future corporate strategy and operations (The Year of Giving, 2017; Gulfnews 2017). Philanthropy has been at the heart of the UAE; however, the government wants to encourage organisations to grow and establish a corporate culture that is driven by ethical and socially responsible decision-making, which contributes to the development and well-being of the community in which they operate (The Year of Giving, 2017; Gulfnews 2017).

Over the past decade, the UAE Government has evolved in its ambition to establish a local and corporate culture of philanthropic giving, from simple donations without any obligation of annual reporting or strategic government alliance, to an organised and strategic approach to cultivate an ethical and transparent business culture in the UAE, that supports the development of the national CSR agenda (The Year of Giving, 2017). According to HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al Nahyan, ruler of the UAE, “*servicing the nation is the responsibility shared by the government, individuals and the private sector, all members of the team that make the UAE one* (The Year of Giving, 2017)”.

## **2.4 CONCLUSION**

It is evident that the UAE can be acknowledged as a leader, especially in the Middle East, in social, economic and environmental development, with a strategic focus on sustainability. The UAE Government has well established CSR strategies and initiatives within the region to promote good corporate governance for sustainable business management and to motivate the private sector, such as Spinneys Dubai, to participate in CSR activities that are in line with the priorities, standards and practices of local government.

As a nation and as a government, the UAE has accomplished impressive milestones since it was established in 1971 by being rated as one of the most developed countries in world and a business hub for over 25% of the world's top 500 largest global organisations in the Middle East. In quarter one of 2018, the UAE was ranked 17th in the Global Competitiveness Index; 20th in United Nations World Happiness Index; and fifth for the consecutive year as the world's largest donor (AED 19.3 billion) for foreign aid in relation to its gross national income of 1.31%. Furthermore, in 2017 the UAE Government announced that no longer will only the UAE public sector contribute to CSR, but its corporate citizens will also have to contribute to the country's ambitious plans to improve its rankings globally. To drive CSR excellence in the private sector, especially for large retailers such as Spinneys Dubai, the UAE Government invested in the following programmes to boost the CSR performance of corporate citizens: CSR workshops and events to encourage a responsible corporate culture, and CSR Smart Platform to align with government CSR projects; form strategic partnerships through the CSR Coordination Forum; enforce annual reporting through a CSR Mandatory Disclosure agreement to renew yearly trade licenses and contribute to the research and statistics centre for latest business news and trends; CSR National Index will formally rank corporate citizens for their contribution and performance; organisational philanthropy will be rewarded through the 'Responsible Procurement Initiative' with supplier contracts; and lastly, organisations are encouraged to drive CSR communication through PR media coverage and influencers to help drive community awareness, engagement, volunteering and collaboration.

Community retailers, such as Carrefour and Pick and Pay (discussed in chapter 1), have a long history of engaging with the community through sport sponsorship and partnering with the media, to gain brand awareness and to align with the government to reach CSR objectives, such as encouraging the health and fitness of the community.

Next, the theories on corporate social responsibility, strategic corporate communication and management will be discussed to determine how Spinneys Dubai should operate when using sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool, with specific reference to the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **PERSPECTIVES ON CORPORATE COMMUNICATION**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter 3 the researcher will share perspectives on communication within the context of holistic business management, corporate communication, corporate social responsibility and corporate social performance management. Next the researcher will discuss the theoretical framework highlighting important theories, constructs, concepts and items for this study.

### **3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The research study is built on the following theoretical framework (constructed by the researcher): the academic disciplines of *business management* and *communication science*; linked with the academic fields of *strategic management*, *corporate communication*, and *corporate social responsibility*; where theories on stakeholder management, corporate communication and corporate social performance reside.

These will be discussed and defined below. CSR Communication, CSR activities and public relations will also be discussed and strategically outlined within the context of the UAE, to understand how stakeholder participation, attitude and behaviour change can be affected within the community that Spinneys Dubai operates in.

**Table 3: Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework in Table 3 was constructed by the researcher outlining the academic discipline, academic field, theories, concepts, constructs and items.

<b>Academic Discipline:</b> Business Management & Communication Science		
<b>Academic Field:</b> Strategic Management Corporate Communication Corporate Social Responsibility	<b>Theories:</b> Stakeholder Theory Corporate Communication Theory Corporate Social Performance	
<b>Concepts:</b> Corporate Communication	<b>Constructs:</b> CSR Communication CSR Activities Public Relations	<b>Items:</b> Participation Attitude Change Behaviour

### 3.3 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

In this section strategic business management and model will be defined, as well as various management approaches namely interactive, strategic-inclusive and sustainable business management be discussed.

#### 3.3.1 Strategic business management defined

Strategic business management can be defined as the overall direction an organisation needs to follow, through its vision, mission and long-term goals which is decided by top management (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012:3). According to Wheelen and Hunger (2012:3) strategic management can be achieved when top management is successful in the internal and external scanning of the environment, formulation, implementation, evaluation and control of predetermined strategies, to ensure the organisation performs according to all stakeholders' expectations.

### 3.3.2 Strategic management model

The core purpose of the strategic management model including the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) is to support business leaders to analyse and make decisions that are based on predetermined organisational goals that include the needs of all stakeholders involved, while taking the operational efficiency and effectiveness into account at the same time (Dess *et al.*, 2004:14). Secondly, this model drives sustainable business management, which formulates and implements corporate strategies that can increase competitive advantage over a long-term period (Dess *et al.*, 2004:14). Sustainable business management is concerned with creating a balance between economic, social and environmental impact and to align the interests of individuals, corporations and society to ensure that long-term objectives are achieved (King Report, 2002:6).

To achieve organisational objectives through sustainable and strategic business management, senior management need to consider the following four stages (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012:3):

1. Environmental scanning: The SWOT analysis method should be applied to identify all internal and external environmental strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to enable the organisation to formulate strategies and gain competitive advantage (Wheelen & Hunger, 2013:3; Dess *et al.*, 2004:14).
2. Strategy formulation: The development and defining of the corporate vision, mission, long-term goals and policy guidelines to enable top management to control internal and external environmental opportunities and threats, against the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation (Wheelen & Hunger, 2013:3; Dess *et al.*, 2004:14). The vision and mission of an organisation are of extreme importance, not only to gain competitive advantage, but also to communicate the values and aspirations of the organisation and to connect and motivate employees to work in alignment with the corporate strategy (Dess *et al.*, 2004:26).
3. Strategy implementation: Once all the corporate strategies have been formulated, the organisation should actively communicate and encourage all stakeholders to support

strategic business objectives through predetermined policies, procedures and development programmes or workshops (Wheelen & Hunger, 2013:15).

4. Evaluation and control: The last phase of strategic management requires a form of feedback to evaluate the results achieved either to make further adjustments to the original strategy or to build on its strengths. According to Wheelen and Hunger (2013:20) the following five steps can be used to achieve valuable feedback:

**Table 4: Strategic management model: 5 steps for evaluation and control**

Step 1	Predetermine what to measure	<p>Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event objectives (Kilalea, 2016; Spinneys Dubai, 2017)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To increase the interest and popularity of cycling as a sport in Dubai through the local and international cycling community</li> <li>➤ To increase the awareness of health and safety on the road with the support of the Dubai Sports Council, Dubai Police and the UAE Cycling Federation</li> <li>➤ To promote a healthy lifestyle through the ‘Eat Well. Live Well’ Spinneys campaign</li> <li>➤ Promote the event as a global competitive platform as part of the UCI Gran Fondo to attract international cyclists</li> <li>➤ To attract cyclists of all ages and fitness levels to grow the largest cycling challenge in the Middle East</li> </ul>
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Step 2	Establish standards of performance	<p>Drive performance through stakeholder engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Following government and international cycling standards</li> <li>➤ execute sponsor brand guidelines and communication objectives</li> <li>➤ increase overall participation on all levels and age groups to build community trust</li> <li>➤ public relations management</li> <li>➤ online communication and engagement through social media, website and emails</li> </ul>
Step 3	Measure actual performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Growth in the number of cyclists from all age groups, gender and nationalities</li> <li>➤ Return on investment through customer loyalty</li> <li>➤ PR and social media coverage value vs. marketing and sponsorship spending</li> <li>➤ Email campaigns: delivery and open rate</li> </ul>
Step 4	Compare actual performance with standards	Evaluate each objective according to the predetermined standards or forecasted results
Step 5	Take corrective action to improve results through SWOT analysis	Determine what the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are of the event to either improve the results or build on the strengths

Source: Wheelen & Hunger (2012:20)

The strategic management model allows Spinneys Dubai to discuss, plan and action objectives and to measure the outcome for each event to determine if its performance is on track or if changes need to be made to meet all stakeholders' expectations.

### **3.3.3 Integrative approach through strategic management**

In recent years, studies have shown that organisations cannot rely on the direction of top management alone to achieve strategic business management goals, but also need the input from staff across all business units to ensure that everyone works or strives towards the same goals through collective thinking (Dess *et al.*, 2004:21). Instead of isolating top management from business units when decisions have to be made, staff from all levels are encouraged to think collectively about challenges such as globalization, limited intellectual capital, ever changing technology and environmental impact and sustainable development, identifying and resolving issues quicker and more efficiently together as one team (Dess *et al.*, 2004:21). To ensure that everyone in the organisation is involved in the strategic process top management should “*champion and guide ideas, create a learning infrastructure and establish a domain for taking action to encourage functional staff who have little positional power and formal authority, generate their power through the conviction and clarity of their own ideas*” (Dess *et al.*, 2004:24).

### **3.3.4 Stakeholder-inclusive approach through strategic business management**

Organisations should formulate their corporate strategies in such a way that they include the interests of their stakeholders, regardless of whether the relationship is contractual or non-contractual (King Report, 2002:7). The stakeholder-inclusive approach is designed to encourage governing bodies to create long-term value for all stakeholders involved, by diversifying investments to support non-profit causes or business activities; and to invest in relationship building and trust (King IV, 2016:25). By using this approach, organisations are expected to openly communicate their values; to enforce ethical and sustainable business management; to use effective communication methods such as annual reports; and to develop a long-term trusted relationship with all stakeholders involved (King Report, 2002:7).

The fact that Spinneys is investing in the health and fitness of the community without a guaranteed return on investment, as well as aligning themselves with government priorities, suggests that the retailer values the interests and needs of external stakeholders.

### **3.3.5 Strategic sustainable business management**

To ensure that organisations are managed in a sustainable way, certain values need to be incorporated into the overall business strategy and practices to reap more market share and valuable stakeholder trust and loyalty over the long-term. Organisations can be evaluated or benchmarked against the following values for ethical business management strategies and practices (King Report, 2002:10): discipline, transparency, independence, accountability, responsibility, fairness and social responsibility. According to the King II Report (2002:18), good corporate governance and ethical business sustainability is essentially about efficient corporate leadership that drives organisations to be competitive in a global market; to behave honestly with integrity; to address social concerns through responsible activities and to be transparent and accountable for all actions taken on behalf of the organisation. It is, therefore, important that the above sustainable business management values are strategically formulated, implemented throughout the organisation, and enforced and evaluated by top management to form part of the organisation's overall CSR strategy (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012:3).

The CSR strategy should be based on sustainable business management and communication that can be defined as business activities that “*meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations*” and encourage responsible and ethical corporate citizenship that care about the “*needs, interests and expectations*” of all stakeholders involved (King Report IV, 2016:23). Corporate Citizens Act as governing bodies in the society in which they operate that drive strategic direction, enforce ethical policies and procedures, monitor and measure performance through reporting and ensure organisational accountability (King Report IV, 2016:40). To achieve a healthy corporate citizenship status among stakeholders, management need to adopt an integrated school of thought during high-level strategic planning and execution to encourage a responsible

corporate culture that considers environmental impact on which society depends (King Report IV, 2016:23).

Beyond the day to day business operations, good corporate citizenship secures a positive organisational reputation through strategic and sustainable CSR activities that contribute to the building of a trustworthy brand and public image to create value for both the organisation and its stakeholders, especially communities (Lantos, 2001:604; King Report IV, 2016:23). Its therefore the responsibility of senior management to strategically align and enforce all business functions to operate according to these ethical values, policies and procedures to build community trust, giving the organisation the licence to operate among its most valued stakeholders (King Report I, 2002:6). To build a long-term relationship with the community, it is important to understand the nature of Spinneys Dubai's corporate communication strategy and to evaluate it according to theory.

### **3.4 CORPORATE COMMUNICATION**

Next the researcher will define the corporate communication theory in the context of strategic business management and discuss effective marketing and communication practices.

#### **3.4.1 Corporate communication theory defined**

Corporate communication is a formal network of information that is shared vertically and horizontally across the business with internal and external stakeholders to sustain daily operations and strategic objectives more effectively to increase long-term value for the organisation (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:13). According to Mihai (2017:104) corporate communication is essential for everyday successful business management as it formulates key messages through multiple channels to achieve short-term and long-term organisational objectives. Corporate communication specialists, should ideally have decision-making power to influence public affairs, stakeholders, relationships with the media as well as drive the internal communication strategy to create a competitive advantage to the business and

the community in which it operates (Mihai, 2017:104). Bell and Muir (2014:91) distinguishes organisational communication into five sub-disciplines of professional corporate communication including: a) technical and b) scientific communication about products and processes; c) marketing and media communication to drive sales, customer service and stakeholder relationships; d) business communication that generate internal work-related messages to establish teamwork and coordination; and lastly e) management communication to that drive work-related messages to support the vision, mission and objectives of the organisation.

According to Van Riel and Fombrun (2007:15) management communication, organisational communication and marketing communication drive strategic performance to build a positive brand image and reputation. Management communication is defined as the foundation of corporate communication, with the objective to develop trust in senior leadership skills by *“accomplishing work through other people”* in order to drive overall teamwork efficiency and business performance (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:15). Effective management communication can have a direct impact on sales if the interests of all the internal stakeholder groups are taken into consideration to establish a positive and safe work environment where employees can free exchange ideas (Mihai, 2017:104) Management communication is applicable to all business units on all levels to enable teams to plan, discuss, organise and control formal projects and processes, while CEOs play a critical role as the brand’s spokesperson, to represent the organisation on various topics, to influence the perception of, or relationships with, internal and external stakeholders (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:18). According to Bell and Muir (2014:84) leadership communication establish healthy formal and informal networks to ensure objectives are reached and to consistently keep in touch with all levels in the organisation, especially through face-to-face communication to reward and encourage employees in person.

From a theoretical point of view, communication specialists are not only expected to support senior management internally, but also act on their behalf during public debates through external communication channels (Mihai, 2017:105). The objective of organisational communication is to develop holistic strategies for all business units to protect the overall corporate brand identity with the support of various communication specialists to ultimately reach business objectives more effectively (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:30). Organisational

communication is a formal network of information that targets both internal and external stakeholders to conduct business ethically and responsibly through various communication platforms, including (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:208-225):

- Internal communication: sharing information within the organisation to promote employee engagement, to encourage teamwork and to improve job satisfaction on all levels of the organisation through HR development programmes, the intranet, announcement boards and routine activities like weekly and monthly meetings.
- Public relations (PR): an unpaid, cost-effective marketing method used to generate free media coverage on topics that are in the interest of the organisation; to target the general public to inform them about sponsorships, collaborations and events; and to use media relations strategically to manage issues and to protect the image and reputation of the organisation.
- Public affairs: the government regulates organisational activities, such as tax, employment, health and safety, through various governing bodies to protect public interest which can be influenced by social and political changes or decision-making.
- Investor relations: when an organisation is listed on the stock exchange, it is important to communicate its trade performance to current investors to ensure that they have complete transparency to protect and manage their interests and to attract potential new investors to drive revenue growth (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:225).

Thirdly, marketing communications, known as the promotional mix, plays an important role to drive sales performance and to define the overall customer experience through the following five activities (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:20-208):

1. Advertising: paid above-the-line (ATL) mass media advertising, including radio, print, in-mall and outdoor or below-the-line (BTL) in store advertising to highlight unique selling points or simply to create awareness of goods, services or ideas to drive footfall and sales.
2. Sales promotion: discounted products and services to drive sales within a short burst of time.
3. Personal selling: direct one-on-one email advertising or verbal presentations to persuade customers to make a purchase.

4. Event sponsorship: an opportunity to engage directly with customers and to create brand awareness, positive brand association and long-term value for all the stakeholders involved.
5. Marketing public relations: an effective low-cost communication tool, which includes press releases, interviews or live press conferences to create public awareness about products and services through print and online publications which is “*designed to improve, maintain or protect*” the brand image and reputation.

**Figure 4: Overlap between marketing and organisational communication**



Source: Van Riel & Fombrun (2007:208)

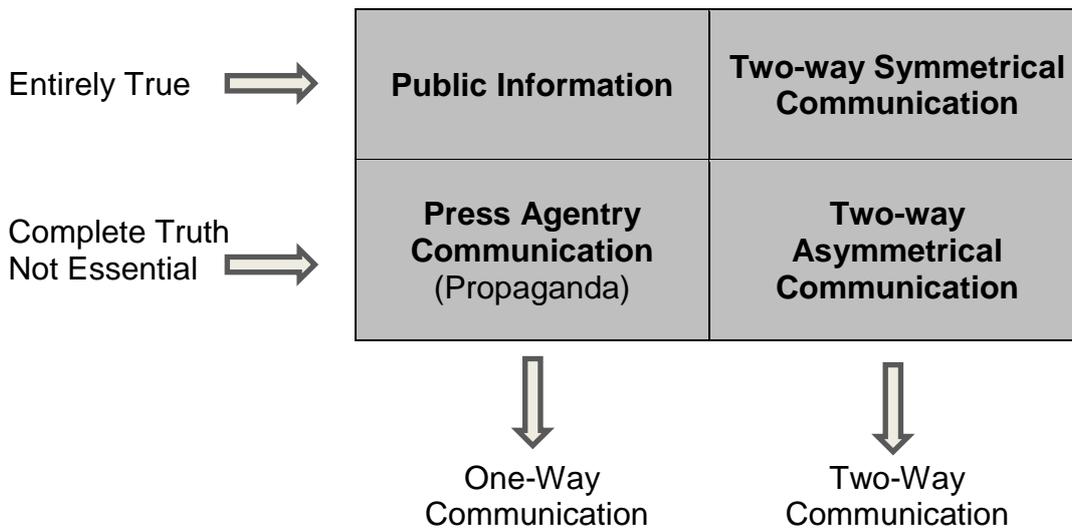
There is a clear overlap between marketing and organisational communication management to ensure that critical stakeholder relationships are managed holistically - from internal relationships with employees to the external interests of investors, customers, regulators and the public at large (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:222). This overlap defines the overall customer experience, as well as the brand perception and reputation within various stakeholder groups. Therefore, it is important that the various communication specialists work together to ensure the brand message is communicated consistently through various platforms (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:222).

### **3.4.2 Effective marketing and organisational communication**

The nature of marketing and organisational communication can essentially be classified into four segments, which determines how organisations choose to engage with their stakeholders through a one-way or two-way exchange of information (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:46). The first approach, propaganda, is considered unethical and the least effective method of communication, as the organisation deliberately chooses to disclose selective information to protect its own interests without considering the repercussions or the negative impact on external stakeholders (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:46). The second one-way communication approach, public information, is considered truthful and ethical, however, limits stakeholders from having an open two-way conversation with the organisation about their concerns (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:46).

The third approach, two-way asymmetrical communication, is truthful and ethical, however, the audience might not be able to comprehend the technical or scientific information that has been shared to promote the product or service. They, therefore, perceive it as less effective when compared to the fourth and final approach of two-way symmetrical communication (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:46). This approach is considered to be the most effective form of marketing and corporate communication, as all stakeholders involved have an opportunity to be open and honest with each other and to exchange information that is respectful and easy to comprehend, resulting in a higher engagement rate with the brand and meaningful long-term relationships (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:46).

**Figure 5: One-way and two-way corporate communication**



Source: Van Riel & Fombrun (2007:46)

Once organisations have decided how they want to engage with their stakeholders, they also need to consider the impact of their communication activities and be willing to take full accountability (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:49). Taking full accountability for all forms of marketing and corporate communication results in a strong corporate brand; which builds long-term reputation value and a multi-stakeholder approach; which drives the performance of the corporate communication system in a holistic way (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:51).

There are three ways of taking full accountability for marketing and corporate communication:

1. Corporate accountability: All functions of the organisation need to be aligned with the same values, policies and procedures set by senior management and should work together to build a reputable brand in a holistic way (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:49).
2. Specialist accountability: To manage high ethical and reputable standards, specialists need to take full accountability by measuring and reporting business performance to ensure all stakeholders involved are considered with regards to their reputation, health and safety (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:49).

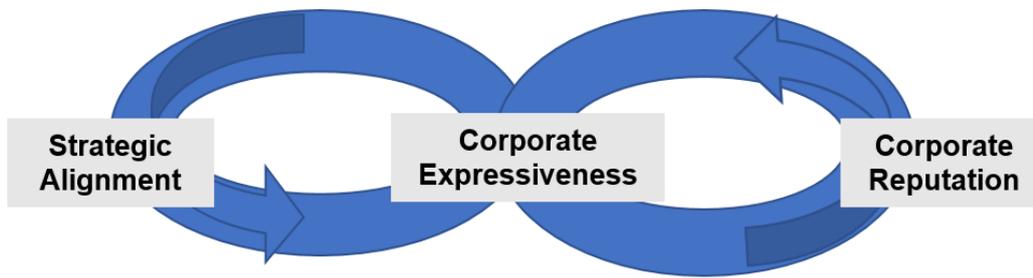
3. Coordinated accountability: This refers to how the organisation conducts itself when communicating with its stakeholders to ensure a positive brand experience. The overall brand tone of voice is important, as it influences how stakeholders perceive the brand in terms of how it makes them feel; and how it influences their knowledge and behaviour (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:51).

From this point of view, Spinneys Dubai needs to strategically and effectively communicate with its stakeholders to influence their perceptions and to drive overall business performance, which can be measured through the following two methods (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:210):

1) *“The effectiveness of corporate communication in creating strategic alignment internally”* is the responsibility of the governing body to align all units with the overall business objectives; and to manage to gain the support of employees to ensure that it is implemented on all levels; resulting in stronger and consistent performance across the organisation (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:210). Research has also shown that internal strategic alignment is an effective engagement tool that uplifts employee morale and increases job satisfaction when responsible and ethical behaviour is acknowledged and rewarded by management (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:211). Before behaviour can be rewarded, the organisation first needs to engage with internal stakeholders through either management communication; internal media; cross-department communication; or individual or corporate messaging, in a healthy and trusting communication climate to encourage a two-way conversation and to empower employees to participate and support organisational objectives and to show their commitment accordingly (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:211).

2) *“The effectiveness of corporate communication in building a resilient reputation and trust with external stakeholders”* is measured in the way an organisation express itself through transparent communication (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:216). The perceived reputation and importance of an organisation or brand depends on the mindset of the stakeholder and how well he/she knows the organisation to support its products and services (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:216).

**Figure 6: Strategic alignment, expressiveness and reputation**

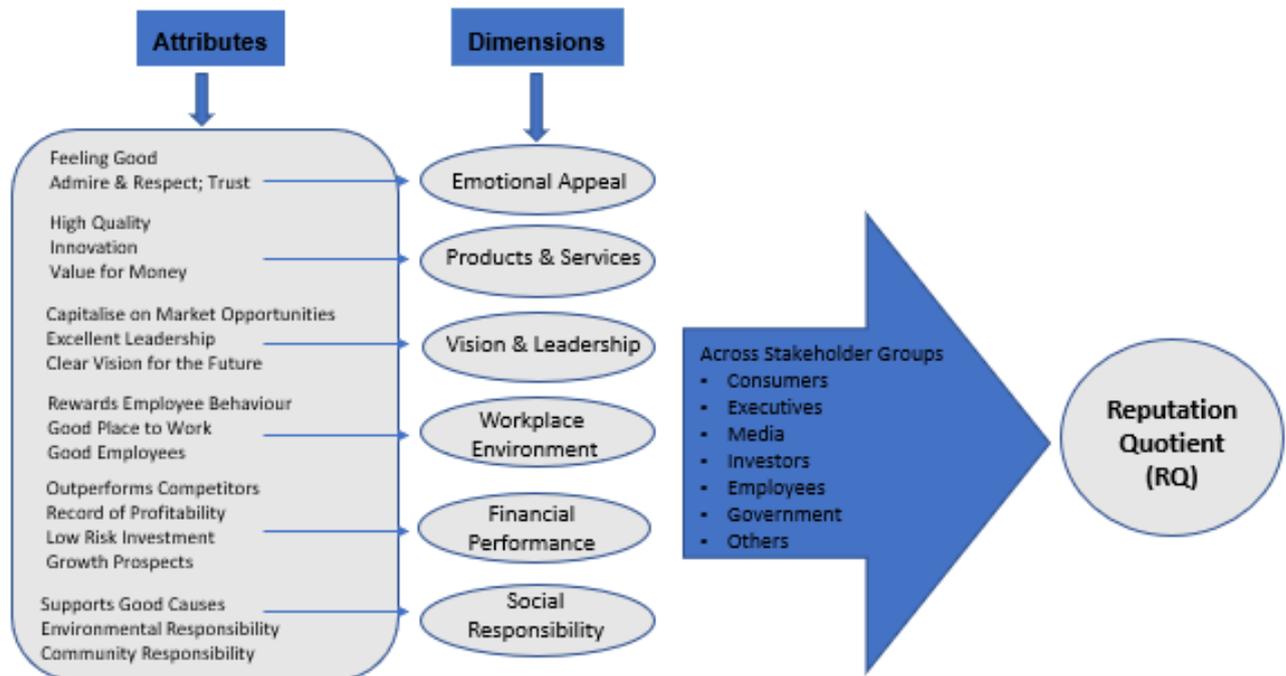


Source: Van Riel & Fombrun (2007:217)

Effective corporate communication can be evaluated according to its ability to “*generate internal strategic alignment through its communication mix*” and according to the extent to which the organisation manages to build stakeholder trust by “*converting alignment into long-term reputational capital* (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:235)”. The Fombrun Reputation Quotient (QR) model a brand’s reputational capital and is built on six important business dimensions which sustain the organisation over the long-term, including: 1) the ability to generate emotional appeal in terms of trust, aspiration and respect; 2) providing high quality innovative products and services; 3) driving organisational performance through excellent leadership; 4) to maintain a rewarding and satisfying work environment for employees; 5) driving financial growth and maintaining stability; 6) to openly support community and environmental corporate social responsibility activities (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:263).

According to research, the RQ model has been tested in over 26 countries world-wide and has concluded that the public care more about an organisation’s products and services, followed by its corporate social responsibility activities and how employees are treated; compared to internal stakeholders who value leadership and financial performance above all other business dimensions (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:265). This study also concluded that strategic corporate communication is the key driving force to effectively engage with all stakeholders involved, to drive business performance and to build a unified and holistic corporate reputation across all functions of an organisation at the same time (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:265).

**Figure 7: Dimensions and attributes of the Harris-Fombrun Reputation Quotient (RQ)**



Source: Van Riel & Fombrun (2007:263)

### 3.5 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The researcher will discuss and define CSR and how the theory developed over the years, and how to effectively and sustainably manage CSR activities through holistic business management.

#### 3.5.1 CSR defined

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is based on organisational legitimacy which means that stakeholders perceive organisations as legitimate when their social and environmental actions can be justified and described as “*desirable, proper, appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions* (Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018)”. This corporate legitimacy can only be obtained by aligning organisational behaviour with

stakeholder expectations through effective communication which forms the definitions of CSR. CSR can be defined “*a practice which corporations undertake to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders* (Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018)”.

The idea of CSR was formed by Howard R. Bowen in 1953 when he published his book ‘Social Responsibilities of the Businessman’ which highlighted that large corporate organisations in the United States had the power to influence and impact the daily lives of ordinary people. He posed a question to these corporate citizens, which asked “*what responsibilities to society may businessmen reasonably be expected to assume*”, which is still applicable today, with the exception that today’s workforce includes women in decision-making roles as well (Carroll, 2016). In the 1960’s academia, the first CSR theories were developed by writers Keith Davis, Joseph McGuire, Adolph Berle, William Frederick and Clarence Walton during movements that changed the landscape for organisations world-wide, including civil, consumer and women’s rights, as well as environmental impact (Carroll, 2016). At the time, CSR was defined as “*seriously considering the impact of the company’s actions on society*” and “*social responsibility is the obligation of decision makers to take action which protect and improve the welfare of society along with their own interests*” to ensure that business owners implement policies and procedures to protect the interests of stakeholders outside the organisation (Carroll, 2016).

In the 1990’s, Carroll’s CSR Pyramid was published and is still used today as a theoretical model for corporate social responsibility, which is based on a four-part definitional framework which states that society expects organisations to uphold high standards for economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic business practices at any given point in time (Carroll, 2016). Each of the four responsibilities are independent pillars of CSR, however, are also strongly interrelated, to ensure long-term sustainability within the society it operates (Carroll, 2016). This was established through a study that surveyed 241 executives and resulted in economic responsibility as the most important responsibility, which scored 3.5; followed by legal (2.54); ethical (2.22); and finally, philanthropic at 1.30. This can be visually summarised by Carroll’s Pyramid for CSR in Figure 8 Carroll’s Pyramid for CSR. In summary, economic and legal responsibilities are required of businesses by society; and ethical and philanthropic responsibilities are expected by society (Carroll, 2016).

**Figure 8: Carroll's Pyramid for CSR**



Source: Carroll (2016)

The following responsibilities have been included in the Pyramid for CSR:

1. Economic responsibilities: society requires organisations to be responsible and sustainable corporate citizens that are profitable enough to benefit business owners as well as support long-term business operations to produce in-demand goods and services in the communities they operate in (Carroll, 2016). Organisations can enjoy profit if they add value in a responsible way to the lives of their customers, giving them the licence to operate (Carroll, 2016). Return on investment (ROI) is vital for organisations to secure future business growth through strategic business decisions, effective cost management, investment, operations and marketing, in order to be competitive (Carroll, 2016).
2. Legal responsibilities: organisations are obligated by law to abide by rules and regulations and to enforce it through policies, procedures and ethical corporate behaviour, such as *“fulfilling all their legal obligations to societal stakeholders and providing goods and services that meet the legal requirements (Carroll, 2016).”*

3. Ethical responsibilities: society expects organisations to conduct business beyond legal requirements, by conducting business that is fair and ethical, to maintain stakeholder trust through the following practices: show consistent ethical performance without any compromise; willing to acknowledge and respect new and evolving norms and support society by creating new policies and procedures to ensure the organisation is morally and ethically sound at all times (Carroll, 2016).
4. Philanthropic responsibilities: organisations identify the communities in which they operate that need voluntary financial support or simply want to give to social causes out of ethical motivation through donations, products and services and volunteer work (Carroll, 2016).

In 2016, Carroll's Pyramid for CSR was re-evaluated to ensure that the theory is still applicable for corporate sustainability - it was established that the theory is still robust enough for the future development of CSR, however, further elaborations have been made on: 1) ethics; 2) tensions and trade-offs; 3) strategic corporate integration; 4) stakeholder relationships; and 5) globalisation of CSR (Carroll, 2016).

Ethical consideration is not only an isolated third tier in Carroll's Pyramid, but is integrated into each responsibility of the structure, for example, laws were developed to avoid ethical issues such as safety and environmental impact to protect the interest of all stakeholder involved; or considerations are as simple as corporate citizens who want to do the right thing and give back to society through kind acts of philanthropy (Carroll, 2016).

Secondly, organisations need to make trade-offs between the four responsibilities when tensions arise. The interests of all stakeholders involved should then be to protect its corporate reputation (Carroll, 2016). An investment in CSR activities might not be perceived as a priority by shareholders, however, goodwill can lead to long-term economic rewards, especially within the community it operates in (Carroll, 2016). The economic rewards include *"cost and risk reductions, positive effects on competitive advantage, company legitimacy and reputation, and the role of CSR in creating win-win situations for the company and society (Carroll, 2016)"*. Other benefits of integrating CSR activities into an organisation's overall business strategy, includes *"innovation, brand differentiation, employee and customer engagement (Carroll, 2016)"*.

Thirdly, CSR is incorporated into each level of the organisation, through business practices, policies and activities, while being committed to being profitable; to obey the law; and to engage in ethical practices. At the same time, the theoretical framework of Carroll's Pyramid for CSR can be implemented effectively to ensure the long-term survival of an organisation in society (Carroll, 2016). Fourthly, the pyramid is considered sustainable when all four responsibilities protect the interests of current and future stakeholder groups which means the organisation should constantly be aware of its current and future strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to maintain strong stakeholder relations in the environment it operates in (Carroll, 2016).

Lastly, Carroll's Pyramid for CSR was originally developed for American corporates, however, over time, various writers have challenged the layering of the theory for markets like Africa, which argued that developing countries would focus on economic responsibilities, followed by philanthropy, as the second highest priority and then legal and ethical responsibilities (Carroll, 2016). Each region or market will have different layering priorities, dependent on local or international pressures through "*cultural tradition, political reform, socio-economic priorities, governance gaps and crisis response*" (Carroll, 2016). The layering of an organisation could also be different within a specific country due to its size, for example small businesses would add layers such as "*personal integrity, self and family, employees, local community and to business partners*" (Carroll, 2016)".

Carroll's Pyramid for CSR has proven to be applicable in various markets, for large corporates and small businesses the world over, labelling CSR as a legitimate and absolute necessity for corporate citizens to survive long-term in the environments in which they operate (Carroll, 2016). Furthermore, the theory established concepts such as corporate citizenship, sustainability, stakeholder management, business ethics, creating shared value and conscious capitalism, providing leadership teams across the world strategic insights on how to manage sustainable and profitable businesses and creating an ethical value system through globalisation that makes it easier for organisations to partner, trade and do business around the world (Carroll, 2016).

With the background of Carroll's Pyramid for CSR and the global development reports, CSR can be defined as a strategic business approach and investment that focuses on a two-way

social, economic and political relationship with its stakeholders; on ethical and sustainable business practices; as well as on the continuous sustainable development of stakeholders and the community in which an organisation operates (Trilogue, 2004:186; Lubbe & Puth, 2002:179). Organisations should also know what it means to be socially responsible and know how to manage and initiate these practices - defined as contributing towards a worthy cause, the public, their work force and the environment through the organisation's understanding of social responsibility and commitment to sustainable development (Trilogue, 2004:186, Lubbe & Puth, 2002:179). These practices will determine each stakeholder's perception about the organisation and influence the organisation's reputation in the public domain (King report: 2002:4).

Nielsen and Thomsen (2018) re-established that organisations will find themselves in a dilemma if they don't invest in concrete CSR initiatives and more importantly choose not to communicate about it openly with their stakeholders. Nielsen and Thomsen's (2018) research determined that stakeholders expect organisations to share CSR information through their corporate websites, CSR reports, policies and procedures and to measure their CSR performance by having an in-depth understanding of stakeholder perceptions, beliefs, perceptions and opinions. Furthermore, organisations should be careful not to self-promote their brands with sudden acts of goodwill as it could cause scepticism and compromise its licence to operate and the benefits of collaborative stakeholder management. From a communications perspective, CSR is a strategic approach that focuses on ethical and sustainable internal and external communication that encourages a responsible corporate culture and drives community and environmental development (Trilogue, 2004:186; Lubbe & Puth, 2002:179). Nielsen and Thomsen (2018) states that CSR communication can be defined as *"a practice which corporations undertake to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close collaboration with their stakeholders"*.

To build and gain a credible CSR reputation and image, organisations must be willing to make operational adjustments to the value chain; identify, prioritise and measure social issues and impact; communicate through reporting initiatives and incorporate CSR values into the performance and operations of management (Kramer & Porter, 2006:13). Information on corporate practices, behaviour and how the organisation affects the

environment needs to be made available for stakeholders to freely access to ensure that the organisation has a license to operate (King report: 2002:12). The purpose of communicating about CSR is to *promote and reinforce all stakeholders' confidence in the organisations' integrity*, empower stakeholders to be more informed about the organisations' activities and to decide for themselves whether the organisations' operations are beneficial to the community or not (King Report, 2002:12, Cooper, 2004:4).

Organisations use sport sponsorships for brand awareness and marketing purposes but have changed their views on how to use it more effectively with the support of CSR communication strategies to ensure positive behavioural change and active community participation (Tsotsou, 2011:557). CSR initiatives related to sport sponsorships are closely related to stakeholder engagement; defined as a trust-based group effort that aims to influence the way stakeholders perceive an organisation; which leads to a competitive advantage and brand loyalty (Foo, 2007:381). According to Trilogue (2004:206), there are two reasons why an organisation communicates about CSR activities such as sport sponsorship. Firstly, to raise awareness about the organisation's CSR work and to generate a positive association, which ensures recognition to enhance the organisation's reputation (Trilogue, 2004:206). The second reason is to communicate about the organisations' CSR activities to gain the support of other stakeholders who can contribute in their own unique way (Trilogue, 2004:206).

CSR reporting is an effective and sustainable communication method to support stakeholders to make a meaningful analysis of the organisation's economic, social and environmental activities (King Report, 2002:11). It is a form of transparency, that allows organisations to release information in a candid, accurate and timely manner, to ensure that stakeholders obtain a clear picture of what is taking place within the organisation in real-time and to build long-term relationships to strengthen its position in the economy (Hess, 2007:458). To form a complete CSR strategy, organisations should also determine who their stakeholders are, define the relationship, and identify effective methods of communicating information to each involved stakeholder group (Hess, 2007:459).

Kramer and Porter (2006:3) use the following four reasons to justify the importance of CSR and to encourage the organisation to incorporate it into their business operations, especially when various internal and external stakeholders need to be managed:

1. Moral obligation – to do the right thing: *“Organisations should achieve commercial success in ways that honour ethical values and respect people, communities and the natural environment (Kramer & Porter, 2006:3)”*.
2. Sustainability: Organisations should focus on environmental and community stewardship and manage all stakeholders involved through sustainable business management and *“meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability for future generations to meet their own needs (Kramer & Porter, 2006:3)”*.
3. Licence to operate: To engage in a responsible relationship with all stakeholders involved and to proactively manage social issues that can have an impact on business operations (Kramer & Porter, 2006:3).
4. Reputation: When organisations participate in CSR activities it has the potential to *“improve the organisation’s image, strengthen its brand, elevate morale, and raise the value of its stocks (Kramer & Porter, 2006:3)”*.

The above compelling rationale supports the practical perspective that CSR enables organisations to achieve successful corporate citizenship when economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic responsibilities are managed responsibly for the greater good of all stakeholders involved (Komaran & Tan, 2006:2). According to Kramer and Porter (2006:3) organisations cannot afford to ignore social issues as activists have the power to draw attention to these problems and cause damage to their overall reputation, operations and income levels. When applied strategically, CSR has the potential to strengthen stakeholder relationships and guide organisations on how to apply their resources, expertise and activities responsibly to benefit society, rather than to cause harm (Kramer & Porter, 2006:3).

### 3.5.2 CSR Principles

The CSR principles can be viewed as different methods of how an organisation can contribute to sustainable development or initiate CSR activities within the community, environment and workplace (Trilogue, 2004:186, Lantos: 2001: 598). There are three charity principles namely 1) the charity principle, 2) the stewardship principles, 3) the social relationship.

The charity principle is based on organisations or individuals that make voluntary contributions and focus on the sustainable development of disadvantaged or underprivileged communities or groups (Trilogue, 2004:186, Lantos: 2001:598; Tan & Komaran, 2006:3). These voluntary contributions, known as philanthropy or sponsorships, can be perceived as a gesture of goodwill or “giving back” to improve the community’s quality of life without expecting something in return (Lantos, 2001:608).

Pick and Pay donated 20 bikes to the children of both Velokhaya Cycling Academy in Khayelitsha and the Knysna Sports School to promote health and safety through the public’s active participation in their social media Facebook campaign “LikeBike” (Pink and Pay, 2017). Lantos (2001:611) argues that if philanthropy is applied strategically, the organisation should benefit from it by receiving “good publicity, enhanced employee morale leading to higher productivity, less government intervention, corruption and abuse of rights” while benefiting financially and building a good public reputation. The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge supports local charity Team Angel Wolf, a worthy cause started by father Nick Watson and mother Delphine, daughter Tia and their disabled son Rio who was diagnosed with Q44 Deletion De Novo and live as a family in Dubai (Team Angel Wolf Facebook Page, 2018; LovinDubai, 2018). The main objective of the cause is to create awareness for people, especially children, with disabilities and to include them in sporting events or fitness activities to build a healthy and more inclusive society through family fitness challenges (Team Angel Wolf Facebook Page, 2018; LovinDubai, 2018). Nick Watson participates in UAE city events like marathons, duathlons, and triathlons that include running, swimming and cycling; and participates with Rio in his specially branded Team Angel Wolf gear to ensure his safety throughout each event (Team Angel Wolf Facebook Page, 2018; LovinDubai, 2018). The charity has also evolved by including more disabled children in sporting events by relying on

community volunteers to push and run with Team Angel Wolf cycling chairs through the 'Together We Can' campaign to inspire a larger community movement to improve family health and fitness (LovinDubai, 2018).

In contrast with the charity principle, the stewardship principle refers to the balance between the organisation's own agenda and objections versus the interest, health and safety of relevant stakeholder groups (Tan & Komaran, 2006:3). These stakeholder groups expect organisations to be responsible and not to suffer from their business activities, but rather to focus on "*the life improvement and growth of employees and their families, as well as the development of the local community and society at large*" (The World Business Council for Sustainable Developments, 2010; Lantos, 2001:598; Tan & Komaran, 2006:3).

In 2010, environmental activists protested the BP Oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, which not only caused major environmental issues for America, but it also broke the trust of the organisation's stakeholders and created negative perceptions about BP's brand and image (BP, 2012). According to BP, the organisation has worked hard to restore trust in the brand and to show their commitment to social responsibility (BP, 2012). BP has spent over USD 23 billion to clean up the environment and to pay out damage claims made by local communities and businesses affected by the oil spill (BP, 2012). The stewardship principle implies that stakeholders expect organisations to take full accountability for their actions and to resolve issues responsibly that negatively impacts the stakeholders involved. In the case of Spinneys Dubai, the focus is on community health and safety development through their 'Eat, Well. Live Well' campaign; the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Build-up rides from August to November; and the main race in December, The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (Spinneys Dubai, 2017). The community expects responsible and ethical event management; and that both Spinneys Dubai and the event organiser Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, can be held accountable for any issues that might occur; and that they would ultimately do the right thing in all situations.

The social relationship shows that organisations care about the needs of their stakeholders and are willing to initiate long-term CSR activities to contribute to sustainable development by improving the quality of life and the living conditions of communities (Lantos, 2001:599). These are organisations that are perceived by the community as "*ethical, legal, commercial and as a public organisation which applies a set of policies, practices and programmes that*

*are integrated throughout their business operations, and decision-making processes that are supported and rewarded by top management”* (Business for Social Responsibility, 2010:22, Lantos, 2001:598). Based on the three principles of CSR it can be argued that organisations apply and manage CSR activities differently to suit their own objections and to meet the needs and expectations of their stakeholders in the environment they operate. In the case of Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency who is the event organiser and owner of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge the social relationship is critical to maintain the trust of title sponsors Spinneys Dubai and Dubai 92 radio station to endorse long-term sport sponsorship to promote community health and safety through cycling.

### **3.5.3 Effective CSR activities**

Effective CSR is dependent on how stakeholders evaluate organisational CSR efforts and the impact these activities have on their relationship, purchase behaviour and attitude towards the brand (Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018). To an extent CSR can be considered as a promotional tool to build brand equity among consumers and have the power to persuade consumers to invest in brands that are perceived as having a good reputation (Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018).

Organisations should identify and evaluate the social needs of their stakeholders and the environment in which they operate; and incorporate strategic sustainable initiatives that can have a long-term impact (Kramer & Porter: 2006:15). According to Kotler and Lee (2005:22) different forms of CSR activities can be initiated to impact different types of social issues, such as the following:

1. Corporate philanthropy: When an organisation donates funds to a charity project that is based on sustainable development.
2. Cause promotion: When an organisation provides funds, resources or volunteers to support a cause.
3. Cause-related marketing: When an organisation commits to donating a portion of revenues made on the sales of products and services.

4. Corporate social marketing: When an organisation initiates a campaign that focuses on behaviour change, such as health and safety.
5. Community volunteering: When an organisation motivates its staff or the community to give their personal time to support a cause.
6. Socially responsible business practices: When an organisation adapts its business practices to improve environmental and social impact.

Organisations should identify and apply effective CSR activities that will fit into the profile of their business operations to ultimately motivate behavioural change. From this perspective, organisations should first define CSR from a strategic management point of view to establish how the organisation should act responsibly. In the case of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, Spinneys Dubai use their sport sponsorship as a CSR activity to be socially responsible; they use corporate social marketing to promote community health, fitness and safety; they use cause promotion, as Spinneys Dubai is the title sport sponsor of the event; and finally, they use socially responsible business practices to manage environmental impact.

Theoretically, recent perception and impact studies have recognised that a stakeholder's brand perception and identification is enhanced when the organisation is considered as global (Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018). According to Forbes (2018), there are 'CSR trends' or activities globally (especially in first world countries like the United States of America) that have forced corporate citizens to change corporate policies, procedures and CSR communication programmes to support the following issues. Workplace harassment and inequality especially for women. Early in 2018 the #MeToo hashtag received overwhelming coverage on social media from victims across industries, especially Hollywood stars, who have suffered sexual harassment in the workplace, forcing organisations to change their corporate policies and cultures to make it easy for women to report incidents and to address gender inequalities like salaries (Forbes, 2018).

Brand activists cause disruptions and influence how brands operate, especially when organisations linger to find solutions for responsible supply chain and ethical working conditions (Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018). A shift from disaster recovery to climate change has forced organisations world-wide to "*invest in innovative technologies, redefine business models, and support policies that can address critical climate-related challenges* (Forbes,

2018)”. Corporate citizens are pressured by society to re-evaluate the gender inequalities of their leadership teams and board members and to implement strategies to increase the number of women across organisations (Forbes, 2018). 2) More than ever before, there is a diverse workforce where a variety of cultures, languages, ages, sexual orientation, disability and background experience are considered within the strategic employment plan for large global organisations (Forbes, 2018).

Another CSR trend is that CSR communication and public relations overlaps and used as a key communication tool to share CSR activities through external media coverage and to build a creditable reputation, desirable public image and trust among its valued stakeholders (Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018). With the rise of online and social media engagement, it is essential that brands openly and honestly share and communicate their CSR performances to ensure it is perceived as a legitimate organisation (Nielsen & Thomsen, 2018).

### **3.6 CORPORATE SOCIAL PERFORMANCE**

According to Ruggiero and Cupertino (2018:1) innovative CSR activities can help organisations to establish a competitive advantage, enhance its corporate reputation, drive innovation, attract a highly skilled workforce and increase consumer loyalty, therefore many multinationals have committed to diversify and allocate financial resource to achieve corporate social performance (CSP) and boost corporate financial performance (CFP) simultaneously. To achieve sustainable business management, organisations should implement and apply CSR strategies that ensure effective and efficient business operations; protect organisational interests; adhere to all legal and socially acceptable requirements and communicate effective and transparent information to all stakeholders involved (King report: 2002:30).

It is argued that the future sustainable growth of organisations is dependent on its financial investment of CSR activities and the integration of these activities into all levels of the organisation (Ruggiero & Cupertino, 2018:1). Sustainable business management functions within four important domains, including economic, legal, social and environmental impact; that allows organisations to operate in a responsible way, over the long-term; and that builds trust with all its stakeholders (Bowd & Harris, 2006).

According to Dentchev (2007:105), each organisation should ask the following three questions to drive corporate social performance:

1. 'What are the opportunities and threats associated with corporate social performance?'
2. 'How are responsibilities to society and the natural environment integrated into strategic management?'
3. 'How can organisations deal with: a) imperfect information; b) stakeholder independence in the context of corporate social performance?'

According to Bowd and Harris (2006), organisations can implement and evaluate their own corporate social performance (CPS) by defining, communicating and integrating all four domains within their business operations. The CPS model below can assist top management to strategise CSR practices that will best suit the organisation's needs and requirements.

**Table 5: Woods Model of CPS**

<b>Domains</b>	<b>Social Legitimacy</b>	<b>Public Responsibility</b>	<b>Managerial Discretion</b>
Economic	Produce goods and services, provide jobs and create wealth for shareholders	Sell quality products and services at a reasonable price	Produce ecologically sound products, use low polluting technology, cut costs with recycling
Legal	Obey laws and regulations	Work for public policies representing enlightened self-interest – health and safety of the public	Take advantage of regulatory requirements to innovate into products, technologies or services
Social	Follow ethical principles about products - being honest about the quality of products	Provide full and accurate product information, to enhance user safety beyond legal requirements	Target product use and information to specific markets – children friendly products, other languages and promote as product advantage
Environmental	Act as a good citizen in all matters beyond law and ethical rules; return a portion of revenue to the community or reduce wastage	Invest the firm's charitable resources in social problems related to primary and secondary involvement in society – hunger (food)	Choose a charitable investment that contributes to problem solving and apply to an effective criterion – contribute and educate communities on sustainable development

Source: Bowd & Harris (2006)

The benefits of corporate social performance strategies include: a) strong organisational reputation; b) employees that perceive the organisation as a desirable place to work and to be associated with; c) more satisfied customers that are willing to trust and be loyal to the brand; and d) other stakeholders such as the shareholders, government and local community will be more supportive, committed, loyal and motivated to allow the brand to operate (Dentchev, 2007:105). Furthermore, CSP allows organisations to improve business models by engaging with various stakeholders to improve the value chain and to offer more competitive products and services (Dentchev, 2007:108).

CPS strategies can also be harmful if leadership teams are not genuine in their approach and accordingly need to use effective strategic communication to inform stakeholders openly and honestly about their activities (Dentchev, 2007:108). To avoid damaging perceptions and loss of credibility, Dentchev (2007:108) outlined the following reasons as risks to avoid when implementing and managing CPS throughout the organisation: a) diluted managerial attention; b) insufficient spending and budget allocation; c) poor long-term strategy implementation and development; and d) poor risk communication and crisis management.

As a solution Dentchev (2007:110) proposes that organisations use the 'resource mix', which is an effective analytical tool that cleverly identifies which business practices need to be re-evaluated by critically looking at resource relationships, such as various stakeholder behaviours that are interdependent and are important for the survival of the organisation in the environment in which it operates. The resource relationships refer to specific stakeholders, for example: the "*owner provides the organisation with access to resources and capabilities; government officials regulate factor-markets; intermediaries such as non-governmental organisations, confederations and the media provide information signals whether these organisations function the way they should* (Dentchev, 2007:110)". Leadership teams need to use these signals as market insights to inform their overall business strategy; and use CPS as a brand value system that is integrated into their everyday policies and procedures, in order to create a more balanced operation (Dentchev, 2007:110).

Effective CSP is a result of an invested CSR corporate culture, and any resistance during the process of implementation within the senior leadership team can compromise CSP performance and accordingly it requires a highly skilled team to strategically govern its CSR activities (Ruggiero & Cupertino, 2018:2). The resistance to invest in CSR activities is rooted in the need for managers to deliver sales and a return on investment in the short-term, and don't consider long-term sustainable growth as part of the process (Ruggiero & Cupertino, 2018:3). Against this backdrop, Ruggiero and Cupertino (2018:3) argues that clever innovations such as clean energy and waste management can bridge the gap between corporate social performance and corporate financial performance to justify why organisations can invest in CSR activities. To bridge this gap and build CSR confidence within organisations, leadership teams can integrate KPI's to develop clever sustainable innovations over a certain period to establish a CSR strategic-orientated approach and a genuine CSR corporate culture (Ruggiero & Cupertino, 2018:22). This supports the notion that organisations can start to invest in CPS by using the Woods CPS model to gain social legitimacy, be perceived as responsible in the public domain and cultivate CSR orientated leadership to not only enhance CPS but also CFP.

### **3.6.1 Stakeholder theory defined**

The stakeholder theory can be defined as the process of identifying, prioritizing and managing a variety of stakeholder groups who have a stake in the performance and financial triple bottom-line of the organisation; therefore, relationships with each stakeholder group should be based on trust and honesty, and strategically managed through effective corporate communication (Steyn & Puth, 2000:188; Tsiotsou, 2011:559, Rawlings, 2006:134). A stakeholder is any group or individual who can influence or can be influenced by the achievements and goals of an organisation (Tsiotsou, 2011:558). Stakeholder groups that need to be considered by governing bodies are: shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, financial community, government, the media, special interest groups, competitors, trade unions, NGO's, partners, the public and activist groups (Tsiotsou, 2011:558).

According to Uribe *et al.*, (2018:16) the stakeholder theory is still relevant in relation to project management and can be described as a symbiotic relationship for sustainability, which is critical for the long-term survival of organisations with the support of dynamic stakeholder relationships. Furthermore, stakeholder theory has developed “*in project management as an active part of the sustainable transformation of organisations and their commitment to sustainability* (Uribe *et al.*, 2018:16)”. It was also determined that corporate governance is regulated by the industry in which it operates and there is no single strategy that can be applied to all types of organisations; therefore, highlighting that each organisation need to build unique relationships with every stakeholder group (Uribe *et al.*, 2018:16). There are three main dimensions for sustainability including economic, social and environmental and the secondary dimensions are ethics, innovation and technology which is strongly linked to CSR, the process of stakeholder identification and prioritisation (Uribe *et al.*, 2018:16).

To incorporate a successful CSR strategy into business operations, organisations should integrate business practices with the social needs of their stakeholders. It is important to define each stakeholder relationship which can have an impact on the performance of the organisation (Lantos, 2001:601). Each stakeholder relationship can place the organisation under extreme pressure, either to be highly profitable and to ensure a maximum return on investment or to make decisions that are socially accepted - known as the push and pull effect. It is the organisation’s responsibility to identify who those stakeholders are and to ensure that each stakeholder’s short- and long-term interests are taken into consideration (Lantos, 2001:604).

First, an organisation should identify who its stakeholders are (according to its short-term and long-term objectives) to enable it to use corporate communication to drive business dimensions and attributes, to achieve a favourable reputation among its most valued stakeholders (Rawlings, 2006:135, Van Riel & Fombrun: 2007:263). Secondly, it is important to identify and prioritise effective and strategic communication initiatives or campaigns that are proactive and meet the needs, expectations and behaviour of all stakeholder groups involved; while scanning the environment for possible activist groups who might approach the organisation unexpectedly about issues that have impacted them negatively and seek an immediate response with responsible solutions (Steyn & Puth, 2000:187).

According to Rawlings (2006:136) and Tsiotsou (2011:558), stakeholder relationships can be managed by using the linkage model to identify, prioritise and balance needs and expectations; and at the same time, to help the organisation to be aware of the mild to severe impact that each group can have on its reputation, as these groups tend to critically and continuously evaluate business practices and corporate communication activities. It is therefore, in the best interest of an organisation to take a proactive approach and integrate the needs, expectations and motives of each stakeholder group into corporate strategy and to use effective corporate communication to ensure the triple bottom-line is protected by incorporating “*economic, social and environmental stewardship, performance and impact*” into their overall business objectives (King Report, 2002:12, Tsiotsou, 2011:558).

Stakeholder groups can be strategically managed and prioritised in the following 4 ways:

- 1) Legitimacy and functional linkages: Stakeholder groups who benefit and contribute to the organisation’s triple bottom-line, believe that they have the right to speak up or to whistle-blow misconduct that are not in line with organisational policy and procedures; or that they can simply address behaviour that is not ethically responsible (Tsiotsou, 2011:558). These stakeholders are referred to as functional linkages “*who are essential to the functioning of the organisation like the input of employees and suppliers who provide labour and resources while the consumers are the output function that consume products and services* (Rawlings, 2006:136)”. Within the context of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge the stakeholder groups include the event organiser Promoseven Sports Agency, all the event sponsors, volunteers and the participating community.
  
- 2) Power and enabling linkages: Stakeholder groups that have the power to regulate organisations through rules, regulations and agreements believe they are entitled to investigate and evaluate all business practices. They are referred to as enabling linkages as they give organisations the license to operate without interruption. These include the government, federations groups, board of directors and shareholders (Tsiotsou, 2011:558, Rawlings, 2006:136). Within the context of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge these stakeholder groups include the Dubai Sports Council, Dubai Police, Dubai Road and Transport Authority (RTA), The Union Cycliste

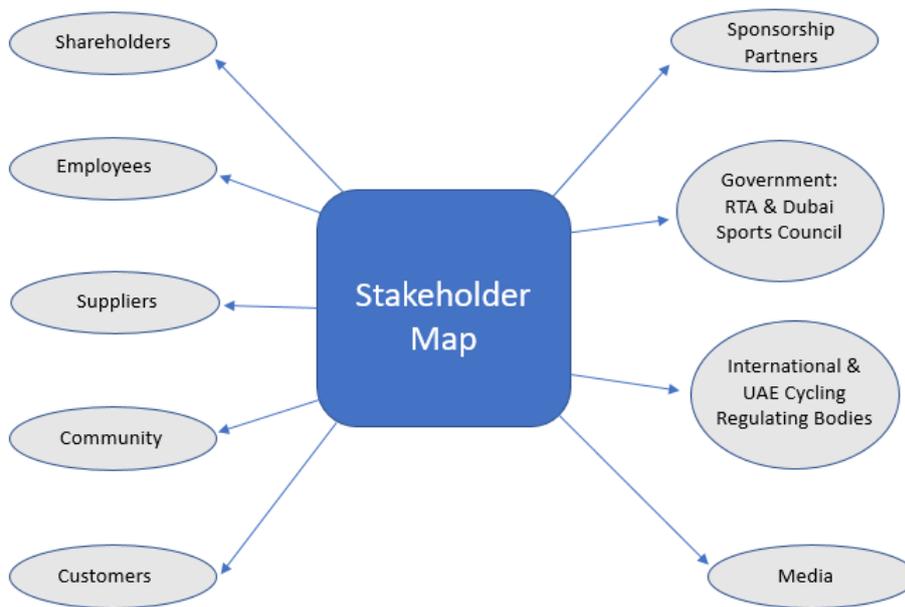
Internationale (UCI) and UAE Cycling Federation who provide permissions and regulate the health, fitness, safety and competitiveness standards and influence operational performance.

- 3) Urgency and diffused linkages: Stakeholder groups who have urgent needs, and pressure organisations to react and resolve social and environmental issues responsibly, are referred to as diffused linkages. They include the media, the general public, activists and special interest groups “*who are the most difficult to identify because they include stakeholders who do not have frequent interaction with the organisation but become involved based on the actions of the organisation.* (Tsiotsou, 2011: 558, Rawlings, 2006:136)”. The health and safety of cyclists on the roads or while participating in the event are the most important consideration for all stakeholders involved, therefore it is the responsibility of the sponsors and event organisers to ensure that all safety precautions and measurements have been considered, communicated, actioned and enforced.
- 4) Normative linkages: To drive brand performance organisations need to do a competitive analysis and scan the environment to ensure that their products and services can compete with similar offerings. Governing bodies need to make a conscious decision to be aware of competitors who share the same values, goals and issues and to strategically communicate and share their observed strategies with internal stakeholders to motivate high standards of service delivery in a competitive market (Rawlings, 2006:136). Within the context of the Dubai retail market and its long history of sport sponsorship in Europe, Carrefour would be Spinneys Dubai’s main competitor to observe in order to evaluate its own brand performance within the region.

The following stakeholder groups for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge have been observed through research: Shareholders, customers, community, government, media, employees, suppliers, sponsorship partners, Dubai Sports Council, Dubai Road and Transport Authority (RTA), The Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) and UAE Cycling Federation (Kilalea, 2016). These stakeholders play an important role in the “*achievement of the economic objectives of the corporation*”. Therefore, Spinneys Dubai should build

strong relationships with each group, either through a “*contractual relationship or based on the impact of their CSR activities.*” Spinneys Dubai should define each stakeholder relationship and decide how to engage with stakeholders accordingly through corporate communication.

**Figure 9: Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge stakeholder map**



Source: Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge Report (2016:2)

Shareholders like the event owner Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency and organiser of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, have invested shares in the organisation, making them partial and entitled owners. It is important to regularly communicate with them about the organisations’ activities to reassure them that their investments are safe and that it is contributing to a worthy cause (Cooper, 2004:184).

Employees are not only responsible for their job description – they need to have a greater awareness of their organisation’s environmental, economic and social impact to be able to support responsible business practices that motivate ethical and productive work behaviour.

This ethical organisational culture requires strong *“leadership and employee communication that play a vital role in building people’s capability and retaining employees; continuous, respectful and candid employee communication also ensures leadership credibility (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, 2009:115)”*.

Customers are willing to support the organisation if it shows goodwill, support and excellent service. Therefore, the organisation should communicate to its customers about its CSR activities to motivate them to get involved or to contribute to a worthy cause. This will also enhance the organisation’s credibility and motivate customers to support the organisation (Cooper, 2004:184).

Suppliers need to be reassured that the organisation will use its supplies according to their agreement and *“monitor the risks associated with a failure to be able to source strategic products and services”* and not to use it to harm the community or indirectly harm its brand reputation (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, 2009:115).

Effective and trusting relationships with sponsorship partners have strategic advantages when CSR communication enables partners to determine what their responsibilities are and what needs to be done in a certain period of time. It keeps all parties involved informed on the latest status of each project to determine if goals were achieved; and at the same time, it provides them with the opportunity to identify and correct issues (Cooper, 2004:188).

Lantos (2001:599) states that organisations must commit themselves to the needs of the community and address social issues such as health, safety or education before competitor brands take advantage of the opportunity to build meaningful and trustworthy relationships. Community relationships can be seen as a corporate social contract that obligates organisations to address and solve social problems that have the potential to prevent social progress in society or limit quality of life. It is, therefore, important that organisations proactively communicate how they are addressing current social problems and what their goals and responsibilities are in terms of these issues. Interest groups that care about the mentally and physically challenged or the preservation of the environment can cause financial harm if social problems are not addressed responsibly through effective and timely corporate communication activities. Environmental impact affect ecosystems, animal life,

water and air and it is, therefore, important that organisations are transparent and communicate openly and honestly about how they are affecting the environment and what contributions are being made to preserve and sustain the environment in which they operate (King Report: 2002:48).

The main function of the government is to ensure that organisations are regulated according to the law and that their business operations reflect responsible and sustainable corporate practices, including the sponsoring of community sporting events such as the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, which needs to be regulated by the Dubai Sports Council and UAE Cycling Federation (Lantos, 2001:596). Organisations are obligated to report on their economic activities, which include how customers' needs in terms of goods and services are satisfied; how shareholder funds are ethically managed; and how organisations are contributing to community empowerment, job creation, career development and product and service innovations (Lantos, 2001:596).

The International Cycling Federation (UCI) regulates and promotes the development of cycling all around the world in collaboration with National Federations like the UAE to ensure fair, safe and healthy practices and conditions for a competitive sport to take place (UCI, 2017). In particular, UCI determines dates for international events; regulates rules and regulations for hosting and participating in cycling events; and encourages people with all abilities to participate in special training programmes and events (UCI, 2017).

Effective stakeholder relationships management is the “*understanding of their complex dynamics, and the creation of high capacity for adaptation, mechanisms for dialogue and conflict resolution and assimilation and response to stakeholder pressures and environmental demands* (Uribe *et al.*, 2018:16)”.

In conclusion, the stakeholder theory continues to be an important approach to gain CSR credibility to manage stakeholder relationships in relation to project management to evaluate risk, communication and integration management. Continuous CSR development and integration of sustainability activities, results in a competitive advantage, an improved corporate reputation, and management teams that are more motivated to invest in product and services, innovation and technology (Uribe *et al.*, 2018:16). Finally, this CSR orientated

approach to manage stakeholders sustainably, improves overall corporate governance and business operations, which not only creates financial value but social commitment from all stakeholders involved (Uribe *et al.*, 2018:16).

### **3.6.2 Strategic stakeholder engagement**

Stakeholder engagement can be defined as “individuals, organisations or communities who participate in a process where knowledge, experience, judgement and values are shared with the purpose of making relevant, transparent and effective decisions to reach organisational objectives (Boaz *et al.*, 2018)”. Strategic stakeholder engagement is achieved when each relationship is specifically designed, implemented and evaluated according to the specific profile and needs of the stakeholder group involved (Foo, 2007:281). Maintaining strategic stakeholder engagement can be challenging and it requires that organisations consistently invest time and energy to build and grow trustful relationships (Boaz *et al.*, 2018). There a number of ways to maintain effective stakeholder engagement including: 1) share and clarify objectives with all parties involved; 2) determine and plan for resources including budget, time and skills required; 3) plan for learning, development and evaluation; 4) work closely with highly engaged and positive stakeholders; 5) create engagement opportunities in a safe stress-free environment to generate shared commitment through collaborations that are flexible; and finally, 6) recognise and reward the involvement of stakeholders to drive ongoing and new initiatives (Boaz *et al.*, 2018).

Organisations who invest time and resource in the sustainable development of green innovations through strategic stakeholder engagement, are prone to develop a CSR culture more rapidly, with the support of effective reporting, relationship management, auditing and certification (Pucci, *et al.*, 2018; Foo, 2007:381). The most important element for effective stakeholder engagement is to actively manage the relationship through collaborations and a process of green innovation development to promote proactive socio-environmental practices, while simultaneously attending to the interests of the community and environment in which it operates (Pucci, *et al.*, 2018).

According to Pucci, *et al.*, (2018) there are three phases for developing green innovations and value for all stakeholders involved:

- 1) Proactively develop sustainable behaviour within the organisation through entrepreneurial passion with a focus on quality and clear sustainability objectives
- 2) Develop a sustainable culture through CSR identity creation, corporate legitimisation and enhancing CSR activities throughout the organisation
- 3) Use effective strategic stakeholder engagement to fully adopt and develop new CSR activities by re-organising its financial investments and making operational changes to support sustainability. Secondly, collaborate with both internal and external stakeholders to co-create green innovations and diffuse disruptive activists through sustainable practices and engaging community events. Finally, other legitimate stakeholders can exploit organisational weaknesses and introduce new sustainable initiatives through educational programmes to establish a foundation for CSR.

According to Blok & Wubben (2015:147) “policy makers and researchers acknowledge that public stakeholder engagement is important for responsible innovation (RI) and that mutual responsiveness and active involvement from all stakeholders involved are essential to overcome any critical issues that prevent future sustainable development”. It is important to recognise that not all innovations are ‘good’ or ‘green’, and therefore, organisations should critically evaluate the process of RI through strategic stakeholder engagement (Blok & Wubben, 2015:147). The process of RI is considered effective when it is “*transparent and interactive by which societal actors and innovators become mutually responsive to each other with a view on the ethical acceptability, sustainability and societal desirability of the innovation process and its marketable products in order to allow proper embedding of scientific advances with in the community it operates* (Blok & Wubben, 2015:147).

Effective stakeholder relationships are managed with a win-win mindset where both the organisation and its stakeholders can have a transparent, two-way conversation (interaction) and share valuable information to co-create green innovations through an attitude of responsiveness (Blok & Wubben, 2015:150). Stakeholder engagement is considered effective when all stakeholders involved are mutually responsive to each other and committed to generate green innovations collaboratively through a process of co-responsibility (Blok & Wubben, 2015:150).

The process of co-responsibility is one of the key areas of concern for sustainable and effective stakeholder engagement. The concerns include financial risks (ROI), decisions on mutual values and ethical standards and how to manage the relationship to ensure future sustainability for all parties involved (Blok & Wubben, 2015:153). The stage-gate model can be used to promote co-responsibility during the RI process by working together through the following stages (Blok & Wubben, 2015:150):

- 1) Discovery: identify new green innovations and co-create new products and services for the community in which it operates
- 2) Scoping: determine the economic, social and ethical benefits for all groups involved
- 3) Business case: ensure all stakeholders are engaged and actively participating to formulate an action plan for execution
- 4) Development: the action plan clearly communicates collaborative objectives and next steps in the process
- 5) Testing and validation: test new green innovations and evaluate its future sustainability among all stakeholders involved
- 6) Launch: collaboratively stakeholders can launch green innovations through effective marketing and communication activities

When organisations communicate about their CSR activities, especially through reporting, it is important to remember that stakeholders are dependent on different types of information regarding their needs and concerns, and accordingly, the most effective method of communication should be selected to build relationships strategically to reach CSR goals (King Report, 2002:12). Across all CSR communication channels, it is important to integrate the following communication principles to strategically engage with all stakeholders: transparency, inclusiveness, audibility, completeness, relevance, accuracy, sustainability content, neutrality, comparability, clarity and timelessness (King Report, 2002:12)

In short, strategic stakeholder engagement requires commitment from all parties involved to co-create green innovations that support sustainable development and maintain the relationship through mutual responsiveness to each other and taking co-responsibility for all actions taken before, during and after the process of responsible innovation. Finally, CSR

communication promotes transparency, two-way conversations (interactions), trust and long-term sustainable partnerships, creating value for all stakeholder involved.

### **3.6.3 Public Relations & CSR Communication**

Over the years, CSR has become an established and integrated business practice. However, stakeholders expect organisations to be transparent and communicate their social responsibilities to avoid being labelled as ‘greenwashing’ corporate social responsibilities for the sake of looking good, instead of being truly genuine about it (CSR Pulse, 2018). Public relations can be used as an affective low-cost communication tool; create public awareness about CSR activities; and help change community behaviour through engaging and credible print and online publications “*designed to improve, maintain or protect*” the brand image and reputation of an organisation. However, when promoted aggressively, it can be seen as a marketing gimmick and ingenuine to the true cause of the campaign; and create a negative perception among internal and external stakeholders (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:20-208; CSR Pulse, 2018). Now, more than ever, board members and corporate leadership teams are responsible for establishing CSR activities that truly make a difference and are deemed credible to all stakeholders, especially with the new digitalised era where information is instantly available online and easy to share with a large network of people world-wide (CSR Pulse, 2018). Once strategic CSR activities have been established in an organisation, only then public relations should be used to share information with the public. It should be factual in nature and true to sustainable and community development, instead of misusing the opportunity for advertising purposes (CSR Pulse, 2018).

According to Kim and Ferguson (2014:3), organisations should not only report on ‘what’ they are doing, but they should also share ‘why’ they are contributing to a specific cause through their CSR communication channels. Using public relations as a CSR communication channel is considered as more trustworthy than to share the ‘why’; especially when coverage is shared through a reliable and reputable third-party media source, instead of using direct organisational communication (Kim & Ferguson, 2014:3). Other important third-party players that can help build strong organisational reputation and image for CSR activities to change community behaviour, are strategic partners such as NGO’s and independent research

agencies that generate clean audits on CSR performance; as well as prestigious CSR and government institutions that award and endorse corporate citizens for their contribution to society (Kim & Ferguson, 2014:4).

Beyond the channel of communication, Kim and Ferguson (2014:12) established the following factors as the most important indicators for organisations to consider when communicating about their CSR activities: 1) the nature and tone of messaging should be low-key, factual and avoid promotional tactics that have the potential to create consumer scepticism; 2) provide clear transparency on all CSR activities, especially on who the beneficiaries are, as well as conveying the results through reporting, to establish the legitimacy of the cause; 3) deliver consistent CSR performance through meaningful activities year-on-year to support long-term sustainability and to limit the frequency of CSR messaging – a ‘do more and talk less’ approach is required 4) organisations who spend on CSR promotional activities are perceived as ingenuine and can be perceived as guilty of CSR ‘greenwashing’. Instead, they should strategically collaborate with third-party entities to share their stories on CSR performance.

To strengthen CSR communication in terms of credibility, organisations can engage with the community in a way that is easy to understand or action; secondly, they can involve CSR beneficiaries and NGO’s in the communication process to increase transparency; thirdly, they should refrain CEO’s and spokespersons from speaking publicly to avoid public scepticism; fourthly, they should share CSR reports with external stakeholders to build relational resource and commitment; and fifthly, for effective CSR communication, they should choose more desirable touchpoints as channels of communication, including physical stores, corporate website, events, as well as PR channels to build trust, brand image and corporate reputation and to motivate community participation (Kim & Ferguson, 2014:16).

Audience targeting for effective and strategic CSR communication is critical, according to Kim and Ferguson (2014:17), for example, females are more sensitive towards CSR ‘messaging, self-promotional tone, transparency and consistency’ compared to males. Secondly, practitioners should keep in mind the age of the target audience, for example, it was established that young (18–24) and old (over 65) people are more prone to show interest in CSR activities, compared to those who are between the ages of 25 and 44 years

old (Kim & Ferguson, 2014:17). Lastly, people aged over 45 are considered more sceptical, and accordingly, CSR communication should be based on facts that are shared through external news channels including television, radio, print and online (Kim & Ferguson, 2014:17).

Forbes magazine (2018) published the following top PR trends for 2018 to consider for any organisation to engage with communities more strategically:

1. PR communication go beyond the executive office: organisations should invest in leadership development across the organisation to enable more people on all levels and functions to have strategic conversations with various stakeholder groups and, accordingly, be a brand ambassador
2. Brands owning their digital platforms is critical to boost consumer engagement through storytelling and limiting the voice of competitors in the market
3. Brands should use PR agencies to provide consultation on crisis management, product launches and media and influencer relations, to generate strategic content that changes consumer perceptions, behaviour, attitudes and that motivates behaviour change
4. Keep PR teams well-informed about business operations and activities as “*PR is an incredible tool for marketing, investor communications, recruiting, and various other areas of the organisation*” to help drive performance
5. Be aware of dark social influence which is hard to monitor through online portals such as emails, texts and Skype and that can create negative brand perceptions; and invest in social-listening if needed, to prevent or contain a PR crisis
6. Quantitative content marketing return on investment metrics are critical to measure digital performance, such as reach, engagement, views and likes, and to use as quantifiable online coverage
7. Influencer marketing has become a sensational PR marketing tool for various brands across the globe, however, it has been heavily criticised for inflated price tags without showing an actual return on investment and, accordingly, strategic PR decisions on selection, investment and measurements need to be made to consider influencer partnerships as a long-term PR strategy
8. Strategic artificial intelligence can support PR through media monitoring and data capturing of coverage received; through online listening to prevent community crisis

management; and through the use of chatbots to support online relationship management with customers.

From a local UAE perspective, KPMG (2018) reported on the growing trend of organisations investing in CSR reporting, which resulted in 44 of the top 100 companies reporting on CSR in 2017, compared to 36 in 2016 (22% increase). The 44 organisations reported on “*social and environmental impacts generated by the organisation’s business operations, adoption of sustainability specific to codes of conduct across the supply chain, and quantifying financial risks related to environmental, social and governance aspects of the organisation’s business practices*” (KPMG, 2018). KPMG (2018) also identified that organisations in the UAE are adapting their CSR strategies to align with the ‘United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ as well as the ‘17 Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs), while using the ‘Global Reporting Initiative (GRI G4)’ guidelines as a CSR reporting framework. Furthermore, KPMG (2018) established the following reporting trends among the top 100 organisations in the UAE:

1. 72% disclose environmental and socio-economic impact
2. 57% disclose the sustainability performance of suppliers
3. 41% of organisations have a specific code of conduct in place
4. 44% report on sustainability performance
5. 16% of organisations use the ‘17 Sustainable Development Goals’ as part of their business operations
6. 11% use the latest GRI standards as a reporting framework

### 3.7 CONCLUSION

Corporate social responsibility is a strategic business management decision that can be motivated through pressures from various stakeholder groups. It can also encourage organisations such as Spinneys Dubai to integrate ethical and sustainable policies and procedures into all levels and functions of their organisation to be economically, legally, socially and environmentally responsible in a competitive retail market, giving them a licence to operate.

Strategic stakeholder engagement is the starting point for CSR and requires the commitment from all parties involved to co-create green innovations that support sustainable development and maintain the relationship through mutual responsiveness to each other and taking co-responsibility for all actions taken before, during and after the process of responsible innovation. From a communication perspective, CSR is a strategic approach that focuses on ethical and sustainable internal and external communication that encourages a responsible corporate culture and drives community and environmental development.

Furthermore, strategic and effective corporate communication is required from Spinneys Dubai, when communicating to stakeholders about CSR activities through various preferred CSR communication channels such the physical store, official corporate website, events, CSR dedicated website, CSR reports and PR to build long-term relationships, brand image and trust and to ultimately motivate community participation and behavioural change. Organisations such as Spinneys Dubai use the sport sponsorships of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge for brand awareness and marketing purposes, however, they can use it more effectively with the support of CSR communication strategies to ensure positive behavioural change and active community participation.

It is important that Spinneys Dubai considers adapting its CSR communication strategy and business practices according to the new CSR policies and regulations of the UAE Government, to ensure they have a licence to operate. This is also to prevent them from suffering reputation damage, such as loss of credibility and being labelled as 'greenwashing' social and environmental responsibilities. It is also evident that, because only 44% of the

UAE's top 100 organisations in 2017 reported on their CSR activities with 11% using GRI guidelines, the UAE still has a long way to go in terms of changing CSR corporate culture and organisations committing to accurate and transparent reporting on sustainability. It can be assumed that Spinneys Dubai has not fully committed to CSR reporting, as the UAE Government did not enforce the practice in the past, until now.

To conclude, organisations are not only perceived as successful when measured by its economic achievements, but also when measured by or held accountable for its social behaviour - the things organisations say and do and how it affects their stakeholders. Therefore, organisations such as Spinneys Dubai must be held accountable and responsible for actions or initiatives taken in the public, economic and environmental domain.

In the next chapter the researcher will focus on community engagement and sport sponsorship; elaborate more on how Spinneys Dubai can use brand management and corporate social marketing to build relationships, trust and a strong corporate identity to engage with the community; and focus on creating valuable customer experiences that will change their behaviour and motivation to participate, that will in turn contribute to the commerciality of the retailer.

# CHAPTER 4

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SPORT SPONSORSHIP

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Globally retailers acknowledge the importance of community engagement (active involvement) to generate economic and social value for all stakeholders involved (Briggs *et al.*, 2015:109). According to Briggs *et al.*, (2015:110) retailers should invest in community engagement activities, not only to show that they care about the needs and values of the community, but also to secure a sustainable and financial future as a legitimate and responsible corporate citizen.

Community engagement strategy can be defined as “*the subset of a firm’s CSR activities that are directed towards individual citizens and community groups and have the potential to enhance a retailer’s brand image and sales revenue*” (Briggs *et al.*, 2015:109). Organisations that focus on the integration of green innovations and community engagement activities into business strategy, while strategically engaging with like-minded stakeholder groups, are more likely to not only produce positive outcomes for the organisation itself but also for community in which it operates (Briggs *et al.*, 2015:109).

There are various levels of community engagement dependent on how deeply engaged or involved the retailer is during the process which are (Briggs *et al.*, 2015:111): 1) transactional engagement (lowest form of engagement) such as charitable donations or philanthropy that is managed through one-way communication; 2) transitional engagement (moderate engagement) such as sponsorship to gain a return on investment; and 3) transformational engagement (highest level of engagement) that is generated through active involvement and decision-making between the retailer and the community through collaborative partnerships and two-way transparent communication. Briggs *et al.*, (2015:111) suggests that to achieve optimal community engagement, retailers have to commit to both

transactional and transformational engagement at the same time to benefit from achieving a strong competitive advantage, are considered more influential and deliver more meaningful change and sustainable growth. These community engagement and CSR activities are formed through sustainable partnerships, that offer marketing such as co-branding and communication opportunities (Briggs *et al.*, 2015:111).

To partner with and share the vision of local government for sport development, Spinneys Dubai aligned their strategy with the objectives of the Dubai Sport Council to contribute to the needs of the community and the environment in which it operates (Spinneys Dubai, 2017). The Dubai Sport Council has three major objectives for sport development in the UAE to consider when strategically planning the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. Firstly, to fight obesity and diabetes amongst UAE nationals and expats by creating opportunities for sport participation; secondly, to encourage healthy community formation through a strong supporter base; and thirdly, to showcase Dubai as an international platform for a variety of sports worldwide (Dubai Sport Council, 2017).

Furthermore, Spinneys Dubai has chosen to associate with cycling as a sport and to follow the standards of the International Cycling Union and UAE Cycling Federation (UCF) to establish and promote it as a professional sport in the UAE (Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, 2017). The UCF committee was established in Paris in 1900, to administrate, regulate and promote the development of the eight disciplines of cycling around the globe, including road cycling, like the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (UCI, 2017). The International Cycling Union's mission is to work closely with the UAE National Cycling Federation to ensure that cycling is considered as a healthy recreational activity that enforce and encourages the values of well-being and fair play among all participants (UCI, 2017).

Against this background, Spinneys Dubai not only engage with the community through philanthropy (sport sponsorship) but also engage with important partners in the community to achieve social and economic value among all stakeholders involved. According to Tsotsou (2011:557), sport sponsorship is perceived not only as a communication and relationship building tool, but also as a commercial investment or an "*agreement between two organisations in order for both parties to mutually benefit and accomplish their profit and non-profit objectives*". Sport sponsorship can be beneficial to the organisation if managed

and implemented strategically to gain media exposure, build brand loyalty and association, increase sales and gain a competitive advantage and reputation over its competitors (Dounis *et al.*, 2008:214). Sport sponsorship can contribute to the overall brand equity of the organisation and increase the value of the brand. This can be achieved by establishing a brand personality; differentiation and loyalty; high name awareness within the public domain; reflecting a positive brand image to its stakeholders; and creating a favourable brand association and a perception of superior quality (Dounis *et al.*, 2008:215). From a marketing perspective, sport sponsorship strengthens the brand image, reputation and perception of an organisation positively, not only from a community perspective, but it also attracts the interest of national and international investors to support a cause or initiative (Tsiotsou, 2011:558).

As determined by Briggs *et al.*, (2015:121), effective community engagement can “affect consumer purchase satisfaction, retailer identification, brand trust and behavioural intentions”. This study illustrated that consumer perceptions, reactions and responses are affected by how retailers like Spinneys Dubai decide on how to engage with the community, and accordingly, partnerships (transformational engagement) results in strong consumer brand association while philanthropy encourages consumers to shop the brand with enhanced purchase satisfaction (Briggs *et al.*, 2015:121). According to Dounis *et al.* (2008:214), sport sponsorship can only be classified as having a competitive advantage when it meets the following criteria: show an increase in customer loyalty and sales; increase the value of the brand and give the organisation a competitive advantage; and create new partnership opportunities for the organisation to increase the value of products and services it provides.

This Chapter discuss how sport sponsorship can be used as a community engagement tool for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, to create long-term value for all stakeholders involved, and to illustrate how effective this approach can be to gain community trust and brand loyalty.

## 4.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARKETING AND CSR

Recent research conducted by Mahmoud *et al.* (2017) investigated how CSR can help drive business performance and justify why organisations such as Spinneys Dubai can use it as an effective marketing strategy to engage with the community, achieve customer loyalty and gain competitive advantage. It is argued that, when organisations integrate economic and social strategies as one cohesive strategy, this supports business operations to achieve economic results by adapting a corporate culture defined by the 'CSR Pyramid of Carroll' as "*the extent to which business meet the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities imposed by their stakeholders*" to challenge marketeers on their narrow views and perceptions on the importance of CSR (Mahmoud *et al.*, 2017).

The following issues need to be addressed within an organisation, to adopt a CSR culture and to integrate it into their marketing strategies:

1. Top management: for CSR to succeed in an organisation, it is critical that senior leadership teams are genuinely convinced that CSR will drive business performance and can lead by example to encourage employees' support of the cohesive strategy and to help form a sustainable CSR culture.
2. Organisational systems: this refers to how quickly or slowly organisations can move through 'red tape' in terms of organisational hierarchy, policies, procedures and processes, especially with large formal institutions where it is difficult to build cohesive strategies that are effective and efficient.
3. Power centralisation: for a cohesive CSR and marketing strategy to be considered and approved, it needs the buy-in from the organisation's senior leadership team; and should the decision-making power be concentrated and centralised at the top, it could prevent CSR policies from being integrated into overall business operations.
4. Customer satisfaction and relationship building: if the organisation values relationships with its customers as the most important factor for a successful business (especially in retail) and it is formally recognised as part of its appraisal system, a cohesive CSR and marketing strategy will be more attractive to leadership teams as a business solution.

5. Interdepartmental collaboration: as part of adapting to a cohesive CSR culture, cross-functional teams are required to work closely together and share information and participate in activities to drive overall business performance that is effective and efficient across the organisation (Mahmoud *et al.*, 2017).

Once all the obstacles within the organisation have been identified, addressed and integrated into a cohesive CSR and marketing strategy, the following areas of the business should be positively impacted: 1) overall performance, 2) customer satisfaction and loyalty, 3) service quality, 4) profitability and 5) employee commitment that provides the organisation with a competitive advantage and offers more value to its stakeholders, especially the community in which it operates. Mahmoud *et al.* (2017) argue that an effective and cohesive CSR and marketing strategy can attract “*new customers on a regular basis without difficulty and that existing customers are happy with the services and prices*” leading to consistent “*customer loyalty, customer retention, cross-buying, price tolerance, repeat purchases word of mouth and recommendation behaviour that will support strong financial performance*”.

A cohesive CSR and marketing strategy have also proven to be robust during difficult economic periods where both CSR and marketing activities can take priority at the same time to maintain customer retention and loyalty and to contribute to steady financial growth. Another benefit of an established CSR corporate culture is that it drives employee engagement and commitment where people genuinely care about the needs of others inside the organisation, are more tolerant, have a higher morale, are more satisfied and willing to support organisational activities and are prone to be positive brand ambassadors for the organisation, which result in higher customer satisfaction rates and effective business performance (Mahmoud *et al.*, 2017).

From a marketing perspective, its core purpose is to drive footfall and profitability through quality customer service that offers a unique customer experience and adds value to the lives of the community, which have been strongly linked to CSR. Integrated CSR strategies that form part of the mission and vision of an organisation have the capability of accelerating business profitability during stable trading periods, as well as protect it during an economic financial crisis; and accordingly serve as a long-term business solution that creates value for all stakeholder involved when used as a cohesive strategy. Furthermore, “corporate

reputation is derived from stakeholder's perception of organisational performance in the economic and social strategies they pursue and accordingly enjoy profits in the long run when they perform well economically, socially, ethically and legally" (Mahmoud *et al.*, 2017). Finally, Mahmoud *et al.*, (2017) suggest that when organisations invest in CSR as a long-term and integrated business solution it will enhance and develop marketing strategies that will accelerate business performance in a competitive market.

Another effective integrated CSR and marketing communication strategy is to use PR coverage to build a positive brand image and corporate reputation while engage multiple key stakeholders all at the same time to gain market share. It is argued that press releases are effective as a community engagement tool when the content is newsworthy, well written and styled with simplicity, shared at a relevant time with credible publications for effective audience targeting, is cost effective considering the mass reach and limitations of direct advertisement (Whysall 2005:1118).

According to Whysall (2005:1121) large community supermarkets across the globe represent the retail industry in a more personalised way and impact the daily lives of the communities in which they operate. Therefore, customers expect responsible and competitive business management and performance. Furthermore, organisations such as Spinneys Dubai need to proactively engage with the community through PR about responsible business practices to avoid crisis management and to "*generate long-term owner value*" through active community involvement of CSR sport sponsorship activities, such as the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (Whysall 2005:1120). In a study conducted by Whysall (2005:1124) among top retailers across the globe, including Tesco's, Asda, Sainsbury's, Wal-mart, Somerfield, Co-op, Safeway and Iceland, it was found that the top themes or categories selected by retailers as most newsworthy and relevant are:

1. Products and services 18.9%
2. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and environmental matters 15.8%
3. Corporate affairs, performance data, takeovers etc. 10.1%
4. Prices 8.2%
5. Promotional and seasonal activity 7.8%
6. Supply chain issues (including relations with farmers) 7.3%
7. Senior management appointments and activities 6.1%

8. Health and dietary matters (including organic and non-GM produce) 6.0%
9. Job creation 3.7%
10. Property, new stores, urban regeneration 3.6%
11. Stories following an outbreak of foot and mouth disease 3.0%
12. Awards gained and given 2.8%
13. Human resource issues (e.g. training, share schemes, pensions) 2.1%
14. Government (including EU) matters 1.6%
15. International matters (Tesco only) 0.9%
16. Product recalls 0.7%
17. Miscellaneous matters 1.3%
18. Total 100%

It was established that each retailer had different priorities and would champion specific themes at a certain point in time to fulfil their strategic agenda. However, farmer stories (supply chain) and CSR were identified as the PR themes that generated the highest engagement from their stakeholders, compared to the limited number of times it was shared with the media (Whysall 2005:1124). Furthermore, within the “*CSR category, charitable activities were not reported widely, yet innovative environmental initiatives, such as biodegradable packaging and degradable carrier bags proved newsworthy* (Whysall 2005:1124)”. In the context of large supermarkets such as Spinneys Dubai, PR is effective when coverage engages communities with the intention of starting a meaningful conversation and initiate partnerships and active participation through the CSR communication shared. However, the organisation should not solely rely on PR as a communication channel, but rather as part of the marketing mix to build a corporate reputation and image (Whysall 2005:1128).

#### **4.3 SPORT SPONSORSHIP AS A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOL**

According to Glandon *et al.* (2017) ‘community’ can be defined as a group or people who live together in a specific geographical area and share similarities and a social identity that is relatable and connected. ‘Community engagement’ is the ability of organisations such as Spinneys Dubai to facilitate a process by defining the purpose of the CSR activity; the level

and speed of implementation; by managing community interpretations and applications; and by using the results to create an experience that is 'meaningful, respectful, and fit-for purpose'. This is done through active community participation, continued evaluation and long-term sustainability Glandon *et al.* (2017). Furthermore, community engagement that is focussed on developing community health is driven by organisational values such as 'fairness, justice, empowerment, participation and self-determination'. This is achieved by addressing social and health issues collaboratively to find effective CSR communication strategies to develop practical solutions to improve the well-being of the community in which organisations such as Spinneys Dubai operate Glandon *et al.* (2017).

Community engagement is closely related to sustainable business management, not only from a social and environmental perspective, but also from an effective corporate strategy point of view (King Report, 2002:3). The impact of organisational or CSR activities can determine stakeholder perceptions which can influence the organisation's reputation and ongoing business sustainability (King Report, 2002:4). According to Baker (1996) organisations can only achieve long-term sustainability and excellent brand reviews when customer loyalty is obtained through trust. To obtain the trust and commitment from customers or the community, the organisation should first establish what the nature of the relationship should be by listening to their feedback and complaints and reacting on it accordingly. It is also argued that organisations such as Spinneys Dubai can only receive complete trust and customer loyalty if they pay equal attention to all stakeholders involved (Baker, 1996:5).

A community is willing to get involved or contribute to a noble cause if an organisation communicates about their CSR activities effectively and show good corporate citizenship, support and excellent customer service (Cooper, 2004:184). Community engagement is an important tool that can be used to form perceptions and build the reputation of the organisation, which results in good relationships with its stakeholders. It is therefore important that the nature of the relationship between Spinneys Dubai and the participants need to be determined to understand how to use sport sponsorship more effectively as a community engagement tool.

As a retailer, Spinneys Dubai aims to engage with the community through sport sponsorship and promote a healthy lifestyle through their 'Eat well, Live Well' food campaign to create brand awareness and gain the trust and loyalty of customers in the region (Spinneys Dubai 2018). To introduce and develop cycling as a sustainable sport in the UAE, Spinneys Dubai identified that, to motivate ordinary people from the community to participate in the main event, they needed a safe, stress-free and competitive environment to mentally and physically prepare for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge on a weekly basis (Spinneys Dubai 2018). To encourage social behaviour to change and to increase active participation within the community, the weekly Cycle Safe Dubai initiative and the monthly Build-up rides of 30km, 40km, 60km and 80km from August to November, were initiated. These training events give all members of the community, from amateur to professional, the opportunity to exercise and build on their strength for the main cycling event in December, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (Spinneys Dubai 2017). These community events are the perfect platform for Spinneys Dubai to promote their products and their 'Live Well, Eat Well' lifestyle campaign (Spinneys Dubai, 2017).

The greater challenge for Spinneys Dubai is to master community engagement, relationship building and trust to ultimately achieve brand loyalty. As a community food retailer competing with other retailers in the UAE, excellent customer service is an important benchmark for Spinneys Dubai to differentiate itself from its competitors (Hsu *et.al*, 2012:75). Spinneys Dubai should establish a community identification concept where people can easily associate themselves with the cycling community and feel emotionally connected to a group, especially expats that are new to the country and who want to form new friendships (Hsu *et al.*, 2012:75).

Secondly, Spinneys Dubai should evaluate how its CSR and sport sponsorship activities affect the participants' experience of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, which can be classified into three types 1) utilitarian, This experience refers to functional or practical benefits that make it possible for participants to train in a safe, stress-free environment along with other cyclists to achieve their health and fitness goals; 2) social, This experience refers to the interpersonal need of a participant to interact and connect with other cyclists and form friendships; 3) This experience refers how much the cyclists enjoy participating in each event and the ability of Spinneys Dubai to keep the community continuously engaged throughout

the year, from weekly rides, monthly Build-up rides to the main race in December, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (Hsu *et al.*, 2012:76).

Hsu *et al.* (2011:75) theory is an important measuring tool to evaluate the level of engagement that Spinneys Dubai offers the community in which they operate. Evaluating the quality of the retailer's community engagement will also give the reader more insight into how Spinneys Dubai manages its key stakeholders and how it builds community trust through its planned CSR activities.

Sports marketing is a strategic brand awareness approach designed to engage with a specific community or target audience to promote products and services and to gain a competitive advantage, which includes sponsorships and event advertising (Dubai Sports Council, 2018). Sport sponsorship is a key marketing strategy when combined with CSR and used as a business solution to engage and build relationships with the community by donating money to a sustainable and worthy cause; in return for commercial gain such as sales and customer loyalty, brand awareness through PR and an enhanced corporate image and reputation as a good corporate citizen among key stakeholders (Ditlev-Simonsen, 2017; Dubai Sports Council, 2018). Therefore, CSR has not only become an integrated business solution for overall performance, it has also been identified as a critical strategy in the marketing mix that go beyond philanthropy and have developed into valuable partnerships (Sung & Lee, 2016:56).

According to Sung and Lee (2016:72) sponsorship can be defined as "*an exchange between sponsor and a sponsored property; the sponsor invests in the entity to obtain the rights to use the commercial potential of having association with the particular property*". Furthermore, Sung and Lee (2016:72) identified that sponsorship can also be labelled 'sport CSR' through a sport sponsorship event that targets either the spectators or the participants or both at the same time through PR and CSR messaging to encourage behavioural change towards the brand, as well as participation resulting in a positive experience (Sung & Lee, 2016:57). The key to engaging with communities through sport sponsorship is to encourage active participation of all stakeholders involved, to drive business objectives more effectively, especially when the brand operates according to ethical values and the expectations of its stakeholders (Sung & Lee, 2016:57). It was also highlighted that sport sponsorship is not

politically driven and is, therefore, widely perceived as a neutral activity that not only reaches and engages with communities and consumers more effectively, but also adds actual value to their lives (Sung & Lee, 2016:58).

Sport sponsorships through CSR results in a 'halo-effect' that drives "*brand awareness, enhance brand and corporate image, brand loyalty, purchase intention and sales as well as market share* (Sung & Lee, 2016:58)". CSR sport, which is considered as cause-related marketing, also drives: "*mass media reach; youth appeal; positive health impact; group participation and social interaction; improved cultural understanding and integration; enhanced environmental and sustainability awareness; immediate gratification benefits; and enhanced public perception of the brand and stronger reputation*" and has the unique ability to positively change behaviour on issues such as 'education, health, the environment and cultural enrichment' to support specific social causes and change community perceptions positively (Sung & Lee, 2016:58). In the case of Spinneys Dubai CSR, sport provides the retailer with a strategic approach to engage with the community and show how committed they are towards their social responsibilities by creating meaningful experiences to the community that help people to participate, socialise with others, get fit and lead a healthy lifestyle and to be more willing to support the brand through purchases (Sung & Lee, 2016:60).

Sponsored events, like the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, give Spinneys Dubai the opportunity to communicate to and partner with valued stakeholders as a corporate citizen to build and strengthen relationships through a more organic advertising approach that has a natural and subtle emotional appeal, which helps to enhance the retailer's corporate image and reputation in the minds of all stakeholders involved (Sung & Lee, 2016:60). CSR sporting events are also known to encourage and motivate communities to actively participate by providing them with experiences that develop satisfaction; generate advocates for cycling and the brand through word of mouth; and cultivate behaviour that favours the sponsored brand through increased customer loyalty – a direct return on investment (Sung & Lee, 2016:60).

Title sponsors such as Spinneys Dubai, that are highly involved in the sponsorship process with the Build-up rides from August to November and the main race in December, are more

likely to receive support and a positive attitude from the community and be perceived as a more credible brand, compared to less significant sponsors or other competitors. It is also argued that Spinneys Dubai's enhanced corporate image should influence or drive strong purchase intent, because the community perceives Spinneys Dubai as a provider of better quality products and services compared to competitors, resulting in gained market share and a return on investment (Sung & Lee, 2016:62). To maintain effective and strategic CSR sport results, Spinneys Dubai needs to focus on increasing the number of community participants year on year, as they tend to show a more positive attitude towards the brand, compared to nonparticipants; and they should, accordingly, use effective and consistent CSR communication to engage with the community (Sung & Lee, 2016:70).

Public health practices are regarded as vital to achieve equity among community members; to empower individuals to have the capacity to identify problems and solutions; and to build self-confidence through active participation (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008:288). According to Minkler & Wallerstein (2008:288), community engagement begins with empowerment – to create the desire from within to change one's behaviour; secondly, to engage in mutual conversations with each other; thirdly, to participate actively in the community initiative; fourthly, to identify issues and solutions through active participation; and finally, to encourage each community member to make his/her own decisions based on his/her needs, shared responsibility, and awareness of resources.

For community engagement strategies to be effective, a specific community, such as cycling, needs to be created where customers can shift from consumption or service related experiences towards a community-based experience where consumer-to-consumer bonding can take place to influence others to participate. Within a community, individuals have the need to associate with certain social groups to differentiate themselves from others, known as social identity theory. Once a group is formed and established, the individuals in the group are most likely to “*conform to the group norms and modify their behaviours based on group members' expectations*” such as training for an event to get fit or to live a healthy lifestyle (Hsu *et al.*, 2012:74).”

It can be argued that community participation can be positively enforced when individuals are encouraged or motivated to engage and commit themselves to participate on a regular

basis (Hsu *et al.*, 2011:73). According to Hsu *et. al.* (2011:74) individuals can also be motivated to change their behaviour because of their internal need to seek approval from others, which make normative pressure effective in regulating behaviour with regards to community participation. Individuals can also experience normative pressure from outside the community and willingly change their behaviour through self-motivation to conform to society's expectations, such as the need to feel accepted in society, based on appearance or to live a healthy lifestyle.

For future consideration to strengthen community engagement strategies Glandon *et al.* (2017) propose that organisations consider investing in 'implementation research' to effectively engage with stakeholders, which can be defined as a "*scientific study of the processes used in the implementation of initiatives as well as the contextual factors that affect these processes.*" Community engagement can be identified as a relationship building tool that can be beneficial to the community. The 'participatory action research' (PAR) approach is an effective strategy to engage with communities to improve their health and well-being through active community participation as a joint decision to become "*actively involved, take responsibility for their own development and improve their own decision-making power*" (Strydom, 2002:240; Schurink, 1998:407). This results in giving the community members a form of belonging or identity, a common interest to others, and a sense of responsibility to oneself and others by sharing and interacting frequently and effectively (Strydom, 2002:242; Schurink, 1998:407). The Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge provides the community with a platform to participate in weekly practice and monthly build-up rides to ensure that they become actively involved and improve their fitness levels for the main race in December, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. The frequent participation gives them the satisfaction of belonging to a group and sharing common interests and goals – to be fit, healthy and complete each race.

As highlighted before, the empowerment of women and children especially among Emiratis is an essential development goal of the UAE Government; and the PAR approach is designed to support organisations like Spinneys Dubai to engage with this community more effectively through the following principles (Strydom, 2002:242):

1. Engage Emirati women and children by encouraging them to be involved throughout the whole process; and providing them with realistic goals for health and fitness through the weekly, monthly and main cycling challenges (Strydom, 2002:242).
2. Incorporate capacity building throughout the process by developing their health and fitness levels through the necessary training programmes, and food health messaging or CSR communication, to develop the necessary skills to achieve and sustain their own goals for a healthy lifestyle and to give them the opportunity to learn from their own experiences (Strydom, 2002:242).
3. Empowering the community through this CSR sport initiative enables them to make better informed decisions to improve their current health and fitness by giving them the opportunity to be more motivated, self-efficient and self-determined to use effective problem-solving skills and to add value to their own lives. The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge drives individual achievement, transformation, satisfaction and self-determination to enable the community to be successful in their goals with the support of the event organiser and title sponsors (Strydom, 2002:242).
4. Self-reliance is an important part of the PAR process, where the community is empowered to the extent of making decisions on their own and solving problems by taking full responsibility for their own development (Strydom, 2002:242).

The 'participatory action research' approach can be summarised as "*an active, participatory, capacity-building, involving, encouraging, mobilising and enabling research procedure*" which involves both the community and the event organiser; and encourages the event sponsors to engage with the community more effectively and to motivate behavioural change. According to Strydom (2002:243), community engagement is based on 'self-development', which acknowledges that the only way to reach the community's own health and fitness goals is to take responsibility for their actions during the process, while working with the event organisers and applying CSR communication messaging to their daily lives to overcome health problems like obesity and diabetes.

As a solution for Spinneys Dubai to deepen the level of community engagement, especially among Emirati women and children they need to consider and investigate the following questions: a) how can Spinneys Dubai give this group of people more control to solve their health and fitness issues; b) how can Spinneys Dubai gather sufficient data from this group

to gain an in-depth understanding of their cultural and religious beliefs and accordingly identify what the next steps should be to address their issues and concerns; c) how much time and resources will Spinneys Dubai need to build community trust; d) when during the process should the community provide their feedback to support their own self-development (Strydom, 2002:243).

As corporate citizens, Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Agency, have the responsibility of aligning with the UAE Government goals and considering attending workshops to understand the local culture and religion better to find appropriate solutions that will work for local Emirati women and children to gain more insights into the problems causing health issues among this specific group of people. Once Spinneys Dubai has identified and familiarised itself with the community issues, Strydom (2002:245) recommends that the organisation analyses the community through a SWOT analysis to understand where the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge; and accordingly develop a long-term community engagement strategy to include more Emirati women and children as participants in The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge (Strydom, 2002:246). Lastly, the PAR approach is only completed post evaluation of the outcome in terms of a 'before and after' result, for example it is the responsibility of Spinneys Dubai and the event organiser to keep track of the number of Emirati women and children who participate in weekly and monthly rides and the main race in December each year and aim to increase the number of people participating in this specific target group year on year while learning from the process and adapting strategies to improve community engagement performance in a sustainable way (Strydom, 2002:247).

Other theoretical frameworks that can be used for effective community engagement insights to target a broader community understanding and to develop more inclusive engagement strategies, include:

1. Participatory poverty assessment: this method aims to assess the views, needs and behaviours of the less fortunate to develop solutions to help this group of people more effectively. In the case of Spinneys Dubai, the organisation can extend the invitation to poor communities to motivate participation in the Build-up rides and the main challenge in December in Dubai, by providing the necessary financial resources to

include talented children that have a natural interest in the sport but are limited by financial support. Another way could be to partner with NGO's to raise funds for the less fortunate and physically unlabelled beneficiaries.

2. Social Mapping: the purpose of this method is to identify a social network that involves multiple stakeholders within a specific system or represent a specific issue; and to indicate how these stakeholders are related and influence each other. The developed 'net-map' can be used by Spinneys Dubai as a 'stakeholder management' approach to drive effective community engagement.
3. Most Significant Change Approach: a clever evaluation process that monitors participation and observes limitations in complex environments or systems through multiple stakeholder reviews and accordingly identifies themes that are most significant by having open two-way discussions with members of the community. These discussions have the potential to reach local communities, break perceptions and motivate behavioural change; and to provide Spinneys Dubai with valuable insights as to how to engage with the community more effectively.
4. Participatory Statistics: a vital approach to integrate into Spinneys Dubai's community engagement strategy is to use research as a method to monitor, evaluate and assess their CSR communication performance and determine if the community is being empowered and transformed to create a win-win solution for both the organisation and the community to create experiences are both meaningful and result orientated Glandon *et al.* (2017).

The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge creates a social network that provides the community with support; encourages active participation; strongly develops self-identity and provides the opportunity to meet new people and build friendships (Schurink, 1998:407). Spinneys Dubai uses this initiative as a community engagement tool to build relationships by sharing information and working closely with the participants to achieve common health and fitness goals to gain community trust, support and loyalty (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008:286). To build a sustainable social relationship that is based on trust, the following methods can be used by Spinneys Dubai to engage with the community more effectively (as suggested by Minkler and Wallerstein (2008:286): to provide emotional support through trust, love, and empathy and to genuinely care about the community; to provide instrumental support such as aid and services to support someone in need or partnering with NGO's to

support worthy causes; to provide informational support through knowledge sharing, giving advice, suggestions and information that can be used to solve issues; use appraisal support by sharing information, providing constructive feedback, affirmation and social comparison; and to support self-evaluation and further development.

To effectively engage with communities to change and improve behaviour around issues of health, CSR communication should include the following steps as part of Spinneys Dubai's cohesive strategy (Lavery *et al.* 2010:280-282):

1. 'Rigorous site-selection procedures': before engaging with a specific target audience, Spinneys Dubai needs to determine the capability of the group and ask if they will be physically capable of participating in cycling as a sport; and secondly, if public health and safety through appropriate infrastructure and authority approvals can be guaranteed without compromising the reputation and image of the brand
2. 'Early initiation of community engagement activities': Spinneys Dubai should ensure that all event information is communicated in advance to help the community plan ahead for participation in weekly and monthly rides as well as the main race in December, to avoid disappointment. This also refers to effective event management, by planning in advance and engaging all stakeholders involved, to allow enough time for execution
3. 'Characterise and build knowledge of the community, its diversity, and its changing needs': it is the responsibility of the event organiser, Promoseven Sports Agency and Spinneys Dubai, to constantly evaluate progress with each stakeholder group involved and to plan proactively throughout the process for issues that could negatively impact objectives; and most importantly anticipate the needs of the community to ensure they continue to actively participate in sport and continue to enjoy the benefits of the experience
4. 'Ensure the purpose and goals of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge are clear to the community': this step ensures that the community is encouraged to actively participate in each step of the process of building on their fitness levels and improving their health through effective, timely and clear CSR communication; and a two-way facilitated conversation that allows the community to ask questions and share their feedback on a regular basis

5. 'Provide information': it is the responsibility of the event organiser and Spinneys Dubai to consistently provide timely and accurate and effective information about each event; and to allow enough time for the community to consider participation; or to allow time when collaborating with other important stakeholders such as the media
6. 'Establish relationships and commitments to build trust with relevant authorities in the community: formal, informal and traditional': to ensure the event is organised ethically and legally, support partners such as the RTA (Road Transport Authority) and Dubai Police, should be engaged in advance to manage public health and to establish community trust
7. 'Understand community perceptions and attitudes about the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge': At this point in the process, the community needs to trust that Spinneys Dubai is not only sponsoring the event for commercial gain, but they should also believe that the organisation's intention is to genuinely improve community health and fitness; to provide a safe and secure environment for cycling; and to provide support consistently through long-term commitment to the movement. In addition to maintaining trust, it is the responsibility of the event organiser and Spinneys Dubai to evaluate their performance; and through feedback opportunities to gain insights on each participants' perceptions, attitudes and experiences across various demographics such as nationality, gender and age, to identify gaps and effective solutions to increase active community participation
8. "Identify, mobilize, and develop relevant community assets and capacity": it is the responsibility of both Promoseven Sports Agency and Spinneys Dubai to critically evaluate the internal skills and capabilities of staff to effectively communicate CSR performance. They should also evaluate the skills of the community, such as Emirati Women and children, the less fortunate or privileged and the disabled; and they should strategically and meaningfully engage with these groups to develop their confidence and skills to increase active community participation
9. 'Maximize opportunities, participation and shared control by the community': To deepen community engagement and increase participation across demographics, Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Agency need to champion community leaders, such as NGO's and corporate organisations, to reach out to unidentified pockets of the broader community and to encourage participation for the sole purpose

of supporting the community to build on their fitness and to improve their health through cycling

10. 'Ensure adequate opportunities and respect for dissenting opinions': in the context of cycling as a sport, Spinneys Dubai and the event organiser need to respect the will of the community, as not all members of society (especially within the Middle East region and with their strict rules of Islam) will allow women to participate in a sport such as cycling, without the approval of male authority figures. Therefore, Spinneys Dubai should work more towards culturally sensitive community engagement solutions that will support active participation
11. 'Secure permission or authorisation from the community': for community engagement to be meaningful, it is important to get ongoing feedback that meets ethical standards through informed and voluntary consent from individual participants, established community leaders and stakeholders. This serves to inform future cohesive CSR and marketing strategies for Spinneys Dubai that include and consider the development of 'community-defined' criteria', with the permission of the relevant stakeholders involved, to action the recommended solutions accordingly for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge
12. 'Review, evaluate and if necessary, modify engagement strategies': Finally, it is the responsibility the event organisers to report on the CSR sport performance and progress of the monthly Build-up rides and the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge along with the feedback of the participants. It's important to review, evaluate and modify strategies as an ongoing method to gain and form insights, learnings and recommendations, for effective community engagement that is ethically sound, in order to improve the following year's performance.

Against this background, the UAE Government announced a new law in April 2018 that engages all residents living in the country, including all nationalities who have a valid visa, and UAE international representation, to increase sport participation, as well as develop "*genuine principles and values of tolerance and cultural diversity* (Khaleej Times, 2018). The legislation was implemented by the UAE government to engage communities more effectively through sport; to build a healthy and peaceful society that is culturally more aware and tolerant; to achieve social development by creating a "*sports-friendly environment in line with the national agenda and UAE Vision for 2020 aimed at preserving the national identity*

*and integrating all segments of society while preserving the UAE's unique culture, heritage and traditions and reinforces social and family cohesion (Khaleej Times, 2018).*" It is, therefore, the responsibility of Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency to further develop their cohesive CSR marketing strategy to support the government as their trusted stakeholder and to challenge themselves as corporate citizens to find innovative and inclusive ways to engage a wider segment of the community.

#### **4.4 CORPORATE SOCIAL MARKETING**

This study also focuses on the contribution of corporate social marketing to the phenomenon under investigation. A corporate social marketing campaign intends to improve the public health and safety of the community; or the environment's well-being (Kotler & Lee, 2005:23). Corporate social marketing can be used as a communication or community engagement tool to achieve social development, on the assumption that behaviour can be changed or influenced by means of persuasive top-down communication (Fourie & Froneman, 2009:241). The participatory research approach suggests that true community engagement is achieved when a dialogue or two-way conversation between the organisation and the community takes place. This approach allows members of the community the opportunity to articulate their needs; to find solutions to their problems; and to feel important and part of the movement of development (Fourie & Froneman, 2009:245). It is also argued that this approach does not always seem practical, since it takes more time to communicate with the community. It is suggested that the strategy be combined with corporate social marketing. Fourie and Froneman (2009:251) argue that a social marketing campaign can only be successful when behaviour change is achieved, and not only in terms of creating awareness.

The community do not change their behaviour because they are forced or well-informed by the organisational campaign; they change their behaviour when it is rewarded with something in return or when there is a clear benefit for the consumer involved (Fourie & Froneman, 2009:251). Naturally the behaviour change would only take place if a certain level of trust and relationship has been established over a period of time. Therefore, it is the responsibility of Spinneys Dubai to understand the needs of the community in order to decide how to communicate effectively to achieve behavioural change. The Spinneys Dubai

92 Cycle Challenge's objective is to support behaviour change in terms of promoting a healthy life style. Therefore, this study aims to determine if the campaign is effective or not according to the literature.

According to Wymer (2011:17), it is important for brands such as Spinneys Dubai to use effective corporate marketing strategies that not only include solutions to social problems, but also environmental issues all at the same time. The goal of social marketing is to identify the 'root cause of problems for unhealthy individual behaviour' and to understand that it is based on repeated behaviour or bad habits fuelled by poor knowledge, lack of alternative options available as a replacement, and a conscious decision to let the habit control the individual's behaviour. Wymer (2011:17) argues that traditionally, social marketing campaigns have all focused on changing the behaviour of an individual through educational programmes, attitude campaigns and CSR communication to persuade behaviour change from unhealthy to healthy. However, the author established that focussing on individuals alone to solve public health issues is a narrow point of view and will not address the root cause of the problem.

Health issues, such as obesity, is difficult to resolve and measure through social marketing alone, For example, if the true root cause has not been researched and identified in a holistic way to achieve a specific result post the actual campaign to lower the percentage of people who are obese in a specific community, it can be perceived as an ineffective campaign without considering external factors such as environmental impact. Wymer (2011:19) confirms that individuals need to take self-responsibility and make lifestyle choices to self-improve their health. However, it is the responsibility of corporate citizens to investigate and address issues that stand between the individual and the 'larger social and physical environment' to develop more effective social marketing strategies that deliver sustainable results within the community they operate in. It is also an opportunity to engage a variety of stakeholders to collaborate and to help formulate long-term solutions that will truly improve rates of obesity and diabetes among women and children in the UAE, and to address obesity as a society health issue, instead of an individual self-inflicted problem (Wymer, 2011:19; Dubai Sports Council, 2018).

Holistic social marketing campaigns, named 'health protection' strategies, are designed to change the health and well-being of all living in a specific community through public health, safety and environmental laws and ethics, compared to the traditional primary prevention tactics, that includes: a) health promotion that focusses on health education and issues such as smoking, drinking and obesity; and b) disease prevention issues, such as HIV Aids and stress related diseases, designed to change individual behaviour and attitudes only (Wymer, 2011:20).

To provide communities with complete health protection within their environment, corporate citizens can strategically and effectively address these issues in four stages by removing barriers between the individual and the environment (Wymer, 2011:20-22):

1. Stage 1: individual motivation refers to people who are aware of the root cause, but deliberately choose unhealthy behaviour, for example, smokers or obese patients that continue to consume fast foods
2. Stage 2: individual ignorance refers to people who are uneducated or not aware that their behaviour can cause self-harm
3. Stage 3: environmental pathogenic agents refer to harmful toxins and bio-chemicals that cause serious illness and disease
4. Stage 4: environmental privation refers to a failed state and healthcare system that cannot provide the health services required to protect and support the community, when needing to overcome a health issue.

According to Wymer (2011:23), childhood obesity is a serious and complex social issue, which is both the responsibility of the individual and the environment; which requires that legislation and policy regulation step in to prevent further unhealthy behaviour and to break habits. In April 2018, the UAE hosted the 'Gulf Obesity Summit and Regional Congress' to deliver and share a long-term plan, based on the United Nations 2025 international objectives, to reduce both obesity and diabetes rates globally, which has 'more than doubled since 1980' (Emirates 24/7, 2018). Speaker Farida Al Hosani, Manager of Commercial Diseases at the Department of Health stated that obesity and related illness diabetes, is a serious health issue in the country. As determined by the World Health Organisation in 2015, 15% of children were classified as obese; 16.7% overweight; and only 27% engaged in 60 minutes of physical activity per day. In 2018, UAE statistics reported that one in every three

school children suffer from obesity (Emirates 24/7, 2018). In 2017 it was reported that 33% of school children are obese; 60.5% of UAE residents were overweight; and 19%, or over a million people suffer from diabetes (Dubai Fitness Challenge, 2018, Khaleej Times, 2018)

The national social development plan is aligned with the World Health Organisation's recommendations and best practices to increase physical activity and to reduce the average body mass index in children to 15, by 2020 (Emirates 24/7, 2018). The government requires the support of corporate organisations like food retailers, entertainment centres, and restaurants to provide healthy food options for children, and to enforce strict policies regulating school canteens to offer only healthy and balanced meals as part of the education plan, while providing national obesity prevention programmes to educate children and parents to change their unhealthy behaviour to help them make better choices on a daily basis. The UAE government is committed to invest in ongoing discussions with the community and government leaders to find more effective solutions, such as how to increase "physical activity, addressing complications of dietary interventions during Ramadan, sustainable treatment plans for childhood obesity and options for weight management during pregnancy (Emirates 24/7, 2018)."

In October 2018, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Executive Council of Dubai Government and Dubai Sports Council, launched the '30-minute x 30 days' challenge for UAE residents, to participate in any physical activity including cycling, team sports, yoga, walking, aerobics and paddle boarding with the vision of becoming the most active city in the world, providing the opportunity to increase social networking and to have fun, regardless of age, physical ability and fitness levels (Dubai Fitness Challenge, 2018, Khaleej Times, 2018). Sheik Hamdan said: *"Dubai aims to set an example for cities around the world in encouraging citizens to give high importance to physical activity and sports. We are very keen to spread a culture of fitness since we strongly believe that making physical activity and sports a part of their daily routines will help people significantly improve the quality of their lives. The Dubai Fitness Challenge has been designed to motivate people to pursue an active and energetic lifestyle. This complements other initiatives we are pursuing to transform Dubai itself into the world's happiest city by providing a positive social environment and the conditions for an enriching lifestyle (Khaleej Times, 2018)."* Furthermore, Sheikh Hamdan encouraged and

challenged community leaders, including all entities of the government, corporate citizens and educational institutions, to set an example, and to help drive this initiative in their communities to form new healthy habits and to improve overall quality of life (Khaleej Times, 2018).

According to the World Health Organisation (2018), the childhood obesity epidemic is not only the responsibility of the individual, but also a responsibility for the greater society to resolve. Parents and teachers, as well as the public and private sectors, should create and establish a healthy environment for children, where they have a variety of healthy and affordable options to choose from, as well as an educational system that consistently educates and empowers children to make better lifestyle choices.

The Dubai Fitness Challenge hosted a series of events free of charge across the city to encourage inclusiveness of all interests, abilities, ages and fitness levels and to encourage residents to download their fitness App “track individual performance, discover events and unlock exiting rewards” to keep the community interested and engaged throughout the month (Dubai Fitness Challenge, 2018, Khaleej Times, 2018). Some of the major community sporting events promoted through the Dubai Fitness Challenge programme included the Spinneys Dubai Build-up rides and the main race, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, as well as the ‘Dubai Colour Run’, ‘Dubai Mass Swim’ and ‘Dubai Schools Fitness Games’ (Khaleej Times, 2018).

According to Wymer (2011:23), community engagement is also dependent on ‘future costs and benefits’, therefore, Spinneys Dubai’s CSR communication should focus on the health benefits of cycling and how it outweighs the cost of existing unhealthy behaviour such as obesity and related illnesses. Depending on the target audience, Spinneys Dubai can use various tactics and CSR communication messaging such as intervention programmes, to address serious childhood obesity and to share their knowledge and expertise according to government standards and the World Health Organisation (Wymer, 2011:23, World Health Organisation, 2018). As a community food retailer, Spinneys Dubai can support intervention programmes, to not only address solutions for exercising, but also for dieting, with effective messaging, to “increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables, legumes, grains and nuts, limit consumption of saturated fats and sugars and replace with healthy alternatives in

combination with 60 minutes of exercise per day” as a preventative CSR measure that empowers families to make better health choices (World Health Organisation, 2018). Spinneys Dubai supports health messaging through their ‘Eat Well, Live Well’ campaign on their formal website ‘Spinneys-dubai.com’; and writes on topics such as ‘5 winning recipes for those training for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Challenge’ sharing health tips and recipes, as well as ‘Your 10-a-day: It’s easier to achieve than you might think’ to encourage customers to up their intake of fruit and vegetables per day. However, the researcher would challenge the retailer in the final recommendations to measure if online messaging is effective enough to change behaviour (Spinneys Dubai, 2018).

In summary, social marketing is theoretically based on “consumer choice and defined as a model for behaviour change that applies to traditional marketing principles and techniques to influence and target audience behaviours that benefit society as well as the individual”. But more importantly, to address both the at the same time, to solve health issues in a holistic way through an effective public health system and educated and motivated community (Wymer, 2011:24). Lastly, stakeholder relationships and long-term partnership across society is critical for addressing major public health issues; and it is the responsibility of corporate citizens, such as Spinneys Dubai, to drive solutions that are inclusive of all community members, regardless of age, ability, gender and fitness levels, to prevent obesity and diabetes, especially among women and children.

## **4.5 BRAND MANAGEMENT**

Next the researcher will discuss the brand terminologies and definitions, theory on the brand management approach and the latest sport sponsorship and brand management trends.

### **4.5.1 Brand terminologies and definitions**

Traditionally, brand identification can be defined as the brand “name, logo, design or any visual signs and symbols” like the Spinneys green and yellow that is instantly recognisable the UAE, especially compared to competitor Carrefour’s blue, red and white logo. To theoretically understand brand management in a holistic way, the researcher has identified

various elements of a brand that need to be managed including (Heding *et al.* 2009:10-19, Spinneys Dubai, 2018):

- ‘Brand architecture’: each organisation consists of a brand structure or portfolio, for example Spinneys Dubai promotes both third-party or external brands, as well as their own private label brand ‘spinneysFood’
- ‘Brand community’: refers to a social setting where the community comes together to engage with the brand in a more meaningful way, based on common interests such as cycling as a sport, at The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, which is based on a community engagement approach
- ‘Brand culture’: is a holistic term that defines the brand values and culture, which is communicated on the Spinneys Dubai website: *“Today, Spinneys Dubai, owned by UAE national Mr Ali Alwardy, has built a strong name for supplying top quality produce and offering a high level of customer service. Yet food standards, safety and freshness have always been at the forefront of the company’s ethos – just one reason why the Spinneys brand is defined as ‘The fresher experience’*
- ‘Brand equity’: it is the responsibility of each organisation, such as Spinneys Dubai, to create, establish and grow a brand that is valuable in terms of its financial value (number of stores), as well as the community’s perception about how the brand is adding additional value in terms of customer experience and service, which is fundamental to effective and strategic brand management and brand equity optimisation
- ‘Brand essence’: refers to the brand identity and can be summarised as the “core of the brand or the heart and soul of the brand”, designed to ensure consistent brand experience across all marketing and communication touchpoints for example from Spinneys stores to Spinneys cycling events
- ‘Brand extensions’: when product categories or service packages are extended as a competitive offering, or as part of expansion plans to grow the brand, for example, the launch and produce development of private label range ‘spinneysFood’
- ‘Brand genealogy’: refers to the brand history and growth, for example, as stated on the Spinneys Dubai website: *“In 1924, Arthur Rawdon Spinney, a British army officer stationed in Alexandria, Egypt, identified a need in the area for imported food products, planting the seed for what would later be one of the Middle East’s leading supermarket chains. Spinneys’ Dubai story started in 1961, with our first supermarket*

*opening in Al Nasr Square in 1962. At that time, it was known locally as 'The Frozen Chicken' – the only retailer to sell frozen chickens from a chiller van. Such innovation has remained. Spinneys enjoys a well-deserved reputation for forward-thinking, keeping pace with changes in cooking trends and the emergence of new products worldwide*

- 'Brand icon': only brands that have shaped culture and social behaviour can claim "icon status as an elite and valuable brand"
- 'Brand identity': can be defined as a "set of associations the brand strategist desires to create or maintain" through a cohesive brand strategy that embodies the brand's vision and the elements that make it unique and will set it apart from its competitors
- 'Brand image': refers to the perceptions consumers have of a brand, which is used to cognitively evaluate the brand experience and determine their long-term attitude towards a brand and how they support it
- 'Brand loyalty': refers to consistently growing the customer base through positive shopping experiences that lead to customer retention
- 'Brand personality': consumers connect with brands that display 'human-like personalities' that make it easy to relate to
- 'Brand portfolio': refers to the number of brands an organisation manages or owns and "relates to strategic issues of brand architecture, market segmentation and product versus corporate branding
- 'Brand positioning': refers to where brands are positioned on a scale from value, to premium, to luxury, in the minds of consumers - their products can also be positioned as low, mid or top tier within a specific category
- 'Brand relation': refers to the ability of organisations, such as Spinneys Dubai, to manage effective stakeholder relationships and a "*deeper understanding of brand loyalty*"
- 'Brand revitalisation': refers to old established brands that need a refresh or rebranding to ensure that it is modern, relatable to consumers, and up-to-date compared to competitors through strategic brand management and positioning
- 'Brand strategy': each brand is unique, and no single strategy can be applied to all, however, it should be "*strategic, visionary and proactive rather than tactical and reactive*" while keeping the brand identity and vision at the core of the strategy with a

long-term sustainable view, that will not only be competitive, but strongly resonate with existing and potential new customers

- ‘Brand stretch’: refers to brands that expand into new ventures or product categories to help the business grow strategically without diluting efforts
- ‘Co-branding’: refers to when two or more brands collaborate or come together and merge their brands into one identity, for example, Spinneys Dubai + Radio 92 = The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge
- ‘Corporate brand’: more than branding individual products, larger corporate corporations also need their own corporate brand and need the support of all internal stakeholders to sustain a corporate brand strategy
- ‘Employee branding’: refers to when employees act as brand ambassadors and embody the spirit of the brand when dealing with stakeholders, to genuinely ‘project the corporate image’
- ‘Employer branding’: it is the responsibility of senior leadership teams to genuinely portray their organisation as an attractive employer to reinforce the “interrelationship between human resources, corporate communication and senior management” to benefit both employee and employer at the same time
- ‘Product brand’: products have their own brand identity and don’t necessarily need to be linked to an organisation
- ‘Service brand’: when organisations offer services, instead of selling products, and the communication is focussed on dedicated human interaction and a brand relation approach
- ‘Viral brand’: refers to online brands that become instantly famous or renowned through fan engagement or endorsement as a marketing tool, with little advertising investment from the brand itself.

#### **4.5.2 Brand management approach in support of community engagement**

The concept of brand management was first developed in the 1980’s, with two schools of thought: a) brand management is the responsibility of the organisation, which includes communicating one-way messages about product positioning and brand image to a passive

consumer with little influence; b) brands that perceive themselves as 'personalities' that have two-way conversations with their customers through relationship building, brand reputation and image management, to gain and maintain consumer trust and loyalty (Heding *et al.* 2009:21).

According to Heding *et al.* (2009:22-25,197,208) there are seven brand management approaches that have been developed and redefined from 1985 until 2006, including:

1. Economic approach: to manage a brand according to the "marketing mix: product, placement, price and promotion" and how marketers research the environment and use the mix to motivate consumers to buy a specific brand, however, has been criticised for being a one-way approach without the active involvement of the consumer
2. Identity approach: the brand is focused on the organisation as one entity, or one cohesive corporate brand identity, that can communicate to all its stakeholders in one recognisable brand tone of voice or corporate culture, from every level and function of the organisation
3. Consumer-based approach: brand management is focused on how the consumer perceives the brand in his/her mind from a 'cognitive psychology' perspective, therefore, giving consumers the power to influence and determine brand performance
4. Personality approach: when brands build 'human-like' characters to connect with consumers emotionally, where they can strongly relate to the brand and feel part of a community
5. Relational approach: refers to a brand that collaborate, engage or partner with stakeholder groups, based on meaningful two-way conversations through established relationships and trust
6. Community approach: brand management that is based on social interaction within specific brand communities, such as The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event, that created a brand community for Spinneys Dubai as a retailer; cycling as a sport; and opportunities for people in the community to socialise and network with like-minded people. Brand communities exist online and offline and have the power to influence brand strategies to invest in specific community

causes, such as limiting the impact on the environment and implementing responsible business practices from a CSR perspective

7. Cultural approach: when brands embody both the community approach, as well as the cultural fabric of society, which means that the brand has the power to shape mainstream culture to ultimately build icon brands that lead the way for best standards and practices from a CSR perspective.

Spinneys Dubai needs to use the 'brand community approach' to support marketing CSR activities, products and services through various communication customer touchpoints (brand management from a community retail perspective). Furthermore, brand community management has the potential to effectively engage customers, drive brand loyalty, and create brand ambassadors, that are not only supportive, but also forgiving and willing to share feedback to improve the overall customer experience and make sure the brand succeeds in the future. According to Heding *et al.* (2009:197) brand loyalty, if managed effectively, can 'spill over' from product to corporate brand; or from corporate brand initiatives such as The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge to the product; and, accordingly, create value for all stakeholders involved. However, poor brand community management can also have serious consequences, such as rumours spreading through word-of-mouth or online activity, to the point where customers can 'hijack' the cycling event if not managed responsibly. Effective brand community management requires organisations such as Spinneys Dubai to: a) observe; and b) facilitate CSR activities to ensure they are effectively engaged and proactively managed to reach CSR goals. Spinneys Dubai can build community observation and community facilitation into their overall business strategy to retain community trust and brand loyalty Heding *et al.* (2009:197-200):

Community observation: it is Spinneys Dubai's responsibility to gain valuable customer insights through constant observation and evaluation from: a) cycling events; b) in store purchase behaviour; and c) online social media consumer engagement, and to integrate these findings and learnings into future business strategies and CSR communication. Spinneys Dubai should also rely on strategic relationship building techniques that are genuine and feel organic to the community, while observing their behaviour simultaneously, as this stakeholder group still have the need to feel in control. For example, cyclists should feel comfortable participating in the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge without feeling they

have to support the retailer in return; and they want to be able to make that choice for themselves over a period of time. The core purpose of using brand communities as a source of information, such as The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, is to build effective community engagement strategies that create meaningful brand experiences for stakeholders that result in trust, long-term relationships and brand loyalty.

Community facilitating: refers to the direct involvement of Spinneys Dubai in the actual cycling events, through 'a practice what you preach or hands-on social networking' approach that facilitates community brand experiences at cycling events; in store and online; and use it as a customer engagement and retention tool to secure a loyal customer base and corporate image and reputation. Community brand management for larger communities such as Dubai is "more suitable for the retention of customers rather than the acquisition of new customers and accordingly active engagement of the brand community is more efficient when targeting customers who already have an affirmative relationship with the brand instead of new customers." Again, Spinneys Dubai should not use The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge to sell products. Instead, they should focus on providing the community with a positive brand experience that will enhance or give meaning to their social life. According to Heding *et al.*, (2009:200) Spinneys Dubai should use the following guideline to effectively engage with the brand community:

**Table 6: Brand community engagement to implement and to avoid**

No.	Greens – Implement	Reds – Avoid
1.	As part of the customer service and brand experience strategy, give the community the power to make their own decisions in terms of brand meaning and equity	Always acknowledge community feedback by listening to customers and adapting strategies to retain loyalty and trust
2.	Listen to customers and provide opportunities for feedback to maintain customer trust and loyalty	Encourage participation in cycling as a sport, however, limit customer involvement in purchase agreements and product sales and rather focus on ways to enhance the social experience
3.	Be actively involved in CSR activities to facilitate the customer experience and manage relationships and the corporate reputation	Be aware of competitor brand community activities and implement strategies that outperform their activities
4.	Build long-term brand communities as a customer retention and engagement strategy and create value and meaning for all stakeholders involved	Focus on empowering the community through CSR activities, instead of gaining new shoppers for Spinneys Dubai

Source: Heding *et al.*, (2009:200)

The ‘cultural approach’ can give Spinneys Dubai retail ‘icon status’ over time, through their ongoing and proactive “Live Well. Eat Well” CSR activities and communication in a response to the communities’ need for living a healthy and active lifestyle in a safe, secure and stress-free environment (Heding *et al.*, 2009:228). The title sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge creates the following advantages for the retailer: a) Spinneys Dubai can develop a strong reputation for developing cycling as a sport in the region and encouraging communities to live a healthy lifestyle as a fresh food retailer; b) establish Spinneys Dubai as a strong authority figure for sport sponsorship and as responsible and proactive community retailer that has the power to influence stakeholders to make a

difference; and c) empower Spinneys Dubai to have a strong voice and achieve market share and create value for all stakeholders involved (Heding *et al.*, 2009:229).

Effective brand management through the cultural approach requires Spinneys Dubai to remember its brand heritage and its journey in creating an established reputation by constantly observing society for cultural trends such as limiting environmental impact and fighting against obesity and diabetes, with a genuine belief that, as a community leader, it is their responsibility to encourage community participation and behavioural change (Heding *et al.*, 2009:230). The cultural approach can also give Spinneys Dubai a competitive advantage by ensuring the brand image stays relevant on a global scale; and by constantly evaluating competitor activity and consumer emotional appeal (Heding *et al.*, 2009:231). Brands such as Spinneys Dubai can reach iconic status when the retailer meets the needs of society and drives CSR communication through all customer touchpoints; and in return establish a positive and strong brand image and reputation (Heding *et al.*, 2009:232).

According to Heding *et al.*, (2009:231) Spinneys Dubai should use the following guideline to effectively engage with the community through the cultural approach (Heding *et al.*, 2009:231):

**Table 7: Community engagement through the cultural approach**

No.	Greens – Implement	Reds – Avoid
1.	Acknowledge the influence external stakeholders have on the community in which Spinneys Dubai operates	Brand communication is not limited between Spinneys and the community - all stakeholders need to be engaged
2.	Respond to feedback and be willing to adapt and invest in new brand strategies to stay relevant	Don't ignore feedback from stakeholders and instead implement proactive brand strategies, especially for CSR communication
3.	Be open-minded to new ideas to change and to improve business performance	<i>“Don't ignore political, social and ideological changes”</i>
4.	<i>“Acknowledge that the brand changes over the course of time”</i>	Don't develop strategies just based on competitor activity
5.	Be a cultural activist by using the brand reputation to change consumer behaviour	

Source: Heding *et al.*, (2009:231)

The ‘four brand management paradigms’ is another strategic brand management approach Spinneys Dubai should consider, enabling the retailer to make the following decisions: a) the role of the consumer in the branding process; b) whether business decisions should be tactical or strategic (Heding *et al.*, 2009:240-252):

1. Product paradigm: when organisations make tactical decisions based on the marketing mix and to drive sales
2. Projective paradigm: when an organisation operates through its own corporate identity and focuses its efforts on a strategic level where meaning is established within the corporate culture and leadership of the organisation
3. Adaptive paradigm: this is the result of an established corporate culture, such as CSR, to form a positive brand image in the minds of consumers, and is the base for corporate reputation

4. Relational paradigm: when organisations such as Spinneys operate strategically from a relationship point of view, it develops “strong and relevant brand equity through meaningful experiences created between the brand and the community and perceived as a relatable brand personality by listening to customers when they provide feedback and integrating it into business strategy and stakeholder communication resulting in a win-win situation where all stakeholder needs are prioritised.

#### **4.5.3 Sport sponsorship and brand management trends**

Sport sponsorship, especially in the Middle East, has become reputable community engagement tool with the following growing trends in the region (Repucom, 2015).

Health: corporate citizens across the region have become more aware of the growing health issues, especially among the Arab community, and as a CSR initiative they invest in sport sponsorship to help create awareness and to motivate active participation and healthy lifestyles (Repucom, 2015).

Sports entertainment: live television and online broadcasting of major sporting events such as the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge have helped to grow individual sports into professional careers, as well as shape the entertainment industry through engaged communities and a supportive fan base (Repucom, 2015).

Growing young population: brands in the Middle East, such as Spinneys Dubai, use sport sponsorships to target the youth, aged between 15 and 29 years of age to not only participate themselves, but to engage with them online, to build meaningful brand communities that create value for all stakeholders involved (Repucom, 2015).

Conservative markets: sport sponsorship is a safe option for investment to build corporate brand image and reputation in more conservative markets, compared to the film and music industry, and ultimately limit activist groups from forming (Repucom, 2015).

National unity: governments such as the UAE, invest in sport development and partner with corporate citizens to bring communities together, and to enhance social integrity and economic strength; especially when the nation consists of various nationalities and cultural groups and use sport to unite people and make them feel part of a social group that are like-minded and share similar life goals (Repucom, 2015).

Social mobility: governments across the region use sport as a community engagement tool to mobilise and empower the poor or less fortunate to help them integrate as part of a cohesive society, as well as to develop national talent and job opportunities to contribute to economic growth (Repucom, 2015).

Economic growth: corporate citizens in the Middle East have more capital to spend, compared to developing markets; and have the means to invest in sport brands; and are more likely to invest in sport sponsorships for both brand awareness and engaging local consumers to grow market share and customer loyalty (Repucom, 2015).

National brand building: governments like the UAE are renowned for hosting international sporting events and tournaments to showcase a country's personal brand on a global stage and accordingly use sport sponsorship to promote tourism to boost economic growth (Repucom, 2015).

According to Deloitte (2018) there are five major trends that will dominate the sports industry in 2018 through technology and cultural changes; and accordingly, will influence how corporate citizens use sport or sport sponsorship as an effective community engagement tool:

Community safety: after the 2015 bombing at a football event in Paris, community safety has become the top priority for all sporting events across the globe to protect innocent people from harm and to ensure that they community can trust the event organisers to provide a safe, secure and stress-free environment where they can enjoy participating themselves, or support other participants (Deloitte, 2018). Furthermore, sporting events around the world will invest in high-end security upgrades through digital solutions and technology, such as biometric recognition, electronic finger scanning and radio-frequency

identification tags to decrease the risk of any unfortunate events from occurring; and should an attack take place, the new technologies will help to evacuate people much faster and safely from the premises (Deloitte, 2018). Other security issues, such as disorderly conduct from supporters decrease community engagement and participation, and accordingly technologies such as incident tracking, fibre-optic camera surveillance and video analytics will be used to combat this issue, as well as providing fans with an experience that they can truly enjoy in a stress-free environment (Deloitte, 2018).

Innovative ticket packaging: it is hard enough to compete with online and live television broadcasting, therefore, more than ever, sporting event organisers need to ensure that communities are offered competitive and innovative tickets to increase attendance at live sporting events. For example, a ticketing system that allows fans to buy seasonal tickets at a once off flat rate, or a debiting system that allows fans to pay in advance and redeem as they like throughout the season, giving them full control over which games they want to support (Deloitte, 2018). Sporting event experiences are key for socialising, and to attract communities, event organisers need to offer a variety of engaging activities that will incentivise them to return (Deloitte, 2018).

Digital and social media advertising: targeting millennials through online advertisements have never been more critical, and accordingly, commercial behaviour has drastically shifted from television to serving advertisements through programmatic and social media advertisement, due to its sophisticated audience targeting abilities; as well as to deliver on specific objectives, such as engagement, reach and loyalty, which are captured and measured, giving marketers evidence for return on investment reporting (Deloitte, 2018). Other digital opportunities include customer data capture and online traceability to retarget existing or look-a-like customers to grow the customer database (Deloitte, 2018). Online advertisement also opens the door for corporate partnerships and sponsorship opportunities by partnering with third-party or external data sources and investing in specialists to analyse data to inform marketing strategies and to report on return on investment (Deloitte, 2018). Furthermore, organisations such as Spinneys Dubai, should “establish a technology road map by building a foundation to enable delivery of a more customised, data driven customer experience in the future and accordingly invest in new technologies that will amplify the impact of loyalty programmes and community engagement” (Deloitte, 2018).

Anti-corruption: sport corruption has been an issue across major sports around the world, such as cycling (Deloitte, 2018). Corruption has negatively impacted sport sponsorship across the globe and in 2016 the world-famous Swiss food brand Nestlé issued a public statement to terminate its sport sponsorship agreement due to doping, and corruption – accordingly, the brand could not cope with the pressure from society (Telegraph, 2018). The Telegraph (2018) reported that the president of the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) responded that the governing body did not accept Nestlé’s decision to dissolve their sport sponsorship agreement since the beneficiaries, who are children across the world, would be negatively affected. Nestle released the following statement to the media and said: *“this decision was taken in light of negative publicity associated with allegations of corruption and doping in sport made against the IAAF. We believe this could negatively impact our reputation and image (Telegraph, 2018).”* And, in response to this statement, IAAF said: *“the IAAF think Nestlé’s claim is outrageous. If Nestlé was a sponsor of the IAAF itself that would be one thing, but to claim that there is reputational damage over the sponsorship of a kids’ programmes is just crazy”*; and also suggested that over three million children will lose the opportunity to participate in the sport (Telegraph, 2018).”

Social activism: sport athletes, who are influencers in their own right, especially in the United States, have taken sporting events as a platform to protest social issues and to make strong national statements that negatively influenced viewership and community engagement and accordingly, sport sponsors started to question their association and active involvement and investment (Deloitte, 2018).

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

Effective community engagement is a result of both transactional and transformational engagement activities, such as the sport sponsorship of the Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and community health CSR messaging of the ‘Live Well. Eat Well’ campaign and sport development in partnership with the UAE Government and the event owners. How effective Spinneys Dubai’s sport sponsorship strategy is in relation to community engagement remains to be discovered in the final chapter, however as a community retailer it is important consider the PAR approach to gain valuable community feedback and improve on the

objectives of the event. Community engagement is based on 'self-development', therefore Spinneys Dubai and stakeholders should actively get involved in process of helping the community to own their health and fitness goals and take responsibility for their actions, with the support of effective and consistent CSR communication messaging to overcome health problems like obesity and diabetes.

It is evident that sport sponsorship has many benefits and can be used as an effective communication and marketing tool when incorporated strategically into organisational communication and CSR practices. It also has the potential to build long-term relationships with all stakeholders involved and could change or form their perceptions positively towards the brand; and encourage the community to change their social behaviour. Sport sponsorship should be more than a gesture of goodwill and provide members of the community with insightful knowledge about the sport; and how to live a healthy lifestyle through corporate social marketing campaigns that have been carefully designed to increase awareness and to motivate social behaviour to change through community empowerment and long-term stakeholder partnerships. Lastly, sport sponsorship, such as The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, should be beneficial to all stakeholders involved and should ideally generate a return on investment and motivate stakeholders to show commitment and loyalty towards the brand.

From a strategic management point of view, it is evident that for Spinneys Dubai to achieve predetermined goals or to project the corporate vision and mission, the brand management approach should be clearly defined, measured and outlined to implement and produce the desired results to show a return on investment. The results or outcome of brand management strategies, such as sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool, should also be critically evaluated and management should be open to make improvements based on the feedback and the development of cultural and digital trends.

The future brand management strategy for Spinneys Dubai is based on the 'community and cultural approach' with the influence of the latest trends to effectively engage the community through sporting events designed to retain community relationships, trust and loyalty; and the use of social media and digital advertisements to reach and engage, not only with existing, but also with new customers online. The purpose of brand management is to create

value for all stakeholders involved and, therefore, it is Spinneys Dubai's responsibility to establish a CSR corporate culture that is genuine and filtrates down to every level of the organisation, to create brand ambassadors that are genuine in their communication; listen to their stakeholders; and use these insights to improve business strategies to ultimately create an iconic brand identity, reputable brand image and corporate reputation that can change the attitude and behaviour of the community in which it operates.

# **CHAPTER 5**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The researcher gained valuable insights after using Leximancer, a data analytics programme that clusters key concepts together and highlight the importance of conceptual relationships. The Leximancer programme is also a practical tool with a graphical mapping system that articulated how all the concepts are interconnected from a strategic management point of view. The programme provided the researcher the ability to analyse each organisation separately, as well as combine their input together in unique combinations, for example, only inserting data into Leximancer from the marketing and communication teams to evaluate and compare their efforts in a more holistic way.

Finally, the Leximancer results will be compared to the predetermined theoretical framework of this study and will be benchmarked against industry standards in Chapter 7, to be able to share valuable and practical insights to contribute to the scientific body of knowledge on sport sponsorship and to enhance business performance.

### **5.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY AND DESIGN**

The researcher's long-term strategy is to encourage community participation and empowerment through strategic organisational engagement based on projected outcomes that drive the commitment of stakeholders who have power and resource to make a meaningful change within their environment (Du Plooy, 2009:330). The strategy of community engagement and empowerment relies on the effective involvement and contribution of partnerships between the private and public sector as well as community organisations who support the same objectives (Du Plooy,

2009:331). To achieve community empowerment the researcher selected a qualitative research method to evaluate performance more effectively to support the growth and development of cycling as a sport and The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event.

### **5.2.1 Qualitative research**

Over the years, qualitative research has been classified as *“field research, critical research, interpretative research, naturalism, ethnography, anti-positivist approach, an alternative approach and constructivism* (Du Plooy, 2009:30).” All these classifications have one thread in common, which is the communication process or experiences of individuals or groups of people within a specific study (Du Plooy, 2009:30). Qualitative research can be defined as a social research approach that relies on the perception of specific human activities or social behaviour; it is a method that will help the researcher to have a more meaningful and in-depth understanding, rather than a simple explanation of events (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:270).

The qualitative research approach is based on three types of assumptions, namely: ontological, theoretical and epistemological (Du Plooy, 2009:31). Ontological assumptions are based on the ideas formed in the 1950’s through mass media communication designed to target a large audience or the general public to create awareness and to influence social behaviour, which is still relevant today (Du Plooy, 2009:31). Furthermore, during the 1990’s researchers realised that ontological assumptions needed to be authentic, reliable, valid and reflect the true nature of the communication experience in its purest form, which developed a need for participatory research where the researcher and participant work closely together to find the truth and to support further solutions within their own community (Du Plooy, 2009:31).

Secondly, theoretical assumptions are based on inductive reasoning where the researcher first questions and observes the behaviour or social actions of individuals or groups; recognises certain patterns; and then formulate conclusions and new theories (Du Plooy, 2009:33). Finally, epistemological and methodological assumptions are purely concerned with the communication process that highlights

issues within a specific community or situation through the in-depth analysis of the researcher's data captured during interviews or observations (Du Plooy: 2009:33).

Qualitative research can also be identified in the following ways (Babbie & Mouton: 2008:270):

- Naturalism: participants are interviewed in their natural environment
- Process: research that investigates the process, rather than focussing on the end results in a numerical format
- Insider perspective: the perceptions of participants are more valuable as the researcher's main objective is to view the world through the participant's eyes
- Description and understanding: this method investigates human actions or behaviour in more detail in a certain social context, to have an in-depth understanding of the specific situation, rather than making general assumptions
- Inductive approach: this research process is more inductive in nature, which promotes the generation of new theories that will explain or support observations theoretically
- Intersubjectivity: The researcher is the main driver of gathering data that are valid and reliable during the research process, while being completely objective throughout the research process

The nature of qualitative research is populated from a multitude of perspectives and can be defined as "interpretive, naturalistic and holistic inquiry that can be described by a wide variety of outlooks, opinions and research practices among qualitative researchers that interpret the experiences of participants (Anderson, 2017)". Qualitative research is rooted in positivism; however, the approach of qualitative research includes critical theory, interpretivism, feminism, constructivism and critical realism (Anderson, 2017). The nature of the research method requires "rigor and validity that support overall trustworthiness, credibility and plausibility of the research conducted through the use of theory, research design, data generation and data analysis (Anderson, 2017)". It is also argued that qualitative research does not claim to be scientific and objective, instead seeks to "engage participants in sense-making of a phenomena with regards to meanings, values, beliefs and the experiences of groups of people (Anderson, 2017)".

To deliver quality research results through the qualitative method, the researcher delivered clear communication of methodological awareness and meaningful coherence to address the problem statement (Anderson, 2017). The researcher used the required methods and techniques to ensure it is consistent with the research questions; sampled 16 participants who are actively involved in the event (recognised as adequate according to university standards).

Furthermore, the participants provided the researcher with rich and insightful information through semi-structured interview schedules, mostly conducted through emails and telephone conversations due to complicated and overlapping GCC and international business travelling; accordingly, data was processed and extracted through the scientific algorithms of Leximancer as evidence of rigor (Anderson, 2017). The researcher also presented sufficient findings with rich, direct quotations from participants, highlighting “*experiences that convey a sense of the participants and their environment as the basis for careful interpretation to illustrate in-depth concepts and constructs that are important to the study* (Anderson, 2017)”.

**Table 8: Quantitative and qualitative research**

In the below table compares quantitative and qualitative research methods to clearly distinguish between the setting, objectives, strategy and notion of objectivity.

	<b>Quantitative</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>
Approach to the setting	Controlled settings Selected samples	Natural settings Whole context
Objective of research	Quantitative descriptions Explanation and prediction	Thick descriptions Interpretive understanding
Research strategy	Hypothetico-deductive Generalising	Inductive Contextualising
Notion of objectivity	Natural science definition: maximum control over extraneous factors	Intersubjectivity: gaining trust and rapport to get as close as possible to subjects/trustworthiness and credibility

Source: Babbie & Mouton (2008: 270)

For the purpose of this study, a qualitative research approach was selected to conduct semi-structured interviews to investigate how Spinneys Dubai strategically use sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool. According to Babbie and Mouton (2008:270) the qualitative research method is used to describe human and organisational behaviour in detail and to understand participants fully through an in-depth study of their perceptions, actions and business practices.

In a broader sense, this design examined the “*properties, values, needs and characteristics that distinguished the stakeholders, organisations, events, the environment or specific communication messages*” related to the study in such a way that it supported the researcher to compare her input with the theories outlined in Chapter 3 and 4 (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:88). After the interviews were finalised, it enabled the researcher to conduct an in-depth analysis through Leximancer to critically evaluate the performance or nature of Spinneys Dubai’s current strategies and practices, which will contribute to the final suggestions and recommendations in considerations in Chapter 7.

### **5.2.2 Strengths of the qualitative strategy**

The key strength of the qualitative strategy is that it mainly focusses on communication in “*organisational and development contexts, as well as environmental monitoring research, social audits, public relations and communication audits* (Du Plooy, 2009:36).” Communication can be investigated and evaluated through the following qualitative research assumptions which supported the research process of this study (Du Plooy, 2009:36):

**Table 9: Strengths of the qualitative research strategy**

The table discuss the strengths of the qualitative research strategy within ontological and epistemological assumptions.

<b>Strengths of the qualitative research strategy for communication</b>	
<b>Ontological assumptions</b>	<b>Epistemological assumptions</b>
The organisation supports and drives active communication participation and inclusivity	Variety and diversity are at the heart of growth and development of communication to support two-way internal conversations within the environment in which they operate
Transparency is strongly encouraged where information is shared consistently to develop a culture of responsibility and skillset	Organisational procedures are flexible based on the input of the leadership team to make decisions as well as the impact of the environment in which they operate
The senior leadership is held accountable when there is no clear communication and transparency on matters of finance, policies and procedures	Effective communication is challenged through research to address potential crisis situations or internal need for change
Leadership and control are divided into various divisions to ensure ownership is distributed throughout the organisation	Developing and maintaining meaningful stakeholder relationships are more important to develop an inclusive culture that provides mutual support
Conflict is addressed and resolved by managing involved stakeholder groups through a mediation process until an agreement or compromise can be made	Solutions and strategies are supported by research questions that most probably have not yet been considered and can potentially highlight issues that needs to be resolved or changed
Leadership teams lead by example and provide a work environment that can be challenged and discussed when it affects them directly	
The minority is empowered and developed with knowledge and skills to make decisions that will influence work performance	

Organisational change is not feared, but recognised as part of strategic planning which is based on the trust and shared responsibility of all stakeholders involved	
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Source: Du Plooy (2009:36)

### 5.2.3 Limitations of the qualitative inquiry strategy

This study was limited to the qualitative research method, which only focused on the experiences or perceptions of specifically selected individuals, rather than generalising results that are more statistical and numeric in value. The method allowed the researcher to only interact with Spinneys and the event organisers, Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency, and not with other stakeholders involved in the event management, sponsorship or participation of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. The focus of the study is based on sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool within a specific sport and area; therefore, this study is limited to only one sport in the UAE, cycling, as well as the series of events that are associated with this initiative.

From a literature review perspective, this study is primarily limited to three main academic disciplines, namely business management, marketing and corporate communication, which include the following theories: strategic management, stakeholder theory, corporate social responsibility, corporate social performance, sport sponsorship, corporate social marketing, brand management, corporate identity and corporate communication. The three major concepts only include community engagement, sport sponsorship and corporate communication, with the following constructs: community trust, stakeholder relationships, social, hedonic, utilitarian experience, people, planet, profit, brand image, customer loyalty, CSR communication, public relations and corporate reputation.

## **5.2.4 Ethical considerations**

Informed consent, harm, confidentiality, deception and research contributions will be discussed next.

### **i. Informed consent**

The researcher contacted the senior leadership team of both Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, to request for approval to conduct research about their organisations and also provided them with a formal communication that explained the purpose of the study as well as the final questionnaire to make sure they are comfortable with and willing to participate (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:529). Both organisations agreed to support the study willingly and provided informed consent through formal organisational letters, followed by ethical clearance from the University of Pretoria to schedule interviews with the selected participants. It was agreed by both parties to conduct the 16 interviews through a first round of email interviews and if required follow-up phone calls if more clarity or prompting is required. It was also agreed that this would be the most sufficient way, due to heavy GCC and international business travelling (a normal practice for large organisations in the UAE).

### **ii. Harm**

The intent of the researcher was always to build long-term relationships with both organisations and to ensure that each participant's dignity and welfare is regarded in the highest esteem (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:529). The purpose of the study is to create social and economic value for both the organisation and the community in which Spinneys Dubai operates.

### **iii. Confidentiality**

The researcher made a conscious decision to respect the privacy of each participant's personal contact information and also not to disclose sensitive information publicly beyond this research study, without prior consent or approval (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:529). In addition to protecting the dignity of individuals and to avoid conflict of interest, the researcher who worked at Spinneys Dubai, purposely made a point not to disclose any sensitive information to current employer Marks & Spencer London, who is considered a competitor brand in the UAE (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:529).

### **iv. Deception**

The researcher was open, honest and transparent with all participants to ensure that they are comfortable with the research process and the questions, prior to scheduled interviews (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:530). Leximancer was used to process raw data through scientific algorithms with the support rich quotes from the respondents to deliver on rigor.

### **v. Research contributions**

The study provided a critical theoretical overview of the importance of CSR activities, strategic stakeholder engagement, sport sponsorship, community engagement, effective corporate communication and social marketing strategies that have been researched to give the reader an in-depth and theoretical overview of each business practice and evaluation according to the findings.

The impact of sport sponsorship was compared to other established and renowned international retailers in Africa and Europe, who have implemented and developed similar strategies as Spinneys Dubai. To give the reader a holistic overview of how sport sponsorship has grown and developed in other regions as an effective community engagement tool, a comparison was made, and the learnings used as final recommendations.

The background and context of the UAE was discussed in Chapter 2, to investigate the nature of sport sponsorship in the country within the context of its political, economic and social background, to give the reader an in-depth understanding of the environment in which Spinneys Dubai operates.

Lastly, the researcher will propose possible business solutions in Chapter 7, to build on Spinneys Dubai's current communication strategies for community engagement through sport sponsorship, based on the results of this study.

### **5.3 DATA COLLECTION**

As discussed, the qualitative research approach was selected as the data collection strategy of this study, with the support of Chapter 2 providing the reader with an in-depth overview of the UAE, followed by theoretical Chapters 3 and 4. Finally, the data collection strategy mainly consists of semi-structured interviews, followed by data analysis through the Leximancer programme that consist of scientific algorithms, which will be discussed in more detail in the results addressed in Chapter 6. Items for the interview schedule were identified from the literature in Chapters 3 and 4.

#### **5.3.1 Semi-structured interviews**

The main objective of an interview is to establish a relationship between the researcher and the participant through a question-and-answer based conversation that is captured for data analysis (Du Plooy, 2009:196). Semi-structured interviews gave the researcher the advantage of steering conversations with a sample of 16 participants, who are directly involved with the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, in a specific direction, by asking semi-structured questions related to specific topics with follow-up questions to ultimately understand how Spinneys Dubai use sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:288). This combination gave the researcher the advantage of understanding the participants' pattern of thought, as well as gaining specific answers on close-ended items of the structured interview (Du Plooy, 2009:198).

Both organisations, Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency were contacted directly to discuss the research focus and questions. Accordingly, the marketing, communication and operational teams were asked to support the study with interviews. Due to the nature of both organisations and the diverse expat community, staff from both organisations travel frequently within the region for business or to their home countries. Therefore, email interviews with follow-up phone calls were scheduled based on availability; and used as the main method of communication for all participants involved.

The researcher made sure to keep the pace of the interview; to work through all the questions within the estimated time of 20 minutes; to avoid participants getting bored or lose interest; and ultimately not to compromise the quality of the information shared (Du Plooy, 2009:196). It was evident, post interviews, that some participants were more informed than others, or had more insights to share from a strategic point of view due to the nature of their roles, especially the CEOs and communication and marketing teams from both organisations, which will be discussed further in this Chapter in more detail.

### **i. Questionnaire design**

The design of the questionnaire is based on three main concepts, of which two are captured in the title of this study, namely: *Sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool – Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge*. The questionnaire is based on the three concepts of sport sponsorship, community engagement and communication management, with individually listed constructs, which resulted in a total of 17 questions.

**a. Key concepts and constructs**

**Table 10: Key concepts and constructs of the study**

<b>Sport Sponsorship</b>	<b>Community Engagement</b>	<b>Communication management</b>
Strategic Partners	CSR Activities	CSR Communication
Brand Image	Community Relationships	Public Relations
Customer Loyalty	Social, Hedonic & Utilitarian Experience	Health, Fitness & Safety Awareness
Community Engagement Tool	Community Trust	Community Relations

**b. Sport sponsorship questions**

The first concept is *sport sponsorship*, which included the following constructs: strategic partners, brand image, customer loyalty and community engagement tool, which formed the below six questions included in the Table 10 below.

**Table 11: Interview schedule - six sport sponsorship questions**

<b>Sport Sponsorship</b>	<b>Six Questions</b>
Strategic Partners	1). Who are the strategic sponsorship partners of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and how can each of their roles be defined?
Brand Image	2). Does the community perceive Spinneys as a health and fitness retail brand since they have been the title sponsor of the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge? Yes/No explain why?  3). Has the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge positively influenced how the community perceive Spinneys as a retail brand? Yes/No explain why?
Customer Loyalty	4). Has the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge proven to contribute to the growth of customer loyalty? If yes, please explain the growth trend of customer loyalty year on year?

	5). Has the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge encouraged an increase in active community participation or behavioural change? Yes/No explain why?
Community Engagement Tool	6). How does Spinneys Dubai use the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge to effectively engage with the community?

### c. Community engagement questions

The second concept is *community engagement*, which included the following constructs: CSR activities, community relationships as well as social, hedonic and utilitarian experiences and community trust, which formed the eight questions included in the Table 11 below.

**Table 12: Interview schedule – eight community engagement questions**

<b>Community Engagement</b>	<b>Eight Questions</b>
CSR Activities	7). How is the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge empowering people in the community?  8). What measurements have been taken to ensure the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge limit or manage environmental impact sustainably?  9). How is the sport sponsorship contribution of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge managed ethically and sustainably?
Community Relationships	10). How is Spinneys Dubai managing the community relationship with the cyclists participating in the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge effectively?
Social, Hedonic & Utilitarian Experience	11). Does the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge offer the community a <u>social</u> experience where they can feel part of a group? Yes/No explain why and support with examples?

	<p>12). Does the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge offer the community a <u>utilitarian</u> experience that is functional or practical and support cyclists to achieve their health and fitness goals?</p> <p>13). To keep the community engaged, what provisions are made, or actions have been taken to ensure cyclists enjoy (<u>hedonic experience</u>) participating in each event throughout the year, from build-up rides to the main race in December?</p>
Community Trust	14). How does Spinneys as a retail brand build community trust through the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge in a competitive retail market?

#### d. Communication management questions

The third concept is *communication management*, which included the following constructs: CSR communication, public relations, health, fitness and safety awareness, which resulted in the three questions included in Table 12 below.

**Table 13: Interview schedule – three communication management questions**

Communication Management	Three Questions
CSR Communication	15). How and when is Spinneys communicating to stakeholders about their CSR activities regarding the social, economic and environmental impact of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge within the community they operate?
Public Relations	16). What are the communication channels being used to communicate externally to the public about the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and who are the key media partners supporting the event?
Health, Fitness & Safety Awareness	17). How is the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge contributing to the overall health, fitness and safety awareness of the community in a sustainable way?

## **ii. Participants and interview schedule**

Sixteen people were sampled and interviewed by the researcher including eight staff members from the Spinneys Dubai management team and eight staff members from the event organisers of Promoseven Sports Communication & Marketing Agency. The top 16 people who are decision makers, actively involved in the event management process and help to drive event execution. As the study's main purpose was to determine which strategic CSR communication and social marketing strategies for sport sponsorship were being used to engage with the community and to evaluate how effective and efficient these strategies are, the researcher sampled the senior management team to investigate the strategic communication management strategy of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

Both the CEOs, who are also the formal spokespersons for their organisations, as well as the marketing and communications specialists, naturally provided more insights on the strategic communication management strategy. The buyers provided more insights from a commercial perspective, compared to the event organisers who provided more detail about the event execution. The breakdown in the Table below will give the reader insight into each participant's designation and their unique role and involvement with the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge followed by the formal questionnaire.

**Table 14: Spinneys Dubai roles and designations**

<b>Spinneys Dubai Management Team</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Name &amp; Surname</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Role</b>
1	Jannie Holtzhausen	Chief Executive Officer	Official Brand Spokesperson
2	Duncan Woods	Marketing Manager	Strategic Stakeholder Management
3	Colette Shannon	Communications Manager	Event Management
4	Karolina Tattera	Marketing Coordinator	Event Execution
5	Shalini Monteiro	In-Store Marketing Manager	In Store Customer Communication
6	Siyak Siyali	Commercial Buyer	Fresh & Ambient Foods
7	Charl Holtzhausen	Commercial Manager	Fresh Foods
8	Shahnawaz Khan	Merchandise Planning Manager	Brand Management

**Table 15: Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency roles and designations**

<b>Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Name &amp; Surname</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Role</b>
1	Donal Kilalea	Chief Executive Officer	Event Owner & Spokesperson
2	Stewart Howison	Managing Director	Event Owner
3	Jo Macadi	PR Manager	Communication Management
4	Lauren Dewhirsyt	Digital Manager	Website & Social Media
5	Brett Benson	Logistics Manager	Operations
6	Alisa Davidson	Event Coordinator	Execution
7	Manoj Khira	Signage Manager	Execution
8	Ghirish Dhanraj	Route Coordinator	Execution

**Table 16: Interview questionnaire**

<b>Name &amp; Surname:</b>	
<b>Mobile Number:</b>	
<b>Email Address:</b>	
<b>Designation:</b>	
<b>In your current position, how do you support the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge?</b>	
<b>Interview Questions:</b> Please answer the questions below from your own perspective and support your answers with examples.	
1.	Who are the strategic sponsorship partners of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and how can each of their roles be defined?
2.	Does the community perceive Spinneys as a health and fitness retail brand since they have been the title sponsor of the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge? Yes/No explain why?
3.	Has the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge positively influenced how the community perceive Spinneys as a retail brand? Yes/No explain why?
4.	Has the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge proven to contribute to the growth of customer loyalty? If yes, please explain the growth trend of customer loyalty year on year?
5.	Has the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge encouraged an increase in active community participation or behavioural change? Yes/No explain why?
6.	How do Spinneys Dubai use the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge to effectively engage with the community?

7.	How is the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge empowering people in the community?
8.	What measurements have been taken to ensure the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge limit or manage environmental impact sustainably?
9.	How is the sport sponsorship contribution of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge managed ethically and sustainably?
10.	How is Spinneys Dubai managing the community relationship with the cyclists participating in the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge effectively?
11.	Does the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge offer the community a <u>social</u> experience where they can feel part of a group? Yes/No explain why and support with examples?
12.	Does the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge offer the community a <u>utilitarian</u> experience that is functional or practical and support cyclists to achieve their health and fitness goals?
13.	To keep the community engaged, what provisions are made or actions have been taken to ensure cyclists enjoy ( <u>hedonic experience</u> ) participating in each event throughout the year, from build-up rides to the main race in December?
14.	How does Spinneys as a retail brand build community trust through the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge in a competitive retail market?
15.	How and when is Spinneys communicating to stakeholders about their CSR activities regarding the social, economic and environmental impact of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge within the community they operate?
16.	What are the communication channels being used to communicate externally to the public about the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and who are the key media partners supporting the event?
17.	How is the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge contributing to the overall health, fitness and safety awareness of the community in a sustainable way?

## 5.4 DATA ANALYSIS – LEXIMANCER

Qualitative data analysis is “any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” and is divided into two major types, including: conceptual and relational analysis which can be compared in the below eight steps in the Table below (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:492):

**Table 17: Conceptual and relational analysis**

No.	Conceptual analysis	Relational analysis
1.	“Deciding on the levels of analysis”	“Identify the question”
2.	“Deciding how many concepts to code for”	“Choose the samples for analysis”
3.	“Deciding whether to code for frequency or for concept”	“Determine the type of analysis”
4.	“Deciding how to distinguish among concepts”	“Reduce the text to the categories and code for words or patterns”
5.	“Developing rules for the coding of text”	“Explore the strength, sign and direction of the relationships”
6.	“Deciding what to do with irrelevant information”	“Code the relationships”
7.	“Coding texts”	“Possibly perform statistical analysis”
8.	“Analysing results”	“Map out the representations”

Source: Babbie & Mouton (2008:492)

The most efficient method of capturing qualitative data for conceptual and relational analysis, is through a computer software programme like Leximancer, which can be defined as a “text analytics tool that can be used to analyse the content of a collection of textual documents and to display the extracted information visually (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:3)”. Conceptual analysis measures text for frequency of concepts, like repetitive “words or phrases, or more complex definitions such as collections of words representing each concept”. In contrast to relational analysis, it “measures how

*such identified concepts are related to each other*” within the same text (Leximancer User Guide: 2017:8).

This smart software programme supported the researcher to analyse the data through a systematic process of writing up results through following a holistic research strategy in the following way (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:504, Leximancer User Guide: 2017:8):

- Captured and transcribed answers or fields notes from interviews
- Edited field notes to ensure all data are clean, without any errors
- Highlighted key words to support important statements and arguments
- Saved and preserved data in an organised and structured format for ease of reference during the data analysis process
- Linked relevant information together to form important clusters of data for further analysis
- Based on observations, it provided the researcher the opportunity to reflect on the results and share a deeper meaning from the participants perspective
- A detailed analysis was conducted through data displays and concept mapping
- Conclusions were made by confirming findings through theory building supported by the development of “*systematic, conceptually coherent explanations of findings*” for the final chapter.

The main benefit of using Leximancer as a software programme, is that it automatically selected the most frequent used terminologies and codes to form concepts in a ready-made format, which enabled the researcher to do fast-track data analysis, especially from a conceptual point of view (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:8). A key strength of the Leximancer software programme, is that it enabled the researcher to conduct both conceptual and relational data analysis at the same time, by mapping the relevant concepts together and visually showing the researcher how they are related from a relationship point of view (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:8).

The researcher identified that the main method of data analysis focused more on the perception of the participants, as well as their experiences, which helped to identify patterns of behaviours and perceptions within both Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven

Sports Marketing Agency; a research process known as thematic data analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Thematic data analysis was ideal for this study, as it supported the researcher to provide insights for the primary and secondary research questions; analysed various theoretical perspectives; and worked well to support a data-focused analysis with information that was obtained through the semi-structured interviews (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

Leximancer is a powerful software tool that can analyse any form of written content by extracting relevant codes and visually presenting key concepts and themes through a graphical map showcasing significant interconnected relationships (Leximancer 2018). Furthermore, the software programme is developed based on the following disciplines (Leximancer, 2018):

- Corpus and computational linguistics: when words are placed in close proximity, it presents a particular meaning from a relationship perspective; and how relevant one word is to the other
- Machine learning: is the optimisation of developing key words to create seeds through a complex system of computer programmed algorithms, specially designed as a unique feature
- Complex networks theory: the concept maps were visually developed to appear like a complex network that consists of themes that contain a deeper meaning behind the information gathered through the interview schedules
- Physics: *“the idea of a measurable short-range order between words was influenced by solid-state physics. More directly, the actual algorithm used for clustering the concepts is derived from physical force laws and numerical methods used in many-body problem simulations”*
- Content analysis: the main purpose of Leximancer is to analyse content through data extracting, coding and generation of relevant themes, that ultimately provide the researcher with clarity to produce a coherent story line for the purpose of the study
- Information science: producing data that are properly documented and indexed; for ease of navigation through captured data for further analysis.

From a practical point of view, the Leximancer software tool is ideal for the data analysis of conversations in the form of interview schedules, as well as surveys and profiling for quantitative research studies. For the purpose of this study, Leximancer was used as flexible tool when analysing interview schedules, for example, the researcher inserted and analysed all 16 participants together; as well as a second combination focusing only on the senior management and marketing communication specialists, to support further analysis on strategic corporate communication management (Leximancer, 2018).

Leximancer offered the researcher basic text analysis for interview schedules in a Word document format, and produced concept maps and summarised extracts reports, for the purpose of communication research (Leximancer User Guide, 2017: 6). The researcher observed the following strengths of using the Leximancer software programme (Leximancer, 2018):

- Efficiency: the software tool proved to be simple to use and quick to produce reports, saving the researcher time and effort of coding raw data
- Deeper meaning: without being biased, Leximancer produced a deeper meaning through coding sentences consisting of various nouns, verbs, modifiers and prepositions through a process of quantifying *“information between concepts with the flexibility and dynamics required to analyse natural language in real-life settings”*
- Automation: the greatest advantage of using the Leximancer software tool was that it saved the researcher time coding interview schedules through automated algorithms that extracted concept seeds and plotted concepts and themes visually on a map for further analysis
- Clarity: when Leximancer produced concept maps, the data were presented in a clear and transparent format, which enabled the researcher to investigate how the relationships between the various concepts were formed through the software tool in the first place
- Control: the software tool is flexible and allowed the researcher to cluster similar concepts through compounding concepts together, to produce a cleaner

concept map for further analysis, and it gave the researcher more control to steer the results toward the research story line

- **Completeness:** the software tool offered the researcher a one-stop-shop tool for all her data analytical requirements; from processing the raw data to customising information inserted into the programme to produce a holistic report that is complete and trustworthy for analysis
- **Robustness:** Leximancer is not data sensitive to low quality information such as grammatically incorrect sentences, broken dialect or slang, which proved to be helpful as the researcher had to interview participants who differ in nationality, first language and level of education and work experience.

The researcher acknowledges that using Leximancer was an extremely helpful tool for the qualitative research approach, especially to organise data for further interpretation through thematic analysis. However, she also encountered limitations that need to be considered for future research. The main criticism of using Leximancer is that it is a purely automated programme which could mean that in particular cases, themes can be presented as important, however, they can consist of concept words that have little meaning (Liverpool John Moores University, 2018). It is also argued that, because researchers have control over the coding process for computerised qualitative data analysis, it might cause the researcher to be biased and be perceived as less scientific when compared to the quantitative research approach, which is considered more clinical and statistical in nature (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:504). For the purpose of this study, the researcher respects the critical views of using Leximancer as an automated data analysis tool, however, supports the overall strengths of the software tool and is of the opinion that it works well to produce results for thematic analysis. To strengthen the results of this study, the researcher went a step further and included the answers (direct quotes) of the respondents from the interview schedules within the chapter to give the reader the opportunity to read it for him or herself.

The researcher selected the thematic data analysis approach which includes six phases that were followed systematically to produce the findings of this study including (Clarke & Braun, 2013):

1. Data familiarisation
2. Data coding
3. Theme building
4. Theme reviews
5. Theme identification and naming
6. Research write-up

#### **5.4.1 Phase 1 – data familiarisation**

The researcher conducted 16 semi-structured interviews with participants from both Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing and Communications Agency through email interviews, which gave the researcher time to read through each participant's answers and to make notes for further questioning. Follow-up phone calls were made to prompt participants for more detailed information like PR value and social media performance, and to clarify statements that were vague or unclear like what how Spinneys communicate their Live Well. Eat Well message. The researcher re-read all the answers again to ensure the new information is familiar and, in the process, analytical observations like repetitive words or terminologies and patterns were recognised to support conceptual data analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2013). The researcher made sure to "*remain close and focussed on the data, considering possible meanings and how they are fitted together to provide clues for theme development* (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016:103)".

#### 5.4.2 Phase 2 – data coding

Data coding is a process of data reduction - by reducing the volume of raw data and presenting it in a more digestible format with high-level insights that have the potential to answer the research questions (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016:103). The Leximancer software text analytics tool was used to extract information and to analyse data from 16 interview schedules, which are displayed visually as a conceptual map of concepts. It also highlighted important relationships for further data analysis (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:3).

Leximancer developed concepts by identifying key words that were frequently used throughout the interview schedule, and accordingly provided statistical data to highlight the importance and presence of each concept by visually displaying it on the concept map (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:9). The software programme also defined each concept through a cluster of concept seed words through statistic-based algorithms that automatically processed a specific collection of words that were interconnected and had specific theoretical and practical meaning in the form of key concepts that were smartly placed and clustered into major themes (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:54).

After the interview schedules were completed in Microsoft Word format, all the files were selected and uploaded onto the Leximancer software programme (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:54). To ensure only relevant information was selected, the researcher generated concept seeds through a filtering process that enabled her to create concept maps that have meaning, by removing words that are not significant like 'including' and 'ensure' and by merging words that are similar and can be clustered into one word, for example, 'ride', 'cycling', 'race' and merged with 'cycle challenge', which reflected visually in the concept map (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:54). The concept map is an essential part of the research process, as it visually presents important key words that are inter-connected or in a relationship, for further analysis and interpretation (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:11).

### 5.4.3 Phase 3 – theme building

Theme development is the next step in the research process, where a number of similar codes build the foundation for a holistic theme; or are developed from a cluster of similar codes, which is fully explained in the next phase (Clarke & Braun, 2013). The researcher used Leximancer to generate “*a thesaurus of terms associated with each concept*” known as theme building, for example, the main theme ‘Spinneys’ is built from concept words, namely: Spinneys, cyclists, Dubai and stakeholders (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:79). The researcher spent time developing and understanding the most relevant themes, by using the following guidelines to build themes and to interpret the Leximancer concept maps (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:12, 57, 58):

- Merged similar words together that have similar meaning, like ‘rides and build-up rides’ to produce cleaner data for analysis
- Removed words with little meaning like ‘and’ or ‘all’ through the process of ‘stopword removal’ to produce cleaner data for analysis and merging similar words together that have similar meaning like ‘rides and build-up rides’
- Concepts that are clustered tightly together on the map form higher-level themes
- The themes can be recognised as coloured circles or bubbles on the map
- The importance of themes is highlighted by warm colours, therefore, red would be classified as the most significant theme on the map, followed by the colour orange to least important themes highlighted in cooler colours, like green and blue
- Theme size can be adjusted to fewer or broader themes from 33% upwards
- Themes are rated in a hierarchal order from most to least important on the side bar of the concept map, to indicate to the researcher which themes are most relevant
- Summary updates in the form of data captured from the interview schedule appear underneath the map, which provides the researcher with insights as to why the themes appear on the map
- The appearance of the map can also be altered from coloured bubbles to a ‘concept cloud map’; or a grey graphical network that illustrates how concepts

are interconnected. The grey 'concept cloud map' follows the same principle for the identification of theme importance, by using warm colours for more important themes compared to cooler colours for less significant concepts.

Furthermore, the researcher inserted concepts that are significant to the study by including "strategic management, community engagement, sport sponsorship, public relations, advertising and communication"; and ended this phase as an analytical process, by only collecting relevant data extracts to build themes to generate data for specific research questions (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Themes also have a functional purpose and enabled the researcher to answer research questions by grouping or clustering ideas together as themes to present "*results in terms of a story line*" (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016:101).

#### **5.4.4 Phase 4 – theme reviews**

The researcher reviewed the themes to ensure that it is compatible with the overall research schedule and to support the analysis of each individual theme, as well as the relationship between themes. However, it took the researcher a few trials to determine which themes would make the most sense for the purpose of this study (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Finally, the researcher used her judgement from insights gathered from the previous phases, to compare themes in terms of importance and in "*relation to the overall research question*" (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016:101).

#### **5.4.5 Phase 5 – theme identification and naming**

During this phase, the researcher labelled and conceptually identified words that would provide a deeper meaning and can be used as main topics when theoretical arguments need to be formed (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016:105). The researcher worked through the data and trialled various options through the Leximancer programme until a cluster of themes were formed to fit into the holistic research story (Clarke & Braun, 2013). The purpose of this phase is to give the researcher the opportunity to define and articulate the meaning of each theme in relation to the research questions, with the support of visual concept maps that illustrate the relationships between themes for

further analytical analysis (Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016:105). According to Vaismoradi *et al.* (2016:105) themes are formed more naturally from the data captured if the researcher did not conclude theoretical chapters in advance. In this study, theoretical chapters were included, giving the researcher the opportunity to go back to Chapters 3 and 4 to link themes into “*theoretical models to develop the study’s story line*”. Accordingly, each theme was carefully identified during the thematic data analysis process. It was then analysed and named for the purpose of this study (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

#### **5.4.6 Phase 6 – research write-up**

In the final stage of data analysis, the researcher used the analytical thematic process to write-up insights gathered from Leximancer concept map and overall themes to provide the reader with a broader perspective and answer the research question (Clarke & Braun, 2013; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016:107). The purpose of the final write-up phase is to present a convincing story line based on all the participants’ experiences and a thorough elaboration on how themes are connected to each other to move “raw data towards a coherent and plausible story Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2016:107).

### **5.5 RESEARCH QUALITY**

According to Pen-Edwards (2010) Leximancer provided the researcher with a solid foundation for sorting and mapping of concepts which is ideal for more effective and timelier phenomenographical analysis, especially when a high volume of data needs to be transcribed. Often the research community debates if qualitative research can be produced without being biased, however argues that the “*analysis is, however, not a measurement but a discovery procedure and that the discovery does not have to be replicable, but once the outcome space of a phenomenon has been revealed, it should be communicated in such a way that other researchers could recognise instances of the different ways of experiencing the phenomenon in question* (Pen-Edwards, 2010).”

The advanced capability of Leximancer provides a clear “bracketing process in identifying the concepts embedded in the responses and accordingly the scientific algorithms is an automatic process that completely removes researcher bias and eliminates issues such as coder reliability and subjectivity (Pen-Edwards, 2010).” Secondly, as Leximancer has the capability of “processing a large amount of raw data, which means that the programme avoids selective analysis and contributes to the improved reliability and validity in coding of content analysis and states its creator, offer less uncertainty to the user than keyword indexing, thus achieving better recall and precision (Pen-Edwards, 2010).”

Research quality is based on the fundamentals of science and the search for absolute truth by selecting objects for further investigation through a process of systematic and methodical inquiry to produce rigorous and trustworthy results (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:6-7). The nature of pure science is based on the following principles (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:6-7; du Plooy, 2009:18-19):

- Human experiences that are validated by scientists or researchers, rather than the opinion of certain individuals
- “*Scientific knowledge is the outcome of rigorous, methodical and systematic enquiry*” which means that the researcher needs to follow a scientific process by reviewing literature; followed by a research approach to observe real-life experiences that can contribute to future research
- The nature of science is to investigate, validate and compare sources until applaudable conclusions can be made for
- Observations need to be supported by scientific evidence and not skewed by the internal or biased beliefs of the researcher
- Science produce evidence that future behaviour, an event or phenomenon can be predicted through a series of relevant and repetitive patterns, which are produced through final conclusions and findings
- Research reports are written for public use to learn from a case study and to apply to future strategies, as well as for other researchers to consider for future studies.

The qualitative research approach is all about the study of human behaviour and actions from the insider's perspective, in order for the researcher to have a better understanding of the real-life situation (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:53). The Dutch philosopher Adri Smaling identified that this idea of creativity was problematic and accordingly developed the school of thought named Munchhausen objectivity which promotes trustworthiness to produce neutral findings through objectivity, validity, transferability and reliability of qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:274).

### **5.5.1 Reliability (dependability) of the study**

Research is classified as reliable when the same research can be repeated with the same participants, replicating the same findings researched in a different point in time producing stable and consistent results (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:274; Du Plooy: 2009:28, Golafshani, 2003:598). To determine the reliability of any study, an external auditor or examiner critically evaluates the research inquiry, which can confirm dependability and confirmability at the same time (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:274). Leximancer address reliability in two ways, namely that it offers stability and reproducibility, the validity parameters for the programme (Pen-Edwards, 2010). It has been established that these validity parameters are methodologically sound, however it is limited when articulating tone of voice but can be seeded or captured into the system (Pen-Edwards, 2010).

Furthermore, it is essential to ensure that the study is confirmed by tracing conclusions and findings back to its original sources, including raw data like interview schedules and products of coded and themed formats like Leximancer concept maps, developed by the researcher during her process of inquiry (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:278). Reliability can also be supported when the study can be reapplied for future research studies offering plausible solutions as a starting point for other researchers or scientists (Du Plooy, 2009:28).

### 5.5.2 Validity of the study

Validity can be defined as produced research results that are as close as possible to actual real-life reality (Du Plooy, 2009:28). According to Golafshani (2003:599) validity is measured by how “*truthful the research results are*” by means of the actual measurement used to determine if the research report is trustworthy enough to use for future research opportunities (Golafshani, 2003:600).

Validity of research can be achieved through the following (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:277):

- Prolonged engagement: spend as much time as possible observing and questioning participants until there is no more data left to capture
- Persistent observation: research is an ongoing process of cross-checking and re-checking various sources of information persistently until the findings can be confidently reported based on evidence
- Triangulation: when possible and applicable to the research study, multiple research methods can be considered to strengthen the validity of the report
- Referential adequacy: to have various documents available to support findings, for example, email interviews, audio or video tapes
- Peer debriefing: researchers can ask peers to review their research and provide their opinion or insights to further enhance the quality of the study
- Member checks: study leaders or examiners to compare the write-up with the source of information to evaluate the adequacy of the findings.

### 5.5.3 External (validity) transferability of the study

Research findings that can be generalised is considered as being transferable when it can be applied to “*different kinds of units of analysis, found in different settings or collected at different time periods*” (Du Plooy, 2009:90). According to Babbie and Mouton (2008:277), transferability “*refers to the extent to which findings can be applied in other contexts or with other respondents*”. External validity of a study can be achieved when relevant participants are selected and observed in a real-life situation

without exhausting them as a resource for information; and rather draw from various sources to validate the study (Du Plooy, 2009:90).

The purpose of the study is to investigate current strategies used for The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, also a growing sport and event in the UAE, which means that, if the same study would be repeated, the reader can assume that the nature and purpose of the event would still be the same. However, that over time, the overall strategy has the potential to evolve or develop into something more sophisticated to cater for a larger audience or more invested stakeholders. For the purpose of future research, the researcher ensured that her findings contain coherent, sound and solid descriptions that are easy to understand and ready to transfer to other case studies (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:277).

## **5.6 SUMMARY**

This Chapter discussed how the qualitative research method was used through semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis by using the Leximancer software tool to organise data and extract the main themes and concepts to formulate valuable insights for future recommendations. Furthermore, the researcher outlined steps followed for ethical considerations, informed consent, harm, confidentiality, deception and research contribution.

Key concepts and constructs were highlighted in the interview schedule with six sport sponsorship, eight community engagement and three communication management questions as well as introduced the roles and responsibilities of the Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency teams.

Finally, the researcher discussed steps taken to ensure quality, reliability, validity and external transferability of the study. Next, the results of the data extracted from Leximancer will be discussed.

# Chapter 6

## Results

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter will give the reader insights into the results found through the semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher from both the title sport sponsor, Spinneys Dubai, and the official event owner and organiser, Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency.

### 6.2 CLUSTERING OF INTERVIEW SCHEDULES AND THEMES

As discussed in Chapter 5, Leximancer was used for theme building, reviewing, identification and naming, to support the research write-up (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Before themes were clustered the researcher clustered, interview schedules into the following three groups: 1) Spinneys Dubai, 2) Promoseven Sports Marketing, 3) Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency marketing and communication specialists, to analyse and observe the two organisations separately, as well as combined, to gather more insights on the strategic mindset managing the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. To produce clean data focused on the answers of the two organisations, the questions and participant names were removed before the data were uploaded to Leximancer.

#### 6.2.1 Spinneys Dubai interviews and themes

There were eight participants interviewed from Spinneys Dubai, which included key decision-makers, including: the Chief Executive Officer, Marketing Manager, Communications Manager, In-store Marketing Manager, Marketing Coordinator, Commercial Manager and Buyer and Merchandise Planning Managers, who all influence how the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge is managed. The following

participants who were interviewed, identified their main roles in relation to the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge as the following:

- Chief Executive Officer, Jannie Holtzhausen: strategic head and the official spokesperson for the organisation, especially when statements need to be released to the media regarding the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge
- Marketing Manager, Duncan Woods: responsible for high-level strategic stakeholder management to protect the interests of the organisation and the health and safety of the community
- Communications Manager, Colette Shannon: responsible for all external communications, including public relations, as well as event management with the support of Promoseven Sports Marketing agency
- Marketing Coordinator, Karolina Tattera: responsible for event execution including on-site branding and product sampling and distribution
- In-store Marketing Manager, Shalini Monteiro: responsible for communicating information about the event to customers in store to create awareness and encourage customers to live a healthy lifestyle through the 'Live Well, Eat Well' campaign
- Commercial Buyer, Siyak Siyali: responsible for sourcing and supplying fresh and ambient foods, as well as drinks for the build-up rides from August to November, as well the main build-up ride in December The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.
- Commercial Manager, Charl Holtzhausen: responsible for managing fresh foods and securing sponsorship deals with suppliers to support the financing of the event and give brands the opportunity to promote products through branding and sampling.
- Merchandise Planning Manager, Shahnawaz Khan: responsible for instore product brand management. In his previous role as Marketing Manager, budgeted, marketed and executed the event through the in-house marketing team, as well as Promoseven Sports Marketing agency, offering valuable insights to the researcher on the history and growth of the event.

After running a few trials through Leximancer, the researcher produced a concept map on the data from the transcribed interviews covering Spinneys Dubai, that can be visually interpreted as follows (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:11-12):

- The overall map is visually displayed in two parts; on the left is a colourful display of concepts extracted from the interview schedules and how these concepts relate to each other; on the right is a display of the 'report tabs' that highlight the significance of the concepts in a hierarchical order
- After the concept map was generated, the '% visible concept slider' underneath the map automatically indicated the top 50% of concepts extracted from the interview schedules for Spinneys Dubai, however, the researcher reduced it to 33% for legibility
- The next slider indicates the themes size, which is automatically set to 33%, followed by setting the rotation slider at 89 degrees in terms of display for fewer and broader themes
- The coloured circles are 'heat-mapped' with the warm colours like red, yellow and orange representing the most significant themes, also displayed on the right as a 'report tab' in a hierarchical order
- Lastly the smaller words in black represent the strongest concepts that are clustered within specific high-level themes

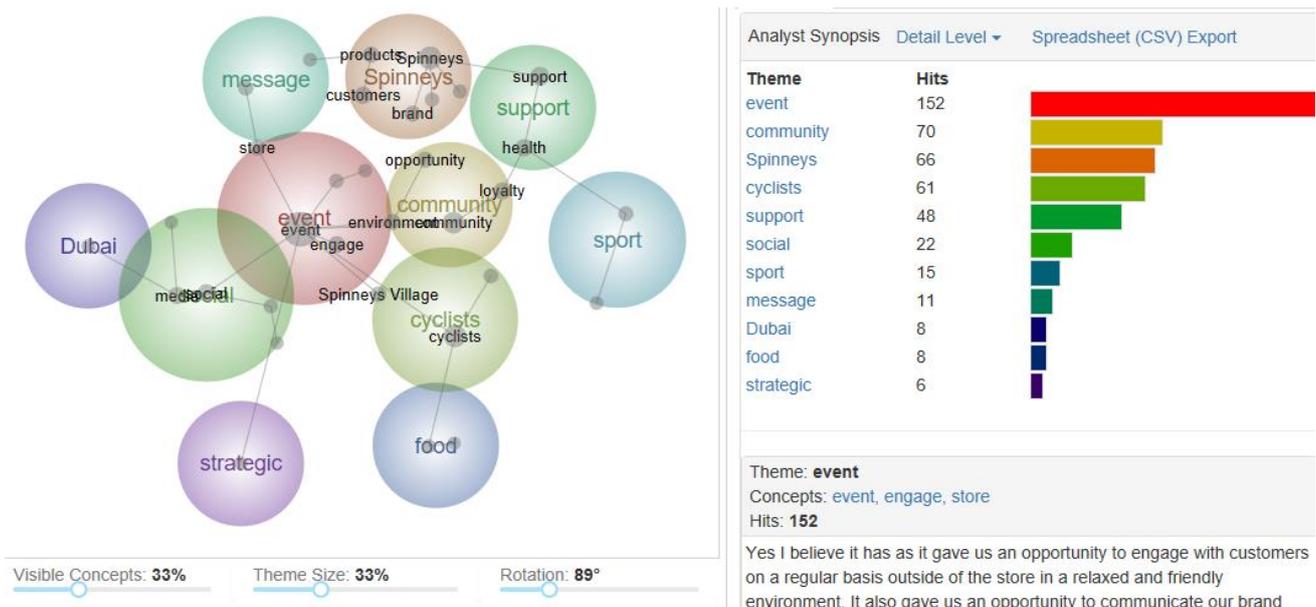
Ten main themes have been identified, named and ranked from most significant to least significant as visually shown in Figure 10:

1. event (red circle): event, engage, and store
2. community (yellow circle): community, loyalty, opportunity, and environment
3. Spinneys (orange circle): Spinneys, customers, products, and brand
4. cyclists (light green circle): cyclists and Spinneys Village
5. support (green circle): support and health
6. social (bright green circle): social and media
7. sport (blue circle): sport
8. message (green circle): message
9. Dubai (blue/purple circle): Dubai

10. food (blue/purple circle): food

11. strategic (blue/purple circle): strategic

**Figure 10: Concept map of the Spinneys Dubai interview data**



From the concept map it can be interpreted that the main hero theme is 'event' and that this word received the highest number of hits extracted from the interview data for Spinneys Dubai, with emphasis on concept words, namely *event*, *engage* and *store*, within the context of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. Each of these concepts contribute to the strategic mindset of the organisation and provide insights as to why Spinneys Dubai would invest in the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

The following reasons were extracted from the interview schedules as the most important reasons for event sponsorship:

1. To give Spinneys Dubai the opportunity to engage with customers in a relaxed and friendly environment outside the store

2. To communicate brand values and the key campaign message 'Eat Well, Live Well' to encourage customers to live a healthy life style
3. To use in-store communication as a marketing and engagement tool; to promote the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and target 100 000 customers on average per day in the months leading up the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge; and to drive in store engagement and event awareness
4. To use the event as a PR engagement tool to communicate with the public
5. To give customers the opportunity to sample or try Spinneys products to drive commerciality and return on investment.

Operational Marketing Manager, Shalini Monteiro elaborated on how in-store customer engagement was managed and said: *"In the beginning, we used roll-up banners, which then progressed to cut-out stands and leaflets, which were promoted by staff who could answer specific queries around the event. This year, Colette brought in many new elements, including smoothie bikes which took the customer engagement to another level altogether. Besides all the social media platforms we own, instore radio announcements were another area where this event was promoted this year"*.

Communications Manager, Colette Shannon said: *"Through social media feedback, SpinneysFood Magazine and in-store communication, we focussed our message the week before each build-up ride and the main event"*. Colette also elaborated on how the event experience should be a functional, and enjoyable experience and an opportunity to socialise, and said: *"Yes; there is an active Cycle Challenge Facebook page and the Spinneys Village allowed participants the opportunity to hang out together in a relaxed environment. The build-up rides allow cyclists to build their capabilities, learn to cycle in a group and build a network of like-minded people. From a Spinneys perspective, we had a Spinneys Village at each build-up ride with food, refreshments and activities for the cyclists and their supporters. The Village was extended to include a lot more family focused activities. We also communicated to the cyclists with hints and tips on what to eat before and after the ride"*.

The second theme, 'community' is not only closely displayed next to the hero theme 'event', but also visually overlaps with the 'cyclists' theme, which makes them strongly interconnected and relatable with the assumption that the event is targeting the community as a stakeholder group, and more specifically cyclists. The third theme is 'Spinneys', which is positioned between the four themes, 'event', 'community', 'support' and 'message', with the natural assumption that Spinneys has strong stakeholder relations with the event and the community, with the objective of communicating key messages and offering support to promote community health and well-being. The themes 'community', 'Spinneys' and 'cyclists' are considered highly important and will be analysed in more detail as stakeholder groups that are strongly interconnected or stand in a relationship with each other.

The 'community' theme consists of the concepts: *community, loyalty, opportunity and environment*. The concepts reveal that customer loyalty is not formally measured by Spinneys Dubai. However, it does give the retailer the opportunity to provide the infrastructure and facilities to host cycling events for the community in a safe and secure outdoor environment. There are two main safe and secure environments for the community to engage and socialise with others, which includes the 'Cycle Challenge Facebook' page for online engagement, and the 'Spinneys Village' for face-to-face interaction and communication with other people in the community. It is also confirmed that customer loyalty is not formally measured to justify the financial return on investment, which suggests that all stakeholders involved might not agree that the value received through the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge is commercially sound.

Commercial Manager, Charl Holtzhausen is of the opinion that marketing is not using the opportunity of sport sponsorship to effectively engage with the community and said: *“I do not think we make use of the opportunity at present, which is a general failing within marketing”*.

Marketing Manager, Duncan Woods is of the opinion that Spinneys Dubai uses sport sponsorship to engage with the community and said: *“The event allows us real-life interactions with customers and potential customers outside of the retail store environment. It is our way of touching new consumers with our brand, our values and our product.”*

Communications Manager, Colette Shannon said: *“Through the Spinneys village we were able to communicate our core values and sample products while at the same time engaging with and listening to customers. We also sampled new to store products and communicated clearly our sustainable sourcing message”*.

Marketing Manager, Duncan Woods believes that Spinneys Dubai empowers the community through the following ways and said: *“The cycle challenge gives the people of the UAE an opportunity to get outdoors and participate. Health and wellness are a concern for the community, including disorders such as childhood obesity and vitamin D deficiency. The challenge provides a platform for the community to get involved and to positively influence their lives. From an economic perspective it creates employment for a large number of full-time and part-time employees”*.

The third theme, ‘Spinneys’, consists of the concepts *Spinneys, customers, products* and *brand*. As part of the Spinneys Dubai strategy, the retailer focuses on offering healthy food choices through responsible product sourcing and brand communication that is designed to empower the community through their brand values and campaign messaging, as well as by offering products in store to sustain a healthier, everyday lifestyle.

Chief Executive Officer, Jannie Holtzhausen said: *“We encourage customers to buy prudent, waste less at home and live a healthy lifestyle. We know that the definition of healthy lifestyle varies a lot and don't want to sound prescriptive, other than encouraging a balanced diet, preferably cooked by yourself and consumed. We undertook to source as pure food as possible and the home cook know what they add, which is the best guarantee to know what you eat. Most manufactured products are produced by large multi-national groups, over which we have no influence. We therefore focused on what we can influence, fresh produce, special products produced for us and own production units. We have now cleaned up all our own products and produce only "clean label" food that is sold under our own label brand. We are a member of amongst other, Global Gap, to assist our internal teams to exercise compliance with agreed standards, from water consumption, labour practices, use of fertilizer and pesticides, and added hormones in protein”.*

The key sport sponsorship strategy for branding is captured in the name of the event, namely The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, which emphasises that the title sport sponsorship strategy is a form of brand identity, providing the organisation with opportunities for community engagement, relationship building and empowerment and promoting and developing cycling as a growing sport in the UAE, with the support of the media partner Dubai 92 radio station. Spinneys Dubai also identified itself as a one-stop-shop community retailer that invests in responsible sourcing practices and messaging to provide the community with natural products that support community health, which are also sampled and promoted at the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event at the ‘Spinneys Village’ to create awareness and drive footfall back to the store to ultimately increase sales.

The fourth theme, 'cyclists' consists of the concepts *cyclists* and *Spinneys Village* which are closely related and strategically important for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge for the following reasons:

1. In the lead-up to the event, social media is used to engage with the cyclists to build relationships and to create awareness of the event activities
2. To create a relaxed and safe environment to engage with cyclists and their family and friends with a range of planned activities suitable for all ages, including children
3. Through messaging, Spinneys Dubai communicates food and drink health tips to help cyclists with nutrition pre, during and post events to promote a healthy lifestyle and to enhance performance
4. Spinneys Dubai suppliers have the opportunity to engage with cyclists with product sampling and branding; and to create awareness and to encourage them to spend more time in the Spinneys Village before and after the event.

The fifth theme 'support' consists of the two concepts *support* and *health*. In this context, Spinneys Dubai want to ensure that they support the community to achieve a healthier lifestyle. The emphasis is on support, as Spinneys Dubai is not classified as a health and fitness brand, but encourages the community to 'Eat Well, Live Well' through messaging. Spinneys Dubai is also supporting cycling to develop and grow as a sport in the UAE in a more sustainable way, by including build-up rides to improve fitness levels before the main race, and by creating awareness to increase the number of participants steadily year or year.

The sixth theme 'social' consist of two concepts, namely *social* and *media*, which refer to online communication, including the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge website and social media Instagram and Facebook pages, as well as traditional media, which refers to radio station partner Dubai 92 Radio, which is formally managed by Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency. Social media bloggers are also used by Spinneys Dubai as a form of media or online advertisement to promote cycling events online.

Communications Manager, Colette Shannon said: *“Through our Spinneys Village we have created a relaxed, friendly environment for cyclists and their families to chill before and after the event. Our hashtags and social media allowed us to engage more regularly outside of the key events. We worked closely with select media and bloggers to extend the message outside our circles”*.

Marketing Manager, Duncan Woods said: *“We do not have a loyalty programme that is linked to the event, but the increase in participation numbers and the increased activity on social and digital media shows an increase in engagement”*.

Merchandise Planning Manager, Shahnawaz Khan said: *“Dubai 92 being title sponsor is the key radio channel spreading the message. The communication is driven to Spinneys customers through in-store banners. The external events company manages PR and digital media to spread the word on the event”*.

The seventh theme ‘sport’ refers to the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event, as well as the development as cycling as a growing community sport in the UAE. The eighth theme, ‘Dubai’, refers to the geographical location and importance of the event as well as the event partners, including Dubai Police, Dubai Sports Council, Dubai 92 Radio, as well as the importance of incorporating key Dubai landmarks into the route of the Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. The ninth theme, ‘food’, refers to the importance of food for Spinneys Dubai as a retailer, which was highlighted in and extracted from the interviews in the following ways:

- Encouraging customers to cook at home from scratch to support a clean diet without any harmful ingredients, hence the food retailer’s slogan ‘The Fresher Experience’
- Spinneys Dubai has its own ‘spinneysFood’ private label products that are better controlled through sustainable sourcing and that provide customers with pure natural food choices, promoting customer loyalty, by offering products that are exclusively only available at Spinneys

- The Spinneys Village give Spinneys Dubai the opportunity to sample food and provide the community to try new products to promote sales.

Commercial Manager, Charl Holtzhauzen said: *“The Spinneys Village appear to help. In the past people disappeared within 15 minutes after the race. Now they linger for anything between 1 to 2 hours afterwards. On race day we saw a large number of people wait around for 3 hours. Coffee, food, etc. I think we can engage the family more than we do, which essentially means providing something for the children to do.”*

Commercial Manager, Charl Holtzhauzen is of the opinion that customer loyalty can be promoted through the sampling of own labelled products and said: *“Supplying the event with spinneysFOOD labelled products and ensuring people know everything is available for sale at Spinneys (assuming it tastes great) can help”.*

In contrast, Communications Manager Colette Shannon emphasised how Spinneys use their third-party suppliers to sample food and also clearly mentioned that Promoseven is responsible for managing all stakeholders and event partners and said: *“I am sure PromoSeven will answer this in more detail. From a Spinneys perspective we have sponsors within the Spinneys Village who added to the overall experience through sampling. Our brands included Illy, Vita Coco, Nature Valley, Fage, Twinnings and Atkins”.*

The tenth and final theme extracted from the Spinneys Dubai interview schedules is ‘strategic’ which refers to strategic partners, including media partners such as Radio stations Dubai 92 and Dubai Eye and national newspaper Gulf News; UAE Government, such as Dubai Police and Dubai Sports Council, to ensure community safety; Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency to communicate directly with the community on behalf of Spinneys Dubai through the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge social media pages and website, as well as any other stakeholders required to make the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event possible.

### 6.2.2 Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency interviews and themes

There were eight participants interviewed from Promoseven, which included key decision makers and supporting staff for event execution, including the Chief Executive Officer, Managing Director, PR Manager, Digital Manager, Logistics Manager, Event Coordinator, Signage Manager and Route Coordinator. The following participants who were interviewed, identified their main roles in relation to the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge as the following:

- Chief Executive Officer, Donal Kilalea: event owner, official spokesperson for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event and responsible for partnership management
- Managing Director, Stewart Howison: co-event owner and responsible for partnership management
- PR Manager, Jo Macadi: responsible for external communication management of the media
- Digital Manager, Lauren Dewhirsyt: responsible for online content management through the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge website and social media pages
- Logistics Manager, Brett Benson: responsible for managing the event logistics, including setup and deliveries
- Signage Manager, Ghirish Dhanraj: responsible for producing signage, as well as the process of municipality approvals for outdoor branding
- Route Coordinator, Manoj Khira: responsible for anything that is required to support event execution for route coordination, including waterpoint stations
- Event Coordinator, Alisa Davidson: responsible for any administrative related tasks to support event execution

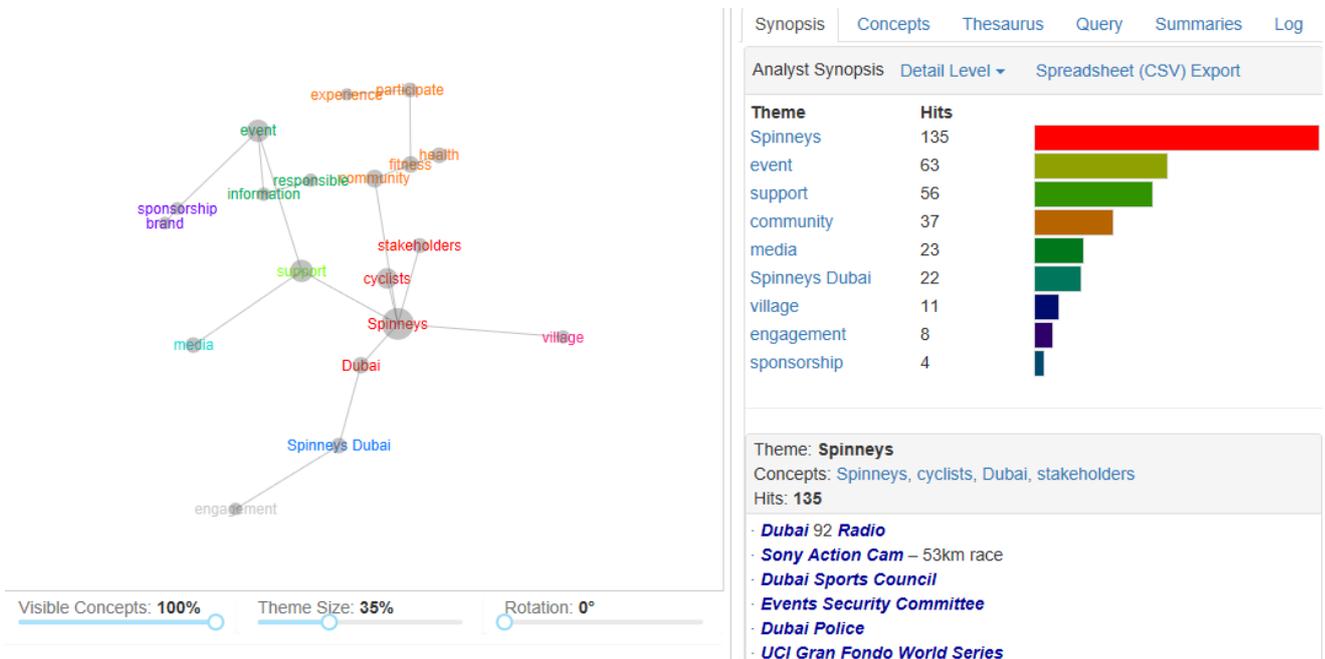
After running a few trials through Leximancer, the researcher produced a concept map on the data from the transcribed interviews covering the Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, and that can be visually interpreted as follows (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:11-12):

- The overall map is visually displayed in two parts; on the left is a display of concepts extracted from the interview schedules and how these concepts relate to each other; on the right is a display of the 'report tabs' that highlight the significance of the concepts in a hierarchical order.
- A different concept map setting was used for visual display, namely a 'concept cloud map' or a grey graphical network, that illustrates how concepts are interconnected. The grey 'concept cloud map' follows the same principle for the identification of theme importance by using warm colours for more important themes, compared to cooler colours for less significant concepts.
- The '% visible concept slider' underneath the map, automatically indicated the top 50% of concepts extracted from the interview schedules for Spinneys Dubai, however, the 'concept cloud map' setting converted it to 100% visibility.
- The next slider indicates the themes size was set to 35%, followed by an automated setting on the rotation slider at 0 degrees.
- The concept cloud map is 'heat-mapped' with the warm colours like red, yellow and orange representing the most significant themes, also displayed on the right as a 'report tab' in a hierarchical order.
- Lastly each colour represents a theme, dotted on the larger grey circles, with interconnected concepts dotted on smaller grey circles in close proximity (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:12)

Ten main themes have been identified, named and ranked from most significant to least significant as visually shown in Figure 11:

1. Spinneys (red): Spinneys, cyclists, Dubai and stakeholders
2. event (green): event, information, and responsible
3. support (green): support
4. community (orange): community, fitness, health, participate, and experience
5. media (blue/green): media
6. Spinneys Dubai (blue): Spinneys Dubai
7. village (pink and blue): village
8. engagement (grey and blue): engagement
9. sponsorship (purple and blue): sponsorship and brand

**Figure 11: Concept map of the Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency interview data**



One of the key objectives of the event is to grow the number of cyclists year on year, participating in the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, especially Dubai residents as well as international cyclists from around the world, and to emphasise Dubai landmarks as a prominent destination for sport and tourism. Dubai offers a unique infrastructure that is developed by the Dubai Government and which is also the first of its kind in the Gulf region, which includes a Cycle Park inside the city and an 85km Cycle Path Way on Al Kudra Road situated on the outskirts of the city.

There following are prominent stakeholders make the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event possible including:

- Spinneys Dubai - Title Sponsor as community food retailer
- ARN Radio Network - Title Sponsor with Dubai 92, which includes coverage on Dubai Eye, Virgin Radio and Al Rabiya Arabic radio station
- Sony Action Cam - 53km race
- Dubai Sports Council
- Events Security Committee
- Dubai Police

- UCI Gran Fondo World Series
- UAE Cycling Federation
- Bike retailer - Revolution Cycles
- Bike partner - BMC Switzerland
- Secure Bike Park
- Vehicles - Nissan
- Medical - Medi Clinic
- Community Volunteers

The second theme 'event' consist of on the following three concepts *event*, *information* and *responsible* which describe the nature of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event through the following information extracted from Leximancer:

- The event organiser requires to have a good relationship with the Dubai Police and Dubai Traffic Authority (RTA) to ensure all permits are obtained prior to the event and to support public safety on Dubai roads during the event
- The Dubai community enjoy events that are well organised and supported by information that is accurate, timely, ethical, responsible and communicated through appropriate platforms, especially on topics of health and fitness that can empower cyclists to make effective decisions to influence their performance and well-being
- The nature of the event is considered family friendly, which includes activities for the whole family to enjoy, including an opportunity to browse through the Spinneys Village for food and drinks to and support cyclists at the finish line
- Responsible and ethical event management includes maintaining a clean environment through waste disposal throughout the event and limiting the use of paper and non-degradable materials; and instead to use reusable Spinneys shopping bags for giveaways. Promoseven also supported a non-profit organisation in Lesotho namely Nala Creations to produce 2 000 medals made from recyclable materials for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event to empower and support the local community with jobs.

Chief Executive Office, Donal Kilalea believe that the event experience should be functional and that the cycling community enjoy the experience and sees it as an opportunity to socialise and said: *“The build-up rides allow all to take part. Furthermore, Spinneys have made an incredible commitment with the provision of food and drink post each event that led to very strong village atmosphere in all the build-up rides and the main one in December of each year. The Build-up rides are fundamental to the experience for they allow all to take part and grow in the sport and prepare for the challenge. Also, the event became a UCI Gran fondo event in 2016 which helps to create a stronger rationale for the more active cyclists. Continual communication with them from the event point of view and the build-up rides are important. Also planning on travel packages for tourists”.*

Donal Kilalea also elaborated on supporting Lesotho NGO Nala Creations, as well as Team Angel Wolf charity organisation and said: *“In 2016, we supported a charity in Lesotho by having the NGO make medals for our challenge. They were made from pampas grass and re-usable metal and manufactured by unemployed Lesotho nations in Maseru. The Spinneys Dubai 92 promoted the support of the NGO that produced the medals as well as providing free entries to such causes as Team Angel Wolf”.*

The third theme and concept namely ‘support’ refers to official sponsorship partners of the event and the following organisations were mentioned (additional names were extracted from multiple interviews producing a complete list below):

- Spinneys Dubai - Title Sponsor as community food retailer
- ARN Radio Network - Title Sponsor with Dubai 92, which includes coverage on Dubai Eye, Virgin Radio and Al Rabiya Arabic radio station
- Sony Action Cam - 53km race
- Dubai Sports Council
- Mohammed Bin Hamdan Community Sports Initiative
- Events Security Committee
- Dubai Police
- RTA (Road & Transport Authority)
- UCI Gran Fondo World Series
- UAE Cycling Federation

- Bike retailer - Revolution Cycles
- Bike partner - BMC Switzerland
- Secure Bike Park
- Vehicles - Nissan
- Medical - Medi Clinic
- Fitness – Fitness First Gym
- Print Media Partner – Esquire Men’s Magazine
- Indoor Training: Wahoo
- Suppliers – Up and Running
- Community Volunteers

It was also highlighted that the Dubai Government and cycling governing bodies such as the UAE Cycling Federation and UCI Gran fondo are essential partnerships to regulate event policies and practices by implementing, maintaining and enforcing local and international best practices to protect the reputation of the sport and to ensure that cycling develops and grow ethically and sustainably within the region.

The fourth theme ‘community’ consist of the following concepts namely *community*, *fitness*, *health*, *participate* and *experience*. The following information was extracted from and through the Leximancer algorithms:

- The local Emirati community is a key focus for the Dubai Sports Council, as well as the Mohammed Bin Hamdan Sport Authority, especially women and children who struggle with health issues related to obesity and diabetes. The Spinneys build-up rides and the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge is designed to encourage Emiratis to participate in family fitness and health events to break the cycle of unhealthy behaviour, obesity and diabetes by simply providing opportunities to participate.
- To support the community as much as possible, specific sponsors and event partners were selected that offer knowledge, products and services to contribute to their health, fitness and safety awareness; and to ensure that the sport of cycling continues to grow and develop into a sustainable event that will deliver results year on year.

- The community is engaged through online communication channels, including the website and social media channels about pre, during and post events to provide them with helpful information regarding up-coming events, or the results during and post events.
- Spinneys is a valuable partner for health and fitness, as the retailer not only provides the community with event opportunities to build their strength and fitness, but also encourages cyclists to eat healthy as well.

Communications Manager Jo Macadi Said: *“The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge offers different rides for all levels and ages. This includes, Junior Rides for children ages 7 to 17, and Kiddie Rides for children ages 2 to 6. Launched in 2014, the Junior Rides is an important legacy to encourage younger cyclists to participate in cycling as a sport. Two categories for the Junior Rides are: 7-11 years old, and 12-16 years old. The 7 to 11-year-old ride was a 15km circuit, completing loops on a 2.5km closed track. Those aged 12 to 16 years rode 30km on the same circuit, completing 12 loops on the 2.5km track. There are top 3 winners for both the 15km and 30km race, which makes it a rewarding experience and encourages these children to participate again. For adult beginners, the event offers the Sony Action Cam 53km Challenge to encourage more of the cycling community to participate. For the first time, the UCI Gran Fondo joined the Spinneys 92 Cycle Challenge. This event attracts international cyclists interested in competitive cycling with some of the top renowned amateur cyclists. International cyclists travelled to Dubai from around the world specifically for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. Groups of cyclists travelled from Europe, Japan, Asia, Africa and North America. With the addition of the Gran Fondo, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge weekend now sees an increased interest from international cyclists as well, not only from the local community”.*

The fifth, sixth and eighth theme produced similar results on coverage namely 'media' 'Spinneys Dubai' and 'engagement' which refers to the following methods of coverage received for the Spinneys Dubai cycling events:

- PR (public relations), which includes free radio mentions in the UAE, interviews, press releases in English and Arabic for print and online in publications covering sport, lifestyle, events and general news, as well as involving and inviting the media to events which resulted in free media coverage across the Gulf region worth over AED 2.2 million as a return on investment
- Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge website (English only), which includes press releases shared with the media in the 'News' section
- Social media channels including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube

Digital Manager, Lauren Dewhirsyt provided more insight on the communication platforms used and listed the following channels and platforms: "*Radio (Dubai 92), print and digital publications, instore, Spinneys Website, Cycle Challenge Dubai Website, Email and Social Media*".

Lauren also provided more insight on social media performance and said: "*In 2016, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge operated on the following social media channels: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram accounts. Our YouTube channel and Instagram stories were also introduced in 2016. For the first time, Instagram stories generated on average 180-200 views - as well as 'Facebook Live' video from the start of the race, finish and capturing the village atmosphere afterwards.*

**Facebook:** *The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge Facebook page attracted 6 197 likes. This is a 17% increase in likes compared to 2015. 74% male / 25% female. 42% of the likes were aged between 25-34, 28% 35-44, and 11% 18-24 years of age. The majority are based in Dubai, UAE. Throughout the main period of the campaign, 1 August until 16 December 2016, 257 posts were made to the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge page. All of these posts included photo and video content and reached over*

532 014 people. The most popular content included: Videos of Spinneys 92 village, the start line and cyclists performing tricks on a road bike, as well as the official photos from the final Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

**Twitter:** The twitter account @Spinneysdubai92 was used for the event with the hashtags #spinneys92. The account attracted 1 322 followers: 74% of the followers were male, with 26% female. Followers were predominantly English speaking. Over the period 1 August until 20 December 2016, 123 500 impressions were made, 689 links were clicked, 722 retweets and 491 likes with an engagement score of 9%.

**Instagram:** The @spinneysdubai92 Instagram account, which was launched in December 2013, now has 751 followers. This is a 103% increase in followers compared to 2015. Over the period 1 August until 16 December 2016, 101 posts were made, attracting 3 211 likes. The most popular content included winners on the podium, Al Qudra cycle track tree, start and finish line.

**YouTube:** The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge You Tube account, was launched in December 2016, and has almost 1 000 views for the first official film posted on it".

According to Jo Macadi, Communications Manager, email campaigns have also been used to communicate information to the community about the Spinneys Build-up rides and the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and said: "Throughout the main period of the campaign from 9 June to 20 December 2016, 25 E-Newsletters were issued to the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge database. Throughout the course of the campaign this achieved 122 842 opens and 3 034 links clicked.

Content included:

- Pre – event information
- Deadline information
- Highlighting key dates
- Late registration/registration open

*In addition to the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge newsletters, a weekly Cycle Safe Dubai newsletter was issued. This also included weekly content regarding the Spinney Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and Build-up ride information.”*

The seventh theme, ‘village’, refers to the ‘Spinneys Village’ with the purpose of bringing the community together to socialise pre, during and post events; offering a variety of activities for all ages to enjoy including food and drinks from Spinneys Dubai for breakfast (such as pancakes and omelettes for Spinneys Build-up rides and the main event in December). To align with the values of Spinneys Dubai, the event organiser, Promoseven, also committed to maintain a clean and safe environment for the community, by using mostly recyclable signage that is immediately removed post-event, to ensure that it does not pollute the environment. Promoseven also ensured that there are enough recycle bins in the Spinneys Village to encourage the community to support the Spinneys Dubai values and to contribute to recycling. Social media was also used for live real-time coverage through ‘Facebook Live’ and ‘Instagram Stories’ to broadcast the start and finish of each challenge; the event atmosphere; and social interactions of the community in the Spinneys Village; and to share with their following online to create further awareness and engagement.

The researcher discovered during the Promoseven interview with Donal Kalilea that there were indeed spinneysFood labelled products sampled by Spinneys Dubai and said: *“At the event Spinneys runs an activation called the Spinneys Eat Well, Live Well Village where participants and their families are invited to relax and enjoy some free spinneysFOOD samplings and some fun activities.”*

The last and ninth theme for Promoseven is ‘sponsorship’ consisting of two concepts namely *sponsorship* and *brand*, which refer to the benefits of being a title sponsor for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. The benefits of sport sponsorship include:

- The title sponsorship benefits the event organisers and the community, as their contribution make complete event management possible and as a return on investment receive brand advertisement and acknowledgement across various internal and external communication and branding platforms, which includes

hand-out leaflets in store and at weekly and monthly rides; print adverts in Cycle Middle East and Esquire Magazine; TV screen ads in Fitness First gyms; as well as event branding such as media walls, signage, trophies and sampling stations.

- Through sport sponsorship, it enables the event organisers to sustain the Spinneys Village after each event with food and drinks; activities for the children; stands for the supporters; facilities and services such as clean bathrooms, recycling, medical aid and product display; to buy cycling gear or conveniently benefit from services on the spot; as well as online advertisement and acknowledgement through social media, free media coverage (public relations) and both the Spinneys Dubai and Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge websites.

According to Donal Kilalea, Chief Executive Officer, the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Build-up rides and The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, benefited the community in the following ways: *“In 2009, the sport of cycling was a passive sport that did not attract high profile support. The Spinneys Dubai 92 was the catalyst to promote the sport and made it into a mainstream discipline. This has definitely led to:*

- 1. The implementation of cycle tracks across the Emirate of Dubai. None existed before that. Now, there are over 130 km of bike tracks and up to 1 000 cyclists on the tracks each weekend.*
- 2. Growth of bike retail outlets from 2-8*
- 3. Growth of cycling clubs now over 50 (1 in 2009)*
- 4. Logistical support from the Dubai Sports Council, and Dubai Police*
- 5. Double digit growth in the number of cyclists taking up the sport*
- 6. Junior cycling events*
- 7. The launch of the Dubai Tour, Abu Dhabi Tour*
- 8. The acknowledgment by other emirates of cycling as a sport for tourism. RAK Ride. Ride Ajman”.*

### **6.2.3 Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports and Marketing Agency interviews and themes combined**

Eight of the participants interviewed from Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing agency included the marketing and communication specialists for the Spinneys Build-up rides and The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, and were:

- Spinneys Dubai Marketing Manager, Duncan Woods: responsible for high-level strategic stakeholder management to protect the interests of the organisation and the health and safety of the community
- Spinneys Dubai Communications Manager, Colette Shannon: responsible for all external communications including public relations, as well as event management, with the support of Promoseven Sports Marketing agency
- Spinneys Dubai Marketing Coordinator, Karolina Tattera: responsible for event execution, including on-site branding and product sampling and distribution
- Spinneys Dubai In-store Marketing Manager, Shalini Monteiro: responsible for communicating information about the event to customers in store to create awareness and to encourage customers to live a healthy lifestyle through the 'Live Well, Eat Well' campaign
- Promoseven PR Manager, Jo Macadi: responsible for external communication management of the media
- Promoseven Digital Manager, Lauren Dewhirsyt: responsible for online content management through the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge website and social media pages
- Promoseven Signage Manager, Ghirish Dhanraj: responsible for producing signage, as well as the process of municipality approvals for outdoor branding
- Promoseven Event Coordinator, Alisa Davidson: responsible for any administrative related tasks to support event execution.

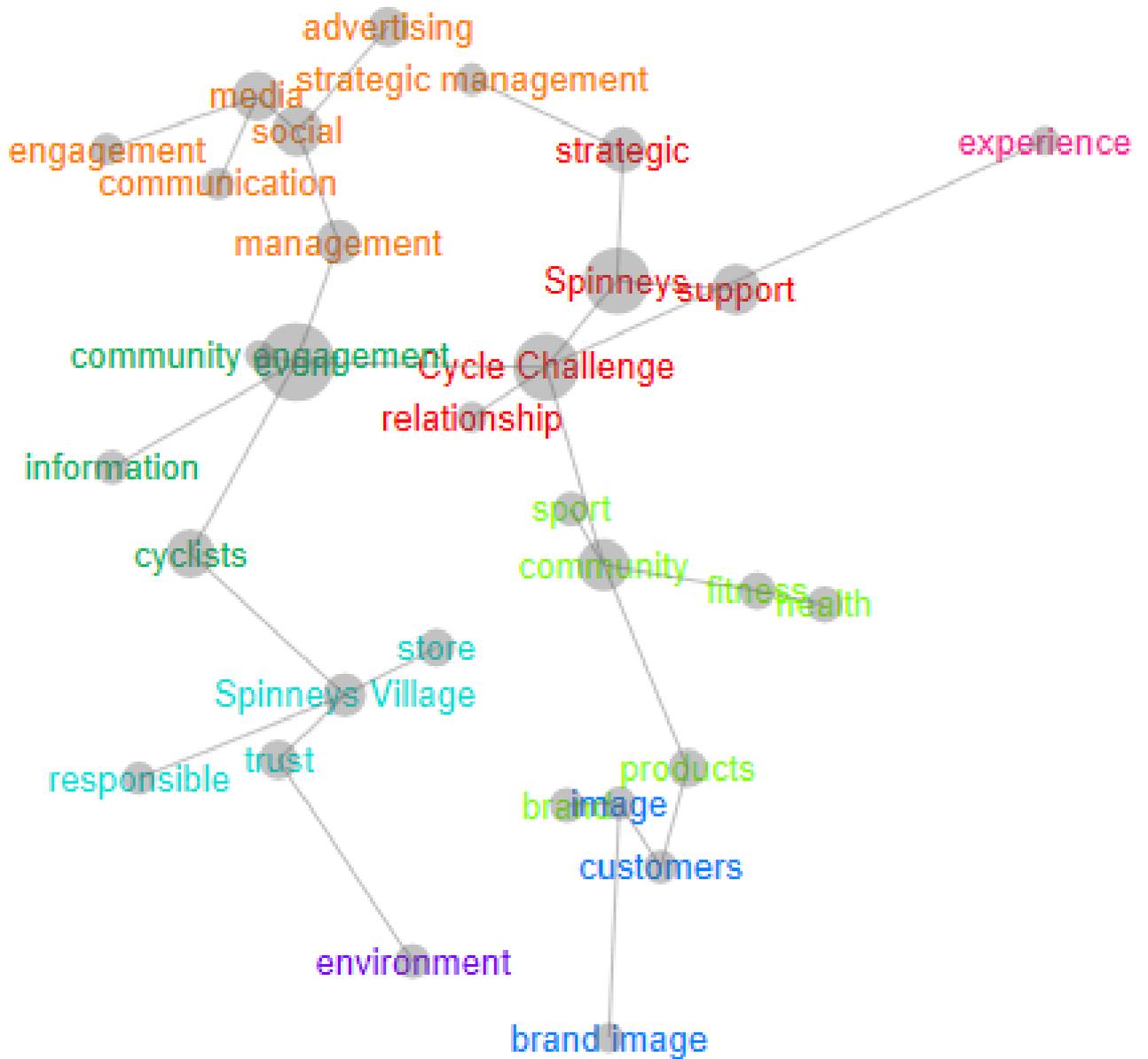
The researcher produced a concept map that can be visually interpreted as follows (Leximancer User Guide, 2017:11-12):

- The overall map is visually displayed in two parts; on the left is a display of concepts extracted from the interview schedules and how these concepts relate to each other; on the right is a display of the 'report tabs' that highlight the significance of the concepts in a hierarchical order
- A 'concept cloud map' was used to illustrate how concepts are interconnected, which follow the same principle for the identification of theme importance, by using warm colours for more important themes compared to cooler colours for less significant concepts
- The '% visible concept slider' was set at 100% for clear visibility on all extracted concepts; the themes size was set to 33%, on the rotation slider at 212 degrees
- The concept cloud map is 'heat-mapped' with the warm colours like red, yellow and orange representing the most significant themes, also displayed on the right as a 'report tab' in a hierarchical order
- Lastly, each colour represents a theme, dotted on the larger grey circles, with interconnected concepts dotted on smaller grey circles in close proximity.

Ten main themes have been identified, named and ranked from most significant to least significant, as visually shown in Figure 12:

1. cycle challenge (red): cycle challenge, Spinneys, support and strategic
2. event (green): event and cyclists
3. social (orange circle): social, media, management and advertising
4. Spinneys Village (blue): Spinneys Village, trust & store
5. community (green): community, products and fitness
6. environment (blue/purple): environment
7. customers (blue): customers
8. experience (blue/pink): experience

Figure 12: Enlarged concept map of the Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven marketing and communication interview data



Leximancer extracted the same information from the interview schedules, however combined and clustered the themes and concepts uniquely to show that the cycling events are strategically and holistically managed through the marketing and communication activities from both Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency.

Firstly, each cycle challenge is supported by strategic partners and sponsors, such as Spinneys Dubai, that expect a return on investment through external PR coverage, as well as brand awareness and advertisement. Secondly, each event is regulated through cycling governing bodies, to ensure that best international practices are followed and to ensure that the event organisers and participating cyclists act responsibly. Weekly Cycle Safe Dubai rides promote the well-being of cyclists, aimed at empowering the community with information on how to ride safely and to create awareness of the dangers of cycling. The Spinneys Village is essential for monthly Spinneys Build-up rides and The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, to provide cyclists and their supporters with food, refreshments and activities for the whole family to enjoy. The growth of the event year on year is essential to build cycling as a community sport, especially by increasing the number of participating children and teenagers. The events are used for health messaging like 'Eat Well. Live Well', through hints and tips, to ensure cyclists feel great and enjoy the event day.

Thirdly, the main communication channels used for advertisement is PR coverage through radio, online and print media, and social media. Fourthly, the purpose of the Spinneys Village is to bring the community together, engage with customers outside the store in a relaxed friendly environment and give Spinneys Dubai the opportunity to communicate brand values, sample products and share the health message 'Eat Well. Live Well'. The Spinneys Village activities included smoothie bikes (cycling until a fruit smoothie is blended and rewarded the cyclist for making their own health drink as a giveaway); kids area that includes a bouncy castle and cookie decorating, Dubai Sports Council and Dubai Tour stand, physio and sports messages; displays of new cycling products; a secure bike park to store and lock bikes while cyclists enjoy socialising the Spinneys Village.

Fifthly, the event is designed to target the community to improve their health and fitness through healthy food choices and regular exercise and to empower them to live a more active and healthy life style and to prevent health issues, such as obesity and diabetes, especially among the local Emiratis. As a corporate citizen, Spinneys Dubai empowers the community through their 'Live Well. Eat Well' campaigns while promoting themselves as a trusted food community retailer, which is a one-stop-shop concept for all your daily grocery needs. The community is also empowered by the weekly Dubai Cycle Safe events on the dangers of cycling, and how to take precautions to be safe on the roads; and regulating partners such as the Dubai Police, Dubai Sports Council and the UAE Cycle Federation ensure that the event organisers and sponsors follow their rules and regulations for health and safety to protect the community from harm and to give them the opportunity to enjoy cycling in a safe and stress-free environment. Lastly, the series of weekly and monthly rides is designed to give the community the opportunity to build on their fitness; empower them with knowledge on healthy eating; and develop skills and discipline on safety to be able to ride the main event, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, with confidence and to enjoy the experience; and to ultimately return to the sport the following year and help it to grow further.

Sixthly, the impact on the environment is supported by encouraging cyclists to use recycling bins at events; and it provides an opportunity for Spinneys Dubai to influence the community's behaviour and perception on recycling to save the planet. The event organiser also uses signage and branding that is recyclable, and which is immediately removed after the event, to ensure the environment is clean and free from any waste, again showing the community the values of both organisations. Lastly, the environment also refers to a safe and stress-free place to exercise and socialise to ensure cyclists can enjoy the experience and encourage others to join or participate as well.

Seventhly, building relationships with the community through sport sponsorship is a strategic decision by Spinneys Dubai to engage with customers on a regular basis, not only in-store (with over 1 000 customers per day), but also through outdoor cycling events to share core values and to encourage families to live healthier life styles, while promoting and sampling Spinneys products to drive commerciality.

Lastly, the event offers the community a unique experience that is functional and practical (utilitarian) from a safety perspective; rewarding and challenging (hedonic) where cyclists enjoy participating in cycling events throughout the year; and where they connect (social) with other cyclists and form friendships with like-minded people.

### **6.3 CONCLUSION**

After the interviews and Leximancer data analysis, the researcher identified that Spinneys Dubai does not have a holistic CSR strategy, nor do they report openly and transparently to their stakeholders about their activities and performance. However, they do use marketing and communication strategies to share their corporate values on ethical and sustainable product sourcing and generate, 'Live Well. Eat Well' campaign messaging through marketing and communication initiatives, recycling and sport sponsorship, to empower the community and to be recognised as a responsible corporate citizen and a trusted community retailer. The researcher observed weaknesses in their strategic approach and identified opportunities that can be explored (and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7) to strengthen their overall stakeholder engagement strategy (especially with the community and more specifically their customers) to justify a return on investment for their sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Build-up rides and The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency is at the heart of developing cycling as a sport in the UAE and is responsible for the holistic event management of the Spinneys Build-up rides and the main race, The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, which includes complete stakeholder management, as well as marketing, communication and public relations management. The researcher identified weaknesses and opportunities that will further be discussed in Chapter 7 to strengthen the event organiser's overall strategic approach to improve overall online communication and engagement; to increase the value of sport sponsorship; to grow the sport and the number of participants through effective community targeting; and to improve CSR reputation through long-term NGO's partnerships and consistent and transparent CSR reporting to all stakeholders involved.

The final Chapter will answer the primary and secondary research questions as well as offer strategic recommendations for both Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency to consider, to improve performance, as well as to provide insights for future research.

# **CHAPTER 7**

## **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, the results extracted from Leximancer were discussed, in this final Chapter of the study the researcher will answer the primary and secondary research questions, providing conclusions and recommendations for managerial implications for both Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency to consider for strategic business management and communication. Finally, the researcher will provide insights for future research studies that can be considered within a different environment and context to enhance strategic business performance through sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool.

### **7.2 DISCUSSIONS AND LINK TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Next, the researcher will outline the problem and purpose statement, with the aim of linking them to the research questions.

#### **7.2.1 Problem statement**

The owners and stakeholders of Spinneys Dubai expect its top management to be responsible for the strategic management of all CSR activities, including the sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. The organisation relies on their event partner Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency to directly communicate and engage with the community, limiting meaningful community development especially amongst Emirati women and children.

The purpose of sport sponsorship is to create brand awareness, to engage with the community more effectively and to ultimately grow the business through trust and loyalty. Therefore, as retailer, Spinneys Dubai needs to strategically engage with the community (as their stakeholder) more effectively, by using sport sponsorship as an engagement tool to increase customer loyalty. To be a title sponsor of a community or sporting event requires effective and strategic partnerships to contribute to the overall execution plan and to drive business objectives. These business objectives include driving corporate social performance and communicating with the community through various communication channels more effectively in a competitive retail market.

From a brand perspective, it is important to understand how Spinneys use sport sponsorship as an engagement tool to build new and to maintain existing stakeholder relationships, especially with the community, who are interested in living an active and healthy lifestyle; have the need to exercise in a safe and secure environment; and socialise to feel part of a group. The researcher will, therefore, further investigate how the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge can provide the community with a *utilitarian*, *social* and *hedonic* experience. Furthermore, it is essential for Spinneys Dubai to use strategic communication to encourage community participation and to motivate the community to change their behaviour and to choose an active and healthy lifestyle through sustainable sport initiatives such as the weekly Dubai Cycle Safe and monthly Spinneys Build-up rides, in order to prepare for the ultimate race in December, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

The researcher will, therefore, investigate and evaluate current marketing and communication business practices including branding, corporate social marketing, CSR communication and activities, social media and public relations and further explore how sport sponsorship can be used as a community engagement tool to provide Spinneys Dubai with more insights and recommendations.

**Table 18: Key concepts and constructs of the study**

<b>Sport Sponsorship</b>	<b>Community Engagement</b>	<b>Communication Management</b>
Strategic partners	CSR activities	CSR Communication
Brand Image	Community Relationships	Public Relations
Customer Loyalty	Social, Hedonic & Utilitarian Experience	Health, Fitness & Safety Awareness
Community Engagement Tool	Community Trust	Community Relations

### **7.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Based on the concepts and constructs identified in the research, the researcher formed a primary research question, followed by three secondary research questions, designed to obtain answers through the results presented in Chapter 6, in the form of interpretations and assumptions supported by theory, to support concluding arguments.

#### **7.3.1 Primary research question**

How can sport sponsorship be used as an effective community engagement tool for Spinneys Dubai?

Sport sponsorship can be used as an effective community engagement tool for Spinneys Dubai by establishing and maintaining effective strategic partnerships and communication that is essential to support and engage with all stakeholders involved. Providing event support through sport sponsorship is based on an agreement and understanding between the event owner, Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency, and Spinneys Dubai. Each organisation’s roles and responsibilities outline how they

contribute to the event and highlight the values and goals they share to achieve results that will benefit all stakeholders involved.

The continuous sport sponsorship of The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge helped to develop cycling as a sport in the UAE by, among others, convincing the Dubai Government that there is a need within the community to exercise in a safe and stress-free environment. Since 2010, Dubai has seen a substantial growth in the number of cycling clubs, retail outlets, and various national and international cycling events contributing to the economy. The number of participants has also increased from 450 in 2010 to 2 000 in 2017, resulting in more people leading active and healthy lifestyles in the UAE.

Building relationships with the community through sport sponsorship is a strategic decision by Spinneys Dubai, to engage with customers on a regular basis, not only instore (with over 100 000 customers per day), but also through outdoor cycling events, to share their core values and encourage families to live healthier lifestyles while promoting and sampling Spinneys products to drive commerciality. The growth of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge year on year, is also essential to build cycling as a community sport, especially by increasing the number of participating children and teenagers, to strengthen community engagement and to increase the value of sport sponsorship over the long-term.

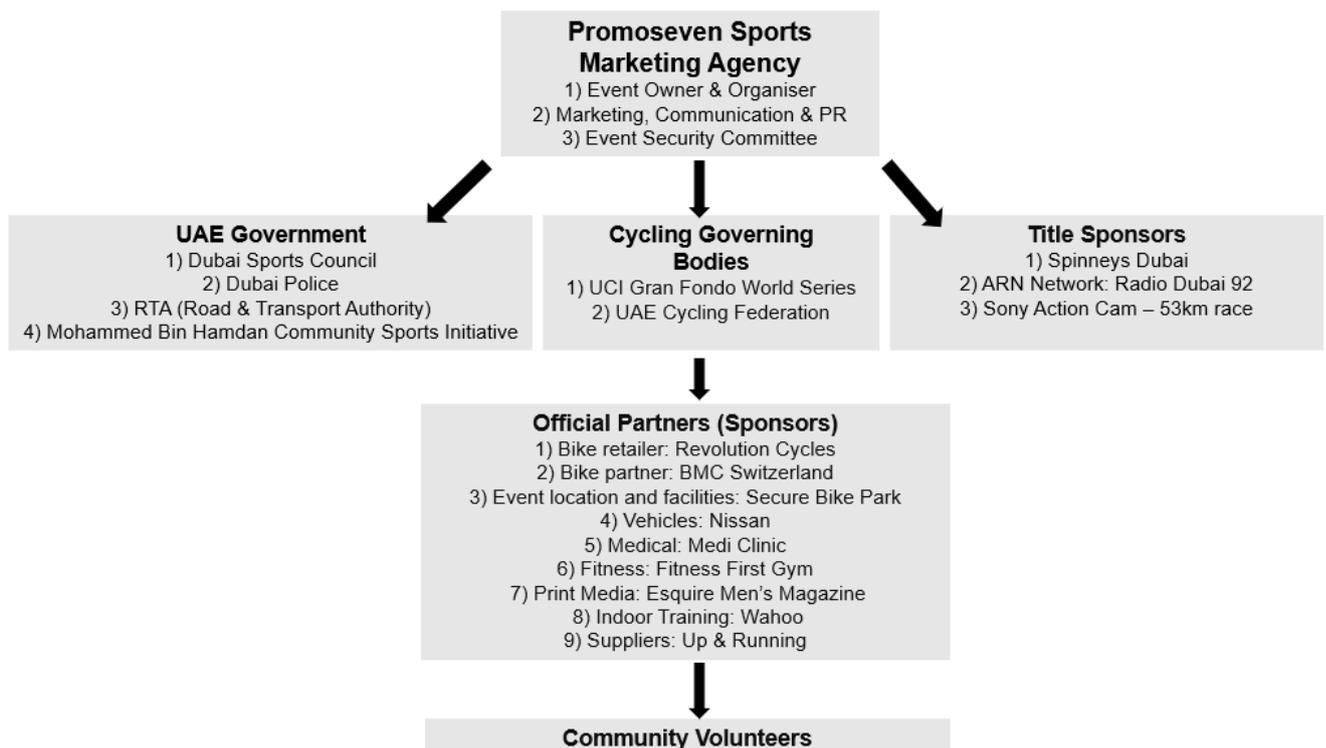
The title sponsorship of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge is considered as an effective and commercially sound community engagement tool to build on the brand's image; to establish relationships with strategic partners; and to drive customer loyalty with the support from other sponsors, such as the official vehicle and healthcare partners. Partnerships can be formed through various event needs, including: to provide opportunities for community empowerment and sustainable development; sport sponsorship investment; services that include supplies, time and specialised expertise; community volunteering to assist with event management; as well as the regulation of policies and procedures to secure health and safety. Valuable partnerships and stakeholders for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge include: title sponsors, community, media, government, national and international cycling regulators, venue and facilities, medical services, cycling partners that supply cycling

gear and services, motor vehicles to support cyclists on the road and, lastly, community volunteers to provide support on the event day at various activity stations.

The level of support from strategic event partners for sport sponsorship varies in commercial value, especially for title sponsors Spinneys Dubai and Radio Dubai 92, as they are considered more valuable as sport sponsors (Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge) due to their investment, as well as the brand awareness and PR coverage they receive in comparison with other sponsors.

Figure 13 illustrates the level of importance the event organiser, Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, places on each stakeholder group, highlighting that stakeholder relationships with the UAE Government, national and international cycling governing bodies, as well as the title sponsors are equally important, followed by the official partners (sponsors) and community volunteers to secure effective, responsible and ethical community engagement.

**Figure 13: Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge strategic partners and sponsors to secure effective, responsible and ethical event management**



**Communication management:** Pre-, during and post-event communication is essential for building relationships, community trust and awareness. Marketing, communication and public relations are managed by Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, also the event owner, organiser and promoter for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. This is done through communication channels, such as the official website and social media pages, as well as traditional media. This is significant for this study, as Spinneys Dubai trusts Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency to communicate directly with all stakeholders involved and to represent the brand values ethically and responsibly.

**Brand management:** As a title sponsor, Spinneys Dubai enjoys prominent branding on all communication platforms, including cycling events, designed to build a positive brand image and reputation among the retailer's most valuable stakeholders; and giving the community the opportunity to engage with the brand in a more meaningful way. Furthermore, The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle challenge gives Spinneys Dubai the opportunity to engage the community with their brand values on the environment, which is also part of being a good corporate citizen.

Spinneys Dubai wants to reduce the impact on the environment by encouraging cyclists to use recycling bins at each event; and accordingly, to influence the community's behaviour and perceptions of recycling, to help save the planet. The event organiser also uses signage and branding that is recyclable, and is immediately removed after the event, to ensure that the environment is clean and free from any waste, again showing the community the values both Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency share. Lastly, the environment is also referred to as a safe, secure and stress-free platform to exercise and socialise in, to ensure that cyclists can enjoy the experience and to encourage others to join or participate as well.

**Event management:** The purpose of the Spinneys Village is to bring the community together at Spinneys Build-up rides and the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge; to engage with customers outside the store in a relaxed friendly environment; and to give Spinneys Dubai the opportunity to communicate brand values, sample products and

promote their health message 'Eat Well. Live Well'. The latter shares hints and tips on what to eat and drink to ensure cyclists feel great and enjoy the event day.

Ethical and responsible event management is essential to ensure long-term sustainability; therefore, each cycle challenge is regulated through cycling governing bodies to ensure that best international practices are followed, and the event organisers and participants act responsibly. Therefore, the event organisers need to ensure that the community experiences a safe, secure and relaxed event environment, not only for cyclists on the roads, but also in the 'Spinneys Village' that offers various planned activities suitable for all ages, including children.

Part of effective event management is to offer the community a unique experience that is functional and practical (utilitarian) from a safety perspective; is rewarding and challenging (hedonic), where cyclists enjoy participating in cycling events throughout the year; and where they can connect (social) with other cyclists and form friendships with like-minded people. This will keep the community interested and engaged.

**Community development and empowerment:** Weekly 'Cycle Safe Dubai' rides promote the well-being of cyclists and are aimed at engaging and empowering the community on how to ride safely, and they create awareness of the dangers of road cycling. This practically illustrates how sport sponsorship can engage with the community in a meaningful way and how it can add value to their daily lives. The Build-up rides are also designed to encourage the community from all fitness levels to participate and build on their strength for the main race in December, providing cyclists with a sustainable and achievable fitness plan to improve their health.

It can be argued that Spinneys Dubai can enhance their community engagement strategy by including the following activities:

- Integrate 'sport CSR' into the overall business strategy to create long-term value for all stakeholders involved, including the owner of Spinneys Dubai, by showing how the sport sponsorship of The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge can deliver a commercial return on investment; increase sales and customer

loyalty; and create new CSR partnerships. Retailers such as Carrefour and Pick and Pay engage all their stakeholders through formal CSR reporting, which can be considered by Spinneys Dubai, as The Spinneys Dubai 92 Challenge event, and cycling in general, grows as a popular sport in the region.

- Community development and empowerment strategies and CSR activities can go beyond the title sponsorship of The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. Spinneys Dubai can get actively involved in facilitating the community development process during each of the implementation, feedback, results and continuous evaluation phases, through community awareness, participation and empowerment to motivate behavioural change. Decreasing obesity and diabetes, especially among Emirati women and children, is a priority for the UAE Government and can be considered as a priority for Spinneys Dubai. Another priority can be to help change their health behaviour through effective community engagement programmes as suggested by the World Health Organisation. Spinneys Dubai can also empower women in general, as well as the disabled, to align with the UCI's objectives to grow cycling as a sport in the region and to encourage inclusivity.

### **7.3.2 SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Next, the researcher will answer the three secondary research questions.

#### **7.3.2.1 Research question 1:**

How can Spinneys Dubai strategically use sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool to build a positive brand image and grow customer loyalty?

Spinneys Dubai chooses not to invest in customer loyalty programmes, neither do they measure or report on the return on investment of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. As a result, the commerciality of the sport sponsorship is brought into question by the Fresh Food Commercial Manager, Charl Holtzhausen, as customer

loyalty is not formally measured and reported on, to illustrate a return on investment. Furthermore, Charl is not convinced that the marketing department is doing enough to engage the community through sport sponsorship effectively to drive instore footfall and sales. It is also observed that the organisation is equally determined to promote products as a return on investment; and to drive messaging through communication touchpoints to encourage the community to live a healthy lifestyle.

Spinneys Dubai invested in the title sport sponsorship of the Spinneys Build-up rides and The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge to engage with the community through in-store marketing, online digital and social media activities, public relations and events. Spinneys Dubai engages with the community outside the store with sponsored cycling challenges and event branding, product sampling and messaging through their 'Live Well, Eat Well' campaign, as well as their sustainable sourcing messages to encourage families to live a healthy lifestyle and to build a positive brand image and gain community trust as a fresh food retailer.

It can be argued that Spinneys Dubai cares about the well-being of the community and that the sport sponsorship of the event is more than a simple return on investment transaction, and instead an opportunity to give back to the community out of good will with the objective to build and maintain good relationships by being a responsible corporate citizen. It can also be argued that senior management appreciate the value of community empowerment and engagement through CSR activities, however, choose deliberately not to invest in CSR reporting to communicate the results of their activities to all stakeholders involved. This is a missed opportunity, which could, if implemented, further develop community trust and relationship building, especially among its own employees.

Effective 'CSR sport' results in a 'halo-effect' delivering a desirable outcome for all stakeholders involved, especially for sport sponsors such as Spinneys Dubai. The positive outcomes are: 1) brand awareness; 2) enhanced brand and corporate image; 3) brand loyalty; and 4) footfall and sales that lead to gained market share. When the CSR strategy is designed to address and offer long-term sustainable solutions to public health issues, Spinneys Dubai extends the impact of the 'halo-effect' to other community engagement benefits, including: 5) mass media PR coverage; 6) stronger

appeal to the youth; 7) positive change in health and lifestyle behaviour; 8) employee engagement and participation; 9) CSR awareness; 10) instant brand satisfaction and positive association; and 11) positive brand perception and reputation (Sung & Lee, 2016:58). 'CSR sport' is also considered as an organic advertising approach that provides Spinneys Dubai with the opportunity as a corporate citizen to build and strengthen relationships over time, while enhancing its corporate image and reputation subconsciously in the minds of all stakeholders involved (Sung & Lee, 2016:60).

Brand loyalty can only be achieved through 'CSR sport' if Spinneys Dubai provides the community with meaningful life experiences that they can enjoy through active and regular participation and socialising. Positive brand experiences will encourage the community to share their experience with their friends and family through word-of-mouth or social media, generating advocates for the sport and the brand simultaneously, resulting in customer loyalty and a direct return on investment if measured and formally reported on by Spinneys Dubai (Sung & Lee, 2016:60). To increase customer loyalty year on year, Spinneys Dubai needs to increase the number of active participants, as these people are more prone to be brand loyal, compared to nonparticipants, and therefore, consistent and effective CSR communication is required to engage with the community over a period of time (Sung & Lee, 2016:70).

As a priority to gain customer loyalty, Spinneys Dubai can provide excellent customer service to differentiate itself from its competitors (Heding *et al.* 2009:197). According to the King Report (2002:4), CSR activities, such as The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, can influence stakeholder perceptions that lead to a positive organisational reputation, as well as long-term business sustainability. Long-term sustainability is the result of excellent brand reviews obtained through customer loyalty and trust, however, only when equal attention is given to all stakeholders involved, which is an important point for Spinneys Dubai to consider (Baker, 1995).

Brand community management is a strategic approach to successfully manage CSR activities; and to engage the community effectively by creating brand ambassadors that are not only loyal, but also willing to share constructive feedback to improve the overall brand experience to promote sustainability (Heding *et al.* 2009:197). If Spinneys Dubai manages brand loyalty effectively through its CSR activities, brand

loyalty can spill over to the corporate brand, creating value for all stakeholders involved. However, when managed irresponsibly, activists can damage its brand image and reputation to the point of UAE authorities and cycling federations stepping in to resolve unethical or poorly managed activities (Heding *et al.* 2009:197).

To secure a positive brand image and grow customer loyalty through effective brand community management Spinneys Dubai can consider the following two strategies to improve its brand image and grow customer loyalty (Heding *et al.*, 2009:197):

1. Community observation: Insights can be gained from Spinneys Dubai customers or Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge participants through cycling events, in-store purchase behaviour, online social media consumer engagement. These findings can be strategically applied to the future business strategy and CSR communication of Spinneys Dubai (Heding *et al.*, 2009:197). More than community observing, Spinneys Dubai can build organic and genuine relationships with cyclists without making them feel obligated to support Spinneys Dubai as a retailer – freedom of choice should be given to participants and if they make the decision by themselves the result is trust, long-term relationships and brand loyalty (Heding *et al.*, 2009:198).
2. Community facilitating: More than a title sponsor, Spinneys Dubai can be actively involved in the process of developing and empowering the local community as an effective engagement and customer retention tool to gain a positive brand image among all members of society and to ultimately grow long-term brand loyalty (Heding *et al.*, 2009:199). Another benefit of direct involvement is that it enables Spinneys Dubai to target existing community members (who are already loyal to the brand) with CSR messaging, as they will be more acceptable and willing to change their behaviour because of the trust factor (Heding *et al.*, 2009:199). Instead of focussing on promoting products at cycling events, the focus can be on providing the community with a positive brand experience that will add more meaning to their lives (Heding *et al.*, 2009:200).

The following brand community engagement guidelines can be implemented (Heding *et al.*, 2009:200):

- 1) Encourage the community to make their own decisions in terms of brand meaning and equity. Avoid ignoring customer feedback; make sure to listen to customers and adapt strategies to retain brand loyalty and trust.
- 2) Provide opportunities for customer feedback to maintain customer trust and loyalty. Avoid customer involvement in purchase agreements and product sales during cycling events and rather focus on ways to enhance the social experience.
- 3) Actively facilitate the customer experience and manage relationships to build a strong corporate reputation. Avoid ignoring competitor activities; instead be aware of competitor brand community activities and implement outperforming strategies.
- 4) Use a customer engagement and retention strategy to build long-term brand communities for all stakeholders involved. Avoid recruiting new shoppers at cycling events and instead focus on empowering the community.

A second strategy that Spinneys Dubai can use to grow customer loyalty is the 'cultural approach' that is designed to give Spinneys Dubai retail 'icon status' through its CSR activities, fuelled by their desire to live a healthy and active lifestyle (Heding *et al.*, 2009:228). The 'cultural approach' enables Spinneys Dubai to develop a strong reputation and brand image as fresh food community retailer and influences stakeholders through 'CSR sport' and through partnerships that create long-term value for all stakeholders involved (Heding *et al.*, 2009:229).

Identifying cultural trends such as limiting environmental impact and living a healthy and active lifestyle as a fight against obesity and diabetes, can be championed by Spinneys Dubai to motivate behavioural change (Heding *et al.*, 2009:230). Other benefits of championing cultural trends are 1) Spinneys Dubai can be considered or perceived as a relevant brand and more emotionally appealing brand compared to competitors; 2) achieve iconic status if CSR communication is channelled through multiple customer touchpoints; 3) enhanced brand image, reputation and customer loyalty (Heding *et al.*, 2009:231).

Spinneys Dubai should use the following guideline to effectively engage with the community through the cultural approach (Heding *et al.*, 2009:231):

1. Be aware of external stakeholders and how they influence community perception and behaviour. Avoid focussing on specific stakeholders; the cultural approach should be targeting all stakeholders simultaneously.
2. Be open to new cultural trends and be willing to respond to feedback to stay relevant. Avoid ignoring feedback from stakeholders and instead implement long-term and proactive sustainable CSR activities.
3. Do research and consider new ideas to change and improve business performance. Avoid ignoring political, social and ideological changes.
4. Be mindful that Spinneys Dubai needs to evolve as a brand and avoid developing strategies that are based competitor activities.
5. Be culturally proactive and on trend by using brand management strategies to change consumer behaviour.

The final brand management strategy that Spinneys Dubai can use to build a positive brand image and grow customer loyalty, by using the following 'four brand management paradigms' (Heding *et al.*, 2009:240-252):

1. Product paradigm: tactical decisions based on the marketing mix to drive sales
2. Projective paradigm: use Spinneys Dubai's corporate identity to focus its efforts on a strategic level where meaning is established within the corporate culture and leadership of the organisation
3. Adaptive paradigm: Spinneys Dubai can use its corporate culture and CSR activities to establish a positive brand image in the minds of consumers from a diverse background based on its corporate reputation
4. Relational paradigm: Spinneys Dubai can use their existing customer relationships to build strong brand equity and gain market share through meaningful brand experiences, by giving customers and participants the opportunity to provide feedback and integrating it into the overall business strategy to create a win-win solution for all stakeholders involved.

To conclude, Spinneys Dubai does not formally measure customer loyalty, however, its organic approach through 'CSR sport' naturally supports its strategy to build a brand image and drive customer loyalty. This can be interpreted as a strong strategic approach; however, customer loyalty can also be strengthened through effective brand community management and CSR reporting that include information on customer loyalty performance.

### 7.3.2.2 Research question 2

How does Spinneys Dubai offer *social*, *hedonic* and *utilitarian* experiences through their CSR activities to engage, build relationships and trust within the community they operate?

To determine how effective Spinneys Dubai engages with the community, especially during cycling events, social, hedonic and utilitarian experiences are used as a measuring tool (Hsu & Huang, 2011:75). The majority of UAE residents are expats which is an opportunity for Spinneys Dubai to bring the community together (regardless of age, gender, nationality, cultural and religious beliefs) through cycling events, where people can associate with like-minded people, feel part of a group and form new friendships. Spinneys Dubai's 'CSR sport' activities can engage, build relationships and build trust through the following three experiences (Hsu *et.al*, 2012:75):

1. **Utilitarian:** This experience refers to functional or practical benefits that make it possible for participants to train in a safe, stress-free environment along with other cyclists to achieve their health and fitness goals
2. **Social:** This experience refers to the interpersonal need of a participant to interact and connect with other cyclists and form friendships
3. **Hedonic:** This experience refers how much the cyclists enjoy participating in each event and the ability of Spinneys Dubai to keep the community continuously engaged throughout the year, from weekly rides, monthly Build-up rides to the main race in December, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

The social theory states that individuals have the need to feel part of a group and to differentiate themselves; accordingly, they adapt their behaviours to meet the group members' expectations and conform to the behaviour of the group. To successfully engage, build relationships and build trust, a cycling community needs to be established with a clear shift from consumption or service related experiences (Spinneys stores), to community-based experiences (Spinneys Village), where people can come together and influence friends and family to join and participate in the Build-up rides and the main race in December (Hsu & Huang, 2011:74).

Community-based experiences can be based on empowerment and social development, and therefore, Spinneys Dubai can focus on including the following activities into their community engagement strategy (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008:288):

1. Motivate the community by creating the desire from within to change one's own behaviour
2. Engage the community with two-way and meaningful conversations, giving them the opportunity to share feedback
3. Actively participate in community cycling events and lead by example to build relationships and trust
4. Identify community issues that prevent people from participating and leading healthy and active lifestyles, and find appropriate solutions to address community concerns
5. Encourage and empower the community to make their own decisions based on their needs, shared responsibility and availability of resources. Strive to achieve equity among all community members, especially Emirati women and children, to empower individuals to have the capacity to identify problems and solutions and to build self-confidence through active participation.

Spinneys Dubai is the title sport sponsor of the event, and without their financial support, the event owners would not be able to sustainably host the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge every year. Strategic partnerships are required to sustain each cycling event financially and physically, including: 1) title sponsors, preferably a strong community food retailer such as Spinneys Dubai and media partner such as Radio 92; 2) the support of government (Dubai Police and RTA), national and international

cycling regulators; 3) venue and facilities; 4) medical services; 5) cycling partners that supply cycling gear and services; 6) motor vehicles to support cyclists on the road, and lastly; 7) community volunteers to provide support on the event day, contributing to the overall standard and holistic experience of the event.

The value of Spinneys Dubai sponsored cycling events goes beyond health and fitness and serves as an opportunity for the retailer to engage with the community through CSR activities to build long-term relationships and brand trust. The main event, The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, cannot succeed without the series of build-up rides (events), from August to November, to give cyclists the opportunity to gradually build on their fitness and strength in a more sustainable and healthy way before participating in the main race in December. The standard of event management for every Build-up ride (event) is just as important as the main race, as this will indicate to the event organisers the expected number of participants by the end of the year, making sure cycling develops sustainably as a sport within the same community. Both local and international, from amateur to professional cyclists, are targeted to participate in the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle to ensure that the number of participants grow year on year to support sustainable growth and to provide results for all stakeholders involved.

The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge event provides the community with valuable life experiences, such as socialising and cycling with like-minded people, to form connections and friendships through engaging, fun and challenging events throughout the year in a safe, stress-free environment to achieve their health and fitness goals.

The community's perception of the overall presentation, infrastructure and quality of the event is critical for its future growth; and to ensure that they are comfortable and enjoy spending time in the Spinneys Village, socialising and participating in the various activities.

The Spinneys Village includes activities such as smoothie bikes (cycling until a fruit smoothie is blended and the cyclist is rewarded for making his/her own health drink as a giveaway); kids area that includes a bouncy castle and cookie decorating; Dubai sports Council and Dubai Tour stand to attract professional cyclists, physio and sports

massages; displays of new cycling products; and a secure bike park to store and lock bikes while cyclists enjoy socialising and sampling food and drinks from the Spinneys Dubai in store range.

Health and safety in a relaxed and stress-free environment are essential qualities for any sporting event to produce positive experiences for the participants and to be recognised as a responsible event organiser from a CSR perspective. To ensure public safety, the Dubai Government needs to be an active partner in regulating each event to prevent any serious incidents from occurring and to maintain public trust. Partnering with the Dubai Government not only facilitates a safe and secure environment, it also helps to grow a community culture of active sport participation to improve overall community health and fitness as a fight against obesity and diabetes. This gives Spinneys Dubai the opportunity to align with the government's objectives to empower and sustain the local community, as well as to create a national and international reputation for being a destination for sporting events such as cycling. Since 2016, the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge has also become an official UCI Gran Fondo qualifying event for professional cyclists, which means that ethical and responsible event management is even more critical to maintain the trust of the community; and critical for cyclists to enjoy the experience and to add value to their lives in a meaningful way.

As part of the overall brand experience, Spinneys Dubai uses each cycling event to highlight its CSR activities to the community in the following ways:

- From a sustainable business management perspective, Spinneys Dubai focuses on ethical and responsible product sourcing and educates the community on its clean label products to promote sales. To encourage the community to try new products, Spinneys Dubai invests in sampling activities as part of the 'Spinneys Village' experience to create awareness about its food offering. This gives Spinneys Dubai the opportunity to introduce new and healthy products to the community, which they can include in their diet, and accordingly drives footfall to stores as a return on investment and sustain the retailer as a responsible corporate citizen.

- Spinneys Dubai's brand communication is designed to empower the community through its brand values and campaign messaging, as well as through offering products instore to sustain a healthier, everyday lifestyle.
- The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge is a form of brand identity, providing the organisation with opportunities for community engagement, relationship building and empowerment; and to promote and develop cycling as a growing and sustainable sport in the UAE.
- Responsible and ethical consideration for the environment forms part of the Spinneys Dubai values through waste management and using biodegradable shopping bags; and accordingly influences the community to think about how they impact the environment as consumers.
- Supporting a worthy cause such as 'Team Angel Wolf' to participate for free, illustrates strong brand values to the community. However, this is also a missed PR opportunity, as this was not communicated on any formal platforms and was only highlighted during the interview with Promoseven. Furthermore, Promoseven worked with NGO, Nala Creations, in 2016 only, to produce medals from re-usable materials where they supported a Lesotho community in need of economic and social development. Strategically, this a missed opportunity to communicate to stakeholders about Spinneys Dubai's CSR activities and to further develop sustainable opportunities to build community relationships and trust from a 'goodwill' perspective through CSR reporting.

Community-based experiences should not only be functional (utilitarian), social and enjoyable (hedonic), but should also be rewarding, such as giving the community the opportunity to improve their health and fitness in a safe and stress-free environment that is sustainable and achievable, to build brand trust, loyalty and positive equity (Hsu *et.al*, 2012:75). This rewarding community experience can motivate the community to invest their time and money in the brand, ultimately leading to repeat purchases and growth, helping Spinneys Dubai to gain valuable market share (Hsu *et.al*, 2012:73).

For Spinneys Dubai to change and improve behaviour to prevent health issues, 'CSR sport' communication can include the following steps as part of the organisation's community engagement cohesive strategy (Lavery *et al.* 2010:280-182):

1. 'Rigorous site-selection procedures': Purposely target specific community groups, including Emirati women, children and the disabled, and determine their physical capability to actively participate, and accordingly find solutions to integrate them into the group, without compromising the image and reputation of the brand.
2. 'Early initiation of community engagement activities': Plan in advance and inform event partners what support and actions are required for successful event management; and inform the community in advance through appropriate communication channels to give them enough time to prepare and build on their fitness and strength.
3. 'Characterise and build knowledge of the community, its diversity, and its changing needs': constantly scan the environment and anticipate community needs, as well as the interests of other stakeholder groups, to ensure that they continue to actively participate in cycling and continue to enjoy the benefits of the experience.
4. 'Ensure the purpose and goals of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge is clear to the community': it is important to keep the community engaged through each stage of the process through timely, consistent and clear CSR communication that is facilitated as a two-way conversation, encouraging the community to provide feedback or ask questions to support them on their health and fitness journey.
5. 'Provide information': It is important to provide clear, accurate and consistent information prior to each cycling event and to allow participants or partners enough time to consider participation and collaboration.
6. 'Establish relationships and commitments to build trust with relevant authorities in the community: To manage public health and safety and ensure the event is organised ethically and legally, the event organisers need to engage with the Dubai Police and RTA (Road Transport Authority) in advance to establish and secure community trust.
7. 'Understand community perceptions and attitudes about the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge': During this phase of the process, it is important that the community genuinely believes that Spinneys Dubai is sponsoring The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge for the right reasons and not just for commercial gain. To show their long-term commitment and maintain community trust Spinneys

Dubai needs to gain feedback and insights from participants, about their attitudes and experiences across various demographics, such as nationality, gender and age, to identify gaps and effective solutions to increase active community participation.

8. "Identify, mobilize, and develop relevant community assets and capacity": It is important to critically evaluate CSR performance and to determine if Spinneys Dubai has the internal skills and capabilities to strategically develop the confidence, skills and active participation of various community groups, including Emirati women, children, the disabled and the less fortunate.
9. 'Maximize opportunities, participation and shared control by the community': To strengthen community engagement (especially when the organisation needs to reach out to unidentified pockets of the broader community) Spinneys Dubai and the event organiser can partner with specialised partners such as NGO's that are highly trained and experienced to reach out and engage with specific community groups more effectively.
10. 'Ensure adequate opportunities and respect for dissenting opinions': the event organiser needs to be culturally sensitive, especially towards families who believe that their region or family authority will not allow them to participate in cycling; and instead think of other ways to engage these communities with the Spinneys Dubai brand.
11. 'Secure permission or authorisation from the community': To ensure that true community empowerment prevails, Spinneys Dubai needs to determine 'community-defined criteria' (which pockets of the community they want to target) and ensure all participants give their voluntary consent; and work closely with their event partners and community leaders to build a cohesive 'CSR sport' communication and marketing strategy that is sustainable and ethically sound.
12. 'Review, evaluate and if necessary, modify engagement strategies': In the final stage of the process, Spinneys Dubai can evaluate if the community experience was indeed rewarding, and accordingly report on CSR performance. This can be done by giving the community the opportunity to provide feedback; and for Spinneys Dubai to gain insights and determine if strategies need to be modified or changed to improve future community engagement, experience and participation growth.

Spinneys Dubai can offer social, hedonic and utilitarian experiences to the existing participants as discovered through the interview schedules. However, the researcher has determined that Spinneys Dubai relies heavily on the event organiser, Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency, to drive CSR activities, instead of driving it more effectively themselves from a brand management and CSR communication perspective. To truly help the community change their behaviour, will require Spinneys Dubai to participate in CSR activities beyond title sponsorship and to get actively involved in the process of social development and community empowerment that deliver not only utilitarian, hedonic and social experiences, but also rewarding sustainable experiences.

Spinneys Dubai can focus on their transformational engagement strategy to deepen the level of community engagement and co-create green innovations through long-term partnerships that are equally responsive throughout the process. It is important that Spinneys Dubai work with like-minded partners that can take co-responsibility and create both social and economical value for all stakeholders involved, especially the community.

To deepen community engagement, especially among unidentified pockets of society such as Emirati women and children, disabled and the less fortunate, Spinneys Dubai can partner with NGO's and community leaders who are specialised and experienced to support Spinneys Dubai in the process. Lastly, CSR reporting is important to engage the community; to gain feedback and evaluate performance; and to make improvements for future CSR activities to further deepen community engagement, relationships and trust within the community that Spinneys Dubai operates in.

### 7.3.2.3 Research questions 3

How does Spinneys Dubai use CSR communication and public relations to strategically communicate with the community when creating community health, fitness and safety awareness?

Organisational CSR activities that are genuine, established and integrated into business practices, without 'greenwashing' corporate social responsibilities, can use CSR communication to effectively engage with stakeholders (CSR Pulse, 2018).

To ensure that Spinneys Dubai develop their CSR communication strategy more effectively the following principles can be incorporated: 1) keep messaging factual and low-key, not promotional; 2) results can be shared through CSR reporting and can include information about the beneficiaries to promote transparency, build relational resource and commitment; 3) CSR activities is advised to be performed consistently long-term through commitments and performance evaluations each year to support sustainable growth; 4) to avoid public scepticism, CEOs and spokespersons should refrain from speaking publicly about CSR activities; and 5) finally it is advised to use strategic CSR communication channels such as in-store, corporate and event websites, and PR, to build brand trust, image and a strong corporate reputation to motivate community participation and behaviour change (Kim & Ferguson, 2014:12).

Effective CSR communication strategically targets gender and age groups. Women are more sensitive towards CSR messaging, tone, and the level of transparency and consistency, compared to men; younger (18-24) and older (over 65) audiences are more susceptible and naturally interested in CSR messaging, compared to people between the ages of 25 and 44 years old, and are more prone to be sceptical over the age 45. To avoid scepticism, Spinneys Dubai can use CSR communication channels including television, radio, print and online media to engage with the community, especially women and people between the ages of 25 and 44 years old (Kim & Ferguson, 2014:17).

Spinneys Dubai can also consider public relations (PR), as it is a cost-effective and instant communication channel to help the organisation to create community health, fitness and safety awareness, and more importantly help to motivate community behaviour to change, by using credible and engaging publications or media (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:208; CSR Pulse, 2018).

Effective PR is “*designed to improve, maintain or protect*” the Spinneys Dubai brand, image and reputation; therefore, it should only be used as a CSR communication tool to share stories that are genuine (and not for brand advertisement) to avoid creating negative stakeholder perceptions and feelings towards the organisation (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:208; CSR Pulse, 2018). Online PR coverage is a powerful CSR communication tool, where information can be shared instantly with consumers. Now more than ever, CSR activities need to be carefully and strategically communicated to ensure credibility and the support of all stakeholders involved (CSR Pulse, 2018).

It is strategically important that Spinneys Dubai consider to use their CSR communication channels, such as PR, to not only report on ‘what’ they are doing, but also ‘why’ they are investing in the sport sponsorship of The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge as a CSR activity, in order to be perceived by their stakeholders as more trustworthy (Kim & Ferguson, 2014:3). Instead of using owned channels, Spinneys Dubai should use third-party channels for CSR communication, such as credible publications, NGO’s, independent research agencies, and CSR and government institutions that award outstanding performance, to strengthen the organisation’s CSR reputation and brand image (Kim & Ferguson, 2014:4).

It is important that Spinneys Dubai are mindful of how strong relationships with stakeholders are critical for the long-term survival and sustainable growth of CSR activities. Stakeholders have the following expectations: 1) it’s Spinneys Dubai’s moral obligation to always do the right thing when decisions are made about people, planet and profit; 2) practice sustainable business management that is integrated into environmental and community stewardship to “*meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability for future generations to meet their own needs*”; 3) all stakeholder engagement CSR activities and issues should be managed proactively and responsibly, giving Spinneys Dubai the licence to operate without operational

interruptions; and lastly 4) only to invest in or support CSR activities that have the potential to “*improve the organisation’s image, strengthen its brand, elevate morale, and raise the value of its stocks*” (Kramer & Porter, 2006:3).

To host an event like The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, CSR communication is essential to support all stakeholders involved as shown in Figure 13 (information extracted from the interview schedules). The stakeholders are grouped or clustered as: title sponsors; community; media; government; national and international cycling regulators; venue and facilities; medical services; cycling partners that supply cycling gear and services; motor vehicles to support cyclists on the road; and lastly, community volunteers to provide support on the event day at various activity stations.

**Figure 14: Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency stakeholder map for communication**

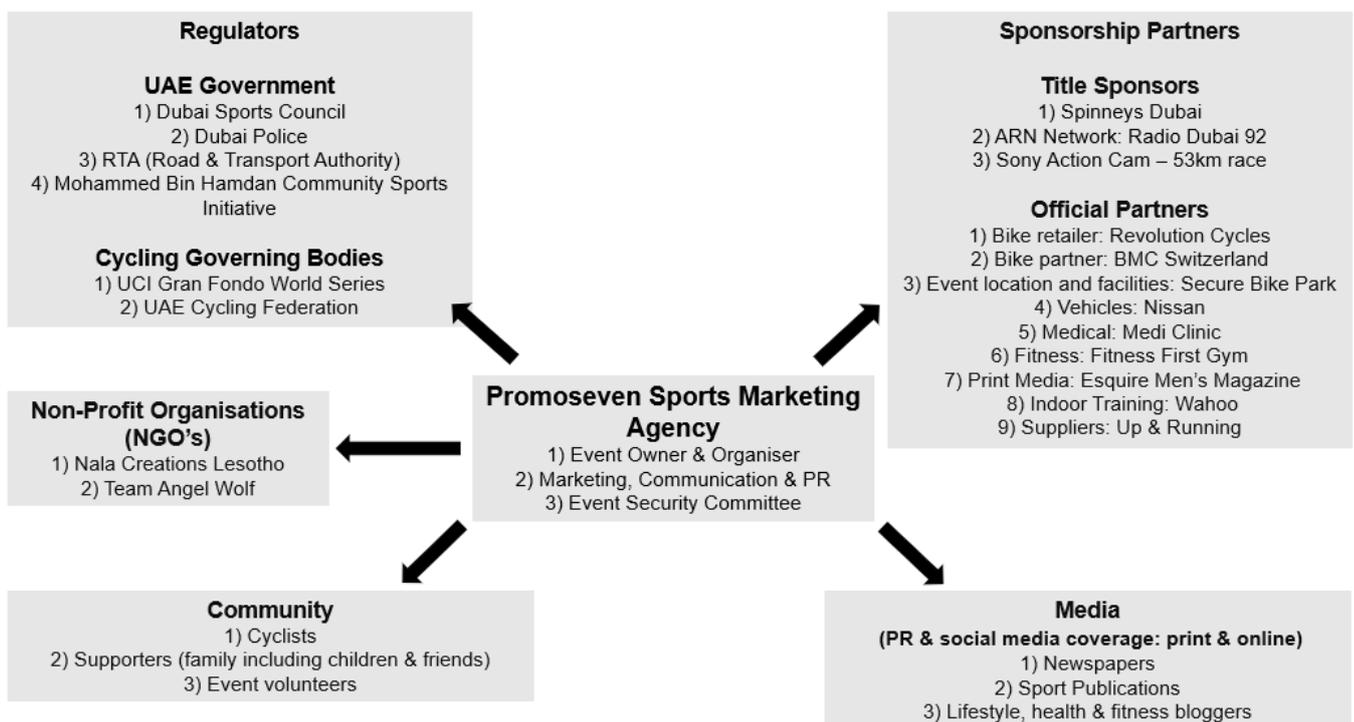
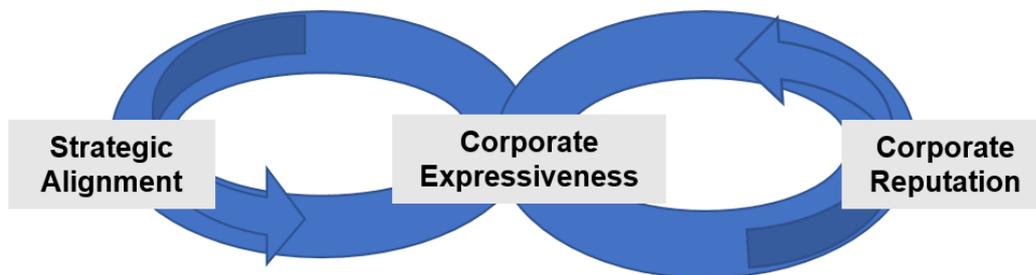


Figure 14 illustrates that the event organiser, Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, is in control of the overall stakeholder management and communication process of The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. Furthermore, the Agency also manages the marketing, communication and PR activities on behalf of Spinneys Dubai, and it can,

therefore, be interpreted that Spinneys Dubai only perceives themselves as a title sponsor or investor in the stakeholder management process and not as the main driver of transformational community engagement. This can be interpreted as a missed opportunity to build relationships directly through strategic corporate communication, to enhance business performance in the following ways (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:210-235):

- 1) Strategic internal employee alignment: Effective corporate communication can be used as an employee engagement tool to increase internal support, morale, ethical behaviour and job satisfaction, which can be acknowledged and rewarded by top management. The nature of internal CSR communication can be engaging and be a two-way conversation; and should empower employees to participate in the process of CSR activities, to show their genuine commitment and to align with organisational objectives. Spinneys Dubai can use management communication, the internal media or intranet, cross-department communication, and individual or corporate messaging to engage employees strategically.
- 2) Strategic alignment with external stakeholders: Effective corporate communication can be used not only to align with the event organiser, Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, but also with other important stakeholders too, by building long-term relationships and trust with all stakeholders involved. Stakeholders will form perceptions and trust based on how well they believe Spinneys Dubai expresses itself as a corporate citizen and how much they are invested in the relationship. Accordingly, external stakeholders will decide for themselves how to label Spinneys Dubai's corporate reputation, as illustrated in Figure 15.

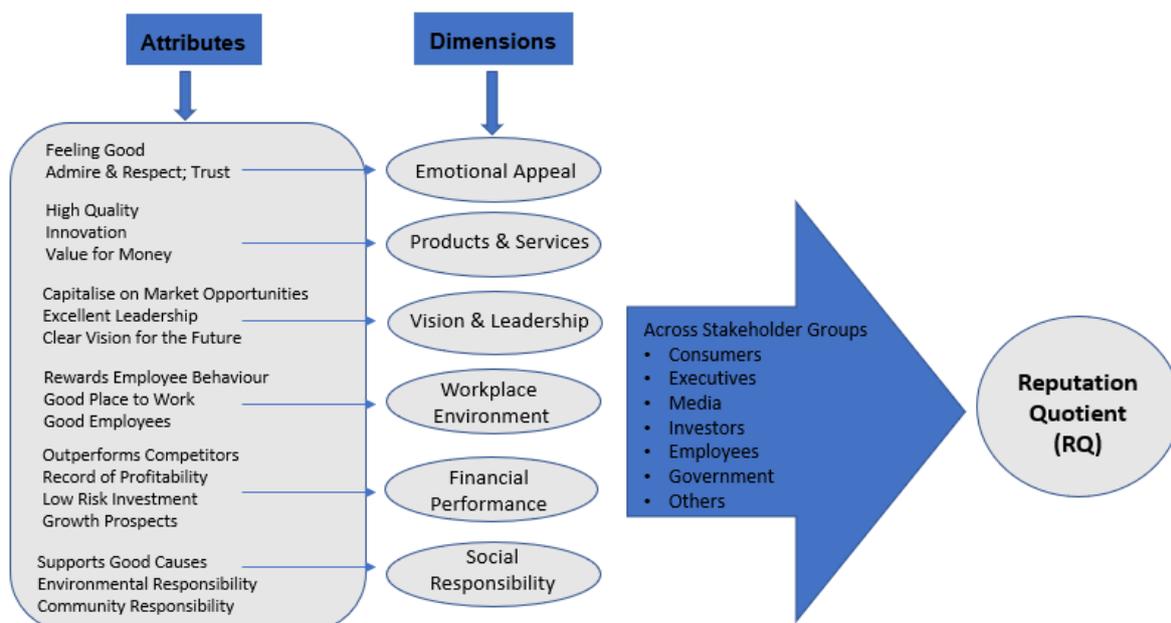
**Figure 15: Strategic alignment, expressiveness and reputation**



Source: Van Riel & Fombrun (2007:217)

- 3) Internal strategic alignment with the communication mix: when an organisation is internally aligned, and its corporate communication mix is used effectively for relationship building and trust, the strength of the alignment can convert into long-term reputational capital for Spinneys Dubai, as illustrated in Figure 16.

**Figure 16: Dimensions and Attributes of the Harris–Fombrun Reputation Quotient (RQ)**

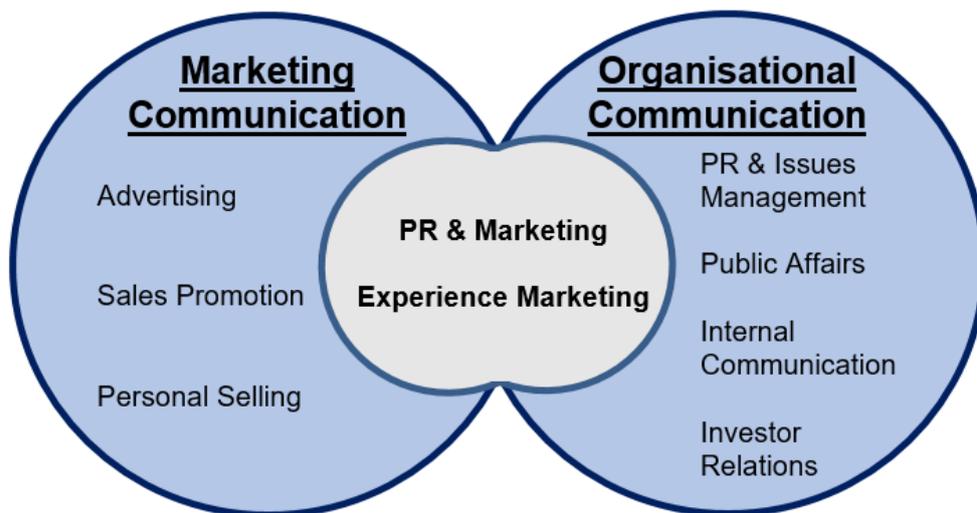


Source: Van Riel & Fombrun (2007:263)

The Fombrun Reputation Quotient (QR) model can be used to build Spinneys Dubai's reputational capital, based on the following integrated business practices: 1) the ability to generate emotional appeal in terms of trust, aspiration and respect; 2) providing high quality innovative products and services; 3) driving organisational performance through excellent leadership; 4) maintaining a rewarding and satisfying work environment for employees; 5) driving financial growth and maintaining stability; and 6) openly supporting community and environmental CSR activities (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:263).

Tested in over 26 countries, the RQ model established that stakeholders first and foremost care about an organisation's products and services; closely followed by CSR activities; and thirdly, the treatment of its employees (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:265). The reputation of Spinneys Dubai is based on how effectively the organisation engages with all its stakeholders with equal importance, to drive holistic business performance across all business functions simultaneously, instead of only focussing on the opinion of leadership and the value of financial (retail) performance (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:265).

**Figure 17: Overlap between marketing and organisational communication**



Source: Van Riel & Fombrun (2007:208)

As illustrated in Figure 18, there is an overlap between marketing and organisational communication management to ensure the holistic management of all stakeholders involved - from employee relations to the external interests of investors, customers, regulators and society in general. The overlap is the overall customer experience, which consists of: a) brand perceptions; and b) organisational reputation within various stakeholder groups. Therefore, it is important that the various communication specialists work together to ensure that the brand message is communicated consistently through various platforms (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:222). When communicating with stakeholders, Spinneys Dubai can use the two-way symmetrical approach to allow opportunities for open and honest conversations; and the exchange of information that is respectful and easy to comprehend; resulting in a higher engagement rate to establish long-term relationships (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:46).

There are three ways Spinneys Dubai can take full accountability for its marketing and corporate communication strategy (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:49-51):

1. Corporate accountability: senior management need to empower all functions in the organisation by aligning each department with the same values, policies and procedures and working together to build a reputable brand in a holistic way.
2. Specialist accountability: invest in CSR expertise to help develop corporate communication and marketing strategies and measure business performance to report back to all stakeholders involved.
3. Coordinated accountability: sustain a positive brand experience with all stakeholders involved, to help influence how stakeholders perceive and talk about the brand.

Based on the argument of specialist accountability, Spinneys Dubai can invest in social marketing campaigns to drive CSR communication performance, to persuade the community to change their behaviour through educational programmes, attitude campaigns and external environmental factors (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007:50; Wymer, 2011:17). Individuals are encouraged to take self-responsibility for their own health choices. However, corporate citizens are also obligated help resolve community health

issues by developing social marketing strategies that offer sustainable long-term solutions to address obesity and diabetes among Emirati women and children. Social marketing strategies should address society health issues, instead of individual self-inflicted health problems (Wymer, 2011:19; Dubai Sports Council, 2018).

To provide the UAE community with complete health protection within their environment, Spinneys Dubai can strategically and effectively address these issues in four stages by removing barriers between the individual and the environment (Wymer, 2011:20-22):

- Stage 1: individual motivation refers to people who are aware of the root cause but deliberately choose unhealthy behaviour, such as obese patients that continue to consume fast foods
- Stage 2: individual ignorance refers to people who are uneducated or not aware that their behaviour can cause self-harm
- Stage 3: environmental pathogenic agents refer to harmful toxins and biochemicals that cause serious illness and disease
- Stage 4: environmental privation refers to a failed state and a healthcare system that cannot provide the appropriate health services to resolve health issues (Wymer, 2011:22).

Childhood obesity is a serious and complex social issue, especially in the UAE, which is both the responsibility of the individual and the environment (UAE Government and corporate citizens like Spinneys Dubai to prevent unhealthy behaviour) (Wymer, 2011: 23). The UAE Government requires the support of corporate organisations such as Spinneys Dubai to provide healthy food options and to help enforce healthy eating at school; while providing national obesity prevention programmes to educate children and parents to change their unhealthy behaviour; and to help them make better choices on a daily basis (Emirates 24/7, 2018). The UAE Government is committed to invest in ongoing discussions with the community and government leaders to find more effective solutions, such as how to increase “physical activity and sustainable treatment plans for childhood obesity (Emirates 24/7, 2018).” Social marketing strategies should focus on the ‘future costs and benefits’ of unhealthy behaviour. Therefore, Spinneys Dubai’s CSR communication should focus on the health benefits

of cycling and how it outweighs the cost of existing unhealthy behaviour Wymer (2011: 23).

As a community food retailer, Spinneys Dubai can support intervention programmes to not only address solutions for exercising, but also for dieting, with effective messaging in order to “increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables, legumes, grains and nuts, limit consumption of saturated fats and sugars and replace with healthy alternatives in combination with 60 minutes of exercise per day” as a preventative CSR measure that empowers families to make better health choices (World Health Organisation, 2018). Spinneys Dubai supports health messaging through their ‘Eat Well, Live Well’ campaign on their formal website ‘Spinneys-dubai.com’ and writes on topics such as ‘5 winning recipes for those training for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Challenge’, sharing health tips and recipes, as well as ‘Your 10-a-day: It’s easier to achieve than you might think’ to encourage customers to up their intake of fruit and vegetables per day. However, the researcher would challenge the retailer in the final recommendations to measure if online messaging is effective enough to change or educate the community on their health behaviour (Spinneys Dubai, 2018).

The UAE Government, who is a trusted partner of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, is specifically concerned about obesity and diabetes as a community health issue among Emiratis. It is, therefore, important that Spinneys Dubai communicates through CSR reporting, how this specific community group is engaged and encouraged to participate in Spinneys Cycling events, indicating the participation growth year on year as a return on investment (time and resource invested by the RTA and Dubai Police). This will encourage the government to be more involved and offer more resources; to empower the local community through health and fitness; and to grow cycling as a sport.

It can also be noted that the event organisers are prioritising stages of development to grow the sporting event each year, by including a variety of challenges to attract more participants, especially children, teenagers and young adults to participate in cycling challenges that are shorter in distance and more age appropriate. The event organiser also introduced a shorter cycling challenge for the general community or

amateur riders to participate in - The Sony Action Cam 53km cycling challenge - and managed to attract professional cyclists from across the world to participate in the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge as a Gran Fondo qualifying race to uplift the profile of the event. This Gran Fondo qualifying race generated valuable PR coverage, not only locally, but also on an international stage as well. This is seen as a great win for the Dubai Sports Council to promote Dubai as a destination for sport and tourism, and to serve as a return on investment for their support and partnership.

Spinneys Dubai sport sponsorship engagement can be measured through various communication and marketing platforms, including PR (public relations), print media as part of above the line advertising, social media, event sponsorship and branding, in-store communication and activities, product sampling, as well as external brand collaborations and strategic partnerships. The main communication channels currently used for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge to drive community engagement through sport sponsorship, is PR coverage through radio, online and print media, as well as social media advertising.

Marketing, communication and public relations are managed by Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency (also the event owner, organiser and promoter for the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge) through all Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge communication channels, such as the official website and social media pages, as well as media management. Event management and communication is a critical part of Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency's responsibilities, and accordingly, the community expects to receive information on easy-to-access platforms, including the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge website, social media Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as in-store, in partnership with Spinneys Dubai.

Furthermore, the event owner and organiser use PR (public relations) as an affective return on investment tool to engage with the media and to create mass awareness across the Gulf region. Relevant English and Arabic media (print and online) were engaged in the latest events and generated over AED 2.2 million free coverage as return on investment across sport, lifestyle, events and general news titles, as well as live radio mentions and discussions on Radio 92.

This is significant for this study, as Spinneys Dubai trusts Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency to communicate directly with all stakeholders involved and to represent the brand values ethically and responsibly. As the title sponsor, Spinneys Dubai does communicate with its customers through in-store and online channels, including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, as well as its website, to help create awareness about each cycling event. Spinneys Dubai uses the 'Live Well, Eat Well' campaign to communicate health messages through all its channels, as a strategy to motivate and encourage the community to live a healthy lifestyle.

The researcher recommends that Spinneys Dubai consider the following top PR trends to engage with communities more strategically (Forbes, 2018):

1. Create brand ambassadors across all employee functions: PR communication go beyond the executive office and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency. Spinneys Dubai should invest in leadership development across the organisation to enable employees on all levels and functions to have strategic conversations with various stakeholder groups.
2. Effectively use digital and social media advertising to boost consumer engagement to gain market share.
3. Rely on the expertise of Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency to proactively take the lead on crisis management and social-listening to prevent a PR crisis. Rely on the expertise of Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency to drive influencer relationships and marketing to change perceptions, behaviour, and attitudes on issues of fitness and health. Be aware of inflated agency price tags without showing an actual return on investment and use quantitative content marketing as a return on investment to measure online PR coverage, including performance such as reach, engagement, views and likes.
4. Strategically align with Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency to help drive 'CSR sport' performance and meet business objectives.
5. For future consideration, Spinneys Dubai can invest in artificial intelligence that can support PR through media monitoring, data capturing and online listening to prevent community crisis management. Finally, chatbots can be used to support online relationship management with customers and to prevent PR issues.

Facebook, followed by Twitter, Instagram and then YouTube, is the best performing social media platform, which reached over 500 000 people from August until December 2016, with a 17% increase in engagement from the previous year. It can also be argued that cycling is a male dominant sport, taking the interest of 74% male followers versus 25% females (1% gender unidentified), with 42% of the followers between the ages 25 to 34 and 28% between 35 to 44 years of age. It can be argued that women and young adults need to be targeted and engaged more effectively, as only 25% of the total audience are women and only 11% of the total audience are between the ages of 18 and 24. To achieve a more balanced community engagement rate that ultimately converts into participation, Spinneys Dubai can create relevant and quality content is important for effective community engagement, as well as post-event videos and photographs.

Twitter has a low following and a dominant (74%) male and English audience, which again highlights that women are not strongly engaged. The content is also not translated into Arabic, which limits the engagement of the Arab community across the Gulf region. In a period of four months (August to December), only 123 500 impressions were delivered, 689 links were clicked, 722 retweets and 491 likes were achieved, with an engagement score of 9%. It can be argued, that if Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency improves its Twitter digital advertising strategy through effective and inclusive content and audience targeting strategies, it would improve the performance of the platform. Instagram and YouTube are highly engaging platforms in the Middle East, and with the low number of followers and engagement on both platforms, it can be argued that Promoseven needs to consider investing in more effective social media advertising strategies to promote The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

Email campaigns can also be considered as an effective engagement tool to communicate with a community database each week regarding event dates, timings and registrations. June to December 2016, resulted in 4 900 emails read, as well as 40 links clicked per campaign, sharing important event information regarding the weekly Cycle Safe Dubai, monthly Spinneys Build-up rides, and the main race in December, The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

Furthermore, in 2017 the UAE Government announced that its corporate citizens will also have to contribute to the country's ambitious plans to improve its CSR reputation and performance globally. To drive CSR excellence in the private sector, the UAE Government expects organisations such as Spinneys Dubai, to invest in the following CSR strategies (The Year of Giving, 2017; Gulfnews 2017):

1. CSR workshops and events to encourage a responsible corporate culture
2. CSR Smart Platform to align with government CSR projects
3. CSR strategic partnerships through the CSR Coordination Forum
4. Enforce annual reporting through a CSR Mandatory Disclosure agreement to renew yearly trade licenses and contribute to the research and statistics centre for latest business news and trends
5. CSR National Index that will formally rank corporate citizens for their contribution and performance
6. Organisational philanthropy will be rewarded through the 'Responsible Procurement Initiative' with supplier contracts
7. CSR communication through PR media coverage and influencers to help drive community awareness, engagement, volunteering and collaboration.

To conclude, organisations are not only perceived as successful when measured by its economic achievements, but also when measured by or held accountable for its social behaviour - the things organisations say and do and how it affects their stakeholders. Therefore, Spinneys Dubai must be held accountable and responsible for actions or initiatives taken in the public, economic and environmental domain through with the support of strategic CSR communication to strategically engage with the community more effectively.

Spinneys Dubai uses the sport sponsorships of the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge for brand awareness and marketing purposes. However, it can be used more effectively with the support of CSR communication strategies to ensure positive behavioural change and active community participation, with a more inclusive targeting strategy across all segments of society. From a communication perspective, CSR is a strategic approach that focuses on ethical and sustainable internal and external communication, and accordingly Spinneys Dubai can engage employees more effectively by building a CSR corporate culture that drives community and

environmental development. Furthermore, strategic and effective corporate communication is required from Spinneys Dubai when communicating with stakeholders about CSR activities through various preferred CSR communication channels, including CSR reports, PR, official corporate website, CSR dedicated website, events and in-store; to build long-term relationships, brand image and trust; and to ultimately motivate community participation and behaviour change.

#### **7.4 MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

As a local UAE brand, Spinneys Dubai built a strong reputation as a community retailer for its fresh fruit, vegetables, quality meat, bakery and groceries, that focuses on responsible sourcing and encourages its customers to live healthy lifestyles through its 'Eat Well, Live Well' campaign messaging. The sport sponsorship of The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge also gives the community the opportunity to exercise in a safe and relaxed environment. In principle, Spinneys Dubai's approach is considered as forward thinking and leading by example, compared to other food retailers, keeping in mind that the UAE Government only started to enforce CSR reporting in July 2017.

The researcher acknowledges that Spinneys Dubai's sport sponsorship contributes to the development of community health, fitness and safety, and is part of being a good corporate citizen. However, from a strategic community engagement perspective through sport sponsorship, there are more effective approaches to be explored and considered. Spinneys Dubai can engage with the community more effectively if they deepen their level of transformational engagement, commit to co-create and develop green innovations through trusted partnerships and use effective CSR communication strategies to gain a competitive advantage. This approach will create shared economic and social value for all stakeholders involved, especially the community in which they operate.

There are two strategic approaches that have given Spinneys Dubai a respected reputation for sport sponsorship and community engagement in the region. Firstly, the retailer recognised the need to develop cycling as a sport in the region; and secondly, that the community needed a safe and secure environment to cycle and that is suitable

for the whole family to encourage active participation and community health development, which is also in line with the priorities of the UAE Government.

Year on year, Spinneys Dubai has increased community engagement by attracting people of all ages and giving them an opportunity to socialise and feel part of a community group, which is an important need for an ever-changing expat community like Dubai. The sporting event also naturally developed over the past seven years, to attract the interest of multiple stakeholders, and has proven to grow year-on-year for both amateur and professional cyclists. The most interesting development for the sport occurred in 2016, when an additional event was introduced, The Sony Action Cam 53 Cycle Challenge, as a fun and social ride, as well as the UCI Gran fondo World Series which is now forming part of the official Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, attracting semi-professional cyclists from around the world.

From a corporate communication and marketing point of view, Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency has developed an omnichannel approach to talk about the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, which includes traditional, above the line channels such as newspapers, magazines, radio and in-store communication (with the support of Spinneys Dubai), as well as a strong digital presence, through channels such as social media, the official website and emails. The Spinneys Build-up rides and main event in December are strong PR coverage drivers before, during and post-events. The researcher acknowledges that both Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency have greatly contributed to the strategic marketing and communication approach to engage with the community, however, discovered that CSR in its purest and theoretical form has not been integrated into the business as a whole. Spinneys Dubai does not invest in stakeholder reporting to promote transparency and need to consider the possibility of building new relationships with NGO's to boost the development and growth of the sport in the region, especially among Emirati women and children, the disabled and the less fortunate.

Carroll's Pyramid for CSR is still robust enough for the future development of Spinneys Dubai's CSR strategy and the following five pillars: 1) ethics; 2) tensions and trade-offs; 3) strategic corporate integration; 4) stakeholder relationships; and 5) globalisation of CSR (Carroll, 2016). From this perspective, Spinneys Dubai can integrate ethics into each responsibility of the organisational structure to establish a

CSR corporate culture and to make trade-offs between the four responsibilities when tensions arise; and to balance the interests of all stakeholders involved, to protect its corporate reputation (Carroll, 2016). An investment in CSR activities might not be perceived as a priority, however, goodwill can lead to long-term economic rewards, especially within the community it operates (Carroll, 2016). The economic rewards include “*cost and risk reductions, positive effects on competitive advantage, company legitimacy and reputation, and the role of CSR in creating win-win situations for the company and society*” (Carroll, 2016). Other benefits of integrating CSR activities into an organisation’s overall business strategy includes “*innovation, brand differentiation, employee and customer engagement*” (Carroll, 2016).

Spinneys Dubai can incorporate CSR into each level of the organisation through business practices, policies and activities simultaneously, while being committed to being profitable, obeying the law and engaging in ethical practices to ensure the long-term survival of the organisation in society (Carroll, 2016). This CSR strategy is considered sustainable when all four responsibilities protect the interests of current and future stakeholder groups, which means that Spinneys Dubai should constantly be aware of its current and future strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to maintain strong stakeholder relations in the environment it operates (Carroll, 2016).

To achieve organisational objectives through sustainable and strategic business management, Spinneys Dubai can consider applying the SWOT analysis (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012:3-26; Dess *et al.*, 2004:14), which consists of the following steps:

1. Environmental scanning: Identify all internal and external CSR environmental strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to enable the organisation to formulate strategies and gain competitive advantage.
2. Strategy formulation: The development and defining of the CSR vision, mission, long-term goals and policy guidelines to enable top management to control internal and external environmental opportunities and threats, against the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation. The CSR vision and mission of an organisation are of extreme importance, not only to gain competitive advantage, but also to communicate the values and aspirations of the organisation and to connect and motivate employees to work in alignment with the CSR strategy.

3. Strategy implementation: Once all the CSR strategies have been formulated, the organisation should actively communicate and encourage all stakeholders to support strategic business objectives through predetermined policies, procedures and development programmes or workshops.
4. Evaluation and control: The last phase of strategic management requires a form of feedback to evaluate the CSR results achieved, either to make further adjustments to the original strategy. or to build on its strengths.

Spinneys Dubai can follow the strategic management model with the below objectives for evaluation and control to generate valuable feedback for future strategy planning (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012:20):

**1. Measurement of the following objectives:**

- To increase the interest and popularity of cycling as a sport in Dubai through the local and international cycling community
- To increase the awareness of health and safety on the road with the support of the Dubai Sports Council, Dubai Police and the UAE Cycling Federation
- To promote a healthy lifestyle through the 'Eat Well. Live Well' Spinneys campaign by reducing obesity and diabetes, especially among Emirati Women and children
- To engage with unidentified pockets of society such as the disabled and the less fortunate with the support of specialised NGO's
- Promote the event as a global competitive platform as part of the UCI Gran Fondo to attract international cyclists
- To attract cyclists of all ages and fitness levels to grow the largest cycling challenge in the Middle East

**2. Establish standards of performance through stakeholder engagement:**

- Following government and international cycling standards;
- execute sponsor brand guidelines and communication objectives;
- increase overall participation on all fitness levels, age groups and abilities to build community trust;
- development of green innovations with the support of like-minded partners
- public relations management;

- online communication and engagement through social media, website and emails.

### **3. Measure actual performance:**

- Growth in the number of cyclists from all age groups, gender, nationality and abilities;
- return on investment through customer loyalty;
- PR and social media coverage value versus marketing and sponsorship spending;
- email campaigns: delivery and open rate
- social media performance – reach, engagement and views

### **4. Compare actual performance with standards:**

- Evaluate each objective according to the predetermined standards or forecasted results

### **5. Take corrective action to improve results through SWOT analysis**

- Determine what the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are of the 'CSR sport' activities to either improve the results or build on the strengths

The researcher discovered the following *strengths* for Spinneys Dubai:

- The retailer has a strong event organiser in place namely Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, to manage partnerships with various event stakeholders, including Dubai Government, Dubai Sports Council and Radio 92 Dubai.
- The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge title sport sponsorship strategy is a formal brand identity, providing the organisation with opportunities for community engagement, relationship building and empowerment and to promote and develop cycling as a growing sport in the UAE, with the support of media partner Dubai 92 Radio station.
- Spinneys cycling events provide the retailer with the opportunity to engage with the community outside the store with branding, product sampling and

messaging on Live Well, Eat Well as well as sustainable sourcing to encourage families to live healthy lifestyles.

- Spinneys Dubai relies on Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency for online and external communication, including: The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge website and social media Instagram and Facebook pages, as well as PR through Dubai 92 Radio and newspapers (print and online).
- From a strategic management point of view Spinneys Dubai is invested in community engagement and communication through in-store marketing, cycling events and public relations in partnership with the event owner and organiser Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency.

The researcher discovered the following *opportunities* after the results chapter was concluded for Spinneys Dubai:

- To consider investing in measuring customer loyalty to justify a return on investment and to report on this through formal and regular reporting; to share this with all stakeholders involved, to create transparency and trust in the value of the sport sponsorship of the event.
- To consider investing in CSR reporting and to communicate the results of Spinneys Dubai's activities to all stakeholders involved; this could support further trust and relationship building within the community they operate in
- Instead of relying on suppliers to promote and sample third party brands, spinneysFOOD labelled products can be sampled and promoted to strengthen the brand experience at events and to ensure long-term customer loyalty
- To support the growth of the event; and to invest in PR (public relations), digital and social media advertising outside the UAE (especially in neighbouring Gulf countries) to attract more international cyclists
- To invest in the latest programmatic and social media technologies to build a strong customer database for effective audience targeting, customer retention, reach, engagement and awareness. Live social media coverage is a smart and strategic community engagement tool to invite people to enjoy live event highlights online, and to make them feel part of the event activities, while either waiting in the Spinneys Village for cyclists to cross the finish line, in the comfort

of their own home, or to watch later after the event. To excel performance, a highlight video can be created and shared online post-events, to reach and engage with a larger portion of the community through paid social media and digital advertising.

- To be more actively involved in targeting all members of society, including Emirati women and children (especially those who suffer from obesity and diabetes, the disabled and the less fortunate); to empower and develop communities through active participation and skills development; and through long-term NGO partnerships and internal organisational commitment. To target the local Emirati community, all communication, including the information on the website and posts on social media pages, should be dual language, English and Arabic. This will engage the local community more effectively and make them feel more included and create a sense of belonging within the cycling community. Lastly, to partner with organisations like Emirati female fitness clubs to introduce cycling as a sport, advise or help Arab women with practical concerns like what clothing to wear as cycling gear for Muslim women who need to be fully covered. More work needs to be done among Emirati women and children to create awareness about the Spinneys build-up rides and Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge, and a CSR communication strategy should be developed that can connect with this specific target audience.
- The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge website is an effective platform for hosting event information, however, it is not considered inclusive from a language perspective and should ideally be available to read in both English and Arabic which should challenge Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency accordingly. It can also be used as a landing page for digital and social media advertising to learn more about the event and to get it touch with the event organisers if needed.
- The Spinneys Dubai website and social media page promoting 'Live Well, Eat Well' messaging should include strong digital and social media advertising for effective audience targeting. Reach, engagement and views of the content shared should also be measured to motivate the community to change their behaviour. Secondly, Spinneys Dubai should invest in more strategic social marketing strategies to address community health issues such as obesity and

diabetes, to educate parents and children on healthy eating and to empower them to make better choices. Spinneys Dubai can also partner with specialised NGO's to strategically manage community development and empowerment, should they not have the internal skills and knowledge to strategically align their corporate communication and CSR strategy.

- It is important that Spinneys Dubai considers adapting its CSR communication strategy and business practices according to the new CSR policies and regulations of the UAE Government, to ensure that they have a licence to operate and prevent reputable damage, such as loss of credibility, and being labelled as 'greenwashing' social and environmental responsibilities. It is also evident that, because only 44% of the UAE's top 100 organisations in 2017 reported on their CSR activities (with 11% using GRI guidelines), the UAE still has a long way to go in terms of changing CSR corporate culture and organisations' commitment to accurate and transparent reporting on sustainability. It can be assumed that Spinneys Dubai has not committed to CSR reporting, as the UAE Government did not enforce the practice in the past, until now.

The researcher has identified the following *strengths* after the results chapter was concluded of Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency:

- Promoseven is a specialised and full-time sporting events management, PR and marketing agency, making them the ideal long-term partner for Spinneys Dubai to drive event performance and to manage all stakeholders involved year after year to grow and develop sport and community participation sustainably.
- PR is used as a return on investment tool to engage with the media, and to generate free English and Arabic coverage as added value for Spinneys Dubai as a title sponsor through radio, print and online publications and to create mass awareness about the events.
- Using online platforms to measure communication and engagement performance through email and social media campaigns.
- Collaborating with Spinneys Dubai to promote the Spinneys Build-up rides and The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge; and to engage with the community

through in-store activities, the Spinneys Village, website and social media pages.

- Promoseven has built valuable long-term relationships and trust in the community they operate in and has managed to contribute to the growth and development of the sport in the region, while helping the community to live healthy and active lifestyles by securing multiple sport sponsorship opportunities, in cooperation with strategic partners such as the Dubai Police and the RTA (Road and Transport Authority).

The researcher discovered the following *opportunities* for Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency after the results chapter was concluded:

- To support the growth of the event; and to invest in PR (public relations), digital and social media advertising outside the UAE (especially in neighbouring Gulf countries) to attract more international cyclists.
- To partner with Dubai broadcasting networks to air the cycling race live on television and to share highlights on local and regional news channels; to create mass awareness and to generate more valuable PR coverage to justify title sport sponsorship.
- To continue the NGO relationship with 'Nala Creations' in Lesotho and Dubai charity 'Team Angel Wolf' to support long-term sustainable development and effective community engagement through partnerships that can be mutually beneficial for all stakeholders involved; and to contribute to Spinneys Dubai's CSR communication through annual CSR reporting.
- To ensure all communication platforms are bilingual (English and Arabic) in order to target and engage with the local Emirati and Arab community more effectively.
- To invest in effective paid social media and digital advertising across the Middle East; to create mass and targeted awareness, especially among teenagers, young adults and women; and to use the Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge website as a landing page for the community to learn more about the event or to get in touch with the event organisers for any queries.
- To share the community email database with Spinneys Dubai to launch 'Eat, Well. Live, Well' campaigns to a relevant and already engaged audience; to

drive traffic to the Spinneys Dubai website; as well as to promote Spinneys products, recipes, hints and tips to ultimately drive footfall to stores as a sport sponsorship return on investment tactic.

The following five major trends will dominate the sports industry in 2018 through technology and cultural changes, and will accordingly influence how corporate citizens, such as Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, use sport sponsorship as an effective community engagement tool (Deloitte, 2018):

1. **Community safety:** Across the globe, event organisers need to take extra precaution to provide a safe, secure and stress-free environment, with high-end security upgrades, through digital solutions and technology, such as biometric recognition, electronic finger scanning and radio-frequency identification tags, to decrease the risk of any unfortunate events and to help evacuate people much faster and safely from the premises. Other security issues, such as disorderly conduct, decrease community engagement and participation; and accordingly, technologies such as incident tracking, fibre-optic camera surveillance and video analytics can be used to combat this issue, and to provide the community with an experience that they can truly enjoy in a stress-free environment.
2. **Innovative ticket packaging:** Sporting event experiences are important for socialising, and to attract communities, event organisers need to offer a variety of memorable and engaging activities that will incentivise them to return.
3. **Digital and social media advertising:** Targeting millennials through online advertisements has never been more critical, and accordingly they need to be served through programmatic and social media advertisements. These sophisticated audience targeting abilities will allow Spinneys Dubai to deliver on its objectives more effectively (such as engagement, reach and loyalty, which are captured and measured as a return on investment). Other digital opportunities include: customer data capture and online traceability, to retarget existing or look-a-like customer profiles to grow the customer database. Lastly,

Spinneys Dubai should establish a technology road map by building a foundation to enable the delivery of a more customised, data driven customer experience in the future, and accordingly, to invest in new technologies that will amplify the impact of loyalty programmes and community engagement.

4. Anti-corruption: Sport corruption has been an issue across major sports such as cycling and has negatively impacted sport sponsorship across the globe. Therefore, Spinneys Dubai needs to ensure that all their practices are responsible and ethical, and aligned with the rules and regulations of all the governing bodies involved, to avoid a PR crisis.
5. Social activism: Spinneys Dubai and Promoseven Sport Marketing Agency need to be aware of sensitive social issues and cultural trends in the region and should carefully mitigate opinion formers and influencers to avoid a decrease in community engagement or sponsorship partners; or to avoid the questioning of their association and active involvement or investment in The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge.

## **7.5 CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Future researchers can use the findings of this research and apply it to UAE neighbouring Arab countries in the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) including: Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia.

Secondly, future researchers can select other sport categories to do research on sport sponsorship as a community engagement tool.

Thirdly, a holistic view of CSR activities and strategies in the UAE retail industry can be further investigated and determined.

Fourthly, more research is required on 'CSR sport' activities and programmes in the UAE. Furthermore, more research needs to be done on how corporate citizens can successfully use effective social marketing strategies to engage with Emirati women

and children to change their unhealthy behaviour; as well as on how to engage with the disabled and less fortunate in the UAE, to develop inclusive community engaging strategies.

Fifthly, to investigate the nature of CSR reporting in the UAE and how corporate citizens can determine what CSR communication strategies can be used and how they can be implemented to align with the new UAE Government CSR initiatives.

Lastly, more research is needed on how social and digital media advertising can be used as part of a social marketing strategy in the UAE to address obesity and diabetes, especially among children and young adults.

## 7.6 FINAL REMARKS

The UAE has come a long way over the past 20 years to prove itself worthy as a first world country; renowned for its diverse expat community; its retail industry; the sponsorship and hosting of first class sporting events; as well as developing a strong reputation for leading in innovation and sustainable development in the region, with the hosting of the Expo 2020.

Corporate social responsibility has always been part of the UAE Government's strategy and core values, to encourage organisations to build their business model and organisational culture based on protecting the interests of people, the planet and profit in an ethical, responsible and sustainable way. With the aggressive ambition of the UAE Government to lead in humanitarian aid, sustainable development and energy, the government realised that these values cannot be sustained by government entities alone. The government requires the buy-in and support of its corporate citizens like Spinneys Dubai, to ensure strategic CSR becomes a practical and everyday reality for all industries and organisational cultures in the UAE.

The researcher has discovered that Spinneys Dubai behaves like a responsible corporate citizen and takes the interests of multiple stakeholders into consideration with the sport sponsorship of The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge. However, they do not have a clear strategic and defined CSR corporate culture and do not fully invest in transformational community engagement to develop green innovations. To establish a strategic CSR and corporate communication strategy, the researcher suggests that Spinneys Dubai start by conducting an in-depth SWOT analysis for 'CSR sport'; secondly, that they implement an integrative approach (as well as stakeholder-inclusivity) to engage all employees from various business units and to identify brand ambassadors; and lastly, that they practise sustainable business management through co-creating green innovations with trusted and like-minded partners and invest in CSR communication, especially CSR reporting, to build a trustworthy brand, public image and credible reputation.

As far as the researcher can determine, the 'Eat Well. Live Well' campaign is used to encourage Spinneys Dubai employees to live healthy lifestyles. However, this

stakeholder group is not encouraged or engaged to share their input on a strategic level or to participate in the process. Ultimately, Spinneys Dubai needs to internalise and establish their organisational CSR values first, before launching aggressive CSR community empowerment and development programmes.

Internal and strategic alignment between Spinneys Dubai and the event organiser, Promoseven Sports Marketing Agency, is crucial, to ensure that both parties are aware, understand, support and implement the event objectives together as a team, in order to build long-term relationships with all stakeholders involved, including NGOs such as 'Team Angel Wolf' and 'Nala Creations', especially for CSR reporting purposes.

From a social marketing perspective, the UAE Government has discussed and highlighted the obesity and diabetes epidemic, especially in schools, in order to target Emirati women and children. The government relies on corporate citizens such as Spinneys Dubai to engage with the community through educational health programmes; to empower these families to make better health choices; and to introduce them to recreational activities such as cycling, in the fight against obesity and diabetes. Spinneys Dubai can partner with skilled NGOs to manage CSR activities and community development programmes effectively; to engage with the community' and to operate according to government approved standards; while respecting the local Emirati culture. These CSR activities can all be captured and reported through CSR reporting and can be shared with all stakeholders involved.

As part of the community engagement strategy, especially to target children and younger adults, Spinneys Dubai can invest in social media and digital advertising to measure reach, engagement and views and can include the results in their CSR reporting. The results and learnings can be used to set objectives for the following year to improve community engagement performance online.

In conclusion, Spinneys Dubai needs to move beyond the title sport sponsorship of The Spinneys Dubai 92 Cycle Challenge and work with specialists to support top management to develop and manage effective marketing and organisational communication strategies for 'CSR sport'. These strategies can be developed from a

multi-stakeholder approach, through two-way symmetrical communication that is effective and can be measured through corporate, specialist and coordinated accountability practices.

Effective stakeholder engagement is the key driving force to excel business performance and to build a unified and holistic corporate reputation, internally and externally. The RQ model indicates that the public care more about an organisations' products and services, its corporate social responsibility activities, and how employees are treated; compared to internal stakeholders who value leadership and financial performance above all other business dimensions. This again supports the notion that CSR communication and transparent CSR reporting are essential for Spinneys Dubai to gain community trust and a reputable brand image, and to give the retailer the licence to operate sustainably in the future.

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