

**The effects of a loyalty program in achieving corporate social responsibility - A South
African retail banking firm perspective.**

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Strategy.

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26074983

ABSTRACT

With the increasing prominence of corporate sustainability, corporate social responsibility and social activism in the corporate environment, the perceived notion of being a responsible and authentic corporate citizen is critical to business survival. Stakeholder theory posits that business stakeholders are an essential component to their success and longevity, and with an added consumer focus on social activities in all its forms, firms are to be purposeful around their value add to their socially conscious consumers. Loyalty programs (LPs) have become an essential tool to manage consumer expectations and collaboration. Historically, LPs have been highly commercially focused by encouraging commercial behaviours for customer fiscal gain.

The South African retail banking firm landscape is well known, and market share is dominated by the five large banking groups. A recent development is the incorporation of firm social or sustainability targets into LPs. This study leveraged the concepts of stakeholder theory to determine the consumer attitudes, motivators and deterrents of having social causes embedded into bank LPs for customer reward donation. Further, to uncover the associated effects on brand perception.

This study adopted a qualitative, exploratory research methodology underpinned by stakeholder theory. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with SA retail banking customers to understand the abovementioned phenomena. The primary research outcomes were that SA retail banks are required to play a more purposeful role in engaging their consumers to enhance participation and contribution to social causes embedded into their LPs. Even though SA retail banks have the platforms for consumers to participate and contribute, consumer preferences, involvement, and more importantly, awareness was lacking. Customer engagement was considered one dimensional and therefore, was in conflict with stakeholder theory as consumers were not aware of social benefits.

KEYWORDS

Loyalty program, stakeholder theory, brand perception, consumer engagement, attitude

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Corporate Strategy at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Muhammed Mikaeel Tayob

13th December 2021

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1. Chapter 1 – DEFINITION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

1.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a background and overview of the study which explores the South African (SA) retail banking firm loyalty or membership program (LP) landscape. Additionally, this study aims to investigate the effects of banks having social causes embedded into their LPs, and the associated impact on customer participation, contribution, and brand perception. This study also aims to explore the various underlying consumer attitudes, motivators, and deterrents when contributing rewards to social causes, or corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives through bank LPs. Any additional relevant spill-over effects, enablers, or enhancements of consumer usage of LPs were also identified as secondary contributions to the research. Underpinning the above is the academic base of stakeholder theory. To accomplish this, initially, a background of the research problem is examined; the relevance to business and academia is discussed; the purpose of the research problem is discussed; the research scope is defined; the research questions are presented with relevance to the research contribution; and the research roadmap is depicted.

1.2. Background to the research problem

There has been increasing emphasis on corporate sustainability and CSR initiatives, both in business and academia. It is now of paramount importance for corporates to be aware of the way that they operate on social, environmental, and economic levels (Bhattacharya, Good, & Sardashti, 2020; Hassan & AbouAish, 2018). The delict requirement for greater sustainability, along with the fast and evolving digital environment, creates exploitable opportunities for firms wanting to explore alternative value propositions, and be perceived as good corporate citizens (O'Brien, Ouschan, Jarvis & Soutar, 2020). Further compounding this notion, was the onset of the Corona Virus pandemic (COVID-19), and its associated catastrophic effects to health, business, and economies (Wenchuan, Shouming & Luu, 2020). This has largely been due to post-COVID- 19 consumers being more ethically orientated and therefore, more prosocial in their consumption. The pandemic then provides exploitable opportunities for businesses to actively participate in social activities (He & Harris, 2020). Apart from these effects, global lockdowns placed significant emphasis on digitalisation and e-commerce, which forced businesses to rethink business models (Breier, Kallmuenzer, Clauss, Gast, Kraus & Tiberius, 2021).

With the added importance of social initiatives and CSR on company success, as well as to consumers, normative stakeholder theory posits that firm stakeholders are critical to the

success survival of the firm (Friedman & Miles, 2006). Further, with multi-stakeholder partnerships being a critical element in firm value creation (Bhattacharya & Polman, 2017; Cowan & Guzman, 2020; Kim et al., 2021), an important element to consider is the manner in which social initiatives are packaged and how collaboration is managed. Another important firm marketing and value-generation phenomena in recent years has been the incorporation of LPs, which are defined as marketing, business or institutional instruments and incentives aimed at rewarding consumers to advocate brand loyalty and repeat purchases (Chen, Mandler & Meyer-Waarden, 2021; Dorotic, Bijmolt & Verhoef, 2012; Kim, Steinhoff & Palmatier, 2021). More recently though, with the added importance of customer engagement, companies have been turning to LPs in an effort to improve customer engagement (Bruneau, Swaen Valérie & Zidda, 2018). According to Cromhout & Netto, (2020), in excess of 70% of SA's economically active consumers engaged with LPs from 2016, with the average SA consumer belonging to 5.6 LP's. There is also a higher distribution of LP users coming from high income households. More so, of the remaining approximately 30% of SA non-LP users, 89% do not use LP's, due to not being engaged or spending sufficiently to earn rewards. Further, among the benefits cited by SA LP users, 27% appreciated the ability to donate to charitable causes (Cromhout & Netto, 2020). It has therefore always been easier to acquire new membership through LPs, than to engage and retain these members (Bruneau, Swaen Valérie & Zidda, 2018, Dorotic, Bijmolt & Verhoef, 2012; Kim, Steinhoff & Palmatier, 2021). One such contributor to the growth in LPs in the retail financial services sector has been digitalisation and the ease of access with mobile. This has had a profound impact on customers ensuring efficiencies and providing simplification (PWC, 2020, Fitch, 2021, BusinessTech, 2021).

Previous research in the perceived consumer benefits of LP usually highlight the fiscal, commercial and convenience attributes that attract and maintain consumer relationships. Recent research however has pivoted toward social causes and benefits, having a far greater positive impact on the perceived benefits to consumers, particularly in the financial services industry (Fourie, 2018; Mimouni-Chaabane & Volle, 2010). With consumer trust and customer intimacy being intrinsic requirements to build effective long-lasting consumer relationships (Mackay & Major, 2017), and with consumers being more socially and environmentally conscious than ever before (O'Brien, Ouschan, Jarvis & Soutar, 2020), the need for firms to merge the social needs of customers and their service or product offerings are essential.

The SA retail financial services sector is the most established in Sub-Saharan Africa with large local and multinational players in banking and insurance (Fitch Solutions Group, n.d.). The industry is regarded as one of the best in the world with local banks being highly regarded.

The retail, and business banking landscape is dominated by the top five JSE listed institutions with each of them investing in digital to ensure convenience and accessibility (Business Wire, 2021). A significant attraction to SA retail banks, are their rewards and LPs for consumers who are drawn to the additional value generation from their banking (Business Tech, 2021c)

1.3. The research problem

The research problem that this study relates to, is that albeit LPs in SA have been advancing, the promotion of social initiatives for customer reward donation through some bank LPs have yielded less than desirable results (ABSA Group Limited, 2020). Also, retail financial services firms have multi-faceted rewards and LPs that are aimed in generating value for themselves and customers which have largely been commercial in nature (Chen et al., 2021; Dorotic et al., 2012; Gao & Mattila, 2017; Kim et al., 2021). There has not been sufficient literature to support, that the incorporation of social and sustainability initiatives into LPs, would promote consumer engagement and yield enhanced consumer contribution (Chen et al., 2021). Further, there is a distinct need to understand the consumer mindset that would create the auspices for a customer to donate their earned LP rewards, or contribute, to a firm CSR or sustainability initiative (Chen et al., 2021). Lastly, whether incorporating firm social and sustainability targets into LPs, would generate any additional brand value (Cowan & Guzman, 2020). Underpinning the above, is the concept of stakeholder theory, which has been widely referenced as a renowned concept in business ethics (Freeman, 2010; Waheed, Zhang, Rashid, & Zaman Khan. 2020).

Much of the previous research on LPs have largely focused on their design and effectiveness of the LP within specific markets or industries (Dorotic et al., 2012; Fourie, 2018; Gao & Mattila, 2017). Very limited research has been conducted to highlight the effects of embedding social causes into LPs. Further, there has been insufficient research conducted that understands the attitudes, motivators, or deterrents of consumer participation or contribution to social causes, specifically through defined LPs. There is a vast body of literature on LP design and effectiveness. Similarly, substantial research has been conducted on CSR effects on consumer engagement, as well as multi stakeholder partnerships. These concepts in business and academia have however not been studied together to understand the impacts that one has on the other. Further, the consumer mindset, morals, values and related rational with respect to donating LP rewards have also not been understood in the SA context. This research had the following objectives:

- Establish the attitudes, motivators and deterrents that affect customer willingness to donate earned LP rewards towards defined bank CSR or social initiatives

- Understand the customer brand perception when banks have social causes embedded into their LPs.
- Identify the factors that may enhance or improve the consumer willingness to donate to social causes through bank LPs?

Each of the above objectives were conducted through the academic lens of stakeholder theory, as well as within the SA retail banking landscape.

1.3.1. Contribution to academia

In addressing the need for greater sustainability and corporate social activism, there is a need to engage and consider the vast and growing firm stakeholder base. Stakeholder theory has mostly been used interchangeably in the concepts of corporate governance, business ethics and broad range CSR (Freeman, 2010; Friedman & Miles, 2006; Morris, 2020; Waheed et al., 2020). There has been a focus in academic research on stakeholder inclusivity particularly in CSR. However, the mindset of the consumer stakeholder in supporting other firm stakeholders (i.e., CSR beneficiaries and communities) within the LP and reward context, is considered a new context within the ambit of stakeholder theory. This new concept warrants some attention due to the need of firms to understand the impacts of the digital LPs they utilise to generate participation. With LPs having largely been considered a firm value generating tool, utilising these as a CSR driver, shifts the narrative to an inclusive stakeholder approach in collaboration to achieve CSR. This research aimed to uncover new insights in the consumer mindset when including and involving customers in the achievement of social causes. This research also sheds light on the interrelationships between stakeholders, and the associated effects on the firm. Additionally, this research then, also contributes to the already vast existing literature on stakeholder theory.

A plethora of literature exists on corporate customer engagement and strategic partnerships to achieve sustainability or CSR. Most, however, relate to generic multi-stakeholder partnerships, with a few exploring the effectiveness of these partnerships with individual partner groups, such as customers, and their related effectiveness. (Moazzam, Yongqiang, & Sayyed, 2018; Tanimoto, 2019). Also, much of the LP literature in research, although vast, have focused largely on the effectiveness, outcomes, and design of LPs, within the context of individualised sectors and in western markets predominantly (Chen et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021). Chen et al., (2021) have produced the latest and most comprehensive review of available literature of LPs as well as proposed the future research agenda in the field of LPs. They distinctly outline, as a future research concept, the cultural dimensions of individualism

and communitarianism to explain consumer and firm value of donating rewards or points to social and sustainability initiatives. They further identify the need for LP research to be conducted in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. This research is partly in response to addressing the future research agenda by Chen et al., (2021) by understanding the customer mindset of donating rewards or points to good causes, as well as conducting the research in the African context.

This research also contributes to the body of literature on LPs and their effectiveness on the social diaspora. As mentioned, much of the literature is focused on the design and/or the effectiveness of LPs. The effectiveness of multi-stakeholder partnerships in achieving social targets for corporates has largely been studied in western markets with limited research in emerging markets (Bhattacharya & Polman, 2017; Chen et al., 2021; Cowan & Guzman, 2020; Dorotic et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2021).

Insufficient literature exists on the considerations, or customer mindset on customer engagement through LPs. More so, there has not been any relevant literature that combines these topics collectively, i.e., LPs, CSR and sustainability, brand perception, consumer mindset as well as customer engagement. Much of the literature also has focussed on retail sectors (Chen et al., 2021). This research adds to the individual concepts listed above in isolation, as well as collectively within the SA retail banking sector through the lens of social and sustainability. Further, the research sheds light on the use of LPs by SA retail banks, and more so, how they engage, with customers, in social initiatives through LPs.

1.3.2. Contribution to business

With a world currently focused on social and environmental factors, LPs allow for firms to meaningfully predict changing consumer behaviours in the context of improving customer engagement, by understanding the social needs and wants of consumers (Bruneau et al., 2018). Most modern-day CEOs believe that CSR and sustainability in business is a key factor to the success of a firm (Hoffman, 2018). Further, with the consumer and corporate world more focused on sustainability and CSR in all its forms, engaging customers and digitally transforming business models to promote CSR, sustainability and circularity have become essential (Bicen & Brem, 2020). For many global consumers, sustainability initiatives now serve consumer values, beliefs, and lifestyles above their basic function (Meise, Rudolph, Kenning & Phillips, 2014). The financial services sector, and in particular, the banking sector experienced a loss of credibility with recent economic crisis. The sector, like many other have been determined to improve their corporate image to restore trust with consumers (Pérez & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2014). Recent research conducted by Fourie, (2018) clearly articulated

that social benefits are the most significant contributor of customer loyalty within the financial services industry. These symbolic benefits (Mimouni-Chaabane & Volle, 2010), and their significance in elevating customer loyalty (Fourie, 2018), highlight the need for SA retail banks to strongly consider social benefits as a fundamental design element within their LPs. The distinct importance of CSR to the banking industry also justified the selection of the sector for this research.

The above highlights the growing use of, and innovation in LPs with a greater focus on customer engagement and retention (Steinhoff & Palmatier, 2016). This, coupled with the growing importance of social initiatives, and the importance of CSR to banks, creates the questions; Under what conditions would customers be willing to give up their rewards to support CSR? Could CSR or sustainability initiatives in LPs enhance customer engagement and improve the image of the brand? By understanding these critical consumer mindsets and effects, SA retail banking firms may be able to unlock value in their LPs that create value across the stakeholder divide – most importantly, with their consumer. Further, an understanding of the SA retail banking services LP landscape may enhance competition and ultimately benefit consumers and the economy. This literature could be utilised by LP Managers to generate additional customers, promote inclusive LP design, and enhance their firm reputation, in a more digital manner.

There is, as mentioned, a vast body of literature that exists both on multi-stakeholder partnerships in sustainability and CSR (MacDonald, Clarke, Huang & Seitanidi, 2019) as well as on LPs (Chen et al., 2021). However, insufficient research exists to understand the effect on consumer responses to CSR through LPs (Hwang and Kandampully, 2015). Given the growing importance of customer engagement, sustainability, CSR, as well as LPs to firm success (Hoffman, 2018), there is still an academic need and business relevance to explore these concepts together. Specifically, conceptual models and associated relationships and benefits of customer engagement in CSR have not been developed (O'Brien et al., 2020).

1.4. Research purpose

Given the individualistic importance of these constructs, the purpose of this research sought to determine the efficacy of engaging consumers through LPs in support of firm CSR and sustainability targets. Furthermore, identify and establish the attitudes, motivators and deterrents that would affect a customer's willingness to donate their earned LP rewards towards defined bank social initiatives. Also, to understand the effects and impacts on consumer participation and their brand perceptions. Lastly, the purpose of this research was

also to identify the elements that would further promote and enhance consumer participation in the donation of rewards

2. CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

The consumer mindset that would lend to the donation of earned LP rewards with the SA retail banking sector, as well as the consumer engagement in LP CSR, are the foundation for the research problems identified. Anchoring the research problem is the concept of stakeholder theory which favours a firm's inclusivity of all stakeholders as vital to the success and survival of the firm (Friedman & Miles, 2006). This chapter aims to present the academic theories and arguments from relevant and recent literature of the concepts introduced in chapter 1. This section initially provides a review of the existing literature on stakeholder theory and its associated relationship with CSR and value co-creation. In addition, an overview of the SA retail banking landscape is provided. Thereafter, the academic literature relevant to the identified research constructs of the social benefits of LPs, sustainability and CSR, their links to brand perception and financial performance, customers as strategic partnerships to achieve sustainability and CSR, consumer engagement as a partnership imperative and LPs, within the SA retail banking context.

2.1. Stakeholder theory

Stakeholder theory has for several years, been studied, and contested in academia. This theory focuses not only on the profit maximisation strategies executed by most firms, but rather on a fuller and more encompassing stakeholder view on purpose. It leads with the notion that profit is the result of pursuing firm purpose (Freeman, 2010; Morris, 2020; Waheed et al., 2020). There is however widespread debate in academia on the definitions of a stakeholder. Freudenreich, Lüdeke-Freund Florian, & Schaltegger, (2019) argue that most value creation firm initiatives to customers are one dimensional and that stakeholders are both recipients and co-creators of value for a firm in a version of mutual beneficence. In a business environment so complex with digitisation and competition, the social and sustainability measures of a firm enhance reputation and is a growth driver (Waheed et al., 2020).

Freeman (2010), positions that most firms have a managerial view of the firm which is focused on its owners, customers, employees, and suppliers, which lends to the profit-centric philosophical existence of most firms. The emergence of a socially conscious environment around which the firm operates (Hoffman, 2018), means that considering only internal stakeholders would be disadvantageous to a firm. Firms are required to equally consider external stakeholders such as communities, special interest groups as they often influence customers (Freeman, 2010). In an effort to create a shift in considering a wider array of stakeholders, stakeholder theory was born and can be defined as an approach by firms to create shared value in an ethical manner for all stakeholders (Freeman, 2010). Stakeholders

may be defined as an individual or group that may affect or is affected by the achievement of a firm's objectives (Friedman & Miles, 2006).

Considering that stakeholder theory is grounded in the notion of firms being inclusive and considering all stakeholders, this theoretical base, for the purposes of this research is focused on the customer as a contributor of the value generated to the firm as well as the CSR beneficiary (also a stakeholder).

2.2. Stakeholder theory and CSR

Freeman & Dmytriyev, (2017) argue that CSR is a fundamental aspect of broad firm responsibilities focused on all stakeholders. Further that there is an interdependency among firm stakeholders such as customers, communities and CSR beneficiaries and that firms should be driven by purpose over profit. Although there is an interdependence among stakeholders, creating CSR value for communities does not have adverse effects towards other stakeholders. Waheed, Zhang, Rashid, & Zaman Khan, (2020) further contribute that firms engaging in CSR activities would stimulate customer buying tendencies with many associated benefits of embedding CSR into their operations. Mosca & Civera, (2017) advocate for the integration of CSR into business rather than the residual nature of firm CSR. They further argue that there exists a number of challenges that firms face when adopting a multi-stakeholder approach to CSR which yields better results as stakeholders as partners jointly make decisions which satisfy their expectations.

2.3. The SA retail banking firm landscape

The SA financial services landscape (banking for the purposes of this study) is the most advanced on the continent with a host of high market share holding local banks and insurance providers, as well as well represented foreign banks and insurance providers (Fitch Solutions Group, n.d.). According to the South African Reserve Bank (n.d.) and Fitch Solutions Group, (n.d.), SA has currently registered, 13 local banks, four foreign controlled banks, 13 branches of foreign banks, five co-operative banks and three mutual banks. Dominating the direct retail consumer are the five large banks: Capitec Bank, First Rand Bank – First National Bank (FNB), ABSA, Standard Bank and Nedbank. New entrants such as Discovery Bank, Tyme Bank, Bank Zero and SPOT Bank have revolutionised banking in SA by bringing a digitally led service offering powered by digital and mobile (BusinessTech, 2020a; BusinessTech, 2021b; Fitch Solutions Group, n.d; Louw & Nieuwenhuizen, 2020; PWC, 2020).

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and rapid digitalisation, retail financial service institutions have been forced to grow and retain their customer base by means of digitalisation

of their services (Louw & Nieuwenhuizen, 2020). Banking has seen a deliberate growth and shift to mobile as Generation Z and Millennials continue to make up their customer base. More so, the banking sector has also been understanding customer preferences for experience from technology firms such as Apple and Google who are able to merge physical and digital customer experience (Sukhdeo, 2020).

At the time of authoring this research paper, each of the major retail banks in South Africa had a mechanism for their consumers to donate their loyalty rewards towards charitable causes. Standard Bank 'UCount' reward members may donate their 'URewards' to through Tekkie Tax, the Solidarity Fund, student tertiary funding via Feenix, or pay a family members school fees via School Days (Standard Bank, n.d.). Tekkie Tax is a combination of 15 National welfare organisations which represent more than 1 000 South African NGOs which allows LP members to donate to a choice of wide array of charities, which best resonates to the individual consumer (Givengain, n.d.). Feenix is a crowdfunded Public Benefit Organisation (PBO) aimed at raising debt-free funds for tertiary education (Feenix, n.d.). FNB 'EBucks' loyalty members may also donate their earned EBucks through a wide array of social causes published on the EBucks website or on the FNB app. These charities range from COVID-19 relief, animal welfare, to children funds, as well as education and social upliftment causes (EBucks Shop, n.d.).

ABSA, as another of the major SA retail banks also has a LP called ABSA rewards which also allows their users to donate their rewards, earned through consumption and banking, to charitable causes. Further, as part of their COVID-19 relief activities, their 2020 Annual Report stated that they had collected a total of R178 000 as donated by consumers toward the Solidarity Fund (ABSA Group Limited, 2020). This highlights the difficulty some banks are facing in engaging customers to donate rewards. Nedbank, like the others, have a mechanism for their customers to donate their 'greenbacks' to a list of verified charitable organisations including the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, The Sports Trust, The Arts & Culture Trust as well as the WWF Nedbank Green Trust. Further, similar to the other banks, also includes the Solidarity Fund (Nedbank, n.d.).

Discovery Bank, one of the latest digital banking entrants, has their Vitality LP which enables the earning of Discovery Miles for their consumers who live healthy, drive well, and spend responsibly, and encompasses their insurance, wellness, and banking businesses. These miles are somewhat easier to earn without necessarily achieving banking tiers, but also includes healthier living through the achievement of Vitality Active Rewards (Discovery, n.d. - a). They holistically promote the donation of Discovery Miles primarily through their 'MoveToGive' initiative. Some of their available social initiatives include the Gift of the Givers

Foundation, Reach for a Dream, as well as stated Discovery CSI initiatives (Discovery, n.d. - b). Capitec, which has proudly stated that they believe that LPs or rewards programs should not be based on tiered earnings and have their “LiveBetter” program based on partner discounts for which all customers are eligible. Customers need only activate their LiveBetter savings account to join, and every customer receives the same or equal benefits. Also, their program promotes a cash-back principal for spend at their partners which is paid into a savings account monthly. Unlike the other banks, Capitec does not have a rewards or points system and therefore, there isn’t a way in which consumers may donate LP rewards to charities. They do however offer their consumers the option to donate to their CSR initiatives through cash donations, which may be made from their cash back from their Live Better savings account, by loading the social organisations as beneficiaries on their banking platform (Capitec, n.d.).

It is abundantly clear is that the use of social benefits in banking LPs is well established and promoted by all the large SA retail banks, however, the effects of these engagements have not been clearly understood. Further, that the engagement with respect to the social donation and social benefits, have not yielded the desired outcomes (ABSA Group Limited, 2020).

2.4. The growing importance of sustainability and CSR practices

CSR may be defined as a firm’s commitment to removing or reducing harmful effects and maximising its sustainable beneficial impact on society (Dongh & Jieun, 2018). The public at large and the consumers of corporations’ products and services, are more knowledgeable and are in constant need of information. They more than ever, want to know how products are produced, the total value chain, and how consumption of the product or service might impact other people, and the environment, further, how firms benefit societies. For many global consumers, social and sustainability initiatives now serve consumer values, beliefs, and lifestyles above their basic function (Meise et al., 2014). There has been an impactful shift by many corporations that have been changing mindsets and strategies from investing in and integrating sustainability measures, to dynamically converting the environment and the markets that they operate in, making them more sustainable – intrinsically merging sustainability and strategy holistically (Hoffman, 2018). Meise et al., (2014) found that consumers value sustainability characteristics over product prices as a key determinant – meaning, they are willing to pay more for ‘ethical’ products that have a sustainability story, or that has information about its production that is sustainable. Further that the lack of information on product sustainability attracts negative connotations for producers.

Another element of the growing importance of sustainability practices is the ever-evolving regulatory landscape. As an example, the automotive industry continues to face challenges to

reduce vehicle carbon and greenhouse gas emissions. The European Union, like many other parts of the globe, are now taxing CO2 emissions, with rates likely to rise. The future viability of automotive brands depends highly on their ability to design and implement sustainability strategies that comply to various legislation to reduce carbon emissions (Rubio, Llopis-Albert, Valero & Besa Antonio José, 2020). Similarly, in South Africa, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) require compliance, with the King IV Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa 2016. The code requires companies listed on the JSE, to compile an integrated report as part of their annual reporting cycle (Goldman & Hamann 2015). This integrated report, quintessentially based on the principles of the “triple-bottom line”, is founded on the notion that strategy, risk, performance, and sustainability are inseparable (Institute of Directors South Africa, 2016).

Firms are being pressured more than ever as modern-day consumers now demand more socially responsible actions. CSR has now become prevalent in firm marketing activities and not just in communications as it supports solidifying consumer relationships (Contini, Annunziata, Rizzi, & Frey, 2020). COVID -19 has exacerbated the responsibility of corporates to support social issues and has reshaped the way we look at CSR. The pandemic and its associated impacts to businesses and society has undoubtedly placed a higher expectation on firms and their CSR initiatives, albeit with constrained investment capacity (Crane & Matten, 2020). The findings from a study conducted by Bhattacharya et al., (2020) reveal that CSR initiatives during economic downturns (as with the pandemic) positively influence consumer perceptions of brand value. CSR has also been found to contribute positively to customer loyalty which promotes repeat purchases and use of products over time, thereby promoting firm financial performance (Contini et al., 2020). Conversely, a study conducted by Ajina, Japutra, Nguyen, Syed, & Al-Hajla, (2019) on consumer perception of CSR in Saudi Arabian banks, surprisingly highlight that CSR consumer perception is not unswervingly related to customer loyalty. This contradicts the vast majority of research that highlights positive impacts on consumer perception loyalty in response to firm CSR.

2015 saw the creation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aimed to resolve global sustainability issues, such as climate change, cleaner production, consumption, and poverty eradication by 2030. In order to achieve global sustainable development, the SDGs consisted of 17 goals and 169 targets or key performance indicators (Eweje, Sajjad, Nath & Kobayashi, 2020). Through the creation of these goals, the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships was emphasized as contained in “SDG 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development” (United Nations, n.d.). SDG 17 promotes partnerships acknowledging the notion that individual entities

rarely hold the resources and know-how to address sustainability issues at a meaningful scale (MacDonald et al., 2019). The SDGs identify the complexity of solving global sustainability issues and therefore, emphasise the collaboration and cooperation required to tackle the globe's troubles (Eweje et al., 2020). Multi-stakeholder partnerships, as part of Agenda 2030, were aimed at supporting global partnerships, owned mostly by governments, as efforts to share resources, knowledge, skills, expertise, and technology in achieving the goals (David, 2019). Sustainability, in all its forms, including CSR, has grown in prominence, which could contribute to positive consumer perception and brand loyalty. This in turn, may contribute to overall brand performance.

The banking sector in particular, views CSR as a mechanism by which lost trust and credibility may be regained through deliberate measures to enhance their corporate image. Therefore, the banking sector represents high net wealth and assets, where trust is essential, and their corporate reputation is critical, and consequently, knowing their customer CSR preferences and expectations is of paramount importance (Pérez & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2014).

2.5. Social LP benefits

Customer-perceived benefits to LPs have largely been focused on economic or fiscal benefits with a distinct shift in recent years to a broader benefit diaspora, which includes social benefits as symbolic benefits (Fourie, 2018; Mimouni-Chaabane & Volle, 2010). These typical non-product/service benefits appeal to the individualistic or communitarianism (Chen et al., 2021) consumer need for social status, social acceptance, personal expression, and self-esteem, (Fourie, 2018; Keller, 1993; Mimouni-Chaabane & Volle, 2010). Typically, LPs that include social responsibility benefits have been shown to predict loyalty, enhance consumer relationship longevity and foster trust through the creation of emotional attachments (Kim et al., 2013; Rudez, 2010; Fourie, 2018).

Fourie, (2018) empirically found in a study within the SA financial services sector that social benefits were the most significant predictor of perceived relationship investment, which in turn, positively affects both attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Also, the study recommended that firms wanting to enhance customer engagement, should focus their LPs on the creation of hyper-personal relationships underpinned by shared values and purpose. CSR and social initiative contributions may be seen as an altruistic measure of shared purpose (Freeman, 2010; Pansari & Kumar, 2017) in the notions of stakeholder theory. Jansen, Gössling Tobias, & Bullens, (2011) found a readiness and overwhelming willingness by consumers in the Netherlands to contribute to social initiatives within the micro-insurance industry which

purports' a potential intermediary role for firms to play in delivering social initiatives for consumers.

2.6. Social impact on customer brand perception and financial performance

Much of the recent research in the field has shifted from enhanced brand reputation or perception, because of product/service innovations, to enhanced brand reputation due to sustainability practices, circularity, and CSR. CSR is often seen as a strategic lever to pull to strengthen firm reputation, thereby expanding their markets and in turn, expanding on their financial performance (Sardana, Gupta, Kumar & Terziovski, 2020). Cowan & Guzman (2020) argue that investments into reputational signals, which include sustainability and CSR, enhance consumer satisfaction, trust, loyalty, purchase intentions and overall brand equity. Building an effective reputation should be considered a business strategy due to the numerous benefits including access to new markets and revenue generation (Cowan & Guzman, 2020). Ukko, Nasiri, Saunila, & Rantala (2019) argue that that having a sustainability strategy is a conduit between capabilities of management and increased financial performance. On the contrary, they also found that on an operational level, having a sustainability strategy hinders financial performance. This is largely due to the inherent profit existence of most firms. Many businesses have merged sustainability into their corporate strategies largely to fundamentally improve reputation and focused on profit maximisation (Bhattacharya & Polman, 2017).

Sustainability and the implementation of the new technologies, both generate firm competitive advantages (Tohãnean, Buzatu, Baba, & Georgescu, 2020). These competitive advantages are usually in relation to a firms' competition. Therefore, with both generating value that usually translate into increased financial performance, it is logical to assume that the implementation of a digital business model, rooted in sustainability principles, would be the most appropriate "north star" for post COVID-era firms to aspire toward. The most significant competitive advantage by firms in their study in the implementation of sustainable business models, was being seen as an entity that was authentic to its social and environmental objectives. Further, that from a reputational perspective, their sustainability efforts were not "superficial" which resulted in positive stakeholder sentiment (Morioka, Bolis, Evans, & Carvalho, 2017). The rationale for forming sustainability collaborations in approximately half of the respondents of the 2015 sustainability whitepaper published by Boston Consulting Group and MIT Sloan Management was to enhance brand and reputation (Avery, 2015). Essentially, there was a strong case to be made that their heightened sustainability and CSR initiatives promoted firm reputation and enhanced loyalty. In turn, the heightened loyalty and reputation resulted in stronger financial performance and repeat purchase behaviour.

2.7. Sustainability and CSR in a digital age

Corporates, sectors, and governments are moving towards accelerating transformation, particularly digital transformation and creating digitised business strategies, functions, products, services, and processes (Ukko et al., 2019). The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has seen many businesses being forced to relook at their business models, that were disastrously affected by government lockdowns. These businesses inevitably were required to amend their strategies and focus on going digital. The opportunities that COVID-19 has offered firms have largely been digital in nature, as well as the opportunity to review alternative business models (Seetharaman, 2020). Arguably, this also creates the ambit for firms to look at their sustainability measures and explore opportunities to reduce their footprints and create circularity, whilst evaluating and shifting to new digitised business models.

Perhaps the most significant risk to business viability and longevity is the disruption of markets due to new technologies (El Hilali, El Manouar & Janati Idrissi, 2020). Companies are forced to innovate to survive and remain relevant. The world we live in currently requires drastic action to endure, and the manner in which we do business requires sustainable transformation to prevent further environmental damage (Hoffman, 2018). Organisations fundamentally invest in sustainability to create and capture value (El Hilali et al., 2020). This investment is often expensive and seen by shareholders and investors as deviating from the legacy notion of profit maximisation (Bhattacharya & Polman, 2017).

Kavadias, Ladas & Loch (2016) argue that digitalisation compliments sustainability and associated CSR processes. Yang, Zeng, Chan & Yu, (2021) argue that loyalty programs are accelerated by digital and an important tool in retaining consumers. According to Parida, Sjödin, & Reim (2019), digitisation facilitates and aids business model innovation in all of the business model rudiments, value creation, delivery, and capture. They argue that particularly in the area of value capture, technological efficiencies created by digitalisation and new technologies can create improvements to social and environmental challenges. Social benefits are achieved in the areas of CSR ease, employee safety as well as the creation of more rewarding and innovative employee and consumer engagement (Parida, Sjödin, & Reim, 2019). Technology plays a pivotal ambassadorial role in supporting sustainability and CSR initiatives (Parida et al., 2019), and LPs are a valuable, modern-age technological dependent tool (Yang et al., 2021). The link between these two constructs is that technology acts as an accelerant.

During 2020, South African Corporates spent approximately R 10.7 billion on CSR which represented a 4.9% increase on the prior year, with retails being amongst the top spenders

(Trialogue, 2020). The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in corporates having less available resources and constrained fiscus's, which resulted in approximately 25% of corporates either, reducing or stopping their CSR funding (Trialogue, 2020).

2.8. Customer partnerships to accelerate firm sustainability and CSR initiatives.

Corporates are now, more than ever, expected to create collaborative partnerships, private and public, to solve environmental and social issues. The research above highlights the importance of sustainability and associated CSR in the modern world. It further highlights a correlation between brand reputation, sustainability, and firm performance. In an era where firm resources are limited due to the challenging economic climate, where digitalisation is the order of the day, and where sustainability is at the forefront of consumers mindsets, could firm strategic partnerships be an exploitable opportunity? Could firms partner with customers to collectively achieve sustainability initiatives, utilising less resources, while leveraging their volume-based customer capabilities?

Hoffman (2018) argues that as a systemic corporate strategy, new partnership conceptions could be a contributor to the next phase of sustainability for corporates. Innovative and novel partnerships that could exist between firms and their consumers. A review conducted by Avery (2015), found that there were two critical aspects for a firm hoping to achieve sustainability and associated CSR goals. These were active engagement of the board of directors and equally as important, generating extensive and collaborative partnerships. Further, that some of the fundamental rationale in doing so, was to widen the reach of their initiatives and create a greater degree of effectiveness. Customers, as a novel and innovative firm CSR partnership, are expected to support firm positive CSR behaviour. Firms should engage with their consumers to understand their needs and social values to create the auspices of value co-creation. They should be considered as partners and co-creators rather than recipients of value (Ali, Amer, Muhammad, Umair, Imran & Naveed, 2020).

2.9. Consumer engagement as a sustainability and CSR partnership imperative

Pansari & Kumar (2017) define customer engagement as the “mechanics of a customer's value addition to the firm, either through direct or/and indirect contribution” (p.295). As can be seen above, partnerships are essential in the creation of shared value and customer engagement in CSR can be a growth driver for firms, as it promotes retention, strengthens connections, and enhances loyalty (O'Brien et al., 2020). Customer engagement has emerged as a significant contributor to firm positive outcomes such as brand image, brand value, performance, and profitability (Gligor, Bozkurt & Russo, 2019).

Consumer engagement research has been all too focused on customer commination, customer satisfaction, the development of product and services to create products and services that suit consumers. There is a need to understand the customer engagement within CSR initiatives (Hwang & Kandampully, 2015; O'Brien et al., 2020). The findings by O'Brien et al., (2020) explain that customer preference of CSR initiatives weighed heaviest on a customer's inclination to engage in any form on the CSR matter. Further, that in instances of lower adoption in LPs, social constructs through LPs, would engage consumers and result in higher participation. It is found consistently in literature that customer engagement and CSR are measures of improved customer loyalty (Chen et al., 2021; Contini et al., 2020; O'Brien et al., 2020).

A study conducted by Choi, Mattila & Quadri-Felitti, (2019) found that as part of CSR engagement, consumers are inclined to perceive the company to be more socially responsible when the social initiative involves local beneficiaries and that the perceived CSR engagement has a spill over effect on consumer willingness to donate. Therefore, loyalty programs as tools to harness customer loyalty, seems a logical technological advancement to engage and partner with consumers to solve sustainability and CSR issues. One established area in marketing which addresses customer engagement in social initiatives is cause-related marketing.

2.10. Loyalty programs and cause related marketing (CrM)

LPs are considered as customer relationship management tools, used to identify, award, and retain profitable customers (Chen et al., 2021). Further, to incentivise and influence customer behaviours (Steinhoff & Palmatier, 2016). They are a customer reward system for the frequent purchase of products or services, thereby classifying customers as loyal, and incentivising their behaviours (Silvar, 2015). Embedded in marketing theories, they usually incorporate rewards, cashback, tiered service levels, "VIP" experiences, brand connections, and dedicated and hyper-personal engagement to influence customer behaviours (Steinhoff & Palmatier, 2016). They are now pervasive across the world with many firms utilising them to drive loyalty which results in satisfaction, loyalty through repeat purchase, and gratification for customers (Gao & Mattila, 2017).

CrM is in essence, a set of marketing actions that involve firms contributing value to causes when customers engage to satisfy firm organisational objectives (Hassan & AbouAish, 2018). A typical example is an airline donating a portion of each airline ticket sold or allowing members to donate their reward miles to charitable causes, thus satisfying and contributing to the achievement of stated CSR targets. This allows firms to follow both operational and brand

marketing objectives as well as contribute to CSR. This concept is distinctly rooted in stakeholder theory which promotes the notion of an all-encompassing pursuit of purpose before profits (Waheed et al., 2020). CrM is also one of the six types of CSR which also include corporate social marketing, cause promotions, responsible business practices, volunteering, and corporate philanthropy (Hassan & AbouAish, 2018). Customer engagement is a crucial part of CrM and CSR and (Gao & Mattila, 2017). Loyalty programs may be used as the lever to activate CrM and promote customers contributing to firm CSR initiatives (Gao & Mattila, 2017; Steinhoff & Palmatier, 2016). The intention and willingness to donate customer rewards is however an area for contentious debate. Gao & Mattila (2017) argue that depending on the type of reward generated, consumers would more or less likely to donate such rewards. For instance, should rewards be earned through engagement activities, purchases, and performance, these would be less likely to be donated. Conversely, more likely to be donated in instances of chance or surprise. The Gao & Matilla (2017) study further found that in the presence of other consumers, the donation likelihood is heightened due to the social positive, self-image preservation, or discomfort nature associated with donating. Hwang & Kandampully, (2015) also identified the construct of “pro-social LPs” which endorse CSR commitment by firms. An example of this is the influence and incentivisation of customers through LPs to purchase sustainable products.

Among some of the best examples of CrM is the case of Discovery Limited’s Vitality program in SA. Discovery Limited is an organisation that operates in banking, health, insurance, and investments spaces. They pride themselves on innovation and a shared value business model which includes their Vitality loyalty program across their fleet (Discovery, n.d.-c). This model largely incentivises good and healthy customer behaviours which in essence, reduces the burden on health expenses both for the customer as well as the firm (Discovery, n.d.-c). An innovation which bridges the loyalty and CSR divide is that Discovery Vitality members may opt to donate their Discovery Miles to charitable contributions. This was as part of their Vitality “MoveToGive” campaign aimed at a variety of charitable options, which are matched by the Discovery Fund (Business Insider, 2020).

2.11. Conclusion

The literature on stakeholder theory highlights the specific requirements for firms to operate more holistically, and consider all their stakeholders, not just from a managerial view, but as co-creators of value (Freeman, 2010). With the importance of social initiatives, CSR, and sustainability, as drivers of customer engagement and loyalty, LPs play an integral role. LPs enable the alignment of a more inclusive, and collaborative firm, with a distinct focus on the achievement of CSR and social targets, enabled by technology (Gao & Mattila, 2017). Also,

with social benefits being found to be the most significant driver of loyalty in the sector (Fourie, 2018), engagement with customers through an LP should be considered a crucial design component. All the major SA banks have effective LPs, and each have social benefits and social causes that enable customer reward donations. The use of social benefits in banking LPs is utilised by all the large SA retail banks, however, the effects have yet to be fully explored. CSR is now, more than ever, viewed as a driver that enhances brand perception and reputation. Brand reputation and the perception of their customers is a critical imperative for banks to regain credibility and lost trust. Banks are therefore understanding the positive influence of CSR on reputation and merging LPs, which are an effective tool in personal customer engagement (Pérez & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2014).

The literature above includes the constructs of stakeholder theory, CSR, LPs, brand perception and reputation. Further, also includes the current landscape of SA retail banks and their LPs. Each of these constructs identify the need for the inclusion and management of stakeholders, particularly customers. The literature also notes positive correlations between CSR and reputation as well as social LPs and engagement. What has not been considered are the empirical consumer attitudes, motivators and deterrents that underpin these constructs. Further, an understanding of the perceptions of bank customers when their bank enables collaborative social benefits. Lastly, based on the somewhat, slow uptake in engagement within the SA retail banking landscape, an understanding of the factors that may enhance engagement is necessary.

3. CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this research is to answer the research questions presented below. The literature discussed in Chapter 2 formed the foundation for the research questions:

3.1. Research Question 1 – Attitudes, motivators, and deterrents

What are the attitudes, motivators and deterrents that affect customer willingness to donate earned LP rewards towards defined bank CSR or social initiatives?

3.2. Research Question 2 – Perceptions

What are the effects of having social causes embedded into SA retail bank LPs, on customer brand perception and reputation?

3.3. Research Question 3 – Enhancements

What can be done to further improve the consumer willingness to donate to social causes through SA retail bank LPs?

Based on the research questions above, the researcher aims to gain a deeper understanding of the SA retail banking LP landscape, particularly within the social and CSR construct. Further, to understand the significant effects on consumer participation, contribution, and the consumer perceptions of the bank. The researcher will also attempt to explore and understand the conditions or variables that motivate or deter consumers to donate their LP rewards to firm CSR or sustainability initiatives. Further, this research aims to understand the correlation between these constructs as a measure to offer solutions to the elements that may be improved to enhance consumer engagement.

4. CHAPTER 4 – RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology in line with research problem and preliminary assumptions and includes, choice of methodology, research design, population, sampling method, population, unit/measure of analysis, research instruments, data gathering and analysis approach, hypothesis testing and research rigour. Business research may be defined as the academic study of topics related to questions relevant to business, including management and organisations (Bryman, Bell & Harley, 2019).

4.1. Research design, purpose, and philosophy

The research design selected was qualitative, **exploratory** underpinned by the **interpretivism** research philosophy. Research design represents a logical manner in which to guide a research study and provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data (Bryman et al., 2019; Krishnaswamy & Satyaprasad, 2010). Research purpose may be explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive, with exploratory research aimed at seeking new insights and to gain a deeper understanding of the social phenomena being studied. This kind of research factors in the effects between variables in response to the research problem (Quinlan, Babin, Carr, Griffin & Zikmund, 2019; Rahi, 2017; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2003). Exploratory research was the appropriate choice. This was due to the researcher aiming to obtain deeper insights into the consumer mindset that would encourage or dissuade the donation of rewards through bank LPs. Deeper insights were also sought to understand the customer perception of the bank, as well as understand the variables that would enhance engagement, participation, and contribution.

The appropriate choice of philosophy for this study is **interpretivism**, which is an epistemological stance that requires a grasp of the subjective meaning of social action (Bryman et al., 2019). This philosophy is grounded in the notion of obtaining a deep understanding of the real world (Rahi, 2017), with a focus on understanding the social world through its participants (Bryman et al., 2019). This approach was used to underpin this qualitative study which related to the social phenomenon of individual customers who engage on their bank's LP in a South African context. The rationale for this choice was that the researcher aims to understand the social narrative of understanding the underlying conditions, variables, barriers, enablers, and effects that would have SA retail banking customers, donate their LP rewards to social causes (Saunders et al., 2003). Interpretivism and a qualitative approach allows the researcher to obtain various customer views by engaging with social participants such as customers of retail banking institutions. This study aims to examine the relationships between the constructs provided in the literature review.

4.2. Approach

For the above reasons, this study was termed an **inductive** research approach, which is a process by which theory is developed by observations (Bryman et al., 2017; Quinlan et al., 2019). This approach will enable the researcher to understand and draw new linkages and build on stakeholder theory, focused on customers, and within the social diaspora (Saunders et al., 2003). The researcher intended to explore whether the effects, attitudes, motivators, deterrents and enhancements would improve stakeholder theory specific to the customer.

4.3. Choice of methodology and strategy

The methodological choice selected for this study was the **mono-method qualitative research** study which enabled a detailed understanding of the consumer mindset and consumer willingness to donate through LPs. A related rationale for this type of methodology was the exploratory nature (Quinlan et al., 2019) of the underlying considerations being explored between the consumer mindset and the willingness to contribute to bank social initiatives through LPs.

This data was generated through a **semi-structured interview** strategy. Semi-structured interviews were the appropriate choice to allow the researcher to utilise a set of predetermined questions in an effort to explore the social phenomena being studied at a SA retail bank customer level. It provided a method of qualitative interviewing in which there was a focus on the interviewee's point of view and experience. Additionally, new questions could be asked that uncovered new and exploratory themes to be considered (Bryman et al., 2019). Further, this enabled the researcher to contribute to the vast literature on stakeholder theory as applied to the social phenomena (Quinlan, Babin, Carr, Griffin & Zikmund, 2019) by gaining new insights within the consumer construct. Also, the twelve semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to explore detailed concepts and customer perspectives. Semi-structured interviews are an essential qualitative research tool which allows the researcher to create a pre-determined set of questions as well as allow for elaboration and contextualisation. The interview schedule is detailed in **Appendix C – Interview Schedule**. These interviews allowed the researcher to develop themes and concepts which differed from interview to interview. Also, the question order sequence varied depending on the conversation flow which, at times, required additional, clarification or elaboration questions that were posed to the respondents (Saunders et al., 2003).

This approach, along with the qualitative exploratory approach, were considered appropriate for the purpose of this study which fundamentally focussed on the population of SA retail bank

customers. This was agnostic of customers belonging to their bank LP or not. Bank LP members were probed on their engagement and awareness through their membership. Non-LP members were asked to justify their non-involvement in bank LPs and the related rationale. All respondents were however asked to discuss their engagement with the bank, their perceptions, their motivating and deterring factors, on their propensity to donate their rewards to bank social causes. The focus was on highlighting the attitudinal and behavioural themes, barriers, enablers, and effects of customer willingness to donate to CSR through the twelve semi-structured interviews. Therefore, all institutional LPs among the large retail banks and new digital bank entrants' users were considered to ensure objectivity, avoid bias, and avoid generalisability (Bryman et al., 2019; Quinlan et al., 2019; Saunders et al., 2003). Further, bank and LP names were omitted as to understand the overall consumer mindset. A conversational mechanism was utilised to understand the constructs of the attitudinal and behavioural considerations contained within the research questions. This type of study also supported in responding to the research questions which contributes to the theory of social LPs in a non-western, African market as well as contribute to stakeholder theory as applied to consumers (Saunders et al., 2003).

4.4. Time horizon

The most plausible time horizon selection to employ was cross-sectional research design. A study of this nature aimed to explore phenomena at a specific point in time (Quinlan et al., 2019; Saunders et al., 2003). This was to ensure the researcher managed to complete the research within the stipulated time constraint (Bryman et al., 2019; Saunders et al., 2003). This was deployed through the semi structured interviews, which are largely used in exploratory research (Saunders et al., 2003). The data collection was conducted over the period November 2021, for the calendar year 2021, with SA retail bank customers. Lastly, respondents and participants perspectives and opinions did reflect past or future views however, the views generated were considered current (i.e., at the time of interview being conducted).

4.5. Population

Bryman et al., (2019) describe population as “the universe of units from which a sample is to be selected.” Additionally, for this study, population in relation to related characteristics included will be SA retail banking consumers, who have engaged with the bank for a year or longer. This included all respondent's, agnostic of their affiliation or awareness of bank LPs. Further, this banking population included all SA retail banks that have an implemented LP. According to Cromhout & Netto, (2020) within the 2019/2020 South African Loyalty

Landscape, 72% of South African respondents belonged to loyalty programs which represents a substantially large population.

4.6. Sampling

Sampling provides alternatives to reaching census due to the impracticability reaching the entire population (Saunders et al., 2003). Quinlan et al., (2019) describe non-probability purposive sampling as a technique where personal judgement is used to select a sample or for convenience. For the consumer population, due to the sheer volume of the population, purposive sampling was employed utilising the researcher's corporate and collegial network, for which there was a high probability of the sample that would be customers one of the large SA retail banks or new entrant digital banks, and likely utilise their bank LP. SA retail bank market share is dominated by the top five banks and the four digital new entrants (Fitch Solutions Group, n.d) which were considered the sampling frame (Saunders et al., 2003).

The researcher set a defined objective target of ten to fifteen interviews with banking customers to achieve a generally accepted saturation point. The researcher achieved twelve interviews to uncover the themes identified. Saturation is considered when data collection does not yield any new data, and where concepts have been understood and well-developed (Saunders et al., 2003). Saturation occurs when there is response replication and ensures comprehension and completeness (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002).

4.7. Unit of analysis and measurement

This study collected data at an individual consumer level as the study aimed to examine the underlying variables considered when SA retail bank consumers that are members of LPs, consider contributions to social or CSR initiatives through bank LPs. Alternatively, those who had not engaged in donations through LPs, this research aimed to understand the related motivation and deterrent rationale. Also, this research examined the reasons for non-participation and non-contribution. In this research, individual perceptions and views of SA retail bank customers that make use of LPs constituted the unit of analysis.

The measurement instrument utilised was the interview schedule which was rooted in the research problem, literature review and research questions. The interview schedule was facilitated through the semi-structured interview process. This consisted of the process by which the researcher obtained responses from respondents (Quinlan et al., 2019). The constructs that were measured included the attitudes, motivators, deterrents and enhancements on a consumer's willingness to donate their earned LP rewards towards bank social causes. Further, the effects on customer brand perception or reputation.

4.8. Data gathering

Post ethical clearances (**Appendix A – Ethical Clearance**), potential respondents were contacted via email or telephone where the researcher explained the nature and objectives of the research. Telephone conversations were followed by emails reiterating and documenting the stated nature and objectives. Once confirmation of participation was received from respondents, the researcher and respondents agreed on interview timeline, availability, location and medium for the interview to take place. Thereafter, an electronic calendar invitation was sent to the respondent by the researcher. All respondents received within the invitation, the stated objectives and nature of the research as well as the interview consent form detailed in **Appendix B – Interview Consent Form** and the interview schedule detailed in **Appendix C – Interview Schedule**. Additionally, respondents were able to opt to remain anonymous in the provision of responses. All consent forms were signed and completed prior to any interviews commencing. Prior to interviews commencing, an introduction to the research being conducted was provided and consent was sourced for the recording of interviews. The right to anonymity was reiterated by the researcher to provide comfort for the respondent to reflect freely on the questions being answered (Saunders et al., 2003). All relevant questions were posed by the researcher as contained within the interview schedule however to obtain greater insights and elaboration, the researcher asked further questions based on the responses provided. This was done in an effort to derive additional insights and clarification from respondents to identify key themes of attitudes, motivations, and deterrents of donating LP rewards as part of CSR. Additionally, transcription software on Microsoft Teams was used to record interviews and categorised (Bryman et al., 2019; Quinlan et al., 2019).

Respondent interviews were recorded using the researcher's personal Microsoft Teams application. Each recording file was saved in the researcher's private cloud-based drive. A transcriber was not utilised, therefore access to the drive was not shared. The transcription files were validated by the researcher and corrected to reflect the correct contents of the interview.

Prior to the collection of data, a pilot test interview was conducted to test the interview schedule for understandability and whether any alterations would be required prior to officially collecting data (Bryman et al., 2019; Quinlan et al., 2019; Saunders et al., 2003). Further, this was done to test coherence to the research questions and constructs.

4.9. Data analysis

One of the main aspects of collecting and analysing qualitative data is to develop a complete and rich account of the phenomena of the research (Quinlan et al., 2019). As mentioned, the semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed. Thereafter, data, was coded using ATLAS.TI as a qualitative data analysis software tool. A code is a word or concept that the researcher identifies in the data that is essential to the research study (Quinlan et al., 2019). Further, to ensure rigour, this qualitative research acknowledged and considered language to determine themes, patterns and meaning of the data collected on the constructs that the study relates to (Quinlan et al., 2019). The coded data generated themes and categories to explain the data.

A thematic analysis was conducted to understand themes and trends in relation to the research questions on the consumer mindset, and its associated attitudes, motivators, deterrents, perceptions, and potential enhancements of consumers possibly utilising banking LPs for social causes. A thematic analysis represents the method of identifying and analysing themes (Bryman et al., 2019).

4.10. Data saturation

Data saturation is considered a qualitative methodological stance that posits that data is collected, analysed and at a point, no further data gathering is necessary as the number of new codes generated are significantly, or incrementally reduced (Saunders, Sim, Kingstone, Baker, Waterfield, Bartlam, Burroughs & Jinks, 2018). The approach to saturation is discussed within chapter 5 and thematic saturation was reached within this inductive study.

4.11. Reliability and validity

Reliability may be defined as the consistency of a measure of a construct and the extent to which data collection or analysis generate consistent findings. Validity as a research credibility metric, is focused on the stated findings are truly about what they appear to be about (Bryman et al., 2019; Saunders et al., 2003). Convergent validity was used when the constructs were themed to ensure higher validation of findings (Bryman et al., 2019).

4.12. Research limitations

There were a few limitations when interpreting the potential results of the study. This study focused on the SA retail banking sector LP landscape, even though LPs are prevalent in most other industries in SA. These results may not be generalised across industries and sectors. Further, not all respondents were members of bank LPs, and most respondents had never

donated reward points to social causes through their bank. Not all age groups and ethnicities participated and therefore, these results may not be affiliated to an age, or ethnic grouping. The study was conducted within the SA construct only and therefore, may not necessarily be generalised to other countries, or as a base for the continent of Africa. Also, as this study focused on those retail banks that utilise LPs with CSR initiatives embedded, and therefore may not be generalised with institutions engaging in these activities without a LP. Lastly, as this study aims to engage with the full population of SA retail banks that make use of LPs which have a social component, there is a limitation that at the time of data collection, social initiatives may not be evident in the bank LP, nor would all the large retail banks be included in the sample as banks of customers interviewed. For this reason, bank and LP names were omitted and the findings were generalised across the SA retail banking spectrum.

4.13. Ethical considerations

Prior to the commencement of this research, the researcher sought, and received ethical clearance from the Masters Ethics Committee of the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. Respondents were also promised anonymity and therefore any identifiers to respondents identity was removed. Bank and LP names were used in the context of framing contextual information, however were removed in respondent responses so as not to create competing elements between banks and LPs. Pseudo names were used for banks and bank LPs.

5. CHAPTER 5 – RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the analysis of the data collected by the author through twelve semi structured interviews with SA retail bank consumers. This research was primarily aimed at understanding the effects of having social causes embedded into SA retail bank LPs. Also, the associated effects on brand perception. Further, to uncover the motivators and deterrents that would increase or inhibit customer “willingness to donate” their earned LP rewards toward defined bank CSR or social initiatives. This research also sought to examine the aspects that could improve the consumer participation and willingness to donate to social causes through SA retail bank LPs. The research aimed at solving the gaps in the literature specific to the consumer mindset of donating LP rewards within the SA retail banking context. Most of the literature has been largely focused on LP design and effectiveness, and in western markets. The research sought to uncover and understand the consumer attitudes, motivational factors, deterrents, perceptions, and possible enhancements. This was in an effort to enhance SA retail bank stakeholder engagement in social activism and CSR through bank LPs.

The sample respondents were all customers of SA retail banks and over the age of 18. Their age, gender and ethnicity were sourced to identify any demographical trends. Participant ages were grouped so as not to provide the exact participant age, e.g., 30-40. No other identifying information was sought and therefore not included in the analysis. Due to the nature of the research and the current health climate due to COVID-19, all the interviews were conducted via video conferencing tool, Microsoft Teams. A pilot interview was conducted after which the interview schedule was amended to reflect slight variations in the line of questioning. As mentioned, as the interviews were semi-structured, additional questions were posed to obtain an in depth understanding on a particular answer. Therefore, not all interviews followed the same flow or the precise interview schedule. All interviewees were from South Africa and represented the social and collegial network of the researcher. Each interviewee was a banking customer of a SA retail bank and interviews took place over a one-month period. Each interview lasted between thirty minutes and one hour.

5.2. Description of sample

The sample consisted of twelve respondents who were each promised anonymity within this research. Their bank and LP names were omitted, even though they were provided in the interview. This was to ensure that there was no deviation from the research questions, and to avoid competitive dynamics between the banks and LPs. Bank and LP names, even though

are widely available in the public domain, were not utilised as to ensure aggregation in the findings. Thus, any identifiers to the respondent, bank or bank LP have been removed within the respondent quotes. Each respondent was assigned and interviewee number code, i.e., Respondent #2. All bank names contained within the respondent quotes were masked with the letters, “BBB”, LP or reward names with the letters, “LLL”, LP partners with “PPP” and social beneficiaries as “SSS”. The spread of banks and LPs were discussed to provide validation that the major SA retail banks were contained within the sample. Each respondent provided their opinions on their engagement with their bank or LP and therefore, bank and LP names were widely referenced in this research, however masked. The focus of the research was aimed at the personal bank accounts of the respondents rather than any business or shared bank accounts. Some participants held more than one bank account with multiple banks and their responses were indicative of their use of both banks’ LPs, where applicable. Below is a representation of the demographic, retail bank and LP usage for the representative sample.

Any representation of banking partners or social beneficiaries mentioned through the respondent data was removed. This was due to the partners and social beneficiaries that associate with the banks would result in the bank and LP name being recognisable. Partner names were masked with the letters “PPP” and social beneficiary names were masked with the letters “SSS”.

The approximate bank and LP spread contained within the respondent data is represented as follows:

Figure 1: Bank customer by respondent

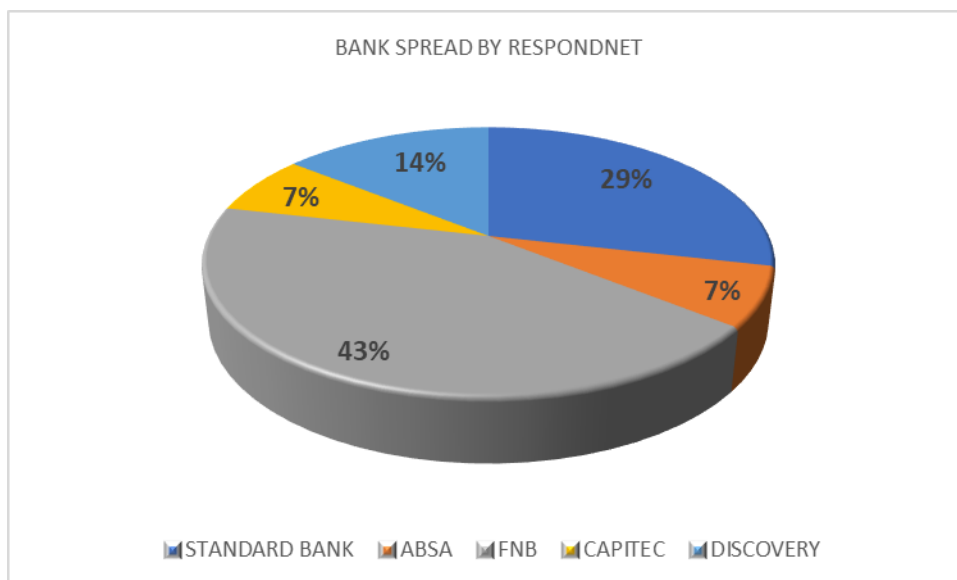


Figure 2: LP customer by respondent

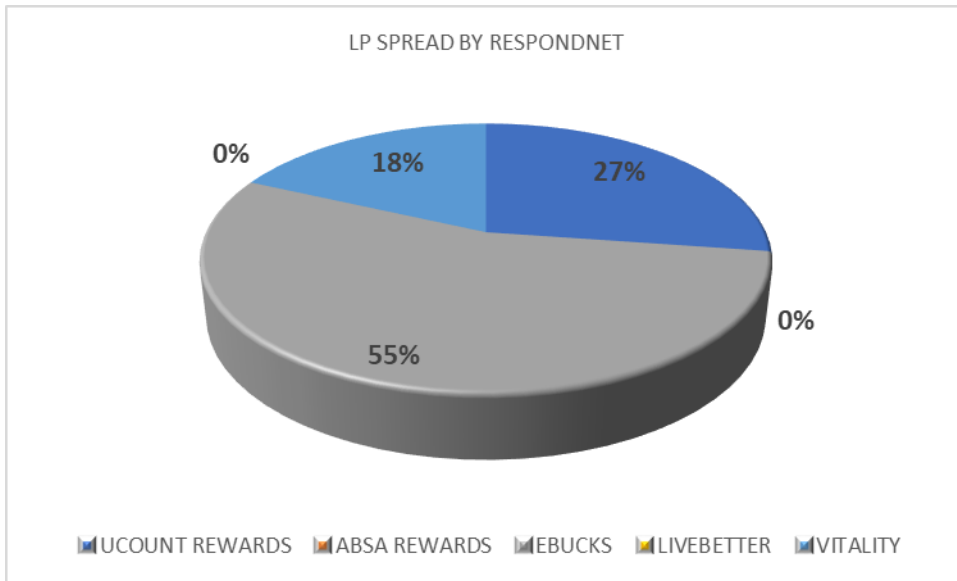


Table 1: Description of respondent demographic, bank, and LP

Respondent	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	LP Program	Length of time with bank (years)
Respondent #1	30-40	Female	Indian	Not a member	10 - 15
Respondent #2	Not answered	Not answered	Not answered	Not a member	15 - 20
Respondent #3	20-30	Male	White	Member	5 - 10
Respondent #4	40-50	Male	White	Not a member	5 - 10
Respondent #5	30-40	Male	Indian	Member of two bank LPs	20 - 25 1 - 2
Respondent #6	30-40	Female	White	Member of two bank LPs	10 - 15 1 - 2

Respondent #7	40-50	Male	White	Member	30 - 35
Respondent #8	40-50	Male	Coloured	Member	10 - 15
Respondent #9	60-70	Male	Indian	Member	15 - 20
Respondent #10	20-30	Male	Indian	Member	10 - 15
Respondent #11	20-30	Female	White	Member	15 - 20
Respondent #12	40-50	Female	White	Member	20 - 25

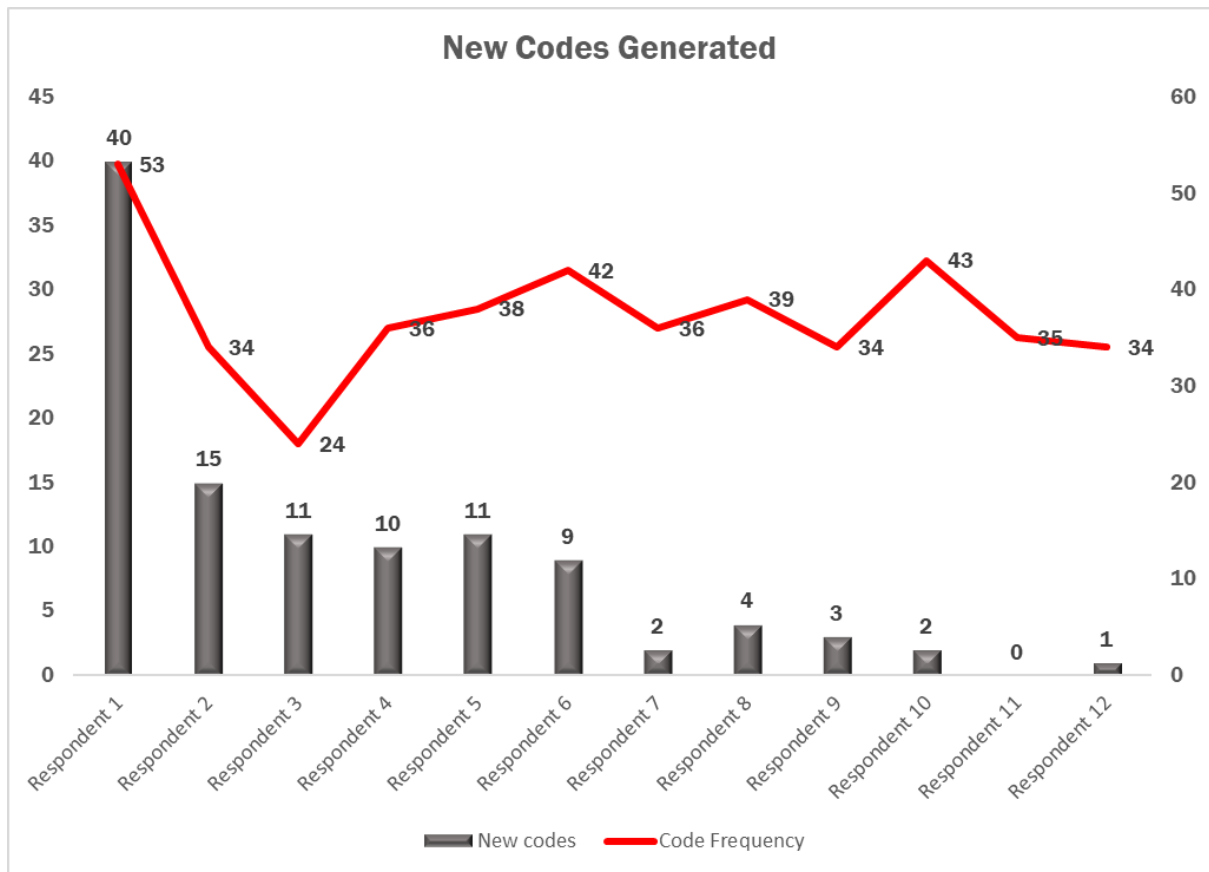
Source: Researcher developed

33% of the sample population was female with 58% being male and 9% of the not divulging their gender. Further, 50% of the population was white and 33% Indian, with 9% being coloured and 9% not sharing their ethnicity. The banking spread on the population customer base included FNB, Standard Bank, ABSA, Discovery Bank and Capitec. Also, the associated LP spread included EBucks, UCount Rewards, Absa Rewards, Vitality and LiveBetter.

5.3. Data saturation

Data saturation was reached approximately at interview 7, however further interviews were conducted to ensure research rigour (Saunders et al., 2018). The number of new codes generated is contained within the graph below and highlights the researcher's approach to saturation. The linear depiction highlights the code frequency by interview.

Figure 3: Data saturation



Source: Researcher developed

5.4. Presentation of results

This chapter presents the findings of the analysis of the data collected by the author through twelve semi structured interviews with SA retail bank consumers. Data collected through the semi-structured interviews were analysed through Atlas TI, and the respondent interviews were allocated a code. There were 108 codes generated through the data analysis that were categorised in code groups or themes. These codes are contained within **Appendix D – Code report**. As highlighted, through a detailed thematic analysis, the 108 codes were grouped into code groups that formed themes which were directed to answer the research questions posed.

Table 2: Thematic analysis of generated codes

Codes	Frequency	Code Group	Theme	Research Question
108 codes - Various	56	Ethnicity	Demographics and background	Research Question 1, 2 & 3
		Gender		
		Age		
	120	Bank customer	Bank and LP insights	Research Question 1, 2 & 3
		Awareness of bank LP		
		Length of time as bank customer		
		Reason for joining/not joining bank LP		
		Member of LP		
	175	Awareness of social causes on bank LP	Attitudes, motivators & deterrents	Research Question 1
		Deterrents to donating LP rewards		
		Social cause preferences		
		Earned not given		
		Attitudes and motivators of donating LP rewards		

		Prior donation of LP rewards		
		Willingness to donate		
		Rewards are easy to earn		
		Rewards not easy to earn		
	36	Negative bank perceptions	Perceptions	Research Question 2
		Positive bank perceptions		
	61	Authenticity	Enhancements	Research Question 3
		Awareness and communication		
		Ease & effort		
		Social cause reporting		

Source: Researcher developed

Research results are presented below in accordance with the research questions posed.

5.5. Contextualisation and framing of results

Prior to presenting the results of the research pertaining to the individual research questions, this section aims to frame the respondent demographics and provide essential insights into their use and selection of their SA retail bank and associated LP.

5.5.1. Demographics and background

As mentioned, optional questions were asked of respondents to understand and aggregate their age group, gender, and ethnicity. Eleven of the twelve respondents were willing to provide this information with one respondent preferring not to share. Any additional identifiers to the

respondents have been removed. The results identified that four of the sample population was female with seven being male and one not divulging their gender. Further, three respondents were between the ages of 20 to 30 years, three respondents were between the ages of 30 to 40 years, four were between the ages of 40 to 50 years, one respondent was between 60 and 65 years of age with one respondent not divulging their age group. From an ethnicity point of view, four respondents were of Indian ethnicity, six were white Caucasian, one was Coloured, and one did not divulge their ethnicity.

5.5.2. Bank and LP insights

To effectively frame the results from participants who had answered questions based on their engagement with their bank and bank LP, respondents were asked which SA retail bank they were a customer of as well as the length of time that they have been a customer. This study focused on those customers that have been a customer with their bank for longer than a year. Respondents were also asked about their awareness of their banks LP, and whether they were members of the bank LP. Reasons for them joining, or not joining were understood as well as gaining an in depth understanding of the ease of reward earning within the bank LP. This was sourced to provide additional context for the relationship between ease of reward earning and customer willingness to donate rewards.

5.5.2.1. Bank and LP spread

Of the twelve respondents, four respondents were customers of Standard Bank. One respondent was a customer of ABSA. One respondent was a Capitec customer. Four respondents were FNB customers. Further, two respondents banked with Discovery Bank. Therefore, of the twelve respondents, nine were members of their banks LP. Lastly, two respondents had more than one personal bank account.

5.5.2.2. Length of time as bank customer

Each of the respondents have been engaging with their respective bank and LP for a relatively lengthy period of time. The two Discovery Bank customers have been with their bank and LP for the shortest time, 1-2 years. This was due to Discovery Bank being the newest bank amongst the respondent banking set. Both respondents however have been engaging on the LP previously through Discovery medical insurance prior to joining Discovery Bank. Two respondents were bank and LP customers for a period of 5-10 years. Four respondents were with their respective banks between 10-15 years. Three respondents, for a period of 15-20 years. Two respondents for 20-25 years and one banking customer has been a banking customer for 30-35 years.

5.5.2.3. Awareness of bank LP

Respondents were asked if they were cognizant of their bank LP and most respondents displayed an awareness of their bank LP. Of those, most were either members already, or deliberately opted not to join their LP. Respondents stated their bank LP by name and displayed an overall awareness of these programs, some, even expressing that their LP was the reason for their bank choice.

- *“LLL. It’s the reason I switched to BBB” - Respondent 3.*

Additionally, only one participant was completely unaware of their bank LP.

- *“No, I’m not. OK, I saw it once on my app, but I didn’t go into it or read anything about it. I know the name, but I don’t know this was a loyalty program or how to get involved.” – Respondent 4.*

5.5.2.4. Reasons for joining, or not joining bank LP

As mentioned, nine of the twelve respondents were members of their bank LP, and respondents were requested to provide the reasons for them either joining, or not joining their banks LP. Additionally, the researcher probed to understand the factors that they view as important when using the bank LP. The most overwhelming factor in the respondents choosing to join their bank LP was identified as the receipt of commercial benefits.

- *“So, for me personally, it was the fact that, you get back something, like something you can use again. Something usable not just points that you can't use it at most retailers and LLL, you can use it at PPP and that's the most important part for us, with all the online shopping we do. I use almost every single LLL reward I get” – Respondent 5.*
- *“Commercial in nature and the money saving, but also the fact that there was this earn and burn benefit and the lounge visits because I was traveling a lot. There's also a lot of spend and burn partners. You know both online and physical in store.” - Respondent 8.*
- *“I saw value in their program because the benefits to me were a lot. For me I use my LLL almost like a savings program. I don't spend LLL at all until it's like a Black Friday special or time to buy Christmas presents or something like that. So, throughout the year, I just let my LLL accumulate. I don't spend it unless I really want to buy something. So almost as a savings account.” – Respondent 3.*

- *“When I joined it, it was mostly about the rewards that I was getting on my fuel. And obviously that has now changed, so now I'm just accumulating the points and yeah, I mainly joined because of the petrol rebate that I used to get.” – Respondent 12.*

Respondents who identified commercial benefits as the key driver also provided additional factors. Ancillary reasons for them joining the bank LP emerged as additional factors for the joining their bank LP. Some respondents mentioned that the reason that they joined their bank LP was that they felt compelled or forced to join as it appeared as if the LP membership came with their bank account.

- *“So, I would say on the LLL side I don't ever really remember having a choice. I felt like the account just came with LLL and then my banker pestered me about my level because I would get certain rebates or account fees covered and so I just became more and more conscious of that I would say. Probably in the pandemic years I was more conscious of it just because it was a cost saving mechanism. So, I don't feel like I opted in. I feel like it just came with the bank but for LLL, it started with the health side of it. And then I had a BBB card through BBB and then with the BBB card, you needed your own BBB account. So, in that way I was kind of shoved to BBB.” – Respondent 6*
- *“No, it was more that they pushed it to me.” – Respondent 8*

Ease of LP use and ease of reward earning, were identified as significant contributors to respondents joining a bank LP. Many expressed that the simplicity of using the LP through an app was a contributing factor. Further, that earning rewards through transactions with affiliated partners justified their membership.

- *“You didn't have to achieve much in terms of criteria. It was little, simple things. Things such as transactions I was already making. So, it was just essentially the ease of the loyalty program that probably moved me towards it.” – Respondent 10.*
- *“I saw that I could use a lot of the LLL to buy stuff on PPP, and so on. So that's basically what I used it for and basically because PPP was a partner. I do spend a lot of money at PPP with the kids and everything you know. So that's mainly why did it” – Respondent 7.*

Another key factor attributable to respondents' inclination in joining their bank LP was the feeling of connectedness and feeling valued by the bank. This was mentioned by several respondents which highlights additional attitudinal considerations.

- *“For me to feel valued as a customer and to gain something back for being loyal to the bank, essentially.”* – Respondent 6.
- *“To feel valued and to get something in return for you choosing that bank, I think.”* – Respondent 12.
- *“Being connected to the bank and for them to see me as a valued customer”.* – Respondent 9

Conversely though, of the three respondents that were not part of their bank LP, two stated their lack of awareness and education of the LP as the major reason for not joining. They further explained that the bank did not do enough to market it to them and make them aware. Further, respondent 1 did not have an understanding of whether the LP membership was an automatic addition with the bank account or achieved through card transactions.

- *“I just think at this stage it wasn't marketed well enough to me to make it interesting whereas I can tell you in honesty with BBB and the LLL and from BBB it was straightforward, it was marketed to you, and you exactly knew when you went by a billboard, that this is what it's about and I was part of it”.* – Respondent 4
- *“I'm not sure if I'd directly become a member if I swipe the card somewhere, I'm actually not so sure.”* – Respondent 1

The hyper-personal aspirations of most LPs often create personalisation and solidify engagement and customer value. Respondent 2, who had understood the bank LP, and deliberately decided against joining the program, provided a variety of reasons the choice. Among them was the lack of personalisation and personal commercial benefits specific to the respondent, a lack of product affinity, a lack of perceived value for money in joining the LP, as well as the fact that there were too many partners on the LP. Interestingly as well, respondent 2 highlighted the lack of social cause affinity as a substantial reason for not joining the banks LP.

- *“My loyalty with any company that I have a loyalty program that I'm linked with, and that I use, is usually because they don't have too many things on their platform. So, for example, I know, for instance at PPP loyalty program, they stand for CSR, and you know, all the SDG things. It's very clear. And other than that, I like what the product and the brand stand for. And I love shopping there. And I know when I shop there, I get good value for money even though it's expensive. I know clearly where my money is going to. I know that a certain percentage of my money goes to certain schools and*

feeding schemes. And in turn I get loyalty points, and I know if I buy a coffee, I get 15% back. Similarly, with PPP. I know when I shop at PPP, at the end of the certain period, I get so much cash back and I can use it. I know when I go to PPP, I know I'm going to get a discount on the petrol, that's brilliant. So, when PPP was partnering with PPP, I went to PPP. And they stopped with PPP and moved to PPP, I moved to PPP. It's clear cut. I just didn't see that with BBB LLL” – Respondent 2.

- *“Now with BBB, first of all, they have a whole lot of reward partners. Some of the reward partners I shop with, and I use, but the majority I don't use. So, the reason I haven't signed up with them, and they've tried desperately to get me to sign up. – Respondent 2.*
- *“It's not tailor made to me. I don't feel that sense that they know what I'm about and what my needs are. And over and above that I don't see any CSR element there. Well, I see loyalty partners. Maybe they do feeding schemes or whatever, or they donate money, but there's nothing about that here and I've never received any correspondence on charity, which is close to me. All I know is that they have those partners and the majority of them, don't talk to me. – Respondent 2.*

5.6. Research question 1 results – Attitudes, motivators, and deterrents

Research question 1 - What are the attitudes, motivators and deterrents that affect customer willingness to donate earned LP rewards towards defined bank CSR or social initiatives?

Research question 1 sought to identify and understand the SA retail bank customer mindset around their readiness and proclivity to donate. The question aimed to uncover the related attitudes and behaviours of a customer's inclination to donate their earned LP rewards toward bank-defined social causes. Two overarching questions were posed to respondents to understand their willingness to donate. The first was related to the factors and rationale that would enhance their engagement and participation on donating their rewards. The second was to understand the inhibiting factors or considerations that would deter participation and contribution. Probing questions were asked to determine the level of awareness of their bank's social causes on the LP, as well as their beliefs on the “earned” nature of rewards.

According to respondents, by far the most significant contributor that affects the potential for consumers to donate their LP rewards towards social initiatives, is the lack of awareness that banks offered this capability. There were also several other factors that contribute to the customer willingness to donate. Among these are the ease of reward earning, the ease of giving up rewards, the nature and transparency of the social causes. Further, also highlighted

were the social attitudes of respondents specific to the influence of their social network, religious, past or life experiences, cultural and faith-based factors. Conversely, respondents were asked about the barriers present that would inhibit or deter their participation and potential contribution. Among the barriers identified, was the lack of perceived transparency, the lack of personalisation, the lack of ease and effort, the lack of variety in social cause options, and the fact that reward earning was perceived as difficult. Further, additional attitudinal barriers were noted in respect of the notion of giving up rewards that were perceived as gifts. Also, that donation of rewards is perceived as not authentic as there is no commercial sacrifice being made.

5.6.1. Awareness of social benefits on Bank LP

One of the most important metrics in measuring effective stakeholder relationship and managing loyalty, is communication. All respondents were asked whether they were aware of social causes on their bank LP that they could contribute to using their loyalty points or rewards. All respondents, except three customer respondents, were completely unaware of this value proposition by their bank, and therefore, had never donated using their bank LP or with their rewards. Respondents seemed surprised by this notion and their lack of awareness was visible.

- *“No how would you donate in LLL?” – Respondent 5*
- *“BBB I honestly have no idea that I can donate to anyone in that platform.” – Respondent 6.*
- *“With BBB, it's just not clear, it's just not and look I do Internet banking all the time and I use my app. I go on the web and whatever, so at any given time every other day, there's nothing. I don't get any cause, or maybe it's because I didn't have to sign up on their marketing, and that's possible as well because I hate being bombarded. But generally, it's not on their landing page, not on the app. Nothing, there's nothing there.” - Respondent 2.*
- *“Not at all. I do not know anything that I can spend my LLL on to help a social cause within BBB, no.” – Respondent 3.*

Three respondents were aware of their ability to interact with their bank and contribute on the LP towards social causes. Two respondents had donated their LP rewards in the past.

- *“I’m aware of it on the BBB platform, I would say more than I am on LLL because BBB has a lot more banners on their app. They say, “hey, this is what we’re doing” or they’ll send you an email and say, “you can donate your miles to SSS”. Or you can donate to something else. So, I felt like there was a lot more communication around donation of miles. And it comes up a lot more in the LLL networks. An example I would be PPP when you’re booking and using LLL, whatever they’ll say, “do you want to donate to the SSS thing” and there’s many different aspects where it seems to keep popping up in the LLL networks, so I am more aware of it there.” – Respondent 6*
- *“I actually wasn’t. The only one that I that I saw was during COVID was I think it was with Solidarity or something like that, where you could donate your LLL. It’s not as widely known as for example, on the BBB side. On my BBB card, I know that there is, and I have used it in the past where they partner up with like SSS and things like that where you can give you money to cancer, and you know, children with cancer and stuff like that.” – Respondent 8.*
- *“I saw it on the app. Often when I would go into my LLL menu or something then in the options of purchasing, the relevant advert would come up and say “you can donate to so and so, or to this organisation. There were even certain programs where if you purchase certain items through LLL they would inform you where the proceeds or the profits would be going through.” – Respondent 10.*

All respondents were then informed of the manners in which they may engage with their respective bank in donating rewards and were asked whether they would then be willing to donate now that they were aware. All but one respondent positively affirmed their willingness to be involved and support social causes put forward by their bank and using their rewards.

- *“Yes, it definitely would have caught my attention.” – Respondent 11.*
- *“If there’s a cause that’s worthy, something like SSS or something, then yeah, then why not. Then I can give part of my LLL to that.” – Respondent 5.*
- *“So, it’s a no brainer if that if I have that option, I will. I will gladly take part in it.” – Respondent 4.*
- *“Yes, because I didn’t know that I could do that.” Respondent 12.*

5.6.2. Prior donation of LP rewards

The two respondents that had donated in the past were asked to explain how they donated and their experience. Much of their rationale was also contained in the remaining respondents' reasons for their inclination to donate their rewards. Respondents noted the awareness through digital channels and the simplicity of the donation as key attributes. Further, they outlined the importance of the social cause type and their belief in the cause as a motivator for donations. Lastly, the ease of giving up rewards rather than cash was seen as a contributor for respondent 10. Consistency of donations were also noted as a key outcome of the ease, structure, and platform of the LP as highlighted by respondent 8.

- *“The BBB side I have, because it's like pretty easy and they tell you like you can donate to certain charities and stuff on the BBB rewards, so that's pretty easy. When I earn BBB miles, that's easy to give like every month.”* – Respondent 8.
- *“It was a combination of factors. One was the ease of being able to donate, two was the fact that the cause for me was worthy. And essentially, simply put, because I thought that it was bit more value for me rather than me donating my money, than me using this little bit of LLL that I had gained. It was easier for me to donate.”* – Respondent 10.

5.6.3. Social cause preferences

In responding to social causes embedded into bank LPs, respondents provided the social causes that resonate with them and would cause an inclination to donation. Respondents provided their views on the types of social causes that were close to them which would yield a high likelihood of them donating. Overwhelmingly, more than half the respondents cited causes related to children and poverty to be amongst the most important social causes that resonate with them. Other social cause types included social causes pertaining to animals, woman and child abuse, disease, and disabilities. There was also a high degree of social cause preference that was local in nature and community centric.

- *“So, there is a mother and child home here. It's for women and children who come from abused homes or have no money. Also, orphanages, my heart goes completely out to them and animal shelters, particularly animal shelters, that have rescued animals from bad living conditions, bad treatments.”* – Respondent 11.
- *“Yeah. I think the thing is anything that's got to do with social upliftment, I am more than happy to support.”* – Respondent 8.

- *“Something involving kids. It can be something as basic as a feeding scheme.” – Respondent 2.*

5.6.4. Attitudes and motivators for donating LP rewards

Perhaps the most significant contribution of this research is the establishment of the factors that would enhance customer engagement in social giving through bank LP rewards. Respondents outlined many varying elements that would enhance their participation and contribution in donating LP rewards. These elements would be critical for banks when they leverage their LPs to achieve social cause outcomes and CSR.

5.6.4.1. Cause resonance

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the single largest reason for donating LP rewards to social causes was the nature, type and belief in the social cause being promoted by the bank. Much of the respondent sentiment was that where there was a distinct belief in the cause, that resonated from being part of their values, faith, local communities, and past experiences, there was a higher inclination to be involved.

- *“Yeah, I would prefer local and what would motivate me is if I recognised a charitable organisation that I’ve been in contact myself personally.” – Respondent 11.*
- *“I think look, mainly local causes. That’s kind of something I would give towards more and more on the charitable side. But it must be something that I am associated with, or I have some sort of familiarity with.” – Respondent 5.*
- *“Animal causes. Yes, a lot I grew up in the Free State on the farm on the ‘platteland’.” – Respondent 4.*
- *“On the on the LLL side, I mean I actively do go and shop LLL so I can collect points for the SSS program, not for my ‘laaitjies’ school, but for the primary school that I was at. So, if you’re able to contribute to that, then you know you make a difference in your own community” – Respondent 8.*
- *“Culturally look, like something that I think I would believe in is like a CSR project. Would be something for Palestine or Syria culturally. That’s because I’m Muslim and religiously I would say that is something that’s close to my heart” – Respondent 1.*
- *Definitely. It would. If I had to see any cause that peaked my interest, or close to something I have experienced then yes. On the cultural and religious side, if I did see*

that there were other people of the same faith around the world or in South Africa anyway, I would definitely consider aiding them before I aid anyone else.” – Respondent 10.

- *“Like I am a big believer. Like cancer is very close to my heart. Because that's what my dad passed away from, so every two weeks I donate platelets. And now that I know I can donate these points to cancer, I would just do that because it's effortless.” – Respondent 12.*

Another important theme that surfaced was, respondents, in engaging with their banks view a variety of social cause options was critical to cater to the needs of their bank's diverse customer base. Also, the degree of awareness created by the bank to their customers of the social causes available to donate to, proved a key determinant in enhancing LP reward donation potential.

- *Which is why they would probably have to give you more than one option as well. It's not a one size fits all type of thing. So, I would definitely say something I believe in, and giving me the option with the power to actually choose where I donate my money to.” – Respondent 3.*
- *“I saw it on the app. Often when I would go into my LLL menu or something, then in the options of purchasing, the relevant advert would come up and say, you can donate to so and so, or to this organisation. There were even certain programs where if you purchase certain items through LLL they would inform you where the proceeds or the profits would be going to.” – Respondent 10*

5.6.4.2. Rewards are easier to donate vs. cash

Several respondents highlighted the attitudinal trait where the donation of LP rewards was noted as being easier to donate than their cash. This highlights a significant finding in that customers could potentially participate and contribute more, by utilising their LP rewards.

- *“Knowing it's not my money, even better, while I'm getting points, they can take off, and donate it to something like that.” – Respondent 4.*
- *“You are benefiting from the rewards, even though my social needs, as I would feel like I am also giving back, you know. So, if it was a cause that I really believed in then I would spend it there, my rewards and it's actually not like you spending. You know what I mean” – Respondent 2.*

- *“Yes. It is easier to give away because essentially, even though you know it's in some sense, money that you spent and that you've gotten back, you don't necessarily think of it as your standard source of income, or the main value of what you hold in the bank. So, because it's something essentially you think that you've gotten as a gift you more willing to then give it away, or just spend it on things that aren't necessary.” – Respondent 10.*
- *“I reckon also that donating points would be easier in this day and age anyways where people have less disposable money to spend. Certainly, for me.” – Respondent 3*

A significant caveat to the donation of rewards, was the ease of earning those rewards. Respondents believed that there is a correlation between ease of earning, and propensity to donating LP rewards.

5.6.4.3. Transparency in cause proceeds

The modern-day consumer requires a high degree of transparency and therefore requires corporates to be more accountable, particularly in their CSR, sustainability, and social initiatives. The research highlighted that the need for accountability and transparency on the social causes published by banks on their LP. Social cause transparency both in the realm of the corporate as well as the social recipient has been reflected by the recipients as a key factor in enhancing active participation. Respondents have indicated the need to understand where proceeds were going as well as recognise the legitimacy of recipients, which would enable a sense of trust.

- *“Especially if it's with credible nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) that have Public Benefit Organisation (PBO) numbers and that are registered. The most transparent vehicle for me would be something like SSS because everything is transparent there so if you're able to contribute to that, then you know you make a difference in your own community.” – Respondent 8.*
- *“Also, they need to also show me as a client what I'm spending on the donations. Are they actually going somewhere? So there needs to be some visibility in terms of that. I would need to see what some of their initiatives are that they are affiliated to. I want to see and know that whatever little contribution I'm making, it's making a difference” – Respondent 3.*
- *“I would expect that if they wanted continued support year after year, they should provide a report to all contributors and transparently share information to say this is*

how much they received, and this is how much they matched, and these are the communities that received it. So at least there's accountability, there'd be trust developing. I think that transparency is important.” - Respondent 9.

Further, many respondents believe that for them to participate and contribute, the bank should be contributing as well to the causes that they are. That either matching, or separately contributing should occur to enhance trust and promote participation.

- *“I would like also to see them put their money there as well, not just mines. So, if I contribute, so should they, or match, or something like that.” - Respondent 10.*
- *“Yes. They need to believe in it as well. Like I said, they also need to believe in it, so I think if they have a thing where for every point I donate, they will match it. Also, I want to see where it goes” - Respondent 12*
- *“I would be glad to contribute towards if BBB matched my contribution. I want to see them also contribute.” - Respondent 9*

5.6.4.4. Ease and convenience

A recurrent theme in engaging consumers, is the ease, convenience and limited effort required in engagement. Particularly in a digital age where SA retail banks have been effectively utilising technology to enhance, simplify and create frictionless consumer journeys for their customers. Almost all respondents' have indicated that a qualifying criterion for engaging and participating with their bank LP to donate rewards, is the ease and lack of effort required in getting involved.

- *“Probably the easiest way for me would just be for them to send me information on my app and give me an option where I can actually transfer it to the animal shelter or whatever.” – Respondent 7.*
- *“I mean the convenience of the app. I mean, you can buy airtime, anything through the app, so I'm pretty sure you can just donate your LLL to the cause on the app. The ease of it would be very simple, because already on everything is done through the app or through your computer.” – Respondent 3.*
- *“It's effortless then. Is the ease right or the lack of effort that you need to do it” – Respondent 12.*

- *“It must be easy for me to do. If they had something that would ask me to donate, so correct, absolutely. In fact, that’s the most important thing for me. If it’s not convenient and not easy to just click and move on, I don’t give it attention, frankly speaking.”* – Respondent 12.
- *“OK, this is step by step. This is how you do it. This is how you donate. It should be like an easy, user-friendly sort of way in which I can donate my rewards.”* – Respondent 2.

Linking to the theme of ease and lack of effort required in donating, respondents also believe that being aware of the initiatives and regular or periodic reminders would aid in motivating participation and engagement in donations.

- *“Now I’ll definitely look into it, but I do expect the bank to pay their part not just for me, but for other people. And you know, we do live in a busy time and sometimes you just forget, and little reminders are definitely necessary in this day and age.”* – Respondent 11.
- *“Well, everything works through the app. I mean it’s like I said, giving people regular reminders, would probably be a big thing.”* – Respondent 13.

5.6.4.5. Ease of reward earning

Incentivised transactional and behavioural criteria reflect very common as a significant reason that rewards at bank LPs are perceived as easy to generate. Another reason highlighted by the respondents was the commonality of the LP partners which displayed a lack of effort required in generating rewards. Respondents viewed this type of earning as easy largely due to the earn criteria, shopping partners and transactional requirements were all within their current behaviours.

- *“I mean, the partners that BBB’s joined with are fairly common. I’m not really going out of my way. I mean, PPP, is the most common garage that there is, I mean everywhere there’s a PPP. They’ve partnered now with PPP. Every mall now has a PPP, so I feel it’s fairly simple to accumulate those type of things.”* – Respondent 3.
- *“But there’s also a lot of spend and burn partners you know, both online and physical in store.”* – Respondent 8

Less than half of the respondents believed that reward earning was easy, however all those respondents mentioned the evolving complexity of the LP earning structures. Some respondents see this as a deterrent to LP engagement and use.

- *“So, I think that it's easy to earn, but it's become a lot more complex to understand how the mechanisms work now, which completely put me off the program.” - Respondent 8.*
- *“It was, but it's become cumbersome and complicated.” – Respondent 5*

The overwhelming majority of respondents however believe that reward earning with their bank LP is not as easy, and rewards are difficult to generate. Complicated tiering and levels, changing partner landscapes and as well as the lack of understanding of the requirements to earn effectively were the key drivers for their perspectives. Ease and stability in reward earning appears to be a significant driver in customer engagement in SA retail bank LPs. Interestingly though, the complicated nature of earning structures seems, in some cases, to enhance the potential for donation of those rewards due to the fact that there was no clear and understandable rationale for earning the rewards, and therefore, are easier to give away.

- *“The fact that they've complicated the earn and burn, and the tiers and all of these kinds of things, it just makes you more passive in your engagement with the program. So, in any event, you know whatever you're going to get, you don't actually know how you've earned it or how much you're going to get. Might as well give it to charity, that's how it's become now.” – Respondent 8.*
- *“I feel like the complication of understanding the levels makes it hard to understand how to earn more or get better at earning points.” – Respondent 6.*
- *“It's not as easy as it used to be. The rules have changed, so essentially now it's split into certain categories and groups, and you have to meet certain criteria so it's a bit more difficult to meet their criteria as compared to what it used to be when I initially joined.” – Respondent 10.*

5.6.4.6. Influence of social network

As perception is an important element in modern day corporates, perception amongst consumers also exists. Negative stigma and perceptions are noted when individuals are seen to be non-conformant with the views and actions of others. The research highlighted that in certain instances, the actions of others in donating LP rewards to social causes would play a role in the willingness of consumers to contribute.

- *“Also, depending on what my network is donating to or cares about, that would influence me.” – Respondent 2.*

- *“More and more will follow because they also want to not be seen as not taking part.”*
– Respondent 3.

5.6.5. Rewards are earned, not given

Five respondents referred to their rewards as earned, and not given, or granted by the bank. There was an inherent sense of ownership expressed on LP rewards, where respondents believed that they have deserved the reward in lieu of the specific bank recommended activities and actions.

- *“We do all these things to earn those points, so it might not look or seem as though you're not working for it, but you are working for it, so they're giving you this gift basically at the end, and this gift is what we use to buy junk for ourselves.”* – Respondent 5.
- *“In certain ways yes because they kind of force your behaviour. So, they'll force you to stick with the partners. Check as you get your 15% on your LLL or you get your 40 cents back per litre with PPP.”* – Respondent 3.

5.6.6. Deterrents to donating LP rewards

Respondents noted substantial barriers that would deter their active engagement or participation in donating LP rewards to social causes. Chief amongst them was the lack of awareness. This was, as mentioned, the primary reason why most respondents had not donated LP rewards in the past. They simply were not aware that they could. Additionally, many of the barriers that would prevent consumers donating through the bank LP channel, were the converse factors that would enhance their donation potential. Factors such as LP program ease of use, social cause proceed transparency, ease of reward earning, and cause preferences were all additionally highlighted as potential barriers to engagement and participation.

5.6.6.1. Lack of awareness

Most respondents identified the lack of awareness as the most substantial hurdle to engaging on the SA retail bank LP and donating their LP rewards. This was evident in that most of the respondents were simply unaware of the fact that their bank, with whom they have been banking for a substantial period, promoted social causes on their LP which allowed them to donate their points or rewards.

- *“So, what they did wrong is I feel like they harassed me for the other commercial stuff. When I see BBB calling me, I like, ignore their phone calls because they are constantly trying to sell me something new. So maybe they're trying to call me with this information, and I missed it because I just assumed it was another sales pitch. And I can tell you that on their app they are constantly harassing me to increase my limit on my credit card. So, it's not that I'm missing anything because I'm seeing all of their pushes and that was never one of their advertisements or pushes.”* – Respondent 11.
- *“But on LLL even if you go to their website, they don't mention their charitable stuff.”* – Respondent 8.
- *“I don't think there is visibility, so I'm not aware of these initiatives, I'm not aware. I'm not sure how it works generally. I've never received any correspondence on charity, which is close to me.”* – Respondent 2.
- *“And maybe one of my reasons for that is I'm not connected to what they're doing, so I'm glad that they're doing it and I value that they're doing it.”* – Respondent 6.

5.6.6.2. Lack of cause affinity

As highlighted, belief and affinity in social causes provided the most compelling rationale for actively donating LP rewards. Respondents again mentioned the lack of resonance with causes, to be a noteworthy factor in them not willing to partake in donations. Specificity around local community initiatives proved again to be a requirement as respondents seemed to suggest that the value of being treated personally by their bank, even on their social needs, was an important factor to solicit engagement on a personal level. One respondent suggested that reward donation would not be a suitable vehicle for faith based social giving. Further, variety and options of causes seemed to be a common deterrent for respondents. Causes that did not align with the values, morals and beliefs of respondents also seemed to inhibit reward donations.

- *“There isn't anything that is specific to my community that would ever feature. So, it's not like I wouldn't, but I would definitely if it was very local for me.”* – Respondent 4
- *“No, I haven't, and I think, like my vehicle for that kind of impact is faith based. So, through my church. So, in terms of like the giving, and the vehicle through which I would do it, it's just more community centred. So, I would say even though I'm aware of it, I wouldn't choose to go through one of their vehicles. In terms of what I would*

proactively give towards, it would be something I'm more personally involved in or and linked to somebody who is personally involved in it.” – Respondent 6

- *“Even though there are social causes, the social causes are generally quite limited and it's not as often as I would like, as its harder to earn.” - – Respondent 10*
- *“If that particular bank had any associations with the negative aspects of social, socio-economic justice, I wouldn't bank with them. So, for example if they had ties with Israel, I wouldn't bank with them if they had any links with oppressive conditions for indigenous people in in our lands. I wouldn't bank with them and if there was any association that they showed this support for things which are against women and youth or any negative element. I wouldn't bank with them if they were supporting or financing military weaponry. Or in promoting, or rather supporting entities which were promoting war, I wouldn't bank with them.” – Respondent 7*

5.6.6.3. High effort and lack of ease

Conversely to the rationale for donating LP rewards, the lack of ease and delict requirement for more effort came across as a negative consideration to donating and engaging banking LPs for social purposes. Respondents had a high propensity to donate, provided that the process of donation required very little effort and the platforms and ability to donate was easy.

- *“The other thing is that for an old guy like me, it's too complicated and takes too much time to do and that's why I find it hard.” – Respondent 4.*
- *“Making it difficult for me. It not being easy to do. So, for me, as an example, it would be for instance if they tell you that you must convert your LLL to cash, and then you must load this charity account number on your account and then transfer it to the account. I think that would become like an effort. And effort is not the right way, but it will just make it more difficult to do it quickly. And you know you don't always have time to sit and do these things so yeah, I think if there was an easier way for us to press a button and do it, it's best.” – Respondent 7.*
- *“Maybe the last part is the amount of effort to do it. So, if they made it cumbersome to do this, I would not want to, in this digital day and age.” – Respondent 9.*

5.6.6.4. Difficulty in earning rewards or points

As mentioned, respondents highlighted a relationship between ease of earning and propensity to donate rewards. One key element mentioned by respondents that would dissuade their

involvement with the bank LP, was the relative difficulty and complexity of earning rewards. Some respondents found ease in generating rewards when they initially joined the programs, however, most acknowledge the increased complexity with earning loyalty points with their bank LP.

- *“It was, but it’s become cumbersome and complicated. If it was clear, even if it was difficult to earn, that would be ok, and I would likely donate more. But it depends again on the cause and how easy is the process.”* – Respondent 5
- *“When I first initially found out about it, it was so complicated, first you have to have a certain balance in your bank account, or 10,000 or something to earn so many number of points. But this is not realistic. How many people have that amount in their bank accounts at any given time? So, it’s kind of like, OK, so you want this money in your coffers and stuff, but you’re not incentivizing me. Really, I mean and it’s not real, it’s like going to buy a car cash. How many people can actually buy a car cash unless you go and use your revolving credit on your bond or whatever. Yes, so in principle, educate me.”* – Respondent 2.
- *“Yeah, I think that if it’s harder to earn points, then it’s harder to give away in my opinion. If easier, than easier to give away.”* – Respondent 9.

5.6.6.5. Lack of transparency

Most respondents commented on transparency and authenticity in the conduct of the bank as well as the legitimacy of the social beneficiary. The concepts of loyalty for the respondents go hand-in-hand with the notion of trust and accountability, as referenced below.

- *“Yeah, it just depends on what the beneficiary and the recipients are hey, so I mean, there’s so many of these little NGOs all over the place, like are you really having an impact? If it’s something that’s well known and credible that you can actually see the difference, and there’s reporting back on where your money is gone, you are more than willing to give. Like with all of these things, whether it’s money or even LLL, if it goes into a black hole, you never told what’s happening with that, then you know, you just trust the system less”* – Respondent 8.
- *“What would stop me is the question, are the fat cats just going to get richer?”* – Respondent 11.

- *“Well, it needs to be a reputable cause. If they donate to SSS itself. For me it's important that wherever the money goes, it is utilised correctly, and that it goes to the correct place, not just any cancer hospital in the middle of nowhere. It must go to a reputable place.”* – Respondent 12.
- *“Yeah, I think that's a lacking aspect with all the banks, and all those that do corporate social investment and corporate social contributions. They don't provide feedback, they don't provide sufficient information as to what's happened with funds, and there isn't enough transparency. So, you know we make contributions we don't really get feedback.”* - Respondent 9.

5.6.6.6. Lack of commercial sacrifice

A novel notion that emerged from the research and through the respondents was the concept of social sacrifice as a barrier to donating rewards. Some respondents believe that the earned reward is like a gift received. They believe that social contributions require sacrifice and a sense of truly giving back. Providing earned rewards that are not their primary source of value, is not considered social contributions or charitable. Respondent 6, who also was the only participant not willing to donate through bank LPs, elaborated on the mindset present on donating what is considered, not primary.

- *“Yeah, it would make it easier to donate, but sometimes yeah, when you get a reward right? It's like you get a present from somebody. Do you give you a present away to somebody else?”* -Respondent 5
- *“So yeah, so I would say no on both counts, and I'll tell you my thinking behind it. So, for me, generosity is at the front end of my spend, so there's a faith component that compels a 10%, you know, donation for want of a better word, at the front end of your spend. So, it's my first expense. So, my first expenses are what you're going to do that supports a CSR project for want of a better word. That's my first expense in the month, so for me the rewards and the loyalties is kind of like a back-end incentive. So, you've spent a certain way across the month and now you're being rewarded for it. So, for me, the correlation between the reward and the CSR would be, you would give me rewards for having been generous or having donated to. I don't know, like to an NGO that has a tax certificate that's going to give me certain tax advantages if that was the case. In terms of behavioural or habits, like if I was rewarded for my generosity, that would be something that would intrigue me, but as it stands, because I have a certain path of how I donate and how I use my money for community upliftment, it's at the front and*

my loyalty is like a reward. So, kind of giving out of your reward for me as not an incentive.” – Respondent 6.

- *“I feel like the rewards are like a birthday present. So, it's like I'm happy to give out of my basics, like I'm happy to give out of what I have or what I've bought or what I've generated like that's what I want to give to somebody else. But if somebody is giving me a birthday present, I don't necessarily want to give that birthday present to a charitable cause. That birthday present is for me, like that's my reward that I get left with at the end of the day. To me, so it's a weird thing to like regift your gift so the rewards for me is like the at the end of the day, when you've done the right thing, you now get to enjoy the reward from your bank and so the more they reward me for doing the right thing, the happier I am. But the right thing comes first, so I'm not using the reward to do the right thing. I'm doing the right thing at the front end” – Respondent 6.*
- *“When you donate your points, you do not feel it. If I can say it like that. It's almost like you're getting something for free and you're giving it away. Where if you make the decision to donate money, for me it's almost like you feel that, and I think that's also an important thing. I think you also like need to feel that. You know you really giving something of importance, where I don't think the points are really that important because it's a freebie. That's the way I see it.” - Respondent 12.*

5.6.7. Conclusions to research question 1 findings

Findings have indicated that there are several related barriers and contributors to the attitudinal and behavioural considerations that affect customer willingness to donate their earned LP rewards to social initiatives at SA retail banks. Awareness and communication of these activities by the bank were viewed as the most significant, however there were twelve considerable themes that emerged that have both positive and negative effects on participation. These themes were viewed as essential to ensure meaningful and collaborative stakeholder engagement, as required by stakeholder theory.

5.7. Research question 2 results – Perceptions

Research question 2 - What are the effects of having social causes embedded into SA retail bank LPs on customer brand perception?

Research question 2 was focused on uncovering the customer perception of SA retail banks that utilised their LPs to engage and partner with members to contribute to social and CSR initiatives. Respondents were asked about their overarching perception of their bank, knowing

that their bank promoted this version of social collaboration. Respondents provided both negative and positive perceptions of their bank and in certain instances, provided conditions associated to the perceptions. Therefore, in some cases, it was not sufficient that the bank was conducting these activities, certain conditions were required to be present to ensure the positive or negative perception and outcomes.

5.7.1. Positive perceptions and conditions

Most respondents fundamentally outlined that their primary reason for joining their bank and bank LP was commercially motivated. Nevertheless, each of the respondents also have a strong inclination and aptitude towards social giving in some shape or form. Several respondents indicated that a bank that was conducting social activities, where they could participate, would be viewed in a favourable light and the respondent would remain loyal to the bank.

- *“Yeah. I would view them very positively because I would know that my bank is also doing the right stuff. But it would have to be that they also contribute. And I would more if the causes they line up are those that resonate with me.”* – Respondent 5.
- *“Yes, I would want to be a part of a bank that, apart from serving me as a customer, also does these things and makes it easy for me to get involved.”* – Respondent 4.
- *“If they had to do it with any educational institution or something like that as well, you know, bursary fund whatever the case may be, you can see that the outcomes of where the money is going, and it's not only the bank that's you know asking you to contribute, but actually it's a platform that they have established, that they are inviting you to be part of. You know it becomes the sense of win-win between the two, between customer and financial service provider. Then you know, it just enhances sort of the lock in and the sense of loyalty.”* – Respondent 8.
- *“Sure. I think so but look, I'm very cynical about this thing because generally, it's the politically correct thing to do. But even if it's a politically correct thing to do, rather do it the proper way you understand, get buy in to the extent that you actually build up that trust with your customer base, and that sense of affinity and whatever. Hell, you know I'm not going to go to any other bank. I'm going to stay with BBB. This is what they believe in. These are the causes they support. I'm all for it.”* – Respondent 2.

- *“I think that they would be amazing because it would make me feel like my bank and I both align to the same values, and I’d want to be a part of a bank like that. This is if the causes line up with what I am expecting.” – Respondent 3.*

A few conditions were however placed on these perceptions. The first, was that the bank would need to display authenticity, transparency, and contribute to the social causes as well. The second, was that the causes would need to align with the respondent preferences. The outcome from respondents was that they would remain loyal to the bank, and they would feel value as their bank was assisting them in giving back.

- *“You know while their CSR spend goes into it, it helps them with their image as a responsible corporate citizen, but it also gives me the trust that my money is going to something that’s going to make an impact in a much broader sense to society” – Respondent 8.*
- *“Yes, of course, the big company, they have to be the ones to implement themselves the most.” – Respondent 11.*
- *“I think only if it feels authentic. That they are also contributing and it’s not just collecting their customers points or cash and stating that they do so much.” – Respondent 4.*
- *You know what, we’re going to take from your reward and give to CSR, to me, is not you are spending your money, even though the reward is an incentive there. Them giving me out of their own pocket kind of thing is. Like I generated this reward out of what I did, so this is not you are suffering any loss. This is me suffering again and so for me I want to feel like they’re CSR program is part of equal giving, so I would prefer that they came across in a way that said we are donating 20 rand, irrespective of what you do. But you could double what we’re able to do by partnering with us. So, I would put it the other way around. So rather than being like if you donate, 20 bucks we will match it. It would be more impactful to me as a giver or someone who is looking at options. If they’ve framed it the other way. And so, I think for the masses it would be, we as BBB are doing this, do it with us so that we can do more. That’s appealing for me. Well, I do think that I would like to perceive that they are making a sacrifice. If they are asking me to make a sacrifice. So, I think one of the things I think is like is that sense of, we’re in it together,” – Respondent 6.*
- *“Yeah, it will definitely. It will change my perception a little bit, so you know, because financial institutions are not really seen as, how I can say, they only care if there’s money involved.” – Respondent 7.*

- *But also, I would want to see them putting their money where their mouth is and actually matching what I donate.” – Respondent 3.*

5.7.2. Negative perceptions and conditions

Rather than having negative perceptions of the bank for conducting LP social activities for with engagement, respondents provided conditions that would have them consider their bank in an unfavourable light or have a negative perception. A few respondents mentioned the need for consistency and continuity. Effectively, should the bank cease the social cause participation with their customer, this would be viewed unfavourably. Also, where banks persist in self-promotion rather than authenticity, this would be viewed as a negative perception.

- *“Yeah, that would, because then they sort of changing the rules. Like if they just stopped it. So, if they just, you know, fell through the initiative and I wouldn't really trust them.” – Respondent 1.*

5.7.3. Conclusions to research question 2 findings

Research question 2 findings drew strong indications that the SA retail bank inclusion of social causes into bank LPs for customer reward collaboration, yields largely positive sentiments from consumers. Considering some of the qualifying statements from respondents, conditions do apply to ensure the positive sentiments result in enhanced customer loyalty. Positive perceptions though, have the propensity to result in negative perceptions under the conditions of a lack of social cause continuity as well as a lack of brand authenticity.

5.8. Research question 3 results – Enhancements

Research question 3 - What can be done to further improve the consumer willingness to donate to social causes through SA retail bank LPs?

Research question 3 was grounded in the foundations of stakeholder theory which requires collaboration and co-creation of value with stakeholders, customers, for the purpose of this research paper. This question was focused on leveraging the customer to identify recommendations to offer solutions enhance and improve consumer engagement and social outcomes through the LP reward channel. Respondents were requested to provide recommendations to improve customer participation, contribution, and engagement on reward donations through bank LPs. Many of the results and recommendations of respondents' stem from the attitudes and barriers discussed above, however additional recommendations were

made that differ in context. These recommendations were grouped into four parts, authenticity, awareness and communication, ease & effort, and social cause reporting.

5.8.1. Authenticity

A few respondents suggested that their bank, at minimum, match donations made by members to social causes. Converting customer rewards to cash and donating was deemed insufficient to warrant perceived bank authenticity. Respondents also specifically recommended that banks are deliberate on combining the social causes to the banks purpose, to ensure cohesion.

- *“It’s part of the CSR initiative. I mean, it’s always better if they contribute and are more authentic but it’s good if they enable you to be able to contribute. But I think if they’ve got skin in the game, obviously it improves the perception of them as responsible corporate citizens.”* – Respondent 8.
- *“I think there’s a lot that can be done, and I mean they’re sitting on so much wealth that you would think that there would be a lot more investment from that. But yeah, I think that some of the other banks do it better because they’re CSR ties to their story. I think something BBB doesn’t really do well, is that everything is kind of in pieces. It’s like business support in a piece, LLL is a piece, what you do for me, is in a piece, what you might do for the community is somewhere there. I don’t really know what they’re up to, but what I find with some of the other banks, like BBB is like, we are small business support and so we are the PPP funders. And then we are entrepreneurial support. We invest in entrepreneurs. We sponsor the PPP of South Africa. So, it’s all kind of linked. This is our CSR project, it’s a business school so everything kind of links to the same story. We are building small businesses and I could say the same with BBB. Everything kind of links to the same sort of outlook or different pockets of outlook and I think that’s something that the other banks could maybe do better, is like pick a cause and just link everything to it for a sense of momentum.”* – Respondent 6.
- *“Yes. Like I said, they also need to believe in it, so I think if they have a thing where for every point I donate, they will match it. Also, I want to see where it goes.”* – Respondent 12.

5.8.2. Awareness and communication

Significantly highlighted as the factor that would most aid contribution and participation, is the way banks communicate social causes, and the ways in which their consumers may

participate. Respondents suggested that banks should simply make customers aware. They posit that the technology already in use by the banks are effective in communicating and making customers aware. Further, that the rigour used in upselling commercial products to customers, should be used in promoting social initiatives for participation. Respondents also proposed that banks remind customers periodically to ensure engagement remains constant.

- *“And you know, we do live in a busy time and sometimes you forget, and little reminders are definitely necessary in this day and age” – Respondent 11.*
- *“I’m sure they are because I think every big organisation has to, you know, do some CSR, but I think they need to also make it more visible, and advertise it more. The first thing is to have sort of, some form of visibility. Whatever it is, but just to make consumers more aware of their reward system and how it works and make consumers more aware, because someone like me that doesn’t really use their rewards and doesn’t really know of the initiatives” – Respondent 1.*
- *“I think the first step would be to communicate the ease of how they can actually earn LLL and what is required to then be able to earn LLL” – Respondent 10.*
- *“By making me more aware of it. Like you can get an email every month saying that you have this many rewards or you have a voucher waiting for you, but in that same email they can also say, you have a voucher, but did you know that you can donate this to this charity and show me what they’ve done for that charity. Just like more updates on what exactly they’re doing, because like really I didn’t even know.” – Respondent 12.*
- *“Make me aware of how to get involved, most people would but I think if they put in half the energy into telling you how they can, with you, solve a social crisis, than about selling you loans and credit and interest, a lot more would get done.” – Respondent 12.*

Respondents also suggested that the banks should market and advertise these initiatives better, by using a variety of channels, and as mentioned, leverage their apps and digital platforms.

- *And I tend to play lots of music on the web on YouTube. So usually before the video starts, they usually have an ad. The ad sometimes goes three quarters of the way, then you have an option to go straight into the video or you can only see the video and only after the ad is played. So those easy options.” – Respondent 2.*

- *“On the other side, if they don't really advertise it well, then why do they then have this?” – Respondent 12.*

One respondent also suggested the effective use of partners or social beneficiaries, to enhance the awareness to customers, and thereby promote engagement.

- *“The second thing is to look within what they are currently doing for platforms that can be extended. I mean you know if you're doing something and I use again the example of, you know, SSS where there is a platform. You know people are donating to it already, they've got a huge volunteer network. People can see what the outcomes are. You know if they had to partner, then partner smartly with organisations like this.” – Respondent 8.*

5.8.3. Ease and effort

The effective use of existing technology, together with the simplification of LP reward earning, framed the recommendations of ease and effort. Further, created structured programs that do not require input and much attention also formed part of the recommendations.

- *“Just make it easier, simpler and straightforward.”- Respondent 4.*
- *So, if BBB, and they have all the technology to do it, had to work with you to earn your loyalty points towards a specific goal. Let's say it is to raise R500 a month to give to a charitable organisation, you know you then direct your spend, and you're purchasing behaviour towards that because you can track on a monthly basis. Look, I've now spent with these partners, and I've earned, let's say, 50 bucks. I've got to spend another R50 so R100 to get the extra R50 to meet my charitable goal. So, they've got the technology. They're just not using it smartly. If I'm lucky articulating myself properly” - Respondent 8.*
- *“And a lot of people at this time don't actually realise the value, and a lot of loyalty programs are essentially virtual. It's not actual, physical, tangible item, so, I think if it normalized, and became a standard procedure across all banks” - Respondent 10.*
- *“Well, on the app they send you very regular updates, so I mean everyday they tell you that you can change your limit or whatever. So, when you log into the app, they can make you aware of it on the app, because I mean most people use their app almost every day. Once you login, there could be personalised messages that can say, don't*

forget, Christmas is coming, you can now donate LLL for children's toys." – Respondent 3.

- *"You know we signed up for this thing. I can't remember, it's not PPP, it's PPP. I think. It is really simple, I ticked 50 rand a month or whatever it is, and so it's a debit order. If BBB kind of says 10% to 20% of your LLL for the month magically goes towards this charity, then it's something you don't consciously have to go in and check and donate but you know it's running in the background."* – Respondent 5.

5.8.4. Social cause reporting

Most respondents believe that the effects of the donation should be visible to customers, Firstly, to ensure transparency and further, to create the sense of accomplishment for customers, as well as to promote usage. Respondents agree that sharing media with the donators, on the effect of their donations is critically important. Further, one respondent specified that there would be more impact and authenticity when communication on the results of the proceeds from donations are initiated or validated by the social beneficiaries or third parties.

- *"So even if it means sending me a little video. Even if it means sending me some pics."* – Respondent 2.
- *"Every now and again when you open the app, they show you a video of where your LLL has gone, how it's helped? Something like that. If that's available, then that's good. Like I think BBB does it quite well with that, where they say, hey, you know this is where all your LLL points went to and with all of you, we made a difference. It would be good to know that."* – Respondent 5.
- *"Yes, I would like to know, maybe like an email with a picture of the shelter for the animals that it went to, so you can feel more involved with that charity."* – Respondent 7.
- *"Yes. Almost like a newsletter. You know if they know that I donate to cancer, they should focus on sending me updates on that. And sending updates on this specific to the NGO that you donated the points to."* – Respondent 12.
- *Right, so I think for me the value comes from testimonial content in this case. So less of you saying what you did and more of your partner saying what you did, would be more effective. So, if SSS is saying we want to thank BBB for*

supporting 100,000 families in KZN in July, we couldn't have done it without you BBB and the BBB family. That to me is way more impactful than BBB saying look what we did for SSS. So, I would say using testimonials and using that kind of third-party reviews of your impact, even though it could be an BBB sponsored advert or paid for advert, I just think that would land a lot better for people to be like BBB were up to something.” – Respondent 6.

5.8.5. Conclusions to research question 3 findings

Several suggestions were recommended by respondents to aid and enhance customer participation. Authenticity, awareness and communication, ease and effort and social cause reporting were the overarching categories of recommendations to SA retail banks.

5.9. Conclusion

The findings presented in this chapter highlight the depth, and research rigour achieved through twelve semi-structured interviews. Respondents provided detailed and relevant information which was categories into codes, groups, and themes as part of a thematic analysis to understand the research questions posed in Chapter 3. The most pertinent findings have been highlighted and presented within this chapter. The details contained within this chapter formed the basis for the discussion and interpretation contained within Chapter 6.

6. CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1. Introduction

Chapter 5 presented the results of the semi-structured interviews conducted with respondents. This chapter will discuss the results in relation to the research questions in chapter 3 and literature review in chapter 2, to identify any congruence, similarities, or new outcomes. The overarching aim of this chapter is to provide a deeper analysis and interpretation of the results to understand the attitudes, motivators, and deterrents for consumers of SA retail banks in donating rewards to social causes. Further, to interpret the perceptions that consumers have of their banks when they embed social causes into LPs for customer reward donation. Lastly, to understand the enhancements proposed by respondents to enrich participation and contribution. The chapter will close with a conceptual model and a conceptual framework outlining the results.

6.2. Discussion: Research Question 1

***Research question 1** - What are the attitudes, motivators and deterrents that affect customer willingness to donate earned LP rewards towards defined bank CSR or social initiatives?*

As mentioned, research question 1 sought to identify and understand the SA retail bank customer mindset specific to their readiness and proclivity to donate. The results uncovered the key attitudes that informed the motivating and deterring factors, that affect the consumer willingness to donate. Each of these factors are critical elements in driving stakeholder management, partnership, and engagement, with respect to stakeholder theory. Results have indicated that there were several related motivators, deterrents, and contributors to the customer mindset on reward donations. The themes were discussed as outlined in the main themes per chapter 5 as follows:

- Awareness of social benefits on bank LP
- Prior donation of LP rewards and social cause preferences
- Attitudes, deterrents, and motivators for donating LP rewards

6.2.1. Awareness of social benefits on Bank LP

A fundamental consideration in stakeholder theory is that firms are not focussed solely on profit maximisation, but also on purpose, driven by the collective shareholder base (Freeman, 2010; Morris, 2020; Waheed et al., 2020). Each of the banks that represented the sample all had social causes embedded into the LPs for consumer participation and contribution which

substantiates the overarching principles of stakeholder theory. It was however noted that the majority of respondents were completely unaware of this value proposition by their bank, and therefore, had never donated using their bank LP or with their rewards. Freudenreich, Lüdeke-Freund Florian, & Schaltegger, (2019) argue that most value creation firm initiatives to customers, are one dimensional due to firms profit maximisation purpose. This has been evidenced in the respondent results where it appears that banks, albeit have put forward social initiatives, largely have not engaged their consumer stakeholder base. The results highlight that albeit banks have the platforms for consumers to get involved, consumer preferences, involvement, and more importantly, awareness was lacking. Freudenreich, Lüdeke-Freund Florian, & Schaltegger, (2019) further argue that customers, as stakeholders, are both recipients, as well as co-creators of value. Banks allowing reward donations from customers create the auspices for the customer value co-creator role to be played, however, the lack of awareness justifies the one-dimensional view of most firms. Additionally, Mosca & Civera, (2017) have the view that a multi-stakeholder approach to CSR yields greater benefits due to joint decision making and satisfied expectations. In the case of SA retail banks, these expected benefits have not been materialised due to the lack of active engagement and awareness with their customer base.

The overwhelming majority of respondents mentioned their willingness to donate their rewards to social causes, based on their awareness. This was largely due the reward nature of the donations which emphasises the notion that, although there is an interdependence between stakeholders, in the execution of CSR, there are no adverse effects toward other stakeholders (Freeman & Dmytriyev, 2017). This resoundingly again, highlights the gap in stakeholder partnership and engagement as the customer stakeholder was not even aware. Therefore, the social beneficiary as a stakeholder, as well as the communities, likely see adverse effects due to the lack of greater customer participation and contribution.

6.2.2. Prior donation of LP rewards and social cause preferences

The results highlighted that the few respondents that had donated the LP rewards in the past, felt engaged and found the process to be easy. Further, that they resonated with the causes which made it easier for them to donate. One of the aspects found by Avery, (2015) for a firm hoping to achieve CSR goals, was the generation of collaborative partnerships, which may widen the reach of effectiveness. This, as an imperative for partnerships, was evident in the donation experience by the small number of respondents.

Among the social cause preferences provided by respondents, were cause types that were similar but also provided variety. Many of the preferences were largely in favour of local and

community-centric causes. These preferences would likely yield a higher likelihood of donation with cause resonance being a high motivator for donation. This is in congruence by the work of Mimouni-Chaabane & Volle, (2010), who deem social benefits as symbolic. Further, that these cause preferences reflect consumers individualistic or communitarianism needs.

6.2.3. Attitudes, deterrents, and motivators for donating LP rewards

Respondents cited numerous motivators, deterrents, and attitudes that would affect their participation and contribution of LP rewards to social causes. The results in with respect to the attitudes, motivators, and deterrents, form the basis of stakeholder theory fundamentals, where firms, together with their stakeholders, jointly create and receive value (Freeman, 2010). Many of the respondent motivators, were conversely, also included as deterrents (i.e. the lack of the motivator). LP ease of use, social cause proceed transparency, ease of reward earning, and cause preferences as motivators, were all additionally highlighted as potential deterrents to engagement and participation.

6.2.3.1. Causes resonance and affinity

The results highlight that the most significant motivating factor in donating regards to social causes, were the resonance that consumers had with social causes. Consumer values, faith, cultures, local communities, and past experiences all rank high on the factors that influence social cause selection. Similarly, respondents also highlighted that the lack of resonance and cause affinity with causes, to be a significant factor in them not willing to partake in reward donations. With LPs supposedly meant to drive brand connections and hyper-personal engagement (Steinhoff & Palmatier, 2016), understanding the social wants and needs of consumers are crucial. The concepts of shared value and purpose (Freeman, 2010) between bank and customer would ultimately decide the level of engagement. Therefore, consistent with the literature, when respondents feel shared value with their bank and collective purpose, they are likely to have a higher degree of involvement, contribution, and participation.

Further, the finding from the study conducted by Choi, Mattila & Quadri-Felitti, (2019) where local beneficiaries were promoted by firms generated a positive effect on consumer willingness to donate. This was found to be in congruence within the respondent subset and supports the finding of the study.

Respondents also interestingly highlighted the attitudinal element of the influence of their social network as a motivator for reward donation. Respondents being perceived as charitable, and contributing to the socially motivated charities were factors that would affect LP reward donation potential. As perception is an important element in modern day corporates,

perception amongst consumers also exists. The Gao & Matilla (2017) study found that in the presence of other consumers, donation likelihood is heightened due to the social positive, self-image preservation, or discomfort nature associated with donating. Respondents as part of this study agree that there is a negative stigma attached to non-donation to socially accepted causes.

6.2.3.2. Rewards vs. cash

A novel outcome of this research was that several respondents highlighted that the donation of LP rewards was noted as being easier to donate than their cash. This fits squarely into the notions of shared value and purpose mentioned by Freeman, (2010) & O'Brien et al., (2020). Shared value and the concepts of stakeholder engagement as part of stakeholder theory would be achieved in this regard. This research highlighted that some customers viewed their rewards, not as their primary income. Banks, on the other hand, under normal circumstance, would make contributions in terms of customer rewards to customers. In the donation of rewards, banks channel customer-destined reward finances to social beneficiaries instead of to customer commercial benefits, therefore, no additional cost for the bank. Banks achieve their CSR targets faster, social needs of consumers are met without any additional spending, and social beneficiaries benefit for the scale of consumers donating.

Conversely though, some respondents also highlighted the concept of social and commercial sacrifice as a barrier to donating rewards. Congruent to Meise et al., (2014), consumers are expecting to know the full corporate value chain and insist on legitimacy. In this instance, as an attitude, for some of the respondents, the donations would not be legitimate if there was no sacrifice of personal commercial benefits which would deter a sense of truly giving. There are therefore conflicting views on the matter of donating rewards compared to cash. The overwhelming respondent base however was in favour of reward donation over their cash.

6.2.3.3. Transparency

The results also highlight as a motivator, the need to know and understand the value chain when rewards are donated to social causes. Almost all the respondents noted transparency as a significant motivator or deterrent. Respondents expressed an expectation that they are informed, accurately, regarding the cause proceeds, as well as the beneficiaries. They have indicated the expectation to understand where proceeds were going, as well as recognise the legitimacy of recipients, to enable trust. The trust is a necessity for banks wanting to restore lost confidence and credibility (Pérez & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2014). The results are consistent with the research of Meise et al., (2014) that acknowledge that modern day

consumers are more knowledgeable and are in constant need of information. Further, how their engagements with corporates, among other factors, benefit societies. Also, the JSE's requirements from a transparency perspective, on triple bottom line reporting justifies the consumer expectations mentioned by respondents (Institute of Directors South Africa, 2016). With a greater regulatory requirement, and a knowledgeable consumer, this seems an appropriate design element in social cause reporting for SA retail banks.

6.2.3.4. Ease and effort

Another significant motivator and conversely, a deterrent, noted by participants was the ease of the process for reward donations as well as the ease of earning points or rewards. Respondents highlighted the need for any LP reward process, particularly their bank, to be effortless. Respondents also noted that with the fast-paced lives being led in SA, regular reminders would support donation frequency. SA retail banks have been effectively utilising technology to enhance, simplify and create frictionless consumer journeys for their customers.

Within the banking sector, banks have been leveraging technology to identify customer preferences and manage expectations (Sukhdeo, 2020), however with the poor uptake of customers in support of social causes through bank LPs as noted by respondents, there exists some misalignment. The literature, as well as the respondents noted a high degree of digitalisation in their engagements with their banks. Retail financial service institutions have largely digitalised their services to consumers (Louw & Nieuwenhuizen, 2020), and with retail banking seeing the shift in the adoption of apps, in light of their growing younger consumer base (Sukhdeo, 2020), there exists some misalignment. For one, the use of technology should generally aid in communication, which according to respondents has not been the case. Further, respondents noted the hyper-digitalisation and over-communication of commercial services, however not on social benefits. Therefore, it appears that the banks have been effectively utilising technology in their engagement with customers, however they have not been as prolific in utilising it for social inclusion and awareness.

Another noteworthy theme that emerged from respondent interviews was the degree of difficulty in earning rewards. Respondents also mentioned the complicated structures, tiers and levels in LPs that add to the difficulty and understanding of earning. Almost all the respondents mentioned that the complexity of the LPs does not promote engagement. Further, that earning of rewards, requires sometimes, high commercial activity. LPs have long been considered as tools to identify, reward and retain profitable customers (Chen et al., 2021), it seems plausible that to promote or incentivise social benefits, bank LPs could create alternate value propositions, not linked to commercial activity, to incentivise social benefit participation.

Another attitudinal construct that emerged from respondents was the ideology that LP rewards were earned by consumers for conforming to behavioural and transactional behaviours. Gao & Mattila, (2017) mention the gratification of customers, which fundamentally have been commercial in nature. With the advancements in social activism, and a more socially conscious consumer, gratification may not be limited to commercial benefits only. Some respondents though, mention the ease of earning due to the transactional nature of earning rewards with familiar partners. The ease of earning also seems to have a positive impact on reward donations where customers feel that rewards are easier to give away, if they are easier to earn, with the converse being true.

Gao & Mattila (2017) also argue that reward type matters in the donation of LP rewards and that earned rewards through transactions and purchases are less likely to be donated, with surprise rewards being more likely to be donated. This fits in with the notion that when rewards are easier to earn they are easier to donate, as found by this study.

6.3. Discussion: Research Question 2

Research question 2 - What are the effects of having social causes embedded into SA retail bank LPs, on customer brand perception and reputation?

Research question 2 was aimed at determining the customer perception and perceived reputation SA retail banks that use and promote their LPs to engage and partner with members in contributing to social and CSR initiatives. Respondents provided positive and negative perceptions and perceived reputations of their banks. These perceptions were qualified with underlying conditions for the positive or negative perceptions. Both perceptions were discussed below.

6.3.1. Perceptions and conditions

A large number of respondents mentioned that their bank would be viewed in a favourable light, for promoting social causes for customer contribution. Further, that this favourable perception, would contribute to customer loyalty. This finding correlates with the literature by Sardana, Gupta, Kumar & Terziovski, (2020) who outline the narrative shift between enhanced brand perception due to firm product/service innovation, to enhanced brand reputation due to CSR. The caveat on the positive perceptions, were, as mentioned, conditional. Primarily, for banks to be viewed in a positive light for engaging on CSR, the bank would need to be perceived as authentic, transparent, and ensure bank contributions are made to social causes as well. Further, the secondary condition was that there would need to be cause affinity. This would not only achieve customer positive perceptions, but also maintain and enhance

customer loyalty. The literature posits that being perceived as authentic, and not superficial to social initiatives was a significant competitive advantage (Morioka, Bolis, Evans, & Carvalho, 2017). The results concur with the literature in that the authenticity of the bank, would generate enhanced brand value, which would in turn, result in enhanced performance. Further, this was in congruence to the literature by Avery, (2015) where heightened loyalty and reputation resulted in stronger financial performance and repeat purchase behaviour. Also, to the finding by Fourie, (2018) that social benefits are the most significant contributor of customer loyalty within the financial services industry. Lastly, the findings of this research do not conform to the study conducted by Ajina, Japutra, Nguyen, Syed, & Al-Hajla, (2019) which highlight that CSR consumer perception is not related to, or has an impact on customer loyalty. The respondents underlying condition for positive brand sentiment was havin cause affinity. Many respondents outlined the requirement for causes to be local or communitarian in nature which aligns with the study conducted by Choi, Mattila & Quadri-Felitti, (2019). They found that consumers are inclined to perceive the firm as being socially responsible when the social initiative involves local beneficiaries.

Also, respondents did not provide any negative perceptions for their bank engaging in social causes through LPs, instead, provided conditions that would have them consider their bank in an unfavourable light. Three major conditions that would create a negative perception for banks would be, the inconsistency and conclusion of social cause support, as well as banks being non authentic and promoting self-glorification.

6.4. Discussion: Research Question 3

Research question 3 - What can be done to further improve the consumer willingness to donate to social causes through SA retail bank LPs?

Research question 3 aimed to establish the potential enhancement factors that would enrich customer participation and contribution in social reward donations through LPs. Respondents offered engagement enhancements as recommendations to aid in participation and outcomes. Much of the enhancements provided followed the motivators,, deterrents and attitudes. Four themed recommendations were outlined, namely ; authenticity; awareness and communication; ease & effort; and social cause reporting.

6.4.1. Authenticity

Respondents suggested that their bank be authentic in their social engagement and at minimum, match donations made by members to social causes. Further, respondents suggested aligning the social causes with the bank purpose and strategy to create

recognisability and cohesion. This recommendation follows the impactful shift by many corporations that have been merging social and strategy holistically (Hoffman, 2018).

6.4.2. Awareness and communication

As mentioned above, awareness was a significant gap which prevented reward donations within the sample set. The recommendations here were that banks communicate, educate and make consumers aware, to the same degree that commercial activity is marketed. Again, respondents recommended the use of their technology in doing so which has derived great communication capabilities on their commercial platforms. Further, respondents suggest that the same rigour used in upselling commercial products to customers, should be used in promoting social initiatives for participation. Lastly, that banks ensure regular an periodic engagement to serve as reminders for consumers. These recommendations highlight the view of Freudenreich, Lüdeke-Freund Florian, & Schaltegger, (2019) where firm approach to value creation is not collaborative or inclusive, but rather one dimensional.

An effective communication channel to follow as purported by respondents is to effectively advertise and market social initiatives to consumers using technology. Fundamentally, the actions of the banks in engaging consumers on social causes is considered an element of CrM (Hassan & AbouAish, 2018), however the marketing and communication of these messages have proved to be a gap. Therefore, the respondent suggestion of marketing social causes is considered appropriate as this concept is deep rooted in stakeholder theory and the collaborative customer engagement. Customer engagement is an essential part of CrM and CSR (Gao & Mattila, 2017).

6.4.3. Ease and effort

Again, similar to the motivator and deterrent, respondents suggest the use of technology and the streamlining of reward earning. Further, to simplify and consider alternate models to reward earning that promotes ease and a lack of effort. Congruence to the literature for this section is contained withing 6.4.3.4.

6.4.4. Social cause reporting

Respondents also highlighted that the outcomes and effects of their donations should be adequately reported, as a measure of creating transparency and complete the consumers gratification in terms of reward giving. All respondents agree that the sharing of media to highlight the outcomes of donation are recommended to enhance engagement. In highlighting the need for authenticity as well, respondents suggest that there would be more impact and

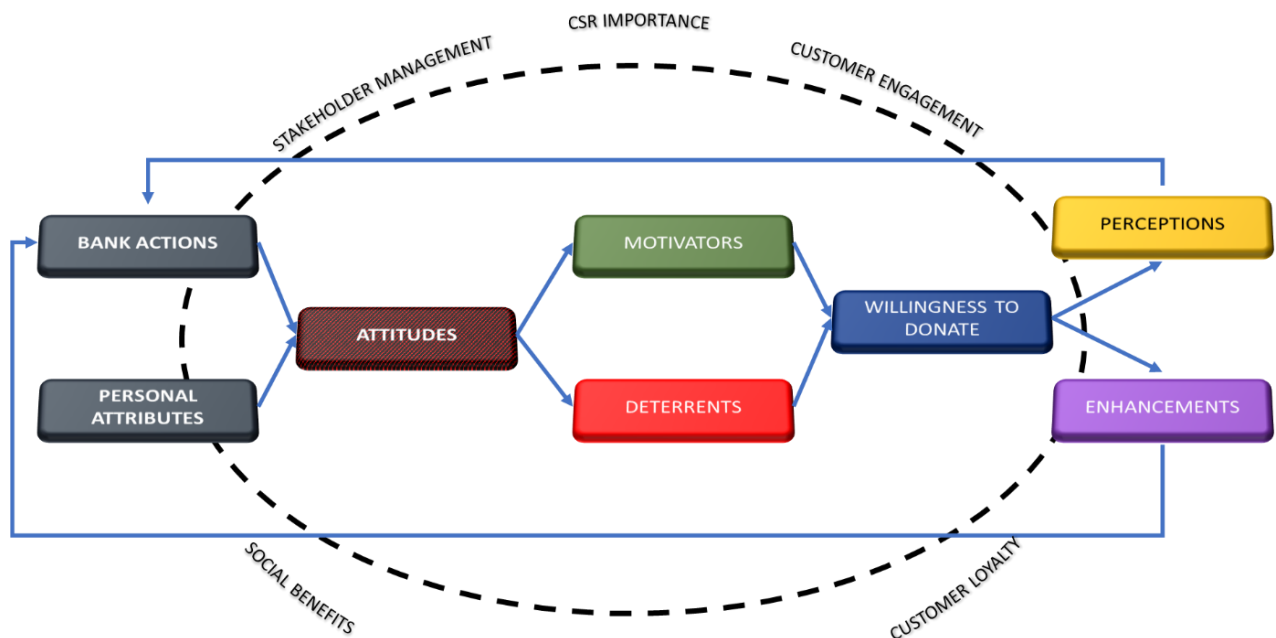
authenticity when communication on the results of the proceeds from donations are initiated or validated by the social beneficiaries or third parties.

6.5. Conceptual model

Through and analysis of the results from the semi-structured interviews conducted, the researcher sought to understand the consumer mindset, and the associated attitudes, motivators, and deterrents evident, when consumer consideration is given to donating LP rewards to a social cause (Research question 1). Further, to understand the effects on brand reputation and perception when banks have embedded social causes in LPs (Research question 2). Lastly, to uncover the potential enhancements that would improve customer participation and contribution (Research question 3). The researcher sought to uncover patterns and trends to derive meaning from the data collected (Quinlan et al., 2019).

Through the analysis of the results and associated themes from the interviews conducted, the following conceptual model was developed to understand the results in a logical way. The conceptual model covers the elements that relate to all three research questions that have been interpreted in this chapter individually in relation to the literature.

Figure 4: Conceptual model



Source: Researcher developed

In the context of donating LP rewards to social causes and understanding the research question set, it was noted that the researcher interpreted the actions of banks as well as

personal attributes of consumers as the foundation for the attitudes reflected by respondent consumers. These attitudes form the basis for respondent consumers either being motivated to, or being deterred from, donating their LP rewards. These donations, or lack thereof, form the consumer perceptions of the bank. These perceptions impact customer loyalty, repeat purchase and affect corporate image and therefore, banks manage their stakeholder engagement. Due the importance of CSR to banks (Pérez & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2014), they often adjust their actions, through effective stakeholder management and customer engagement on social benefits, to enhance corporate image. These actions then reflect the adjustment of the bank in iterating to ensure partnership and greater participation and contribution. This is considered a version of stakeholder theory whereby the bank views the customer stakeholder as an integral part of its value chain, in its pursuit of profit through purpose (Freeman, 2010; Morris, 2020; Waheed et al., 2020) by creating value for other stakeholders and create mutual beneficence.

7. CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings of this research and provides the research conclusion. Also, the contribution to research is presented with the implications for management and other stakeholders. This chapter also includes the limitations of the research as well as suggestions on future research.

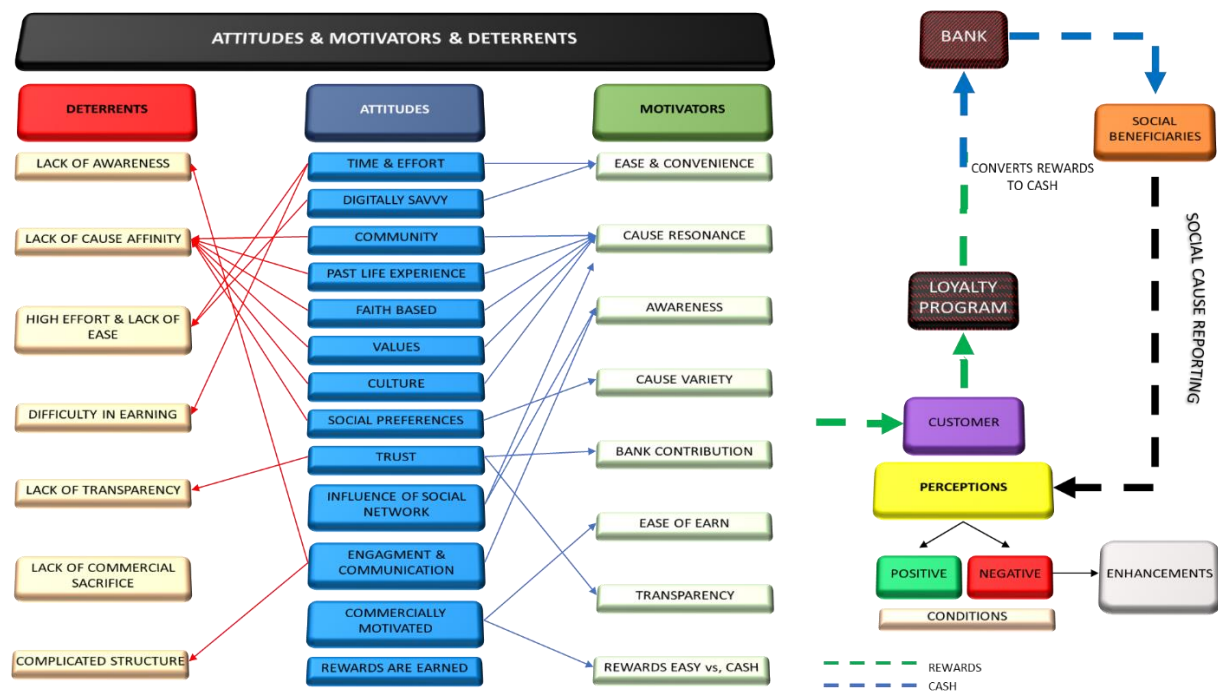
7.2. Principal findings

A conceptual model and conceptual framework was developed based on the results and interpretations of this research that enabled the researcher to derive the findings from this research. The principal research finding is that SA retail banks are required to play a more purposeful role in engaging their consumers to enhance participation and contribution to social causes embedded into their LPs. Further, that although SA retail banks have the platforms for consumers to get involved, consumer preferences, involvement, and more importantly, awareness was lacking.

Freudenreich, Lüdeke-Freund Florian, & Schaltegger, (2019) further argue that customers, as stakeholders, are both recipients, as well as co-creators of value Stakeholder engagement as part of stakeholder theory requires a far more inclusive and collaborative manner in which to engage their customer. The current engagement is considered as one dimensional with consumers not even being aware of social benefits. Customer engagement would yield an understanding of the main consumer attitudes, motivators, and deterrents for reward donations. With LPs having largely been considered a firm value generating tool, utilising these as a CSR driver, shifts the narrative to an inclusive stakeholder approach in collaboration to achieve CSR. Effective social benefits on LPs should warrant more attention being the most impactful contributor in customer loyalty, particularly within the industry (Fourie, 2018).

7.3. Conceptual framework

Figure 5: Conceptual framework



Utilising the conceptual model, the researcher developed a conceptual framework. This framework was drawn from the results and interpretations of the interviews and provides a holistic approach by banks in engaging with their consumers, to achieve social objectives. This framework represents the views and opinions of the respondents in engaging with their banks and LPs. This proposed conceptual framework may be used by LP Managers of banks to ensure adequate consideration in the design and implementation of socially induced LPs, and for banks to consider in engaging their customers to donate LP rewards to bank defined social causes.

7.3.1. Explanation of conceptual framework

Consumer attitudes form the foundation of the consumer “willingness to donate”. These **attitudes** are either affected positively as **motivators**, or negatively as **deterrents**. Attitudes were linked to the motivators and deterrents to identify interrelationships between the various constructs and themes (Research question 1). Cause affinity and resonance mainly are derived from customer values, cultures, faith, communities and past life experiences

Customers then donate rewards based on their underlying consumer mindset and thereafter, the bank converts the LP rewards to cash, and donates to the social beneficiary. Social cause reporting then takes place by the bank, which in turn informs part of the customer perception.

The perceptions are the results of the bank activities in allowing donation of rewards as well as aiding social beneficiaries. These perceptions are either negative or positive, however both are dependent on underlying conditions (Research question 2). The enhancements to improve and enrich participation and contribution then reflect the development areas (Research Question 3).

Secondary findings to the research from the interrelationships include:

- Lack of awareness of social benefits is by far the most significant deterrent to customer reward donation. SA retail banks have not adequately engaged with their consumers to make them aware of social benefits on their LPs.
- Cause resonance is significantly the most significant motivator for consumer engagement on social benefits and reward donation. A variety of attitudes make up consumer cause resonance however local and community causes are the most prevalent, thereby promoting individualism and communitarianism.
- Ease, convenience and technology enabled engagement would yield a higher participation on social benefits
- The degree of ease of reward earning may affect participation positively or negatively. Rewards are considered easier to donate than cash, however reward earning may not achieve social objectives of commercial sacrifice.
- Transparency of cause proceeds and social beneficiaries supports the willingness to donate and enhances consumer trust.

7.3.2. Research contribution

This research contributed to stakeholder theory as well as LP literature. The research promotes and adds new context to stakeholder theory. The research applied social metrics and attitudes, motivators and deterrents to stakeholder management as part of stakeholder theory. This promoted an understanding of the consumer mindset of the consumer stakeholder in supporting other firm stakeholders (i.e., CSR beneficiaries and communities) within the LP and reward context. Further, this research adds to the literature on multi-stakeholder partnerships, within an individual stakeholder on the collective achievement of CSR. Lastly, this research contributes by addressing the future research agenda by Chen et al., (2021) by understanding the customer mindset of donating rewards or points to good causes, as well as conducting the research in the African context.

7.3.3. Implications for management

Fundamentally, this research provides a conceptual framework for banks to consider in the application of engaging consumers to donate rewards towards social causes, using their LP. This adds value by providing key metrics on the consumer diverse mindset and therefore provides LP Managers with insights to enrich engagement.

7.3.4. Limitations of research

Research limitations were discussed in Chapter 4. However, these limitations were discussed below:

- This study focused on the SA retail banking sector LP landscape, even though LPs are prevalent in most other industries in SA. These results may not be generalised across industries and sectors.
- Not all respondents were members of bank LPs, and most respondents had never donated reward points to social causes through their bank.
- Not all age groups and ethnicities participated and therefore, these results may not be affiliated to an age, or ethnic grouping.
- The study was conducted within the SA construct only and therefore, may not necessarily be generalised to other countries, or as a base for the continent of Africa.
- Also, as this study focused on those retail banks that utilise LPs with CSR initiatives embedded, and therefore may not be generalised with institutions engaging in these activities without a LP.
- Lastly, as this study aims to engage with the full population of SA retail banks that make use of LPs which have a social component, there is a limitation that at the time of data collection, social initiatives may not be evident in the bank LP, nor would all the large retail banks be included in the sample as banks of customers interviewed. For this reason, bank and LP names were omitted and the findings were generalised across the SA retail banking spectrum.

7.3.5. Suggestions for future research

The research conducted exposed the following areas for future research:

- Future research in triangulating this research, which is consumer focused, to the SA retail banks on engagement
- Future research possibility in conducting this research across other industries

- The future research agenda on the technology-enabled adoption that would enhance engagement on social benefits

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A. APPENDIX – ETHICAL CLEARANCE

**Gordon Institute
of Business Science**
University of Pretoria

Ethical Clearance
Approved

Dear Muhammed Mikaeel Tayob,

Please be advised that your application for **Ethical Clearance** has been approved.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

[Ethical Clearance Form](#)

Kind Regards

This email has been sent from an unmonitored email account. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the GIBS Research Admin team.

B. APPENDIX – INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWS

Informed consent for interviews

The effects of a loyalty program in achieving corporate social responsibility- A South African retail banking firm perspective.

Researcher: Muhammed Mikaeel Tayob, current MPhil Corporate Strategy Candidate

I am conducting research on the effects of a loyalty program in achieving CSR within the South African retail banking firm landscape. Our interview is expected to last approximately one hour and will help us understand the motivators, attitudes and deterrents present when customers of SA retail banks contribute their earned LP rewards toward defined firm CSR or social initiatives. **Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. All feedback provided will be stored and reported anonymously.** By signing this letter, you are indicating that you have given permission for:

- The interview to be recorded.
- The recording to be transcribed by a third-party transcriber, who will be subject to a standard non-disclosure agreement.
- Verbatim quotations from the interview may be used in the report, provided they are not identified with your name or that of your organisation.
- The data to be used as part of a report that will be publicly available once the examination process has been completed; and
- All data to be reported and stored without identifiers.

If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.

Researcher name: Muhammed Mikaeel Tayob

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Research Supervisor name: Dr Sonja Fourie

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Signature of participant _____ Signature of researcher _____

Date _____ Date: _____

C. APPENDIX – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview Schedule

Semi-structured interview guide. Duration will be approximately 30 mins - 1 hour.

Introduction

The purpose of this survey will be to determine the effects of a loyalty program (LP) in achieving CSR within the South African retail banking firm landscape. Furthermore, investigates the attitudes, motivators, and deterrents present when SA retail banking customers, contribute to charitable or CSR initiatives through firm loyalty programs. The interview is semi-structured. Respondents may elaborate based on their perspectives and experiences.

- 1. Please state your age. (Optional, the interviewee may choose not to answer)**
- 2. Please state your ethnicity. (Optional, the interviewee may choose not to answer)**
- 3. Please state your gender. (Optional, the interviewee may choose not to answer)**
- 4. Are you a customer of one or more of the following SA retail banks? (*Nedbank Standard Bank, First National Bank, ABSA, Capitec Bank, Discovery, Other*). Please state the SA retail bank that you are a customer of.**
- 5. How long have you been a customer of the SA retail bank?**
- 6. Are you aware of your bank's LP? Please name the LP. (*Standard Bank U Count, First National Bank EBucks, ABSA Rewards, Nedbank Greenbacks, Capitec Bank Live Better Benefits, Discovery Vitality, Other*)**
- 7. Do you belong to the bank relevant LP?**
- 8. What made you join, or not join the bank's LP?**
- 9. What do you believe is the most important element for you in utilising your bank's LP?**
- 10. Do you find ease in generating loyalty rewards or points? Please explain.**
- 11. Are you aware of your bank having social causes that you may contribute to using your earned rewards or other contributions?**

- 12. Have you ever donated your rewards or financial resources towards your banks stated social cause through the LP? Can you explain?**
- 13. What drivers would influence your willingness to donate to a social cause through the bank's LP?**
- 14. What factors would prevent or inhibit your participation and contribution to a social cause through the banks LP?**
- 15. What is your perception of your bank knowing that they allow you to donate your points to charity and social causes? Is there an impact on your loyalty to the bank?**
- 16. What would you recommend that the bank do to gain your active sustained participation in their program?**

D. APPENDIX – CODE REPORT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age - 20-30 Gr=3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Points not easy to earn - Complicated tiers and levels Gr=10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age - 30-40 Gr=3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Points not easy to earn -No awareness Gr=1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age - 40-50 Gr=4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive perception - Bank needs to be authentic Gr=7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age - 60-65 Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive perception - Bank needs to contribute themselves Gr=6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age - Not specified Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive perception - I will remain loyal Gr=9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Awareness of Bank LP - No Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive perception - The bank supports me in giving back Gr=8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Awareness of Bank LP - Yes Gr=11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - Agnostic of local vs. international Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Awareness of social causes on bank LP - No Gr=14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - Being aware of the initiatives Gr=2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Awareness of social causes on bank LP - Yes Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - Belief in the cause Gr=12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bank customer - BBB Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP Rewards - Choice variety in social causes Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bank customer - BBB Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - Ease and convenience Gr=8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bank customer - BBB Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP Rewards - Faith based causes Gr=5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bank customer - BBB Gr=5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - If the bank contributed too Gr=5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bank customer - BBB Gr=4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - Influence of social network Gr=2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Lack of awareness Gr=13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - Local and community causes Gr=7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Lack of community/local causes Gr=4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP Rewards - Past or personal experience Gr=6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Lack of transparency Gr=6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - Regular reminders Gr=2

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Lack of understanding my social needs Gr=7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - Rewards are easy to earn Gr=1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Lack of variety in social causes Gr=3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP rewards - Rewards easier to donate Gr=10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Much rather donate cash than points Gr=3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rationale for donating LP Rewards - Transparency of cause proceeds Gr=9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Not easy to use Gr=5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for joining - Affiliation with partners Gr=2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Personal benefits are first priority Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for joining - Commercial Benefits Gr=20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Requires effort Gr=4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for joining - Ease of earning Gr=2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Reward earning not easy Gr=5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for joining - Ease of use Gr=4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Barrier to donating LP rewards - Rewards are a gift to me Gr=3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for joining - Feeling valued Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Donated LP Rewards in the past - No Gr=10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for joining - Felt forced Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Donated LP Rewards in the past - Yes Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for not joining - Lack of awareness of LP Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ethnicity - Coloured Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for not joining - Lack of awareness of social causes Gr=4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ethnicity - Indian Gr=4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for not joining - Lack of personalisation Gr=2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ethnicity - Not specified Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for not joining - Lack of product affinity Gr=1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ethnicity - White Gr=6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for not joining - No perceived value for money Gr=1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gender - Female Gr=4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for not joining - No personal benefit Gr=4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gender - Male Gr=7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reason for not joining - Too many partners Gr=1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gender - Not specified Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation - Advertise it more Gr=9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Longevity- 10-15 Years Gr=4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation - Bank to be authentic and contribute Gr=4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Longevity- 1-5 Years Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation - Leverage Technology Gr=7

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Longevity- 15-20 Years Gr=3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation - Make it easy to use Gr=7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Longevity- 20-25 Years Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation - Make it effortless Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Longevity- 30-35 Years Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation - Make me aware Gr=14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Longevity- 5-10 Years Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation - Partnerships Gr=1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Member of LLL - No Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation - Showcase causes Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Member of LLL - Yes Gr=6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation - Tie cause to bank story Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Member of LLL - No Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reward ownership - My rewards were earned not given Gr=5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Member of LLL - No Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social cause reporting - 3rd party validation Gr=2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Member of LLL - Yes Gr=3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social cause reporting - Provide a report Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Member of LLL - Yes Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social cause reporting - Send me media Gr=5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Negative perception - Cease in CSI activity Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Types of causes - Poverty Gr=6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Negative perception - If they were not consistent Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Types of causes - Abuse Gr=2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Negative perception - Lack of trust Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Types of causes - Animals Gr=3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Negative perception - Self-preservation/glorification Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Types of causes - Children Gr=6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Points are easy to earn - Incentivised behaviours Gr=3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Types of causes - Disabilities Gr=1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Points are easy to earn - Partners are common Gr=2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Types of causes - Disease Gr=1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Points not easy to earn - Changing partner landscape Gr=1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Types of causes - Elderly Gr=1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Willingness to donate - No Gr=1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Willingness to donate - Yes Gr=12