

**Cross sector sustainability partnerships that contribute
to corporate strategic goals and sustainability.**

Michelle Julie Constant

20819928

A research report submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy (Corporate Strategy)

29 November 2021

ABSTRACT

Given the growing demand for responsible business practice in society today, this research paper aims to deepen understanding of the role of multi-stakeholder partners, and cross sector partnerships, as they are framed by stakeholder theory, and as they support corporate goals, and local and global sustainability. How the strategic partnerships, which are often built on the same purpose and vision, approach the sustainability of the corporate, the partners, the local community, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals globally, is included. The research is a qualitative analysis of a global organisation in the FMCG sector. This paper is based on extant literature on cross-sector sustainability partnerships and corporate strategic goals, and also stakeholder theory literature. Additionally, the report concludes with potential refinements and extensions to the literature on cross-sector partnerships and the corporate strategic goals they support.

KEY WORDS

Stakeholders, Sustainability, Multi-Sector Partnerships, Corporate Strategy, Purpose.

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 (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.

Signed Michelle Constant Date 29 November 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
DECLARATION	iii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF APPENDICES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	x
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Business Relevance	1
1.2 Research Problem	2
1.3 Research Questions	5
1.4 Research Aims.....	5
1.5 Contributions to Research	6
1.6 Research Scope	6
1.7 Research Roadmap Forward.....	7
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2. 1 Introduction	8
Sustainability	8
Stakeholder Theory	8
2. 2 Definitions And Understanding Of Key Terms	9
2.2.1 Sustainability as Flourishing, and the Sustainable Development Goals	9
Sustainability as Flourishing.....	9
Sustainability and the SDGs	10
2.2.2 Stakeholder Theory and its Historical Antecedents.....	12
2. 3 Construct 1: Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships	13
2.3.1 Stakeholders	14
2.3.2 Multi-Stakeholder Partners.....	15
2.3.3 Beyond Partnerships – Relationship Building	16
2.3.4 Shared Value and Collective Impact	17
2.3.5 Supply Chains and Value Chains.....	18
2. 4 Construct 2: Corporate Strategic Goals	20
2.4.1 Activist Shareholders.....	21
2.4.2 Corporate Purpose	21
2.4.3 Purpose And Profit	22

2.4.4 Timeframes	22
2.4.5 Responsible Capitalism	23
2.5 Local And Global Sustainability	23
2.5.1 Local Sustainability and Communities.....	24
2.5.2 Global Sustainability and SDGs	25
2.5.3 Measuring and Reporting	25
2.5.4 Resource And Knowledge Sharing	26
2.6 Conclusion Of Literature Review	27
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH QUESTION	28
CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	30
4.1 Introduction	30
4.2 Research Methodology	30
4.2.1 Role of theory	30
4.2.2 Research Methodology	30
4.2.3 Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions.....	30
4.3 Research Design	31
4.3.1 Research Setting.....	31
4.3.2 Level of Analysis	31
4.3.3 Unit of Analysis.....	32
4.3.4 Sample Selection /Recruitment.....	32
4.3.5 Sample Size and Saturation.....	33
4.4 Data Collection.....	34
4.4.1 Research Instrument and Data Collection.....	34
4.4.2 Time and place of interviews.....	35
4.5 Data Analysis	36
4.5.1 Thematic Analysis Process	36
4.5.2 Phases of Thematic Analysis for the Research Report.....	37
Phase 1: Interview and Transcription.....	37
4.6 Ethical Considerations	38
4.7 Limitations.....	39
CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	41
5.1 Introduction	41
5.2 Grouping of Research Participants for Analysis	42
5.2.1 Analysis Grouping 1 The Investment Company.....	42
5.2.2 Analysis Grouping 2 The Global Corporate.....	43
5.2.3 Analysis Grouping 3 The Local Corporate	43

5.2.4	Analysis Grouping 4 The Partners	43
5.2.5	Participants, Codes, Profiles And Grouping	44
5.3	Analysis of Interview Data.....	45
5.3.1	Construct 1 Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships.....	45
5.3.2	Key Construct 2: Corporate Strategic Goals	59
5.3.3	Construct 3: Local And Global Sustainability	68
5.4	Final Conclusions of Research Findings.....	77
5.4.1	Construct 1: Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships Highlights	78
	Stakeholders and Multi-stakeholder Partners	78
	Potential New Sub theme: The ‘Retrofit’	78
	Beyond Partnerships: Relationship Building	79
	Potential New Sub theme: Challenges.....	79
	Shared Value and Collective Impact.....	79
	Supply Chains, and Value Chains.....	80
	Potential New Theme: Innovation and Interconnectivity	80
5.4.2	Construct 2: Corporate Strategic Goals	80
	Activist Shareholders.....	80
	Purpose and Profit.....	81
	Potential New Theme: Purpose and ‘Panic’	81
	Timeframes	81
	Responsible Capitalism.....	82
	Potential New Sub Theme: Legacy.....	82
5.4.3	Key Construct 3: Local and Global Sustainability.....	82
	Local Sustainability and Communities.....	82
	Global Sustainability and the SDGs	83
	Measurement and Reporting.....	83
	Resources and Knowledge Sharing.....	83
CHAPTER 6 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE DISCUSSION		84
6.1	Introduction	84
6.2	Key Constructs And Themes	84
6.2.1	Construct 1: Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships.....	84
	New Sub Theme: The ‘Retrofit’	86
	Recap of Key Insights from the Literature	86
	Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature.....	87
	New Sub Theme: The ‘RetroFit’	87
	Conclusion on Multi-Stakeholder Partners	88

Recap of Key Findings for Beyond Partnerships – Building Relationships	88
New Sub Theme: Challenges.....	88
Recap of Key Insights from the Literature	89
Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature.....	89
New Sub Theme: Challenges.....	89
Conclusion on Beyond Partnerships	90
Recap of Key Findings on Shared Value and Collective Impact.....	91
Recap of Key Insights from the Literature	91
Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature.....	91
Conclusion on Shared Value and Collective Impact	91
Recap of Key Findings for Supply Chains, and Value Chains as Value Networks	92
Recap of Key Insights from the Literature	92
Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature.....	92
Conclusion on Supply Chains and Value Chains, as Value Networks	93
Recap of Key Findings of New Theme Innovation and Interconnectivity	93
Recap of Key Insights from the Literature	94
Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature.....	94
Conclusions on Innovation and Interconnectivity	95
6.2.2 Construct 2: Corporate Strategic Goals.....	95
Recap of Key Findings for Activist Shareholders	95
Recap of Key Insights from the Literature	96
Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature.....	96
Conclusion on Activist Shareholders.....	96
New Sub Theme Legacy	104
6.2.3 Construct 3: Local And Global Sustainability	105
Recap of Key Insights from the Literature	107
Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature.....	107
Conclusion on Global Sustainability.....	108
6. 3 Summary of Chapter 6 Conclusions	110
6.3.1 Similarities	112
· Stakeholders.....	112
· Multi-Stakeholder Partners	112
· Beyond Partnerships: Building Relationships.....	112
· Activist Shareholders	112
· Corporate Purpose	112
· Purpose and Profit.....	112
· Time Frames.....	112

· Responsible Capitalism	112
· Local Sustainability	113
· Global Sustainability	113
· Measurement and Reporting	113
· Resource and Knowledge Sharing	113
· Shared Value as Collective Impact.....	113
· Supply Chains and Value Chains as Value Networks	113
6.3.2 Minor Differences and Sub Themes.....	113
· New Sub Theme The ‘Retro-Fit’, comes out of Multi-Stakeholder Partners theme	113
· New Sub Theme Tensions, formerly Challenges, comes out of the Beyond Partnerships, Building Relationships theme.....	114
· New Sub theme Legacy, comes out of the Responsible Capitalism theme	114
6.3.3 Differences and New Themes	114
· Innovation and Interconnected Structures, retitled from Innovation and Interconnectivity	114
· Purpose and Crisis, retitled from Purpose and ‘Panic’	114
CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	115
7. 1 Introduction	115
7. 2 Principle Research Conclusions	115
7. 3 Contributions.....	119
7.3.1 Similarities	119
7.3.2 Potential Nuanced and Minor Differences.....	119
7.3.3 Potential Differences	120
7.3.3.1 Innovation and Interconnected Structures.....	120
7.3.3.2 Purpose and Crisis	120
7. 4 Recommendations for Managers and Relevant Stakeholders.....	121
7. 5 Limitations.....	122
7. 6 Recommendations for Further Research.....	123
REFERENCE LIST.....	125
APPENDICES	132
1. APPENDIX 1	132
2. APPENDIX 2.....	133
3. APPENDIX 3.....	135

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Literature Review Roadmap.....	9
Table 2: Sustainability, Definitions and Literature.....	11
Table 3: Stakeholder Theory, Definitions and Literature.....	13
Table 4: Construct 1, Themes and Literature.....	13
Table 5: Construct 2, Themes and Literature.....	20
Table 6: Construct 3, Themes and Literature.....	24
Table 7: Conceptual Framework I.....	27
Table 8: Sample Sub Groups And Interviewees Per Group.....	33
Table 9: Research Participants, Codes, Profiles and Groupings.....	34
Table 10: Phases of Thematic Analysis.....	36
Table 11: Conceptual Framework II.....	42
Table 12: Research Participants, Codes, Profiles and Groupings.....	44
Table 13: Construct 1 Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships, Themes and Evidence.....	58
Table 14: Construct 2 Corporate Strategic Goals, Themes and Evidence...	68
Table 15: The UN Sustainable Development Goals.....	69
Table 16: Sustainable Partnership Activation, Local To Global Trajectory	73
Table 17: Construct 3 Local and Global Sustainability, Themes and Evidence.....	77
Table 18: Conceptual Framework III.....	78
Table 19: Summary of Chapter 6 Conclusions.....	110
Table 20 Final Conceptual Framework IV.....	118

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Unique codes generated by the four different interviewee groups...	37
Figure 2: Stages of Coding.....	38
Figure 3: Crossover of Partnerships, Local and Global Corporate, and Investment Groups.....	57

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Introduction to Interview.....	132
Appendix 2: Interview Guidelines.....	133
Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance.....	135

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CSR Corporate Social Responsibility
CSV Creating Shared Value
ESG Environmental/ Social/ Governance
FMCG Fast Moving Consumer Goods
MSP Multi-Stakeholder Partners
NPC Not For Profit Company
RBV Research Based Values
SDGs Sustainable Development Goals
UN United Nations

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Business Relevance

In August 2019, the Business Roundtable in the United States, an organisation representing diverse corporates, outlined what they described as a “modern standard” of corporate purpose, including a “commitment to all stakeholders” (businessroundtable.org, “Business Roundtable Redefines the Purpose of a Corporation”, 2019, para 1). Whilst the Roundtable is specifically focused on corporate and international companies, it sends a decisive message to the business world, eschewing a decades old approach to shareholder primacy, and supporting a shift to a stakeholder approach, one that reinforces purpose and sustainability, and addresses a more integrated role for business in society. Harrison, Phillips and Freeman (2020), in writing about the 2019 Business Roundtable Statement, note the diversity of corporates supporting the need to re-examine strategic purpose, in order to support organisational and societal sustainability. The relevance of this to other international organisations, including those based in South Africa, is emphasised.

In her book, *Reimagining Capitalism – How Business Can Save the World* (2020), academic and popular author, Rebecca Henderson, suggests that historically business regarded environmental, social and governance issues as incidental to their operations. She notes, however, that these matters should underpin corporate strategies and outcomes (Henderson, 2020). This researcher acknowledges the popular tilt of this literature, which is included in a growing library of other popular, mainstream business writing, including Kate Raworth’s *Doughnut Economics – Seven Ways to Think like a 21st Century Economist* (2017), but argues that they demonstrate the business relevance, through easy accessibility, of a mounting business need to change the practice of business, to something that approaches a more moral and ethical support of corporate *and* societal sustainability.

In South Africa, the issue of sustainability, as framed by Environment, Society and Governance approaches (hereafter ESG), is well covered in the media. The Daily Maverick online newspaper, for example, features diverse articles on the different aspects of corporate participation in sustainability (Planting, 2021; Absa Group, 2021). This is underscored, as it suggests the relevance of the topic, as recognised by both the private sector and civil society. Again, the researcher proposes that the shift of the

mediated conversation into the private sector and broader society, demonstrates both the relevance and need to reimagine the corporate approach to sustainability. The role of the stakeholder and purpose in the current discourse is, furthermore, noted.

1.2 Research Problem

Henderson and Serafeim (2020) contend that real change is required in the private sector, given the complexity and rapidly changing times we are living in. This is also supported by the Harrison et al. (2020) suggestion that society is developing “shareholder wealth fatigue” (p. 1224). The latter argue for the replacement of shareholder primacy with a more multidimensional approach to multi stakeholder relationships in business, based on purpose, and supporting a more sustainably and ethically conscious business environment. How then do businesses create sustainability, as opposed to reducing unsustainability (Hoffman, 2018) both as a means of achieving strategic outcomes, and in supporting society more broadly, as suggested by Harrison et al. (2020) and Ordonez-Ponce, Clarke and MacDonald (2021)? The research problem thus addresses the complexity of corporate and societal sustainability, described as a “grand challenge” (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2021), and how it might best be resolved through partnerships. Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) and Freeman et al. (2020) suggest that corporate sustainability partners offer a valuable distinction to business, and may even support global Sustainable Development Goals (hereafter SDGs).

The notion of partnerships is framed by stakeholder theory, as iterated by Freeman over decades, given that the stakeholder is differently and diversely recognised as a critical role player in supporting corporate purpose and strategic goals (Freeman, 2017). Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) support the notion that a multi-stakeholder partnership consists of different stakeholders, who hold the same vision and purpose, based on similar long-term socio-sustainability beliefs and goals. Gray and Purdy (2018), extend this, by suggesting that a partnership is often based on a mutual desire to resolve a unique social problem. They suggest that this is different to a collaboration, which they argue is based on a purely commercial approach.

Diverse stakeholder partnerships appear to support the complex nature of sustainability in the corporate world in relation to society; this based on the suggestion that stakeholders who hold the same vision and purpose, and similar long-term socio-

sustainability goals, support and strengthen value networks and outcomes (Freeman et al. 2020). Additionally, the diverse resources and cross sector expertise that partners are able to bring to the partnership, strengthen the goals and outcomes further.

How the corporate is structured, to ensure that the partnerships are integrated into the organisation speaks to the concept of interconnected stakeholders or ecosystems, as suggested by Bhattacharya and Polman (2017), Jacobides, Cennamo and Gawer (2018), Freeman et al. (2020) and Freeman (2017). The notion of a multi-linear, non-hierarchical structure is further extended by the Freeman et al. (2020) concept of value networks as opposed to value chains.

Given the suggestion of partnerships as interconnected value networks, the creation of shared value (hereafter CSV) as a construct (Kramer and Porter, 2011), is addressed differently as the ecosystem of collective impact (Kramer and Pfitzer, 2016). Thus the research problem does not focus on CSV, although it is included in cross-sector partnership literature, through the concept of collective impact. Multi-sector partnerships cannot be directly considered to create shared value, as their overarching goal is not to drive corporate competitiveness alone, but foremost to address specific sustainability needs. The nature of these partnerships does, however, highlight a tension between profit and purpose, which requires cogent and persuasive articulation of the latter.

One cannot detach stakeholder engagement and corporate strategic goals from the notion of purpose. Inasmuch as a greater purpose, based on global sustainability and a responsible future, guides the vision, mission and strategy, as also suggested by Freeman and Dmyetreyev (2017), it supports the original motives behind the corporate strategic goals. The complexity of purpose as it impacts the corporate strategy, and sustainable partnership goals, is demonstrated through diverse tensions - the tensions of purpose during a time of crisis, and purpose and profit, as they impact strategy and partnership relationships (Freeman et al., 2020). The Henderson and Serafeim (2020) recommendation that SDGs act as an ethical and practical roadmap in defining corporate purpose, is demonstrated through the corporate strategy. In striving to reach a shared vision and “desirable” future, as noted by Gray and Purdy (2018), the opportunities that the multi-sector partnerships (hereafter MSPs) and cross sector partnerships offer, under the umbrella of sustainable purpose, contribute to the organisational strategic goals.

In order to address the complex systemic challenges of climate change and sustainability, the organisation stakeholders, including shareholders, are required to be

active participants in what Freeman (2017) describes as responsible capitalism, and Henderson (2020) describes as a reimagining of capitalism. Hoffman (2018) argues for the creation of equitable communities, as supported by sustainable business practice. Thus flourishing, as the Ehrenfeld and Hoffman principle (2020), remains a purpose-driven process, supported by all stakeholders and partnerships, addressing sustainability.

Local and global sustainability goals are differently approached, but nevertheless demonstrate an alignment to the SDGs. Partnerships address local sustainability issues, as they relate internally to the local corporate, the affiliated partners and then more broadly to the community; generally in an attempt to resolve inequality, unemployment and poverty. Clarke and MacDonald (2019) also note the differentiation in how partnerships may tackle local and global sustainability. The local and global sustainability strategy further supports the partnerships, in the perception, and reality, of being active citizens in broader society; noted by Pera, Occhiocupo and Clarke (2016). The sustainability requirements, or goals, may, however, differ according to whether the local office is situated in the global north, developed countries, or in the global south and developing countries. This then provides the strategic opportunity, as also suggested by Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), to address specific sustainability goals according to different geographic needs. Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), further suggest that cross sector social and sustainable partnerships offer a nascent opportunity for global business, if supported by purpose and even legacy, based inter and intra-generational needs. Furthermore the role of longer time frames is critical in supporting long-term sustainability, as also noted by Henderson and Serafeim (2020).

In conclusion, the research problem argues for the shared commitment between different stakeholders, and partnerships, in support of local and global sustainability. Local and global sustainability are generally framed by the corporate strategic goals, which are grounded in a well-articulated purpose, and supported by all stakeholders including corporate (both global and local), the diverse partners, and the investment company. Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) note that without this collective vision, the possibility of partnership failure is increased.

1.3 Research Questions

Corley and Gioia (2011) suggest that both usefulness and innovation are fundamental to the process of research. In the exploration of the research problem, the question of whether the overarching research question has business relevance or utility, and whether it has potential theoretical relevance, is raised.

The research question and sub questions were framed by the academic article of Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), which addresses the broader question of how business strategy can support sustainability, and the SDGs, through multi-sector partnerships. Thus the question: **How do cross sector sustainability partnerships contribute to corporate strategic goals and local and global sustainability?**

Four sub questions were charted, out of the research question, based on the work of Freeman et al. (2020), Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), Ordonez-Ponce and Clarke (2020) and Gray and Purdy (2018), amongst others. These sub questions are:

1. What are the partnership relationships, and how do they work?
2. What is the role of the partnerships?
3. How are the relationships with SDGs seen as opportunities?
4. How do these opportunities contributing to strategic goals?

1.4 Research Aims

The research aimed to expand insights from the two broad concepts, notably cross sector sustainability partnerships, and how they reinforce corporate strategic goals and global sustainability. The research attempted to explore the phenomenon of cross sector sustainable partnerships as the support both corporate strategic goals and local and global sustainability. Furthermore the research aimed to develop deeper understanding of, and key insights into, the research problem, as framed by the research question. In closing the research objective was to develop a conceptual framework, addressing the key constructs and thus highlighting the opportunities and tensions of cross sector sustainable partnerships as they as they support corporate strategy and sustainability, for individual corporates.

1.5 Contributions to Research

The research suggests that there are many similarities to the extant literature. In particular the argument for a broader value network of stakeholders, or what Ferraro, Etzion and Gehman (2015) describe as a “multivocality”, in order to support cross sector partnerships and sustainability in complex times, is well covered.

Potential contributions are supported by nuanced refinements to the literature. The suggestion that shared value rather be considered within a more nuanced approach through the broader ecosystem of collective impact was highlighted, as was the notion that both supply chains and value chains be considered as a multi-linear network (Freeman et al., 2020) to further support the concept of interconnected partners and relationships.

The concept of the ‘retrofit’ in partnership origins provided valuable insights to the Gray and Purdy (2018) notion of mutual problem solving, based on mutual purpose and sustainability goals. And the partnership tensions that develop as an outcome of the corporate strategic goals, further added a more nuanced approach to the research.

The research also highlighted possible differences in the creation and support of partnerships, based on organisational value networks and corporate structures. Additionally the research tentatively builds on existing stakeholder and partnership literature in considering the role of purpose, as it underpins multi-sector partnerships, in relation to corporate strategic goals and sustainability. These are small differences that may contribute to the current literature on cross sector sustainability partnerships.

1.6 Research Scope

The research scope is framed within the theoretical and the practical. The orientation of the literature was on sustainability partnerships and corporate strategic goals.

The practical scope of the research was framed by the choice of a Fast Moving Consumer Goods (hereafter FMCG) corporate operating both locally and globally. The selection of the FMCG was made, given the researcher knowledge of current and diverse partnerships that the level of analysis required, in order to support the research problem.

1.7 Research Roadmap Forward

The research paper consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 frames the research problem as it is supported by business relevance, and research. Chapter 2 is the literature review, and addresses the theoretical practice of the paper. This chapter is divided into four sections, consisting of a definition of the terms and theories being reviewed, and thereafter three core constructs, notably Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships, Corporate Strategic Goals, and Local and Global Sustainability. These are outlined by the research question, and sub questions, and can be found in Chapter 2, with supporting themes, in the Table 1 Literature Review Roadmap. Thereafter Chapter 3 returns the reader to the research questions, and Chapter 4 addresses the methodology that was used to analyse the findings, and the literature. Chapter 5 is a detailed analysis of the research data and findings based on evidence, cross and in case analysis, and conclusions. Chapter 6 further analyses the similarities and differences between the literature and the finding conclusions, and Chapter 7 consolidates all the outcomes of the previous sector. Chapter 7 additionally addresses potential research contributions, recommendations to business, and potential topics for further research.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The selection of literature in the review, addresses the nature of multi-sector and cross sector partnerships, as they impact corporate strategic goals and sustainability. The literature review addresses three key constructs and their underlying themes. Furthermore the definitions of key terms, as they are covered in the literature are also included. Thus the literature review framework tackles: i) understanding and definitions of key terms; ii) cross sector sustainability partners; iii) corporate strategic goals; and iv) local and global sustainability.

The literature is supported by two literature paradigms, or key terms, which are addressed under the definitions – Sustainability, and Stakeholder Theory.

Sustainability

For the purposes of the review, interpretations and definitions of sustainability were addressed through different lenses§ – firstly the Ehrenfeld and Hoffman (2020) submission of sustainability as ‘flourishing’, and sustainability in relation to the notion of purpose; and sustainability as a post ‘Gross Domestic Product’ concept (hereafter GDP) as originally suggested by Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi (2010), and expanded by Hoekstra (2021). Secondly the researcher addressed sustainability as it is covered, in relation to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (hereafter UN SDGs).

Stakeholder Theory

In defining the key terms in relation to the three constructs, the researcher looked at different iterations of stakeholder theory and it’s historical antecedents, specifically as it pertains the work of Freeman (2017) and Freeman et al. (2020). The intrinsic relationship between stakeholder theory and purpose, as noted by Freeman et al. (2020), whilst not covered in depth in the chapter on definitions, is covered extensively under the construct of corporate strategic goals.

Table 1, below, is the Literature Review Roadmap, which identifies all definitions, key constructs, and themes that will be addressed in the chapter 2 literature review.

Table 1: Literature Review Roadmap

Key Constructs	2.2 Definitions and Understanding of Key Terms	2.3 Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships	2.4 Corporate Strategic Goals	2.5 Local and Global Sustainability
Themes Explored in each Construct	2.2.1 Sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals	2.3.1 Stakeholders	2.4.1 Activist Shareholders	2.5.1 Local Sustainability and Communities
	2.2.2 Stakeholder Theory	2.3.2 Multi-stakeholder Partners	2.4.2 Corporate Purpose	2.5.2 Global Sustainability and the SDGs
		2.3.3 Beyond Partnerships – Relationship Building	2.4.3 Purpose and Profit	2.5.3 Measuring and Reporting
		2.3.4 Shared Value and Collective Impact	2.4.4 Timeframes	2.5.4 Resource and Knowledge Sharing
		2.3.5 Supply Chains and Value Chains	2.4.5 Responsible Capitalism	

Source: Author's Own

2.2 Definitions and Understanding of Key Terms

2.2.1 Sustainability as Flourishing, and the Sustainable Development Goals

In defining the term sustainability, the researcher focused on the concepts of sustainability through the moral and ethical lens of flourishing, as measured post the GDP, and as qualified by the UN SDGs. The table below highlights key sustainability concepts, definitions and a broad literature orientation. The literature review scope is limited to literature oriented to Business and Society, Business Ethics, and Business and Sustainability.

Sustainability as Flourishing

Ehrenfeld and Hoffman (2020) suggest that the definition of sustainability is driven foremost by the specific agenda of author and the sector from which he or she derives. They also ask how we achieve a thriving and considered sustainability

(2020, p 7). In arguing a thoughtful interpretation of sustainability, the philosopher and psychologist Erich (2013) writes that mankind operates within two modes – the ‘having or acquisitive’ mode, and the ‘being’ mode. It is the latter, which could be applied to corporate purpose, as a post shareholder paradigm, in addressing sustainable goals. Ehrenfeld and Hoffman (2020) suggest the concept of sustainability as flourishing. The terminology of flourishing in relation to sustainability, is common, and reflects a purposeful approach, in stakeholder and partnership literature, and is referenced by Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, and de Colle (2010) and Freeman et al. (2020) amongst others.

Ehrenfeld and Hoffman argue that sustainability as “flourishing” needs to be seeded in authenticity, proposing that rethinking “consumption” in relation to “personal fulfilment” is critical to reimagining sustainability within the broader framework of contemporary and responsible capitalism (2020, p 70). Furthermore Ehrenfeld and Hoffman (2020) suggest the challenge of addressing sustainability lies in rethinking the belief that global progress is only measured by scalable economic growth, as opposed to sustainability; that unending growth, as a measurement of success, comes at the cost of true sustainability.

In order to grow sustainability as flourishing within the private sector, and also more broadly, Hoffman suggests we need to shift from reducing unsustainability to creating sustainability, focusing on connection and transformation (2018). Stiglitz et al. (2010) argue for a “balance sheet of sustainability” (p 12), which recognises success through diverse human metrics and not as economic growth and Gross Domestic Product (hereafter GDP) measurement alone. Hoekstra (2019) further notes that the GDP even as it grows, may still cause inequality and poverty, and not demonstrate sustainability. Hoekstra suggests that the GDP acts as a “proxy indicator” for a country’s success (2019, p 6) but that this need not be the case, as we use sustainability as a means to redefine country and corporate success as we move forward.

Sustainability and the SDGs

In defining the different meanings and metrics of sustainability, this paper uses the 17 UN SDG’s as a framework. The United Nations 2030 Agenda names 17 goals, and is cited by Ordonez-Ponce, Clarke and MacDonald (2021, p 2) as a “shared vision for a just, safe and sustainable future for humanity”. Thus in thinking about sustainability, this paper will use the different SDGs’ as they are applicable to the

corporate being researched. The corporate vision, the sharing of it, and a desire too achieve just and sustainable outcomes are intrinsically aligned to the SDGs’.

Whilst individual goals may be addressed, it is noted that the goals, are all encompassing and comprehensive, recognising that there is interconnectivity between goals, which must “balance social, economic and environmental sustainability” (undp.org, “United Nations Development Programme”, 2020). Goal 17 argues for strong partnerships locally and globally, acting as a ‘plumb line’ dropping through all the other goals, supporting them in the achievement of their outcomes. It is this concept of partnership that will be addressed further by the research question and corporate analysis.

Whilst the original United Nations 2030 agenda intention is to have the 17 goals successfully addressed by 2030, Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2020, p 2) cite Swain (2018) as suggesting that UN enforcement of the goals lack any real agency, and are not supported by any active obligation for governments globally. However, as noted by Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2020, p 2) there has been some progressive activity within the private sector in attempting to address sustainability and the goals, either individually or as part of the over- arching business strategy, and corporate purpose. It is within this context that this paper realises sustainability. Table 2, below, highlights the literature, definitions, and orientation of the sustainability terms.

Table 2: Sustainability, Definitions and Literature

Concept: Sustainability as Flourishing		
Authors	Definition	Literature Orientation
Ehrenfeld, J., & Hoffman, A. (2020); Fromm E. (2013,); Freeman, R., Harrison, J., Wicks, A., Parmar, B., & de Colle, S. (2010) Freeman R., Phillips R., & Sisodia, R. (2020)	Sustainability within the broader framework of responsible capitalism	Business and Sustainability Business Ethics
Stiglitz, J., Sen, A., & Fitoussi, J. (2010) Hoekstra, R. (2019)	Sustainability as a measurement beyond GDP	Business Ethics, Business and Sustainability
Concept: Sustainability and the SDGs		
Authors	Definition	Literature Orientation
United Nations (2020). <i>The</i>	Global Sustainability as	Business and Society,

<p><i>Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020</i>. Retrieved from https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/ Ordonez-Ponce, E., Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2021)</p>	<p>measured and addressed by the UN SDGs, and the role of business in supporting</p>	<p>Business as Ethics, Business and Sustainability</p>
--	--	--

Source: Author's Own

2.2.2 Stakeholder Theory and its Historical Antecedents

In attempting to define stakeholder theory, and the stakeholder in business, the researcher looked at the orientation of business and society. The table below highlights both the theory, and it's historical antecedents.

In understanding the concept of stakeholder theory, it is valuable to briefly look at the history of the term in relation to shareholder theory. The literature of the latter suggested the corporate has only one responsibility - growing corporate profit. As the Nobel Prize winning economist and shareholder theorist, Milton Friedman observed in the New York Times (1970), the “social responsibility of business is to increase its profits”. Harrison et al. remind us of this, when they note “maximizing shareholder returns has been an article of faith in business research and practice for decades” (2020, p 1224). Whilst Friedman grounded shareholder primacy directly in the making of profit for the shareholder alone, and not in the broader social context, contrasting Drucker, when he noted that what all corporates have in common, and should be cognisant of is, “that they function and perform within a larger society and community” (1993, p. xvii). Drucker also underscored the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (hereafter CSR) as part of this functionality (1993), which, at the time, demonstrated an understanding of the relationship between business and society.

Stakeholder theory however, is broadly founded on the academic work of Freeman over decades. Freeman’s seminal literature embraces stakeholder theory and the role of partnerships, shifting the academy beyond shareholder literature. Furthermore, Freeman and Reed argued for the “wide sense” of the stakeholder as opposed to the narrow definition (1983, p 91), noting that the term stakeholder was originally conceived by the Stanford Research Institute as far back as 1963, referring to diverse “groups without whose support, the organization would cease to exist” (1983, p 89). The notion of a corporate that performs within larger society, obviously proposes a very different and more broadly engaged corporate than the one Friedman originally suggested. Additionally it questions how corporate purpose within broader society, is in fact defined, what the role of the stakeholder is in this definition, and suggests a different way of engaging with what Freeman et al. describe as “responsible capitalism”

(2020, p 217). In closing, Phillips et al. (2019, p 6) suggest that the growing success of stakeholder theory relies on the need to place greater emphasis on the relation between ethics, organisational justice, long term goals, highly complex and connected environments, and global sustainability. Table 3, below, highlights the literature, definitions, and orientation, supporting stakeholder theory.

Table 3: Stakeholder Theory, Definitions and Literature

Concept: Stakeholder Theory and Historical Antecedents		
Authors	Definition	Literature Orientation
Harrison J., Phillips R., and Freeman R. (2020); Drucker, P. (1993); Freeman, R., & Reed, D. (1983); Freeman, R., Phillips R., & Sisodia, R. (2020); Harrison, J., Barney, J., Freeman, R. & Phillips, R. (2019)	Stakeholder theory as it pertains to shareholder theory and the role of business in society	Stakeholder and Partnership Literature

Source: Author's Own

2. 3 Construct 1: Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships

The themes of stakeholder, sectors, value and supply chains, and relationships, as they pertain to partnerships are covered under the first construct. In framing the sustainability in relation to the partnerships, the researcher read literature on shared value, and collective impact, as it addresses the interconnected nature of relationships beyond commercial partnerships.

Table 4, below offers a framework of the themes and the literature covered under this construct.

Table 4: Construct 1, Themes and Literature

Construct: Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships	
Theme	Literature
2.3.1 Stakeholders	Freeman R., & Ginena, K. (2015); Freeman R., (2017); Freeman, R., Phillips, R., & Sisodia, R. (2020);

	Harrison, J., Phillips, R. A., & Freeman, R., (2020); Harrison, J., Barney, J., Freeman, R., & Phillips, R. (2019); Bhattacharya, C., & Polman, P. (2017); Freeman, R., & Dymtriyev, S. (2017)
2.3.2 Multi-stakeholder Partners	Gray, B., & Purdy, J. (2018) Ordonez-Ponce, E., Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2021) Porter, M., and Kramer, M. (2011) Harrison, J., Phillips, R. A., & Freeman, R., (2020).
2.3.3 Beyond Partnerships: Relationship Building	R., Occhiocupo, N., & Clarke, J. (2016); Henderson R., & Serafeim G., (2020); Ordonez-Ponce, E., Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2021); Kramer, M., and Pfitzer, M. (2016); Crane, A., Palazzo, G., Spence, L., & Matten, D. (2014) (2014); Kania, J., & Kramer M., (2011); Freeman, R., Phillips, R., & Sisodia, R. (2020)
2.3.4 Shared Value and Collective Impact	Kramer, M. and Pfitzer, M. (2016); Crane, A., Palazzo, G., Spence, L., & Matten, D. (2014) (2014); Kramer M., & Pfitzer, M. (2016); Kania, J., & Kramer M., (2011);
2.3.5 Supply Chains and Value Chains	Freeman, R. E., Phillips, R., & Sisodia, R. (2020); Jacobides, M. G., Cennamo, C., & Gawer, A. (2018); Gray, B., & Purdy, J. (2018); Freeman, R. (2017); Bhattacharya, C., & Polman, P. (2017); Evans, S., Vladimirova, D., Holgado, M., Van Fossen, K., Yang, M., Silva, E. A., & Barlow, C. (2017); Freudenreich, B., Lüdeke-Freund, F., & Schaltegger, S. (2020)

Source: Author's Own

2.3.1 Stakeholders

Freeman and Ginena (2015) note that the “emerging view on business (is) not merely aimed at profits” (p. 9). Harrison et al. highlight this in the Business Round Table Statement (2020). Consequently the argument suggests that performance of the corporate is aligned not to the shareholder alone, but to the broader value chain of stakeholders, including diverse clusters of players who support “value-creating relationships” (Freeman, 2017, p 3).

In attempting to understand who is the stakeholder, Harrison et al. question whether the boundaries of the stakeholder value chain, and singularly the term ‘stakeholder’,

should “be based on legal status, economic dependence, social convention, ability to control, common interests, ability to contribute to creation of value, or some other dimension?” (2020, p. 1232). Phillips, Barney, Freeman and Harrison (2019) argue that a stakeholder has legitimacy and power in the eyes of management – power being aligned to expertise, skills, influence and other value forms. They argue that legitimacy talks to “cultural and societal norms” (2019, p 3). Freeman (2017) furthermore believes the term to include the relationships between suppliers, financiers, employees and broader community, noting that all these players are important in the expanded value chain. Freeman’s emphasis on interdependence and the interconnected relationship between stakeholders is fundamental to the growing body of literature on stakeholder theory, demonstrating how the stakeholders might impact corporate purpose through interaction with one another (2017). This, as the view of interconnectivity, also suggests a realisation of common and overarching goals, and outcomes, as noted by Bhattacharya and Polman (2017).

In closing Freeman and Ginena (2015) suggest ethical engagement and human complexity are intrinsic to consider in growing stakeholder theory, acknowledging that through this, a deeper purpose based on sustainability and ethics, might be achieved. Harrison et al. (2020) suggest a ‘chicken and egg’ situation, questioning which comes first - the corporate creation of purpose or the stakeholder’s role in creating purpose? By suggesting that the stakeholder value chain in the corporate supports ethical and sustainable business in broader society, Freeman and Dmytriyev submit it defends the corporate against those who suggest “false dichotomies of economic vs. social, business vs. ethics, or stakeholder interests vs. societal interests” (2017, p 13). This notion is valuable in the underscoring of purpose as a theme framed by corporate strategic goals, in considering profit and purpose, for profit and not for profit, philanthropy and corporate competitiveness, and more.

2.3.2 Multi-Stakeholder Partners

Gray and Purdy (2018) posit that corporates need to start moving towards partnerships within broader society, in order to meet challenges that “cannot be handled on their own” (p 1). Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2020) cite Glasbergen ((2007) in their suggestion that the term partnerships refers to a grouping of stakeholders that together seek to achieve “common socio-environmental goals” (p 5). These multi-stakeholder partnerships (hereafter MSPs) are “unlikely bedfellows” (Gray and Purdy (2018), 2018, p 1), often including a corporate and a cross sector organisation which may or may not be a Not for Profit Company (hereafter NPC), in the stakeholder mix. Furthermore they flag that a collaborative partnership is different to an MSP, and that the two are not

easily interchangeable (Gray and Purdy, 2018). They suggest that the collaboration process may have more rigorous requirements and outcomes and may be based on a contractual service provider relationship, whilst an MSP is a plan that is mutually conceptualised, created and implemented (Gray and Purdy, 2018). This is highlighted in addressing the origins of partnerships and relationships in the findings.

Ordonez-Ponce et al. cite the Eisenhardt and Schoonhoven (1996) suggestion that organizations partner “so they can gain additional resources that they need” or even when they are “in comfortable positions to attract and engage other organizations” (2021, p 6). The assumption here is that a ‘comfortable position’ means a financially and / or strategically strong position. Whilst Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) argue that historically a partnership was either strategic or philanthropic, the Harrison et al. (2020) approach to purpose, argues that a partnership could support both an equitable financial and non financial strategic engagement at the same time. Furthermore Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) suggest that sustainability and strategy are well aligned in the making of a partnership.

2.3.3 Beyond Partnerships – Relationship Building

Pera, Occhiocupo and Clarke suggest that “reputation enhancement” and “relationship motives” are one of the important reasons for a partnership to occur (2016, p 4). Whilst the first talks to marketing strategy, it might be argued that the latter is about a deepening of the partnership, linked to purpose and values, including trust. Henderson and Serafeim (2020) also argue for a relationship that moves beyond being a commercial supply chain partner. They suggest that strongly purpose-driven organisations are able to support their stakeholders through a deep sense of meaning, as opposed to commercial gain, alone.

Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) cite Glasbergen (2007), who argues that a partnership simply refers to a configuration of stakeholders, and that in order for the relationship to develop there needs to be a mutual vision, trust and history. This draws attention back to the work of Gray and Purdy (2018) (2018) who also argue that MSPs must be based on mutual goals and values. Conversely Ordonez-Ponce et al. note that, without a long-term, collaborative vision, the chances of failure are increased dramatically (2021, p 5). Thus the need to address all challenges upfront, but with a view on the long-term relationship.

Pera et al. (2016) furthermore describe the stakeholder relationship as an orchestra, a “polyphonic multi-stakeholder eco-system” performed by “economic and social actors” (p 2). Pera et al. (2016) suggest the idea of the corporate value chain as an orchestra,

in that it argues for the creation of value through the sum of the parts or teamwork, rather than through the individuals operating alone (p 3). This is in line with the UN SDG 17, which argues for the power of partnerships as a sustainable goal in its own right.

2.3.4 Shared Value and Collective Impact

Shared Value

The model of Shared Value, as theorised by Porter and Kramer (2011) argues for a greater engagement between social needs and economic growth, in order to support corporate competitiveness.

Porter and Kramer (2011) describe capitalism as being “under siege” (p 4). In suggesting the model of Shared Value, they argue for a greater engagement between social needs and economic growth, in order to support corporate competitiveness. However they highlight that CSV should not be confused with Corporate Social Responsibility (hereafter CSR), which it supersedes (Porter and Kramer, 2011, p 16). They note that the former is philanthropic; the latter is clearly aligned to a maximisation of profit (2011, p 16). It should be noted that whilst the authors recognise that shared value offers wide-ranging strategic and economic value for all the stakeholders, the primary return is company competitiveness (Porter and Kramer, 2011). The concept of creating shared value has, however, come under critique for its oft mixed and simplified messaging. Crane, Palazzo, Spence and Matten (2014) argue that the problem of CSV is its attempt to solve “a system level problem (the crisis of capitalism) with merely organizational level changes” (p 142). Furthermore Crane et al. (2014) also argue that shared value does not necessarily provide real direction in resolving the tension between profit and purpose. They contend that Porter and Kramer (2011) do not address the complexities of the value chain in the business process.

Collective Impact

The critique of shared value based on its primary strategy of organisational corporate competitiveness, as opposed to a strategy grounded in a more systemic purpose, is well documented. Thus the former might limit the organisation in certain cross sector engagement and partnerships, whilst the latter is based on a principle of mutual co-creation with diverse partners. Kania and Kramer (2011) suggest ‘collective impact’ as guiding model for businesses, in order to bring together the stakeholders required for shared value to succeed. Kramer and Pfitzer describe it as an ecosystem that can “catalyse change” and thereafter support shared value (2016, p 4). It should be

highlighted that the term 'ecosystem', as used by Kramer and Pfitzer (2016) suggests the idea of an interconnected system.

Collective impact suggests a reciprocal underpinning of the relationship between partner organisations (Kramer and Pfitzer, 2016). In order to address the challenges of CSV and the challenge of value chain complexities, Kramer and Pfitzer (2016) suggest that corporates support shared value through five components of collective impact (p 4). The concept of interconnectedness appears to be essential to all the five fundamentals of collective impact, notably "i) a common agenda, ii) a shared measurement system, iii) mutually reinforcing activities, iv) constant communication, and v) dedicated support from independent organisations" (Kramer and Pfitzer, 2016, p 5).

In closing, the use of the term collective impact, talks to the various components that make up the 'system', as suggested by Freeman et al. (2020) who note "the behaviour of a system is affected by its constituent parts, the relationships between those parts, and its purpose" (p 2020). Thus we see a network of value created through stakeholders, partnerships, and their relationship both with one another, and the corporate purpose.

2.3.5 Supply Chains and Value Chains

In order to further understand the stakeholder value chain, Freeman (2017) argues, "no stakeholder stands alone in the process of value creation" (p 6). As suggested, various authors including Bhattacharya and Polman (2017), and Hoffman (2018) posit that addressing sustainability requires wide-ranging buy-in from the corporate sector and broader society. Likewise Freeman (2017) suggests that the stakeholder value chain must be inclusive of society, communities and business. Furthermore he argues that given the supply chain role to be an operational process, the production of goods; the value chain remains a more strategic process, based on diverse activities (Freeman, 2017).

Freeman et al. (2020) suggest that conceptualising a value network as opposed to a value chain is more appropriate in supporting corporate strategy in an age of complexity (p 217). This may be based on the Allee (2000) suggestion of a "value network or value web" (p 36) shifting the concept of value from the linear, to the multidimensional. Furthermore Freeman et al. (2020) argue that a value chain is focused on financial outcomes alone, whilst the value network addresses the importance of "shared purpose and values" (2020, p 217). The idea of the network additionally, talks to a system in which all the stakeholders are "a means and an end" and importantly contribute to "collective flourishing" (Freeman et al., 2020, p 217).

In arguing for a stakeholder value network, and not a value chain, that may address corporate purpose and support the supply chain process, Jacobides, Cennamo, and Gawer suggest focusing on value-based 'ecosystems' instead of "vertically integrated" value and supply chains (2018, p 2256). This is in line with the idea that the vertical suggests a traditional hierarchical, linear approach, whilst an ecosystem suggests a more horizontal, multi-dimensional, interconnected and potentially equitable process, inclusive of the supply chain. This is in line with Hoffman, who suggests that business needs to reimagine the approach to supply chains through fresh concepts of operations, which are also more transparent (2018, p 38).

By using the term 'ecosystem', as is also suggested by Kramer and Pfitzer (2016) in their approach to shared value and collective impact, Jacobides et al. (2018) not only suggest a relationship between the business world and the environment, but also evoke the idea of bio-mimicry in the creation of a more sustainable world.

Addressing the interconnectivity of stakeholders and the Freeman et al. (2020) notion of value networks, the work of Evans, Vladimirova, Holgado, van Fossen, Yang, Silva and Barlow (2017) is appreciated. It suggests a series of applications, all of which highlight value as it is demonstrated in diverse economic, environmental and social networks, underpinning what they describe as value "flows" over time (Evans et al., 2017, p 601). This idea of the value flow amongst stakeholders is further expanded to the exploration of stakeholder value creation. The concept of multidirectional flow to support stakeholder value creation, as opposed to the historical "unidirectional" flow of value, is also highlighted by Freudenreich, Ludeke-Freund, and Schaltegger (2020, p 4). Additionally, they suggest that stakeholders in this environment become both beneficiary and co-creators of value (Freudenreich et al., 2020, p 4).

In closing, Gray and Purdy suggest the stakeholders are "intertwined" (2018, p 8), both in the problem and in the need for positive outcomes and a "shared vision of a collectively desirable future" (2018, p 11). This idea of being 'part of' and not 'separate from' suggests the further opportunity of real multi-stakeholder partnerships value networks and supply chains.

2. 4 Construct 2: Corporate Strategic Goals

The researcher addressed the themes of shareholder activism, purpose, timeframes and responsible capitalism under the second construct. The key construct of corporate strategy in relation to stakeholder theory is closely triangulated with purpose and responsible capitalism.

Table 5, below, shows the themes and the literature, covered under this construct.

Table 5: Construct 2, Themes and Literature

Construct: Corporate Strategic Goals	
Theme	Literature
2.4.1 Activist Shareholders	Freeman, R., Phillips, R., & Sisodia, R. (2020); Harrison, J., Phillips, R., & Freeman, R. (2020)
2.4.2 Corporate Purpose	Gray, B. & Purdy, J. (2018); Freeman, R. (2017); Freeman R. & Ginena, K. (2015); Freeman, R., & Dmytryiev, S. (2017).; Henderson, R., & Serafeim, G. (2020) (2020); Henderson, R., & Van der Steen, E. (2015); Gartenberg, C., Prat, A., & Serafeim, G. (2016); Kramer, M., & Pfitzer, M., (2016)
2.4.3 Purpose and Profit	Harrison J., Phillips R., & Freeman R., (2020); Henderson, R., & Serafeim, G. (2020) (2020); Henderson, R., & Van der Steen, E. (2015); Freeman, R. E., Phillips, R., & Sisodia, R. (2020); Stout, L. (2013); Hollensbe, E., Wookey, C., Hickey, L., George, G., & Nichols, c. (2014), Wookey, Hickey, George, & Nichols (2014); Bhattacharya, C., & Polman, P. (2017)
2.4.4 Timeframes	Stout, L., (2013); Henderson, R., & Serafeim, G. (2020) (2020); Ordonez-Ponce, E., Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2021); Freeman, R. E., Phillips, R., & Sisodia, R. (2020); Clarke, A., & Crane, A. (2018)(2018)
2.4.5 Responsible Capitalism	Freeman, R. E., Phillips, R., & Sisodia, R. (2020); Harrison, J., Phillips, R. A., & Freeman, R., (2020); Henderson, R. (2020); Ferraro, F., Etzion, D., & Gehman, J. (2015)

Source: Author's Own

2.4.1 Activist Shareholders

Freeman et al. (2020) note stakeholder theory offers an opportunity that is less one that pits the shareholder against the stakeholder, but rather a holistic view on the role of business in society more broadly (p 217). In changing the view of the shareholder, the authors suggest a review of the shareholder's relationship, both as a stakeholder, and *with* diverse stakeholders in the system that is business in society. Furthermore Freeman et al. suggest that there is a need to reimagine old school shareholder traditions and expectations by considering a more "coherent worldview" for business that reflects its "role, purpose, and full range of immediate and long-term impacts on society" (2020, p 219). The authors argue for the well-defined articulation of a shared purpose, one, which all the stakeholders, including shareholders, are able to articulate, noting that a "default purpose" will find all stakeholders operating on short term activities and goals (Freeman et al., 2020, p 220). This frames the shareholder as needing to be active and activist, in conveying their own vision and purpose of the organisation, to all the stakeholders involved.

2.4.2 Corporate Purpose

Henderson and Van den Steen (2015) define corporate purpose as "a concrete goal or objective for the firm that reaches beyond profit maximization" (p 2). It is this definition that is also used by Henderson and Serafeim (2020) and Gartenberg, Prat and Serafeim (2016). The latter do, however, suggest that there is also a characteristic of "inherent intangibility" in corporate purpose (Gartenberg et al., 2016, p 3). This obviously suggests a challenge in the measurement of strategic success, as it may be implicitly and not explicitly addressed.

Even so, in striving to reach a shared vision and collective future, as noted by Gray and Purdy (2018), diverse academics suggest corporate purpose as a critical piece of the strategic puzzle. Freeman (2017) posits that stakeholder theory addresses responsible capitalism through corporate purpose. He argues that in order to reimagine capitalism there are different factors that need to be addressed. In particular, he suggests, "purpose, values, and ethics" (2017, p 457) should be entrenched in the corporate environment. Freeman and Dmyetreyev (2017) additionally define purpose as an ethical and moral framework that guides the vision, mission and strategy, highlighting different core responsibilities. Building on this notion, Henderson (2020) also recommends that real corporate purpose and progress is based on the outcomes suggested by the United Nation SDGs (2020), suggesting that the SDGs act as an ethical and practical roadmap in defining corporate purpose.

Furthermore, the literature demonstrates that purpose needs to be both philosophically and pragmatically embedded in the corporate structure. Kramer and Pfitzer (2016, p 5) suggest the stakeholder needs to be an active participant in “mutually re-enforcing activities” and in the journey to Gray and Purdy’s vision of a collective future (2018).

2.4.3 Purpose And Profit

Harrison et al. describe the CEO of Black Rock as suggesting that purpose can be, and is, an “animating force” (2020, p. 1224), having a positive impact on business operations. It is this approach to corporate purpose, which Freeman et al. (2020) argue for, too. The latter suggest that it is through a pragmatic and authentic approach that the oft-suggested binary of profit and purpose, can be resolved (2020, p 217). Henderson and Serafeim (2020) further argue that “if the firm routinely makes costly investments in it, at the expense of immediate profitability” (p 178) the dualism of the two, may be resolved. Thus purpose and profit appears a mix of the philosophical and pragmatic – requiring a systemic, strategic and operational approach.

In fact, Freeman et al. (2020) suggests that the tension between profit and purpose is largely self-created, and that the higher purpose and delivery of profit are increasingly required to happen holistically and proactively. They also argue that it requires leadership throughout the organisation (2020, p 220).

Bhattacharya and Polman (2017, p 17), acknowledge this, by suggesting that within the private sector, businesses need to work beyond traditional business modelling, in order to create deeper purpose in support of broader society. In arguing a more proactive engagement, Bhattacharya and Polman (2017) are supported by the earlier work of Hollensbe, Wookey, Hickey, George, and Nichols, who posit that “a focus on purpose acknowledges the interdependence of business and society— one cannot flourish without the other” (2014, p 5).

2.4.4 Timeframes

Freeman et al. (2020) suggests that there are elements specific to stakeholder theory; these include long-term impact on society (p 219). They further argue that a “long-term orientation” is aligned to shared purpose, and will support real value creation (2020, p 226). Thus there is a potential triangulation of long timelines, purpose and the stakeholder partnership.

Clarke and Crane (2018) highlight that cross sector partnerships are often deep, long-term relationships (p 303). They also suggest that short-termism is a critical obstacle to sustainability and organisational purpose. Stout (2013) and Henderson and Serafeim

(2020) also suggest that sustainability, as supported by corporate purpose, requires a long-term vision. It is also worthwhile to note that Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) suggest that whilst sustainable development is both complex and challenging for businesses, it requires “long-term big picture sustainability” goals (p 4).

2.4.5 Responsible Capitalism

Freeman et al. (2020) argue that the 21st-century executive requires a different approach to business, as opposed to the traditional view of a shareholder driven business. The suggestion is that stakeholder theory provides a new approach to the corporate world in relation to society, by building “shared values and shared purpose, a long-term orientation” and “consciously building trust and fostering agility”, based on the interdependence of diverse stakeholders (Freeman et al., 2020, p 226). The notion of corporate purpose as driving the corporate strategy, that as opposed to the traditional paradigm of increasing shareholder value through profit is one that is argued by Harrison et al. (2019). They further suggest that this approach of responsible capitalism is one that is largely gaining traction through stakeholder theory and the function of purpose in driving strategy (Harrison et al., 2019). They also suggest that this approach is in line with the complexity and turbulence of the current business environment, and global economy.

Given the current, broad socio-economic and sustainability complexities, Ferraro, Etzion and Gehman (2015) suggest that these ‘grand challenges’ of today extend well beyond the limits of an organisation, and require innovative strategies in order to address what they describe as “dynamic and non-linear” problems (p 365). The impact of grand challenges on human “welfare and well-being” (p 365), as noted by Ferraro et al. (2015) argues for a far more responsible approach to the corporation, it’s role and it’s impact and capitalism broadly.

2. 5 Local And Global Sustainability

The researcher addressed the themes of local sustainability in relation to community and global sustainability as a more systemic approach to the SDGs in the final construct. Table 6, below, shows the themes and the literature covered under this construct.

Table 6: Construct 3, Themes and Literature

Construct: Local and Global Sustainability	
Theme	Literature
2.5.1 Local Sustainability and Communities	Ordonez-Ponce, E., Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2021) Freeman, R., Harrison, J., Wicks, A., Parmar, B., & De Colle S. (2010) Freeman, R. (2017) Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2019)
2.5.2 Global Sustainability and the SDGs	Ordonez-Ponce, E., Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2021) United Nations (2020). <i>The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020</i> . Retrieved from https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/
2.5.3 Measuring and Reporting	Harrison, J., Barney, J., Freeman, R., & Phillips, R (2019), Freeman R., Phillips R., & Sisodia, R. (2020), Freudenreich, B., Lüdeke-Freund, F., & Schaltegger, S. (2020), Den Ouden, E. (2011),
2.5.4 Resource and Knowledge Sharing	Ferraro, F., Etzion, D., & Gehman, J. (2015) Ordonez-Ponce, E., Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2021), Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2019)

Source: Author's Own

2.5.1 Local Sustainability and Communities

Clarke and MacDonald (2019) argue that sustainability partnerships are presented with opportunities to address local sustainability issues, whilst querying whether addressing the local might contribute to the global SDGs. (p 3). Thus it is clear from the literature that there is a differentiation between tackling local sustainability as opposed to addressing global sustainability goals. Whilst Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) suggest that the SDGs provide a sustainability roadmap for local sustainability strategies, within which to address specific strategic goals, there is a suggestion that local sustainability also addresses more immediate community needs and shorter timeframes. The authors note that local sustainability requires action from different sectors, including public, private and third sectors. Furthermore they cite George et al. (2016) and note “businesses have progressively united organizations from different sectors” as they wrestle with local sustainability challenges (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2021, p 2).

The role of the community as stakeholder in local sustainability is also differentiated further in relation to its geographic location, and Freeman et al. (2010) also posit that the community may be the one the organisation finds itself physically located in. They also suggest that community can be found within the corporate itself.

In closing, Ordonez-Ponce et al. cite Ordonez-Ponce and Khare (2020) in noting that real sustainable development requires partnerships which “maximising positive

contributions” to society (2021, p 4). This provides value in understanding the role of the stakeholder activity in addressing local sustainability.

2.5.2 Global Sustainability and SDGs

Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) cite Osborne et al. (2015) in suggesting that whilst the SDGs have global impact, the responsibility of addressing them is global, local, and sector-wise. The authors also note that, “the pressure on businesses to be socially and environmentally responsible will only increase” (2021, p 3). The specificity of the sustainability challenges may, however, differ according to whether the corporate is situated in the global north, developed countries, or in the global south, developing countries, or all of them. This then provides the strategic opportunity, as suggested by Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), to address specific sustainability goals as per geographic needs. Whilst Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021, p 5) suggest that cross sector social and sustainable partnerships is a nascent opportunity for business to address sustainability, they note that local partnerships don’t generally address sustainability through the SDG’s but rather through immediate needs of a local community. Thus local corporates may address the current and immediate local needs and requirements, only later, will local and global corporates align to either specific or integrated SDGs for global impact and systemic change.

2.5.3 Measuring and Reporting

Harrison et al. (2019) suggest that stakeholder theory measures value more extensively and beyond financial returns. The authors also argue for the “big picture” of impact measurement (2019, p 7).

In understanding the measurement of impact and value, there is a need to interrogate value. Freeman et al. (2020) question whether profit is the correct way in measuring the success of an organisation. They argue that current methods of measurement of “total value” and “total performance” are inadequate, and that different models can and should be addressed moving forward (p 226). Freeman et al. (2020) suggest that total value created needs to measure different types of stakeholder value, which may not be purely financial. In addition to this, Freudenreich et al. (2020) note that how businesses engage with stakeholders will define the kind of value that is created, and that joint purpose is critical to both (p 9).

Den Ouden suggests there are four different types of value: value for user, for organisation, for ecosystems and for society (2011, p 13). With goal 17 of the SDFs in mind, it could be argued that the four values are intrinsically interconnected, through

multiple stakeholders. Kramer and Pfitzer extend this in arguing that there is an ecosystem of value, which should however include a “common agenda” (2016, p. 5).

2.5.4 Resource And Knowledge Sharing

Ferraro et al. (2015) suggest that in order to tackle the grand challenges, businesses need to innovate by using “multivocality”, or a multiplicity of voices and methods (p 372). This aligns to the concept of stakeholder theory and multi sector partnerships, whilst also arguing for the different stakeholder skills, both operant and operand, that are supported through diverse partnerships.


According to Barney, Ketchen and Wright (2011) using Resource Based View Theory (hereafter RBV), is a means to understanding the value of tangible and intangible resources both within an organisation, but also across diverse partnerships (p 1300). This paper does not argue for an RBV methodology in the research question, given its positivist approach, as opposed to the more pragmatic approach of creating stakeholder value (Freeman et al., 2020). However Freeman et al. do suggest that RBV may offer insights into the relationship between the stakeholder and value, given diverse stakeholder resources offerings (2020, p 224). Furthermore Ordonez- Ponce et al. (2021) reason that organisations often partner in order to realise various resources for their own success and even survival, highlighting different types of capital in the stakeholder partnerships. These include sector-based experience and expertise, networks and relationships based on “history and trust”, technology, and financial and non-financial resources (Ordonez- Ponce et al., 2021, p 6). They further suggest the term “sustainability capital”, that is partnerships, which support “socio-environmental drivers” (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2021, p 6). Additionally, Ordonez-Ponce and Clarke (2020) suggest that organisations partner to secure know-how and skill that is unavailable to them otherwise. Given that some partners may be drawn from diverse sectors, this would then be of real value to the partnerships and the corporate. How the corporate engages with partners, may often be delineated by these different types of capital needs.

In closing Ferraro et al. (2015) suggest that pragmatism supports the “capacity of both individuals and communities to improve their knowledge and problem-solving capacity” (p 369). The researcher notes this, given the Freeman argument, in diverse literature, and Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) suggestion that stakeholder theory is a means to solving complex problems, through the diversity of the partners and the sectors they inhabit.

2.6 Conclusion Of Literature Review

Based on the literature review and the findings summarised in this chapter, a conceptual framework was created as Table 7 below. The framework highlights the three key constructs and the themes they support. Briefly the Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships raises the concept of a relationship as it is built beyond the partnership, and beyond a more formal collaboration. The Corporate Strategic Goals is increasingly driven by the role of purpose and stakeholder values. Additionally Local and Global Sustainability, differentiates between the local support of community and the global SDGs. Thereafter the research aims (as also discussed in chapter 1.4) seek to expand insights of the challenges or tensions, and opportunities, in order to support the “grand challenge” of Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021). Table 7, below, shows the conceptual framework, as based on the conclusions of the literature review.

Table 7: Conceptual Framework I

Key Constructs	Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships	Corporate Strategic Goals	Local and Global Sustainability
	Stakeholders	Activist Shareholders	Local Sustainability and Communities
	Multi-stakeholder Partners	Corporate Purpose	Global Sustainability and the SDGs
	Beyond Partnerships – Relationship Building	Purpose and Profit	Measuring and Reporting
	Shared Value and Collective Impact	Timeframes	Resource and Knowledge Sharing
	Supply Chains and Value Chains	Responsible Capitalism	
			
Conclusions -Tensions and Opportunities			

Source: Author's Own

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question was formulated and articulated based on the literature review of chapter 2, and its persuasive case for business, as identified in chapter 1. In particular the overarching research question, and sub questions, were framed by the academic article of Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), which addresses the broader question of how business strategy can support sustainability, the SDGs, and corporate strategy, through multi-sector partnerships. The notion of sustainability as a complex challenge, a “grand challenge” (Ordonez-Ponce et al. 2021, p 21) is thus also addressed through the research question.

Research Question

How do cross sector sustainability partnerships contribute to corporate strategic goals and local and global sustainability?

The research question aimed to understand how partnerships, from different communities and sectors, could add value to the outcomes of the corporate strategy on sustainability. The value for different stakeholders, and what the outcomes could be, if the relationships were realised, was raised through the question.

As noted, four sub questions were added to the research question, in order to probe the different sections of the latter – partnerships, and how they are created; what the partnerships ‘do’ to support the corporate; the stakeholder relationships, and how they drive sustainability, if at all; and finally how these sustainable relationships support the strategic goals of the corporate.

Sub Questions

1. What are the partnership relationships, and how do they work?

The work of Freeman et al. (2020), and earlier Freeman iterations in developing stakeholder theory, as it supports value networks, was used in the framing of this question.

2. What is the role of the partnerships?

The question sought to understand the role of the partnerships, in supporting the corporate in its strategic journey.

3. How are the relationships with SDG's seen as opportunities?

This sub-question was further differentiated in order to understand local and global sustainability in relation to both community and the SDGs. Furthermore, given the "grand challenge" of sustainability (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2021, p 21), the notion of it as opportunity, rather than problem, was raised through the question.

4. How do these opportunities contributing to strategic goals?

Based on Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), the sub question was framed in order to understand the opportunities created by partnerships in supporting the strategic goals. Additionally, the role of purpose as it underscores corporate strategic goals was also addressed.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The research methodology was selected based on the research question and the need for an explorative process, given the challenges of researching constructs, which may be difficult to measure.

4.2 Research Methodology

4.2.1 Role of theory

In addressing the role of theory in research, Crane, Henriques, Husted and Matten suggest that there are three focus areas – that of developing new theory, refining theory as it assesses “core constructs” and thirdly, testing theory (2016, p 5). Whilst this paper does not attempt to develop new theory, it could tentatively contribute to both literature and practice in assessing how cross sector sustainability partnerships contribute to strategic goals and sustainability. Furthermore, inasmuch as Bell, Bryman and Harley (2018) argue for a process-based data gathering approach to theory building, there is also a suggestion that the theory emerges from an explorative process. And finally, Gehman, Glaser, Eisenhardt, Gioia, Langley and Corley (2018) argue that theory building is good for constructs that are difficult to measure. This will additionally be covered in the paragraph on ontological and epistemological assumptions.

4.2.2 Research Methodology

The researcher approached the processes of research design, data gathering and analysis based on the work of Braun and Clarke (2006), Crane et al. (2016), Corley and Gioia (2011), Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2013), Bell et al. (2018), Josselson (2013) and the Gehman et al. symposium paper of 2018. The literature review and the overarching research questions formed the basis for the choices made in this research design.

4.2.3 Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions

The Bell et al. (2018) suggestion, “reality is constituted by human action and meaning-making, rather than existing objectively and externally” (p 30), underpins a social-constructionist ontology. Given that relationships and partnerships, as is addressed in

the question and sub questions, are rooted in 'meaning-making' for the individual, the corporate and society, this ontological approach was fitting.

The research question and sub questions are exploratory in their nature – the asking of 'how cross sector sustainability partnerships contribute to corporate strategic goals and local and global sustainability?' argued for the Gehman et al. (2018) suggestion that an inductive qualitative approach supports process questions, specifically the 'how', as highlighted.

Crane, Henriques and Husted reinforce this, arguing for the use of a qualitative approach when the research problem is a "contested concept" (2018, p 4). The complexity of sustainability in complex times, and in relation to corporate strategic outcomes is, as Freeman rightly suggests, part of the difficult task to reimagine "the disciplines of business" (2017, p 15). This reimagining becomes a complex challenge, which was thus best approached qualitatively. Thus an inductive qualitative approach to the research was taken.

4.3 Research Design

4.3.1 Research Setting

The researcher identified a global FMCG company, with roots in South Africa, as the research setting. The company has multiple cross sector partnerships, which address the broader strategic and sustainability goals of the organisation, locally and globally. Given that the research question looks at cross-sector sustainability partnerships, the researcher felt that this company might provide valuable and different insights into the relationships between stakeholders in driving sustainability.

4.3.2 Level of Analysis

Bell et al. (2018) suggest that the level of analysis can be differently an organisation, an individual, a single event or an experience. Further, premised on Gehman et al. (2018), this researcher confirmed the level of analysis here was the 'partnership' as is reflected in the research questions.

How the FMCG partnership relationships contribute to strategic outcomes, and sustainability, across the global value chain, was addressed. These partnerships, or levels of analysis, were inclusive of global and local senior management, strategists, investors, shareholders, cross sector supply chain partners, local community sustainability partners, and regional sustainability partnerships.

4.3.3 Unit of Analysis

The individual participants as they engage in different partnerships, were the units of analysis.

4.3.4 Sample Selection /Recruitment

In selecting the unit of analysis, Bell et al. (2018) suggest that there are different purposive sampling processes. This is aligned to the fact that the units of analysis are strategically and not randomly chosen. In this case the researcher was looking at 'typical case' sampling as it "exemplifie(d) a dimension of interest" with regard to the research question and sub questions (Bell et al., 2018, p 390).

Bell et al. also make the point that the participant, as a 'human' unit of analysis in qualitative research, is able to "attribute meaning" to the work that they do (2018, p 336), thus the researcher suggested the terminology of 'recruitment of participants' in the qualitative research, as opposed to the use of the term 'sample selection'.

The researcher anticipated interviewing approximately 15 participants, including those from the parent company and those stakeholders in the partnership value chain. This was in fact, the number of interviewees that was finally achieved.

In addressing the purposive sampling process there were three criteria that the researcher used, in order to address the research question. These were:

1. Organisations that are in partnership with the FMCG global corporate;
2. Individuals who work in the selected organisations – these participants are required to have decision-making responsibilities and/or be involved at a strategic level and;
3. Individuals who have knowledge and experience of the topic – cross-sector sustainability partnerships including the frameworks of sustainability and strategy - as addressed in the research question.

The CEO of the regional group supported the recruitment of participants, as did the FMCG co-founder. Whilst a consent form, agreeing to the usage of name and material and participant interviews, was signed by the CEO of the regional group, and the CEO of the investment company, the researcher made the decision to submit the research findings anonymously, and these signed consent documents are stored in the raw data file, and presented in the actual report itself.

4.3.5 Sample Size and Saturation

Different literature argues for diverse sample sizes. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) suggest a number between 12 and 25, noting that data saturation should be reached, with a sample this size. With this in mind, the researcher selected 15 as the number to interview. A total of 15 interviews was achieved against the target of 15.

4.3.5.1 Sample Sub Groups

The interviews were divided into four groups. There were however, no targets set for the numbers per group, and the researcher followed the guidance and support of the global CEO, who helped facilitate the interviews. These groups were as follows: i) Investment Company Interviewees; ii) Global Corporate Interviewees; iii) Local Corporate Interviewees; and iv) Partners Interviewees. Furthermore, all the groups except for the Investment Company group consisted of executives, and C suite interviewees. The Investment Company group consisted of founding members and strategy leads. Each of the allocated reference codes are also the reference codes to be found on the redacted transcripts. Tables 8, below, shows the sample sub groups, the number of interviews per group.

Table 8: Sample Sub Groups And Interviewees Per Group

Sub Groups and Interviewee Codes and			
Investment Company (YY)	Global Corporate (XX)	Local Corporate (XX)	Partners
1. Shareholder	4. Executive	8. Executive	10. Partner
2. Strategy Lead	5. Executive	9. Executive	11. Partner
3. Strategy Lead	6. Executive		12. Partner
	7. Executive		13. Partner
			14. Partner
			14. Partner

Source: Author's Own

Tables 9, below, shows the sample sub groups, the number of interviews per groups, the codes and profiles.

Table 9: Research Participants, Codes, Profiles and Groupings

Interview Number	Code	Profile	Analysis Grouping
1.	3IS	Shareholder	1. Investment Company
2.	5IS	Sustainability Lead	1. Investment Company
3.	10IS	Sustainability Lead	1. Investment Company
4.	2GS	Executive	2. Global Corporate
5.	4GS	Executive	2. Global Corporate
6.	14GS	Executive	2. Global Corporate
7.	15GS	Executive	2. Global Corporate
8.	13LS	Executive	3. Local Corporate
9.	7LS	Executive	3. Local Corporate
10.	1PH	Management	4. Partner
11.	6PS	Executive	4. Partner
12.	8PC	Executive	4. Partner
13.	9PM	Executive	4. Partner
14.	11PB	Executive	4. Partner
15.	12PH	Executive	4 Partner
Code	XX	Global and Local Corporate	
Code	YY	Investor Organisation	

Source: Author's Own

4. 4 Data Collection

4.4.1 Research Instrument and Data Collection

Crane, Henriques and Husted (2018) suggest that qualitative research is supported by specific data collection methods, appropriately described by Josselson as narrative research, through a series of “co-constructed” interviews (2013, p 10). To support this, the researcher therefore approached the research instrument as a series of “semi-structured” interviews, as is appropriate in qualitative research (Gioia et al., 2013, p 19).

According to Josselson (2013) qualitative research interviews, and how these interviews are framed, demonstrate a knowledge and reality, beyond the interviewer. As Josselson notes “The aim of interviewing is to document people’s experience, self-understanding” (2013, p 2). Josselson suggests that this will ultimately support the meaning making of that experience, and thereby inform the outcomes of the research question (2013). Josselson talks of interviewee phrasing and choice of words, as they are used to inform the narrative (2013, p 3). The researcher would further add that tone and pause, as an aural experience, were also critical to understanding the interpretation of an interview. Thus the researcher, as interviewer, needed to focus on

listening to the content and the also be aware of the language of the interview. The researcher also noted that some of the interviewees were more relaxed in their approach, than others, and this impacted the content, specifically the language and terminology used.

The reviewer has included an introduction as Appendix 1, which was verbalised at the beginning of the interview. The interview (see Appendix 2) was framed with an opening question, attempting to address the history of the relationship (backward looking), and a closing one addressing how the participant saw the relationships moving forward (forward looking). These two questions framed eight key questions. All participants were asked the same questions.

Each interview was recorded online on Zoom and a 45-minute time limit was generally kept, unless the interviewee spoke for longer by choice. A second recording was also made on voice recorder, on the researchers cell phone, to secure against any loss of material.

The value of this type of instrument, that is the Zoom recording, is that it allowed for a more engaged, even relaxed, visual approach, even as interview protocols were followed. Whilst the recorded visual may offer an entirely different set of data, as noted by Gehman et al. (2018) who argue that “multiple types of data” (p. 288) may support different outcomes, the researcher chose to only work from the material transcribed from the interviews.

4.4.2 Time and place of interviews

Given the ongoing COVID 19 crisis, and furthermore the unrest events of July 2021, there was a request by the organisation CEO, that the 45 minute interviews should take place online via Zoom. Thus the crafting of the interviews needed to demonstrate the awareness of the difference between a physical and a Zoom interview experience. Two recording devices were be used; the Zoom recording and a second one for surety. No notes were taken during the process of interview. All the interviews bar one, took place between early August and early September. One interview took place after the researcher had started on the data analysis and coding process. It was however felt that the remaining interview was a critical and valuable one, and it was therefore inserted into the process later than the others.

4.5 Data Analysis

4.5.1 Thematic Analysis Process

Bell et al. (2018) observe that in qualitative research, the result is an extensive and diverse set of data, all of which needs to be analysed – in this case under the different themes and constructs. Gioia et al. (2013) also identify rigorous analysis of the participant data. According to Gehman et al. a deeper understanding of “the lived experiences” of the participants is important (2018, p 297). This is critical as Gioia et al. (2013) note the focus of analysis is based on experience as opposed to quantitative measurement.

Braun and Clarke (2006), and Bell et al. (2018) suggest inductive or thematic analysis as it is seen as a “foundation method” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p 78) of analysing data. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) the method is more flexible and supports the generation of fresh insights. Significantly thematic analysis requires the researcher to interview, identify, analyse and report on the data, in order to highlight different themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The researcher thus used this method, given its flexible but still systematic approach. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe the flexibility of this particular method, through the broad identification of themes. Conversely, the potential danger of thematic analysis may lie in the self same ‘flexibility’ of the method. Consequently it was incumbent on the researcher to follow the six phases of thematic analysis meticulously. Table 10, below, shows the Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p 87).

Table 10: Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic ‘map’ of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87)

Researcher's Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase 1: Interview and Transcription

The Researcher had each interview transcribed directly after the interview had taken place. Reading of transcriptions took place soon afterwards.

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes

Using the Atlas TI online platform, the researcher went through each transcript individually as a data set, identifying first level codes supporting the entire data set. There were 167 first level codes. Each first level code had anything between one and 120 second level data sets relevant to a code. The issue of saturation was noted, and Figure 1 below demonstrates the number of unique codes generated per group. In line with this, it is noted that the first interviewee had 136 quotes, and the final interviewee had 22, approaching a point of saturation.

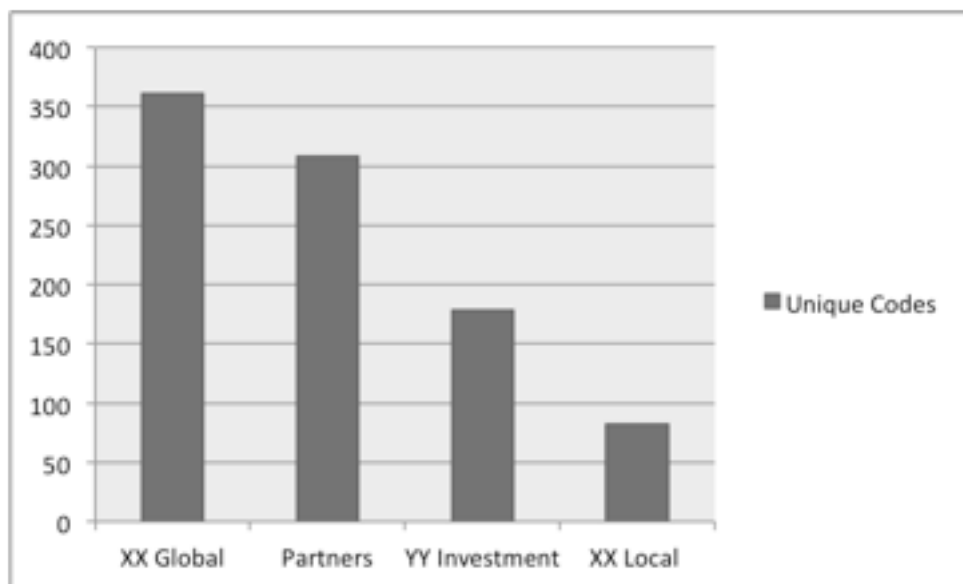


Figure 1: Unique codes generated by the four different interviewee groups

Source: Author's Own

Phase 3: Searching for themes

Once the first level codes were identified, the researcher then went back to the codes to identify the themes or code groups. Twenty-three code groups were identified – into which various first level codes were amalgamated. The code groups were identified, some in line with the themes of the literature review, and some independent of those themes. The figure below, Figure 2, maps the stages of coding. It covers the following - a table identifying the inductive process of developing codes and codes

groups from the interviews, as they applied to the key constructs and research themes. Thereafter the themes were tackled through evidence, cross case and in case analyses, final theme conclusions, and a final end of chapter summary of the research findings based on the three key constructs.

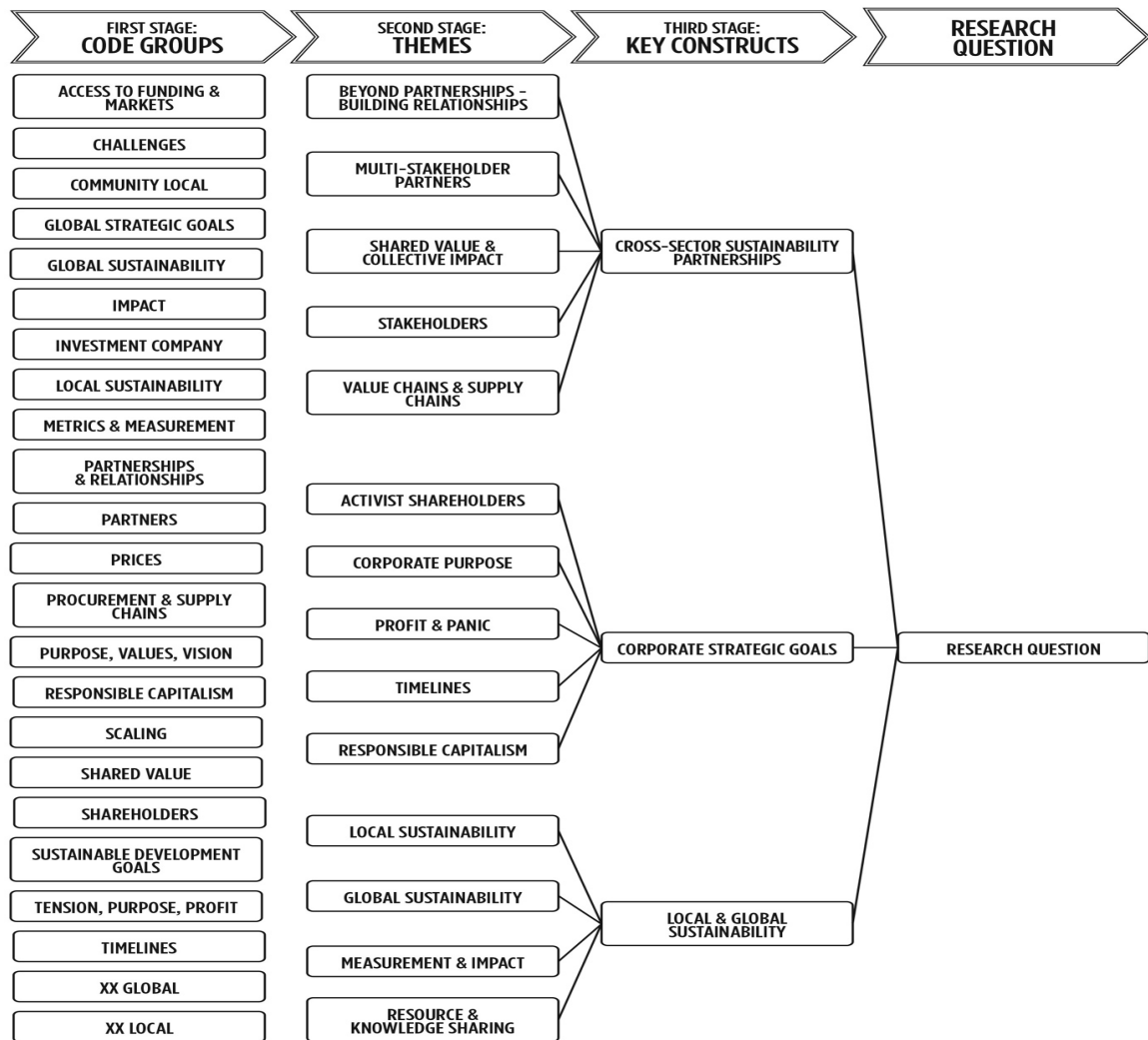


Figure 2: Stages of Coding

Source: Author's Own

4.6 Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that all ethical considerations were covered, and that the process did no harm, or overstepped the protocols. The interview protocol required different ethical procedures. There was a signed Consent Letter, supporting the

interviews and organisational research, as per the research setting, from both the CEO of the regional FMCG, and the investment company CEO. However, as noted earlier, the researcher took the decision to maintain the anonymity of the organisation. All the interviewees signed a further consent letter, which stated anonymity of the interviewees. Thus none of the participants' names, or the organisations they work at, is named in the research report, as per informed consent and ethical clearance.

The researcher has stored all of these redacted letters in the raw file, which is not for public consumption. A generic version is included as Appendix 1. As noted, all individual interviewees were identified only as a code and a broad identifier, for example, 'executive' and 'senior management'. This was also highlighted in a verbal introduction, prior to the interview starting.

All data recorded is stored as a password protected document in the cloud and also on a password protected personal computer. An independent scribe was hired to do the data transcriptions, and was required to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement, which is included in the raw data storage. The transcripts were redacted, and coded according to the codes used for interviews. On delivery of the research, all data will also be loaded into the raw data GIBS storage.

4.7 Limitations

The researcher noted a few limitations to the research process. Firstly the researcher is a novice in the field of research. Her lack of experience may be demonstrated as a lack of detail, and thorough execution. Ensuring that all interview protocols were followed, as well as an on-going attention to detail was supported throughout.

Historically the researcher has worked with different XX stakeholders, and this might have proved a limitation, but the researcher attempted to address expectations and protocols up front, and with clarity. The researcher was aware that the previous professional relationships should not bias or impact the process, quality or outcomes. The issue of bias was something to be cognisant of, according to both Bell et al. (2018) and Corley and Gioia (2011). The researcher acknowledged this, and attempted to be cognisant of historical values, professional career, and current attitudes to the relationships between the third sector and the private sector.

Another limitation to the research process remained the risk of current political and pandemic instability. Interviews and timelines were impacted, particularly given the recent experiences of the FMCG organisation. In response, a pragmatic approach to timetables and internal deliverables was needed, as were constant updates with the supervisor.

CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The researcher identified a global FMCG company, which was originally founded in South Africa, as the research setting. The company has both local, and territory specific groups. Locally based senior executives separately head up the South African company, and the territory of Africa, Middle East and Asia, whilst the group head office is situated in the United Kingdom - which also covers United States of America, and other territories including India and Australia. The whole corporate, (hereafter XX), has been described by interviewees as:

a non-hierarchical, at times incredibly political business (5IS),


an agent for social change, and a 'spokesperson' for social change (4GS),

a deeply human organisation (14GS).

The corporate works closely with its investment company (hereafter YY) shareholders, and has multiple cross sector partnerships locally and globally.

The conceptual framework, Table 11, found below, is a summary of constructs and themes finalised in the chapter 2 Literature Review, based on the research question and sub questions. The framework will act as a guideline to support the chapter 5 research evidence, analysis and conclusions. Additionally, should any potential new themes be revealed, these will be highlighted in the concluding Conceptual Framework for chapter 5.

Table 11: Conceptual Framework II

Key Constructs	Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships	Corporate Strategic Goals	Local and Global Sustainability
	Stakeholders	Activist Shareholders	Local Sustainability and Communities
	Multi-stakeholder Partners	Corporate Purpose	Global Sustainability and the SDGs
	Beyond Partnerships – Relationship Building	Purpose and Profit	Measuring and Reporting
	Shared Value and Collective Impact	Timeframes	Resource and Knowledge Sharing
	Supply Chains and Value Chains	Responsible Capitalism	
			
Tensions and Opportunities			

Source: Author's Own

5.2 Grouping of Research Participants for Analysis

As discussed in the chapter 4 Methodology, fifteen (15) interviews were recorded. They were then separated according to four different groups.

5.2.1 Analysis Grouping 1 The Investment Company

This group consists of a founding shareholder who plays a key role in championing diverse partnerships. Also to be found in this group are role players in strategic positions in the investment company; they are involved in developing and scaling the global sustainability strategy for the investment company. The members of the investment company are particularly involved and extremely active in propelling strategy that impacts all the subsidiaries, and more broadly in society as well:

This is not a classic corporate setup, because what you have are very activist shareholders who kind of carry a founders mentality, if you will. This is their mission in life (5IS).

The terminology used by this grouping, and about this grouping, and describing their relationship with the corporate and the multi stakeholder partners, demonstrates enthusiasm and passion

*turbo-charged (4GS), emotionally powerful (3IS), passionate connection (2GS), and f**king crazy (9PM).*

5.2.2 Analysis Grouping 2 The Global Corporate

This group consists of high level, c-suite leaders, and executive directors, driving the overarching strategy and operations of the global corporate, including Africa, Asia, UK, Australia, India and USA. The interviews are split between group and regional executives. They offer extremely robust, strategic and innovative thinking, describing a value network of partners and operations globally. They are passionate and even political in their thinking about impact globally. They work closely with the investment company and other organisations:

XX itself is part of a bigger network of organisations with common goals and shared goals, that allows us to network on the ground, in the markets, to help us do what we intend to do (14GS).

5.2.3 Analysis Grouping 3 The Local Corporate

This analysis group consists of c-suite executives who are driving the strategy, marketing and operations locally in South Africa. They are determined, enthusiastic, and are supportive of the greater sustainability opportunities and goals. They see the opportunity to scale partnerships and have global impact as critical to their purpose, but also recognise both the opportunities and exigencies of the region:

South Africa is, weirdly, easier to understand what your contribution to societal upliftment will be. So, we have no shortage of opportunities in this country (7LS).

5.2.4 Analysis Grouping 4 The Partners

This analysis grouping consists of diverse stakeholder organisations, for profit and not for profit, that the investment company and the global and local corporates partner with, either as supply-chain stakeholders, and / or as experts in their sector, offering thought leadership and other resources from within their sector. One interviewee in the investment company group has described the partnerships as *coalition building (10IS)*.

One organisation is less easily linked to the brand and marketing strategy as a supply chain provider. As one executive notes:

It's less easy to link that to the brand. But it's something that we believe in from a changing lives perspective (2GS).

All of the partnerships interviewed reveal a close relationship with specific investment company members – including original shareholders and founders. All those interviewed recognise their ability to make a difference to society, given the original support of XX, and also YY:

Understanding the impact that one partner, XX has had on the [our] community in South Africa and realising that if we amplify and multiply, and work with other businesses, that we really can draw in significant growth into the industry (8PC).

All the organisations have scaled to different degrees, partnering on local and global corporate strategy, and in some cases, operating outside of the corporate framework, working closely with government and / or other corporates.

The partner organisations interviewed are based in Southern Africa. Also discussed by interviewees, but not interviewed, are other partners and partnerships in the SADC supply chain, and further afield.

5.2.5 Participants, Codes, Profiles And Grouping

In closing, the participants were grouped and then anonymously coded according to groups and profiles. These codes are used in the evidence, analysis and conclusions of chapter 5. Table 12, below, shows the research participants, codes, profiles and groups.

Table 12: Research Participants, Codes, Profiles and Groupings

Interview Number	Code	Profile	Analysis Grouping
1.	3IS	Shareholder	1. Investment Company
2.	5IS	Sustainability Lead	1. Investment Company
3.	10IS	Sustainability Lead	1. Investment Company
4.	2GS	Executive	2. Global Corporate
5.	4GS	Executive	2. Global Corporate
6.	14GS	Executive	2. Global Corporate

7.	15GS	Executive	2. Global Corporate
8.	13LS	Executive	3. Local Corporate
9.	7LS	Executive	3. Local Corporate
10.	1PH	Management	4. Partner
11.	6PS	Executive	4. Partner
12.	8PC	Executive	4. Partner
13.	9PM	Executive	4. Partner
14.	11PB	Executive	4. Partner
15.	12PH	Executive	4 Partner
Code	XX	Global and Local Corporate	
Code	YY	Investor Organisation	

Source: Author's Own

5.3 Analysis of Interview Data

Code groups were generated from the data, as part of the broader inductive thematic analysis. Thereafter the code groups were analysed according to three key constructs and 14 themes.

5.3.1 Construct 1 Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships

Given the overarching Research Question, the first key construct derived from the literature, is that of cross sector sustainability partnerships. These are the stakeholder partnerships that the corporate, through either local and / or global divisions, engages directly with.

5.3.1.1 Theme 1 Stakeholders

Evidence

The groups, and the interviewees within the groups, hail from different sectors and organisations, as noted in the choice of participants. Whilst the interviewees don't generally use the term 'stakeholder', they appear to think of themselves, as diverse value creating partners in the broader value chain, solving purpose based sustainability:

And you create a very, very clear and explicit narrative for the organisation. And for our customers and for other stakeholders like government, and so on, that says this is what we believe in (4GS),

Wherever there is a XX presence, it should be a positive presence for as many of the various stakeholders as it can be (7LS),

like stakeholders need to have a voice, you know, in the project as well (11PB),

What is this thing [we] have to solve for, for that business to form the partnership, get that structured? (5IS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

As is evidenced from the interviews, there appears to be an extremely progressive approach from the majority of stakeholders, as they impact the values and long-term purpose of the local and global corporates. All the stakeholders use language, and terms, like *what we believe in, we are passionate about (4GS)* and *a partnership that we would give our heart to (3IS)* and *a super useful way of partnering (1PH)* in describing the working partnerships.

Theme Conclusions

Whilst the interviewees don't describe themselves as stakeholders, they all use a positive, values based language in describing themselves and the partnerships, suggesting a more balanced stakeholder view, as opposed to a traditional hierarchical shareholder approach.

5.3.1.2 Theme 2 Multi-Stakeholder Partners

Evidence

The multi-stakeholder partners (hereafter MSPs) consist of private sector or third sector / not for profit organisations, in addition to the local and global corporate, and / or the investment company. Based on interviews across all four groups, the partnerships appear to have been established differently on informal engagement, trust, opportunity, gut instinct and also strategic need:

[S]ome of them are opportunistic, and some of them have been very strategic (3IS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

From the analysis of all the groups, it appears that originally the alliances are mostly created between YY and the multi sector partner.

So an organisation like [] and a partnership like []. These are sitting within a shareholder ecosystem that enables them to bring best in class to the table. They are pretty well funded, because they're part of that ecosystem (4GS).

However the partnerships are occasionally founded between XX and the multi sector partner.

Potential New Sub Theme: The Retrofit

Analysis of the investment company group, and local and global corporate interviews demonstrate a similar reasoning as to how the partnerships were formed; the general partnership origins being founded on shared values, culture, passion, shared vision, and the strategic needs and purpose of the partners, investors and corporates. This is described by one of the interviewees as a 'retrofit, which suggests a partnership first based on mutual trust and mutual passion:

We tend to find something that we're passionate about, and then kind of retrofit some value from it. Possibly not the cleverest way to do it, but the one thing that that does guarantee is that we're motivated by the right things (2GS).

The partner interviews suggest that at inception a partner organisation is created to drive the mutually agreed upon strategy, and supported with resources by the corporate or investment company. Furthermore, the investors and corporate see the MSPs as integral to the broader creative 'church' of the predominant purpose and strategy of both XX and YY, equally:

The DNA of the organisation has always been, for as long as I've been around, about investing in creative communities (7LC).

The partners group also offers particular insights into the scaling and sustainability of the partner organisations, as it appears that to scale beyond the corporate framework comes with it's own difficulties. When it works though, they partners are quick to recognise the value of the original corporate support in understanding how partnerships evolve:

I think we probably literally have hundreds of partnerships. So with individual employers of all different shapes and sizes, with government, with civil society with research institutions, donors ... I think that the founding businesses were important in shaping our approach to partnership (12PH).

Amongst six partner interviewees, it appears that there are two partnership outliers, and of course there may be more, that are different to the previous analysis. One of those two organisations was founded separately, prior to an engagement with the investors. Another partner does not have a direct involvement as a supplier, but rather has a primary goal of supporting global SDG 3 – good health and wellbeing. It would appear that although there is endorsement of this particular partnership, it is seen as an anomaly as it does not support specific procurement needs or align directly to marketing or brand benefits:

There's pretty much no brand benefits, but it's something that that we all feel passionately about and are proud of (2GS).

Theme Conclusions

Cross sector MSPs appear to be an important part of the organisational framework in order for XX and YY to achieve their over-arching purpose of 'changing lives'. Having said that, the idea of the 'retro-fit' suggests a far more organic and instinctive approach to the initial engagement, than is usually argued, and suggests a more confident, informal and unstructured way of addressing purpose. The suggestion is that there is enormous trust in the organisational value and corporate purpose. This notion will be added as a potential sub theme.

5.3.1.3 Theme 3 Beyond Partnerships – Relationship Building

Evidence

The term *symbiotic (13LS)*, as in providing symbiotic value, is used a few times as a descriptor of the partnerships. From the interviews, it appears that interviewees understand symbiosis to describe a mutually beneficial relationship. All interviewees from the partners group comment that, beyond a commercial partnership, which may be created as part of the procurement chain, is the building of resilient relationships based on trust, and meaning. This, no matter what the function of the stakeholder partner is, in the broader value chain:

We start to build relationships and not partnerships. But we build relationships with people who share the passion we have, and who think like us (9PM),

[The] relationship, it encompasses a contract, a social contract, relationship contract, understanding of the other's value and your value and how to bring those together. (6PS),

I think when [the corporate and our organisation] have had the most impact, that's when key individuals have held relationships in the organisation that are based on trust, you've got to be walking, you know, really hand in hand (1PH).

The concept of a different and on going commitment, based on values, defines these stakeholder relationships in the corporate world. It is one that is often articulated as purpose, and is also recognised by both XX and YY in different interviews:

You need partners that will share the purpose journey. And again, those relationships are built over time with a deep commitment to making a difference (3IS),

[You are] truly differentiated in your purpose, to really mean that, to not have that cynically viewed as virtue signaling or greenwashing (13LS),

you need relationships, and you need ongoing kind of support of each other and then occasionally, they need to change. I think it is sometimes harder in these types of roles to change a partner (4GS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

It appears from the analysis of interviews that the cross sector partners recognise that this is not a normal partnership but rather one that is based on a deep and ideally long-term relationship. One partner even described it as a *marriage* (6PS). This metaphor was extended by a global corporate group participant describing himself as a *marriage broker* (15GS), in the building of relationships between the diverse stakeholders. There are similarities across all the groups with regard to the principle of deep relationships. All the interviewees of the four groups are quite clear that these are not sponsorship, philanthropic or corporate social investment initiatives, but are a different type of relationship, built on very specific value chains:

But like to actually kind of shift things, you have to take specific value chains and socially compact around them (10IS).

a solid relationship based on solid values (3IS),

Potential New Sub Theme: Challenges

Analysis of the data from all four groups highlights diverse challenges in long-term building of relationships, in order to achieve both long-term scale and strategic goals for both the partners and the corporate.

The data from the partners group generally notes that any change in executive or middle management in XX impacts the partnership, requiring the constant building of, and renewing of, relationships to ensure buy-in:

I think I have worked with over five or six different HR directors, or different CEOs, or acting CEOs. So each time someone leaves, [there are] requirements to build a new relationship and do things again. So I think one of the biggest challenges has been as insofar as people are definitely committed to social impact, at the end of the day, they have a business to run. They're held to very tight targets and margins (1PH).

According to the partners group, the partnerships are often perceived as philanthropic or CSI engagements by middle management, and not as equitable partners with specific offerings, as noted by the corporate and investor groups. There are sometimes expectations as to their contribution to resources, also brand and marketing supply chains, which, according to one partner interviewee requires more facilitation:

Obviously learning from everything they've done with other projects, there's a ton of knowledge there that can be transferred. And we can learn from. But we don't have anyone orchestrating all of that, unfortunately. Because there's a lot of, you know, a lot of overlaps and a lot of crossovers (11PB),

The data from the corporate group, both global and local, supports the above, in that they acknowledge that a challenge lies in ensuring that middle management and the entire value chain, including franchisees, understand the connections between brand, cross sector partner projects and strategy:

I think we've gotten involved in a number of very worthwhile projects. But the challenge, I think, is to meaningfully link them together, and link them to the brand. (2GS),

Sometimes it's hard. Because actually, where it gets really difficult is in the middle management. Because those individuals and roles are caught in the middle of a desire and a wish, and then a practical carry-out (14GS).

According to a local corporate interviewee, being caught between the 'wish' and the operational 'delivery risk' is difficult, given specific country challenges. They do however appear to recognise the need to be agile in the process:

This is the world we live in. So there are very, very fundamental challenges ... So then you've got to pivot your way of thinking (7LS).

One challenge suggested, was that there is a *mismatch in scale* between a *multi billion rand business (13LS)* and smaller not for profit partners, which may create an expectation and even financial dependency on the former, by the latter. The partners also acknowledge this, suggesting that these dependencies are then created further with their own suppliers, and this needs to be kept in check:

So we needed to put filters in place, some rules in place, to make sure that we didn't foster these dependencies. But yeah, it's very easy for that to happen (6PS).

However in support of both XX and YY, some of the partners interviewed recognise the tension between profit and purpose, also highlighting that these are not philanthropic partnerships. As one interviewee from the partners group noted:

I don't think that [XX] should be held accountable for our organisation's ability to extend beyond them as a primary partner. I don't think that it is their responsibility to ensure that we are able to continue to operate. That onus is on us to try and figure out how to broaden our market (6PS).

Theme Conclusions

All the interviewees appear to demonstrate a bona fide desire to make a difference in society, whilst growing their own organisations, which they believe can be done by establishing deep, vertical and horizontal relationships between all players at a local and global level.

The oft-uneasy tension between profit and purpose, partnership and philanthropy, for profit and not for profit organisations, is a tricky line that all the groups interviewed have to navigate in order to address what are described as *powerful modalities (5IS)*. Whilst the investment company group has a powerful and sustainable strategic directive - the exigencies of those strategies demand single mindedness, clarity of direction and a long vision, from all the stakeholders. As one interviewee notes:

[These modalities] enabled XX and YY businesses more broadly, to have impact way beyond what they would normally have achieved if they tried to do everything themselves. And kind of would have almost inevitably have fallen into the trap of the kind of corporate social investments way of doing things (5IS).

The challenges for the partners also demonstrate the importance of acknowledging the difference between a long-term relationship and a short-term partnership. However

they also demonstrate the requirement of both XX and YY to support the partner organisations in scaling and growing both impact and sustainability, outside of the 'stable' over time. Whilst the theme of challenges was not addressed in the literature review, the researcher believes it offers a real nuance of difference to the idea building relationships.

5.3.1.4 Theme 4 Shared Value and Collective Impact

Evidence

The interviewees all suggest their involvement demonstrates a different business model; one that supports the corporate's strategy, engagement with society, and broader sustainability goals, and may even address the concept of shared value. This, given that the stakeholder partnerships are not CSR or even corporate social investment (hereafter CSI):

But it's not an expense, it's not CSI (13LS).

Different interviewees from all four groups use the term 'shared value', but they do offer different interpretations of the term:

Personal shared values, a shared intent in the world (4GS),

I think the partnerships that have worked well, are built on a foundation of shared values, high levels of integrity, and trust (13LS),

The purpose of the partnership with XX is to hopefully grow that mission, you know, by creating shared value for both XX and [our organisation] (11PB),

[They have the] same values as us. And are very, very purpose-led. ... it's brilliant, and then you've got the win win, this shared value – not philanthropy (3IS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

Whilst the interviewees may be using the same term to describe their engagement with one another, they also frame their partnerships as a *collective (3IS)*, or having *shared intent (4GS)*, or *shared commitment (5IS)*.

It appears from the XX and YY groups that a collective strategy, based on the corporate purpose, is what propels the partnerships forward. However, the partners group interviews suggest that the cross sector partners also require the corporate

purpose to align to their own values and purpose. They do not see themselves as commercial partner to support corporate competitiveness alone:

Figure out which of those people share your values, have the right levels of integrity, and the shared vision for the future and you're in good shape. And it sounds like a very naive way of thinking about it, but in my experience, that's exactly what it is (7PS).

Theme Conclusions

The analysis would suggest that the cross sector partnerships are built on a complex construct in which all four groups engage, based on individual and overarching purpose, as opposed to corporate competitiveness, or shared value, alone. In order to align this purpose, and strategy, to profit, a complex ask in itself, the global corporate and investment company groups recognize that there are tensions that are not easily resolved, but that additionally require critical and different support from all the groups:

to pivot to do two things that are sometimes mutually exclusive, is very, very, very hard, because sometimes, driving social impact costs more money. So ... So therefore, how do I balance that? So when I'm choosing a partner, especially around driving sustainability, or social impact, I want someone that can actually make a difference, be able to measure and demonstrate that difference, and be able to demonstrate that that is advantageous to both society and the organisation and the employee (4GS).

5.3.1.5 Theme 5 Supply Chains and Value Chains

Evidence

From the interview findings of the investment company and local and global corporate groups, it would appear that purpose and strategy are supported through diverse partnerships in the value chain. The investment company and global corporate recognizes that the intentionality of stakeholder partnerships and purpose is addressed through the extended value chain:

you have to take specific value chains and socially compact around them (11IS).

The local corporate, and the partners, recognise the intentionality of the supply chain model, comparative to other corporates, including their competitors:

So I think XX has always been a creative company... that same level of creativity applies to our supply chain supply (13LS),

XX was a pioneer in thinking differently about the, you know, talent pipelines that they were going to use (12PH).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

The value chain remains a more strategic process, based on diverse activities. The partners appear to support this through their supply chain role, which is an operational process, the production and procurement of goods.

It appears from the interviews, that throughout the corporate value chain, partnership supply chains often support various corporate strategic and operational needs – mostly employment resources, and brand and marketing opportunities. These include, amongst others, the procurement of artisanal and unique shop fittings and accessories for all public-facing workspaces and retail outlets, as well as all the private global and local corporate and investor workspaces. This then supports the partners in their own growth strategy, ideally beyond the local and global corporate, as is suggested from the investment company group:

But, you know, if I look at the [] supply chain, for example, you know, we've got a very clear sort of principle that we never want to be more than one third of any manufacturers business, because we don't want [them] to build a dependency on us. (5IS.)

All the partnerships create different opportunities and challenges for the cross sector partners, the investment company, and corporate groups, in relation to diversifying and scaling their services. Most of the partners from group 4, address their role as a service provider in the interviews; recognising the responding resources they need (and get) in order to support their own sustainability and growth trajectory:

So there's quite a lot built into supporting the procurements. And that means it's sustainable for [the partners] to be part of this (8PC).

The partners are supported in the purpose, in what was described by one c-suite member as *real time activities (2GS)*. The interviews also reveal that time spent on connection and direction, are there to support the partner in scaling and diversifying beyond its original role in the XX supply chain. This requires, however, a coherent purpose, which supports the operations, as noted by one corporate executive:

I'm spending a lot of time on connection and direction of existing projects. So that we get value and absolute clarity of purpose across all the projects that we're involved in currently (2GS).

As one key executive noted, *we've had some horrific partners (4GS).*

However, analysis of the interviews, suggests that the supply chain can support the scaling beyond the global and local corporate, providing work and up-skilling opportunities for young people in different communities, locally, and later globally:

[Our organisation] has grown and has scaled ... and our model has changed significantly (12PH).

The global and local corporate groups, as well as the investment company group, recognise that there is also a scaling of suppliers in the SADC region. These SADC region suppliers are not amongst the interviewees, but are frequently mentioned in discussion around supply chain value, commercial viability, and broader questions of impact:

So the there is a commercial reason to get involved with [the SADC suppliers] because it's our thing, and no one else does it (13LS),

About six or five years ago, we completed 100% of our [supply needs] from our [suppliers] in Southern Africa. So now the real challenge is ... how do you drive greater levels of social impact? (4GS),

So I'll use procurement as an example. I mean, XX goes all the way, right, it buys 100% of its [supply] requirements from []. We see an opportunity to do what XX has cracked the code on, but for hundreds of thousands of [suppliers]. And so that's where the partnership gets formed, and how does YY brings a muscle about how to scale this (5IS).

Theme Conclusions

It could be concluded from the findings and analysis that Southern Africa has intentionally been identified as a sourcing hub, supported by a diversity of partnerships, many of which are based on supply chain needs from the start:

Southern Africa [as a] sourcing hub and all its intentionality [is] there (14GS).

One interviewee described the supply chain as a *trampoline* (15GS) and another described it as the *opportunity to transition* (10IS) implying that the supply chain

becomes an instrument driving development and growth across the partnerships and the organizational value chain, and creating a broader system of value. This suggests a new and more integrated approach to the operations, as driven by purpose.

5.3.1.6 Potential New Theme 6 Innovation and Interconnectivity

Evidence

Whilst Innovation and Interconnectivity is not a theme drawn from the original literature review in chapter 2, the interviews from all groups suggest that the strategic and operational framework, as suggested by XX and YY, is an unusual and innovative one, offering *alternative modalities of execution (5IS)* and a *unique way of investing (7LS)* with regards to cross sector partnerships:

But XX is an absolute story of innovation (1PH),

But what we're really trying to do [is] something that's more profound ... which is around identifying what this sweet spot is, where we can drive the right level of social impact while still being able to drive the business and commercial and brand goals of the organisation (4GS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

In all the interviews, the difference between the XX and YY strategy as compared to other FMCGs is constantly referenced and argued as a different approach to business in society. Innovative and creative thinking, and entrepreneurship, are originally attributed to the original South African founders and the investors in the investment company group. Different ways of approaching the challenges of sustainability are acknowledged by all the stakeholders now, both in the global and local corporate, and amongst the cross sector partners, as a thread that is deeply woven into the cultural fabric of values of the organisation and its partnerships, now:

But actually, this whole ethos of this organisation, if we get it right, is that we're in this together to solve it together (14GS),

The partners however suggest that this is an ethos that originates from the top down:

I'm convinced what makes it work well, is that it is a top down strategy. Something that came or was born through the shareholders who worked really hard to get buy in from the executive team, who then wrote it into this strategy (6PS).

What is striking is that the global and local corporate groups and the partners group do see the partnership as located horizontally between investor group and global and local corporate, as opposed to a vertical relationship. As one executive of the global corporate notes:

Our focus is on changing lives as XX. So there is a Venn diagram of YY and XX. And there is a significant area of crossover. And I think these partnerships fit in that crossover on the Venn diagram (2GS).

Figure 3, below, is a visualisation of the Venn structure, as suggested by the interviewee.

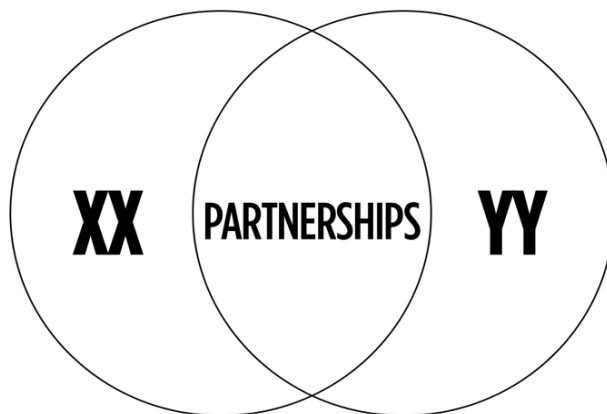


Figure 3: Crossover of Partnerships, Local and Global Corporate, and Investment Groups.

Source: Author's Own

Theme Conclusions

All the partners recognize, however, that this is a world that can get *messy in the middle (1PH)*, and that there are *overlaps* in the process of *closing the circle (9PB)*. The investment company and corporate group interviewees described it as a *virtuous circle (3IS)*; and another termed it as having *blurred boundaries (2GS)*. Furthermore the oft-repeated notion that the relationship between the groups is an ecosystem, or network, that is *non-hierarchical (5IS)* suggests closely interconnected cross sector partnerships, with integration directly into the corporate and investment groups that address strategic goals:

they join our ecosystem and have that voice in partnership with us and in partnership with a bunch of other people too (1PH),

we also have within that network join-ups of different parts of the networks to catalyse some of the goals that I spoke to (14GS).

Inasmuch as the Venn structure is a demonstration of interconnected relationships, of broader networks, the groups' language also evidences how the structure is perceived differently to other organisations.

5.3.1.7 Construct 1: Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships Summary

In addressing the themes from the Literature Review, there is one new theme - Innovation and Interconnectivity - that is revealed from the research findings. The researcher suggests that there may be a new sub theme of the 'Retrofit', falling under the theme Multi-stakeholder Partners; and of Challenges under the theme of Beyond Partnerships – Building Relationship. Additionally Table 13, below, highlights the alignment of the different groups to the themes, as per the findings.

Table 13 Construct 1: Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships, Themes and Evidence

Construct and Themes	Gr 1 Investment	Gr 2 Global Corp	Gr 3 Local Corp	Gr 4 Partners
Cross Sector Partnerships				
Stakeholders	x	x	x	x
Multi-stakeholder Partners	x	x	x	x
• New Sub-Theme: 'The Retrofit'	x	x		x
Beyond Partnerships: Building Relationships	x	x	x	x
• New Sub Theme: Challenges		x	x	x
Shared Value and Collective Impact	x	x	x	x
Supply Chains and Value Chains	x	x	x	x
• New Theme: Innovation and Interconnectivity	x	x		

**Bold Highlights suggest Potential New Theme or New Sub Theme*

Source: Author's Own

5. 3. 2. Key Construct 2: Corporate Strategic Goals

The second key construct to be derived from the literature review, and the research question in addressing the findings, is that of corporate strategic goals. These are goals, which are based on themes of purpose in relation to profit, and the role of the shareholders.

5. 3. 2. 1. Theme 1: Activist Shareholders

Evidence

Analysis of all the interviews highlight a strong focus on the role of shareholders in the purpose making, specifically from the investor company group and global corporate group. Words and terms like *catalytic (4GS)* and *activist role (5IS) founder's mentality (5IS)* and *turbocharged (4GS)* are used to describe the executive shareholders and their involvement:

It's about getting that championship from the top the whole time (5IS),

[It is] seeded by our owners and our shareholders. They innately operate in that world, it is their instinctive space (2GS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

The evidence suggests that all the stakeholders are aware of the value of active and activist shareholders - in the investment company group, in the global and local corporate group, and in the partners group. However each group sees the value of the shareholders, as supporting different outcomes, with the global corporate and the investment company groups specifically, holding a similar view. These groups recognise that shareholder championship is rooted in founding philosophies, and is critical for over arching global strategy and global sustainability goals, as developed over time:

Who the shareholder is, right? And what passions that shareholder brings. And you can't kind of, I guess, understate that, or overstate that (4GS).

The local corporate group see the shareholder engagement as framing the original 'changing lives' strategy, supporting a different approach to their supply chain and branding opportunities, and overseeing the profit and purpose motivations:

Our shareholders are very focused on that. I mean, we're now iterating, the way that we think about our purpose in a more operational way (7LS).

The partners group sees the shareholder involvement as a means to growing their own organisation's value. They recognise the support of the shareholders in opening the proverbial door, bringing in other organisations, and also in providing support, both financial and otherwise, in the scaling of the projects:

So it's been amazing to have the support and the visioning of the XX shareholders to believe that this project is an opportunity for others as well (8PC).

Theme Conclusions

In conclusion, the active and activist role of the shareholders in the investment company group appears to be critical in driving the overarching strategic and sustainability goals, and well recognized by the other stakeholders. Whilst each stakeholder may see the shareholder input and impact differently according to their own specific goals, there is a strong sense that together all the groups further reinforce the purpose and strategy, as set by the shareholders.

5.3.2.2 Theme 2: Corporate Purpose

Evidence

A review of all the data suggests the interviewees are aware of a clearly communicated corporate purpose. The local and global corporate and the investment company groups frame it universally as 'changing lives':

So the purpose is to change lives together (7LS),

I think, I mean, you know, if we've got a very strong purpose as part of, which is our changing lives kind of format. (3IS),

XX regards itself as being a purpose-led organisation ... which is around changing lives together (4GS).

Furthermore the partners recognise the 'changing lives' purpose as the driver of the strategy:

[They] clearly articulate a strategy around sustainability and clearly articulate a purpose. A purpose strategy (1PH).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

Having a pithy maxim like 'changing lives' appears to be a persuasive and simple articulation of the global corporate purpose for all stakeholders; it is used throughout

the value chain, and is quoted within all the groups as a guide to a clearly articulated strategy around sustainability and purpose.

The corporate global purpose of making a difference is used to highlight and drive diverse sustainability goals. An analysis of the quotes and data on the purpose and changing lives phrase suggests that creating employment opportunities, for example, through the different partnerships, supports the sustainability impact requirements of both XX and YY, as well as the partners group:

[T]he spirit of our purpose being to change lives together, we've begun to articulate particularly the employment people side as playing a significant role in driving inclusivity and inclusivity is through economic and social betterment (14GS).

Additionally the suggestion is that this business model is highly iterative, and the all stakeholders are required to *think about [their] purpose in a more operational way (7LS).*

Theme Conclusions

Arguably, analysis of all the purpose codes suggest the concept of corporate purpose needs to be holistically supported by all the groups, from partners to local and global corporate to the investment company. Importantly it is seen by all those interviewed as the linchpin to sustainability goals. This will be further addressed in the chapter on the third construct Local and Global Sustainability. Furthermore how the purpose meshes operationally, and the challenge therein, is addressed in the following sector on profit and purpose.

5.3.2.3 Theme 3 Purpose and Profit

Evidence

A review of the data on the commercial imperative of the corporate, and the relationship between profit and purpose, suggests that constructing a new business imperative requires constant work in ensuring that all stakeholders throughout the value chain are supported by and supportive of the overarching purpose. Furthermore the challenge of balancing the two is recognised by all the groups:

And, you know, if you wanted to come in tomorrow to XX and look at cost cutting, you could take out a huge amount. That would damage the brand going into the future, but you wouldn't feel it today, you'd feel it in two years time. So

you'd look like a genius for the next results. But we wouldn't be sustainable in our way of being sustainable (3IS),

Our job ... was to then transport that purpose, that vision, like we would around financial objectives into our businesses (15GS),

There's always this tension between profit and purpose ... So being able to balance you know traditionally fairly competing principles in a way that is symbiotic takes an enormous degree of faith and courage (13LS),

I mean some of the conversations with some of the middle management when we encounter them initially and they trying to figure out how we fit in (6PS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

It would appear from those interviewed in the corporate and investment company groups that there are different strategic principles, which ensure that the purpose is not subsumed by a more traditional profit based strategy – these include longevity, also long-term financial support, and a holistic approach. The issue of timelines, and longevity, will be addressed as a theme on it's own, in that it is also tackled by the partners in terms of their own strategic goals. The long-term financial support suggests that both the investment company and the local and global corporate need to be prepared to invest over the long term to firstly achieve scale, and more broadly achieve a successful purpose profit alliance:

All you really have is the kind of moral and ethical argument, right. And you have to sort of weigh that against the cost of doing all of this ... But right, now, let's really understand the problem (10IS),

How we've got there is from an investment mindset, not a cost mindset (13LS).

Finally it is worth noting that two members interviewed from the global corporate group suggest that profit and purpose are only achieved if one takes an all-encompassing and complete view of purpose and profit, addressing what is described as *the whole*:

And we absolutely accept that not every market will be able to play its part, but it's the whole that will make the difference. How we come together as a whole (14GS),

So the danger here, though, is to present it as purpose and profit meeting in a dark alley, and how do they engage? And I think, where we found purpose and profit is don't see them as opposite, see them as Ying and Yang. And how do

they connect in and make the whole, but you need to see the whole as well (15GS).

Theme Conclusions

In conclusion there appear to be certain requirements that are critical in order for both purpose and profit to be addressed as part of a spectrum as opposed to a binary. These include a broader holistic view of the entire value chain, including all stakeholders. Furthermore the need to subsidize the purpose, even at the cost of profit margins is recognised as a long-term strategy to purposeful success. And finally the issue of time to achieve scale and purpose is noted.

5.3.2.4 Potential New Theme 4 Purpose and 'Panic'

The theme of purpose in a time of crisis is not one addressed in the Literature Review. The researcher uses the word 'panic' as this is how an interviewee framed the business in a time of crisis:

I always think panic is a very good test of purpose, okay? Because if purpose gets ejected out the window when panic comes and everyone goes to batten down ... your purpose was only ever paper-thin (15GS).

Whilst the idea of panic is raised in a specific interview, the notion of operating through crisis is raised across all groups, specifically in relation to the issues that had to be addressed over the last 24 months – notably the COVID 19 Lockdown and the July Riots in KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng in 2021.

Evidence

All four groups touched on the issue of change and the related difficulties, specifically in relation to the lockdown:

My answer two years ago, pre-COVID, might have been different now. So at the moment, our major challenge is that there is just no normal activity (6PS),

The COVID economy, where, you know, revenues have been badly affected ... It's really hard to make an argument to urgently do something, right (10IS),

And now you've got COVID on top of it. It does expose the vulnerabilities in these partnerships ... It also made the bad things worse (13LS),

And then our second complex[ity] has been, is that when a business comes under stress, so for example, COVID, this business interruption ... is how do people in the organisation behave? (14GS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

Whilst each group noted the difficulties created by the Covid Lockdown, it was a specific interviewee from the global corporate group, who suggested differently that *how* stakeholders engage in a time of crisis, or what he described as ‘panic’, was a test of the real belief in the purpose, not as an add-on, but as integral to the strategy.

It is, however, clear from the interviewees that the impact of both events has been great, and furthermore that it has, in some cases, compromised decision-making. Having said that, the general consensus appears to be that all stakeholders move forward sanctioned by the financial backing of both the investment company group and the global corporate group.

Theme Conclusions

As noted, the theme of Purpose and ‘Panic’ is not raised in the Literature review, however it suggests that stakeholder tenacity and truly authentic partnerships are required to drive corporate purpose, and this might best be demonstrated during a time of crisis.

5.3.2.5 Theme 5 Timeframes

Evidence

The issue of timelines in addressing stakeholder partnerships and corporate strategic goals appears to be critical, particularly as it supports purpose and scale, and desired outcomes. This is highlighted by all the group interviews:

We have the luxury of a long, long time cycle and so therefore we can take much longer-term views. And even if they don't give a financial return, it talks to the purpose (15GS),

I think the other thing is that we also choose to do things the hard way sometimes, because we know that going slowly, in order to go far is has a more sustainable outcome (5IS),

And because we're privately-held ... we can take a longer-term view, which is itself a sustainable remit (13LS).

Similarly the partners also acknowledge the need for extended strategic time lines in order to achieve certain sustainability activities and outcomes, and ultimately impact:

So if we look at the timeframe that we've set ourselves, and we've now together with XX looked at that time frame, as being 2025, of course, we looking to extend it to 2032, for it to align with the SDGs (9PM).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

It appears that in order to deepen the relationship and thus partnership, many of those interviewed felt that time supported iterative processes, skills development, strategic thinking, expertise and impact. Importantly there is agreement across all groups that longevity is required if the partnerships are to work.

According to various stakeholders, in determining whether the cross and multi sector partnerships have impact, scale and support sustainability, even critical insights, one would need to ensure that the measurement of success is based on long term outcomes and not the short-term activities:

What time does it build deeper relationships. And it allows for a lot of latitude in terms of being able to experiment, fail, succeed, you know, and evolve. Just evolve (1PH),

[T]hey think in these long-term timescales. And it is about the impact you will have in 10, 15, 20 years, it's not about two (14GS),

So when we thinking about XX/YY in 20, 30 year time horizons, these things might not show instant return on capital in a year or two (15GS).

Theme Conclusions

Whilst short-term views may achieve immediate profits, based on the interviews it would appear that longer timelines are more important in achieving the tenuous balance between profit and purpose. According to the partners it supports the ability to test strategies and ultimately achieve the goals and impact. According to the investment company group, and local and global groups, it supports achievement of the overarching purpose and long-term strategy of sustainability.

5.3.2.6 Theme 6 Responsible Capitalism

Evidence

The interviewees from different groups, suggest that the intention of, and approach to, business has shifted and changed over time:

You know, old school leaders that said, your business's job is to make money, and the shareholder's job is to just decide how to spend it, is a sort of a dinosaur's view of how capitalism works. And if capitalism carries on working like that, it is a real threat to capitalism surviving (15GS).

Or as one interviewee from the partners group noted, in describing historical business practices in relation to supply chains:

I think it hasn't worked when people have been kind of what I would say is sort of stuck in an antiquated [business] practices that feel safe (1PH).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

Based on the interviews, there has been a real shift to approaching business with a different lens, founded on the purpose needs of the investment company group:

And we thought about, what is our purpose? And why do we exist? [We're] coming to a sort of business problem with a solution that has a massive impact lens (15GS),

And businesses will always solve for profit first. In the traditional setup. And so, you know, what we end up having to do is sort of spend time thinking through, you know, what is this thing we have to solve? (5IS).

All the interviewees appear to think that stakeholder driven strategic business model is underscored by the investment company *kind of sitting at the front and centre (7PC)*, or as a noted by a member of the investment company group:

YY is very driven by an agenda, or a commitment to systemic change, right. And so the common set between the two circles [XX and YY], if you will, is in the scaling of impact (5IS).

This is notable, beyond the suggestion again of a Venn business model, in that, within a more traditional shareholder paradigm, the 'common set' would be profit, as opposed to the 'scaling of impact'. Whilst there is a general sense of needing to do things different, it appears from the interviews that this is not an easily replicable process for business more broadly.

Possible New Sub Theme Legacy

There is a suggestion too from both the investment company group and the global corporate group, that responsible capitalism is further grounded in both corporate and personal legacy, and deep-seated values. The concept of legacy additionally suggests

that responsible capitalism depends on longer timelines and futures, and intergenerational conversations:

The focus was not driven originally from an SDG agenda, right, it was driven by more broadly having a legacy beyond wealth accumulation (5IS),

It brings a strong story, you know, to the XX legacy (11PB),

I want to be proud of the legacy that I leave, you know, so and I want my children to be proud of what I've achieved (15IS),

*But hopefully, there'll be a place that we can turn around and say to our kids, you know what, I wasn't greedy, I tried my best not to f**k it up (4GS).*

Theme Conclusions

The idea of a more responsible approach to business, and more broadly capitalism as it is historically recognised, is raised by members of the investment company group, the partner group and also by the global corporate group. It is however only briefly addressed by the partners group, perhaps given the fundamental role of a not for profit organisation, which most of the partners, in supporting socio-economic needs. The notion of legacy as part of the responsible capitalism construct highlights the value of long-term sustainable strategy, and also a strategy, which addresses future generations. Finally, the interviews suggest there may be a triangulation across the three constructs, in addressing responsible capitalism.

5.3.2.7 Construct 2: Corporate Strategic Goals Summary

In addressing the themes from the Literature Review, there is one new theme that is not covered in the chapter 2. This is the Purpose and Panic theme – the title is based on the term used by one of the interviewees in the corporate global group and talks to purpose in a time of crisis; this given the challenges of the pandemic and also the July 2021 protests in Gauteng and KZN. It also appears that the notion of legacy may add value to the theme of responsible capitalism, highlighting long-term, intergenerational and intra-generational strategies, as addressed by the global corporate and investment company group. Additionally Table 14, below, highlights the alignment of the different groups to the themes, as per the findings.

Table 14: Construct 2 Corporate Strategic Goals, Themes and Evidence

Construct and Themes	Gr 1 Investment	Gr 2 Global Corp	Gr 3 Local Corp	Gr 4 Partners
Corporate Strategic Goals				
Activist Shareholders	x	x	x	x
Corporate Purpose	x	x	x	x
Purpose and Profit	x	x	x	x
• New Theme: Purpose and 'Panic'	x	x		
Timeframes	x	x	x	x
Responsible Capitalism	x	x	x	
• New Sub Theme: Legacy	x	x		

**Bold Highlights suggest Potential New Theme or New Sub Theme*

Source: Author's Own

5. 3. 3 Construct 3: Local And Global Sustainability

Based on the interviews, sustainability is framed around two areas of corporate strategy in order to drive real systemic change:

The two areas that we can have most impact in in terms of driving meaningful, sustainable change, and systemic change in the world at large are the two areas that we spend most of our money. So the one is around people, and the one is around goods and services. And I include things like renewable energy, and carbon offsetting [in both] (4GS).

In addressing sustainability, the corporate has both a local approach, which was 'retrofit' to the SDGs; and a global approach more specifically aligned to the UN SDG as noted in Table 15, below, sourced from the United Nations website (UN, 2020, *What are the sustainable development goals*, para 2).

Table 15: The UN Sustainable Development Goals

GOAL 1: No Poverty
GOAL 2: Zero Hunger
GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being
GOAL 4: Quality Education
GOAL 5: Gender Equality
GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
GOAL 10: Reduced Inequality
GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
GOAL 13: Climate Action
GOAL 14: Life Below Water
GOAL 15: Life on Land
GOAL 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions
GOAL 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal

Source: <https://sdg.un.org/goals>

5.3.3.1 Theme 1: Local Sustainability and Communities

Evidence

It appears from the evidence that the original approach was not to address the global SDGs:

Firstly, we haven't created our internal plans to tick off a set of SDGs (4GS).

However, what emerges from many interviews is that the original approach to sustainability and partnerships was framed by the binding constraints of youth unemployment and inequality in South Africa first, and secondly in the SADC region:

So, to what degree can excluded youth become included in the labour market? ... if you can get XX to hire people who don't have work experience, we've had success (1PH),

Whilst the biggest part of changing lives is probably around people, employment, globally, there's a very deliberate thing in the changing lives procurement in Southern Africa (5IS),

The single biggest thing we can do is make sure that we manage a business effectively, so that we can continue to grow. Because every time we open a [retail outlet], we employ, on average, 26 people (7LS),

We learned that, and deeply researched that if somebody stayed in employment for a year, they were more likely to stay in more regular employment in their lifetime (14GS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

As evidenced in all the group interviewees, when it comes to local community sustainability, youth employment and 'changing lives', procurement through supply chains is the original and probably most impactful local sustainability engagement.

The evidence suggests that different groups and different interviewees use the term sustainability differently, based on their sector, geography and even locality. For example, the local corporate group describes the opening the local head office in a working class community, as opposed to areas where *our ability to positively impact the broader community is almost zero (7LS)*, as sustainability. Some partners also spoke to sustainability as being funding *we need to find a sustainable funding model (11PB)*, which was addressed by supplying XX with services. The analysis of the interviews across groups does however appear to be supportive of common socio-economic sustainability goals.

Whilst most of the interviewees don't specifically align their ideas of sustainability to any of the global SDG's, a few of them did note that it addresses Goals 8 and 10 of the UN SDGs – Decent Work and Growth and Reduced Inequality:

Our work is focused on the idea of SDG 8 which is around you know decent work and the idea that work is part of dignity and part of you know, social cohesion (12PH).

The majority of the multi sector partners interviewed, except for the youth employment accelerator - which alone suggests that thousands of young people have passed through the accelerator partnerships into work opportunities - recognise the opportunity for employment growth within their organisations and sector as an outcome of the broader supply chain. The local sustainability impact is also extended beyond South African communities, and a second tier of engagement is driven in the SADC region, where work opportunities impact broader sustainability goals, as well as mitigating high levels of inequality and poverty:

And we know that the fundamental layer of social impact that happens in those kind of rural, deeply rural, impoverished farming communities is when they're able to send their children, especially their girl children, to school in other towns. That's really where you have systemic multigenerational change (4GS).

Additionally the interviews, specifically from the global corporate group, suggest that sustainability is not directly aligned to environmental sustainability alone, but rather to *how the organisation drive[s] impact on a variety of different measures (4GS)*, and the organisation should ideally be an *agent for social change (4GS)*.

Theme Conclusions

The original framing of sustainability under the changing lives banner, has seen the local and global corporate expand the meaning of sustainability. Local sustainability suggests a more operational approach to alleviate the triple threat of poverty, unemployment and inequality. This strategy may be driven through the different partnership procurement opportunities and supply chains, specifically through the local corporate and diverse partners.

5.3.3.2 Theme 2 Global Sustainability and the SDGs

Evidence

Whilst the sustainability demands in South Africa and the SADC region are identified strongly as unemployment and inequality, the global corporate and investment company group interviews suggest they are focusing sustainability in relation to carbon emission and responsible production globally.

The investment company and global corporate groups who are both involved in the strategy building of the organisation, suggest that the broader global strategy is being built on addressing the climate crisis, *setting the right level of ambitious environmental goals (10IS)*, including net zero emissions and carbon offsets, and supporting the green economy. It is suggested that as part of the more recent XX strategy there is a deliberate approach to sustainability, with regards to climate change:

Interestingly, I think the sort of urgency around sustainability and carbon neutral was coming from our UK market, particularly but also ANZ (2GS),

[Our] goal is really to think about, across the geographies that we operate, because businesses are not just in South Africa. How do we kind of get to a net zero target for our businesses? (10IS.)

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

According to all the interviewees involved in the global strategic activity, responsible consumption and production is considered a critical sustainability goal that is being implemented first in the UK and then in other regions globally. It was however noted that whilst this would ideally be implemented by 2030, it did not stop the broader ongoing sustainability strategy based on the two areas noted earlier – that of people, and goods and services. All the interviewees talk to this in different capacities - whether it is safe employment for women *in places like India [where] there are many barriers ... for women to work (4GS)*, or *creating employment pathways for people in the green economy (10IS)*.

Two of the partners in the partner group are addressing sustainability goals beyond the global corporate:

In the current iteration of [our] model, its most important partnership is with the government (11PH),

also the health partner addressing SDG 3:

And of course, we also then, as part of our impact developed all the SDGs ... whether it's eradicating poverty, of course, the SDG 3 for health (9PM).

It is valuable to note that the latter partner, whilst not directly involved in the corporate activities does not see itself as a philanthropic partnership, even though it's core business is to address SDG 3, outside of the corporate. This notion is also supported by XX.

Theme Conclusions

Based on the analysis it appears that the global and local corporate, supported by the investor company, and the activities of the partnerships, are expanding their sustainability goals and measurements, based on different SDG's and specifically 12 and 13, and doing so rapidly :

We're moving fast on that agenda, right? I mean, it's become very central (5IS).

The suggestion is that, given the greater systemic outcomes of the SDGs, is that the corporate strategy is moving beyond the local to a global approach with sustainability. In the case of the global strategy, it appears from the interviewees, that the key role players here are sustainability experts in the investment company and the global corporate, and that the approach is far more systemic than the local sustainability practices. According to the global corporate group, and also the investment company

group strategy, there are deadlines in place to reach net zero globally in the corporate by 2030, and all the groups agree that beyond their own activities, this is a systemic challenge that needs to be addressed. It does however appear that the partners are not all expected to participate in the immediate global strategies, even if they are intrinsically able to support it, but are expected to address their own sustainability goals.

Table 16, below, demonstrates the partnerships, and involvement in sustainability goals, both locally and internationally,

Table 16: Sustainability Partnership Activation, and Local To Global Trajectory

Partner	Activating Partner Group	Sustainability Challenge	Partnership Function	Current Local & SADC Impact	Current Global Impact	SDGs
	Investment ◆ Global ■ Local ○		Supply Chain ⊙ Brand ◆ Marketing ■ Scale Beyond XX & YY ○			
1.	◆	Unemployment, Inequality, Youth, Poverty, Gender	⊙ ○	✓	✓	1,2,5,8,10,17
3.	◆	Unemployment, Inequality, Youth, Poverty, Gender	⊙ ◆ ■	✓	✓	8,10,11,17
4.	◆	Unemployment, Inequality, Poverty, Youth, Gender	⊙ ◆ ■	✓	✓	8,9,10,11,12,17
5.	◆	Health, Poverty, Gender	○	✗	✓	3,17
6.	◆	Unemployment, Inequality, Poverty, Youth, Gender	◆ ■	✓	✗	8,10,11,17
7. SADC Partner -No Interview	■	Unemployment, Inequality, Youth, Poverty, Gender, Environmental Degradation	⊙ ◆ ○	✓	✓	1,2,8,10,17

8. New Local Partner -No Interview	○	Unemployment, Inequality, Youth, Poverty, Gender, Lack of Governance, Ethics and Constitutionalism	⊖ ◆	✓	✗	9, 16, 17
9. Investment Company	◆ ■	Climate Crisis, Climate Change	⊖ ○	✓	✓	11,12,13,14,15,17

Source: Author's Own

5.3.3.3 Theme 3 Measuring and Reporting

Evidence

The evidence suggests that the investment group requires more clarity on the metrics of impact measurement, and also as to *how* the narrative of these metrics is navigated:

You know, we get very proud by the fact that our executives have non-financial metrics in their performance incentives and link to their bonuses. But actually not one of those is about, you know, how many poor people have been lifted out of poverty by the actions of this business? (5IS),

And we're saying, don't give us the glossy brochure give us the Excel (10IS),

But actually, you need to start telling the story on the numbers, because there's a brilliant story to tell (5IS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

Based on the different group analyses, it would appear that different groups measure the success or impact of their sustainability strategies differently. As commented earlier, executives also have non-financial metrics that are part of their KPA's, which are linked to the changing lives and sustainability goals. What is clear is that whilst the measurement of impact might vary amongst groups, the investment, and global groups acknowledge the necessity:

If we're going to be spending all this money with you, we want to track this stuff ... to develop a very different set of metrics that they are not used to gathering (10IS),

So we count those that you can track through partners, but actually we are innately sure that our [retail outlet] managers are also doing this work

themselves in their local communities. We just haven't tracked and understood and worked with that (14GS).

Success looks different according to the groups; for example, according to an interviewee from the local corporate group success is purely about scale:

The single biggest thing we can do is make sure that we manage a business effectively, so that we can continue to grow. Because every time we open a [retail outlet], we employ, on average, 26 people (7LS).

Nevertheless there appears to be some hesitation in the partner group in the evaluation of impact:

[Our organisation] is saying but we've made a difference to two and a half million people. They were like, yeah, but maybe you talking nonsense. Are you sure your numbers been vetted? (9PM,)

You know, like there are very few corporates that are really looking at the metrics, right? In a really thorough way, understanding the impact that, you know, we as their partner is doing (11PB).

There is a view, however, that how all the organisations and partners view success and the measurement thereof, should be aligned, to some degree. As one interviewee from the global corporate group noted:

[If] there is a mismatch in the middle that is always going to pull the partnership apart or crumble. Because if the one organisation's goals is numbers, and the other one is quality, that's a problem (14GS).

Theme Conclusions

In conclusion, based on the outcomes of the interviewees, it appears that whilst all groups generally agree that impact must be measured, each group appears to feel differently as to *how* to measure impact. This suggests that even impact and success itself is differently realised, and recognised.

5. 3. 3. 4 Theme 4 Resources and Knowledge Sharing

Evidence

The interviews demonstrate that the partnerships offer expertise in diverse fields, which supports the sustainability strategy and importantly the ability to scale. This expertise is described differently according to the groups, and includes the likes of network,

financial and skills capital. The global corporate and investment company groups also see the opportunity the partnerships provide in supporting the organisational and institutional goals through their own sector expertise

The purpose of having partnerships in this space, I think, is just to bring in specialists expertise, knowledge, resources, reach, and so on, into the organisation that the organisation itself does not have (4GS),

Which is, you know, what these partnerships are really good at, because they are fit for purpose, right? They're built to deliver, you know, impact (5IS).

Cross Case and In Case Analysis

Whilst the global corporate and investment groups celebrate the expertise of the partners, the partner group likewise appreciates expertise but of a different type of skill:

Business in South Africa really has the opportunity to bring in the change. And their understanding of the marketplace and their understanding of what how to bring, you know how to engage with the public and achieve sales is ... what [our] community really needs access to (6PC).

This need for business skills growth the partner organisations, is further recognised by the local corporate group:

You know, I mean, in some cases, the coaching that has been required to help talented young, creative people physically build the business (7LS).

Theme Conclusions

The diversity of resources that each group offers appears to support the sustainability and strategic goals of the corporate. However, different resources also support the sustainability and strategic goals of the partners themselves. Notably all the interviewees seem to suggest that were able to contribute either to local or global sustainability, owing to the diverse resources found within the groups, and may even support their profitability overall:

[It's a] combination of thought leadership, as well as businesses that are in different sectors than our own. So we are getting smarter and smarter between us all about sharing, and joining up, learning, but actually also sharing expertise, and sharing input, just to build all those goals, for example (14GS).

5.3.3.5 Construct 3: Local and Global Sustainability Summary

In conclusion, the analysis demonstrates a different corporate strategy to local and global sustainability. This is addressed through the themes of Local and Global Sustainability separately. The common thread between groups was that measurement and success, appears to need a cohesive process, which may be jointly through narrative and metrics. Table 17, below, highlights the alignment of the different groups to the themes, as per the findings.

Table 17: Construct 3 Local and Global Sustainability, Themes and Evidence

Construct and Themes	Gr 1 Investment	Gr 2 Global Corp	Gr 3 Local Corp	Gr 4 Partners
Local and Global Sustainability				
Local Sustainability and Communities	x	x	x	x
Global Sustainability and SDGs	x	x	x	x
Measuring and Reporting	x	x	x	x
Resource and Knowledge Sharing	x	x	x	x


**Bold Highlights suggest New Theme or New Sub Theme*

Source: Author's Own

5.4 Final Conclusions of Research Findings

In the final summary it is noted that there are two new themes that have emerged – Innovation and Interconnectivity, and Purpose and Panic under the first and second constructs. Furthermore, two sub themes have emerged. The first is that of Challenges, under the theme of Beyond Partnerships – Relationship Building, in the first construct. The second is that of Legacy, under the theme of Responsible Capitalism. These will be further addressed in the following chapter. The conceptual framework Table 18, below, is a summary of the conclusions of the research findings of chapter 5, and the details will be addressed in the text to follow.

Table 18: Conceptual Framework III

Key Constructs	Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships	Corporate Strategic Goals	Local and Global Sustainability
	Stakeholders	Activist Shareholders	Local Sustainability and Communities
	Multi-stakeholder Partners New Sub Theme The Retrofit	Corporate Purpose	Global Sustainability and the SDGs
	Beyond Partnerships – Relationship Building New Sub Theme Challenges	Purpose and Profit	Measuring and Reporting
	Shared Value and Collective Impact	New Theme Purpose and ‘Panic’	Resource and Knowledge Sharing
	Supply Chains and Value Chains	Timeframes	
	New Theme Innovation and Interconnectivity	Responsible Capitalism New Sub Theme Legacy	
			
Tensions and Opportunities			

**Bold Indicates potential new themes and sub themes revealed in chapter 5.*

Source: Author’s Own

5.4.1 Construct 1: Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships Highlights

Stakeholders and Multi-stakeholder Partners

Whilst the interviewees don’t generally describe themselves as stakeholders, they all use positive, values based terminology in describing themselves and the partnerships, suggesting a more stakeholder based view, as opposed to a traditional hierarchical approach to the business.

Potential New Sub theme: The ‘Retrofit’

Potentially a sub theme, given that the partnerships were historically connected through what one interviewee described as ‘retrofitting’; they were established differently, sometimes on informal arrangements, or trust, opportunity, gut instinct and

also strategic need. The suggestion is that the relationships are initially created on trust and values, and only thereafter becomes a transactional process. These partnerships generally extend into deep and long-term relationships, which may sometimes, but not always, grow out of the XX and YY family, into other public and private sector partnerships.

Beyond Partnerships: Relationship Building

All the partners consider the partnerships to be based on trust and values, and therefore tend to prefer to use the term 'relationship', both in the description of building value chains, addressing purpose, process and timeframes.

Potential New Sub theme: Challenges

This is a new sub theme; the question of challenges was raised in the questionnaire, and was addressed by all groups. Furthermore it suggests that in order to develop deep relationships, the challenges need to be addressed. The challenges are predominantly similar, although seen through different group lenses. Specifically the challenge of ensuring that middle management understand the higher purpose or goal of these partnerships in the value chain, as opposed to simply seeing them as a transactional supply chain partner, was noted. Some partners felt it required specific and ongoing corporate communication to ensure middle management buy-in, and the global and local corporate recognised that they were required to constantly guide and direct the process of both supply and value chain. It is noted that the investment company group did not raise the issue of middle management communication, as a challenge, in the interviews.

All the interviewees appear to demonstrate a bona fide desire to make a difference in society, whilst growing their own organisations, which they believe can be done by addressing the tensions raised, and establishing deep, vertical and horizontal relationships between all players at a local and global level. The analysis would suggest that the cross sector partnerships are built on a complex construct in which all four groups engage, based on individual sustainability purposes. In order to align this purpose, and strategy to profit, a complex ask, the global corporate and investment company groups recognize that there are tensions that are not easily resolved, but that additionally require critical but different support from all the groups. This will be addressed in chapter 6.

Shared Value and Collective Impact

All the groups identify these relationships as based on 'shared value', but it is apparent that all the groups have different and broad understandings of the meaning of the term,

and may in fact be referring to collective impact, which supports shared value, given the latter's key components. It appears from the XX and YY groups that a collective strategy, based on the corporate purpose, is what propels the partnerships forward. However, conversely, the partners group interviews, suggest the corporate values and purpose must *also* align to their *own* values and purpose. They do not see themselves as only a commercial partner to support corporate strategy. The value of this is that it demonstrates a non-hierarchical relationship, based on cross sector value and skills.

Supply Chains, and Value Chains

Given the supply chain role to be an operational process, the production of goods; the value chain remains a more strategic process, based on diverse activities, the interviews suggest that the stakeholders are involved in both the supply chain, as part of a procurement process, whilst they support the value chain as part of strategy, based on the broader purpose.

Potential New Theme: Innovation and Interconnectivity

The Innovation and Interconnectivity theme is a new theme, which highlights what appears to be a different approach to the partnerships. The XX and YY groups are extremely intentional in describing their partnership relationships as a horizontal interconnected ecosystem, and not a hierarchical relationship. One interviewee suggests the relationship could be seen as a Venn diagram. Based on the interviews, from the global and local corporate, the investment company, and even the partners group, this visual description offers an insight into the status quo of all partners demonstrating an equal investment, based on the breadth of skills and resources being brought into the value network.

5.4.2 Construct 2: Corporate Strategic Goals

Activist Shareholders

Whilst the corporate strategic goals, based on a powerful thread of local and global sustainability, are supported by all the groups under the ambit of 'changing lives', it is apparent that these goals are initially embedded in the overarching purpose driven by the shareholders, who appear to be both active and dynamic. Furthermore they use the term 'changing lives' to address various sustainability goals making a difference in different communities.

Corporate Purpose

The purpose is closely connected to the strong thinking around new and purposeful capitalism, as was raised by both the investment company group and the global

corporate group. A highlight of these conversations was the differentiation between traditional shareholders, activist shareholders and stakeholders as participants in the process.

The purpose is closely connected to the concept of responsible capitalism, as is raised by both the investment company group and the global corporate group. Whilst the purpose is framed as 'changing lives', and is supported by all four groups, this is addressed differently according to different partner sustainability goals – be it employment opportunities, or net zero carbon emission goals.

Purpose and Profit

Balancing the two imperatives of purpose and profit is one that all the groups, including the partners group, highlighted. It was further noted that whilst purpose framed all the activities, it required a holistic long-term view based on both financial and non-financial input. A few interviewees in the global, local corporate group, and the investment company group, also noted that it was easy to achieve profit over a short term, but that purpose *and* profit required longer strategic timeframes. Thus all the groups suggested that the investment company and the local and global corporate need to be prepared to invest over the long term, firstly to achieve scale, and then to achieve a successful purpose profit alliance with the partners.

Potential New Theme: Purpose and 'Panic'

In the Corporate Strategic Goals construct there is one new theme that is not covered in the chapter 2. This is the Purpose and Panic theme – the title is based on the term used by one of the interviewees in the corporate global group and talks to purpose in a time of crisis; this given the challenges of the pandemic and also the recent July 2021 protests in Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal.

Emphasis on the corporate purpose is required in a time of crisis, whilst also demonstrating the tenacity and authenticity of all the teams, a global corporate interviewee noted. Whilst some interviewees felt compromised by the events of the last 24 months, the general consensus was that continued financial input, supported by the investment company and global corporate, and focus on the overarching purpose, meant they could rebuild during a turbulent period.

Timeframes

Based on the interviews, in particular from the investment company group, and global corporate group, short-term approaches may achieve immediate profits, but longer timeframes are more important in achieving a balance of both profit and purpose.

According to the partners group, it supports the ability to test strategies and ultimately achieve the goals and impact. As noted in an earlier theme, the concept of long-term purpose is inevitably linked to financial input and support. A long view also appears to deepen the partner relationships, and all the groups felt that 'time' supported iterative processes, skills development, strategic thinking, critical insights, expertise and impact.

Responsible Capitalism

The idea of a more responsible approach to business, and more broadly capitalism, as it is historically recognised, is raised by members of the investment company group, the partner group and also by the global corporate group. It is however only briefly addressed by the partners group, perhaps given the fundamental function of a not for profit organisation, in supporting socio-economic needs.

The responsible capitalism theme is closely aligned to that of purpose. It is however more specifically addressed by the investment company group and the global corporate, and not by the partners group or local corporate group. There is also a clear triangulation between purpose, timelines and responsible capitalism. The need to address a stakeholder approach to collective impact, through partnerships, as opposed to a more traditional shareholder approach to corporate social responsibility is also raised.

The different groups also note the value of legacy planning, as a functioning component of responsible capitalism.

Potential New Sub Theme: Legacy

The notion of legacy as part of the responsible capitalism construct highlights the value of long-term sustainable strategy, and also a strategy, which addresses future generations. This concept of long timelines, future planning and intergenerational engagement supported the researcher's decision to make this a sub theme.

5.4.3 Key Construct 3: Local and Global Sustainability

In final key construct, the research findings demonstrate different strategies in support of local and global sustainability. The concepts of measurement and success indicators, and the value of diverse resources and skills are also highlighted as requirements of strong sustainability partnerships.

Local Sustainability and Communities

Local sustainability appears to be highlighted by a more operational approach, at a more local, community based level. Furthermore it is driven by the immediate challenges and binding constraints of the South African socio-economic environment

that include poverty, unemployment and inequality. The 'changing lives' theme acts in mitigation of these challenges and there is a strong focus on the outcomes of SDGs 1, 8 and 9, although the local activities are not directly aligned to global SDG's, in general. It is however clear from interviews in all groups, that local sustainability, whilst not directly naming the SDGs, is completely aligned to the strategic purpose and sustainability goals of the corporate.

Global Sustainability and the SDGs

The SDGs are strong internal guides within the investment company group and global corporate group; clearly there is a convincing need for real sustainability with regards to net zero goals and SDGs 11,12 and 13. The two groups also see the global corporate and global partners as the drivers of these goals. It appears that the local corporate group and the partners group are less involved in these global sustainability goals, although the very nature of their work does apply to the goals.

Measurement and Reporting

In order for the challenge of sustainability to be addressed, proper measurement and monitoring and evaluation (hereafter M&E) are highlighted by many of the interviewees. Conversely there appear to be different approaches to measurement and impact, with different interviewees suggesting either more quantitative or qualitative approaches. It is suggested that without proper measurement over a long term, the impact of the work is not fully addressed or acknowledged. The interviews appear to demonstrate that all the groups are similar in their response; they all suggest a need for better measurement tools and indicators.

Resources and Knowledge Sharing

Finally there is a strong support for the different resources, which are made available through the multi-sector diversity of the partners, and the groups. It is furthermore suggested that the range of these resources, including skills and sector expertise, offer diverse capital to supports both sustainable and strategic goals of the corporates and the partnerships. Again, this is something that is identified and supported by all the groups in relation to their sector skills and partnerships.

CHAPTER 6 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 analysed the similarities and differences between the research findings of chapter 5, and the literature reviewed in chapter 2. This was done under the sub-headings – Recap of Key Findings, Recap of Key Insights from the Literature, Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature, and finally Conclusions based on these sub-headings. Furthermore, the researcher addressed the emergent themes and sub-themes, with a three step approach to the literature – material found in the review, re-reading the literature used in the review, and extending the reading of extant literature, if the first two steps were unsuccessful. This was done in order to support a systematic approach to finding the apposite literature for the new themes and sub themes.

Chapter 6 will be structured in the same way as chapter 5.

6. 2 Key Constructs And Themes

6.2.1 Construct 1: Cross Sector Sustainability Partnerships

6.2.1.1 Stakeholders

Recap of Key Findings for Stakeholders

Whilst the interviewees don't generally use the term 'stakeholder' in their self-description, rather they use the terms 'partnerships' and 'relationships'. Furthermore the terminology used to describe themselves and others, is generally positive and values based. All the stakeholders recognise themselves as diverse value creating partners in the broader value network, and in many cases in the supply chain, as well. All the partners in the different groups, but most particularly the partners group, note the diversity of sectors and activities that each organisation and partnership is involved in. The evidence from different interviews suggests that they all recognise their role in supporting purpose-based sustainability.

In closing, the concept of the stakeholder is one that is supported, although not necessarily named, by all four groups.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Freeman (2017) considers the term stakeholder to include the relationships between suppliers, financiers, employees, shareholders and broader community, noting that all these players are important in the expanded value chain. This is based on the “wide sense” of the term, as argued by Freeman and Reed (1993, p 91). Freeman (2017) suggests that the broader value chain consisting of stakeholders, including diverse clusters of players who support “value-creating relationships” (p 3), are important for the purpose and performance of the corporate.

Bhattacharya and Polman (2017) also describe interconnectivity between stakeholders, suggesting common and overarching goals, and outcomes. In addressing the expanded stakeholder value chain, Crane, Henriques and Husted suggest that this requires a transversal view, across sectors and methodologies, including those used in “sociology, marketing, economics, finance, fine arts, and psychology” (2018, p 5).

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

All the four groups use value based, and positive terminology as per the Freeman et al. (2020) description of an alignment of values by stakeholders. The interview analysis demonstrates similarities with the stakeholder literature, suggesting diverse stakeholder dimensions and relations, as argued by Freeman (2017), Harrison et al. (2020) and Crane et al. (2018). These dimensions include different sectors, and communities, as specifically highlighted in the partnerships group. Thus we see diverse stakeholders in all the groups - the investment company consists of shareholders, investors, strategists and founders; the global and local corporate group includes global group and local executives; and the partners group demonstrates broad cross sector organisations in the expanded value chain, as highlighted by Freeman (2017), inclusive of not for profit and for profit organisations in the creative, health and human resource sectors.

Conclusion on Stakeholders

In conclusion the concept of the stakeholder as suggested by Freeman (2017), Freeman et al. (2020), and Harrison et al. (2020) is comparable and similar to the key findings, demonstrated through the diversity the stakeholders, all supporting an overarching and common purpose amongst the partnerships.

6.2.1.2 Multi-Stakeholder Partners

Recap of Key Findings for Multi-Stakeholder Partners

According to the findings in chapter 5, the need to align profit and purpose, and the complexity of global and local sustainability challenges, sees the corporate partnering with organisations that could be considered incongruous allies, from different sectors relative to the FMCG sector. Some of these partners are not for profit, they hail from the broader creative and cultural sector, youth employment hubs, agricultural sector, and even the health sector, amongst others.

New Sub Theme: The 'Retrofit'

Most of the partnership origins are founded on collective values, culture, passion, shared vision, and the strategic needs and purpose of the partners, investors and corporates. This is described by one of the interviewees as a 'retrofit', arguing a partnership grounded first in passion, mutual trust and belief, and only later becomes a commercial transaction.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) suggestion that MSPs consist of a grouping of stakeholders that together seek to achieve "common socio-environmental goals" (p 5), whilst Gray and Purdy (2018) suggest that MSPs must be based on a strong mutual vision. Ordonez-Ponce et al., support this, arguing that, without a mutual, and importantly long-term, collective vision, the chances of failure are increased dramatically (2021, p 5).

Ordonez-Ponce et al. cite the Eisenhardt and Schoonhoven (1996) suggestion that organisations partner "so they can gain additional resources that they need" or even when they are in a "comfortable position" in order to interest and thus engage other organizations (2021, p 6). The assumption here is that a comfortable position means a financially and / or strategically strong position. Whilst Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) argue that historically a partnership had a specific function - either strategic or philanthropic - the shared value theory supporting competitive advantage of Porter and Kramer (2011), and the Harrison et al. (2020) focus on purpose and partnerships, argues that a partnership need not be dichotomous, and could support different functions. Furthermore Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) suggest that sustainability and strategy are closely linked in the making of an MSP.

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

The Gray and Purdy (2018) suggestion that MSPs are often “unlikely bedfellows”, in order to address complex challenges (2018, p 1), is in line with the different types of partners in chapter 5, many of whom appear, on the surface, to be incongruous. This is also in line with the need for diverse expertise and skills, as argued by all the groups in chapter 5, and highlighted by Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021).

In comparing the literature with the research findings, it is worth noting that XX, and its historical shareholder (YY), supports the resource needs of the partnerships from the beginning, and then later for the scaling and sustainability of the relationships. Similarly Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) support this, in suggesting that the partnership equation is often linked to resource needs. The suggestion that the XX corporate is financially comfortable and thus is more likely to partner with other organisations demonstrates similarity with the extant literature (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2021, p 6).

New Sub Theme: The ‘RetroFit’

The suggestion that these partnerships are based first on trust and passion, guaranteeing that all the partners are mutually motivated, before a specific strategic role is agreed upon, or as one interviewee calls it, a ‘retrofit’, offers a potential difference to what the literature suggests. In attempting to identify the difference, or similarity to the literature the reviewer went through the process of relooking at the literature.

Step 1

The chapter 5 findings argue that partnerships are often created based on mutual beliefs and passion, and thereafter a more formalised transaction occurs. Whilst the chapter 2 literature review does not specifically address the process described by the interviewee, Gray and Purdy (2018) do argue that there is a difference between a partnership and collaboration. They suggest that the process of collaboration may have more rigorous requirements and outcomes and may be based on a contractual service provider relationship, whilst an MSP is a plan that is mutually conceptualised, created and implemented (Gray and Purdy, 2018). Thus, a similarity in the process could be argued, based on partnership, and not on collaboration.

Step 2

In a further re-reading of Gray and Purdy (2018), it is noted that, unlike the Freeman concept of stakeholders creating an alliance with the principal corporate (1983), the stakeholders align to a central “issue field” (p 2). Thus they partner, based on an issue,

and not necessarily just an organisation. Gray and Purdy suggest that stakeholders become partners and allies, based on a mutual need to resolve complex socio-economic problems before agreeing to partner (2018, p 2).

The steps followed therefore suggest that the stakeholder literature does address the idea of a retrofit, if not directly, then more broadly. It is clear that the concept is not a component of collaboration, but rather of an MSP, as highlighted by Gray and Purdy (2018). Furthermore the Gray and Purdy (2018) suggestion that stakeholder's may partner with one another, based not on the immediate corporate commercial need, but rather on a desire to solve a mutual problem or purpose, seems to demonstrate a similarity between the findings and the current literature.

Conclusion on Multi-Stakeholder Partners

Given the literature of Ordonez-Ponce (2021) and Gray and Purdy (2020) it could be argued that these partnerships do consist of MSPs, and the global and local organisation has MSPs embedded first in its corporate sustainability strategy, and thereafter operations.

The concept of The Retrofit remains a valuable one. Whilst it does not have immediate similarities with the Literature Review of chapter 2, the Gray and Purdy (2020) concept of the 'issue field', or focal problem based on socio-economic challenges, in particular, requires partners to address mutual purpose and passion, before forming a transactional partnership.

6.2.1.3 Beyond Partnerships – Building Relationships

Recap of Key Findings for Beyond Partnerships – Building Relationships

The language of the interviewees in all the groups, demonstrates intent to build resilient relationships based on trust and meaningful engagement, beyond a transactional collaboration or partnership. In addressing this, they all talk about the partnerships as relationship. All the groups address the challenges of making the stakeholder partnerships work, suggesting that the buy-in of all those involved, in the over arching purpose of 'changing lives' required on-going relationship building.

New Sub Theme: Challenges

The tension between profit and purpose is noted as challenging to navigate, specifically in how the partners are engaged by middle management in the corporate - those not necessarily driving the purpose and strategy, but rather the operations. This was highlighted differently by each of the groups interviewed, but acknowledged by three as a 'challenge'. Whilst the investment company group appears to have a

powerful and sustainable strategic directive - the exigencies of those strategies demand single mindedness, clarity of direction and a long vision, from all the stakeholders. Both the corporate groups noted the occasional mismatch in resources and scale, between the multi-sector partners and themselves, and the challenge thereof, and the partners also underscored the challenge of ensuring middle management supported the overarching purpose and strategy as part of KPA's. There was a suggestion that any change in management required the constant building of, and renewing of, relationships, to ensure buy-in.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Pera, Occhiocupo and Clarke posit that “reputation enhancement” and “relationship motives” are one of the important reasons for a partnership to occur (2016, p 4). Whilst the former talks to a marketing strategy, it might be argued that the latter is about a deepening of the relationship, linking it to values and purpose beyond transaction.

Pera et al. (2016) and Ordonez-Ponce (2021) argue for a broad ecosystem of reliable relationships over a long term, in order to grow real value. Furthermore, Freeman (2017) and Freeman et al. (2020) argue for authentic and well-articulated purpose to ensure overarching corporate support.

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

Both the ‘reputation enhancement’ and the ‘relational motives’ suggested by Pera et al. (2016) appear to resonate with the analyses of the interviews from all four groups. The interviewees in the partners group suggest that XX is a powerful, engaged brand, and thus one that is valuable to form relationships with. That the relationships are based on mutual goals (Gray and Purdy, 2018), which might also be argued as the groups’ sustainability goals, even as they are differently ‘applied’ by each group and organisation, similarly supports the notion of building deeper relationships. All the groups seem to argue more strongly for the term ‘relationships’ as opposed to ‘partnerships’, less so in the literature.

New Sub Theme: Challenges

Whilst there is no specific theme on the challenges, under the first construct, in chapter 2, many of the challenges addressed are discoverable in the stakeholder theory literature. The chapter 5 findings appear to argue that the difficulties created, are based on a lack of middle management buy-in owing to the latter’s perceived tension between profit and purpose.

Step 1

Freeman et al. (2020) suggest that the oft-argued tension between profit and purpose is a “false dichotomy” (p 216). This is also the terminology used by Freeman and Dymtriyev (2017) in how they perceive stakeholder theory. It is this tension, which appears to be the source of the tension, specifically for middle management.

The implication of the challenges, as noted by the interviewees, furthermore suggests that the middle management may not feel that the partners have real legitimacy as they are multi-sectoral, and not obvious commercial suppliers, in some cases. However the literature review notes that Phillips et al. (2019) argue that a stakeholder should have legitimacy and power in the eyes of management – power being aligned to expertise, skills, influence and other value forms. As will be noted under the theme of Resource and Knowledge Sharing, under the third construct, the multi-sector partners are acknowledged for the expertise that they bring to the table.

Step 2

A re-reading of the Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) importantly notes that some partnership challenges are based on “diverse goals” and potential “conflicting views” (p 5); this appears to support the issues that all the groups raise. Whilst the tensions may not be directly conflicting, they are aligned to the differing approach to profit and purpose, by middle management, compared to the corporate and investment groups. This demonstrates similarity to the Freeman et al. (2010), and the Phillips et al. (2019) suggestion that the challenge lies how to integrate business requirements, ethical needs and human behaviour (p 7).

In closing, a reading of Gartenberg et al. (2016), suggest that it is middle management who drive the relationship between purpose and profit (p 6); however this appears to be at odds with the findings, suggesting a nuanced difference between this literature, and the findings.

Conclusion on Beyond Partnerships

All the partners describe their engagement as a relationship beyond a commercial partnership, a strategic integration of resources and values. This is in line with the literature (Pera et al., 2016).

In addressing the issue of challenges, it is clear, both from the literature review and a re-reading of the literature, as they align to the research findings, that there are challenges, or tensions, to achieving successful, and purposeful cross sector sustainable partnerships. They are also critical to resolve in ensuring deep relationships.

6.2.1.4 Shared Value and Collective Impact

Recap of Key Findings on Shared Value and Collective Impact

All the groups identify their relationships as based on 'shared value', but it appears that all the groups have different and broad understandings of the meaning of the term, and may in fact be referring to collective impact, which supports shared value, given the latter's key components.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Kania and Kramer (2011) suggest 'collective impact' as guiding model for businesses, in order to bring together the stakeholders required for shared value to succeed. Kramer and Pfitzer (2016) describe it as an ecosystem that can "catalyse change" (p 4) and support shared value. Furthermore it suggests a reciprocal underpinning of the relationship between partner organisations, addressing some of the critique of CSV.

In order to address the challenges of CSV and the challenge of value chain complexities, Kramer and Pfitzer (2016) suggest that corporates support shared value through five components of collective impact (p 4). The concept of interconnectedness appears to be essential to all the five fundamentals of collective impact.

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

The partnerships are founded on purpose, as opposed to supporting a primary strategy of corporative competitiveness alone. Thus it appears that their similarities are more closely aligned to the Kramer and Pfitzer (2016) approach to an ecosystem of collective impact, as distinct from the Porter and Kramer theory of shared value (2011). Given the Kramer and Pfitzer (2016) components of collective impact, it could be argued from the findings that all the groups have a very clear and common purpose and thus agenda, their activities are mutually reinforcing, beyond corporate competitiveness, and the partnerships are supported by XX and YY, through diverse resources and long term relationships, providing what Kramer and Pfitzer describe as a "dedicated 'backbone' of support" (2016, p 5).

Conclusion on Shared Value and Collective Impact

Whilst the literature review addressed the concept of shared value and collective impact, it might be suggested that shared value as collective impact is what emerges through the findings. This does suggest that the Pera et al. (2016) notion of a collective ecosystem, and an ecosystem of collective impact as suggested by Kramer and Pfitzer (2016), appears well aligned with the strategic activities of the groups as they partner to achieve the overarching purpose. One key component suggested by Kramer and

Pfizer (2016), that may require more input, is the need for ongoing communication. This is particularly noticeable in the middle management requirements, as suggested by both the local corporate group, and the partners group, in the earlier sub theme on challenges.

6.2.1.5 Supply Chains, and Value Chains as Value Networks

Recap of Key Findings for Supply Chains, and Value Chains as Value Networks

The multi-stakeholder partnerships consist of stakeholders who are, generally, integral to the current procurement or supply chain process, and also the corporate value chain, in support of different resources - brand, marketing, operations, and even youth employment opportunities - critical for an organisation of this size and nature.

The partners group and global corporate group highlight the building of systems and structures to support value chain and the supply chain. Furthermore, the interviews from all the groups argue for a more divergent value chain.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

In arguing for a stakeholder value chain that may address corporate purpose and support the supply chain process, Jacobides et al. (2018) suggest focusing on value-based, interconnected 'ecosystems' instead of "vertically integrated" value and supply chains (2018, p 2256).

Freeman et al. (2020) suggest that conceptualising a value network as opposed to a value chain is more appropriate to business in an age of complexity (p 217). The authors argue that the latter is a linear process especially focused on financial outcomes, whilst the former equally addresses the importance of "shared purpose and values" (2020, p 217). The idea of the network furthermore, talks to a system in which all the stakeholders are "a means and an end" and importantly contribute to "collective flourishing" and collective impact (Freeman et al., 2020, p 217).

In closing, Gray and Purdy suggest the stakeholders are "intertwined", in the problems, the activities and the outcomes - supporting a common "vision of a collectively desirable future" (2018, p 11).

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

According to interviews with all four groups, the multi-sector partnerships consist of diverse stakeholders who are, generally, integral to value creation through the current

supply chain, in support of brand, marketing, operations, and even product, both in the corporate, but also in their own organisation. These supply and value chains have been described by many of the interviewees as an 'ecosystem', and as 'symbiotic', and demonstrates similarity to the literature of Gray and Purdy (2018) and Jacobides et al. (2018).

Furthermore, this may also suggest that the relationships are not seen as a linear value chain but something closer to a network. The shift from influence to participation in the value network, according to Gray and Purdy (2018) is in line with Freeman who argues that, "no stakeholder stands alone in the process of value creation" (2017, p 6). This idea of being 'part of' and not 'separate from', as further suggested by Jacobides et al. (2018), Freeman (2017) and Freeman et al. (2020) may also align to the suggestion of a broader network created by Southern Africa as a sourcing hub.

Conclusion on Supply Chains and Value Chains, as Value Networks

It would appear from both the literature and the findings, that the value chain and the supply chain are similarly addressed in the cross sector stakeholder and partnership approach, as is also highlighted in stakeholder theory. The Freeman et al. (2020) argument for the term 'value network' is a valuable one, and whilst this paper generally uses the term value chain, owing to its use in the literature, the suggestion is that moving forward, the concept of the value network is interrogated further, and used consistently.

6.2.1.6 New Theme Innovation and Interconnectivity

Recap of Key Findings of New Theme Innovation and Interconnectivity

The Innovation and Interconnectivity theme is a new theme, revealed in the chapter 5 findings. It highlights what appears to be an innovative approach to addressing the partnership organisational framework. The XX and YY groups are extremely intentional in locating their partnership relationships as a horizontal interconnected ecosystem, and not a hierarchical relationship. One interviewee suggests the relationship could be described as a Venn diagram (hereafter this will be described as the Venn structure). Based on the interviews, from the global and local corporate, the investment company, and even the partners group, this visual description offers an insight into the status quo of all partners, demonstrating an equal investment, centred on the breadth of skills and resources being brought into the value network. Whilst the chapter 5 findings do not see the term interconnected, the groups and stakeholders are described by various interviewees as connected; the suggestion that the business model of the organisation

is coupled between groups, is innovative and original, and is well covered by all the groups.

However, based on the partner interviews, the nature of the stakeholder relationship, and potentially structure, sometimes means that it is challenging for the partner to break out of the internal value chain, and scale beyond the corporate.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Given that the concept of the Venn structure, may be an entirely new theme that emerged from the chapter 5 findings, there is no comparative theme in the chapter 2 literature review. Accordingly the researcher approached the literature through the three-step process highlighted in the introduction, with a focus differently on innovation and interconnectivity, in the following section.

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

Step 1

The key findings of the literature review does not address innovation, however it does speak to the interconnectivity of stakeholders, and partnerships, in the work of Bhattacharya and Polman (2017), Jacobides et al. (2018), Freeman et al. (2020) and Freeman (2017). The suggestion of the Venn structure from chapter 5 does appear to address the non- hierarchical, or even flat structure as suggested in the literature.

Freeman et al. (2020) suggest that conceptualising a value network as opposed to a value chain is more appropriate to business in an age of complexity. The authors argue that the latter is a linear process especially focused on financial outcomes alone, whilst the former supports shared purpose (2020, p 217). The idea of the network furthermore, talks to a system in which all the stakeholders are “a means and an end” and importantly contribute to “collective flourishing” and shared impact (Freeman et al., 2020, p 217). This is well documented in the chapter 5 analysis, and all the groups note the extremely original organisational framework through diverse terminology. Additionally, Phillips et al. (2019) suggest that stakeholder interests “also tend to be interconnected” (p 2).

Step 2

A further rereading of the literature suggests that innovation and shared value, and innovation and stakeholder theory are widely acknowledged. Porter and Kramer (2011) use the term extensively, describing the “next wave of innovation” (p 4), and arguing that without innovation there is no competitive advantage.

Thus the suggestion that this is an innovative process, as noted in chapter 5 may be well founded.

Of note, is the work of Ordonez-Ponce and Clarke (2020) who argue for the strategic role of an organisational structure in supporting cross sector sustainability partnerships. The authors specifically argue that the organisational structure should at best attempt to match the business and societal environment and it's challenges; furthermore that the structure is critical in achieving the strategic goals (p 8). Whilst Ordonez-Ponce and Clarke (2020) do not suggest a structure similar to the Venn structure, the conceptual approach demonstrates similarities in both literature and findings, and is well aligned, in the argument that organisational structure has a strategic role in cross sector sustainability partnerships.

Conclusions on Innovation and Interconnectivity

In conclusion, it appears that the need for innovation to address interconnectivity, as noted in the findings, in order to address new business models and organisational frameworks, is covered in extant literature. The concept of a Venn structure as a structural device, is covered broadly, but not explicitly, in the work of Ordonez-Ponce and Clarke (2020) on the strategic role of organisational structure.

However, based on the partner interviews, the nature of the stakeholder organisational structure may mean it is challenging for the cross sector partner to break out of the internal value chain, and scale beyond the corporate. Thus, whilst the Venn structure demonstrates a non-hierarchical approach to the partners, corporate and investment group, they may also demonstrate a finite relationship, owing to the self-same structure.

6.2.2 Key Construct 2: Corporate Strategic Goals

6.2.2.1 Activist Shareholders

Recap of Key Findings for Activist Shareholders

Analysis of all the interviews and the terminology used, highlighted a strong focus on the role and activism of shareholders. Whilst all the groups noted the value of champion shareholders, some groups saw the shareholder function differently. For example, the partners group in particular highlighted the investment company as playing a specific role in facilitating the partnerships and networks. The investment company group, driven by the shareholders, and the global corporate group, appear to

be responsible for envisaging the purpose and a global sustainability strategy into the future, with a goal of zero carbon emissions by 2030.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Freeman et al. (2020) note that the opportunity that stakeholder theory offers is less one that pits the shareholder against the stakeholder, but rather it allows a more holistic view on the role of business in society more broadly (p 217). The authors suggest that there is a need to reimagine old school shareholder traditions and expectations by considering a more “coherent worldview” for business that reflects its “role, purpose, and full range of immediate and long-term impacts on society” (Freeman et al., 2020, p 2019). They argue for the articulation of a shared purpose, one, which all the stakeholders, including shareholders, are able to express, noting that a “default purpose” will find all stakeholders operating on short term activities and goals (Freeman et al., 2020, p 220).

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

The findings generally acknowledge the shareholders play a participant role in creating inter-connective value networks; this is supported by Freeman and Dmytriiev (2017) who eschew the perceived binary between shareholder and stakeholder, and suggest that the shareholder is part of the stakeholder ecosystem. All the four groups describe the shareholders and investment company group in extremely proactive and positive terms, ensuring the creation of partnerships, and the support of sustainability strategies, and purpose. This is further supported by the Freeman et al. (2020) context of a business that exploits its role in society differently, as driven by diverse stakeholders, of which the shareholder is also one.

Conclusion on Activist Shareholders

The activist shareholder plays a critical role in the creation of multi sector partnerships. They participate in the value network, as one of many stakeholders, who are dedicated to the process of purpose and strategic sustainability goals. Whilst each stakeholder may see the shareholder input and impact differently according to their own specific goals, there is a strong sense that their role is critical to reinforcing the purpose.

6.2.2.2 Corporate Purpose

Recap of Key Findings for Corporate Purpose

Having a pithy maxim like ‘changing lives’ appears to be a persuasive and simple articulation of the global corporate purpose for all stakeholders; it is used throughout the value network, and is quoted by all the interviewees within all the groups as a guide

to a clearly articulated strategy around sustainability. The suggestion is that the changing lives framework was seeded by the investment company group and the global corporate, thereafter it is communicated to the local corporate and also the partners. It is also noted that the corporate see their purpose as an investment mind set, rather than a line item on the budget, by supporting the growth of the partnerships, generally financially, with sustainability as a goal.

The corporate global purpose of making a difference is used to highlight and drive diverse sustainability goals. An analysis of the quotes and data on the purpose and 'changing lives' phrase suggests that creating employment opportunities, for example, through the different partnerships, supports the sustainability impact requirements of both XX and YY, as well as the partners group.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Freeman and Dmyetreyev (2017) define purpose as an ethical and moral framework that guides the vision, mission and strategy, highlighting different core responsibilities. Building on this notion, Henderson and Serafeim (2020) recommend that real corporate purpose and progress is based on the outcomes proposed by the United Nation SDGs (2020), suggesting the SDGs act as an ethical and practical roadmap in defining corporate purpose. Thus sustainability and purpose are closely aligned.

In striving to reach a shared vision and "desirable" future, as noted by Gray and Purdy (2018), diverse academics argue for corporate purpose as a critical piece of the puzzle. Freeman (2017) posits that stakeholder theory addresses responsible capitalism through corporate purpose.

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

Arguably, analysis of all the purpose codes in chapter 5, suggest the corporate purpose of 'changing lives' is clearly communicated as a living principle based on an ethical engagement with society; this is further espoused by all the groups, from partners to local and global corporate to the investment company. Importantly it is seen by all those interviewed as the strategic core of the sustainability goals. This is demonstrated similarly in the literature of Freeman and Dmyetreyev (2017), Henderson and Serafeim (2020) and Gray and Purdy (2018).

Pragmatically, Henderson and Van den Steen (2015) define corporate purpose as "a concrete goal or objective for the firm that reaches beyond profit maximization" (p 2). All the groups in the chapter 5 analyses demonstrate this, as achieving sustainability through 'changing lives' is perceived as demonstrating impact and success.

Furthermore Henderson and Serafeim (2020) define purpose as genuine only “if the firm routinely makes costly investments in it, at the expense of immediate profitability” (p. 178). This is noted in the interviews, with the suggestion that the partnerships are considered a long-term investment in sustainability. The majority of the interviewees across all the groups support this view.

Conclusions on Corporate Purpose

Thus corporate purpose appears to be a powerful mix of the philosophical and pragmatic - a systemic, strategic and operational approach, based on the maxim, ‘changing lives’. The purpose of ‘changing lives’ is inclusive of local and global sustainability goals, some of which are directly aligned to the SDGs, and is supported by long timeframes and financial and non-financial resources. This is well supported by the literature.

6.2.2.3 Purpose And Profit

Recap of Key Findings for Purpose and Profit

A review of the interviewees, who discuss the commercial imperative of the corporate, and the relationship between profit and purpose, suggests the tension of balancing the two, is acknowledged by all the groups.

It would appear from those interviewed in the corporate and investment company groups that there are different strategic principles, ensuring a more successful profit purpose alliance– including long timeframes, also long-term financial support, and a holistic intent.

The need to subsidize the purpose, even at the cost of certain profit margins is recognised as a long-term strategy to purposeful success, by the investment company and the global and local corporates.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Freeman and Ginena (2015) note that the “emerging view on business (is) not merely aimed at profits” (p 9). This is the view that is supported by diverse academics in the stakeholder theory environment; furthermore it is supported in the Freeman (2017) literature on responsible capitalism and purpose. Additionally Freeman et al. (2020) suggest that the tension between profit and purpose is largely self-created, and that purpose and the delivery of profit are increasingly required to happen both holistically and proactively. They also argue that this requires motivated and dedicated leadership throughout the organisation (2020, p 220).

Alongside Stout (2013), Henderson and Serafeim (2020) argue that short-termism in business, is a critical obstacle to sustainability and organisational purpose. The authors suggest that sustainability, as supported by corporate purpose, requires a long-term vision (Stout, 2013; Henderson and Serafeim, 2020).

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

The comparison between findings and the literature are clearly similar on all the key points. From the interviews, the global corporate group and the investment company align to the arguments of Freeman and Ginena (2015) and Freeman (2017). All the groups suggest purpose as the basis of scale and sustainability. The Freeman et al. (2020) argument for profit *and* purpose is clearly suggested by all the groups, as framed by the purpose of 'changing lives'. The suggestion by Stout (2013) and Henderson and Serafeim (2020) that stakeholder engagement, based on purpose and profit, requires longer timeframes and financial input over longer time frames, is also noted by all the groups in the chapter 5 findings.

Conclusions on Purpose and Profit

In conclusion, as noted by Freeman et al. (2020) the relationship between profit and purpose need not be a combative one, given the stakeholder relationships, and articulated purpose, and may be further demonstrated by collective impact. This is clearly evident in the findings, and the similarities are noted.

6.2.2.4 New Theme Purpose And 'Panic'

Recap of Key Findings for Purpose and 'Panic'

In the Corporate Strategic Goals construct there is one new theme that is not covered in the chapter 2. This is the Purpose and 'Panic' theme – the title is based on the term used by one of the interviewees in the corporate global group, and talks to purpose in a time of crisis; this given the recent challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and also the July 2021 protests in Gauteng and KZN.

A global corporate interviewee notes the importance on the corporate purpose during a crisis. The interviewee suggests that during crisis periods, the real commitment to the corporate purpose is demonstrated, or not, depending on the management team values and leadership. Whilst some interviewees felt compromised by the events of the last 24 months, the general consensus, amongst groups, was that the corporate remained steadfast, perhaps *because of* the corporate purpose. It was also suggested that the continued financial backing over longer timeframes, by the investment

company and global corporate, meant they could rebuild, and address the challenges without fear or drift from the purpose.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Given that this is may be an entirely new theme that emerged from the chapter 5 findings, there is no comparative theme in the chapter 2 literature review. Accordingly the researcher approached the literature through the three-step process highlighted in the introduction.

Step 1

There was no specific literature in chapter 2 that addressed the topic of crisis management and purpose. However the researcher noted that it could be possible to consider the concept of contemporary complexity and stakeholder theory, in covering crisis, and therefore did a search for the key words, 'complexity' and 'crisis', in the literature for Step 2.

Step 2

Phillips et al. (2019) suggest that stakeholder theory is increasingly gaining traction, owing to its ability to address an "environment that ha(s) become increasingly complex, turbulent and interconnected" (p 5). Freeman et al. (2020) also question how we address value creation in a corporate world, when we are engaging in an unstable, "uncertain and complex world" (p 216).

Given the insights on complexity, as suggested in the literature of Phillips et al. (2019) and Freeman et al. (2020), it could be argued that the value of partnerships which operate within a corporate stakeholder framework, may well be able to survive, owing to the long-term view that the corporate supports.

Step 3

In order to address the issue of crisis, the researcher further extended the literature research, and notes the work of Quarshie and Leuschner (2018). The authors note that in a time of crisis, "non-traditional actors in other contexts as having untapped potential to help co-create novel solutions to complex problems" (Quarshie and Leuschner, 2018, p 379).

Furthermore the researcher notes the work of Talbot and Ordonez-Ponce (2020) in addressing business during COVID-19. Noteworthy was the suggestion that a proper

proactive response internally and externally in the community, was a demonstration of support by leadership during a time of crisis.

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

The suggestion by Freeman (2017) that purpose is inherent to stakeholder theory, provides a more contemporary approach to the business environment, and is better suited in supporting the complex challenges that corporates are required to deal with – in this case uncertainty and even instability. Thus the broad theme of purpose and crisis, in the stakeholder literature, are supported by the findings in chapter 5.

The chapter 5 suggestion, noting that long-term purpose might be eschewed in a time of crisis without strong leadership is similarly proposed by Ordonez Ponce et al. (2021). The authors cite Montiel et al. (2020), who argue that the present complexity of sustainable development often sees businesses erring to short-term smaller goals, rather than long-term sustainable goals, given the challenges of tackling the latter. The interviewee argues that the strength of the organisational purpose and the organisational leadership and team work will determine whether the purpose is, in fact, upheld during crisis.

In the context of the diverse multi-sector partners groups, in chapter 5, all of who offer diverse skills and sector expertise, required to solve multifaceted problems. Quarshie and Leuschner (2018) also noted this.

In relation to the Talbot and Ordonez-Ponce (2020), the researcher notes that a proactive response is arguably what the global corporate and investment company groups believe in, when addressing purpose in a challenging time. This is also recognised by the local corporate group, and the partners group.

Conclusion on Purpose and 'Panic'

Whilst the theme is a new one, and the literature summary does not address the challenge of crisis, the researcher suggests that the work of Freeman et al. (2020) and Phillips et al. (2019) talk to the notion of complexity and adversity, and supports the research findings. Quarshie and Leuschner (2018) and Talbot and Ordonez-Ponce (2020) do address crisis directly, and the suggestions that there are diverse role players who are able to respond with different solutions, during complex times, demonstrates similarity. The global and local corporate groups all reference long time lines and this may offer a level of security in a time of crisis or instability, allowing for a continued and focused purpose, as noted by Quarshie and Leuschner (2018).

The researcher was, however, not able to immediately find literature on the specific relationship between purpose as an opportunity for leadership during a crisis, as was demonstrated during the Protests of 2021, by the leadership of the corporate.

6.2.2.5 Timeframes

Recap of Key Findings for Timeframes

Whilst short-term views may achieve immediate profits, the interviews all suggest that partnerships supported by longer timelines, sometimes over generations, are more important in achieving a balance of both profit and purpose. According to the partners it supports the ability to test strategies and ultimately achieve their strategic goals and impact. According to the investment company group, and local and global groups, it supports achievement of the overarching and long-term goal of sustainability in all its practises.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Clarke and Crane (2018) highlight that cross sector partnerships are often deep, long-term relationships (p 303). They also suggest that short-termism is a critical obstacle to sustainability and organisational purpose. Stout (2013) and Henderson and Serafeim (2020) also suggest that stakeholder theory supports a long-term vision. It is also worthwhile noting that Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) suggest that even as sustainable development is both complex and challenging for businesses, it requires “long-term big picture sustainability” goals (p 4).

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

It appears from all the group interviews that extended timelines for the MSPs, are required to achieve strategic sustainability goals, as supported by the purpose. This is analogous with the Henderson and Serafeim (2020) suggestion that corporate purpose requires a long-term vision. Moreover the interviewees all argue that having longer timelines allows for iteration, deep processes, the transfer of expertise and the ability to scale, both for the partners, and the corporate. Stout (2013), Henderson and Serafeim (2020) and Ordonez- Ponce et al. (2021) all highlight this as part of the sustainable development of corporates and their cross sector partnerships.

Conclusion on Timeframes

It is clear from both the research findings and the literature review that longer timelines are required in order for corporate and cross sector partnerships to achieve success and even scale in their strategic goals.

6.2.6 Responsible Capitalism

Recap of Key Findings for Responsible Capitalism

The idea of a more responsible approach to business, and more broadly capitalism as it is historically recognised, is raised by members of the investment company group and also by the global corporate group, in order to address sustainability in all its forms. From the interviews it appears that the components of responsible capitalism and business are supported by MSPs and sustainability.

New Sub Theme: Legacy

All four groups clearly flag the concepts of purpose and sustainability, whilst the notion of legacy is specifically raised by the global corporate, and investment company group interviewees, under the theme of responsible capitalism. The researcher suggests a new sub theme may be appropriate for the deliberation of legacy.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Ferraro et al. (2015) suggest that the grand challenges of today extend well beyond the limits of an organisation, and require innovative strategies in order to address what they describe as “dynamic and non-linear” problems (p 365). The impact of grand challenges on human “welfare and well-being” (p 365), as noted by Ferraro et al. (2015) argues for a far more expanded approach to the corporation, its role, its stakeholders, and its impact.

The term Responsible Capitalism is based on the work of Freeman (2017). Academic Rebecca Henderson (2020), suggests that historically business regarded environmental, social and institutional issues as incidental to their operations (p 9); she suggests this is based on a century of worldviews (p 105). Henderson posits that not only is it timeous and morally correct for business to rethink its approach to business in society, but that it also provides new potential for business growth, centred on the opportunities provided by the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (2020, p 255).

Freeman et al. (2020) argues that the 21st-century executive requires a different approach to strategy, as opposed to the traditional view of shareholder driven business. The notion of corporate purpose as driving the corporate strategy, through its deep-seated relationship with cross sector partners, as opposed to the traditional paradigm of increasing shareholder value through profits, is one that is argued by Harrison et al. (2019). They also suggest that this approach is in line with the complex and turbulent business environment, and global economy (2019).

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

The interviews from the global corporate group and the investment company group clearly argue for a business approach, which is sustainable and has long-term legacy. They also argue that purpose is best recognised in challenging and disruptive times. According to Henderson (2020) this approach creates the opportunity to redefine and reimagine capitalism, comparative to the traditional paradigm, which Freeman describes as an “old and shopworn model” (2017, p 12). Furthermore the approach to a new form of capitalism, as driven through stakeholder theory and MSPs, allows for a greater response to sustainable global economy, based on the SDGs, and socioeconomic engagement, as argued by Ferraro et al. (2015).

Both the global corporate and investment company interviewees support this, in the research findings. It is notable that whilst the majority of partners group do not talk to the terminology of responsible capitalism, they appear to address it through the ‘changing lives’ strategy and sustainability goals.

New Sub Theme Legacy

Step 1 and Step 2

Whilst responsible capitalism is well covered in the literature review, as it is a core component of purpose and stakeholder theory, the notion of legacy is not covered in the key findings of chapter 2, or the key literature, at all. The researcher therefore turned to different Journals of Business and Society; literature, which may address the concept of legacy.

Step 3

Arenas and Rodrigo (2016) provide insight into how the corporate environment addresses issues of generational legacy; in particular they suggest that there is a clear differentiation between “future generations and the next generation” (p 166), when addressing the future. They take the position that the focus needs to be on the latter, owing to immediacy of interpersonal relationships with the ‘next generation’.

The authors suggest that there are four routes that the corporate can address with regards to next generational legacy work (Arenas and Rodrigo, 2016, p 171). One route is based on the provision of the corporate community, or “stakeholder attachment” (2016, p 170). This is considered an intra-generational process, and sees direct similarity with all the different groups in the findings; who argue for a better world for the stakeholders and their immediate and broader communities.

In particular Arenas and Rodrigo (2016) suggest that a particular process where the interest of the stakeholders encompass “their direct descendants” (p 170). The researcher notes this, as the concept of legacy is strongly aligned to direct descendants, and the need to ‘do good’ by them, in the global corporate group and investment company group. Thus it might be argued that the strategy of sustainability grounded in the corporate purpose, is also based on responsible capitalism as it impacts the next generation.

In closing, Vazquez (2016) argues that when it comes to legacy and corporates, there is a powerful triangulation of the founder’s legacy alongside “personal value systems” and the “shaping (of) strategy” through these values (p 698). All the chapter 5 findings show how the activism and values of the shareholders, and investment company group, frame the purpose and thus the corporate strategic goals. Thus there is a clear acknowledgement of the similarity between the findings on legacy and responsible capitalism, and the broader literature search.

Conclusion on Responsible Capitalism

Given the research findings and broader literature, it would appear that responsible capitalism, in order to create purpose, is also supported by a legacy approach. Whilst members of the global corporate and investment company group do this on an intergenerational approach, the local corporate and partners group address it, through partnerships, on an intra-generational basis to address sustainability.

6.2.3 Local And Global Sustainability

6.2.3.1 Local Sustainability and Communities

Recap of Key Findings for Local Sustainability and Communities

As evidenced in all the group interviewees, when it comes to local community sustainability, youth employment and ‘changing lives’ within the surrounding communities, is arguably the most relevant approach taken.

The evidence suggests that different groups and different interviewees use the term sustainability differently. The local corporate group describes local community support with regard to the opening the local head office in a working class community as sustainability. Some partners also spoke to sustainability as funding needs and financial sustainability within their own organisation. The analysis of the interviews across groups does however appear to be supportive of common socio-economic sustainability goals.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Whilst Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), and Henderson and Serafeim (2020) suggest that the SDG's provide a sustainability roadmap for local sustainability strategies, within which to address specific strategic goals, there is a suggestion that local sustainability also addresses more immediate community needs within shorter timeframes.

Freeman (2017) also suggests the literature is equivocal when it comes to the idea of community as stakeholder, but he notes that the definition of the term is often dependant on the specifics of the research. Freeman et al. (2010) also posit that the community can be the one the organisation finds itself geographically located in.

Clarke and MacDonald (2019) argue that sustainability partnerships are presented with opportunities to address local sustainability issues, whilst querying whether addressing the local might contribute to the global SDGs (p 3). Thus it is clear from the literature that there is a differentiation between tackling local sustainability as opposed to addressing global sustainability goals.

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

There is equivocation to both the term sustainability and the term community when it comes to local sustainability. This is noted both in the research findings and also in the literature. What is apparent though, is how local sustainability supports diverse socio-economic goals, according to all the groups, and this similarity is noted in Ordonez-Ponce (2021) as well.

The local corporate group, addresses local sustainability, through the geographic location of their head quarters, thus supporting a working class community with different opportunities; this is confirmed in the literature of Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) and Clarke and MacDonald (2019).

Finally the Clarke and MacDonald (2019) query as to whether local sustainability supports global SDGs is best accounted for, by the purpose of 'changing lives' supported by all four groups. It appears from all the findings that the local corporate mostly addresses local sustainability goals, whilst the global corporate is currently addressing longer-term global sustainability goals and impact.

Conclusion on Local Sustainability and Communities

The original framing of local sustainability under the 'changing lives' banner, suggests a more immediate and operational approach addressing surrounding communities, and employees, in alleviating the triple threat of poverty, unemployment and inequality,

within shorter timelines. This is similarly noted in the literature of Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) and Clarke and MacDonald (2019).

6.2.3.2 Global Sustainability

Recap of Key Findings for Global Sustainability

Whilst the sustainability demands in South Africa and the SADC region are identified strongly as unemployment and inequality, the global organisation and investment company group are addressing focused sustainability in relation to carbon emission and sustainable production globally.

Based on the analysis it appears that the global and local corporate, supported by the investor company, and the partnership activities, are expanding their sustainability goals and measurements, based on different SDGs and specifically 12 and 13, and doing so rapidly,

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

The Ehrenfeld and Hoffman (2020) concept of sustainability as flourishing, both in the local and global sustainability themes, argues for what Hoffman (2018) notes is a shift from reducing unsustainability, to a growing of sustainability. Thus flourishing remains a purpose-driven process, supported by all stakeholders. This is acknowledged by Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021, p 3), who note that, “the pressure on businesses to be socially and environmentally responsible will only increase”. The specificity of the sustainability challenges may, however, differ according to whether the corporate is situated in the global north, developed countries, or in the global south, developing countries. This then provides the strategic opportunity, as suggested by Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), to address specific sustainability goals as per geographic needs. Ordonez-Ponce et al. suggest that cross sector social and sustainable partnerships is a nascent opportunity for global business sustainability (2021, p 5). This, they suggest, is because the SDGs are “global in impact” (Ordonez-Ponce et al. 2021, p 2). Thus corporates may address the current and immediate local needs and requirements, and only later, align to specific SDGs for global impact and systemic change.

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

The findings suggest that a route to global sustainability, addressing the SDGs, with a strong focus on supply chains and zero emissions, is a more recent global strategy. This is in line with Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021), who note the rapidly growing demand on corporate social and environmental sustainability. The sustainability roadmap

suggested through the findings, argues for both local and global sustainability, with different focuses on community. Freeman et al. (2010), and Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) support this.

In closing, the role of the diverse MSPs, is vital to the global corporate strategy of global sustainability. Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) highlight this, when they cite Ordonez-Ponce and Khare (2020), who suggest that real sustainable development requires partnerships, which maximise positive involvement.

Conclusion on Global Sustainability

In conclusion the use of global partnerships to address global sustainability is essential to corporate growth, through the use of MSPs, and the skills and resources they offer the corporate sustainability strategy.

6.2.3.4 Measurement And Reporting

Recap of Key Findings for Measurement and Reporting

In order for the challenge of sustainability to be addressed, the need for proper measurement through monitoring and evaluation (hereafter M&E) are highlighted by many of the interviewees. Conversely there appear to be different approaches to measurement with different interviewees suggesting either more quantitative or qualitative approaches are required. It is suggested that without proper measurement tools over a long period the impact of the work is not fully addressed or acknowledged. The interviews appear to demonstrate that all the groups are similar in their response; they all suggest a need for better measurement tools and indicators.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Harrison et al. suggest that stakeholder theory measures value more extensively and beyond financial returns (2019, p 7). The authors also argue for the “big picture” of impact measurement (Harrison et al., 2019, p 7).

In understanding the measurement of impact and value, there is a need to interrogate value. Freeman et al. (2020) question whether profit alone, supports the measurement of success alone, in an organisation. They argue that current methods of measurement of “total value” and “total performance” are inadequate, and that different models can and should be addressed moving forward (p 226).

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

Both the findings and the research, argue for a more innovative and systematic approach to measurement, one that suggests the “big picture” of purpose and profit

(Harrison et al., 2019). Furthermore the findings suggest that there are diverse approaches to the measurement, and even the indicators of success. Freeman et al. (2020) also argue this, and thus the similarity is noted.

Conclusion on Measurement and Reporting

In conclusion the research findings appear to be consistent with the summary and key findings of the literature review.

6.2.3.5 Resource And Knowledge Sharing

Recap of Key Findings for Resource and Knowledge Sharing

Based on the findings there is a strong support for the different resources, which are made available through the multi-sector diversity of the partners, and the groups. It is furthermore suggested that the range of these resources, including skills and sector expertise, offer diverse capital to supports both sustainable and strategic goals of the corporates and the partnerships.

Recap of Key Insights from the Literature

Ferraro et al. (2015) suggest that in order to tackle 'grand challenges', businesses need to innovate by using "multivocality", or a multiplicity of voices and methods (p 372). This aligns to the concept of stakeholder theory and MSPs, whilst also arguing for the different stakeholder skills, both operant and operand, that are supported through diverse partnerships.

Furthermore Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) reason that organisations often partner in order to realise various resources for their own success and even survival, highlighting different types of capital in the stakeholder partnerships (p 6). These include sector-based experience and expertise, networks and relationships based on "history and trust", technology, and financial and non-financial resources (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2021, p 6). They further suggest the term "sustainability capital", that is partnerships, which support "socio-environmental drivers" (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2021, p 6). Additionally, Ordonez-Ponce and Clarke (2020) suggest that organisations partner to secure know-how and skill that is unavailable to them otherwise.

Comparison of Key Findings with the Literature

Different types of capital needs may often demarcate how the corporate engages with partners, and partnerships. The nature of the cross-sector and multi-sector partnerships, suggest a value network of diverse skills and resources. This is highlighted in the findings, and there is a strong sense of all the groups having valuable resources and skills, both financial and non-financial, to contribute to profit and

sustainability. This is similarly covered in the Ferraro et al. (2015), Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) and Ordonez-Ponce and Clarke (2020) literature.

Conclusion on Resource and Knowledge Sharing

Resources, expertise, and knowledge sharing, is a valuable component of multi-sector partnerships, and furthermore supports the sustainability of the aforementioned partnerships. Both the findings and the existing body of literature support the notion that partnerships support sustainability, partially owing to the diverse expertise on offer, in the MSPs.

6. 3 Summary of Chapter 6 Conclusions

In brief, Table 19, based on the conceptual framework of Table 18, offers a summary of the conclusions examined in this chapter. The table splits the 16 themes into three outcomes, notably i) a similarity between the findings and the literature; ii) minor differences allowing for a more nuanced approach, these are noted as sub themes; and iii) differences, which may offer potential for further research. In certain cases, the differences, whether minor or not, might have advocated for a change in title. The table furthermore, also demonstrates the similarities (SM), minor differences (MD) or differences (D) of response to the different themes, as noted by each of the participant groups – the investment company (group 1), the global corporate (group 2), the local corporate (group 3) and the partners (group 4).

Table 19: Summary of Chapter 6 Conclusions

Constructs and Themes	Gr 1 Investment	Gr 2 Global Corp	Gr 3 Local Corp	Gr 4 Partners	Similar	Minor Difference	Difference
Cross Sector Partnerships							
Stakeholders	x	x	x	x	x		
Multi-stakeholder Partners	x	x	x	x	x		
New Sub-Theme: 'The Retrofit'	x	x		x		x	

Beyond Partnerships: Building Relationships	x	x	x	x	x		
New Sub Theme: Tensions (Formerly Challenges)		x	x	x		x	
Shared Value as Collective Impact, (Formerly Shared Value and Collective Impact)	x	x	x	x	x		
Supply Chains and Value Chains as Value Networks, (Formerly Supply Chains and Value Chains)	x	x	x	x	x		
New Theme: Innovation and Interconnected Structures (Formerly Innovation and Interconnectivity)	x	x	x				x
Corporate Strategic Goals							
Activist Shareholders	x	x	x	x	x		
Corporate Purpose	x	x	x	x	x		
Purpose and Profit	x	x	x	x	x		
New Theme: Purpose and Crisis, (Formerly Purpose and ‘Panic’)	x	x					x
Timeframes	x	x	x	x	x		
Responsible Capitalism	x	x	x		x		
New Sub Theme: Legacy	x	x				x	
Local and Global Sustainability							
Local Sustainability and Communities	x	x	x	x	x		
Global Sustainability and the SDGs	x	x	x	x	x		
Measurement and Reporting	x	x	x	x	x		
Resource and Knowledge Sharing	x	x	x	x	x		

Similarities, Minor Differences and Differences are coded in Pale, Medium and Dark Purple.

Source: Author’s Own

6.3.1 Similarities

The themes that were identified as similar in both research and findings, and between groups are:

- Stakeholders

Cross sector stakeholders make up the value network, supporting the purpose and strategy of both the corporate, and partner organisations.

- Multi-Stakeholder Partners

Diverse partners from different sectors make up the MSPs with the global and local corporates. MSPs support sustainability strategy, through supply chains, and are participants in the broader value network.

- Beyond Partnerships: Building Relationships

All the partners describe the partnerships as relationships based on trust, and mutual values.

- Activist Shareholders

Shareholders as stakeholders, dedicated to driving purpose and strategic sustainability goals. Role is critical to reinforcing the purpose.

- Corporate Purpose

Purpose is both philosophical and pragmatic based on the maxim, 'changing lives', inclusive of local and global sustainability goals.

- Purpose and Profit

Purpose and profit are not a combative relationship, if there is a well-articulated purpose supported by MSPs.

- Time Frames

Longer time frames are required in order for corporate and cross sector partnerships to achieve purpose and strategic sustainability goals.

- Responsible Capitalism

Responsible capitalism, purpose and sustainable corporate strategic goals support MSPs.

- Local Sustainability

Local sustainability suggests a more immediate and operational approach to surrounding communities, and employees, in alleviating the triple threat of poverty, unemployment and inequality, within shorter timelines.

- Global Sustainability

Global partnerships as they address SDGs are integrated into corporate strategy. MSPs offer the skills and resources to support the strategy. Furthermore the corporate purpose is necessary for flourishing.

- Measurement and Reporting

Measurement remains a challenge, owing to different notions of value, but remain vital to the deeper understanding of MSPs in relation to purpose, strategy, and sustainability.

- Resource and Knowledge Sharing

Resource and knowledge sharing as a valuable component of multi-sector partnerships, strengthens the aforementioned partnerships.

Whilst similar as above, two themes were retitled in order to align more appropriately to emerging research and findings, although they did not change as over-arching themes.

- Shared Value as Collective Impact

Title changes owing to more nuanced approach to CSV. The notion of collective impact is better aligned with the strategic activities of the groups as they partner, beyond competitive advantage. This, even as the term 'shared value' is commonly used.

- Supply Chains and Value Chains as Value Networks

The value chain and the supply chain are similarly addressed in the cross sector stakeholder and partnership approach. The suggestion that both are not linear in approach, and thus more appropriately titled as Value Networks (Freeman et al., 2020)

6.3.2 Minor and Nuanced Differences and Sub Themes

The new sub themes are identified as having minor differences and requiring a more nuanced approach. These sub themes saw a 50-75% similarity within the groups, and include:

- New Sub Theme The 'Retro-Fit', comes out of Multi-Stakeholder Partners theme

The partnerships are created, based on mutual "issue fields" (Gray and Purdy, 2018), passion and trust. Only later is the MSP approach to the partnership more transactional.

This may be a demonstration of mutual process being institutionalised into the structure.

- New Sub Theme Tensions, formerly Challenges, comes out of the Beyond Partnerships, Building Relationships theme

Challenges, better described as tensions, arise owing to the perceived binary of profit and purpose. In particular, middle management struggle with understanding the MSPs and their role in supporting sustainability and corporate strategic goals.

- New Sub theme Legacy, comes out of the Responsible Capitalism theme
Legacy approach supports the concept of longer timeframes, addressing inter and intra-generational engagement amongst the corporate, stakeholders and society.

6.3.3 Differences and New Themes

Thirdly, and finally, two new themes were identified as potential differences to the existing literature review. The two new themes saw 50% support from the groups, in both cases. These are:

- Innovation and Interconnected Structures, retitled from Innovation and Interconnectivity

New organisational structure provides greater interconnected strategy value in addressing mutual purpose with all MSPs, but may also make it difficult for some MSPs to break out of value network.

- Purpose and Crisis, retitled from Purpose and 'Panic'

A clearly articulated and supported purpose buttresses stakeholders during crisis; conversely all stakeholders need to continue to support the purpose, during times of complexity.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7. 1 Introduction

The structure of this chapter focuses on the Research Question, and the conclusions to the RQ, and the sub questions as follows:

Research Question: How do cross sector sustainability partnerships contribute to corporate strategic goals and local and global sustainability? :

Sub questions:

1. What are the partnership relationships, and how do they work?
2. What is the role of the partnerships?
3. How are the relationships with SDGs seen as opportunities?
4. How do these opportunities contribute to strategic goals?

In setting out the research conclusions, the researcher used the chapter 6 outcomes to answer the sub questions, and finally the overarching research question.

7. 2 Principle Research Conclusions

What are the partnership relationships; how do the work, and what is their role?

The suggestion remains that an MSP consists of a group of stakeholders who hold the same vision and purpose, based on similar long-term socio-sustainability goals (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2021). There appears to be a differentiation between the terms partnership and relationship, the latter arguing for a greater level of trust and engagement, again based on purpose. Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2020), further argue that partners, aligned to the same over-arching purpose, may often be derived from very different sectors. Gray and Purdy (2018) also highlight this. Whilst the partnerships are created in order to support different corporate and partner needs – these could be supply chain and procurement – they are often founded on mutual passion, and only later align to commercial need. Gray and Purdy describe founding the partnership motive on “issue fields” (2018, p 2), or a unique problem, that all

partners hope to solve. In this case the issue of both local and global sustainability, described as 'changing lives' is the issue being addressed. Given the above, the partnerships cannot be directly considered shared value, as their over-arching goal is not to drive corporate competitiveness alone, but rather to address global sustainability. Whilst this tension between profit and purpose should not be considered a binary (Freeman et al., 2020), it does drive tensions, particularly for the partners and the local and global corporate, but less so acknowledged by the investment company.

How the corporate is structured, to ensure that the partnerships are integrated into the organisation, speaks to concepts of stakeholder interconnectivity or ecosystems. Bhattacharya and Polman (2017), Jacobides et al. (2018), Freeman et al. (2020) and Freeman (2017) all note this. The notion of a non-hierarchical, multi-linear structure, is further expanded by the Freeman et al. (2020) concept of value network as opposed to a value chain. It is an important addition to how the relationships are created and supported, although it may later provide a challenge for the partnerships, as they are framed closely by the organisation, and may not be able scale beyond the original structural device.

How are the relationships with SDGs seen as opportunities?

In order to address the complex systemic challenges of climate change and sustainability, the organisation stakeholders, including shareholders, are required to be active participants in what Henderson (2020) describes as re-imagining capitalism. Furthermore sustainability is noted as both purpose and corporate strategic goal. The opportunities, and challenges, derived from this are diverse, depending on the partnership role. Given the Ehrenfeld and Hoffman (2020) concept of sustainability as flourishing, both in the local and global sustainability activities, Hoffman (2018) argues for a shift from reducing unsustainability, to a growing of sustainability, including issues of unemployment, and the creation of equitable communities. Thus flourishing, as a sustainability principle, remains a purpose-driven process, supported by all stakeholders and partnerships, in addressing growth.

Whilst local and global sustainability are addressed differently through the partnerships, the principal alignment to the SDGs is clear. Partnerships are presented with opportunities to address local sustainability issues, as they relate to the local corporate, the affiliated partners and the community; addressing the challenges of unemployment and poverty. Clarke and MacDonald (2019) also note the differentiation in how partnerships may tackle local and global sustainability, and this recognised in the findings.

The local and global sustainability engagement further supports the partnerships, in the perception, and reality of the engagement, as being active citizens in broader society, as is also noted by Pera et al. 2016. The Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) suggestion that cross sector social and sustainable partnerships offers a nascent opportunity for global business, is also well covered, supporting responsible strategic goals, and even legacy based inter and intra-generational needs.

How do these opportunities contribute to strategic goals?

One cannot separate the corporate strategic goals from the corporate purpose and stakeholder engagement. In as much as a greater purpose, based on global sustainability and a responsible future, guides the vision, mission and strategy, as also suggested by Freeman and Dmyetryev (2017), it supports the original motives behind the multi-sector partnerships. In striving to reach a shared vision and “desirable” future, as noted by Gray and Purdy (2018), the opportunities that the MSPs and cross sector relationships offer, through sustainable purpose, contribute directly to the organisational strategic goals. How the purpose, and thus the strategic goals are engaged, specifically during turbulent and complex times, remains critical to the success of the organisation. Furthermore longer time frames are important in maintaining corporate strategy and sustainability, as also noted by Henderson and Serafeim (2020). In order to work within the complexity of the current business environment, it is also noted that strengthened measurement tools bolster the support of longer timeframes of local and global sustainable strategic goals, by the corporate and it’s activist shareholders.

In conclusion, the research question argues for multiple stakeholder perspectives between different stakeholders, including the corporate (both global and local), the partners and the investment company, in support of strategic goals and local and global sustainability. These perspectives often highlight the tensions created by the corporate strategic goals of sustainability. Conversely an articulated purpose, supported by all partners, even during a time of crisis, impacts the corporate strategic goals positively.

The multiple perspectives and expertise of the different stakeholders support the creation of cross sector and multi-sector partnerships, which are then aligned to the corporate strategic goals, as they steer local and global sustainability needs.

In closing, Table 20, below, the Final Conceptual Framework, demonstrates the summary of chapter 7, clearly emphasising areas which are claimed as differences, minor differences, name changes and similarities.

Table 20 Final Conceptual Framework IV, inclusive of Partner Groups

Constructs and Themes	Gr 1 Investment	Gr 2 Global Corp	Gr 3 Local Corp	Gr 4 Partners	Similar	Minor Difference	Difference
Cross Sector Partnerships							
Stakeholders	x	x	x	x	X		
Multi-stakeholder Partners	x	x	x	x	X		
New Sub-Theme: 'The Retrofit'	x	x		x		X	
Beyond Partnerships: Building Relationships	x	x	x	x	X		
New Sub Theme: Tensions		x	x	x		X	
Shared Value as Collective Impact	x	x	x	x		X	
Supply Chains and Value Chains as Value Networks	x	x	x	x		X	
New Theme: Innovation and Interconnected Structures	x	x	x				X
Corporate Strategic Goals							
Activist Shareholders	x	x	x	x	X		
Corporate Purpose	x	x	x	x	X		
Purpose and Profit	x	x	x	x	X		
New Theme: Purpose and Crisis	x	x					X
Timeframes	x	x	x	x	X		
Responsible Capitalism	x	x	x		X		

New Sub Theme: Legacy	x	x				X	
Local and Global Sustainability							
Local Sustainability and Communities	x	x	x	x	X		
Global Sustainability and the SDGs	x	x	x	x	X		
Measurement and Reporting	x	x	x	x	X		
Resource and Knowledge Sharing	x	x	x	x	X		

Similarities, Name Changes, Minor Differences and Differences are coded in Dark, Medium and Light Green

Source: Author's Own

7.3 Contributions

The potential research contribution is framed by the scope of the work, based on the analyses conducted and the scope of the research in the literature on stakeholders, sustainability partnerships and purpose.

7.3.1 Similarities

The research concludes that there are a majority of similarities to the extant literature. Based on a broader value network of stakeholders, different sectors make up the MSPs with the global and local corporates. MSPs are formed on mutual trust, and deep, long-term relationships.

Other areas of similarity to the existing literature include the notion of the activist shareholder as stakeholder as they drive purpose and strategic sustainability goals, in partnership with expert and diverse cross sector partners.

Local and global sustainability activities, appears to be analogous to the literature as well.

7.3.2 Potential Nuanced and Minor Differences

In addressing potential nuanced differences, the researcher firstly highlights the renamed themes of 'Shared Value as Collective Impact', and 'Supply Chains and Value Chains as Value Networks'.

Three new sub themes emerged from chapter 5 and 6, offering minor differences to the literature review; the researcher was able to discover literature on which the sub themes were then based.

The concept of the 'retrofit' in partnership origins provided insights into the notion of mutual problem solving, based on mutual purpose and sustainability goals. The idea of purposeful process as it is then institutionalised into the organisation, offers a nuanced difference to the literature.

A new sub theme based on the occasional tensions between cross sector partners and middle management, by purpose and profit requirements, emerged from the Beyond Partnerships theme. Purpose and profit, however, remains an important theme in Freeman's iterative literature on stakeholder theory (2017).

A final sub theme that emerged from the Responsible Capitalism theme is that of inter and intra-generational values, argued as legacy. The researcher was required to search beyond the extant literature specifically addressed in this report, but suggests that it may expand the discussion on cross sector partnerships and sustainability goals, given the requirements of the latter, moving into the future.

7.3.3 Potential Differences

There were two new themes identified in the process of research. The first new theme was revealed in the first construct of Cross Sector Partnerships, and the second emerged from the second construct of Corporate Strategic Goals.

7.3.3.1 Innovation and Interconnected Structures

The first new theme, Innovation and Interconnected Structures, was highlighted by the corporate and investment sectors, but less so from the cross sector partners. It could be argued that those involved in corporate strategy, are more intentional as to how the corporate is structured, in order to best evolve the purpose into operations.

Of note, is the suggestion that the organisational structure should support cross sector sustainability partnerships, the organisational structure should at best attempt to match the business and societal environment and it's challenges, and is critical in achieving the strategic goals. The researcher did not however discover a structure suggestion, similar to the one noted in the findings.

7.3.3.2 Purpose and Crisis

The final new theme, Purpose and Crisis, revealed in the findings, emerged owing to the exigencies of the last year in South Africa, specifically COVID 19, and the July Protests in KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng. The impact of both events were raised differently in the findings, suggesting that a clearly articulated and supported purpose buttresses partnerships during crisis; conversely all partners need to continue to support the purpose, during times of complexity. Given that 'crisis' literature was not

part of the scope of the literature design, the researcher extended the literature research, and notes the work of Quarshie and Leuschner (2018) and Talbot and Ordonez-Ponce (2020) in suggesting that it may be different stakeholders, the unexpected stakeholders, who have a role to play during crisis. Additionally the well-articulated purpose, as it addresses long-term value creation is further noted, when addressing great uncertainty and complexity, according to Freeman et al. (2020). The researcher therefore tentatively suggests that this may be a potential point of difference and even opportunity, between different stakeholders, purpose and crisis, as they pertain to multi-stakeholder sustainability.

7. 4 Recommendations for Managers and Relevant Stakeholders

Given the approach by this FMCG organisation to multi-sector partnerships, the recommendations are based on the three different constructs researched, and the research conclusions.

- Based on the outcomes of the cross sector sustainability partnership construct, it is recommended that the corporate address potential tensions arising between middle management and the MSPs. This may be done as on going and institutionalised communication, built on a clear articulation of the purpose as it aligns to strategy, and long-term corporate goals.
- Furthermore, it is recommended that, as part of the corporate strategic goals, the corporate and partners consider the challenge of partner growth and scalability beyond the corporate structure. Currently this appears to be a point of difficulty for many of the partners, and may be based on the corporate structure.
- Based on the outcomes of the corporate strategic goals, there is an opportunity for the corporate to further recognise the potential value of the expertise and diversity of the partnerships, during a complex and often ‘turbulent’ time in South Africa. Thus the multi-sector partner expertise should be formally included in the strategic planning.
- Based on the local and global sustainability outcomes, it is recommended that a more comprehensive and intuitive measurement tool, addressing the corporate strategic goals, support the corporate and partner activities.

- In supporting the construct of long-term sustainability, it is recommended that the corporates in engage in identifying further opportunities for Public Private Third Sector Partnerships.

7. 5 Limitations

Some of the research limitations that emerged, are briefly summarised below:

- The orientation of the research literature meant that the report was specifically framed by the ambit of business and society, specifically stakeholder, multi-sector partnership and sustainability literature. Whilst it is a limitation, it offers an opportunity to research the topic through another academic lens, moving forward.
- There was a limitation, given the FMCG sector as the research setting, and also the specific organisation as the level of analysis.
- There was a limitation to depth of research and number of interviews owing to time constraints. Whilst the researcher achieved the goal of number of interviews required, it was felt that SADC region partners could also have been interviewed to support a more regional understanding, as well.
- There was a further limitation in the exploration of constructs such as shared value and collective impact, purpose, and sustainability, given the extensive extant literature available. Additionally the scope of the study was broadly defined, and did not allow for a more in-depth analysis of specific concepts.
- The literature review in chapter 2 revealed three constructs, which were derived from the research question. The orientation drew strongly from the stakeholder, cross sector partnership and sustainability literature. Accordingly, it should be noted, that the limitation and scope of the research paper, was based on this orientation. The span of the literature focused on the following – stakeholder theory and it's diverse iterations, notably as supported by Freeman (2017), Freeman et al. (2020) and Harrison et al. (2020); stakeholder theory as it relates to multi-sector partnerships, notably Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) and Gray and Purdy (2018); and stakeholder theory as it addresses corporate purpose, especially Henderson and Serafeim (2020). The work of Kramer and Porter (2011) and Kramer and Pfitzer (2016), with regards to shared value theory, and the ecosystem of collective impact, was also critical in understanding stakeholder theory and partnerships more broadly. And finally

the work of Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) and Ordonez-Ponce and Clarke (2020) were critical in the discussion around business and sustainability.

7. 6 Recommendations for Further Research

The researcher suggests that there are areas of research that could be further explored by other scholars, and they are briefly summarised below:

- Given that the research setting was a specific global company, founded in South Africa in the FMCG sector, a further exploration, by other researchers, could take place in different sectors and industries. Diversification of the research setting, may also demonstrate new strategic partnerships, and corporate goals in relation to sustainability, and thus demonstrate the types of cross sector relationships and the value networks that are created.
- The concept of the 'retrofit' was not explored in depth, and whilst it is understood that the partnerships may initially be formed, based on mutual values and mutual interest in specific issues, how the MSP is created, and how process is institutionalised, offers further opportunities for research.
- Further research into the notion of the organisational process, as the partnership becomes part of the value network, and further investigation into the corporate structure, as it supports cross sector partnerships is recommended. Further research may demonstrate how the corporate configures the value network in order to best support, and be supported, by the diversity of MSPs in order to achieve strategic sustainability goals.
- Given the specificity of the research setting, and the complexity of the unit of analysis, as individual, as partner organisation, as partner, and finally as stakeholder, there is a recommendation to research the stakeholder framework in relation to global growth; understanding how the stakeholder partner scales globally, and even beyond the boundaries of the corporate.
- A more nuanced understanding of how purpose supports organisational stability through partnerships would provide valuable insight into the 'how' of cross sector partnerships. This could further be expanded into research on the role of purpose in a time of crisis.
- There is a need to conduct further research on the role of collective impact in both the local and global corporate more fully, as it addresses shared value

more expansively. This might offer insights into new business constructs, and might further support research into the ecosystem of value networks, as part of the expanding literature of stakeholder theory.

- The relationship between the local and global corporate strategies, and local and global sustainability might potentially offer different insights into the approach to stakeholder theory, and partnerships, is recommended as an area of further research.

REFERENCE LIST

- Absa Group. (2021). *Mitigating the climate crisis and driving inclusive growth*. Retrieved from the Daily Maverick website: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-07-23-mitigating-the-climate-crisis-and-driving-inclusive-growth/>.
- Allee, V. (2000). Reconfiguring the value network. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 21(4), 36-39. Retrieved from: <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A63924619/AONE?u=anon~8de135cf&sid=googleScholar&xid=7957baa0>.
- Arenas, D., & Rodrigo, P. (2016). On firms and the next generations: Difficulties and possibilities for business ethics inquiry. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 133(1), 165-178. doi: 10.1007/s10551-014-2348-8.
- Barney, J.B. (2018). Why resource-based theory's model of profit appropriation must incorporate a stakeholder perspective. *Strategic Management Journal*, 39: 3305-3325. doi: 10.1002/smj.2949.
- Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2018). *Business Research Methods* (5th ed., pp. 17-37). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bhattacharya, C. B., & Polman, P. (2017). Sustainability lessons from the front lines. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 58(2), 71. Retrieved from: <http://mitsmr.com/2h3NTCd>.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Businessroundtable. (2019), *Business roundtable redefines the purpose of a corporation to promote an economy that serves all Americans*. Retrieved from the Business Roundtable website:

<https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-redefines-the-purpose-of-a-corporation-to-promote-an-economy-that-serves-all-americans>.

- Clarke, A., & Crane, A. (2018). Cross-sector partnerships for systemic change: Systematized literature review and agenda for further research. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 150(2), 303-313. doi: 10.1007/s10551-018-3922-2.
- Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2019). Outcomes to partners in multi-stakeholder cross-sector partnerships: A resource-based view. *Business & Society*, 58(2), 298-332. doi: 10.1177/0007650316660534.
- Corley, K. G., & Gioia, D. A. (2011). Building theory about theory building: what constitutes a theoretical contribution?. *Academy of management review*, 36(1), 12-32. doi: 10.5465/amr.2009.0486.
- Crane, A., Palazzo, G., Spence, L. J., & Matten, D. (2014). Contesting the value of "Creating Shared Value". University Of California, Berkeley, 56(2) doi:10.1525/cmr.2014.56.2.130.
- Crane, A., Henriques, I., & Husted, B. W. (2018). Quants and poets: Advancing methods and methodologies in business and society research. *Business & Society*, 57(1), 3-25. doi: 10.1177/0007650317718129.
- Den Ouden, E. (2011). Innovation design: Creating value for people, organizations and society. *Springer Science & Business Media* ISBN: 978-1-4471-2268-5.
- Donaldson, T., & Preston, L. E. (1995). The stakeholder theory of the corporation: Concepts, evidence, and implications. *Academy of Management Review*, 20, 65-91. doi: 10.5465/amr.1995.9503271992.
- Drucker, P. F. (1993). *Concept of the Corporation*, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers.
- Ehrenfeld, J. R., & Hoffman, A. J. (2020). *Flourishing*. Stanford University Press. doi: 10.1515/9780804786676
- Eisenhardt, K. M., Graebner, M. E., & Sonenshein, S. (2016). Grand challenges and inductive methods: rigor without rigor mortis. *Academy of Management Journal*, 59(4), 1113-1123. doi: 10.5465/amj.2016.4004

- Evans, S., Vladimirova, D., Holgado, M., Van Fossen, K., Yang, M., Silva, E. A., & Barlow, C. Y. (2017). Business model innovation for sustainability: Towards a unified perspective for creation of sustainable business models. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 26, 597-607. doi: 10.100/bse.1939
- Ferraro, F., Etzion, D., & Gehman, J. (2015). Tackling grand challenges pragmatically: Robust action revisited. *Organization Studies*, 36(3), 363-390. doi:10.1177/0170840614563742
- Freeman, R. E., & Reed, D. L. (1983). Stockholders and stakeholders: A new perspective on corporate governance. *California management review*, 25(3), 88-106.
- Freeman, R. E. (1984). *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. Boston: Pitman.
- Freeman, R. E., Harrison, J. S., & Wicks, A. C. (2007). *Managing for stakeholders: Survival, reputation, and success*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Freeman, R. E., Harrison, J. S., Wicks, A. C., Parmar, B., & de Colle, S. (2010). *Stakeholder theory: The state of the art*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Freeman, R. E. (2015). Stakeholder theory. *Wiley encyclopedia of management*, 1-6. doi: 10.1002/9781118785317.weom020179
- Freeman, R. E., & Ginena, K. (2015). Rethinking the purpose of the corporation: Challenges from stakeholder theory. *Notizie di Politeia*, 31(117), 9-18.
- Freeman, R. Edward. 2017. The New Story of Business: Towards a More Responsible Capitalism. *Business and Society Review* 122(3):449–65. doi: 10.1111/basr.12123
- Freeman, R. E. (2017). Five challenges to stakeholder theory: A report on research in progress. In *Stakeholder management. (Business and Society 360, Vol. 1)*, Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley, pp. 1-20. doi:10.1108/S2514-175920170000001
- Freeman, R. E., & Dmytriyev, S. (2017). Corporate social responsibility and stakeholder theory: Learning from each other. *Symphonya. Emerging Issues in Management*, (1), 7-15. doi: 10.4468/2017.1.02freeman.dmytriyev

- Freeman, R. E., Phillips, R., & Sisodia, R. (2020). Tensions in stakeholder theory. *Business & Society*, 59: 213-231. doi: 10.1177/0007650318773750
- Freudenreich, B., Lüdeke-Freund, F., & Schaltegger, S. (2020). A stakeholder theory perspective on business models: Value creation for sustainability. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 166(1), 3-18. doi: /10.1007/s10551-019-04112-z
- Friedman, M. (September 13, 1970). The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits. *New York Times Magazine*, 32
- Fromm, E. (1976). *To Have Or to Be?*, New York (Open Road Media) Reprint 2013.
- Garcia-Castro, R., & Aguilera, R. V. (2015). Incremental value creation and appropriation in a world with multiple stakeholders. *Strategic Management Journal*, 36: 137-147. oi: / 10.1002/smj.2241
- Gartenberg, C., Prat, A., & Serafeim, G. (2019). Corporate purpose and financial performance. *Organization Science*, 30(1), 1-18. doi: 10.1287/orsc.2018.1230
- Gehman, J., Glaser, V. L., Eisenhardt, K. M., Gioia, D., Langley, A., & Corley, K. G.(2018). Finding theory–method fit: A comparison of three qualitative approaches to theory building. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 27(3), 284-300. doi: 10.1177/1056492617706029
- Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational research methods*, 16(1), 15-31. doi: 10.1177/1094428112452151
- Globescan Organisation. *The Globescan/Sustainability Leaders Survey (2021)*. Retrieved 23 August 2021 from <https://globescan.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/GlobeScan-SustainAbility-Leaders-Survey-2020-Report.pdf>
- Gray, B., & Purdy, J. (2018). *Collaborating for our future: Multistakeholder partnerships for solving complex problems*. Oxford University Press.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59-82. doi: 10.1177/1525822X05279903

- Harrison, J. S., Bosse, D. A., & Phillips, R. A. (2010). Managing for stakeholders, stakeholder utility functions and competitive advantage. *Strategic Management Journal*, 31, 58-74. doi: 10.1002/smj.801
- Harrison, J. S., Barney, J. B., Freeman, R. E., & Phillips, R. A. (Eds.). (2019). *The Cambridge handbook of stakeholder theory*. Cambridge University Press. doi: 10.1017/9781108123495
- Harrison, J. S., Phillips, R. A., & Freeman, R. E. (2020). On the 2019 business roundtable "statement on the purpose of a corporation", *Journal of Management*, 46(7), 1223-1237. doi: 10.1177/0149206319892669
- Henderson, R., & Van den Steen, E. (2015). Why do firms have "purpose"? The firm's role as a carrier of identity and reputation. *American Economic Review*, 105(5), 326-30. doi: 10.1257/aer.p20151072
- Henderson, R. (2020). *Reimagining Capitalism: How business can save the world*. Public Affairs, New York, NY, Penguin Business.
- Henderson, R., & Serafeim, G. (2020). Tackling Climate Change Requires Organizational Purpose. *Aea Papers and Proceedings* 110:177–80: doi: 10.1257/pandp.20201067
- Hoffman, A. (2018). The Next Phase of Business Sustainability. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 16(2), 34-39. doi: 10.2139/ssm.3191035
- Hoekstra, R. (2019). *Replacing GDP by 2030: towards a common language for the well-being and sustainability community*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hollensbe, E., Wookey, C., Hickey, L., George, G., & Nichols, C. V. (2014). Organizations with purpose. doi: 10.5465/amj.2014.4005
- Jacobides, M. G., Cennamo, C., & Gawer, A. (2018). Towards a theory of ecosystems. *Strategic management journal*, 39(8), 2255-2276. doi: 10.1002/smj.2904
- Jones, T. M. (1995). Instrumental Stakeholder Theory: A Synthesis of Ethics and Economics. *Academy of Management Review* Vol. 20.

- Kania, J., & Kramer, M. (2011). *Collective impact* (pp. 36-41). FSG.
- Kramer, M., & Pfitzer, M. (2016). Strategy : The Ecosystem of Shared Value. *Harvard Business Review* 94(10):80–89.
- Ordonez-Ponce, E., & Clarke, A. (2020). Sustainability cross-sector partnerships: The strategic role of organizational structures. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 27(5), 2122-2134. doi:10.1002/csr.1952
- Ordonez-Ponce, E., Clarke, A., & MacDonald, A. (2021). Business contributions to the sustainable development goals through community sustainability partnerships. *Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal*. doi: 10.1108/SAMPJ-03-2020-0068
- Ordonez-Ponce, E., Clarke, A. C., & Colbert, B. A. (2021). Collaborative sustainable business models: Understanding organizations partnering for community sustainability. *Business & Society*, 60(5), 1174-1215. doi: 10.1177/0007650320940241
- Parmar, B. L., Freeman, R. E., Harrison, J. S., Wicks, A. C., Purnell, L., & De Colle, S. (2010). Stakeholder theory: The state of the art. *Academy of Management Annals*, 4(1), 403-445. doi: 10.5465/19416520.2010.495581
- Pera, R., Occhiocupo, N., & Clarke, J. (2016). Motives and resources for value co-creation in a multi-stakeholder ecosystem: A managerial perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(10), 4033-4041. doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.03.047
- Phillips, R. A., Freeman, R. E. & Wicks, A. C. (2003). What stakeholder theory is not. *Business Ethics Quarterly*. 13, 479-502. Doi: 10.5840/beq200313434
- Planting, S. (2021). *Executive remuneration, the quandary of rewarding bosses for going green*. Retrieved from the Daily Maverick website: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2021-11-08-executive-remuneration-the-quandary-of-rewarding-bosses-for-going-green/>
- Porter, M. E., & Kramer, M. R. (2011). The Big Idea: Creating Shared Value. How to reinvent capitalism—and unleash a wave of innovation and growth. *Harvard Business Review*, 89, 62-77

- Porter, M. E., & Kramer M. R. (2019). Creating shared value. In Lenssen, G., & Smith, N. (eds), *Managing Sustainable Business* (pp 323-346). Dordrecht: Springer. doi: 10.1007/978-94-024-1144-7_16
- Porter, M., Serafeim, G., & Kramer, M. (2019). Where ESG fails. *Institutional Investor*, 1-50.
- Quarshie, A., & Leuschner, R., (2018) Cross-Sector Social Interactions and Systemic Change in Disaster Response: A Qualitative Study *Journal of Business Ethics* 150:357–384. doi:/10.1007/s10551-018-3860-z
- Stiglitz, J. E., Sen, A., & Fitoussi, J. P. (2009). Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress.
- Stiglitz, J. E., Sen, A., & Fitoussi, J. P. (2010). *Mis-measuring our lives: Why GDP doesn't add up*. The New Press
- Stout, L. A. (2012). The problem of corporate purpose. *Issues in Governance Studies*, 48(1), 1-14.
- Stout, L. A. (2013). The toxic side effects of shareholder primacy. *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 161(7), 2003-2023. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23527857>
- Talbot, D., & Ordonez-Ponce, E. (2020). Canadian banks' responses to COVID-19: A strategic positioning analysis. *Journal of Sustainable Finance & Investment*, 1-8. doi: 10.1080/20430795.2020.1771982
- Ueda, K., Takenaka, T., Váncza, J., & Monostori, L. (2009). Value creation and decision-making in sustainable society. *CIRP annals*, 58(2), 681-700. Doi 10.1016/j.cirp.2009.09.010
- Vazquez, P. (2018). Family business ethics: At the crossroads of business ethics and family business. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 150(3), 691-709. doi: 10.1007/s10551-016-3171-1
- United Nations (2020) *What are the sustainable development goals?* [Table] Retrieved 10 November 2021 from: <https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals?>

United Nations (2020). *The sustainable development goals report*. Retrieved 10 November 2021 from <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/>

APPENDICES

1. APPENDIX 1

Introduction to interview

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my GIBS Research Paper.

Please note that I would greatly appreciate your candid comments and I undertake to guard your confidentiality. Your name and details will not be noted against any comments that you might make and the report will be carefully worded to prevent your statements being identified with you specifically.

For accuracy and ease of analysis I would like to record the engagement with you. This recording will be erased after your comments have been captured and recorded against an interview number, not with your name.

You are, of course free to terminate the interview/discussion at any stage or decide not to respond to certain questions or issues. I will exercise all safeguards to ensure that your participation does not prejudice you or your organisation in any way. Your engagement and informed input is thus a vital contribution to the work.

I am conscious of the pressures on your time and will try to keep the engagement as time limited as you require – 45 minutes, and I greatly appreciate benefitting from your in-depth knowledge.

Are these arrangements acceptable to you?

Interviewee:

SIGNATURE

Organisation, designation & length in current role:

Date:

Interviewer MICHELLE CONSTANT

SIGNATURE

2. APPENDIX 2

Interview Draft Guideline

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my GIBS Research Paper.

Please note that I would greatly appreciate your candid comments and I undertake to guard your confidentiality. Your name and details will not be noted against any comments that you might make and the report will be carefully worded to prevent your statements being identified with you specifically.

For accuracy and ease of analysis I would like to record the engagement with you. This recording will be erased after your comments have been captured and recorded against an interview number, not with your name.

You are, of course free to terminate the interview/discussion at any stage or decide not to respond to certain questions or issues. I will exercise all safeguards to ensure that your participation does not prejudice you or your organisation in any way. Your engagement and informed input is thus a vital contribution to the work.

I am conscious of the pressures on your time and will try to keep the engagement as time limited as you require – 45 minutes, and I greatly appreciate benefitting from your in-depth knowledge.

Are these arrangements acceptable to you?

Themes	Questions focusing on experience and understanding
Opening Question	Please tell me about how you got involved in the XX partnership (Referencing history)
Eight Main Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is the purpose of this partnership or partnering activity? Part (b) How are the partnership activities related to the SDGs and/or sustainability?2. What are those partnerships, and please tell me about your experiences of the key partnerships relationships?

3. What are the specific strategic outcomes that you are hoping to see from these partnerships?
4. In your experience, how do these partnerships work and what makes them work well?
5. Based on your experience, what are the opportunities from the partnership activities and how do they contribute to your strategic goals?
Part (b) what are the opportunities for sustainability and /or the SDGs
6. Could you tell me about your experience of the challenges you encountered?
7. How were they addressed?
8. What are the outcomes that have been achieved through the partnership activities

Part (a) for the SDGs and/or sustainability and Part (b) for your strategic goals?

Closing Question

Looking forward, where do you see this going?

To be used as and when needed

1. Probing questions

Please tell me more about that?

Please could you give me an example?

Please tell me about what happened, who was involved, what were the outcomes - please describe that further ...

2. Clarifying question

Use seldom if at all – could you clarify what ‘xyz’ means -

usually an acronym

3. APPENDIX 3

Ethical Clearance Email

The image shows a screenshot of an email. At the top left is the logo for the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. To the right of the logo, the text 'Ethical Clearance' is written in white on a dark blue background, with 'Approved' written in white on a lighter blue background below it. The main body of the email is white and contains the following text: 'Dear Michelle Constant,', '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.', and a link to 'Ethical Clearance Form'. Below the main body, there is a dark blue footer bar with white text that reads: 'This email has been sent from an unmonitored email account. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the GIBS Research Admin team.'