

**EXPLORING CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY DISRUPTIONS IN THE FAST-
MOVING CONSUMER GOODS RETAIL INDUSTRY: CASE OF THE CITY OF
TSHWANE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

BY

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07 June 2023

Signature

Date

DEDICATION

I want to thank my mom, Martha Mogoane, my best uncle, FJ Xaba, and my grandmother Phoebe Maboki for their support and encouragement while I pursued education throughout my life.

In addition, I further devote this research study to my fellow students who are experiencing the same challenges in finishing their coursework. I want to encourage them to persevere and take things slowly because eventually, everything will be over.

By and large, I am dedicating my dissertation to my children, Lesedi and Botlhale. They supported me throughout this path with their unwavering love, prayers, patience, and sacrifices, which motivated me and enabled me to get my master's degree.

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ABSTRACT

How corporate sustainability is ensured by businesses is a crucial aspect of the twenty-first century business environment. This study explored the perceptions of operations managers in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) retail sector on measures that could be taken to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions afflicting the industry.

The management of disruptions and risks has become an important topic on the agendas of boards of directors; however, most boards of directors are still not doing enough to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions afflicting the FMCG sector. For this research, the sustainability theory was adopted to explain corporate sustainability disruptions and the strategies ideal for mitigating these disruptions. Theories of sustainability attempt to prioritise and integrate social responses to environmental and cultural concerns, and sustain an economic model that seeks to uphold natural and financial capital as well as an ecological model that seeks to maintain biological diversity and ecological integrity, together with a political model seeks social arrangements that recognise human dignity. Religion has entered the debate with symbolic, critical, and motivating resources for cultural transformation.

This study is significant to FMCG retail practices because the findings may contribute to knowledge on mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions. It is also relevant for boards of directors, shareholders, academics, and management students because the results may enhance their understanding of risk management and sound corporate governance. The study used a qualitative phenomenological approach that was guided by an interpretivism perspective. For data collection, ten operations managers in the FMCG retail sector in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality were interviewed using semi-structured questions. The sample was collected using non-probability convenient sampling. The major findings revealed that the main corporate sustainability disruptors in the FMCG retail sector are cultural diversity, a lack of top management dedication, a lack of knowledge and understanding, and a lack of information, intelligence, vision, financial resources, and competence. Thus, the study proposes

methods for mitigating the corporate sustainability disruptions that plague the FMCG retail business.

Keywords: corporate sustainability, disruptions, mitigating, strategies

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

FMCGs	Fast-Moving Consumer Goods
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
QFD	Quality Function Deployment
AHP	Analytical Process Hierarchy
CS	Corporate Sustainability
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CPG	Consumer-Packaged Goods
TBL	Triple Bottom Line
BES	Business Experimentation
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ERM	Enterprise Risk Management
SRM	Sustainability Risk Management

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction and Context of the Study

A critical component of the business climate in the twenty-first century is how corporations secure their sustainability. The research work proposed in this study shows how operations managers in the retail sector of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) perceive what steps might be implemented to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptors plaguing the business. Corporate sustainability (CS) is the capacity of an organisation to carry out business plans and endeavours that satisfy the needs of the organisation and its stakeholders today while enhancing and preserving the natural and human resources that people will require in the future (Gutterman, 2022). CS is also management's view of a company's responsibility to the environment, its stakeholders, and its bottom line (Fuentes and Fredriksson, 2016); (Gutterman, 2022). The term "corporate sustainability" also specifies that sustainable development should be a byproduct of CS. Brundtland (1987) ; Bilińska-Reformat et al (2019) defined sustainable development as growth that meets the needs of the present generation without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Internationally, CS is seen as a crucial governance tool for all general business sectors and commercial merchants (Real et al., 2018). However, its success or effectiveness depends on the number of stakeholders agreeing with the organisation's position on CS. Some studies suggest that corporate sustainability activities should be connected to the sector, company strategy, and business model (Bilińska-Reformat et al., 2019); (Fuentes & Fredriksson, 2016).

Human resources is also essential to developing and implementing sustainability initiatives, and employees should be satisfied with how they are involved in the business's CS (Lee & Ha-Brookshire, 2017) (Kerdawy, 2019). Generally, CS addresses the triple bottom line, which argues that a business should focus on developing communities and the planet as well as making a profit (Kenton, 2022). Organisations should apply the triple bottom line in an integrated and holistic way. Several academics and scholars have previously regarded CS as a voluntary activity in addressing and

paying attention to the triple bottom line (Kenton, 2022). Other researchers have highlighted that conflicts and disruptions confound the implementation of CS by organisations (Fuentes & Fredriksson, 2016); (Kenton, 2022).

Ivory and Brooks (2018) developed a framework that organisations can adopt to manage CS disruptions and tensions. Elg et al. (2021) noted that, in most cases, there might be a conflict among managers with different perspectives regarding the implementation and the role of CS in organisations. Elg et al. (2021) argue that implementing CS is based on individuals' perceptions. Managers' different views may result in different commitments to the various aspects of CS, necessitating the need to understand the sustainability disruptions that may exist in a board of directors within an organisation and how these perceptions pose a risk to the FMCG retailers' CS endeavours (Simões-Coelho et al., 2023).

FMCG retailers should have a sense of purpose and responsibility toward the local community in which they operate (Derqui, 2020). This social responsibility should go beyond the gesture of local philanthropic sponsorship programmes. Genuine CS involves a different perspective on the role of retailers within a community. Using a qualitative and phenomenological case study research strategy, the researcher explored FMCG CS disruptors by examining the perceptions of the operations managers in selected FMCG retailers in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng Province of South Africa (Iglesias et al., 2023). The study empirically investigates corporate sustainability disruptors that impede the successful implementation of the triple bottom line.

CS focuses on improving people, the planet, and profit (Sharma, 2019). Retail businesses face sustainability disruptions due to human and non-human factors; consequently FMCG retailers (at times) fail to meet the sustainability obligations as prescribed by governance ethics (Santhi and Muthuswamy, 2022). Therefore, this study sought to explore the perceptions of operations managers on efforts implemented to mitigate CS disruptions in the FMG retail sector. The board of directors and business managers implement effective sustainability strategies to remain competitive and sustainable in the business sector in which they operate.

The results of this study are important for FMCG retail operations because they contribute to the body of knowledge on reducing CS disruptions. The boards of directors, shareholders, researchers, and management students should take heed of the study since its findings provide fresh perspectives to the literature on risk management and sound corporate governance. This chapter highlights the problem statement, the research technique, objectives, and a literature review on corporate sustainability and the function of a board of directors in minimising disruptions.

The chapter outlines and discusses the background of the study. Second, it provides a preliminary literature review of the study, which presents the conceptual framework of the study. Lastly, it reviews the literature on the perceptions of boards of directors of measures that could be implemented to mitigate CS disruptions in the fast-moving goods retail industry (Zorić et al. 2023).

1.2. Background to the Research Problem

FMCGs retailers provide or sell consumer-packed goods (Rahdari et al. 2020). According to Mati et al. (2019) FMCGs are products that are sold quickly and inexpensively. Non-durable items used daily by consumers make up most of the FMCGs. Examples of FMCGs include foodstuffs, toiletries, detergents, and beverages. The FMCG retail sector links business and society; thus, it plays a crucial role in commerce (Rahdari et al. 2020). As a result, the FMCG retail sector propels production for millions of customers globally (Deloitte, 2017). The sector provides a variety of goods to consumers (Deloitte 2017) and employs millions of people worldwide (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018).

Although the FMCG retail industry plays a crucial role in the global economy, it is one of the most vulnerable A industries due to its business model that is embedded within society. Globally, FMCG retailers adopt a sustainable business model (SBM) (Bashir et al. 2020), which utilises a CS philosophy and helps managers to understand the value of CS (Bashir et al. 2020). sustainable business focuses on developing and implementing new solutions for enhancing the sustainability of the organisation, the natural environment, and the community in which the organisation is trading (Bashir et

al. 2020). The sustainable business model involves suppliers and consumers in society by not delivering an eco-friendly product and using a technology that does not harm the environment (Bashir et al. 2020); (Geissdoerfer et al. 2018).

The sustainability of the FMCG industry relies on consumer attitudes and changes in sentiments based on the dynamic and volatile economic environment that affects the operations of the industry (Wahi and Porus, 2021). Retailers are also vulnerable due to their reliance on long supply chains that are mostly beyond their control. Most importantly, they must adhere to ethical business principles by offering suppliers sustainably produced goods (Rahdari et al. 2020). Therefore, businesses should put pressure on their suppliers to address issues such as unfair labour practices, workplace safety issues, and air pollution (Gurzawska, 2020). Corporate social responsibility addresses complex societal issues (Rahdari et al. 2020). FMCGs are involved in CS activities and provide more social and environmental programmes to the public. Retail organisations are confronted with several disruptors that are detrimental to sustainability and their success. The execution of a CS agenda is hampered by disruptors such as organisational structure and culture, management systems, employee behaviour, and leadership (Schein, 2018). The implementation of CS is fundamentally distinct from that of other organisational methods. In organisations that prioritise making a profit, operating goals often focus on increasing profits, whereas innovative goals try to surprise the market by upgrading the operating systems of the business or to introduce modern technologies for automation and boost financial rewards. Sustainability is concerned with establishing excellence in social, environmental and financial performance simultaneously (Fan and Chang, 2021).

Top management is another CS disruptor since they tend to be shortsighted in maximising short-term revenues (Haessler, 2020). The resources available for sustainability investments are also major CS disruptors. In this regard, Ekins and Zenghelis (2021) indicated that the amount of money and people devoted to sustainability significantly impacts how sustainability programmes are implemented. Additionally, the organisational structure significantly impacts whether CS strategies are implemented successfully or unsuccessfully. The organisational structure and the type

of corporation affect the integration of corporate sustainability; the key organisational factors are the size, scope, and organisation of the enterprise (Hristov et al., 2022). According to Miska et al. (2018), a company's corporate culture might undermine CS.

The study aimed to investigate operations managers' perspectives on the measures taken by the board of directors to reduce CS disruptions in the FMCG retail sector. To mitigate or limit the negative consequences of CS disruptions that jeopardise retail organisations' efforts to fulfil their corporate sustainability requirements, the researcher sought to establish and comprehend the roles and perceptions of the boards of directors.

The research study is important as it will assist in understanding the CS disruptions faced by FMCGs retailers. Moreover, the study highlights the efforts and steps taken by boards of directors in preventing the CS disruptions. The findings will aid policymakers and boards of directors to find suitable solutions for reducing the impact of CS disruptions on the FMCG industry. In addition, the researcher suggests strategies for mitigating CS disruptions. The research findings add new information to the body of knowledge on CS, making the study indispensable to future and current researchers.

1.3. Reason for Selecting the Problem.

The eleventh Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), which concerns creating sustainable cities and communities, serves as the study's foundation. A sustainable future for all people is sought after through the 17 interrelated SDGs. The SDGs' universal agreement is to end poverty and craft an equal, just world for people and planet prosperity (Johnston, 2016); (United Nations, 2018); (Mishra & Padhi, 2021). Cities must adopt sustainable production and consumption habits to achieve sustainable management, the effective use of natural resources, and the reduction of food losses along supply and production chains. Given these goals, this research seeks to investigate the disruptors in the FMCG retail sector that might impede the effective realisation of the 17 SDGs pertaining to sustainable cities and communities. These goals aim to address the triple bottom line by promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns (United Nations, 2018).

This study is important for several reasons. First, society might benefit from gaining insight into the strategic perceptions of boards of directors to mitigate CS disruptions in the FMCG retail industry, because these disruptions can affect employees and communities (Gutterman, 2022). Employing efficient corporate services disruption mitigation methods can conserve organisational resources while increasing customer value and satisfaction. Second, understanding how to minimise CS disruptions can improve FMCG corporate sustainability outcomes (Gutterman, 2022). Last, the study will educate the boards of directors about their functions and contributions in reducing CS disruptions, not only in the FMCG retail sector but also in other facets of the South African economy. The findings will also be utilised to inform suggestions to various stakeholders, the South African FMCG retail industry, and the general business community.

1.4. Problem Statement

The management of disruptors and risks has become an important topic on the agendas of boards of directors; however, most of these directors are still not doing enough to mitigate CS disruptors (Van den Breul et al. 2018). Furthermore, Van den Breul et al. (2018) conclude that companies' preparation levels for crises and disruptors are obsolete. Christopher and Peck (2004) and Raj et al. (2022) conducted a survey and found that while senior executives now understand that disruptions in the retail chain logistics and supply channels can be disruptive to the bottom line of an organisation, strategies to minimise disruptions in the supply chain are generally not well established or even initiated. Furthermore, Ruiz Real et al. (2018) stated that retail sustainability is an emerging issue related to multiple issues (e.g., logistics, transportation, cleaner production, manufacturing waste reduction, and eco-efficiency).

Apart from ethical considerations, organisations' consideration of environmental management yields many other benefits for retailers and customers. The situation with disruptors requires businesses to concentrate on survival if they have the capital, human resources, and other resources to survive a period of disruption (International Finance Corporation-World Bank Group, 2021). The non-financial interruptions caused

by crises such as the current Covid-19 outbreak, climate change, and natural disasters, are becoming increasingly important to businesses (International Finance Corporation-World Bank Group, 2021). A sustainable risk management approach used by boards of directors to manage corporate sustainability disruptions is adopted. Oftentimes, disruptions arising from sustainability issues compromise the company's survival at risk (Najam, 1999); (Statistics South Africa, 2019). Over the years, FMCG retail companies in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality in South Africa have placed little importance on fostering good corporate governance by boards of directors through the adoption of sustainable business practices. FMCG retailers seem not to address the people, profits and planet also known as the triple bottom line on CS; instead, they focus mostly on profit-making, while paying little attention to community development and environmental sustainability (Gutterman, 2022); (Pattit, 2015); (Stoddard et al., 2012); (Kenton, 2022), thus compromising the sustainable development of the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. Failure to mitigate CS leads to a polluted environment and insufficient development of people who could be future employees or potential customers of the FMCG retail business. The research question for the study is “what are the corporate sustainability disruptions in the fast-moving consumer goods retail industry in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality?”.

Retailers play an important role in promoting sustainable food systems. FMCG merchants can potentially ensure sustainability in both production and consumption costs (Prashar, 2022). Recently, retailers are better positioned in promoting responsible supply chain practices and the retail sector faces several CS disruptions that could require tremendous effort and various solutions to moderate (De los Rios & Charnley, 2017); (Prashar, 2022).

1.5. Purpose, Goals and Inspiration of the Research

1.5.1. Study objectives

This study investigated how operations managers viewed the initiatives by boards of directors to reduce CS disruptions in the FMCG retail industry. The researcher

employed a qualitative technique to understand how CS disruptions impact the FMCG retail sector and what steps were taken to minimise the negative effects.

1.5.2. Research objectives

The secondary objectives to this study are:

- To identify internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in South Africa.
- To explore the role of sustainability risk management in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.
- To analyse the role of a board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.
- To identify strategies that can be used by FMCG retailers in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.
- To explore the perceptions of operations managers on the efforts made by boards of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

1.5.3. Research questions

In light of the background described above, this study's main research question is:

- What are the corporate sustainability disruptions in the fast-moving consumer goods in the retail industry in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng Province, South Africa?

The following secondary research questions will guide the study:

- What are the internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality?
- What is the role of sustainability risk management in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality?
- What is the role of boards of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality?

- What methods do FMCG merchants employ in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality to minimise corporate sustainability disruptions?
- What is the perception of operations managers on the efforts made by boards of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality?

1.5.4. Research assumptions

The assumptions in this study are:

- FMCG retailers have a corporate sustainability agenda in place, but this agenda is not fully implemented due to the prevalence of internal and external disruptions which impede the implementation of corporate sustainability.
- FMCG retailers address social and environmental concerns to improve business and community sustainability (Gold, Seuring, and Beske 2009; Liczmańska-Kopcewicz, Mizera, and Pyplacz 2019). These firms assume that implementing CS practices has several benefits.

1.6. Terminology

This section defines the key terms used in this study: corporate sustainability, fast-moving consumer goods, sustainability, and triple bottom line.

- Corporate sustainability: CS encompasses aspects such as stakeholder perspective, business role perspective, and strategy (Schaltegger, et al., 2017); (Sudmai 2018). It is also perceived to be companies' contribution to long-term growth (Gutterman, 2022). This viewpoint recognises that businesses have multifaceted goals to achieve in addition to profit maximisation (Schaltegger et al., 2017); (Sudmai, 2018). Gutterman (2022) describes CS as the strategy and practice of an organisation for achieving the goal of balanced maximisation of stakeholder satisfaction by incorporating

environmental, social and economic factors. CS also involves preserving corporate assets to achieve sustainable and environmentally friendly growth.

- **Fast-Moving Consumer Goods:** Consumer packaged goods (CPG), commonly referred to as fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), are rapidly consumed products. Most of these goods are consumed in a matter of days; they include non-durable products such as cold drinks, baked and packaged goods, and other goods like canned foods, fruits and vegetables, and dairy goods (Ankrah, 2014); (Mati et al., 2019); (Matinga et al., 2018).
- **Sustainability:** Kock et al. (2012) and Chakhovich and Virtanen (2023) described sustainability as satisfying the needs of current and potential stakeholders' needs without compromising current stakeholders' interests. Sustainability lays the groundwork for the discussion of development from a global perspective by emphasising the ongoing fulfilment of human needs as a primary goal. This idea is crucial for everyone's existence because it impacts both the human species' survival and almost every other living thing on the Earth (Ragheb et al., 2016); (Vandenhole et al., 2019); (Verma, 2018).
- **The triple bottom line:** Pattit (2015) and Kenton (2022) describe the triple bottom line (TBL) as the three components of corporate sustainability, namely the people, the location and the profits.

1.7. Research Methodology

The methodologies, procedures, and strategies utilised to collect and analyse the data are described and discussed in this section, along with the research design.

1.7.1. Research design

The researcher employed a phenomenological case study conducted using a qualitative approach. This technique was ideal for this study as it enabled the researcher to obtain detailed information about CS disruptions in the FMCG retail sector.

1.7.2. Research approach

This study employed an in-depth research methodology. The difference between qualitative and quantitative research is that the former is subjective and collects or uses non-numerical data, and the latter is objective and employs mathematical data that can be quantified (Chinyere and Val, 2023); (Daneshgar, 2023); (Laksman et al., 2000); (Madill, 2015). The phenomenon under study was investigated using a qualitative approach. An interpretive philosophy is connected to this method (Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). The qualitative strategy was deemed to be the best suitable for this investigation since it employs inductive reasoning to identify meaningful patterns (Bell et al., 2022); (Chinyere & Val, 2023); (Madill, 2015); (Matinga et al., 2018). Additionally, this approach helped the researcher fully comprehend the CS disruptions in the FMCG retail market.

1.7.3. Research method

The proposed study's research methodology was mono-qualitative. The researcher was able to learn about the participants' inner experiences thanks to this procedure, which was appropriate and acceptable for this study.

1.7.4. Sampling process

A list of the top 33 FMCG retailers in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality in South Africa was used to identify the 33 operations managers who made up the study's target group (N = 33). The study's sample was chosen via non-probability convenience sampling, which helped the researcher select individuals conveniently located. For this study, the sample (n = 10) includes ten operation managers. The sample size was perfect since it led to data saturation and the gathering of dense, rich data that was sufficient for addressing the research objectives.

1.7.5. Data collection instruments and procedures

The methods and tools a researcher uses to acquire data are referred to as data collection (Johnson & Christensen, 2020); (King et al., 2019). As is appropriate for an exploratory study using an inductive and phenomenological method, the current study

employed an open-ended, semi-structured face-to-face interview format. Ruslin et al. (2022) define a semi-structured interview as a method of data collection that starts with a list of interview topics and permits the interviewer to change the sequence of the questions to suit the needs of the research project.

1.7.5.1. Data analysis strategies

Thematic analysis of the data was used because it is a versatile method for analysing qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Its key component is to observe themes or patterns that recur across a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2022); (Nowell et al., 2017). Following the transcription of the interview data, the researcher began the analytical phase. The researcher had planned to use the NVIVO software, which was developed to manage the coding processes needed while analysing qualitative data to process data (Almusallam, 2021). However, due to the challenges of getting access to the app, the researcher then opted to use a manual process to analyse written, audio, and visual data that had been collected through focus groups or interviews.

1.7.5.2. Data quality assurance

The researcher took several precautions to guarantee the study's reliability and authenticity. According to Stahl & King (2020), trustworthiness is the degree of confidence in research results; it guarantees quality without sacrificing relevance. The researcher used reliable methods throughout the investigation. Elo et al. (2014) and Mamba (2019) presented five broad requirements for achieving trustworthy results: credibility, transferability, dependability, conformability, and authenticity.

1.8. Ethical requirements

The UNISA Ethics Committee approved the ethics of the study. All regulations set forth by the College of Economics and Management Sciences Ethics Committee and, in general, by UNISA, were followed throughout the research procedure. The top ethical issues are the right to privacy, participant protection from danger, voluntary participation, obtaining all information, and being honest with professional peers (Davis, 2018); (Meyiwa., 2023). Prior to undertaking the study, the researcher requested permission from the management of specific organisations to examine retail

organisations and all managers granted their consent. The study required participants to engage willingly, and they were permitted to withdraw at any time. As a result, the researcher adopted safety measures to ensure the welfare of every participant. Each participant's data was collected anonymously using pseudonyms.

1.9. Exposition of Chapters

The thesis chapters are structured as follows:

Chapter 1: This chapter provided an overview, background information, context, and motivation for the reader to comprehend the current research study.

Chapter 2: The chapter presents the most recent literature. The literature research, which also juxtaposed diverse perspectives on the subject of corporate sustainability disruptions, offered the study's pertinent hypotheses. The purpose of this chapter is to identify areas of the study that need more investigation.

Chapter 3: The chapter provides a summary of the research design and methodology. It covers the demographics, sample, data collecting, and data analysis for the research study investigations.

Chapter 4: The results are presented, described, evaluated critically, and discussed in this chapter. The conclusions are discussed in relation to the research questions that served as the main guidelines for the research investigations.

Chapter 5: The chapter provides recommendations after summarizing the research findings and the study's limitations in Chapter 4. The research investigation conclusions follow an overview of the research findings.

1.10. Conclusion

The context and setting of the study were introduced in this chapter, including the background information, motivation, and context for the reader to better grasp the current research topic. The development of the research topic, research questions, and study objectives that served as a roadmap for carrying out the study were also provided in this chapter. The following chapter provides the literature review.

CHAPTER 2: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

An overview of corporate sustainability (CS) disruptions in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) retail sector is given in this chapter. The chapter explores the literature on practices and changes in corporate social responsibility. To comprehend these behaviours and build a connection between them and the environment, the researcher also examined corporate social responsibility practices. An overview of the retail sector and the internal and external CS disruptions in the FMCG retail sector are provided below. The researcher focused on the role of middle managers, particularly operations managers and the board of directors, in mitigating those disruptions.

The investigation identified obstacles to business sustainability initiatives and quality function deployment. The objectives of this study are met by using quality function deployment (QFD), which is considered one of the best tools for incorporating demands into plans and achieving goals (Erdil & Arani, 2019). This model was chosen to increase the quality and provide a useful resource for actual QFD implementations (Kiran, 2017); (Bossert, 2021).

2.2. An Overview of Corporate Sustainability

The presentation and acceptance of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and business sustainability have attracted a significant empirical attention from researchers. SDG 11 addresses the issue of sustainable cities and particularly communities; it refers to slums, human settlement management, climate change mitigation, and urban economics. It also reflects a movement in international development cooperation from viewing poverty as a rural issue to realising that cities face substantial challenges such as extreme poverty, environmental degradation, and catastrophic occurrences caused by climate change (Gregersen, 2015); (Guterres, 2020). The goal of SDG 11 is to renew and develop cities and other human settlements so that all people have access to essential services such as water, energy, housing, transportation, and public spaces while decreasing resource usage and environmental

consequences. This also provides access to safe, cheap, accessible, and sustainable transportation networks for everybody while improving road safety, affordable housing, and public transportation development. As a result, cities must be secure, settlement inclusive, sustainable, and provide quality life (Du Plessis, 2022).

CS has been thoroughly researched by several researchers and professionals (Grewal & Serafeim, 2020); (Guterman, 2022) even though politicians, academics, and researchers disagree on its specific definition and meaning. The components of CS strategy, business role viewpoint, and stakeholder perspective (Sudmai, 2018). Sustainability is defined as meeting the requirements of the current stakeholders without compromising those of potential future stakeholders (Chakhovich & Virtanen, 2023). It is a framework for the debate around development in a global context with the continuous satisfaction of human needs as a fundamental objective. This idea is crucial for the existence of all people because it impacts both the survival of the human species and nearly every other living thing on earth (Vandenhole et al., 2019). Guterres (2020) stated that CS is also viewed as an organisation's contribution to long-term growth. This viewpoint recognises that businesses have goals beyond maximising profits (Sudmai, 2018).

CS is an organisation's strategy and practice for achieving the goal of a balanced maximisation of stakeholder satisfaction while considering environmental, social, and economic factors (Correia, 2019). Achieving sustainable and environmentally friendly growth also necessitates maintaining the assets of a business. CS aims to advance people, the environment, and business. It has been proposed as a framework for addressing a wide range of sustainability issues and challenges. CS must consider all connections between the four pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental, social, and time, including the individual the four pillars themselves (Guterres, 2020). A company sustainability focused technology, establish sustainability reporting standards, and offer sustainable goods, services, and product-service combinations to become more sustainability-focused.

CS is also seen as a management perspective on an organisation's duty to its employees, its bottom line, and the Earth (Guterres, 2020). Furthermore, CS should

promote sustainable growth. Sustainable development satisfies present-day requirements without jeopardising the ability of future generations to satiate their own needs. CS is commonly regarded as an essential governance tool for all corporate sectors globally and commercial merchants (Ruiz Real et al., 2018). However, CS can only be beneficial or effective if numerous organisation stakeholders agree with the organisation's position on corporate sustainability. Other researchers asserted that CS operations must be connected to the sector, primary company strategy, and business model (Bilińska-Reformat et al., 2019).

The role of human resources is crucial for creating and implementing sustainability initiatives (Mohiuddin et al., 2022); furthermore, staff members must be satisfied with their level of involvement in the company's corporate services (Taha & Taha 2023). The triple bottom line is considered in CS. The triple bottom line idea states that a business should prioritise enhancing its impact on the environment, its employees, and its bottom line (Correia, 2019). Organisations should implement the triple bottom line in a comprehensive and integrated manner. Many academics and researchers have historically seen computer science as a voluntary activity for addressing and highlighting the triple bottom line. According to earlier studies, conflicts and interruptions prevent firms from implementing CS (Lee & Ha-Brookshire, 2017). Organisations can use the framework created to manage CS disruptions and tensions (Joseph et al., 2020). Elg et al. (2021) stated that managers with divergent viewpoints on applying CS may occasionally come into conflict. Managers may hold divergent opinions about the importance of CS in their organisations. CS implementation depends on how people perceive it. Managers may have varying perspectives of the various CS components (Corsi, 2021). Therefore, it is critical to understand how views on sustainability could influence a board of directors within a business and thereby potentially imperil attempts by FMCG companies to apply CS.

2.3. Retail Sector for Fast-moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)

The FMCG sector is the largest in the world and is renowned for its dynamism, competition, and rapid pace (Schein, 2018). The sector is characterised by non-durable products that are often and frequently used by consumers. It is one of the largest and

most dynamic economic sectors in South Africa in terms of GDP (gross domestic product) growth. In 2011, FMCG industry sales surpassed one trillion rands for the first time. In 2016, this amount increased to R1.46 trillion (Statistics South Africa Report 2018). Large official FMCG retailers make up 68% of the market in South Africa; the remaining 22% are informal small, medium, and micro businesses (SMMEs), such as spazas (miniature, illegal superette-style stores) (Malgas & Zondi, 2020).

Fast-moving consumer items are available for immediate consumption. Most of these products are used daily (Matinga et al., 2018). FMCG products only provide a little profit per unit, but earnings are substantial due to their high purchase volume and rapid sales (Matinga et al., 2018). Tungande et al. (2019) concurred that FMCGs frequently comprise items with low-profit margins but high sales volumes, such as packaged foods, alcoholic drinks, personal care items, and home cleaning supplies. Syed et al. (2019) claim that the main objective of companies in the fast-moving consumer products market is to build a supply chain that satisfies customer expectations in the most reliable and lucrative way feasible. This sector is acknowledged as a pioneer in SCM. Matinga et al. (2018) claim that the fast-moving consumer products industry is a thriving market sector that provides a wide range of items and moves quickly. According to Matinga et al. (2018), the fastest-growing high-speed industry in the world is the production and sale of well-known goods that consumers use daily. CPGs are retail products that are simple to consume. The majority of goods are consumed quickly after being purchased. These include non-durable goods such as dairy products, packaged foods, canned goods, iced beverages, baked goods, and packaged foods (Matinga et al., 2018). Businesses in the FMCG sector are under increasing pressure to develop more sustainable strategies due to consumer items' significant social and environmental consequences (Bashir et al., 2020). Since the decisions made by FMCG consumers are typically predictable and challenging to alter, it is particularly challenging to create business models that encourage consumer acceptance of novel sustainable solutions. Eventually, businesses must increase their ability to experiment with sustainable business models to enable such sustainability advances (Bocken et al., 2019). Businesses could find the business model techniques that customers are most likely to select with the aid of business experimentation capabilities (Bocken & Boons, 2018).

Corporate governance is seen as a key success factor for firms since it has been linked to increasing sustainable performance and garnering investors' trust (Alduais et al., 2023).

2.4. Fast-Moving Consumer Goods Retail Industry vis-a-vis Corporate Sustainability

FMCG merchants may not meet the sustainability commitments required by governance principles because human and nonhuman factors undermine the sustainability of retail companies (Gardner et al., 2019). They should have a sense of responsibility towards the community in which they operate. This civic duty should go beyond the retailer's neighborhood's philanthropic sponsorship scheme. Genuine CS takes a different stance on the role of retailers in a community. FMCG companies are under greater pressure to create more sustainable business models since consumer products harm social and environmental sustainability (Bashir et al., 2020). Making business models that encourage consumer acceptance of new sustainable solutions is a significant difficulty because consumers' decisions are regular and difficult to change. Over time, businesses would need to develop sustainable business experimentation capabilities to enable such sustainability changes (Bocken & Baldassarre, 2019).

2.5. Business Sustainability Measures in South Africa's FMCG Retail Industry

The Republic of South Africa boasts big cities with some of the best infrastructure in sub-Saharan regions where wealth could be created, yet the majority of its citizens are still very impoverished (Valjalo, 2018). The highest Gini Index replicates this, reflecting unequal earnings margins and a larger disparity between the rich and the poor (World Development Report, 2019).

This contrasts with other developing nations in sub-Saharan Africa such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, and Malawi, where access to services and conveniences like airports, retail centers, and hospitals - even in large city locations - is sparse and infrastructure is consistently inadequate. SCM for a corporation involves controlling the

efficient, value-added movements of products, information, and cash along the supply chain. FMCGs are goods with huge sales volumes but poor profit margins; they include beverages, packaged foods, personal care products, and home cleaning supplies (Ovezmyradov, 2022). Globally, the FMCG sector is recognised as a leader in SCM techniques. The priority of FMCG firms is to create a supply chain that meets client requirements as effectively and efficiently as feasible (Syed et al., 2019).

Given the fluidity of FMCG supply networks, adaptability is essential for satisfying customer demands (Govender et al., 2018). One of the most significant and quickly expanding CRM industries in South Africa is the FMCG industry, which strives to overcome the difficulty of offering customers high-quality service (Meyer et al., 2019). The gap between a customer's idea of how a service should be offered and their opinion of how that service is provided is known as service quality (Mosana, 2019); (Tungande et al., 2020).

In the last two years (2021–2022), the FMCG industry has dramatically grown in South Africa. According to a poll that looks at consumers' online purchasing behaviours, 91% of South Africans with internet access have made an online purchase, with the growth of the fashion industry, online restaurant delivery, and meal kit services demonstrating the most importance (Tungande et al., 2020). However, due to the complexity of its product and service offerings and how intensely it is focused on the end-consumer, the FMCG retail industry is one of the most difficult and complex supply chain industries to operate (Singh et al., 2018). Integrating social media use across the supply chain is one approach to alleviate the pressure on the FMCG sector to stay competitive. This makes it possible to establish meaningful customer relationship management (CRM) with both current and past customers (Mathu & Phetla, 2018).

2.6. Corporate Sustainability Disruptions in the FMCG Retail Industry

CS is mainly driven by institutional rules, increasing stakeholder pressure, unofficial socioeconomic considerations, and corporation desires to defend their operations (Wang & Qi, 2020). The foundational literature on the subject and a well-established study field are the driving forces behind CS. The problems that prevent CS from working

and the solutions to those problems receive little attention in academic research. Several reports claim that the numerous sustainability disruptors frequently subject CS to various disruptions (Latapí et al., 2019). As a result, more academic scholars claim that rigorous barrier identification and efficient mitigation strategies are required for businesses to meet their sustainable goals. Organisations must create appropriate strategies that address sustainability issues to do this (Bocken et al., 2019). Prioritising obstacles and mitigating measures is essential since organisational competence for CS may differ based on a business's size, nature, industry, and socioeconomic position (Geissdoerfer et al., 2018). Numerous CS activities have been studied by researchers in both developed and developing nations, although some more recent studies concentrate on CS hurdles. However, research that creates plans to minimise CS interruptions is lacking (Geissdoerfer et al., 2018); (Khadri, 2018).

Managers should identify potential CS disruption causes because some these disruptions might not be preventable (Scheibe & Blackhurst, 2018). The negative effects could become more severe when a disruptor permeates a company. Literacy is necessary for managers to recognize potential CS challenges (Scheibe & Blackhurst, 2018). Management and potential providers must work together to reduce CS interruptions. These disruptions could result in decreased revenue growth, stock returns, and shareholder value if certain procedures are not followed (Sawik, 2017).

The long-term viability of FMCGs is severely threatened by the social, environmental and economic aspects of sustainability (Bocken et al., 2022). The ecological aspect is the most detrimental component, followed by the social and then economic aspects. Despite this, the majority of FMCG companies lack comprehensive sustainability analyses in their risk management processes (Bocken et al., 2022).

Table 0-1: An analysis of the research on the challenges to corporate sustainability

Barriers to corporate sustainability	Literature
Lack of governance and a regulatory framework	(Kazancoglu et al., 2021)

Lack of understanding and information	(Zhang et al., 2019)
Lack of sustainability education	(Kopnina, 2020)
Lack of written policy	(Rasoolimanesh et al., 2020)
Lack of sustainability strategy	(Jaramillo et al., 2019); (Nave & Ferreira, 2019)
Lack of funding or expense	(Kazancoglu et al., 2021)
Environmental and social aspects	(Orazalin & Baydauletov, 2020)

2.6.1. Internal corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry

Every person who purchases the finished goods is involved in retailing, which employs around 20% of all workers worldwide (Neboh et al., 2022); (Siagian et al., 2021). The FMCG retailing sector in South Africa has demonstrated its viability by consistently meeting the needs of the public. However, dynamic changes in customers' needs brought on by economic upheavals and supply chain vulnerability may result in disruption events. In the FMCG retail sector, there are several other variables that can lead to disruptions, including a lack of funding, conflicts of interest, ineffective strategic leadership, and a lack of knowledge and understanding (Magagula et al., 2018). The adoption of business sustainability is hampered internally by insufficient knowledge, insight, vision, financial resources, and competence. There are three main impediments to CS through an exploratory in-depth investigation, the lack of a sustainable framework, the lack of commitment from senior management, and cultural diversity (Sudmai, 2018).

The top managers believe that the main challenges are socioeconomic factors, a lack of sustainability knowledge and training, a lack of government effort, resource constraints,

and a predisposition to break the law (Mohiuddin et al., 2022). After analysing the organisational barriers to CS, Rodrigues and Franco (2019) found that a lack of strategy prevents companies from adopting sustainable business practices. In a similar vein, the World Bank Report (2017) claims that for business operations to be sustainable, there needs to be a framework for social and environmental compliance as well as an understanding of eco-efficiency. In addition, Gupta and Gupta (2021) reiterate that management and organisational impediments to sustainability exist, including a lack of strategy, organisational commitment, and a framework. However, these studies primarily focus on industrialised nations, of which the contexts differ from those of emerging nations (Rodrigues & Franco, 2019). Even though CS adoption by businesses in developing nations is already a common practice, Pinto & Alluil (2020) noticed a range of CS obstacles in their recent study on India. The authors also assert that the biggest obstacles are a lack of funding, difficulties of implementation, a lack of managerial backing, and a lack of precise understanding. The main obstacles to CS include a lack of resources, a lack of a link between sustainability and business strategy, and a lack of worker awareness (Table 2.1) (Jaramillo et al., 2019); (Kopnina, 2020); (Orazalin & Baydauletov, 2020); (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2020); (Zhang et al., 2019). A few scholars have called attention to the flaws in CS, but nothing has been done to prioritise them or find remedies.

The CS challenges must be prioritised because the resources and capacities of businesses differ according to their size and sector of operation. Organisations can identify the most difficult obstacles by choosing the best mitigation options based on their capabilities (Gutterman, 2022). This study used an analytical hierarchy process to identify and rank the obstacles to corporate sustainability.

2.6.2. External corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry

The social, environmental and economic components of external CS severely impair FMCG's long-term survival, with environmental aspects taking the lead, followed by the social and economic aspects (Chakabva et al., 2020). The environmental factor is the most dangerous to the long-term viability of FMCGs, followed by social and economic

factors. Despite this, most FMCG companies lack comprehensive sustainability analyses in their risk management processes (Chakabva et al., 2020).

2.6.2.1. Social factors

Corporate social responsibility and sustainable development are increasingly employed in academic study, corporate initiatives, and public discourse. Company social responsibility is viewed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development as "a business's contribution to sustainable development (OECD/UNDP, 2019). It serves as an example of how corporations must act such that they consider not only shareholder profits, employee compensation, and consumer goods and services, but also social and environmental ideals and challenges. Globally, businesses that are a part of different economic, cultural, and political systems are subject to different operational and management standards; they also face rising market barriers and must manage customers' expectations that are rapidly changing in a competitive environment. According to Chakabva et al. (2020) adhering to the moral, legal, and social concerns that the stakeholders represent is necessary for acting socially responsible. The concept of corporate social responsibility can also be understood as a business strategy that commits an organisation to address societal needs, such as the environment. The current definitions of corporate social responsibility strongly emphasise the importance of responsible company behaviour and taking ownership of the social and natural surroundings (Liczmańska-Kopcewicz et al., 2019).

2.6.2.2. Environmental factors

The environment and the economy are two sides of the same coin. If the ecosystem cannot be sustained, neither can people. Businesses have historically put profits ahead of the effects of their operations on the environment and people (Tetreault, 2022). Organisations must combine environmental practices with their corporate governance principles to reduce the danger of incidents that could damage an their reputation. This is a result of the complicated and changeable nature of clients. Dyadic interactions are a byproduct of sociology. A pair of individuals or an organisation is said to be in a dyadic link when these individuals or the organisation share certain relationships, activities, employment, and interests (Caraiman & Mates 2020). In this study, the buyer–supplier

relationship in the FMCG industry's supply chain environment is referred to as the dyadic relationship. According to 81% of the 3000 respondents to the Nielsen Global Report (2018), businesses should actively participate in environmental projects to enhance the environment in which they operate. In addition, 73% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay extra for a commodity or service from a company that appreciates the environment. (Karl et al., 2020).

2.6.2.3. Economic factors

In this context, the term "economical" refers to using techniques and technologies that do not harm the environment to provide for humanity's basic material needs. Economically speaking, sustainable development is characterised as adopting a fair revenue distribution approach. The FMCG industry, a subsector of the economy, includes fast-moving consumer products, also called "basic" necessities. This includes goods from various categories, including food, beverages, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, personal care products, household chemicals, and over-the-counter medications (Magagula et al., 2018); (Tsalis et al., 2020). These are reasonably priced goods that are typically bought in bulk. Changes in customer behaviour due to new conditions and adjustments in market trends are crucial for businesses and their products.

The FMCG is a sector that is always evolving, and a company's ability to adapt quickly to customers' shifting requirements and rising expectations is crucial to its survival in the market. It is challenging to run a business in the FMCG sector because of the intense competition (Tungande et al., 2020). The FMCG market constantly changes as more shops that sell these product categories open and the assortment expands. As evidenced by the emergence of new health food shops, organic cosmetics, and zero-waste establishments that price items according to weight, this sector is always changing and adopting the latest fashion trends. Studies and examples demonstrate the connection between customers' desire to make informed purchasing decisions and how well-functioning organisations operate according to sustainable development.

2.7. Strategies FMCG Retailers can Adopt for Mitigating Corporate Sustainability Disruptions

The long-term trajectory of an organisation is its strategy, which is a pattern of choices that combine planned and unplanned elements (Pushpamali et al., 2021). Thus, an organisation's long-term direction, consisting of planned and emergent elements, is defined as a strategy (Bryson & George, 2020). In this study, a strategy frequently consists of both intentional and unintentional emergent components. This study will address both established and newly developed methods for minimising CS disruptors in Gauteng's FMCG retail sector.

To achieve its long-term corporate objectives, a sustainable organisation must remove sustainability barriers. For an organisation to survive and for the good of society, it must ensure social, environmental, and economic sustainability. Furthermore, to close the sustainability barrier gap, it should also employ company management techniques that consider social, environmental, and economic considerations. With the help of a strategic sustainability policy and standard, an organisation can transition to sustainable business practices (Nazam et al., 2020); (Zimon et al., 2020). Many countries have stringent regulations that force companies to follow social and environmental norms. Owing to these constraints, managers must consider sustainability management (Sajjad et al., 2020); (Zimon et al., 2020).

By acquiring certification from various standard-setting organisations such as ISO 14001 and UN Global Compact membership, organisations can address sustainability challenges by demonstrating their social and environmental performance (Haack & Rasche, 2021); (Nave & Ferreira, 2019). Organisations prioritise social and environmental compliance and offer sustainable working conditions, taking into account issues with occupational health, safety, and pollution avoidance. Currently, the two biggest issues are business methods utilised to meet the demands of suppliers and maintain sustainable supply chains (Mikhno et al., 2020); (Sardana et al., 2020). However, management, employees, and other stakeholders could benefit from continual training to help the organisation achieve its sustainable goals (Inesa et al., 2021). For

internal stakeholders to meet management's goal of setting higher standards for sustainability, social responsibility, and the environment, additional education and training are required. Maintaining sustainability and removing barriers to sustainability depends heavily on technological innovation, notably boosting efficiency through technology. Equipment and technology efficiency improvements can reduce costs, input requirements, and emissions (Liao & Zhang, 2020); (Mio et al., 2022). Thus, efficiency is one of the essential elements of sustainable development.

This study intends to close the knowledge gap regarding the modelling of the prioritisation of CS-related barriers and the appropriate mitigation tactics. It starts by outlining potential impediments to company sustainability and their appropriate solutions. In the modern, competitive business environment, well-developed organisational strategies for CS adoption are evident, yet management has significant difficulties with prioritising CS barriers and mitigating measures. Guterres (2020), Lashitew (2021), Wuni (2022), and Ghobakhloo et al. (2022) assert that one of the primary obstacles to sustainability is a lack of resources and expenses. Although several earlier studies scrutinised CS from a variety of angles, none of them provided an economic strategy for eliminating its barriers that are considered the most efficient use of resources. The second goal of this research is to identify the best mitigation techniques for CS issues in a world with limited resources.

Table 2.2: An analysis of the corporate sustainability disruptor's mitigation research

Mitigation Approach	Literature
Reporting on social and environmental issues	(Hämäläinen & Inkinen, 2019); (Wang et al., 2022)
Evaluation and selection of suppliers	(Shekarian & Parast, 2021)
Establishing standards for sustainability	(Feroz et al., 2021); (Frizzo-Barker et al., 2020)
Controlling the use of resources	(Feroz et al., 2021)
Product life cycle management	(Feroz et al., 2021); (Leng et al., 2020); (Shekarian & Parast, 2021)

The creation of backward linkages	(Kivimaa et al., 2021)
Establishing a unit for managing sustainability	(Choi et al., 2022); (Hosseini-Motlagh et al., 2019)
Putting social and environmental practices into practice (waste management and pollution control)	(Batista et al., 2021); (Debrah et al., 2021)
Enhancing the working environment and degree of employee satisfaction	(Kurniawaty et al., 2019)
Agile management	(Claus, 2019)
Internal and outside auditing	(Lombardi et al., 2022)
Cooperating and establishing partnerships with supply chain partners	(Kurniawaty, 2019)
Training for skill development	(Agarwal et al., 2022)
Using technology and effective machinery	(Choi et al., 2022)
Counselling and education on social and environmental issues (awareness)	(Purcell et al., 2019)
Alternatives and backup facilities	(Emenike & Falcone, 2020)
Backward logistics	(Hosseini-Motlagh et al., 2019)

2.8. Quality Function Deployment (QFD)

The development of quality function deployment (QFD) applications has benefitted numerous industries, including design planning, engineering, management, teamwork, timing, and costing (Ahmadzadeh et al., 2021). Ahmadzadeh et al. (2021) shows that QFD aids the firm in successfully directing requests toward crucial areas so customers may make better plans. In conclusion, QFD is used for (1) converting and translating client needs into technical specifications of the product/service and (2) determining

qualitative activities in accordance with the technical specifications of the product/service. The main goal of using the quality function is to gather and analyse consumer desires and needs before putting the findings into design requirements or enhanced items that meet or even surpass the standards. To reach specified objectives, QFD gives a technique to convert desires or needs into useful technical or engineering qualities (Fitriana et al., 2020). It is an effective technique for developing strategies that address the issues related to corporate sustainability, according to past studies. It is also a useful method for identifying the main obstacles to business sustainability and the corresponding mitigation strategies (Erdil & Arani, 2019); (Kiran, 2017); (Ocampo et al., 2020).

Businesses have recently successfully addressed strategic and operational decisions by utilising QFD as a potent tool (Erdil & Arani, 2019). This tool is used in many fields, such as customer demand analysis, priority setting, annual planning, manufacturing strategy formulation and environmental decision-making (Jamwal et al., 2021). A comprehensive list of the disciplines in which QFD has been successfully used is provided by Hossain and Chowdhury (2015). Sustainability is achieved through helping an organisation identify its growth opportunities. Additionally, QFD offers a strategy for converting needs or wants into practical ways of achieving specific objectives. This lends credence to the claim that the quality function deployment is a useful instrument for developing strategies that address obstacles to business sustainability.

In addition to QFD, other methods such as multiple-objective linear programming and statistical methodology can be used to identify the issues facing CS and choose the appropriate solutions to address them. One major flaw is that a quantitative model cannot consider qualitative factors. A substantial focus on qualitative factors is necessary to address sustainability concerns (Schaltegger et al., 2017); (Scharlemann et al., 2020). The qualitative aspects of sustainability concerns can be addressed effectively with QFD. The weights of the business sustainability problems in this study were calculated using AHP-integrated quality function deployment (Leal, 2020).

This study identifies the primary sustainability issues using QFD. The main technique for analysing the sustainability barrier reduction activities is quantitative functional

analysis, based on an organisation's capability for sustainability. To fulfil the requirements, "needs" – also known as "WHATs" and "HOWs" – are utilised in quality function deployment and modelling. To demonstrate how to employ the proper HOWs to fulfil the given WHATs, a matrix is used. The WHAT, WHY, HOW Correlation Matrix, Relationship Matrix, and Importance of WHATs are five kinds of input data that are presented methodically in the paper's methodology section (Horan, 2022).

2.9. Analytical Process Hierarchy (AHP)

The analytical hierarchy process (AHP), created by Leal (2020), is a multi-criteria decision-making strategy that uses a special technique for organising an issue hierarchically and ranking viable solutions through paired comparison. In the QFD process example, the analytical hierarchy process is a conventional pairwise comparison matrix (Leal, 2020). According to the methodology utilised in the current study, sustainability hurdles are given priority in QFD.

2.10. The Role of Sustainability Risk Management in Mitigating Corporate Sustainability Disruptions

Risk management is a proactive attempt to optimize corporate priorities by identifying, evaluating, and limiting disruptive behaviours and occurrences to lessen their impact and safeguard valuable resources and sustainably used services (Caraiman & Mates, 2020). Enterprise risk management is a strategy for managing risks and obstacles that interfere with business operations. Sustainability risks management (SRM), a concept in ethics, is concerned with the effects of business action on social and environmental systems. In the management of sustainability risks, disruptions or dangers resulting from social, environmental, and economic implications are considered (Razak et al., 2020). SRM is controlling the risks related to sustainability issues.

2.11. The Role of a Board of Directors in Mitigating Corporate Sustainability Disruptions in the FMCG Retail Sector

According to Goyal et al. (2019), a board of directors (BOD) denote people who represent shareholders and have a significant role in company administration; such roles have broadened the breadth and growth of sustainability consciousness. Goyal et al. (2019) further assert that a board of directors aims to drive corporate choices and improve financial performance by protecting investors. These directors perform control, service, strategy and resource tasks. The board of directors is crucial because of the increase in stakeholder demands and corporate governance violations resulting from liberalized financial markets. It ensures that values are upheld by concentrating on the environment, health and safety, stakeholder security, discrimination, bribery and corruption, information confidentiality, and insider practices (Goyal et al., 2019).

Additionally, the board develops and supports sustainability standards for suppliers, which encourages consideration of environmental and social concerns when evaluating, choosing, and designating a company's primary suppliers. The board of directors is in charge of risk analysis, current and future evaluation and monitoring senior management and the chief executive officer's (CEO) behaviour. Thus, directors can evaluate how the company is run, put initiatives into action, and establish the criteria for the CEO's pay.

A business controls environmental constraints by adopting CSR policies and moral guidelines that uphold and promote the position of economic and social standing (Goyal et al., 2019). Boards have historically focused on creating sustainable value for shareholders and planning for changes in the environment in which their business works as part of their supervisory responsibilities (Goyal et al., 2019). In the company's entire business risk assessment, management, and policy implementations, social, economic, and environmental risks are now included within the board's regulation of best practices. When a board of directors is involved in challenging situations and making critical strategic choices for an organisation, it should contribute significantly to finding solutions (Real et al., 2018).

2.12. Effectiveness of the Efforts Made by a Board of Directors in Mitigating Corporate Sustainability Disruptions in the FMCG Retail Industry

A corporation can handle environmental constraints by adopting CSR policies and ethical standards that uphold and promote the position of economic and social standing (Aryssi et al., 2020); (Corvino et al., 2020). A sustainable organisation must remove sustainability barriers to achieve its long-term corporate objectives. The organisation must assure social, environmental, and economic sustainability for its continued existence and the benefit of society. To do this, it must use corporate management strategies that take social, environmental, and economic concerns into account. According to Baldassarre et al. (2020) and Barros et al. (2021), a strategic sustainability plan and guiding principles can help an organisation transition to sustainable business practices. It is against the law for enterprises to violate social and environmental standards in some countries. Owing to these limitations, managers must consider sustainability management. By getting certifications from various standard-setting organisations, such as ISO 14001 and UN Global Compact membership, organisations demonstrate their social and environmental performances more frequently to remove barriers to sustainability (Blind & Heß, 2023); (Haack Rasche 2021).

Organisations prioritise social and environmental compliance and provide sustainable working conditions, including issues with occupational health, safety, and pollution prevention in the demanding and competitive global business environment (Alavi & Aghakhani, 2023); (Haack & Rasche 2021). The two main recurring issues are having a sustainable supply chain and the strategies businesses use to satisfy the requirements of their suppliers. However, other studies have demonstrated that management, staff, and other stakeholders could benefit from ongoing training to support an organisation's sustainable goals (Cop et al., 2020); (Journeault et al., 2021). Additional education and training are necessary for internal stakeholders to achieve management's objective of establishing higher standards for sustainability, social responsibility, and the environment. (Glonti et al., 2020); (Lu et al., 2021). Technological innovation, particularly via increasing efficiency through the use of technology, is crucial to

maintaining and lowering the obstacles to sustainability. Technology developments and equipment that boosts efficiency can save costs, input requirements, and pollutants. Thus, one of the key components of sustainable development is efficiency. Although some academics have suggested some of the ways and means to achieve this, no comprehensive and integrated study on the mitigation of different types of sustainability hurdles has yet been conducted. Developing an effective and efficient mitigation plan has received little attention from various research methodologies. To close this gap in the literature, this study employs QFD to pinpoint mitigation strategies for sustainability barriers and select the most crucial ones.

2.13. Conclusion

This chapter included information on possible disruptors as well as CSR best practices. It also overviewed CS disruptions in the FMCG industry. The study examined corporate social responsibility practices worldwide for a better understanding and to establish a link between them and the context under consideration. The chapter began by outlining corporate sustainability, sustainability disruptions, and swiftly moving to consumer goods. After that, it summarise the disruptions to business sustainability on the internal and external levels, along with the retail market for FMCG products to understand the nature of these disruptions better. The research focused on the role of middle managers particularly operations managers and boards of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions that the FMCG retail sector is currently experiencing. The review's objective was to identify corporate sustainability hurdles to sustainability initiatives.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The research procedures, techniques, and strategies for data gathering and analysis, including a detailed study design and inquiry strategy, are covered in this chapter. The chapter provides details on the sampling process and the study's target population. It also identifies the kind of data analysis performed and thoroughly explains the methods and tools used to collect the data. The techniques used to ensure the research integrity and quality, as well as the ethical norms that must always be upheld, are also covered in this chapter.

A research strategy is a research method that follows a certain research paradigm or philosophy (Mulisa, 2022). Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method techniques are the basic research methodologies. A qualitative method was used in this study. Quantitative research is objective and uses measurable numerical data, whereas qualitative research is subjective and collects or uses non-numerical data (Wyllie, 2019). A qualitative method helps understand the significance of people or groups to a studied phenomenon. This approach has ties to an interpretive philosophy (Englander, 2019). It is interpretive because the researcher tries to make sense of the arbitrary and socially constructed meanings presented about the topic under study (Englander, 2019). The process of interpretative research incorporates novel questions and methodologies. The participant's natural environment is used to collect data which is then inductively analysed to provide new hypotheses or information.

The qualitative approach seemed appropriate for the present study since it employed an inductive methodology to identify meaningful patterns (Mohajan, 2018). By conducting a qualitative inquiry, the researcher was better equipped to understand the issue under study. The qualitative technique is predicated on comprehension of social or human experiences based on the specific perspectives of informants in their natural environment (Mohajan, 2018). This methodology was used for the current study because it allowed the researcher to acquire a more comprehensive insight into CS disruptions in the FMCG retail market. The researcher understood the subjective and

socially created meanings attributed to the researched occurrences (Cuthbertson et al., 2020); (Groenland & Dana, 2019); (Rajasinghe, 2020). The process of conducting interpretative research included emerging questions and processes. Inductive reasoning was used to analyse the data that was gathered in the participants' natural surroundings to generate new hypotheses, knowledge and information. The relevance of the results was also explained by the researcher in relation to questions posed to the willing participants.

3.1.1. Research methodology

Al-ababneh (2020) asserts that a certain paradigm or approach to data interpretation should always be used in scientific research. Today, paradigms in the form of thought schools that have evolved over many years regulate all types of investigation. Generally, the term "paradigm" refers to a significant body of ideas held by scientists; these include a collection of perceptions on how to approach issues and interpret the world to do research (Rahi, 2017). A paradigm can be thought of as a fundamental set of assumptions or convictions that guide scientific inquiry. Al-ababneh (2020) further affirms that a paradigm is a collection of premises placed within a structure that guides how social theory and empirical study view the world. This review aims to provide a clear understanding of different research methodologies based on ontology, epistemology and the methods applied.

- Ontology (nature of reality and what truth is)
- Epistemology (how we know)
- Methodology (which research methods can be used to gather and analyse data)

Two popular worldviews or ideas that guide the conduct of a scientific investigation are positivism and interpretivism (Hackfort & Schinke, 2020); (Maarouf, 2019). Positivism presupposes that reliable and credible research findings are impartial and consider the five senses (Maarouf, 2019). Given that it is inherently more scientific, this paradigm is more helpful to researchers doing quantitative research inquiries (Mezmir, 2020). Positivism is more suited to a quantitative approach because it is experimental,

manipulating, and hypothetical. As a result, statistical data collection, analysis, testing, and presentation are all possible (Kaiser, 2019). According to Aspers & Corte (2019), positivists permit measuring facts through numerical conversions and statistical analysis to assess relationships with less researcher impact on study participants.

This study relied heavily on positivism to quantify the consequences of respondents' questionnaire responses. Interpretivism encourages the creation of various arbitrary facts depending on personal interpretations (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). Finding meanings or producing knowledge using qualitative data rather than objective facts with a quantitative focus is another objective of interpretivism. An interpretivism-driven study strongly emphasises the participants' memories and interpretations of their experiences. This type of research focuses on developing explanations and deepening knowledge of these phenomena.

The interpretive and phenomenological philosophies served as the respective guiding principles for this research. Interpretivism includes the philosophy of phenomenology. According to Frechette et al. (2020), it is an interpretivist component that emphasises individuals' actual experiences. The researcher selected the phenomenological method because it is excellent for investigating participants' meanings and understandings as social agents. The researcher can better comprehend research participants' experiences by asking them to explain their encounters with customer service interruptions in the FMCG retail sector. This approach was found to be appropriate for this study (Frechette et al., 2020); (Monaro et al., 2022); (Urcia, 2021).

3.2. Research Design

Research design helps address the research problem by revealing a complete picture of the procedures employed by the researcher (Kekeya, 2021). Kekeya (2021) urges researchers to choose an acceptable research strategy and emphasises that a research design uncovers the characteristics of study participants, the scope and subject matter to be examined, the time timeframe, the method to be implemented and the purpose of the investigation. The direction to be followed by the researcher is expressed clearly by the study's research design (Alam, 2021). In this study, the researcher used a

qualitative approach to conduct an exploratory phenomenological case study. Semi-structured interviews are used to gather the participants' experiences and perceptions as part of a phenomenological case study that is conducted in their natural setting. The researcher gathered extensive and in-depth data on the corporate sustainability disruptors in the FMCG retail business thanks to this approach, which made it appropriate for the current study.

3.3. Sampling Procedure

A target population consists of all individuals from whom study participants can be selected and a research population is a group of individuals from which study participants may be selected (McKay et al., 2022). The study's target audience consisted of 33 operations managers (n = 33) drawn from a list of 33 FMCG retailers.

The study was qualitative, and the sample was chosen via non-probability convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a sampling approach in which a researcher selects easily available individuals. A sample is frequently composed of volunteers. Stratton (2021) states that sampling is the selection of several individuals from a population. The sample consisted of operation managers from 33 FMCG stores in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (n = 33), of which only ten are FMCG retailers. This means that the sample for this study (n = 10) included all ten operation managers. The study's sample size of the first ten participants was appropriate since it resulted in data saturation and the collection of rich and detailed data adequate to meet the research objectives. Owing to the need for more in-depth and extended interview questions, the researcher used a small sample size for the study. Furthermore, the project researcher identified instances that supplied the non-bias and finest data for the study's aims.

Table 0-1: The stores in which the data was collected, including the population, and race of the target group interviewed.

Gender	Number	Sample Targets	Interview Minutes	Retail Stores as Population in Tshwane Municipality
Male	1	Operation	20	3

		Manager		
Female	2	Operation Manager	23	2
Male	3	Operation Manager	20	1
Female	4	Operation Manager	18	1
Male	5	Operation Manager	33	4
Female	6	Operation Manager	30	5
Male	7	Operation Manager	35	5
Female	8	Operation Manager	30	6
Male	9	Operation Manager	23	4
Female	10	Operation Manager	26	2

Table 3-1 is significant since it displays both the gender and the number of operation managers who participated in the study, demonstrating a balance in the participants' gender equality. The time it took to conduct the interview is also shown. Due to the participants' diverse levels of education and experience, the interview durations differed. The table also reveals how many outlets the interviewees were in charge of in the Tshwane municipality.

3.4. Data Collection Methods and Tools

The techniques and equipment used by a researcher to collect data are called data collection instruments (Pandey et al., 2019). The researcher employed face-to-face individual semi-structured interviews with FMCG operations managers to gather primary data. The strategies used by qualitative researchers to collect primary data include observations, interview scheduling, and document analysis and the interview took about 10–15 minutes for each participant.

The researcher used a semi-structured interview to administer a set of interview questions in a flexible manner by allowing spontaneity and adaptation of the interaction during the interview session which took approximately 10–15 minutes per participant (Wishkoski, 2020). The open-ended questions posed in the context of the phenomenon under examination were structured according to the study's objectives (Henriksen et al., 2022). Employing interviews as a method of data collection was essential to this study since it allowed for the possibility of asking follow-up questions, observing attitudes, and understanding participants' perspectives and experiences (Döringer, 2021).

Semi-structured interviews were also chosen since they enabled the researcher to gather exhaustive data that improved comprehension of the topic (Ahlin, 2020); (Husband, 2020); (Xu et al., 2020). Additionally, a researcher has more control over the order and flow of questions during an interview. The interview schedule may be modified in light of preliminary findings, and the researcher may respond to any queries. A researcher should create an interview schedule as a tool for data collection since interviews are a component of the self-report data collection approach (Long et al., 2020). An interview schedule with a list of questions was developed to guide the interview process. A good interview schedule should include an inquiry-based discourse and be tied to the study objectives (Jackman et al., 2022). Based on the study's goals and an assessment of the pertinent literature, interview questions were developed.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Following the interviews and data transcription, the researcher began the analysis of the data using thematic analysis, a method for interpreting qualitative data that entails looking for recurrent themes or patterns (Lester et al., 2020); (Peel, 2020); (Xu & Zammit, 2020). The thematic analysis was used because it is a flexible method for analysing qualitative data (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). As part of the approach, the researcher must become familiar with the data they have gathered, code that data, search for themes, and identify patterns. Thematic analysis has proven to be a useful methodology for analysing the perspectives of the participants, and this approach was chosen since it is simple to apply (Herzog et al., 2019).

3.6. Data Quality Assurance

Several steps were taken by the researcher to assure the study's dependability, reliability, and authenticity as a method that ensures quality without losing relevance (Goodman et al., 2020). The investigator followed the rules of reliability throughout this inquiry. Credibility, transferability, dependability, conformity, and authenticity were the four main requirements for obtaining credible outcomes (Goodman et al., 2020).

3.6.1. Credibility

Credibility is the ability to represent the participants' various realities in the research findings in a way that seems true and legitimate to individuals with similar beliefs (Slater et al., 2020); (Teeny et al., 2021). The participant's view of the environment or activity is credible if it matches how the researcher has described it in the study report. In this study, the researcher concealed the identity of the participants. Moreover, the results were gathered from the participants' perspectives to ensure their validity.

To confirm the validity of the participants' perspectives, the researcher also employed tactics of ongoing participation and participatory design. Several questions addressed the issue of corporate sustainability disruptions. The interviewer offered follow-up questions and asked the participants to give examples to back up their assertions. The researcher found research themes from the raw interview data. Transcripts of the

interviews were sent to the participants for comment where the researcher needed clarity. The participants also received an interview schedule framework for assessment after the creation of the draft framework (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). Additionally, the researcher verified the results by asking participants questions, examining the transcripts for inconsistencies, and ensuring that the data were coded consistently.

3.6.2. Transferability

The ability of research findings to be generalised or applied in other contexts is referred to as transferability (Levitt, 2021). This study considered geographical characteristics and provided decision-makers with more information so they could judge whether the results would be applicable in other situations. There were many FMCGs employed to broaden the range of scenarios. To guarantee the relevance of its conclusions, the study was carried out at many organisations. Transferability is a method for enhancing a qualitative study's conclusions' applicability and generalisability to various situations or populations. Although the Gauteng Province's retail firms were the study's primary target, the conclusions may still be relevant to companies in other regions. To ensure transferability, the researcher provided a complete and in-depth summary of the organisations where she conducted her research work.

3.6.3 Dependability

Reliability is defined as the accuracy and reliability of the study results, while dependability is the amount to which findings may be replicated with the same subjects or under similar conditions (Kyngäs et al., 2020). All research methods must be thoroughly recorded so that later researchers can duplicate the entire procedure in order to preserve credibility. The entire study procedure was painstakingly documented for reliability. The use of overlapping processes is possible with a direct strategy. Reliability is a prerequisite for qualitative research that demonstrated the ability to track data collection and analysis procedures and processes (McDonald et al., 2019). Some studies examine the development of connections between the researcher and participants as well as the reliability and organisation of interviews (Rashid et al., 2019).

3.6.4 Conformability

Confirmability requires a researcher to use objective judgement by eliminating biases (Johnson et al., 2020). The outcome of the data gathered from the participants is necessary for conformability, not the researcher's ideas. All necessary measures were followed to guarantee that the study's findings were supported by the participants' perceptions and experiences. Usually, this is done to lessen the impact of research bias. To maximise confirmability and remove researcher bias, this study used triangulation to combine primary data from several different organisations.

Moreover, the approach should be described in sufficient detail for other readers to judge whether the results are acceptable (McKenzie & Brennan, 2019). The researcher provided an auditor with a summary and analysis of the study to determine whether the results were valid and logically derived from the data. During data collection, the researcher was able to capture all factors that can have an impact on the analysis by keeping a field journal. The researcher ensured this by examining her ideas, emotions, and behaviours to see how they affected the study.

In order to eliminate any bias and preconceived notions regarding the managers' engagement in strengthening the corporate sustainability of the retail industry, the researcher published their field notes detailing their activities, thoughts, and responses.

Confirmability can be increased by making the research method accessible and giving the reader enough information to ascertain whether they came to the same or a similar result (Elfenbein & Schwarze, 2020). Elfenbein and Schwarze (2020) scholars argued that qualitative researchers should be impartial and maintain a neutral posture to avoid bias in their findings. To prevent describing what did not happen, the researcher must ensure that the data collected will be checked many times to establish their validity. The researcher also showed confirmability by recording the processes for data verification and rechecking throughout the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2020).

3.7. Authenticity

When assessing the impact of a setting, a researcher must consider sub-criteria including fairness, educational authenticity, tactical authenticity, ontological authenticity, and catalytic authenticity (Amin et al., 2020). Fairness is the degree to which all competing reality constructions and underlying value systems are exposed, analysed, and considered to inform the development of a framework or product (Amin et al., 2020). The data from operational managers at several FMCG companies were gathered for this study to ensure objectivity. The level of understanding and acceptance or value that participants and researchers have of a work produced by someone outside their field is what educational authenticity means. This study upheld instructional authenticity by allowing participants and the researcher to recognise their similar perspectives. The degree to which participants are empowered to use the study's findings is what is known as tactical authenticity (Amin et al., 2020). A final copy of the transcripts was provided to the participants in this case (upon request), allowing them to assess the impact of corporate sustainability disruptions on the FMCG retail sector.

3.8. Research Limitations

The availability and openness of the participants encountered in town meant that the demographic targeted was not considerable. Despite being assured that their anonymity and privacy would be preserved, most participants simply did not want to take part in the study. Depending on the locations where the research was done, a portion of the

South African population was excluded. Thus, if the investigation had been carried out in locations with a greater diversity of cultures, the research results would have been amplified. The NVIVO software was proposed to be used in this research work (Alam, 2021); (Almusallam, 2021). This software is widely used for qualitative data analysis and can shorten analysis timeframes, provide more thorough interpretation, and provide researchers with enhanced data management. However, NVIVO was developed to manage the coding procedures in analysing qualitative data; therefore, it was not used in this research as initially proposed.

3.9. Ethical Requirements and Considerations

The UNISA Ethics Committee gave their permission for this project. Both the College of Economics and Management Sciences Ethics Committee's rules and all UNISA regulations were followed in accordance with Cilliers & Viljoen (2021). The right to privacy, open communication among professionals, protection from harm, voluntary participation, and obtaining complete information are the most crucial ethical factors. "Ethical considerations are vital to all study inquiries and must be addressed by researchers," claims Vollmer et al. (2020). The researcher requested an ethical clearance certificate from the organisation in order to adhere to all ethical frameworks. The researcher obtained the participant's consent before the interviews.

Malik et al. (2021) defined anonymity as the maintenance of respondents' identities by concealing their identifying information. The researcher explained the study's purpose and upheld the participants' rights. Since participation in the study was completely voluntary, each participant was allowed to stop at any time without consequences. The researcher concealed the identity of all participants by using pseudonyms. This was even done to the names identified in the documents used to acquire data from the FMCG merchant (Magagula et al., 2018). The participants' information was saved in a digital folder protected by a password known only to the researcher. These records will be kept for at least five years from the day after the thesis is submitted. The researcher ensured that all participants were safe from injury.

3.10. Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the study's design, techniques, tactics, and strategies for collecting and analysing data. The complete research methodology and inquiry approach were described and backed up. The chapter also detailed the data analysis the study will use and provided a general overview of the tools and procedures used for data collection.

The chapter also described the procedures utilized to ensure the accuracy and high caliber of the research and the ethical standards upheld. The findings and conclusions of this investigation are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The research methodology, strategy, and approach used to answer the research problem were explored and addressed in the preceding chapter. This study attempts to solve corporate sustainability disruptions in the fast-moving consumer goods retail market (Ermes et al., 2022); (Meyer et al., 2019).

Moreover, regarding SDG, sustainability draws practical attention to the complex mutuality of human and ecological systems at the local and global levels. Economic health, ecological integrity, social fairness, and future responsibility must all be integrated in order to address numerous global problems within a coherent, long-term, and moral society vision (Bhandari, 2023).

The findings from the semi-structured interviews with ten operations managers working for five different FMCG retail organisations are presented and analysed in this chapter, which also contains the main data. Based on the primary data and themes found during the research, the conclusions are provided. Thematic analysis was used to examine the main data in this study. The researcher used Maguire and Delahunt's (2017) thematic analysis as a reference point for conducting analysis.

4.2 Socio-demographic Distribution of the Participants

Before the interviews, participants were requested to provide their socio-demographic data such as gender, age, education level, race, and employment history. This information was crucial for determining the participants' roles and whether they had the appropriate skills for managing FMCG retail businesses. The demographic and gender data for the participants are summarized and shown in the red and blue coloured pie chart figures shown below.

4.2.1 Distribution of participants' gender

Figure 4.1 below provides a summary and visual representation of the gender distribution of the research participants.

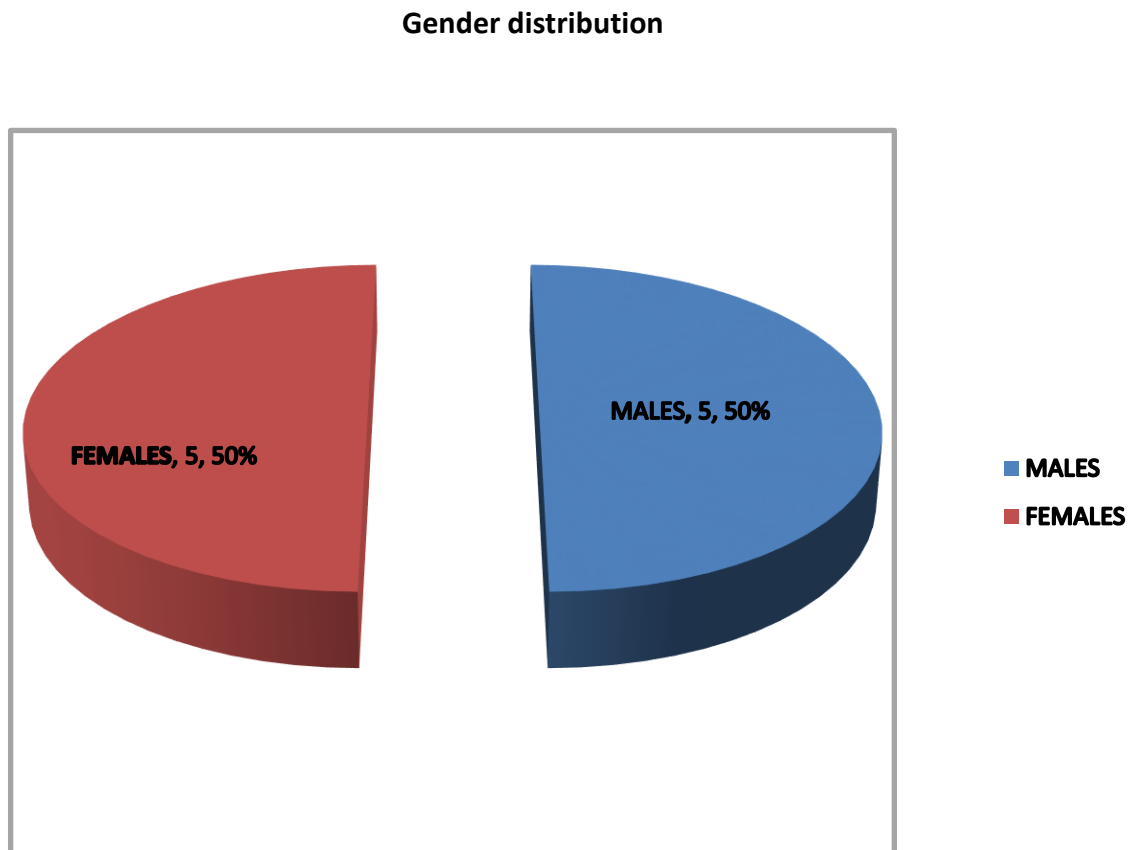


Figure 0-1: Red and blue colour array pie chat representing the gender distributions

The sample comprises ten participants (five men and five women) ($n = 10$, 100%) (Figure 4-1). This indicates a gender balance in the study's sample, which also included both men and women.

4.2.2 Distribution of participants' ages

To ensure diversity within the sample, it was important to determine the chronological distribution of the participant's age ranges. The results of the age distribution study are shown in Figure 4-2.

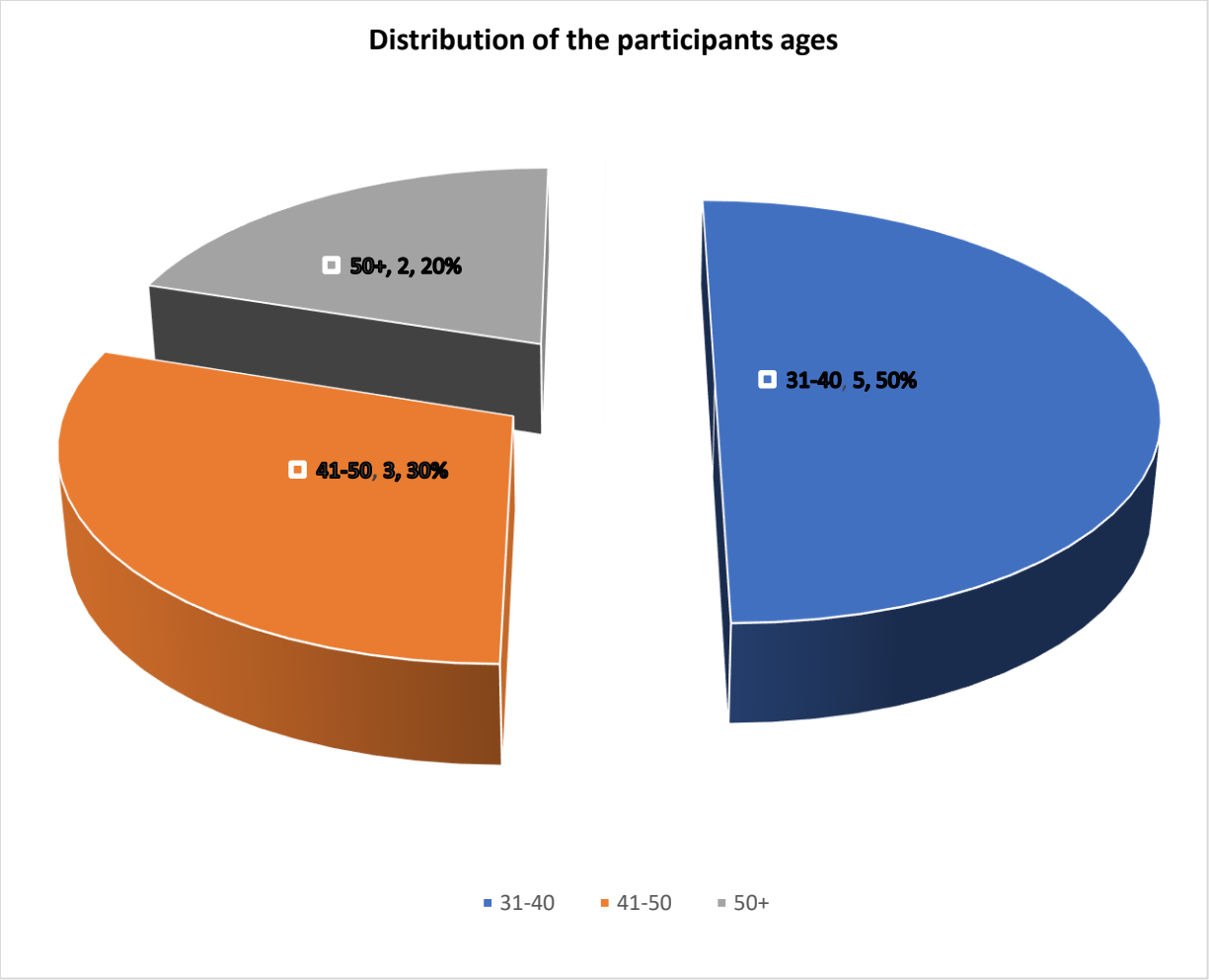


Figure 0-2: Distribution of the participants' sampled ages

Five participants in the research (50%) were between the ages of 31 and 40, and three (30%) were between the ages of 41 and 50. Two individuals (20%) in the group of those aged 50 and older could also be detected in the distribution. Age differences among the participants served as additional evidence of the sample's variety.

4.2.3 Distribution of the participants' educational qualifications

Figure 4-3 below displays the educational qualifications of all the participants. The qualifications also assist us to know the likely positions they may have for their portfolios and the understanding of the evolution and dynamics of the retail industry.

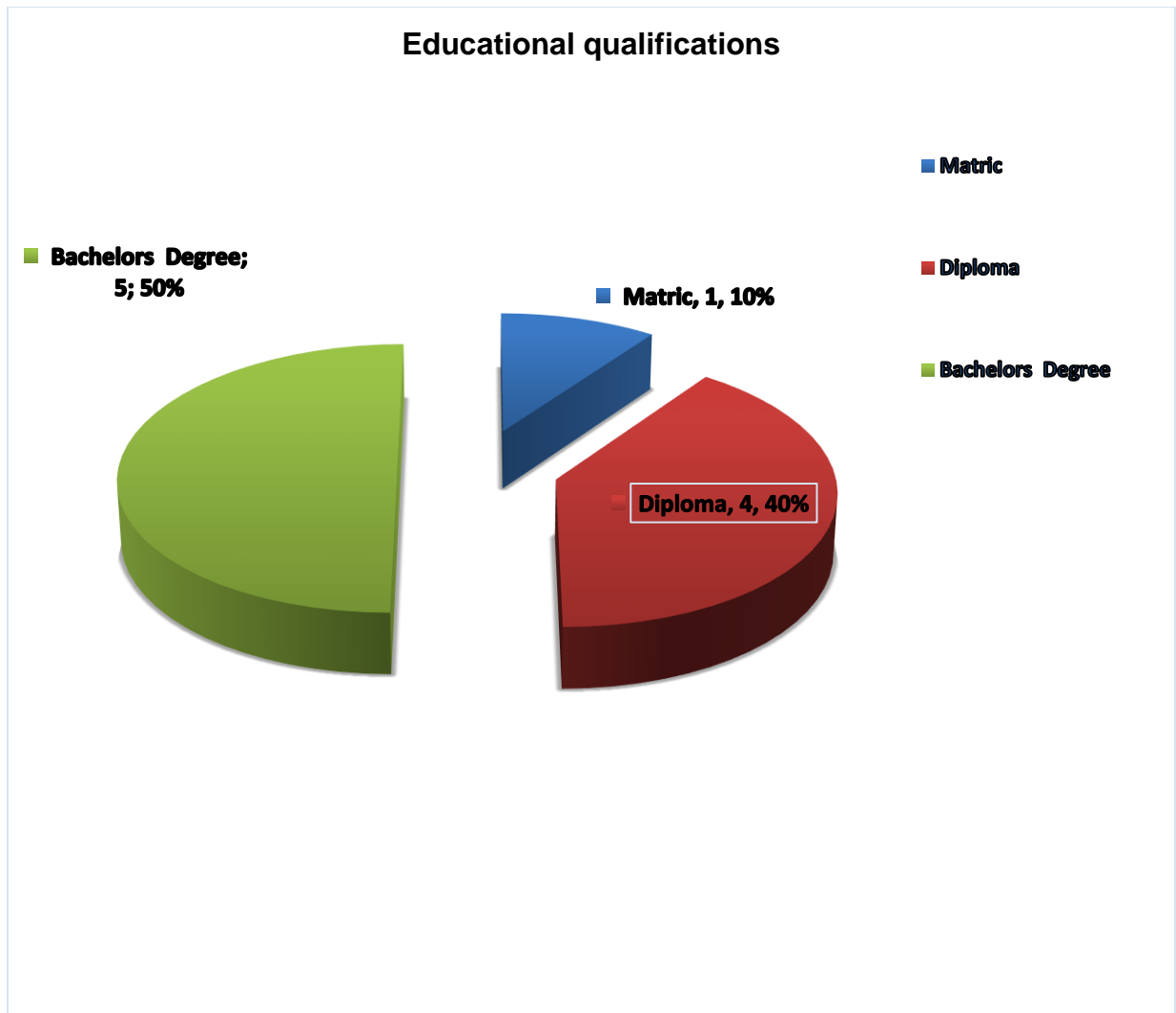


Figure 0-3: Distribution of the participants' educational qualifications

The results shown in Figure 4.3 above show that the majority of participants (n = 5) (50%, n = 5) had bachelor's degrees, while (n = 4) had diplomas, and only (n = 1) had matriculation as the highest educational level. The distribution is significant because it shows that the researcher sampled competent individuals who might offer deeper understanding and expertise that adequately addresses the research objectives.

4.2.4 Race distribution

The race distribution of all the participants is presented in Figure 4-4. Different races were chosen to get a broad spectrum of perspectives and responses from all residences in South African urban areas community.

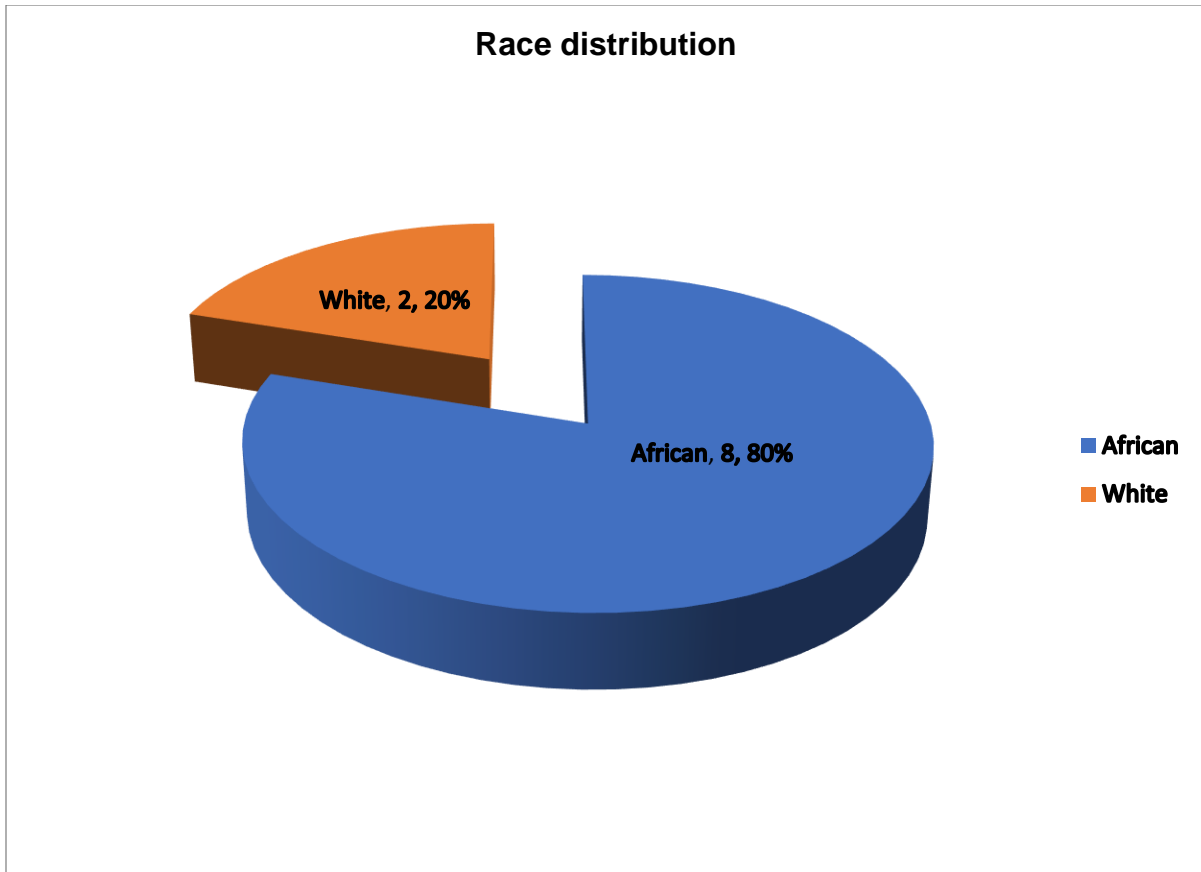


Figure 0-4: The pie chart represents the participants' race distribution.

According to the findings displayed in Figure 4-4, the majority of participants were black (n = 8; 80%) and whites (n = 2; 20%). Black people make up the majority of South Africa's major cities.

4.2.5 Work experience distribution

The work experience distribution of all the participants is presented in Figure 4-5.

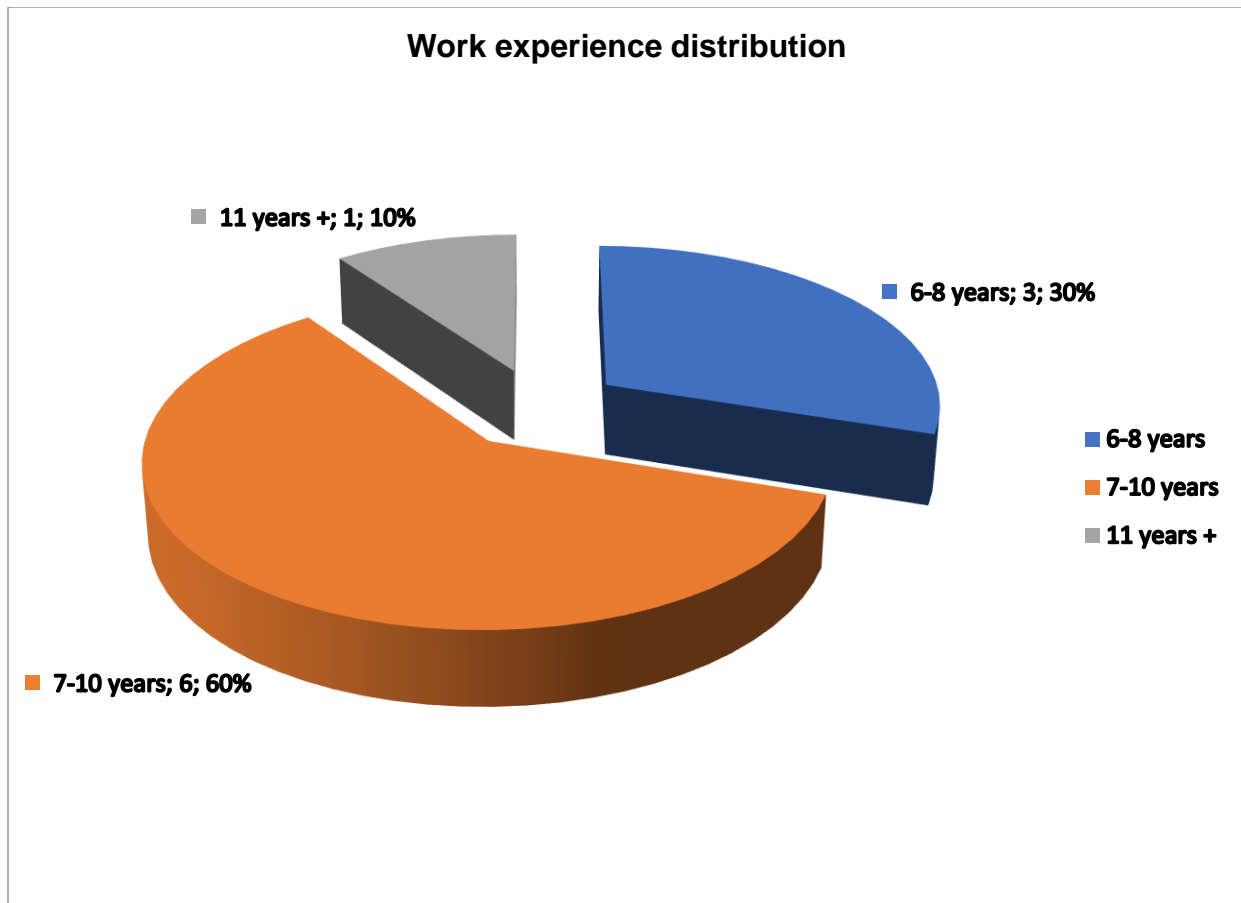


Figure 0-5: The distribution of professional experience of the participants.

According to the results shown in Figure 4-5, 60% of the participants (n=6) had 7–10 years of work experience; 30% (n=3) had 6–8, and 10% (n=1) had 11+ years. The majority of participants offer a variety of proposals based on their knowledge, abilities, and experience in the FMCG retail sector.

4.3 Presentation of Research Findings

The findings are logically presented in line with the various sections addressed in the semi-structured interviews. The results are based on the five categories identified:

- Category 1: Corporate sustainability disruptions
- Category 2: The role of sustainability risk management
- Category 3: The role of boards of directors
- Category 4: Strategies

- Category 5: Perception of the efforts made by the board.

This researcher interviewed ten participants according to an interview schedule. Themes and categories were identified based on the responses received to the questions asked during the interviews. The study is qualitative and applied thematic analysis to analyse the results. Table 4.1 below presents the themes and categories.

4.3.1 Themes derived from the participants.

Five categories were determined for this study. The table below presents the themes for each category and subthemes.

Table 4.1: Categories and Themes

Categories	Themes	Sub-themes
Category 1: Corporate sustainability disruptions	1.1 Internal corporate sustainability disruptions	1.1.1 Strikes 1.1.2 Fuel hikes 1.1.3 Covid-19 pandemic 1.1.4 Road works 1.1.5 Travelling restrictions 1.1.6 Poor strategy implementation 1.1.7 Panic buying 1.1.8 Lockdowns 1.1.9 Sabotage 1.1.10 Competition among staff 1.1.11 Absenteeism 1.1.12 Staff treatment 1.1.13 Lack of training. 1.1.14 Unqualified staff 1.1.15 Poor customer service

	<p>1.2 External corporate sustainability disruptions</p>	<p>1.2.1 Business shutdown 1.2.2 Renovations 1.2.3 Protests and riots, riots, and unrests 1.2.4 Theft 1.2.5 Covid-19 1.2.6 Looting 1.2.7 Crime 1.2.8 Load shedding 1.2.9 Lack of collaboration 1.2.10 Competition</p>
	<p>1.3 More other additional drivers of the corporate sustainability disruptions</p>	<p>1.3.1 Competition 1.3.2 Company cultures 1.3.3 Community awareness. 1.3.4 Poverty 1.3.5 Underpaid staff 1.3.6 Government legislations 1.3.7 Unemployment 1.3.8 Political influence 1.3.9 Economic matters 1.3.10 Inequality</p>
<p>Category 2: The role of sustainability risk management</p>	<p>2.1 Risk management</p>	<p>2.1.1 Considering customer needs. 2.1.2 Services improvement 2.1.3 Awareness 2.1.3 Lowering prices</p>

		<p>2.1.4 Creating competitive advantage</p> <p>2.1.5 Awards cards</p> <p>2.1.6 Increasing human resources</p> <p>2.1.7 Adhering to the basic legislative aspects</p>
Category 3: The role of boards of directors	3.1 Board of directors	<p>3.1.1 Being involved</p> <p>3.1.2 Considering sustainability issues.</p> <p>3.1.3 Frequent meetings with floor managers</p>
Category 4: Strategies	4.1 Strategies	<p>4.1.1 Getting customers</p> <p>4.1.2 Training</p> <p>4.1.3 Implementing the COSO standard risk management framework</p> <p>4.1.4 Monitoring and supervision</p> <p>4.1.5 Understanding their dealer margins</p> <p>4.1.6 Maintaining their supply</p> <p>4.1.7 Providing the best possible service</p>
Category 5: Perception of the efforts made by a board	5.1 Environmental sustainability	5.1.1 Unemployment
	5.2 Financial sustainability	<p>5.2.1 Food and fuel hikes</p> <p>5.2.2 Inflation</p> <p>5.2.3 Business loss</p>

4.4 Core Themes Analysed

The replies to the important or frequent terms mentioned by the participants were used to generate the following themes for the analysis of the primary data.

4.4.1 Category 1: Corporate sustainability disruptions

4.4.1.1. *Internal disruptions*

Other key internal issues raised by participants were underqualified workers, a lack of training, bad employee treatment, absenteeism, employee rivalry, and ineffective plan implementation.

Participant 1: Corporate Sustainability is not achieved because employees lack [s] training and they are inadequately provided with adequate resources and facilities.

Participant 2: Business owners place more emphasis on productivity than on sustainability.

Participant 3: Poor treatment of employees significantly has an effect on productivity and sustainability of the company.

Participant 4: Poor training and development of human resources have an effect on corporate sustainability.

Participant 5: You know, there seem to be issues of you know people hired in positions perhaps that are not qualified and maybe that is something I guess you know a lot of companies.

Participant 6: Lack of employee training, in my view, affects the sustainability of FMCG companies

The findings from the thematic analysis of the interviews reveal that the FMCG retail sector is beset with several internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions. These disruptions impede the process of achieving social, economic, and environmental sustainability. The findings are in agreement with Chkanikova & Mont (2015) who also found that a lack of expertise and understanding causes disruptions in the FMCG retail industry. Sudmai (2018) also revealed that business sustainability is hampered internally by a lack of knowledge, insight, vision, financial resources, and competence. Three main impediments to corporate sustainability – a lack of a sustainable framework, a lack of commitment from senior management, and cultural diversity – are acknowledged. In a similar vein, for business operations to be sustainable, there needs

to be a framework for social and environmental compliance as well as an understanding of eco-efficiency. In addition, the management and organisational impediments to sustainability such as the lack of strategy, organisational commitment and a framework, cause corporate disruptions (Nowell et al., 2017). Several participants also highlighted the lack of adequate resources as one of the corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector.

Participant 2: Limited financial resources significantly compromise the company's corporate sustainability.

Participant 4: Employee expertise is limited in the FMCG sector as most employees do not have adequate skills in a competitive environment.

Participant 7: The quality of tangible resources such as vehicles and company infrastructure has an impact on the company's corporate sustainability.

In line with these findings, Acquier et al. (2019) agree that one of the main corporate sustainability disruptions is the lack of resources. Thus, the primary obstacle to sustainability is a lack of resources (Acquier et al. 2019).

4.4.1.2. *External disruptions*

The social, environmental and economic components of external corporate sustainability severely impair FMCG's long-term survival, with environmental aspects leading, followed by the social and economic aspects (Chakabva et al., 2020). The environmental factor is the most hazardous to the long-term viability of FMCGs, followed by social and then economic factors. Despite this, most FMCG companies lack comprehensive sustainability analyses in their risk management processes (Chakabva et al., 2020).

The external corporate sustainability disruptions mentioned by the participants include inflation, strikes, the Covid-19 pandemic, road works and fuel prices.

Participant 1: Look, I think in every kind of business there are disruptions. Sometimes you will get the cows are sick, we are struggling with transport, we have got strikes.

Participant 4: So, I would say strikes, riots, panic buying, your lockdowns, those are disruptions that I have identified externally.

Participant 8: Well, the other one that ... the first one that I can think of it is maybe, strike from employees if they ever get to something like that and ... what do you call this, absenteeism.

Participant 10: As you can see, the food price is rising. There is also now inflation, [the] rand is no longer having strength, the petrol price is going up and as a result, now we are suffering. The Covid-19 pandemic was mentioned as one of the external disruptions of corporate sustainability, as indicated by Participants 1, 4, 6, 7 and 8.

Participant 1: The main external disruption of corporate sustainability in [the] recent years is the Covid-19 pandemic.

Participant 4: So, I would say strikes, riots, panic buying, and lockdowns are disruptions that I have identified externally.

Participant 6: Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted us in the company very much and we couldn't make a profit.

Participant 7: Ja, I think, I mean from the covid crisis that is one of the things that affected every retailer.

Participant 8: stated that, Joh, disruptions. External the first thing will be the pandemics, like your Covid and the drugs, wars and energy crisis.

The respondents in this study cited a variety of disruptions that are brought on externally and have an impact on how the organisation operates. They are unable to operate their businesses because they need their products to be transported from one area to another, they experience problems with receiving stock and some staff members are unable to get to work due to chores. Adjacent businesses often help a company attract customers. For instance, one participant mentioned that the closure of a filling station caused them to lose much revenue because many people used to visit the filling station, which led to them visiting the adjacent store, among other external disruptions. Road works and protests were also mentioned as external disruptions of corporate sustainability in the FMCG retail sector.

Participant 1: Road works and road closures during Covid that were highlighted because our main operations are passing trade, so things like traffic.

Participant 5: The disruptions that I know of are recently we can talk about the protests and riots, riot and unrests. Load-shedding was also highlighted as a significant disruption of corporate sustainability in the FMCG retail sector.

Participant 9: Well, external you know, firstly and foremost I think you know the issue around Eskom, you know our power utility; you know currently it is affecting our economy.

4.4.2 Category 2: The role of sustainability risk management

The views of participants regarding the role of sustainability management are presented and analysed in this category. The participants mentioned the importance of considering customers' needs, service improvement, and awareness of and lowering prices as some of the factors that could be used to assist with risk management. Some participants indicated that risk management also includes enhancing fundamental legislative

aspects, increasing human resources, and using rewards cards to create competitive advantages. Given the role of sustainability risk management, participants pointed out the following:

Participant 3: Corporate sustainability disruptions can be avoided if we try and look after the needs of the customers that we do have.

Participant 4: We need to improve in the way we are handling customers [is] better.

Participant 6: As operations, we have had to look at bringing our prices down substantially and then increasing our customer service.

Participant 7: I think in our case, the major factor is to ensure or create a competitive advantage in the environment, like having to know the new thing that it is in the market, what we call the “brand matching”. We start to look at brand matching so that we can be in a good position with our competitors.

Participant 8: I’m saying that to mitigate these disruptions the companies must adhere to the basic legislative aspects, like the regulations, for example, environmental regulations.

The results are consistent with those of Masocha (2019) who found that the social component of sustainability is the major corporate sustainability disruptor. As indicated by Participants 3, 4 and 6, the findings of this study revealed that the social component of sustainability significantly affects most organisations in the FMCG retail sector. In this case, the customers played a big role in disrupting the sustainability of FMCG retailers. Therefore, in their efforts to attain corporate sustainability, FMCG retailers should prioritise identifying customer service-related risks such as a damaged reputation and the loss of key consumers. On the other hand, the findings of the current study do not support the findings of Chowdhury et al. (2015) who found that a lack of awareness and governance as well as the utility supply problem are the major corporate sustainability disruptions.

4.4.3 Category 3: The role of the board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions

The participants were asked to highlight the role of a board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector. The participants asserted that the board of directors is responsible for mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions confronting the FMCG retail sector. They maintained that having frequent meetings with retail managers and considering sustainability issues are functions of the board of directors. Avery (2015) underlines the importance of a board of directors towards corporate sustainability. In agreement, Kostyuk et al. (2016) noted that corporate sustainability disruptions can be mitigated through the pivotal role of the board of directors since they are an essential part of the corporate governance mechanism.

Accordingly, the participants' views were:

Participant 3: In my view, the board of directors plays a significant role in corporate sustainability implementation and curtailing corporate sustainability disruptions.

Participant 4: he board of directors concentrates more on the profitability side and fail[s] to balance the social element and understand the environmental factors that can affect the business.

Participant 5: I think the main role of [a] board of directors should be to consider sustainability issues and how to eliminate the corporate sustainability disruptions.

Participant 6: The board of directors should concentrate on [the] environment, health and safety, security of stakeholders' discrimination, bribery and corruption, information confidentiality and practices of insiders.

Participant 7: The board of directors creates and endorses guidelines for sustainability to suppliers.

Participant 8: The board of directors is responsible for examining risks and evaluating the future and the present of the organisation.

The findings highlight that a board of directors is a key driver of sustainability and the mitigation of corporate sustainability disruptions. Disruptive issues are related to the board of directors, which is an organisation's highest strategic decision-maker and should contribute to addressing disruptive issues effectively (Real et al., 2018). Related studies also show that the sustainability of an organisation is influenced by the board's commitment to sustainability principles (Gan et al., 2017). Recent research pointed out that a sustainability-oriented board can act as a change agent. It is also expected to maintain a constant dialogue with all stakeholders and ensure that sustainability is dynamically integrated into corporate objectives and business operations to create a shared culture that eliminates possible corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector (Hernelind & Hogreus, 2020).

4.4.4 Category 4: Strategies for mitigating sustainability disruptions

The mitigation of sustainability disruptions is crucial in achieving long-term business goals for a viable FMCG retail sector. The FMCG organisation as a social product needs to ensure social, environmental, and economic sustainability for its existence as well for the greater benefit of society. Corporate management strategy considering social, environmental and economic aspects can contribute to mitigating the gap of corporate sustainability disruptions.

Some participants indicated that one method used by FMCG retailers to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions is the provision of training.

Participant 3: The best strategy to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions is the provision of training and development opportunities to employees.

Participant 4: We are enforcing training as a strategy of mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions.

Participant 5: In order to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions effort is being made to provide all employees with better resources, training and so on and making sure that we share information better as well.

Participant 6: We have implemented the COSO standard risk management framework, which is dealing with all the risks that the organisation is facing, to make sure that it improves performance.

Participant 7: We provide the best possible service to the customers so that they can maintain their relations with the customers and just stay competitive in the market as well.

The participants of this study argue that FMCG retailers need to develop some strategies and capabilities to mitigate disruptions towards corporate sustainability.

The current study findings support previous research findings. Continuous training for employees, management and other stakeholders can help to reduce corporate sustainability disruptions and help the organisation achieve its sustainable objectives (Hossain et al., 2012); (Chowdhury et al., 2015). Researchers found that a strategic sustainability policy and standard can help an organisation attain corporate sustainability (Maas & Reniers, 2014). Chowdhury et al. (2015) found that internal and external audits regarding compliance issues and setting policies for sustainability standards are considered fundamental mitigation strategies for corporate sustainability disruptions. These findings are not confirmed in the current study.

4.4.5 Category 5: The perception of operations managers of the efforts made by boards of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions

Corporate sustainability initiatives by a board of directors are effective when sustainability principles have been integrated into the company's governance and management processes (Guterman, 2020). The participants were asked to express their views regarding efforts made by the board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions. Below are the participants' responses:

Participant 1: In my view, the board of directors is ineffective because they do not address the concerns of the company's stakeholders.

Participant 2: Mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions is an impossible dream in the FMCG retail industry since the board of directors does not clearly apply governance principles and processes.

Participant 3: It seems as if the board of directors lack adequate knowledge about corporate sustainability issues and disruptions. It seems as if they do not comprehend the impact of external factors on the corporate sustainability of the business.

Participant 4: In my opinion, the board of directors is not committed to the triple bottom line per se as more emphasis is given to profitability concerns.

Participant 5: So I've decided that the board of directors still believes that their primary responsibility is to maximize shareholder value through achieving short-term profits.

Participant 6: The main responsibility of the board of directors is risk management and in my organisation, the directors [are] leave no stone unturned as they strive to reduce and eliminate both internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions.

Participant 7: The failure of the board to develop [a] compensation and reward system which can instil and motivate employees to develop a mindset which seeks to be on the lookout for corporate sustainability disruptions makes the effort to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions become a mammoth task.

Participant 8: Not much is done by the board to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions in the organisation.

Participant 9: The board of directors focuses more on short-term goals than on long-term goals and this compromised the sustainability of the organisation and make[s] it more liable to corporate sustainability (CS) disruptions.

Participant 10: To be effective, the board of directors needs to ensure that management is appropriately accountable for corporate sustainability performance.

The participants' perceptions denoted several issues, which point to the fact that boards of directors are ill-prepared for mitigating the corporate sustainability disruptions within the FMCG retail sector. The participants pointed out that boards of directors are ineffective because they do not address the concerns of the company's stakeholders,

do not explicitly implement governance policies and procedures and do not comprehend the impact of external factors on the corporate sustainability of the business. Generally, not much is done by the board to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions. Given the inadequate effort displayed by the board of directors, some participants suggested that education and training should be provided to boards of directors on sustainability issues, including managing corporate sustainability disruptions.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were approved by the United Nations in 2015 as a global call to action to eradicate poverty, safeguard the environment, and guarantee that by 2030 all people live in peace and prosperity. The 17 SDGs are integrated: they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Countries have committed to prioritising progress for those who are furthest behind. They designed the SDGs to end poverty, hunger, AIDS, and discrimination against women and girls. The creativity, know-how, technology, and financial resources from all of society are necessary to achieve the SDGs in every context (Bhandari, 2023); (Corvino et al., 2020); (Purcell et al., 2019); (Zimon et al., 2020).

4.5. Summary and discussion of the findings

The findings of the study were furnished in line with the research objectives. First, regarding research objective 1 – to identify internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry – the study's findings show that the FMCG retail sector is afflicted with several internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions. These disruptions impede the process of achieving social, economic and environmental sustainability. The internal disruptions include a lack of expertise and understanding, a lack of knowledge, insight, vision, financial resources and competence, the lack of a sustainable framework, a lack of commitment from senior management and the lack of adequate resources.

Concerning external disruptions, the data demonstrate that the social, environmental, and economic components of external corporate sustainability substantially degrade

FMCG's long-term survival, with the environmental component leading the way, followed by the social and economic components. Participants identified inflation, strikes, the Covid-19 epidemic, road construction, and fuel prices as external business sustainability challenges. Research Objective 2 is to explore the role of sustainability risk management in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector.

The participants mentioned the importance of considering customers' needs, service improvement, and awareness and lowering prices as some of the factors that could be used to assist with risk management. Some participants indicated that risk management also includes enhancing fundamental legislative aspects, increasing human resources and using reward cards to create competitive advantages. The findings of this study revealed that the social component of sustainability significantly affects most organisations in the FMCG retail sector. In this case, the customers play a big role in disrupting the sustainability of FMCG retailers. Therefore, in their efforts to attain corporate sustainability, FMCG retailers should prioritise identifying customer service-related risks such as damaged reputation and loss of key consumers.

Objective 3 focuses on analysing the role of a board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry. The findings revealed that the board of directors is responsible for mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions confronting the FMCG retail sector. Participants claimed that meeting frequently with retail managers and considering sustainability issues are the board of directors' responsibility. Several participants mentioned that corporate sustainability disruptions can be mitigated through the key role of the board of directors as they are an essential part of the corporate governance mechanism. The strategies that FMCG retailers can use in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions were uncovered in this study. The participants in this study argued that FMCG retailers need to develop some strategies and capabilities to mitigate disruptions to corporate sustainability. The highlighted strategies include continuous employee training and adopting a strategic sustainability policy and standard. The need for internal and external audits regarding compliance issues and setting policies for sustainability standards were considered highly important

mitigation strategies for corporate sustainability disruptions. Participants unanimously stressed the need for workshops, induction programs and training for all employees and managers, including political offices such as councillors and the mayor.

Finally, research Objective 5 explored the perception of operations managers on the efforts made by boards of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector. The participants' perceptions identified several issues illuminating the fact that the board of directors is ill-prepared for mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions within the FMCG retail sector. The participants indicated that the board of directors is ineffective because it does not address the concerns of the company's stakeholders, does not explicitly implement governance policies and procedures, and does not comprehend the impact of external factors on the corporate sustainability of the business. Generally, not much is done by the board to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions. Considering the inadequate effort displayed by the board of directors, some participants suggested that education and training should be provided to boards of directors on sustainability issues, including managing corporate sustainability disruptions.

4.6. Conclusion

The study's results were given in this chapter. The results of ten interviews with operational managers in the FMCG retail sector were recorded and analyzed. The research questions listed in Chapter 1 and the study's objectives were related to the findings. The following chapter highlights the research results and supporting documentation from the literature review and provides conclusions and suggestions.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The data gathered from the research participants were presented, analysed and discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter presents the study's conclusions and recommendations and provides information regarding what the researcher has achieved in addressing the research objectives. The study's findings correlate with evidence supporting the findings revealed in previous empirical studies. First, this chapter summarises the objectives of the investigation, findings, and analysis. The research findings are presented first and then conclusions are drawn from the findings. This is followed by a discussion of the results in relation to theoretical, managerial and policy implications. The chapter proceeds to outline the delimitation and limitations of the study as well as provide suggestions for future studies. Lastly, the chapter presents the conclusion of the study.

5.2. Summary of the Objectives of the Thesis

By examining the corporate sustainability disruptions that must be minimized in order to improve the corporate sustainability of retail organisations, the research sought to contribute to the sustainability of FMCG retail organisations. The lack of research on corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in South Africa served as the impetus for this study. To fill the knowledge vacuum on corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector, the researcher created five secondary objectives.

5.3. Summary of the Research Design and Methodology

According to Rahman (2020), quantitative research is a research strategy that emphasizes quantification in the collection and analysis of data. The researcher employed a phenomenological case study, which was conducted using a qualitative approach. The case study was conducted in the participants' natural settings during which their experiences and perceptions were gathered through semi-structured interviews. This technique was ideal for this study since it enabled the researcher to

obtain detailed information about the corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector. The researcher adopted a qualitative approach premised on understanding social or human experiences from the detailed views of informants within their natural environment. This approach was chosen because it allowed the researcher to understand the corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry. The researcher made sense of the subjective and socially constructed meanings expressed about the phenomena being studied. Data were collected in the participants' natural settings, and data analysis was done inductively to generate theories or new knowledge. The researcher administered a semi-structured interview schedule as the data collection instrument and conducted a thematic analysis to analyse data by searching for themes or patterns across a dataset.

5.4 Summary of the Analysis and Findings

In this sub-section, the key findings of the study are summarised in the context of the research objectives and each research objective is deliberated upon. In addition, the findings of the study are furnished in line with the research objectives.

5.4.1 Internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions

The first objective sought to identify internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector. The findings showed that the FMCG retail sector is beset with several internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions. These disruptions include internal disruptions such as a lack of expertise and understanding; a lack of knowledge, insight, vision, financial resources and competence; a lack of a sustainable framework and commitment from senior management, and inadequate resources. Concerning external disruptions, the findings show that the social, environmental and economic components of external corporate sustainability severely impair the long-term survival of FMCGs. The external corporate sustainability disruptions mentioned by the participants include load-shedding, inflation, strikes, the Covid-19 pandemic, road works and fuel prices.

5.4.2 The role of sustainability risk management in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions

The second objective of this study is “to explore the role of sustainability risk management in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions”. The findings confirmed the importance of considering customers' needs, service improvement, and awareness and lowering prices as some of the factors that could assist with risk management. Some participants indicated that the function of risk management also includes the enhancement of fundamental legislative aspects, increasing human resources and using rewards cards to create competitive advantages. The findings of this study revealed that customers play a big role in disrupting the sustainability of FMCG retailers. As a result, FMCG retailers should prioritise identifying customer service-related risks such as reputational damage and the loss of important customers in their attempts to achieve corporate sustainability.

5.4.3 The role of the board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions

The findings revealed that a board of directors is responsible for mitigating the corporate sustainability disruptions confronting the FMCG retail sector. Participants asserted that it was the duty of the board of directors to have frequent meetings with retail managers and consider sustainability issues. Most participants stated that corporate sustainability disruptions could be mitigated through the key functions of a board of directors because they are an essential part of the corporate governance mechanism.

5.4.4 Strategies for mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector

The participants of this study argued that FMCG retailers need to develop some strategies and capabilities to mitigate disruptions to corporate sustainability. The strategies highlighted included continuous training for employees, the adoption of a strategic sustainability policy and standardisation. The need for internal and external audits regarding compliance issues and setting policies for sustainability standards was

considered highly important mitigation strategies for corporate sustainability disruptions. The participants unanimously specified the need for workshops, induction programmes and training of all employees and managers, including political office-bearers such as councillors and the mayor.

5.4.5 Operations managers' perceptions of the role of a board of directors

Participants' perceptions highlighted various concerns indicating that boards of directors are ill-prepared to mitigate the corporate sustainability disruptions that beset the FMCG retail sector. Participants stated that the board of directors is ineffective because it does not address the concerns of the company's stakeholders, does not explicitly implement governance policies and procedures, and does not understand the impact of external factors on the corporate sustainability of the business. Generally, not much is done by the board to assuage corporate sustainability disruptions. In light of the inadequate effort displayed by the board of directors, some participants suggested that education and training should be provided to the board of directors on sustainability issues, including the management of corporate sustainability disruptions.

5.5 Research Implications

In this section, the results of this study are discussed in relation to theoretical, managerial and policy implications.

5.5.1 Theoretical implications

The findings of this study contribute to the body of knowledge on corporate sustainability and determine the strategies for mitigating internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions. This study was motivated by a lack of research in South Africa on measures FMCG retail sector managers took to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions. Thus, the study attempted to bridge a knowledge gap in the existing research by providing a theoretical framework for strategies to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector. Furthermore, the study provides much-needed insight into the FMCG retail sector as the findings could inform any

interventions towards mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions to boost the corporate sustainability of the FMCG retail sector organisations.

5.5.2 Managerial implications

In terms of managerial implications, this investigation highlighted the main corporate sustainability disruptions with which FMCG operations managers and boards of directors have to grapple. This study will help managers in the FMCG retail sector to identify and overcome existing corporate sustainability disruptions effectively and efficiently. The findings may also assist the boards of directors and operations managers with mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions through better coordination between all parties to enhance the sustainability of the FMCG retail organisations.

5.5.3 Policy implications

The findings suggest that corporate sustainability disruptions must be assuaged in order to enhance the corporate sustainability of the FMCG retail sector. Hence, policymakers should be aware of the significance of individual corporate sustainability disruptions, which should be prioritised to ensure the efficient allocation of resources for mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

The study's findings are susceptible to various limitations, which provide the potential for future research. This section includes a quick overview of the study's limitations and delimitations.

5.6.1 Delimitations

Theofanidis and Fountouki (2018) describe delimitations as the boundaries that a researcher imposes within which to focus the scope of a study. This study focused on contributing to the mitigation of corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector. It also focused on providing a theoretical framework with the potential to improve the mitigation of corporate sustainability disruptions to improve corporate sustainability management of FMCG retail organisations. The study was confined to the City of

Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality and did not include other provinces and cities outside the City of Tshwane.

5.6.2 Limitations

Limitations are potential weaknesses that cannot be reasonably dismissed; if not disclosed, they could influence the validity and interpretation of the results of a study (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). Limitations are factors that are beyond a researcher's control. Simon & Goes (2013) declare that a researcher cannot always resolve limitations and that limitations affect all research projects. This study contains an array of limitations despite the stated contributions.

5.6.2.1 Participants

Only ten operations managers from ten different FMCG companies were asked to take part in this research. The sample size was modest, with individuals drawn solely from the FMCG retail industry. This might create generalisability problems with the findings. Future studies might consider a large sample by including organisations from other industries. Finally, the study opens up opportunities for future research based on a larger sample size for survey research to test the relationship between corporate sustainability disruptions and mitigation processes with corporate sustainability in the wider industry.

5.6.2.2 Time limit

Owing to the time limit, this study was conducted on a sample size of 10 operations managers from FMCG retail organisations. Ideally, the study should have involved more research participants in different locations in South Africa to generalise the results to all FMCG retail organisations in South Africa.

5.6.2.3 Sampling method

The researcher lacked a full inventory of FMCG stores in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan, making the use of probability sampling techniques unfeasible. Using the probability sampling method would have given all elements in the target population an equal chance of being selected for the investigation. Consequently, the researcher

employed a non-probability convenience sampling method, which has been successfully used in previous studies, thus providing some form of justification for using this sampling method as the main method of selecting participants.

5.6.2.4 Geographical area

Owing to limited funding, this study was conducted on FMCGs located in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality only. This area is conveniently close to the researcher and this consideration enabled the researcher to access the participants easily to conduct interviews.

5.7 Suggestions for Further Studies

The limitations explained above pave the way for further studies. Only operations managers at FMCG retailers were involved in the current study because they were considered to be people with adequate knowledge regarding corporate sustainability disruptions afflicting the FMCG retail sector. This study only investigated and explored the perceptions of operations managers on efforts being implemented by boards of directors to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMG retail sector in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan, Gauteng Province. Future studies may investigate the mitigation of corporate sustainability disruptions of FMCG retail operations in other Metropolises or even other sectors of the economy. Furthermore, the results of the current study were based on a sample of five FMCG retail organisations and 10 operations managers. Future studies must incorporate a larger sample size by conducting a survey to generate substantive data and for better generalisation of the findings.

It is also important for future studies to incorporate both urban and rural-based FMCG retailers in their research to eliminate the imbalance inherent to the current study. Future studies should also embark on a comparison of the corporate sustainability disruptors and strategies that rural and urban FMCG retailers use and experience.

5.8 Concluding Remarks

The management of corporate sustainability disruptions and risks has become an important topic on the agenda of boards of directors, yet most of these directors are still not doing enough to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions. Furthermore, the preparation level of companies for crises and disruptions seems not to be up to date. Against this background, the research was derived from the view that corporate sustainability of the FMCG retail sector is beset with several disruptions that stem from the inadequate role of boards of directors and middle managers in mitigating such disruptions.

Nonetheless, there is scant research on the function of boards of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector. In an attempt to fill this knowledge gap, the present study explored corporate sustainability disruptions in the fast-moving consumer goods retail industry in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality in Gauteng Province. The empirical results revealed that the FMCG retail sector is beset with several internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions. These include internal disruptions such as a lack of expertise and understanding, a lack of knowledge, insight, vision, financial resources and competence, a lack of a sustainable framework and commitment from senior management, and inadequate resources.

Regarding external disruptions, the findings show that social, environmental, and economic components of external corporate sustainability severely impair FMCG's long-term survival. The results further identified external corporate sustainability disruptions such as load-shedding, inflation, strikes, the Covid-19 pandemic, road works, and fuel prices. The findings of this study revealed that customers significantly contribute to disrupting the sustainability of FMCG retailers. Therefore, in attempting to attain corporate sustainability, the priority of FMCG retailers should identify customer service-related risks such as reputational damage and the loss of key consumers. The findings revealed that a board of directors is responsible for mitigating the corporate sustainability disruptions confronting the FMCG retail sector. Participants claimed that

frequent meetings with retail managers and considering sustainability issues are a function of the board of directors.

Most participants stated that corporate sustainability disruptions can be mitigated through the role of the board of directors as they are an essential part of the corporate governance mechanism. The participants in this study argued that FMCG retailers need to develop some strategies and capabilities to mitigate disruptions towards corporate sustainability. The strategies specified by the participants included the continuous training of employees, the adoption of a strategic sustainability policy and standardisation.

The research findings were generalised to FMCG stores in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, which served as the primary unit of analysis (Makaleng & Hove-Sibanda, 2022). The need for internal and external audits regarding compliance issues and setting policies for sustainability standards were considered highly important mitigation strategies for corporate sustainability disruptions. The perceptions of the participants highlighted several issues which point to the fact that the board of directors is ill-prepared for mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions within the FMCG retail sector. The participants indicated that the board of directors is ineffective because it does not address the concerns of the company's stakeholders or implement governance policies and procedures explicitly, nor does it comprehend the impact of external factors on the corporate sustainability of the business.

To better understand potential solutions for addressing the role of the board of directors and operations management in accelerating the implementation of sustainability inside organisations, future studies could examine this topic in greater detail as well as in other industries and regions.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICS

If you have any questions about or require assistance with the completion of this form, please contact your supervisor (master's or doctoral students), or the Research Ethics Advisor: Dr Marianne Engelbrecht

Engelm1@unisa.ac.za

IF YOU ANSWER <u>YES</u> TO QUESTION a.1 OR a.2, PLEASE CONTINUE FILLING IN THIS FORM. IF ALL ANSWERS ARE NO, CONTACT SoCEthics@unisa.ac.za		
1. The proposed study involves human participants	YES	NO
a.1 Directly through the collection of primary data	X	
a.2 Both directly and indirectly through the secondary use of data (If secondary data is the main data source, please complete Form 2, Secondary Data Application)		X
2. Collecting personal or confidential information (participants can be identified)		X
3. UNISA employees, students or data		X
4. Potential conflicts of interest (real or perceived) could arise during the course of the research		X

<i>*This section is needed for record keeping.</i>		
DATE SUBMITTED TO ERC <i>(*for applicant use)</i>		
PREVIOUS APPLICATION NUMBER <i>(*for applicant use if applicable)</i> <i>(Applicant to indicate a previously allocated application number in case of a resubmission if applicable)</i>	Previous Application Number	Not applicable

PRIVACY INFORMATION:

The personal information you provide on this form is collected for the primary purpose of assessing your research ethics application. This personal information will be entered into a database to assist with administration, correspondence, and statistical analyses. Office bearers of the Ethics Review Committee that will process this application have access to these records. Records will be made available to authorised third parties should the need arise such as the Unisa structures such as the Unisa Research Ethics Review Committee (URERC). All records will be retained for as long as necessary to achieve the purpose for which it was collected.

RESEARCHER'S DECLARATION TO ADHERE TO THE UNISA CODE OF CONDUCT REGARDING THE ETHICS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

The declaration should be signed in a separate document and provided to the ERC in a scanned format as part of the application package. PLEASE DO NOT PDF THE APPLICATION FORM BELOW TO ALLOW THE COMMITTEE TO OPEN ATTACHMENTS.

By signing below, I Dimakatso Hellen Maunye (full name of the main researcher) declare as follows:

***Double click on text box selected**

1. I completed all the sections of this form that are relevant to the proposed research study according to Appendix A. Agree
2. I have not commenced with fieldwork relating to any data collection in relation to the proposed research. Agree
3. I have acquainted myself with UNISA's code on research ethics expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment. I shall fully comply with it. Agree
4. I shall conduct the research in an ethically responsible way by demonstrating respect for participants' autonomy, considering a fair risk-benefit analysis and employing fair research procedures. Agree
5. I shall conduct the research in strict accordance with the approved proposal. I acknowledge that the approval is valid as long as approved procedures are followed. Agree
6. I shall notify the ERC in writing of any adverse events that occur arising from harm experienced by participants. Agree

- | | | | |
|-----|---|---|------------------|
| 7. | I shall notify the ERC in writing if any changes to the research are proposed that may affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants (e.g. methodology, sampling, questionnaire, interview schedule). | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Agree |
| 8. | I shall maintain participants' privacy and the confidentiality of records pertaining to the research. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Agree |
| 9. | I shall not use the research and information in a manner that is detrimental to human participants or institutions unless it can be scientifically and ethically justified. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Agree |
| 10. | I shall store research data securely and in accordance with the data management measures indicated in my application/proposal. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Agree |
| 11. | I shall uphold research integrity and refrain from conduct that may taint the integrity of science, including, but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication and falsification of data. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Agree |
| 12. | I shall refrain from the use of human participant data that was collected without a valid research ethics approval for the purpose of this research. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Agree |
| 13. | I shall take the necessary steps to warrant that co-researchers, <u>if applicable</u> , familiarise themselves with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> | N/A

Agree |
| 14. | I accept the privacy information statement set out on page 3. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Agree |

Applicant: Principal Researcher

**CONSENT IN TERMS OF THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION
ACT NO 4. OF 2013**

1. I declare that all the information furnished by me on this form is true and correct and undertake to inform Unisa of any changes in my personal information.
2. I undertake to comply with all the rules, regulations and decisions of the university and any amendments to it and I have taken note of advice that may be applicable to Unisa researchers, non-Unisa researchers and postgraduate supervisors.
3. I, as a researcher and/or postgraduate supervisor, hereby consent that Unisa may collect, use, distribute, process and communicate my personal information for all required research ethics processes about my participation in Unisa research ethics activities, which may include, but is not limited to:
 - 3.1 assessment of research ethics application.
 - 3.2 internal administrative processing.
 - 3.3 assessment of complaints and investigations of alleged violations of norms and standards for the ethical conduct of research; and
 - 3.4 institutional and scholarly research.
4. I also consent that Unisa may share my personal information with other Universities of South Africa, third parties rendering database management facility on behalf of the university, the Department of Higher Education and Training, the National Health Research Ethics Council, Internal and External Auditors, and for legislative requirements.
5. I understand that in terms of the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) and other laws of the country, there are instances where my express consent is not necessary to permit the processing of personal information, which may be related to investigations, litigation or when personal information is publicly available.
6. I will not hold the university responsible for any improper or unauthorised use of personal information that is beyond its reasonable control.

7. I confirm that I have read the notice and understand the contents thereof.

Note: The nature of personal information collected can be viewed in the Personal Information Inventory Lists published on the Unisa webpage at www.unisa.ac.za

Full name in Print: DIMAKATSO HELLEN MAUNYE

Signature: 

Date signed: 05.05.2022

Approved by supervisor (if applicable):

To my knowledge, the student has addressed all aspects in his/her application for research ethics approval set forth in the University of South Africa's Policy for Research Ethics. I confirm that the form is complete according to Appendix A. I will ensure that the student notifies the committee in writing if any changes to the research are proposed that may affect any of the study-related risks for the research participants such as methodology, sampling, questionnaire, interview schedule, etc. Subsequently, I approve the submission and recommend that approval is granted for the research.

Full name in Print: MPANZA SINAKHOKONKE

Signature: 

Date signed: 2022/05/11

Please complete the rest of the form below.

SECTION 1: RESEARCHER'S DETAILS

**This section should be fully completed to aid with the issuing of the clearance certificate and for record keeping.*

1.1	Details of the main researcher (referred to as the applicant)		
Title	Full name & Surname	Staff/student no	Department/Unit where you are currently registered for studies
Mrs	Dimakatso Hellen Maunye	50065831	Operations management
Contact numbers	Mobile:0720470471 Work:0125644808		
Email address	50065831@mylife.unisa.ac.za Mogoadh147@gmail.com		
Abridged CV/one-page bio of the main researcher:	<p>1.1.1 Experience relevant to the <u>proposed research</u></p> <p>I am an operations supervisor at a private company called CHEP SA. My responsibilities include ensuring that all legal and statutory requirements (such as labour legislation) as well as company policies and procedures applicable to the operations function are implemented and complied with by all staff.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1. Qualifications relevant to the <u>proposed research</u></p> <p>I obtained B-tech Safety Management and Postgrad NDP modules from the University of South Africa in 2020/1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2. Research Ethics Training is done within the past three years</p>		

	Yes, I attended ethics training in 2021 and completed TRREE training “Module 1: Introduction to Research Ethics, Module 2: Research Ethics Evaluation and Module 3. Informed Consent”. 4. Applying for Ethics clearance		
1.2	Supervisor if the application is made by a student		
Title	Full name & Surname	Staff/student no	Department/Unit where you are currently registered or employed
DR	Sinakhokonke Mpanza	90452682	Operations Management
Contact numbers	Mobile: 0745790053 Work: 0124296641		
Email address	mpanzs@unisa.ac.za		
Abridged CV/one-page bio of the main researcher	(Embed document here)		
1.3	Co-supervisor if the application is made by a student* * if applicable		
Title	Full name & Surname	Staff/student no	Department/Unit where you are currently registered or employed
	Bonginkosi Tshabalala	90005678	Operations Management
Contact numbers	Mobile: 0835595353 Work: 012 429-3776		
Email address	dtshabal@unisa.ac.za		
Abridged CV/one-page bio of the main researcher	(Embed document here) The CV of the main Supervisor attached		

1.4	Internal and/or External Co-Researcher(s) * * if applicable N/A		
Title	Full name & Surname	Staff/student no	Department/Unit where you are currently registered or employed
Contact numbers	Mobile: Work:		
Email address			
Abridged CV/one-page bio of the main researcher	(Embed document here):		
1.5	Title or provisional title of the research project <i>10–16 words</i>		
EXPLORING CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY DISRUPTIONS IN THE FAST-MOVING CONSUMER GOODS RETAIL INDUSTRY			
1.6	Type of application (more than one option may apply) <i>Place an 'x' in the box [provide details in the space allocated for comments if applicable]</i>		
1.6.1 Research for a non-degree purpose (journal articles; conference presentations, etc.)			
1.6.2 Research for degree purpose			x
1.6.3 Identify the qualification for the project (in the case of research for degree			

purpose)			
MASTERS OF COMMERCE IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT			
1.6.4 Collaborative research		1.6.5 Community-Engaged Research (CER)	
1.6.6 Health or Health-related research ¹		1.6.7 Other	X
1.6.8 Identify the relevant research niche area(s) <i>(Unisa researchers and postgraduate students only)</i>			
1. Knowledge generation and human capital development in response to the needs of South Africa and the African continent			
2. The promotion of democracy, human rights and responsible citizenship			
3. Innovation and capacity building in science and technology			
4. Economic and environmental sustainability			X
5. ODL/OdeL			
<p>Comments:</p> <p><i>Justify why you deem this a CE research project OR collaborative research project OR identify the primary reason for conducting the research if you ticked "Other".</i></p> <p>This study is significant to FMCG retail practices because the findings may contribute to knowledge on mitigating CS disruptions. The research is also significant for boards of directors, shareholders, academics, and management students because the findings will add new insights to the body of knowledge on risk management and good corporate governance.</p>			

1 Consult the Policy on Research Ethics for a definition of health research.

1.7	Identify the data collection procedures that apply to this research	YES	NO
<i>Place an 'x' in the box provided – tick all columns/blocks</i>			
	a) Survey/questionnaire		X
	b) Focus groups		X
	c) Observations		X
	d) Interviews	X	
	e) Documents		
	F) Other. Please provide details. The researcher will employ a phenomenological case study which will be carried out through a qualitative approach. Semi-structured interviews will be used to collect rich and thick data which will address the research objectives. A phenomenological case study is conducted in the participants' natural settings and people's experiences and perceptions will be gathered through a semi-structured interview. This technique is ideal for this study as it will enable the researcher to gather rich and deep information about the corporate sustainability disruptors in the FMCG retail sector.		

SECTION 2 – RISK ASSESSMENT

2.1	Does your research contribute to the knowledge of	YES	NO
<i>Place an 'x' in box [if yes, provide details in the space allocated for comments]</i>			
	1. The biological, clinical, psychological or social processes in human beings [social processes refer to those activities, actions, and operations that involve the interaction between people]		X

If your research includes people in a focus group, an interview or survey, and can entail a social process, you need to tick (a).			
2. Improved methods for the provision of health services		X	
<p>Comments: If you selected yes for any of the above options, please provide a detailed explanation for your selection. Example: Who will be interviewed? Focus group?</p> <p>This research does not contribute to the generation of knowledge relating to any aspect of health. This research is to identify internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Gauteng South Africa</p>			
2.2	<p>Does your research include the direct involvement of any of the following groups of participants (Refer to Section 4 in the SOP)</p>	YES	NO
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Place an 'x' in box [if yes, provide details in the space allocated for comments]</i></p>			
<p>a) Children or young people under the age of 18</p> <p>Include the parental consent letter and explain how assent will be obtained in Section 6.6 of the application form.</p>			X
<p>b) Persons with disabilities (physical, mental and/or sensory)² that could potentially be at risk of harm when participating in this research.</p>			X
<p>c) Persons that might be considered vulnerable, thus finding it difficult to make independent and/or informed decisions for socio, economic, cultural, political and/or medical reasons (<i>such as the elderly, the dying, unconscious patients, prisoners, those in dependent relationships, women considered to be vulnerable due to pregnancy, victimisation, etc.</i>)</p>			X

2 Describe whether and how proxy or gatekeeper consent will be obtained in section 6.1 relevant to items 2.1. a – e

d) Communities that might be considered vulnerable, thus finding it difficult to make independent and informed decisions for socio, economic, cultural, political and/or medical reasons		X	
e) UNISA employees, students or alumni Indicate that you will apply for permission at the UNISA Research Permission Subcommittee (RPSC) in section 3.1 of the application form to involve any of these participant groups in the proposed research.		X	
f) Persons who cannot read, speak or understand the language used for the research i.e. English Attach the translated data collection instrument(s), interview guide(s), participant information sheet and consent form in the participants' first language, as well as a letter from the language practitioner certifying the credibility of the translated material in Section 4.13. The services of an interpreter may need to be secured for fieldwork activities.		X	
g) There is a likelihood that a person or definable group will be identified during the research process, and it is likely to be of concern.		X	
Comments: If you selected yes to any option above, please describe it in detail here.			
2.3	Does your research involve any of the following types of activity that could potentially place the participants at risk of harm?	YES	NO
<i>Place an 'x' in the box provided [if yes, provide details in the space allocated for comments]</i>			
a) Collection, use or processing of personal, identifiable information <u>without</u> the consent of the individual or institution that is in possession of the required information (except for aggregated data or data from official databases in the public domain)		X	

b) Collection, use and processing of personal, identifiable information directly from participants <u>with</u> prior informed consent.	X	
c) Personal, identifiable information to be collected about individuals from available records (e.g. employee records, student records, medical records, etc.) and/or archives		X
d) Personal, identifiable information to be collected outside or transferred outside of South Africa <i>(if collected from outside SA you must have consent; if transferred across the border the participant must consent & the country must have adequate privacy laws to protect the personal information)</i>		X
e) Personal, identifiable information to be shared with third parties for research purposes <i>Attach the confidentiality agreements in Section 6.23 & ensure that prior consent has been obtained from the research participants</i>		X
f) Participants being exposed to questions that may be experienced as stressful or upsetting, or to procedures that may have unpleasant or harmful side effects		X
g) Participants being required to commit an act that might diminish self-respect or cause them to experience shame, embarrassment, or regret		X
h) Any form of deception of participants, concealment or covert observation		X
i) Examining potentially sensitive or contentious issues that could cause harm to the participants		X
j) Research that may be prejudicial to participants		X
k) Research that may intrude on the rights of third parties or people not directly involved		X

l) Audio-visual recordings of participants which may be of a sensitive or compromising nature (with or without consent)		X
m) Disclosure of the findings of the research could place participants at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to their financial standing, employability, professional or personal relationships		X
n) Any form of a physically invasive diagnostic, therapeutic or medical procedure such as blood collection, an exercise regime, body measurements or physical examination		X
o) *Psychological inventories/scales / tests		X
p) Research involving any sensory analysis through the ingestion, smell, taste or feel of food or food-related products of any kind.		X
q) Other. Please describe		X
<p>Comments: If you selected yes to any option above, please describe it in detail here.</p> <p>All participants will be asked to sign a consent form before they are interviewed. Zikmund (2003) states that anonymity is the protection of respondents' identity by not showing their personal identification information. All information provided by the participants will be kept confidential by the researcher to protect participants' privacy. Where the use of a name is required, a pseudonym will be used instead of the participant's real name. This will be applied even to the names that will be found in the FMCG retailer's documents that will be used to collect data. Participants' information will be stored in a digital folder with a password that will be known only by the researcher. These records will be stored for a minimum of five years starting on the day after the thesis has been completed.</p>		

2.4 Does your research involve any activity that could potentially place the researcher(s) and/or field workers at risk of harm? [if yes, provide details in the space allocated for comments] **YES** **NO**

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) There is a possible risk of physical threat, abuse or psychological trauma as a result of actual or threatened violence or the nature of what is disclosed during the interaction | X |
| b) There is a possible risk of being in a compromising situation, in which there might be accusations of improper behaviour | X |
| c) There is increased exposure to risks in everyday life and social interactions, such as working with hazardous materials or sensitive information | X |

Comments: *If you selected yes to any option above, please describe it in detail here.*

N/A

2.5 Does any of the following apply to your research project? YES NO

Place an 'x' in the box provided [if yes, provide details in the space allocated for comments]

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) Participants will be offered inducements or incentives to encourage their involvement in the research | X |
| b) Participants will incur financial obligations as a result of their participation in the research | X |
| c) The researcher(s) can anticipate financial gains from involvement in the research (i.e. contract research) | X |
| d) Any other potential conflict of interest, real or perceived, that could be seen as compromising the researcher(s) professional judgement in carrying out or reporting on the research | X |
| e) Research will make use of Unisa laboratories | X |

- f) Research will be funded by UNISA or by an external funding body that could compromise the integrity of the research project X

Comments: *If you selected yes to any option above, please describe it in detail here.*

N/A

2.6 Guided by the information above, classify your research project based on the anticipated degree of risk. *[The researcher completes this section. The REC/ERC critically evaluates this benefit-risk analysis to protect participants' rights]*

Place an 'x' in the box provided

Category 1	Category 2		Category 3	Category 4	
<p>Negligible</p> <p>No to indirect human participant involvement.</p> <p><i>If you choose this option, stop completing this form and contact URERC@unisa.ac.za</i></p>	<p>Low risk</p> <p>Direct human participant involvement. The only foreseeable risk of harm is the potential for minor discomfort or inconvenience, thus research that would not pose a risk above the everyday norm.</p>	X	<p>Medium risk</p> <p>Direct human participant involvement. Research that poses a risk above the everyday norm, including physical, psychological and social risks. Steps can be taken to minimise the likelihood of the event occurring.</p>	<p>High risk</p> <p>Direct human participant involvement. A real or foreseeable risk of harm including physical, psychological and social risk which may lead to a serious adverse event if not managed responsibly.</p>	

1. Briefly justify your choice/classification

The research is classified as low risk because there is no direct contact with human participants, as interviews will be conducted via Ms Team/ZOOM. Participants will only experience minor discomfort or inconvenience during the research process and therefore would not be exposed to risk that is above the everyday norm, such as obtaining consent using remote technologies to obtain an electronic signature. Consent could be obtained orally via Microsoft Teams recording. Research under the Covid- 19 lockdown requires access to technology thus the interviews will be conducted virtually via online platforms such as ZOOM and Microsoft Teams to mitigate the chances of contracting the Covid -19 Virus. This will address the issue of social distancing as required by the lockdown regulations during the coronavirus pandemic. This will also eliminate any movement between the researcher and the interviewees as well as minimising travelling costs which could be used to invest in improved internet connectivity. Participants who have contracted the virus would not carry the risk of spreading the infection as they must self-isolate to minimise the risk of transmission. In addition, the interviews will be conducted at a time that is conducive and convenient for the participants to minimise the physical, social and psychological risks, participants will also feel more comfortable interviewing in the comfort of their own homes. Therefore, the research can effectively be conducted remotely without putting the participants' safety and well-being at risk. All in all, the research will not pose a risk above the everyday norm.

2. Indicate the potential benefits of the study for the research participants and/or communities or other entities.

The study will benefit FMCG businesses in Gauteng South Africa to understanding corporate social sustainability disruption so they can eliminate the disruptions

3. Describe the risks relating to the research procedures, which participants, communities or third parties may or will suffer.

This refers to, but is not limited to any participant discomfort, pain/physical or psychological problems/side-effects; persecution, stigmatisation or negative labelling that could arise

during the course or as an outcome of the research undertaken.

The participants might suffer psychological discomfort in responding to the interview questions. This is caused by when they are not sure of the purpose of the research and how the information they will provide will be handled and how the employer will react after reading the research report.

4. Indicate how the potential risks of harm will be mitigated by explaining the steps that will be taken to minimise the likelihood of the event occurring (e.g. referral for counselling, debriefing, etc.).
1. The researcher will explain the objectives of the study including its significance and benefits to the participants and the organisation they are representing on how to mitigate the corporate sustainability disruptions.
2. In case the participant experiences any discomfort during the data collection process, the interview will be terminated immediately.
3. Describe the steps to be taken in the case of adverse events or if injury or harm attributable to participation in the study is experienced by the participants, communities or third parties.

Any problems and challenges encountered during the research project it will be reported to the supervisor and the ethics committee in writing.

4. Describe your arrangements regarding indemnity/compensation for research-related adverse events (if applicable).

This is not applicable to this study.

SECTION 3 – DETAILS OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

3.1	<p>Does your project involve institutions that need to grant permission for research activities?</p> <p>Generally, permission to conduct research involving institutions should be obtained prior to fieldwork activities. In case of research involving UNISA employees, students and data, the application form and standard operating procedure can be obtained from RPSC@unisa.ac.za Application for permission to involve UNISA employees, students and data should be obtained after ethics clearance.</p>
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YES / NO (*Underline the applicable answer*)

1. Name of organisation(s), state authorities or community advisory boards if appropriate (i.e. UNISA)	2. Name of person or committee granting permission (i.e. Research Permission Subcommittee, RPSC@unisa.ac.za)	(c) Contact details of authorised person or committee granting permission (E-mail address or telephone number)	1. Has institutional permission been granted?		
			YES	NO	Pending
			<i>Place an 'x' in the box provided</i>		
					X
Hercules SPAR	Mr L Kruger	E-mail address: Telephone number:	Hercules1@retail.spar.co.za 0123799025 cell:0798415873		
BSBH VLEISMARK	Mr B Stimie	E-mail address:	barneystimie@telkomsa.net		

		Telephone number	0123721880 cell:0825490298
IC FOODZONE	Ms J Dias	E-mail address:	icfoodzone@gmail.com
		Telephone number	0123793593 cell 0836697075
LEBEBE BAKERY & FOODS	Mr A Ledwaba	E-mail address:	info@lebebe.co.za
		Telephone number	0123213355 cell 0615306434
SAVEMOR	Mr Tina	E-mail address:	vanderhoffsavemor@gmail.com
		Telephone number	0123771187 cell 0849623011
2. Embed the letter of request that you submitted to the gatekeeper here letter here			
3. Embed the letter of permission from the gatekeeper here (formal company letterhead)			
4. If permission is pending, <u>explain and indicate your planned efforts in obtaining the permission.</u> Insert a Pro-forma permission letter here or append it to the application.			

3.2 Are any of the researchers' members of, or do they have any association with the

	organisations in which you wish to conduct your research?
YES / <u>NO</u> (<i>Underline the applicable answer</i>)	
If YES, please <u>explain</u> the association clearly in the comment section below and indicate how this perceived conflict of interest will be managed and mitigated	
Comments: N/A	

Place an 'x' in the box provided

3.3	<p>Does your research involve collectives and/or communities? This question refers to Community Engaged Research</p> <p>(Group of people sharing social ties, similar interests and a geographic location)</p>
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YES / NO (*Underline the applicable answer*)

Please explain what measures you have taken to consult and engage with those communities and/or representative groups regarding your research project below.

N/A

3.4	Is your project funded or sponsored by any organisation?
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YES / NO (*Underline the applicable answer*)

1. Name of funder/sponsor	2. Contact details of funder/sponsor	(e) Amount funded/sponsored if applicable	(f) Will the identity of any funders be made known to the participants?

	E-mail address:		
	Telephone number:		

3.5 Has this proposal been submitted to another ethics review committee?
 If yes, indicate the name of the institution and the outcome. If previously rejected, provide the reasons. **NO**

**Insert proof of ethics clearance here*

Not applicable

3.6 Is this research a sub-study linked to an existing or main study?

YES / NO (*Underline the applicable answer*)

Please provide details relevant to the existing or main study in the comments section below

Comments:

SECTION 4 – PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Embed final proposal as accepted by relevant Higher Degrees Committee here (students only)

Embed evidence of registration for the 2022 thesis/dissertation here

4.1	<p>Introduction, motivation and literature review</p> <p><i>One page - include references</i></p> <p><i>Background, Key concepts and definitions, research problem, research gap, brief overview of the methodology</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION

The way that corporate sustainability is ensured by businesses is a crucial aspect of the 21st-century business environment. The proposed study will explore the perceptions of operations managers in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) retail sector on measures that can be taken in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptors afflicting the industry. Corporate sustainability (CS) is the ability of a business to adopt business strategies and activities that meet the needs of a business and its stakeholders today while protecting, sustaining and enhancing the human and natural resources that people will need in the future (Siew, 2015). It is also a management perspective on the responsibility of organisations for the planet, people and profits for the business (Fuentes & Fredriksson, 2016). Furthermore, CS should lead to sustainable development. Brundtland (1987) defined sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. CS is internationally perceived as an important public relations and governance tool for all business sectors in general and business retailers in particular (Pedersen & Gwozdz, 2014); (Real et al., 2018); (Wilson, 2015). However, CS can be effective or successful if many stakeholders in an organisation support the organisation’s stance on CS. It is also argued that CS activities should be related to the industry and core business strategy and business model (Bilinska-Reformat et al., 2019); (Fuentes & Fredriksson, 2016).

FMCG retailers should have a sense of purpose and responsibility towards the local community in which they operate. This social responsibility should be beyond the gesture of local philanthropic sponsorship programme (Deepa & Chitramani, 2016). Genuine CS involves a different perspective on the role of retailers within a community. Using a

qualitative and phenomenological case study research strategy, the proposed study will explore FMCG CS disruptors by exploring the perceptions of the operations managers in selected FMCG retailers in Gauteng Province of South Africa. The CS disruptors that impeded the successful implementation of the triple bottom line will be empirically investigated in this study.

CS focuses on improving the people, planet and profit (Deepa & Chitramani, 2016). Retail businesses face sustainability disruptions due to human and nonhuman factors and as a result, FMCG retailers at times, fail to meet the sustainability obligations as expected by governance ethics (Crittenden et al., 2017). Therefore, the proposed study seeks to explore the perceptions of operations managers on efforts that are implemented to mitigate CS disruptions in the FMCG retail sector. Boards of directors and business managers implement effective sustainability strategies in order to remain competitive and sustainable in the business sector they will be operating within (Karimi & Walter, 2015).

MOTIVATION

The researcher is motivated to conduct the proposed research study for several reasons. FMCG retail companies in the Gauteng Province of South Africa have given little importance to fostering good corporate governance by the boards of directors through the adoption of sustainable business practices (Lenssen et al., 2014). FMCG retailers seem not to address the triple bottom and they focus much on profit-making and pay little attention to community development and environmental sustainability. This then has resulted in the compromise to the sustainable development of Johannesburg Central. If the board of directors does not mitigate the sustainability disruptions, this will lead to an unclean environment and poor development of the people who can be future employees and potential customers for the FMCG retail customers. Society might benefit from the study regarding the perceptions of operations managers on efforts that can be implemented to mitigate CS disruptions in the FMCG retail industry. CS disruptions can affect employees and communities. Deploying effective strategies in mitigating

sustainability disruptions can save organisational resources and enhance customer value and satisfaction. Therefore, gaining insight into mitigating sustainability disruptions can enhance FMCG CS outcomes. Finally, the results which will be depicted from the proposed research study may help to educate boards of directors on the roles and contributions of boards of directors in mitigating CS disruptions, not only in the FMCG retail sector but also in other sectors of the economy in South Africa. Additionally, the knowledge which will be generated from the study will be used to make recommendations to various stakeholders as well as the FMCG retail sector in South Africa and the entire business sector. The researcher believes that CS disruptions should be strategically monitored and addressed so that the FMCG retailers play a significant role in enhancing the sustainable development of the communities. Corporate social responsibility activities and programmes for reducing pollution and unsustainable use of products should be made a priority.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Terminology

The key terms in this study will be defined in this section. The following terms will be defined: corporate sustainability; Fast moving consumer goods; sustainability; and Triple Bottom Line.

Corporate sustainability

Corporate sustainability encompasses aspects such as stakeholder perspective, business role perspective and strategy (Sudmai, 2018); (Montiel & Delgado-Ceballos, 2014). Corporate sustainability is also perceived as the contribution of companies to long-term growth (Schaltegger et al., 2013). This viewpoint recognises that businesses have multifaceted goals to achieve in addition to profit maximisation (Sudmai, 2018). Afzal et al. (2017) described corporate sustainability as the strategy and practice of the organisation in achieving the goal of balanced maximisation of stakeholder satisfaction by incorporating environmental, social and economic factors. It also involves preserving corporate assets to

achieve sustainable and environmentally friendly growth.

Fast-Moving Consumer Goods

Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), also known as consumer-packaged goods (CPG), refer to merchant items that are consumed quickly. Most goods are consumed in a matter of days. For example, nondurable products like cold drinks, baked packaged goods and other goods like canned foods, fruits and vegetables, and dairy goods (Mulongoet al., 2018).

Sustainability

Sustainability is a broad concept that is difficult to grasp. Kock et al. (2012) defined sustainability as achieving the needs of the stakeholders of a firm indirectly and directly without failing to meet the needs of future stakeholders. Sustainability creates a basis for the debate on development in a global framework, with the continuation of the satisfaction of human needs as a major goal. This principle is critical for everyone's survival because it concerns the survival of the human species as well as the survival of nearly every other living creature on the planet (Ragheb et al., 2016).

The Triple Bottom line

Slaper & Hall (2011) defined the *Triple Bottom Line* (TBL) are the three dimensions of CS namely the people, the place, and profits.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework is the foundation for the proposed investigation. It serves as a foundation upon which to construct and endorse the research rationale as well as a framework for defining how the researcher will approach the study philosophically,

epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically (Osanloo & Grant, 2016). Osanloo & Grant (2016) further described a theoretical framework as the backbone of a study. This study will be guided by the sustainability theory.

Sustainability theory states that organisations should prioritise the social responsibilities they have towards environmental and economic issues. The social response should adequately address the needs of the current and future generations (Tjahjadi et al., 2021). In the contemporary business environment, all companies are expected by their stakeholders to raise awareness when executing their corporate responsibilities (Tjahjadi et al., 2021).

Fast-Moving Consumer Goods retail industry

Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) refers to merchant items that are consumed quickly. Most goods are consumed daily (Matinga et al., 2018). FMCG goods make little profit per product, but since they are purchased in large amounts and sold quickly, profits are high (Mulongo et al., 2018). Tungande et al. (2020) further agreed that FMCGs are frequently products with low-profit margins but high sales volumes, such as beverages, packaged food, personal care and household cleaning products.

Syed & Siddiqui (2019) indicated that the FMCG industry is acknowledged as a leader in SCM and practises fast-moving consumer goods' primary goal of businesses, creating a supply chain that meets the needs of consumers most reliably and profitably possible. Mulongo et al. (2018) also indicated that the fast-moving consumer goods market is a fast-paced, thriving industry with a diverse range of items. Mulongo et al. (2018) stated that the fast-moving consumer goods industry is the world's largest high-speed industry manufacturing and selling well-known products that customers use daily.

Fast-Moving Consumer Goods retail industry vis-a-vis corporate sustainability

Consumer goods have a negative impact on community and environmental sustainability and there is increased pressure on fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies to develop more sustainable business models (Bashir et al., 2020). Since FMCG customer decisions are essentially habitual and difficult to alter (Lehner et al., 2016), designing business models that promote consumer adoption of new sustainable solutions is a major challenge (Bashir et al., 2020). To allow such transitions in sustainability, businesses will progressively have to build capabilities for sustainable business experiments (BES) (Bocken et al., 2019) that will assist businesses in determining which business model designs are likely to succeed in real-world scenarios (Bocken et al., 2018). Sar (2018) stated that corporate governance has been linked to enhancing sustainability performance and gaining investor confidence, making it a critical success factor for companies.

Corporate sustainability disruptors

Globalisation and foreign trade will help a company to broaden its supply chain while also lowering manufacturing costs and rising productivity. At the same time, global supply chain success extends supply chain networks, exposing businesses to supply chain disruptors (Alramadin et al., 2019). Natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes or hurricanes as well as human activity like industrial accidents and terrorist strikes can cause supply chain disruption (Snyder et al., 2016). Natural disasters have a significant impact on businesses (Alramadin et al., 2019). Schlegel (2015) stated that customers' *demand volatility*, bankruptcy, delivery issues, time delays, inventory shortages and quality problems may all be supply chain disruptors. According to Snyder et al. (2016), the "just-in-time approach" increased the susceptibility of supply chains to disturbances while outsourcing.

According to Snyder et al. (2016), some SC disruptions may be unavoidable therefore managers should strive to recognise possible causes of SC disruptions (Scheibe & Blackhurst, 2018). When a disruptor spreads through an enterprise, the negative consequences may become more serious (Scheibe & Blackhurst, 2018). Managers need literacy to recognise possible SC disruptions (Scheibe & Blackhurst, 2018). Managers

must establish partnerships with potential suppliers that can assist in the reduction of SC disturbances (Sawik, 2017). SC disruption could result in lower revenue growth, stock returns and shareholder value if these practices aren't followed (Snyder et al., 2016).

In terms of sustainability, the social, environmental and economic elements pose significant challenges to FMCG's long-term viability (Chakabva, 2020). The environmental component is the most dangerous, followed by the social component and finally, the economic component, all of which pose serious threats to FMCGs' long-term viability. Despite this, the majority of FMCG companies do not include robust sustainability analysis in their risk management processes (Chakabva, 2020).

This section examines and explores the literature on the factors that influence firms to implement various strategic approaches and sustainability practices, such as external and internal factors. Chkanikova & Mont (2015) identified several disruptions in the FMCG retail sector such as a lack of financial resources, conflict of interests, lack of strategic leadership, and lack of knowledge and expertise among others. Internal obstacles to corporate sustainability adoption are lack of knowledge, lack of vision, lack of financial capital and lack of competence (Sudmai, 2018).

Sustainability strategies

Strategy is an organisation's long-term course (Neugebauer et al., 2016). According to Neugebauer et al. (2016), *strategy* is a process that includes both planned and unplanned components. For this study, both meanings are used because it is important to remember that strategy typically includes both expected and unexpected elements. Strategy is an organisation's long-term plan of action, which includes both planned and emergent elements (Neugebauer et al., 2016). In this study, planned strategy and emergent strategy for mitigating corporate sustainability disruptors in FMCGs retail industry in Gauteng will be discussed.

Risk management as a tool in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptors

Risk management is a proactive attempt to optimise business priorities by detecting, evaluating and managing disruptive behaviours and events to minimise and secure the valuable assets and services that are used sustainably (Sharma & Swain, 2011). Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) is an approach to risk management and forces that disrupt business operations. Sustainability risks management (SRM) are ethical concerns that focus on the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of business transactions. MacDonald (2011) stated that SRM encompasses disruptions or risks which emanate from social, environmental and economic impacts. An SRM is a process that is used to address and manage risks derived from sustainability issues.

Role of board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptors

Reinecke et al. (2012) explained that a board of directors (BOD) is a nominated group of individuals who represents shareholders and plays an important role in corporate management; such roles had widened the scope and growth of sustainability awareness. According to Reinecke et al. (2012), the board of directors' aim is to direct corporate decisions and improve financial performance by protecting investors. Currently, boards of directors offer resource functions, strategy functions, service functions and control functions.

The BOD is crucial because the presence of liberalised financial markets expands corporate governance misconduct and the demands of stakeholders. The BOD makes sure that values are being observed by concentrating on the environment, health and safety, security of stakeholder discrimination, bribery and corruption, information confidentiality and practices of insiders (Reinecke et al., 2012). It also creates and endorses guidelines for sustainability to suppliers, and as a result this promotes environmental and social issues in assessing, selecting and identifying firms' main suppliers. The BOD is responsible for examining risks and evaluating the future and the

present. Monitoring senior management and CEO conduct is one of the duties of the BOD; it allows them to examine the operation of the company, to enforce strategies and to choose the criteria of CEO compensation. Thus, the firm controls environmental constraints through communicating corporate social responsibility practices and standards of ethics that promote and support the status of economic and social status (Reinecke et al., 2012).

Traditionally, the boards have concentrated on planning for changes in the world in which their business operates as part of their oversight duties as well as generating sustainable value for shareholders (Reinecke et al., 2012). More recently, the board's regulation of best practices embeds social and environmental risks into the overall business risk assessment and policy of their company. Disruptive issues are related to the board of directors, who are an organisation's highest strategic decision-makers and should contribute to addressing disruptive issues effectively (Real et al., 2018).

4.2 Research Questions

The following secondary research questions will guide the study:

1. What are the internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Gauteng?
2. What is the role of sustainability risk management in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in Gauteng?
3. What is the role of boards of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Gauteng?
4. What types of strategies are used by FMCG retailers in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in Gauteng?
5. What is the perception of operations managers on the efforts made by the board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Gauteng?

4.3 Aims and Objectives

The study will explore the perceptions of operations managers on efforts that are implemented by the board of directors to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMG retail sector.

The secondary objectives are:

6. To identify internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Gauteng, South Africa.
7. To explore the role of sustainability risk management in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in Gauteng.
8. To analyse the role of a board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Gauteng.
9. To identify the strategies that can be used by FMCG retailers in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in Gauteng.
10. To explore the perception of operations managers on the efforts made by the board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Gauteng.

4.4	Research Paradigm <i>Place x in applicable box</i>	
1.	Quantitative	
2.	Qualitative	X
3.	Mixed methods	
4.	Other	
4.5	Research Design / Approach / Procedures <i>Name & describe the research design you intend to use, e.g. descriptive correlation, case study, grounded theory, etc. If your research will proceed in different phases, describe each phase sequentially.</i>	

The researcher will employ a phenomenological case study which will be carried out through a qualitative approach. A phenomenological case study is conducted in the participants' natural settings and people's experiences and perceptions will be gathered through a semi-structured interview. This technique is ideal for this study as it will enable the researcher to gather rich and deep information about the corporate sustainability disruptors in the FMCG retail sector.

Research approach

A research approach is a method of conducting research that is aligned with a particular research philosophy or paradigm (Babbie, 2014). The basic approaches in research are the qualitative approach, the quantitative approach, and a mixed approach. The study will employ a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is subjective and collects or uses non-numeric data while quantitative research is objective and uses numeric data that can be quantified (Greener, 2011); (Landrum & Garza, 2015). A qualitative approach is a method for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a research phenomenon. This approach is associated with an interpretive philosophy (Saunders et al., 2016). It is interpretive because the researcher will make sense of the subjective and socially constructed meanings expressed about the phenomena being studied (Saunders et al., 2016). The interpretive research process involves emerging questions and procedures. Data will be collected in the participant's natural setting and data analysis will be done inductively in order to generate theories or new knowledge.

The qualitative approach is attractive because it follows an inductive approach to identify patterns of meaning (Mohajan, 2018); (Landrum & Garza, 2015); (Leung, 2015). The researcher will gain deeper insight into the problem by conducting a qualitative investigation (Silverman, 2011); (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016); (Babbie, 2014). The qualitative approach is premised on an understanding of social or human experiences based on the detailed views of informants in their natural settings. This approach is chosen because it will allow the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the CS

disruptions in the FMCG retail industry. The researcher will make sense of the subjective and socially constructed meanings expressed about the phenomena being studied (Saunders et al., 2016:168). The interpretive research process involves emerging questions and procedures. Data will be collected in the participant's natural setting and data analysis will be done inductively in order to generate theories or new knowledge. The researcher will also make interpretations of the meaning of the data. (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014).

Research method

Researchers can use a mono-method quantitative or mono-method qualitative method (Saunders et al., 2016). On the other hand, a researcher can also employ a multi-method qualitative or multi-method quantitative method when conducting a study. The quantitative and qualitative approaches are mono-methods while the mixed approach is a combination of the qualitative method and the quantitative method. The research method for the proposed study will be based on the mono-qualitative method. This method will be appropriate as it will enable the researcher to discover the participants' inner experiences. Additionally, the mono-qualitative method will help the researcher in understanding the internal and external disruptions in the FMCG industry in-depth.

4.6	<p>Details of the participants of the proposed research project</p> <p><i>*Add additional rows if more than one sampling group is used</i></p>
4.6.1	<p>Describe the participants (in groups) involved in your research project, including the site population, site population size and age category.</p> <p><i>Provide a short description of the intended participants here</i></p> <p><i>Indicate if they can be divided into 'groups'</i></p> <p>The population comprises operation managers in 33 FMCG retailers in Gauteng (n = 33) and 5 FMCG retailers will be conveniently sampled. Two</p>

	<p>operations managers will be sampled from each retailer. This means 10 operation managers will form part of the sample for this study (n = 10). The sample size of 10 participants for the study is ideal as it will result in data saturation and the collection of rich and thick data which will be adequate to address the research objectives. The researcher will use a small sample size for the research study because there is a need for longer and in-depth interview questions when collecting data. Furthermore, the researcher will select cases that will best provide data to attain the aims of the study. The selection of the research participants will be based on their job experience: at least one or more years of experience as an operation manager in the FMCG retail industry.</p> <p>These participants will be males and females between 30 and 60 years of age group. In terms of working experience of 3 years as an operation manager in the FMCG retail industry. The participants should be involved in the implementation of CS.</p>		
	Identify the participant groups' targeted for the research	Site population size <i>(How many individuals are known to have similar characteristics?)</i>	Age category of group
Group 1*	10 operation managers from 33 operation managers will comprise the research sample	33 operation managers will comprise the population of the study	Between 30 to 60 years old
Group 2*			

4.6.2	<p>Explain <u>step by step</u> how you will select participants in each group <i>(sampling method, predicted sample size and justification for the sample size).</i></p>		
	Sampling method	Sample size	Justify sample size
Group 1*	<p>A convenience sampling method will be used to select the participants. The researcher will select participants who are conveniently accessible; working as operations managers and also geographically closer to the researcher.</p>	<p>10 operation managers</p>	<p>The sample size of 10 participants for the study is ideal as it will result in data saturation and the collection of rich and thick data which will be adequate to address the research objectives. The researcher will use a small sample size for the research study because there is a need for longer and in-depth interview questions when collecting data. Furthermore, the researcher will select cases that will best provide data to attain the aims of the study. The selection of the research participants will be based on their job experience: a minimum of two years of experience as an operation manager in the FMCG retail industry. These participants, given their years of experience, will most likely have the knowledge of disruption problems as well as the extent or scope of the</p>

			implementation of corporate sustainability.
Group 2*			
4.6.3	Please specify the <u>inclusion</u> criteria for <u>each</u> participant group.		
Group 1*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants should be between 30 and 60 years old 2. Both females and males employed as operations managers will be included in the study 3. Participants should have a minimum of 2 years of working experience as an operation manager in an FMCG retail company 		
Group 2*			
4.6.4	Please specify the <u>exclusion</u> criteria for <u>each</u> participant group.		
Group 1*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants who are below 30 years and above 60 years will be excluded from the study 2. Only operations managers will participate in the study hence non-operation managers will not participate in the study 3. Operations managers with less than 3 years of working experience in the FMCG retail industry will not participate in the study 		
Group 2*			
4.6.5	Describe <u>how much time</u> you require of participants in each group and <u>when the data will be collected/ interviews will take place.</u>		
	Time required	When will data be collected?	
Group 1*	25–30 minutes will be required	Only after ethics clearance is received to July 2022	
Group 2*			

4.6.6	<p>Explain how you will <u>obtain the contact details</u> of participants AND provide step-by-step details of <u>how you will recruit</u> them to participate.</p> <p>If from a public domain source – please identify the source. If from a previously approved database, please confirm how approval was or will be obtained. Attach the approval letter on official letterhead from the authorised person/committee as an appendix to the application form if you have it. If not, explain why approval could not be obtained.</p>
Group 1*	<p>The application for Ethical Clearance will be submitted to the College of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee. On obtaining approval to conduct the study from the management team, the gatekeepers from Hercules SPAR; BSBH VLEISMARK; IC FOODZONE; LEBEBE BAKERY & FOODS; and SAVEMOR. Will be involved in gaining access to operations managers to obtain a list of information containing operations managers’ names and contact details, qualifications, and experiences. The gatekeepers may also send information letters or e-mails on behalf of the researcher in order to protect the privacy of the participants. The information received from the gatekeeper will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity so as to comply with the prescriptions of the Protection of personal information Act. The researcher will then identify potential participants from the list provided by the gatekeepers. A consent form and information letter about the study will be used to establish their willingness to participate in the study. The information letter will contain detailed information about the study such as the purpose, objectives, benefits of the study and participant’s rights. When participants express their willingness to participate, a date, time and venue will then be set for them to be interviewed. The researcher will send an email to each operation manager sampled to participate in the study. The email will have two attachments, an information sheet and a letter of invitation for participants to express willingness to participate in the study.</p>
Group 2*	

4.6.7	Will any dependent or unequal relationship exist between anyone involved in the <u>recruitment</u> and the participants? [i.e. the person in a position of power is recruiting participants which could compromise voluntary participation]	
YES / <u>NO</u> (<i>Underline the applicable answer</i>)		
Explain if applicable: How will this perceived conflict of interest be managed?		
N/A		
4.7	Collection of data material and procedures	
Indicate which data collection methods will be used.		
4.7.1	Questionnaire / Survey	
YES / <u>NO</u> (<i>Y or N in each block to indicate your response</i>)		
i) Self-designed		N
ii) Borrowed		N
iii) Adapted		N
iv) Fully identifiable (name on it) or linked to a consent form		N
v) Potentially identifiable (coded)		N
vi) Anonymous (can never be identified)		N
vii) Questionnaire(s) / Survey(s)		
EMBED questionnaire or survey here – ensure that you have used the Unisa templates and front cover		
viii) If the questionnaire/survey is borrowed, was approval granted by the original developer?		N/A
ix) Proof of approval from the original developer		
Insert proof of approval here or append it to the application		

N/A

ix) If not, justify why:

N/A

1. Explain how the questionnaire/survey will be administered.

N/A

1. Specify how the questionnaire/survey will be returned to you to ensure confidentiality.

N/A

4.7.2 Interviews

YES / NO (*Y or N in each block to indicate your response*)

i) In-depth	Y
-------------	---

ii) Semi-structured	Y
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iii) Unstructured	N
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iv) Audio-taped	Y
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v) Video-taped	N
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vi) **Insert the interview questions/list of topics below**

EMBED document here – ensure that you have used the Unisa templates and front cover

4.7.3

Focus groups

Note: Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in a group setting – this must be included in the Informed Consent leaflet and explained as part of the consent process

YES / <u>NO</u> (Y or N in the block to indicate your response)	
i) Insert the focus group questions/ list of topics below or attached them as an addendum to the application	
EMBED questionnaire or survey here – ensure that you have used the Unisa templates and front cover	
4.7.4	Other
YES / <u>NO</u> (Y or N in the block to indicate your response)	
i) Identify each additional data collection method, describe it briefly and insert data collection tools or attach it as an addendum to the application	
* Insert here	
4.8	Where will the data be collected? If not known, please provide a suggested location or online.
Interviews will be conducted via virtual platforms such MS Teams and Zoom	
4.9	<u>By whom</u> will the data be collected? (Researcher/field workers/community members)? <u>Explain</u> any measures that you will take to prepare yourself/field workers/community members to optimise data collection activities. Field workers/community members are required to sign a confidentiality agreement form.
Data will be collected by the researcher.	
* Embed confidentiality agreement(s) for fieldworkers/community members here if applicable	
4.10	Will participants be subjected to any form of intervention (manipulation of the participant or the participants' environment)?
YES / <u>NO</u> (Underline the applicable answer)	

Please explain the intervention in full.

4.11 Does the research involve participants who have specific cultural needs, protocol requirements or/and specific consent arrangements?

YES / NO (Underline the applicable answer)

Please clarify your response.

4.12 Will you require the use of a translator or will you use documentation translated into a language other than English?

YES / NO (Underline the applicable answer)

Describe how the translator will be used.
Insert or append the translated data collection instrument(s), interview guide(s), participant information sheet(s) and consent form(s) in the participants' first language, as well as a letter from the language practitioner certifying the credibility of the translated material.

4.13 Is there a dependent or unequal relationship between any person collecting the data (e.g. researcher) and the participant?

YES / NO (Underline the applicable answer)

If YES, Please give details and explain the measures taken to manage this situation.

4.14 Does your research project involve the collection and analysis of documents or secondary data?

YES / NO (Underline the applicable answer)

1. Please explain the sampling method of the relevant categories of documents and the predicted sample size, followed by a justification for sample size (add more rows if necessary)

	Sampling method	Sample size	Justify sample size
--	-----------------	-------------	---------------------

Data set/ document 1*			
Data set/ document 2*			
2. Describe the <u>conditions</u> under which the data was collected initially and the <u>reasons why</u> it was collected. If applicable, describe the <u>number of participants</u> and <u>demographics</u> applicable to the secondary data analysis.			
3. Was ethical clearance granted for the original data-gathering phase by this or by another research ethics committee if appropriate?			

SECTION 5: DATA MANAGEMENT, ANALYSIS AND DESIGN QUALITY

5.1 State the data analysis method that you will use (qualitative data analysis method or quantitative statistical procedures)

Thematic analysis method will be used to analyse data. Thematic analysis is a technique used to analyse qualitative data that involves the search for themes, or patterns, occurring across a data set (Saunders et al., 2016). After transcribing the interview data, the researcher will embark on the analysis phase. Thematic analysis will be employed in this study because it is a flexible method of analysing qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The procedure will include activities such as becoming familiar with the data collected, coding the data, searching for themes and identifying patterns. Thematic analysis will be used because it is appropriate for analysing the participants' views (Caulfield, 2019). The researcher will closely analyse the data to identify common themes or ideas. NVIVO software which is used to analyse qualitative research data will be used to help in the data analysis process. NVIVO is qualitative data analysis software developed to manage the coding procedures in analysing qualitative data (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). This software will be appropriate for the study because it is used for analysing texts, audio and video data collected through interviews or focus groups. The software will enable the researcher to analyse and organise text and audio data.

NVIVO may significantly improve the quality of research because software reduces manual tasks and give the researcher more time to discover tendencies, recognise themes and derive conclusions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

5.2 Provide the contact details of the statistician or external coder that you will use (if applicable)

N/A

5.3 For a quantitative study or phase of your research, provide a brief description of the measures YOU WILL TAKE with regard to your study to ensure validity and reliability, taking into account:

1. Internal and External validity of the research design

N/A

2. Validity and Reliability of data gathering instrument

N/A

5.4 For a qualitative study or phase of your research, provide a brief description of the measures YOU WILL TAKE with regard to your study to ensure trustworthiness and/or authenticity, for instance taking into account:

1. Credibility

In this study, the researcher will not use the information that can be used to identify the participants. However, to ensure credibility, the findings will represent what will be drawn from the participants' data or views. Furthermore, to ensure authentic participants' perspectives, the research will use open-ended questions which will enable the participants to open up and give detailed narratives regarding their experiences and views towards corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG Retail industry. Participants will be encouraged to support their statements with examples, and the interviewer will ask follow-up questions. The researchers will review the data from their raw interview material until themes emerge. Where the researcher seeks clarity, transcripts of the interview discussions will be sent to the participants for feedback. In addition, after the development of the draft framework, a framework will be sent to the participant to review it.

2. Dependability

Dependability refers to whether the research results are consistent and reliable (Moon et al., 2016); (Shenton, 2004). To ensure dependability, all research processes should be documented in detail to enable other researchers to trace the entire process (Oates, 2006); (Shenton, 2004). In this study, to ensure dependability, all processes will be documented thoroughly.

3. Confirmability

Here, all necessary steps must be carried out to ensure that the study's findings are supported by participants' ideas and experiences (Shenton, 2004). Normally, this process is done to lessen the impact of the research bias. To promote confirmability and avoid bias by the researcher, this study will triangulate primary data. Again, Shenton indicated that the detail of the methodology should be elaborated to enable other readers to determine if the results will be acceptable (Shenton, 2004). In this study, design science research methodology will be presented to support the development of a framework. Summary data and analysis of the study will be provided for an auditor to judge if the results are sound and based logically on the data (Oates, 2006).

4. Transferability

Transferability refers to whether the research results can be generalised or applied to another situation (Moon et al., 2016); (Shenton, 2004). This study will consider local conditions and offer more elaboration for decision-makers to determine if the results can be applied to another situation. This will be done by using multiple operations managers to increase the variety of situations.

5. Authenticity

When addressing authenticity, the researcher must consider the impact of a context by considering sub-criteria like fairness, educative authenticity, tactical authenticity, ontological authenticity, and catalytic authenticity (Amin et al., 2020); (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Fairness is seen as the degree to which all underlying value structures and competing constructions of reality are deconstructed, exposed, assessed and taken into consideration in guiding the development of a framework or product (Amin et al., 2020). In this study, fairness will be ensured by collecting data from different operation managers in different FMCG retail outlets and from different participants to give their views and experiences with regard to corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector.

Educative authenticity is described as the degree to which the participants and the researcher improve their understanding and tolerate or appreciate the product developed by others outside their domain (Amin et al., 2020). In this study, educative authenticity will be ensured by allowing participants and the researcher to appreciate a shared perspective on an integrated framework. Tactical authenticity refers to the degree to which participants are empowered to put the findings of the study into action (Amin et al., 2020). In this case, participants will be provided (on request) with a final framework that will empower them to eliminate the corporate sustainability disruptions bedevilling the FMCG retail sector.

Ontological authenticity refers to the improvement of the initial framework in providing all parties with a deeper understanding of the use of the improved framework (Amin et al., 2020). In this study, ontological authenticity will be shown in the framework that will make all parties sophisticated in the use of the framework by elaborating aspects that are influential in eliminating the corporate sustainability disruptions affecting the FMCG retail sector.

Lastly, catalytic authenticity is defined as the degree to which action is taken to eliminate issues raised by participants during the research (Amin et al., 2020). This will be demonstrated by directly addressing the issues that affect corporate sustainability disruptions affecting the FMCG retail sector.

5.5 List the references used in the application form

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5.6	Indicate the timeline (<i>*Insert additional rows if necessary</i>)	
	Planned research activities (i.e. ethics clearance, data collection, analysis, report writing, editing, printing, etc.)	Anticipated completion time
	Ethics clearance application	August 2022
	Data Collection	September 2022 – October 2022

Analysis and testing	November - December 2022
Write up of paper and results	January – February 2023
Editing and printing the document	March – April 2023
5.7	Indicate the budget <i>to justify the financial feasibility of the research (*Insert additional rows if necessary)</i>
Planned research activities (i.e. ethics clearance, data collection, analysis, report writing, editing, printing, etc.)	Estimated cost
Transport, accommodation, and food for data collection	R20 000,00
Accommodation and food for report writing	R5 000,00
Language editing	R10 000,00
Document printing	R5 000,00
5.8	If you do run out of funding to cover your budget, do you have a contingency fund to complete the study?
I have applied for bursaries, and I have saved some funds for the study	

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1	Describe the process of obtaining Informed Consent below			
<p>1. The participant will be given the consent form before the interview takes place to sign in order to give their consent to continue with the interview session.</p>				
<p>Embed the information sheet and informed consent document(s) here – use Unisa templates</p>				
6.2	<p>Checklist to ensure that the <u>participant information sheet</u> and <u>consent form</u> meet ethical requirements</p> <p style="color: red;"><i>Standard participant information sheets and consent forms are available on the research website or can be requested from the relevant ERC</i></p>	YES	NO	N/A
<p><i>Place an 'x' in the box provided</i></p>				
a) The identity and position of the researcher(s) and the organisation collecting the information?		X		
b) The purposes for which the information is being collected?		X		
c) Reason why the participant has been selected and procedures for selecting participants?		X		
d) Participant's actual role in the study?		X		
e) Expected duration of participation?		X		
f) Statement that participation is voluntary and that there is no penalty or		X		

	loss of benefit for non-participation?			
	g) Benefits to the participant and others?	X		
	h) Potential risks <u>as well as</u> measures that will be taken if injury or harm attributable to the study occurs?	X		
	i) Statement that participant can withdraw at any time without obligation to explain or any adverse effects?	X		
	j) Compensation/gifts/services for participants?	X		
	k) Reimbursement and any costs incurred by participants?	X		
	l) Indemnity if applicable?*			X
	m) The period for which the records relating to the participant will be kept?	X		
	n) The steps taken to ensure confidentiality and secure storage of data?	X		
	o) The types of individual or organisation to which your organisation usually discloses information of this kind?	X		
	p) How privacy will be protected in any publication of the information?	X		
	q) How feedback will be provided?	X		
	r) Any exclusion to confidentiality? (e.g. when focus groups are used)*			X
	s) Consent for third party sharing of data e.g. statistician, coders if applicable*			X
	t) Consent for cross border data transfer if applicable*			X
	u) Consent for data sharing in a credible public repository if applicable*			X
	v) The steps taken to ensure that cultural protocol has been observed if applicable*			X
6.3	Checklist to ensure that the process of <u>obtaining assent</u>	YES	NO	N/A

	(participants younger than 18) meets ethical requirements				
	(IF APPLICABLE). Place an 'x' in the box provided below if not applicable				
	Not applicable	X			
a)	A statement of the purpose of the research or study?				X
b)	A description of the procedure to be applied in dealings with the minor?				X
c)	A statement that the minor's identity will not be revealed?				X
d)	A description of the potential risks or discomfort associated with the research?				X
e)	A description of any direct benefits to the minor?				X
f)	A statement that the minor is not compelled to participate?				X
g)	A statement that the minor is free to withdraw at any time?				X
h)	A statement that the minor should discuss participation with the parents prior to signing the form?				X
i)	A statement that the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the minor will be asked for permission on behalf of the minor?				X
j)	A statement that the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the minor will receive a copy of the signed form				X
k)	Invitation to ask questions?				X
l)	Contact details of researcher?				X
<p>Note that only the minor and the researcher obtaining assent should sign the child assent form. A copy of the child assent form should be given to the parent or legal guardian.</p>					

*[*If other, provide details in the space allowed for comments]*

6.4	Measures taken to protect confidentiality:
a)	<p>Paper-based records must be kept in a secure location and should only be accessible to personnel involved in the study.</p> <p>Please indicate who will have access to the data and where will it be retained.</p>
	<p>Hard copies of data will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard/ filing cabinet in the work office of the master's student or as appropriate. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. After the applicable period, all hard copies will be shredded.</p>
b)	<p>Personnel will be required to sign statements agreeing to protect the security and confidentiality of identifiable information.</p> <p>Please indicate who will be required to sign confidentiality agreements and embed them below – Use the Unisa template</p>
	<p>All electronic files and folders will be password protected. These electronic data will be stored on a password-protected masters candidate's computer. A backup of the electronic data will be saved on an external hard drive. The external hard drive will be locked in the cupboard/filing cabinet in the master's student study room at home. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. After the applicable period, electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme.</p>
c)	<p>Personnel will be required to sign statements agreeing to protect the security and confidentiality of identifiable information.</p> <p>Please indicate who will be required to sign confidentiality agreements and</p>

insert them below or append the agreements to the application.

The Transcriber and Co-coder will be required to sign confidentiality agreements.

d) *[Place an 'x' in the box provided]*

i) Personal identifiers will be removed from research-related information	X
ii) Encryption	N/A
iii) Use of pseudonyms	X
iv) Participants in focus groups will be advised that confidentiality cannot be assured	N/A

Comments:
 The removal of personal identifiers and the use of pseudonyms will ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The data provided by the participants will be kept in a soft copy format and access to that data will require a password to access the information, when the information is protected it will ensure that only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to that information.

Data sharing with 3rd parties/collaborators/institutions (if applicable)
In the South African context, agencies including the National Research Foundation (NRF) require that data supporting publications be deposited in an accredited open access (OA) Data repository from March 2015 onwards with a registered Digital Object Identifier (DOI) for citation and referencing.

a) How will you obtain consent from the research participants and/or other stakeholders i.e. funders, participating institutions, etc. for further use of research information? *Note that personal identifiable data cannot be shared without explicit*

	prior consent.
	The raw data will not be submitted to any third-party repository.
b)	Where, with whom and how will you share the data?
	The raw data will not be shared with any third party.
c)	How will you de-identify data to protect participants' privacy during further processing?
	The names of the participants (individuals, groups, organisations, etc.) will not be included in any published records of the research. Names will not be reported in any published records of the study, and no one will be able to connect any findings to participants [this measure refers to anonymity]. Each participant will be given a code number or a pseudonym and will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings [this measure refers to confidentiality].
6.6	Data Storage and Procedures for Disposal of the Data
a)	For what period will the data be retained? The Unisa Policy on Research Ethics stipulates that data should be retained for a minimum period of 5 years. <i>Please note that this time period presents a minimum standard.</i> What reasonable steps will be taken to dispose of or permanently de-identify personal information if it is no longer needed for research?
	All electronic files and folders will be password protected. These electronic data will be stored on a password-protected master's candidate's computer. A backup of the electronic data will be saved on an external hard drive. The external hard drive will be locked in the cupboard/filing cabinet in the master's student study room at home. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

After the applicable period, electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme.

All hard copies of data will be stored in the researcher-locked cupboard/ filing cabinet in the work office of the master's student or as appropriate. A backup will be locked in the cupboard/filing cabinet in the master's student's study room at home. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. After the applicable period, all hard copies will be shredded

After a minimum period of five years, any hard copies will be shredded, and electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme.

6.7	<p>How will participants be informed of the findings or results and consulted on the potential or actual benefits of such findings or results to them or others?</p> <p>(Copy of journal article, book, chapter, summary report to organisation, on-line web based, oral presentation, other)</p>
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Once the research has been completed, the findings will be available to the participants on request. If they would like to be informed of the final research findings, they will have to contact Dimakatso Hellen Maunye on 0720470471 email: 50065831@mylife.unisa.ac.za / mogoadh147@gmail.com

6.8	<p>In the case of the use of indigenous knowledge, how will you ensure that participants are not exploited/harmed for instance by protecting their Intellectual Property rights? (if applicable)</p>
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N/A

6.9	<p>How will participants benefit, gain access or share in products developed from the study in case of collaborative projects or the use of indigenous knowledge? (if applicable)</p>
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N/A

6.10	<p>Indicate how you envisage publishing this research.</p> <p>(thesis, journal article, book, chapter, on-line web based, oral presentation, other)</p>
<p>In a thesis and peer-reviewed conference proceedings or accredited journal publications or other related academic publications</p>	
6.11	<p>Describe the nature and amount of compensation including reimbursements, gifts, services or incentives to be provided to each group of participants.</p> <p>(if applicable)</p>
<p>N/A</p>	
6.12	<p>Describe any financial costs that might be incurred by participants. If participants incur costs, how will you ensure that it is fair?</p> <p>(if applicable)</p>
<p>N/A</p>	

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR OPERATION MANAGERS

Research objective 1: What are the corporate sustainability disruptions in the fast-moving consumer goods in the retail industry in Gauteng Province, South Africa?

1. **Sub-question 1.1:** Can you highlight the internal corporate sustainability disruptions which are prevalent in the FMCG retail sector?
2. **Sub-question 1.2:** What are the external corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail sector?
3. **Sub-question 1.3** In addition, to internal and external corporate sustainability disruptions what are the other drivers of corporate sustainability disruptions?

Research objective 2: What is the role of sustainability operations management in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the organisation?

1. **Sub-question 2.1:** How is the operations management department involved in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the organisation:

Research objective 3: In your view what is the role of boards of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Gauteng?

1. **Sub-question 3.1:** What is being done by the board of directors to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions which have an impact on the sustainability of the community?
2. **Sub-question 3.3:** In your view do you think the board of directors is doing enough to mitigate corporate sustainability disruptions in the organisation?

Research objective 4: Which strategies are employed by FMCG retailers in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in Gauteng?

1. **Sub-question 4.1:** Which strategies are you implementing in your organisation in an endeavor to mitigate internal corporate sustainability disruptions affecting your organisation?

2. **Sub-question 4.2:** In your view do you think these strategies are working in mitigating the corporate sustainability disruptions?
3. **Research objective 5:** What is your perception on the efforts made by board of directors in mitigating corporate sustainability disruptions in the FMCG retail industry in Gauteng?
 1. **Sub-question 5.1:** In your view how are these disruptions affecting people or community sustainability?
 2. **Sub-question 5.2** How are the corporate sustainability disruptions affecting the financial sustainability of the organisation?

**APPENDIX E: INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT
FORM**

(Fuentes & Fredriksson, 2016); furthermore, employees should be satisfied with how they are involved in the business' corporate sustainability (Lee & Ha-Brookshire, 2017).

APPENDIX F: TURNITIN FINAL REPORT

