

## **We bravely don't throw cash in the trash; we recycle it!**

Increasingly there has been pressure on businesses to stand with society facing social, environmental, economic, and health issues. One of the mainstream issues prevalent is the need for sustainability. In recent times, a popular sustainability practice is 'going green', with 45% of customers willing to buy more from companies that care about the environment. Brands 'going green' is meeting customers' environmental needs. A popular brand that has executed this is Woolworths. By doing this, it portrays the brand bravely upholding its core values, creating the space for the brand to gain respect by improving its reputation, trustworthiness, and performance. When customers see their own values reflected in brands and identify with what the brand stands for, consumer brand identification occurs, which drives brand loyalty. However, there is little knowledge in understanding brand bravery and brand respect and how it can influence consumer behaviour. This study provides insight into using bravery as a means of managing customers' concerns and expectations when there are societal challenges and using this to encourage positive consumer responses towards the brand.

A study was conducted by Cameron Sathiah, a [Master's](#) student in the [Department of Marketing Management](#), to examine the way in which harnessing the power of brand bravery, brand respect, and consumer brand identification, using Social Identity Theory, can drive loyalty. Brand loyalty is important since it increases satisfaction and brand choice, and leads to increase purchasing.

A non-probability snowball sampling method was used by means of a self-completion online questionnaire, through social media platforms and 355 responses were obtained from South African Woolworths shoppers. Findings revealed that there are positive relationships between brand bravery, brand respect, consumer brand identification and brand loyalty. The results found that consumers gained respect and identified with the brand for executing sustainable practices. Woolworths with their green initiative, gains the respect of consumers, and consumers identify with Woolworths' concern for the environment, resulting in loyalty.

This study contributes to branding literature, by testing the applicability of the brand bravery and brand respect scales in a sustainability context. It provides insight into how brands should position themselves to gain respect and be viewed as brave while

simultaneously addressing social issues and obtaining positive consumer outcomes. The findings assist brand managers in understanding how to position their advertising, promotion strategies and product offerings to be perceived as brave, by focusing on sustainability practices. Charity work, recycling, donations, hosting events, running sustainability campaigns, using environmentally friendly products, and creating educational posts, all in such so that people will respect and see their own values in the brand, will lead to positive outcomes not only for brands and consumers but also for the planet.

*This research was conducted as part of the fulfillment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2022 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Cameron Sathiah under the supervision of [Prof Melanie Wiese](#).*