Brand image creation by anti-food waste focused social enterprises on Instagram

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ABSTRACT

As the number of active users on Instagram grew rapidly, businesses are increasingly using the platform to create awareness for their brand and establishing online brand image. Accordingly, the number of social enterprises advocating for a social goal increased. These organizations also started to use Instagram to create a brand image. By advocating their social goal online, social enterprises encourage their followers to contribute to help to achieve this goal. In this case, the focus lays on intending to reduce food waste worldwide. This thesis researches the ways how anti-food waste focused social enterprises build their brand image on Instagram. As Instagram grew into a platform for organizations to identify and present their selves as a brand, brand image creation by social enterprises on Instagram can contribute to a longer existence and higher impact on the social enterprises' social goal. By conducting thematic analysis on the Instagram pages of three social enterprises, this study examines how the brands create their brand image on Instagram. Hereby, tools and strategies for online brand image creation are considered. The findings point out that social enterprises actively engage their followers through stimulating co-creation and by educating them. By doing so, social enterprises aim to encourage their followers to take action and start reducing food waste. First, the social enterprises under study largely involve their followers to co-create their brand image, as the content of followers is often reposted and input and experiences of followers are regularly asked for. Through this process of co-creation of content and brand image online, an online brand community is built. The creation of online brand communities has become increasingly popular, as the sense of belonging to the community results in loyal customers. Second, social enterprises educate their follower base in the field of food waste. The brands inform and educate their followers in their posts by sharing recipes, tips, and easy hacks, the social enterprises try to involve their followers in their attempt at reducing food waste. Therewith, social enterprises are utilizing different tools and strategies for brand image creation to encourage their followers to get involved in reducing food waste.

Keywords: *Social enterprise, Anti-food waste, Brand image, Instagram, Social media marketing*

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1. Introduction

As consumers worldwide are increasingly becoming more conscious about the ecological footprint they leave on earth, businesses and their visions are shifting towards a more responsive ideology (Cha, Yi, & Bagozzi, 2016; Galera & Borzaga, 2009). Accordingly, the term Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) became a much-discussed topic over the last couple of years (Cha et al., 2016). Consumers are more interested in 'doing good', both for others and for the environment. This has ensured that consumers are also willing to go an extra mile for a product that helps them 'doing good'. This extra mile could mean paying a higher price or making an extra effort such as, for instance, bringing a reusable coffee cup instead of using a new paper cup repeatedly (Kao, Yang, Wu, & Cheng, 2016). A survey by Futerra (2018) revealed that 96% of consumers believe they can make a difference by adjusting their actions, for example by starting to recycle. Although individual consumers believe they can make a difference, large brands are the ones to help to make this happen (Townsend, 2018). For brands, this provides an opportunity to establish a connection with their consumers, as several studies on CSR practices have revealed that consumers tend to develop higher brand loyalty when a company is known for its social responsibility (e.g. Cha, Yi, & Bagozzi, 2016; Marin, Ruiz, & Rubio, 2009). Moreover, consumers are more likely to support and promote the company if it has a reputation for CSR (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2007).

Despite the fact that many companies, for this reason, steer on a better CSR strategy, one can question the sincerity of such a strategy. More and more organizations utilize a socially driven mission. However, not all organizations who do this are considered credible. This roots in the idea that the increased efforts of a company to become socially responsible possibly have been done to improve the brand's image and subsequently, to increase profit (Yoon, Gürhan-Canli, & Schwarz, 2006). The organizational type that can eliminate this doubt of sincerity is the social enterprise.

Social enterprises are a relatively new phenomenon, that, given the centrality of a social purpose to their business model, may be an example of businesses that do employ a sincere social strategy. To investigate this new phenomenon of social enterprises, this thesis considers social enterprises that are focused on countering food waste. A social enterprise can be best described as a business that has a social cause as its business goal and reinvests its surpluses in the business itself. By doing so, the social enterprise is not driven by maximizing profit for its stakeholders or owners (DTI, 2003). The concept of social enterprise will be further explained in the theoretical framework.

While the interest in anti-food waste is growing globally, there is little evidence showing exact numbers or information on the amount of food that is wasted. A report from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (2011) claims that one-third of all food that is produced globally is considered food loss. Even though this estimation is made in 2011, there is no

recent estimation available and FAO's estimation from 2011 is generally cited. It could be argued that the field of food waste lacks recent research. The FAO defines food loss as "any change in the availability, edibility, wholesomeness or quality of edible material that prevents it from being consumed by people" (Girotto, Alibardi, & Cossu, 2015, p.1).

Different suppliers in the food chain contribute to food waste. For instance, most supermarkets are only selling well-shaped- and sized fruits and vegetables, meaning that the diversely shaped fruits and vegetables are rejected for sale and, therewith, discarded. Besides, restaurants changed to offering larger plates and meals to their consumers, which will not be fully consumed, causing the left-overs to become food waste (Smith, 2020). According to Närvänen, Mesiranta, Mattila, and Heikkinen (2020), 30 to 50 percent of the food produced for humans never gets eaten by people, while in some parts of the world, people do not even have access to the necessary nutrition and calories per day. More specifically, in the Netherlands, the average person wasted 34,4 kg on food in the year 2019 ("Cijfers voedselverspilling 2019", 2019).

As mentioned before, brands benefit from sharing their sustainable contributions with their consumers. In order to stay in contact and share information and opinions with consumers, organizations increasingly use social media (Raziq et al., 2018). As these channels are also intensively used by social enterprises, it is interesting to explore how these organizations use Instagram as a tool for building their brand image. According to Nyangwe and Buhalis (2017), a strong brand is one of the most valuable assets an organization can have, which emphasizes the importance of branding. Along with the increased popularity of social media, online branding has become more relevant for all businesses, in order to be able to reach a bigger audience and establish a strong connection with customers (Clement, 2020; Raziq et al., 2018). According to Roth and Zawadski (2018), branding on Instagram can contribute to building a strong brand image. Due to the high sense of interactivity on Instagram, the creation of brand image is no longer a one-way directional process (Nyangwe & Buhalis, 2018). What is more, brands use Instagram to build online brand communities, as this platform proves to be a valuable tool to do so (Roncha & Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016). Online brand communities arise from the co-creation of a brand's image by the organization and its consumers (Kozinets, De Valck, Wojnicki, & Wilner, 2010). In general, most organizations share an interest in building an online brand community, since members of a brand community feel a strong sense of connection (Aksoy et al., 2013). Brands deem this strong sense of connection important as these members are more likely to stay loyal to a brand and tend to recommend the brand more regularly to others (Gao, Tate, Zhang, Chen, & Liang, 2018; Vivek, Beatty, & Morgan, 2012).

As social enterprises are neither belonging to the non-profit- or the for-profit sector, tools and strategies from both fields will be studied and combined to research how social enterprises build their brand image on Instagram. Although for-profit brands are profit-driven and are more likely to

make an effort to build their brand image, non-profit organizations are considered the strongest brands worldwide (Stride & Lee, 2007).

The increase in brand image creation on social media combined with the increased number of social enterprises focusing on reducing food waste worldwide poses the topic of study as to how social enterprises in the Netherlands communicate to their followers on Instagram, to better understand how these social enterprises build their brand image around their societal mission. The research question that will be answered throughout this paper is: "How do anti-food waste focused social enterprises in the Netherlands create their brand image on Instagram?". To provide an answer to this question, supporting literature on the different concepts that are central to this study will be explored. The rise of social enterprises, the rise of brand image creation on social media, and the globally increasing problem of food waste together pose an interesting question to study.

1.1.   Societal relevance

This study focuses on social enterprises in the Netherlands that devote their business to the reduction of food waste. Food waste is causing a problem worldwide and is continuously growing (Girotto et al., 2015; Parfitt, Barthel, & MacNaughton, 2010). The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) argues that this waste of food directly contributes to shortages of water and food, biodiversity loss that could have been prevented, and high greenhouse gas emissions ("The Environmental Impact of Food Waste - Stop Food Waste," n.d.).

Initiatives that commit to helping to solve issues like food waste try to enhance the well-being of the world. Social enterprises that are intending to reduce food waste raise awareness about the worldwide problem. Additionally, they make it possible for people to be involved in their attempt to reducing food waste. By doing so, social enterprises encourage people to 'do good' and be more conscious of world issues. This can contribute to a more conscious and considerate society.

This contribution to society is considerably important. However, these companies can only contribute when they communicate with their customers well. Therefore, these companies are increasingly using social media. At this moment, the world needs to establish a better understanding of how brand image can be built on social media by social enterprises, in order for social enterprises to exist and contribute to society by reaching their social goals. This research helps to create understanding for social enterprises and Instagram users about how social enterprises utilize different tools and strategies to build their brand image and, therewith, present their brand online. By providing more insights into the combination of social enterprises and brand image creation on Instagram, social enterprises will be more likely to present their brand images more strongly on Instagram, which helps them to gain more attention and exposure online. This contributes to a possible growth for the brand as a whole and establishing stability for the existence of social

enterprises.

1.2.   Scientific relevance

Next to the societal value, this study will add to the existing literature on the topics of social enterprises, anti-food waste, and the online brand image creation by social enterprises. Since the topic of this research is relatively recent, there are not many academic studies that can be directly linked to the topic.

Existing literature is mainly focusing on the brand image creation by for-profit organizations (Latiff & Safiee, 2015; Low & Lamb, 2000; Malik, Basharat, & Madiha, 2012; Roth, 1994) and lacks research in the field of branding of social enterprises. Nonetheless, some research focuses on the branding strategies of non-profit organizations. Yet, this research mostly addresses branding strategies before the rapid developments of social media over the last decade. However, along with the rise of social media, branding strategies and tools evolved accordingly. Online branding strategies were implemented in the online social environment. Hereby, the focus of existing literature shifted towards a co-creation of brand image by the brand itself and its customers (Kozinets et al., 2010). Although this shift to co-creation is recognized and acknowledged, this research will focus on the element of brand image creation from a brand's perspective solely, considering it a component of today's brand image creation. Co-creation involves brands and consumers creating a certain image together. By focusing on one component of this collaboration, this study will lay its focus on the brand's initiatives in building brand image. For this study, research in the broad field of brand positioning will be applied to social enterprises. This literature research will serve as a basis and will be complemented with additional research and analysis that focuses on brand image creation in specific. As social enterprises have a different business goal than profit-driven companies, their branding strategy may also differ from those employed by profit-driven companies. According to Nyangwe and Buhalis (2018), a strong brand image is of great value to a non-profit organization, as it can be considered one of the only real assets the organization possesses. This thesis will provide insights into how three chosen social enterprises in the Netherlands create their brand image on Instagram: Too Good To Go, Kromkommer, and No Food Wasted.

1.3.   Chapter outline

In this section, the structure of this research will be discussed. In order to provide an answer to the research question while addressing relevant topics and aspects that add to the trustworthiness of research, this paper consists of five chapters. After introducing the topic, research question, and relevance of this thesis in this chapter, the research question will be answered in the following four chapters. The second chapter will discuss the existing literature and theories on the

topic, and is divided into three subsections. The first section addresses social enterprises and will elaborate more on this type of organization. Then, literature regarding food waste and initiatives that strive to reduce food waste globally will be addressed. Following this, existing literature about creating brand image online will be discussed, focused specifically on the platform Instagram. Throughout chapter 2, existing literature about the creation of online brand image by organizations will be explored. This helps to develop a theoretical framework to understand the concepts under consideration in this study.

The research method that will be used for this study is thematic content analysis, which will be introduced in chapter 3. Furthermore, the chapter will elaborate on the research design decisions regarding the data collection and units of analysis as well as the number of posts, and the time period of the analysis. Besides, the analysis will be operationalized, and the different steps in the coding process will be described. Lastly, the validity and reliability of the research will be discussed.

Then, in the fourth chapter, the results of the research will be presented and discussed. The results of the analysis will be interpreted and related to the existing literature on the topic, by means of specific examples from the dataset. The most important findings and their meaning will be critically discussed.

In the last chapter, a conclusion will be drawn and the research question as to how anti-food waste focused social enterprises in the Netherlands create their brand image on Instagram will be answered. Furthermore, the most important findings will be briefly addressed once more, and the limitations of this research will be discussed. Lastly, suggestions for future research will be given.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter discusses the existing literature on the introduced topics. The three concepts that are specified in the research question will be leading this theoretical discussion, which are: social enterprises, the anti-food waste industry, and brand image creation on Instagram. Although literature specifically addressing social enterprises is thus far lacking, studies on brand image will be considered and connected to the case of social enterprises.

As Ko and Liu (2020) suggest, social enterprises are a relatively new type of non-profit organization. It is important to first gain clear insights into social enterprises and what they entail. Therefore, the theoretical framework will start by exploring social enterprises as businesses. In order to do so, existing literature on social enterprises will be discussed and linked to the specific cases of this study. Hereby, current social enterprises can be used to illustrate certain aspects of a social enterprise.

Allan (2005) argues that the first and most important characteristic of social enterprises is the social goal they aim to achieve. For this thesis, the main scope of the research includes social enterprises that focus on reducing food waste. The worldwide problem of food waste will be discussed, in order to emphasize the importance of social enterprises to tackle this issue. Therefore, section 2.2 will focus on food waste in the context of general food waste and its implications.

The last theoretical concept in the research question is the brand image creation of social enterprises on Instagram. Considering the nature of social enterprises, it is of interest to research the brand image social enterprises create on their Instagram. Although social enterprises are not merely profit-driven, they are trying to grow as a business in order to be able to support their social goal, which, in this case, is reducing food waste. This study aims to better understand the brand image creation of social enterprises. Although the social enterprise is a relatively recent topic in academia, there have been numerous studies done on brand image creation in the marketing field, which can be linked to social enterprises. Hereby, the focus will especially lie on brand image creation on Instagram. Studies addressing these topics will be used to identify tools and practices for brand image creation on Instagram by social enterprises.

2.1. Social enterprises

The concept of social enterprise is a relatively new phenomenon. Therefore, by defining the concept, different approaches should be considered. First, the academic approach to defining social enterprises in the literature will be addressed. Then, the academic definition will be connected to the practical definition per local area. After that, the organizational type of social enterprises will be explored.

2.1.1. Social enterprises defined by academic literature

As this thesis focuses on social enterprises, this concept will be clarified and described by means of existing literature on this topic. Despite the social enterprise being a relatively new phenomenon, it has been discussed in the academic literature and various definitions have been proposed. According to Ko and Liu (2019), social enterprises are a type of non-profit organization. The distinction between a non-profit organization and a social enterprise can be made as non-profit organizations generate their income largely from funding and donations, whereas social enterprises make a profit from commercial activities, placing social enterprises more towards the for-profit sector (Ko & Liu, 2020; Smith, Gonin, & Besharov, 2013). More specifically, these commercial activities that social enterprises are involved in are done to generate profit while supporting a good cause, considering this good cause as their core mission (Ko & Liu, 2020). Others put it more strongly by pointing out that social enterprises do not value profit-making as their core business. Bagnoli and Megali (2011) define social enterprises as organizations that are social-mission-driven and trade in goods or services that have a social purpose (Bagnoli & Megali, 2011). Short et al. (2009) add to this definition by arguing that the characteristics of entrepreneurship are used to achieve a social goal, without profit as a motive. Along these lines, the Department of Trade and Industry's stresses that a social enterprise reinvests its surpluses in the business itself to further its social objectives (DTI, 2002). Accordingly, Mair and Martí (2006) describe a social enterprise as a process that combines resources to develop new organizations, to stimulate sociological change, and to meet social needs.

According to Allan (2005), social enterprises generally entail three common characteristics. First of all, a social enterprise has a clearly disclosed social aim and can be held accountable by the community for its ecological, economic, and social impact on the world. Social enterprises are often associated with the fair-trade movement. The two branches share similarities as they both advocate for a social cause. However, the promotional strategies of the movements differ. Generally seen, fair-trade brands focus on raising awareness for a fair and honest trading system. Therewith, consumers can recognize fair-trade products through the distinct fair-trade label on the packaging. However, while the fair-trade movement aims to raise awareness about the fairness and honesty within the trading system through labeling the packaging, social enterprises do not have such a specific method. However, some sectors have utilized specific labels, such as the EU Ecolabel, focusing on ecological products (Baldo, Marino, Montani, & Ryding, 2009). Nevertheless, there is not one distinct label for all social enterprises. In order to increase the popularity and the reputation of social enterprises, Allan (2005) suggested developing one label or brand to indicate products and services from social enterprises.

Second, a characteristic of social enterprises is that its strategies generally involve generating revenue from commercial activities, implying that they are directly involved in producing goods and

providing services to the market (Doherty, Haugh, & Lyon, 2014). Moreover, by making a profit on the market, social enterprises can be seen as "trading concerns" (Allan, 2005, p.57).

Third, the ownership of a social enterprise is autonomous and based on the participation of several stakeholders. For instance, stakeholders can be consumers, employees, or funders of the social enterprise (Allan, 2005). Moreover, profits are used in a way that is beneficial for the community behind a social enterprise (Allan, 2005).

The first social enterprises started to emerge in the late 20th century (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008). In the following years, the number of social enterprises grew substantially in different areas of the world (Nicholls, 2010). Accordingly, all areas gave a different interpretation to social enterprises as businesses, causing a multitude of definitions of social enterprises. Therefore, different local definitions will be addressed. Hereby, the focus will lay on Europe and the Netherlands, as these areas are relevant to this study.

The discussed definitions from the academic literature overlap and share many similarities. In this thesis, social entrepreneurship is mainly understood through the notion by DTI (2003), and Ko and Liu (2020) that social enterprises are organizations that are social-mission-driven at their core and that reinvest their surpluses back into the business to continue pursuing their social goal, in light of the three characteristics listed by Allan (2005).

2.1.2. Social enterprises in practice

Similar to the academic literature available on social enterprises, the development of social enterprises in the business world is relatively recently acknowledged. As clarified before, academic literature knows different definitions of a social enterprise. Accordingly, in practice, different understandings of social enterprises developed. This mostly depends on the location of the social enterprise. The different conceptualizations of social enterprises will be explored to gain a better understanding of social enterprises worldwide.

Twelve years ago the term social enterprise was rather unknown by many in the European Union (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008). The emergence of social enterprises can be explained by several reasons. Firstly, entrepreneurship became more popular over the last decade in general (Bosma et al., 2020; Kuratko, 2005), especially amongst the younger generations. As Kuratko (2005) states, the young adults in the 21st century are the most active entrepreneurs since the Industrial Revolution. Second, regulations regarding funding opportunities changed within countries worldwide, making it more attractive for the third sector to enter the entrepreneurial sector (Emerson, 2003). The third sector represents the sector that falls between the non-profit- and for-profit sector (Borzaga & Defourny, 2001). This concept will be discussed and elaborated more on in paragraph 2.1.3. Third, due to the changing funding opportunities causing organizations to compete for tendering and

contracts, the expectations in regard to practices such as marketing and management grew (Goerke, 2003). More than before was now expected from non-profit organizations that made a shift towards becoming a social enterprise (Goerke, 2003).

With the rise of social enterprises, the business world and governments globally adapted to social enterprises. The first country to introduce a new type of organization with its focus on a social cause was Italy. The country created the 'social solidarity co-operative' in 1991 (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008). A few years after, other European countries followed, although social enterprises were not always completely recognized (Nicholls, 2010). Some countries were forerunners in this process. For instance, the United Kingdom created a business model specifically for social enterprises, the so-called "community interest company" (DTI, 2003). The emergence of this new legal form created a more open environment for social enterprises that is more accessible (Nicholls, 2010). More generally in Europe, the Emergence of Social Enterprise (EMES) introduced the concept of the 'ideal' social enterprise, consisting of a number of features (Defourny & Nyssens, 2014; Kerlin, 2006). According to the EMES, social enterprises should have continuous flow in producing goods or selling services. Moreover, it should be directly involved in the process of production to exist as a social enterprise, although their main activity is not the generation of profit. Also, by carrying out this activity, a minimum number of paid workers is obligatory. Besides the paid workers, social enterprises can have volunteers if there is a minimum level of paid work in the organization. Furthermore, in order to be considered an ideal social enterprise, there should be a high degree of autonomy in the enterprise. Meaning that social enterprises may not be managed by federal or private organizations, but merely by the group of people that created the social enterprise. Adding to that, the EMES states that a social enterprise should be initiated by a couple of normal citizens as a result of a collective need or aim. Also, the decision making should be distributed amongst the members that are in control of the social enterprise. This distribution may not be made based on financial shares. Furthermore, social enterprises must know a significant level of economic risk, as they do not rely on the financial resources of a third party. Rather, they depend on the efforts of the social enterprise's members itself. Besides that, as mentioned before, social enterprises must advocate for a social cause to serve the community at large, or part of the community they operate in, and to enhance social responsibility locally. Finally, social enterprises should have a participatory nature, meaning that they should actively participate in society and involve their members to participate accordingly.

This study focuses on social enterprises in Europe, as the research considers social enterprises in the Netherlands. Yet, it should be noted that the understanding of social enterprises in Europe is substantially different from the United States. Whereas European countries deem social enterprises as organizations that advocate for a social cause as their main goal, the United States

describes a social enterprise as an organization that mainly focuses on making a profit (Kerlin, 2006). Furthermore, in the United States, a business is a social enterprise when it generates profit while engaging in socially beneficial activities. However, also non-profit organizations that engage in any commercial activity are seen as a social enterprise (Kerlin, 2006). Besides, the focus in a social enterprise is mainly on the entrepreneur itself, instead of on the social cause the social enterprise supports (Chell, 2007; Kerlin, 2006). This broad definition of a social enterprise is being maintained by educational institutes and companies consulting on social enterprise development (Kerlin, 2006).

In conclusion, similar to the academic understanding of social enterprises, practical understanding differs per country. For the purpose of this thesis, the European understanding of social enterprises will be followed, since this thesis explores social enterprises in the Netherlands. Meaning that the focus lays on the power distribution and the democratic idea of control (Defourny & Nyssens, 2008; Kerlin, 2006).

2.1.3. Social enterprises in the third sector

Following the discussion in previous sections, social enterprises adopted traits from both for-profit organizations as non-profit organizations. Although it could be argued that social enterprises share more similarities with non-profit organizations than with for-profit organizations, social enterprises are distinct from both and need to be considered as a certain type of organization as part of the third sector (Dart, 2004; Young & Lecy, 2014). The third sector is an overarching concept that refers to the organizations that neither fall into the private and for-profit sector nor the public sector ("What are third sector organizations and their benefits for commissioners?," n.d.). The third sector is also explained as the social economy. In Europe, social enterprises are part of the social economy, as supporting a social cause is their main driving force. According to Defourny and Develtere (2009), the social economy consists of three main principles. First, cooperative enterprises are part of the social economy. Over the years, cooperativism became a broader understanding including high amounts of cooperative types. For instance, cooperative enterprises could have a marketing, housing, or insurance-focused area of business. Second, the social economy includes the so-called mutual benefit societies. These are non-profit organizations that benefit and meet the needs of society in various ways. For instance, mutual benefit societies can benefit society in its need for health care, insurances, funerals, and more. Lastly, associations are part of the social economy. Associations can be seen as organizations that are producing goods or services, while their main driving force is not dedicated to making profit. These four aspects together form the social economy. These type of organizations are being discovered over the last decades (Defourny & Develtere, 2009). Besides, the definition of third sector organizations varies from country to country as explained before. The third sector became to grow as a response to a demand of society. One reason for this

was the increasing problem of unemployment in Europe, while some groups that were capable to work, were being excluded. For instance, people with social problems, people at age, or people with low-qualifications (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). Defourny and Nyssens argue that this caused a demand from society to create a working place for the excluded groups in the late 20th century, which explains the new entrepreneurial initiatives that arose in the third sector. Although the demand was similar throughout the whole of Europe, the type of third sector organizations that emerged differed per country (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). This is a clear starting point of when social enterprises started to root in the third sector in the late 20th century.

Nowadays, social enterprises are a rapidly growing type of organization within the third sector. Borgaza and Defourny (2001, p.2) claim that social enterprises can be seen as "a sub-division of the third sector" that influences the developments within the third sector at large (Borzaga & Defourny, 2001). This can be explained by the higher levels of hybridization in the third sector that the rise of social enterprises caused. Hybridization is currently a central characteristic of third sector organizations. Hybridization means that enterprises make a profit with the strategies of both for-profit business models and of non-profit business models (Haigh, Walker, Bacq, & Kickul, 2015). Hence, they are a hybrid between for-profit and non-profit organizations. Hybrid organizations adopt characteristics from both the private as the public sector and eventually merge into a combination of both. Moreover, these organizations base their business model on the social cause they advocate for (Haigh et al., 2015). In the definition of Haigh et al. (2015), the characteristics of a social enterprise are clearly perceptible. Also, earlier, the third sector organizations were defined to either serve minorities in society, to spread empowerment, or increase the freedom of people to advocate for social change (Najam, 1996). Looking at the two definitions, they did not change significantly over the years. The definitions point out that social enterprises did derive from the third sector organization principle, and now took over a large part of this sector.

All in all, social enterprises can be best classified as a third sector organization, as traits from other organizational forms are adopted.

2.2.   Food waste

As mentioned in the previous section, a key characteristic of social enterprises is that they support a specific social cause. This thesis focuses on social enterprises with the social goal to reduce food waste. Food waste is an increasingly studied and discussed topic among scholars (Ai & Zheng, 2019; Gustavsson, Cederberg, & Sonesson, 2011; Jörissen, Priefer, & Bräutigam, 2015; Lipinski et al., 2013; Timmermans, Ambuko, Belik, & Huang, 2014). Food loss and food waste are concepts that are used interchangeably in the literature, but they are in fact distinct. Food loss refers to the unconsumed food that gets lost throughout the supply chain, for instance, during the production,

packaging, or storage of products before arriving at their final selling point (Ai & Zheng, 2019; Gustavsson et al., 2011; Kummu et al., 2012). Food waste, on the other hand, refers to the edible food, that is ready for consumption, that is discarded by consumers regardless its perishable date (Garrone, Melacini, & Perego, 2014; Lipinski et al., 2013; Nahman & de Lange, 2013; Timmermans et al., 2014). This happens due to spillage, reduction in the product's quality, or technical limitations in the production process that causes food to be thrown away (Lipinski et al., 2013). In this thesis, food waste will be the main topic of discussion, as this research will analyze social enterprises that intend to reduce food waste, instead of food loss.

Although proper data is still lacking, it becomes increasingly clear that the problem of food waste is a worldwide phenomenon. Globally, the biggest contributors to food waste are households (Jörissen et al., 2015; Priefer, Jörissen, & Bräutigam, 2016). Also in the Netherlands, households are contributing 42% to the total food waste ("Voedselverspilling," 2020). Looking at specific numbers, c. Furthermore, the waste that is disposed of via alternative routes such as the sink or the vegetable mold is estimated at 7,8 kg per household. In total, 9,5% of bought products were wasted in 2019. On a positive note, the numbers seem to have decreased over the last couple of years, as in 2010, 13,6% of all bought products were wasted ("Cijfers voedselverspilling 2019 ," 2019). The products that are disposed of most are bread, potatoes, dairy products, and fruits and vegetables ("Cijfers voedselverspilling 2019 ," 2019; Jörissen et al., 2015).

Jörissen et al. (2015) propose that societal trends such as the rise of single households or the growing number of working women contribute to the growing food waste in households (Jörissen et al., 2015). Besides, economic trends such as lower prices for food and the increasing wealth contribute accordingly. Exact quantities and sources of food waste are not available, however, Jörissen et al. (2015), made an indication by using the findings of other scholars, with as a result the outcome of households as the number one contributors to the total amount of food waste. According to several scholars, households waste a significantly higher amount of food than large institutions and businesses (Jörissen et al., 2015; Priefer et al., 2016). Reasons for households wasting food are confusion about expiry dates of products, impulsive buying decisions, and the absence of skills for the planning and preparation of food (Jörissen et al., 2015). Furthermore, Jörissen et al. (2015) indicate which food groups are contributing most to the total amount of food waste in Europe. For most countries, the waste of fruit and vegetables is relatively high. Also, dairy products were thrown out often and contribute significantly to the total food waste. Furthermore, the waste of meat and fish came last and showed to have a relatively low contribution to the total food waste in households. Overall, several scholars state that households and food manufacturing were the most responsible sectors for causing food waste (Jörissen et al., 2015; Monier et al., 2010).

While households are significant contributors to the total food waste, most of the food gets

lost in the supply chain, during activities such as harvesting and processing (Ai & Zheng, 2019; Priefer et al., 2016). One of the reasons for this is the fact that the supply chain for food has grown and is now longer, bringing along its implications for a smooth process (Priefer et al., 2016). Moreover, due to higher expectations and more specific wishes from customers for a wide range of options and the demand for fresh and good-looking products, the food supply chain has become more complex than it used to be (Priefer et al., 2016). Another reason for the complexification of the supply chain is the growing popularity to live in urban areas, and no longer in rural areas. This results in a longer distance that food has to travel from source to consumer, which increases the possibility of errors leading to more food waste (Priefer et al., 2016). The food that is wasted by different layers of the food industry has multiple negative impacts on both the economy and the environment (Lipinski et al., 2013). Firstly, the negative economic effects involve the lost investment that is made to produce foods that are then wasted. Moreover, because of this lost investment, the producers of food (farmers) achieve lower incomes and increase their prices, which affects the expenses for consumers (Lipinski et al., 2013). Secondly, the impacts on the environment include the unnecessary use of water, land, and greenhouse gas emissions. Eventually, these environmental impacts can disturb natural ecosystems (Lipinski et al., 2013). According to Jörissen et al. (2015), food production equals the waste of water, land, and energy needed for the production process. These resources are used, whether the food that is being produced will be consumed or wasted. It is estimated that every year, globally, the amount of land used to produce unconsumed food is 0.9 million hectares, while 306 km³ of water is used for food that gets lost (Priefer et al., 2016). Logically, the intensive use of these resources brings along high costs. These costs are the highest when food is wasted in the household sector, as this is the end of the supply chain (Jörissen et al., 2015). Namely, a product has been produced, packed, and transported before it arrived at a household, making costs on its way there. This implies that food waste at the beginning of the food supply chain implies relatively lower costs (Jörissen et al., 2015).

Another negative environmental effect of food waste is the increased concentrations of greenhouse gas emissions. As mentioned before, fish and meat have a relatively low contribution to the total amount of food waste. However, the highest greenhouse gas emissions are caused by the production of meat, with beef products as the biggest contributor (Scholz, Eriksson, & Strid, 2015). At large, the sector agriculture is responsible for 10 to 12 percent of the global greenhouse gas emissions (Porter, Reay, Higgins, & Bomberg, 2016). However, the food supply chain is not only part of the agriculture sector. As it also passes other sectors like transport and retail, greenhouse gas emissions that are released in these sectors add up to the total greenhouse gas emissions food waste is responsible for (Porter et al., 2016). This complicates the estimation of total greenhouse gas

emissions food waste causes. Therefore, existing studies focus on a specific sector or local region to research and make estimations.

2.2.1. Growing demand for reducing food waste

With increasing awareness about the magnitude and implications of the problem of food waste, consumers are increasingly exploring these implications and realizing their contribution to the problem (Auger & Devinney, 2007). More specifically, customers are starting to realize that they can contribute to the wellbeing of the environment by making more conscious decisions while shopping (Auger & Devinney, 2007). Besides that, consumers are increasingly connecting the expression of their identity through their purchasing behavior. Several explanations for this have been proposed. Carrigan and Attalla (2001) argue that ethical purchasing behavior follows from changes in demographic characteristics such as increased incomes and higher levels of education. Harrison (2003) points to the contribution of pressure from the media, which increasingly pay attention to social and ethical issues in the industry. Another factor is the increased number of conscious and green products that are available in stores and advertised on social networking sites (B. Luo, Sun, Shen, & Xia, 2020).

Generally, anti-food waste social enterprises are operating out of environmental motive and advocate for 'green' products and services. The emergence of green products refers to products that claim to benefit the environment and are mostly organic, reusable, and eco-friendly products (Luo, Sun, Shen, & Xia, 2020). This emergence also leads to increased research into consumer purchase intentions and behavior concerning green products (Ankit & Mayur, 2013; Luo et al., 2020; Schmuck, Matthes, & Naderer, 2018). Green advertising helps to build a company's brand image into a green image by emphasizing environmental motives to attract environmentally conscious customers (Segev, Fernandes, & Hong, 2016). The increasing number of green products and its advertisements could be a response to the idea that consumers are willing to make more conscious buying decisions and demand a broader range of products to choose from. However, their actual purchasing behavior shows otherwise. While most customers claim to be willing to make conscious and sustainable decisions, only few actually do buy fair trade or ecological products (Datamonitor, 2010). Other research by Carrigan and Attalla (2001) also points to the gap between purchase intentions and actual behavior. Furthermore, an influencing factor is the general demand of consumers for companies to consider corporate social responsibility (Harrison, 2003). In line with this demand, it is increasingly becoming a common practice for businesses to operate in environmental and sustainable manners, mainly to attract customers (Auger & Devinney, 2007). These consumers are requiring a minimum level of corporate social responsibility (Harrison, 2003; X. Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006). Adding to the factors, Harrison (2003) argues that one of the overarching reasons for the

growth of corporate social responsibility is the emergence of pressing world problems such as climate change. All these factors seem to contribute to more conscious consumers, resulting in more conscious businesses. However, the gap between the customer's demand and their actual purchasing behavior points out the importance of the way social enterprises communicate with their consumers. By communicating to their consumers that the social enterprises can deliver on the demands of the environmental-friendly requests and, therewith, convince the consumers to buy their products or service. Social enterprises can communicate this by communicating with consumers and building brand image on social media.

2.3.   Brand image

The concept of brand image has been studied extensively in the academic literature and knows different research approaches. Both the brand's perspective focusing on the marketing tools and strategies to create brand image has been studied (Latiff & Safiee, 2015; Nyangwe & Buhalis, 2018; A. Roth & Zawadzki, 2018), as from the customer's perspective, focusing more on the perception of brand image (de Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998; Janonis & Virvilaitè, 2007; Low & Lamb, 2000; Roncha & Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016). These different approaches in literature result in a rather broad definition of the concept of brand image.

Accordingly, the related concepts of 'brand image', 'brand identity', and 'brand positioning' are often confused and used interchangeably (Latiff & Safiee, 2015). Roth (1994, p. 495) defines brand image as: "the meaning consumers develop about the brand as a result of the firm's marketing activities". Hence, it refers to the way brands position themselves and how consumers perceive a brand in reality (de Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998). According to Malik et al. (2012), brand image is based on personal beliefs and ideas. Therefore, the brand image will be perceived differently by consumers and by the brand itself. Consumers will perceive the brand image based on their interpretation, while businesses themselves perceive the desired brand image (Malik et al., 2012). In a study by Low and Lamb (2000), brand image is defined as the way consumers attach their rational and emotional perceptions to a specific brand. Although various definitions of brand image are mentioned in the literature, all definitions involve an element of the consumers' perspective (Latiff & Safiee, 2015; Low & Lamb, 2000; Malik et al., 2012; Roth, 1994). Related to the concept of brand image and the consumers' perspective is the concept of brand positioning, which focuses on the way brands create a desired image. Brand positioning can be defined as the desired place a brand wants to own in the consumers' mind, and specifically the positive associations the consumer has with a brand (Latiff & Safiee, 2015).

Focusing on the non-profit sector, the main discussion of brand image creation by non-profit brands lacks evidence of successful cases in which branding techniques are used in a strategic way

(Stride & Lee, 2007). Rather, literature focuses on the tangible branding techniques that are utilized to create brand image strategically, such as the design, logo, and visual presence of a non-profit brand (Stride & Lee, 2007). Furthermore, Hankinson (2000) argues that the non-profit sector portrays brand personalities rather vague, causing multiple stakeholders to have different perceptions of a brand. Since the definition of brand image in the non-profit sector has not been developed sufficiently, this thesis will adopt the understanding of brand image in the commercial sector as defined by Low and Lamb (2000) and use this concept throughout this study.

2.3.1. Brand image creation on social media

Along with the growing importance of brand image creation, the ways in which brands could create a desired brand image increased. Especially, social media channels proved to be a convenient platform for branding activities (Bruhn, Schoenmueller, & Schäfer, 2012; Clement, 2020). According to several scholars (Gillin, 2007; Jung, Shim, Jin, & Khang, 2016; Kelly, Kerr, & Drennan, 2009; Raziq et al., 2018; Vivek et al., 2012), there are multiple reasons for brands to create brand image on social media. To begin with, Gillin (2007) argues that due to a decrease in the response rates of traditional marketing strategies such as banners and emails, brands switched over to social media channels. Furthermore, branding on social media has become more accessible and easier in use for brands due to IT developments and tools (Gillin, 2007). Besides, Gillin (2007) points out that a successful and viral marketing campaign can be produced at a lower cost than an equally successful campaign disseminated through traditional media. More importantly, young individuals have become more active on social media and are using traditional media less, which makes social platforms more attractive to advertise on (Gillin, 2007).

Comparing the strength of advertising through traditional media and social media, Keller (2009) states that the distribution of information through social media is more powerful. However, distributing information is not social media's only strength. What is more, Khan (2018) claims that users perceive brand-related content as enjoyable, relaxing, and as a pastime. Moreover, social networking sites stimulate interaction and enable the possibility to develop a strong relationship with customers (Alam & Khan, 2019; Raziq et al., 2018). This can be attributed to the option on social networking sites to generate contact with customers in the online environment and to initiate direct discussion and conversation and, therewith, be in continuous contact with the customer (Kelly et al., 2009). With that being said, the dynamics of social media branding changed, and a higher sense of interactivity and engagement is existing.

Therefore, it is unsurprising that advertisers and marketers are drawn to social media platforms (Gillin, 2007). These parties utilize campaigns on social platforms to gain attention from potential consumers and establish a higher loyalty with existing consumers (Alam & Khan, 2019). Due

to the high sense of interactivity, social media users are directly involved in the process of branding and are contributing to the creation of a brand online (Vernuccio, 2014). This process of co-creation largely takes place on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other platforms that enable consumers to interact with the brand and its consumers about brand-related content (Alam & Khan, 2019). More importantly, when used in the right way, social media platforms can be used by brands to express their voice by communicating their core values (Yan, 2011). These platforms enable brands to show the reasoning behind the brand and let followers engage with brands they associate themselves with. This engaging process contributes to a sense of interactivity that strengthens the brand image, by involving external consumers to participate in the co-creating process (Engeseth, 2005).

There are multiple ways for brands to interact with their customers online. In order to make a distinction in the type of messages a brand sends to its followers, Coursaris, Van Osch and Balogh (2013) differentiate *brand awareness messages*, *engagement messages*, and *seasonal messages.* Within this typology, more concrete labels for messages are used to distinguish the posts that brands create and share with their followers. These categories provide a clear grip to distinct the type of messages social enterprises use to create their brand image on Instagram. To begin with, Coursaris et al. (2013) defined brand awareness posts as "posts that build company presence and attentiveness in the digital consumer market" (p. 7). Accordingly, Clauser (2001) argues that one of the most important reasons for brands to be active online is to create awareness for the brand by being visible in the online environment. The first type of messaging the scholars distinguish is *brand awareness messages* and can be divided into the subcategories *promotions posts, heritage posts, and operations posts.* These three types of posts contribute to the messages brands communicate in order to raise awareness for their brand. The utilization and operationalization of this typology will be elaborated more on in section 3.2.2. Second, they identify the following types of engagement messages: *product assistance messages, community messages, likes, photo or video messages, polls, open question posts, appreciation posts, and directional posts* (Coursaris, Osch, & Balogh, 2013). The third type of brand interaction is through seasonal messages. These seasonal messages are categorized into *holiday posts, events, and season.* Study shows that seasonal messaging helps drawing the consumers' attention by creating content in a safe and trusted way (Lavoie, 2015). For this study, an adjusted typology based on the one by Coursaris et al. (2013) will be used and presented in section 3.2.2.

2.3.2. Brand image creation on Instagram

As explored in the previous section, companies are using social media to create a brand image extensively (Clement, 2020). While Instagram is rapidly growing into one of the most used

social media platforms (Clement, 2020; Khan, 2018), academic research increasingly shifts its focus to marketing on Instagram. This is unsurprising in light of the popularity of the platform, as, according to a survey by Statista (2019), counts over one billion users that are active on Instagram monthly (Clement, 2019). As consumers started to become more active on the platform, the opportunity for brands to communicate with their consumers through this media channel grew (Latiff & Safiee, 2015), and Instagram started to become an important advertising tool for businesses (Clement, 2019, 2020). Moreover, for activities such as building an online community and creating brand image, social media platforms started to become a convenient tool. More specifically, Instagram serves as one of the most efficient channels to influence the customer's understanding of a brand as Instagram users tend to use the application while looking for inspiration, for information about products, or a brand at large (Roth & Zawadzki, 2018). Due to the perception of visual images, the relevance of a brand in the consumers' eyes increases. Another advantage for brands using Instagram is the possibility to rapidly change and adapt content to current events or festivities (Roth & Zawadzki, 2018). Also, content such as behind the scenes or interactive features like a live session on Instagram enables consumers to more easily identify with a brand (Mintz, 2017).

2.3.3. Social media branding and the shift to co-creation

The emergence of an ongoing interaction between a brand and its customers on social media platforms implied the rise of a new way of creating brand image. Brand image creation is no longer merely a one-way communication from the brand to the customer. Rather, it is seen as a co-creation emerging from a dialogue between a brand and its customers (Kozinets et al., 2010). Content is co-created through social media channels where customers review, evaluate, and advertise a brands' products or service (Nyangwe & Buhalis, 2018). This also implies a shift from communicating brand image with the goal to sell on a short term, to creating a long-lasting brand image through communication and sharing information (Nyangwe & Buhalis, 2018). Fouts (2010) argues that branding through social networking sites can be used optimally when brands consider this communication as a two-way instead of a one-way street. Therewith, brands must acknowledge that customers are no longer passive in the process of brand image creation, but should be seen as equally important creators of the brand image as the brand itself (Björner, 2013). This type of co-creation brings more power to the collective, rather than to the brand alone (Nyangwe & Buhalis, 2018).

Adding to that, the inclusion of customers in organizational activities regards the concept of customer engagement. Customer engagement can be of great influence in the process of involving customers on an emotional, psychological, and physical level (Sedley, 2010). By inviting consumers to participate in the brand's online actions, a relationship between the two actors will be developed.

Hereby, this process of engagement, and thus the establishment of a relationship, goes beyond purchasing behavior (Brodie, Hollebeek, Jurić, & Ilić, 2011; Vivek et al., 2012). Moreover, a high level of engagement drives customers to be more loyal to a brand, as well as more likely to engage in the online community of a brand (Vivek et al., 2012). Also, engaged customers tend to be more rejecting towards competing brands, while they are more likely to accept new products of a brand they are engaged with (Aksoy et al., 2013).

As mentioned before, the social media platform Instagram serves as one of the most efficient channels to influence the customer's understanding of a brand (Roth & Zawadzki, 2018). Primarily, Instagram users tend to use the application when looking for information about products or a company at large (Roth & Zawadzki, 2018). Due to the perception of visual images, the relevance of a brand in the customer's eyes increases (Roth & Zawadzki, 2018). Instagram also enables brands to rapidly change and adapt their content to current events or festivities (Roth & Zawadzki, 2018). Also, content such as behind the scenes or interactive features, like a live session on Instagram enables customers to more easily identify with a brand (Mintz, 2017). Besides, Instagram is also often used as an inspiration source (Roth & Zawadzki, 2018).

Since Instagram offers many opportunities for brand image creation, brands use the platform to explore those possibilities. For instance, brands are able to build brand communities more easily through the platform (Roncha & Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016). Brand communities can be considered a network, consisting of the brand itself and its customers, communicating with each other (Aksoy et al., 2013). The concept of brand community will be further explored in section 2.3.4. Furthermore, Instagram allows brands to easily interact with customers and enables the creation of user-generated content. User-generated content emerges due to a co-creation between a brand and its customers. For instance, brands can call for customers to share photos or videos with their products and tag the brand. That way, user-generated content emerges and enhances the interactive aspect of brand image creation on Instagram.

In line with the growth in types of strategies for companies to use Instagram for advertising, brand image creation, and creating online brand community, Instagram recently added several features. For instance, Instagram added the option to tag products by linking products directly in a post, to enable followers to check the product's prizes and to shop right away (Roth & Zawadzki, 2018). Amongst other reasons, this allows businesses to grasp a better understanding of the level of engagement that social influencers generate. Along with these developments, some rules and regulations for influencer marketing emerged, as it became difficult to determine whether an influencer was being paid to advertise a product or whether they were promoting a product out of personal motive (Childers, Lemon, & Hoy, 2019).

Creating a brand image online is inevitable these days, although not all brands succeed in

building a strong brand image in the online environment. Borkent (2020) investigates the best practices for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to build online brand image. First, Borkent (2020) suggests posting rather short content, as customers tend to engage more easily with short content. Second, the use of images is essential for the creation of brand image online. Moreover, according to Henderson et al. (2003), visual messages stick longer with the reader than verbal messages. Third, NGOs should inform their followers about their products and services, while interacting and connecting with the customers. The latter is important as NGOs tend to focus only on communicating information (Borkent, 2020). This role of informing and educating is a trait that social enterprises incorporated, as this type of organization advocates for a social purpose (Allan, 2005).

In conclusion, the existing literature discussed the transformation of brand image creation to a co-creative process, rather than a one-way traffic from brand to consumer. Given the popularity of social media and Instagram in specific, all brands benefit from giving an online presence. The best way to do so differs per type of organization and its goal. For instance, creating brand community is becoming a more popular goal, which will be explored in the next paragraph.

2.3.4. Online brand communities

Because of the co-creative shift in branding strategies, the importance of engaging with the customers grew. Along with that, the act of creating an online brand community became more valuable, since this act leads to a more sustained engagement of consumers. Brand communities can be defined as networks that consist of the brand itself and its customers, in which the brand and the customers interact with each other, as well as the customers among one another (Aksoy et al., 2013). According to Nyangwe and Buhalis (2018), brand communities that are deeply engaged with a brand can be of higher value than individual customers with a more casual relationship with a brand. Moreover, high levels of engagement can drive customers to be committed to a brand and increase the likelihood of customers being involved in a brand's online community (Vivek et al., 2012). The involving nature of online brand communities gives members the feeling of connection (Aksoy et al., 2013). Furthermore, experiencing the brand community positively can contribute to the development of a stronger sense of connection customers feel with a brand (Aksoy et al., 2013). Especially, since members of an online brand community share the same values they appreciate in a brand (Aksoy et al., 2013). As social enterprises are characterized by advocating for certain values supporting its social goal, this type of organization is likely to build a strong brand community (Allan, 2005; Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

Although not all brands actively invest in creating an online brand community, brands should be aware that customers will discuss their products and services online by any means (Brabham, 2012). However, by creating a platform for their online brand community, brands are able to have

more control over this community than when the brand does not deliver an online presence (Brabham, 2012). Moreover, some activities contributing to building this online community are initiated by the brand itself. Taking that into account, brands have the power to manage these branding activities (Brabham, 2012).

Gao et al. (2018) state that by properly managing relationships between the brand and its consumers, brand communities can be created and maintained. Social media influencers are important in this respect, to help the brand reach a bigger audience including new consumers or stakeholders. This means that brands need to engage in the recruitment of potential influencers that fit the brand or by enhancing existing collaborations with influencers. Furthermore, similar to one of the most important branding strategies, the brand's values must be communicated strongly. The practice of storytelling is an effective tool to convey the values a brand stands for. A powerful story that simultaneously informs as entertains customers and stakeholders can increase the level of engagement of these parties (Gao et al., 2018; Nyangwe & Buhalis, 2018). Lastly, however considerably most importantly, the presence of a brand online is the most important branding tool (Björner, 2013; Nyangwe & Buhalis, 2018). Namely, visibility and availability of a brand add to the service experience of the customer (Björner, 2013).

Considering the shift towards co-creation of brand image leading to the emergence of brand communities, this thesis will focus on how brands approach their brand community and if so, what strategies and tools the brands utilize to build and address their brand community. Hereby, the focus will be laid on the perspective of the brand itself, rather than focusing on the consumers' actual contribution to a brand's image.

3. Methodology

The purpose of this research is to explore the brand image of social enterprises on Instagram. The research will be guided by the research question: "How do anti-food waste focused social enterprises in the Netherlands create their brand image on Instagram?". In this methodology chapter, the chosen research method will be discussed and the decisions in the research design will be justified and explained. After that, the sample and the process of data collection will be discussed.

3.1.   Research design

During this study, a qualitative research method was applied to provide the answer to the research question leading this thesis. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), qualitative studies place the researcher in the world, which in turn can be made visible to the researcher through interpretation. By placing the researcher in the world as it is, phenomena can be studied in their original and natural environment (Flick, 2007). In this case, this is in an online environment namely, on Instagram. In line with this, Brennen (2017) mentions that qualitative research allows researchers to study and analyze phenomena in their own context. Hereby, the study was dependent on the interpretation of the researcher. Babbie (2014) adds to this that qualitative research aims at revealing underlying patterns or meanings that can be found by interpreting observations. Moreover, Schreier (2013) argues that qualitative research goes beyond quantities and identifies a deeper meaning of messages by interpreting and finding patterns in the data, which in this case are Instagram posts. By applying a qualitative research method to this study, the underlying motives of the social enterprises behind posting content on their Instagram pages could be explored. Hereby, the communication of a brand's image that was brought forward by the brand itself through Instagram posts was interpreted.

This study explored the brand image that is created by social enterprises on Instagram. Moreover, its purpose was to interpret the meaning of this created brand image. This research is explorative since it aimed to explore the created brand images by social enterprises focused on anti-food waste. Given the nature of this research, the qualitative research method is the most suitable approach. More specifically, the chosen qualitative research method is thematic content analysis.

In the remainder of this chapter, the research design will be elaborated. In line with the objectives of a research design that Flick (2007) outlines, this research design served as a plan for the collection and analysis of the data, while it narrowed the focus of the research down to a feasible research scope (Flick, 2007). The plan consists of the sampling decisions and a justification for the chosen method as well as the operationalization of the content analysis, the data analysis, and the possibility of maintaining trustworthiness throughout this study.

3.1.1. Thematic content analysis

To explore how the social enterprises under study create their brand image on Instagram, the data sample was analyzed through thematic content analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis allows the researcher to identify recurring patterns in the data while organizing them in a systematic way. By doing so, underlying meanings of the data can be found and presented in a well-organized manner (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The goal of thematic content analysis is the emergence of overarching themes that include identified patterns in the data. Thematic content analysis is a flexible and open way of doing analysis and helps with reducing the amount of data that needs coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). While the flexibility of this research method can be seen as an advantage, it could have also posed a pitfall as the method's freedom can lead to a complex account of broad data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The steps in the process of conducting thematic analysis as identified by Braun and Clarke (2006) will be further discussed in section 3.3.

Thematic content analysis allows the identification of recurring themes and patterns of how the social enterprises under study communicate their brand image to their followers on Instagram. Therefore, this type of analysis is considered an appropriate method for answering the research question of this study. Hereby, the approach as posed by Braun and Clarke (2006) will be followed, including the according steps the scholars suggest by taking this methodological approach. This will be combined with the three steps Boeije (2010) identified during the coding process. These steps include the open coding phase, the axial coding phase, and the selective coding phase (Boeije, 2010). Similar to the steps suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), the different coding phases proposed by Boeije (2010) will be discussed in section 3.3. Furthermore, the analysis will partly build on existing literature that is found on brand image creation by different organizations, meaning that themes will derive from the literature. These themes will be complemented with newly created themes that derive from the data during the coding process. By combining a deductive approach with an inductive approach, this research knows a mixed-method approach. The mixed-method approach is defined by Braun and Clarke (2012) as a combination of approaches that is needed when for parts of the analysis, data is already within the researcher's reach to analyze, and other parts of data need to be deducted in a semantic way from the analysis itself. Namely, the inductive approach is more suitable when there is not enough ground knowledge about a topic (Lauri & Kyngäs, 2005). Therefore, inductive coding is seen as moving from a specific case to a more general understanding (Chinn & Kramer, 1999). Moreover, this approach enables researchers to come to new insights (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

3.2. Sample and data collection

Sampling in qualitative research is considered rather flexible and purposive (Flick, 2007). Purposive sampling is a type of nonprobability sampling, which means that the sample is purposely picked by the researcher himself and that randomization is left out (Vehovar, Toepoel, & Steinmetz, 2016). According to Patton (2015), purposive sampling allows researchers to select cases that contain significant information that will address the questions under research. Only cases that are relevant to the purpose of the research are selected (Patton, 2015). When doing purposive sampling, it is important to access variety in a sample, through a focus on specific features (e.g. demographics) during the sampling process (Flick, 2007). Purposive sampling is an appropriate method for this study as it allows the researcher to identify specific cases within the data that include rich information contributing to answering the research question (Flick, 2007). The decision to use purposive sampling will be further justified in section 3.2.1.

3.2.1. Sample and data collection for thematic content analysis

The thematic analysis in this study was conducted on the Instagram pages of three social enterprises that focus on reducing food waste. The analysis focused on three social enterprises in order to get more in-depth insights into the brand image creation by those three social enterprises. Given the scope of this research, increasing the number of cases would provide less detailed results per social enterprise. In order to prevent this from happening, three social enterprises were selected to analyze. The data that were analyzed for this study are Instagram posts. Instagram posts are a primary data source, as the researcher took the data straight from the source that produced the data (Salkind, 2012). The cases selected for analysis, are social enterprises active in the Netherlands that engage people in the act of reducing food waste. The selected organizations were varying in size. The official, Dutch Instagram page of each of the selected social enterprises was used.

The first selected case was the platform Too Good To Go. Too Good To Go was founded in Denmark in 2015. This application allows users to buy left-over food from stores and restaurants that would get rid of the leftovers at the end of the day. This is beneficial for both the restaurants and stores, as they are still able to sell the products they prepared for that day, as for the users of the app, since they can buy restaurant- and store quality food for a smaller prize ("Too Good To Go," n.d.). One of the most popular products Too Good To Go offers is the "Magic box". This surprise box full of leftover food and drinks assembled by multiple stores is offered in exchange for a reduced price. According to a study by the University of Wageningen, the food that people order through Too Good To Go is consumed 90% of the time (van der Haar & Zeinstra, 2019). This points out the efficiency of the application to contribute to solving the food waste problem (RTL Nieuws, 2019). After its success in Denmark, Too Good To Go is now active in fourteen European countries, and

recently announced to expand its business to the United States of America ("Too Good To Go trekt naar Verenigde Staten," 2020).

Too Good To Go is the most popular organization of the three selected cases on social media. The Dutch Instagram page of Too Good To Go (@toogoodtogo.nl) currently has 17.400 followers. The account has a sufficient number of posts to be researched.

The second social enterprise that was investigated is Kromkommer. This Dutch initiative focuses on bringing disfigured fruits and vegetables back to the market. 10% of vegetables and fruits are disapproved for sale by supermarkets due to their uncommon shape or size ("Kromkommer," n.d.). Kromkommer is in direct contact with farmers and buys their disfigured vegetables and fruits ("Kromkommer," n.d.). Then, they will process these vegetables into products such as soups and sell them to their consumers. Recently, Kromkommer also started to sell their soups to restaurants of universities ("Kromkommer," n.d.). Despite the success of its soup, Kromkommer announced to start focusing on other projects to reduce food-waste from 2020 onwards (van Rijswijck, 2019). This social enterprise was founded in 2012 and built a strong community supporting its business (van Rijswijck, 2019). The followers of Kromkommer are named the 'Kromkommers' or the 'Krommunity'. The Dutch Instagram page of Kromkommer (@krommunity) currently has 6.933 followers and shared enough posts to be analyzed.

The last anti-food waste focused social enterprise chosen was No Food Wasted. No Food Wasted is a nationally active initiative that offers foods from supermarkets, restaurants, cafés, bakeries, and many other stores to its consumers for a reduced price. The application works similarly as Too Good To Go. At the end of the day, users of the app can buy leftovers for a reduced price. No Food Wasted started with the singular function in their app that notified users of discounted products in supermarkets This way, customers are enabled to save products from being discarded, while supermarkets increase their sales instead of discarding products. Once this was a success, No Food Wasted also started to offer products from other businesses. Nowadays, the initiative also offers "No Food Wasted packages", which works similarly as the "Magic box" of Too Good To Go.

No Food Wasted is the smallest of the three social enterprises under study. The Dutch Instagram of No Food Wasted (@nofoodwasted) has 1.568 followers. Despite a lower number of followers in comparison to the other selected cases, No Food Wasted has posted a sufficient number of posts to be analyzed.

Table 1 shows an overview of the selected companies and the details of their respective Instagram pages.

Social enterprise	Too Good To Go	Kromkommer	No Food Wasted
Instagram account	@toogoodtogo.nl	@krommunity	@nofoodwasted

Number of followers	21.700	6.970	1.581
Number of posts	509	994	675

Table 1 Details of Instagram pages

Following the guidelines for qualitative content analysis on social media research, a number of 60 posts per case were analyzed, yielding a total number of posts of 180 (*Methodological Guidelines Thesis Research 6th edition*, 2020). The posts were selected during May and June 2020. For posts to be eligible for analysis they could not be posted before the year 2017. Therewith, posts that were published between the years 2017 and 2020 were able to be selected for the analysis. This decision was made considering the fast-changing nature of Instagram and its features. By looking at the three most recent years, the findings of the analysis are more applicable to the present day and age, while still providing enough posts for the sample. Furthermore, the analysis looked at an Instagram post as a whole, including the picture and caption. The Instagram post in Figure 1 indicates the different elements of a post that were analyzed.
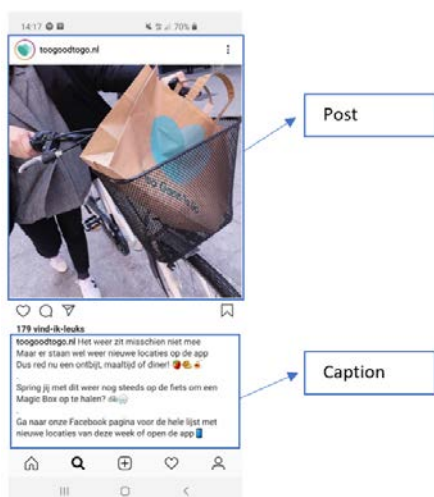

Figure 1 Post retrieved from @toogoodtogonl

The sampling method that was used is purposive sampling. Within purposive sampling, there are several sampling strategies. The sampling strategy that suited this study the most is maximum variation sampling. This sampling strategy is convenient for smaller samples, as these often deal with the issue of heterogeneity, meaning that there is not much variety within the small sample (Patton, 2015). By sampling with maximum variation, the researcher selected the cases that are as varied as possible, to generate a broad range of different cases to be studied (Flick, 2007). Since there were three cases selected to study, the sample could be considered rather small and, therefore, suitable for the maximum variation sampling strategy. While in many other sampling strategies, this would be negatively affecting the analysis, the maximum variation strategy makes use of this aspect by laying

the emphasis on the variation in the sample (Patton, 2015). This sampling strategy provided a particular data sample that showed the diverse aspects of the data. Meaning, the focus was on extreme and typical cases while these also included all other variations that lie in between those extremes (Palys, 2008). It was most important that the selected cases were information-rich and contained enough information that concerns the research topic (Patton, 2015). According to Patton, maximum variation sampling means that "any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared aspects dimensions of a setting or a phenomenon" (Patton, 2015, p. 283). Adding to that, maximum variation sampling can be used to find diverse types of variations of a phenomenon in the data that arose when adapted to various conditions (Patton, 2015). Finally, Patton (2015) states that sampling data with maximum variation will generate two types of findings. Firstly, the cases were described in detail, which can be used to further support the unique and diverse aspects of the cases. Secondly, the analysis led to the finding of shared patterns among the cases that were derived from heterogeneity in the data. Concludingly, maximum variation sampling allowed the researcher to thoroughly describe the variation in the sample and to then interpret and understand the various cases (Patton, 2015). It should be noted that with the maximum variation sampling strategy, the researcher should not have attempted to generalize the findings to a larger group. Rather, the researcher should have sought to find variation, including common patterns within the variation (Patton, 2015). The ultimate goal of the maximum variation sampling strategy was to create a sample that is heterogenic (Palys, 2008).

3.2.2. Operationalization

The aim of the analysis was to identify themes that illustrate how these social enterprises create their brand image on Instagram. This research has a mixed nature consisting of a deductive and an inductive approach, as some coding categories derived from previous literature, and other coding categories derived from the data. Normally, the deductive approach applies a general theory on a specific case, approaching an analysis from a specific position (Chinn & Kramer, 1999). Since the marketing field with its corresponding tools and strategies has been studied extensively, theory from existing literature in the field of brand image creation has been used for the deductive part of the analysis. The typology as addressed by Coursaris et al. (2013) was used to explore the strategies brands use in their messaging on Instagram. The original typology of the scholars served as a basis as many categories apply to the tools and strategies that social enterprises use on their social media. However, the typology of Coursaris et al. (2013) is focused on for-profit organizations and this study aimed at exploring brand image creation tools and strategies by social enterprises. The application of tools and strategies to create brand image in the field of social enterprises is currently understudied.

Therefore, aspects from both for-profit as non-profit were used to study this sector, serving as a deductive framework for the analysis.

Given this research's explorative nature, the deductive codes were complemented with inductive codes, that derived during the coding process. The typology by Coursaris et al. (2013) was used as a basis for the deductive codes. However, as not all categories and subcategories applied directly to this study, the typology was adjusted to increase its applicability. The adjusted typology is visualized in Table 2 below.

Category	Subcategory	Definition
Brand awareness	Promotions	Posts that contain the use of celebrity and/or event sponsorship which mentions brand's name
	Heritage	Posts that seek to bring consumer into company's history; trivia and employee spotlights
	Operations	Posts that inform consumers about production processes and behind-the-scenes operations
Engagement	Community	Posts that encourage consumers to follow one of the brand's other social media platforms (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)
	Poll	Posts that request information or prompts answers from the consumer through multiple-choice questions
	Open question	Posts that request information or prompts answers from the consumer through fill-in-the-blank or open-ended questions
	Appreciation	Posts that recognize and show gratitude for consumer support
	Directional	Post that direct a consumer to click/do something (also liking and redirecting to other photos/videos)
Seasonal	Holiday	Posts that mention or advertise specific holidays such as Valentine's, Christmas, or New Years. The weekend is also coded as Holiday.
	Season	Posts that reference a climatic or sports season
	Event	Posts that mention significant timely events that are not holidays, such as Graduation, tax day, Daylight

Table 2 Adjusted typology based on Coursaris et al. (2013)

Considering the mixed nature of the research approach, the deductive strategies were complemented with inductive categories, meaning that categories were added and deleted. The main reason for doing so were new features or common practices on Instagram, such as reposting followers' content. The complementation of the strategies by the scholars from 2013 could be justified by arguing that the original strategies are somewhat outdated, as, in seven years, social media developed and became more advanced in its possibilities. Besides that, to apply the strategies to social enterprises, some aspects more according to this sector were added that emerged during the inductive coding process. Although the inductive categories arose from the data, some categories were somewhat expected to be found. For instance, after studying the non-profit sector, it was clear that it is common practice for non-profit organizations to educate and inform its members and customers on societal topics. Since the sample consists of three social enterprises that are advocating for a clear social goal, it was expected to find some educational aspects back in the analysis. However, despite this expectation to exist, there was no suitable theory found that could serve as a basis for the analysis. Therefore, this was analyzed inductively. Using the inductive approach ensured the categories deriving from the data, by preventing bias or prejudgments to interfere (Kondracki, Wellman, & Amundson, 2002).

3.3.   Data analysis

The analysis was conducted by means of the steps of a thematic content analysis that Braun and Clarke (2006) distinguish. The first step familiarized the researcher with the collected data. In order to familiarize with the data, it is important to repeatedly and actively read the data. This is done while taking notes which yield an initial list of open codes, which are recurring topics in the data. This is a manual process in which as many themes and patterns as possible are identified, which are relevant again in step three (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After this, the written data were to be transcribed, which is the second step. This step added to the process of getting familiar with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). After getting familiar with the data, the manual generation of open codes was the third step. The open codes derived from the notes of step one and were organized into potential and overarching themes by sorting and combining them (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Subsequently, relationships between the codes and overarching themes and sub-themes arose. After sorting the coding into themes, the themes were reviewed. For instance, some themes overlapped and merged into one theme, and other themes were split up in multiple themes. Specifically, this phase consisted of two levels of reviewing. On the first level, the researcher read the codes within a theme to look for patterns. On the second level, the researcher looked at the themes in relation to each other and the overall dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the final phase, the created themes were further refined and labeled with a name. The researcher described the interesting aspects of

each theme to show the reader how the themes fit altogether (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The data that was used for this research are Instagram posts. The data were analyzed in the period of April and May 2020 and was done by the researcher. Choosing to study this phenomenon through a thematic content analysis was based on the suitability of the method and the scope of the research. The Instagram posts consisted of the visual image and the written description under the post. These posts were filed and uploaded in the data software Atlas.ti. The analysis started with open coding, after which the open codes were categorized into axial codes. Axial codes serve as an overarching, more general category. At last, selective codes were created, categorizing the selective codes into main topics (Boeije, 2010).

The coding process was done according to a coding scheme. Building a coding scheme is, in this case, a partly inductive- and deductive process, as existing theory was applied to the data, while the data itself also determined themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Boeije (2010), the coding process consists of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. After following the steps Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest for thematic analysis, an initial coding frame arose. However, this coding frame has been adjusted throughout the coding process. The final coding tree can be found in Appendix A. The following sections discuss the three steps of the analysis in more detail, followed by reflections on validity and reliability.

3.3.1. Open coding

In the initial phase of the coding process, open codes were created. This means that the first analysis was done on the data that served as a first examination. The collected data was coded into groups that shared similarities. Accordingly, these groups were given an overarching code group name. Groups were created in the case they seemed to contribute to help to answer the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, the analysis utilized the semantic approach, as data has been organized in order to reveal reoccurring patterns and interpret the broader meaning of these patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In Atlas.ti, the Instagram posts were coded in a visually clear manner and the risk of making minor errors was decreased. As the coding process can be considered iterative, codes were adjusted and relocated many times during the open coding phase. This first phase was rather flexible, mainly since the initial coding frame had to emerge from the initial coding phase. After the open coding phase, a more structured manner of coding was used, according to the final coding frame. During the open coding phase, notes were taken by the researcher to keep track of the overall process and noticeable findings.

3.3.2. Axial coding

Whereas the initial, open coding phase was very flexible, the axial coding phase was more structured. The purpose of the axial coding phase was the restructuring of the codes that were made

in the open coding phase. This largely involved combining codes, creating new codes, and discarding codes (Boeije, 2010). More importantly, in this phase, the focus was laid on the creation of categories that contained data needed to answer the research question. At the end of the axial coding phase, the researcher developed a number of themes that reflect the overall story of the dataset and identified important patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Like the open coding phase, the axial coding was executed in Atlas.ti, which helped to structure and to order the open codes into code groups in an efficient manner. The codes that emerged at the end of this coding phase are described in the table below.

Selective code	Axial codes
Educating customers about food waste	- Educating children about food waste - Sharing facts about food waste - Publicly advocating for regulations about food waste - Sharing tips to reduce food waste - Exploring and reporting on food waste
Community building	- Co-creation by customer's input - Empowering followers to help reducing food waste by taking action - Building online brand community
Insight into the brand's world	- Heritage of the brand - Behind the scenes of operations
Insight into brand's core values	- Healthy eating for better health - Sustainability for a healthier planet - Sustainability to be cost effective - Diversity to waste less food
Collaborations of the brand	- Promoting partner brands - Promoting inspirational brands - Celebrity endorsement - Sponsored events
Products that enable customers to 'do good'	- Offering products that enable customers to save food from being discarded - Marketing products that embrace or are made from diversely shaped ingredients

Table 3 Axial codes

3.3.3. Selective coding

The final phase of the content analysis was the selective coding phase, in which the themes that emerged during the axial coding were restructured and placed into overarching topics as themes. This has been done to give more structure to the findings and to identify the concepts that are most relevant to the study. The overarching themes were essentially the core of the study, and, therewith, enabled the researcher to answer the research question leading the research. These selective codes were used to illustrate the findings of the analysis in a coherent and organized manner. By choosing the themes, the analysis, the research question, and theoretical framework were considered (Boeije, 2010). The selective codes that were created were based on the content that focused more on the consumers, the brand itself, and its products. The selective codes that focus on the content on the Instagram pages of the social enterprises are *customer focused strategies, brand focused strategies,* and *product focused strategies.* These themes were chosen by analyzing the axial codes and considering the research question and research´s aim (Boeije, 2010). The selective codes were described in the results and discussion section, in which the researcher critically assessed the results of the analysis on the hand of the three selective codes.

3.4.   Validity and reliability

When conducting qualitative research, it is essential that the researcher conducts the study in a justifiable manner to be able to generate meaningful results (Attride-Stirling, 2001). In order to maintain trustworthiness in research, researchers should pay attention to the validity and reliability of a study. In order to distribute attention to the trustworthiness of this study, several measures were applied to the different stages of this research. Those measures were focusing mostly on enhancing the trustworthiness during the steps of thematic analysis, by creating a trial test phase and taking self-reflexibility of the researcher into account.

Specifically for thematic analysis, the process of the data analysis must be disclosed in detail to prove its credibility (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Especially, since it is argued that by conducting data analysis, the researcher is completely responsible for judging the data and deciding the codes that are given to this data (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017) created a step-by-step guide to reach trustworthiness during thematic analysis per phase as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). In the first phase of familiarizing with the data, Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasize the importance of the immersion of the data, also when the data is collected by the coder itself. In order to familiarize with the data, it is suggested to go through the data repeatedly and actively by making meaning of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This phase should be completed before the start of coding, as researchers might be influenced by knowing the data fully. Accordingly, in the second phase, the researcher must continue revisiting the data, as

initial codes should be created. Hereby, the researcher should focus on specific aspects of the data to be able to create codes that cover the many characteristics of the data (Nowell et al., 2017). However, codes should have clear distinctions and boundaries, in order to prevent codes from overlapping (Attride-Stirling, 2001). In this research, the sub-categories are mutually exclusive (Schreier, 2013). In order to structure and organize the codes that were created, supporting software may be used. Nonetheless, the researcher should be aware that supporting software is not able to make judgments based on the data that is put in (King, 2004).

The software that was chosen for this study is Atlas.ti. This program helped with organizing and to structure the coding process of data analysis. In order to establish trustworthiness in phase three of the analysis, an initial coding scheme was created and tested as proposed by Schreier (2014). Namely, Schreier (2014) argues that a test phase with an initial coding frame enhances the trustworthiness of the analysis. Therefore, after coding a significant part of the data, a second opinion was asked for, and adjustments were made based on the feedback. The trial phase contributed to building a strong and definitive coding frame. By means of this definitive coding frame, all data was coded once more to ensure the correct distribution of codes. After that, phase three consisted of creating overarching themes for the codes. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue the importance of consistency in the practice of creating themes. Adding to that, this process should be described in detail to allow others to examine the study's credibility (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Regarding the themes, researchers should not discard any initial codes yet, as they can be of great purpose later on, serving as background detail of the research, or to be combined with other themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Continuing to phase four, themes were revisited and adjusted where needed. Hereby, the validity of the themes was examined by checking whether they represent the meaning of the aspects of the data they collected correctly (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the case the themes were not covering all relevant issues in the data, new codes emerged. Adding to that, the emergence and elimination of codes happens continuously, as the coding process is always ongoing (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the fifth phase, the researcher tried to define the themes that came up during the analysis. Every theme should have contained a clear description and definition to enable the reader to understand the story each theme tells. Moreover, the themes were supposed to fit into the story that reflects the whole data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As mentioned before, coding is an ongoing process, which makes it difficult for the coder to end the process of refining and defining themes (King, 2004). King (2004) suggests conferring a second opinion to decide if the definitions of the themes are clear and inclusive. In that case, the process can be ended. Then, in the last phase, a report with the findings was written. This writing process followed a logical and interesting approach discussing the apparent data within the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Discussing the steps of the process and the realization of findings helped the reader to determine the credibility of the research

(Thorne, 2000). Furthermore, the description of the results was supported by pieces of raw data, illustrating the story of themes and validating the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; King, 2004). Moreover, referring back to literature in the definitions can be a way to validate and justify the decision for creating certain themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Besides addressing the ways in which trustworthiness can be enhanced during the coding process, the researcher took self-reflexibility into account. The concept of self-reflexibility refers to the way researchers interpret their data, and let their prejudgments and assumptions create a bias during the analysis (Devine & Heath, 1999). In essence, qualitative research is more open to the subjectivity of the researcher (Babbie, 2014). Nonetheless, this was avoided as much as possible. In this research, the subjectivity was limited by documenting all steps in the coding process in order to be transparent. Also, by consulting others on the coding frame and the defined themes, the themes were created from a more neutral perspective. Nonetheless, the absence of some influence caused by subjectivity is hard to achieve. Especially, since the researcher fell in the target audience of the social enterprises by living in the Netherlands and being active on Instagram.

The steps and measures discussed in this section were taken to enhance the trustworthiness of this research. In terms of transparency multiple steps were taken, such as the explicit documentation of different stages of the coding process, and, especially, the process from grouping codes into themes. Also, the trial coding and second opinion added to the credibility of this research.

4. Results and discussion

In this chapter, the results of the analysis will be presented. Moreover, the results will be critically assessed by linking them to existing theory and literature. The aim of the research was to explore how anti-food-waste-focused social enterprises create their brand image on Instagram. In order to provide an answer to the research question, this results section will address the findings derived from the analysis. In this section, the codes that emerged will be described by introducing the results per theme. The three overarching themes are *customer focused strategies, brand focused strategies,* and *product focused strategies.* All themes have several categories that fit the theme. By addressing the results of the analysis per theme and category, data will be interpreted and presented as illustrating examples. A more detailed visualization of the coding tree can be found in Appendix A.

Customer focused strategies	Brand focused strategies	Product focused strategies
Educating customers about food waste	Insight into the brand's world	Products that enable customers to 'do good'
Community building	Insight into the brand's core values	
	Collaborations of the brand	

Table 4 Overview of the findings

4.1. Customer focused strategies

The first theme that arose regards customer focused strategies for brand image creation. The social enterprises under study focused on the consumer by *educating customers about food waste* and *community building*. These selective codes will be explained in the following section.

4.1.1. Educating customers about food waste

The analysis revealed that the social enterprises under study focus on educating the customer in the field of food waste. The social enterprises are informing and educating their followers in multiple ways. First and foremost, educational incentives are used to provide followers with information.

This category derived inductively from the analysis, as all three social enterprises share short pieces of information with their followers frequently. It could be stated that informing its followers is rooted in the nature of social enterprises. As it was discussed in section 2.1.1., Allan (2005) points out that the main characteristic of a social enterprise is the intention to reach a social goal. Moreover, they can be held accountable for their public actions and the impact of these on ecological, economic, and social aspects globally. Therefore, it is expected that social enterprises actively carry out this social aim towards their customers by informing and communicating with them about this social goal.

Figure 2.1. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Figure 2.2. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Sharing facts about food waste: Besides educating children specifically, the brands educate their follower base by sharing practical facts about food waste. They share facts about diverse topics within food waste, such as percentages of thrown out edible food (see Figure 2.3. and 2.4.) or the fact that customers waste high amounts of food during the holidays. In most cases, the facts that are shared by the brands are short and aim at catching the attention of the reader. In addition, most facts about food waste are combined with a recipe or tip to consume a certain product. With the intention to reduce this amount of food waste and decrease the percentages in the given facts. The informing trait of social enterprises can be considered a strategy borrowed from non-profit organizations, as these organizations mainly focus on communicating information (Borkent, 2020).

Figure 2.3. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Figure 2.4. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl

Sharing tips to reduce food waste: All social enterprises under analysis regularly inform their followers by sharing practical tips and tricks to reach the ultimate goal of reducing food waste. Hereby, two types of tips are most common: tips about preservability and tips about reusing food. The tips are given by stating a short text with simple hacks to, for instance, preserve food (see Figure 2.5.). Often, the tips are given in combination with facts about food. To illustrate: *''Did you know tomatoes are best preserved outside of the fridge? They will remain edible for a week. Also don't put the tomatoes with cucumbers, broccoli, eggplant, mushrooms, and cabbage. Tomatoes produce ethylene, which is a matter that makes fruit and vegetables go bad fast'* (Too Good To Go, 2020). Besides sharing it combined with facts, Too Good To Go and Kromkommer, both utilize illustrations to share tips and give advice regularly (see Figure 2.6.). Making use of illustrations can improve the experience of reading and helps to understand the data (Kirsh, 2002). Moreover, illustrations can be used to let the reader recall the illustration and its context easier (Wicker, 1970). The tips itself are often simple hacks, that show followers that it is not difficult to reduce food waste, giving them a steppingstone into starting to reduce food waste.

Figure 2.5. Post retrieved from @nofoodwasted

Figure 2.6. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl

Publicly advocating for regulations about food waste: the social enterprises under study have the common goal of reducing food waste. In their Instagram posts, the organizations emphasize that consumers could help to make a change. By educating them about reducing food waste and providing them with easily accessible options, the brands encourage followers to be part of their battle against food waste. At the same time, the brands stress the impression to disagree with current rules and regulations for food waste in some cases. Mostly, debates and protests were held against the discarding of fruits and vegetables that do not conform to the size and shape standards of supermarkets. All the products that do not comply with these standards, are disapproved and rejected. The social enterprises try to oppose these rules and regulations in several ways since they believe that these products should be sold instead of discarded. First, through attending numerous, offline events that focus on food waste as guest speakers, the social enterprises share their motives to start a business that focuses on reducing food waste. By doing so, the social enterprises raise awareness for the implications of food waste. Mostly, these are sponsored events hosted by third parties such as large companies or are created for a specific day of the year (e.g. World Disco Soup Day[1]), that is dedicated to topics regarding food waste. By attending these events, social enterprises are able to communicate their beliefs to raise awareness for the topic increases, which could be a starting point for the renewal of rules and regulations.

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[1] World Disco Soup Day is a yearly event that gathers people from different industries and local areas to process products into a soup that otherwise would have gone to waste. For more information about World Disco Soup Day refer to https://www.slowfood.com/what-we-do/international-events/world-disco-soup-day/

Kromkommer shares posts in which they actively lobby for the acceptance of diversely shaped fruits and vegetables with the intention to reduce the waste that is caused by these products. Lobbying is addressed as an important organizational objective of NGOs (Hankinson, 2000), and is an activity that social enterprises adopted. To illustrate, in one post, Kromkommer explicitly mentions their company debating with the government (see Figure 2.7.), and in another post, the organization displays banners they took to a public protest (see Figure 2.8.)

Figure 2.7. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Figure 2.8. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Exploring and reporting on food waste: As pointed out by Allan (2005) before, social enterprises advocate for a social goal and are held responsible for their actions regarding this goal. Therefore, social enterprises must be up to date on current information on food waste. This resonates with the finding that the brands are involved in exploring and reporting on food waste. The investigating activities are molded into an informing yet entertaining item for followers, to keep informing and educating consumers. For instance, Too Good To Go released a YouTube-series in which they are cooking while intending to create as little food waste as possible (see Figure 2.9.). Furthermore, Kromkommer visited a supermarket chain in the Netherlands to interview its management about disfigured fruits and vegetables in the supermarket, sharing it on Instagram (see Figure 2.10.). The goal of researching the food waste field is to inform and engagingly educate followers to raise awareness and inspire people to start helping reducing food waste.

Figure 2.9. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogonl

Figure 2.10. Post retrieved from @krommunity

4.1.2. Community building

Another category within the theme of customer focused strategies is building brand community. In this case, the focus lays mostly on the creation of an online brand community, as online tools for community building were coded during the analysis. Instagram proves to be a suitable platform for the establishment of an online brand community (Roncha & Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016). The reason for brands to be interested in building brand community is the impression that consumers feel strongly connected to the brand once they participate in its online brand community, leading to an increased sense of loyalty towards the brand (Aksoy et al., 2013; Vivek et al., 2012). The category of community building compiles of the three sub-categories:

1. *Co-creation by customer's input*
2. *Empowering followers to take action and reduce food waste*
3. *Building online brand community*

Co-creation by customer's input: As was discussed in section 2.3.3., brand image creation has increasingly become about co-creation by the brand and its customers. This is also reflected in the

findings. By using different engagement strategies such as reposting content and sharing directional posts, brands involve their followers in creating content (Roncha & Radclyffe-Thomas, 2016).

On the Instagram pages of the organizations under study, a considerable amount of content is created by followers. More specifically, the brands often ask for followers' opinions or experiences. This way of initiating a dialogue was the most frequently observed strategy during the analysis and was done by means of open-ended as well as closed-ended questions. This can be explained by the fact that open-ended questions are likely to create a more in-depth dialogue (Babbie, 2014). Besides asking questions, all brands regularly repost content initially posted by consumers (see Figure 2.11. and 2.12.). Most of the reposted content contain customers using the brand's products, in the form of home-cooked meals.

Figure 2.11. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl

Figure 2.12. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Empowering followers to take action and reduce food waste: Another sub-category within community building is the empowerment of followers to take action. Hereby, the brands use content created by the community to show others easy tricks to reduce food waste themselves. By doing so, the brands encourage the community to inspire each other. Moreover, Too Good To Go explicitly asks their followers to do so: *''Let's keep inspiring each other to make more impact''* (Too Good To Go, 2020). Also, the message that the companies try to get across is the principle that every small step counts. For instance, No Food Wasted shares practical tips to be sustainable and emphasizes the

idea that however small, any act that aims to reduce food waste contributes to their cause (see Figure 2.13.). These motivational posts help to build a community that is under the impression that it is doing good.

Figure 2.13. Post retrieved from @nofoodwasted

Building online brand community: The creation of a brand community occurs on the social media channels of the brand, and in this case, specifically, on Instagram. Therefore, the community largely exists online and actively interacts with the brand in an online environment. Within this online environment, the brands often refer followers to one of their other platforms (e.g. Facebook, blog) in their communication. By getting users to follow the brand on multiple platforms, the level of engagement of followers increases and, therewith, the likelihood for followers to participate in the online brand community (Vivek et al., 2012). Moreover, brand community can cause customers to be more loyal to the brand and to be more likely to recommend the brand to others (Gao et al., 2018; Vivek et al., 2012). This way, the brand community can add value to the image of the brand.

Another strategy of the brands to build a brand community is by addressing their followers explicitly as a community. For instance, Kromkommer refers to their followers as ''Krommunity'' and approaches them like this in almost every post. Moreover, Kromkommer invites their followers to actively participate in the business process of developing new products (see Figure 2.14.) Also, Too

Good To Go approaches their follower base as a community, by calling them ''Waste Warriors''. Both Kromkommer as Too Good To Go adopted these names as recurring hashtags under their posts. Addressing the brand community was initially done by Korean pop artists, and was taken over by Western pop stars (Hall, 2017). To illustrate, Lady Gaga's fanbase, called 'Little Monsters' was the first to build a strong online brand community of a pop star. As naming the community proved to work for several industries, brands took over the practice of naming their brand community. Value was added to the brand 'Lady Gaga' by creating a distinction between ''us'' and ''them'' (Hall, 2017), which is the most common practice in building community (McMillan, 1996). For the former group, this created a sense of support from the network of like-minded people from the community (Hall, 2017). This way a strong brand community can add value to the image of various brands.

Another element that was coded for this category were the posts that showed appreciation to the online brand community (see Figure 2.15.). In these posts, brands thank their followers or partners for their support and loyalty.

Figure 2.14. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Figure 2.15. Post retrieved from @nofoodwasted

4.2.   Brand focused strategies

From the analysis, it arose that there are three ways of giving followers insights into the brand that are essential to the creation of a brand image. The following categories touch upon different elements of brand focused strategies:

1.   *Insight into the brand's world*

2. *Insight into the brand's core values*

3. *Collaborations of the brand*

4.2.1. Insight into the brand's world

In this selective code, brands provide followers with a look into their worlds. By sharing several operational events, the brands allow consumers to be involved in the brand's nature. By giving followers insights into the brand's world, a brand's story comes to life. By connecting the brand's nature to an entertaining story, brands can establish a further reach and stronger engagement with its community (Nyangwe & Buhalis, 2018). The three sub-categories that invite followers to look into the brand's world are:

1. *Heritage of the brand*

2. *Behind the scenes of operations*

Heritage of the brand: the heritage of a brand is its foundation, built from the several elements of a brand's culture (Coursaris et al., 2013). The communication of heritage allows followers to get insights into the brand's history and accomplishments. According to Malik et al. (2012), the history and heritage of a brand contribute to the brand image creation in the mind of consumers. In most posts coded as heritage, brands comment on how the journey has been looking back to the start of the organization (see Figure 2.16.). Furthermore, highlights and proud accomplishments of the brand are reflected on (see Figure 2.17.). Often, these posts are combined with an element of appreciation, in which brands thank their followers for their support during their journey. Appreciation posts are also connected to the element of community building, as expressing appreciation towards consumers contributes to their sense of belonging to a brand community (Aksoy et al., 2013).

Figure 2.16. Post retrieved from @nofoodwasted

Figure 2.17. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Behind the scenes of operations: In the posts that were coded as behind the scenes of operations, brands give insights into the operational part of their business. In these posts, followers are introduced to the teams behind a brand or given a peek into the activities of a brand. Behind the scenes content humanizes a brand for its followers and places the brand into familiar situations (Laurence, 2017). The social enterprises under study make use of that by sharing posts giving insight into their operations regularly. For instance, Too Good To Go shared a picture displaying its employees having lunch in the office (see Figure 2.18.). Also, Kromkommer shared posts of the farmers that are growing and processing their products. In the posts, the farmers are shown in the fields of their farm, showing the followers where Kromkommer's products come from (see Figure 2.19.). By displaying the processes and operations behind the brand, followers are likely to associate themselves with the brand due to a sense of familiarity (Laurence, 2017).

Figure 2.18. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl   Figure 2.19. Post retrieved from @krommunity

4.2.2. Insight into the brand's core values

Nowadays, organizations use social media platforms to actively communicate their core values to their followers (Yan, 2011). Especially for social enterprises, core values are of great importance (Allan, 2005). Core values can be used to communicate a clear message and vision to an audience. As discussed before, brand community is built upon the understanding that consumers and brands share similar values (Aksoy et al., 2013). The three social enterprises under analysis all shared similar core values, as their social goal is highly alike. Nonetheless, the emphasis on core values differed somewhat per brand. The category of *insight into the brand's core values* consists of the following sub-categories:

1. *Healthy eating for better health*
2. *Sustainability for a healthier planet*
3. *Sustainability to be cost-effective*
4. *Diversity to waste less food*

Healthy eating for better health: As mentioned earlier, consumers seem to be more conscious when it comes to their eating decisions nowadays (Auger & Devinney, 2007). In line with the increased consciousness of consumers, the number of brands supporting a healthy lifestyle grew rapidly (Von Plato, 2015). Also, the three social enterprises under study promote the value of healthy eating for better overall health. This is mostly done by discussing healthy recipes or sharing tips for the use of healthy eating options instead of using unhealthy products.

Furthermore, the brands discuss the nutritional value of products. For instance, whether

products are gluten- or lactose-free, or how many vitamins products contain (see Figure 2.22. and 2.23.). These healthy food-options are always connected to the brand's products or social goal. For instance, the brands share advice on reusing products or ingredients, that appeared to be healthy as well. Therefore, healthy eating could be considered a core value of each of the three brands.

Figure 2.22. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl

Figure 2.23. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl

Sustainability for a healthier planet: Besides encouraging followers to increase their health, the three brands encourage consumers to make sustainable decisions for a healthier planet. This resonates with the social aim that all three social enterprises advocate for: reducing food waste. In general, the social enterprises shared practical tips to become more sustainable (see Figure 2.24.). Furthermore, during the analysis, two ways of how the brands promote sustainability in their posts were found. First, the recommendation to use local products from local entrepreneurs is presented by all three brands. In these posts, local entrepreneurs are introduced by the brand. Although it should be noted that for Too Good To Go and No Food Wasted, the support of local businesses is part of their business idea as they are saving food that is left over from local stores. By promoting local products, consumers no longer buy products that need long distribution and shipping. A shorter supply chain carries fewer implications for the environment, whereas a long supply chain affects the environment negatively because of the use of energy, water, and land for the storage and distribution of these (Schmitt et al., 2017). This can be prevented by buying locally. Therefore, many

of the brands' posts supported local initiatives.

Second, all three brands share posts in which recipes with seasonal products were given. By using products that are in season, cooking is made more sustainable. Namely, seasonal products are easier to reach consumers since they are locally produced and have a shorter supply chain. Besides, the energy use to grow products in glasshouses outside of season has a great impact on the environment (Macdiarmid, 2014). To inform followers about seasonal products and how to use these products, posts are dedicated to seasonal recipes (see Figure 2.25.).

Figure 2.24. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl

Figure 2.25. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl

Sustainability to be cost-effective: Often, the practical tips of the brands to reduce food waste are associated with saving costs. For instance, the brands encourage followers to preserve food to enjoy leftovers on another day. In their posts, the brands give advice such as: *''Devote one week per month to eating out your fridge and freezer, so your leftovers will not end up discarded anyway''* (No Food Wasted, 2019, Figure 2.26.)*.* By giving these tips, the brands give their followers practical tips on being sustainable and highlight the financial advantages of being sustainable. To illustrate: *''… and the best part: you don't have to go to the supermarket anymore''* (No Food Wasted, 2020, Figure 2.27.). By mentioning the financial benefits of being sustainable, the brands possibly try to make sustainability more attractive for the followers. Directly emphasizing the effects of making sustainable choices can inspire the followers (Kemp, Bui, & Chapa, 2012).

Besides, Too Good To Go often mentions the price of their products in posts. Often, these prices are low due to the need for products to be saved quickly. This low price could stimulate followers to make a purchase.

Figure 2.26. Post retrieved from @nofoodwasted　　　　Figure 2.27. Post retrieved from @nofoodwasted

Diversity to waste less food: The value of diversity is most important to Kromkommer, as the brand advocates for the sale of diversely shaped fruits and vegetables in supermarkets. This brand regularly displays diversely shaped fruits and vegetables in their posts. Hereby, they emphasize the fact that these products should not be discarded since they have similar taste and are equally beautiful as 'normally' shaped products (see Figure 2.28.). Often, diversely looking products were portrayed by the brand as left-out or pitiful. This could be done to communicate their message on a more emotional level to Kromkommer's followers.

However, not only Kromkommer actively promotes diversity. Also Too Good To Go and No Food Wasted display diversely shaped fruits and vegetables with the message to accept diverse shapes (see Figure 2.29.). By persuading consumers into buying diversely shaped fruits and

vegetables more often, the waste of these products will be reduced. Since, nowadays, most products that are refused due to their looks by supermarkets are discarded ("Kromkommer," n.d.).

Figure 2.28. Post retrieved from @krommunity	Figure 2.29. Post retrieved from @nofoodwasted

4.2.3. Collaborations of the brand

In this selective code, the collaborations of the three social enterprises are mapped. For two of the brands (Too Good To Go and No Food Wasted), collaborating is their core business idea, as they need local stores to offer leftover food in their app. Partnerships can benefit social enterprises financially but also enable the organization to exchange knowledge, skills, and other intangible elements with its partners (Blau, 1964; Muthusamy & White, 2005). To analyze the collaborations of the social enterprises under study, the following types of collaboration were distinguished:

1. *Promoting partner brands*
2. *Promoting inspirational brands*
3. *Celebrity endorsement*
4. *Sponsored events*

Promoting partner brands: Both Too Good To Go and No Food Wasted businesses include collaborating with partners such as supermarkets, cafés, restaurants, and other stores. These businesses offer their leftover foods in the apps of Too Good To Go and No Food Wasted (see Figure

2.30.). Therefore, it is expected that these two brands have many collaborations with other brands. Accordingly, this was also shown to their followers on Instagram. By displaying collaborations, the brands boost both their products, as well as the partner brand's products. Generally, the display of partner brands in the posts is accompanied by the logo or name of the social enterprise itself (see Figure 2.31.). Furthermore, in some cases, the social media channels of partner brands are referred to, as collaborating brands are always tagged in the post itself.

Figure 2.30. Post retrieved from @nofoodwasted   Figure 2.31. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl

Promoting inspirational brands: The brands under study did not merely promote partner brands. They also promote brands that play an inspirational role in their business. These brands are no business partners of the social enterprises. Promoting these brands could be understood as an act out of goodwill. In some cases, inspirational brands are only addressed regarding the example function they hold for the social enterprise. For instance, Kromkommer shared a post about attending a lecture by Tony's Chocolonely representative. In the caption Kromkommer wrote: *''… for us, Tony's is an inspiration source. Everybody can become a Tony. Just by DOING it''* (Kromkommer, 2018, Figure 2.32.)*.* It should be noted that Kromkommer could promote Tony's Chocolonely in this manner to let followers associate the brand Kromkommer with Tony's Chocolonely. By creating the understanding in the follower's mind that the two brands are associated, Kromkommer's brand image can borrow positive associations from Tony's Chocolonely by creating their own brand image (Del Río, Vázquez, & Iglesias, 2001). Especially, brands with a strong brand image – like Tony's

Chocolonely, are appealing to be associated with. Also, Kromkommer might try to inspire and encourage its followers by communicating the message that people should take action.

Other brands are promoted by the social enterprises for their inspirational products. These posts are accompanied by a picture of the product and the reason why the social enterprise promotes the brand's product (see Figure 2.33.). The most common reason for this that was given in the posts, was the appreciation for the other brand's products, as they enable people to 'do good' for matters such as the environment or the wellbeing of others.

It should also be noted that, possibly, this mutual promotion could be an agreement between two brands. However, researching this fell beyond the scope of this study.

Figure 2.32. Post retrieved from @krommunity   Figure 2.33. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl

Celebrity endorsement: celebrity endorsement is a known strategy in the marketing field. The popularity of utilizing celebrities increased as social influencers started to play a larger role in social media marketing (Woods, 2016). The reason for brands to use social influencers is the reach social influencers have in their network (Gao et al., 2018). Also, social enterprises started to collaborate with social influencers and other celebrities. For the two somewhat larger brands from the sample (Too Good To Go and Kromkommer) the use of social influencers was coded. No Food Wasted does not use celebrities or any large events in their posts. The social influencers that were collaborated with were generally somehow connected to the topics of food or food waste. For instance, Kromkommer collaborated with a chef to film an item about cooking with diversely shaped vegetables (see Figure 2.34.).

Figure 2.34. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Sponsored events: Again, Too Good To Go and Kromkommer posted about attending some large events about fighting food waste as well as regular festivities that did not especially concern food waste. Brands attend events to raise awareness for their brand or to get new customers (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2005) (see Figure 2.35.). Moreover, by doing so, the social enterprises prove to realize their statements by taking action. By creating a narrative that places the brand in a more familiar environment such as an event, followers can more easily identify themselves with the brand (Laurence, 2017). However, for social enterprises, the emphasis may lay more on raising awareness for the cause and trying to enthusiast people for their activities. By attending an event, consumers experience the brand and its core values in real life (Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2005). This enhances their understanding of the brand and what it stands for. Whereas Too Good To Go mostly posts about events where they share their business views and experiences, Kromkommer attends events where they actively advocate for their social goal. For instance, Kromkommer visited the large music festival Tomorrowland and built their own '*diversely shaped vegetable museum'*, that festival guests could visit (see Figure 2.36.).

Figure 2.35. Post retrieved from @krommunity

Figure 2.36. Post retrieved from @krommunity

4.3. Product focused strategies

This strategy focused on the product, rather than on the customer or brand. The products that the social enterprises market are both their own products as products from collaborating brands. One category emerged in this theme: *products that enable customers to 'do good'.*

4.3.1. Products that enable customers to 'do good'

This category groups products that encouraged consumers to 'do good'. The concept of 'doing good' refers to the impression that customers get when they are behaving in a way that is beneficial for their surroundings. In this case, this mostly concerns 'doing good' for the environment by reducing food waste. Within this category, the following sub-categories emerged:

1. *Offering products that enable customers to save food from being discarded*
2. *Marketing products that embrace or are made from diversely shaped ingredients*

Offering products that enable customers to save food from being discarded: As reducing food waste is the core-business of the social enterprises under study, it is in line of expectations that the products that these brands offer help to their followers to reach that goal. The type of product that is offered by the brands to help followers reduce food waste differs. Since Too Good To Go and No Food Wasted share a similar business idea, their products are similar. Both brands work with an application that enables local entrepreneurs to offer food to customers. Within this app, the brands

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offer their own product called the ''Magic Box/No Food Wasted Box'', consisting out of a range of products that differ for every box. By ordering a box, customers are 'saving' food, which contributes to the idea of 'doing good' for the environment and local entrepreneurs. Hereby, the brands offer their own product that directly adds to the customers 'doing good'. Both Too Good To Go as No Food Wasted regularly display and mention their own products in their posts. By giving examples of what's inside the boxes, the brands give their followers an impression of what could be expected when buying their products (see Figure 2.37. and 2.38.).

Figure 2.37. Post retrieved from @toogoodtogo.nl   Figure 2.38. Post retrieved from @nofoodwasted

Marketing products that embrace or are made from diversely shaped ingredients: Whereas Too Good To Go and No Food Wasted focus on selling their own products in a left-over box, Kromkommer focuses more on raising awareness and generating acceptance towards diversely shaped products. By doing so, the brand promotes its own products. The initial product that Kromkommer brought to the market was the Kromkommer soup, which is made from diversely shaped vegetables (see Figure 2.39.). However, as Komkommer is raising awareness for diversely shaped fruits and vegetables, the brand started developing products that helped them accordingly. For instance, earlier this year, Kromkommer launched a children's book, that educates children about the normality of diversity. Besides, the brand creates children's toys in the shape of diversely shaped fruits and vegetables (see Figure 2.40.). Therefore, it could be noted that Kromkommer focuses more on raising awareness and establishing acceptance with its products, whereby the brand does not rely on collaborating partners. The other two brands directly enable customers to help saving food, often

in collaboration with partner brands. Kromkommer promotes its own products extensively on Instagram. In many posts, the brand encourages its followers to buy their products.

Figure 2.39. Post retrieved from @krommunity   Figure 2.40. Post retrieved from @krommunity

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore how anti-food waste focused social enterprises create their brand image on Instagram. In order to provide an answer to this research question, a qualitative content analysis was done with three cases: Too Good To Go, Kromkommer, and No Food Wasted. The Dutch Instagram pages of these three social enterprises were analyzed. In this section, an answer to the research question will be given by concluding the results of this study, posing a number of theoretical and societal implications of the outcomes, discussing limitations of this study, and offering recommendations for further research.

5.1.　　Main findings

The analysis that was done to find how social enterprises create their brand image on Instagram identified some key findings. In this section, the most important findings will be presented and concluded.

The results of the analysis provided three strategies that the brands used to create their brand image: *customer focused strategies, brand focused strategies,* and *product focused strategies*. By utilizing these three strategies in their Instagram posts, the perception of consumers about a brand's image should be influenced (Low & Lamb, 2000). The most important strategies for brand image creation used by the analyzed social enterprises will be discussed.

To begin with, all three social enterprises are communicating their core values on Instagram on a regular basis. The most outstanding value that the enterprises communicate is the concept of diversity. The brands communicate diversity in many of their posts. Especially, diversity in shapes and sizes of fruits and vegetables is a reoccurring issue. The social enterprises position themselves as more than acceptive towards diversely shaped fruits and vegetables, as the social enterprises actively raise awareness and advocate for the acceptance of diversely shaped fruits and vegetables. Especially, Kromkommer focuses on these advocating activities, by protesting during numerous events aimed at different age groups, to possibly reach a large and varied audience with their protests.

Along promoting diversity, the social enterprises position themselves and their products as steppingstones for consumers to 'do good'. By using the brand's products and, accordingly, 'doing good', customers can contribute to a healthier planet as reducing food waste is sustainable. More importantly, the brands emphasize that everyone can start reducing food waste and that all small steps count towards the ultimate goal of reducing food waste worldwide. By doing so, the brands try to inspire their followers to participate in 'doing good'. Moreover, they encourage followers to inspire others and become part of the sustainable movement.

The brand image that is created by the social enterprises is partly determined by their brand

community. As scholars consider brand image to be a co-creation between brands and consumers (Kozinets et al., 2010), the social enterprises under study seem to substantiate this understanding. By utilizing engaging messaging strategies, the brands interact with their followers, who in turn also generate content. This content includes followers' reposted content that features the brand's products. Also, the brands frequently repost educational content that is initially created by followers. For instance, brands share recipes that followers create with their products. This way, the image that is presented on Instagram is partly created by the input of followers. Furthermore, the social enterprises address their follower base directly as a community, which increases followers' sense of belonging to the community (Aksoy et al., 2013). Considering these recurring practices, it could be stated that the social enterprises under study encourage the process of co-creation, which corresponds to the trend of co-creation in the for-profit domain (Kozinets et al., 2010; Nyangwe & Buhalis, 2018).

All these forms of engagement strategies are commonly used by the social enterprises. Next to the motive of building a brand community, engagement strategies can be utilized for other reasons. An underlying motive for the brands to engage their followers substantially is to inspire and encourage them to take action. In this case, this entails encouraging followers to start reducing food waste by making use of the brand's products and services. This is connected to building brand community, as by building the community, brands are longing from their followers to act according to the behavior of the community (Aksoy et al., 2013). By inspiring followers with their products, the brands try to stimulate followers to contribute to the production of less food waste.

Besides engaging their consumers to encourage them to reduce food waste, the social enterprises inform and educate their followers. By informing their follower base about food waste and its implications, the brands intend to raise awareness about the issue and eventually, encourage people to take action and start reducing their selves. The social enterprises share many facts and advice in their posts on Instagram, educating and informing their followers about lowering food waste. Furthermore, awareness is raised in other ways. Some of the brands are actively protesting in public for the acceptance of diversely shaped fruits and vegetables, that are often rejected due to their deviant size or shape. Also, brands attend events to inform people about the issue of food waste and how people can help to solve this issue. The strategy of utilizing educational incentives is one of the most important strategies the brands use for building brand image.

5.2.   Theoretical implications

The strategies for brand image creation of social enterprises are partly in line with existing theories on the brand image creation of businesses. However, the outcomes of this thesis add value to the limited academic literature in the field of marketing and social enterprises, as it provides

insights in brand image creation by social enterprises.

For some of the coding categories, similarities with existing theory could be identified. For instance, the typology of Coursaris et al. (2013) was used to categorize different types of social media messages, helping the researcher to identify underlying motives in the communication of brands. Although the typology by Coursaris et al. (2013) was used as a basis, the typology was adjusted by means of inductive coding, meaning that new messaging strategies were added or irrelevant strategies were excluded. By doing so, a more suitable fit with the organizational type of social enterprises was found. Some categories that emerged were not described in existing literature. To illustrate, an important strategy is the practice of *educating customers about food waste.* Existing theory often discussed the educating and informing trait of non-profit organizations. However, little research was available on the educative role of social enterprises. Therefore, the results of this analysis contribute to the academic literature available on branding strategies by social enterprises.

Additionally, the category of *products that enable customers to 'do good'* also derived inductively from the analysis. Although this topic has been addressed in academic literature, existing theory did not focus on the products of social enterprises yet. Moreover, some products of Too Good To Go and No Food Wasted can be considered a combination of a product and a service with reducing food waste as goal, resulting in a more complex principle. For this reason, social enterprises' products that enable customers to 'do good' cannot be compared to this type of product offered by for-profit organizations. With that being said, it could be argued that the category of *products that enable customers to 'do good'* is an illustrating example of the contribution of this study to existing literature.

5.3.　　　　Societal implications

This study contributes to the existing academic literature that is available on brand image creation on social media by social enterprises. Therewith, new understandings and insights into this topic were provided. Especially since this study adds to the literature on a relatively recent phenomenon, as it combines brand image creation with the organization type of social enterprises. Furthermore, this research focused on the niche market of anti-food waste social enterprises.

The growth of more conscious and sustainable consumers by preventing food waste arises a societal relevance. After studying the current brand image creation on Instagram by social enterprises, these organizations now have access to information about how brand image on Instagram is created by other social enterprises on their niche market. By providing these insights, social enterprises can learn to apply these tools and strategies for brand image creation accordingly. This contributes to the development of a greater visibility and brand image of social enterprises, which in turn helps to draw more attention to the organization and its social cause. By educating

consumers to become more aware and conscious, the importance of combatting food waste will grow. Besides, possessing over the knowledge of brand image creation by social enterprises is important, as this might support businesses in building a strong brand image that is long-lasting and enables them to have an increased impact. Considering the social goal of social enterprises, an increased impact of social enterprises would benefit society.

5.4.   Limitations and suggestions for further research

The research succeeded in providing an answer to the research question by conducting a qualitative content analysis. For the scope of this research, the chosen method has proven to be suitable and managed to analyze how anti-food waste focused social enterprises create their brand image on Instagram. However, while existing literature on brand image creation emphasizes the rise of co-creation, this research focuses more on how brands include co-creation in their branding activities by merely considering the brand's component of co-creation. Therefore, it could be argued that this study was unable to grasp the element of co-creation, as the responses and activity of the consumers were not analyzed. In order to be able to include the element of co-creation from both the brands' as the consumers' viewpoint, future research should focus on including the perspective of consumers by identifying their activities and responses to the brand image creation strategies by brands.

Furthermore, it would have been of interest to examine the motivations of social enterprises to create their brand image in a certain way. Revealing underlying motives of brands could have provided more insights into brand image creation strategies. These insights could have been realized by adopting a second research method, such as interviews. With that being said, future research should include a more in-depth study about the motivation of the social enterprises for utilizing chosen tools and strategies for brand image creation on Instagram. Moreover, future research is suggested to look into other social media channels besides Instagram.

Nonetheless, this research added to the academic literature on brand image creation. Considering that this study merely focused on social enterprises that intended to reduce food waste, the results of this research may not be applicable to all types of social enterprises. Additionally, the research sample consisted solely of a limited number of Dutch social enterprises, which may provide difficulties when applying the research outcomes to other geographical areas and cultures. However, some aspects of brand image creation that were found in this study can still be meaningful for further research. For instance, further research could apply this research on a bigger scale or apply it to other markets besides the anti-food waste industry.

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Appendices

Appendix A   Coding tree

Themes	Selective codes	Axial codes	Open codes
Customer focused strategies	Educating customers about food waste	Educating children about food waste	E.g. creating a children's book about food waste, developing a teaching plan for children about food waste
		Sharing facts about food waste	E.g. amount of food that is wasted, recent news about food waste
		Publicly advocating for regulations about food waste	E.g. displaying banners for public protest, lobbying for new regulations about food waste
		Sharing tips to reduce food waste	E.g. tips about preservability, tips about reusing food
		Exploring and reporting on food waste	E.g. reporting, creating a YouTube series about food waste
	Community building	Co-creation by customer's input	E.g. asking open questions customer's opinion, reposting customer's content
		Empowering followers to take action and reduce food waste	E.g. sharing easy hacks to reduce food waste by other customers, call to download the app
		Building online brand community	E.g. redirecting customers to other social media pages of the brand, appreciation posts for customers' support
Brand focused strategies	Insight into the brand's world	Heritage of the brand	E.g. celebrating the organization's birthday, looking back on the starting phase of the organization
		Behind the scenes of operations	E.g. introducing the team, introducing business partners
	Insight into brand's core values	Healthy eating for better health	E.g. recipes to exchange unhealthy

			ingredients of a meal with healthier options, discussing the nutrition of products
		Sustainability for a healthier planet	E.g. using local products, cooking with seasonal products
		Sustainability to be cost effective	E.g. saving money by eating leftovers from the fridge, tips to reduce the discard of edible parts of food
		Diversity to waste less food	E.g. introducing products made with disfigured fruit/vegetables, emphasizing the beauty of disfigured fruit/vegetables
	Collaborations of the brand	Promoting partner brands	E.g. promoting products of collaborating brand, call to check a collaborating brand's social media
		Promoting inspirational brands	E.g. sharing posts about inspirational brands that have an example function, promoting products of non-partner brands out of goodwill
		Celebrity endorsement	E.g. collaborations with influencers, collaborations with other celebrities
		Sponsored events	E.g. collaborations with festivals, handing out samples at events
Product focused strategies	Products that enable customers to 'do good'	Offering products that enable customers to save food from being discarded	E.g. the Magic Box, No Food Wasted Box
		Marketing products that embrace or are made from diversely shaped ingredients	E.g. soup that is made from disfigured vegetables, toys of disfigured fruit/vegetables for children