

Editorial

Challenges for Marketing Research in the Concept of Sustainable Development

GUEST EDITORS

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is a topic that is currently being discussed and constantly adapting, since it is related not only to an ecologically correct posture and strategy but also economically viable and socially equitable. Therefore, the importance given by the media to the theme of ecology, sustainability has led to a growing concern among the population. This concern leads to greater environmental awareness (Ngo et al., 2018), which ends up influencing the purchase, that is, they verify whether a product is ecological and compatible with sustainability (Pinto da Silva et al., 2019). For instance, regarding the environment, it promotes incentives for the preservation of nature, education on environmental ethics, and the defense for the preservation with development within the environmental perspective (Roseta et al., 2020).

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Therefore, sustainability is also present in the fields of marketing. Marketing has a strong consumer orientation (internal or external) and progressively raises concerns about sustainability, social responsibility, and good environmental practices (Lubowiecki-Vikuk et al., 2021b). Implementing this philosophy is a particular challenge for both consumers and businesses. In times of uncertainty, the types and directions of marketing are transformed (e.g. Lubowiecki-Vikuk & Sousa, 2021). There is an increasing move towards socially responsible marketing, which, together with digital technology, is expected to ensure the pursuit of sustainability. The importance of marketing in the customer's perception is also changing, which is seen through the prism of their 'responsible lifestyle' (Lubowiecki-Vikuk et al., 2021a).

Marketing with a focus on sustainability is present in the various domains of society and the economy, both in public organizations, in non-profit organizations and also in private institutions (e.g. Athwal et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2020; Low et al., 2020; Peneda de Oliveira & Sousa, 2020). Sustainable marketing is also geared to the various sectors and industries in the territories (e.g. tourism, hospitality, retail, health, banking institutions, textile industry, footwear, glass, and many others relating to the production of goods and the provision of services).

2. STRUCTURE

This special issue on Sustainable Marketing of the International Journal of Marketing, Communication and New Media (IJMCNM) published eight relevant contributions about:

1. Sustainable Business practices and Supply Chain Negative Outcomes;
2. The Participation of Manufacturing Employees in Workplace Health Promotion Programmes: Determinants and barriers;
3. Do Yoga Be Sustainable: Examination of sustainable consumer behaviour of yoga practitioner;
4. Relationship Between Green Marketing Mix and Consumer Behavior: A study of hospitably firms in North India;
5. Value Co-Creation and Sustainability: A systematic literature review;
6. Tesla, SpaceX and Hyperloop: Sustainability as a technology-related mindset;

7. Environmental Sustainability in the Hotel Industry: A Perspective from Eco Hotel Managers in Portugal;
8. Knowledge of the Markings and Marketing Declarations for Sun Products.

The first article is an appropriate introduction to the discussion on the implementation of sustainable development in the marketing activities of supply-side actors. The authors have conducted a systematic literature review. They identified several areas where there are negative consequences from implementing sustainable business practices about business relationships.

In the second article, the authors focused on workplace health promotion programs. This is an example of practices that combine corporate social responsibility and human resources objectives. The results are extremely important for internal marketing in organizations. Overcoming barriers to employee participation in such programs become a challenge for responsible employers.

The authors of the third article referred to the social responsibility of one of the leading leisure activities such as yoga. It would seem that consumers of such services follow the idea of sustainable development. Using an appropriately selected scale for measuring sustainability, they proved that it is closely related to the consumer experience. Socially responsible marketing activities must be carried out in the context of experience marketing.

The fourth article provides inspiring information about green marketing. Regarding the marketing of hotel services, the author presented the perception of marketing composition instruments by hotel guests.

The fifth article follows on from the first article, where this time the authors highlighted the role of value design for sustainable marketing by market stakeholders.

In the sixth article the authors present a retrospective of three editions of the Web Summit in 2016, 2017 and 2018 in which the Smart Cities, Mobility and Sustainability standard was identified. In this study, a cut-out for in-depth analysis was established, in which the companies Tesla and SpaceX were selected, as well as the Hyperloop project.

The seventh article concerns a study related to the perspectives of Portuguese ecological hotel managers in relation to the environmental management practices in which they are involved. The authors' reveal that covid-19 caused setbacks in environmental performance, generating more non-recyclable waste, but, for some hotels, there was

time to reflect on strategies, new ecological measures and sensitize employees.

In the last, eighth article the authors focused on the competence of consumers in terms of their knowledge about sunscreen goods. It is not surprising that consumers do not read carefully the information on the packaging. However, as the authors found out, Polish consumers in the majority did not know the labels/symbols that would indicate the quality of goods produced in the concept of sustainable development. This poses a challenge to companies to highlight the social, including health, and environmental aspects of the sunscreen products concerned in their marketing communications. This is an educational function that every responsible company performs.

The papers evaluated by the double-blind review system belong to authors who have presented the results of their studies that fit in the scientific areas of the IJMCNM; so, they were accepted for publication in this international scientific journal.

The authors are aware of the limitations of their articles. The direction of further consideration of sustainable marketing will be through the challenges of research design. It is important to strive for their universality and to go beyond local issues. Triangulation of research and, in the case of quantitative research, serious (representative) sampling and the use of validated research tools would help.

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