

## **A SHORT THEORETICAL TEST ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION**

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## ABSTRACT

Sustainable consumption means that consumers suffer in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, being one of the causes in contemporary societies, which consider conscious consumer behavior and consumption patterns to be a relevant theme. The aim of this theoretical test is to reflect on the understanding that comprises sustainable consumption and this motivation to conduct this study, as well as analyze the different criteria of sustainable consumption and a definition of sustainable marketing in the literature. It justifies whether this sustainable consumption method is the pattern of consumer behavior that has been evolving in the population. The study is classified as a theoretical essay through bibliographic research. It can be concluded whether the present moment demands a reinvention of society, lifestyle, which is allowed, mainly, in the short term, the concept of consumption, which is legitimate and penetrates the conscious collective of the population and is confused with individual desire or collective of freedom.

Keyword: Sustainable Consumption, Sustainable Marketing, Green Marketing, Green Consumer, Conscientious Consumption

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Humanity is facing a variety of serious sustainability challenges. On the environmental side, global warming and the scar of city resources. On the social side, we see increasing inequality. It is known that most people demonstrate to have pro-environmental attitudes, thus understanding the changes in attitudes and behaviors in the face of cognitive conflicts related to the consumption of natural resources can also serve as support to companies to formulate sustainable marketing actions and with greater added value to its stakeholders. It also allows the creation of organizational objectives aligned with the conservation of the environment, influencing people's consumption behavior, and, consequently, generating results for the organization (PEATTIE, 2009).

So that society can incorporate the challenges inherent to sustainable development, or the main aspect is viewed with an idea of management, in view of the current patterns of unsustainable production and consumption and the tests of a better orientation. In this way, sustainable consumption emerges, as the pattern of reduced consumption and a set of interrelationships between different social actors as the search and scope of development is achieved. This discussion should be carried out in case of considering the complex character that the theme involves, since, according to Tukker et al. (2008), there is an indissociation and an interdependence between production, market and consumption, which are perceived as a difficulty in modifying one of these equal and other parts as well. In the perspective of sustainability, there is no way to talk about production without talking about consumption, or even consumption without talking about production.

The purpose of this succinct theoretical essay is to conduct a reflection that aims to understand sustainable consumption, which is the motivation for carrying out this study, as well as analyzing the different segments of sustainable consumers and the definition of sustainable marketing in the literature.

This is justified because the approach of sustainable consumption is because this pattern of consumer behavior that has been evolving in the population, as this consumption pattern involves a set of relationships that permeate the market dynamics to be effective. This form of sustainable consumption generates new consumption patterns.

The present study is organized as follows: first, the methodological aspects will be presented and how this research was carried out, secondly, an introduction on what

sustainable marketing / green is, its definition and state of the art, through the main references of theme and more recent authors.

Next, the theme of sustainable consumption, the main theme of this study, will be addressed, taking into account the main references and recent productions. Finally, the complementary terms of this theme will be presented, two of which are the green consumer and the conscious consumer were selected, as these terms are present in studies on the main theme of this succinct theoretical essay. Throughout this essay, some research proposals will be raised and, at the end, some conclusions, presenting the limitations of the study and suggestions for future lines of research.

## 2 METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

As for the methodological aspects, the study is characterized as a theoretical essay, as it is not restricted to analyzing what the literature is about the subject, but it is configured as a reflexive writing that seeks to establish relationships, converge thoughts and propose questions that enrich the debate on the subject (MENEGHETTI, 2011). In turn, Severino (2007) states that the theoretical essay is a formal discursive process that exposes the theme in a logical and reflective way, and adds that in this way there is the possibility of inserting personal interpretations. Based on different theoretical perspectives, arguments were constructed to facilitate the debate.

Thus, considering the breadth of the themes selected for the construction of this study, it is understood that the use of this approach seeks to contribute to a clearer and more effective view on such discussions. through a bibliographic search. Using the Scopus database, a bibliographic search was performed on 05/13/2020, 06/02/2020 and 1/07/2020, the filters used were Business, Management and Accounting and Social Sciences using the following keywords: key Sustainable Consumption, Sustainable Marketing, Green Marketing, Green Consumer and Conscious Consumption. As a criterion for selecting articles, the selection of those who had a relevant approach on Sustainable Consumption was used.

The main articles analyzed were those researched with the following keywords Sustainable Consumption and Sustainable Marketing, as complementary articles were analyzed with the following keywords Green Consumer and Conscious Consumption. The initial search searched for the keyword Sustainable Consumption where 782 results were found, which selected the 20 most cited articles and the 20 most recent articles of each, afterwards the keyword Sustainable Marketing and Green Marketing was searched where Total: 1,836 results found. Subsequently, the other keywords were searched, which resulted in a total of 1,233 results, this being the sum of the results obtained by searching the two complementary terms, the filtering took into account the title of the articles and the 5 most cited and the 5 most recent . The choice of the number of articles analyzed was at the discretion of the author.

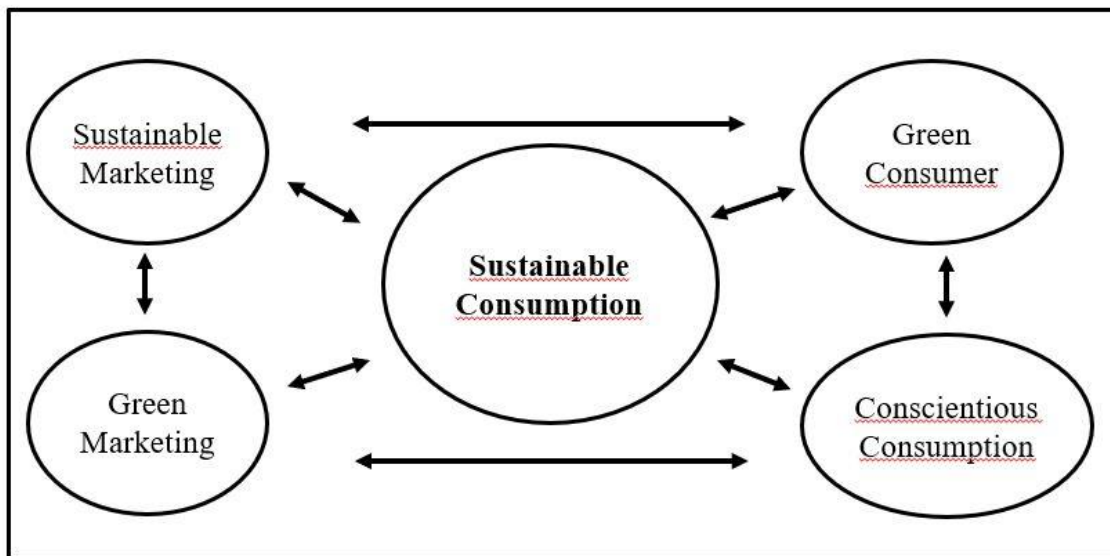
After a filtering of the results was carried out, taking into account the title and keywords for the selection and exclusion of the articles, then another filtering was carried out considering where the full reading of the articles was carried out, in this research step, an understanding was sought. better on the subject, some analyzed articles contributed little to this understanding, so they were disregarded. At this stage, in addition to the selected articles, he added complementary readings that were present in the analyzed articles, thus seeking to find the state of the art on the subject, to verify the importance of the references used, the number of citations was searched on Google Scholar.

Thus, reaching a total of 40 articles analyzed and 10 used and one more complementary reading in the textual construction as they presented relevant concepts on

sustainable marketing and a total of 40 articles analyzed and 8 used and one more complementary reading in the textual construction because they presented concepts information on sustainable consumption. In what corresponds to the other keywords, 20 articles were analyzed and 3 articles were used, plus a complementary reading in the textual construction because they presented relevant concepts about the green consumer and the conscious consumer. Complementary readings totaled 3. Thus totaling 60 analyzed articles and 21 used in this brief theoretical essay and 3 complementary readings.

Given the above, figure 1 demonstrates the terms used in this brief theoretical essay, demonstrating a framework model used to guide this research.

Figure 1 - Framework for this succinct theoretical essay.



Source: Data from this research, (2020).

### 3 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 Sustainable Marketing and Green Marketing

The sustainable marketing orientation considers environmental aspects in the exchange relationship between the company and the market. This orientation is based on the recognition of a marketing strategy that is consistent with the company's long-term survival and natural environment (CALVO-PORRAL, 2019). Sustainable marketing, in turn, is a more holistic and integrative approach in which it equals environmental, social, equity and economic-financial concerns in the development of marketing strategies (BRIDGES; WILHELM, 2008).

The first definition related to Green Marketing dates back to 1976, when Hennion and Kinnear show that Ecological Marketing takes into account all marketing activities that in turn caused environmental problems and now need strategies that can solve the problems caused by their ferocious behavior. consumption and thus create new consumption patterns. Over the years, many other definitions have been provided and the concept has evolved and become more structured, as is evident from the Fuller definition (1999) in which it emphasizes that Sustainable Marketing must take into account the entire process of planning, implementation and control in the development of prices, products, promotion and distribution of products in a way that satisfies the following three

criteria: (1) the customer's needs are met; (2) the organization's objectives are achieved and (3) the process is compatible with ecosystems.

Since the first definition of Green Marketing, the number of studies on the topic has increased substantially. For example, Lampe and Gazda (1995) analyzed the evolution of green businesses and the forces that led to the emergence of green marketing

this definition clearly highlights how Green Marketing is central to cleaner production and corporate sustainability. Peattie (2001a) pointed out that green marketing cannot be seen simply as a variation of conventional marketing, suggesting some specific ways of looking to avoid failures.

Peattie (2001b) focused on the evolution of the concept over time and the different actions that characterize green marketing at each stage of this evolution. Adopting a more case-oriented approach, Ottman et al. (2006) analyzed several cases of unsuccessful green products, highlighting factors that must be taken into account for the successful development and commercialization of ecological products. Specifically, the authors stressed that green marketing must simultaneously satisfy two conditions: developing products with high environmental quality and meeting customer expectations.

Thus, sustainable marketing practices are defined as compiled from sustainable activities, how to design and implement the marketing strategy, which aims to make a positive net contribution to society, thereby producing a sustainability report and measuring marketing success through a combination of environmental and social performance (FERDOUS, 2010). Green marketing is a component of new marketing approaches that reorient, change and improve existing marketing philosophy and practice, offering a considerably different perspective. Green marketing belongs to a set of approaches that try to reconcile the lack of adjustment between marketing as it is currently practiced and ecological and social realities (GHEORGHIU; NICULESCU, 2013).

Given the above, the list of articles analyzed is in order of textual construction in table 1 below, which contains the year, journal, title, authors, and number of citations until the date of data collection:

Table 1 - List of articles analyzed on Sustainable Marketing and Green Marketing

<b>Year</b>	<b>Journal</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Numbers of Quotes</b>
2019	Contributions to Economics	The role of marketing in reducing climate change: An approach to the sustainable marketing orientation	CALVO-PORRAL	0
2008	Journal of Marketing Education	Going beyond green: The "why and how" of integrating sustainability into the marketing curriculum	BRIDGES; WILHELM	81
1976	American Marketing Association	Ecological Marketing	HENNION; KINNEAR	97
1995	International Business Review	Green Marketing in Europe and the United States: an evolving business and society interface	LAMPE; GAZDA	146
2006	Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development	Avoiding green marketing myopia: ways to improve consumer appeal for environmentally preferable products.	OTTMAN; STAFFORD; HARTMAN	873
2001	Business Strategic Environment	Golden goose or wild goose? The hunt for the green consumer	PEATIEE	558
2001	Marketing Review	Towards sustainability: the third age of green marketing	PEATIEE	654
2010	Journal of International Consumer Marketing	Applying the theory of planned behavior to explain marketing	FERDOUS	30

2013	Quality (Supplement)	managers' perspectives on sustainable marketing The development of the Eco marketing, green performance and corporate responsibility in a competitive economy	GHEORGHIU; NICULESCU; VIDRASCU	15
<b>Complementary Studies</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
1999	SAGE e Publications, Inc., London, UK.	Sustainable Marketing	FULLER	713

Source: Data from the survey, (2020).

### 3.2 Sustainable Consumption

But what is sustainable consumption? In 1994, the Oslo Symposium defined sustainable consumption as “. . . the use of services and services related to products, which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as emissions of waste and pollutants throughout the service or product life cycle, in order not to compromise the needs of generations "(MINORITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF NORWAY, 1994). Thus changes in people's attitudes, beliefs and behaviors can stimulate changes in the political and economic systems, which in turn can generate changes in lifestyle life (TANNER; KAST, 2003).

First, sustainable consumption requires an increase in consumption efficiency, which can be achieved through technological improvements. Improvements in eco-efficiency of consumption mean a reduction in the consumption of resources per unit of consumption due to improvements in production processes or in an efficient design in terms of efficiency, for example. These improvements are often win-win scenarios. Improving consumption efficiency can be seen as the necessary prerequisite to achieve sustainable consumption (FUCHS; LOREK, 2005).

The behavior generated by sustainable consumption has grown rapidly over the past three decades. Its value, however, has been limited by the continued preference of companies, policies of manufacturers and researchers to meet the need for more sustainable patterns of production and consumption in terms of incremental changes in consumption behaviors aiming at an ecologically correct lifestyle (PEATTIE , 2010).

Thus, most consumer-oriented environmental studies suggest that technological solutions aimed at improving resources and productivity are not enough to reduce the environmental impact of consumption. Solutions must be based not only on changing consumption patterns, but also on reducing consumption levels. The most radical views on reducing consumption levels are based on sufficiency principles. However, most activities today deal with changes in consumption patterns, addressed by strategies for replacing materials, preventing pollution, consumer information and optimizing management practices (MONT; PLEPYS, 2008).

Therefore, from a political perspective, sustainable consumption can be approached in economic terms (by reducing expenses) or in material terms by redirecting the consumer, taking into account various ways of materially intensive consumption to less intensive ways (for example, goods to services). The prospect of progressing partially towards sustainability, generating a transformation in which it has a more efficient and conscious direction. Sustainable consumption also becomes more attractive in terms of politics, if we measure progress using a metric like happiness, instead of more conventional measures of economic growth (PEATTIE; PEATTIE, 2009).

The need to identify sustainable consumption patterns to promote a transformation of the green economy of companies and thus generate innovation in the circular economy (SHAO, 2019). The combination of sustainable consumption with the concept of circular economy could help to face challenges, such as resource scarcity and climate change, reducing the transfer rate of resources and increasing the cycle of products and materials within the economic system, thus reducing emissions and the use of virgin material. To achieve sustainable consumption in a circular economy, one must change production practices and the form of consumption (TUNN et al., 2019).

Given the above, the list of articles analyzed are in order of textual construction in table 2 below, which contains the year, journal, title, authors, and number of citations until the date of data collection:

Table 2 - List of articles analyzed on Sustainable Consumption.

Years	Journal	Title	Authors	Number s of Quotes
2003	Psychology & Marketing	Promoting Sustainable Consumption: Determinants of Green Purchases by Swiss Consumers	TANNER; KAST	374
2005	Journal of Consumer Policy	Sustainable consumption governance: A history of promises and failure	FUCHS; LOREK	150
2010	Annual Review of Environment and Resources	Green consumption: Behavior and norms	PEATTIE	245
2008	Journal of Cleaner Production	Sustainable consumption progress: should we be proud or alarmed?	MONT; PLEPYS	121
2009	Journal of Business Research	Social marketing: A pathway to consumption reduction?	PEATTIE; PEATTIE	268
2019	Business Strategy and the Environment	Sustainable consumption in China: New trends and research interests	SHAO	3
2019	Journal of Cleaner Production	Business models for sustainable consumption in the circular economy: An expert study	TUNN et. al	10
Complementary Studies				
Year	Publication	Title	Author	Quotes
1994	Ministério do Meio Ambiente da Noruega	Report of the Sustainable Consumption Symposium	MINISTÉRIO DO MEIO AMBIENTE DA NORUEGA	884

Source: Data from the survey, (2020).

### 3.3 Green Consumer and Conscious Consumer

Environmental, green or ecological consumers are characterized by being concerned about the environment and consequently choosing, whenever they have the opportunity to choose, for products and services that cause the least possible environmental impact, such consumers have a stronger pro-ecological attitude than the population average, in addition to the desire to perform some activity that positively influences the preservation and maintenance of ecosystems (ROBERTS, 1996). The “green” consumer relates the purchase or consumption to the possibility of acting in accordance with environmental issues. He knows that, by refusing to purchase certain products, he can discourage the supply of products harmful to the ecosystem (POLONSKY, 1994).

Green consumption must take into account the multidimensional construction that consists of the continuous act of controlling desire, avoiding extravagant purchases and rationalizing the use of goods and services that satisfy basic needs. Conscious consumption ranges from environmental concerns, ensuring and managing existing resources that are not only capable of meeting current demand, but also without compromising the need for future generation. Thus guaranteeing at least three aspects: quality of life, protection and preservation of the environment and maintaining natural resources useful for the future generation (QUOQUAB; MOHAMMAD; SUKARI, 2019).

The central issue of sustainability consumption requires compromises between meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Thus, green consumption does not only serve to satisfy the needs and desires of consumers, but aims to be determinant for global sustainability (BRUNDTLAND, 1987).

Given the above, the list of articles analyzed are in order of textual construction in table 3 below, which contains the year, journal, title, authors, and number of citations until the date of data collection:

Table 3 - List of articles analyzed on Green Consumer and Conscious Consumption.

<b>Years</b>	<b>Journal</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Number of Quotes</b>
2019	Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	A multiple-item scale for measuring “sustainable behaviour” consumption Constructo: Development and psychometric evaluation	QUOQUA; MOHAM; SUKARI	6
1996	Journal of Business Research	Green consumers in the 1990s: profile and implications for advertising	ROBERTS	1674
1994	Eletronic Green Journal	An introduction to Green Marketing	POLONSKY	853
<b>Complementary Studies</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Publication</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
1987	Our common future	What is sustainable development	BRUNDTLAND	2050

Source: Data from the survey, (2020).

#### 4 CONCLUSION

According to the consulted literature, it can be concluded that the current moment demands a reinvention of society, lifestyle, priorities and, especially, in the short term, the concept of consumption, which legitimizes and penetrates the collective consciousness of the population and it is confused with the individual or collective desire for freedom. Collective responsibility is fundamental to delimit the just measure of human actions from the perspective of a common and environmental good. It is also necessary to reconstruct the social values that can be built with the help of Sustainable Marketing through actions that encourage sustainability, such as sustainable consumption practices, actions aimed at social responsibility and environmental awareness.

The contributions brought by this study can be weighted by the limitations that represent future research trails. First, for the segmentation of “green” consumers, the present work used an international classification, however it is known that consumption can be strongly influenced by culture. Therefore, it is desirable that future studies explore



more deeply the segmentation of these consumers in the Brazilian context. Second, the propositions presented in this essay have not been tested empirically. Therefore, it is suggested that future studies carry out in-depth views with managers of organizations in order to explore whether legitimacy, competitiveness and socio-environmental responsibility are their main motivations for the execution of green marketing by organizations.

Third, future research could investigate the influence of the company's credibility and the quality and quantity of information available to consumers on their purchasing behavior through in-depth customer interviews or through experiments that they manipulate without the credibility and information available to consumers. consumer and then the intention to purchase the product was measured.

Fourthly, it is desirable that future investigations explore the discrepancy between the discourse and the practice of consumers in relation to the consumption of sustainable products. In this case, an ethnographic study at the points of sale is suggested

sustainable and unsustainable products in order to observe people's behavior and explore the divergences between the consumer's speech and their actual consumption. Finally, it is suggested that future studies that explore the relationships between the strategies adopted by companies and the adoption of products by different consumer segments through a survey-type survey and / or experiments that test the causal relationship between the company's action and customer perception.

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