

## Marketing is a Positive Force in Contemporary Society Case of Holland & Barrette Social Campaign

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**Abstract:** Objectives: This essay discusses and investigates marketing's positive contribution to contemporary society as a force that leads to a better life. Also, targeting consumption is primarily to be modified by applying marketing techniques to yield desirable outcomes for all stakeholders. This will be reflected in businesses and society while paying attention to the challenges of limited marketing scope and other ethical considerations.

Methods: a case study of the marketing concept as a whole and chosen approaches to demonstrate marketing's positive impact on contemporary society, that illustrate the abilities and opportunities of marketing in making a behavioral change, with an example of a health corporation practicing social and sustainable marketing.

Results: A positive impact on society can be achieved and maintained by taking advantage of marketing. Besides, future marketing efforts must consider more positive and supportive customer experiences to guarantee that the required behavioral outcome is sustained. While previous research investigated several aspects of social marketing, it fails to engage all diminutions that affect consumers' behavioral change process, such as limiting studies on gender age, or culture group alongside greater involvement of policymakers in social marketing.

Conclusions: Marketing practices and concepts may achieve positive change in society through applying social and sustainable marketing approaches From my perspective, appropriate employment of marketing techniques has significant potential to lead consumer behavior through an accurate and precise understanding of drivers and barriers of this behavior and create proper ethical and sustainable values that attract them to the desirable behavior

**Keywords:** social marketing; contemporary society; consumer behavior; Marketing Practices

### التسويق قوة إيجابية في المجتمع المعاصر حالة حملة هولاند وباريت للتسويق الاجتماعية

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**المستخلص:** الأهداف: يناقش هذا المقال ويبحث في المساهمة الإيجابية للتسويق في المجتمع المعاصر كقوة تؤدي إلى حياة أفضل. كما يجب تعديل استهداف الاستهلاك في المقام الأول من خلال تطبيق تقنيات التسويق لتحقيق نتائج مرغوبة لجميع أصحاب المصلحة. وسوف ينعكس هذا على الشركات والمجتمع مع الاهتمام بتحديات نطاق التسويق المحدود والاعتبارات الأخلاقية الأخرى.

المنهجية: دراسة حالة لمفهوم التسويق ككل والأساليب المختارة لإظهار التأثير الإيجابي للتسويق على المجتمع المعاصر، والتي توضح قدرات وفرص التسويق في إحداث تغيير سلوكي، مع مثال لمؤسسة صحية تمارس التسويق الاجتماعي والمستخدم هولاند اند باروت.

النتائج: يمكن تحقيق أثر إيجابي على المجتمع والحفاظ عليه من خلال الاستفادة من التسويق. كما يجب أن تأخذ جهود التسويق المستقبلية في الاعتبار تجارب العملاء الأكثر إيجابية والداعمة لضمان استدامة النتيجة السلوكية المطلوبة. في حين بحثت الدراسات السابقة في العديد من جوانب التسويق الاجتماعي، إلا أنها فشلت في إشراك جميع أوجه القصور التي تؤثر على عملية تغيير سلوك المستهلكين، مثل الحد من الدراسات حول العمر بين الجنسين، أو المجموعة الثقافية إلى جانب مشاركة أكبر لواقعي السياسات في التسويق الاجتماعي.

الخلاصة: الممارسات والمفاهيم التسويقية قد تحقق تغييراً إيجابياً في المجتمع من خلال تطبيق مناهج التسويق الاجتماعي والمستخدم من وجهة نظري فإن التوظيف المناسب لتقنيات التسويق له إمكانات كبيرة لقيادة سلوك المستهلك من خلال فهم دقيق ومحدد لدوافع ومعوقات هذا السلوك وخلق القيم الأخلاقية السليمة والمستدامة التي تجذبهم إلى السلوك المرغوب فيه.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التسويق الاجتماعي، المجتمع المعاصر، سلوك المستهلك، ممارسات التسويق.

## Introduction

Broadly speaking, the marketing perspective is highly interlinked with society and the environment in practicing its function in the way that both society and the environment will be affected by marketing practices, in vice versa relation (Grønhaug 2002; Fitchett and McDonagh 2000). Although marketing is criticized of focusing on academic discipline and professionalized practices which limited its contribution to socio-economic life and creating valuable social impact (Araujo & Pels 2015), however, marketing has the potential to drive current communities to desirable and positive behavior through implying social marketing approach that targeting consumers' behavioral change ((Suarez-Almazor 2011; Dibb & Carrigan 2013; Zainuddinet al., 2013; D. Newton et al., 2013). Besides, marketing is impacted by ethical and sustainability aspects as well as stakeholders, which all influence firms to take actions that improve the life quality of society (Gordon et al. 2011; Thomas 2018). Hence, marketing theories and practices could direct consumers toward sustainable and positive choices that benefit society eventually.

In this essay, we attempt to explore relative marketing theories, such as social marketing and sustainable consumption in order to demonstrate the significant role of marketing in reinforcing society positively. The main question of this study is: Does sustainable and social marketing positively influence consumers' behavior?

## Body:

Marketing Knowledge is commonly recognized as useful, however, "useful knowledge" is considered an ambiguous term, and the meaning of what constitutes useful knowledge is not limited to only one concept (Grønhaug 2002). When viewing marketing mainly as a business discipline, marketing knowledge is expected to benefit businesses in understanding their customers and business environments, so they can achieve a competitive edge since they will be able to make wise decisions and excellent actions as well (Grønhaug 2002). Additionally, Fitchett and McDonagh (2000) discussed the significance and limitations of Relationship marketing (RM) from two dimensions which are developing marketing ideas primarily and empowering consumers and citizens as it considers environmental welfare in risk society. In contemporary cultural life, Marketing has played a vital role and to accomplish this role effectively it needs to address some aspects, so exciting that potential consumers will support this marketing effort (Fitchett and McDonagh 2000).

Nevertheless, Araujo & Pels (2015) argued that marketing should have more engagement with the marketization wave to expand its scope of markets rather than an academic discipline and professionalized practices set and suggested assessing the societal impact of marketing practices. This led to an expanded marketing view to consider more socioeconomic life.

In my perspective, the marketing discipline recently has many capabilities to positively affect society if it wisely understands and addresses socio-economic life aspects. Precisely, social marketing theory have the potential to influence society and individuals' decisions by targeting consumers behavior and directing to the required action\_(Suarez-Almazor 2011; Dibb & Carrigan 2013; Zainuddinet al., 2013; D. Newton et al., 2013)

Since social marketing began in 1971 academically it has transformed from improving individual well-being to an innovative approach currently, which is social change as Dibb & Carrigan (2013) stated that the purpose of this type pf marketing is to "change behavior, attitudes and intentions in a way that is more beneficial for the individual and society", while commercial marketers focusing on the benefits to the self. Suarez-Almazor (2011) confirmed the different goals of commercial marketing, mainly financial, in convincing consumers to purchase, unlike social marketing which aims to achieve social good in long-term behavior change. For this reason, transferring the wholesale of techniques between commercial and social marketing could be problematic have to consider since there are fundamental differences between the two fields (D. Newton et al., 2013). Thus, the relationship between commercial and social marketing is complex and needs to be accurately comprehended.

Despite universal agreement that social marketing concentrates on behavior change, approaches to modification of behavior vary by social marketers (Hoek & Jones 2011; Dibb & Carrigan 2013). For instance, focusing on individual-level behavior change known as downstream is the dominant approach, whereas upstream in social marketing focuses on policy and regulation to alter environments that consequently support and promote behavior change (Hoek & Jones 2011). Interestingly, considering a network perspective that emphasizes upstream and downstream activities is significant in social marketing even though it is complex to understand drivers and inhibitors that shape consumer behavior (Dibb & Carrigan 2013). Therefore, understanding upstream and downstream interventions of

social marketing are substantial aspect of conducting and accomplishing social marketing activities properly (Hoek & Jones 2011; Dibb & Carrigan 2013).

This complexity of behavior is supported by Parkinson et al., (2018) study that demonstrated the significant role of emotion and experience when understanding a complex social behavior unlike cognitive variables, which challenge the planned behavior models and theories that are prevalently used in marketing.

Indeed, value creation in short-term measuring cannot be achieved or appear in the firm's sales or market share of a firm since social marketing has a greater impact and extended benefits (Dibb & Carrigan 2013). Besides, Gordon et al., (2018) contributed to value theory, the concept of value-in-behavior, by confirming that consumers differ in perceiving the value in performing behaviors and suggested that perceived value-in-behavior could usefully expect consumer behavior through understanding their perception of value.

In health-related social marketing, improving personal health and well-being could be achieved by social marketing and preventative health strategies that motivate individuals for self-care behaviors engagement, creation, and provision of value, Zainuddinet al., (2013).

Theories of individual behavioral change and social/health marketing may Insightfully support agencies to boost public health (Diehr et al., 2011).

Therefore, behavioral change depends on creating value that consumers might be influenced by, which leads to yield favorable behavior (Zainuddinet al., 2013; Dibb & Carrigan 2013; Gordon et al., 2018). Yet, substantial improvements in public health and welfare by social marketers require to expansion of the boundaries of social marketing since there are negative influences encouraging unhealthy behaviors in commercial marketing activities, so targeting individuals through public service messages to generate major progress in health aspects is doubtful (Wymer 2010).

Consequently, the substantial role of social marketing can be seen in changing behavior through emotionally affecting consumers' behavior, which creates value, and identifies how this value is recognized diversely by customers which affects in achieving required behavioral outcomes accordingly

Notably, engaging all stakeholders, such as government and society in building social marketing content is essential since they all strive to boost optimal social behavior (Suarez-Almazor 2011; Dibb & Carrigan 2013; Parkinson et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, ethical issues have to be considered in targeting an audience through social marketing or social campaigns to guarantee to delivery of the message effectively, which was investigated by D. Newton et al., (2013) who suggested that applying the (TJHC) theory of just health care, and (ISCT) integrative social contracts theory to health-related social marketing contexts provides ethical justification of audience segmentation, especially because of limited resources in conducting campaigns, so segmentation decisions should be based on cost-effectiveness or need that can have significant health-related implications. Similarly, Suarez-Almazor (2011) agreed that targeted audience segmentation is a crucial component in the social marketing campaign that should be taken into account alongside the precise goals of this campaign.

Another perspective in the same path of ethics, ethical orientations vary among consumers that lead to different consumption behavior (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013; Burke et al., 2014). Alongside, Ogiemwonyi & Jan (2023) study indicates that environmental ethics and moral obligation influence the willingness to use green products comparatively, which beneficially promotes green consumption by leveraging proper strategies that align with SDG\*12, ensuring responsible consumption.

While some customers select an ethical product based on positive and negative emotions that are a significant driver of consumption behavior, particularly feeling guilt as a prominent emotion driver, so they often compensate for unethical choices by making ethical choices shortly in the future as Gregory-Smith et al., (2013) study indicated and confirmed by Antonetti & Maklan (2014) that highlighted the effectiveness of consumers' feelings of pride and guilt in sustainable consumption choices, other customers choose to purchase ethical products because of the positive orientation to its impact, health, personal relevance, and quality unlike negatively orientated consumers who reject purchasing because of indifference, cost, confusion and doubt of this products whilst other customers have an ambivalent behavior (Burke et al., 2014). As a result, understanding previous barriers and motivators could beneficially contribute to the marketing function in designing a suitable and appealing ethical product.

In addition, a relationship between green marketing and the ethical standards of sporting goods manufacturers was investigated by Yazdani et al., (2021), and this relationship was found between the elements of green marketing with customer loyalty of sports products. The influence of sustainable marketing on customer loyalty was suggested by Rastogi et al., (2024) study and found that

sustainable marketing practices impact brand image and loyalty positively. Thus, fostering customer loyalty can be achieved by implementing sustainable practices and green marketing.

Despite the outlook of traditional social marketing that targets individuals to change behavior in a downstream focus, such as tackling obesity health problem, this was approach criticized because it disregards upstream social marketing and a socioecological model implementation should apply through engaging policymakers and other partners' commitment to social change in education campaign for instance (Wood & Tapp 2016; Venturini 2016). In addition, Carrigan et al., (2011) argued that firms could play a major role in facilitating behavioral change by implementing upstream and downstream approaches since growing public pressure and increasing consumers and shareholders' inspection of corporate behavior lead firms to shift toward Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as the consumption is interlinked with social relations and norms and consequently changing individual behavior toward sustainability.

Consequently, confronting complex social issues requires more involvement of multiple stakeholders by applying upstream and downstream approaches (Carrigan et al., 2011; Dibb & Carrigan 2013; Wood & Tapp 2016; Venturini 2016).

Likewise, sustainability becomes a vital factor of all marketing strategies and practices that is considered a convincing aspect from a consumer perspective because consumption contributes directly and indirectly to a rising threat to the life quality of humans (Gordon et al. 2011; Thomas 2018). Consumers' concern about environmental and ethical issues is a substantial factor in prompting consumer behavior that could be achieved by employing a customer-centric approach, which striving sustainable marketing (Shamma & Hassan 2013; Huang et al. 2014). Indeed, considering all stakeholders in sustainable marketing is a crucial factor in determining firms' marketing strategies due to its significant effect on the economic foundation and profit that results from stakeholders' decision to deal with firms (Høgevoid & Svensson 2012; Kumar & Christodouloupoulou 2014). Moreover, Sustainability-oriented innovation and organizational creativity accompany positive social sustainability performance, so applying the creative process will yield new models and paths in which firms' profitability, growth, and survival are related to overcoming environmental and social problems (Souto 2022). Singh & Misra (2022) find that corporate social responsibility adoption is associated with business society by showing CSR as a connecting link between business and society as a win-win cooperation for stakeholders. Thus, implementing social and sustainable concepts and perceptions in marketing efforts might generate profitability.

To illustrate previous literature in an existing campaign, Holland & Barrette, which is a leading health and wellness retailer, has concentrated on social topics in their honest and open marketing communication with consumers in order to educate and empower individuals to make their decisions " (Marketing Week 2019). For instance, their last successful campaign that won the completion of Transport for London (TfL) " me.in.pause' pursues to show the diversity and empowering women through educated society and women who are experience natural part of every woman's life and how to deal with challenges in menopause (Campaign 2018; The Drum 2019; Marketing Week 2019). This campaign obviously adopts diversity attributes in embracing a wide range of multicultural and disabled women besides targeting all society in raising awareness in breaking the stereotyping of women's roles or abilities. Consequently, H & B's financial revenue has been affected positively by its sustainable marketing and this campaign resulted in rising sales alongside 100% positive emotion on social media (Marketing Week 2019).

However, this campaign that attempts to address gender stereotypes may face criticism for taking advantage of this topic and exploiting the femvertising trend to improve sales (Grau & Yorgos 2016). Thus, ethical consideration has to pay more attention to designing social marketing content to avoid misleading or unfavorable perceptions among consumers.

In my perspective, this campaign aims to behavioral change in both targeted women and society through a social marketing approach that seeks long-term value creation, which is empowering women and raising awareness. Indeed, ethical and sustainable marketing has beneficial outcomes for businesses and communities as well.

Ultimately, I believe that marketing has the potential to generate positive outcomes for society by pursuing long-term behavioral change for individuals and society alongside concern for ethical and sustainable consumption that would impact all stakeholders positively.

## Conclusions:

Eventually, marketing practices and concepts may achieve positive change in society through applying social and sustainable marketing approaches for example even though challenges and criticism of the inadequate social impact of marketing function in the academic and professional field. In my view and study experience, appropriate employment of marketing techniques has significant

potential to lead consumer behavior through an accurate and precise understanding of drivers and barriers of this behavior and creates proper ethical and sustainable values that attract them to the desirable behavior. Accordingly, a positive impact on the whole of society can be achieved and maintained by taking advantage of marketing. In addition, future marketing efforts has to consider more customers experiences as positive and supportive to guarantee that the required behavioral outcome is sustained. While previous researches investigated in various aspects in social marketing, it lacks to engaging all dimensions that effect consumers behavioral change process, such as limiting study on gender or age or culture group alongside greater involvement of policymakers in social marketing.

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