

THE BUSINESS CONTRIBUTION FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION:

a proposal of theoretical categories and analytical parameters

1- Minelle Enéas Silva*

Doutorando em Administração pela Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Brasil.

minele.adm@gmail.com

<http://lattes.cnpq.br/3329329091837689>

2- Gesinaldo Ataíde Cândido

Professor da Universidade Federal de Campina Grande (UFCG), Brasil.

gacandido@uol.com.br

<http://lattes.cnpq.br/2771934125977891>

Diego Maganhotto Coraiola – Editor Geral

Editor responsável pela submissão:

Washington José Souza.

Artigo analisado via processo de revisão duplo cego (*Double-blind*).

Recebido em: 26/06/2013

Aprovado em: 23/02/2014

Última Alteração: 28/12/2013

* Rua General Lima e Silva, 30 – Apto 402, Centro. Porto Alegre - RS. CEP: 90.050-100.

THE BUSINESS CONTRIBUTION FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION: A PROPOSAL OF THEORETICAL CATEGORIES AND ANALYTICAL PARAMETERS

Resumo

This paper aims to propose a set of analytical categories and parameters to Michaelis' (2003) theoretical model, in order to facilitate the role of business in sustainable consumption. For this, the theoretical essay form was used. Along this study we identified a set of theoretical categories (Eco-efficiency, Own Consumer Practices, Government Incentives, Supply Chain Links, Choice Edition, Corporate Citizenship, Responsible Marketing and Dialogue with Stakeholders), which together with the analysis criteria facilitates the analyses of the model. Therefore, the greatest contribution of this paper was to propose ways that can guide studies in sustainable consumption.

Keywords

Sustainable Consumption; Responsible Business Practices; Social Interactions.

A CONTRIBUIÇÃO DAS EMPRESAS PARA O CONSUMO SUSTENTÁVEL: UMA PROPOSTA DE CATEGORIAS TEÓRICAS E PARÂMETROS DE ANÁLISES

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é propor um conjunto de categorias teóricas e parâmetros de análise para o modelo de Michaelis (2003), no sentido de facilitar a contribuição das empresas para o consumo sustentável. Para tanto, foi realizado um ensaio teórico, no qual foram identificados como categorias teóricas: eco-eficiência, práticas próprias de consumo, incentivo do governo, elos da cadeia de suprimentos, edição de escolha, cidadania corporativa, marketing responsável e diálogo com *stakeholders*. Como forma de tornar operacionalizáveis tais categorias foram definidos parâmetros de análise para cada uma dessas. A maior contribuição deste ensaio está em propor caminhos que guiem empresas para o consumo sustentável.

Palavras-Chave

Consumo sustentável; Práticas empresariais responsáveis; Interações sociais.

1 Introdução

The debates on sustainable development (SD) indicate its appearance as an alternative view to a set of transformations existent all over the world. In Kte'pi's view (2009), it is necessary to have a long-term concern to maintain activities in order to work the environmental, economic and social aspects better. In addition, we identified that the current model of development must be modified, considering that individual capitalist characteristics can be directed from a collective perspective as benefits for all society (Foladori, 2005). Its discussion was highlighted, mainly from of the Rio+20 Conference which had concerns in reference to different social problems (United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development [UNCSD], 2012).

According to Peattie (2007), the sustainable development can be effective when challenges are incorporated by society, mainly regarding management, since the current production and consumption patterns are not sustainable and need better guidance. As shown by this author, we must understand that organizations, including companies, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGO) will have to work in partnership so that there is this shift in paradigm, being that this is the business organizations biggest challenge. This fact is aligned with the idea that there is an interdependence between production, market and consumption, in which we can perceive some difficulties in modifying one of these parts without the other also being modified (Tukker, Emmert, Charter, Vezzoli, Sto, Andersen, Geerken, Tischner, & Lahlou, 2008).

In this context, we start from the premise for the development of this study that for a change in consumption practices to a more sustainable view it is necessary to have a set of interactions among different stakeholders, in which the awareness process is active and continuous. In order to understand the need to revise the current forms of production and consumption, in the changing context, the discussion and study of sustainable consumption (SC) emerges. This is justified according to Jackson (2007), since this consumption pattern seeks to demonstrate and understand what the direct and indirect influences that act on the sustainable development model are.

Therefore, we consider that to have the introduction of sustainable consumption, a set of social interactions is necessary to incorporate new roles and responsibilities (Caeiro; Ramos; Huisingh, 2012; Jackson; Michaelis, 2003; Lorek; Fuchs, 2013; Michaelis, 2000a; 2003; Mont, 2004; Mont; Plepys, 2007; Silva, 2011; Silva; Oliveira; Gómez, 2013). In this field of argument, in order to understand that businesses can contribute to the realization of SC from responsible practices among a set of interactions that must necessarily be created, it is essential to identify the roles that must be developed, especially for companies. This is so because most companies still do not understand or are in a state of incipient understanding of their role as facilitator to the sustainable consumption practice.

This fact, according to Michaelis (2003), indicates the business' reactivity in relation to the market circumstances and their own competitive performance. Therefore, the same author suggests changes in practices and social interactions within its network of influences so that companies can indeed contribute to sustainable consumption, they are: (1) developing new technologies and practices to improve performance in market; (2) changing economic incentives, as shown by the author the interactions are modified around the company; and (3) cultural changes in the network of influence, which can contribute to the study in perspective. Thus, when one business practice is incorporated changes are identified in the actions of different stakeholders.

In this context, it is necessary that some responsible practices are institutionalized as a new position taken by companies, since that basic idea of institutionalization process involves change and adapting to the context (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002). For these authors this occurs because it is necessary to seek for a new restructuring of actions in the political context in which it operates. This is totally aligned with the discussions on sustainable consumption, as shown by Mont (2004), there must be change in behavior development for all those players who are working on building new consumption levels and patterns. Thus, with the change in social context it becomes possible to implant a new collective practice.

Considering these aspects as complementary and suggesting a way for transformation of the current and unsustainable scenario, it becomes relevant to deepen and broaden the discussions on these determinants. Thus, the objective of this paper is to propose a set of analytical categories and parameters to Michaelis' (2003) theoretical model, in order to enable the role of business in sustainable consumption. Therefore, as for the methodological aspects, this study is characterized as a theoretical essay, because it is not restricted to analyzing what the literature shows, but is set up as a reflective writing that seeks to establish relationships and proposes discussions that enrich the debate about sustainable consumption (Meneghetti, 2011).

Given these considerations, it is clear that this paper presents an effective contribution to broaden the discussion on the subject, trying to identify the role of business in this context. With this, it is understood that the greatest relevance and contribution to academic studies are the theoretical articulation of a set of categories, criteria and parameters that facilitates the analyses of the model of Michaelis (2003) assumed here as a guide. It is noteworthy that this articulation was developed with the focus on retail of supermarkets, requiring adjustments to other economic sectors. Therefore, the article is structured into five parts that facilitates the understanding and reflection about the research proposal.

To clarify the proposed objective, this paper is divided into five distinct parts. After this introduction, the next sections present various theoretical principles with a discussion of the concepts about sustainable development and sustainable consumption, as a way of presenting the arguments used to understand the proposal. In the fourth section, we present the

discussion about the responsible role of business in sustainable consumption. After that, is presented the theoretical proposal in relation to a set of categories and parameters organized in different themes. The last section presents some concluding remarks.

2 Sustainable Development: A Macro View

The physical changes observed all over the world, to a stream of scientists, result from high production and consumption practices, generating much of the reduction in the load capacity of the planet causes a big impact on natural resources. These changes indicated the salience of economic capital in relation to the social and natural capital (Hawken, Lovins, Lovins, 1999), due to the myopia on the abundance of resources. Thus, there must be a big change to transform the capitalist economic growth in a sustainable development (SD) model (Brown, 2003). Moreover, the individualistic attitudes can be directed to a more collective practice, related to human values (Norton, 2007). However, capitalism and sustainability do not form an easy alliance, which created new elements to this paradigm (Elkington, 1998).

In addition, the correct argument for sustainable development is not the construction of a new profile to decline capitalism from the other markets (Smith, 2007), but to get the new vision to emerge from the production of consciousness. However, much has been done to its basic precepts, such as the carbon market. According to Böhm, Misoczky and Moog (2012), many people still see carbon markets as a viable tool for dealing with climate change, not through a change in the capitalist perspective, but as a way to reinvent capitalism through the idea of greening practiced. Therefore, this occurs with the establishment of new areas for capitalism (Smith, 2007).

In this new context, the most used sustainable development concept was defined in the Brundtland Report, which is understood as “a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony” and that human needs can be met now and in the future (World Commission on Environment and Development [WCDE], 1987). Therefore, this idea searches for harmony between the basic dimensions of this development, namely: economic, social and environmental (Sachs, 2007), so that it is possible to practice different social roles for various actors in society. According to Hopwood, Mellor e O’Brien (2005) it is necessary to assume a view of transformation rather than maintaining the status quo.

The Agenda 21 report shows different actions which stakeholders can use to make decisions in developing their activities. The business role in this context demonstrates that it is necessary to incorporate the Triple Bottom Line perspective among other things, with more relationships along its value chain focusing in the dynamic’s market (Elkington, 1998). This idea for Peattie (2007) can be corroborated because the businesses are within an economic and social system. Moreover, they need to direct their opportunities and practices according to a set of guidelines for sustainability. From these changes for responsible practices, we can understand that it is possible to restructure both the production and consumption pattern of the population (Tukker et al., 2008).

Based on the sustainable development model, according to Schumacher (2001) these changes can be aligned both to the reduction of goods productions and services, which generate a large environmental impact and the consumption rate in society. Corroborating this idea, Foladori (2005, pp.17) indicated that “to limit the consumption is it also necessary to have changes in a production process for a more enduring product and more efficient and cleaner technologies in the resource use”. According to these aspects and which businesses are inserted in a set of social interactions, it is necessary to have a discussion about new forms of production and consumption patterns. Therefore we can regard the discussion of sustainable consumption.

3 Sustainable Consumption

Consumption practices belong to humans in every activity in their existence, which confirms the idea that it is not possible to live without consuming (Mont, 2004; Silva, 2011). Thereby, Lipovetsky (2007) argues that we live in the midst of a paradoxical happiness as a hyper consumption society that does not concern itself with its unsustainable practices. According to Michaelis (2000a), there are forces that interfere in an active behavior: (1) an intrinsic human tendency towards an escalation of desire - consumerism; (2) growth of consumption may be related to specific technological and institutional developments; (3) the use of material consumption to meet social needs; (4) the competitive market system; and (5) an expectation that the material quality of life should improve continually. If these aspects are satisfied without worrying about their impacts, there is a potential to form a new social vision.

With the evolution of markets which focus in a systemic view of the characteristics of the consumer, we can perceive that the market in general has changed. In the social context, the change in consumption practices reflect the cultural time in which the company operates, in relation to the dynamic supply and demand, which requires a collective direction for the sustainable development (Silva, 2011, p.29). Thus, following the idea of the shift in paradigm, it is necessary to change the focus of the individualistic consumption to a view of broader awareness (Michaelis, 2000a). For this author a more responsible consumption emerges. We highlighted that the buying process not only considers the economic factor, but other variables are also involved with the final product, among which we can identify the business’ concern with the social and environmental aspects.

The framework of discussions on the need for a new consumption pattern was the Agenda 21 report resulting from the Eco-92 Conference, which emphasizes the difficulty of meeting the basic human needs, which can still be viewed after the Rio+20 Conference. Therefore, the “change consumption patterns will require a multipronged strategy focusing on demand, meeting the basic needs of the poor, and reducing waste and the use of finite resources in the production process” (Conferência das Nações Unidas sobre Meio Ambiente e Desenvolvimento [CNUMAD], 1992, n.d.). In this context we highlight the creation of the sustainable consumption concept, which not only emerges from the consumers demands, but requires restructuring in all consumer relations that permeate meeting these needs.

From an evolutionary perspective, the understanding and practice of consumption goes through distinct complementary phases, starting with the green consumption, rising to the conscious consumption and reaching a sustainable consumption. However, these terminologies are still confusing, we begin to realize that there is a need for hierarchy, such that there is a match between them, but still have a complementary concept (Silva, 2011; Silva; Oliveira; Gómez, 2013). With these considerations, we can indicate that sustainable consumption is a more complex concept that encompasses the others and can cover a larger amount of interactions, which permeate a more political perspective in the practice of their actions.

Therefore, sustainable consumption is understood as a consumption pattern resulting from interplay between different stakeholders (Jackson, 2007; Michaelis, 2003; Silva, 2012; World Business Council for Sustainable Development [WBCSD], 2008). For this, it is necessary to have the involvement and action by governments, businesses and other stakeholders of society, in which the individual is related to all these instances, in such a way that he or she influences and is influenced in this process (Jackson, 2007; Silva, 2011). This pattern can be understood as a cultural and complex process, which is able to assist the realization of a new paradigm of consumption, which means that different actors need to be working with different responsibilities. Thus, Michaelis (2003) shows the interrelationships between different actors in a graphical representation (Figure 1).

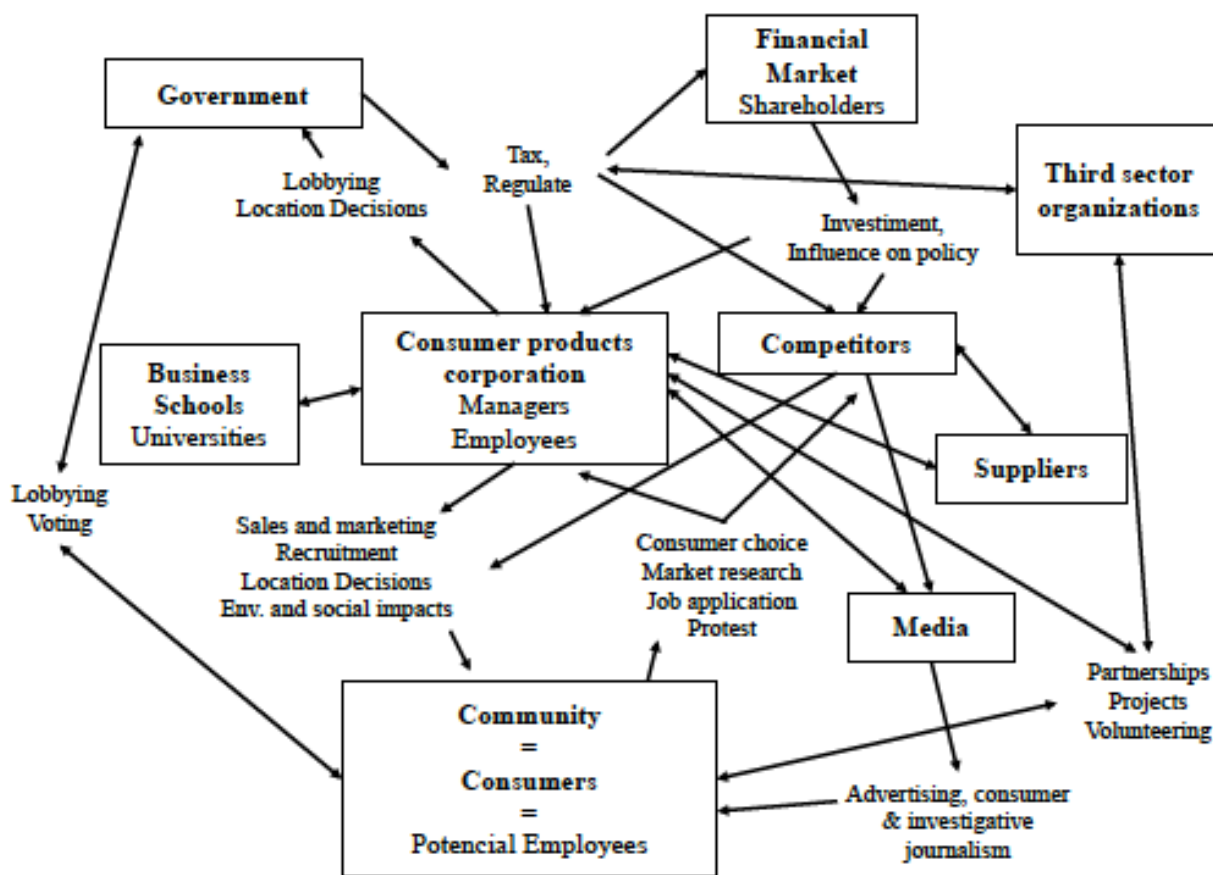


Figure 1: New map of network of sustainable consumption influences
Source: Silva (2011) adapted Michaelis (2003)

The relationships shown in the illustration bring a new stakeholder for the network, which is additional to those that were in Michaelis (2003). Considering the idea of interaction and complementarity among the stakeholders, it becomes clear that each actor has a specific contribution to the practice amid the collective perspective that has been discussed (Silva, Oliveira, & Gómez, 2013). In this context, following the Michaelis' (2003) view, we could argue that the prominent role of relationships of the companies in the middle of a set of interactions is to create and visualize their model mapping influences presented earlier in this paper. Thus, the WBCSD (2008) corroborates the assertion that the responsibility for SC must be shared by partnerships that resemble those presented by Michaelis (2003).

Noting the government's role in this process, it is clear that among other actions the government should stimulate and encourage other actors through public policy, educational programs, and the promotion and financing of projects, facilitating the changes in different areas (Silva & Gómez, 2011; Taylor, 2006). Thus, it is possible and necessary that governments work actively and intensely in social relations, with this behavior other players may also become active in this process. In addition, the responsibility of the individual is important in the definition of sustainable consumption practices, since the role involves the responsible purchasing and inspection of products delivered by the companies.

In order to have more sustainable thinking the individuals should have a new attitude from the conscious consumption. According to Tukker et al. (2008), this is a challenge for individuals that receive the influences and pressures against this new attitude, which in most cases, make the option not to do so. This fact was discussed by Mont and Plepys (2007) and Seyfang (2006) as an aspect of limitation in the form of performance and in the process of individual choices. Thus, with a citizen's view, the individuals can use their power to make a better decision, for example, choosing their leaders during elections. As shown in Figure 1 individuals beyond the other actors play an important role in change, but for the present study we focus on the discussion of the role of business.

4 The Responsible Role of Business in Sustainable Consumption

To identify the business contribution for sustainable consumption, we chose to study the Michaelis' (2003) theoretical model, which indicated as use responsible practices in market. Thus, the companies can be involved in an influence network according a set of social interactions. Thereby to corroborate this argument, Steiner and Steiner (2006) indicated which exist in society a lot of stakeholders, like: shareholders, customers, employees, community, government, the media, competitors, suppliers, trade associations, political interest groups, unions, political parties, the terrestrial biosphere, future generations, the poor, educational institutions, among others.

In general, the business community has interpreted the sustainable consumption only as the purchase of sustainable products and environmentally friendly. However, what we can see is that there is a greater complexity that surrounds the sustainable consumption practice. Thus, amidst this context as presented in the paper introduction, three dimensions must be met: (1) developing new technologies and practices; (2) changes in economic incentives; and (3) cultural change in influence network, which when incorporated by companies can contribute to sustainable consumption. Corroborating, Málovics, Csigéné and Kraus (2008) claim the possibility of corporate action toward a more or less sustainable consumption, and one should observe the behaviors adopted by them.

From the considerations presented to extent that these dimensions are being observed and practiced by businesses, these are interrelated and complement each other in ways that often features inherent for a specific dimension of the model can be practice by another. Thus, for each dimension, to know which its aspects facilitates understanding the theoretical model used and can be observed from the articulation of categories of analysis, since according to the author's study, they have not been presented directly, but can be seen in the theoretical concepts involving the theme. It is worth mentioning that since there are few studies on sustainable consumption with this focus, this fact presents itself as a search limit.

4.1 Developing New Technologies and Practices

Changes in business activities for sustainable consumption involve the developing of new technologies and practices. This new way of business activity is related to the innovative process that involves targeting business opportunities in use according to the new trade practices that emerge in the market. According to Porter and Van der Linde (1995), the only winners will be those that innovate successfully, since knowing how to use their skills can better their performance. Firms can stay in the market for a long time, to the extent that firms are able to work with the innovations of the market according to different innovation types.

Noting the sustainable development perspective, the use of the innovation process considers the idea of sustainable innovation that aims to provide levels of functional value to restructure the business actions as possible (WBCSD, 2008). According to Rennings (2000) and Silva, Corrêa and Gómez (2012) this innovation is possible if the use of the various areas of the organization (e.g. analysis lifecycle, research and development, logistics, and so on) are considered, which in their essence can be technological, organizational, social or institutional. Therefore, with this new way of operating we can perceive the emergence of models and the incorporation of environmental management tools, as well as the aspects that involve a change in corporate values and beliefs.

For each of these indicated practices there is a perceived positive applicability, more specifically in relation to sustainable consumption, yet there are few studies on the practices and technologies that can be used. There is a greater focus on the relationship with your own consumption. In Michaelis' (2003) work, the eco-efficiency is indicated as a new technological paradigm and behavior of enterprises. This fact is corroborated by Fuchs and Lorek (2005) and Mont and Plepys (2007) as a new practice in the building of the entrepreneurial behaviors and performances. We understand the eco-efficiency as a business practice that is concerned with reconciling the economic and reducing the environmental impacts (Elkington, 1998; Michaelis, 2003).

In this area of study on new practices for sustainable consumption we can identify the certification idea. For Schrader and Thøgersen (2011), if this is adopted by the firms it contributes to a more sustainable production and encourages consumption patterns, since in the middle of network interactions, the incorporation of the social, the environmental and the quality practices is necessary. For each responsible business practice, particularly those related to environmental issues, there is a form of certification that depends on how it is used and may be contributing to a new collective vision. For Michaelis (2003), there should not be only one change in technologies and practices, but an incorporate and restructuring in actions by enterprises in their organizational behavior.

Thus, the WBCSD (2008) indicates that the recycling and reuse arises as actions for sustainable consumption, which are considered as internal practices that facilitate the reduction of environmental impact, as well as an improvement in the economic aspects of the company. As eco-efficiency practices, the recycling and reuse contribute positively to the process of business change, since they create a cycle of clean production and lead to construction of different interactions on the part of stakeholders in pursuing actions directly influencing the internal organization (Kazazian, 2005; Michaelis, 2000b; Mont and Plepys, 2007). Given this argument, it is clear that beyond the actions for the market, companies need to conduct changes in their internal routine practice to concern themselves with their own consumption practices, for example.

Furthermore, the business should be concerned with the water and energy management, solid waste management, transport management, among other actions. Thus, we see an incorporation of new practices and not just the use of management tools (Michaelis, 2003; Muster, 2010). These changes often are viewed as simple, but they broadly contribute to new behaviors. Following this perspective we understood that the business innovation emerges as an initial and essential factor for sustainable consumption, in view of the adaptive character to market changes (WBCSD, 2008). Thus, once again it confirms the need for social interactions within a set of influences on the network of stakeholders of the company, which can facilitate changes in economic incentives in the market.

4.2 Changing Economic Incentives

The second dimension of the theoretical model used suggests a modification in the interactional processes of the company with all its stakeholders. At this point, one realizes the need for involvement of the entire supply chain with respect to the responsibility that companies take on to achieve the sustainable consumption pattern. The perspective used for an effective change, as presented in the previous section, indicates that different actors should be interacting, including governments, businesses and civil society (Jackson, 2007). Thus, for change in economic incentives to be implemented within the sustainable consumption context the role of each of these stakeholders should exist.

Considering the role and the power that the government has in its practices, it receives greater emphasis in Michaelis' (2003) dimension model. According to the author, there is a direct influence on the decisions taken by it in relation to the others that make up the society. Therefore, with a business-government relation in sustainable consumption context, the regulatory and administrative are the main instruments used (Mont & Plepys, 2007). These interactions can be observed considering aspects such as the regulation by the government and the responses to these stimuli with passive actions or the lobbying as a form of influence by organizations close to the government practices.

In this process of interaction, it is remarkable that there are few companies that have the ability to pressure the government practices, and many are capable of becoming passive. According to the size of these organizations such relationships can be observed. Therefore, the process of change raised by this dimension can be implemented. Complementary to this idea of economic incentives, Michaelis (2003) indicates the need for greater interaction between the links of the supply chain. According to the author, beyond government incentives received, companies should seek to involve other intermediaries in the supply chain in a more responsible perspective.

The supply chain is composed of all those who worked towards the main activity of the company, from obtaining raw materials, production and delivery of products or services to the final customer (Linton, Klassen, & Jayaraman, 2007). When observed from the responsible perspective, the supply chain can be used as an instrument for promoting sustainable consumption from the creation of new social and environmental standards throughout the whole chain (Muster, 2010; WBCSD, 2008). Thus, from the programs developed by each company, the process of incorporating new practices in each intermediary must be done from a clear shift in the practices of these individual actors. Another theoretical aspect that can be studied refers to choice edition from the changing economic incentives view.

The choice indicates the positions of each actor within the set of interaction to which the company operates, which aims to change the way of control of the decision making by each of the actors (Tukker et al., 2008; WBCSD, 2008). Thus, these have specific characteristics in their choice edition, which in the case of companies can be made with respect to its suppliers; the products sold; and transparency to their customers; or to educational practice such as a more sustainable lifestyle. In the retail industry, for example, as companies realize the choice edition of suppliers of their products that do no deforestation or no slave labor, this is contributing to a more sustainable supply chain.

For each of these choices, changes in business practices must be observed, these are the economic incentives offered by business-government interaction, incentives along the supply chain for all links from producer to consumer, or even the choice editions that can be performed by each of these actors. However, all these aspects can only be observed with a change in the economic model and the business model used by organizations, so that in fact changes are observed in the market relations (Michaelis, 2003). These changes are likely to facilitate change in culture that involves business, internally or not, (look on) the third dimension of the model.

4.3 Cultural Changes in Influence Network

As observed until now, the factor that has been highlighted for sustainable consumption involves the need for change in organizational behavior. This aspect for Michaelis (2003) is related to ethical behavior, in which companies should be making and actually incorporating changes to their practices. For all the changes, a restructuring in the way of acting in the market should be undertaken by the company. This suggests that it is formulating and incorporating new values, new goals and priorities in relation to their practice (Michaelis, 2003). Thus, from the cultural change perspective, we can work in two fields of analysis: an internal culture change and external change for the company.

Regarding the internal area, we believe that the incorporation of corporate responsibility with respect to collective issues being performed, a corporate citizenship may be created (Michaelis, 2003). For Carroll and Buchholtz (2008), the internal public transfers the external citizenship to carry out the daily business practices, becoming a corporate citizen. In a complementary fashion, Crane, Matten and Moon (2010) argue that this behavior can be understood as the relationship between business and society, thus contributing to the environmental aspect or responsibility assumed by companies. According to Carroll (1998), this perspective comes from four faces or basic dimensions: economic, legal, ethical and discretionary, seeking a new culture in the company.

According to the author, to have a 'good corporate citizenship' the company should take into account the need for intimate relationship between these dimensions, understanding them as follows: the economic, the company needs to be profitable; the obedience of the law should be the rule; ethics, the company must worry about what should be done in relation to what is being done; and the discretionary should seek an improvement in the lives of others and in your own. Despite these considerations, in discussions on corporate citizenship, some authors indicate with a critical view, the existence of a limited identification of such practice, as this is similar to the discretionary aspects developed by a company (Crane, Matten, & Moon, 2010).

This business practice, according to Maignan and Ferrell (2000), was subjected to a natural process of measurement. The work of the authors sought to validate an analytical tool capable of presenting the basics of building a 'good corporate citizen', from the perspective of some stakeholders such as consumers, employees, suppliers and shareholders. However, it is clear, according to Maignan and Ferrell (2000, p. 286), that the approach of observation of the employees for this measure should be considered, from the demands that they have and the aspects that must be analyzed. For sustainable consumption, corporate citizenship is viewed as the facilitator aspect of incorporating responsible practices by employees, suggesting a change in company culture (Michaelis, 2003; Muster, 2010).

While incorporating responsible thinking towards the new practices in the market it is possible that companies can contribute to sustainable consumption (Buenstfort & Cordes, 2008). We understand that all the changes made so far are related to the issue of corporate responsibility, it is also necessary to have the communication to external audiences about what is being developed at the company or in relation to the way it operates. Thus the role of the marketing emerges as an aspect of interaction among the company, the consumer and other stakeholders to communicate organizational practices, through responsible marketing. By so doing, the communication by companies presenting their main actions realized can be facilitated, and can create a macro view on a particular aspect to their stakeholders.

The discussion on the use of marketing is relatively recent, and aimed at the dissemination of corporate responsibility as educational and informative aspects to the consumer and has its foundation in human values (Kärnä, Hansen, & Juslin, 2003; Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2010). This perspective, known as marketing 3.0 or responsible marketing, seeks to bring a new logic of consumption pattern, in the attitudes and behaviors of consumers, as well as ways of working the organizational activities. It is worth noting that this perspective does not put aside your marketing efforts (marketing mix), but restructures the way of interaction with the consumer to use sustainable products and green retail outlets, for example (Jones, Clarke-Hill, Comfort, & Hillier, 2008; Kärnä, Hansen, & Juslin, 2003).

In the sustainable consumption context, the responsible marketing offers a more effective way to communicate new organizational practices, and encourages a change in corporate culture. This occurs, because new concepts are offered which were not previously explored, as is the case of greater awareness among consumers. Therefore, this communication can help for a more responsible contribution that companies have to do for sustainable consumption (Michaelis, 2003; Tukker et al., 2008; WBCSD, 2008). Besides these observed aspects, we identified another category that can be used to study the role of business for sustainable consumption: the dialogue with stakeholders.

Throughout the discussions so far, it is clear that besides interacting with governments, other companies, with consumers, and with employees, we identified the need to realize greater interactions with other actors in society. Within this perspective, the idea is to search for an engagement with other stakeholders for a sustainable society, with a contribution by the company (Steiner & Steiner, 2006). In view of Michaelis (2003), this engagement with other stakeholders facilitates the formation of a collective thought on sustainable consumption practice and involvement in this decision-making process, yet as previously presented the author does not map all the interactions that are possible.

Given all these considerations, seeking to contribute to the ability of responsible business practices and to advance in studies on the sustainable consumption theme, it is necessary to construct a theoretical design. This will help to facilitate the understanding of how Michaelis (2003) theoretical model can be practiced through the criteria and analysis parameters, such that it becomes easier to empirically identify how companies are contributing to this practice. It is worth noting that all actions can contribute for sustainable consumption with changes in behavior and values that must be held in view of the need to work under a long-term perspective.

5 Theoretical Design: A Proposal of Analytical Criteria and Categories

From a comprehensive review on sustainable consumption, we identified that to practice Michaelis (2003) theoretical model as a guide to this proposal it is necessary to classify different analytical criteria and parameters. Thus as can be seen in Figure 2, we highlighted the main aspects which can show the business contribution according to a set of interactions with other stakeholders. From the dimensions defined by Michaelis (2003), eight analytical categories that can be use were identified. Additionally we cited the definition about the understanding as to how they were integrated, as well as the theoretical contribution found in the academic literature. It is noteworthy that each of these points raised, were based on authors who discuss the perspective of sustainable consumption within of sustainable development, so that there is an alignment with the paper proposal.

Dimension	Theoretical Categorie	Definition	Theoretical Contribution
Developing new technologies and practices	Eco-efficiency	Refers to business practice that reconciles economic growth and environmental impacts mitigation.	Fuchs e Lorek (2005); Michaelis (2003); Mont (2004); WBCSD (2008).
	Own consumer practices	Refers to business practice concerned with energy and water consumption, solid waste management and transport management.	Michaelis (2003); Mont (2004); Muster (2010).

Continua...

Continuação...

Changing economic incentives	Government incentives	Relates to business responses from government incentives and regulates.	Michaelis (2003); Mont e Plepys (2007).
	Supply chain links	Relates to sustainable practices dissemination in all supply chain links so that the actions of each intermediary become responsible.	Michaelis (2003); Muster (2010); WBCSD (2008).
	Choice edition	Refers to decisions controlling consumer impacts directly.	Tukker et al. (2008); WBCSD (2008).
Cultural changes in influences network	Corporate citizenship	Refers to incorporated responsible practices from employees. It is related to individual citizenship role.	Michaelis (2003); Muster (2010).
	Responsible marketing	Relates to communication process seeking to disclose conscious mentality for their consumers.	Michaelis (2003); Tukker et al. (2008); WBCSD (2008).
	Dialogue with stakeholders	Relates to business interaction process with their stakeholders on decision-making process.	Michaelis (2003); Mont e Plepys (2007).

Figure 2 - Theoretical categories (indicators) to identify the business contribution to sustainable consumption

Source: Drawn from Fuchs e Loreck (2005); Michaelis (2003); Mont (2004); Mont e Plepys (2007); Muster (2010); Tukker et al. (2008); WBCSD (2008).

As can be seen in the previous theoretical design, all dimensions were contemplated in defining of the analytical categories. Thus, in an order to practice these categories, it is necessary to build and articulate analytical criteria, as well as analytical parameters to visualize the bigger contribution of this proposal. In Figure 3, we can view a set of indicators that were identified in the academic literature on sustainable consumption. It is noteworthy that both categories and analytical criteria can be observed as integrated and complementary for an easier incorporation of responsible business practice in a sustainable consumption context. This idea demonstrates all the operational perspectives which companies can utilize.

	Theoretical Categories	Analytical criteria	Analytical parameters
Developing new technologies and practices	Eco-efficiency	Recycling	The existence of recycling materials in the company practice suggests that the market presents itself as responsible to the environmental issues.
		Reuse	The use of a product or material more than once in the productive system indicates the company's concern about the impact on the environment, showing its bigger responsibility.
		Store's physical structure	From the incorporation of organizational initiatives aimed at improving its operational efficiency, it becomes easier to define that the company has a bigger practice responsible.
		Certification	The existence of certifications in the business, indicates a contribution to a more sustainable production and new consumption patterns.
	Own consumer practices	Water management	The use of a management plan for efficient use of water suggests an improvement in consumption and practice, showing its bigger responsibility.
		Energy management	The use of a management plan for efficient use of energy suggests an improvement in consumption and practice, showing its bigger responsibility.
		Solid waste management	The use of a solid waste management plan in the company facilitates less wasted material, showing its new form of responsible action.
		Transport management	From the management the impact that transport in business imposes on the environment and its effective modification, showing its bigger responsible practice.

Continua...

Continuação...

Changin g econ omic incentives	Government incentives	Reactive behavior	From the incorporation of their responsibility according to the government influences, when the company avoids having to pressure reactive behaviors, its performance in the market is improved.
		Negotiation	With the articulation of the business and government from lobbying, a new relationship is created and it becomes easier to practice sustainable consumption.
	Supply chain links	Responsible practices dissemination	From the information and responsible practices dissemination throughout the supply chain it is easier to have change in collective behavior for sustainable consumption.
		Influences capacity	By taking its influence over its supply chain, the company develops a new way of operating in the market and can contribute directly for the promotion of sustainable consumption.
	Choice edition	Responsible decision-making process	From the more responsible decision-making process in business with respect to practices that will be developed, their control of the impacts of consumption is better.
		Analysis of the product to sales	The analysis of the source of the products improves the products offered to consumers and encourages a better share of the suppliers, showing its bigger responsible business practice.
Cultural change s in influence network	Corporate citizenship	Good corporate citizenship	The good corporate citizenship practiced in the economic, ethical, legal and discretionary dimensions, as defined by Carroll (1998), facilitates a more responsible practice.
		Conscious consumption dissemination with their employees	The training to encourage responsible practice of the individual in his or her daily life facilitates their engagement with responsible business practices and promotes sustainable consumption.
	Responsible marketing	Responsible marketing mix	Building a marketing effort according to a more responsible marketing mix (products, price, place and promotion) facilitates the process of cultural change in the company's influence network and improves the responsible practice.
		Social report	Using the social report as a communication aspect of its responsible actions, the business facilitates the spread of a new vision of the stakeholders in their network.
	Dialogue with stakeholders	Relationship with the media	From a good relationship with the media, both with partnerships as incentives to practices that are being developed, it is easier to present the development of actions on sustainable consumption.
		Relationship with the community	From a good relationship with the community, both with partnerships as incentives to practices that are being developed, it is easier to present the development of actions on sustainable consumption.
		Relationship with the non-governmental institutions	From a good relationship with the non-governmental institutions, both with partnerships as incentives to practices that are being developed, it is easier to present the development of actions on sustainable consumption.

Figure 3 - Analytical criteria and parameters to identify the business contribution to sustainable consumption

Source: Drawn from Carroll (1998); Michaelis (2000b; 2003); Mont (2004); Moore, Slack e Gibbon (2009); Muster (2010); Tukker et al. (2008); WBCSD (2008).

Understanding that an integrated system between sustainable consumption and sustainable development exists, we assume that different stakeholders in one specific economic sector can be incorporated into a new responsibility market position, so that change can be effective. The analytical criteria demonstrated in Figure 3 indicated practices and behaviors that can be adopted by companies within a sustainable consumption context. This is possible because different practices must be incorporated. To incorporate at least one of these indicators we assume that the company was involved with a change process and that is appropriate for a new market context.

6 Concluding Remarks

Throughout the discussions realized regarding the emerging model of sustainable development, the need to work with the idea of a sustainable consumption pattern is increasingly identified. Within this context, to understand that different stakeholders should be acting, one realizes that business organizations have an important role in the context to which it is inserted, considering that their actions influence and can be influenced by other social actors. With that thought, the study of the role of business becomes relevant as it has the same importance in the process and often the power to stimulate change. So with the search for the new practices, a change might be made.

From these considerations, knowing that companies can contribute positively in the market, these are likely to become a benchmark for consumer behavior, depending on the practices and the impact these companies have on the environment, as they begin to concern themselves with environmental issues (acting proactively or due to market constraints). So, understanding that by incorporating goals, values, culture and practices directed to the issue of sustainability (Peattie, 2007), a company is directed to sustainable development, it becomes possible to identify aspects related to sustainable consumption patterns, according to the set of social interactions previously presented.

Therefore, through a theme content analysis we identified what the major issues that were related to the dimensions defined by Michaelis (2003) were. We identified with this theoretical essay eight categories, which are: Eco-efficiency, Own Consumer Practices, Government Incentives, Supply Chain Links, Choice Edition, Corporate Citizenship, Responsible Marketing and Dialogue with Stakeholders. Thus, with the identification of these categories, we observed the need to establish criteria to analyze each category, as well as its analysis of these parameters so that the model could be fully articulated. This fact facilitated the achievement of the proposed objective.

To identify the business contribution to introduce sustainable consumption in different sectors, this model proposed need to create a new comprehension about the theme, because a lot of papers in Brazilian context have a great confusion in this understanding. Considering the necessity of the institutionalization of practices, new studies need to analyze how this and others Organizational Theories can contribute with the business activities using the sustainable development background. Silva, Oliveira and Gómez (2013) researched the electricity sector, thus we indicate that new studies can investigate some different sector, since this model proposed can be adapted to another contexts.

During the research a major limitation was identified, there were only a few papers in the literature on the perspective used, which makes this a greater contribution towards the theme of sustainable consumption, particularly with regard to business practices, since much of the work on the said topics mostly aimed their focus on the consumer perspective. Thus, in an academic perspective, one realizes that there is an advance in discussions on sustainable consumption more specifically with the companies. In a managerial perspective, it is clear that the indicators of action companies can take their responsibility role and change the way it operates and its market behavior.

References

- Böhm, S., Misoczky, M. C. & Moog, S., (2012). Greening Capitalism? A Marxist Critique of Carbon Markets, *Organization Studies*, 33 (11).
- Brown, L., (2003). *Eco-economia*. Earth Policy Institute/ UMA - Universidade Livre da Mata Atlântica. Available in: <http://www.ethos.org.br/_Uniethos/Documents/livro.pdf>. Accessed: Nov. 2011.
- Buenstfort, G.; Cordes, C., (2008). Can sustainable consumption be learned? A model of cultural evolution, *Ecological Economics*, p.646-657.
- Caeiro, S., Ramos, T. B., Huisingh, D., (2012). Procedures and criteria to develop and evaluate household sustainable consumption indicators, *Journal of cleaner production*, 27, 72-91.
- Carroll, A. B. (1998). The Four Faces to Corporate Citizenship, *Business and Society Review*, (100-101), p. 1-7.
- Carroll, A. B.; Buchholtz, A. K., (2008). *Business & Society: Ethics and Stakeholders Management*. Mason – USA: Cengage Learning.
- Crane, A.; Matten, D.; Moon, J. (2010). The emergence of corporate citizenship: historical development and alternative perspectives. *Handbook of research on global corporate citizenship*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Conferência das Nações Unidas sobre Meio Ambiente e Desenvolvimento. CNUMAD, (1992) *Agenda 21 Global*. Available in: <<http://www.mma.gov.br/sitio/index.php?ido=conteudo.monta&idEstrutura=18&idConteudo=575&idMenu=9065>>. Accessed: Nov. 2011.
- Dacin, M. T.; Goodstein, T.; Scott, W. R., (2002). Institutional theory and institutional change, *Academy of Management Journal*, 45 (1), 45-57.
- Elkington, J., (1998). *Cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of 21th century business*. Gabriola Island, Canada: New Society Publishers.
- Foladori, G., (2005). *Por uma sustentabilidade alternativa*. Uruguai: Colección Cabichui.
- Fuchs, D. A.; Lorek, S., (2005). Sustainable consumption governance: A history of promises and failures, *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 28, p.261-288.
- Hawken, P.; Lovins, A.; Lovins, H. *Natural Capitalism: creating the next industrial revolution*. Little Brown – USA, 1999. Available in: <<http://www.natcap.org/>>. Accessed: Aug. 2011.
- Hopwood, B., Mellor, M., O'Brien, G., (2005) Sustainable Development: Mapping Different Approaches. *Sustainable Development*, 13, pp. 38-52.
- Jackson, T., Michaelis, L., (2003). Policies for sustainable consumption, A Report to the sustainable development commission. UK Sustainable Development Commission, September. Available in: <www.sd-commission.gov.uk/>. Accessed: Nov. 2011.
- Jackson, T. (2007). Sustainable Consumption. In Atkinson, G.; Dietz, S.; Neumayer, E. (editors). *Handbook of Sustainable Development*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

- Jones, P., Clarke-Hill, C., Comfort, D., & Hillier, D., (2008). Marketing and sustainability, *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 16 (2), 123-130.
- Kärnä, J., Hansen, E., & Juslin, H., (2003). Social responsibility in environmental marketing planning, *European Journal of Marketing*, 37 (5), 848-871.
- Kazazian, T., (2005). *Haverá a idade das coisas leves: design e desenvolvimento sustentável*. São Paulo: SENAC-SP.
- Kotler, P., Kartajaya, H., & Setiawan, I., (2010). *Marketing 3.0: as forças que estão definindo o novo marketing centrado no ser humano*. Rio de Janeiro: Elsevier.
- Kte'pi, B., (2009). Sustainable Development. *Encyclopaedia of Business in Today's World*. SAGE Publications.
- Linton, J. D., Klassen, R., Jayaraman, V. (2007). Sustainable Supply Chains: An introduction, *Journal of Operations Management*, 1075-1082.
- Lipovetsky, G., (2007). *A felicidade paradoxal: ensaio sobre a sociedade de hiperconsumo*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- Lorek, S., & Fuchs, D., (2013). Strong sustainable consumption governance – precondition for a degrowth path? *Journal of cleaner production*, 38, 36-43.
- Maignan, I., & Ferrell, O. C., (2000). Measuring Corporate Citizenship in Two Countries: The Case of United States and France, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Springer Science.
- Málovics, G., Csigéné, N. N., & Kraus, S., (2008). The role of corporate social responsibility in strong sustainability, *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 37, 907-918.
- Meneghetti, F. K., (2011). O que é um ensaio teórico? *Revista de Administração Contemporânea*, 15 (2), 320-332.
- Michaelis, L., (2000a). Ethics of consumption. *Ethics & Society*. Available in: <http://spin.medic.ukm.my/Contents/ZZZT3133/ZZZT3133/CModule/Lesson13/131534428_EthicsofConsumption.pdf> Accessed: Nov. 2012.
- Michaelis, L., (2000b). Sustainable consumption and production. In: Dodds, F., Middleton, T. *Earth Summit 2002: A new deal*. Earth scan Publications Ltd.
- Michaelis, L., (2003). The role of business in sustainable consumption, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 11.
- Mont, O., (2004). Institutionalisation of sustainable consumption patterns based on shared use, *Ecological Economics*, 50, 135-153.
- Mont, O., & Plepys, A., (2007). Sustainable consumption progress: should we be proud or alarmed? *Journal Cleaner Production*, 16, 531-537.
- Moore, G., Slack, R., & Gibbon, J., (2009). Criteria for Responsible Business Practice in SMEs: An Exploratory Case of U.K. far Trade Organisations, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 89 (2), 173-188.
- Muster, V., (2010). Companies promoting sustainable consumption of employees, *Journal of consumer policy*, 34(1), 161-174.
- Norton, B. G., (2007). Ethics and sustainable development: an adaptive approach to environmental choice. In Atkinson, G.; Dietz, S.; Neumayer, E. (editors). *Handbook of Sustainable Development*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Peattie, K., (2007). Toward sustainable organizations for the 21st century. *21st Century Management: A Reference Handbook*. SAGE Publications.
- Porter, M. E.; Van der Linde, C., (1995). Green and competitive: Ending the stalemate. *Harvard Business Review*, September – October, pp. 120 – 134.
- Rennings, K., (2000). Redefining innovation: eco-innovation research and the contribution from ecological economics, *Ecological Economics*, 32.
- Sachs, I., (2007). *Rumo à ecossocioeconomia: teoria e prática do desenvolvimento*. São Paulo: Cortez.
- Schrader, U., & Thøgersen, J., (2011). Putting sustainable consumption into practice, *Journal of consumer policy*, 34(1), 3-8.
- Schumacher, E. F., (2001). *Lo pequeño es hermoso*. 3ed. Espana: Tursen S.A.
- Seyfang, G., (2006). Ecological citizenship and sustainable consumption: examining local organic food networks, *Journal of Rural Studies*, (22), 383-395.
- Silva, M. E., (2011). *A contribuição de práticas empresariais responsáveis para o consumo sustentável no varejo de supermercados: O caso Wal-Mart Brasil*. 137p. Dissertação (Mestrado em Administração) – Programa de Pós-Graduação em Administração (PROPAD). Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Recife.

- Silva, M. E., (2012). Consumo Sustentável: A Articulação de um constructo sob a perspectiva do desenvolvimento sustentável, *Revista Eletrônica de Ciência Administrativa*, 11 (2).
- Silva, M. E., Corrêa, A. P. M., & Gómez, C. R. P. (2012). Inovando para o Consumo Sustentável: o desafio na construção de um novo paradigma organizacional, *Revista de Negócios* (Online), 17 (1), Jan-Mar.
- Silva, M. E., & Gómez, C. R. P., (2011). O papel do governo e a prática do consumo sustentável: Como esse stakeholder atua no setor elétrico? *Revista Eletrônica de Ciência Administrativa*, 10 (2), p. 107-123.
- Silva, M. E., Oliveira, A. P. G., & Gómez, C. R. P. (2013). Can collaboration between firms and stakeholders stimulate sustainable consumption? Discussing roles in the Brazilian electricity sector, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 47, 236-244.
- Smith, N., (2007). Nature as accumulation strategy, *Socialist Register*, (43).
- Steiner, G. A., & Steiner, J. F., (2006). *Business, government and society: A managerial perspective, text and cases*. (11 ed.). Nova York: McGraw-Hill.
- Taylor, B., (2006). Encouraging industry to assess and implement clear production measures, *Journal of cleaner production*, 14.
- Tukker, A., Emmert, S., Charter, M., Vezzoli, C., Sto, E., Andersen, M. M., Geerken, T., Tischner, U., & Lahlou, S., (2008). Fostering change of sustainable consumption and production: an evidence based view, *Journal of cleaner production*, 16.
- United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. UNCSD, (2012). *7 critical issues at Rio+20*, Rio de Janeiro. Available in: <http://www.uncsd2012.org/riotransportation.html> Accessed: Ago. 2012
- World Business Council for Sustainable Development. WBCSD, (2008). *Sustainable Consumption: Facts e Tends – From a business perspective*. Available in: http://www.wbcsd.org/DocRoot/I9Xwhv7X5V8cDIHbHC3G/WBCSD_Sustainable_Consumption_web.pdf. Accessed: may. 2011.