SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN SOCIAL MARKETING PROGRAMS:
A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION

by

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Author's Declaration

This thesis consists of material all of which I authored or co-authored: see Statement of Contributions included in the thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Statement of Contributions

This thesis consists of three chapters written for publication: Chapters 2, 3 and 4. Chapters 2 and 3 have been published.

Research presented in Chapters 2 and 3:

I was the primary investigator for these chapters, with Dr. Jennifer Lynes taking a consultative role. I conducted all of the interviews, distributed the surveys, and analyzed the survey data. Sarah Fries was a secondary researcher who helped with theoretical coding for both chapters. Both Sarah and Jenn helped with survey design for Chapter 2.

Research presented in Chapter 4:

I was the primary investigator for this chapter, with Dr. Jennifer Lynes taking a consultative role. I conducted all of the interviews and analyzed all of the documents. Dr. Lynes was integral in helping me to conceptualize the theoretical codes that emerged from the data as a response to the research questions.

Abstract

The world is facing a number of complex, interconnected crises that require rapid social transformation. Social change approaches such as social marketing have a role to play in this transformation. In order to strengthen the discipline's ability to add value to solving or mitigating these crises, social marketers need to better understand what makes social marketing programs succeed or fail. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the reasons why social marketing programs succeed or fail so that the discipline may learn from this in order to improve future program outcomes, particularly at the upstream level.

Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis involved a two-part qualitative study that explored the perceptions of social marketing professionals with regard to mistakes and failures in the field. In the first part of the study, the principal researcher interviewed 17 social marketing experts about their understanding of the most common mistakes made by social marketers. The interviews revealed nine mistake categories: Inadequate research, poor strategy development, ad hoc approaches to programs, mismanagement of stakeholders, weak evaluation and monitoring, poorly designed program objectives, poor execution of pilots, inadequate segmentation and targeting, and poor documentation. The interviews also revealed two emergent, cross-cutting themes that affect the mistakes being made: External influences that the social marketer does not have direct control over, and the social marketer's preconceptions that they bring to the program. In the second part of the study, the researchers surveyed 100 members of the social marketing community in order to understand their perceptions of mistakes and failures in the field. According to the data analysis, the social marketing community believes that inadequate research, poor strategy development, and mismanagement of stakeholders are the most common mistakes made by social marketers. Weak evaluation and monitoring is considered to be the least well-managed program element. Poor strategy development, external influences, and poorly designed program and behavioral objectives are considered to be the primary reasons for social marketing program failure.

Chapter 4 involved a qualitative study that explored what the discipline of social marketing can learn from social movements in terms of successfully engaging upstream stakeholders to create socio-behavioural change. The principal researcher interviewed seven people who were involved with the New Nordic Food movement, and analyzed 53 documents related to the movement. The data analysis revealed a four-point strategy that the organizers of the movement used to engage upstream stakeholders:

- Identify key upstream stakeholders

- Present a compelling concept to key upstream stakeholders at the right time, with dynamic leaders who have high levels of social capital

- Promote the concept using both instrumental and inspirational approaches

- Take action to realize the concept

The data analysis also revealed that the organizers of the movement had been highly impactful in terms of motivating upstream stakeholders to provide funding and start up government programs to make the New Nordic Food concept a reality. Recommendations for social marketers with regard to what they might learn from the New Nordic Food movement include partnering with mid-stream stakeholders, promoting a concept rather than only products, services, or campaigns, finding the right time to promote the concept, using both instrumental and inspirational approaches, and taking action to realize the concept.

All of the data collection and analysis for the three research chapters was qualitative and exploratory, and was conducted using Charmaz's (2014) grounded theory approach. Future research may explore the extent to which external influences lead to social marketing program success or failure, particularly in comparison to mistakes made by social marketers. Future research may also consider further exploring the spiritual and emotional energy-related aspects of heliotropy in social marketing programs at the upstream level to see if they correlate with program success.

Acknowledgements

As with many academic works, this thesis would not have been possible without the hard work of several people. I would first like to acknowledge the incredible support of my thesis supervisor, Dr. Jennifer Lynes. Your suggestions, corrections, guidance, and encouragement along the way is part of why I kept persevering through good times and bad all of these years. You have also went above and beyond to connect me with opportunities to present at domestic and international conferences, to gain experience in and learn skills in teaching at the university level, to apply for (and receive!) scholarships and grants, to work with like-minded social change professionals, and to engage with the community in regards to my research. Thank you so much for all of this. Since the joy I've felt from these experiences is immeasurable, I guess it really is all about the 'vibe'! I would also like to acknowledge the feedback and suggestions I received from my committee members over these past several years: Dr. Sean Geobey, Dr. Stephen Quilley, and Dr. John McLevey. Your insights have helped me become a better researcher, and your encouragement at key moments motivated me to keep moving forward. Thank you all for understanding and having patience when I faced personal difficulties along the way.

Sarah Fries was an amazing secondary researcher for Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis. I learned about grounded theory from her, and we learned together how to apply it. It was fun to work together and become friends through that process. Thank you.

Thank you also to Dr. Sarah Wolfe, Dr. Michael Wood, and Dr. Robert de Loë for your suggestions and insights regarding my research.

Last but not least, thank you to my family and friends for being there. Through all of the challenges I have faced during the course of completing my PhD, you have reminded me why this work is so important: it gives us hope that humans can change and be better.

Dedication

To my mom:

I don't even know if I can express in words how much you mean to me. I could never have reached the summit of this mountain without you. The foundation of love that you have provided to me for my entire life has given me the strength and courage to reach for the stars. In everything I do, I hope to honour you and the rest of our family, and I promise to always move forward in gratitude and in faith that truly anything is possible.

To my family (Mom, Dad, Renee, Bonnie, Debbie, Barrie, Michelle, and your spouses, children and grandchildren):

I love you, and I wish for all of us to grow and be the best human beings that we can be…together.

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1. Thesis Introduction

It is well known that mitigating or solving converging global crises such as climate change, overconsumption, social and economic inequality, and a global pandemic require societal transformation (Tabara et al., 2019; Corner & Randall, 2011; Buchs & Koch, 2019; Lai & Ho, 2020; Ahmad et al., 2020). Major infrastructure and system changes across economic sectors such as industry, finance, transportation, and agriculture are all necessary (Government of Canada, 2019; Mair, 2020). Significant shifts in collective behaviors are also urgently needed (Hastings & Domegan, 2014; Lefebvre, 2013). Governments in the global North are increasingly recognizing that they need to engage citizens with regard to these crises. They are, therefore, promoting citizen behaviours that contribute to mitigating or solving complex social and environmental problems (Reynolds, 2010; Corner & Randall, 2011; Davis, 2019). Several mechanisms exist to change behaviour, such as law, policy, education, and social movements, but these mechanisms are at times inadequate in and of themselves (Weinreich, 2011). This presents a unique opportunity for social change approaches— such as social marketing—that specifically focus on behavioural influence to complement existing mechanisms.

1.1. What is social marketing?

Social marketing is an approach to influencing behaviour that is empirically effective in a multitude of domains, including health, international development, environmental sustainability and disaster management (Lee & Kotler, 2016; Gordon et al., 2006; Corner & Randall, 2011; McKenzie-Mohr et al., 2012; Firestone et al., 2017; Truong, 2014). In the past few decades, social marketing has been implemented in the global North— particularly in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States—to tackle social and environmental problems (Lee & Kotler, 2016).

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Fundamentally, social marketing is a programmatic approach to social change (Lefebvre, 2012). It became a discipline in its own right when it branched off from the commercial marketing discipline in the 1970s (Kotler and Zaltman, 1971). More specifically, social marketing is the systematic application of marketing principles and techniques to influence the behaviours of target audiences in order to improve their well-being and that of society as a whole (Lee and Kotler, 2016; Andreasen, 1995).

There are five key features represented in this definition. First, social marketing is *systematic* in the sense that it is a planned, step-by-step process from the research phase to strategy development, piloting, implementation, and finally, evaluation. Second, social marketing uses *marketing principles and techniques* because it is recognized that the discipline of marketing is powerful in changing consumption behaviour, and that successes from these efforts can be applied to health, social, and environmental behaviours (Hastings and Domegan, 2014). Third, social marketing was originally understood to be about influencing the acceptability of social ideas (Kotler and Zaltman, 1971), but as the discipline evolved, social marketers eventually agreed that their primary goal is to *influence behaviours*. Fourth, social marketers know (as do commercial marketers) that the marketplace constitutes a rich mosaic of diverse populations, each with their own distinct wants and needs. For this reason, the market is divided into similar groups. These are defined as market segments, or *target audiences* (Lee and Kotler, 2016). And finally, in commercial marketing, the primary beneficiary is the corporate shareholder, whereas in social marketing, the primary beneficiaries are the target audience and wider *society*, since there is generally a consensus that the behaviours being promoted by social marketers are 'good' (Lee and Kotler, 2016). See **Table 1.1.** for a glossary of key terms.

Table 1.1. Glossary of key social marketing terms

Key term	Description
Social marketing	The systematic application of marketing principles and techniques to influence the behaviours of target audiences in order to improve their well-being and that of society as a whole
Downstream social marketing	Social marketing interventions that aim to change the behaviour of a group of individuals
Upstream social marketing	Social marketing interventions that aim to change the behaviour of decision makers (e.g. a politician, policy maker, or regulator), in order to affect individual behaviours 'downstream'
Social marketer	A person who is hired to plan, implement and/or evaluate a program or campaign to change the behaviour of a target audience/priority group
Social marketing intervention	The program or campaign that the social marketer plans, implements, and/or evaluates
Commercial marketing	The branch of corporate activity that is designed to sell products or services to customers in order to maximize corporate profit
Behaviour change	The ultimate goal of any social marketing intervention (with respect to the target audience/priority group)
Target audience/Priority group	The group of people whose behaviour the social marketer wishes to change
Segmentation	The process of distinguishing between various societal groups in order to determine which group(s) the social marketing intervention will be aimed at
Formative research	The research that is conducted in the early stages of the social marketing intervention in order to better understand the target audience/priority group and the social problem that needs to be addressed
Barriers & benefits	Barriers: The obstacles or disadvantages that prevent the target audience from engaging in the new, desired behaviour(s) Benefits: The advantages that may persuade the target audience to engage in the new, desired behaviour(s)
Upstream stakeholders	Those who make policy, legislative, regulative and management decisions in society that affect the behaviours of individuals and groups
Midstream stakeholders	Community leaders or other influential people who may have ties to both upstream and downstream stakeholders
Downstream stakeholders	Individuals and groups who are usually the target audience/priority group of a social marketing intervention
Exchange	A central concept in social marketing, which states that the target audience/priority group will engage in a desired behaviour when they perceive that the benefits offered by the social marketer outweigh the costs

Marketing mix	The strategic framework that guides most social marketing interventions. The framework consists of the 4Ps, borrowed from commercial marketing: Product, Price, Place and Promotion.
	Product: A physical item or service that is offered to the priority group
	Price: The cost for the priority group of engaging in the desired behaviour (e.g. financial cost, time, effort, etc)
	Place: The location where the product can be found or the location where the priority group can engage in the desired behaviour
	Promotion: Key messages for communicating with the priority group about the desired behaviour

1.2. Problem Statement

The discipline of social marketing has continuously evolved since its emergence in the 1970s, and has reported many successes in changing individual, downstream behaviours (Truong, 2014). To a lesser extent, social marketing has entered into the socio-political arena in order to influence behaviours at the structural, upstream level (Goldberg, 1995), where many opportunities exist to influence people who shape the determinants of human behaviour; for example, policy makers, politicians, corporate executives, regulators, and media magnates (Gordon, 2013; Goldberg, 1995; Andreasen, 2006). There is some evidence from the social marketing literature that upstream social marketing has been successfully implemented to change the environment with regard to smoking (Pollay, 2004; Gordon, 2013; Farrelly et al., 2009); however, in general, it has been employed only intermittently at the upstream level and has had limited success at influencing policy (Gordon, 2013).

What is needed for the social marketing discipline to unlock its potential for influencing upstream stakeholders (Gordon, 2013) and to truly add value in solving complex problems at the "structural, environmental, political and social level"? (French &

Gordon, 2015; Goldberg,1995; Andreasen, 2002; Gordon, 2013)? Social marketing textbooks and articles in recent years have provided some conceptual and practical guidance (French & Gordon, 2015; Gordon, 2013; Lee & Kotler, 2016). However, such guidance is insufficient when significant weaknesses in the discipline remain unaddressed. One such weakness is that the social marketing community lacks a clear conceptual and practical understanding of the reasons why social marketing programs succeed or fail.

1.3. Literature review

1.3.1. Why do social marketing programs fail?

The social marketing field has a multitude of empirical examples that demonstrate program success in many fields and contexts (Truong, 2014); however, failures and mistakes made in the process of planning, implementing and evaluating social marketing interventions are underreported (Silva & Silva, 2012; Truong, 2014).

The examples in the social marketing literature of mistakes and failures made in the field tend to be presented on a case-by-case basis (James et al., 2017; e Silva and Silva, 2012; Deshpande et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2009; Ramirez et al., 2017), as opposed to an exploration of systematic reasons why social marketing programs fail. A survey of the social marketing literature turned up only one conceptual article that engaged in a discussion related to the reasons why many social marketing programs fail. Wymer (2011)'s conceptual article grappled with the question of why social marketing programs might be less effective than they could be, and then posited that mistakes made by social marketers are an important contributing factor to limited program effectiveness.

With only one article discussing the reasons for social marketing program failure, the social marketing community clearly has a limited knowledge base in this area,

and as such, social marketers are missing critical opportunities to learn from their mistakes and failures in order to increase the chances of future program success. This, in turn, has implications in terms of the discipline's ability to solve complex social problems.

1.3.2. Why do social marketing programs succeed?

Similar to a limited conceptual and practical understanding of program failure, the social marketing community lacks a clear understanding of what makes (or could make) social marketing programs successful. Many social marketing articles that discuss program success do so within the context of one single campaign (Borden & Mahamane, 2020; Sundstrom, 2012) or a few campaigns (Bryant et al., 2011). Many also point to one particular 'ingredient' (e.g. the use of theory) that must be present to successfully design and implement a social marketing program (Dooley et al., 2012; Carins & Rundle-Thiele, 2014; Walter, 2013; Aras, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2014).

A few scholars have developed different sets of benchmark criteria in order to provide a framework for social marketing programs to follow to ensure that they are 'true' or 'real' social marketing programs (Andreasen, 2002; French & Blair-Stevens, 2007; Robinson-Maynard et al., 2013). There is some evidence demonstrating that the use of all six of Andreasen's benchmark criteria correlates with better program outcomes (Carins & Rundle-Thiele, 2014); however, it is uncommon for social marketing practitioners to use all six benchmark criteria in the implementation of their programs (Fujihira et al., 2015; Wettstein & Suggs, 2016; Kubacki et al., 2015; Kubacki et al., 2017; Kubacki & Szablewska, 2019). The existence of such a discrepancy raises some important questions; namely, are other factors missing from the established benchmark criteria that contribute to social marketing program success? And if so, what are these factors?

There is evidently a critical gap in knowledge related to the social marketing community's understanding of the conceptual and practical underpinnings of program success and failure. Since this understanding could be fundamental to increasing the success of social marketing programs, and in turn unlocking the field's potential to add value to contemporary efforts at solving complex social problems, this PhD thesis will begin to fill the conceptual gap.

1.4. Ontological and epistemological perspective

Ontology refers to the branch of philosophy that studies and describes the form, nature, and/or substance of social reality, as well as "basic categories of being and their relations" (Grimwood, 2012; French & Gordon, 2015). My ontological perspective as a researcher is that reality is complex, interconnected, paradoxical, and a complete account of it in the universe is ultimately unknowable. Likewise, in specific social situations, it is not possible to arrive at an objective truth with 100% certainty partly due to the potential for human error or immorality, and partly due to the layered nature of reality. This perspective is most closely aligned with critical realism, which is a post-positivist philosophy in which the social world is comprised of three levels of reality; namely, the empirical level, the actual level and the causal level. On the empirical level, we experience and engage with reality through our five senses. For example, we hear a piece of classical music, we smell fresh bread that has just come out of the oven, or we feel the cool breeze on our face as we're walking home. On the actual level, events occur regardless of our empirical engagement with them. A concert may take place on the other side of the city, even if we are not there to hear it. The main points here are that our sensory experiences are limited by time and space, and that something that we have not experienced ourselves can still be part of reality. On the causal level, there are unseen mechanisms that are working beneath the empirical and actual levels. These can be natural forces (e.g. the Earth's tectonic forces) or social forces such as elite groups working behind the scenes to influence a national government's political agenda (Coghlin & Brydon-Miller, 2014).

The social marketing field's ontological perspective involves the process of "becoming that emphasizes an ever changing and emerging world and no single universal truth but multiple interpretations of reality"(Zainuddin & Gordon, 2020). This is consistent with Truong (2014)'s systematic review, which found that most social marketing programs engage in qualitative research to understand the world. There is also evidence in the literature that social marketing scholars view social reality as complex and interconnected, particularly at the upstream level (Wood, 2016; Kennedy et al., 2018).

Epistemology refers to the branch of philosophy that studies and describes the nature of knowledge, including ways of knowing and understanding social reality (Grimwood, 2012). My epistemological perspective as a researcher is that, although we may never know the complete truth about anything with 100% certainty, the scientific method is one of the most effective ways for humans to discover the truth. Further, a combination or synthesis of the scientific method with other ways of knowing can give us a high degree of confidence that something exists or is true. I believe that researchers need to strike a balance between rational and empirical ways of knowing on one hand and emotional and intuitive/spiritual ways of knowing on the other. Fact and value, two concepts that were separated during the Scientific Revolution (Berman, 1981), should be cautiously reconnected in our attempts to understand reality. Again, this epistemological perspective is most closely aligned with critical realism, which does not rely solely on factual information but attempts to understand the nature of the social world—and our perceptions of it—that surrounds those facts (Archer et al., 2016; Coghlan &Brydon-Miller, 2014). Efforts to solve social problems should therefore be holistic and integrated, taking the above characteristics into account.

The social marketing field's epistemological perspective is quite varied, with positivism, interpretivism, critical theory and pragmatism all being used as ways of knowing in social marketing research. The application of these epistemologies has traditionally been quite narrow in the sense that different ways of knowing are not usually

integrated in the search for truth, though at least there is some evidence that mixed methods approaches are gaining prominence (French & Gordon, 2015). On the whole, the discipline of social marketing is primarily Western-centric, and relies heavily on a rational, *homo economicus* model of human nature (Carvalho & Mazzon, 2013). Scholars have made calls for social marketers to explore outside disciplinary boundaries, and there is some evidence that indicates this is happening (Wymer, 2011; Lefebvre, 2012; Gurrieri et al., 2018; Young & Caisey, 2010). Further, Santos et al. (2021), demonstrate that contemporary thought in the field is changing with respect to the need for integrated ways of knowing:

> …the challenges in this century cannot be tackled with incremental changes. They require novel, transdisciplinary ways of thinking, including the need to defy the boundaries of siloed academic knowledge. Most social problems are not contrived artefacts with defined contours. Rather, they are messy issues with multilayered forces of causation.

1.5. Research design

This research takes the form of a paper-based thesis (as opposed to a monograph). Three publishable papers have been written; chapters two and three are already published. All three papers relate to each other to form a conceptual whole under the umbrella of the overarching research objective and questions.

1.5.1. Research objective & questions

The primary objective of this PhD thesis is to advance the social marketing discipline's conceptual and practical understanding of why social marketing programs fail or succeed. In doing so, the intention is to increase the chances of future program success and in turn, strengthen the discipline's contribution to mitigating or solving complex social and environmental problems in a durable way.

The primary objective of the thesis has been accomplished in two ways. First, a mixed methods research study was conducted that explores perceptions among social marketing professionals with regard to social marketing program mistakes and failures (Chapters 2 and 3). This exploration was an attempt to get an initial sense of possible reasons for program failure in the field, as well as to begin a community-wide conversation about program mistakes and failures.

The research questions (RQ) asked in the mixed methods study are the following:

RQ1 - What are the perceptions of social marketing experts regarding the most common mistakes made by social marketers?

RQ2 - What are the perceptions of the social marketing community regarding mistakes and failures in the field?

Second, a qualitative study was conducted that explores an alternative approach to socio-behavioural change with implications for social marketing program success at the upstream level. The case study of the New Nordic Food movement is an illustrative example of this alternative approach (Chapter 4). This exploration was aimed at discovering what the social marketing discipline can learn from social movement theory and practice in terms of how to engage with upstream stakeholders, understand and enhance program success at the upstream level, and thereby influence socio-behavioural change in the broadest sense.

The research questions in the Chapter 4 qualitative study are the following:

RQ1 - What was the strategy used by the New Nordic Food movement chefs to engage upstream stakeholders in the Nordic food industry during the movement's early years? (2003-2010)?

RQ2 - To what extent did the chefs' strategy influence upstream stakeholders to make significant changes to the Nordic food industry during the New Nordic Food movement's early years?

RQ3 - What might social marketing professionals learn from the New Nordic Food movement in terms of how to successfully engage with stakeholders at the upstream level?

1.5.2. Research methodology & scope

This PhD thesis is qualitative and exploratory. The mixed methods study in Chapters 2 and 3 as well as the qualitative study in Chapter 4 both applied grounded theory methodology, the process of which was informed by Charmaz (2014).

Grounded theory methods involve:

> …systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves. Thus, researchers construct a theory 'grounded' in their data. Grounded theory begins with inductive data, invokes iterative strategies of going back and forth between data and analysis, uses comparative methods, and keeps [the researchers] interacting and involved with [the] data and emerging analysis (Charmaz, 2014).

Grounded theory can be contrasted with traditional quantitative research methodologies in which an established theory already exists, and hypotheses are tested relating to concepts within the established theory (Bryman & Bell, 2019; Charmaz, 2014).

In terms of the scope of the research, it is situated in Western countries, as this is where most social marketing work is conducted (Lee & Kotler, 2016; Truong, 2014). Further, while most of the research is contained within the social marketing field, there is also some extra-disciplinary exploration of social movement theory and practice in Chapter 4, which makes that research relevant to the wider social change community.

1.5.3. Research significance and contribution

This PhD thesis research is significant in two ways. First, the research makes important theoretical contributions in the field of social marketing. Investigating the research questions has advanced the social marketing field's knowledge base related to program success and failure. This will hopefully be the beginning of a more robust body of literature in the social marketing field. Scholars who are interested in expanding the evidence base for social marketing may be particularly interested in building upon this research. With regard to the mixed methods study in Chapters 2 and 3, the research may be followed up with further research that compares perceptions to reality (e.g. how do social marketers' understanding of mistakes and failures in a social marketing program compare with the statistical reality?). This would present a significant learning opportunity for the social marketing community. With regard to the qualitative study in Chapter 4, this research—by applying social marketing and social movement theory— has begun a theoretical line of inquiry related to the effectiveness of combining instrumental and inspirational approaches to affect socio-behavioural change. Researchers interested in social change processes in the fields of social marketing, social movements, and sociology may be particularly interested in building upon this exploratory research.

Second, this research makes important practical contributions in the field of social marketing. The results of this research are useful to social marketing practitioners in that they may use the knowledge gained from the mixed methods study to increase reflexivity in their practice. They may also use the knowledge gained from the qualitative study to engage with and influence policy makers in drafting behaviour or social change policies that are more effective in tackling complex problems such as climate change. Policy makers may have further cause to encourage the use of social marketing as a stand-alone approach to changing behaviour, or as a complement to existing regulatory approaches (Kennedy, 2010).

This research is also original in two ways. First, the mixed methods study is the first study to empirically explore social marketing professionals' perceptions related to program mistakes and failures in a systematic way, as opposed to a case-by-case basis. Second, the qualitative study is the first study to explore a unique approach to socio-behavioural change based on combining elements from social marketing and social movement theory and practice—that is, instrumental and inspirational approaches—to influence upstream stakeholders.

1.6. Thesis structure & main findings

Chapters 2 and 3 consist of a two-part mixed methods study. The objective of this study is to gain insights into social marketing community perceptions related to program mistakes in order to begin to understand why some social marketing programs fail. Empowering social marketers with a thorough understanding of what contributes to program failure is one way to increase the chances of success in future social marketing programs.

In Chapter 2, social marketing experts were interviewed for their perceptions on the most common mistakes made by social marketers. The main findings for RQ1 revealed nine mistake categories: inadequate research, poor strategy development, ad hoc

approaches to programs, mismanagement of stakeholders, poorly designed program objectives, weak evaluation and monitoring, poor execution of pilots, inadequate segmentation and targeting, and poor documentation. Additionally, the interviews revealed two emergent, cross-cutting themes that affect the mistakes being made: external influences that the social marketer may not have direct control over, and the social marketer's own preconceptions that they bring to the program.

In Chapter 3, the wider social marketing community was surveyed for their perceptions on mistakes and failures in the field. The main findings for RQ2, according to the analyzed survey data, revealed that the social marketing community believes that inadequate research, poor strategy development, and mismanagement of stakeholders are the most common mistakes made by social marketers. Further, weak evaluation and monitoring is considered to be the least well-managed program element. Poor strategy development, external influences, and poorly designed program and behavioural objectives are considered to be the primary reasons for social marketing program failure.

In Chapter 4, a qualitative study was conducted that explores an alternative approach to socio-behavioural change based on adding elements of social movement theory and practice to social marketing interventions that engage upstream stakeholders. Chefs and upstream stakeholders involved in the early years of the New Nordic Food movement were interviewed and documents were analyzed in order to find out if the chefs' approach to engaging upstream stakeholders could be applied to social marketing practice at the upstream level, thereby increasing the chances of program success.

The main findings of Chapter 4 are as follows:

In terms of RQ1, the chef's approach primarily involved applying a four-point strategy to engage with and influence Nordic upstream stakeholders:

(1) Identify key upstream stakeholders

(2) Present a compelling concept to key upstream stakeholders at the right time, with dynamic leaders who have high levels of social capital

(3) Promote the idea using both instrumental and inspirational approaches

(4) Take action to realize the concept

The Results section of Chapter 4 focuses on how the chefs promoted the concept using both instrumental and inspirational approaches, as most of the evidence points to this being integral to the chefs' success in engaging and influencing upstream stakeholders.

In the Discussion section, RQ2 is addressed by presenting three primary reasons why the researchers believe that the chefs' strategy was highly impactful in terms of upstream stakeholders' decisions to transform the Nordic food industry: First, there is empirical evidence from government reports and websites that shows the Nordic Council of Ministers giving explicit credit to the chefs for kick starting the New Nordic Food movement. Second, there was an obvious momentum built around Nordic food-related government initiatives following the 2004 Nordic Kitchen symposium. Third, there is evidence from both the interviews and the analyzed documents that upstream stakeholders from the Nordic governments came to believe in the idea intellectually, emotionally and spiritually, which was likely a highly motivating factor with regard to their actions in the early years of the movement. We also present a counterpoint to temper our argument, which is that after the 2004 symposium, the movement experienced a significant amount of media publicity due to a controversy related to

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female chefs feeling excluded from the movement. This was an unintended catalyst that likely bolstered the success of the movement.

With regard to RQ3, we provide four recommendations for upstream social marketers:

(1) Partner with midstream stakeholders who have relationships with elite groups in government and industry

(2) Promote concepts to upstream stakeholders that involve thinking about a social problem in new ways

(3) Find the right time to engage with upstream stakeholders when the likelihood is highest in terms of getting an issue on the political agenda

(4) Engage with upstream stakeholders using both instrumental and inspirational approaches. Authentic relationship building will facilitate this

The paper concludes with limitations of the chefs' approach, limitations of the research study, and suggested areas for further research.

1.7. Research Ethics Approval

This research was approved by the University of Waterloo's Office of Research Ethics Committee.

Checking our blind spots:

The most common mistakes made by social marketers

[PhD Chapter 2]

2. Introduction

The work of social marketers, to influence behaviour for social good, is challenging and the socio-ecological environment in which they work is just as complex (Lee & Kotler, 2016). In such a complex working environment, failures[1] are inevitable. Studies have shown that communicating failures can have more impact on learning transfer than communication of successful programs or initiatives (Bledow et al., 2017; Edmonson, 2011). Unfortunately, social marketing practitioners do not often report their own failures (Silva & Silva, 2012). When failures are reported, it is usually for the purpose of one study (Clapp et al., 2003; Glassman and Braun, 2010; Ramirez et al., 2017), as opposed to a comprehensive understanding of the causes of failure in the field (Rydon-Grange, 2015). This is a significant gap in the development of social marketing practice. Our research begins to fill this gap by considering mistakes[2] made by social marketers as a potential influencing factor in program failure. We interviewed 17 social marketing experts (SM experts) with the following research question (RQ) in mind:

RQ1 - What are the perceptions of SM experts regarding the most common mistakes made by social marketers?

This research has facilitated a 'bird's eye view' of mistakes made in the field. The intent of this exploration is to:

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[1] A 'failure' refers to a social marketing program that does not meet its behavioural objectives

[2] A 'mistake' refers to an error made by the social marketer during the design, implementation or evaluation of a social marketing program

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(1) Expand the understanding of failures in social marketing beyond a case-by-case basis, toward a more systematic appraisal of failures in the social marketing field

(2) Begin to understand the extent to which mistakes made by social marketers might contribute to social marketing program failure

(3) Assist social marketers in assessing their own and others' shortcomings, which could lead to more successful program outcomes (Mintz, 2016)

2.1. Background/Literature

Though there are many case studies, reports and articles documenting social marketing successes in a variety of fields and contexts (Truong, 2014), failure is also common (Dan & Fry, 2009). Yet, failures and mistakes made in the field remain underreported (Silva & Silva, 2012; Truong, 2014). This is unfortunate, given that there is evidence in scholarly research that people tend to learn more from others' failures than they do from their successes (Bledow et al., 2017). For example, Bledow et al. (2017) cited a study published in 2006 by Joung et al. demonstrating the following finding: firefighters exposed to case studies in which experienced employees made mistakes on the fire ground yielded better problem identification when compared to firefighters exposed to case studies in which experienced employees did not make mistakes. A similar finding was made when KC et al (2013) sampled 71 surgeons: patient mortality was decreased through vicarious learning and the surgeons learned more from others' failures than from their successes (Bledow et al., 2017). Further, Ellis & Davidi (2005) found that after people succeed at a given task, they learn the most when they consider what aspects went wrong.

Though it may not be surprising that failure sparks learning, cultures of failure- and mistake sharing may be challenging to foster (Sutton, 2007). In social marketing practice, this kind of culture simply does not exist. In order for that to change, the social marketing community would need to actively create more spaces for admitting to and reporting on failures and mistakes in the field, such as presentations at behaviour change conferences and discussions on email listservs. In the academic realm, journals that publish social marketing articles would need to give as much publishing space to failed programs as they do to successful ones. This kind of value placed on the lessons learned from failure and mistakes made may be an important goal for the social marketing community to work towards, which leads us to the present empirical study, in which we asked 17 SM experts to express their opinions on the most common mistakes made by social marketers.

2.2. Methods

2.2.1. Research Design

The primary objective of this study was to gain insights on perceptions of the most common mistakes made by social marketers in order to understand how this might contribute to social marketing program failure.

The research that is the focus of this paper is the first part of a two-part mixed methods research study that explores social marketing professionals' perceptions related to the most common mistakes made by social marketers. The first part of the study, which is described in this paper, involved in-depth semi-structured interviews with 17 SM experts. These interviews informed the second part of our research, in which we surveyed over 100 social marketing professionals to ask their opinion on what they believe to be the most common mistakes made by social marketers, as well as to discover their personal experiences with program failure

and their beliefs about the reasons behind those failures. The rest of this paper will refer to the first part of our research study.

In total, 30 SM experts were invited to participate in the interviews. Twelve did not respond to requests to be interviewed. Eighteen semi-structured interviews were conducted over the phone or via video conference. One was later disqualified because they did not meet the eligibility criteria, leaving a sample size of 17 SM experts. To meet eligibility criteria, potential interview participants had to:

(1) Have over 10 years of experience in the field of social marketing

(2) Be known and recognized within the social marketing community via conference presentations, publications, or by recommendation from another expert

(3) Have consented to participate

SM experts who were the most well known and recognized in the social marketing field were contacted first, nine of which responded positively. An additional five interview participants were recommended by other SM experts, and three were recruited from the researchers' own networks.

Prior to being interviewed, each participant completed an online survey that contained a combination of closed and open-ended questions. Interview questions then asked SM experts to elaborate on particular survey responses; namely:

(1) Their perceptions of the most critical elements that may lead to success of a social marketing program[3]

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[3] These interview questions were later set aside by the researchers in favour of focusing on a two-part study related to mistakes and failures in social marketing programs

(2) Their perceptions of the most common mistakes made by social marketers

(3) Any experiences they have had with social marketing program failure and the reasons for those failure(s)

(4) Any additional thoughts on social marketing successes and failures

Interviews ranged from approximately 30 to 90 minutes in duration, with an average duration of 60 minutes. SM experts did not receive any incentives for participation in this research.

2.2.2. Data Analysis

Interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed using speech to text software.[4] The transcription of the SM expert interviews was coded in three phases, the first two being informed by Charmaz (2014). Phase one involved an initial coding process whereby two researchers coded the SM expert interview data paragraph by paragraph to identify key ideas from each paragraph. The second phase involved focused coding whereby the same two researchers selected the most salient codes, and then grouped overarching categories together based on conceptual similarities and frequency of mention. In the third phase, the same two researchers used NVivo 12 software to organize the interview transcripts into the aforementioned overarching categories. These categories (codes) are shown in **Table 2.1**. 'Files' represents the number of SM experts who spoke about a given topic. 'References' refers to the number of times the topic was spoken about.

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[4] The speech to text software used by the researchers, called Temi, can be found here: www.temi.com

Table 2.1. NVivo codes from analyzed interview data[5]

NVivo codes	Files	References
Inadequate research	14	160
Poor strategy development	14	157
Ad hoc approaches to programs	13	43
Mismanagement of stakeholders	9	43
Poorly designed program objectives	7	36
Weak evaluation & monitoring	12	32
Poor execution of pilots	8	10
Inadequate segmentation & targeting	4	4
Poor documentation[6]	2	4
External influences	17	162
Preconceptions	8	37

In organizing the transcripts into categories, the researchers were able to identify which mistakes were most widely and deeply discussed by the SM experts, which in turn informed the prioritization of mistakes discussed in this paper.

2.2.3. Overview of participants

Of the 17 SM experts who were interviewed, 10 (~60%) had at least 21 years of experience in the field of social marketing, while the remaining seven had between 11-20 years of experience. The SM experts reported playing a variety of roles, mostly as consultants, academics and practitioners. Their fields of work were also diverse, with most experts working in the fields of health, environment, and international development. The SM experts self-reported as having very high levels of expertise in program design, followed closely by high levels of expertise in

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[5] See Appendix 1 for definitions and representative quotes

[6] Though this category is small, the researchers decided to include it in order to be comprehensive. Every mistake mentioned by the SM experts was categorized

program implementation and evaluation. While some SM experts have spent part of their career in the global South, all SM experts have worked on social marketing programs in the global North (i.e. Western countries). See **Table 2.2.** for more details.

Table 2.2. Demographic profile of SM experts

Years of experience	# of SM experts
21+	10
16-20	3
11-15	4
Fields of work	**# of SM experts**
Health	13
Environment	8
International Development	7
Disaster Risk Management	5
Other	5
Safety	4
Financial	3
Work role	**# of SM experts**
Consultant	6
Academic	5
Practitioner	4
Educator	1
Other (Consultant/Academic)	1
Program Experience Type	**Average self-reported score (out of 5)**
Design	4.9
Implementation	4.4
Evaluation	4.4

2.3. Results

The research team identified eleven overarching categories that emerged from interviews with the 17 SM experts. Nine of these categories describe the mistakes made by social marketers that were the most commonly discussed by the SM experts. These are illustrated in **Figure 1.1.** below.[7]
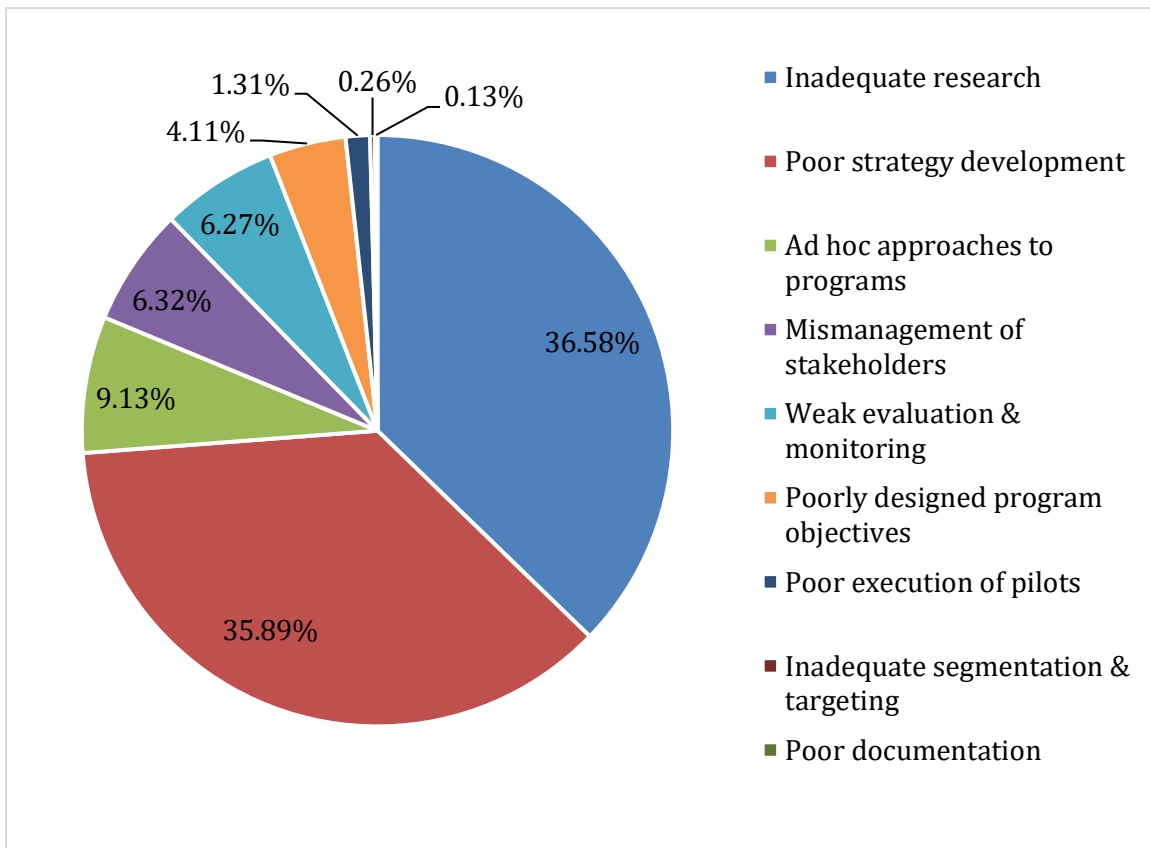
Figure 1.1. SM experts' perceptions of the most common mistakes made by social marketers

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[7] Percentages were calculated by multiplying the number of times a topic was discussed by the number of SM experts who discussed that topic. This metric was used to capture both the breadth and depth of topics discussed. If the researchers had only included the number of times a topic was discussed, the results would have been skewed because some experts discussed a topic many times and at length, while others did not

The other two categories were identified as emergent themes that cut across multiple mistake categories. The first was *External Influences* that the social marketer does not have direct control over. The second was *Preconceptions*, or pre-conceived notions, that the social marketer may bring to the table during the design and implementation phases of a social marketing program.

In the following sections, the two cross-cutting themes will be described first, followed by an in-depth description of three of the nine mistakes that were spoken about most often and most broadly by the SM experts: inadequate research, poor strategy development, and ad hoc approaches to programs.

2.3.1. External Influences

One cross-cutting theme described by SM experts related to external influences. These are essentially phenomena or conditions that the social marketer does not have direct control over but may influence the success or failure of a program. The primary external influences mentioned by the SM experts were the social marketer's budget[8] (which may include the amount of money set aside for certain elements of a program, such as formative research and evaluation), as well as the interests, agenda, and timeline set by other stakeholders such as the funder, client, upper management of the social marketer's organization, or a project partner.

For example, several SM experts identified monitoring and evaluation as a weak point in the social marketing field. When asked if this was due to a lack of skill on the part of social marketers, SM expert 1 responded:

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[8] Though it is true that at times social marketers have control over the money allocated to a program, when the SM experts talked about the budget, they often spoke about their relative lack of control over it, which is why the researchers included it in 'external influences'

"Well, no, I think the number one reason is because most social marketing programs are funded by third parties, usually government agencies, and they don't fund evaluations in a lot of these programs."

Additionally, several of the SM experts mentioned that various stakeholders, particularly funders, simply do not understand what social marketing is or what is required to change behaviour, which presents a challenge for them to lead successful programs.

All of the SM experts (n=17, or 100%) discussed external influences vis-à-vis program success/failure in the course of their interviews. It was the only one of the eleven categories that was mentioned by all of the SM experts.

2.3.2. Preconceptions

Another cross-cutting theme described by SM experts relates to preconceptions. Though none of the SM experts overtly listed preconceptions as a mistake made by social marketers, the research team identified it as a cross-cutting category during the focused coding stage. The language used by several SM experts pointed to the possibility that social marketers are bringing pre-conceived notions to the design and implementation phases of social marketing programs. More specifically, they are making assumptions about:

(1) The priority group

(2) The problem the priority group is faced with

(3) The behavioural objectives for the priority group

(4) The strategies used to affect the priority group's behaviour

For example, SM expert 5 stated assumptions made with regard to the use of fear appeals by social marketers:

"…the other big assumption here, which I already touched upon, is the use of fear appeal(sic). Um, there's a prominence of use of fear appeal(sic) because an assumption is 'If you scare me, I'll change my behaviour.'"

SM expert 3 expressed assumptions made by social marketers in the context of behaviour selection:

> And I can say that with confidence, at least in the environmental field, people are often prejudging which actions we should go after. I would say the same thing as is often true though in social marketing and of people who have experience and a depth of knowledge in the field of social marketing. I don't believe that they often go through a rigorous process of selecting which behaviours to target and I just… Again, I think there's a presumption that if you set the goals, then the behaviours become self-evident.

SM expert 6 mentioned that solutions may be decided upon before the causes of the problem are truly understood. When asked whether or not this is the social marketer or the funder being prescriptive, (s)he responded:

> It's both. It's both…funding agencies have their preferences, but also…practitioners and researchers have their preferences…You're really interested in a certain channel. You're interested in a certain approach, you know…you've gotta do motivational interviewing because you know it works…or you've got to do…social norms because it's just so cool…so you kind of hold on to that….And we, everybody does that, it's not exclusive to social marketing.

The language of assumptions and preconceptions on the part of social marketers appeared across many mistake areas, but was absent when SM experts were discussing the evaluation phase of social marketing programs.

2.3.3. Inadequate research

The first mistake most often identified by the SM experts was that social marketers do not adequately conduct research. Inadequate research was described by several SM experts as preventing the social marketer from fully understanding the priority group and the problem context surrounding the priority group. This 'mistake' was understood in different ways, with a few SM experts pointing to external influences as a primary cause for inadequate research.

For example, SM expert 9 pointed to a lack of funding:

> …that is so often the case, I think, in social marketing and general communications is that there's a budget that goes into materials production and developing the messages, but not enough really and truly understanding the journey that people go through in order to ultimately make that final choice to buy the low flow toilet or a mosquito net or, you know, use a condom, or whatever. It's a journey that people take to get to the place where they need to use that product or make a healthy decision I think is inadequately, is often inadequately researched because it takes a lot of time to do that."

SM expert 16 explained that there is not an opportunity to do a lot of research because particular elements of the campaign are already decided upon by the time the social marketer is brought on board:

> I don't see a lot of [social marketers] doing that. And I think it's because they're not given the time or the opportunity to do so…even those marketers who want to do [a lot of research] are not often given the opportunity to do so because I think by the time that the RFP goes out….they already have the product down….so that's quite a challenge for a social marketer when by the time they step in…so much of this has already been established.

Other SM experts took the perspective that adequate research is, at least to some degree, within the social marketer's control. As SM expert 15 explained it:

Yeah, I think it's often [a lack of funding]…it may have had a fixed budget and there was not going to be a lot of money for the research, but there are ways, there are ways that I try to overcome that with, okay, let's at least do qualitative ones. Even if we can't quantify some of this stuff, let's go out and do some citizen interviews.

In a similar vein, SM expert 7 elaborated:

Um, we know with behavior change that if you don't take that time up front to really paint the picture and understand that day in the life of your audience, that no matter how creative and fun and brilliant your campaign is, it could totally fail because you haven't really understood what the, you know, drivers of change are in that community. So, I do think that's the number one lesson I've learned in all my years of doing this is, you know, you have to really do good audience research up front before you dive in and try and solve the problem.

For a few SM experts, the nature of the mistake made by social marketers was rooted more in a lack of theoretical or conceptual knowledge that impedes them from fully understanding the problem context during the formative research stage. SM expert 2 admitted:

Yeah, I think we're all of us a bit guilty of that, of not thinking through the theoretical basis of what we're doing and trying to make sure that we actually don't just do the research because we ought to do the research, but it's actually important for what we're going to do…

Similarly, SM expert 1 explained:

I think I'll say this. I think most social marketers don't know theory. So to even have this conversation, I mean, you're nodding your head when I say Theory of Reasoned Action and social diffusion, most people are not going to be nodding their head… They just have, they have their own innate sense of, you know, how do I think the world works. And a lot of social marketers, and I see this in the commercial sector in particular, you know, 'This is what's worked for us in the past, so this is what we're using'. Well what theory is that? 'Well, it's the theory of real life' is the best answer you get…they have a design based on their best

guesses, their hunches, and the framework they use to think about the world in their everyday life.

SM expert 3 pointed to a lack of knowledge in a particular domain that affects how the social marketer thinks about the problem facing the priority group:

> My sense, however, is that some individuals within the field of social marketing are less likely to be thinking about knowledge based in psychology-related tools like social norms, social diffusion, etc., and it's not that they are unfamiliar with those tools, it's just that they're less likely to have deeper knowledge and I think they are more likely, to be fair, to have deep knowledge around organizational issues and partnerships, the types of things that psychologists tend not to talk about very much if at all, but I think the emphasis was in different locations when they started thinking about strategies.

SM expert 15 also recalled having an experience in which adequate research was done, but that the team (s)he was working with (i.e. both the client and her/himself as a social marketer) simply didn't believe the research and therefore ran out of a product because of it:

> I have seen a lot of stuff where people just poo pooed the research and, and think 'well, that's nice to know, but I still believe this.' And so that—I see that as one of the problems too with failure. Sometimes it doesn't get implemented as planned, and then sometimes we underestimate, or we don't pay attention to what the research told us.

2.3.4. Poor strategy development

The second mistake most often identified by the SM experts was that the social marketing program strategy was poorly developed. The majority of SM experts who spoke about problems with strategy development mentioned that strategic approaches taken by some social marketers to change behaviour are too communication-heavy. Some of the SM experts framed it in the sense that

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programs focus too much on the 'Promotion' P of the marketing mix. For example, SM expert 17 explained it this way:

> It's that black hole between research and creative. You know…people will take all this time and do all this research and you know, create long, big reports on findings and do debriefs and then they have no idea how to translate that into any kind of creative strategy or program design that's relevant. They go, and again, I'm speaking specifically about the communication piece or promotion in social marketing and…the default is… these message matrix kind of things. Again, what, what do we want to tell people to do? So you just gathered all this, you know, rich, uh, data and hypothetically you've got insights into people, but then you just end up telling them what to do, what you want them to do…it just, it happens all the time.

Some SM experts identified this mistake as one that originated with funders or other decision-makers. For example, SM expert 3 stated:

> This idea that the people who are designing and delivering behavioral change programs…are almost always constrained by the funders and their own worldviews of how you bring about changes in behavior. And that usually means that they're being constrained to use what I call information intensive programs, where they have to deliver initiatives where they're producing flyers, and brochures and booklets, and things like that….so essentially the strategy is being presented to them without knowledge of what…would make sense in the actual context.

SM expert 11 explained that information intensive or communication-heavy programs are:

> *…seen as success by people in the community, elected officials and senior managers because these people are not aware that those methods don't work. They're not familiar with this body of research, this overwhelming body of research that says, you know, mass marketing education on its own achieves little or no reduction. Little or no effectiveness.*

When pressed by the interviewer to identify whether or not social marketers were making the mistake of using communication-heavy campaigns to change behaviour, a few SM experts pushed back and asked, "Who is a social marketer*?*" and "What is social marketing?" Some SM experts mentioned that many programs claim to be social marketing, but are not in reality because they are only using the Promotion P of the marketing mix.

SM expert 10 explained it this way:

> They may call themselves social marketers….you have your very high lit social marketers who have a very specific definition of what social marketing is and will… say a lot of programs that are social marketing are not actually social marketing because they don't do X, Y, and Z. Then you have a large group of people who aren't experts in social marketing…and consider what they're doing to be social marketing.

It is this group, (s)he said, that tends to create what they would consider to be a social marketing campaign to raise awareness about an issue.

SM expert 1 described how (s)he differentiates between social marketing and communications campaigns:

> And I can always tell someone who's kind of talking the talk about, well, social marketing is more than a communication campaign. When I started asking them about "Place". How do you use "Place" in your program? And they will inevitably start telling me about where their messages are being placed. Now I know I'm in a communication campaign.

(S)he further explained how easy it is to believe that simply telling someone to do something will change their behaviour:

I think because a lot of us just walk around with that—it's one of those intuitive, naïve ideas we have in our heads about how the world works, you know, if we just yell louder…people will pay attention to us or they'll change. Or just scream louder, they'll make their beds.

2.3.5. Ad hoc approaches to programs

The third mistake most often identified by the SM experts was that social marketers' engage with the priority audience in fragmented, inconsistent, or 'ad hoc' ways, which prevents them from finding long-lasting solutions to the problem the priority group is facing. This mistake was sometimes perceived by the SM experts as an issue of inadequately researching the priority group, and therefore may be linked to the first mistake. SM expert 2 expressed it this way:

> You know if you're going to run a campaign then you should allocate a proportion of your budget for the campaign to research, and that's your call. So if you've got a hundred pounds to spend on a campaign how much of that hundred pounds are you going to ascribe to research. But I would argue that whatever the figure is, let's say 25 percent, that 25 percent is going to be well spent because the other 75 percent is going to be more effective than it would've been without it. So it's that mindset.

(S)he further explained:

> …but it is also a matter of cost, it is also a matter of, again, ad hoc-ery because what you really need to happen is a spiral of research that gradually takes you forward. And that's an ideal that rarely happens. So you start with, you start with a campaign on road safety and you start with some focus groups, define what you need to do and you learn something about your target audiences [inaudible], evaluate your campaign, then you run a better campaign as a result of the evaluation and the pretesting. And, but in the process of doing that, you learned something about the target population. So when you come to do a core…another campaign on sun safety, you've already got the starting [point] there and you can go back to the step to re-interview, see, the whole thing becomes a process of learning rather than just a bunch of testing.

But this fragmentation, or 'ad-hocery' was also expressed by some SM experts as a lack of social support:

> Yeah, I think a lot of times social marketers forget to keep the social in the social marketing. That piece is so critical to whether a program is effective…people are more likely to adopt a behaviour…hugely more likely, if they see that other people around them are doing it as well and that they're receiving support. And I think more often than not, social marketing programs are kind of, they go into the community, they do their thing, they leave and that's that. Instead of…building those ongoing social support[s], kind of infrastructure pieces that are really important for continued sustainable behavior change (SM expert 12).

SM expert 8 explained this fragmentation as a lack of co-creation; that is, social marketers may fail to work together with the priority group, hindering their ability to solve the problem in a sustainable way:

> Okay, I've got five years to solve a problem. At the end of five years, my money's gone, my job is gone, and hopefully we solved as much of the problem as we can. What happens then? In too many cases the money goes, it gets spent, the problem returns. Okay. Where the people come, they do the intervention, they leave and then who's going to do the intervention? So the field has learned quite some time ago that the whole planning and implementation must be done in full…constant collaboration, cooperation, whatever word you want to use, [with] the end beneficiaries, some of whom are part of the cause of the problem.

SM expert 4 expressed this fragmentation in the context of the medical profession, where health care professionals are:

> …limited in their time and they have so many people to see that…they spend most of their time just doing the…core…medical bits rather than doing the other bits, the program buy-in and enhancing that. So…if this could be sort of like an ongoing process with all the key stakeholders involved, it would be a much better way of enhancing the social marketing program.

This lack of an 'ongoing process', or sudden stop to a program was also mentioned by this SM expert as preventing the priority group from receiving the ongoing support that they might require (i.e. after the program ends).

SM expert 14 stated that there is no pat answer to how long a social marketing program should be. S(he) explained that it is possible to "achieve great success quickly", and that the environment is an important predictor as to whether or not a program should be short or long-term.

2.4. Discussion

The findings presented in this study validate the notion that working in the social and behaviour change field is difficult and complex (Lee & Kotler, 2016; Rundle-Thiele et al., 2019), making mistakes in the design, implementation, and evaluation of social marketing programs more likely. The findings further demonstrate that mistakes made by social marketers are relatively common, they occur for a number of different reasons that are difficult to pinpoint, they involve the responsibility of a multitude of actors, and they exist on a continuum between success and failure. In other words, the interviews with the SM experts provide only a snapshot of a much larger, more complex picture of mistakes made in the field.

The fact that all 17 SM experts (100%) mentioned external influences when responding to interview questions suggests that according to the SM experts, influences beyond the social marketer's control have a significant impact on their work. Clearly, mistakes can and are made by a multitude of players in the behaviour change field, not only social marketers, and they may influence the ultimate success or failure of a program, to varying degrees. **Figure 2.1.** below

provides a conceptual framework—developed from the 17 SM expert interviews—that illustrates the mistake landscape in which the social marketer functions.
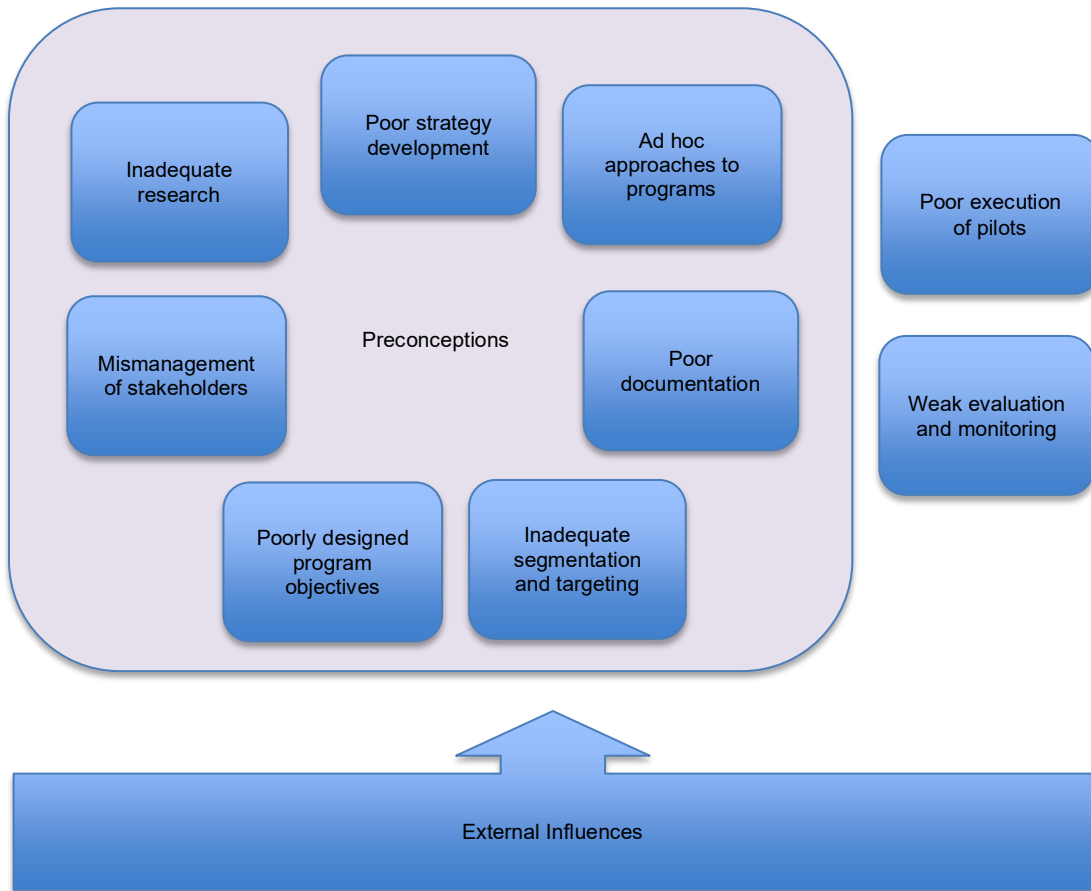
Figure 2.1. Ecological context within which mistakes occur

External influences, such as budget, timelines, and decision makers' agendas, can hinder the success of a social marketing program. To what extent these are within the social marketer's ability to influence remains an open question. Since several SM experts mentioned the lack of knowledge about social marketing on the part of various stakeholders, and since this may impede not only the success of a program but also the adoption and growth of the field (Andreasen, 2002), there is an

important opportunity here for social marketers. They may consider spending more time educating funders and other stakeholders about:

- What social marketing is
- The benefits of this approach vis-à-vis other social change approaches
- What has been successful in the past
- The relationship between research and program outcomes

This is no easy task, given the time constraints that social marketers already face, but, as SM expert 7 pointed out, this education could be facilitated by inviting more funders and other stakeholders to join in social marketing activities, both online (e.g. listservs) and offline (e.g. social marketing conferences). An additional challenge is a growing but potentially underdeveloped evidence base in the field (Rundle-Thiele et al., 2019) that would make it easier for social marketers to point to successes and best practices in order to gain funder support. Such an evidence base could be used to document failures as well, which would help social marketers to learn from each other's mistakes.

The presence of preconceptions, or assumptions, made by social marketers was a surprising but perhaps understandable finding by the research team. Social marketers are evidently not immune to the kinds of cognitive biases that affect the priority groups with which they work (Young, 2010). Because the language of assumptions and preconceptions on the part of social marketers appears across many mistake areas, but is absent when SM experts are discussing the piloting and evaluation of social marketing programs, this may suggest that these preconceptions tend to happen at the front end of a program, during the design phase. As such, social marketers may consider consciously building in exercises at the outset of a social marketing program in order to check their own biases, and potentially that of other stakeholders as well.

The strengths of this study include the in-depth nature of the insights drawn from the interviews, and the collective experience of the 17 SM experts. Further, to the authors' knowledge, it is the only qualitative study existing that aims to understand mistakes made in the field of social marketing as a whole, as opposed to a case-by-case basis.

There are several limitations to this study. First, the sample size is small (n=17), which means that the views expressed by the SM experts are not generalizable to all social marketing experts, nor to the social marketing community as a whole. Second, only qualitative data was collected from the SM experts; quantitative data was not included in this part of the study. Third, there was not sufficient space in this paper to deeply analyze all of the nine mistake categories; therefore, only the three mistakes identified most often and most broadly by SM experts were described in detail. Fourth, the SM experts were substantially screened. All of the SM experts interviewed originated from Western countries; there are many countries and regions that were unrepresented, and therefore the SM experts' views may not accurately reflect mistakes made or challenges encountered by social marketers in those areas. Also, all of the SM experts selected for interviews had at least 10 years of experience in the field. We felt that this was important in order for them to speak with sufficient insight about social marketing program success and failure. However, we recognize that a tradeoff may be that younger generations of social marketers could have fresh perspectives that were not captured by the experts we interviewed. And finally, the 'mistakes' presented in this paper are generated from opinions as opposed to direct observation (Geller, 2002), which may make them more susceptible to bias.

2.5. Conclusion

Given the difficulty of influencing behaviour and the complex environment within which social marketers work, mistakes and failures are inevitable. In order to learn from them, and to ensure the growth of the social marketing field, these failures and mistakes need to be reported. Further, it is clear that more research needs to be conducted in order to validate what are the most common mistakes and similarly, to discover the most common causes of program failure. Since external influences were discussed by all of the SM experts (n=17, or 100%) in the context of program failure, there is potential for future research to explore to what extent these external influences lead to social marketing program success or failure, particularly in comparison to mistakes made by social marketers. One way to frame this would be to examine the relative impact of endogenous influences (i.e. social marketers' own mental models) versus the relative impact of exogenous influences (i.e. influences that are external to social marketers' mental models) on social marketing program success or failure. Endogenous influences could include a deeper dive into the specific preconceptions that were mentioned in this study.

Future research may also build on the 'bird's eye view' taken in this study by exploring perspectives and experiences from the social marketing community related to mistakes and failures in social marketing programs. And finally, this was a preliminary, exploratory study that explored the 'what' with respect to social marketing mistakes and failures. Future research may explore the 'why'; that is, why are mistakes and failures underreported in the social marketing field? What are the incentives and disincentives that influence the reporting environment (e.g. funding problems, academic journals being unresponsive, lack of community culture that accepts this kind of reporting, etc)? These research efforts would all lend richness to the study of success and failure in the social marketing discipline.

Exploring mistakes and failures in social marketing: The inside story

[PhD Chapter 3]

3. Introduction

In the 1990s, a friend from high school went into a job interview for a sales position at a car rental company. When asked what his greatest weakness was, he looked straight into the interviewer's eyes and replied, "kryptonite". In saying this, he was able to take the dreaded "what are your weaknesses?" question and turn it around in his favour through an inference to Superman. Needless to say, he got the job, became the top sales person that year in Canada and today is vice-president of sales for a large multinational food conglomerate.

This anecdote highlights two things: firstly, that this friend's business school degree seems to have paid for itself, and secondly, it illustrates our tendency to shy away from talking about weaknesses or past mistakes. If you've ever had a social marketing program 'fizzle' or fail to meet its objectives, you likely haven't been scrambling to write it up as an abstract for a presentation at the next World Social Marketing Conference. But we would likely all be better off if you did.

While it was once taboo to talk about or reflect on the F word (i.e. failure), time and time again it has been proven to lead to effective – and positive – change. In 2011, *Harvard Business Review* dedicated an entire issue to this topic. In the issue, Edmonson (2011) argued that "the wisdom of learning from failure is incontrovertible" and that it is crucial to build a learning culture that embraces this notion. The practice of entrepreneurship is a good example of this type of learning culture. There is empirical evidence to suggest that entrepreneurs regularly discuss failure because it is an accepted social norm within their field of practice. "Fail fast, early, and often" is a common piece of entrepreneurial advice (Gartner & Ingram, 2013; Parris & McInnis-Bowers, 2017).

This paper aims to explore common mistakes[9] and failures[10] that have been identified by a range of professionals in the social marketing community. The purpose of this research is not to pinpoint specific programs that have 'failed' or made significant errors, but rather to identify which parts of the process of designing, implementing and evaluating social marketing programs are most likely to be the weakest. In collecting and reporting on our findings, we also aim to contribute to building a culture of mistake- and failure-sharing within the social marketing community.

3.1. Background/Literature

There are many case studies, reports and articles documenting social marketing successes in a variety of fields and contexts (Truong, 2014). There is also a growing body of literature that points to the effectiveness of social marketing in various domains such as physical health (Gordon et al., 2006), environmental sustainability (McKenzie-Mohr et al, 2012), and global health (Firestone et al., 2017). However, less research has been conducted related to mistakes and failures in the social marketing field. When surveying the social marketing literature, what we do find is that several articles critique, assess, or evaluate one or a few social marketing programs, pointing to failures or mistakes made during the design, implementation and evaluation stages (James et al., 2017; e Silva and Silva, 2012; Deshpande et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2009; Ramirez et al., 2017). Some articles have discussed failure in terms of social marketers making mistakes with regard to one particular topic—the use of theory, for example (Manikam and Russell-Bennett, 2016; Dietrich et al., 2016; Glassman & Braun, 2010). Others explore weaknesses in the discipline as a whole (Nicholson & Xiao, 2011; Russell-Bennett et al., 2013; Antonetti et al., 2015). Some scholars have listed challenges that they encountered or lessons learned during the course of one social marketing program (Clason & Meijer, 2016; Parvanta et al., 2013; Long et al., 2011), while others have listed

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[9] A 'mistake' refers to an error made by the social marketer during the design, implementation or evaluation of a social marketing program

[10] A 'failure' refers to a social marketing program that does not meet its behavioural objectives

mistakes made in the course of designing and implementing a single social marketing program (Sundstrom, 2013; Huberty et al., 2009).

Only one article was found that engaged in a discussion related to the reasons why many social marketing programs fail. Wymer (2011) asked why social marketing programs might be less effective than they could be, and then pointed to mistakes made by social marketers as an important contributing factor to reduced program effectiveness. Specifically, he stated that:

(1) Social marketers' understanding of the social problem is biased due to their own 'mental models'

(2) They restrict social marketing strategies to those that are aimed at individuals rather than tackling environmental factors

(3) When they do acknowledge that environmental factors contribute to the social problem, they fail to create a plan that will eliminate the upstream cause of the problem

Wymer (2011) provides valuable insight into possible reasons why social marketing programs fail, but he leaves many questions unanswered. Are there other common mistakes that social marketers are making that might lead to program failure, and, if so, how are these mistakes characterized? What about other common reasons why social marketing programs fail aside from mistakes made by social marketers? Further, Wymer's (2011) paper is conceptual. Until recently, there has been no empirical study that explores the most common mistakes made by social marketers and/or the factors that might contribute to social marketing program failure. This research will begin to fill this gap in knowledge by exploring perceptions of social marketing professionals related to program failure in the field.

For this paper, we surveyed 100 members of the social marketing community in order to investigate the research question (RQ):

RQ2 - What are the perceptions of the social marketing community regarding mistakes and failures in the field?

In alignment with previous research conducted by Cook et al (2020), the purpose of this exploration is to:

(1) Expand the understanding of failures in social marketing beyond a case-by-case basis, toward a more systematic appraisal of failures in the social marketing field

(2) Begin to understand the extent to which mistakes made by social marketers might contribute to social marketing program failure, especially in comparison with external influences

(3) Assist social marketers in assessing their own and others' shortcomings, which could lead to more successful program outcomes (Mintz, 2016)

From an academic perspective, this research provides empirical data to complement both conceptual discussions of common social marketing mistakes (e.g. Wymer, 2011), and previous research that has looked into the weaknesses of specific social marketing programs (e Silva & Silva; Sundstrom, 2013; Huberty et al., 2009). From a practitioner perspective, this research offers empirical data that may serve as a guide for social marketing professionals to begin mitigating some of these mistakes and failures, thereby improving program outcomes.

3.2. Methods

3.2.1. Research design

This paper is the second half of a two-part mixed methods study that aims to explore social marketing professionals' perceptions related to mistakes and failures in social marketing programming in order to better understand the reasons behind social marketing program failure.

In the first part of the study, 17 social marketing experts[11] were interviewed regarding their opinions about mistakes and failures in the field (Cook et al, 2020). In this second part, the focus is on gathering opinions from the wider social marketing community[12]. In order to accomplish this, the researchers surveyed 100 social marketing community members over a two-year period, from 2017 to 2019. Survey questions examined different angles of the social marketing community's perspectives on failures and mistakes made in the field. In addition to demographic questions, researchers inquired about mistakes made in the field, program elements that are least well-managed, and failures in social marketing programs. Survey questions also varied between open and closed questions, in order to get a wide range of possible responses. Each of these angles gave the researchers a multifaceted understanding of the various reasons behind social marketing program failure.

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[11] For this study, a 'social marketing expert' (SM expert) was considered to be an individual who had over 10 years of experience in the field of social marketing, and who was known and recognized within the social marketing community via publications or conference presentations

[12] For the purposes of this study, the 'wider social marketing community' represents any one who self identifies as part of the community of social marketing professionals *and* has worked on a program that has attempted to influence a behaviour(s)

3.2.2. Social marketing community surveys

The research team collected 108 surveys that had been administered both online and in person (i.e. on paper) to the social marketing community. Respondents who were given paper copies of the survey were recruited from social marketing conferences in Europe and North America. Respondents who completed the survey online were recruited through social marketing listservs (e.g. iSMA, SMANA, ESMA newsletter, New Zealand Social Marketing Network), the research team's personal contacts, and the social marketing experts' personal contacts. Since the research team felt it would be more difficult to recruit survey respondents online as opposed to in person, potential online respondents were offered a chance to win a $50 CDN VISA card as an incentive to participate. The winner was randomly drawn and then mailed the VISA card.
To meet eligibility criteria, survey respondents had to:

- Have consented to participate
- Have worked on a project or program that aimed to change a behaviour(s)
- Have completed a minimum of 14 of 16 survey questions

3.2.3. Data Analysis

Data from the 108 surveys was consolidated into the University of Waterloo's Qualtrics Insight Platform. At this point, eight surveys were disqualified. Five were incomplete, two had no behavioural experience and one did not consent. This left 100 valid surveys.

The 100 valid surveys were then imported into SPSS for analysis. SPSS Version 26 was used to analyze survey data. Data was reviewed again before analysis (to ensure there were no more invalid surveys), and then was examined using descriptive statistics. Initial codes were built upon from preexisting codes used in previous research by Cook et al (2020). Similar codes were grouped together and defined (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Following Cohen et al. (2019), two raters conducted pilot tests with 10% of the data to ensure adequate interrater reliability. Once interrater reliability was established (Cohen's K = .76), one member of the research team coded the rest of the data. Of the survey questions that were coded, all codes are shown in the charts and graphs below (minus the code for missing or irrelevant data), except the survey question related to program elements that are least well-managed. In this question, only the top six least well-managed program elements are listed as it would have been impractical to include results for all twenty program elements.

3.2.4. Overview of survey respondents

All 100 survey respondents answered in English. In terms of their working roles, most survey respondents were practitioners (42%), consultants (22%) or academics (17%). Some were educators (11%), and several had 'other' roles such as student researcher or government employee (8%).

Most survey respondents (60%) had ten or less years of experience working in the social marketing field, while one-third (33%) had sixteen or more years of experience and a few (9%) had more than 20 years of experience. Survey respondents work in a variety of fields, many in more than one. The most common fields of work are in health (70%) and environment (57%), while the rest were a diverse mix of safety, transportation, international development, social work, disaster preparedness, conflict prevention, food, and agriculture, among others.

The majority (70%) of survey respondents answered questions related to their level of experience with program design, program implementation and program evaluation. See

Table 3.1. Survey respondents' level of experience with programming, by number of respondents

	Program Design	Program Implementation	Program Evaluation
Very experienced	46	43	36
Somewhat experienced	22	24	19
Not experienced	2	2	3

Nearly all (96%) of survey respondents answered questions related to the types of social marketing programs they regularly engage in (e.g. downstream, upstream, critical, etc). Most social marketers engage in multiple types of social marketing programs. Perhaps not surprisingly, the largest percentage of respondents engage in individual, downstream social marketing programs. This is consistent with Truong (2014)'s finding that the majority of social marketing research and discourse focuses on the individual, downstream level.

Most respondents also engage in mid-stream and upstream social marketing, with a minority engaging in macro and critical social marketing programs. A small percentage of respondents engage in other types of social marketing programs such as systems social marketing, strategic social marketing, and social and behaviour change communication. See **Table 3.2.**

Table 3.2. Types of programs social marketers typically engage in

Type of social marketing program	Percentage (%)
Individual, downstream social marketing	89
Mid-stream social marketing	70
Upstream social marketing	55
Macro social marketing	36
Critical social marketing	18
Other	11

3.3. Results

In regard to mistakes, failures, and least well-managed program elements in social marketing, respondents were asked several questions in the survey.

In this section, these will fall under the following subheadings:

- Most common mistakes made by social marketers

- Least well-managed program elements by social marketers

- Reasons for social marketing program failure

- Additional comments about successes and failures in social marketing programs

3.3.1. Most common mistakes made by social marketers

Respondents were asked what they believe are the three most common mistakes made by social marketers in the design and implementation of social marketing programs. This was asked as an open question in the survey, which was then coded into the corresponding program element codes. Responses are ranked not only by which types of mistakes occurred most frequently overall, but also by which ones were most often

listed first (light blue), second (medium blue), and third (dark blue). Responses are illustrated in **Figure 3.1.**
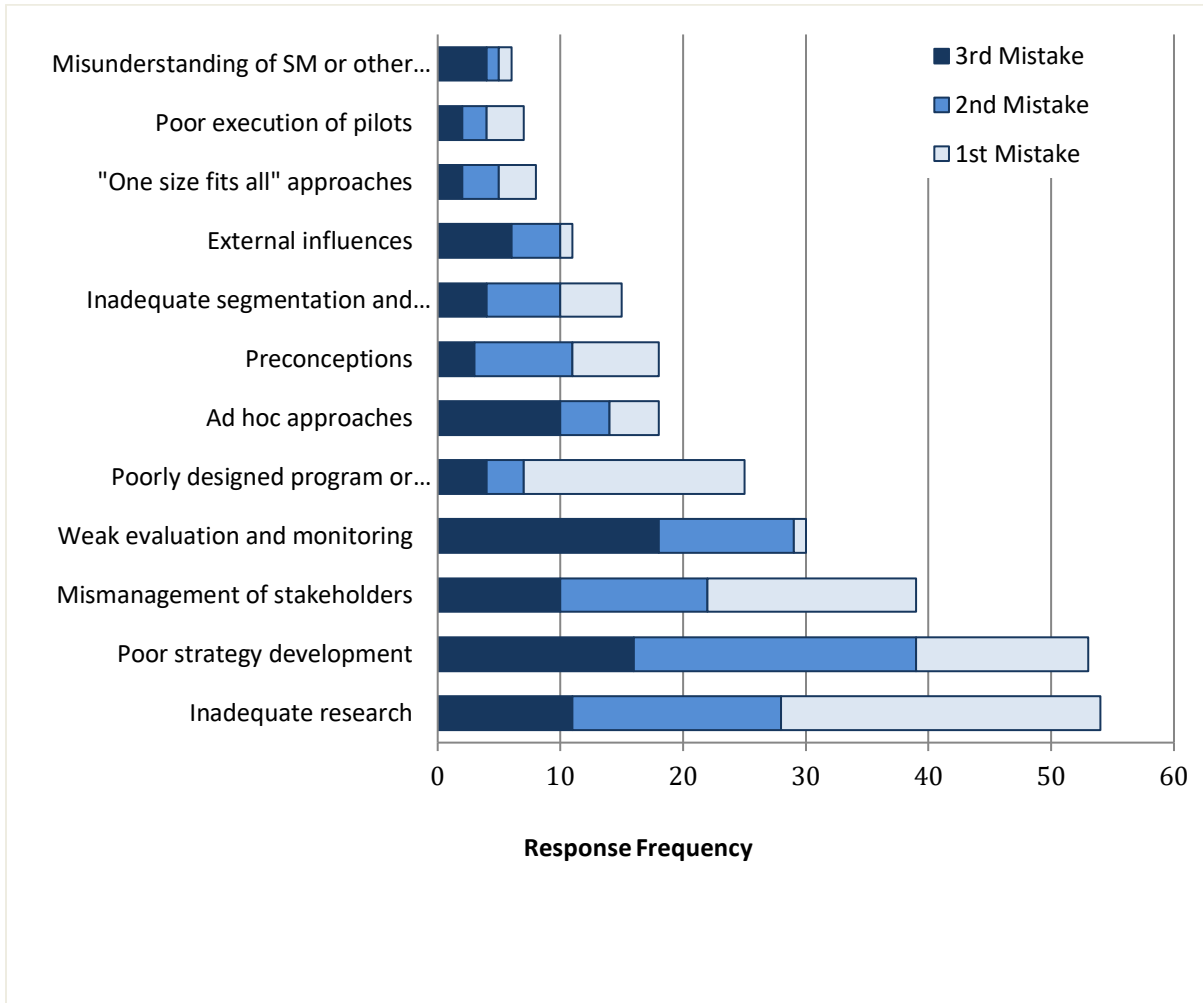
Figure 3.1. The most common mistakes made by social marketers, according to survey respondents (by frequency of response). Respondents were asked to note the top three most common mistakes they believe are made by social marketers.

Similar to recent research done by Cook et al (2020), in which social marketing experts were asked what they believed were the most common mistakes made by social marketers, *inadequate research* and *poor strategy development* were the top two most frequent responses. *Inadequate research* was not only listed the most frequently

overall, but it was also most frequently listed first (among the three possible mistakes that respondents could list).

Inadequate research

For this mistake, responses tended to revolve around the notion that social marketers may sometimes do little or no formative research at the beginning of the campaign. However, there were a few other nuances in relation to *inadequate research* that appeared in the responses:

- The first involves a *lack of understanding*. Respondents who commented on this mentioned that the social marketer may lack an understanding of the motivations of the target audience, the social problem as well as its systemic causes, or the structural factors that influence particular behaviours.

- The second involves *inadequate gathering of evidence*. Respondents who commented on this mentioned such things as a lack of baseline data, an overemphasis on anecdotal evidence or theoretical evidence instead of field evidence, and a failure to analyze previous interventions.

- The third involves a *misinterpretation of research*. Some respondents mentioned that the social marketer may misread research about the priority group, or may draw the wrong conclusions from the formative research and as a result may fail to appropriately apply the research to strategy development.

Poor strategy development

Many respondents stated that the social marketer may overemphasize the importance of awareness and education in influencing behaviour change. Other responses mostly fell into two categories:

The first relates to a *misuse of messaging*. Respondents mentioned that messages may be unclear, overly negative or fear-based, too plentiful (so as to be confusing), irrelevant, or they may lack creativity.

The second relates to an *inadequate use of behavioural levers*.[13] Some respondents mentioned inadequacies with respect to barriers and benefits. For example, either the benefits to the desired behaviour were not well promoted, or not enough tools were provided to overcome the barriers. Other respondents mentioned inadequacies in the use of the 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion)[14]; for example, forgetting the importance of distribution; lacking integration across channels; using the wrong channels; underemphasizing the quality of products and services; not using the full scope of marketing tools to make the behaviour fun, easy and popular; and not focusing on the 'user experience', which makes the behaviour too complicated or difficult.

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[13] A behavioural lever is an evidence-based intervention tactic that aims to influence human behaviour. Examples: emotional appeals, social influences, choice architecture, material incentives, rules and regulations, and information. To learn more about behavioural levers, please visit the organization Rare's website: https://behavior.rare.org/behavioral-science-landing/

[14] For explanations of each of the 4Ps, please see Table 1.1. in the Introduction section (p.3)

Mismanagement of stakeholders

In contrast to Cook et al (2020)'s previous work with social marketing experts, *mismanagement of stakeholders*[15] was one of the top three listed mistakes made by social marketers, according to the wider social marketing community. Most respondents described this mistake in the context of top-down approaches to campaigns, where there is little (if any) input or engagement with the target audience related to program formation, direction and goal-setting. Some respondents stated that social marketers may make the mistake of focusing on the needs of the program rather than the needs of the priority group. Other respondents mentioned inadequate or ineffective partnerships as a key mistake. More specifically, some respondents described the mistake as a failure to communicate with, engage with, or coordinate various stakeholders (e.g. influencers or community leaders) in order to get buy-in for the program. One respondent described this mistake as a lack of social marketing training for stakeholders.

With respect to the ranking of mistakes (i.e. whether the mistake was listed as respondents' first choice, second choice, or third choice), *inadequate research* was most often the first mistake respondents listed, *poor strategy development* was most often the second mistake listed, and *weak evaluation and monitoring* was most often the third mistake listed.

3.3.2. Least well-managed program elements by social marketers

Respondents were also asked what were the top five elements that they believe are the least well-managed by social marketers. This was asked as a closed-ended question. The list of twenty possible categories they could choose from is in **Table 3.3.** below.

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[15] *Stakeholder,* for the purposes of this research study, is defined as any individual or group who has an interest in or is affected by the social problem that the social marketer is attempting to solve. This definition includes the priority group

Table 3.3. List of possible least well-managed program elements by social marketers

Program element	Description
Accounting for practitioner bias	Ensuring that the social marketer's biases are acknowledged, examined and dealt with in a way that may reduce error in programming
Communication	Carefully choosing the format and the content of the messages that will be delivered
Critical marketing	Educating and involving the target audience in messages or activities that expose the potential harm caused by commercial marketing
Exchange	Ensuring that the target audience perceives that the benefits of the desired behaviour(s) clearly outweigh the costs
Evaluation	Integrating monitoring and evaluation practices into all stages of the program
Formative research	Collecting and analyzing information about the target audience (e.g. attitudes, values, perceived barriers and benefits of target behaviour) or researching the wider socio-cultural, political, economic and/or physical environment
Goal setting	Setting specific and measurable behavioural goals for or with the target audience
Medium	Carefully researching and implementing social marketing messages that align with segmented audiences
Mid-stream targeting	Actively engaging those who are considered 'power-brokers', facilitators, or gatekeepers to resources and/or decision-makers
Ongoing support	Developing relationships of trust and confidence with the target audience primarily by providing social support throughout the program and beyond
Partnerships	Actively engaging stakeholders whose actions may influence the target audience's behaviour
Piloting	Testing the program prior to full-scale implementation
Program objectives	Developing clear objectives and goals that can be used to guide program design as well as evaluate the success of the program
Resources	Designing the program such that it fits within the practitioners' resource base (i.e. within scope of available finances, personnel/expertise, etc)
Segmentation and targeting	Ensuring that the social marketing program messages are tailored to particular audience segments
Strategy	Using evidence-based behavioural change strategies that are drawn directly from the formative research (e.g. using the 4Ps, or community-based social marketing strategies such as commitments, prompts, and social norms)
Theory	Underpinning social marketing programs with a strong theoretical base
Upstream targeting	Actively engaging decision-makers who create laws, policies and regulations
Value co-creation	Ensuring that the target audience is actively involved in the process of creating a product, service or experience that will be of value to them

The results found six top elements (there were two ties) that the social marketing community believes are least well-managed by social marketers: evaluation, partnerships, value co-creation, practitioner bias, ongoing support and strategy. See **Figure 3.2.**
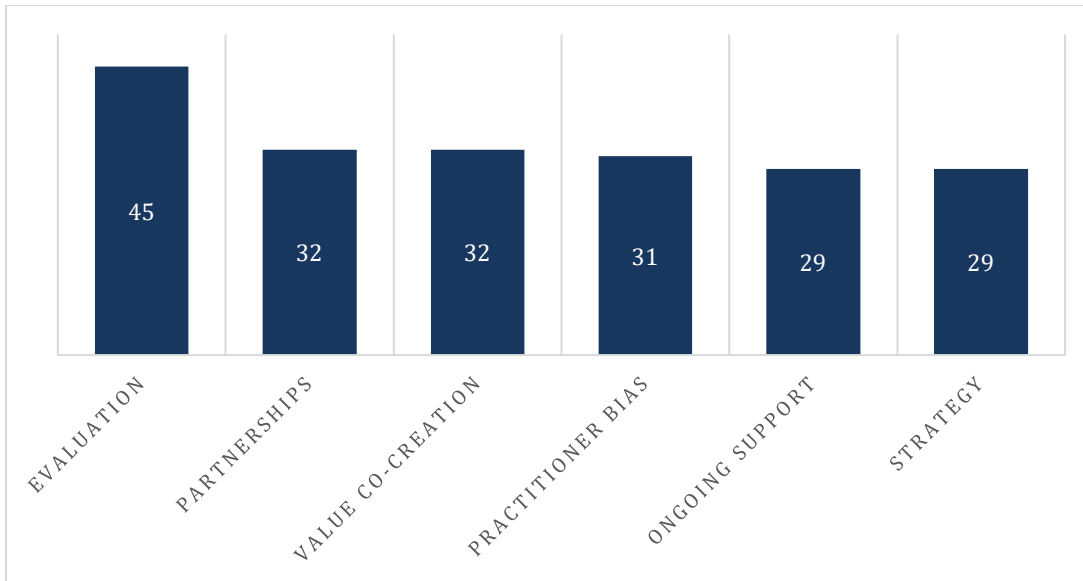
Figure 3.2. Least well-managed program elements by social marketers, according to survey respondents (by number of responses). Respondents were asked to select up to five social marketing program elements that they believe are the least well-managed by social marketers (from the list illustrated in **Table 6** above).

3.3.4. Reasons for social marketing program failure

Respondents were asked if they have had any experience with social marketing programs that failed to meet their behavioural change goal(s). Of the 100 respondents, 58% said that they had been involved in a program that failed, while 42% had not. Of the respondents who had been involved in a program that failed, 50 out of the 58 (86%) offered reasons as to why they believe the programs they were involved in failed. Respondents offered 78 reasons in total (after missing, unclear or irrelevant responses were removed). **Figure 3.3.** demonstrates the break-down of reasons for program failure.

Reason	Count
Poor strategy development	14
External influences	13
Poorly designed program or behavioural objectives	12
Inadequate research	10
Mismanagement of stakeholders	9
Weak evaluation and monitoring	5
Inadequate segmentation and targeting	4
Ad hoc approaches	4
Poor execution of pilots	3
Misunderstanding of SM or other social change…	2
Preconceptions	2

Figure 3.3. Top reasons for social marketing program failure, according to survey respondents (by number of responses) [16]

Poor strategy development, *external influences*, and *poorly designed program or behavioural objectives* were listed as the three main reasons why the social marketing programs failed.

Poor strategy development

The most common reason for failure cited by the social marketing community with regard to *poor strategy development* was that the overall approach of their campaign focused more on awareness raising and education instead of behaviour change. Additionally, some respondents pointed to particular problems that the campaign encountered when designing the 4Ps (e.g. In regard to *promotion*, there was an overemphasis on fear-based messaging, whereas with *place*, there was a lack of accessibility for services). A few respondents also mentioned that their campaign was too broad or complicated in its approach. For example, one respondent stated, "We were attempting to get support for affordable housing and the campaign was far too complex, the messages were confusing and the ask was too big".

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[16] Please see Appendix 2 for definitions and representative quotes

External influences

This reason for failure was referred to in a number of different ways, including: funding cuts; relatively small budgets that exclude key elements such as evaluation; lack of personnel; decision-makers, upper management and/or the client setting their own agenda and being inflexible; and working in a behavioural environment that is difficult to change (e.g. social stigma).

Poorly designed program or behavioural objectives

The most common reason cited for program failure within this category was that too many behavioural objectives were selected. Other reasons included the lack of a behaviour goal and setting behavioural objectives that are unattainable, overly complex, inappropriate or poorly defined.

3.3.5. Additional comments related to successes and failures in social marketing programs

Of 100 respondents, 60% offered additional comments related to both success and failure in social marketing. Responses varied greatly. See **Table 3.4.** for a non-random, diverse sample[17]:

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[17] A non-random, diverse sample of additional comments was selected based on readability, length, diversity of perspectives, and relevance to the survey question

Table 3.4. Additional comments from survey respondents. At the end of the survey, respondents were asked if they had any additional comments to add regarding social marketing successes and failures

Resp. #	Comment
19	I have been involved with a number [of] outreach efforts that didn't necessarily call themselves "social marketing" but basically tried to pick and choose pieces from social marketing without doing all the steps as a program. It's hard to say these failed, because there was without exception not one that had a formal evaluation process (everyone is still super focused on outputs, not outcomes). But my sense being a part of these groups (and having done 2 successful programs) is that they fell short, because cherry-picking a cool strategy they saw work well for someone else is not the same as doing a thorough audience analysis, behavior identification process, impact projection, etc.
24	Eliminate the assumption that we, as professionals, know better than the audience we are targeting.
26	Proper training or practitioners and their supervisors/superiors/leadership is needed so that everyone is "on the same page". To[sic] often leadership want fast results which is not possible with a proper social marketing program.
27	Social marketers need to be wary of limiting their strategies, theories and tactics to ones that ONLY fall within the boundaries of "social marketing". Success in behavior change programs comes from incorporating and applying pieces of commercial marketing, behavioral economics, social marketing, UX/UI design, and more that will work best to achieve the results of an individual goal and program.
35	Pilot test, even programs designed through co-design and human centred approaches need tweaking as often what consumers say they want in a program is different to their reality. Establish an evaluation framework at the start, including the individual and midstream level changes and impacts. Embed social impact into the evaluation. Engage with experts in the context as well as end consumers. Consider any unintended consequences that may occur as a result of your program.
45	Personally, one of the greatest problems with social marketing and public health communications is the lack of good management. Managing is difficult and people think that they can just walk in and do it. I think we need more training on how to engage and cultivate staff, and how to balance the pieces of a campaign.
58	For me, it's fundamental the existence of national policies and institutions to promote, support and manage the general strategy of SM in a country.
63	Failures result from a top-down strategy. Social marketing programmes should be informed and driven by the target audiences they are for. All stakeholders should be aligned with the values of social marketing from the onset. If anyone is unconvinced of the benefits of social marketing, work with them to bring them on-board.
84	Using a 'co-creation' approach (involving our target audience from the very beginning and over the lifetime of the campaign) has been very productive. It has built good links with social groups leading to a social marketing program that reflects our audience, recognizes their challenges and supports them to keep trying. Focusing on a social change rather than a behavioral change is more sustainable I feel! :)

89	Better sharing of data, experience & knowledge. Wider realisation that social marketing is _far_ more than just communications campaigns & acknowledgement of the need for a whole systems approach.
95	There is a need to develop standards of good practice that are manditory [sic] - i.e. if you don't work in this way you don't get any funding. There is also a need to develop training for people expected to work to agreed standards.

3.4. Discussion

This discussion will cover each of the findings from the survey responses as well as strengths and limitations of this research, and recommendations for social marketing professionals. Additional comments about successes and failures in social marketing programs will not be discussed in this section, as it is solely intended to be a reference for the reader.

3.4.1. Most common mistakes made by social marketers

As a reminder, *inadequate research*, *poor strategy development*, and *mismanagement of stakeholders* were identified by the social marketing community as the most common mistakes made by social marketers.

Inadequate research

Inadequate research is the top mistake listed by both social marketing experts (Cook et al, 2020) and the wider social marketing community. This is surprising given that social marketing is known to be a programmatic approach to social change that creates value for individuals and society partially through research (Lefebvre, 2012). Yet, there is ample evidence in social marketing literature that research is not always adequately undertaken. This evidence is expressed in both direct and indirect ways. When inadequate research is expressed directly in the literature, it is described as a lack of primary research (Gordon, 2013), a lack of barrier and benefit research (Lombardo &

Léger, 2007) or a lack of research vis-à-vis the target audience (Hoffman et al., 2009; McGovern, 2007).

When inadequate research is expressed indirectly, it is described in the following ways (see **Table 3.5.** below):

Table 3.5. Indirect references to inadequate research in the social marketing literature

Type of reference to inadequate research	Sources
An inadequate use or understanding of theory	Nicholson & Xiao, 2011; Somers et al., 2007; Manikam & Russell-Bennett, 2016; Gruneklee, 2016
A lack of attention paid to structural, environmental, or cultural factors	Wymer, 2011; eSilva & Silva, 2012; Spotswood et al., 2017
A lack of attention paid to competing behaviours	Wymer, 2010; Godwin et al., 2016; Menzel & Shrestha, 2012
An inadequate understanding of various aspects of the social problem	Antonetti et al., 2015; Domegan et al., 2017
An overreliance on intuition/assumptions/biases of the social marketer	Dietrich et al., 2016; Wymer, 2011; eSilva & Silva, 2012; Hastings et al., 2004; Carvalho & Mazzon, 2013; Hoek & Jones, 2011; Lombardo & Léger, 2007; McKenzie-Mohr, 1994

All of these descriptions represent facets of the same overarching problem: that formative research within social marketing programs is commonly inadequate. This has obvious implications for the rest of the social marketing program, from strategy development to evaluation. Further research is required to understand the factors that contribute to this problem, including potential external influences on the social marketer's ability to conduct adequate research.

Poor strategy development

The most common mistake cited by the social marketing community in regard to *poor strategy development* was that the overall approach of their campaign focused too much on awareness raising and education as opposed to behaviour change. The social marketing community has known for quite some time that "programs that do not have

behaviour change as a stated objective are not social marketing programs" (Maibach, 2002). And yet, this research, as well as previous research by Cook et al (2020) indicates that many individuals who intend to change behaviour are not sufficiently trained in social marketing techniques in order to know how to do so. This research also indicates that many social marketers know exactly what social marketing is, but are influenced to engage in awareness or information-heavy campaigns by external actors such as funders or those in upper management positions. There is, therefore, room for social marketers to develop skills in promoting social marketing to decision makers (Sowers et al., 2007).

Mismanagement of stakeholders

The mismanagement of stakeholders was mentioned most often in the context of top-down approaches that do not engage the priority group. Whether or not this problem is well recognized in the social marketing community is arguable; however, it is evident that collaboration between actors is required in order to achieve positive social change (Johansson et al., 2018; Vargo and Lusch, 2016a; Vargo and Lusch, 2016b). Some scholars state that social marketers are, or should be, embracing service-dominant logic, which proposes value as being co-created rather than as a deliverable outcome (Desai, 2009; Luca et al., 2016a; Zainuddin et al., 2016; French et al., 2017; Lefebvre, 2012frel). There is also anecdotal evidence in the form of case studies that some social marketers are indeed engaging with the priority group in the process of co-creation (Erickson et al., 2015; Blanchette et al., 2016; Biroscak, 2017). Nevertheless, this research adds to the literature suggesting that top-down approaches are still common when it comes to the way that social marketers engage with the priority group from the research to the evaluation stage of programming (McBride et al., 2000; Vogl, 2007; Dietrich et al., 2016; Bellew et al., 2017). With regard to other key stakeholders aside from the priority group, Lefebvre (2013) asserts that their contributions to the behaviour change process often go untapped. He suggests that "rather than simply handing them a plan to implement", social marketers could actively involve them earlier in the co-creation process particularly relating to promotion and distribution.

3.4.2. Least well-managed program elements by social marketers

Of the six program elements that were considered to be the least well-managed by social marketers, the top three are *weak evaluation and monitoring*, *partnerships* and *value co-creation*.

Weak evaluation and monitoring

This is the top element that is considered to be the least well-managed by social marketers. We know from the social marketing literature that strong evaluation and monitoring is important for program success (Bontrager & Marshall, 2020). We also know that after almost fifty years of programming, most social marketing program resources are still spent on planning and implementation, while monitoring and evaluation is overlooked (Lefebvre, 2013). Additionally, social marketers continue to face basic evaluation questions regarding distinctions between social marketing and other types of interventions, as well as whether or not social marketing is effective or cost effective in comparison to those other interventions. This research confirms that the field of social marketing would greatly benefit in the near future if the social marketing community were able to obtain more funding for evaluation processes and reform evaluation strategies (Chapman, 2010).

Since *partnerships* and *value co-creation* were covered in the previous sub-section (Section 3.4.1. Mismanagement of stakeholders), they will not be elaborated upon here.

3.4.3. Reasons for social marketing program failure

As mentioned earlier, *poor strategy development*, *external influences*, and *poorly designed program or behavioural objectives* were listed as the three main reasons why social marketing programs fail.

Poor strategy development

This has already been covered in the *most common mistakes* section; therefore, a detailed discussion will not be necessary here. However, it is interesting to note that *poor strategy development* has been listed as the second most common mistake made by social marketers, both in this research as well as previous research by Cook et al. (2020). Additionally, *poor strategy development* was identified by the social marketing community as the primary reason for program failure. As has already been mentioned, most of the respondents' comments in regards to this centred around the notion that in social marketing programming, too much emphasis is placed on awareness raising and education rather than behaviour change.

External influences

Interestingly, when the language of *mistakes* is used in the survey question, *external influences* do not seem to be important; however, when the language of *failure* is used; that is, when the social marketing community was asked what factors might contribute to the failure of a social marketing program, external influences feature prominently. Previous research by Cook et al. found that all 17 social marketing experts who were interviewed mentioned external influences when discussing mistakes and failures in the field (2020). This research further confirms the notion that external influences may significantly influence the success or failure of a social marketing program. This begs the question: what exactly is the interplay between external influences and mistakes made

by social marketing practitioners that may cause a social marketing program to fail? Further research is required in order to answer this question.

Poorly designed program or behavioral objectives

Within this category, the most common reason cited for program failure was that too many behavioural objectives were selected. According to McKenzie-Mohr (2018), social marketers should limit the number of target behaviours to no more than five or six within one program or campaign. Limiting behavioural objectives carries the advantages of keeping the strategy concise and reducing the problem of decision fatigue among the priority group (Fries, 2019). Respondents also mentioned the lack of a behavioural goal and setting behavioural objectives that are unattainable, overly complex, inappropriate or poorly defined. Social marketers may therefore consider Lee & Kotler's (2016) advice to "establish quantifiable measures" relative to the behavioural objectives. That is, they advocate for goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).

3.5. Strengths and limitations of this research

Strengths of this research include its qualitative, exploratory nature. That is, the social marketing field currently has a rudimentary understanding of mistakes and failures in the field. An exploratory analysis such as this one provides a starting point for further, more focused analysis. Another strength is the reflexivity inherent in this research. Social marketers most often publish research related to the success or failure of the particular programs they are working on (Borden & Mahamane, 2020; Sundstrom, 2012; James et al., 2017; e Silva and Silva, 2012; Deshpande et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2009; Ramirez et al., 2017). Far less often do they publish research that critically examines the work that they are doing as a whole (Wymer, 2011) or how they adapt and improve as a result of that work (Lefebvre, 2012). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, when social marketers have a better understanding of the nature of mistakes and failures made in

the field, that insight empowers them to address these mistakes and failures in order to bolster the success of social marketing programs.

This study has a few limitations. First, the sample size of 100 respondents is not sufficient to be statistically representative of the global social marketing community. Second, SM experts from developing countries were under-represented. Embedded within this limitation is the fact that the survey was only administered in one language (i.e. English). Third, the mistakes and failures described in the surveys are based on self-reported insights rather than direct observation, which may make the findings less robust (Geller, 2002).

Based on the findings from this study, we propose five recommendations. The first three recommendations are aimed at social marketing professionals, while the final two are aimed at social marketing academics.

3.6. Recommendations for social marketing professionals

Recommendation 1: Build a culture within the social marketing profession that encourages discussion around programmatic mistakes and failures.

If using the F-word (i.e. failure) is too hard on the ego to say aloud, consider a more moderate version such as an 'unsuccessful' program or a 'program fizzle'. Social marketers should be open to reflecting on programs that have not lived up to their behavioural goals, recognizing that these are essential learning opportunities on the road to success (Silva and Silva, 2012; Edmonson, 2011). This kind of culture-building can be done through internal organizational documents, webinars, presentations at conferences, as well as academic papers.

Recommendation 2: Adopt process evaluations from the outset.

Social marketers would benefit from adopting and integrating process evaluations from the outset of their program in order to capture not only 'what' went well and what didn't, but also 'how' and 'why' success or failure occurred (McHugh & Domegan, 2017). While we tend to focus on evaluating program outcomes, the *process* that was used to develop and implement the program should also be included in the evaluation strategy.

Recommendation 3: Aim to influence particular aspects of social marketing programs that are not currently under your control (Winch, 2015).

For example, if funders are regularly setting the agenda and pushing for communication-heavy campaigns, then one way to push for better program outcomes is to educate funders about the nature and mechanics of behaviour change.

3.7. Recommendations for social marketing academics

Recommendation 4: Social marketing researchers could research the relationship between social marketers' mistakes and external influences, both of which may contribute to program failure.

A more thorough understanding of the complex interplay between these two phenomena may further illuminate a possible combination of internal and external factors that may lead to program failure, which in turn could help improve program outcomes (Babur, 2018).

Recommendation 5: Social marketing journals could more actively encourage submissions from practitioners and academics that are reporting mistakes and failures in the field.

This kind of encouragement could provide a much-needed push towards a community-wide social norm of mistake- and failure-sharing. As an example, the academic journal Social Marketing Quarterly put forth a Call for Proposals in June 2019 for papers related to mistakes and failures in social marketing programs, and since then, they have published four of these types of academic articles (Desphande, 2022; Akbar et al., 2021; Cook et al., 2021; Cook et al., 2020).

All social marketing professionals may benefit from reviewing the most common mistakes, reasons for failure, and least well-managed program elements in order to provide a starting point for further discussion and action, both in practice and in academia. To facilitate this, the researchers have included a synthesis of findings from both parts of the research study. See **Figure 3.4.** below.
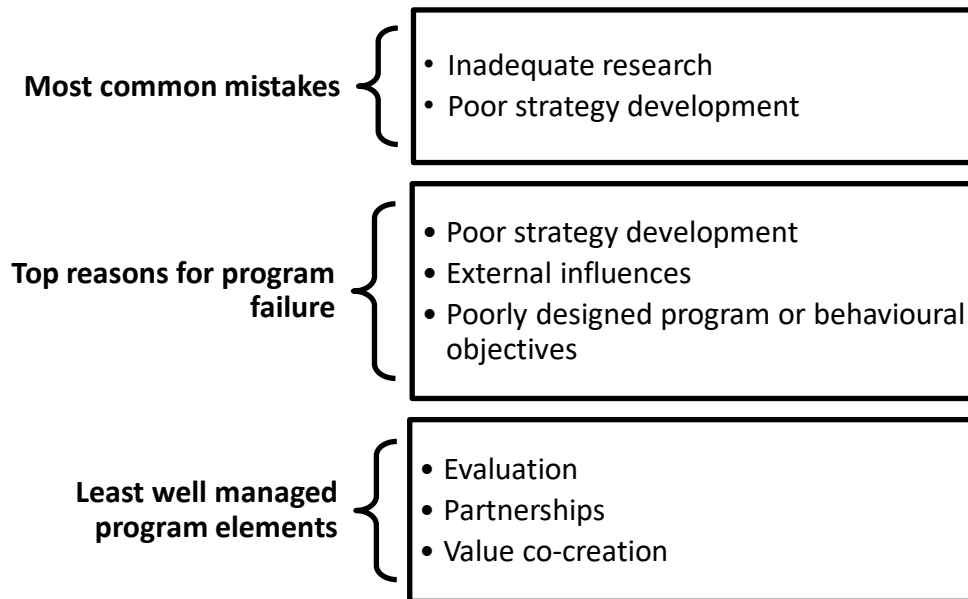
Figure 3.4. A synthesis of most common mistakes and failures, as well as least well-managed program elements by social marketers, according to social marketing experts and the social marketing community

3.8. Conclusion

This paper is the second half of a two-part research study that has explored the perceptions of social marketing professionals with respect to mistakes and failures in social marketing programs. This research study also represents an attempt to foster a culture of mistake- and failure-sharing within the social marketing community. Simultaneous efforts from practitioners, academics, and other members of the social marketing community will help everyone to feel comfortable sharing and learning from each other's mistakes and failures, which may in turn bolster program outcomes and increase the likelihood of future program success.

Social marketing with a soul:

Applying social movement theory and practice to engage

upstream stakeholders

[PhD Chapter 4]

4. Introduction

Without leaps of imagination or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities.

When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.

We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds.

It always seems impossible until it's done.

No one is too small to make a difference.

Answer the highest calling of your heart.

I have a dream.

The words that you've just read were spoken by social movement leaders around the world in the past few decades: Gloria Steinem, Malala Yousafzai, Wangari Maathai, Nelson Mandela, Greta Thunburg, John Lewis, Martin Luther King Junior. These are all people who have devoted themselves to a cause greater than themselves because they believe that humans and the planet can be better. In doing so, they have compelled a great many people to action, resulting in changed ways of societal thought and behaviour that will ripple through humanity for some time to come.

Not one of the leaders mentioned above was or is a social marketer. And yet they have been highly successful in the socio-behavioural change arena. If the ultimate purpose of social marketing is to influence behaviour for the betterment of society (Carvalho & Mazzon, 2015), then social marketers are located in that same arena. Lefebvre (2012) has already provided the social marketing discipline with some thought leadership on this, stating—quite rightly—that social marketing "has become captive of a routinized process to create programs", and in so doing, has essentially lost its soul. Though social marketers' efforts in changing behaviour have seen more than enough successes to justify the field (Truong, 2014), the singular, programmatic approach that they use limits them from reaching a higher level of effectiveness in terms of addressing the complex,

wicked, interconnected social and environmental problems of today. Looking outside disciplinary borders for fresh ideas is therefore an imperative.

There are increasing calls in the social marketing literature for scholars to examine the ways in which social marketing might be informed by social movement approaches to behavioural change (Wymer, 2011). A few social marketing scholars have already heeded this call (Gurrieri et al, 2018; Douglas, 2008; Mirabito & Berry, 2015; Daellenbach & Parkinson, 2017). The potential for social marketing to learn from social movement theory and practice is considerable, and yet social marketers' understanding of it remains limited (Gurrieri et al, 2018). Enhancing the knowledge base about social movement approaches to behavioural change could be particularly useful at the upstream level, from which individual and collective behaviours are significantly influenced (Gordon, 2013; Heath, 2020; French & Gordon, 2015). To date, there has been no formal academic exploration of how social movements might inform social marketing efforts at the upstream level. The proposed research will contribute to filling this gap in knowledge by considering how the success of the New Nordic Food movement could be applied to social marketing programs at the upstream level.

In this chapter, social marketing and social movement theories are drawn upon to answer the following research questions (RQ):

RQ1 - What was the strategy used by the New Nordic Food movement chefs to engage upstream stakeholders in the Nordic food industry during the movement's early years (2003-2010)?

RQ2 - To what extent did the chefs' strategy influence upstream stakeholders to make significant changes to the Nordic food industry during the New Nordic Food movement's early years?

RQ3 - What might the social marketing discipline learn from the New Nordic Food movement in terms of engaging upstream stakeholders, and influencing socio-behavioural change more generally?

The paper will begin with a review of social marketing and social movement theories of change. Next, the New Nordic Food movement will be introduced, as well as the methodology that was used to gather and analyze data related to the movement. Then, the four-point strategy that the Nordic chefs used to engage upstream stakeholders in the Nordic food industry during the movement's early years will be examined, with a focus on their application of instrumental[18] and inspirational[19] approaches (RQ1). Next, the extent to which the chefs' strategy influenced upstream stakeholders to make significant changes to the Nordic food industry will be discussed (RQ2). Then, recommendations for incorporating elements of the chefs' four-point strategy within a social marketing intervention to engage upstream stakeholders will be proposed (RQ3). Finally, limitations of the chefs' approach and the research study will be presented.

4.1. Social marketing theories of change

The central purpose of social marketing is to apply marketing principles and techniques to influence human behaviour for the benefit of the priority group and for society (Lee & Kotler, 2016). Social marketers develop, implement and evaluate their programs with the implicit assumption that changing individual or group behaviour will contribute to mitigating or solving a social problem. This is one reason why most social marketing interventions focus on downstream, individual behaviour change (Truong, 2014; French & Gordon, 2015). More recent social marketing literature recognizes upstream,

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[18] In this paper, the term *instrumental* refers to an approach that seeks social change by strategically managing people, resources, and time

[19] In this paper, the term *inspirational* refers to an approach that seeks social change by inspiring people and appealing to their intrinsic motivation

structural factors—such as government policies, programs, and legislation, as well as the power brokers who develop, implement, and evaluate them—as playing a significant role in shaping downstream human behaviour and solving complex social problems (Hastings, 2007; Gordon, 2013). Upstream social marketing interventions concentrate efforts on understanding the beliefs, values, motivations, and goals of decision makers, who are considered to be the priority group and whose behaviours the social marketer wishes to influence in order to alter the structural environment (Green et al, 2019; Gordon, 2013; French & Gordon, 2015).

As might be expected considering its origins in commercial marketing, the concept of *exchange* is central to the discipline of social marketing (Hastings & Domegan, 2014). The social marketer offers something tangible (e.g. a financial incentive) or intangible (e.g. personal satisfaction) in exchange for the priority group voluntarily behaving in a certain way (Duane et al., 2016). Exchange theory, within the context of social marketing, asserts that a prerequisite to behaviour change is that the priority group must believe that the benefits to adopting a behaviour are equal to or greater than the costs (Bagozzi, 1978; Lee & Kotler, 2016). As such, a key task for the social marketer is to reduce barriers and enhance benefits for the priority group, which significantly increases the chances that they will adopt a specific behavior (Lee & Kotler, 2016; McKenzie-Mohr, 2011). Once members of the priority group perceive that the benefits to adopting a behaviour sufficiently outweigh the costs, they will then interact with the social marketer in a way that fulfills their own interests, by exchanging such things as time, effort, or money for the goods or services offered to them by the social marketer (Maibach, 2002).

Exchange theory has been applied to upstream social marketing in that social marketers who discuss or report on upstream social marketing efforts emphasize mutual exchange and reciprocity as well as the cost/benefit analysis that decision makers undergo when they consider whether or not to change the structural environment (Scott & Higgins,

2012; Gordon, 2012; Lagarde, 2014; Kennedy et al., 2018). Williams (2011) asserts that the social marketer should consider what the potential costs and benefits are for upstream stakeholders in terms of collaborating with certain partners, or with respect to removing an upstream barrier; for example, negative public perceptions may block a policy decision when politicians are concerned about re-election (Key & Czaplewski, 2017; Kennedy et al., 2018). Gordon (2013) emphasizes the importance of identifying "motivational exchanges" with upstream stakeholders to attract and engage them in making desired policy changes. For example, he recommends building trusting relationships with upstream stakeholders, and avoiding undue criticism, as this can be counterproductive in terms of influencing their behaviour. He further suggests researching "the needs and wants, goals and barriers" of various decision makers; presenting clear scientific evidence in favour of a particular policy change; and building public support for the change through media advocacy. In short, highlighting the benefits for upstream stakeholders and addressing potential barriers holds promise in terms of incentivizing them to change the structural environment (Gordon, 2013).

Beyond the central concept of exchange, there are a multitude of behavioural science theories and models that social marketers consult in order to understand how human behaviour can be influenced. We will elaborate on the Diffusion of Innovations Theory below, as it best reflects one of the instrumental strategies applied by the Nordic chefs to influence upstream stakeholders.

The Diffusion of Innovations Theory (Rogers, 1995) explains how new innovations such as ideas, products and behaviours spread throughout a society or among societies. In this theory, diffusion is defined as a process by which a) an innovation b) is communicated through certain channels c) over time d) among the members of a social system. According to innovation diffusion research, different segments of society adopt an innovation at different points in time. These different segments can be categorized according to how they approach new innovations.

In the Diffusion of Innovations Theory, there are five societal groups:

1) **Innovators**: the first to adopt a new innovation. They strongly influence early adopters.

2) **Early adopters**: the next group to adopt a new innovation. They have a high degree of opinion leadership and high social status.

3) **Early majority adopters**: this group adopts a new innovation after a degree of time that is significantly longer than the innovators and early adopters. They tend to have above average social status and have some opinion leadership.

4) **Late majority adopters**: this group will adopt an innovation after the average individual in the society. They tend to be skeptical about new innovations, have below average social status, and show very little opinion leadership.

5) **Laggards**: this group is the last to adopt an innovation. Individuals in this group tend to be averse to change, have lower social status, and have little to no opinion leadership.

For social marketers, understanding that various groups within society adopt new ideas, products and behaviours at different times and for different reasons, can allow for the development of targeted strategies that are tailored to each group. See **Figure 4.1.**

| Innovators | Early Adopters | Early Majority | Late Majority | Laggards |
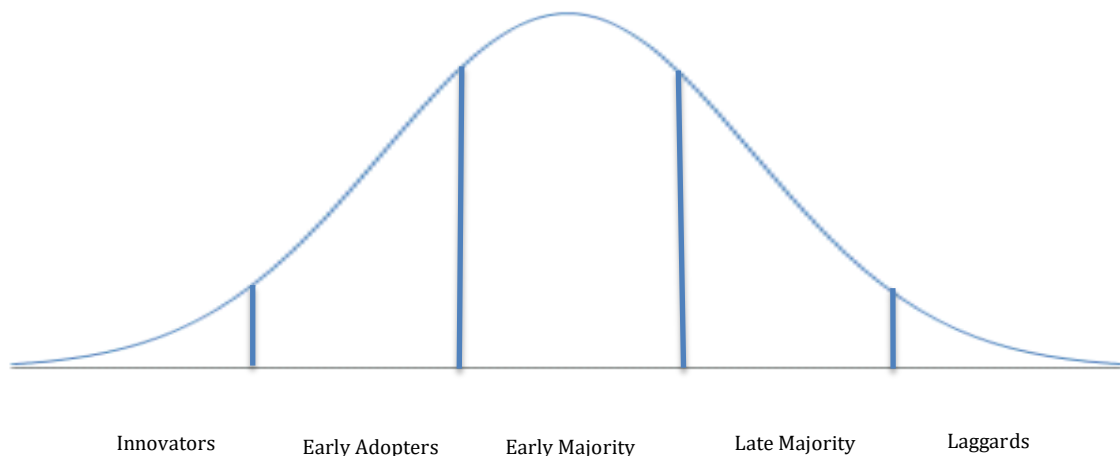
Figure 4.1. Diffusion of Innovations Theory

There are many more aspects to Diffusion of Innovations Theory, but we focus here on the societal groups and their social positioning in order to explain later how the chefs diffused buy-in among upstream stakeholders.

4.2. Social movement theories of change

Throughout history and to the present day, social movements have been important avenues for social change (Mirabito & Berry, 2015). In contrast to the field of social marketing, which involves professional social marketers being hired to develop programs to change individual or group behaviour, social movements are a form of collective action (Chesters & Welsh, 2011) whereby a group of people work together to change a social situation that they perceive as inadequate, unfair or wrong (Rodgers, 2018). Social movement participants usually engage in a series of activities (as opposed to only one or two) that have a broad social change goal. Social movement organizers can be viewed as 'challengers' to the established status quo, who "mobilize mostly outside of established political and institutional channels" (Johnston, 2014), and their claims are typically aimed at government authorities (Staggenborg & Ramos, 2016).

In the first half of the 20th century, social movement scholars heavily focused on labour movements and class-based conflicts as the primary source of social revolution, which emphasized the rational, structural and formal organization of social movements. In the 1960s and 1970s, with increasing economic security among the populace in Western society, contemporary post-industrial movements emerged that included both political *and* cultural aspects of modern life; for example, the peace, civil rights, feminist, LGBTQ, student, and environmental movements. Social movement scholars therefore began to study these cultural aspects (Melucci, 1985; Saunders, 2013) as well as the fluid and informal—rather than hierarchical—participatory networks among various social movement actors. These contemporary movements are formally known in social movement scholarship as New Social Movements (Staggenborg & Ramos, 2016; Saunders, 2013), as they primarily focus on issues related to lifestyle, identity, democratic participation, and self-expression (Baumgarten et al, 2014; Staggenborg & Ramos, 2016).

The development of collective identity and the role of emotions in social movements are two important processes studied by New Social Movement scholars and sociologists. They are considered to be motivating factors for New Social Movement emergence and social change (Staggenborg & Ramos, 2016; Jasper, 2018; Doestch-Kidder, 2012; Jasper, 1997). Since both of these processes played a key role in the NNF movement, each one will be explained in further detail.

Collective identity is an active, reflexive process by which a group defines, redefines, and distinguishes itself with respect to members inside and outside of the group, within a wider context of social opportunities and constraints (Melucci, 1995; Rodgers, 2018; Baumgarten et al., 2014). The process of defining the collective, the 'we', fosters solidarity (i.e. mutual feeling and action, mutual support and loyalty) and critically, cohesion among the group, which in turn facilitates collective action to take place in an organized way (Saunders, 2013). Baumgarten et al (2014) emphasize that "collective

identity is crucial in generating collective action and in sustaining groups and movements over time". Shared experiences, values, goals, and social norms along with the cultural production of stories and symbols contribute to a sense of collective agency within the group that makes collective action and social movement formation possible (Snow, 2001; Staggenborg & Ramos, 2016; Saunders, 2013).

According to Jasper (2014), "some social movements emerge from a pre-existing collective identity". For example, national identity, which encompasses the shared beliefs, values and traditions of a particular nation, is considered to be one of the most successful forms of collective identity throughout history.

Emotions play a central role in learning and meaning-making during the various stages of social movements. They help focus the attention of those who first hear and begin to care about an issue and they help maintain group membership among social movement actors (Jasper, 2011; Rodgers, 2018; Baumgarten et al, 2014). Emotions are intricately connected with our thoughts, beliefs and morals. According to Jasper (1997),

> Our cognitive beliefs about how the world is, our moral vision of how the world should be, and our emotional attachments to that world march in close step. Emotions don't merely accompany our deepest desires and satisfactions, they constitute them, permeating our ideas, identities and interests…emotions involve socially learned beliefs and assumptions open to cognitive persuasion…a social movement organizer deploys different language and arouses different emotions in her listeners if she paints her opponents as inherently malevolent rather than well-meaning but ignorant. Emotions are closely connected to the cognitive meanings one constructs about the world, and to the moral valuations accompanying them.

It is partly through this dynamic interplay between cognition, morality and emotions that motivation takes place, with emotions providing the key driving force for action (Rodgers, 2018; Baumgarten et al, 2014). During decision-making processes, emotions depend on our cognitive appraisals of a situation. Our belief that change is possible is more than a rational calculation; it also involves positive emotions and moods related to

confidence (Baumgarten et al, 2014). In this sense, emotions are actually a part of rational action, not separate from it (Jasper, 1997), as has been posited in Western scholarship until recently (Jasper, 2018). Much of this feeling-thinking process is beneath our conscious awareness (Baumgarten et al, 2014). According to Goodwin and Jasper (2004), there is a growing recognition in social movement scholarship

> …that people are much more than rational actors. In deciding whether and how to engage in contentious politics, people have to make sense of themselves and their worlds and the relationship between the two. They must evaluate their situations, consider their sometimes ambiguous or contradictory desires, confront their fears, assess their own values as well as those of mainstream society and navigate possible conflicts therein, conjure up the unknowable future, and so on. Much more than rational calculation occurs as people engage in this kind of (sometimes conscious, sometimes less-than-fully conscious) interpretive work. An investigation that presumes rational calculation alone is simply inadequate.

Presenting ideas and facts is therefore not as meaningful or powerful if not combined with shared positive emotions, such as "trust, fondness, confidence and pride in our own group". This is also true with regard to motivating political players specifically. Facts are inadequate without some sort of emotional resonance (Rodgers, 2018; Jasper, 2014; Baumgarten et al, 2014).

Both collective identity and emotions can be considered to be the 'glue' that holds social movements together (Jasper, 1997; Rodgers, 2018; DeLind, 2006; Baumgarten et al, 2014). The process through which a collective identity emerges has "strong emotional underpinnings. We like, love, trust, admire and simply feel comfortable with those with whom we identify…collective identity depends on the emotions we feel towards a community" (Baumgarten et al, 2014). The feelings of solidarity and commitment that emerge from collective identity processes are strong motivators for action in social movements (Staggenborg & Ramos, 2016; Jasper, 2018; Doestch-Kidder, 2012; Jasper, 1997).

Sociologist Dr. Randall Collins (2011) adds another layer to our understanding of emotions and the emergence of collective identity by explaining that face-to-face interactions with others carries a certain level and type of emotional energy. He identifies these face-to-face interactions as Interaction Rituals.

According to Collins,

> The basic mechanism of social interaction is the Interaction Ritual. Its ingredients are [an] assembly of human bodies in the same place, mutual focus of attention, and sharing a common mood. When these ingredients are strong enough, the Interaction Ritual takes off, heightening mutual focus into inter-subjectivity, and intensifying the shared mood into a group emotion. Voice and gesture become synchronized, sweeping up participants into rhythmic entrainment. Successful Interaction Rituals generate trans-situational outcomes, including feelings of solidarity…and most importantly…emotional energy. The person who has gone through a successful ritual feels energized: more confident, enthusiastic, proactive…emotional energy is the raw experience that we call 'will'…When one is full of emotional energy, one moves into action, takes on obstacles and overcomes them; the right words flow to one's tongue, clear thoughts to one's head. One feels determined and successful…

Collins further explains that extremely high emotional energy individuals tend to be the centre of attention, to be the orator or performer at the centre of crowds. These individuals have the ability to channel the emotions of large crowds such that will power becomes less an attribute of the individual and more the aggregation of all of the individuals who come together in an Interaction Ritual (Collins, 2011).

4.3. The New Nordic Food movement

Local food movements have emerged over the past few decades in Western countries as an alternative to corporate-led global industrialized food processes (Bauermeister, 2016). Demand from urban-centred upper-middle-class citizens has increased (Newman et al., 2015; Nonini, 2013) over time for foods that meet higher quality standards with

respect to health and environmental sustainability (Newman et al, 2015; Bauermeister, 2016; Forman, 2008).

Food activists around the world have met that demand by developing local food initiatives, such as Farm-to-Fork, Buying Local and Slow Food, all of which aim to contribute to more self-reliant food economies (Feenstra, 2002). Farmer's markets, small-scale farming, community-supported agriculture, and community gardens are also on the rise (Noll & Werkheiser, 2018), as is activism around food justice and food security (Nonini, 2013). At times, local food movements involve loosely structured alliances among organizations such as food banks, farmers' organizations, environmental non-profits, churches, city governments, and food workers' unions (Nonini, 2013), which help facilitate the success of these initiatives. According to Feenstra (2002), the local food movement is "a collaborative effort to build more locally-based, self-reliant food economies—one in which sustainable food production, processing, distribution, and consumption [are] integrated to enhance the economic, environmental and local health of a particular place." DeLind (2011) further characterizes local food movements as being "place sensitive (contextually aware), values oriented (collaborative), and participatory in nature (self-reliance)".

In addition to the health and sustainability benefits of local food movements, one of their greatest strengths is that food production is connected to a sense of place. This provides an anchor point for knowledge sharing and cultural expression. In the process of working within local food systems, people have opportunities to regain and share knowledge about their local community resources (e.g. biodiversity, seasonality, etc) (Starr, 2010). They also form stronger connections to the place that they live and the food that is grown there. These may invoke various forms of cultural expression, such as music, art and dance, all of which are important for the growth, development and resilience of local communities (DeLind, 2010; Noll & Werkheiser, 2018). The central

concept of many local food movements, then, is "food as community (instead of commodity)." (Starr, 2010; Noll & Werkheiser, 2018).

Though local food movements have received much attention and praise over the years, perhaps the most common critique about them in the scholarly literature and in the media is that they are elitist (Starr, 2010). More specifically, critics claim that local food movements tend to engage mostly white, affluent people and exclude people of colour as well as those who have lower incomes (AuCoin & Fry, 2015). A less common but equally important critique is that local food movements primarily use the language and assumptions of the marketplace while overlooking "the sensual, the emotional, the expressive for maintaining layered sets of embodied relationships to food and to place" (DeLind, 2006). In other words, in much of the local food movement discourse, success is still primarily measured in terms of market value and profit generation rather than through social, cultural and spiritual richness. However, there are exceptions. The New Nordic Food movement is one of them.

The New Nordic Food movement is a social movement focused on Nordic identity and high quality, local food from Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Greenland, Iceland, the Faroe Islands, and Åland. The movement emerged in the early 2000s, when top Danish chef Claus Meyer, dissatisfied with the state of food culture in the Nordic region, co-wrote and drafted ten principles that described a new food ethic for the Nordic countries. These principles—based on the importance of using local, raw, and sustainable ingredients that reflected the seasons, climate and landscape of the region were debated and refined by twelve leading Nordic chefs, and then written down in a document that became known as the New Nordic Kitchen Manifesto[20] (Skylare, E., n.d.); New Nordic Kitchen Manifesto, 2004).

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[20] Please see Appendix 4 to read the ten principles of the New Nordic Kitchen Manifesto

The process of developing and signing the manifesto turned leading chefs from professionals who cooked great food into role models for society (Thurfjell, K., 2015). But the manifesto was just one piece of a larger, transformative plan to influence the direction of Nordic cuisine (Greenwood, 2010). Shortly after releasing the manifesto, the twelve chefs met with a range of key stakeholders in the Nordic food industry at a culinary symposium in Denmark (Byrkjeflot et al., 2013), whose support would be needed to push the agenda forward: a Nordic politician, high-profile government officials, business leaders, scientists, farmers, researchers, teachers, retailers, chefs and citizens (Skylare, E. (n.d.); Byrkjeflot, et al., 2013).

The focus of the symposium was not on 'buying local' or 'sustainability' or 'animal welfare'. Rather, discussions were framed around two questions:

(1) What would it take to become one of the greatest food regions in the world?

(2) What would the benefits be down the road? (Thurfjell, K., 2015)

The symposium acted as a catalyst for change among decision makers and inspired them to take the words of the manifesto into reality. Within two years of the symposium, the Nordic Council of Ministers[21] had made a political declaration of support for the NNF concept, offered 5 million USD to fund a government program called New Nordic Food—Enhancing Innovation in the Food, Tourism, and Experience Industry (2007-2009), and the Ministers of Agriculture and Food in Denmark had offered 3 million EUR in funding towards related initiatives (Bech-Larsen, 2016). A massive 50 million EUR research project at the University of Copenhagen was also funded to

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[21] According to their website, "The Nordic Council of Ministers is the official body for inter-governmental co-operation in the Nordic Region". For more information, please visit:
https://www.norden.org/en/nordic-council-ministers

explore a New Nordic Diet[22] (C.Meyer, personal communication, Sept 5, 2018; Micheelsen et al., 2013).

The political will generated from these activities became the impetus for a food revolution—the New Nordic Food (NNF) movement—that spread far and wide across the Nordic region (Danbolt, 2016) and continues to this day. Over the past two decades, the NNF concept has progressively influenced the mindsets of decision-makers and citizens in Nordic countries (Sundbo et al., 2013). The movement has led to the rebirth of the microbrewery and the local cheese maker (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022; Bodil Cornell, personal communication, August 30, 2021), and it has led to collaborations in the fields of art, music, and fashion, among others. It has diffused into local schools and hospitals through nutritious meal programs (B. Lindfors, personal communication, July 1, 2021; NCM, 2013) and some have even taken the principles of the manifesto and applied them to domains such as furniture design (Lynes, 2015). Though a direct causal link cannot be made with the NNF movement, there is also empirical evidence that Nordic eating behaviours have been shifting. According to the Nordic Council of Ministers (2018), in Denmark and Sweden, a few recent studies demonstrate that there is a growing trend among the general public towards plant-based diets. In short, the chefs' leadership in driving the NNF movement appears to have contributed to moving high quality, local and regional food from the margins to the centre of Nordic life (NCM, 2013).

Along with these systemic changes in the Nordic food industry, the Nordic people involved in the movement have also been transformed. They have more confidence in themselves to make high quality Nordic food, and they are proud of their climate, soils and waters, as well as the richness of flora and fauna found within them (L.Sorensen, personal communication, Sept 19, 2018; M.Grontoft, personal communication, Sept 1, 2018; Bech-Larsen & Kolle, 2016). As Leif Sorensen, a leading chef from the Faroe

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[22] The purpose of this project was to develop a Nordic diet that would be suitable for daily consumption, test its health benefits, and promote the diet among Danish people

Islands, states, "We believe in ourselves again" (L.Sorensen, personal communication, Sept 19, 2018).

4.4. Methods

This research was qualitative and exploratory. In order to better understand the chefs' strategy and impact in engaging upstream stakeholders during the NNF movement's early years, we conducted seven in-depth semi-structured interviews with a cross-section of the movement's principal organizers (i.e. chefs; government officials) as well as key upstream stakeholders (i.e. a Danish politician). The interviews focused on the first eight years of the movement, from 2003 to 2010. Two Nordic chefs, two government officials, one business leader, and one politician were interviewed, as well as one informational aide who provided background context for the NNF movement.

To be eligible for an interview, potential interviewees had to:

(1) Have lived and worked in a Nordic country between 2003 and 2010 <u>AND</u>

(2) Be one of the twelve chefs who signed the New Nordic Kitchen Manifesto <u>OR</u>

(3) Be a key source of background information/context on the NNF movement <u>OR</u>

(4) Have been a primary catalyst to at least one of the following, between 2003 and 2010:

    a. Major source of funding from a Nordic country or Nordic Council of Ministers

    b. Major government food or food-related policy change (e.g. rules for slaughter houses) in one or more Nordic countries

    c. Start up of key Nordic government program related to the NNF movement

    d. Market share increase for locally- or regionally-made cheeses, meats or breweries

Interview questions for the chefs explored their overall approach as well as the specific strategies and tactics they used to engage upstream stakeholders. Interview questions for the key upstream stakeholder (i.e. the Nordic politician) focused on his reasons for engaging in the movement. For example, what were the reasons that the Nordic governments committed significant amounts of funding, started new programs, drafted new policies or created more market share for small-scale producers in the Nordic region.

Interviews were conducted over the phone or via video call and ranged from approximately 40 to 80 minutes in duration, with the average time being 70 minutes. Interviewees did not receive any remuneration for participating in this study. Since one of the goals of the study is to explore and gain an in-depth understanding of the approach used by the Nordic chefs to engage upstream stakeholders, nonprobability sampling was used. More specifically, we used a snowball sampling technique to identify interviewees. See **Table 4.1.** for the list of interviewees.

Table 4.1. List of interviewees from the NNF movement

Interviewee Name	Interviewee occupation during the NNF movement's early years (2003-2010)
Claus Meyer	World-renowned Danish chef and TV co-host of *Scandinavian Cooking*; Driving force behind the NNF movement
Hans Christian Schmidt	Minister of Food and Agriculture in Denmark
Lise Lykke Steffensen	Senior official, Nordic Council of Ministers
Magnus Grontoft	Program Manager, Nordic Council of Ministers
Bettina Lindfors	Communications specialist, Nordic Council of Ministers
Leif Sorensen	Top chef in Faroe Islands
Bodil Cornell	Director of Eldrimner, a Swedish organization that provides educational and skills-building opportunities for small-scale artisan food producers

Secondary research was also conducted to supplement data from the interviews. Government reports and websites, books, journal articles and media articles, as well as special documents from the chefs and the Nordic Council of Ministers were read and analyzed. **Table 4.2.** lists the documents that were selected for the data analysis.

Table 4.2. List of NNF documents that were selected and analyzed

Type of document	Number of documents coded
Chefs' manifesto	1
Aarhus Declaration	1
Nordic government reports	5
Nordic government websites	9
Noma's menu	1
Media articles	18
Journal articles & book chapters	16
Cookbooks	1
Internal communication	1
Total documents coded	53

4.4.1. Data Analysis

Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed using speech to text software (www.temi.com). As a refresher, the research questions were the following:

RQ1 - What was the strategy used by the New Nordic Food movement chefs to engage upstream stakeholders in the Nordic food industry during the movement's early years (2003-2010)?

RQ2 - To what extent did the chefs' strategy influence upstream stakeholders to make significant changes to the Nordic food industry during the New Nordic Food movement's early years?

RQ3 - What might the social marketing discipline learn from the New Nordic Food movement in terms of engaging upstream stakeholders, and influencing socio-behavioural change more generally?

In order to answer these questions, a grounded theory approach informed by Charmaz (2014) was used. To identify patterns and themes across the data, the interview transcripts, government documents and websites, journal articles, and media articles were coded in three phases: initial coding, focused coding with memos, and theoretical sampling. In the initial coding phase, the principal researcher coded the data paragraph by paragraph to identify key ideas. In the focused coding phase, the researcher selected the initial codes that were the most salient (i.e. analytically meaningful), and wrote memos on these. When the principal researcher compared the memos from across the interview transcripts and additional documents, tentative categories began to emerge from this process. These were written down and then discussed with the second researcher. In the third phase, the principal researcher grouped overarching categories together based on conceptual similarities and frequency of mention. For RQ1, for example, in organizing the interview transcripts and documents into overarching categories, the researcher identified which elements of the chefs' approach appeared to be most influential in compelling upstream stakeholders to make significant changes to the food industry during the NNF movement's early years. The emergent overarching categories were tested and retested by continuing with initial and focused coding of the remaining data, and then comparing that new data with the tentative categories until theoretical saturation was reached. Initial and focused coding of media articles offered a few fresh perspectives, but no new categories. In contrast, the initial and focused coding of Hans Christian Schmidt's interview[23] revealed a fourth point to the chefs' strategy in engaging upstream stakeholders.

In order to add to the robustness of the research process, a methodological journal was kept and consulted frequently. This journal helped the principal researcher to grapple with concepts and to keep track of methodological decisions made.

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[23] This was the seventh and final interview

The findings of this research may be used to inform upstream social marketing theory and practice.

4.5. Results: The chefs' four-point strategy to create change (RQ1)

After analyzing the data from the seven in-depth interviews and supplementary documents, the researchers identified a four-point strategy that the chefs applied to create transformative change in the Nordic food industry. The four-point strategy was largely intentional on the part of the chefs, though they did not present it as such during the interviews. The strategy below, organized by the researchers, has been presented in this way so that social marketers may coherently apply it in their own work.

The strategy is as follows (each of these points will be discussed in more detail in the following sections):

- **Identify key upstream stakeholders**

- **Present a compelling concept to key upstream stakeholders at the right time, with dynamic leaders who have high levels of social capital**

    Dynamic leaders

    A compelling concept

    The right time

- **Promote the concept using both instrumental and inspirational approaches**

    The instrumental approach

        Facilitating active multi-stakeholder participation

        Appealing to self-interest

        Diffusing buy-in

    The inspirational approach

        Applying heliotropy

    Combining instrumental and inspirational approaches

- **Take action to realize the concept**

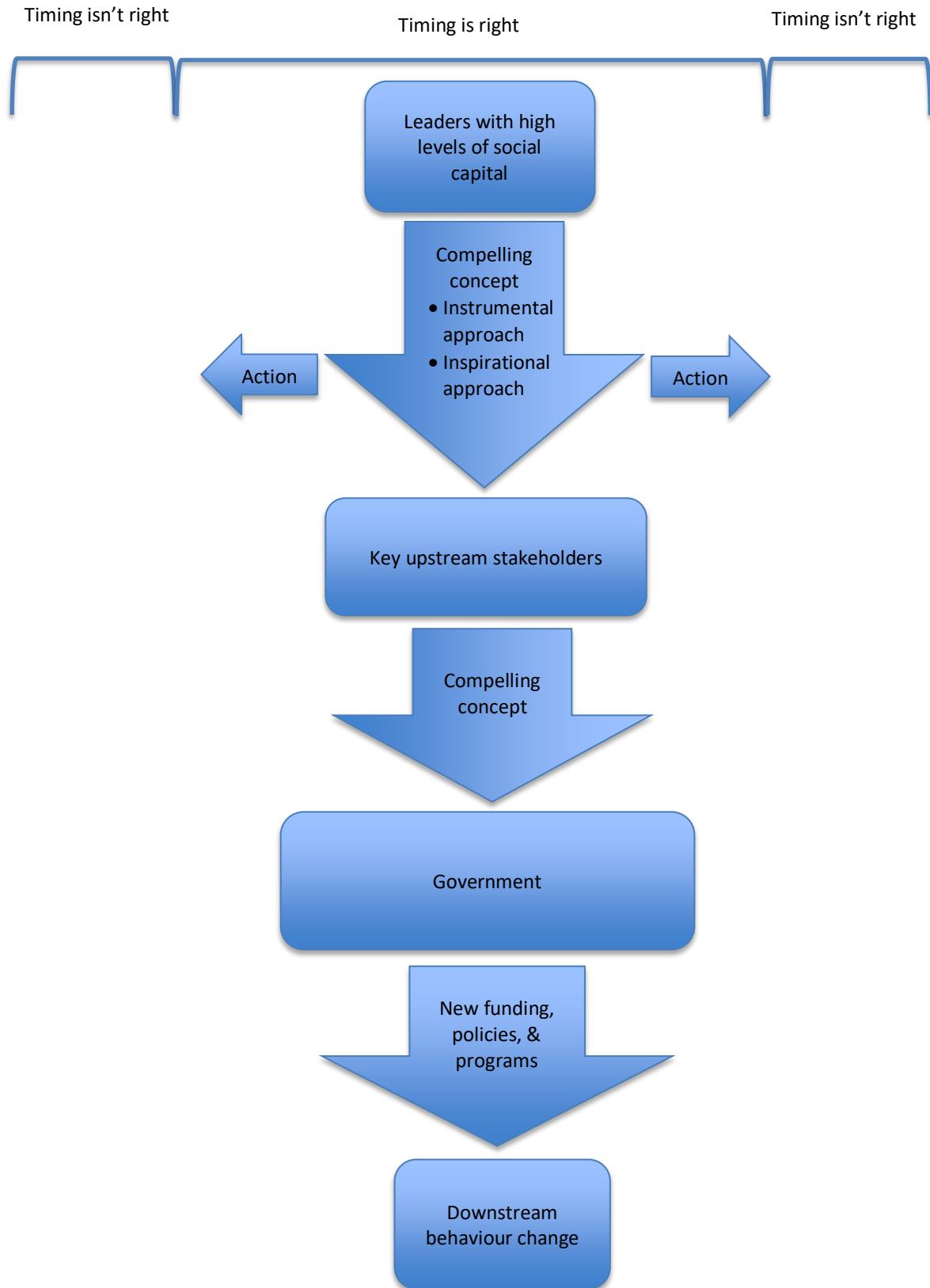See **Figure 4.2.** for an illustration of the strategy.

Figure 4.2. The chefs' strategy to create change in the Nordic food industry

In the following sections, the key elements of the chefs' strategy will be described, followed by theoretical explanations from the fields of social marketing and social movements. See **Table 4.3.**

Table 4.3. Instrumental and inspirational approaches with corresponding disciplines, theories, and concepts

Approach	Discipline	Theory/concept
Instrumental	Social Marketing	Exchange Theory
		Diffusion of Innovations Theory
Inspirational	Social Movements	Emotions
		Collective Identity
		Interaction Ritual Theory

4.5.1. Identify key upstream stakeholders

The chefs decided to invite upstream stakeholders from both government and industry to the symposium because they were convinced that significant change would not happen without them. They chose specific decision-makers to be at the conference that they knew would be 'movers and shakers' (NCM, 2008), and that they knew had the capacity to influence other upstream stakeholders (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018).

The two clearest examples in the Nordic government are Lise Lykke Steffensen and Hans Christian Schmidt. Claus had approached Lise, who was a senior official of the Nordic Council of Ministers at the time, saying that he had "this really, really great idea about doing something with…Nordic food" (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021). The two met many times before Claus asked Lise to help him co-organize the Nordic Kitchen Symposium that was held in November 2004. They received money from

the Nordic Council of Ministers and made a formal steering group in preparation for the symposium (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021).

Before the symposium, Meyer also approached Hans Christian Schmidt, who was the Danish Minister of Food and Agriculture at the time, and who would soon hold the Danish chairmanship at the Nordic Council of Ministers (C Meyer, personal communication, Sept 5, 2018). The Minister had recently fired Meyer from some consulting work that he had been doing with the Danish government (Byrkjeflot et al, 2013; C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018).[24] The government at the time was also right-wing ideologically, and believed that "government should not interfere with the markets" (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). Surprisingly, Meyer approached Schmidt and invited him to open the symposium. Meyer recalls, "I needed him to be there, to have all the major companies to also be…represented…the big agriculture, big food industry kind of went hand in hand with the government in Denmark" (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). The Minister was impressed by the invitation, so he accepted, and opened the symposium (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018).

When the symposium was over, both Hans Christian Schmidt and Lise Lykke Steffensen acted as a bridge to the rest of the Nordic government. Both of them were highly influential at convincing senior government officials to accept the NNF concept as an official item on the Nordic government agenda (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021; C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018; M. Grontoft, personal communication, Sept 1, 2018; H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

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[24] In Hans Christian Schmidt's interview, he said that the firing process was due to reductions by the government at the time and that it was not him alone who did the firing (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022)

In the upstream social marketing literature, achieving desired behaviour and social change requires knowledge about upstream stakeholders, the degree to which they could affect the social change process, and the role they might play (Buyucek et al., 2016; McHugh et al., 2018; Hastings, 2007). McHugh et al. (2018) offer excellent tools for identifying and classifying stakeholders—including upstream stakeholders—in social marketing programs. Though there is an emphasis in the upstream social marketing literature on conducting consumer research with respect to upstream stakeholders (Kennedy et al., 2018; Hastings, 2007; Gordon, 2013), there is no specific guidance on how to identify particular upstream stakeholders that may have an influence on their peers. Likewise, in the social movement literature, the identification and engagement of specific upstream stakeholders as a means to effect social change is not much theorized. Jasper (2014) recognizes that political parties and legislators are usually the main targets of social movements, and that social movement actors sometimes seek statements of support from political leaders who may capitalize on the issue at hand to gain more votes. Saunders (2013) further provides some empirical evidence that social movement actors who lack a relationship with the government may select allies who do.

4.5.2. Present a compelling concept to key upstream stakeholders at the right time, with dynamic leaders who have high levels of social capital

Dynamic leaders who have high levels of social capital

Among the interviewees and across the documents, it was commonly understood that the driving force at the heart of the NNF movement is the internationally renowned Danish chef Claus Meyer (NCM, 2013; Sundbo et al, 2013; H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022). It was Meyer who first approached top chef René Redzepi in 2002 to start the restaurant Noma, which would later sky rocket to international fame for its unique spin on Nordic cuisine (Byrjeflot et al, 2013). It was Meyer who approached Lise Lykke Steffensen to organize a symposium that would bring together many stakeholders in the Nordic food industry (L.L. Steffensen, personal

communication, July 6, 2021). And it was Meyer who convinced corporate CEOs from large Nordic agribusinesses to commit to investing more of their market share in small-scale producers (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). Though Meyer does not explicitly state the importance of having dynamic leaders such as himself and René Redzepi leading the way, he does acknowledge that he was the brainchild of the movement, and that his ideas and choices in the early days contributed to kick starting significant changes in the Nordic food industry (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018).

Meyer's ability to motivate people comes, at least in part, by his electric personality. In the interviews, Meyer's colleagues describe him in this way:

"Claus Meyer is a good talker…Claus Meyer is probably—he is the most important person in this. And he has done…nearly everything [chuckles]. He is really the person, the idea maker behind it."

"He's very…he has a strong character and very charismatic. He gets people's attention…he has this wonderful feeling and he's really somebody that drives initiative."

"Claus was the inspired person who had the visions…very convincing."

"He's a very good guy, very good guy, very good guy. He has really fought for what he has received."

At the time that the 2004 symposium was held, Meyer was already a well-known celebrity chef, as he was one of the hosts of the TV show *Scandinavian Cooking*, which was broadcast in 130 countries with over 100 million viewers. He was also a co-owner of the newly opened Noma restaurant in Copenhagen (Byrkjeflot et al, 2013). As such, he had a high level of social capital with connections throughout the food industry, which

made him more influential among upstream stakeholders (NCM, 2013; C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 5, 2018; L. Sorensen, personal communication, Sept 19, 2018; H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022; Thurfjell, n.d.).

In social marketing, leaders are sometimes called upon to set an example for others whose behaviour social marketers are aiming to influence (Daellenbach et al, 2016; Fehring et al, 2019). However, most of the time it is social marketers who act as advocates for a social objective that they believe is positive for the priority group and wider society (Gordon, 2013). In contrast, strong, dynamic leaders who have passion for a cause greater than themselves are an important element of social movement practice. In social movements, as in the case of the NNF movement, leaders are often the initiators of change, and they are driven primarily by intrinsic motivation (Jobin-Leeds & AgitArte, 2016). Though many people in a population may feel dissatisfied or possess grievances, movement formation may never occur unless societal leaders take the initiative to persuade and organize supporters (Staggenborg & Ramos, 2016). Further, social movement leaders—such as Meyer—who have a lot of social connections, can more easily exert their influence within the political landscape (Levkoe & Wakefield, 2014).

A compelling concept

The interviews revealed that along with Claus Meyer's leadership and electric personality, he also presented a compelling concept.[25] He had a novel idea, and a different way of thinking about how Nordic cuisine "should be sourced, prepared and served" (Sundbo et al., 2013) that completely upended the status quo in the Nordic region food world (Danbolt, 2016).

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[25] According to Sundbo et al. (2013), a concept "may include, for example, methods and principles, aesthetics and ethics" as well as "new…goods and service products, new processes and procedures, new market behaviour and new consumption patterns…a concept is not a characteristic of scientific knowledge, it is an idea about a business, but it resembles a paradigm in that a fundamental idea is the basis for certain outputs, methods and norms in the operating community."

For hundreds of years, food in the Nordic countries was considered only as a means with which to feed oneself and one's family. People ate the food that was available to them (Amilien & Notaker, 2018), and there was no distinct cuisine or culture in relation to food, as there is in Southern European countries such as France, Spain and Italy (Larsen, 2010). As Magnus Grontoft describes it,

> In the Nordic countries, you have four months of growing, and then you have eight months of surviving. It is cold and winter and snow. So, you know, people ate a lot of bad food because they just had to survive… food was more [like] some kind of [survival] kit (M. Grontoft, personal communication, Sept 1, 2018).

Before the NNF movement began, the Nordic country governments had pre-existing policies and programs with respect to food that focused mostly on health and safety aspects. The compelling concept that Claus Meyer and his colleagues ushered in was that food can be understood in a much more holistic way. Important connections can and should be made between food and society, culture, spirituality, the economy, and the environment (B. Lindfors, personal communication, July 1, 2021; C. Meyer, personal communication, September 3, 2018). Meyer and the other chefs believe that food should be in harmony with nature, it should be healthy, and produced via a combination of traditional and modern preparation methods (Sundbo et al., 2013).

The chefs also wanted upstream stakeholders to see and enact higher moral standards with respect to food (e.g. respecting animal welfare), while at the same time highlighting the taste and experience aspects. Additionally, it was important to the chefs for Nordic upstream stakeholders to rethink *Nordic* food, specifically. What was special about their region, their climate, soils and waters? What kind of food could they produce, and could they do so in traditional yet innovative ways? How might food reflect Nordic identity? What the chefs did when they presented the NNF concept to upstream stakeholders was to essentially imbue food with meaning, breathing life and

complexity into their understanding of Nordic food and each other (NCM, 2013). Hans Christian Schmidt expressed in his interview that the Nordic government initiatives that followed the 2004 symposium were "very, very successful" and that "all of it was coming from the idea"(H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

In social marketing practice, a central, compelling concept is not usually the basis for social marketing interventions. Rather, social marketing interventions tend to centre on a value proposition (French, J. et al, 2017; Godwin et al, 2016), which is similar but does not necessarily include an aspirational or inspirational component. In contrast, a "big, change-oriented idea" that encourages people to aspire to something greater is a key characteristic of many social movements. As Johnston (2014) states, "…ideas that envision new social arrangements, new possibilities, new policies, and new political alignments give social movements shape and motion".

The right time

In 2004, when the symposium was held, Meyer felt that the moment was right for the chefs to present the NNF concept to upstream stakeholders (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). From the interviews and across the documents, it is clear that there were five distinct reasons why the timing was right:

First, globalization and industrialized food processes were causing a reaction among the Nordic general public. There was widespread dissatisfaction with industrialized food, as well as growing feelings of alienation and consequently a search for identity and belonging (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021). There had also been discussions in the media and on television programs about the state of Nordic food since the 1980s (M. Grontoft, personal communication, Sept 1, 2018), so the general public was aware of the need for a change. Claus Meyer recalls,

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People basically—the market wanted this change….we basically came in a little bit ahead of the market, so there was a lot of unreleased energy, a lot of unreleased support for any kind of product or service or execution of anything related to this concept. So the market developed, transformed quicker than supply. (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018).

Second, other food movements had already emerged and were becoming popular around the world, such as the Slow Food movement. This movement had introduced Nordic people to higher quality, local and regional food (B. Cornell, personal communication, Aug 30, 2021). Third, Nordic governments already had a solid foundation for cooperation, including on food and agriculture, and politicians were looking for solutions to various problems facing the Nordic people, including the impoverished state of Nordic food (B. Lindfors, personal communication, July 1, 2021). According to the Nordic Council of Ministers, Nordic politicians "were keenly aware of the growing movement around food and stated that this had links to important political issues such as health, rural development, export, tourism, and the general growth of the experience industry." (NCM, 2013). Fourth, top Nordic chefs were increasingly influencing market conditions in the food industry by winning international competitions and appearing in television programs. They were therefore ready to make a commitment to a cause greater than their restaurants (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2021). And finally, leading up to the symposium, Claus Meyer and the internationally renowned chef and owner of Noma restaurant, René Redzepi, had had a number of in-person and phone conversations with individuals from various sectors of the food industry about the NNF concept (Leif Sorensen, personal communication, Sept 19, 2018; H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022). This prepared them for the multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral discussions that took place at the symposium.

In the upstream social marketing literature, there is little attention paid to timing and strategic opportunities to influence decision makers. Gordon (2013) does, however, mention that "timing and opportunity are critical factors", since it may be years before

another similar opportunity arises to ensure that a particular issue or policy is on the political agenda. Gordon (2013) further explains that, "failure to engage the relevant stakeholders upstream when the opportunities arise may cause them to form different opinions than the ones encouraged." In the social movement literature, timing and strategic opportunities are well researched and much discussed. According to Amenta et al. (2010), when social movement actors successfully place their issue on the political agenda, they have increased the probability of achieving their social change objective: "influencing the political agenda matters for achieving legislative gains, and movement protest is most influential at this early stage of the policy process." In the case of the NNF movement, Nordic politicians were aware of the problems with Nordic food culture, but had not yet taken action to remedy them. This represented a political opportunity that the Nordic chefs seized, to the benefit of all.

4.5.3. Promote the concept using both instrumental and inspirational approaches

In this section, the chefs' instrumental and inspirational approaches will be described and theoretically explained, and then an example will be provided as to how the chefs combined the two approaches when promoting the NNF concept to upstream stakeholders.

Promoting a compelling concept: The instrumental approach

In promoting the NNF concept, the chefs used an instrumental approach by strategically managing people, resources, and time before, during and after the symposium. Bringing a number of different stakeholders together from various sectors to engage in dialogue and co-creation, appealing to upstream stakeholders' self-interest in adopting the concept, and then diffusing buy-in through a series of commitments were the main elements of this approach. Each one will be elaborated upon in turn, and their relevance to social marketing theory and practice will be explained.

Facilitating active multi-stakeholder participation

Appealing to self-interest

Diffusing buy-in

Facilitating active multi-stakeholder participation

Though there are conflicting accounts among interviewees in terms of who exactly was at the 2004 symposium, there was general agreement among the interviewees that the open, collaborative dialogue facilitated at the symposium among a wide range of key stakeholders was an influential impetus for the NNF movement (C.Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018; L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021; M. Grontoft, personal communication, Sept 1, 2018). The "movers and shakers" of the Nordic food industry were invited to attend (NCM, 2008), as well as anyone who had an interest in Nordic food. Nordic chefs, government officials, a politician, business managers, farmers, teachers, scientists, and foodies began speaking to each other under the banner of the two aspirational questions mentioned earlier (Kirk, 2018). In this way, a diverse range of people within the Nordic food industry were able to share ideas, collaborate, and provide benefits to each other in tangible and intangible ways (e.g. new business partnerships).

Lise Lykke Steffensen describes the symposium:

> At the kitchen symposium, it was much more launching ideas and how we show things…Think of it, people coming together for the first time. There, you had some curious [people] that had sponsored some of the symposium from the industry, and of course they came to see 'Okay, what is this?'. Then you had some presentations by people who worked with this…concept…And then you had information about the gene bank…And you had some from the organic association…And then you had, of course, the presentation by the chefs on their manifesto, on the kitchen manifesto. So…there must have been something from everybody, nothing was formulated…" (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021).

All of the symposium attendees were encouraged to be active participants in reaching common goals to transform Nordic food culture. The Nordic Kitchen Manifesto, for example, was co-created by all twelve of the top chefs, who had engaged in a lengthy debate about their values and goals in relation to Nordic food prior to the symposium. There was also little pressure on upstream stakeholders to make commitments that they did not feel comfortable with. Instead, they were positively influenced by other attendees to make commitments through low stakes dialogue as well as witnessing the public commitments of their peers (Claus Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). Further, the engagement of many stakeholders in the Nordic food world was not limited to the symposium. Claus Meyer and René Redzepi had invested in relationships prior to the symposium and followed up with key stakeholders, such as small-scale producers, afterwards. In doing so, they began to rediscover and rebuild networks within the Nordic food system (L. Sorensen, personal communication, Sept 19, 2018; B. Cornell, personal communication, August 30, 2021; NCM, 2013; NCM, 2010).

By investing in relationships with many stakeholders and encouraging their active participation, Meyer and the co-organizers of the symposium engaged in a more empowering process than simply managing stakeholders. The stakeholders at the symposium, whether upstream or not, all had a voice while engaging in a process of group learning in order to develop a shared vision for a NNF culture. In a convergence of bottom-up and top-down motivation, they were co-owners of the ambitious change being sought, with joint responsibilities to realize the collective vision (B. Lindfors, personal communication, July 1, 2021; C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 5, 2018; Senge, 1990; McHugh et al., 2018). It was through that co-creation process that previously held assumptions about Nordic food were challenged (McHugh et al., 2018). In that sense, this particular aspect of the chefs' approach was not entirely instrumental.

The importance of multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement is widely acknowledged in the social marketing literature (i.e. both upstream and downstream) as being

important for solving complex or systemic problems, such as climate change, obesity, alcohol misuse, and conservation issues (Hastings et al, 2000; Andreasen, 2006; Gordon, 2013; Buyucek et al, 2016; McHugh et al., 2018; Sorensen et al., 2013; Scott & Higgins, 2012). However, it is arguable as to the extent to which multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement is used in social marketing practice. According to McHugh et al (2018), social marketing has received substantial criticism for its myopic focus on the priority group, to the exclusion of other stakeholders. Multi-stakeholder dialogue and engagement is particularly important at the upstream level, where the buy-in of multiple individuals or groups may be required to change the structural environment.

Appealing to self-interest

The interviews and the document analysis revealed that one of the key elements in the chefs' instrumental approach to engage upstream stakeholders was appealing to their self-interest. Claus Meyer, in particular, confidently presented multiple clear benefits for all of the symposium stakeholders as well as the Nordic people, and convinced them that there was something to be gained for each of them, should they adopt the NNF concept:

> What we did…was…opportunistic based on the optimistic idea that this would be relevant to anyone if only they would listen a little bit. And so we didn't bother about segmentation because we knew that people would get it sooner or later. It was a win, win, win scenario. (C.Meyer, personal communication, September 3, 2018).

Meyer and his colleagues helped Nordic government officials and politicians to see unique branding opportunities for the region, national economic gains through tourism, and new markets for local products such as meats and cheeses, as well as employment opportunities for local small-scale producers (Byrkjeflot et al, 2013). They were also invited to consider that working collaboratively across Nordic countries to transform food culture, rather than working individually, would strengthen and unify them all (L.

Sorensen, personal communication, Sept 19, 2018). Further, Nordic politicians in particular knew that the Nordic brand was unpolluted, in the sense that there were positive connotations associated with it in other economic domains (Byrkjeflot et al, 2013). As Hans Christian Schmidt described it,

> …we are the ones who have [been] chosen to see what are we going to use the money [for] to that, or to that, or to that. And then we make a decision that we'll [make progress on] this Nordic food. It's a good idea. And I think we can benefit. (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

Business leaders, after attending the symposium and speaking with Meyer, were convinced to increase their market share of locally and regionally produced products. When engaging business leaders about the benefits of the NNF concept, Meyer spoke the language of the market:

> We convinced the big monopolistic players to be good big brothers in their industries…
> If the value of their category was $1 billion per year, and they could… increase the value of the industry to $1.5 (billion) by embracing diversity, and if they could get not only the $1 billion they were having already as a market share or as a market value, but also 50% of the new value of the new markets, it is very easy to produce a commercial argument for embracing diversity because the old, boring monopolistic market was basically slowing down and people were interested in more…delicious products with the more interesting stories behind them, we could all see that….So we said, why don't we want diversity? The world wants diversity, so that the enthusiasm and passion around this category, whether it be cheese or beer, would expand and just take your market share of that new market you are developing…so we succeeded in motivating people. (C.Meyer, personal communication, September 3, 2018).

Meyer and his colleagues' appeals to self-interest in order to influence upstream stakeholders is consistent with social marketing's exchange theory, whereby the priority group must perceive clear benefits to themselves and/or their constituents in order to adopt a certain behaviour (Duane et al, 2016; French & Gordon, 2015). There is empirical evidence in the social marketing literature that confirms the success of this

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approach. According to Robinson-Maynard et al (2013)'s study on the predictors of success in social marketing, there is a statistical probability that social marketers who present clear benefits to a priority group or other stakeholders will have greater chances of successful behavioural outcomes. Though there is a dearth of case studies within the upstream social marketing literature, Gordon (2013) points to a successful example of tobacco control lobbying efforts by social marketers in the UK and other countries. Barriers to adopting tobacco control legislation and policies were effectively addressed (e.g. upstream stakeholders' concerns over interfering with freedom of choice) and benefits such as health care savings were emphasized.

Diffusing buy-in

Claus Meyer was intentional about organizing commitments from upstream stakeholders at the 2004 symposium (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). Since the Nordic Council of Ministers were sponsoring and co-organizing the event, having the Danish Minister of Food and Agriculture, Hans Christian Schmidt, open the symposium was *"a good starting point since the rest of the [government] [was] already convinced"* (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). In this way, Meyer impressed the Minister and got him into the same room engaging in conversations with other government officials who already believed in the concept.

Before the symposium, Claus Meyer and René Redzepi had went on a televised tour of Nordic countries (Byrkjeflot et al, 2013), where they visited and invested in relationships with top chefs and small-scale producers, whom they would later ask to attend the symposium. When Meyer and Redzepi invited twelve of the top chefs from the Nordic countries to the symposium, they spent many hours deliberating before eventually signing the New Nordic Kitchen Manifesto. Journalists were present at the symposium, which meant that the signing of the Manifesto was a public commitment by each of the chefs to follow its principles. As Meyer recalls, "this was a very powerful situation" (C.

Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018) for upstream stakeholders, because they knew that the chefs were gaining societal influence due to their successes in international competitions and on television programs. When the chefs stood up for a cause that was larger than their restaurants and made a significant, public commitment, this was inspiring to everyone present at the symposium (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018), and had an influential effect on decision makers.

For example, when it came to decisions around aiming high with cheese production in Denmark, Meyer recalls that "by having top chefs and big dairies[26] in the same room, the dairies wanted to please the top chefs so they walked this route with the room and said 'Okay'" (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). Meyer recalls that the representatives of the big dairies followed the conversation and, once convinced, he says, "in the smallest possible corner of their life, we had them commit to pursue this idea…in front of all the chefs and the journalists, they wanted to be part of the game"(C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). In turn, when the big agricultural companies such as Arla, Carlsberg and Danish Crown had given their commitment at the symposium, it was easier for the right-wing Minister of Food and Agriculture to support the concept as well (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 5, 2018). Finally, when the big companies and government had made a commitment, this helped onboard other major stakeholders in society, such as researchers, scientists, teachers, and farmers (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 5, 2018).

What Claus Meyer and his colleagues did in diffusing buy-in from a number of different stakeholders at the symposium can be explained by applying the Diffusion of Innovations Theory. Meyer essentially brought the major stakeholders through a series of commitments, starting with Lise Lykke Steffensen from the Nordic Council of Ministers. In Diffusion of Innovations theoretical terminology, Lise could be considered an 'Innovator', as she was one of the first ones to adopt the concept. This was a wise

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[26] 'Big dairies' refers to the large dairy companies in Denmark, such as Arla Foods

choice on Meyer's part since he already knew Lise, she held a senior position at Nordic Council of Ministers at the time, and she was already involved in the Slow Food movement (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021). **Figure 4.3.** depicts the Diffusion of Innovations Theory as it played out at the 2004 symposium and afterwards.
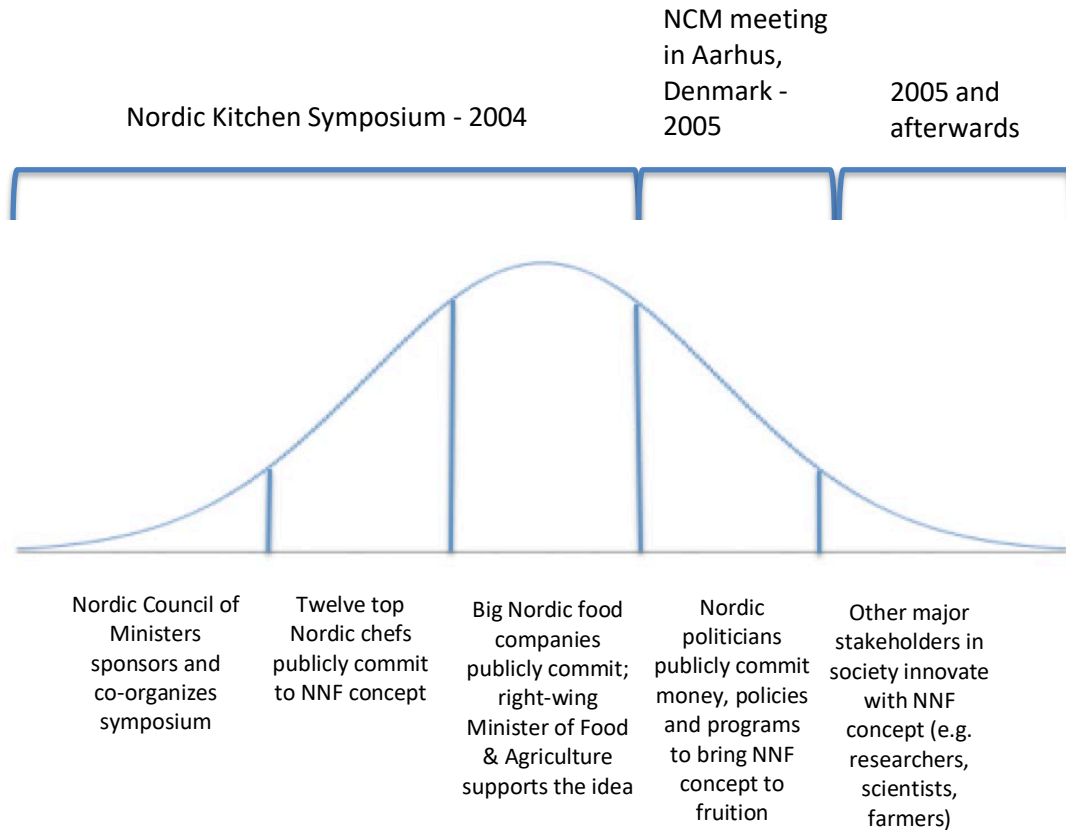
Figure 4.3. Diffusion of commitments to the NNF concept

The sequence of commitments at the symposium and afterwards can be understood by considering the ways in which people are influenced by what they think others believe about a particular behaviour, or in this case, a concept (French & Gordon, 2015). In succession, key stakeholders at the symposium were influenced by each other to perceive the NNF concept in a positive light and make their commitments to it known to

the public. The strategy of diffusing products, services, behaviours or ideas through a population as well as the impact of public commitments are both well known in the field of social marketing (French & Gordon, 2015; Lee & Kotler, 2016; McKenzie-Mohr, 2011). The Diffusion of Innovations Theory provides guidance to social marketers in terms of understanding how to segment and influence priority groups. The specific strategy of diffusing buy-in among upstream stakeholders is absent within the upstream social marketing literature, which points to an area of future research.

Highly respected midstream stakeholders within a social network, such as the Nordic chefs, are valuable people for social marketers to connect with, as their opinions and behaviours significantly influence other social groups (Lee & Kotler, 2016), including upstream stakeholders.

Promoting a compelling concept: The inspirational approach

In addition to the instrumental approach, the chefs also used an inspirational approach to promote the NNF concept. The primary element of the inspirational approach was the application of heliotropy. There are three key concepts included in Meyer's understanding and application of heliotropy:

- Collective identity
- Aspiration
- Emotions

Collective identity and emotions have been discussed earlier as being integral to New Social Movement theory and practice. These, along with the concept of aspiration, will be addressed within the context of heliotropy and Collins' Interaction Ritual Theory.

Applying heliotropy

Claus Meyer explains heliotropy this way:

> [Heliotropy is] some sort of philosophical, spiritual approach that is the concept of being guided by the light. It's believing in the positive element of other people. It is trusting that we all share common goals. If we stop focusing on what is splitting us today and focus instead on what we would be proud of achieving together down the road…We have all these obstacles in our private lives, so if we leave aside all the things that prevent us from doing the right things, then we probably have the same goals. We just don't know exactly how to get there. So we spent the two days at the symposium agreeing on a common set of goals that would be wonderful to achieve [and] that nobody, no human being on earth could disagree on, but without spending energy on discussing who has the obligation to do what and when, if somebody has to change and who should finance it and blah, blah, blah. [We] just agreed on some sort of dream outcome or the ultimate outstanding beneficial food culture from the perspective of the world. And then we didn't know most of [the way forward]. And so to begin with, we didn't do much more than make all these people feel so good…even though they were kind of enemies in a way, leaders of supermarkets and fine dining chefs and producers of horrible pork meat and standard milk….we had people who [were] super different [who] normally would argue in panels against each other and defend their missives from the past, we had all these people discuss what the best possible food culture would look like and how that could benefit…the Nordic region and what would be our legitimate reasons to believe that we had the slightest chance of getting there. So [this was] our potential for improvement and people were just enlightened and fired up by embracing each other and feeling that we could have this conversation in spite of the fact that [it] normally wouldn't go this way when these people are brought together in a room. So by stating this very particular agenda, we created a very, very positive atmosphere." (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018).

Collective identity, aspiration, and emotions

During the symposium, everyone was encouraged to face in the same direction. There was no vilification of any of the stakeholders in the Nordic food industry; rather, a variety of stakeholders with differing roles and agendas were invited to shape common goals and aspire to greatness in Nordic food culture *together* (C.Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). Importantly, Meyer had the participants focus on their commonalities instead of their differences. He reminded them of their common Nordic identity, as well their shared values and culture.

Consider again the questions that were at the heart of the symposium:

(1) What would it take to become one of the greatest food regions in the world?
(2) What would the benefits be down the road?

These questions are highly aspirational. Not only did they encourage key players in the Nordic food world to aim higher, they also established common ground. The fusion of collective identity and aspiration to fulfill their potential together as Nordic people created a strong 'we' feeling in the room (Steffensen, 2017), a sense of solidarity and belonging. This was combined with powerful feelings of pride, confidence, excitement and happiness, as well as the sense of being part of something larger than oneself (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018; L. Sorensen, personal communication, Sept 19, 2018; M. Grontoft, personal communication, Sept 1, 2018; Thurfjell, n.d.). Meyer calls this generation and distribution of positive energy and emotions an "explosive ambience"(C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 5, 2018), while Redzepi called it "a great energy" (Redzepi, 2010). All of this was very inspiring and motivating to upstream stakeholders.

During the symposium, when the NNF concept was first presented to Hans Christian Schmidt, he recalls that for him it brought back positive memories from his childhood:

> …When I was a kid, we lived on a farm in the countryside. And of course…we were eating a lot of Nordic goods because if it was fruit or if it was sausages or what it was, well, it was all what we had in our—because we were not a family with a lot of money, so we couldn't buy exotic things. And so we had to stick to the Nordic. And then I got the idea, I thought about it and said, well, it's simply the new call of what we have done for a lot of times, but we have never put that in a system. (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

The NNF concept that Meyer and his colleagues presented to the Minister seems to have had strong emotional resonance with him. In addition to recounting stories about Nordic food in his childhood years, Hans Christian Schmidt also said this,

> …I was moved when Claus Meyer said to me, well, can't you see that we should bring up some of all this good Nordic traditions about food? Why don't we use it? Why don't we use the food we have? Why don't we use that? (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

The concept of heliotropy that Meyer and his colleagues applied during the Nordic Kitchen Symposium and beyond originates in the field of biology. Certain plants that grow and turn towards the sunlight in order to optimize their harvest of the sun's energy are called heliotropes (Hart, 1990). The concept of heliotropy in regards to humans is analogous in that people tend to be motivated by light, warmth, and positivity as opposed to fear and despair (Key & Czaplewski, 2017; Lefebvre, 2012; Brennan & Binney, 2010). When key stakeholders came together to discuss how incredible Nordic food could be if they worked together, they engaged not only in rational cost/benefit assessments, but also less obvious emotional, spiritual, and value-laden processes related to their collective identity as Nordic people.

Hans Christian Schmidt, when describing his reawakening to a 'new' Nordic food, implies that the concept would become a reality if the Nordic people worked collectively. He uses the word 'we' eleven times in the following paragraph:

We have so much cod and we have sausages and we have fruits and we have meat and we have pigs and we have sheep and we have so many things that is for the Nordic. Why don't we make that into something special? To say that it is so gourmet that's so nice. And then I suddenly said, well, that is something that we maybe have forgotten. Maybe we haven't done that. We haven't developed that, we haven't took up this idea and then suddenly Claus Meyer….said, well let's do it. (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

The 2004 symposium organized by Meyer and his colleagues can be considered a very successful Interaction Ritual that generated high amounts of emotional energy. The mutually reinforcing positive feelings associated with the group's collective energy sustained itself long past the symposium. Years afterwards, in the media articles that were written about the NNF movement, it appears that many journalists from around the world were affected by this collective positive energy. When speaking about Redzepi's restaurant Noma, for example, one journalist says that she "fell in love" with their red fruit pudding, which is a new spin on a traditional Danish dessert (Stern, 2010). Another describes her experience with New Nordic Cuisine. She eats creamy potatoes, onion and bacon, explaining that it is a modern interpretation of a traditional Danish dish called 'burning love'. "I'm already swooning", she writes (Hallock, 2010). Still another, when sitting down to eat at Noma restaurant, writes:

We're one of the lucky few to bag a table here and it far exceeds expectations. Pebbles nudge up against the foamy shoreline; a sea urchin clings to a rock, while four fat shrimps wallow in the shadows. No, I'm not staring into a rock pool, but at my plate. (Sims, 2010).

Redzepi himself describes the restaurant's ethos as "when raw kisses cooked" (Porter, 2010).

In the present day, upstream stakeholders in Nordic countries continue to commit their time, money and energy to their shared NNF program (B. Lindfors, personal communication, July 1, 2021). Part of this overwhelming success is undoubtedly due to

Claus Meyer and René Redzepi being very high emotional energy individuals with high levels of social capital and leadership capabilities.

Promoting a compelling concept: Combining instrumental & inspirational approaches

The instrumental and inspirational approaches explained above did not happen in isolation from one another. The instrumental tactics of facilitating active multi-stakeholder participation, appealing to self-interest, and diffusing buy-in from upstream stakeholders were all infused with an inspirational process.

For example, when Meyer was asked how he convinced the Danish Minister of Agriculture, Hans Christian Schmidt, to open the symposium when he had just fired Meyer, he stated, "We seduced him"(C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). In the quote below, Meyer explains how he seduced the Minister to open the symposium and support the NNF concept. Notice how Meyer fuses clear benefits for the Minister, his country, and the Nordic region with inspirational language and syntax:

> So what I did when I convinced him to come was to basically participate in a conversation about what could be the benefits for our country and our region and for the world if food was more healthy, if agricultural products had a higher value, if Danish people were more proud of the way we were eating, if food was produced in a more sustainable way. If the whole world would admire the Nordic region for its ways, its food ways. If tourists would come to our countries, not in spite of our food culture, but because of our food culture…so basically sitting down with this man, it was possible to have a conversation where he could not disagree about this being a very, very good idea if somehow it could happen. So instead of insisting on him spending money or kind of re-engaging with certain individuals to initiate governmental initiatives, I basically asked him to step in to the market space and just be part of a conversation about how wonderful it would be if this could happen somehow. (C.Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018).

4.5.4. Take action to realize the concept

The NNF concept that Meyer and his colleagues promoted may not have had the impact it did if the chefs had not also taken action to make the concept a reality. This component of the chefs' strategy was emphasized most in the interview with Hans Christian Schmidt. He talks extensively about how impressed he was that the chefs were showing leadership by acting on the concept that they proposed.

He states,

> If the chefs [were] only sitting and saying, 'do this, do that, do this, do that, and I will decide that is good. That is bad. That's good. That's bad.' Then people will say, well, okay, then I do so much. It's necessary for me to do, but no more. But if the chef goes in front and say, 'well, I'll show you what I mean, because I'm doing it. Could you help me by doing it?' So you are staying here. You are not going to your office. You are not sitting there with the legs on the table here and coffee, but you are actually working with each other and you are working with us for getting this implemented. 'Yes, I'll be here. I'll stay here. I'll be the one, I'll not leave you alone. I'll not leave you alone to your own, but I'll be there'. Then….people will be impressed and say, 'well, that's something. I think we'll stick to that. And I think we'll fulfill it because if you really will work so hard, I will also'. But I don't like, if you tell me I have to work hard, but you'll relax. I don't think that's a good idea. So I mean, very often when you have seen it successful, then you have always seen the chef going in front together with all the employees. (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

The year before Claus Meyer and René Redzepi opened Noma restaurant, they had went on a televised tour of Nordic countries, and they had organized a symposium in the first couple of years of the movement. These actions not only increased buy-in from the general public, they also made an impact on the Minister because he felt it showed that the chefs genuinely believed in the NNF concept, they could demonstrate its viability, and they had confidence to see it through to success (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

4.6. Discussion

4.6.1. Impact of the chefs' approach on upstream stakeholders (RQ2)

Although the extent to which the chefs' approach influenced the Nordic governments' decisions in the early years of the NNF movement cannot be precisely measured, we argue that it was highly impactful for three reasons:

First, in multiple government reports and on official government websites, as well as the interview with Hans Christian Schmidt, the Nordic governments explicitly give credit to the chefs for kick starting the movement (NCM, 2008; NCM, 2013; NCM, 2015; NCM, n.d.,H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022). Some documents tell the stories of how the chefs started the movement, while others praise the chefs for their efforts. For example, the Nordic Council of Ministers' Halfway Report on the Nordic governments' NNF program states that, "much of the honour for New Nordic Food's success goes to the extremely talented Nordic chefs" (NCM, 2013). In the interview with Hans Christian Schmidt, he states, *"*when [the movement] is very successful, you have to keep in mind who were the starters. And it was the chefs because they went in front and they said, 'we will go for it'" (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

Second, there was an obvious momentum built around NNF-related government initiatives following the 2004 Nordic Kitchen Symposium, which was organized primarily by the chefs. The timeline of key events in **Table 4.4.** below illustrates that the Nordic Council of Ministers made a political declaration in support of the NNF movement one year after the 2004 symposium, denoting a shift in the major drivers of change with respect to Nordic food culture. Nearly two years after the Nordic Council of Ministers' political declaration, the NNF governmental programs were launched, and continue to this day.

Table 4.4. Timeline of key events in the NNF movement

Year	Event	Details	Key documents	Primary drivers of change
2002	Claus Meyer approaches René Redzepi with idea to open a restaurant	N/A	N/A	**Nordic chefs**
2003	Noma restaurant opens	N/A	Noma menu	
2004	Meyer and Redzepi, with NCM[27] government officials, organize Nordic Kitchen Symposium	Chefs publicly commit to NNF concept; key Nordic government officials support the concept	The Nordic Kitchen Manifesto	
2005	NCM meeting at Aarhus, Denmark	NCM politicians include NNF concept on their political agenda	Aarhus Declaration	**Nordic governments**
2007	NCM New Nordic Food Programme I begins	Wide range of NNF gov't programs are implemented	NCM program reports	
2010	NCM New Nordic Food Programme I is evaluated	N/A		
Post-2010	NCM New Nordic Food Programmes II & III are implemented	More focused efforts to reach general public with New Nordic Diet		

Third, key Nordic government stakeholders were inspired by and came to believe in the NNF concept, not only intellectually, but also emotionally and spiritually (NCM, 2005; Patterson, 2009; H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022). Meyer and his colleagues, by applying both instrumental and inspirational approaches, harnessed the intrinsic motivation of upstream stakeholders, which was a significant motivating factor

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[27] NCM in this table refers to the Nordic Council of Ministers

in their subsequent actions. Referring to Nordic government officials and politicians, Lise Lykke Steffensen states that,

…they bought into it, and they prioritized it, and they provided money for national programs to develop this further…and still today the Nordic Council of Ministers are having a program, they're still launching, and they're still supporting this…in the Nordic countries, and they're doing that because they believe in it. They think that it's right. (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021).

The chefs were very persuasive partly because they themselves genuinely and passionately believed in the concept and in the Nordic people to see it through (L.Sorensen, personal communication, Sept 19, 2018; M.Grontoft, personal communication, Sept 1, 2018; C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3 & 5, 2018; H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022; Rose, 2010). If this authenticity were not there, the application of heliotropy would have been nothing more than another instrumental tactic at best, and emotionally manipulative at worst. It is this authenticity that gives the inspirational approach its moral weight and spiritual power. Goodwin & Jasper (2004) provide an example of this when they critique another social movement theorist's instrumental perspective on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speeches during the Civil Rights movement [Italics added]:

> McAdam, for example, argues that the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., by employing Christian themes (among others) in his speeches, 'brought an unusually compelling, yet accessible frame to the [civil rights] struggle' (1996b:347). For example, 'the theme of Christian forgiveness that runs throughout King's thought,' notes McAdam, 'was deeply reassuring to a white America burdened (as it still is) by guilt and a near phobic fear of black anger and violence' (1996b:347). But does McAdam believe that King made a calculated decision to employ Christian themes in his speeches as part of a 'strategic effort' to legitimate the civil rights movement? That is like saying King made a strategic choice to speak English, rather than seeing English as part of the culture shared by King and his audiences. McAdam's definition of framing seems to imply this kind of strategizing, yet he produces no evidence to support this claim. Nor does he mention the possibility that King employed Christian themes because, as a Baptist minister with a doctorate in theology, he *actually believed* that those 'themes' were true or valuable for their own sake.

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Inspirational leaders, like King or Meyer, who genuinely believe in the strength and virtue of their own ideas, can be a powerful force for motivating others and mobilizing them to act. The reason for this may be that their primary approach in affecting social change is to motivate people by persuading them of the inherent value of a concept or a set of behaviours, rather than relying only upon instrumental tactics such as incentives or disincentives (Lavergne & Pelletier, 2015). Also, inspirational leaders tend to be closely connected to their community and may therefore be personally invested in social change outcomes (Chesters & Welsh, 2011).

The three reasons mentioned above provide evidence to the argument that Nordic upstream stakeholders were significantly influenced by the chefs to adopt the NNF concept and invest their time, energy and resources towards bringing it to fruition. However, there is also evidence from the interview with Lise Lykke Steffensen that negative media publicity surrounding the 2004 Nordic Kitchen Symposium actually acted as an unintentional catalyst to the movement (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021). In her interview, Steffensen explains that leading female chefs from Nordic countries were very offended that all twelve of the top Nordic chefs chosen by Meyer and a colleague of his to attend the symposium and sign the manifesto were men. There was controversy generated by this exclusion, "so it hit the news", Steffensen recalls. She asserts that since Nordic countries highly value gender equality, there were many questions posed to Nordic parliaments and prime ministers about why the Nordic Council of Ministers had funded a symposium that featured leading male chefs only. Curiosity among politicians emerged from this media controversy and from the questions posed by the public. Politicians wanted to know what was this symposium about? And what was this manifesto? Steffensen asserts that "if [the chefs' efforts] had not got any political or press interest, it would never have gone as far as it is today…they would have had something, but not—but then there came these females" (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021).

Taking all of these factors into consideration, we reiterate our argument that the chefs' strategy was highly influential with regards to upstream stakeholders' decisions to support the NNF concept in the early years of the movement, and that media publicity enhanced awareness of the chefs' efforts, further bolstering the movement.

4.6.3. Recommendations for upstream social marketers (RQ3)

Recognizing that the Nordic chefs' four-point strategy was successful at influencing upstream stakeholders in the early years of the NNF movement, it is worthwhile to consider key elements of their strategy that may be transferable to upstream social marketing interventions. We elaborate on five of these elements below.

First, when engaging with multiple stakeholders to tackle a social problem upstream, social marketers may consider identifying and ***partnering with midstream stakeholders*** who are well known and respected leaders in society, who have relationships with elite groups in government and industry, and who genuinely care about the social problem at hand (Russell-Bennett et al., 2013; Lagarde, 2012; Kotler & Lee, 2008; Hastings & Domegan, 2013). In the case of the NNF movement, this would be the Nordic chefs. Of course, if the social marketer has the opportunity to identify and partner directly with key upstream stakeholders who have influence over their peers, this would be preferable. In the absence of such a relationship with key upstream stakeholders, partnerships with midstream stakeholders could be a significant leverage point. Additionally, it may not be necessary to influence the behaviours of an entire group of midstream or upstream stakeholders. Rather, carefully identifying particular midstream or upstream stakeholders who have leadership capabilities and influence over their peers may be a more strategic and effective use of resources.

Second, social marketers may consider ***promoting concepts*** that solve social problems in addition to products, services or campaigns. Promoting concepts may be particularly relevant at the upstream level, where entrenched ways of thinking about a social issue

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among upstream stakeholders and wider society may be a significant obstacle to changing the structural environment. Promoting fresh, compelling, and evidence-based ideas that challenge the status quo may lead to reflexivity among upstream stakeholders (Mehmet et al., 2021; Luca et al., 2019), particularly when the general public is in favour (Gordon, 2013), and when upstream stakeholders are not pressured to commit resources before they're ready (C. Meyer, personal communication, Sept 3, 2018). Further, at the upstream level there tend to be more complex, interconnecting factors involved in the social problem (Kennedy & Kemper, 2018; Wood, 2016), which requires innovative thinking and new ideas in order to solve it. Promoting concepts also provides freedom to the social marketer, upstream stakeholders, and others to engage in a process of value co-creation (Dibb & Carrigan, 2013; Kennedy & Kemper, 2018) that empowers them to be agents of change (Khayame & Abdeljawad, 2020) while avoiding the pre-emptive imposition of solutions from the social marketer (Lefebvre, 2012). And finally, shared sets of ideas provide a cognitive reference point with which to organize people toward common goals.

Third, ***finding the right time*** to engage with upstream stakeholders when the likelihood is highest in terms of getting a particular issue on the political agenda would be beneficial to social marketers working at the upstream level. The right time will depend on the social problem at hand. The social marketer's knowledge and skill set, the strength of the relationships with upstream and/or midstream stakeholders, current events, the electoral cycle and political climate, as well as the wider societal appetite for change (Mehmet et al., 2021) are all considerations with regard to timing and strategic opportunities.

Fourth, social marketers may have more successful interventions by engaging with upstream stakeholders ***using both instrumental and inspirational approaches***. Social marketing, by virtue of its origins in commercial marketing, is primarily instrumental in its approach. That is, the process of planning, implementing and evaluating social

marketing interventions relies heavily on strategically managing people and resources over a period of time to achieve a behaviour change goal (Lee & Kotler, 2016; Weinreich, 2011). Social marketers may have more success in influencing behaviour and solving social problems if they engage not only in strategic management, but also in inspirational processes. This would mean authentically engaging in the 'soulful' aspects of human nature, such as emotions, aspiration, collective identity, values and culture. The social marketing field could start by talking about what that looks like and develop a language around it (Delind, 2006). At present, there is scant social marketing literature on emotions in social marketing (Lefebvre, 2013; Parkinson et al., 2018), and very little on the other soulful aspects mentioned above beyond the acknowledgement that understanding the ideology, emotions, and morality of decision makers is important in upstream social marketing interventions (Kennedy & Kemper, 2018).

Relationship building with key stakeholders would facilitate the addition of inspirational processes to social marketing interventions. As mentioned earlier, the Nordic chefs met and had pre-existing relationships with certain midstream and upstream stakeholders prior to the symposium. As the chefs have illustrated, in the socio-political arena, exchange activities can and should involve more than financial currency or utilitarian transactions that provide tangible or intangible benefits. There is a currency to human relationships as well. This concept is implicit when we use the term *social capital* or when we talk about *investing* in relationships. Recognizing that currency while at the same time appreciating the inherent value of upstream stakeholders as human beings builds trust and reciprocity that may be more robust and effective than a relationship based solely on the purposes of exchange (Luca et al., 2019; Gordon, 2012).

Fifth, the importance of demonstrating the viability of a compelling concept by ***taking action*** to realize it should not be underestimated. Politicians and other decision makers want to know that the concept is worth investing in (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022). In the case of the chefs, they kickstarted the NNF

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movement by opening Noma restaurant, going on a televised tour of Nordic countries, and organizing a symposium. For social marketers, this could mean presenting the results of a successful pilot project or a creative program that shows promise to upstream stakeholders. Of course, as Hans Christian Schmidt has made clear, genuinely believing in the concept at the same time as you promote it and take action on it, is very powerful in terms of convincing decision makers to take action themselves (H.C. Schmidt, personal communication, April 4, 2022).

4.6.4. Limitations of the chefs' approach

Although the chefs were highly impactful in terms of engaging upstream stakeholders and motivating them to take action, there are a couple of limitations regarding the chefs' approach. The first is that like many local food movements, the NNF movement has been heavily criticized for being elitist. This criticism is largely focused on the 'whiteness' of the movement, to the exclusion of communities of colour and lower class food cultures (Emontspool & Georgi, 2017; Byrkjeflot et al., 2013; Müller and Leer, 2019). As mentioned earlier, there was also some criticism around the choice to include only top male chefs as signatories to the New Nordic Kitchen Manifesto (L.L. Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021), while excluding top female chefs. Further, when Meyer spoke about diversity as part of the movement, there is no indication that he intended this concept to apply beyond the realm of food (C. Meyer, personal communication, September 3, 2018).

The second limitation is that the degree to which the chefs were able to indirectly influence the eating behaviours of the Nordic public is questionable. There is anecdotal evidence that more Nordic citizens and gastro-tourists are seeking out local, small-scale producers and artisanal food (B. Cornell, personal communication, August 30, 2021; Thurfjell, n.d.), and the interviewees agree that the NNF movement organizers and others were positively impacted by the movement in social, cultural and spiritual ways (Leif Sorensen, personal communication, Sept 19, 2018; L.L. Steffensen, personal

communication, July 6, 2021; M. Grontoft, personal communication, Sept 1, 2018).
There also appears to be wide acceptance of the NNF concept within the general public.
In these respects, the NNF movement has been successful. However, a few studies
revealed that many Nordic citizens have not adopted the New Nordic Diet as part of
their everyday eating habits. Barriers such as time, unfamiliarity with and availability of
ingredients, and inadequate quantity prevent the widespread uptake of the New Nordic
Diet (Emontspool & Georgi, 2017; Micheelsen et al., 2013; Müller and Leer, 2019). There
may be, therefore, an opportunity here for social marketing to be applied in a
downstream context as well.

4.6.5. Limitations of the research study

There are a few limitations to this research study. The first one is that the sample size of
interviewees is small (n=7). Though key interviewees provided rich detail of the chefs'
strategy and the context of the NNF movement, interviews with more of the
movement's top chefs (e.g. René Redzepi) and key upstream stakeholders (e.g. Lars
Sponheim[28]) would have been helpful. This was not possible mostly due to non-
responses from the chefs and/or their representatives. This limitation was mitigated
primarily by incorporating the perspectives of the top chefs from previously published
interviews into the paper (Thurfjell, n.d.).

It should be noted here that although the original intention was also to interview
business leaders of major corporations such as Danish Crown or Arla, a decision was
made between the two researchers to focus on the Nordic governments as upstream
stakeholders, since there was more evidence from the interviews and documents that
they were the upstream stakeholders who had made the most significant changes (L.L.
Steffensen, personal communication, July 6, 2021; Grunert, 2010; Thurfjell, n.d.).

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[28] Lars Sponheim was the Norwegian Minister of Food, Agriculture & Fisheries during the NNF movement

The second limitation is that the way that the NNF movement unfolded as a social phenomenon may be specific to Nordic countries and not necessarily transferable to other regions of the world. For example, the Nordic countries have a unique combination of economic prosperity and openness, strong democracies, low hierarchies, concern for social welfare and equality, and a collective regional identity. Prior to the NNF movement, they also had pre-existing structures for collaboration and dialogue through the existence of the Nordic Council of Ministers. All of this provided a background context that made the NNF movement possible (Bettina Lindfors, personal communication, July 1, 2021; Vartiainen, 2011; Hvinden & Johansson, 2007; Ohman & Simonsen, 2003).

The third limitation is similar to the second one with respect to transferability. The particular social problem being raised by the Nordic chefs (i.e. an undesirable food culture) is relatively non-controversial, which likely made it easier for the chefs to collaborate with government and industry. Usually, social movements generate conflict of some kind, since the claims that are made tend to oppose the interests of elite groups (Staggenborg & Ramos, 2016; Saunders, 2018; Levkoe & Wakefield, 2014). Similarly, upstream social marketers may not always choose to partner with government and industry, particularly when they have concerns that their social change objectives may be compromised by doing so (Weis & Arnesen, 2007; Cherrier & Gurrieri, 2014).

The fourth limitation relates to the accessibility of documents. Some of the documents that were requested (e.g. Nordic Council of Ministers press releases, access to the symposium website) were not provided to the researchers. Also, all of the documents selected and analyzed as part of the document analysis were in English. There were many more that could have been chosen but these documents were in Nordic languages, which presented a language barrier for the researchers.

4.7. Conclusion

This research study has contributed to recent social marketing literature that explores how social movements might inform the discipline of social marketing (Gurrieri et al., 2018; D'Amore & Chawla, 2017; Daellenbach & Parkinson, 2017; Mirabito & Berry, 2015), and it has contributed to social marketing's knowledge base on the operationalization of upstream social marketing (Gordon, 2013). Further, this research has given some insight into how social marketers might apply the Nordic chefs' strategy by engaging with upstream stakeholders in both instrumental and inspirational ways in order to increase the chances of program success and to solve complex social problems.

In order to advance the social marketing discipline's knowledge base on success in social marketing, future research could compare the highly successful truth® social marketing campaign (Evans et al, 2002; Eisenberg et al., 2004; Cowell et al., 2009; Holtgrave et al., 2009; Farrelly et al., 2009; Richardson et al., 2010) and/or a successful upstream social marketing program with the NNF movement to examine similarities and differences. Additionally, the spiritual and emotional energy-related aspects of heliotropy point to promising areas of future social change research that embrace a more holistic perspective of human motivation, one that ventures beyond the rational/emotional dichotomy. Such endeavours would require reflexivity and mental agility, particularly with respect to social marketing's origins in commercial marketing, and in turn, commercial marketing's embeddedness in Western ways of thinking.

5. Thesis Conclusion

This qualitative, exploratory research has contributed to the social marketing field's conceptual and practical understanding of the reasons why social marketing programs succeed or fail.

5.1. Reiteration of findings

The mixed methods study in Chapters 2 and 3 explored social marketing professionals' perceptions vis-à-vis program mistakes and failures in order to gain insight on possible reasons for program failure in the field, and to begin a community-wide conversation about program mistakes and failures. The qualitative study in Chapter 4 explored an alternative approach to socio-behavioural change at the upstream level. The aim was to discover what the social marketing discipline can learn from social movement theory and practice in terms of engaging with upstream stakeholders in order to increase the chances of success in future social marketing interventions at the upstream level.

The results from Chapters 2 and 3 revealed a number of mistake categories, with *inadequate research* being the number one mistake identified by the social marketing community. Two emergent, cross-cutting themes were revealed in the first part of the study: *external influences* that the social marketer may not have direct control over, and the social marketer's own *preconceptions* that they bring to the program. In the second part of the study, the social marketing community considered *weak evaluation and monitoring* to be the least well-managed program element, and they considered *poor strategy development, external influences*, and *poorly designed program and behavioural objectives* to be the primary reasons for social marketing program failure.

The results from Chapter 4 indicate that the chefs' approach primarily involved applying a four-point strategy to engage with and influence Nordic upstream stakeholders:

(1) Identify key upstream stakeholders

(2) Present a compelling idea to key upstream stakeholders at the right time, with dynamic leaders who have high levels of social capital

(3) Promote the idea using both instrumental and inspirational approaches

(4) Take action to realize the concept

Additionally, the results found that the chefs' strategy significantly influenced upstream stakeholders' decisions to transform the Nordic food industry. And finally, there were four key elements from the chefs' strategy that were transferable to upstream social marketing interventions:

(1) Partner with midstream stakeholders who have relationships with elite groups in government and industry

(2) Promote concepts to upstream stakeholders that involve thinking about a social problem in new ways

(3) Find the right time to engage with upstream stakeholders when the likelihood is highest in terms of getting an issue on the political agenda

(4) Engage with upstream stakeholders using both instrumental and inspirational approaches. Authentic relationship building will facilitate this

5.2. Research contributions

The mixed methods study is the first study to empirically explore social marketing professionals' perceptions related to program mistakes and failures in a systematic way, as opposed to a case-by-case basis. The qualitative study is the first study to explore a

unique approach to socio-behavioural change based on combining elements from social marketing and social movement theory and practice—that is, instrumental and inspirational approaches—to influence upstream stakeholders.

5.3. Research limitations

There are a few limitations to these research studies. First, in both studies the sample size was relatively small. This prevents the possibility of generalizing the findings to the entire social marketing community. Second, in the process of collecting data for the mixed methods study, the primary researcher did not keep a methodological journal. This would have helped to keep track of the reasons for decisions being made related to research methodology, as well as to have a record of how the results unfolded over time. This weakness was corrected in the research study for Chapter 4. Third, due to personal circumstances as well as the global pandemic, the qualitative study interview data was collected over the course of four years, which is a rather long time frame that may have impacted the coherence of the data analysis process.

5.4. Future research

One area for future research includes an exploration of endogenous/exogenous framing with respect to mistakes and failures in social marketing programs. That is, it may be worthwhile finding out to what extent the mistakes made by social marketers are a result of their own internal mental models versus external influences. Following that, researchers could then explore those results in more detail. For example, if much of the mistakes made are a result of external influences, what exactly are those influences, why are they resulting in mistakes made, and should they be modified to ensure greater program success? If so, how? Another area for future research includes a more comprehensive exploration of inspirational approaches to engage upstream stakeholders within social marketing programs. Upstream social marketing is still an

understudied area of research, and the concept of applying inspirational approaches to engage upstream stakeholders is completely new. It may be worthwhile investigating to what extent social marketers are currently using elements of heliotropy (e.g. emotions, aspiration) to engage upstream stakeholders within their interventions and find out if the use of those elements is correlated with success in terms of receiving funding, developing new policies, and/or starting up new behaviour change programs. If so, this may point to a benchmark criterion of success at the upstream level.

5.5. Methodological reflection

The most important lesson I have learned from researching and writing this PhD thesis is to ensure that I have a sound understanding of research methodology and a thorough, well-thought out plan for the *process* of doing the research, before I begin data collection. I had experience as a researcher prior to completing my PhD, but it did not involve empirical data collection. I would also have kept a methodological journal for all three PhD chapters, instead of only the third one. The methodological journal that I kept for Chapter 3 was critical for helping me to remember what decisions I made at what juncture, and why.

By applying three distinct research methodologies within my PhD thesis, I was able to widen the scope of my methodological knowledge. Chapter 2 was qualitative with interviews, Chapter 3 was quantitative with surveys, and Chapter 4 was qualitative with interviews and document analysis. These three distinct methodologies gave me opportunities to learn how to collect and analyze data in different ways, and challenged me to think about the strengths and weaknesses of those processes in terms of revealing truth. I am interested in further expanding my methodological knowledge, and would like to engage in participatory action research in the future.

5.6. Impact/application

Since Chapters 2 and 3 were published (in 2020 and 2021, respectively), the social marketing community has been more openly discussing mistakes and failures in the field at international social marketing conferences (WSM, 2019). Further, the 2021 study by Cook et al. has been cited five times and is the most read article in Social Marketing Quarterly in the past six months[29]. A couple of new studies have also subsequently been published that explore what causes social marketing programs to fail and what we can learn from unsuccessful social marketing programs (Deshpande, 2022; Akbar et al., 2021). All of this provides evidence that social marketers have begun to open up space for community-wide discussions about mistakes and failures in the field. Thus, the research objectives for Chapters 2 and 3 have been fulfilled to a certain extent.

Chapter 4 is as yet unpublished, but there are tentative plans to include it as a chapter in a book about how to influence upstream stakeholders at the intersection of social marketing and social movement theory and practice. Though four key elements of the chefs' strategy were presented in this chapter, much more remains unexplored and could have been expanded upon. A social change book of this nature could therefore be useful for social marketers and social movement organizers alike.

5.7. Final thoughts

Understanding the reasons why social marketing programs succeed or fail is critical knowledge that will contribute to future social marketing program success and to the field's ability to mitigate or solve complex social problems. Learning from our mistakes and failures, as well as learning how to successfully engage upstream stakeholders, are two ways to get us moving in that direction.

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[29] Cook et al (2021)'s *Exploring mistakes and failures in social marketing: The inside story* article has been viewed and downloaded nearly 2000 times. Please see Social Marketing Quarterly's website under the 'Most Read' tab for more details: https://journals.sagepub.com/home/smq

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Appendices

Appendix 1. NVivo codes from analyzed interview data, with definitions and representative quotes

NVivo Code	Definition	Representative Quote
Inadequate research	Inadequate time and resources spent on formative research and/or misapplication of formative research that leads to a misunderstanding of the priority group and/or the problem they are facing	"…we know with behaviour change that if you don't take that time up front to really paint the picture and understand that day in the life of your audience, that no matter how creative and fun and brilliant your campaign is, it could totally fail because you haven't really understood what the…drivers of change are in that community. So, I do think that's the number one lesson I've learned in all my years of doing this is…you have to really do good audience research up front before you dive in and try and solve the problem."
Poor strategy development	The program strategy developed by the social marketer does not go beyond conveying information to the priority group	"I think because a lot of us just walk around with that—it's one of those intuitive, naïve ideas we have in our heads about how the world works, you know, if we just yell louder, you know, people will pay attention to us or they'll change. Or just scream louder, they'll make their beds."
Ad hoc approaches to programs	The social marketer engages with the priority audience in fragmented, inconsistent, or 'ad hoc' ways, usually meaning that the intervention is short-term with limited funding	"Okay, I've got five years to solve a problem. At the end of five years, my money's gone, my job is gone, and hopefully we solved as much of the problem as we can. What happens then? In too many cases the money goes, it gets spent, the problem returns… where the people come, they do the intervention, they leave and then who's going to do the intervention?"
Mismanagement of stakeholders	Inadequate engagement with the groups who have an interest in or are affected by the problem the	"It's also a lot of relationship issues. Some people argue, 'well, relationships are part of marketing'. Well, that's the perfect place

	social marketer is attempting to solve	where, yes, you need to be thinking about relationships and marketing with your partnerships, not just you know pulling strings or just saying, 'here, we've got something for you' or you know, 'come to these planning meetings and then we'll decide what we want to do anyway'".
Poorly designed program objectives	Unclear or overambitious goals that the social marketer has established to meet the overall social or environmental outcome(s)	"Let's say you're going after a behavior that is nowhere near as strategic or as important as another, the program could be effective, but if it's not bringing about a significant change with respect to your goal or outcome that you're interested in, then it would be moot…it's the outcome that we're interested in."
Weak evaluation & monitoring	Lack of or inadequate assessment of the social marketing intervention's progress toward meeting its behavioural objective(s)	"A lot of the kinds of methods we're using in social marketing can be so expensive…that the… organization that's doing the social marketing doesn't feel like it can spare the money for evaluation…Or they think about evaluation at the very end and haven't planned from the beginning how they're going to evaluate, and so they're not able to do any kind of data collection before or during…the program's happening. They only have the after. So that makes it really hard to be able to…know if they were effective or not or to know which parts of the program were effective."
Poor execution of pilots	Lack of or improper execution of small-scale test prior to full-scale implementation of the intervention	"I think that often people when they create pilots, they create one pilot rather than thinking, 'I have multiple different ways in which I could foster this specific behavioral change, what strategy is…the most lean that would still allow me to foster this behavioral change?' And the only way that you could really know that of course, is to test several strategies against each other, and people do not do that for the most part."
Inadequate segmentation &	The social marketing program messages are not appropriately	"…my concern is when people use a behaviour…to segment because the behavior

targeting	tailored to particular audience segments	doesn't tell you…why? So - when you're trying to reach an audience, you need to understand why they're engaged in the behavior and your segmentation should be based on the why rather than on…demographics or the behavior itself. So when you just say, 'well, I'm targeting smokers', well that doesn't tell you why those people are smokers…So there are some people who…have the same psychographic profile as those who smoke, but for whatever reason don't smoke yet. And that's actually really critical to understand, so if people smoke because…they're highly stressed about money, about…their…life situation…it would be very advantageous for you to do focus groups with people who have those same characteristics but have chosen not to smoke and compare those to people with those same characteristics who have chosen to smoke to really understand… what are some of those nuances that pushed them towards smoking or can possibly push them to not smoke. But you wouldn't be able to do all that if your segmentation is, 'well, I'm just looking at smokers' because then all you're talking about is the behavior of smoking. You're not talking about the underlying things that may have led them to smoke. So really just staying away from behavior-based…groups."
Poor documentation	Social marketers underreporting and/or reporting their successes and failures in different ways, which leads to lack of standardization and a weak evidence base	"…we don't use consistent terminology and vocabulary to describe what it is that we do. And so as social marketers, we really are sometimes our own worst enemy because we don't… document and we don't have an evidence base for social marketing…we don't have the evidence base I would say that we should have at this point…"
External influences	Phenomena or conditions that the social marketer does not have direct	"It's usually…it's funders often constraining the people who design programs. I've just

	control over but may influence the success or failure of a program	seen this numerous times and I deliberately did not mention anyone, but what I've seen people do very frequently is they will constrain what can be done, and they will say such and such a program has to have this built in as part of the intervention, without thinking about whether or not that's actually a useful thing to do because they've not done the barrier/benefit research yet. That's pretty common."
Preconceptions	The pre-conceived notions and/or assumptions that social marketers bring to the design and implementation of a social marketing program	"…the other big assumption here, which I already touched upon, is the use of fear appeal(sic). Um, there's a prominence of use of fear appeal(sic) because an assumption is 'If you scare me, I'll change my behaviour.'"

Appendix 2. Top reasons for social marketing program failure, with definitions and representative quotes

SPSS Code	Definition	Representative Quote
Poor strategy development	The program strategy developed by the social marketer does not go beyond conveying information to the priority group	"The program failed, because they decided to call it social marketing, but in essence did health education and promotion."
External influences	Phenomena or conditions that the social marketer does not have direct control over but may influence the success or failure of a program	"Failure to diversify ethnic mix of people making applications for jobs in a public organization - Main reasons for failure was senior management resistance to changing recruitment strategy…"
Poorly designed program objectives	Unclear or overambitious goals that the social marketer establishes to meet the overall social or environmental outcome(s)	"There have been so many that either failed or under-performed. The root cause is usually trying to do too much with too little: setting a behavioral objective that is unattainable within the allotted resources and timespan"
Inadequate research	Inadequate time and resources spent on formative research and/or misapplication of formative research that leads to a misunderstanding of the priority group and/or the problem they are facing	"…we're learning that we should have done better initial research to identify why people don't pick up dog poop rather than just promoting picking up dog poop"

Mismanagement of stakeholders	Inadequate engagement with the groups who have an interest in or are affected by the problem the social marketer is attempting to solve	"…not getting the right partners on board in support of the desired behavior change (not flushing old medicines down the toilet)"
Weak evaluation & monitoring	Lack of or inadequate assessment of the social marketing intervention's progress toward meeting its behavioural objective(s)	"We…didn't have a clear plan for evaluation that fit within our budget so we couldn't accurately assess our theory that uni students as advocates would lead to more [smoke-free] housing for all"
Inadequate segmentation & targeting	The social marketing program messages are generalized to too many people or not appropriately tailored to specific audience segments	"A campaign to reduce illegal hunting did not achieve its objectives because it had too many target audiences for the time and resources allotted to the program."
Ad hoc approaches to programs	The social marketer engages with the priority audience in fragmented, inconsistent, or 'ad hoc' ways, usually meaning that the intervention is short-term with limited funding	"The National High Blood Pressure Education Program in the U.S. was a well-planned, well executed initiative led by the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute (NIH). It registered well-documented successes, and then was de-funded by the Institute. Within a few years, the original gains were lost and hypertension remains a serious risk factor. Opportunity lost."
Poor execution of pilots	Lack of or improper execution of small-scale test prior to full-scale implementation of the intervention	"Didn't pretest/pilot before rolling out"
Misunderstanding of social marketing or other social change approaches	The social marketer either does not have a solid grounding in social marketing principles and techniques	"Social marketers need to be wary of limiting their strategies, theories and tactics to ones that ONLY fall within the boundaries of "social marketing". Success in behavior change programs comes from incorporating

	or the social marketer has not adequately considered other approaches to social change besides social marketing	and applying pieces of commercial marketing, behavioral economics, social marketing, UX/UI design, and more that will work best to achieve the results of an individual goal and program"
Preconceptions	The pre-conceived notions and/or assumptions that social marketers may bring to the design and implementation of a social marketing program	"SIMPle study - achieved its [behaviour change] objectives but [the social marketers] assumed bounded rationality and linear causality did not scale up, achieve sustainability or social transformation…."

Appendix 3A. Database searches for journal articles & book chapters

Date	Database	Search string	Date Range	Results	Criteria	Title/abstract filter results	Language
30-Jul-21	Scopus	'New Nordic Food'	2003-2010	9	Must discuss New Nordic Food movement in title and/or abstract	2	English
30-Jul-21	Scopus	'Nordic Food movement'	2003-2010	5	Must discuss New Nordic Food movement or New Nordic kitchen manifesto in title and/or abstract	1	English
May 23-22	Omni	'New Nordic Food'	2003-2010	70	Must discuss New Nordic Food movement in title and/or abstract	7	English
	Omni	'New Nordic Kitchen'	2003-2010	44	Must discuss New Nordic Food movement or phenomenon in title and/or abstract	1	English
	Scopus	'Nordic cuisine'	2003-2010	28	Must discuss New Nordic Kitchen as a 'movement-related' phenomenon	5	English

Appendix 3B. Database searches for media articles

Date	Database	Search string	Date Range	Results	Criteria	Title/abstract filter results	Language
14-Jun-22	Factiva	'New Nordic Food' OR 'New Nordic Cuisine'	2003 - 2010	49	Must speak about the philosophy, principles, impact, and/or goals of the NNF movement and/or Noma restaurant	18	English
17-Jun-22	NexisUni	'New Nordic Food' OR 'New Nordic Cuisine'	2003 - 2010	61	Must speak about the philosophy, principles, impact, and/or goals of the NNF movement and/or Noma restaurant	0*	No option to input language selection

*All articles that matched the search criteria were duplicates

Appendix 4. The New Nordic Kitchen Manifesto

The aims of the New Nordic Kitchen are:

1. To express the purity, freshness, simplicity and ethics we wish to associate to our region
2. To reflect the changes of the seasons in the meals we make
3. To base our cooking on ingredients and produce whose characteristics are particularly [well suited to] our climates, landscapes and waters
4. To combine the demand for good taste with modern knowledge of health and well-being
5. To promote Nordic products and the variety of Nordic producers—and to spread the word about their underlying cultures
6. To promote animal welfare and a sound production process in our seas, on our farmland, and in the wild
7. To develop potentially new applications of traditional Nordic food products
8. To combine the best of Nordic cookery and culinary traditions with impulses from abroad
9. To combine local self-sufficiency with regional sharing of high-quality products
10. To join forces with consumer representatives, other cooking craftsmen, agriculture, fishing, food, retail and wholesale industries, researchers, teachers, politicians and authorities on this project for the benefit and advantage of everyone in the Nordic countries

List of signatories:

- Erwin Lauterbach, Denmark
- Eyvind, Hellstrøm, Norway
- Fredrik Sigurdsson, Iceland
- Gunndur Fossdal, Faroe Islands
- Hákon Örvarsson, Iceland
- Hans Välimäki, Finland
- Leif Sørensen, Faroe Islands
- Mathias Dahlgren, Sweden
- Michael Björklund, Aland
- René Redzepi, Denmark
- Roger Malmin, Norway
- Rune Collin, Greenland