

INFLUENCE OF SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE MARKETING IN THE CONTEXT OF INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES

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Abstract:

In the realm of marketing, the concept of sustainability has gained significant traction in recent years. However, the growth and adoption of sustainable marketing practices within industrial enterprises are often influenced by various socio-economic factors. This piece aims to explore the influence of these factors on the development and implementation of sustainable marketing strategies in the context of industrial enterprises. To achieve this objective, we mobilized primary and secondary source data of a quantitative and qualitative nature on a cross-sectional sample of 74 Cameroonian industrial companies from the Central, Littoral, and West regions. We used various statistical tools: descriptive, exploratory, correlation, and explanatory analysis. The results show that, among the socio-economic factors, only the presence of a Quality, Health, Safety, and Environment (QHSE) Department, level of education, shareholder structure, level of debt, profit maximization, and competitive advantage contribute to sustainable marketing implementation. We therefore recommend that public and private organizations step up the debate on the environment and ecology, especially in developing countries.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Socio-Economic Factors, Sustainable Marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the notion of sustainable development seems to be increasingly in vogue. Many upheavals have taken place in today's world. Harribey (1998) points out the serious limits to economic development. According to him, economic development has not succeeded in reducing poverty worldwide, even in rich countries, but it is also a dangerous threat to the equilibrium of ecosystems. Revéret and Turcotte (2009), on the other hand, refer to an "imminent threat" due to climate change, energy insecurity, growing freshwater scarcity, deterioration of ecosystems, the impact of climate change on ecosystems, and, above all, worsening poverty. In addition, the ecological problems caused by human activities, mainly industry, have led to a growing awareness of the impact of industrial activity on man and his environment since the early 1960s. Since then and since the following decade, environmental issues have become an integral part of all ecological, economic, and social debates. Sustainable marketing is based on the principle that the influence and power of marketing and its tools can be used to develop and promote market and consumption models in line with environmental and social issues. It is a proactive approach and process that creates value in a combined and systematic way (1) for the company, (2) for the consumer, and (3) for the environment and society. In 1987, the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development presented a report entitled "Our Common Future," also known as the "Brundtland Report." This report presented the idea of economic development being linked not only to the achievement of the highest economic growth but also to equality between individuals and groups of people (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). The report also mentions the importance of intergenerational equity, i.e., equity between people in the present and in the future. Nevertheless, the report supports the aspect of intergenerational equity, in particular the environmental impact of economic activities on people. Current economic activities have a dramatic influence on environmental degradation and impact on descendants who are not allowed to use the natural resources that are fundamental to the economic well-being and equality of life of the future generation (Garrod & Fyall, 1998; Hunter, 1997). According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), these concepts lead to sustainable marketing.

Thus, sustainable marketing in its various forms is mainly represented as a management technique, and the moral values and principles on which it is based have tended to remain implicit. Thus, sustainable marketing is fundamentally an ethical issue and should therefore be discussed as a philosophical and political question of environmental ethics. In concrete terms, this means integrating sustainability issues at the heart of the brand's strategic vision by defining a *raison d'être* that projects into the long term and is concretized through the various dimensions of the marketing mix, but also through accompanying consumers to move towards sustainable consumption practices (Dekhili et al., 2021). The challenge now is to advance thinking on approaches and tools for effectively integrating sustainability at the heart of marketing practices, accelerating societal transformation, and explaining the factors behind this practice. These questions are becoming increasingly important in the face of current and future transitions in consumer behavior brought about by the pandemic (He and Harris, 2020). In fact, consumers' environmental and social awareness is growing (Peattie, 1995). However, the market share of sustainable products is estimated at less than 4% worldwide (Delmas, 2018). These data confirm the persistence of the green gap (Elhaffar et al., 2020). Research has highlighted various impediments to the development of the green market, such as cognitive biases (Brough et al., 2016; Luchs et al., 2010), consumers' lack of confidence in green communication (Cronin et al., 2011), the relative effectiveness of ecolabels (Dekhili and Achabou, 2015), or price sensitivity (Lombart et al., 2020). More recently, analytical frameworks and research agendas specific to certain dimensions of sustainable marketing have emerged (White, 2010; Eckhardt et al., 2019; Vadakkepatt et al., 2021). They defend the idea that marketing can be a player in creating a better world (Chandy et al., 2021; Dekhili, 2021). For this reason, involving the marketing function and marketing professions to a greater extent in sustainable development issues for greater corporate profitability, as advocated by some authors, raises a number of difficulties and constraints that impinge on profitability and the company's organizational and environmental structure. Other theorists and practitioners propose to respond to the challenge posed by ecological marketing. Thus, the ecological factor has become essential and must be integrated into all business processes and functions. For Hatchuel (1999), the environmental management system presents itself as a "rational myth" and therefore also includes a mobilizing myth [1]. Nevertheless, a closer look at the content of the reference documents, particularly the ISO 14001 standard, reveals that the underlying managerial model is not at all original (Boiral, 1998; 2000). This unveiling of the model underlying the environmental management system should not lead us to disqualify this phenomenon. In a similar vein, Gianneloni (1998) believes that "the projection of the ecological character of a behavior will depend on the subjective knowledge of environmental problems and the individual's personal sensitivity to this problem." Work on environmental protection has focused on the study of how ecology is taken into account in the firm's strategic management and its effects on its organization and marketing mix variables, considering ecology as a component of corporate performance (Boiral and Jommy, 1992; Boyer and Poisson, 1992; Ajay and Avril, 1997; and Pearsis, 1998). The work of Louppe (2004) and Reverdy (2005), in turn, concludes that environmental management is an opportunity to instrument coordination and initiate cross-learning over time between environmental services and other services. However, as Swim et al. (2009) point out, studies on this issue are few and far between. Hence the growing interest in sustainable development in marketing, which has led some researchers to analyze the fallacious nature of the environmental arguments proliferating in advertising (Notebeart, 2009). So the development of sustainable marketing practices in industrial enterprises is heavily influenced by socio-economic factors. These factors, which include income levels, education, cultural values, and government policies, shape the way businesses approach and implement sustainable marketing strategies. Understanding the impact of these factors is crucial for businesses to effectively navigate the complexities of sustainable marketing and contribute to a more environmentally and socially responsible future.

In this piece, the focus will be on sustainable marketing practices and their socio-economic determinants, hence the following question: What are the socio-economic factors explaining the development of sustainable marketing within Cameroonian industrial companies? Marketing can indeed support sustainable development, as Van Dam and Apeldoorn (1996), Le Gall (2002), and Sempel and Vandercammen (2009) point out.

In view of the above, the aim of this article is to attempt to understand the socio-economic determinants of the development of sustainable marketing. To achieve this objective, we will structure our work into three main parts. First, we will present the literature review (I) and expand on the methodology (II). Next, we will present the results of the descriptive, exploratory, and correlation analyses, and finally, we will discuss the results of the explanatory analysis (III.).

I. LITERATURE REVIEW

We will begin by reviewing the theoretical literature (I.1), followed by empirical work (I.2) linking the development of sustainable marketing to its socio-economic determinants.

I.1 Ecological marketing within the organization: theoretical foundations

Various theories have sought to explain the different determinants of SD and sustainable marketing. As far as theories are concerned, the vast majority of researchers who have tackled the question of sustainable development in business maintain that there is a debate between the utilitarian vision advocated by Bentham and Kant's deontological vision. These visions have recently been taken up by Friedman and several thinkers such as Simon Herzberg, who are described as neo-Kantians (Mathieu, 2006). In addition to these two approaches, the literature on sustainable marketing is also characterized by two currents of thought: reformist and transformist. In this section, we will discuss the two currents of sustainable marketing.

1.1.1. The Reform School

Also referred to as incremental, instrumental or evolutionary, it is a trend that supports current ideologies, structures and beliefs, and does not modify or seek to change the profound way in which the existing system operates (Merizrow, 2004; Glisczinski, 2007; Blasco, 2012). It's a school of thought that uses innovation in the search for competitive advantage and corporate performance, whether it's capitalism or green growth. This "small" improvement is of a strategic, decision-making or managerial nature, facilitating management or the use of management tools. This approach translates into the search for a "win-win" combination (Stubbs and Cocklin, 2008), in which everyone benefits, i.e., maintaining business performance without damaging the environment, in order to be seen as respectful of the environment and society. This school of thought is seen as reformist, with a keen sense of business, yes to the integration of ecological principles, but not forgetting that the company is a high-performance organization (effectiveness and efficiency).

1.1.2. The transformist or radical school

This school emphasizes the desire to break with the existing model. In order to integrate sustainable development and sustainable marketing, this school categorically refutes the current model based on the law of the market or the dogma of growth (Marshall and Hankey, 2010). Contingency theory, for its part, insists on the basic assumption that organizations whose internal structures best respond to the demands of the environment will achieve better adaptation and therefore greater efficiency. This is its "innovative" side, in that the great sociologists who have studied it have all sought to understand the relationship between performance and context. The organization will depend on its environment in two ways: on the one hand, it will draw inspiration from it, and on the other, it will enrich it with its own production.

Having highlighted the two theories above, it is important to develop the work that has been done in this direction.

1.2. Determinants of sustainable marketing development: the role of empirical research

An exhaustive review of the literature shows the importance of implementing sustainable marketing in companies, especially in the industrial sector. Since the 1970s, ecology has been considered a strategic decision criterion (Marguerat and Cestre, 2002).

1.2.1. Views on the development of green marketing

In the marketing literature of the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was critical reflection and debate on the role of marketing in processes of social and environmental change (Anderson and Cunningham 1972; Fisk 1974; Kelley 1971). Indeed, the multiplication of laws and regulations, the development of environmental groups and the consumer society gradually led companies and the media to take an interest. Ecological concerns then began to be integrated into the study and practice of management and marketing, judging by the seminal works of Henion (1976), Kinnear and Taylor (1973) and Kinnear et al. (1974), cited in Marguerat and Cestre (2002). However, although consumers seem to be becoming aware of climate change, some authors, notably Swim et al. (2009), denounce their inaction. According to Stamm et al. (2000), this inaction is largely due to a lack of understanding of the real causes and impacts of climate change, leading consumers to postpone their actions. However, as Swim et al. (2009) point out, studies on this issue are few and far between.

For some authors, this self-reflection also involved an ethical and societal problematisation of marketing as an institution, as well as calls for commercial organizations to accept more responsibility in society as corporate citizens

(Dawson 1971; Lazer 1969; Lazer and Kelley 1973). Kelley (1971), for example, called for marketers to shift their emphasis from "the satisfaction of individual needs to social considerations." Dawson (1971) and Kotler (1972), for their part, argued that it is important to recognize that this surge of interest in consumer welfare goes far beyond mere customer dissatisfaction with allegedly inferior products.

1.2.2. From societal marketing to ecological marketing

While societal marketing primarily addressed the concerns of consumerism, the demands of environmentalism were taken up by other marketers, who understood that the ecological challenge required profound changes in the marketing discipline, including the education of consumers and marketers about the relationship between their everyday decisions and the natural environment (Feldman 1971; Fisk 1973, 1974). In this respect, Fisk (1973, 1974) made an important contribution by proposing the theory of responsible consumption and the ecological imperative, which emphasize the responsibility of marketers in limiting individual consumption. From this perspective, a major social objective of marketing is to encourage responsible rather than frivolous consumption by involving the consumer as a responsible and informed market player. In another effort to provide new solutions to environmental problems, Henion and Kinnear (1976) introduced ecological marketing, which concerns all marketing activities: (1) activities that have contributed to causing environmental problems, and (2) activities that can be used to provide a remedy for environmental problems.

Despite the initial boom in contributions in the 1970s, discussion of marketing's responsibilities towards the environment and society faded somewhat, relegating this new area of marketing to the annals of marketing history (Mintu and Lozada 1993; Sheth et al. 1988). It has been suggested that the oil crises of 1973 and 1980, the strong belief in the ability of the market mechanism to correct environmental imbalances and the lack of interest among marketing practitioners in ecological and social issues prevented marketers from engaging in new research in this field (Peattie 1995; Sheth and Parvatiyar 1995; Sheth et al. 1988). It was not until the late 1980s that environmental and social issues were once again at the center of public attention concerning the debate on the role of marketing in society re-emerged and new concepts, such as green marketing, environmental marketing and enviropreneurial marketing, were introduced (Charter 1992; Coddington 1993; Peattie and Crane 2005; Varadarajan and Menon 1988). Mintu and Lozada (1993), for example, proposed a definition of green marketing as the application of the concept and tools of marketing to facilitate exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual objectives in ways that preserve, protect and conserve the physical environment. Unlike the concept of green marketing, this approach prescribes a more proactive role for marketers, not only in monitoring the negative impacts of marketing activities on the natural environment but also in actively engaging in practices that reduce or minimize these impacts.

1.2.3. Sustainable marketing as marketing for the future

Although ecological marketing is seen by some authors as a business growth opportunity (Coddington, 1993), it should be noted, however, that it wasn't until 1995 that the term sustainable marketing was coined by Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995), who discussed marketing efforts that are both competitive and ecologically sustainable. From a macro-marketing perspective, they recognized the link between marketing and sustainable development and, consequently, the urgent need to shift from current consumer marketing to more sustainable marketing. In their view, sustainability can only be achieved by combining active government intervention with proactive marketing aimed at healthier consumption and production patterns. From a more managerial perspective, Menon and Menon (1997) have also proposed the concept of "enviropreneurial marketing," which refers to the process of formulating and implementing entrepreneurial and environmentally beneficial marketing activities with the aim of creating revenue by providing exchanges that satisfy a company's economic and social performance objectives (see also Varadarajan 1992). However, in most discussions on the subject, sustainable marketing has been approached as simply a logical extension of the classic managerial marketing concept (Crane and Desmond, 2002; Kilbourne, 1998). Fuller (1999), for example, redefines the concept as the process of planning, implementing and controlling the development, pricing, promotion and distribution of products in a way that satisfies the following three criteria: customer needs are met, (2) organizational objectives are achieved, and (3) the process is compatible with ecosystems. This stream of research tends to be based on a typically managerial, micro-marketing approach, as opposed to the more societal, macro-marketing perspective of sustainable marketing.

It follows from the above that a number of theoretical and empirical studies highlight the evolution of marketing from classical marketing to sustainable marketing. Following on from this development, it is important to present the various socio-economic factors as a tool for Developing Sustainable Marketing (DSM).

1.2.4. Socioeconomic characteristics as determinants of DSM in the literature

An exhaustive review of the literature has brought to light a number of works highlighting the socio-economic determinants of the practice of sustainable marketing. Three types of determinants of concern for the environment or sustainability emerge from the literature:

personal values, personality and demographic characteristics. Variables such as age, income, gender and company growth are significant in some studies and irrelevant in others. According to Giannelloni (1998) and Imed Zaiem (2005), the socio-economic factors likely to have a significant influence on the application of sustainable marketing practices within a company can be broken down into socio-demographic factors. These include age, gender, level of education, income, socioprofessional category (SPC) and marital status. In the implementation of sustainable marketing practices, socio-demographic variables are significant in some studies (Giannelloni, 1998; Imed Zaiem, 2005) and irrelevant in others (Aspinall, 1993; Chan and Lau, 2000). The divergence of research results is more marked with these

indicators, particularly with age. Significant for some in the sense of greater concern for the environment (PPE) among young people (Van Liere and Dunlap, 1980; Belch, 1979), it has no effect, or an opposite effect, for others (Dolich, Tucker and Wilson, 1981; Antil, 1984; Samdahl and Robertson, 1989).

It is also questionable whether gender has any influence on PEP. It would also appear that the results depend on the population studied. In a sample comparable to the general population, women score higher on the attitude and self-reported behavior scales, while men show better concrete knowledge of environmental issues. On the other hand, in a sample of avowed and convinced environmentalists, gender no longer has any effect on either knowledge or behavior (Schahn and Holzer, 1990). Some suggest that women are more concerned about the quality of the environment, especially when it is close by (Blocker and Eckberg, 1989), because they perceive more acutely the threats associated with a degraded environment (Baldassare and Katz, 1992). On the other hand, for Stern, Dietz and Kalof (1993), gender only plays a role in the perception of social norms in the context of environmental protection.

Finally, a greater convergence of results exists for other indicators: EPP is often associated with high income or good company growth (Kinneer, Taylor and Ahmed, 1974; Dolich, Tucker and Wilson, 1981), as well as with a high level of education (Samdahl and Robertson, 1989). In addition to these three groups of variables, knowledge of environmental issues was also tested as a potential determinant of EPP. The results are, once again, relatively ambiguous. Some research shows a positive link between knowledge and EPP (Schahn and Holzer, 1990); other studies show a weak link (Arbuthnot and Lingg, 1975) or even no link at all (e.g., Pickett, Kangun, and Grove, 1995). It would seem, in fact, that the more knowledge relates to concrete aspects of environmental protection (recycling activity), the stronger the link with associated behaviors (Oskamp et al., 1991; Vining and Ebreo, 1990). Moreover, the actual level of knowledge about the environment is no better among "green" consumers, unlike the perceived level of knowledge (Ellen et al., 1991). Finally, even if the empirical literature does not seem to emphasize certain social factors (number of employees, internationalization of the company, presence of a QHSE department) and economic factors (debts, competition, shareholder structure, profitability, etc.), these factors seem important for the implementation of sustainable marketing in the context of Cameroonian industrial companies. On the basis of this observation, we formulate the following hypothesis: Socio-economic factors taken individually contribute significantly to the implementation of sustainable marketing in companies in the Cameroonian industrial sector; for this reason, these variables are often used to segment populations already determined thanks to personality variables or variables linked to personal and corporate values.

II. METHODOLOGY

To achieve the above objective, we will first carry out an exploratory analysis, followed by a descriptive and correlational analysis, and finally an explanatory analysis. However, before outlining the stages of these different analyses, it is necessary to present our sample, the variables and the econometric model of the study. The various statistical tools we have mobilized include the use of descriptive statistics, the construction of the variables used, the operationalization of the variables, the exploration of the variables through principal component analysis, and the use of econometric modeling. It is also based on a regression model for an ordinal qualitative variable. This analysis consisted of presenting some descriptive statistics highlighting the different variables in the model.

II.1 Study sample

Our study sample consists of 74 companies from the Cameroonian industrial sector obtained over the year 2021. The data are from primary and secondary sources, based on semi-structured interviews and questionnaires administered by direct interview. They are qualitative and quantitative in nature. From the general list of companies obtained from the National Institute of Statistics (INS) of Cameroon, we selected the industrial companies that will be the subject of our study, whatever their legal form, without distinction as to field of activity or size. We have chosen companies in three (03) cities in Cameroon: Yaoundé, Douala and Bafoussam, which process raw materials in these cities. This choice is justified by the fact that industrial companies are more numerous in these three cities, and the majority of these companies have their general management or head office in either Douala, Bafoussam or Yaounde.

II.2 Variable specification and econometric models

II.2.1 Variable specification

This section presents the operationalization of the dependent and independent variables selected. These variables will be defined here in terms of observable and measurable events called indicators (Pettersen, 2010), with a view to their subsequent measurement (Pettersen, 2010).

Dependent variable: Sustainable marketing development

According to authors such as Van Dam and Apeldoorn (1996), le Gall (2002) and Sempel and Vandercammen (2009), Sandratra Ranaivoarivelo (2012) and Elsa de Gerus (2013), the question for assessing the knowledge and level of development of sustainable marketing within Cameroonian industrial companies is the following: What is the level of practice of sustainable marketing in your company? With this in mind, we mobilized five-point likert scale questions ranging from "1-Very low" to "5-Very high".

Independent variables: socio-economic factors

As seen in the literature, socio-economic factors are one of the determinants of sustainable marketing development. These factors are summarized in the table 1 below.

Table 1: Socio-economic factors

Indépendent Variable	items	sources
Socio-economic and managerial factors (SE)	The practice of sustainable marketing is determined by the number of employees (S1)	Giannelloni (1998) ; Imed Zaiem (2005), Aspinall, 1993 ; Chan et Lau, (2000) ; Samdahl et Robertson(1989) ; (Oskamp et al., 1991 ; Vining et Ebreo, 1990).
	The level of sensitivity of the business sector explains the implementation of sustainable marketing (S2)	
	Level of sustainable marketing is explained by the company's presence in other countries (S3)	
	The existence of quality-hygiene-safety-environment departments within the company is a driving force behind the development of sustainable marketing (S4).	
	Marital status of owner-manager determines level of sustainable marketing development (S5)	
	Level of education of the owner-manager determines the level of development of sustainable marketing (S6)	
	The age of the owner-manager is an explanatory factor in the development of sustainable marketing (S7)	
	The company's practice of sustainable marketing is driven by return on equity (E1)	
	Return on assets is a key factor in the company's sustainable marketing practices (E2)	
	The Profit/Sales ratio is a key driver of sustainable marketing (E3)	
	Shareholder structure is a determinant of sustainable marketing (E4)	
	The practice of sustainable marketing depends on the proportion of debt in the company's resources (E5)	
	The number of social creditors can determine the level of development of sustainable marketing (E6)	
	The development of sustainable marketing can be explained by the percentage of voting rights held by the public (E7)	
	As an owner-manager, is maximizing profits/growth your top priority? (E8)	
	As an owner-manager, is the survival of your company your top priority? (E9)	
	As an owner-manager, is your priority the growth of your business? (E10)	

Source: authors based on questionnaire

The socio-economic factors used in this article are based on studies by Giannelloni (1998) and Imed Zaiem (2005). For these authors, socio-economic factors are likely to have a significant influence on the application of sustainable marketing practices within a company. These authors see an explicit relationship between sustainable marketing development and these factors in their analysis.

The aim of our study is to highlight the socio-economic determinants of the development of sustainable marketing. To this end, we test the econometric model defined as follows:

$$DMD_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SE_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

Where DSM represents the level of development of sustainable marketing;

SE: social and economic factors to be retained after exploratory analysis;

β_0 and β_1 are the coefficient estimates

ε_i refers to the error term

II.2.2 Estimation Method Adopted

In our study, we have the dependent variable and the independent variables. Our dependent variable is captured using a five-level Likert scale. We will use ordinal logistic regression, estimated by the maximum likelihood method. We will then perform a linear regression using ordinary least squares as the estimation method to check the robustness of our results.

III. Results and interpretations

The aim here is to present the characteristics of the sample, the characteristics of the companies, the behavior of Cameroonian industrial companies through their determinants in the face of the implementation of sustainable marketing, the development of the elements of the exploratory analysis and finally, we will proceed to a more specific analysis by carrying out more in-depth analyses.

III.1 Results of exploratory analysis

In order to develop a valid and reliable measurement scale, we will carry out an exploratory factor analysis. Our main aim is to determine the structure of the scale (number of dimensions) and to reduce the number of items. The presentation of the results of the exploratory analysis (principal component analysis: PCA) relating to the socio-economic determinants of the implementation of sustainable marketing in Cameroonian industrial companies. In this way, we were able to retain only those items that met the criteria commonly used in factor analysis (Malhotra, 1981). For the choice of dimensions, we referred to the eigenvalue table (Cattell, 1966), which suggests taking into account a maximum of four components.

Table 2: principal component analysis results for socio-economic factors

items	Components after varimax rotation					
	1	2	3	4	5	Extraction
S1: Number of employees	0,880	-0,268	-0,045	-0,189	-0,269	0,956
S2: Industry sensitivity	-0,215	0,566	-0,059	0,441	0,528	0,844
S3: Business in other countries	-0,607	0,092	0,532	-0,562	0,007	0,906
S4: Presence of QHSE department	0,076	0,886	0,579	0,151	0,048	0,977
S5: Marital status	0,884	0,229	-0,259	0,143	-0,218	0,969
S6: Level of education	0,344	0,807	-0,270	0,114	-0,183	0,940
S7: Age	0,221	0,643	0,061	-0,192	0,015	0,935
E1: Return on equity	0,635	0,177	0,095	0,207	-0,291	0,812
E2: Return on assets	0,468	-0,577	0,261	0,550	0,015	0,824
E3: Income/equity	0,132	-0,602	-0,398	0,355	0,369	0,876
E4 : Shareholding structure	0,863	0,144	0,303	-0,008	0,382	0,942
E5 : Debts	0,684	-0,367	0,585	-0,056	0,269	0,947
E6 : Social creditors	0,450	0,563	0,398	-0,242	0,346	0,856
E7: Voting rights	-0,620	0,494	0,054	0,066	-0,21	0,744
E8: Profit maximization/company growth	-0,546	0,121	0,614	0,749	-0,001	0,937
E9: Company sustainability	-0,478	0,371	0,096	0,485	-0,187	0,772
E10: Competitive advantage	0,142	-0,245	0,831	0,143	-0,368	0,927
Eigenvalue	5,688	3,897	2,359	1,997	1,208	
% of variances	33,457	22,924	13,877	11,745	7,108	
% variance explained Cumulative	33,457	56,381	70,258	82,003	89,111	
Cronbach's Alpha	0,689					
KMO	0,882					
Bartlet	172					
Khi-2	2567,869					
P-value	0,000					

Source: authors based on estimates

The KMO index of 0.882 indicates a strong correlation between the items in the table above. Additionally, Bartlett's sphericity test yields a value of 172 at a threshold of 0.000, indicating the probability of rejecting Ho (the correlation

matrix is equal to the identity matrix) and justifying the use of principal component factor analysis. Regarding the scale's reliability, the Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.600 to 0.998 indicate good internal consistency. The application of PCA to this measurement scale resulted in five components, following Kaiser's rule of eigenvalues greater than 1, which explain 89.11% of the sample's total variance. Additionally, the table above allows us to select items that strongly explain social and economic factors. We have selected a total of eight items, four for each factor, by retaining only those items whose coefficients are greater than 0.65. We have selected a total of eight items, four for each factor, by retaining only those items whose coefficients are greater than 0.65. The selected items are presented as follows: social factors (S1, S4, S5 and S6) and economic factors (E4, E5, E8 and E10).

Our exploratory analysis enabled us to choose the items that best explained our components. Now, we need to describe and estimate the regression model (1).

III.2. Descriptive analysis results

In this section, we present the major determinants of the implementation of sustainable marketing, namely the socio-economic factors derived from the Principal Component Analysis (PCA).

Table 3: Socio-economic factors

Items	STD	SMD	DK	SMA	STA
Number of employees	10,81	40,53	33,78	0	14,88
Presence of the QHSE department	0	1,35	9,47	24,32	64,86
Marital status	7,5	52,12	14,88	10,6	14,9
Level of education	7,41	9,1	11,82	58,11	13,56
Shareholder structure	8,23	29,41	37,04	25,32	0
Debts	5,46	53,11	16,89	9,7	14,84
Profit maximization/company growth	0	9,46	0	18,92	71,62
Competitive advantage	0	9,46	28,38	21,62	40,54

STD=Strongly disagree; SMD=Somewhat disagree; DK=Don't know; SMA=Somewhat agree; STA=Strongly agree

Source : Authors

Examining the table above, four points of analysis on social factors are evident. 40.53% of owner-managers surveyed disagreed with the notion that the practice of sustainable marketing is influenced by the number of staff. This was followed by 33.78% of owner-manager respondents who were unaware that sustainable marketing practices are determined by the number of employees. Secondly, 64.86% of the entrepreneur respondents completely agreed and 24.32% somewhat agreed that the presence of a quality-hygiene-safety-environment department motivates the development of sustainable marketing. Thirdly, regarding marital status, 52.12% of the owner-managers somewhat disagreed that sustainable marketing is influenced by marital status. 14.9% strongly agree and 10.6% somewhat agree, while 7.5% strongly disagree and 14.88% don't know. Additionally, a significant majority (58.11%) agree on the influence of education level on sustainable marketing practice implementation. Of those surveyed, 13.56% strongly agreed, 11.82% did not know, 9.1% somewhat disagreed, and 7.41% strongly disagreed. The table above indicates that 37.04% of respondents do not acknowledge the impact of shareholder structure on the implementation of sustainable marketing within the company, while 29.41% do not concur that shareholder structure is a decisive factor in the application of sustainable marketing. Secondly, 53.11% of the owner-managers surveyed disagreed that the practice of sustainable marketing is dependent on the proportion of debt in the company's sustainable resources. 16.89% were unsure of the impact of the proportion of debt on the implementation of SM. However, a small percentage of the owner-managers interviewed strongly agreed that the proportion of debt in resources influences the implementation of SM within the company. Thirdly, 71.62% of the surveyed owner-managers strongly agreed that the company's practice of sustainable marketing is motivated by profit maximization and/or company growth. Only 9.46% of owner-managers disagreed with this statement. Finally, 40.54% of owner-managers strongly agreed that sustainable marketing is motivated by the desire to gain a competitive advantage. The finding is supported by 21.62% of respondents who somewhat agree. However, only 9.46% of owner-managers somewhat disagree that the practice of sustainable marketing in business is motivated by the desire to gain a competitive advantage. Additionally, 28.38% of respondents were unaware of the influence of competitive advantage.

III.3. Results of the Pearson test and explanatory analysis

The following section presents a model that integrates the determinants of sustainable marketing development. Indeed, the study of the link between these constructs is particularly essential in the field of marketing. We will present the results of the correlation and regression tests.

III.3.1. Pearson correlation test results

After testing the correlation between the independent variables and the level of sustainable marketing practice, the results obtained are presented in the table below:

Table 4: Pearson correlation test

Sustainable marketing development (DMD)		
SE	Pearson correlation	Sig.(2-tailed)
S1: Number of employees	0.297*	0.010
S4: Presence of QHSE department	0.386**	0.001
S5: Marital status	0.445**	0.000
S6: Level of education	0.239*	0.040
E4 : Shareholding structure	0.652**	0.000
E5 : Debts	0.326**	0.005
E8: Profit maximization/company growth	-0.035	0.770
E10: Competitive advantage	0.342**	0.003

**, * significant at 1% and 5% respectively

Source: authors based on our results

The Pearson correlation table 4 above allows us to test the correlation between the level of sustainable marketing development and its determinants. As far as the link between sustainable marketing development and socio-economic factors is concerned, social items such as S1, S4, S5 and S6 are all positively correlated with sustainable marketing development, at a threshold of 1% for the first three and 5% for the last. Similarly, items representing economic factors such as E4, E5 and E10 are positively correlated with the development of sustainable marketing at the 1% threshold, with the exception of item E8, which is negatively and non-significantly correlated with the implementation of sustainable marketing.

III.3.2 Regression results

In addition to descriptive, exploratory and correlation analysis, it is important to perform an explanatory analysis using a regression model. Given that our dependent variable is qualitative ordinal (Likert scale), we first ran an ordinal logistic regression (using the maximum likelihood method) and then a multiple linear regression (using the ordinary least squares method) to confirm the robustness of our estimates. The results of the various estimates are shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Relationship between socio-economic characteristics and the development of sustainable marketing

Independent variables (items)	Ordinal Logit		Linear Regression	
	Coefficient	Probability	Coefficient	Probability
S1: Number of employees	7.4270	0.135	1.3726	0.12
S4: Presence of QHSE department	0.5329***	0.000	0.5262	0.011
S5: Marital status	-6.2197	0.226	-0.3553	0.309
S6: Level of education	6.7577*	0.063	-0.5634***	0.000
E4 : Shareholding structure	-3.1437	0.233	0.3242*	0.086
E5 : Debts	-3.7877**	0.038	-0.2660**	0.005
E8: Profit maximization/company	1.5710***	0.000	0.7427**	0.029
E10: Competitive advantage	7.0145**	0.048	0.6102**	0.042
Constant	-	-	-1.3684	0.420
PseudoR /R ²	0.6009		0.7939	
R ² adjusted	-		0.7686	
Probability	0.0000		0.0000	
LR chi2/Fcal	101.80		21.06	
Number of observations	74		74	

*** 1%, ** 5%, * 10%.

Source: authors based on estimates

In the light of the results presented in the table above, it can be seen that: With regard to ordinal logistic regression, we note that the model is globally significant at the 1% threshold, as the probability is 0.000 (less than 0.01). Similarly, the socio-economic factors selected explain 60.09% of the development of sustainable marketing, since the value of the pseudo-R² is 0.6009, i.e., an explanatory power of 60.09%. In the same vein, we need to interpret the various items. Examination of Table 5 shows that, as far as **social factors** are concerned, two of the four items selected have a significant influence on the implementation of sustainable marketing. These items are the presence of a QHSE department (S4) and the level of education of owner-managers (S6). These items positively and statistically determine the development of sustainable marketing at the 1% and 10% thresholds. Thus, the greater the presence of a QHSE department in the company, the greater the tendency of owner-managers to develop sustainable marketing. A one-unit

improvement in QHSE leads to a 0.53-unit increase in sustainable marketing. Similarly, a one-unit improvement in the level of education leads to a 6.22-unit increase in the implementation of sustainable marketing. Thus, the more educated the owner-managers, the more sustainable marketing is developed within the company. These results are similar to those obtained by Giannelloni (1998) and Imed Zaiem (2005) and contradict the work of Aspinall (1993) and Chan and Lau (2000). Similarly, according to Oskamp et al. (1991) and Vining and Ebreo (1990), a good knowledge of the environment is a determining factor in the development of sustainable marketing. Staff size (S1) and marital status (S5) have no significant influence on the practice of sustainable marketing. These determinants, such as age, economic and social status (Anderson and Cunningham, 1972), geographical location ((Zahran et al., 2008, cited in Sandvik, 2008) and cultural change (Patchen, 2010), have been further developed by the authors.

In terms of economic factors, debt level (E5), profit maximization (E8) and competitive advantage (E10) have a significant influence on DSM, with the exception of shareholder structure (E4), which has no influence on DMD. In fact, the level of indebtedness has a negative and statistically significant influence on the DMD at the 5% threshold. Thus, the more indebted a company is, the less it develops sustainable marketing. For a debt level of one unit, the development of sustainable marketing increases by 3.78 units (Giannelloni, 1998).

Moreover, the results of the linear regression are not far from those obtained in the ordinal logistic regression. This model is globally significant. Socio-economic factors explain 76.86% of the level of sustainable marketing practice. Thus, items such as S4 and S6 explaining social factors have a significant influence on DSM, as in the case of logistic regression. However, it should be noted that all economic factors significantly determine DSM when using multiple linear regression. Even so, among these items, E4, E8 and E10 have positive effects, while E5 has a negative effect. As demonstrated in the literature review, the implementation of sustainable development is a source of competitive advantage (Spence, 2005; White, 2010). And so, in the case of industrial companies, the implementation of sustainable marketing can be explained by the desire to distinguish themselves from their competitors. This work also supports the findings of authors such as Barthel (2007), Le Gall (2002), Varasson (2009), Vernier (2005), Sempel and Vandercarmen (2009), and Pastore-Reiss (2006).

In view of the above, six of the eight items explaining socio-economic factors were found to be significant. This led us to validate our hypothesis that socio-economic factors explain the application of sustainable marketing to Cameroonian industrial companies.

Conclusion

In short, the aim of this article was to use exploratory, descriptive and correlational analysis and a regression model to highlight the socio-economic factors behind the development of sustainable marketing in Cameroonian industrial firms. The first step was to explore the various items measuring the determinants, using principal component analysis to describe them. For the exploratory analysis, PCA enabled us to select the items that best explained the socio-economic factors. Descriptive analysis enabled us to characterize the companies in our sample and the determinants of DSM. Correlation tests were then performed. Finally, explanatory analysis using ordinal and multiple linear logistic regression enabled us to identify the variables that have a statistically significant impact on the development of sustainable marketing.

This article has several limitations, on the basis of which the results of the study must be explained. The first limitation relates to the research design used, as the study only considered Cameroonian industrial companies. It follows that the validation of the results might not be true for other non-industrial companies, making it difficult to generalize the results to all categories of companies. The second limitation is linked to the fact that the study is cross-sectional, whereas so-called longitudinal studies could be conducted to provide more precise results. Despite all these limitations, our results make a contribution at the theoretical, practical and managerial levels.

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