

Marketing and Environmental Sustainability in the Sport Sector: Developing a Research Agenda for Action

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Abstract

Authoritative discourse within the literature indicates a realization that sport impacts the natural environment (Brooks, 2006; Cachay, 1993; Lenskyj, 1998) and that environmental sustainability (ES) in sport management is emerging as a topic of concern. The number of sport-related journal articles focusing on environmental sustainability (ES), however has been found to be insufficient (Mallen, Stevens and Adams, 2011). The purpose of this study, thus, was to complete a content analysis of management journals to reveal marketing-ES literature to underscore the development of a sport marketing-ES research agenda. The premise was that the understandings concerning the outlook, perceptions, opinions and viewpoints in the marketing-ES manuscripts will enhance the capacity of researchers in developing a research agenda in sport marketing-ES. The methods involved content analysis steps provided by Krippendorff (1980), Weber (1985), and Wolfe, Hoeber and Babiak (2002) including: establishing the sampling units, the unit of text, the coding themes and sub-themes, analytical factors and coding mode. The data analysis framework involved the use of key marketing concepts: the consumer perspective (Aaker, 1996) and the corporate perspective (Knapp, 2000), along with the concept of influencers (Davis & Dunn, 2002). In sum, the examination involved 49 journals published from 1999 to 2009. Key findings included 63 marketing-ES manuscripts and their concepts, themes and sub-themes, along with their perspectives and influencers that were applied to construct 30 questions to develop a sport marketing-ES research agenda. It is time for sport researchers to generate a robust research response to the marketing-ES questions.

Keywords: environmental sustainability, sport sector, marketing, content analysis

1. Introduction

Discourse indicates a realization that sport impacts the natural environment (Brooks, 2006; Cachay, 1993; Lenskyj, 1998) and that environmental sustainability (ES) in sport management is emerging as a topic of concern. A content analysis by Mallen, Stevens and Adams (2011), however, revealed a low level (n=17) of sport ES manuscripts in 21 sport-related journals published from 1987 to 2008. Examples of topics in this literature include environmental impacts of sport (Weiss, Norden, Hilscher & Vanreusel, 1998), greening the Olympics (Cantelon & Letters, 2000; Lenskyj, 1998; Loland, 2006; Preuss, 2007), and golf (Wheeler & Nauright, 2006). Interestingly, although marketing has the majority of the sport research (Mahoney, 2008), there was a noticeable void of marketing-ES studies in the sport journals. Importantly, manuscripts on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and cause-related marketing were not included in this study unless they focused specifically on ES. Overall, Mallen et al. determined that the body of knowledge in sport ES was in the infancy stage.

The authors of this manuscript extended the Mallen et al. study through 2009 and 2010 and found 14 manuscripts that focused on sport ES. These 14 manuscripts discussed ES and extreme sports (Brymer, Downey & Gray, 2009), facility and event management (Konstantaki & Wickens, 2010; Mallen, Stevens, Adams & McRoberts, 2010; Mallen, Adams, Stevens & Thompson, 2010; Paquette, Stevens, & Mallen, 2011), golf (Briassoulis, 2010), justice (Mansfield, 2009), land use or preserving wilderness (Mincyte, Casper & Cole, 2009; Ray, 2009; Schaffner, 2009), motorsport (Dingle, 2009) political transformation (Barnes, 2009; Harvey, Horne & Safai, 2009), and quality (Limehouse, 2010). A gap, however, continued in sport marketing-ES focused manuscripts.

The purpose of this study, thus, was to complete a content analysis to reveal marketing-ES literature to underscore a sport marketing-ES research agenda. The premise is that the understandings concerning the outlook,

perceptions, opinions and viewpoints in the marketing-ES manuscripts will enhance the capacity of researchers in developing a research agenda in sport marketing-ES.

1.1 Environmental Sustainability (ES), Marketing-ES and Marketing-ES Strategies

ES in this manuscript “refers to a level and pattern of consumption” (Thøgersen, 2010, p. 171), “which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland Report, 1987, p. 1). Marketing follows Kotler and Armstrong’s definition (2004) and involves “building lasting and profitable customer relationships” (p. 5). In this paper, the terms “customer” and “consumer” are used interchangeably (Lehmann, 1999; Malthouse & Calder, 2005) and encompass multiple stakeholder groups. Marketing-ES follows Mintu and Lozada’s (1993), along with Kilbourne and Carlson (2008) as the “application of marketing concepts and tools to facilitate exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual goals in such a way that the preservation, protection, and conservation of the physical environment is upheld” (p. 106). Finally, marketing-ES strategies are “how environmental criteria are integrated into the marketing decisions” (Miles & Covin, 2000, p. 300).

1.2 Marketing-ES Credibility and Greenwashing

It has been determined that marketing-ES information must be perceived “as being credible” (Prakash, 2002, p. 293). Belz (2006) indicated that “credibility and trust are of special importance in the market for sustainable products” [and that] “the customer has to believe that information given by producers or third parties with respect to the socio-ecological qualities of products” (p. 142), is genuine. However, scholars have detected that some declarations are: not credible (Belz, 2006; Saha & Darnton, 2005), “false, unsubstantiated or exaggerated” (Prakash, 2002, p. 293), “unable to live up to their claims” (Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001, p. 21) or “directly deceitful ‘green’ claims” (Thøgersen, 2006, p. 145). These fabrications of reality have given rise to the term “greenwashing”; here, companies create and market a false value around their ES practices (Laufer, 2003). Some companies have prospered with opportunities within a green marketplace (Thøgersen, 2006) with relationships that create “ecological value” (Belz, p. 139); meanwhile, others have abused consumers’ trust to appear ‘green’. This manuscript supports Bansal and Kistruct’s (2006) position that “stakeholders must judge whether a firm’s impression management efforts are credible and whether they truly reflect a substantive commitment to the practices they espouse” (p. 178).

2. Method

This study utilizes steps provided by Krippendorff (1980), Weber (1985), and Wolfe, Hoerber and Babiak (2002) that include establishing the sampling units, the unit of text, the coding themes and sub-themes, analytical factors and coding mode. The sampling units in the current investigation included 49 journals. First, 23 mainstream management journals in organizational and natural environment were selected based on the Cohen (2007) rating of mainstream management journals for quality and footprint based on a 1-4 rating system (1 = low; 4 = high) including:

Rating of 4

Academy of Management Journal
Academy of Management Review
Administrative Science Quarterly
Strategic Management Journal
MIT Sloan Management Review
Organization Science
Academy of Management Executive
Management Science
Harvard Business Review

Rating of 3

California Management Review
Organization Studies
Journal of Industrial Ecology
Journal of Management Studies

Journal of Applied Behavioral Science

Business Strategy and the Environment

Business and the Environment

Journal of Business Ethics

Business Ethics Quarterly

Rating of 2.5

Journal of Management Inquiry

Rating of 2

Organization and Environment

Business and Society Review

Corporate Environmental Strategy

Business Horizons

Next, 20 journals were selected based on the Chamorro et al. (2009) study on “a group of scientific journals likely to include work in the field of green marketing” (p. 224), including:

Advances in Consumer Research

British Journal of Management

European Journal of Marketing

Industrial Marketing Management

International Journal of Advertising

International Journal of Research in Marketing

International Marketing Review

Journal of Advertising

Journal of Business Research

Journal of Consumer Affairs

Journal of Consumer Marketing

Journal of Consumer Policy

Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising

Journal of Macromarketing

Journal of Marketing

Journal of Marketing Management

Journal of Public Policy and Marketing

Journal of Strategic Marketing

Long Range Planning

Public Relations Review

Finally, 6 journals that publish influential research in the field of environmental sustainability were included in the investigation, including:

Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management

Sustainable Development

Journal of Environmental Management

Environment, Development and Sustainability

Environmental Management

Environmental Policy and Governance

There were manuscripts from these 6 publications that focused on topics *relating* to marketing, such as the marketplace (Brown & Shrestha, 2000; Honey-Rosés, 2009; Vermeulen & Seuring, 2009), perceptions (Rajeswar, 2000; Timur & Getz, 2009), attitudes (Ma, Lu, Xing, He & Sun, 2009), cause-related marketing (Baghi, Rubaltelli & Tedeschi (2009), and motivations (Ryan, 2009). The key focus of these manuscripts, however, was not on marketing-ES and, thus, they were removed from the study.

While there is debate concerning “the criteria to differentiate that which constitutes a top or a leading journal in marketing” (Svensson & Wood, p. 288), the three lists utilized were selected due to their fit concerning the focus of this manuscript on marketing-ES literature. Also, given that the Chamorro et al. (2009) study reviewed marketing literature from 1993 to 2003 to “determine the state of research on green marketing” (p. 233), the authors of this manuscript did not repeat the Chamorro et al. examination; instead, the examination was *extended* to include 2004-2009. Importantly, again, manuscripts in CSR or cause-related marketing were not included unless their main focus was on ES.

Each unit of text is a marketing-ES manuscript within the five article types classified by Rourke and Szabo (2002), including viewpoint, empirical, descriptive, review and methodological. Each manuscript was published in 1999-2009 as this decade represented the transition into, and the first decade within, the new millennium.

The coding theme was marketing and ES and involved human coding. Two of the researchers completed the content analysis. There were six manuscripts that needed to be reviewed by the research team to determine fit. The team decided unanimously that the five articles were not focused specifically on marketing-ES and should not be included; meanwhile, the sixth was found on topic, but was only an extended abstract and was eliminated due to the brevity of the manuscript.

The analytical factors were adapted from Wolfe et al. (2005) and included: marketing-ES manuscripts, rationales, theoretical perspectives, research settings and research methods. The data analysis framework involved the use of key marketing concepts: the consumer perspective (Aaker, 1996) and the corporate perspective (Knapp, 2000), along with the concept of influencers (Davis & Dunn, 2002). Multiple themes and sub-themes generated from the marketing-ES manuscripts were applied to construct questions for a sport marketing-ES research agenda.

3. Results and Discussion

The content analysis revealed 63 marketing-ES manuscripts (see Table 1) within the 49 journals and over 13,700 published manuscripts examined. Specifically, in the 23 mainstream journals in management on organizational and the natural environment from 1999 to 2009, there were over 4,600 published articles and 27 (n=27 or 0.56%) focused directly on marketing-ES. The content analysis of the 20 journals rated as most likely to include research on green marketing revealed over 5,100 published articles from 2004 to 2009 (see Chamorro et al., for 1999-2003) and 31 (n=31, or 0.60%) focused directly on marketing-ES. Finally, from 1999 to 2009, the 6 environment-focused journals produced 5 marketing-ES focused manuscripts from the 4,070 published articles (n=5, or 0.12%).

The 63 marketing-ES manuscripts were examined for their rationales, theoretical perspectives, research settings and methods. The rationales (see Table 2) ranged from outlining the environmental situation, to providing calls to respond to the environmental situation and exposed a need to change for the environmental times. These rationales indicated a lack of knowledge in marketing-ES, provided trends and stated that marketing-ES was complex. After considering the rationales that supported the marketing-ES manuscripts, the research team developed a position that the rationales were appropriate for application to support research in sport marketing-ES.

Table 1. Marketing-ES manuscript

Andrews & DeVault (2009)	Klintman (2009)
Aragon-Correa & Rubio-Lopez (2007)	Lai, Sorice, Nepal, & Cheng (2009)
Bansal & Kistruck (2006)	Lansing & Vries (2007)
Belz (2006)	Larsen (2006)
Boiral, O. (2006)	Lindell & Karagozoglu (2001)
Bortree, D. (2009)	Lindgreen, Antioco, Harness & van der Sloot (2009)
Boyd, Spekman, Kamauff, & Werhane (2007)	McDonald & Oates (2006)
Chamorro, Rubio, & Miranda (2009)	McKie & Galloway (2007)
Chamorro & Banegli, (2006)	Melton & Tinsley (1999)
Christensen, Godskesen, Gram-Hanssen, Quitau, &	Menguc & Ozanne (2005)

Röpke (2007)	Meriläinen, Moisander, & Pesonen (2000)
Cleveland, Kalamas, & Laroche (2005)	Miles & Covin (2000)
Cornelissen, Pandelaere, Warlop, & Dewitte (2007)	Mitchell & Saren (2008)
Dougall (2005)	Nair & Menon (2008)
Fraj, & Martinez (2006)	Oyewole (2001)
Fraj-andrés, Martinez-Salinas, & Matute-Vallejo (2009).	Peattie (2001)
Francois-Lecompte & Roberts (2006)	Pedersen & Neergaard (2006)
Gadenne, Kennedy, & McKeiver (2009).	Pickett-Baker & Ozaki (2008)
Gärling & Thøgersen (2001)	Polonsky & Rosenberger (2001)
Gaterell & Morse (1999)	Prakash (2002)
Gilmore, Carson, & Ascensão (2007)	Press & Arnould (2009)
Ginsberg & Bloom (2004)	Reber & Berger (2005)
Golding & Peattie (2005)	Rivera-Camino (2004)
Grankvist, Dahlstrand, & Biel (2004)	Rothenberg (2007)
Gurău, & Ranchhod (2005)	Rowlands, Scott, & Parket (2003)
Hartmann, & Apaolaza-Ibáñez (2009)	Rueda-Manzanares, Argon-Correa, & Sharma (2007)
Heiskanen (2005)	Saha & Darnton (2005)
Iles (2008)	Sammer & Wüstenhagen (2006)
Iyer (1999)	Spears & Germain (2007).
Judge & Elenkov (2005)	Thøgersen (2006)
Kassinis & Vafeas (2009)	Yin, & Ma (2009)
Kilbourne & Carlson (2008)	
Kilbourne & Pickett (2008)	

Table 2. Examples of rationales that support marketing-ES research

The Environmental Situation, Calls and the Need to Change
Aragon-Correa & Rubio-Lopez (2007) "Environmental problems are real and urgent for our planet" (p. 374)
Bortree (2009) "Communication about environmental policies and practices has become a critical area of focus for corporations" (p. 133)
Chamorro, Rubio, & Miranda (2009) "marketing has not been immune from the social concern about the deteriorating environment" (p. 223)
Chamorro & Banegil (2006) call "to highlight the importance of there being a true corporate commitment towards protecting the environment behind any green communication" (p. 11)
Cornelissen, Pandelaere, Warlop & Dewitte (2007) "There has been repeated calls for social marketing research to address sustainable consumption issues" (p. 46)
Fraj & Martinez (2006) "There is an increasing concern for the environment that makes the individuals' values and lifestyles change" (p. 133)
Fraj-andrés, Martinez-Salinas & Matute-Vallejo (2009) "This situation is driving firms to undertake an environmental transformation process with the purpose of reducing the negative externalities" (p. 263)
Gadenne, Kennedy & McKeiver (2009) "There has been rising demand for environmental-friendly business practices" (p. 45)
Heiskanen (2005) "There has been a mounting public policy interest in sustainable consumption" (p. 179)
Lai, Sorice, Nepal & Cheng (2009) need "to better target the... visitor segments and facilitate a sense of natural resource stewardship among them" (p. 985)
McDonald & Oates (2006) The natural environment is again "at the forefront of academic research and management thinking" (p. 157)
McKie & Galloway (2007) "Climate change...has passed a tipping point in the public awareness" (p.368)
Mitchell & Saren (2008) "There is a need for change towards more sustainable business practices, be it in management or as in this case for the marketing of products" (Mitchell & Saren, 2008, p. 402)
Press & Arnould (2009) There is a "growing recognition of a fundamentally resource-constrained environment and the increased salience of various global commons effects to consumers" (p. 102)
Saha & Darnton (2005) "Marketing itself has detrimental effects on the environment and society because the activities of marketing (and mass production) have increased consumption, use of raw materials and waste through advertising, product differentiation, and shortening of product life cycles" (p. 122)
The Lack of Knowledge

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- Fraj-andrés, Martínez-Salinas & Matute-Vallejo (2009) "Empirical support for the positive link between environmentally friendly initiative and profitability is still scarce and, often, contradictory" (p. 263)
- Gurão & Ranchhod (2005) "The market of ecological products is growing exponentially... however, there are very few studies focused on the international marketing strategies of eco-firms" (p. 547)
- Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez (2009) "Research on the specific topic of green advertising has been relatively scarce" (pp. 715-716)
- Kassinis & Vafeas (2009) "No clear evidence exists as to whether pollution pays or polluters pay and what distinguishes firms that have lower emissions from others with higher ones" (p. 484)
- Kilbourne & Pickett (2008) "The institution most in need of examination and critique is consumption itself" (p. 886). "Most of the research ... was not systematic and tended to focus on symptoms of environmental degradation... rather than root causes" (p. 885)
- Lindell & Karagozoglu (2001) "We know little about how to shift from economic rationality to ecological rationality" (p. 40)
- Melton & Tinsley (1999) need "to compare theory with recent empirical information from the field" (p. 86)
- Peattie (2001) "The challenge has been to understand how the environment has impacted consumer behavior in a way that will allow them to segment and respond to the market, according to environmental concern" (p. 188)
- Rowlands, Scott & Parket (2003) "Little... is known about the potential purchaser of green electricity" (p. 3)
- Rueda-Manzanares, Argon-Correa, & Sharma (2007) "Less attention has been paid to how stakeholder pressures influence the environmental strategy of service firms" (p. 185).
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Questions; Trends; Complexity

- Boiral (2006) "Many managers are at a loss concerning the strategy they should ... adopt to deal with global warming" (p. 315)
- Christensen, Godskesen, Gram-Hanssen, Quitzau & Røpke (2007) Results and experiences are not always transferrable as they are context specific
- Ginsberg & Bloom (2004) "Consumers, shareholders and society at large all stand to benefit when a company integrates environmental friendliness into its marketing strategy" (p. 84)
- Grankvist, Dahlstrand & Biel (2004) "There is no straight and simple relationship between attitudes and pro-environmental behavior" (p. 214)
- Iles (2008) "Green chemistry promises to transform industry in the next two decades" (p. 524)
- Judge & Elenkov (2005) "One possible way of conceptualizing how organizations can more effectively address their environmental challenges is by looking at the threats and opportunities posed by the natural environment as a series of change opportunities" (p. 894)
- Pedersen & Neergaard (2006) "The number of labels is expected to continue to grow in the coming years" (p. 16)
- Polonsky & Rosenberger (2001) "Understanding corporate motivations and pressures for greening is essential" (p. 22)
- Prakash (2002) "Clearly, green marketing is part and parcel of the overall corporate strategy" (p. 285)
- Thøgersen (2006) "Environmental protection has indeed been an issue with remarkable staying power on the public agenda" (p. 153).
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The theoretical perspectives varied within the marketing-ES research from, for example, stakeholder theory, consumer economic theory, institutional theory and political theory (see Table 3). Interestingly, a number of manuscripts used sustainability theory, yet, this perspective remains "vague" [and] wide disagreement still exists on what is sustainable" (Bettencourt & West, 2010, p. 120); indeed, much work to clarify sustainability theory is still needed. All of the theoretical perspectives utilized, however, were deemed applicable for use in sport marketing-ES as each is similarly represented in sport management.

The settings utilized ranged from conceptual, the consumer market, or to a particular country or industry (see Table 4). Many settings had linkages to the sport management field, such as the consumer sport market; sport consumption; sport settings based on country; education; industry such as sport manufacturing and multiple sport organizations. The marketing-ES research settings, thus, were deemed appropriate by the research team to underscore sport marketing-ES research.

The examination of research methods revealed qualitative and quantitative strategies. They encompassed a variety of methods, such as content analysis, case, conceptual and survey studies (see Table 5). Each method illustrated was deemed appropriate to underscore a sport marketing-ES research agenda as they are currently being employed in sport management research.

Table 3. Examples of theoretical perspectives

Stakeholder Theory: Bansal & Kistruck, 2006; Gadenne, Kennedy & McKeiver, 2009; Lindgreen, Antiocho, Harness & van der Sloot, 2009; Miles & Covin, 2000; Prakash, 2002; Rivera-Camino, 2004
Sustainability Theory: Boiral, 2006; Bortree, 2009; Boyd, Spekman, Kamauff & Werhane, 2007; Chamorro, Rubio, & Miranda, 2009; Cornelissen, Pandelaere, Warlop & Dewitte, 2007; Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Gärling & Thøgersen, 2001; Gilmore, Carson, & Ascensão, 2007; Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004; Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibanez, 2009; Heiskanen, 2005; Iles, 2008; Iyer, 1999; Kassinis & Vafeas, 2009; Kilbourne & Carlson, 2008; Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008; Lansing & Vries, 2007; Larsen, 2006; Lindell & Karagozoglu, 2001; Lindgreen, Antiocho, Harness & van der Sloot, 2009; McKie & Galloway, 2007; Nair & Menon, 2008; Peattie, 2001; Pedersen & Neergaard, 2006; Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008; Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001; Reber & Berger, 2005; Rowlands, Scott & Parket, 2003; Saha & Darnton, 2005; Spears & Germain, 2007; Thøgersen, 2006; Yin & Ma, 2009
Examples of Other Theoretical Perspectives Utilized:
<i>Application of metaphors</i> (Mitchell & Saren, 2008)
<i>Consumer economic theory</i> (Sammer & Wüstenhagen, 2006)
<i>Crane's framework including four levels of ethical augmentations</i> (Francois-Lecompte & Roberts, 2006)
<i>Deliberative democracy</i> (Klintman, 2009)
<i>Game theory</i> (Andrews & DeVault, 2009)
<i>Gender theoretical perspectives</i> (McDonald & Oates, 2006; Meriläinen, Moisander & Pesonen, 2000)
<i>Institutional theory</i> (Rothenberg, 2007)
<i>Internationalization theories</i> (Guräu & Ranchhod, 2005)
<i>Locus of control perspective</i> (Cleveland, Kalamas & Laroche, 2005)
<i>Political theory</i> (Iyer, 1999)
<i>Public relations theory</i> (Dougall, 2005)
<i>Resource-based view of the firm</i> (Judge & Elenkov, 2005; Rueda-Manzanares, Argon-Correa & Sharma 2007)
<i>Socio-environmental theory</i> (Belz, 2006)
<i>Social environmental justice theory</i> (Oyewole, 2001)
<i>Strategic view of the firm</i> (Aragon-Correa & Rubio-Lopez, 2007)
<i>Systems theory</i> (Press & Arnould, 2009)
<i>Theory of perceptions</i> (McDonald & Oates, 2006)
<i>Value function</i> (Grankvist, Dahlstrand & Biel (2004)

Table 4. Examples of the research settings in the marketing-ES literature

Conceptual: Belz, 2006
Consumer Market: McDonald & Oates, 2006; Meriläinen, Moisander & Pesonen, 2000; Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008; Prakash (2002)
Consumption: Press & Arnould, 2009
Country setting:
<i>Australia:</i> Dougall, 2005; Gadenne, Kennedy & McKeiver, 2009; Menguc & Ozanne, 2005
<i>Bulgaria :</i> Judge & Elenkov, 2005
<i>Canada ;</i> Bansal & Kistruck, 2006; Rowlands, Scott & Parket, 2003
<i>China :</i> Yin & Ma, 2009
<i>Denmark</i> (Christensen, Godskesen, Gram-Hanssen, Quitzau & Røpke, 2007)
<i>France :</i> Francois-Lecompte & Roberts, 2006
<i>India:</i> Nair & Menon, 2008
<i>Ireland:</i> Gilmore, Carson & Ascensão, 2007
<i>Spain:</i> Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Hartmann, P., & Apaolaza-Ibanez, 2009; Rivera-Camino, 2004
<i>Sweden;</i> Grankvist, Dahlstrand & Biel, 2004; Klintman, 2009
<i>Switzerland;</i> (Sammer & Wüstenhagen , 2006
<i>United Kingdom;</i> Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008
<i>United States of America;</i> Bortree, 2009; Cleveland, Kalamas & Laroche, 2005; Heiskanen, 2005; Kassinis & Vafeas, 2009; Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008; Larsen, 2006; Kilbourne & Carlson, 2008; Reber, & Berger, 2005
<i>Multiple country focus;</i> Guräu & Ranchhod, 2005; Lindell & Karagozoglu , 2001; Rothenberg, 2007; Rueda-Manzanares, Argon-Correa & Sharma, 2007
Education: Menguc & Ozanne, 2005; Bansal & Kistruck, 2006; Bortree, 2009; Cornelissen, Pandelaere, Warlop

& Dewitte, 2007; Grankvist, Dahlstrand & Biel, 2004; Kilbourne & Carlson, 2008
Environmental Organizations: Reber, & Berger, 2005
Firm: Miles & Covin, 2000; Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001
Green Consumers: Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004; Peattie, 2001; Sammer & Wüstenhagen, 2006
Households: Hartmann, P., & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2009
Industry:
Automobile industry: Andrews & DeVault, 2009; Rothenberg, 2007
Banking: Dougall, 2005
Chemical industry: Iles, 2008
Economic sector: Rivera-Camino, 2004
Food industry: Aragon-Correa & Rubio-Lopez, 2007
Magazine industry: Spears & Germain, 2007
Manufacturing industry: Judge & Elenkov, 2005; Kassinis & Vafeas, 2009
Medical: Lindgreen, Antiocho, Harness & van der Sloot, 2009
Ski industry: Rueda-Manzanares, Aragon-Correa & Sharma, 2007
Tourism: Lansing & Vries, 2007; Gilmore, Carson & Ascenção, 2007
Washing machine industry: Sammer & Wüstenhagen, 2006
Organizations: Gadenne, Kennedy & McKeiver, 2009; Saha & Darnton, 2005
Marketing literature: Chamorro, Rubio, & Miranda, 2009

Table 5. Examples of research methods utilized in the marketing-ES literature

Case Study: Bortree, 2009; Dougall, 2005; Gilmore, Carson & Ascenção, 2007; Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001; Rothenberg, 2007; Rowlands, Scott & Parket, 2003; Saha & Darnton, 2005; Sammer & Wüstenhagen, 2006; Yin & Ma, 2009)
Conceptual: Judge & Elenkov, 2005; Kilbourne & Carlson, 2008;
Content Analysis: Chamorro, Rubio, & Miranda, 2009; Spears & Germain, 2007;
Descriptive Methods: Aragon-Correa & Rubio-Lopez, 2007; Belz, 2006; Gärling & Thøgersen, 2001; Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004; Lindgreen, Antiocho, Harness & van der Sloot, 2009; Iles, 2008; Iyer, 1999; Lansing & Vries, 2007; Meriläinen, Moisander & Pesonen, 2000; Miles & Covin, 2000; Mitchell & Saren, 2008; Peattie, 2001; Pedersen & Neergaard, 2006; Prakash, 2002
Empirical Methods: Christensen, Godskesen, Gram-Hanssen, Quitzau & Røpke, 2007; Cleveland, Kalamas & Laroche, 2005; Cornelissen, Pandelaere, Warlop & Dewitte, 2007; Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Grankvist, Dahlstrand & Biel, 2004; Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2009; Kassinis & Vafeas, 2009; Larsen, 2006; McDonald & Oates, 2006; Menguc & Ozanne, 2005; Pickett-Baker, & Ozaki, 2008; Rivera-Camino 2004; Yin & Ma, 2009;
Survey Method: Bansal & Kistruck, 2006; Gadenne, Kennedy & McKeiver, 2009; Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008; Lindell & Karagozoglu, 2001; Nair & Menon, 2008; Oyewole, 2001; Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001; Rowlands, Scott & Parket, 2003; Rueda-Manzanares, Aragon-Correa & Sharma, 2007

The rationales, theoretical perspectives, settings and methods outlined above illustrate that ES has begun to permeate the management context. However, ES can be context specific (Christensen, Godskesen, Gram-Hanssen, Quitzau & Røpke, 2007; Cleveland, Kalamas & Laroche, 2005). It is, thus, important to generate understanding of sport-ES, including sport marketing-ES.

Next, the marketing-ES literature was applied with the use of a conceptual framework that included the consumer perspective (Aaker, 1996) and the corporate perspective (Knapp, 2000), along with the concept of influencers (Davis & Dunn, 2002); the examination generated the marketing-ES themes and sub-themes that were applied to develop questions for future research in sport marketing-ES. Importantly, Mitchell and Saren's (2008) noted that the historical context of ES included a "general debate [that] tends to take either a company or consumer perspective and does not take into account the dynamics and characteristics of the system as a whole" (p. 401). As such, our conceptual framework was specifically selected to highlight the interconnected and interdependent nature of business and consumer goals present in any exchange relationship. Further, Davis and Dunn (2002) indicated that numerous organizational touch points can shape an organization's brand image and the influences upon a sport marketing-ES strategy must similarly be considered. Multiple influences impacting the consumer and corporate perspectives involve the myriad of stakeholders, such as sport manufacturers; consumers; facility and event managers; along with government entities, sponsors, staff/volunteers, spectators and media. The concept of influencers was applied by the authors to mean any of sports multiple stakeholders.

The role of various influences on sport marketing-ES was not considered in this study and should be given a place in a future research agenda.

3.1 Consumer Perspective

An examination of the consumer perspective generated themes that were categorized as the consumer viewpoint, awareness, and perceptions. Each will now be examined in turn.

3.1.1 Consumer Viewpoint

The *consumer viewpoint* theme generated multiple sub-themes within the data. Examples included, *the consumer profile* (Fraj & Martinez, 2006; Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004; Rowlands, Scott & Parket, 2003), *consumer influences of purchase choices* (Lindgreen et al., 2009), *geographical attitudes/perspectives* (Christensen et al., 2007; Cleveland et al., 2005; Dougall, 2005; Lindell & Karagozoglu, 2001; Miles & Covin, 2000; Nair & Menon, 2008; Yin & Ma, 2009), *consumer consumption logic* (Iyer, 1999), and *consumer ethical perspectives and limitations* (Meriläinen, Moisander & Pesonen, 2000). The literature, thus, encompassed multiple understandings concerning the consumer. For instance, consumer perceptions of ES “influences their purchase choice” (Lindgreen et al., 2009, p. 445) and “solutions [to ES] are decidedly political and rooted in a different model of the consumer as contrasted to the prevalent rational economic model of the consumer” (Iyer, 1999, p. 285). Also, “consumers in major international markets are demanding that firms produce increasingly higher quality products and services that are consistent with societal and environmental values” (Miles & Covin, 2000, p. 299) and there is a “general debate [that] tends to take either a company or consumer perspective and does not take into account the dynamics and characteristics of the system as a whole” (Mitchell & Saren, 2008, p. 401).

An application of the consumer viewpoint theme and the subsequent sub-themes in the marketing-ES literature generated research questions to guide a sport marketing-ES research agenda. Throughout this discussion, each question should be considered for the multiple stakeholders in sport. Questions included:

Who is the sport-ES consumer?

What are the sport consumer opinions/perceptions/attitudes and their moral and ethical imperatives for ES?

How does the sport consumer opinion differ based on factors such as geographic location and gender?

What influences sport consumers and how do these influences impact sport ES consumption?

What capacity and limitations exist for sport marketing-ES?

3.1.2 Awareness

The awareness theme and sub-themes involved *awareness levels* (Bortree, 2009; Nair & Menon, 2008; Pedersen & Neergaard, 2006), *geographical influences on awareness* (Nair & Menon, 2008), *the link between awareness and environmental justice* (Oyewole, 2001), *awareness of environmental labels* (Grankvist, et al., 2004; Pederson & Neergaard, 2006; Sammer and Wüstenhagen, 2006), and *the importance of ES education* (Andrews & DeVault, 2009; Iles, 2008; Kilbourne & Carlson, 2008). Further, communication was promoted as key in environmental marketing, along with education (Andrews & DeVault, 2009; Nair & Menon, 2008). Saha and Darnton (2005) stated that “actual behavior is very much behind awareness” (p. 152) and the researchers of this study surmise that that this may stem from the lack of understanding concerning the complexities of who, what, and how to incorporate ES within marketing. The development of a robust agenda for communication, awareness and education may stimulate greater institution of marketing-ES practices. Iles (2008), however, reported that “a shift [to ES] will not succeed unless companies generate more information internally, build new relations across supply chains and provide more information externally” (p. 534).

An application of the awareness theme and sub-themes in the marketing-ES literature generated guiding research questions for a sport marketing-ES research agenda including:

What is the ES awareness level of sport consumers?

How has/does the sport consumer develop awareness of ES?

How does awareness of ES by the sport consumer differ based on influences such as organizational size and geographical location?

How does sport consumer awareness of ES impact sport marketing?

What are the narratives influencing ES education in sport?

3.1.3 Perceptions

The perceptions theme and sub-themes involved *consumer perceptions* (McDonald & Oates, 2006), including a “*green purchase perception matrix*” (Peattie, 2001, p. 196), *perceptions through “impression management”* (Bansal & Kistruck, 2006, p. 178), *perceptions of credibility* (Gärling & Thøgersen, 2001), *perceptions influencing product choice* (Lindgreen, Antiocho, Harness & van der Sloot, 2009), *perceptions around terminology* (Lansing & Vries, 2007), *perceptions through labeling schemes* (Pedersen & Neergaard, 2006) and the *desire for companies to be perceived as green* (Saha & Darnton, 2005). Managing consumers’ perceptions has long been an area of interest for marketers. Keller (1993) noted that consumer perceptions and behaviors arise from marketing initiatives and Hoeffler and Keller (2002) discussed the role of Corporate Societal Marketing (CSM), its growth and impact on brand strength and equity as it can “significantly affect a brand’s strength and equity” (p. 78). Lindgreen et al. (2009) acknowledged this new realm of marketing noting that customer’ product perceptions need to be compatible with their views of ES. According to Saha and Darnton (2005), there is an onus on the consumer to determine companies truly ‘living’ their ES mantra (remember the earlier discussion on ‘greenwashing’?). Indeed, Bansal and Kistruck (2006) noted that “stakeholders must judge whether a firm’s impression management efforts are credible and whether they truly reflect a substantive commitment to the practices they espouse” (p. 178). Credibility in adopting ES schemes is, thus, paramount.

An application of the perception theme and sub-themes in the marketing-ES literature generated guiding research questions for a sport marketing-ES research agenda, including:

What is the perception of companies adopting ES practices amongst sport consumers?

How are sport consumers’ perceptions of ES being formed?

How do sport consumer perceptions of ES impact sport marketing?

Is perception reality in sport marketing-ES initiatives?

3.2 Corporate Perspective

A number of issues were identified that related to the corporate perspective of marketing-ES. The data indicated that these issues could be grouped into four sub-themes including: economics, green strategy, practices, and outcomes. Each will now be examined in turn.

3.2.1 Economic Perspective

The economic perspective theme and sub-themes included: *viability and profitability of green products* (Andrews & deVault, 2009), *limits of natural resources* (Iyer, 1999), *economic-to-environmental rationality* (Lindell & Karagozoglu, 2001), *economic pursuits* (Lindgreen, Antiocho, Harness & van der Sloot, 2009), *financial performance through environmental stewardship* (Miles & Covin, 2000), *consumers’ willingness to pay* (Sammer & Wüstenhagen, 2006; Rowlands et al., 2003) and *economic assessment of environmental pursuits* (Gaterell & Morse (1999). It was noted that green products currently depend on early adopters that are willing to pay a premium (Andrews & DeVault). Importantly, Miles and Covin (2000) opined that ES can “create a reputational advantage that leads to enhanced marketing and financial performance” (p. 309). However, Lindell and Karagozoglu (2001) pointed out: “we know little about how to shift from economic rationality to ecological rationality and especially about how actions differ between different regions” (p. 40).

An application of the economic theme and the subsequent sub-themes in the marketing-ES literature generated research questions, including:

What are the economic ramifications of adopting a sport marketing-ES initiative?

Would consumers buy more if a sport organization abided by ES principles?

What reputational advantages could be won by implementing a sport marketing-ES campaign?

Even if economic rational is not present for adopting a sport-ES marketing initiative are there ‘softer’ or ‘intangible’ benefits making the decision worthwhile?

3.2.2 Green Strategy

The green strategy theme and sub-themes included: specific strategies, such as *energy consumption strategies* (Press & Arnould, 2009), *the right type of green strategy* (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004; Prakash, 2002), *sustainability marketing strategies* (Iles, 2008; Lindgreen, Antiocho, Harness & van der Sloot 2009), *the importance of green strategies* (Lindell & Karagozoglu, 2001), *differentiation strategies* (Lindgreen, Antiocho, Harness & van der Sloot, 2009; Miles & Covin, 2002), *segmentation strategies* (Peattie, 2001), *corporate motivation for greening and coordination within marketing-ES* (Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001), *corporate*

commitment to ES (Chamorro & Banegil, 2006), *the influence of stakeholders on the strategy* (Rueda-Manzanares et al., 2007), *green marketing theory and application* (Melton & Tinsley, 1999), and *assessing green strategies* (Lindgreen, Antiocho, Harness & van der Sloot, 2009). It was noted that green marketing must be integrated and cannot exist in isolation from the overall strategy of an organization (Prakash, 2002; Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001). However, there is no one roadmap to implement a marketing-ES strategy. Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) accept this viewpoint noting,

The strategies that should work best under different market and competitive conditions range from the relatively passive and silent “lean green” approach to the more aggressive and visible “extreme green” approach – with “defensive green” and “shaded green” in between. Managers who understand these strategies and the underlying reasoning behind them will be better prepared to help their companies benefit from an environmentally friendly approach to marketing (p. 80).

Customized marketing-ES was captured by Iles (2008) who noted the need for buy-in from key organizational stakeholders for marketing-ES strategies to be successful and that marketing-ES is about sustainable relationships with consumers and the natural environment. However, “this shift will not succeed unless companies generate more information internally, build new relations across supply chains and provide more information externally” (Iles, 2008, p. 534). Therefore, for “marketing orientated companies, the challenge has been to understand how the environment has impacted consumer behavior in a way that will allow them to segment and respond to the market, according to environmental concern” (Peattie, 2001, p. 188).

Another challenge is to understand the pressures and motivations for ES marketing (Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001). For example, while “enhancing environmental performance is both socially responsible and rational and builds the corporation’s reputational advantage” (Miles & Covin, 2000, p. 301) there is no one superior strategy that fits all companies (Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001). Yet, aligning corporate strategies with defined marketing-ES results is paramount. Lindgreen et al. (2009) acknowledged the pursuit of outcomes rather than profit could become a future key marketing-ES imperative.

An application of the green strategy perspective theme and sub-themes generated guiding research questions for a sport marketing-ES research agenda including:

What is the impact of a sport marketing-ES strategy when building a brand?

What are the key influences on a sport marketing-ES strategy?

How might a sport marketing-ES strategy be designed?

How might the internal buy-in for a sport marketing-ES strategy be coordinated?

What metrics should be used to assess the effectiveness of a sport marketing-ES strategy?

3.2.3 Practices

The practices themes and sub-themes examples included: *understandings of practices* (Miles & Covin, 2000, McDonald & Oates, 2006; Mitchell & Saren, 2008; Pedersen & Neergaard, 2006; Saha & Darnton, 2005), *challenges* (Saha & Darnton, 2005), *the credibility of practices* (Gärling & Thøgersen, 2001), *internal communications* (Iles, 2008), *documentation of environmental benefits* (Rowlands et al., 2003), *specific practices such as levies* (Larsen, 2006), *fair trade principles* (Golding & Peattie, 2005), *natural resource stewardship* (Lai, Sorice, Nepal, & Cheng, 2009), and *implication considerations* (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004). This literature was multi-directional in focus. For instance, it was noted that diversity in ES practices (Mitchell & Saren, 2008) exists, and that marketing “environmental improvement practices of companies have so far been rather piecemeal” (Saha & Darnton, 2005, p. 118). Mitchell and Saren (2008) found a tendency towards “incremental improvements of traditional practices ... rather than creativity (and new skills)” (p. 401) due to the complex, difficult and challenging nature of marketing ES (Saha & Darnton, 2005).

An application of the practices theme and the subsequent sub-themes in the marketing-ES literature generated guiding research questions for a sport marketing-ES research agenda including:

What are the trends and best practices in sport marketing-ES?

What are the challenges, barriers and implications in sport marketing-ES practices?

How credible are the sport marketing-ES practices and what are the implications of credibility?

3.2.4 Performance/Outcomes

The performance/outcomes theme and sub-themes included: *marketing performance* (Miles & Covin, 2000), *environmental performance* (Kassinis & Vafeas, 2009), *integration performance* (Polonsky & Rosenberger,

2001), *performance based on company size* (Gadenne, Kennedy & McKeiver, 2009), *issues impacting performance, such as purchase and disposal problems* (McDonald & Oates, 2006), *supply information and context* (Iles, 2008), *environmental labeling* (Pederson & Neergaard, 2006), *environmental claims* (Prakash, 2002) and *tradeoffs* (Peattie, 2001). Data indicated that performance in marketing-ES can be impacted by a diverse number of elements. For instance, Mitchell and Saren (2008) suggested that marketing efforts “contain embedded assumptions that have repercussions on our relationship with the natural world” (p. 399) and that “whilst taking a product perspective, being part of an ecosystem, the immediate implication of interdependency and interconnectedness should be considered” (p. 405). Polonsky and Rosenberger (2001) promoted that marketing-ES required high levels of coordination and Prakash (2002) indicated a requirement for “manipulating the 4Ps (product, price, place and promotion) of the traditional marketing mix” (p. 285). Further, Peattie (2001) discussed that performance involved cost and benefit tradeoffs. However, Saha and Darnton (2005) revealed “a wide gap between environmental impact size and mitigating the overall impact” (p. 152); specifically, “companies focused on some impacts, but not all the impacts within the supply chain” (p. 152). Finally, Prakash (2002) revealed that “in adopting green marketing policies, firms may encounter many challenges” (p. 287).

An application of the performance/outcomes perspectives theme and sub-themes in the marketing-ES literature generated guiding research questions for a sport marketing-ES research agenda including:

What methods, models and factors impact sport marketing-ES performance?

What are the pillars of success in sport marketing-ES performance?

3.3 Influences

The component on influences within ES initiatives indicated that organizations do not exist in isolation from other groups/bodies/organizations. Porter (1980) introduced the multiple forces that an organization interacts with on an on-going basis; here, organizations may, in the course of operations, act and interact with influential bodies (i.e. government), organizations (i.e. suppliers), stakeholders (i.e. word-of-mouth), constituent groups (i.e. governing association), analysts (i.e. finance professionals) and many more. As such, Iyer (1999) noted that ES “solutions are decidedly political and rooted in a different model of the consumer as contrasted to the prevalent rational economic model of the consumer” (p. 285); here, “the vision is available, the means are present, but the will to change is also a necessary pre-requisite” (p. 286).

An understanding of the influences on sport marketing-ES generated guiding research questions that can be applied to the multiple stakeholders in sport for a sport marketing-ES research agenda including:

What/who are the biggest potential influencers on the sport marketing-ES agenda?

How might this influencers act to affect the future of sport marketing-ES?

4. Conclusions

This content analysis study utilized steps by Krippendorff (1980), Weber (1985) and Wolfe et al. (2002) to examine the mainstream management journals in organization and natural environment and the marketing journals rated as likely to publish environmental manuscripts to reveal marketing-ES manuscripts. The study of 49 journals, included over 13,700 manuscripts, and revealed 63 marketing-ES manuscripts. Their subsequent topic, theory, constructs, methods, setting, rationale and generalized statements were derived and found to be applicable to underscore a sport marketing-ES research agenda. This paper contributed a conceptual framework generated with the use of key marketing concepts: the consumer perspective (Aaker, 1996) and the corporate perspective (Knapp, 2000), along with the concept of influencers (Davis & Dunn, 2002); the multiple constituent themes and sub-themes in the marketing-ES manuscripts to construct 30 questions for a sport marketing-ES research agenda.

It is evident that a focus on the environment is an important agenda item for business managers to consider as the growth in corporate commitment to ES practices continues (Kilbourne & Carlson, 2008; Myers, 2010). Incorporating environmental factors into firms’ commercial decisions is likely to be a key part of business plans in the future. Indeed, Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) noted that, “consumers, shareholders and society at large all stand to benefit when a company integrates environmental friendliness into its marketing strategy” (p. 84). It is time for sport researchers to be part of this capacity and to generate a robust research response to the marketing-ES questions.

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