
SOCIAL MARKETING AND ATTITUDINAL CHANGE FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Can social marketing concepts and techniques be effectively applied to the promotion of social objectives such as campaign against smoking, safe driving, and brotherhood? The applicability of social marketing concepts to such social problems is among others, examined in this paper and the writers also show how social causes and attitudinal change can be advanced to successfully bring about sustainable national development. The paper is a theoretical research which draws up data from books (both online and from library), published journals and the writers' experiences in addition to the relevant literature. The writers conclude that given the right attitude, the concept of social marketing can facilitate sustainable national development.

Keywords: Change; Attitude; Social Marketing; Sustainable; Development

INTRODUCTION

People have been unstoppable, particularly in the last couple of decades, rushing forward whereas the term 'forward' appears to be rather doubtful in its meaning. On one hand, there is an assumption that social marketing concepts enhances individual performance and on the other hand, the race for economic development leads to negligence of the now fairly negative human impact on their attitudinal change, which is particularly related to various issues such as campaign against smoking, drunken driving, unhealthy products, urbanization, eco system and damages. Consequently, the world, particularly developed

societies, sheds light on the quality instead on the quantity of living and hence it has come to sustainability as a megatrend, which is mostly reflected in the sustainability development of societies and of the world at large. This paper attempts to establish that social marketing can be used as a veritable tool to influence people's attitude for sustainable development since change in attitude can and must provide support to the enhancement of sustainable development.

CONCEPT OF SOCIAL MARKETING

Social Marketing

The first steps on the pathway to sustainability can often be seen in initiatives that seek to reduce waste and pollution, increase water and energy efficiency and improve people's health. Social marketing is a key approach whose aim is to influence and support constructive change in environmental, social and health campaigns. The concept is an adaptable approach, increasingly being used to achieve and sustain behaviour relevant to a range of social issues and topics. It is significantly different from commercial marketing despite the fact that its basis lies in the borrowing of the latter's concepts and tools. One of the main differences is that social marketing is charged with increasingly complex and ambitious goals - often with the provision of very few resources.

Definitions of Social Marketing

Social marketing is a planning approach that is used to encourage the adoption of specific behaviour that is seen as being beneficial for both individuals and wider society. Social marketing as defined by The National Social Marketing Centre (NSMC) is "an approach used to develop activities aimed at changing or maintaining people's behaviour for their benefit." According to Liam, Scerri, James, Thom, Padgham, Hickmott, Cahill(2013), social marketing is an approach used to develop activities aimed at changing or maintaining people's behaviour for the benefit of individuals and society as a whole. Business Dictionary also defined social marketing as the application of commercial marketing concept, knowledge, and techniques to non-commercial ends (such as campaign against smoking and drunken driving) for the society's welfare. Social marketing can

Bello, Babatunde Sikiru, et al

again be defined as the use of commercial marketing in promotion of goods and services in a way that helps in promoting the consumers' and, by extension, the society's wellbeing.

Sustainable Development

The term sustainable development means different things to different people. But, in essence, it is concerned with meeting the needs of people today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development therefore involves:

- A broad view of social, environmental and economic outcomes;
- A long-term perspective, concerned with the interests and rights of future generations as well as of people today;
- An inclusive approach to action, which recognizes the need for all people to be involved in the decisions that affect their lives.

How Social Marketing can Help Foster Sustainable Development

Social marketing can therefore help policy makers working to tackle the social determinants of attitudinal change to gain a deeper understanding of the different barriers and motivations faced by target populations in the voluntary adoption of very specific behaviour. It can also help governments to identify the limits of what they can realistically expect to achieve through programmes designed to influence voluntary individual behaviour. By doing this social marketing can also help to create the awareness and support needed to introduce upstream measures needed to reshape the environment in a way that can accelerate the adoption and maintenance of beneficial behaviours.

Fostering Sustainable Behaviour

Numerous initiatives to reduce waste and pollution, increase water and energy efficiency, and alter transportation patterns are first footholds in the transition to sustainability. This was developed for the people who design these and other programs to foster sustainable behaviour. Its purpose is simple: to

provide information that can enhance the success of their efforts. The site consists of six resources: an online guide which illustrates how to use community-based social marketing to design and evaluate programs to foster sustainable behaviour; searchable databases of articles, downloadable reports, graphics, and case studies on fostering sustainable behaviour; and a listserv for sharing information and asking questions of others.

Achieving Sustainable Development

So what does sustainable development mean for marketers?

There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles: an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure; a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimize waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy. These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions. Pursuing sustainable development

Bello, Babatunde Sikiru, et al

involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to): making it easier for jobs to be created in cities, towns and villages; moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature; replacing poor design with better design; improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and widening the choice of high quality homes. Sustainable development is the organizing principle for sustaining finite resources necessary to provide for the needs of future generations of life on the planet. It is a process that envisions a desirable future state for human societies in which living conditions and resource-use continue to meet human needs without undermining the "integrity, stability and beauty" of natural biotic systems (retrieved from www.planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/).

THE CONCEPT OF ATTITUDE

In psychology, an attitude is an expression of favour or disfavour toward a person, place, thing, or event (the attitude object). Allport (1935) once described attitudes "the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary social psychology." Attitude can be formed from a person's past and present. Key topics in the study of attitudes include attitude measurement, attitude change, consumer behaviour, and attitude-behaviour relationships.

Definitions of Attitude

In Social psychology, an attitude is an evaluation of an attitude object, ranging from extremely negative to extremely positive. Most contemporary perspectives on attitudes also permit that people can also be conflicted or ambivalent toward an object by simultaneously holding both positive and negative attitudes toward the same object. This has led to some discussion of whether individual can hold multiple attitudes toward the same object. An attitude can be defined as a positive or negative evaluation of people, objects, events, activities, and ideas. It could be concrete, abstract or just about anything in your environment, but there is a debate about precise definitions. Eagly and Chaiken (1998), for example, define an attitude as

"a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour." Though it is sometimes common to define an attitude as affect toward an object, affect (discrete emotions or overall arousal) is generally understood to be distinct from attitude as a measure of favourability. Attitude may influence the attention to attitude objects, the use of categories for encoding information and the interpretation, judgment and recall of attitude-relevant information. These influences tend to be more powerful for strong attitudes which are easily accessible and based on an elaborate knowledge structure. Attitudes may guide attention and encoding automatically, even if the individual is pursuing unrelated goals.

Attitude Formation

According to Doob (1947), learning can account for most of the attitudes we hold. The study of attitude formation is the study of how people form evaluations of persons, places or things. Theories of classical conditioning, instrumental conditioning and social learning are mainly responsible for formation of attitude. Unlike personality, attitudes are expected to change as a function of experience. In addition, exposure to the 'attitude' objects may have an effect on how a person forms his or her attitude. This concept was seen as the "Mere-Exposure Effect". Zajonc (1968) showed that people were more likely to have a positive attitude on 'attitude objects' when they were exposed to it frequently than if they were not. Mere repeated exposure of the individual to a stimulus is a sufficient condition for the enhancement of his attitude toward it. Tesser (1993) has argued that hereditary variables may affect attitudes - but believes that they may do so indirectly. For example consistency theories, which imply that we must be consistent in our beliefs and values? As with any type of heritability, to determine if a particular trait has bases in our genes, twin studies are used. The most famous example of such a theory is Dissonance-reduction theory, associated with Festinger, which explains that when the components of an attitude (including belief and behaviour) are at odds an individual may adjust one to match the other (for example, adjusting a belief to match a behaviour). Other theories include balance theory, originally

proposed by Heider (1958), and the self-perception theory, originally proposed by Daryl Bem.

Attitude Change

Attitudes can be changed through persuasion and an important domain of research on attitude change focuses on responses to communication. Experimental researches into the factors that can affect the persuasiveness of a message include:

Target Characteristics: These are characteristics that refer to the person who receives and processes a message. One such trait is intelligence - it seems that more intelligent people are less easily persuaded by one-sided messages. Another variable that has been studied in this category is self-esteem. Although it is sometimes thought that those higher in self-esteem are less easily persuaded, there is some evidence that the relationship between self-esteem and persuasibility is actually curvilinear, with people of moderate self-esteem being more easily persuaded than both those of high and low self-esteem levels (Rhodes & Woods, 1992). The mind frame and mood of the target also plays a role in this process.

Source Characteristics: The major source characteristics are expertise, trustworthiness and interpersonal attraction or attractiveness. The credibility of a perceived message has been found to be a key variable here; if one reads a report about health and believes it came from a professional medical journal, one may be more easily persuaded than if one believes it is from a popular newspaper. Some psychologists have debated whether this is a long-lasting effect and Hovland and Weiss (1951) found the effect of telling people that a message came from a credible source disappeared after several weeks (the so-called "sleeper effect"). Whether there is a sleeper effect is controversial. Perceived wisdom is that if people are informed of the source of a message before hearing it, there is less likelihood of a sleeper effect than if they are told a message and then told its source.

Message Characteristics: The nature of the message plays a role in persuasion. Sometimes presenting both sides of a story

is useful to help change attitudes. When people are not motivated to process the message, simply the number of arguments presented in a persuasive message will influence attitude change, such that a greater number of arguments will produce greater attitude change.

Cognitive Routes: A message can appeal to an individual's cognitive evaluation to help change an attitude. In the central route to persuasion the individual is presented with the data and motivated to evaluate the data and arrive at an attitude changing conclusion. In the peripheral route to attitude change, the individual is encouraged to not look at the content but at the source. This is commonly seen in modern advertisements that feature celebrities. In some cases, physician, doctors or experts are used. In other cases film stars are used for their attractiveness.

EMOTION AND ATTITUDE CHANGE

Emotion is a common component in persuasion, social influence, and attitude change. Much of attitude research emphasized the importance of affective or emotion components. Emotion works hand-in-hand with the cognitive process, or the way we think, about an issue or situation. Emotional appeals are commonly found in advertising, health campaigns and political messages. Recent examples include no-smoking health campaigns and political campaign advertising emphasizing the fear of terrorism. Attitudes and attitude objects are functions of cognitive, affective and conative components. Attitudes are part of the brain's associative networks, the spider-like structures residing in long term memory that consist of affective and cognitive nodes. By activating an affective or emotion node, attitude change may be possible, though affective and cognitive components tend to be intertwined. In primarily affective networks, it is more difficult to produce cognitive counterarguments in the resistance to persuasion and attitude change. Affective forecasting, otherwise known as intuition or the prediction of emotion, also impacts attitude change. Research suggests that predicting emotions is an important component of decision

Bello, Babatunde Sikiru, et al

making, in addition to the cognitive processes. How we feel about an outcome may over ride purely cognitive rationales. In terms of research methodology, the challenge for researchers is measuring emotion and subsequent impacts on attitude. Since we cannot see into the brain, various models and measurement tools have been constructed to obtain emotion and attitude information. Measures may include the use of physiological cues like facial expressions, vocal changes, and other body rate measures. For instance, fear is associated with raised eyebrows, increased heart rate and increase body tension (Dillard, 1994). Other methods include concept or network mapping, and using primes or word cues in the era.

Attitude-Behaviour Relationship

The effects of attitude on behaviour are a growing research enterprise within psychology. Ajzen(2001) has lead research and helped develop two prominent theoretical approaches within this field: the theory of reasoned action and, its theoretical descendant, the theory of planned behaviour. Both theories help explain the link between attitude and behaviour as a controlled and deliberative process.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion of this paper, social Marketing can help policy makers to focus on the specific priority behaviours we can realistically influence today while also mobilizing public demand for the environmental changes that are needed to influence the wider social determinants of health. Social Marketing programmes have a greater chance of sustained success if they take a two-pronged approach to try and influence the internal (psychological) and external (environmental) factors that influence how we behave. For example, any programmes designed to motivate responsible alcohol consumption must also address key environmental factors such as accessibility, price and the intensive marketing of competing products. Social marketing can help to make the most cost-effective use of limited public resources by:

- (a) Utilizing existing strengths, resources and opportunities from within communities

- (b) Pre-testing effective approaches at a local scale
- (c) Making preventative action to address emerging social problems

Social marketing can provide government agencies, NGOs and the private sector with a transparent platform for working together because it is clearly based on providing evidence of sustained behaviour change as the bottom-line indicator of success.

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Bello, Babatunde Sikiru, et al

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