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Original Article

ESG, global compact and 2030 agenda: framework proposal based on social marketing and transformative consumer research

ESG, pacto global e agenda 2030: proposição de framework baseado no marketing social e pesquisa transformativa do consumidor

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study proposes a framework to systematize the relationships among Social Marketing, Transformative Consumer Research (TCR), and sustainable practices (ESG, Global Compact, and the 2030 Agenda). The framework highlights their respective strengths, weaknesses, and implications for sustainable development, drawing on state-of-the-art literature and outlining a future research agenda with both academic and managerial applications.
Design/Methodology/Approach: The research employs conceptual analysis grounded in a systematic literature review focused on sustainable management practices through the perspectives of Social Marketing and TCR. The SPAR-4-SLR protocol served as the systematic review method, guiding research planning, knowledge expansion, and supporting critical reflection within the current state of the field.
Findings: Analysis of 81 articles revealed a predominance of quantitative methodologies and an increase in publications in 2023 and 2024. Notable gaps include definitional, measurement, and implementation issues in sustainable practices, particularly the absence of standardized ESG metrics, limited applicability of the Global Compact to small enterprises, and challenges surrounding the local adaptation of the 2030 Agenda.
Originality/Value: The proposed framework integrates Social Marketing and TCR with sustainable practices, elucidating how ESG, the Global Compact, and the 2030 Agenda can facilitate transformation in consumer behavior and support the alignment of organizations with socio-environmental demands. It identifies strengths, weaknesses, research gaps, and proposes a future research agenda. The analysis emphasizes the need for standardized metrics and collaborative approaches to progress sustainable development.

Keywords: Social marketing; Transformative Consumer Research; ESG; Global compact; 2030 Agenda

RESUMO

Propósito: Propor um framework que sistematize as relações entre Marketing Social, TCR e as práticas sustentáveis (ESG, Pacto Global e Agenda 2030), destacando seus pontos fortes, fracos e implicações para o desenvolvimento sustentável, com base no estado da arte da literatura e sugestão de agenda de estudos futuros com aplicações acadêmicas e gerenciais.
Desenho/Metodologia/Abordagem: Foi realizada uma análise conceitual, fundamentada em uma revisão sistemática da literatura que aborda as práticas sustentáveis de gestão à luz do Marketing Social e da Transformative Consumer Research (TCR). O protocolo SPAR-4-SLR foi empregado como método de revisão sistemática para orientar o planejamento de novas pesquisas para promover o avanço do conhecimento e respaldar novas reflexões baseadas no estado da arte atual.
Resultados: Dos 81 artigos analisados, observa-se predominância de métodos quantitativos, com aumento de publicações em 2023 e 2024. Há lacunas na definição, mensuração e aplicação de práticas sustentáveis, com destaque para a falta de métricas padronizadas em ESG, aplicabilidade limitada do Pacto Global a pequenas empresas e desafios na adaptação local da Agenda 2030.
Originalidade/Valor: O framework proposto integra Marketing Social e TCR às práticas sustentáveis, evidenciando como ESG, Pacto Global e Agenda 2030 podem transformar comportamentos de consumo e alinhar organizações às demandas socioambientais, além de evidenciar os pontos fortes e fracos e sugerir uma agenda de pesquisa futura sobre o tema. A análise destaca a necessidade de métricas padronizadas e abordagens colaborativas para avançar o desenvolvimento sustentável.

Palavras-chave: Marketing social; Pesquisa Transformativa do Consumidor; ESG; Pacto global; Agenda 2030

1 INTRODUCTION

Contemporary literature on organizational sustainability consistently highlights the unsustainable nature of prevailing production and consumption patterns, which threaten the planet’s capacity to support future life. In response, both organizations and consumers have increasingly sought to adopt sustainable practices, such as Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG), the Global Compact (GC), and the 2030 Agenda, to drive social and environmental change that ensures the well-being of future generations (Carvalho & Mazzon, 2020; Roy & Goswami, 2020; Vyse, 2018; Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2023). These strategies, which seek to mitigate environmental impact, promote social inclusion, and ensure transparency and ethical governance, confer competitive advantages and add consumer value, as demonstrated by studies linking sustainability to organizational strategy (Khalil & Khalil, 2022; Nerlinguer, 2020).

Theoretical frameworks such as Social Marketing and Transformative Consumer Research (TCR) have become essential for fostering behavioral and social transformations consistent with sustainable practices. Social Marketing addresses complex societal issues, including sustainability, while TCR, as an academic movement, centers on social justice and enhancing quality of life through changes in consumer behavior (Vyse, 2018; Bodunrin & Stone, 2018; Zeng & Botella-Carrubi, 2023). Initiatives akin to the GC, which enlist institutions in ESG actions, as well as the 2030 Agenda, which targets reduction of inequality and global sustainability, exemplify these approaches in practice and encourage sustainable development across multiple sectors (Waal & Thijssens, 2020; Delvaux & Van den Broeck, 2023; Galan-Ladero, Sarmento, & Marques, 2023).

Despite growing academic interest in sustainable practices such as ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda, the literature lacks comprehensive systematization that clearly delineates the relationships, convergences, strengths, and limitations between Social Marketing and TCR within the context of these initiatives. This gap is primarily theoretical, stemming from the absence of an integrative framework systematically linking these approaches, rather than from a lack of practical or operational tools. This gap is significant: the lack of integrative research obscures understanding of how these theoretical approaches can more effectively drive behavioral and organizational change toward sustainable development, a critical issue amid ongoing socio-environmental challenges (Naomi & Akbar, 2021; Lee & Hess, 2022).

This study's principal contribution lies in addressing this theoretical void by proposing a conceptual integration of Social Marketing and TCR, presenting a structured framework that maps out their interrelationships and offers explicit theoretical guidelines to advance both scholarly inquiry and effective sustainable practices in organizational and consumer contexts. Further study is thus warranted to clarify these interrelationships and generate actionable guidance for both researchers and managers.

Accordingly, this work is guided by the research question: What are the primary relationships among ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda when analyzed through the lenses of Social Marketing and TCR? The study's objective is to propose a framework that systematizes these relationships, identifies principal strengths and weaknesses, highlights research gaps, and presents an agenda relevant to both academia and management.

2 CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Social Marketing and TCR

Social Marketing is defined as the application of marketing principles to the design and implementation of social interventions, aiming to foster cognitive, value-based, behavioral, or action-oriented change. This strategic approach ultimately seeks to promote individual and societal well-being, focusing on the prevention, mitigation, and resolution of social issues, including sustainability challenges (Kotler & Levy, 1969; Lunde, 2018; Hoffmann, 2018; Rundle-Thiele, David, Willmott, et al., 2019).

In this context, Social Marketing leverages the logic of exchange to effect sustainable social change that fosters long-term quality of life improvements (Mazzon, 1981; Carvalho & Mazzon, 2020). Beyond increasing citizen engagement with socio-environmental causes, Social Marketing enhances both the present and future well-being of populations (Rundle-Thiele, David, Willmott, et al., 2019; Carvalho & Mazzon, 2020; Wymer, 2023). Contemporary challenges include moving beyond an individual perspective to emphasize macro-level analyses capable of understanding and transforming complex social systems (Hoffmann, 2018; Lunde, 2018; et al., Rundle-Thiele, David, Willmott, et al., 2019; MacInnis, Morwitz, Botti, et al., 2020; Rivera, 2023).

In this regard, TCR has emerged to address consumption-related problems and opportunities at both individual and collective scales, seeking to enhance well-being and produce positive social outcomes. Recognizing that many socio-ecological challenges are rooted in consumption patterns, TCR promotes practices such as reuse, recycling, donation, responsible consumption, conscientious financial management, and supply chain transparency across both B2C and B2B settings (Mick, Pettigrew, Pechmann, et al., 2011; Newman, Finkelstein, & Davis, 2021; Figueiredo, Chelekis, De Berry-Spence, et al., 2015).

Thus, a close relationship exists between Social Marketing and TCR, as both seek significant and durable social transformation. TCR advances a participatory approach, emphasizing cooperation, trust, and shared responsibility among diverse stakeholders, thereby reinforcing its theoretical and practical contributions to Social Marketing (Saunders, Barrington, & Sridharan, 2015; Lefebvre, 2012; Russell-Bennett, Fisk, Rosenbaum, et al., 2019).

Both approaches, therefore, strive to empower individuals, communities, and societies as active agents in their own development in line with sustainable development principles (Saunders, Barrington, & Sridharan, 2015; Lefebvre, 2012; Rundle-Thiele, David, Willmott, et al., 2019; Russell-Bennett, Fisk, Rosenbaum, et al., 2019).

2.2 Sustainable practices (ESG, GC, and the 2030 Agenda)

In light of social awareness and research addressing complex social issues from the 1970s onward, institutions across sectors recognized changes in consumption patterns and the necessity of reimagining production models. Pro-socio-environmental causes grew in prominence, influencing customer decision-making and prompting reexamination of organizational practices (Elkington, 2020; Hoffmann, 2018).

The Brundtland Commission's (UN, 1987) report, *Our Common Future — Call for Action,* introduced the concept of sustainable development as a transformative process harmonizing resource exploitation, investment direction, technological innovation, and institutional change to secure both present and future development potential (UN, 1987).

Consequently, these principles engaged a range of actors, including governments, the third sector, educational institutions, citizens, businesses, and other organizations, in developing strategies to reduce environmental degradation, global warming, and other ecological harms. They also informed policies for social inclusion, dignified work, and broad-based reductions in inequality, thus revitalizing the contemporary concept of sustainability (UN, 1987; Peterson, Minton, Liu, et al., 2021).

This perspective aligns with John Elkington's (1997) contemporary sustainability concept, articulated in his Triple Bottom Line framework, consisting of People, Planet, and Profit. Elkington posited that stability is achieved only when these three pillars are kept in balance. According to this model, sustainability prevails when institutions prioritize social well-being, environmental stewardship, and financial performance, facilitating institutional success, progress, and profitability (Elkington, 1997).

Accordingly, sustainability-oriented management entails both formal and informal interactions among stakeholders and systems, with the aim of integrating knowledge to address sustainability's multidimensional challenges.

2.2.1 ESG: history and concept

From the early the 21st century, the United Nations (UN) recognized the necessity for cross-sector companies to go beyond legal and regulatory compliance to address environmental, social, and governance challenges. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan introduced the seminal document *Who Cares Wins* (2004), developed in collaboration with the Swiss government and the World Bank (International Finance Corporation, 2004).

Annan alerted investors that the World Bank, the UN, and other stakeholders stood ready to influence and empower capital market participants to integrate ESG criteria into capital allocation and portfolio management decisions. Following the document's publication, he convened 50 leading financial institution CEOs to advocate for sustainable development through ESG, establishing the term within the business community (UN, 2015; International Finance Corporation, 2004).

The ESG acronym initially gained currency in the financial sector, identifying companies committed to environmental and social causes. Capital holders increasingly incorporated ESG into strategy, channeling resources toward organizations with demonstrable pro-environmental and social practices (Peterson, Minton, Liu, et al., 2021; Lee & Hess, 2022).

Over time, ESG adoption extended beyond investors and capital markets, prompting organizations to reevaluate strategies and implement standardized metrics, surpassing traditional social and environmental responsibility reporting. The ESG designation has since become integral to sustainable management strategies, shared value, corporate social responsibility, and Social Marketing efforts (Peterson, Minton, Liu, et al., 2021; Lunde, 2018; Hoffmann, 2018; Trentin & Marques, 2025).

Notably, the "Sustainable Practices" concept drawn from Elkington's (1997) Triple Bottom Line theory, was itself incorporated into the UN's ESG initiative, encompassing ESG dimensions (Elkington, 1997; Ferrell & Ferrell, 2021).

2.2.2 Global Compact - GC: history and concept

Recognizing this corporate shift toward ESG, the UN launched the GC in 2000 at a conference convened by then-Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The GC addressed companies regarding risks posed by the depletion of natural resources linked to modern production methods (Global Compact, 2023; Waal & Thijssens, 2020). At this event, Annan called on institutions to align their strategies and operations with the Ten Principles of the GC, designed to address pressing societal challenges. These principles are organized into four thematic areas: Human Rights, Labor, Environment, and Anti-Corruption (Global Compact, 2023; Ortas, Álvarez, & Garayar, 2015).

The GC is a voluntary initiative, echoing the approach of the 2030 Agenda for UN member states. It is not a regulatory instrument, code of conduct, or a platform for monitoring management. Instead, it provides guidance for promoting sustainable growth and citizenship, supporting committed and innovative business leadership (Global Compact, 2023).

Currently, the GC is the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, encompassing over 16,000 participants, including companies and organizations in 70 local networks across 160 countries (Global Compact, 2023). GC signatories commit to integrating its Ten Principles into their strategies and operations and pledge to contribute to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the 2030 Agenda (Global Compact, 2023; Rivera 2023).

2.2.3 2030 Agenda: history and concept

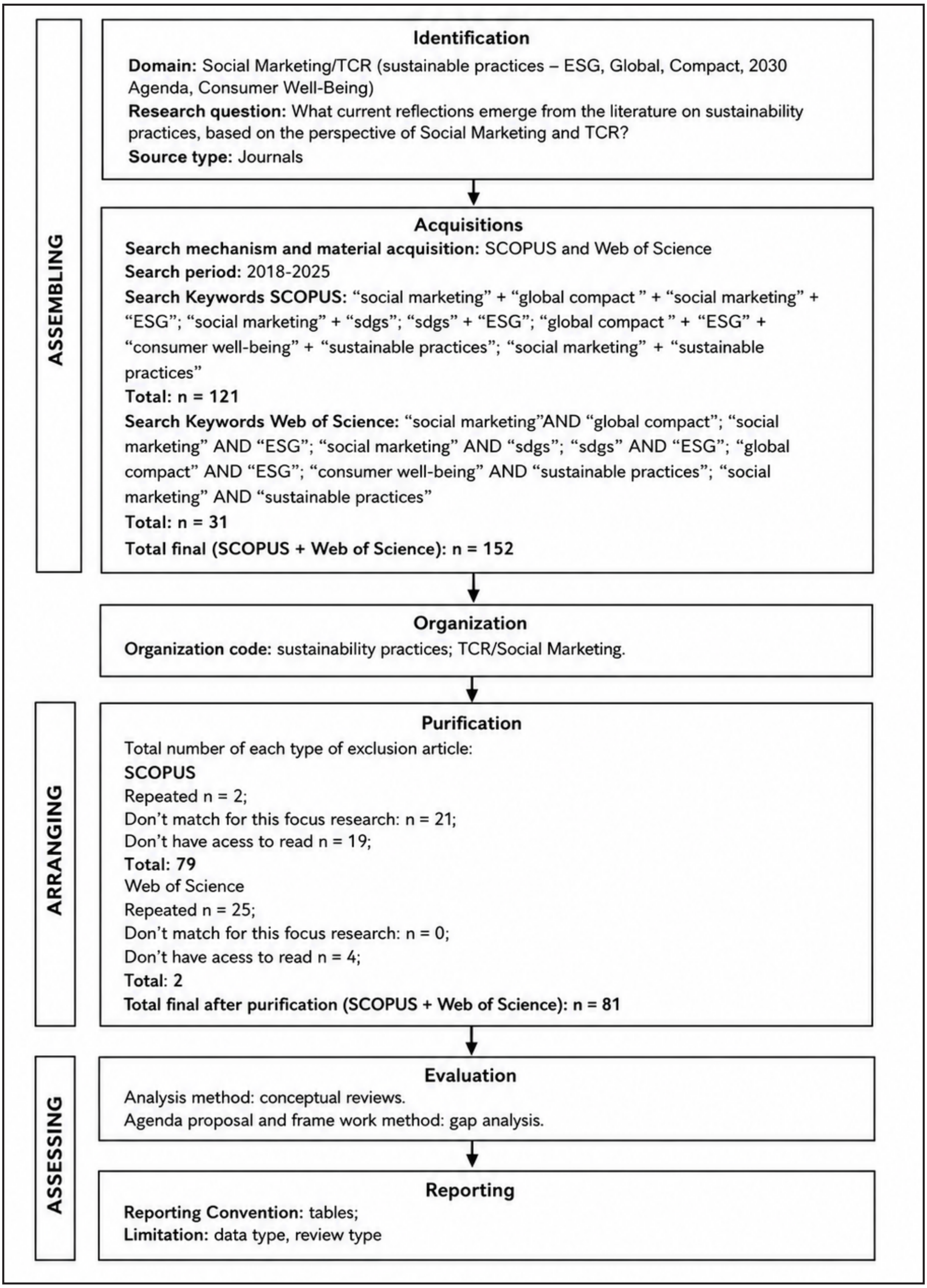
At the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 (Rio+20), the post-2015 Agenda ("Millennium Declaration") for sustainable development was established, emphasizing greater engagement across societal sectors in shaping a new development agenda. The conference resulted in *The Future We Want*, which led to forming the Open Working Group that proposed the 17 SDGs constituting the 2030 Agenda (UN, 2015). At the UN Summit on Sustainable Development, the final document ratified the 17 SDGs, including their specific targets and indicators (UN, 2015).

The 2030 Agenda, adopted in September 2015 by all 193 UN member states, sets forth a global vision for a sustainable future centered around five pillars: people, peace, prosperity, partnerships, and planet. Each nation, state, and municipality has flexibility in its implementation, following the principle of territoriality and tailored to local contexts (UN, 2015; Wymer, 2023; Galan-Ladero, Sarmento, & Marques, 2023).

3 SCIENTIFIC METHOD

This article presents a conceptual review intended to consolidate existing knowledge and propose new insights, assumptions, and theoretical directions within the domain of sustainable practices as they relate to ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda, analyzed through the perspectives of Social Marketing and TCR (Rowley & Slack, 2004; Paul et al., 2021). Consistent with the guidelines set forth by Paul et al. (2021), this review aims to avoid redundancy in academic production, guide future research, and support innovative approaches by comparing established and emerging perspectives. To this end, a comprehensive and systematic literature analysis was conducted, encompassing both seminal and recent state-of-the-art studies, thereby ensuring a rigorous, transparent, and reproducible process (Rowley & Slack, 2004; Paul et al., 2021).

Figure 1 – SPART-4-SLR method protocol



Source: Adopted by authors from Paul, Lim, & O´Cas et al., 2021

Figure 1 summarizes stages 1–3 of the methodological protocol adopted in this study, which is based on the SPAR-4-SLR model proposed by Paul, Lim, and O'Cass et al. (2021). This model consists of three sequential stages (assembling, arranging, and assessing) each divided into two substages. The first stage (assembling) comprises the identification (1a) and acquisition (1b) of relevant but unsynthesized literature. The second stage (arranging) involves the organization (2a) and purification (2b) of the selected literature for synthesis. The final stage (assessing) incorporates the evaluation (3a) and reporting of results (3b) derived from the synthesized literature. Figure 1 graphically consolidates these methodological choices, illustrating the practical application of each protocol step throughout the systematic review process.

Step 1: Assembling: identification and acquisition. The initial step involved selecting keywords for database queries in SCOPUS and Web of Science. SCOPUS was selected for being the largest abstract and citation database for peer-reviewed literature, while Web of Science was chosen for its extensive coverage across science, social sciences, applied social sciences, arts, and humanities, along with its large volume of open-access content.

The following keyword combinations were defined, based on common discussions in the literature about sustainable practices, namely, ESG, GC, and the 2030 Agenda: *"social marketing"* AND *"global compact"*; *"social marketing"* AND *ESG*; *"social marketing"* AND *SDGs*; *SDGs* AND *ESG*; *"global compact"* AND *ESG*; *"consumer well-being"* AND *"sustainable practices"*; *"social marketing"* AND *"sustainable practices*." Minor adjustments to these terms were made according to each database's search functionalities, including connector and quotation mark variations. Table 1 illustrates this search process.

Table 1 – Keywords and filters to research at Scopus and Web of Science data basis

SCOPUS		WEB OF SCIENCE	
Category	**Filter**	**Category**	**Filter**
Title-Abs-Key	1. "Social marketing" + "Global compact" (n = 0); 2. "Social marketing" + "ESG" (n = 0); 3. "Social marketing" + "sdgs" (n = 14); 4. "sdgs" + "ESG" (n = 95); 5. "Global compact" + "ESG" (n = 9); 6. "Consumer well-being" + "Sustainable practices" (n = 0); 7. "Social marketing" + "Sustainable practices" (n = 3).	Topic (Title-Abs-Key)	1. "Social marketing" and "Global compact" (n = 0); 2. "Social marketing" and "ESG" (n = 0); 3. "Social marketing" and "sdgs" (n = 11); 4. "sdgs" and "ESG" (n = 18); 5. "Global compact" and "ESG" (n = 2); 6. "Consumer well-being" and "Sustainable practices" (n = 0); 7. "Social marketing" and "Sustainable practices" (n = 0).
Year	2018-2025	Year	2018-2025
Subject Area	Business, Management and Accounting	Subject Area	Business, Economics
Document Type	Article	Document Type	Article
Source Type	Journal	Source Type	Journal
Language	English	Language	English

Source: by authors, 2025

It is important to note that the extensive number of keyword combinations was necessary because several searches returned zero results in certain databases when using alternative but similar terms. This finding indicates a notable gap in the literature, revealing a scarcity of scientific articles specifically addressing sustainable practices from the approach adopted in this study.

All retrieved articles were subjected to the SPAR-4-SLR protocol's procedures and then augmented by additional relevant studies to inform the analysis and reflections developed herein. Following these procedures, a total of 81 state-of-the-art articles were selected, complemented by further publications deemed theoretically relevant. This process is believed to provide a comprehensive overview of sustainable practices, yielding robust and relevant data for framework development.

Step 2: Arranging: organization and purification. At this stage, the data collection was organized and article exclusion criteria were established. Articles were excluded for the following reasons: duplicates found across databases (n = 27); restricted access preventing full reading and analysis (n = 25); and those deemed misaligned with the research topic or outside the study's scope on detailed review (n = 19). In total, 71 articles were excluded using these criteria, resulting in 81 articles selected for in-depth analysis in the subsequent stage.

Step 3: Evaluation and reporting. Subsequently, the search terms were systematically explored to support this review's objectives. The goal was to identify, among the selected studies, data representative of the latest advances, and to generate novel insights, context, and practical applications concerning sustainable practices, particularly ESG practices and the progression of the 2030 Agenda. The review also examined the impacts of these practices on societal well-being through Social Marketing and TCR, ultimately to inform the proposed research framework.

4 ANALYSIS

The subsequent analysis demonstrated that sustainability, especially ESG practices, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda, viewed through Social Marketing and TCR, remains an emerging field with significant potential for academic inquiry. Table 2 summarizes the key findings. Regarding publication trends, a marked increase in 2023 and 2024 may be linked to rising media attention and recent pronouncements by the United Nations and GC institutions that emphasize the “Decade of Action,” with less than ten years remaining for UN member states to meet the 2030 Agenda targets (UN, 2015). Nevertheless, inconsistent publication volumes over time highlight ongoing challenges various disciplines face when addressing sustainability from this particular perspective and suggest limited information or scholarly engagement within this scope.

Regarding research methods, the analysis shows a predominance of quantitative studies, a trend consistent with the broader orientation in Marketing science, where quantitative methods are widely favored (Sampaio, Perin, & Clein, 2019). In terms of geographical distribution, notable heterogeneity was observed, with publications concentrated in the United Kingdom, United States, Italy, and India; classification was based on the corresponding author’s country. Concerning the most frequently cited journals, leading outlets are mostly based in the United States, with prominent examples including the International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing, the Journal of Cleaner Production, Investment Management and Financial Innovation (Ukraine), and Business Strategy and the Environment (United Kingdom).

To ensure methodological consistency, only countries and journals with at least two publications were included in the analysis of publication counts, with those having just one excluded from this stage.

Regarding the methods used in the analyzed articles, the data suggest a modest tendency toward qualitative approaches over quantitative ones on these topics. However, this difference is insufficient to establish a clear preference among journals or the academic community; leading international journals welcome a variety of methodological approaches.

Table 2 – Data collection (Scopus + Web of Science) information (year, method, country and journal)

Number of publications per year	Number of publications per method	Number of publications per country	Journals most cited
2025: 11	Quantitative: 54	United Kingdom – 11	Australasian Accounting, Busness and Finance Journal – 2
2024: 25	Qualitative: 25	Spain – 10	Business Strategy and Development – 2
2023; 21	Quali/Quanti: 2	United States – 10	Business Strategy and the Environment – 4
2022: 13		Italy – 10	Cogent Business and Management – 2
2021: 4		India – 9	Corporate Board: Role, Duties and Composition – 2
2020: 6		Switzerland – 6	Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management – 4
2019: 0		Australia – 4	International Journal of Business and Society – 2
2018: 1		Brazil – 4	International Review On Public And Nonprofit Marketing – 8
Total: 81		Germany – 3	Investment Management and Financial Innovation – 4
		Argentina – 3	Journal of Businee Ethics – 3
		Greece – 3	Journal of Cleaner Production – 8
		Indonesia – 3	Journal Of Social Marketing – 2
		Portugal – 3	Journal of Sustainable Finance and Investment – 2
		Czech Republic – 3	Organization and Environment – 2
		Thailand – 3	
		Belgium – 2	
		Canada – 2	
		England –2	
		Taiwan – 2	
		Ukraine – 2	

Source: by authors, 2025

Current literature at the current state of the art explores topics such as fashion (Joshi & Srivastava, 2020; Shen, 2023), quality of life (Christie & Villiers, 2023), agriculture (Makarenko, Plastun, & Mazancova et al., 2022), and religion/ culture (Minton, Tan, & Tambyah et al., 2022). Table 3 categorizes publications by the *organization code* stage of the SPAR-4-SLR protocol, allocating articles under ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda. For each code, major themes emerging at least three times among the relevant studies are identified.

Table 3 – Data collection information (organization code and subject)

Organization code	Subject/theme of publication
ESG practices	Commerce/Industry, Finance and Market
Global Compact practices	Consumer Behavior
2030 Agenda practices	Education, Marketing, Finance and Market

Source: by authors, 2025

It is evident that, as academic efforts advance, diverse fields are increasingly integrating sustainable practices into their management processes (e.g., commerce, finance, consumer behavior/marketing, education, market dynamics). Furthermore, managing organizational resources aligned with sustainable development principles presents new challenges for both managers and employees, including the effective integration of resources and heightened emphasis on reducing consumption, reuse, and recycling.

Sustainability must be among the core objectives of resource management and broader organizational strategies. This orientation propels companies to adopt approaches that transcend pure economic criteria, expanding to include social and environmental impacts within their strategic and operational plans. The prevalence of finance, market dynamics, commerce, and industry themes underscores a growing commitment to balance across sustainability's three pillars: economic, social, and environmental.

5 SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

Based on the preceding definitions, concepts, and contexts, significant considerations emerge for sustainable practices in the proposed framework (Figure 2). To inform this framework's development, Table 4 provides a comparative synthesis of sustainable practices (i.e., ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda) highlighting their strengths, weaknesses, theoretical linkages with Social Marketing and TCR, and practical recommendations for organizational application. The alignment of these practices with Social Marketing and TCR principles enhances organizations' capacity to address environmental and social challenges by promoting behavioral change among consumers and stakeholders (Galan-Ladero et al., 2023; Beatson et al., 2019; Vyse, 2018).

This framework is also compatible with broader theoretical perspectives on organizational and societal transition to sustainability. It resonates with sustainability transitions literature, particularly the multi-level perspective that explains long-term shifts in socio-technical systems across niche innovations, regimes, and landscapes (Geels, 2002; Markard et al., 2012). Institutional theory further clarifies how regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements drive organizational adoption of sustainable practices and bestow legitimacy (Scott, 2014; Aguilera et al., 2007). Together, these literatures highlight the institutional pressures and multi-actor dynamics facilitating the integration of ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda into organizational strategies.

As synthesized in Table 4, ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda constitute foundational pillars for sustainability integration in Social Marketing, serving as the backbone for the proposed framework. The comparative analysis shows that despite strengths, such as ESG's widespread institutionalization, the GC's multistakeholder collaboration, and the 2030 Agenda's holistic scope, significant challenges remain. These pertain to the absence of standardized metrics, limitations for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and challenges in local adaptation (Khalil & Khalil, 2022; Naomi & Akbar, 2021; Chen et al., 2022; Biglari et al., 2022; Pradhan et al., 2017; Úbeda et al., 2022; Consolandi et al., 2020; Duane et al., 2022; Wymer, 2023; Waal & Thijssens, 2020; Trentin & Marques, 2025).

Table 4 – Comparative Analysis of Sustainable Practices in Light of Social Marketing and TCR

Dimensions	ESG	GC	2030 Agenda
Strengths	Broad institutional adoption; demonstration of commitment to sustainability; potential positive impact on stakeholders and the environment. (Khalil & Khalil, 2022; Naomi & Akbar, 2021).	Brings together multiple stakeholders; promotes behavioral change through collaboration. (Rasche, 2009; Ortas et al., 2015).	Holistic and integrative approach to global challenges; potential for synergy among the SDGs. (Biglari et al., 2022; Pradhan et al., 2017).
Weaknesses	Risks of "washing" (greenwhashing, pinkwashing, rainbow washing); lack of standardized metrics; conceptuais gaps. (Úbeda et al., 2022; Consolandi et al., 2020; Nerlinguer, 2020, Trentin & Marques, 2025).	Limited applicability to large institutions; vague principles without robust verification mechanisms (Duane et al., 2022; Rasche, 2009).	Trade-offs between goals (e.g., SDG 8 vs. SDG 13); challenges in implementation across diverse national contexts (Wymer, 2023; Waal & Thijssens, 2020).
Relationships with Social Marketing and TCR	Leverages behavior transformation by integrating ESG guided by ethical and measurable purposes. (Galan-Ladero et al., 2023; Beatson et al., 2019).	It can be strengthened by Social Marketing and TCR by mobilizing diverse actors with a focus on sustainable behavior change. (Vyse, 2018; Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2023).	Social Marketing and TCR can act as vectors for local adaptation, community, engagement, and large-scale habit transformation. (Pinto & Casais, 2023; Zeng & Botella-Carrubi, 2023).
Propositions for Applicability in Organizations	Invest in genuine ESG practicies, with transparent indicators and verification mechanisms comparable across organizations. (Lee & Hess, 2022; Trentin & Marques, 2025).	Expand acess for SMEs; adopt concrete metrics and accountability mechanims to ensure effectiveness and credibility. (Ortas et al., 2015; Rasche, 2009).	Adapt the SDGs to local contexts through participatory strategies; promote alliances among organizations, governments, and society based on behavioral evidence (Wylmer, 2023; Pradhan et al., 2017)

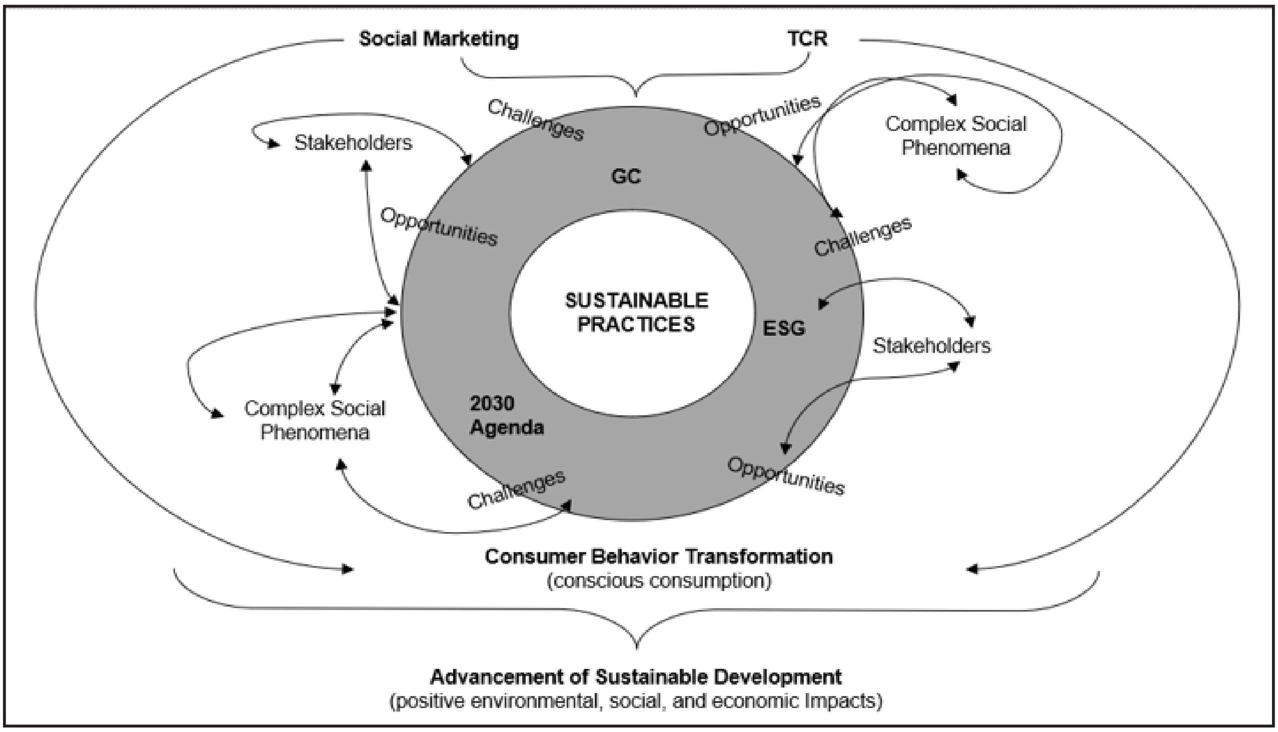
Source: by authors, 2025

Articulating these practices with Social Marketing and TCR provides a promising pathway for shifting consumer behaviors and aligning organizations with socio-environmental demands, thereby enhancing collective well-being and organizational sustainability. Application strategies recommended include developing transparent indicators, expanding SME engagement, and adapting SDGs locally, underscoring the importance of collaborative approaches and evidence-based strategies (Galan-Ladero et al., 2023; Beatson et al., 2019; Vyse, 2018; Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2023; Pinto & Casais, 2023; Zeng & Botella-Carrubi, 2023; Lee & Hess, 2022; Wymer, 2023; Pradhan et al., 2017).

Drawing from Table 5 and the systematic literature review, Figure 2 presents the proposed framework integrating ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda, aiming to enhance their effectiveness within organizational contexts. It interconnects the identified elements: complex social phenomena and stakeholder engagement and the conceptual foundations of Social Marketing and TCR. The framework outlines action pathways for sustainable development through management grounded in ethics, transparent metrics, multistakeholder collaboration, and evidence-based transformation (Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2023; Pinto & Casais, 2023; Zeng & Botella-Carrubi, 2023; Rasche, 2009).

The proposed framework centers on the organizational level, investigating how organizations integrate ESG criteria, adhere to GC principles, and align with the 2030 Agenda to implement sustainable practices and respond to stakeholder demands. Drawing on Social Marketing and TCR, it seeks to foster behavior change, including conscious consumption, and to support multistakeholder collaboration for systemic synergies among SDGs. Nonetheless, its core recommendations are targeted at organizational strategic, operational, and managerial action to promote ethical, transparent, and evidence-based transformation.

Figure 2 – Sustainable practices´s framework



Source: by autors (2025)

In an increasingly complex business context, organizations encounter both challenges and opportunities that necessitate strategic alignment with sustainable development's pillars (Carvalho & Mazzon, 2020; Anuardo, Espuny, Espuny et al., 2023). Organizational management in this context prioritizes strategic processes responsive to socio-environmental pressures and oriented toward GC and 2030 Agenda objectives (Hoffmann, 2018; Rasche, 2009; Waal & Thijssens, 2020).

Integrating ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda within Social Marketing and TCR frameworks emerges as a promising means of influencing consumer behaviors and strengthening organizational sustainability (Galan-Ladero et al., 2023; Zeng & Botella-Carrubi, 2023). The resulting framework is grounded in a literature review that foregrounds the potential of Social Marketing and TCR for ethical, well-being–driven behavior change (Beatson et al., 2019; Davis & Ozanne, 2019).

In line with López-Cabarcos et al. (2025), the adoption of ESG factors anchored in ethical principles bolsters the credibility of sustainability initiatives and promotes conscious consumption, advancing alignment with the SDGs (Biglari et al., 2022; Ortas et al., 2015). Nonetheless, challenges such as an absence of standardized metrics, limited GC applicability to SMEs, and local adaptation issues persist. These obstacles necessitate deeper SDG synergies and solid multistakeholder collaboration (Lee & Hess, 2022; Pinto & Casais, 2023; Pradhan et al., 2017).

The conceptual framework emphasizes collaborative strategies and transparent metrics to maximize sustainable practice impacts. For ESG, standardized indicators and sector-specific guidelines are critical for guiding implementation and assessing consumer perceptions (López-Cabarcos et al., 2025; Lee & Hess, 2022). For the GC, enabling SME participation and enhancing monitoring mechanisms are essential for effectiveness (Ortas et al., 2015; Rasche, 2009). As for the 2030 Agenda, localized adaptations and multi-sectoral partnerships are required to harness goal synergies and promote collaboration among governments, corporations, and civil society (Pradhan et al., 2017; Wymer, 2023).

Ultimately, the convergence of these practices underpins a robust theoretical and practical framework for advancing social well-being, institutional responsibility, and sustainable development.

Table 5 presents key suggestions for future research identified from the review and analysis of the articles included in this review. These suggestions were extracted both from the recommendations within the reviewed articles and the critical interpretations of the review's authors, based on recognized gaps, opportunities, and the framework's assessed strengths and weaknesses. These recommendations focus on fundamental issues in organizational behavior and interactions with increasingly complex environments, mapping clear guidelines in line with the principles of sustainable development.

Table 5 – Agenda Proposal

(Continue)

ESG practices		Source
Research Gaps Academic/ Managerial	- Performance of ESG practices, focusing on the challenges of comparability across different institutions and sectors, and propose possible solutions to enhance metric transparency and consistency. - Analyze the impact of ESG practices on consumer perceptions and decision-making, as well as their effects on consumer well-being. - Propose a manual of ESG best practices tailored to each business sector or area of activity. - Identify how ESG practices develop and what the main practices are within institutions, analyzing their organizational and social impact.	Lee & Hess (2022) Waal & Thijssens (2020) Beatson, Gottlieb & Pleming (2019) Bodunrin & Stone (2018) Davis & Ozanne (2019) Khalil & Khalil (2022) Zeng & Botella-Carrubi (2023) Anuardo et al. (2023) Biglari, Beiglary & Arthanari (2022) Consolandi et al. (2020) Vila Nova & Bitencourt (2020) López-Cabarcos, López-Pérez & Vizcaíno-González (2025) Waal & Thijssens (2020) Naomi & Akbar (2021)
Research Questions Academic/ Managerial	- What are the main challenges faced by institutions when adopting ESG practices? - How can institutions develop standardized and transparent metrics to assess the performance of their ESG practices? - What are consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards institutions that invest in ESG practices? - What are the key factors influencing consumers' decision-making regarding products and/or services offered by institutions that adopt ESG practices? - How do ESG practices affect consumer well-being? - How can the impact of ESG practices on consumer well-being be measured?	
GC practices		**Source**
Research Gaps Academic/ Managerial	- Analyze the role and effectiveness of the Global Compact in promoting sustainable practices among large institutions, assessing the degree of commitment and implementation of the proposed actions, as well as the outcomes achieved in terms of sustainable development. - Understand the impact of the engagement of different stakeholders in the Global Compact, including governments, civil society, academia, and businesses, on the achievement of the proposed objectives, identifying synergies and potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the process.	Waal, Johannes W. H. van der; Thijssens, Thomas (2020) Duane, Sinead; Domegan, Christine; Bunting, Brendan (2022) Lee, Dason; Hess, David J. (2022)

Table 5 – Agenda Proposal

(Continue)

GC practices		Source
Research Gaps Academic/ Managerial	- Investigate how the Global Compact can be adapted and improved to become more accessible and appealing to small and medium-sized enterprises, considering their particularities and limitations, and propose mechanisms to encourage their participation in sustainable practices. - Analyze and propose tools to monitor the actions of Global Compact signatories, aiming to identify whether institutions are complying with the Ten Principles and advancing the 2030 Agenda.	Waal, Johannes W. H. van der; Thijssens, Thomas (2020) Duane, Sinead; Domegan, Christine; Bunting, Brendan (2022) Lee, Dason; Hess, David J. (2022)
Research Questions Academic/ Managerial	- What are the main challenges faced by small businesses in adhering to the Global Compact, and how can these barriers be overcome to enable greater inclusion of these enterprises in ESG practices? - What are the primary benefits and challenges perceived by large institutions when joining the United Nations Global Compact, and how can these perceptions influence the dissemination of ESG practices within their sectors and regions of operation? - How can academic initiatives and behavior change strategies be aligned with the Global Compact to promote awareness and engagement among consumers and society regarding ESG practices and the 2030 Agenda? - What are the key factors motivating large institutions to join the Global Compact, and how can these motivations be leveraged to increase the number of participating companies and strengthen the collaborative network for sustainable development?	
2030 Agenda practices		**Source**
Research Gaps Academic/ Managerial	- Evaluate the application of the SDGs in different national contexts, considering the economic, social, political, and environmental particularities of each country, and identifying the challenges faced in adapting global goals to local realities. - Investigate the synergies among different SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, analyzing how progress in one goal can contribute to the achievement of others, and proposing strategies to strengthen these positive interactions and maximize the impact of sustainable actions.	Biglari et al. (2022) Naomi & Akbar (2021) Úbeda et al. (2022) Duane et al. (2022) Galan-Ladero et al. (2023)

Table 5 – Agenda Proposal

(Continue)

2030 Agenda practices		Source
Research Gaps Academic/ Managerial	- Assess the role of various stakeholders in implementing the 2030 Agenda, including governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and academia, identifying best practices for collaboration and engagement to foster a joint effort toward sustainable objectives.	Biglari et al. (2022) Naomi & Akbar (2021) Úbeda et al. (2022) Duane et al. (2022) Galan-Ladero et al. (2023)
Research Questions Academic/ Managerial	- How can the 2030 Agenda be effectively adapted and implemented across different national contexts, taking into account the economic, social, and environmental particularities of each country, in order to ensure the relevance and success of the SDGs in diverse settings? - What synergies have been identified among the 17 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, and how can these interconnections be leveraged to amplify the positive impact of actions aimed at multiple goals? - What are the main challenges countries face in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and how can these challenges be overcome through collaboration and cooperation among various stakeholders, such as governments, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and civil society? - What are the successful cases of countries or regions that have managed to overcome trade-offs and challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and what lessons can be drawn from these cases to guide other nations in their sustainable development efforts? - How can ESG practices, together with actions aligned with the 2030 Agenda, impact consumer well-being and institutional performance?	

Source: by authors, 2025

6 CONCLUSION

This study addressed a significant gap in the literature by systematizing sustainable practices associated with ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda through the perspectives of Social Marketing and TCR. By integrating these domains, the research addresses the core question of how such practices can be conceptualized and combined to foster organizational sustainability and drive transformative consumer behavior. Leveraging a systematic literature review, the study fulfilled its objective of creating a theoretical and practical framework capturing the interrelationships among these initiatives and the challenges faced by institutions and stakeholders within a dynamic context.

The analysis also underscores the substantial potential of Social Marketing and TCR's ethical approaches to transform organizations, positively influence consumption patterns, and support progress toward the SDGs. Persistent challenges were identified, including the lack of standardized metrics, difficulties in translating global goals to local realities, and the limited inclusion of SMEs in the GC. These barriers underscore the necessity for collaborative, evidence-driven strategies.

The proposed framework advances several conceptual propositions derived from the literature synthesis. For example, it is posited that integrating ESG criteria, GC principles, and the 2030 Agenda, when shaped by the ethical and transformative tenets of Social Marketing and TCR, may enhance organizations' abilities to foster sustainable management and promote consumer behavior aligned with the SDGs. The framework also suggests that developing transparent metrics, sector-specific guidelines, and broad-based collaborations could address current implementation challenges. These propositions are offered for empirical examination in future research through quantitative or qualitative methods across different organizational and cultural settings.

Among the central conclusions, the study demonstrates that sustainable practices, when unified under the proposed integrative framework, can advance collective well-being and reinforce institutional accountability, aligning organizations with global sustainability mandates. A notable rise in scholarly interest aligns with the urgency of the "Decade of Action" for the 2030 Agenda. Nevertheless, persistent obstacles in impact measurement and authenticity confirm that successful initiatives require greater transparency, robust verification, and sensitive adaptation to local contexts.

Another key conclusion is the need for tools and sector-specific guidelines to facilitate best practice implementation and to highlight Social Marketing's unique role in constructing ethical engagement strategies for both consumers and stakeholders. Involving SMEs in sustainability networks is identified as a crucial factor to enhance impact and scalability.

This study's primary contributions are its theoretical synthesis and framework development: it provides an interdisciplinary conceptual model that systematizes the interconnections among ESG, the GC, and the 2030 Agenda using Social Marketing and TCR, enriching the corporate sustainability and behavior change literature. In practical terms, the study offers managerial direction on the prioritization of ethical integration, transparent measurement, and inclusive collaboration for strengthening sustainability efforts. For future research, the expectation is empirical validation of the framework, such as through case studies, surveys, or longitudinal analyses, to determine real-world efficacy, cross-sector generalizability, and tangible impacts on sustainability outcomes.

Theoretically, this study broadens understanding by embedding Social Marketing and TCR concepts into a framework that clarifies sustainable practices' roles in fostering social change and influencing consumption. This perspective affirms the necessity of interdisciplinary approaches for addressing the complexities of corporate sustainability in a global context.

From a practical standpoint, the framework gives valuable guidance to managers and organizations, highlighting the importance of authentic ESG practices, verifiable indicators, standardized metrics, and promoting multisectoral partnerships. The analysis also emphasizes participatory, adaptive strategies that respect local specificities and foster SME involvement, thereby supporting the effectiveness and credibility of sustainability initiatives.

As with all SLR-based research, some limitations must be recognized. Primarily, the framework's scope and depth are contingent upon the quality of published literature, introducing potential publication bias and omitting insights from unpublished, grey, or yet-to-be-codified practices. Furthermore, while the synthesis defines a strong theoretical structure, the resulting conceptual propositions await empirical validation, limiting immediate generalizability and application until tested in operational contexts.

Finally, limitations related to the review's temporal scope and keyword constraints may have narrowed the range of perspectives analyzed. Future work is therefore recommended to deepen these concepts via empirical investigation and interdisciplinary synthesis, drawing on domains such as psychology, sociology, and public policy. Such continued research is essential for enhancing sustainable practice implementation and evaluating effects on consumer behavior and organizational accountability, thereby supporting substantive progress toward a sustainable future.

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2. Data curation	√		
3. Formal analysis	√	√	√
4. Funding acquisition			√
5. Investigation	√		
6. Methodology		√	√
7. Project administration			
8. Resources			√
9. Software			
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Conflict of Interest

The authors have stated that there is no conflict of interest.

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Data availability statement

Data will be available upon request