The role that marketing academics play in advancing sustainability education and research

Abstract

To advance sustainability education and research sustainability needs to be integrated into subjects, such as marketing, which do not currently actively promote such topics. Instead, the marketing discipline promotes continuous consumption and advocates for material accumulation as indicators of national and individual success, even when research has shown this does not make individuals happy. This qualitative research seeks to understand the experiences of marketing faculty engaged with sustainability and their perceived ability to create impact in their own institution and the larger academic community. This research utilizes institutional theory which can offer theoretical insight into the ability for change in higher education, especially through the individual as an institutional entrepreneur. The contribution of this research lies in its discussion of a framework which explores how academic actions may be classified according to their perceived and anticipated reward and societal impact, as well as tactics which can be employed by academics to create institutional change.

1. Introduction

Even as the decade of education on sustainable development (2005-2014) ended, the nature of sustainability education and research and its role within the University has remained elusive (Doherty, Meehan, & Richards, 2015). This research focuses on the marketing discipline as it can provide interesting insight into the tensions exhibited theoretically and ideologically when integrating sustainability, as sustainability and marketing are often seen to be the anti-thesis to each other. Marketing is implicated in both the problems and solutions to sustainability; with marketing's roots in consumerism and materialism but it also has the ability to educate and bring about behavioral change, and change product offerings (Borland & Paliwoda, 2011; Varey, 2011).

This study explores how sustainability focused marketing academics integrate sustainability within marketing higher education and research. The objective of this research is to understand the experiences of university marketing faculty engaged with sustainability, and their perceived ability to create impact in their own institution and the larger academic community. Specifically, this research responds to Toubiana's (2014) call for research to examine the "'disruptive' and critical institutional work [that] can be engaged to develop a more open environment in business schools" (p.97). The contribution of this paper lies in its ability to reflect on the tactic's academics can employ to embed sustainability within research and teaching.

While much research has examined how to integrate sustainability in university operations and curriculum (e.g., Barber, Wilson, Venkatachalam, Cleaves, & Garnham, 2014; Doh & Tasman, 2014; Thomas, 2004), the experiences and possible struggles involved in embedding sustainability in academic scholarship (research) has largely been neglected (Huge, Block, Waas, Wright, & Dahdouh-Guebas, 2016; Waas, Verbruggen, & Wright, 2010). As such, few studies have paid attention to the role of individual academics and their experiences

with sustainability and the process of integration in education and research (Wood, Cornforth, Beals, Taylor, & Tallon, 2016). Thus, how academics attempt to embed and address sustainability in their own courses and research, and subsequently, how they feel about bringing about larger institutional change, remains largely unknown.

Further, this study builds on the limited research which uses institutional theory in the interpretation of their findings for education for sustainability (EfS) (e.g., Barber et al., 2014; de Lange, 2013; Dobers et al., 2008; Doherty et al., 2015). As such, through the lens of institutional entrepreneurs in an academic context, this research adds theoretically to the literature. Lastly, much research has taken a case study method approach to examine and provide rich insight into individual cases of sustainability and EfS (Corcoran, Walker, & Wals, 2004) and, to offer new insight, this research undertakes an international, multi-institution, qualitative research approach.

2. Conceptual background

2.1 Education for sustainability

Society is facing a series of interrelated social, economic and environmental crises. Many have called for the need to shift to a sustainable society, one which lives within the ecological bounds of the planet, which recognizes the symbiotic relationship between nature and societal well-being, and fosters community (Allen, Cunliffe, & Easterby-Smith, 2019; Borland & Lindgreen, 2013; Hopwood, Mellor, & O'Brien, 2005). However, such a shift requires a paradigm shift in our institutions, especially higher education (Blanco-Portela, Benayas, Pertierra, & Lozano, 2017; Cortese, 2003; Lozano, 2006).

Higher education integrates sustainability within operations, research, education, community engagement/outreach, and reporting. In response to the need for sustainability education, the United Nation's Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD) was started in 2004 to "contribute to enabling citizens to face the challenges of the present and

future, and leaders to make relevant decisions for a viable world" (UNESCO, 2005, p. 4). Yet, it is only recently that higher education has sought to fully redesign universities and collaborate with stakeholders (i.e., community, companies, government) to enable a transition to a sustainable society (Beynaghi et al., 2016).

The emergence of specialized environmental and sustainability journals, conferences and associations in the higher education domain demonstrates the interest shown in the education field. Sustainability education research has examined how to teach it (Christie, Miller, Cooke, & White, 2013; Springett, 2010; Stubbs & Cocklin, 2008), how to integrate it within faculties and the university as a whole (Barber et al., 2014; Beynaghi et al., 2016; Doherty et al., 2015), and the impact of education on beliefs and behaviors in both students (Felgendreher & Löfgren, 2018; Olsson, Gericke, & Chang Rundgren, 2016) and faculty (Richardson, Byrne, & Liang, 2018).

The critical components of sustainability education are attitude, skills and knowledge (Hesselbarth & Schaltegger, 2014; Stubbs, 2013; Thomas, 2004). Knowledge has been suggested to include ecological concepts, environmental management systems and practices, understanding the different worldviews of nature and sustainability, and concepts of social global justice (Hesselbarth & Schaltegger, 2014; Stubbs & Cocklin, 2008). Skills include advanced communication, negotiation, critical analysis and overall, the skills necessary to enact behavior change if individuals choose to take action; while attitudes emphasize the need to encourage students to question their worldview, and to partake in critical and reflective thinking (Hesselbarth & Schaltegger, 2014; Kearins & Springett, 2003; Redding & Cato, 2011; Stubbs, 2013). EfS in business studies, such as marketing, is often heavily geared towards getting students to engage in critical reflective thinking about the relationships between economy, ecology, and society as traditional business education fails to take the interrelationships into account (Marshall et al., 2010; Springett, 2010; Stubbs & Cocklin, 2008)

resulting in a "narrow and skewed perspective" (Kurucz et al., 2014, p. 438). Nevertheless, it is business students which become the future leaders of organizations and thus, their knowledge and attitudes towards sustainability are crucial for the incorporation of sustainability within business operations.

2.2 Sustainability in marketing education and research

Sustainability has gained little traction in the marketing curriculum and research, despite the increasing popularity of the concept in other disciplines. Sustainability was included in only 40% of marketing courses in Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited business schools in the United States (Nicholls, Hair, Ragland, & Schimmel, 2013). Additionally, Weber (2013) in examining a relatively small sample of universities which had applied to the sustainability focused Beyond Pinstripes program found that only 16% of graduate marketing courses allocated 50% of course time to ethical, social, and sustainability issues. Similarly, sustainability marketing research still remains relatively sparse (McDonagh & Prothero, 2014; Purani, Sahadev, & Kumar, 2014), with such a lack of attention potentially being a result of the epistemology or mindset of marketing faculty (Kemper & Ballantine, 2019; Kemper, Hall, & Ballantine, 2019).

The epistemology of business studies, such as marketing, is based on the dominant social paradigm which is framed by the need for continuous economic growth, material development as a measurement of progress and success, and the environment as controllable by humans and technology as the solution to social and environmental ills (Kemper, Hall, & Ballantine, 2019). This tension between profitability and social responsibility is also seen in other business disciplines such as accounting (Joseph, 2012), tourism (Boyle, 2015), and management (Painter-Morland, 2015). Marketing adopts this profit-dominant ideology and continues to promulgate continuous consumption, not consumption reduction, and advocates

for material accumulation as indicators of national and individual success, when research shows this does not make us happier (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002). Such neoliberal teachings are in contrast to sustainable education (Hursh, Henderson, & Greenwood, 2015). Other institutional barriers, such as stakeholder resistance (Lozano, 2006), also prevent a shift towards sustainability integration.

2.3 Institutional barriers

Neo-institutional theory discusses that the dynamics of institutional change includes both internal (characteristics of individuals) and external (environmental) pressures to the organization (Battilana, Leca, & Boxenbaum, 2009). There are numerous institutional barriers towards sustainability integration across universities and business schools experienced by individual academics (internal barriers) (e.g., Doh & Tashman, 2014; Thomas, 2004). Specifically, these internal barriers include organizational (structure, lack of leadership, unsupportive culture and infrastructure, and terminological challenges), resources (lack of knowledge and skills), and personal factors (lack of time, weak institutional commitment, staff development issues and adverse staff reactions to sustainability integration, ability to teach sustainability skills, rewards, incentives and student responsiveness) (Doh & Tashman, 2014; Doherty et al., 2015; Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015; Thomas, 2004). Outside the university, external pressures include accreditation bodies, external stakeholders (such as business, partner schools, public bodies, and NGOs), student demand, school ranking systems and tables, and ranking of individuals and/or schools on the quality of their research (Doherty et al., 2015; Lozano, 2006).

However, while numerous studies have examined the institutional barriers for EfS, studies have failed to more broadly address issues for sustainability integration in individual academic research and scholarship (Huge et al., 2016; Waas et al., 2010). Whether for the

advancement of research or EfS, institutional theory provides a lens to understand change, while institutional entrepreneurship allows researchers to draw upon a large body of knowledge which theorizes how much change can be implemented by the individual.

2.4 The institutional entrepreneur

New institutional theory postulates that there are possibilities for resistance in organizations, particularly in the form of institutional entrepreneurs. DiMaggio (1988) introduced the term "institutional entrepreneur" as an agent who transforms or creates institutions (frameworks for appropriate or acceptable behavior) through the mobilization of resources. Therefore, institutional entrepreneurship reintroduces agency, interests, and power into institutional theory and analyses of organizations (Garud, Hardy, & Maguire, 2007). Individuals are aiming for institutional change (as institutional entrepreneurs) when they are dissatisfied with the status quo. Institutional entrepreneurs are seen as exploiters of social contradictions (Seo & Creed, 2002) and utilize other institutional logics (socially constructed, patterns, symbols and material practices) (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012) to initiate change (Friedland & Alford, 1991) in the dominant logic (i.e., market logic is present in businesses) present in individuals, organizations and/or society.

Marketing academics may engage in institutional entrepreneurship by challenging the taken-for-granted assumptions regarding their role (Marshall et al., 2010; Snelson-Powell, Grosvold, & Millington, 2016). The response of some academics to promote sustainability worldviews in business schools and marketing departments which endorse a profit-orientated ideology may therefore be regarded as a form of academic activism (Hall, 2016). As change in higher education is usually dependent on individuals and their ability to create "bottom-up" change (Thomas, 2004; Wood et al., 2016), exploring the plight of academics integrating sustainability in their research and teaching is of extreme import. This exploration is especially

important for academics in the business school who continuously struggle with the profit-orientated ideology (Springett, 2010; Toubiana, 2014), colleague resistance and lack of support from management (Doh & Tashman, 2014; Doherty et al., 2015; Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015).

3. Method

Since the research was exploratory in nature, qualitative research allowed an in-depth exploration of the topic. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the experience of attempting to embed and address sustainability in courses and research. Semi-structured interviews allow depth and flexibility when discussing complex issues, such as sustainability (Bamball & While, 1994). Purposeful sampling was used to select "information-rich cases" (Patton, 1990, p. 169), allowing the researcher the ability to "compare and contrast, to identify similarities and differences in the phenomenon of interest" (Palinkas et al., 2015, p. 534). In addition, in two instances snowball sampling was used; one interviewee was selected (without solicitation) when one participant suggested a possible interviewee and the other participant was suggested by one of the co-authors, based upon their work in sustainability and accreditation.

Participants were selected in two stages. Firstly, marketing academics who had authored conceptual sustainability marketing journal articles were invited to participate in an interview. The second stage sought to utilize lecturer/professor listings on university websites through a Google search, specifically looking for sustainability marketing courses or academics with a listed interested in sustainability marketing. Equal representation was sought for Australasia, North America and Europe, and a good representation of both genders (10 females, 8 males). The data collection was considered complete at 18 interviews when data saturation was met, specifically, when there was no addition of new themes or codes (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

Face-to-face, telephone and Skype interviews were all employed to conduct the interviews, with the latter used most frequently. Telephone interviews were only used when participants felt uncomfortable or unable to use Skype; this was the case with three participants. Skype without video was sometimes requested by participants (twice) and are thus much the same as telephone interviews. Only two face-to-face interviews were conducted due to geographical limitations. Research has found that telephone interviews experience relatively the same difficulties in substantive understanding in the interview process as face-to-face interviews (Irvine, Drew, & Sainsbury, 2012).

Interviews lasted from 35 minutes to 140 minutes, with the average lasting approximately 70 minutes. Six broad topics served as the focus of discussions with interviewees: (a) description of sustainability, (b) (non-) conflicts with marketing and sustainability, (c) sustainability in the marketing curriculum, (d) integration of sustainability within the marketing curriculum and scholarship (including barriers and opportunities), (e) pressures and logics of the business school, and (f) creating active change in the business school. Interviews were transcribed verbatim, which has the advantage of facilitating an audit trail of data analysis (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). Due to the small community of sustainability marketing academics, participants were assured of their confidentiality, and as such, pseudonyms are used and the profile of participants is limited to gender and region as can be seen in Table 1. However, it should be noted that ages varied but were usually skewed towards those in the latter stages of their career (i.e., Associate Professors and Professors).

< Insert Table 1 about here>

Common among qualitative data analysis is the identification of key themes. A number of analyses can be employed to detect these themes, such as discourse and conversational

analysis, but most commonly used is thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is extremely flexible and positions itself within a constructionist framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The style of thematic employed in this research is template analysis, which seeks to define, organize and structure themes within data (Brooks, McCluskey, Turley, & King, 2015). Akin to flexible pattern matching, template analysis utilizes both a prior codes (top down) and inductive (bottom up) codes (Sinkovics, 2018).

Template analysis uses an iterative process to create or modify themes throughout the analytical process (King, 2012). The first six transcripts were initially coded, and a template was produced, which involved reading through the transcripts and attaching codes to the identified section. This ultimately led to several levels of coding being established. The initial template was used to analyze a further six interviews and adjustments to themes were made where necessary. This was then reapplied to the initial 12 interviews and the remainder of the six interview transcripts and again the coding template was revised. However, at this stage of the revision process, only the regrouping of themes was necessary. Here, data analysis was considered complete as there was no addition of new themes (Guest et al., 2006). Coding was aided and undertaken using the software NVivo 10 and aided by hand-drawn mind maps which helped to visualize the data. Hierarchical coding was used to groups similar codes together and produce several higher level codes (King, 2012).

Following the outcome of the coding process, the findings are presented by exploring the role and need for change agents, and the issues of power related to change agents' ability to affect change. Next, the role of the change agent in the case of teaching and research, and how these roles offer varied opportunities for change is discussed. Lastly, the overall belief in the ability for the marketing discipline to change is explored.

4. Interview findings

4.1 Change agents

In the interviews, academic activism was seen by participants as weaving sustainability passion and advocating for change in all their work (research, teaching and service). Academic activism was usually seen as the direct actions of academics within their own institution. Specifically, activism was described as engaging students in sustainability projects, and critical discussions of sustainability and marketing topics, with both students and faculty, and actively "nagging" for institutional change at their university.

> *I've spent twenty years nagging the university to accept reasonably small steps forward in policy and things...I see that as being important rather than individual gestures.... I just keep, wherever I can just drop it in conversation, try and point out that actually from this perspective... I just keep chipping away and nagging away to remind people that there are other ways of thinking about these things. (Bob)*

Having such a champion or change agent within the university was seen by participants as advantageous. Indeed, some participants felt little encouragement for change without such change agents.

> *There's gonna be no real push in business education towards sustainability unless there is a champion in, at a high enough level in a school or department, without that champion it goes away. (Christine)*

The change agents were seen as critical to the success sustainability education because participants felt they lacked power in their organization due to existing institutional power structures. Consequently, sustainability academics may have the passion to create and envision

change, but may lack the power to change institutions. Indeed, participants communicated their lack of power to change institutions.

People underestimate that bureaucratically, trying to change courses within the university is a long, soul-destroying process and it's often much smarter to just adjust what you're teaching a bit today rather than trying to create any more radical change. (Bob)

4.2 Need for power

Participants thought only those in power were seen to be able to create institutional change. Those in 'power' were those with a high status within the marketing academy, those with tenure, editors, deans and program managers.

As more and more of those kinds of people come through the system, and do get a platform, people do listen to them. If you've got professors that are doing well, well regarded by the university, but their focus is on sustainability or critical issues, people will listen to them. (Nick)

However, without change agents to envision and start curriculum and institutional innovation, change may remain elusive. The views expressed by the participants show academic activism as possible and needed but was constrained to those with institutional power. Interestingly, while sustainability education was not rewarded or seemingly valued, there were no perceived institutional barriers preventing the integration of sustainability topics in education.

When you're a faculty member you pretty much have total control of what you're teaching so in many cases I don't think my colleagues even know what I'm teaching. (Rachel)

Instead, institutional barriers seem to limit the time available for teaching or curriculum innovations, and prevent sustainability marketing research, and thus lead researchers to shift attention to non-sustainability issues, which arguably have a flow on effect to what interest academics have in teaching.

4.3 The role of the educator

The role of an academic as an 'educator' in the academic community as well as their institute was not seen as a particularly valued one by interview participants. However, most of the participants highly valued their role as an educator. While their role as an educator wasn't necessarily professionally satisfying to participants, it seemed more personally satisfying.

You assign those [teaching] jobs to the people who don't publish. You're rewarded, because if you publish you don't have to do those things. (Paul)

I probably should take six months where I don't do any research and just focus on my teaching and formulate my teaching in such a way that I can feel more comfortable with it but it's not something that's highly rewarded. (Diana)

Indeed, teaching is seen as a punishment, performed only by 'bad' researchers and new academics, and was seen as 'second order' to research Consequently, participants usually seem to take a personal, rather than a professional stance that EfS is important and thus integrate sustainability throughout their own courses.

Participants encountered no issues integrating sustainability into existing marketing courses; many participants suggested that an existing course was easy to adjust within the parameters of broad learning/student objectives.

That's one of the advantages of being an academic, is kind of educate students about the world, and how you sort of see the world, and what's needing to be improved...myself compared to my colleagues I would probably take a much more sustainable approach to marketing education...so it's definitely down to the individual. (Louise)

Participants thought that addressing sustainability only in one separate course was reinforcing the isolation of the topic. However, two participants suggested that integration should be a progression from a stand-alone course to full integration across all courses. Interestingly, the participants saw a lesser value in stand-alone courses than fully integrated courses.

If we had a stand-alone course, I would love a stand-alone course, but if you only have a stand-alone course I think you are doing a disservice. (Claire)

The participants' passion and interest in sustainability seemed to conflict with some of their teachings. Several participants discussed the struggle, conflict or guilt they felt with teaching more 'mainstream' marketing courses.

It started to grate with me – my god, why am I turning this people out to go and be mass consumers, to encourage others to consume, and suddenly I felt incredibly responsible and incredibly guilty about what I was doing because I knew better. (Maya)

4.4 The role of the researcher

The tension between publishing and teaching produces institutional barriers for sustainability focused marketing academics. A focus on publishing in high A-level[1] journals for career advancement seems to contribute little to subjects like sustainability which remain, through these institutional barriers, on the periphery. Consequently, due to the perception that sustainability topics are usually harder to publish in marketing and business studies journals than other marketing topics, many participants suggested that this puts a lot of pressure on sustainability academics.

> *And the problem again with publication here, and every publishing school, is that you're required – it's even a requirement of our tenure and promotion. Is that we have to develop for yourself an area of research where you are recognized as one of the movers and shakers in the world. That's far easier to do if you do something like advertising. (Paul)*

Moreover, in the case of tenure, some participants chose not to focus on sustainability for the first ten years of their career purely because it was not easy getting published in the area of sustainability in marketing and business journals.

Seven participants had some skepticism about the ability for individual faculty members to make much difference in sustainability's integration in marketing research. In the view of participants, a major and broader concern for the whole marketing academy was the question of whether anybody reads the articles that are being published, whether sustainability or non-sustainability focused.

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[1] 'A level' journals was used as generic terminology to refer to A* (Australian Business Deans Council List) or 4* rated journals (British Association of Business Schools)

I think you write for your peers and your peers read your papers and you read their papers and voilà all 20 of us have read the same journal article isn't that wonderful! I'm not sure if we have much of an impact, you know, that's just my feeling whether publications have as much as an impact as direct change agent where you're actually changing students minds in the classroom and changing your colleagues' minds. (Rachel)

Few participants discussed the need and/or difficulty for interdisciplinary research for sustainability. Only three participants reflected on the need for interdisciplinary research, which they perceived as quite challenging.

I think one of the great challenges I think is for us to be able to work cross discipline and it's a real challenge, it's a very big challenge because we use different terminologies and we have different agendas and interests but unless we combine our talents, skills and energy we are going to fail. (Rosie)

4.5 The ability to change

Eight participants suggested that only a worsening of social, economic or environmental crises would incite change in consumers, businesses and the marketing academy. While this was less than half of the participants, this was the most agreed upon 'solution' for wide scale change in the marketing academy and society as a whole.

I'm beginning to think that ultimately, that Karl Marx was right in that to get any kind of change comes from crisis, it comes from disaster. I think it's one of these things that fundamental change in trajectory of society, and the economy and politics and the way we think about practice of things like marketing, will only happen after some kind of catastrophe in which a lot of people die. Which sounds

a terribly gloomy... But I just do not...human nature, being warned about consequences, doesn't tend to be able to change. (Bob)

While most faculty were optimistic that sustainability will continue to be integrated in marketing, a total change of marketing or its paradigm to one that is entirely sustainable was not expected.

Marketing won't be this super-responsible, sustainable discipline, you know – I think it will be slow growth, and I think commercial marketing still massively outnumbers the other perspectives. (Ben)

Four participants felt or implied that to increase familiarity and interest in sustainability, courses and/or institutions should be established that help faculty integrate sustainability into their courses. For example, a sustainability workshop hosted by the American Marketing Association (a leading academic association in marketing studies) or the establishment of sustainability institutes at their university. Such initiatives would help increase faculty sustainability knowledge and help empower faculty to change curriculum and teaching practices.

And I have this idea that there's also perceived faculty effectiveness, like, faculty have to feel confident that they could teach sustainability concepts in their courses, whether they were just going to introduce a few of the concepts in a regular marketing course, or a regular sociology – any field. (Patricia)

All faculty suggested that the dominant social paradigm, and subsequently the lack of perceived importance of sustainability within the marketing discipline, is very difficult to change. Some participants suggested that the dominant industrial worldview will only change with a new cohort of PhD students who are interested, or at the very least educated, in sustainability. It is

only by replacement of the 'old' generation of marketing academics that new life is breathed into the discipline.

> *Part of me feels like well eventually the establishment is going to die out and we*
> *can leave it to the younger generation who might make some serious structural*
> *changes. (Claire)*

However, one participant pointed out that even now while there may be an increased interest in sustainability in PhD students, most are still not specializing in this area. This was very likely due to insufficient exposure in PhD programs and the somewhat limited ability for emerging scholars to publish in sustainability-oriented journals accepted by business schools (for promotional purposes).

Overall, participants were uncertain about how to bring about change in the worldview of business and marketing faculty and departments. As previously discussed, more opportunities existed within one's own department for curriculum innovation and change, and the willingness to sacrifice some professional goals for possibly more rewarding personal ones in advancing sustainability's integration within marketing research and education.

5. Discussion

The internal dynamics of change are discussed first as a direct reflection of the research findings, followed by an extended account how external dynamics theoretically may be used by institutional entrepreneurs in higher education.

5.1 Internal dynamics of change

This study shines a light on the experiences and struggles faced by sustainability academics. The research finds that a greater enthusiasm existed for educating students, rather than publishing sustainability research as a gateway for institutional change. Participants

demonstrate that change in the institution and in the broader academic community was much harder to achieve due to power imbalances and institutional structures. Without political power or support, transformation of higher education institutions "are vulnerable and remain limited, even when strategic sustainability visions and structures are in place" (Lee & Schaltegger, 2014, p. 467).

Participants encountered little resistance when creating or editing courses as teaching within the general objectives of the course or degree allowed flexibility. Consequently, sustainability integration was a personal interest and agenda that translated into the workplace. The participants in this study, like the majority of sustainable education research, showed a preference for the integration of sustainability into existing courses (Vaughter, Tarah, McKenzie, & Lidstone, 2013). However, while sustainability marketing courses were also created, these were usually very reliant on one faculty member making them very vulnerable to elimination if academics relocate.

Reflecting on the practices available to change agents in academic institutes, Figure 1 was created to offer the differing types of practices available dependent on the degree of perceived personal recognition (promotion, incentive etc.) and the degree of perceived personal positive impact on society. The degree of recognition is strongly tied to institutional structure, as formal (i.e., grants, promotion, tenure), and informal (i.e., praise, colleague recognition and support) rewards (Doh & Tashman, 2014; Doherty et al., 2015; Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015) are linked to current processes and values present in business schools. Therefore, four practices emerge: status building, personal rewards, win-win and slim pickings.

<Insert Figure 1 about here>

Many participants felt disadvantaged as sustainability researchers, with some reflecting

on the marketing academy's rejection and takeover of sustainability (Dobers & Springett, 2010; McDonagh & Prothero, 2014). Similar aspects are seen in the decoupling strategy of business schools to 'embed' sustainability (Snelson-Powell et al., 2016). Specifically, publishing was sometimes seen as harder in the sustainability marketing field. Participants also reflected on their role as researcher and felt most critical about their ability to influence change (i.e., to be a change agent). Doubts about who read research was a concern amongst participants, who felt skeptical of their studies, and others, to affect real change in the theory of marketing and the academy. As such, sustainability research could be classified as 'Status Building', with a high degree of recognition (in promotion, tenure and hiring processes) but low perceived direct impact on improving societal conditions. However, some academics choose to take an entrepreneurial angle to achieve institutional and societal change by disseminating their research more widely via better engaging with stakeholders and media and advocating for the impact of their research (i.e., under the UK Research Excellence Framework requirement).

More positively, participants had no issues integrating sustainability within their marketing courses or creating new sustainability marketing courses in most cases. However, what separated research and teaching was the participants feeling of impacting change and personal satisfaction, which the latter seemed to achieve, and a lack of recognition for efforts in innovating the curriculum. This practice is classified as 'Personal Rewards'; while academics may feel they contribute positively to society, this comes with a lack of recognition from their employers. Participants were genuinely hopeful of their impact on students and saw this as a good way to have direct impact on industry practices, but also on society by educating and empowering citizens. This reflection in the research provides some counterviews on the academic profession, with much previous research showing the disinterest in teaching portrayed by many academics (Badley, 2002; Cederstrom & Hoedemaekers, 2012; Harley, 2002).

Lastly, a role for faculty is to create projects and collaborate with other academics and organizations with shared values. The creation of outside partnerships and internal coalitions by sustainability champions shows the ability of these individuals to work across organizations and harness similar values (Barber et al., 2014; Reay & Hinings, 2009). Indeed, some participants specifically worked alongside sustainable businesses, and harnessed their relationship in the classroom, or at a minimum utilized green business case studies in class. Such industry engagement is highly valued by business schools and universities, and may have a high degree of perceived impact (Perkmann et al., 2013); leading to a 'Win-Win' situation.

5.2 External dynamics of change

Considering the lack of reflection by the interviewees on how to utilize external environment or pressures, this next section discusses the possibilities for change in leveraging external dynamics and specific academic tactics. Individual academics can leverage the meso (i.e., community, accreditation) and macro (i.e., policy, public attitudes) environment to gather support, through power and legitimization, for sustainability education and research.

Journal rankings, external funding (Teelken, 2012) and accreditation agencies (Doherty et al., 2015) can be leveraged by individuals in marketing departments to voice their support for sustainability integration; combating interview participants' issues of isolation, vulnerability and lack of power and institutional/management support. These are external institutional forces which can offer legitimacy to sustainability research and teaching (Alajoutsijarvi, Juusola, & Siltaoja, 2015; Wilson & Thomas, 2012). In turn, such actions may have spillover effects into the organizational culture as has been shown through accreditation processes (Elliott & Goh, 2013), as well as contribute to power dynamics.

A typology is created to articulate actions of individual academics and categorize tactics according to whether they are aiming to be disruptive or undisruptive to existing institutions.

The researchers create this typology by blending the works of Oliver (1991), who hypothesized differing strategies for organizational resistance and provided a typology of five strategies varying from passive conformity to active resistance, and the institutional entrepreneurial tactics discussed by Battilana et al. (2009) of visualizing and mobilizing (i.e., framing) vision, and Hall's (2016) academic research strategies for sustainable tourism. Reflecting on the interviews alongside the different strategies and tactics to provide a comprehensive overview of actions that can be undertaken by academics to overcome issues of isolation, vulnerability, inertia and lack of sustainability knowledge, power and institutional/management support; these can be seen in Table 2. These strategies are by no means mutually exclusive, as individual actions may overlap strategies as well as change strategies over time.

<Insert Table 2 about here >

The suggested academic tactics include compromise, avoid, defy and manipulate. According to Oliver (1991), when conformity does not suit an organization and when dealing with conflicting demands (i.e., institutional logics, expectations), they can instead choose to compromise through the balancing of demands, pacifying members and bargaining with institutional actors. When institutional entrepreneurs compromise, however, actors may be active in promoting their own interests, but they are not changing the institutional environment as they are conforming and accommodating the status quo (Oliver, 1991). Similarly, concealing and escaping tactics also work within the system, through hiding actor practices and changing or diverting ones' own interests or goals to satisfy the status quo (Oliver, 1991). To create disruption within the system, actors must engage in actions that may still be self-interested, but which carry larger risk.

Disruptive strategies of defying and manipulating (Oliver, 1991) are more active forms of resistance which (hope to) influence institutional change. Disruptive tactics can be employed

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without much power (the same could be said about leveraging of favorable institutional dynamics); they are a reaction to unfavorable conditions perceived by the individual and usually require personal sacrifice (i.e., promotion, tenure). However, actors who have greater social and legitimate power create better enabling conditions for institutional change (Battilana et al., 2009). Actions taken by institutional entrepreneurs or more specifically academics in this case, can attempt to defy or manipulate elements of the institution (Oliver, 1991).

Specifically, a defying strategy can involve either dismissing or defying the demands of the institution (Oliver, 1991). Dismissing implies the choice to actively publish in ones' preferred journals regardless of promotional or department requirements. This strategy may involve a participatory research approach to understand and raise community voices, which may not be customary for their discipline (Hall, 2016). Challenging tactics involves questioning taken for granted norms whether in one's own research or speaking up in departmental meetings (which may be possible dependent on one's position). For example, academics can take an activist stance on research, which is reflective, critical and challenges existing structures (Hall 2016). Here, actors can create a vision of change, involving diagnostic (articulate the failings of the current institution) and prognostic (communicate a new vision of change) framing (for more detail see Battilana et al., 2009). However, this new vision may stop short of providing a motivation for change.

Conversely, manipulating tactics (Oliver, 1991) involve a greater navigation of politics through careful leveraging of relationships and institutional norms to create change. This tactic ultimately satisfies current institutional demands (i.e., publishing research, participating in academic service activities) while actively pursuing ones' own agenda (institutional change). Here, actors can co-opt change and import institutional logics from outside the institutional field and provide a vision for change (i.e., through prognostic framing) (Oliver, 1991). Influencing tactics aim to shape institutional logics, values and culture, and may utilize the full

spectrum of framing forms: diagnostic, prognostic and motivational (compelling reasons for change) (Battilana et al., 2009). Such change may require the full use of resource mobilization, including financial, formal authority and social capital (Battilana et al., 2009). Here, academics can take a research approach which focuses on policy, where their applied research has policy implications with a strong consultancy angle (Hall, 2016).

6. Conclusion

Academics have been at the forefront of sustainability integration within higher education, suggesting a bottom-up change rather than top-down. This qualitative research goes beyond previous studies which have examined the barriers for EfS and instead focuses on how to overcome these barriers. The findings resulted in the creation of a typology of academic actions for work recognition and the perceived impact of change for the evaluation for the internal dynamics for institutional change.

While the interview findings are not readily generalizable, as with all qualitative research, they are helpful in understanding the experiences of sustainability interested marketing academics and provide reflections of the institutional barriers they face when integrating sustainability within their marketing research and curriculum. Future research may examine a larger number of academic views through quantitative research. Moreover, this research is one of the few which has addressed the individual experiences of possible change agents in universities. However, there is much more research needed on institutional entrepreneurs in universities for sustainability, especially across disciplines.

Furthermore, new avenues to encourage faculty toward research in sustainability must be discussed in future research. Many higher education studies have advocated for a change in the tenure and promotion processes, however, they fail to expand into what tangible aspects of the process should be changed and how this change should come about. Consequently, it would

be worthwhile for future research to examine the tenure and promotion processes from various business schools and/or universities to understand what processes are currently in place and consider what specifically may need to change in the process. Lastly, considering the valuable lens that institutional theory provided, more research utilizing this theory in higher education studies is encouraged.

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Table 1. Interview participant profiles

Alias	Region	Gender
Rosie	Australasia	Female
Diana	Australasia	Female
Ben	Australasia	Male
Ron	Australasia	Male
John	Australasia	Male
Stewart	Australasia	Male
Christine	Europe	Female
Maya	Europe	Female
Bob	Europe	Male
Louise	Europe	Female
Andrew	Europe	Male
Nick	Europe	Male
Rachel	North America	Female
Paul	North America	Male
Claire	North America	Female
Ruby	North America	Female
Toni	North America	Female
Patricia	North America	Female

Table 2. Undisruptive and disruptive strategies

Strategies	Tactics (Oliver, 1991)	Description (Oliver, 1991)	Academic Actions
Compromise (Undisruptive)	Balance	Balance the expectations of various institutional actors	• Balance personal and professional demands
	Pacify	Accommodate demands by institutional actors	• Publish in top marketing journals as well as conduct other research / publish in other high impact journals
	Bargain	Negotiate with institutional actors	• Negotiate position objectives/targets for publication locations and amount
Avoid (Undisruptive)	Conceal	Disguise disobedience to institutional norms and logics	• Participate in sustainability research but don't tell your HOD
	Escape	Change goals, domains and/or institutes	• Change schools, departments or positions
Defy (Disruptive)	Dismiss	Ignore institutional demands and norms	• Follow own interests and publication route • Adopt an academic participatory stance (Hall, 2016)
	Challenge	Contest institutional demands and norms	• Challenge promotion/hiring processes, speak out in departmental meetings • Develop a new vision for change, using diagnostic and prognostic approaches (Battilana et al., 2009) • Adopt an academic advocacy stance (Hall, 2016)
Manipulate (Disruptive)	Co-opt	Import institutional logics from outside the institutional field	• Forge new sustainability research relationships with those outside the marketing field • Utilize logics from outside the field • Use of prognostic framing (Battilana et al., 2009)
	Influence	Shape institutional logics, values and culture	• Join editorial boards, conference boards • Use diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing (Battilana et al., 2009)

	- Resource mobilization (financial, formal authority and social capital) - Adopt an academic policy stance (Hall, 2016)

	High	Status Building	Win-Win

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                    ┌─────────────────┬─────────────────┐
           High     │                 │                 │
                    │                 │                 │
                    │  Status Building│    Win-Win      │
                    │                 │                 │
Degree of           ├─────────────────┼─────────────────┤
Personal            │                 │                 │
Recognition         │                 │                 │
                    │  Slim Pickings  │ Personal Rewards│
                    │                 │                 │
           Low      │                 │                 │
                    └─────────────────┴─────────────────┘

              Low          Degree of Personal        High
                           Perceived Impact
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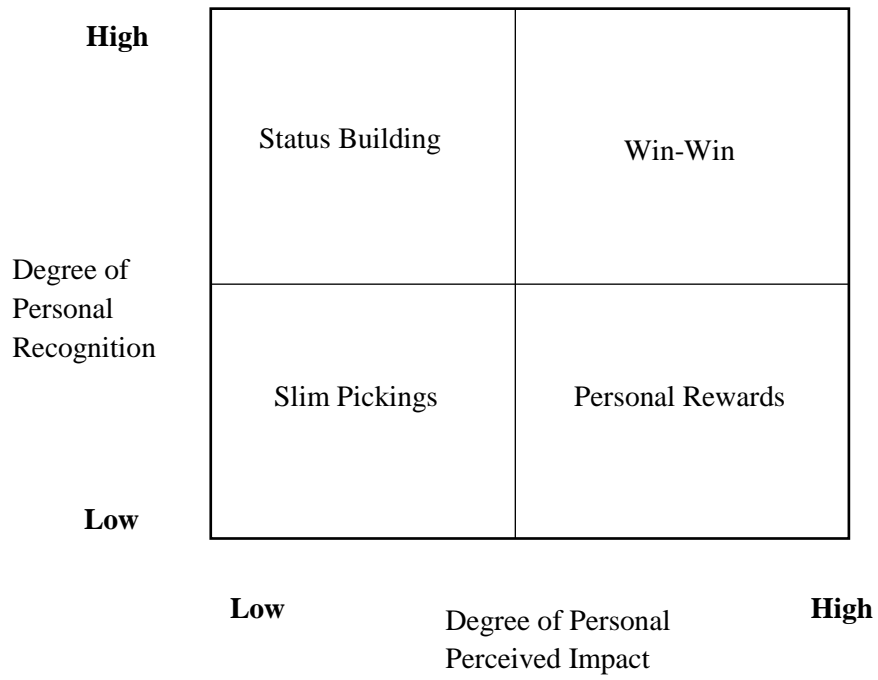
Figure 1. Academic actions for impact and recognition