

**Perceptions of Marketing Teachers Regarding Sustainability in Marketing Education:
A Case Study in Canada**

by

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Abstract

Broadly, the concept of sustainability provides directions for sustainable development in the global context whereas sustainability education is referred to as a systemic response to sustainability issues (Holdsworth & Thomas, 2020). In higher education, business schools train business leaders who will in turn operate much of the business sector. Business schools therefore have economic, social and environmental impacts on societies through their training programs. Particularly, marketing is one major stream of business education that trains marketers for the business sector. Given the sustainability focus that many universities have adopted (Kemper et al., 2020a), university teachers play important roles in inculcating sustainability principles of in students. However, in the context of marketing education, there is little research on how university teachers perceive sustainability or how that would affect their teaching. This qualitative case study explores the perceptions of marketing teachers regarding sustainability in marketing education. A university in Canada is selected as the research site because of its stated focus on sustainability. The research adopts semi-structured one-on-one interviews with five teachers specializing in marketing. For data triangulation, marketing course syllabi were reviewed to enhance the research credibility. Thematic analysis with NVivo identified themes arising from interview data. The findings revealed the perceptions of marketing teachers towards sustainability, showing a dilemma in their business worldviews that limits a holistic view of sustainability in marketing education. The research also identified several factors affecting marketing teachers' sustainability integration. An important internal factor is the motivation of teaching to prepare students for the future, which is inherent in all interviewed teachers. The external factors include resources, professional development opportunities and a faculty culture supporting sustainability integration. As many universities are starting to implement strategic

changes towards sustainability education (Wals, 2014), this research provides useful implications for educational leaders, business schools, marketing faculty and marketing researchers.

Keywords: sustainability education, marketing education, marketing teachers, perceptions of sustainability, sustainability integration, business schools

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List of Abbreviations

AACBS	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
EfS	Education for Sustainability
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
FAS	Faculty of Arts and Sciences
GUNI	Global University Network for Innovation
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HESI	Higher Education Sustainability Initiative
K-12	From kindergarten to 12 th Grade
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MC	Marketing Course
NVivo	Qualitative data analysis computer software package
RCE	Resource Centre of Expertise
RQ	Research question
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SE	Sustainability Education
ULFS	University Leaders for a Sustainable Future
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States

Chapter One: Overview of the Study

Introduction

Sustainability education (SE) is widely recognized in many higher education institutions (HEIs) around the world. By definition, HEIs often produce graduates with at least a Bachelor's degree (Weiss & Barth, 2019). The history of sustainability education can be traced back to the term 'sustainable development' which was originally defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs" in the 1987 Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 16). In 2002, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) promoted a decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) from 2005 to 2014 for developing global citizens who can help transform the world for a sustainable future (UNESCO, 2017). Hundreds of Regional Centres of Expertise (RCE) were formed around the world to promote sustainability in education (Global RCE Network, n.d.). The guiding idea is to provide students with expertise in sustainability through principles of sustainability based on democratic teaching strategies (Saqib et al., 2020). Although SE research reports different discourses (Kemper et al., 2020a), the common ground is that HEIs have adjusted activities in teaching and research as well as community engagement in responses to the call for SE (Wals, 2014). Hence, SE has gained increasing recognition in educational institutions with demonstrated commitment to strategic directions for teaching and learning (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019). Moreover, HEIs are identified as a key stakeholder to SE through sustainability teaching and learning (Paletta et al., 2019). This led to the establishment of the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) in 2012 with more than 300 member universities across the globe, offering a shared platform for science, higher education and policy making (Green Policy Platform, 2021).

In addition, there have been several HEI networks established for SE, including the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI), who announced their report, *Higher Education in the World 6 – Towards a Socially Responsible University: Balancing the Global with the Local in 2017* (Global University Network for Innovation, n.d.).

Whilst sustainability is increasingly gaining recognition in HEIs worldwide, several Canadian universities have made sustainability a strategic priority. Since the signing of the Talloires Declaration by University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF) in 2016, Canada has witnessed a surge of commitment towards sustainability in many universities (Amey et al., 2020). Within sustainability research and scholarship, attention has been paid to curriculum development (Beringer et al., 2008). A recent study by Amey et al. (2020) reported that 67% of Canadian universities explicitly address sustainability on their websites. For instance, in 2005, the University of British Columbia website officially expressed their strategic commitment to becoming a leader in the sustainability movement, with academic recommendations to integrate service, research and teaching, and to create space for transformative pedagogy (Moore, 2005a). However, the literature does not report much recent research on sustainability in Canadian HEIs. An earlier study focusing on universities in Atlantic Canada reported that only a small fraction of institutions offered professional development opportunities to help faculty engage in sustainability in higher education (Beringer et al., 2008). Another recent study focusing on Manitoba, Canada also found that there was no systematic preparation of teachers for SE despite promotional effort from the Manitoba Ministry of Education (Falkenberg & Babiuk, 2014). Furthermore, an analysis of sustainability reports from selected Canadian universities by Fonseca et al. (2011) indicated that there was limited performance information relating to curriculum and research on sustainability. Likewise, Sassen and Azizi (2018) found that sustainability reports for

the period of 2011-2015 by Canadian universities were shallow, showing a clear focus on environmental dimensions but not on other social aspects such as teaching and learning sustainability.

Research identifies barriers that limit sustainability education. Lack of support and promotion was cited as one reason for faculty preference to commit to traditional disciplines rather than to the emerging sustainability field (Beringer et al., 2008). Other research showed that barriers to SE within Canadian HEIs might come from other factors such as disciplinary boundaries in academic environments, competition and lack of collaboration across disciplines, a focus on research rather than on teaching, and unclear priorities and decision-making at management levels (Moore, 2005b). Additionally, though sustainability seems to be discussed at the executive levels of Canadian HEIs, a content analysis of 50 HEIs' strategic plans showed that responses to sustainability are primarily accommodative, lacking details on how commitment to sustainability would reflect in specific policies, programs and actions (Bieler & McKenzie, 2017). Mentioning sustainability in university communications does not guarantee that SE will be implemented (Driscoll et al., 2017; Wiek et al., 2011).

The literature includes some studies focusing on preparing K-12 teachers for SE in Canada. For instance, Sims and Falkenberg (2013) examined the status of teacher training for SE in undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs in four selected Canadian universities. They found that although there was good progress in sustainability integration into teacher education programs, the success was reliant on priority areas set by the institutions and support from provincial educational policy. This body of research, however, is focused on teacher training for K-12 teaching, not for instructors in higher education.

Another stream of research is focused on sustainability curriculum status in Canadian

universities. For example, Brugmann et al. (2019) analyzed University of Toronto sustainability curriculum, finding that among 2022 sustainability courses offered, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) offer the greatest number. Additionally, the most sustainability-focused content relates to climate change, inclusive societies, social well-being and health (Brugmann et al., 2019). This shows a lack of focus on sustainability teaching related to other aspects of society, such as business and industry. Another study at the University of Waterloo reflected on the experiences and perceptions of sustainability practice, using a case study on a cohort of students and their course instructor in a Master of Environmental Studies program (Armitage et al., 2019). They found that regardless of intellectual backgrounds, to create an impact on student learning about sustainability, transdisciplinary thinking for sustainability should be integrated to help develop systems thinking in graduates.

Not much literature reports specifically on sustainability teaching practice in business education in Canadian HEIs. In consideration of sustainability integration into business education, a sign of progress is that more sustainability courses are being offered (Driscoll et al., 2017). To elaborate, 15 in the studied sample of 25 Canadian MBA programs have incorporated sustainability to some degree (Driscoll et al., 2017). However, there is no consensus on how much content business programs would need to qualify as a sustainability concentration or specialization (Driscoll et al., 2017). With continuing social concerns about the environmental and social impacts of economic growth as expressed in many United Nations reports (Upadhyaya et al., 2019), business schools in North America have slowly acknowledged sustainability in business curricula. The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACBS) officially supports sustainability inclusion in all business disciplines (Upadhyaya et al., 2019), allowing a single, stand-alone course, which is typically how most business schools in North

America interpret compliance (AACSB International, 2017). A study examining 62 undergraduate business programs in Canada showed that business curricula do not effectively address the need to develop managers with sustainability skills (Wymer & Runder-Thiele, 2017). Even when sustainability has become such an important agenda item for HEIs, only one-third of Canadian HEIs offer a sustainability-related course (Wymer & Runder-Thiele, 2017). Beyond this, not much is known about the status of business schools' sustainability integration in Canada.

Given the diversity in student degree backgrounds and interests across business programs (such as management, accounting and finance, marketing, digital business, international business, logistics and supply chain management), the approach to sustainability can be organized within a sustainable development framework. This framework should be built to “develop competencies that empower individuals to reflect on their own actions, taking into account their current and future social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts, from a local and global perspective” (UNESCO, 2017, p. 12). In this educational context, the perceptions and practices of business teachers should be explored to gain insights into existing curriculum and teaching frameworks as well as to provide directions for further development with a sustainability focus in business education. Since little research is reported on SE integration in Canadian business schools, there is a need for research to investigate teachers' perceptions in this area.

Statement of the Research Problem

In higher education, much research exists on sustainability integration into curriculum (e.g., Andrades Peña et al., 2018; Arefin et al., 2021; Barber et al., 2014; Doh & Tashman, 2014; Guerra, 2017). Most research concentrates on science and engineering disciplines while not

much is reported on business schools' existing curriculum, designed to develop business leaders for societies. Marketing is one major discipline of business schools that trains business students who will market for the business sector; however, not all marketing teachers appreciate sustainability due to the tension between marketing and sustainability (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019). This tension exists because marketing concentrates on increasing consumption to achieve economic growth in the short term (Springett, 2010) whereas sustainability focuses on solving environmental, social and economic issues for the long run (Tilbury & Ryan, 2011). Few studies have reported on the experiences of individual teachers with sustainability teaching and integration within marketing courses (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019; Kemper et al., 2020a; Wood et al., 2016). Although few studies describe how sustainability is integrated into marketing courses (e.g., Albinsson et al., 2020; Tasdemir & Gazo, 2020; von der Heidt, 2018), knowledge is emerging of how marketing teachers' perceptions of sustainability affect the teaching of sustainability (Kemper et al., 2020a). Hence, questions remain about what marketing teachers think about sustainability, and these questions can affect how they address sustainability in marketing courses. Given the context of Canadian HEIs where progress with sustainability integration in business schools is slow (Driscoll et al., 2017), this research investigates the marketing discipline within a Canadian university to appreciate sustainability's current status and to provide implications for professional development.

Personal Relevancy

Upon reflection of my personal journey as a marketing teacher, I have taught marketing curriculum that is explicitly focused on teaching students how to market products and services to maximize profit. Having taught marketing for more than ten years, I believe my lack of

sustainability integration into courses is due to limitations in my worldview. Although I am aware of sustainability issues thanks to the many efforts of sustainability-supportive organizations, such as UNESCO and the United Nations (UN), I may have not adequately integrated sustainability topics into my teaching practice.

I have incorporated some sustainability concepts in my Consumer Behavior course where I include one module that focuses on sustainable consumption trends and eco-friendly products. Despite my engagement in sustainability-related research since 2016, my teaching of Integrated Marketing Communications is constrained by my business worldview. In this course, I teach students to promote products for profit maximization. I feel that my research—what I know—and my teaching—what I do—are still two distinct areas.

I think that marketing teachers can and should integrate more sustainability-related content to transform students into business leaders with sustainability mindsets. Therefore, I chose to conduct a case study to examine how marketing teachers at a sustainability-focused university perceive sustainability and sustainability integration in marketing education. As I am doing my Master of Education in Canada, focusing the research on a sustainability-focused university in Canada was possible.

Research Site

In this research, a university in Canada with a stated sustainability focus was selected as the research site. The selected university has a good reputation in Canadian higher education as a research university as well as one of the leading primarily undergraduate universities in Canada.

In the field of sustainability and social justice, the selected university has demonstrated a longstanding commitment and has participated in the 2020 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings which purport to capture university impact on society based on the United Nations'

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As a sustainability university, it has identified two major functions: to educate students with a sustainability focus and to develop research in sustainability. This university has also implemented many sustainability initiatives, such as the Office of Sustainability and the five-year Sustainability Plan embracing sustainability in operations, investment, research, curriculum, teaching and learning and public engagement. With its sustainability focus, the selected university offers a good case study to explore sustainability integration in curriculum and pedagogy.

For confidentiality, I do not name the participating university and the site is not described in further detail. Throughout the research, I refer to it as a sustainability-focused university in Canada.

Research Purpose and Research Questions

The research is focused on understanding marketing teachers' perceptions of sustainability and sustainability integration in marketing education. The research context is the marketing discipline at a sustainability-focused university in Canada. The proposed research answers the major research question: *How do marketing teachers at a sustainability-focused university in Canada perceive, and teach about, sustainability in marketing education?* The following sub-questions are developed to guide the research and the reporting of findings:

Research question 1 (RQ1): *What do marketing teachers at a sustainability-focused university in Canada perceive sustainability in marketing education to be?*

Research question 2 (RQ2): *What are the perspectives of marketing teachers at a sustainability-focused university in Canada regarding sustainability integration in marketing education?*

This research is focused on university teachers. University teachers are directly involved in developing students into graduates with core competencies to serve society. University teachers can be tenure-track faculty academics and contract or sessional lecturers.

Significance of the Research

Through a literature review and a qualitative case study, the research adds to the literature on sustainability integration in marketing education. Findings shed light on how marketing teachers' perceptions affect their curriculum development and teaching practice regarding sustainability in marketing education. This knowledge will help to promote professional development strategies for implementing sustainability teaching in marketing education, and to produce business leaders needed for sustainable development on local, regional and global scales.

Limitations of the Research

Limitations are related to the research design and the sampling size. Using a qualitative case study design, this research offers rich descriptions of perceptions of marketing teachers. The sample size was however modest, drawn from a small population within the marketing discipline, and thus the case study is applicable to only the research setting (Stake, 1995). It is evident that the case of one sustainability-focused university in Canada cannot represent all Canadian universities. The research was not intended to compare different universities or programs for evaluation purposes. The intent was to look at the perspectives of marketing teachers and their perceptions of sustainability and sustainability integration in marketing education at the selected university to provide a snapshot for broad consideration, professional

development implications, and to add to the existing literature by suggesting future research directions in sustainability in marketing education in Canadian HEIs.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter Overview

To set a theoretical direction for the case study, the literature review is organized as follows. First, the background information about sustainability, sustainability education and business education for sustainability is provided. In addition, an overview of teachers' roles in higher education for sustainability is discussed to shine light on their change agent roles. This provides a rationale for exploring perceptions of sustainability of teachers who influence the outcome of SE. Second, with a focus on business education and the marketing discipline, teachers' perceptions of sustainability are examined in two aspects: the worldviews of business teachers in general, and marketing teachers' perceptions of sustainability specifically. Third, teachers' practice of sustainability integration in higher education and particularly in the business and marketing discipline is discussed. Research gaps in the existing literature are identified to serve as springboards for this research.

The key terms used to undertake the literature review search for relevant studies on the Scopus database, ERIC database (Education Resources Information Center) and Google Scholar are: "sustainability, sustainability education, sustainability in business education, sustainability in marketing education, teachers' perceptions of sustainability, marketing academics' perceptions towards sustainability, faculty view on sustainability, sustainability integration in higher education, sustainability integration in marketing education, sustainability teaching in marketing courses, sustainability marketing, sustainability in marketing, sustainability in marketing education, sustainability in business schools, sustainability integration in business education, and sustainability teaching in business courses". The review scope captures most recent studies within the past ten years, with a few exceptions beyond the ten years' timeframe which provide

important historical background.

Background

Sustainability

Sustainability is a concept that provides directions for sustainable development in the global context. Sustainability relates to most aspects of human societies (Beier et al., 2017) because it is concerned with not only social issues but also the preservation of economic and environmental resources (Choi & Ng, 2011; Ford & Despeisse, 2016; Ghobakhloo, 2020). According to Ben-Eli (2018), sustainability conceptually embraces the current and future well-being of humanity and ecological systems on a global scale. However, there is no agreement on a definition of sustainability. The literature has witnessed increasing numbers of interpretations on sustainability as the awareness of sustainability increases (Beier et al., 2017; Ben-Eli, 2018; Ghobakhloo, 2020). There are several definitions of sustainability in different fields such as the environment, production, finance and economics and in consideration of the application of sustainability, each field has its own systems and principles (Glavič & Lukman, 2007).

The concept of sustainability originated from social movements towards socio-economic justice and was first used in the 1970s (Caradonna, 2014). Sustainability is about human needs for a social system that protects people from injustice, inequality, climate change, pollution and environmental degradation (Clube & Tennant, 2020; United Nations, 2020). In the scope of this research, I focus on the Sustainable Development Goals—SDGs (United Nations, 2020). The SDGs center sustainability on the triple bottom lines of human societies regarding environmental, economic and social dimensions (Ford & Despeisse, 2016; Ghobakhloo, 2020; Khuntia et al., 2018), equating those three terms as equivalent to the three Ps - planet, profit, people - as proposed by Elkington (1994).

First, environmental sustainability is concerned with preserving ecological systems, and with ecological integrity and equilibrium (Glavič & Lukman, 2007; Kim & Bosselmann, 2015).

Second, economic sustainability involves long-term sustainable economic development while maintaining the balance of environmental and social resources without compromising the needs of future generations (Ghobakhoo, 2020). From an economic perspective, the growth of an economy must not be at the expense of a decrease of natural or social resources, and thus should not disregard the equilibrium state of natural resources, ecological systems, social welfare and wealth distribution in a society (Choi & Ng, 2011; Rees, 2020). As Western industrial society progresses, Western society becomes gradually concerned about the environment and limited resources on the planet (Breyer et al., 2017).

Third, social sustainability refers to the recognition and management of business, environmental, economic and technological impacts on people and their lives (Ghobakhoo, 2020). The purpose is to build and develop sustainable communities where members are treated fairly and have equal access to human rights and basic welfare including security, safety and health care (Dempsey et al., 2011; Fischer, 2017). In short, sustainability requires economic activities to account for social and environmental responsibilities (Moon, 2007). Maintaining a healthy ecosystem in a sustained economy while ensuring the well-being of individuals and communities constitutes the triple bottom lines of sustainability (Bridges & Wilhelm, 2008).

In the global context of ever-increasing pressures on peoples and ecosystems, sustainability has emerged as a core concept embracing the development of human societies for current and future generations (Caradonna, 2014; Ghobakhoo, 2020; Glavič & Lukman, 2007). Sustainability is widely recognized as a priority agenda of educational institutions in developing human resources to serve the goal of sustainability (Agbedahin, 2019; Leal Filho et al., 2019).

The topic of sustainability integration in higher education has attracted academic attention and research (Kemper et al., 2020a, 2020b; Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019; Kemper, Hall, & Ballantine, 2019; Leal Filho et al., 2019; Tasdemir & Gazo, 2020) since questions still exist on how and what should be taught to prepare students for sustainability.

Sustainability Education

The terms ‘education for sustainable development’ (ESD), ‘education for sustainability’ (Efs) and ‘sustainability education’ (SE) are often used interchangeably in the existing literature (Kemper et al., 2020a). However, scholars have challenged the underpinnings related to economic development conveyed in ESD (e.g., Berryman & Sauv e, 2016; Glasser, 2004; Jickling & Wals, 2012; Kopnina, 2012, 2020; Sauv e et al., 2007). Researchers emphasized that economic development should be considered as the main cause for increasing tensions on natural resources (Kopnina, 2012, 2016; O’Neil, 2012; Washington, 2018). Moreover, the term ESD has been critiqued due to the preposition ‘for’ as it seems to imply that education is a training system with a defined outcome (Wals & Jickling, 2002, Sauv e et al., 2007). In this thesis, I built the research around the term SE. SE is also the most widely used term in North America (Weiss & Barth, 2019). SE is defined as a response to sustainability issues through educational systems that train global citizens who contribute to sustaining the ecological system and social equality (Holdsworth & Thomas, 2020; Lang et al., 2006).

SE is highlighted in many leading higher education institutions (HEIs) across the continents (Kemper et al., 2020a). In 2005, UNESCO proposed a decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Moreover, UNESCO (2017) emphasized that all citizens of the world should be taught how to make informed decisions and act responsibly to maintain economic and environmental sustainability and to build a fair society for current and future

generations. To achieve this goal, HEIs should play an active role in transitioning educational practice towards these principles.

According to Frisk and Larson (2011), the most important educational outcome is to transform students' thinking and ways of doing. Thus, a transformative paradigm is needed so that sustainability and education are not seen as two separate domains but as co-dependent in one system (Jones et al., 2010). In such a system, teachers should use innovative pedagogy to teach sustainability to students with a focus on behavioral change (Frisk & Larson, 2011) and sustainability competency development (Cebrián et al., 2020). Furthermore, HEIs should prioritize the role of teachers in transforming students into graduates with sustainability mindsets. Still, the implementation of SE is not well articulated in the educational policy of many countries (Aikens et al., 2016; Jucker, 2011). A focus is lacking on how to transform higher education systems to effectively promote SE, which is the objective of the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (Global University Network, 2021).

Sustainability is well recognized in HEIs, and the literature on SE reports different discourses, yet the strongest view concentrates on continuously working on paradigmatic change for sustainability (Sterling, 2004). SE is "is increasingly able to facilitate a transformative learning experience" (Sterling, 2001, p. 61). At present, SE is the highlight of the United Nations' SDGs which strongly hold that all nations should tackle issues relating to human development and environmental sustainability in global partnerships, thus requiring a profound transformation in the way humans think and act (Leicht et al., 2018). It is worth noting that human development for sustainable development largely depends on HEIs thanks to their goal of producing highly skilled labor.

At this point, it is crucial to understand how sustainability is perceived in the higher education context. Sustainability represents a condition in which human societies and the ecosystem are in harmony (Jones et al., 2010). Increasing environmental problems put more pressure on human development, requiring holistic strategies to tackle environmental impacts arising from humans' social and economic activities (Holdsworth & Thomas, 2016). Orr (1991) once highlighted the important role of higher education as he proposed that “all education is environmental education” (para. 18), meaning that students learn dangerous lessons about what society does not value when ecological concepts are missing from university courses. Orr challenged HEIs to develop students into graduates who have environmental knowledge and understand the effects of all knowledge on others and their communities.

A shift in human behavior is needed to drive societies towards sustainable patterns of development. Given the importance of education in transforming human behavior, the links between education and sustainability should be promoted (Holdsworth & Thomas, 2015, 2020). Nevertheless, in higher education, sustainability can mean different things in different academic disciplines. Hence, an appreciation of the conceptualization of sustainability in a discipline is necessary to understand the underlying principles of teaching and learning about sustainability in that discipline.

When human societies entered the new millennium, SE started to be included in different disciplines holding different worldviews. This transformational process in education is important but slow and difficult (Lange, 2018). In the global context, HEIs are regarded as key stakeholders who help achieve SDGs by supplying “inclusive, equitable and quality education to all” (Menon & Suresh, 2020, p. 1037). A sustainability philosophy should be adopted to ensure

that learners can develop into individuals who can facilitate sustainable development (Holdsworth & Thomas, 2020).

HEIs should consider and embed the values and principles of sustainability in teaching and learning, but the implementation of sustainability in higher education is in its early stages (Alba-Hidalgo et al., 2018). This justifies the need to develop insight into building SE at HEIs, and particularly in Faculties of Business, whose graduates will work primarily in the business sector, a sector which produces economic, social and environmental impacts on societies. Given the many business disciplines, such as business administration, management, marketing, digital business, economics and finance, accounting, logistics and supply chain management, a knowledge of how sustainability is perceived and taught in each business discipline is important.

Business Education for Sustainability

Since sustainability is recognized as a key component in higher education, nowhere is this need more critical than in business education that provides the training and professional development of business leaders (Storey, 2020). As pointed out by Paletta et al. (2019), to achieve sustainable development, universities and the business sector must cooperate. This highlights the important role of business education in producing graduates who will develop and lead business firms. Business schools recognize the importance of sustainability teaching in business programs, but the implementation is slow compared to such programs as Science, Technology and Engineering (Onel et al., 2020). Teaching sustainability in business schools requires a deep shift in curriculum and pedagogy to adopt a sustainability focus, an integration that is making little progress (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019).

One explanation for the lack of sustainability content in business curriculum is related to business worldviews. From a philosophical viewpoint, sustainability is on a continuum where

natural resources are highlighted in strong sustainability worldviews and monetary value is emphasized in weak sustainability worldviews (Landrum & Ohsowski, 2017). This continuum shines a light on how different perspectives of sustainability may exist in different disciplines (Landrum & Ohsowski, 2017). For instance, in business education, the dominant worldview highlights financial performance (Kilbourne & Carson, 2008), thus often limiting business teaching to a weak sustainability worldview. Furthermore, business education is inclined to limit the inclusion of social and environmental issues to make room for economic development (Toubiana, 2014). Consequently, the learning outcomes of business programs often focus on knowledge acquisition and skill development primarily limited to business performance, rather than developing students' worldviews to practice sustainability (Olalla & Merino, 2019; Storey, 2020). Storey (2020) advocates that it is time to move away from traditional business principles to inspire transformative changes in business schools and to adopt teaching for sustainability.

Three approaches are proposed for implementing SE in business education: (1) application of research-based learning theories, (2) practical course design starting from defining learning outcomes, and (3) design of assessment that embraces sustainability learning (Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015). Because these approaches are dependent upon teachers who directly interact with students, business education should emphasize the role of teachers in teaching and learning. Given the autonomy of university teachers, the integration of sustainability content into business education depends on the teacher's practice (Holdsworth & Thomas, 2020; Rouhiainen & Vuorisalo, 2019; Sidiropoulous, 2014). This initiates a need for more SE research from teachers' perspectives.

Teachers' Roles in Business Education for Sustainability

Fostering sustainability in HEIs requires active participation and engagement from teachers. In their capacity to teach students directly, teachers can be sustainability change agents (McNamara, 2010; Ryan & Tilbury, 2013) and can influence the extent of sustainability integration into course materials, assessment and learning activities (Kemper et al., 2020a).

There are many reasons why the role of teachers is critical to SE in HEIs. First, teachers have the freedom to develop and update curriculum (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019). Second, teachers exercise their capacity to implement educational policy and to directly influence student learning (Smith, 2016; Sobe, 2015). Moreover, teacher quality is critical to enhancing a nation's human capital (Berkovich & Benoliel, 2020).

Despite the recognition of SE and the increasingly important role of teachers, research shows that sustainability has gained little recognition in business curricula even though it is well reflected in science disciplines (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019). This clarifies the need for further research to be conducted explore the roles of teachers as well as their perceptions and practices regarding sustainability integration in business schools.

Teachers' Perceptions of Sustainability

Teachers' worldviews are reflected in how they teach students, no matter the level. For instance, research shows that high school teachers' views on sustainability influence their teaching practice to a large degree (Sund, 2016). As for HEIs, there is evidence that proves the same finding. For example, some university teachers in Australia do not have definitive opinions on sustainability and hence do not have a sustainability focus in their teaching (Christie et al., 2015). In the United Kingdom, science academics are reported to hold a range of views about sustainable development (Melles, 2019). This means individuals from different disciplinary backgrounds may perceive sustainability differently. Even specialist scholars in the fields of

globalization and environmentalism voice the need for interdisciplinary teaching and learning about sustainability that considers students' socio-cultural backgrounds (Misiaszek, 2019).

Teachers in different disciplines have varying perceptions of sustainability and they decide what sustainability content to teach. Some claim specific content should be taught in specific academic disciplines and others stress that content should be selected in relation to students' needs and societal changes (Öhman & Östman, 2019). Since much of literature on SE is focused on science disciplines, research on teachers' perceptions of sustainability in the marketing discipline is needed to shed more light on how teaching and learning of sustainability may happen in business schools (Christie et al., 2015; Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019). It is particularly critical for business schools to understand teachers' perspectives on sustainability to support sustainability integration.

Worldviews of Business and Marketing Teachers

To produce business leaders with sustainability mindsets, business schools need teachers committed to teaching about sustainability, because teachers' interest is the key driver of sustainability integration (Lazzarini et al., 2018; Matten & Moon, 2004; Moon & Orlitzky, 2011; Murphy et al., 2012). Teachers who embed sustainability content in the curriculum can contribute to developing human capital for sustainability (Leal Filho et al., 2018, 2019). One key success factor for SE within business schools should lie in teachers' interest and commitment to teaching sustainability.

The worldviews of business teachers influence how they design business courses and whether and how they teach sustainability. In business schools, the dominant industrial worldviews emphasize science, technology and consumption (Dunlap & van Liere, 1984; Kilbourne, 2006) and ultimately profit maximization and economic performance (Kilbourne &

Carson, 2008). The profit-driven business practice is identified as one root cause of unsustainability (Varey, 2012). To a large extent, the profit-maximization mindset in business teachers may obstruct sustainability integration in their curriculum design and delivery (Kemper et al., 2020a; Kilbourne & Carson, 2008). At the same time, not all business schools demonstrate sustainability course requirements (Rundle-Thiele & Wymer, 2010). Furthermore, the curricula of many MBA programs focus primarily on financial outcomes, rather than on sustainability issues (Toubiana, 2014).

Even when business schools are committed to a sustainability focus, this may not mean that the teaching of sustainability is as effective as desired. A study of European business schools shows that although sustainability and ethics are included in existing curricula, teaching success is limited due to the lack of systemic thinking and leadership in connection with business, the environment and society (Painter-Morland et al., 2016). Moreover, business teachers may prefer to focus more on economic development than sustainability, as has been traditionally practiced in their disciplines (Öhman & Östman, 2019). The business sector embodies a conflict between environmental goals and profit motives (Varey, 2011). The focus on economic performance may present itself as an obstacle to sustainability integration in business schools.

As sustainability enters business schools, business teachers are becoming aware of the sustainability concept (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019). The marketing discipline is well positioned within business schools as one of the major disciplines to contribute to training business leaders who will influence sustainable development. Nevertheless, the teaching of marketing is mainly based on satisfying consumers' needs and wants to make a profit (Lunde, 2018). What is more, marketers may focus on creating new consumer needs for new products

(Deepak & Jeyakumar, 2019). Thus, marketing teachers may take sustainability lightly as they concentrate on teaching the promotion of products to increase consumption and maximize profit.

Most marketing programs do not often display a holistic view of sustainability. For instance, faculty perceptions towards sustainability in the United States (US) are reported to lack important dimensions, such as economic and social dimensions (Owens & Legere, 2015) This is because they use theories that emphasize the benefits to businesses and customers, not appreciating marginalized communities (Lunde, 2018). In addition, research indicates that marketing teachers show lower environmental concern than those in other disciplines (Kemper et al., 2020b), thus reflecting barriers towards a strong sustainability worldview. Marketing teachers are also reluctant to appreciate the negative impact that marketing practice may have on the environment (Kemper et al., 2020b; Kemper, Hall & Ballantine, 2019).

One main reason for this may be that marketing practices often increase consumption and even facilitate overconsumption, which are inherently linked to environmental degradation (Speth & Zinn, 2009). Overconsumption has received little attention from marketing researchers as it seems too difficult a paradox to solve (Tollin et al., 2015). Therefore, in HEIs, marketing teachers' worldviews on marketing practices to increase consumption can affect how they teach marketing (Ling et al., 2020). Particularly, marketing teachers' worldviews can affect curriculum development and pedagogical practice and may hinder the inclusion of sustainability content into marketing teaching.

With increasing scientific consensus on global climate change (Ripple et al., 2019) and corresponding political pressure (Ardley & May, 2020), the practice of marketing should be reviewed. Many researchers acknowledge that sustainability issues have been caused by humans' unsustainable production and consumption, whilst marketing has a heavy concentration on

increasing consumption and therefore, they call for responsible marketing (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2021). As a major discipline in business schools, marketing is in a strong position to train business leaders to work with shareholders and customers (Ardley & May, 2020). Whether the focus of business leaders' training is on sustainability or not largely depends on marketing teachers.

Marketing Teachers' Perceptions of Sustainability in Marketing Education

Because teachers develop and deliver course content, their perceptions are a key factor affecting curriculum development and teaching pedagogy. The marketing discipline typically adopts the business worldview focusing on increasing consumption to grow the economy (Springett, 2010) and thus, sustainability has hardly gained integration in the teaching of marketing (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019). Specialist skills and knowledge to deliver sustainability should be developed (Snelson-Powell et al., 2020) so that sustainability can be better integrated into teaching and learning in the marketing discipline.

The current picture of sustainability integration in the marketing discipline seems not in line with expressed sustainability commitments. For example, research demonstrates that sustainability content is available to some degree in less than 40% of marketing courses in AACSB accredited business schools in the US (Nicholls et al., 2013). A study by Weber (2013) on universities joining the Aspen Institute's Beyond Grey Pinstripes (BGP), which was launched in 2005 to assess curriculum attention to ethical, social and sustainability issues (ESSI), found that only 16% of graduate marketing courses allocate course time to ESSI. In the Asia Pacific region, Naeem and Neal (2012) reported that 41.7% of business schools teach some sustainability to undergraduate students, whilst only 29.2% teach sustainability to postgraduates. Hence, researchers have called for a marketing worldview transformation towards a sustainable

paradigm (Ardley & May, 2020; Kemper et al., 2019) so that sustainability can be addressed in the marketing curriculum (Kemper et al., 2020a; Springett, 2010). This call should reach directly to individual marketing teachers whose perceptions of sustainability are influential in curriculum development and delivery.

The existing literature scarcely reports research on how marketing teachers perceive sustainability in marketing education. Kemper et al. (2018) reported that 85.6% of surveyed marketing teachers define sustainability in social, economic and environmental dimensions whilst 12.1% limit their perceptions only to environmental concerns. Overall, marketing teachers show a good understanding of sustainability, though not many of them incorporate sustainability in their teaching. The paradox is that while marketing teachers may show their support for sustainability, many of them still place more emphasis on economic development, and do not see the importance of environmental and social issues in business contexts (Kemper et al., 2018). Since Kemper et al. (2018) used a quantitative research approach, a question remains about the depth of collected data. That led to more studies by Kemper et al. (2020b) who reported that teachers' perceptions of sustainability are important to understand underlying assumptions used in the curriculum and pedagogy of marketing education. Although prior research has found positive support from marketing teachers for SE, some individual teachers are not ready to recognize the social and environmental impacts of marketing (Kemper et al., 2020b).

To explore the topic further, Kemper et al. (2020a) conducted a qualitative study, interviewing 18 marketing teachers who teach and/or research sustainability. They found that even marketing teachers who advocate sustainability teaching find it difficult to integrate sustainability into mainstream marketing courses due to conflicting views between maximizing economic performance and social and environmental sustainability topics. Sustainability is

therefore more like a personal interest (Kemper et al, 2020a). Nevertheless, many teachers feel disadvantaged due to little recognition for sustainability in their profession. Furthermore, although marketing teachers do support SE (Kemper et al., 2018), specialization in sustainability marketing is not highly valued by marketing teachers themselves (Kemper, Hall, & Ballantine, 2019). What is worth noting is that Kemper et al. (2020a) only investigated marketing faculty who are active in teaching and researching sustainability, and not marketing teachers with no sustainability focus. More research is needed to explore the perceptions of marketing teachers who are involved in direct teaching, rather than limiting the participants to a niche of sustainability advocates.

Since marketing teachers' perceptions of sustainability affect curriculum development and delivery, and since so little research exists exploring the area, including no research at an institution identifying as having a sustainability focus in Canada, more research using a qualitative approach should be conducted. Hence, the first question for the current study: *What do marketing teachers at a sustainability-focused university in Canada perceive sustainability in marketing education to be?*

Sustainability Integration in Higher Education

As HEIs recognize sustainability in their teaching and learning strategy, the number of HEIs that integrate sustainability into curricula has significantly increased (Hill & Wang, 2018). The education literature includes several recent studies examining sustainability integration in universities (e.g., Buckley & Michel, 2020; Kanashiro et al., 2020; Khan & Henderson, 2020; Salovaara et al., 2020; Tasdemir & Gazo, 2020). However, a systematic review by Weiss and Barth (2019) indicates that research on sustainability curricula implementation in higher education is an emerging field of research, with primarily descriptive case studies. They also

report that most sustainability integration research was conducted in the contexts of the US, the UK and Australia. Furthermore, effective sustainability curricula are not yet at desired levels (Tejedor et al., 2018). Why have good intentions for SE not translated into classroom practices?

Curriculum is the first place to reflect whether or not teachers teach sustainability in their courses. In confirmation of prior findings (Holdsworth et al., 2008; Jones et al., 2010), Anastasiadis et al. (2020) reported that SE is a complex educational area where “perceptions and abilities of educators greatly affect the design, implementation and impact of teaching activities” (p. 275). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the perspectives of teachers regarding sustainability integration within their own teaching.

Sustainability Integration in Business and Marketing Education

Researchers have conducted many studies that examine sustainability teaching in business disciplines. One noteworthy finding is that a culture unfit for sustainability integration can lead to ineffective practices, even when faculty have resources and policy support (Slager et al., 2020). Best practices for teaching sustainability can be learned through university orientation (Egorova & Jonsson, 2020) on an entrepreneurial focus (Hermann & Bossle, 2020) and constructivist pedagogy (Dziubaniuk & Nyholm, 2020)

To give a clear idea about how sustainability is integrated in curricula, Stough et al. (2018) used a curricular assessment approach to distinguish between sustainability courses (i.e., courses with the main content on sustainability) and courses that include sustainability (i.e., courses with the main content outside sustainability, but which include a module or a topic on sustainability). In business schools, some courses are stand-alone sustainability courses and some are courses with embedded sustainability modules or topics.

The way teachers design and deliver sustainability content does impact students' learning outcomes. Hay and Eagle (2020) conducted surveys on the same student cohort in their first semester and again in their third semester. They found that when sustainability content is embedded in business courses, students show incremental positive progress in their understanding of sustainability. Others have suggested that to enhance students' learning of sustainability an interdisciplinary approach in business curriculum development is needed (Annan-Diab & Molinari, 2017). For example, postgraduate business courses can be designed with interdisciplinary perspectives, embracing sustainability-related content from economics, law, management, finance, accounting and marketing (Annan-Diab & Molinari, 2017).

To effectively teach sustainability topics, courses and programs, pedagogy should focus on how students learn. Dziubaniuk and Nyholm (2020) conducted a case study in an International Marketing course with a unit on sustainability and ethics taught in English at a Finnish university. They used anonymous course feedback and students' written reflections as part of their course assignments. They collected data from 124 students, both Finnish and international, over four years from 2016 to 2020. Students were shown to learn more effectively via practical assignments and discussions (Dziubaniuk & Nyholm, 2020). Traditional lecturing, they wrote, should be combined with active learning via practical assignments to transform students' thinking and encourage behavioral change.

Others agree with a constructivist approach to teaching sustainability-related topics (Kalamas Hedden et al., 2017), using simulations and case studies (Prado et al., 2020). Galeo (2017) proposed experiential learning to teach sustainability with hands-on exercises, role-plays, business simulations and case studies in collaboration with industry and community partners

while Seatter and Ceulemans (2017) emphasized a transformative learning approach to engage students in critical thinking and behavioral shifts towards sustainability.

Despite progress integrating sustainability into business education, demonstrated through curriculum development and pedagogy as shown above, there is a lack of analysis of the relationships between teachers' perceptions and their curriculum development and pedagogy. Since teachers enjoy autonomy in their jobs (Kemper et al., 2020a), it is important to gain insights from individual teachers' perspectives to accurately reflect how teachers' perceptions influence their practice of SE in their own field.

As an integral part of business schools, marketing education could play an important role in developing and enhancing students' environmental awareness (Boulocher-Passet et al., 2019), including awareness of sustainable products and sustainable consumption and lifestyles. Business knowledge delivery should be designed to incorporate socio-ecological issues across teaching and learning activities (Wals et al., 2015), and to promote critical thinking and transformative behavioral change for sustainability (Tasdemir & Gazo, 2020). To facilitate the inclusion of sustainability in marketing education, scholars have proposed the concept of sustainability marketing to distinguish sustainable marketing practices from other sustainability-related terms in marketing such as green marketing and social marketing (e.g., Bridges & Wilhelm, 2008; Heath & McKechnie, 2019; Kemper & Ballantine, 2019; Lim, 2016; Lunde, 2018).

For instance, Lunde (2018) reviewed the literature on sustainability from 25 leading marketing journals between 1997 and 2016 to recommend a definition of sustainable marketing addressing socio-ecological issues facing humans societies. Bridges and Wilhelm (2008, p. 35) proposed sustainable or sustainability marketing "that puts equal emphasis on environmental,

social equity and economic concerns” in marketing strategies. Lim (2016) promoted a blueprint of sustainability marketing that spans economic, environmental, social, ethical, and technological dimensions. Most recently, Kemper and Ballantine (2019) put forward a definition of sustainability marketing that embraces three perspectives:

Auxiliary Sustainability Marketing focusing on environmental, social and economic dimensions of production and consumption, Reformative Sustainability Marketing acknowledging that current consumption levels are unsustainable and reflecting inequity between developed and developing nations, and Transformative Sustainability Marketing aiming to change institutions for a transition to a sustainable society. (pp. 285-289)

Hoadley and Baumann (2020) argued that the concept of sustainability marketing is positioned between sustainability and marketing, reflected in firms’ marketing practice and sustainable market offerings. As firms’ marketing practices are embedded in management, sustainability marketing embraces broader definitions of sustainability (social sustainability, economic sustainability and environmental sustainability) and marketing and operation practices (Hoadley & Baumann, 2020). This definition suggests relevant discourses relating to sustainability marketing in the literature.

Though some scholarly efforts have attempted to define sustainability marketing, it is unclear whether marketing teachers do apply sustainability marketing in their teaching. In a qualitative study on how sustainability pioneers integrate sustainability in their teaching, Kemper, Ballantine and Hall (2019) put forward three categories of sustainability educators: (1) the sustainability transformer delivers transformative learning experiences to change student mindsets, (2) the thinker brings about discussions to enhance students’ critical thinking, and (3) the actioner engages in experiential learning or ‘learning by doing’ in community projects in close connection with sustainability. Not much reporting exists on the categories of sustainability educators in the marketing discipline. Furthermore, the literature includes little research about

how sustainability integration is implemented in marketing education. Only a few studies highlight the need to innovate marketing curriculum and propose changes in pedagogy to teach about sustainability to students taking marketing courses (e.g., Albinsson et al., 2020; Borin & Matcalf, 2010; Bridges & Wilhelm, 2008; Markley Rountree & Koernig, 2015; Perera et al., 2016; Upadhyaya et al., 2019; von der Heidt, 2018).

Bridges and Wilhelm (2008), who report an initiative at an American university to deliver an MBA elective course focusing on sustainability in the development and implementation of marketing strategy, propose the use of the 4Ps marketing mix (product, price, place/distribution and promotion) to categorize sustainability concepts relevant for inclusion in specific marketing courses. For example, product development courses can integrate sustainability concepts relating to raw materials, product and package design, and product disposal. Other researchers have focused their work primarily on assessing student learning outcomes as a result of academic efforts to include sustainability concepts into a marketing course, such as Integrated Marketing Communications (Albinsson et al., 2020), and Marketing Principles (von der Heidt, 2008). Only Upadhyaya et al. (2019) put forward ideas for sustainability integration across core marketing courses. They also propose developing four new elective marketing courses with a focus on sustainability, namely, Sustainability Marketing, Community-based Social Marketing, Sustainable Retailing, and Sustainable Product Design and Innovation. Markley Rountree and Koernig (2015) reflect on their development and testing of two elective courses, Introduction to Sustainable Development and Global Issues in Sustainable Development. All the aforementioned studies are however based on the subjective perspectives and experiences of the authors within their own teaching in the US (i.e., Albinsson et al., 2020; Bridges & Wilhelm, 2008; Markley Rountree & Koernig, 2015; Upadhyaya et al., 2019) or Australia (i.e., von der

Heidt, 2008). They do not reflect nor do they represent the current progress of sustainability integration in marketing education. No prior studies have attempted to provide marketing teachers' perspectives in relation to their sustainability integration in marketing education.

As argued by Kemper et al. (2020b), marketing teachers may report strong personal beliefs in sustainability but in fact do not reflect this in their teaching practice. Lack of resources on sustainability topics may hinder sustainability teaching in marketing courses (Beusch, 2014; Kemper et al., 2020b). The good news is that students from younger generations are often open to changes, which can be a motivating factor for teachers to teach about sustainability (Kemper et al., 2018). At a sustainability-focused university, it is often expected that teachers teach sustainability to students to prepare them for the future; however, as the research studies have shown in this field there can be gaps between sustainability policies at the institutional level and the integration into classroom teaching. Nevertheless, not much is known about whether marketing teachers' conceptions of sustainability affect the extent of sustainability integration in their practice. Moreover, no knowledge is reported in the literature about the perspectives of marketing teachers teaching at a sustainability-focused university within a Canadian context. Thus, the second question for the research is: *What are the perspectives of marketing teachers at a sustainability-focused university in Canada regarding sustainability integration in marketing education?*

Chapter Summary

The literature review shows that sustainability has been recognized and supported in HEIs, including business schools and particularly in the marketing discipline. However, the perceptions of teachers regarding sustainability and sustainability integration in the context of marketing education is under-researched. To develop marketing professionals who capably

contribute to sustainability, marketing education should place more emphasis on curriculum development and pedagogy (Kemper et al., 2020a).

Teachers exercise autonomy when they develop their courses with intended learning outcomes towards sustainability. Marketing teachers' worldviews affect how they perceive sustainability and what should be taught in marketing courses regarding sustainability knowledge and skill sets (Kemper et al., 2020b; Kemper, Hall, & Ballantine, 2019). Marketing teachers often display the dominant industry worldviews that focus on profit maximization (Varey, 2012). Some teachers even consider sustainability too complex a topic to teach (Kurland et al., 2010; Wu et al., 2010). A disconnect exists between teachers' self-reported support for sustainability and their practice of sustainability integration in marketing education (Anastasiadis et al., 2020; Kemper et al., 2020a, 2020b). To explore this tension, the current research asks about marketing teachers' perceptions of sustainability in marketing education.

In summary, the practice of sustainability integration in marketing education should be promoted to move towards SE. Nevertheless, despite some progress in SE, there is still a gap in the teaching of sustainability knowledge and skill sets which are needed in industry (Chen et al., 2018; Hoadley & Baumann, 2020). To develop graduates with sustainability mindsets to tackle social, economic and environmental issues, there should be sustainability integration in curriculum development and pedagogy, which largely depends on individual teachers.

Marketing education is important as it produces marketers and business leaders who are expected to promote sustainable production and consumption (Kemper et al., 2020a). The significance of sustainability should be reflected in the teaching of marketing courses. The literature review has identified two research gaps: (1) There is a lack of research relating to marketing teachers' perceptions of sustainability; (2) Limited research is reported on the current

picture of sustainability integration in the marketing discipline. This study is undertaken to fill the identified research gaps.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Chapter Overview

The chapter describes the methodology adopted in this research thesis. First, I present the qualitative research paradigm used to explore marketing teachers' perceptions regarding sustainability and teaching sustainability. Second, I discuss my choice of applying a case study design. Third, I provide details about the sampling plan, data collection and data analysis methods. Next, I reflect my stance as a researcher with personal preconceptions and prior experiences in marketing education. Finally, I provide details about how I ensured validity and reliability of the study, and detail ethical considerations.

Research Paradigm and Research Approach

In this research, the interpretivist paradigm was adopted, because it gives researchers opportunities to examine a phenomenon from the perspectives of research participants (Greener, 2008). Using interpretivism, the researcher emphasizes social contexts (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991) and the complexity of human experiences of the phenomenon being studied (Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994). For the current research, the purpose was to explore marketing teachers' preconceptions regarding sustainability and sustainability teaching. For the investigation, the focus was on the marketing discipline within the Faculty of Business Administration at a Canadian university with a stated sustainability focus. This can be referred to as a bounded system in which the phenomenon is investigated, requiring direct engagement with the research context, by asking, listening, analyzing, interpreting and describing. Hence, one-on-one interviews were used to collect narratives from research participants to gain insider insights from their own perspectives. In addition, educational documents (marketing course syllabi) used by

research participants were reviewed. Accordingly, a qualitative approach was applied to conduct the current research.

Research Design

In this research, the phenomenon of interest required an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of marketing teachers regarding sustainability and teaching sustainability at the selected university. In the social context of marketing courses delivered at this university, how teachers perceive their world and the meaning they attribute to their experiences are the major concerns of the interpretivist methodology. Interpretative research, the most common type of qualitative research, is based on the assumptions that reality is socially constructed: “Researchers do not ‘find’ knowledge; they construct it” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 9). Moreover, since the philosophy of phenomenology also underlies qualitative research, it is worth noting that most qualitative research is, in one sense, phenomenological (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2002), focusing on people’s perceptions and meanings (van Manen, 2014). To examine the phenomenon of sustainability integration in marketing teaching, this research adopts the design of a qualitative case study. Case study focuses on a single site or a system around which there are boundaries (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 2005). In this research, the selected site is a Canadian university with a stated sustainability focus, and the case is a group of teachers specializing in marketing. The purpose is to gain in-depth details about the case being studied (Patton, 2002), within its specific social, cultural and political contexts. Case study research helps the researcher to focus on real-life situations to explore and examine views directly in relation to the phenomenon (Tight, 2010).

One technique for assessing the boundedness of the case is to ask, for example, if there is a definite number of people who could participate in the research as interviewees (Merriam &

Tisdell, 2016). The selected university has a small group of teachers in marketing, most of whom are participants in the research. The nature of the marketing discipline at this university is one that has aspects of a bounded system in organizational culture, in which participants' perceptions, experiences, and actions interact with and affect each other. Thus, the subjective nature of the phenomenon being studied, namely, the perceptions of marketing teachers regarding sustainability and sustainability integration in their teaching, suggests a qualitative orientation to this inquiry, and is best facilitated through case study design.

Data Collection

In the current research, marketing teachers (both full-time faculty (n=3) and contract lecturers (n=4); total: n=7) in the marketing discipline at the university site were invited by email to participate in semi-structured one-on-one interviews via Zoom. The list of potential academic participants was obtained from the Dean of the Faculty where the research took place. To collect rich data, I followed the interview protocol proposed by King et al. (2018). The interview guide (Appendix E) with the key questions was prepared, reviewed and finalized to provide the framework for the interviews with some room for flexibility, depending on each participant. Questions covered teachers' perceptions of sustainability and their perspectives toward sustainability integration in marketing teaching. To ensure comprehensibility and validation of the interview questions, two pilot interviews were conducted.

In my first invitation email to potential participants, I described my research and attached a participant information sheet explaining the research and the procedures. I followed up with them by email to answer any questions they had. This process allowed two-way communication, helping to recruit participants interested in the research. I found this step very important as the more interested in the topic they were, the more they would openly share valuable and

meaningful responses during the interviews. I sent two follow-up emails to non-respondents to increase the response rate.

I scheduled interviews at participants' convenience, and sent participants consent forms for their signatures. Four interviews lasted between 45 to 75 minutes via Zoom and were audio recorded with participants' written consent. One teacher requested to provide written responses and did so after I secured an amendment from the Research Ethics Board. I included this written interview data with the other interview data. In total, five of seven marketing teachers participated, representing a 71% response rate. There were three men and two women. Four were contract lecturers and one was full-time faculty.

Before each Zoom interview with the research participants, I shared again about the research purpose and reviewed the ethical protocols ensuring that their identity would be protected and that pseudonyms would be used in analysis and reporting. I also asked them if they had any questions about the research before we commenced. In doing so, I cleared any concerns or answered any inquiries of the research participants at the time. Then, I built rapport with research participants by asking general questions to start a friendly conversation that would make them feel comfortable. During the interviews, I used the key questions prepared in advance to help research participants stay focused on the studied topic. I also used probes to encourage participants to give details in their responses such as examples and stories. When they mentioned something meaningful to the research, I used probes to indicate that I was very interested and wanted to hear more.

In a follow-up email to thank participants, I asked them to send one of the current marketing syllabi they used if they felt comfortable doing so. I collected six marketing course syllabi from four participants. The course syllabi formed a part of the data collection and were

reviewed and analyzed to provide more insights about participants' interviews and written email responses. This second source of data meant I was able to apply triangulation as suggested by Denzin (1978). As indicated by Patton (2015), triangulation, using more than one data collection method and multiple sources of data, is useful for increasing the credibility or internal validity of the research.

Interview Questions

The interview questionnaire (Appendix E) was designed with a combination of open and closed questions to improve validity and reliability as recommended by Krosnick et al. (2015). Questions were sequenced to sound like a natural conversation and were arranged in each of four categories (background and role, perceptions of sustainability, current practice and thoughts for sustainability integration in marketing teaching). The set of interview questions was designed with the intent to complete each interview within one hour and to include sufficient time for follow-up questions to gain unique insights from each research participant. A final follow-up question was asked at the end to encourage research participants to add any points that they forgot to mention in the interview or wished to elaborate.

To make sure that the interview questions were understandable and were completed within the set timeframe, I conducted two pilot interviews: one with myself as a marketing teacher, and another with a colleague who was teaching marketing at another institution. Based on my experience and feedback from my colleague, I revised the questions to create the final set which are included in the ethics application for endorsement. Appendix A supplies the letter of institutional research ethics approval from my home university. Appendix E provides the full set of interview questions used in the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began once all collected interviews were fully transcribed. I transcribed all the interviews myself and at the end of the transcription process, I sent the full transcript to each research participant for their checking and confirmation as well as for adding or deleting points as they wished.

According to Rossman and Rallis (2017), in the data analysis process, the researcher will bring structure and meaning to research data. The general steps in this process include: (1) reading through all collected data to gain an overall understanding, (2) coding the data manually or using a qualitative research software, (3) classifying codes and grouping similar codes together to build categories or themes (Creswell, 2018). I followed the procedures to read data first. Reading the transcribed and written responses of research participants gave me opportunities to become familiar with the data and identify the main patterns of opinions, perceptions and experiences relating to sustainability integration in marketing education. Once I had a good understanding of the data, I started the coding stage, when I determined what was important in the narrative data of research participants' responses and assigned a code label (item) to each important piece of information I found. For this stage, I operated NVivo software for qualitative data analysis to code important items emerging from narrative data. Once all important items were found and coded, I started to classify codes and grouped similar codes together to form categories which were labelled as themes. Each of the themes could be triangulated, which means the data were cross-checked from course outlines and interview transcripts to search for thematic content and patterns in the research data (O'Donoghue & Punch, 2003). In doing so, I identified the main themes. After that, I applied the within-case and cross-case analytical process proposed in Ayres et al. (2003) to re-read the interview transcripts,

comparing across the documents to reconfirm the identified themes. I then searched for relevant statements provided by research participants relating to the themes for the purpose of reporting.

Triangulation of Data

To strengthen the research credibility, I used two sources of data for triangulation. I also followed the recommendation of Lacey and Luff (2009) to conduct the analysis of different data together to demonstrate rigour, not just simply presenting the use of different sources.

To achieve data triangulation, I collected narrative data from interviews and collected marketing course syllabi from research participants. Triangulation is not simply about using different sources of data but refers rather to the manner the researcher effectively conducts the analysis of different types of data to draw meaningful and valuable research results and findings (Lacey & Luff, 2009). I took this into consideration throughout the research process. I not only described but also synthesized the data to make sense of the research findings. Regarding the review of marketing course syllabi, I conducted a content analysis to grasp an overview of learning objectives, topics of teaching and types of assessment used by research participants in teaching their marketing courses. Then I compared the findings from the content analysis of course syllabi with the findings from interviews to finalize analysis and to report the findings. To elaborate, with respect to findings for RQ1, one theme could be supported by the materials from course syllabi: sustainability in marketing education. For RQ2, in terms of current practice described by research participants, I could also compare the findings with learning topics and assessments described in course syllabi. Different data sources could thus support and validate each other, helping to enhance the rigour of the analysis.

Table 1 shows research participants' profiles and their pseudonyms and the codes used to indicate course syllabi collected for the research. As required by the ethical standards, I adopted the codes to label the six course syllabi as MC1, MC2, MC3, MC4, MC5, MC6. Note that MC stands for Marketing Course. Table 2 illustrates the evidence of how data were triangulated across interviews and course syllabi to enhance the credibility of the results.

Table 1

Participants' Profiles, Pseudonyms, and Course Codes

Number	Gender	Role	Pseudonym	# of course syllabi sent for review	Course code
Participant 1	Male	Full time faculty	Alex	two	MC1, MC2
Participant 2	Male	Contract lecturer	John	one	MC3
Participant 3	Male	Contract lecturer	Kirk	one	MC4
Participant 4	Female	Contract lecturer	Kelly	two	MC5, MC6
Participant 5	Female	Contract lecturer	Hannah	none	none

Note: Participant 5 did not send any course syllabi for review and hence no course syllabi and codes are associated with them.

Table 2

Evidence of Data Triangulation

Findings	Triangulation of data
Sustainability in marketing education	Comparing the findings in interviews with the course description relating to course learning objectives described in reviewed course syllabi
Current practice	Comparing the findings in interviews with the course description relating to course content course assessments described in reviewed course syllabi

Although it took time to review and compare data across multiple sources, triangulation strengthens the credibility of the research results. The presentation of findings in Chapter 4 will synthesize data triangulation when addressing the above-mentioned items as illustrated in Table 1 and Table 2.

The Researcher's Stance and Reflexivity

In this study, qualitative methods through which data were interpreted are personal by nature (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). As the primary investigator with a background in marketing education, I was aware that my personal preconceptions and prior experiences might affect how I interpreted the insights gained from research participants. Therefore, it is critical to ensure transparency of the research process and that data interpretation was managed in an appropriate manner, following ethical standards. Based on the protocols of qualitative inquiry, I practiced reflexivity to address how I would affect and was affected by the research process (Probst & Berenson, 2014), by clearly explaining my biases, dispositions and assumptions regarding the research to be undertaken.

To be specific, I applied the principles of reflexivity proposed by Longhofer and Floersch (2012) that recognize (1) personal reflexivity to address how my values, assumptions, experiences, and identity shaped the research process (see Chapter 5), (2) methodological reflexivity to question how the research design and method might limit the types of data collected, and (3) analytic reflexivity to question how data were analyzed. For transparency, an audit trail is important to describe data collection and analysis (Richard & Lahman, 2015). The audit trail helped clarify my perspectives and subjectivity as the researcher (Wolf, 2003). Thus, in both data collection and analysis, I kept an audit trail to take notes of my feeling and thoughts during the process in case they might affect the research.

As the primary investigator, whose background is similar to the research participants, I enjoyed both advantages and disadvantages in the process. I could understand the vocabulary used by research participants and quickly grasped why they did what they did in their marketing teaching. The limitations were that my personal experiences might have influenced the way I used probing questions and interpreted research data. To reduce bias and increase objectivity in data collection, I focused on the interview guide to keep the interviews on the right track.

One difficulty I experienced was a result of the exploratory stance of the research to investigate the perceptions and perspectives of participants regarding sustainability and sustainability integration. Sometimes, I felt an urge to select the themes I wanted to discuss as they resonated with my experience. Nevertheless, thanks to my audit trails, I was able to reduce my biases and to focus on the scientific nature of qualitative data analysis. I used the NVivo software to identify and determine the major themes based not on my preferences but on the required number of references. Furthermore, the identification of the themes for interpretation required me constantly to visit and revisit, search and research the literature to find relevant studies to support and synthesize the research findings.

Validity

Two aspects of validity are to be considered: internal validity and external validity. Internal validity is about “whether or not research findings capture the reality” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 242). However, as “data do not speak for themselves; there is always an interpreter” (Ratcliffe, 1983, p. 149), internal validity, typically a concept used in quantitative research, can be referred to as credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The following strategies were used to improve internal validity or credibility in the current research. First, I applied triangulation using more than one data collection method and multiple sources of data (Maxwell,

2013). My use of triangulation enhanced the validity of qualitative analysis with the convergence of data collected from different sources (Patton, 2015). Second, I undertook member checking, and returning interview transcripts to participants for verification, to reduce misinterpretation of the meanings of what research participants said (Maxwell, 2013). Third, I practiced reflexivity (Probst & Berenson, 2014) to acknowledge my biases, dispositions and assumptions regarding the research. Finally, peer examination or peer review was applied as the thesis was read by a supervisor, a committee member as well as internal and external examiners (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

External validity is typically referred to as ‘transferability’ in qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As suggested by Maxwell (2013), the researcher should offer a description of the setting, research participants and the research findings to enhance transferability. However, as required by research ethics, no personal profiles could be reported, even with pseudonyms, and no specific descriptions of the research site could be supplied to protect identities. In this small qualitative case study, I was not aiming for transferability or generalizability.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The more important question for qualitative research is whether the results are consistent with the data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To ensure consistency of the research, I used an audit trail (Wolf, 2003) to describe in detail how decisions were made throughout the research process. In this study, my audit trail included audio files, transcript files, educational documents, personal comments and memos reflecting ethical, conceptual, methodological and analytical decisions. My practice applied reflexivity which

“involves critical reflection of how the researcher constructs knowledge from the research process in the planning, conduct, and writing up of the research” (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004, p. 275).

Ethical Considerations

First, before the commencement of data collection, I sought ethics approval from the university where I was doing my master’s thesis. Second, I sent recruiting emails to invite potential participants (see Appendix B). Prior to each interview, I distributed cover letters, and research participants signed consent forms (see Appendix C, D1, D2). The cover letter describes the aims, objectives and procedures of the research and the intended benefits to the participants, as well as the voluntary nature of participation and the participants’ right to withdraw at any time. The cover letter also provides advice and avenues for the participants to file complaints or concerns about the research. Third, I also used an interview guide as the research instrument in data collection (see Appendix E).

Fourth, pseudonyms were used in data analysis and reporting to protect each participant’s identity. To prevent inappropriate and unintended disclosure of personal identities, I prepared and used a list of codes of participants for the purpose of filing and labelling of data collected from interviews. With regard to course syllabi, the actual course codes and titles were not used. Rather, another list of codes was created and used throughout data analysis. Accordingly, the six course syllabi were labeled by code and number: MC1 (Marketing Course 1), MC 2, MC 3, MC 4, MC 5 and MC 6. I also applied these labels in the reporting of the findings. For confidentiality, the name of the participating university was not mentioned; instead, it is referred to as a sustainability-focused university in Canada

Finally, recordings and storage of data were safeguarded in compliance with ethical requirements. All audio-recorded interviews, interview transcripts, educational documents and audit trails are stored in password-protected devices. Research data are backed up on a drive that is safely stored in a faculty office at Lakehead university. Five years after research completion, raw data will be destroyed.

Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion

Chapter Overview

This chapter has six sections. First, I report the main themes arising from narrative data. Second, I present the results from the course syllabus review. Third, I discuss the main research findings. The findings are in two main sections: (1) marketing teachers' perceptions of sustainability and (2) marketing teachers' perspectives regarding sustainability integration. Finally, a synopsis of the main research findings is given to summarize the chapter.

Main Themes Identified from Narrative Data

The analysis of narrative data yielded seven major themes arising from the codes identified and categorized with NVivo. A minimum requirement of eight references from at least four sources of responses was set to confirm a theme. The seven themes were developed deductively from the research questions as the outcome of data analysis (see Table 3).

Table 3

Summary of Themes Corresponding to Research Questions

Research question (RQ)	Themes	References
RQ1: What do marketing teachers at a sustainability-focused university in Canada perceive sustainability in marketing education to be?	Sustainability	17
	Sustainability in marketing	18
	Sustainability in marketing education	27
	Current practice	27

Research question (RQ)	Themes	References
RQ2: What are marketing teachers' perspectives at a sustainability-focused university in Canada regarding sustainability integration in marketing education?	Motivation to teach sustainability	15
	Barriers to teaching sustainability	17
	Support and development	18

Figure 1 and Figure 2 visualize the main themes extracted from NVivo regarding research question 1 and research question 2 respectively.

Figure 1

Three Main Themes Corresponding to Research Question 1 (Extracted Word Tree from NVivo)

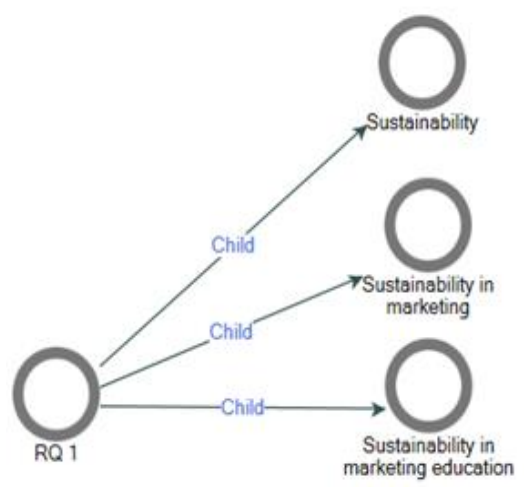
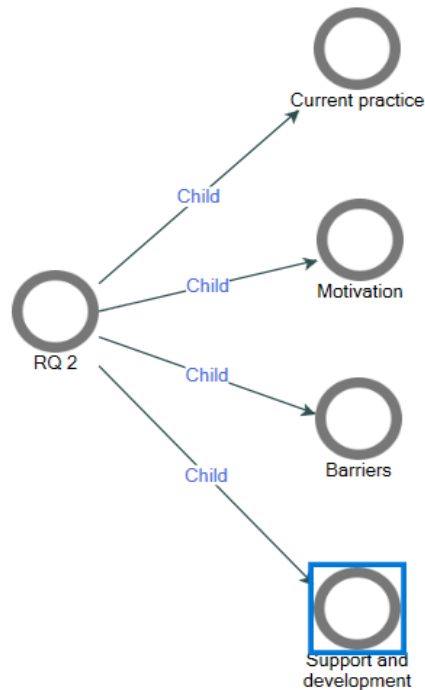


Figure 2

Four Main Themes Corresponding to Research Question 2 (Extracted Word Tree from NVivo)

**Results from Course Syllabus Review**

In the review of course syllabi, I used the definition of sustainability proposed in the Sustainable Development Goals—SDGs (United Nations, 2020), focusing on three dimensions of sustainability: economic dimensions, social dimensions and environmental dimensions (Ford & Despeissem, 2016; Ghobakhloo, 2020). Based on this definition and as proposed by Khan and Henderson (2020), explicit course learning outcomes should be included in the course syllabi to indicate that courses meet at least one of the following conditions: (1) Include some course content from a sustainability perspective (on at least one dimension of sustainability), (2) Include course content and one assessment on the intersection of at least two dimensions of sustainability and (3) Include significant course content and one assessment on all three dimensions of

sustainability. For this review, I created a ranking scheme to identify whether the learning outcomes as presented in the collected course syllabi matched one of the above-mentioned conditions. I also used 0 (i.e., include no teaching contents on the concept of sustainability) to indicate courses that do not meet any of the aforementioned conditions. Table 4 illustrates the rankings used to assess the marketing course syllabi in this research.

Table 4

Sustainability Integration Ranking Scale

0	1	2	3
Include no teaching content on the concept of sustainability	Include some teaching content from a sustainability perspective (at least one dimension of sustainability)	Include course content and one assignment on the intersection of at least two dimensions of sustainability	Include a significant course content and one assignment/project on the concept of sustainability (with three dimensions of sustainability)

I analyzed each course syllabus, using the ranking scheme in Table 4. In the syllabi analysis, I followed the recommendations of Gorski (2009) to examine course descriptions, course learning outcomes, course topics/modules and course assessments carefully. I assessed whether each course matched any pre-determined ranking of sustainability integration. All course syllabi were analyzed in the same manner to determine the match to the ranking.

The results from the syllabi analysis show that more than half of the collected marketing syllabi cover marketing challenges, marketing strategies and tactics without any modules/topics on sustainability. Among six courses, only one course covers content on sustainable marketing, thereby showing some concerns for the environment. Only one course includes a topic specifically teaching about social marketing, and to some degree, about the social dimensions of

sustainability. Though this course does not convey specific concepts about sustainability, the course content is useful in preparing students for critical social issues with a higher level of social awareness and concern as well as knowledge and skills to develop a social marketing campaign to change social behavior. Hence, this one course has some room for sustainability content. According to the course syllabi, most assessments are quizzes, mid-terms, final exams with multiple-choice and short-essay questions. Major course assessments are flexible as students can choose to do a marketing project on a company which could be a green business but that is not a compulsory condition.

Overall, sustainability is underrepresented across all six marketing course syllabi. Only two courses have some space for sustainability integration, and they only teach one aspect of sustainability, either environmental dimensions or social dimensions. Table 5 summarizes the results of the ranking analysis.

Table 5

Ranking of Sustainability Integration in Marketing Course Syllabi

Ranking	Number of syllabi (N=6)	Percentage of syllabi
0 – No course content on any dimension of sustainability	4 (MC1, MC2, MC3, MC4)	66.67%
1 – Include some teaching content from a sustainability perspective (at least one dimension of sustainability)	2 (MC5, MC6)	33.33%
2 – Include course content and one assessment on the intersection of at least two dimensions of sustainability	0	0%
3 – Include a significant course content and one assessment on all three dimensions of sustainability	0	0%

Marketing Teachers' Perceptions of Sustainability in Marketing Education

The three main themes relating to RQ1 are: (1) sustainability, (2) sustainability in marketing, and (3) sustainability in marketing education. I explore these in three following sections.

Sustainability

Sustainability was the essence of the first research question and was a key question in the interviews. In a few instances, participants thought about sustainability from a business perspective; for example, Kelly stated that “Sustainability has a rising importance in business organizations”. When asked about sustainability dimensions, four out of five participants put environmental sustainability in the first place. For instance, “Sustainability is first related to environment protection” (Hannah), and “Sustainability is more like environmental sustainability” (John). Except for one participant who stated that social sustainability was the most important, four other participants emphasized that environmental dimensions would be ranked as their priority in their perceptions towards sustainability. One participant said: “The first thing that comes to my mind when I hear the sustainability term is environmental sustainability” (Kelly). In most participants' sharing, environmental sustainability was very much related to the fact that business development should go hand in hand with maintaining ‘ecologically viable’ resources, such as:

Typically, what I hear about sustainability is to have the ability to run business in a way that is more green or more ecologically viable and that can lead to long-term sustainability of resources. For example, in manufacturing, it is about sustainable production that focuses on the understanding of ecological impacts of materials. (Kirk)

Participants also shared their understanding of sustainability from a long-term perspective and in three dimensions, namely, economic, social and environment dimensions. Despite their

business backgrounds, as they talked about the bottom-line profit of firms, they still acknowledged that profit (i.e., economic dimensions) should no longer be the priority; rather, the emphasis should be on social and environmental impacts. For example: “Sustainability is basically thinking of a business from a long-term perspective, not just caring about the bottom-line profit that’s immediate, but also caring about the society and the environment” (Alex).

One participant elaborated on how they perceived sustainability:

In terms of the dimensions of sustainability, I want to put them all on an equal level, but I don’t know if that is a fair thing to do. So, I will rank the environment first, and then social and economic dimensions. The environment comes first as we can’t have a society without the environment. And then socially, people need to work together and have their needs met, before being able to focus on the economics, because the economy focuses on the organization of how we manage and use our resources. (Kirk)

Participants also stated that business firms now were more focused on environmental sustainability and trying to show eco-friendly initiatives since it could be easily demonstrated to win customers in the marketplace. Kelly said:

I think a lot of sustainability issues probably come down to what you see companies are doing and the push from the public and from consumers towards companies to make these changes for transparency and for showing their corporate initiatives towards sustainability. I would say, you’re seeing organizations now talking about sustainability more and do more eco-friendly initiatives. That’s probably why I think first about environmental sustainability.

Overall, participants did not fully define the concept of sustainability as a stand-alone term. Four out of five talked about sustainability from a business perspective while they were mentioning the business sector and emphasizing the meaning of sustainability in the business sector.

Sustainability in Marketing

The second aspect participants shared in the interviews was relating to sustainability in marketing. Four research participants had experience working in the marketing field and in the

interviews, they shared their practical perspectives about sustainability as marketing practitioners. In their expressions, marketing is related to sustainability since marketers are trying to satisfy consumer demand to buy in a sustainable manner. For example, John said:

I've always believed marketing to be like that. A good marketer will make products and services based on consumer demand. I think people are starting to think about more sustainable ways of purchasing things, and you're seeing more and more businesses taking a more sustainable nature than you have ever before.

Participants highlighted the role of marketing in communicating to a public audience and consumers about the necessity of sustainability and promoting sustainable initiatives. For example:

The other day, I went to Amazon, and I bought reusable Ziploc bags, not typical Ziploc bags. I do see a demand for such products growing. I think marketing can play a very valuable role in the future, especially in the communication of sustainable initiatives and the moving of sustainability of companies. As we start pushing for more sustainable products, marketing could be a very good tool. (John)

Whereas only one participant stated that "Sustainability is more conceptual than practical in marketing" (Hannah), four other participants described witnessing the evolution of marketing because of sustainability trends in society. In their opinions, marketing has transformed over time from the traditional short-term selling view to embed long-term strategies to take care of customers while doing good for society, thereby somehow acting as an agent for change. Seen from this perspective, marketing can serve in the social dimensions of sustainability. Alex said:

Marketing is the interface between the business and the society; the business and the consumers and consumers make up the society. So, any kind of communication or interaction or offering of the product with the society in marketing has the ability to change that society. Marketing has been accused of being very short-term oriented, where you try and create needs and then you satisfy those needs, and in the process, make profit. That's a traditional view. But I think, marketing is also trying to take care of consumers in the long run, not only consumers, but the overall society, and that is the whole narrative of sustainability in marketing. Now, we are going into the direction of sustainability, where we do even more societal marketing. That's where marketing is taking a role of agent for social change.

Alex also added that the push factor was from consumers and the society because marketing was adapting to satisfy market trends. He argued that such a social pressure might be pushing firms towards marketing sustainable products as desired by consumers:

Consumers are becoming smarter, and society is becoming smarter as well, and because of that, marketing is also adapting. Now, marketers are taking on the role of making people happy and getting into sustainable practices. There're so many campaigns around the environment which are telling how products are being produced and are now better for the environment. So, there's that discourse, that kind of a narrative, but if you look at it critically, maybe marketing would not have changed if the society had not evolved.

Other participants also said that marketing could be used as a tool to push for sustainability and to communicate green messages from the business sector to its customers and the public. Moreover, the sustainability mindset of marketers could help develop and market products in a sustainable way, relative to the natural resources available. Thus, in participants' opinions, marketing assists with the development of sustainability, and does not necessarily conflict with sustainability. For instance:

You can use marketing as a tool to create a message or create a strategy for green issues or for your sustainable project. At the end of day, businesses are there to make profit, but you can make profit in a way that is also sustainable, so marketing satisfies people's needs, not just trying to tell people to buy. To say that marketing conflicts with sustainability is false because marketing can be used to increase sustainability or increase messaging around sustainability. (Kirk)

I think sustainability is relevant in marketing. If you're building sustainability into marketing, it could relate to a lot of basic components, such as product development. For instance, when you design a product, how do you design it with sustainability in mind and relative to the natural resources on hand? (Kelly)

Four out of five participants agreed about the critical role of marketing communication in promoting strategic sustainability. The ability to communicate with the public and consumers using marketing tools is essential in raising awareness and educating mass audiences about the necessity of sustainability. Hence, in participants' views, marketing can serve not only the

interest of firms in satisfying consumer demand for sustainable products but also the interest of society for long-term sustainability, as summarized in the following statement by Kirk:

Sustainability in my mind is about the triple bottom lines, or the three Ps aspects (people, planet, profit). When making your marketing strategy or marketing plans, you should be able to have the focus on people, planet, and profit, making sure that it's able to have some levels of sustainability.

Most participants understood the three dimensions of sustainability even though they used their disciplinary terms to express their perceptions of sustainability in marketing. When looking closely at the terminologies, 'people' can be related to social dimensions, 'planet' to environmental dimensions, and 'profit' to economic dimensions of sustainability from a business perspective.

Sustainability in Marketing Education

The third aspect mentioned on the topic of sustainability was related to sustainability in marketing education. All participants were aware of the relevancy of sustainability integration in marketing education. One participant emphasized that "Sustainability integration in marketing education is one of the trends and it is a good topic that will call for more attention. For instance, environmental protection is related to marketing strategies and can be integrated in marketing courses" (Hannah). Another participant emphasized that students should be taught about sustainability to develop critical thinking to bring about changes for a sustainable future. She said:

I think sustainability in marketing education is highly valuable. I think it's valuable to be discussing more about social marketing, which looks at different components of marketing within the marketing discipline. If you're teaching students sustainability concepts, hopefully they can develop critical thinking to make changes in our society for the positive and we can raise up leaders who have long-term thinking about sustainability. (Kelly)

Kelly elaborated by citing an example about how knowing about sustainability would help marketing students apply sustainability in their future jobs:

If you're building sustainability into marketing teaching, it could really relate to product development. For instance, when you're designing a product, how do you design it with sustainability in mind, relative to natural resources on hand, and relative to the country that you're operating in as well. If there were more emphasis on sustainability in marketing education, it would give a foundational understanding for students to be able to take these ideas and implement them in the marketplace themselves when they start working or when they're starting a company. So, you're not just thinking about the price of products, but you're thinking about how you develop sustainability or environmental sustainability through your products and your operations from the very beginning.

That said, all participants noted that it was not easy to teach about sustainability in marketing courses. In their opinions, marketing education was to teach students about competing with competitor firms to gain more market share in a competitive marketplace. Putting sustainability in the context of individual marketing courses could distract students' attention from core marketing concepts and strategies, since the emphasis should be the business goal of marketing: making profit and earning money for shareholders. Alex argued:

Marketing is a competitive field. You have to get the market share and you have to compete with other businesses. You want to make sure that you earn money for the shareholders, right? Too much of sustainability content in marketing education is going to dilute the true nature of marketing. At the end of the day, businesses are there to make money, that's the heart of it. And so, sustainability topic, I mean, that's just nice to have.

The interview findings show that there is a paradox in teachers' perceptions towards sustainability in marketing education. This may come from their business background and their teaching experience. Their disciplinary beliefs may influence how they perceive sustainability in marketing education despite their awareness of the necessity of teaching sustainability to transform students into people who can lead sustainability in the future.

Triangulation from the review of marketing syllabi confirms the main thrust of what participants shared. It indicates that sustainability content is underrepresented across the

reviewed syllabi. The concept of sustainability itself is not mentioned anywhere in the six reviewed course syllabi. Only two courses have a place suggesting sustainability integration, where they only briefly discuss such concepts as societal marketing and corporate social responsibility which only embraces one aspect of sustainability, either environmental dimensions or social dimensions.

Marketing Teachers' Perspectives regarding Sustainability Integration in Marketing Education

The data analysis using NVivo, as described in Chapter 4, found four main themes relating to RQ2. Upon a further comparison across collected narrative data, I confirmed these four main themes and searched for significant quotes that formed the underlying narrative. Specifically, the four major themes arising from the research data are about (1) current practice, (2) motivation to teach sustainability, (3) barriers to teaching sustainability and (4) support and development. The following sections discuss each of the four themes in light of the findings from the course syllabi analysis where relevant. The discussion of results also includes significant quotes reflecting research participants' unique perspectives.

Current Practice

In terms of current practice, research participants shared what they were doing in three major areas of teaching: course content, teaching and learning activities, and assessment. I discuss these areas in three sub-sections.

Course Content. When it comes to marketing teaching, all participants shared their current practice in their existing course allocation. The commonly quoted discussion was on the current courses they were teaching at the time of interview. Most talks revealed the fact that they did not teach much about sustainability, such as:

In my teaching, I mostly focus on marketing theory, and how it has changed over time. I don't really get to focus much on sustainability concepts in my teaching. (Kirk)

My course is a fundamental course which teaches students basic marketing concepts. The course does not have much sustainability content. (Hannah)

I wouldn't say I teach much sustainability in my marketing courses. I do talk about it as examples in the class, but to be honest, sustainability hasn't been a major focus from my end to teach about it. (John)

Although participants disclosed the lack of sustainability integration in their marketing teaching, they also shared that they did attempt to bring examples of sustainability into class discussions or encouraged students to choose companies with a stated sustainability focus for the major assessment. They gave several examples about their teaching practices, for instance:

I support students in their projects that focus on sustainable enterprises. (John)

In my teaching, when I teach about product categories, we don't only look at the product, but also the packaging. Packaging has to be sustainable, and environmentally friendly. In terms of promotion, we can send the message about the product that is better to show that we care about the environment and society. In terms of place, for example, Walmart says that "we have low carbon footprints, while making the products available by transporting from one place to another. We're trying to make supply chain more energy efficient". (Alex)

All participants also explained why sustainability integration could not happen much in marketing education. Some courses could incorporate sustainability content to some extent whereas other courses could not at all, as the main content of marketing courses vary. Alex said:

Some courses are very technical. I don't think those courses would have any sustainability content. Not-for-profit marketing course is different as that course is situated within the story of sustainability. But if you want to teach about how marketing is situated within sustainability, it generally happens in introductory marketing courses where you're talking low levels, where you are introducing the discipline to students.

Other participants agreed, saying some courses were more appropriate than others. Kirk gave details of the argument: "I think there are some courses that can integrate sustainability, but in some courses, there isn't much focus on teaching students how to be sustainable, because it's not

applicable to the marketing concepts in those courses.” He then elaborated the argument, citing the discipline of business: “I feel in most business courses, there is not a large focus on sustainability, from my perspective. I think, for other courses in other departments, for example, forestry, obviously those courses have a lot more discussion regarding sustainability.”

Whereas four teachers tried to make the case that marketing practices connect to sustainability by using examples and topic discussions, they also brought into the class their own perspectives on sustainability. John said that he loved talking about “the Indigenous community, human rights and not-for-profit organizations” as he wanted “students to think about their ethics and long-term roles in the society”. Kirk also emphasized teaching the topics they were interested in, such as ‘greenwashing’ to encourage students to engage in “a good conversation about sustainability issues that are related to greenwashing in marketing”. Many scholars use the definition of greenwashing which is proposed by the environmental non-government organization Greenpeace (Seele & Gatti, 2017). Accordingly, greenwashing is a deceitful tactic of a company in misleading consumers about the environmental benefits of their products or services (Seele & Gatti, 2017). For instance, Volkswagen adopted deceptive emissions testing to make environmental claims about their cars, which is recommended to use in a marketing course of the University of Waterloo as a case study about greenwashing (Lynes, 2015).

According to two participants (Alex and Kelly), the bright spot in their marketing courses was that there was a chapter dedicated to sustainability topics in their selected textbooks. This reflects how marketing has transformed and incorporated important social trends into how firms should be doing marketing. For example:

In my course, there’s a chapter dedicated to sustainability, and maybe just a few concepts. (Kelly)

The content is included in the textbook, and we teach that. In the past, there was no sustainability content in the textbook. Now it is in chapter number three: social responsibility, and sustainability. That tells you how much the dialogue has evolved over the past two decades. (Alex)

The interviews shed light on different perspectives of teachers teaching different aspects of marketing. Hannah wrote: “There are many topics, such as the marketing environment, the global marketplace, marketing strategy, consumer and business markets, managing marketing information, products, services and brands”. Consequently, teachers assigned to teach different marketing courses could handle different content. That may be why three participants did not integrate sustainability in their courses whereas two others said they had opportunities to address some sustainability issues in their teaching to some small degree. Two participants shared that their current or past courses dealt with materials about sustainability or behavioral change for long-term social changes, which they could have used as a starting point to encourage students to think about sustainability in the society. They said:

One of the courses I teach looks at how to change people’s behavior, such as stop smoking or change eating habits. A lot of it looks at developing societal changes for the better, rather than use marketing to gain profit. It uses basic marketing concepts, but there are a lot of research components that are tied into it and a lot of new concepts that I can teach. (Kelly)

My current course doesn’t have much content regarding sustainability, or about how to be greener or how to have a better ecological footprint, just because the nature of the course tends to be more about products or categories. I used to teach another course, where we did have conversations about how sustainability could be used in marketing to change consumer behavior though it was not in depth. (Kirk)

The review of marketing course syllabi in this study also confirms the research participants’ interview responses. Sustainability and related topics are underrepresented in all six course syllabi. Only two courses include some content on sustainability, but such content only briefly introduces part of the sustainability term, not the holistic meaning of sustainability embracing all social, economic and environment dimensions. No specific topics or modules on

sustainability in marketing practice are introduced. No course assessments are specifically addressing sustainability issues or practices in business firms. Hence, the course syllabi reflect what was reported by research participants that sustainability is lacking in their existing marketing courses.

Teaching and Learning Activities. Being self-motivated by a drive to bring interesting learning experiences to students, four participants described their class as an environment for lively discussions. Examples about the market and class discussions were commonly used to facilitate students' learning. In this manner, they organized teaching and learning activities in the form of exchange of experiences and opinions. Kelly said:

When I'm in class, I try to bring in examples that are interesting and relevant about the current environment and what companies are doing, not just giving students hard knowledge. I try to bridge the gap by showing students what's happening in the real world, and how the concepts we're talking about actually take place. I try to bring in thinking about sustainability in class as well. For example, I look for companies who incorporate sustainability in their operations, then I use them as an example in the classroom or as a discussion point of view.

John also used the same teaching strategy in his class and added that although the class examples and discussions were not necessarily always about sustainability, the activities gave students ample opportunity to develop their thinking and speak up to share their opinions. Furthermore, students were given a chance to work in course assignments/projects on local small or not-for-profit businesses, to gain some authentic knowledge about how to do marketing. He stated:

I bring up examples in my class. I may bring discussion questions about topics like multiculturalism or human values, to get students to think about different ways they do things. There are also marketing projects and I want students to do their projects on local businesses, or they might do theirs for a not-for-profit business.

Three participants taught advanced marketing courses to third- or fourth-year undergraduate students and two participants taught graduate students in the MBA program. When students were mature enough, facilitating class discussions for students to express and exchange ideas was

more possible. For example, Kirk elaborated on why he used class discussion as the main learning activity.

Honestly, I don't do much to push students into sustainability topics other than having discussions about it. My class tends to be discussion-based because my students are third- and fourth-year students. They have their own ideas, so they might start engaging with the material and I'll only provide them with additional stuff from the textbook. That is my pedagogical style.

In addition, case studies were in prominent use in the participants' teaching. As illustrated by Alex, the use of case study could be applied for students to initiate their thinking about sustainability in marketing. He said, "In my course, we use case studies. We could also have something like do's and don'ts in marketing with regards to sustainability."

While most participants thought they might consider integrating sustainability in their courses by case studies and class discussions, one participant felt that it was overwhelming for students to learn about sustainability topics, especially in foundational marketing subjects. Hannah wrote: "I can use case studies for students to discuss the influence of sustainability in marketing. But I think in my fundamental marketing course, it is too much for students to learn about sustainability." The idea of using case studies in class activities illustrates that it is important to find relevant materials on sustainability in the context of marketing, which helps facilitate the teaching of sustainability rather than just talking theories in the lecture-based class.

At the time of the interviews, the Covid-19 situation was impactful on the mode of teaching delivery as participants shared that they were doing mostly online classes. That might be one reason why all participants mainly lectured in their marketing courses. Kelly said:

I teach online on Zoom, so it has been lecture-based. It's hard for students to be engaged online. As I lecture, there are not many activities. So, in one of my courses, as an after-class activity, I ask students to write case answers relating to companies using sustainability to change people's behavior, for example, recycling clothing. I provide a one-page brief of questions for students to answer.

In summary, despite the underrepresentation of sustainability topics in marketing courses, participants brought sustainability into their classroom examples and discussions on sustainability in relation to marketing. This indicates that individual teachers were motivated to introduce students to the current market trends, one of which is sustainability, in most Western societies.

Assessment. The topic of course assessment received a lot of sharing from participants. They used a variety of assessment, including quizzes, tests, essay writing, case studies, game simulations, presentations, and marketing team projects. The most widely used assessment in every course was in the form of knowledge test, such as multiple-choice questions, and short-essay questions for concept checking. Alex described what he gave in the tests.

I use mid-term and final tests including quizzes and essay writing. In the mid-terms and final exam, there are multiple-choice questions, and short-answer questions. Students would have questions that relate with social marketing or environmental marketing, for instance, and they basically show their understanding of terminologies.

Still, most quizzes were described to have no association with sustainability concept checking as the courses did not teach students about sustainability: “Assessments are mostly just quizzes, and students don’t really have the opportunity to learn about sustainability” (Kirk).

All participants reported that they often used class tests to check students’ understanding of theoretical concepts. They also used other forms of assessment for skill development and student engagement. For instance, they could use game simulations to give students immersive learning experiences, or case studies to develop analytical skills and critical thinking.

Participants stated that group assignments were often applied as “the business school typically has group assignments in every class, and we want students engaged in group assignments” (John). However, they also noted that most, if not all, course assessments were focused on marketing and not on sustainability. For example:

For my course, the major assignment is marketplace simulation. What happens in that assignment is that I create student groups who compete with each other in marketing activities, such as selling, advertising, pricing. That's a hands-on interesting exercise but that is not related to sustainability. (Alex)

For assessment, there are student projects, but the projects tend to be about marketing, not sustainability. (Kirk)

In my courses, the major assignment's going to be focusing on case studies, and I take my case studies from the textbooks. They don't really have the sustainability focus. (Kelly)

In my course, students have a group project about the digital marketing strategy for a local not-for-profit business. So, it is just digital marketing. (John)

When asked if he wanted to change the assessment to cover sustainability topics, Kirk said:

In my past course, consumer behavior, I did get the students to pick a business that they like for analysis. I can say, hey, students, pick a company that has a green image or has sustainability focus, and analyze how they have changed over time, with respect to society's shifts towards sustainability, so, that can be one case for consumer behavior. But I do not do much sustainability in my current course. (Kirk)

In short, current assessments were focused on the content of the courses taught. As mentioned before, very few courses incorporated substantial sustainability content or had a dedicated chapter on sustainability topics; it is therefore understandable why assessments were not related to sustainability. This finding is in line with the review of six marketing course syllabi where only two courses include some limited teaching content on sustainability. When that happens, the concepts taught are only a few, such as societal marketing and eco-friendly features of products corresponding to consumer needs and wants. As illustrated in the selected course syllabi, major course assignments are flexible as students can choose to do a marketing project on a company of their choice. Nowhere do the course syllabi mention that students should choose to work on a company with a stated sustainability focus or sustainable products and services. This implies that students' choice to do marketing projects on sustainable types of

companies can only be encouraged or guided by the teacher in charge. This finding confirms the participants' interview responses.

Overall, the current situation of marketing education at the research site, as revealed by participants, is that the limitation of course content on sustainability topics leads to course assessments not covering sustainability knowledge and skills. According to all participants, they were trying to assess students' understanding of key course concepts or terminologies, and some soft skills, such as critical thinking, communication, leadership, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. The goal of their teaching was to train students to be effective managers, as summarized below:

I really push the idea that students have to think about what they do versus being told what to do. And that's what I really want to see and try to focus on. (John)

Honestly, I think it's the soft skills that are more important than any content in the class. The matter is in five years or 15 years, none of the jobs that exist today are going to be relevant. So, I focus on teaching students to be able to communicate effectively, to understand consumers and how people interact with each other, understand empathy, understand more soft skills aspects, making sure they understand leadership to be an effective manager. (Kelly)

This confirms the findings from the syllabi review that the learning objectives have a concentration on the understanding and application of marketing concepts, including integration of marketing ideas and ability to apply marketing knowledge to business situations. Course syllabi do not explicitly indicate the soft skills each course aims to develop in students. Hence, it can be said that there is a gap between the soft skills teachers want to develop for students and the learning outcomes described in the course syllabi. The soft skills developed in students may make students more capable of leading in sustainability.

Motivation to Teach Sustainability

To implement sustainability integration in teaching, teachers need motivation to engage with the materials and make transformative changes in the curriculum. Hence, participants were asked about the factors which would make them feel motivated to incorporate sustainability topics in their marketing courses. Interestingly, all participants were more or less intrinsically motivated to push for sustainability content. For one participant, sustainability topics reflected consumer and social trends and thus could be used to engage students in learning about what was happening in the market and the society at large. Kirk said:

Sustainability itself is a huge thing and it's a pushing factor in the market and the society today. I always like the idea of seeing companies that have sustainability features. So, being able to discuss those topics with students makes the class more relevant with the trends than just me talking about some old theories about how consumers behave from the 1960's. I'll be able to engage students and to provide them with more accurate information on what's going on.

Alex concurred, feeling good that one of his courses included one chapter dedicated to sustainability and corporate social responsibility. He added that being able to make students think about marketing in a critical way could be a good strategy to increase student engagement:

There's no way around sustainability these days. First, I have to cover the content. I could see it's more motivating to teach students about marketing in a critical way. It gives the opportunity for critical analysis of brands and companies. Students love to talk about brands and their malpractices. So, the motivation is a friendly lively class and getting something out of it to help students to think critically. It makes the whole experience richer. I think there's more engagement, more fun.

Two other participants also mentioned that their motivation originated from their job as a university teacher whose role is to train future leaders for the society. For example:

I think it's our jobs to mold the minds of our students and hope that they are going to push for more sustainability. I don't think we can force them to accept that, but we should be at least trying to be the influencers. (John)

If we're teaching sustainability concepts to students, once they're out of university, they would know more about how they would develop sustainability; for instance, in terms of what they're bringing into products, partnerships and suppliers whom they're working with. I think this helps develop a long-term view for students to see the future. (Kelly)

I do think that anybody who's teaching at the university should be an advocate for sustainability and that we're pushing for the changes in our communities. (John)

John said that even though he did not teach much sustainability content, he tried to bring in related topics, such as multiculturalism, and the sense of community, because of his motivation to teach about human values:

I think, for anybody living in Canada, we need to be accepting multiculturalism and all forms of diversity as human beings. From a marketing business perspective, I also think that we have a role of working with individuals in our communities, and we should be representing them. I try to make students think about the community, so that they start considering who they are as a human being and where they want to go with their life.

On the other hand, Kelly regretted not having much sustainability integration in her teaching and wished to be able to incorporate more sustainability content in courses. She elaborated:

If I had a chance, it would be interesting to incorporate sustainability more, in the way that product development is related to sustainability, and how those two would be bridged together or the impact of these. I think if there were a heavier focus on this idea of product development and sustainability, I would say that part is the most interesting and important. Companies are starting to change their products to be more sustainable. Having that focus, students will be able to envision a future that would build a better foundation for sustainability.

In summary, each individual participant's motivation for teaching sustainability was expressed as an intrinsic factor arising from their teaching job. This suggests that marketing teachers may have a good intention to integrate sustainability into their teaching if they have adequate conditions that support their role.

Barriers to Teaching Sustainability

Participants described a number of barriers to teaching sustainability. What is noteworthy is that they talked about barriers to teaching sustainability from their own perspectives as they were teaching different courses in the same program and the difficulties were not the same. Only Hannah said that she could not incorporate any sustainability content because there was already

too much content to cover in her courses. Two participants, on the other hand, mentioned the limited resources available for teaching sustainability. They experienced difficulties finding textbooks on sustainability topics or marketing textbooks that include sustainability content. For example:

The issue for me is getting a textbook that talks about sustainability. Most textbooks don't really talk about sustainability and every course needs to have textbooks for some reason. So, I think that might be the biggest issue, the content that's been available for teaching marketing itself is going to be limiting the opportunity to teach sustainability. (Kirk)

There's not much in the textbook, so I do my best to read as many articles as I can before the chapter on sustainability to be able to bring in studies that have been done about sustainability. A lot of it is dependent upon myself to find the information because the text only covers the very basic stuff. (Kelly)

In a few instances, the challenges might come from students who receive the teaching.

Two participants stated that since Canadian universities promote inclusiveness in the classroom, diversity in the backgrounds and perspectives of students was a factor to be considered. Kirk and John cited a mixed student cohort as a challenge for them when trying to explain sustainability concepts in class. For example, Kirk said:

I teach a mixed cohort of students. There might always be a small number of students that always question, "why we're learning this stuff," or "I don't see the reason why this is important; this has absolutely nothing to do with marketing". I feel that polarization and the access to a textbook that will discuss sustainability in decent details may be the two biggest issues that I can think of.

John also talked about his experiences having to deal with students' skepticism and resistance to sustainability:

I think the big challenge is whether students buy into sustainability. The topic tends to be more opinion-based. Some students might not buy into it. Some people just don't believe in it. Sometimes, there is resistance to learn or discuss these things.

Another obstacle for sustainability integration in marketing teaching could also be the teacher's perceptions of sustainability and marketing concepts. For instance, when explaining

why she could not teach about sustainability in her courses, Kelly stated that the gap between sustainability concepts and marketing concepts was too hard to bridge:

I do not teach much sustainability because there're a lot of concepts that have to be discussed in class. Moreover, to me, sustainability seems like a separate topic, rather than it being built into marketing. I see a gap between the idea of sustainability and marketing. For example, in one of my marketing courses, there's a chapter dedicated to sustainability, and it covers a few sustainability concepts, but not clearly the main themes that go through the textbook.

Furthermore, there were some inherent barriers within each individual teacher, such as limited knowledge on the topic. The knowledge base was so important to Kelly that she said she was not very confident in teaching about sustainability:

Sustainability is something that I'm not very knowledgeable in. There're probably a lot of new terminologies that come along with it. It takes me a lot of time myself just to understand. I feel like there is a whole another side of terminology and stuff that I am not familiar with.

Overall, the barriers to teaching sustainability reflect the inner world of participants and the paradox they might be facing. On the one hand, they felt the necessity of teaching about sustainability and were motivated to transform their teaching. On the other hand, there were many barriers to overcome before they became capable of doing some sustainability integration. It would take time and effort, leading to the next theme for discussion: support and development.

Support and Development

Three sub-themes relating to the support needed for marketing teachers emerged in the interviews, including provision of resources, professional development opportunities and an organizational culture supporting sustainability education. As mentioned before, participants noted the limited availability of teaching materials on sustainability, especially a lack of access to relevant textbooks. Most of them would like to have more reliable teaching resources, such as textbooks, journal articles, test banks and case studies.

Hannah said: “I need more case studies to teach my students about sustainability issues.” Kelly even suggested having resources on sustainability content sent by email as the main channel, because, as she shared: “I would expect monthly or every-two-week emails that send relevant articles related to sustainability and connected to marketing specifically. I think having stuff on sustainability being sent by email would be helpful”. Kirk proposed that having access to a textbook with sustainability would be beneficial for all teachers teaching in the marketing discipline, since “all courses should have a textbook”. He also recommended having online resources as part of “the library that focuses on how we’re able to teach about sustainability or integrate sustainability in teaching”. Some other resources Kirk mentioned were the access to “different ways to assess students’ understanding of sustainability, such as test banks and assignments that are focused on sustainability and related topics”.

Participants also wished to have professional development opportunities. They were willing to learn from experts in the field and colleagues who had experience in teaching or researching sustainability. Such opportunities could help them gain knowledge on the topic and develop networks for teaching and research. For instance:

I would like to have more professional development. Having someone who can talk about sustainability so that we can learn more will be excellent. (Kirk)

I think what would really help is having opportunities to hear from faculty members or people who have studied environmental sustainability or people in the business department who studied sustainability in terms of economic factors and social factors through research presentations or conferences. Having connections with research portals and research presentations on sustainability would also be great. (Kelly)

John also would highly value the chance to have faculty meetings or even multi-discipline meetings where teachers could exchange experiences and learned from each other. He said:

I think if we have multi-faculty team meetings where we talk about examples of what we can teach. That’s probably the strongest way of doing that to make us think about how we can apply sustainability topics in our teaching.

The third type of support that participants indicated was the organizational culture and leadership. All participants emphasized that educational leadership was indispensable to the success of sustainability integration in curriculum development and teaching, citing that the leaders' roles would be to develop a culture that was supportive and committed to sustainability education. John pointed out the important role of leaders in higher education institutions, as summarized below:

I think educational leaders have a big role in sustainability because they are representatives of the community, and they are expected to be leaders in the community. We need a warm positive environment where people want to talk about sustainability in a comfortable setting. Keeping in mind that a lot of students come to university for that type of dialogue. That's where we're going to have our biggest growth within the institution.

Other participants were also in agreement that a culture that allowed sustainability teaching in business courses would not only be helpful but also impactful on the practice of university teachers. In their opinion, teaching in a culture where sustainability was highly valued and important would motivate them to integrate more sustainability and to overcome student resistance. In their views, a faculty sustainability culture would have the biggest impact on their teaching as they would then know they would need to transform their practice to demonstrate the organizational cultural values.

I feel that the culture around teaching business students about sustainability is important. If it comes from the organizational culture to begin with, teachers will be able to have textbooks, and discussions on sustainability. And then we will allow the process to happen in teaching. By having that cultural shift, by allowing the textbooks with sustainability content, we will facilitate students to learn about it and overcome students' biases. That is what I mean by culture. (Kirk)

I haven't felt myself that I've been pushed to focus on sustainability. So, if this came from somebody from the upper-level management in the workplace, it would definitely change. It would make me feel like I should do it. This is so important that we should be talking about sustainability more. So, that would probably bring about the biggest change to myself, knowing that's a high value for the faculty, the teaching team and students as well. (Kelly)

As culture in a business school includes all aspects of teaching, learning and research, leadership is needed to build an organizational culture that ensures the provision of resources and professional development. Participants regarded such a supportive culture essential to make teachers feel confident about their teaching role, as expressed by Kelly:

I think culture would have the biggest impact on our teaching, knowing this is something that is valued and important from the Dean, or from professors or from people who've been around longer. Knowing that's a high value for the faculty, I would feel more comfortable and definitely change.

In short, the research findings show that while participants did acknowledge their teaching limitations and difficulties, they wanted to integrate sustainability into their marketing teaching. Moreover, research participants expressed a desire for more support and development opportunities to gain knowledge and skills to be able to address sustainability in their own classroom. They also emphasized the role of educational leaders in creating and maintaining a culture suitable for sustainability to thrive in business teaching and learning.

Chapter Summary

The chapter discussed the findings relating to the research questions. In response to the first question, three themes emerged from the data, namely, sustainability, sustainability in marketing and sustainability in marketing education. In terms of the second research question about university teachers' perspectives on sustainability integration in marketing education, the data produced four themes, including current practice, motivation to teach sustainability, barriers to teaching sustainability, and support and development

In the next chapter (Chapter 5), I interpret the findings with respect to the literature and discuss theoretical and practical implications. In addition, I present the research limitations, and future research directions.

Chapter Five: Interpretation of Findings and Conclusions

Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses the interpretation of the main research findings and draws conclusions. First, I interpret the findings about the perceptions of marketing teachers towards sustainability in marketing education. Second, I discuss the results relating to marketing teachers' perspectives on sustainability integration. In each of the sections, I analyze the findings in a synthesis based on the existing literature. Third, I provide a conclusion including theoretical and practical implications. Then I present research limitations and future research directions. Finally, I provide a personal reflection on the research to serve as a closing remark for the thesis.

Teachers' Perceptions of Sustainability in Marketing Education

The present research adds to the under-researched area of the perceptions of marketing teachers about sustainability in marketing teaching at higher education institutions. In this research, four out of five participants expressed their formative understanding of the sustainability concept around the three main dimensions—economic, social and environmental—as defined in Elkington (1994). Four out of the five were able to provide specific examples to illustrate their understanding of sustainability. What is noteworthy is that they placed priority on the environment, prominently citing the ideas of environmentally friendly products of companies that they used to explain market trends in their classes. At least two participants fully elaborated the ranking of importance on the three dimensions of sustainability in their views, with environment dimensions as the first, followed by social and economic dimensions. The common ground is that all participants perceived the concept of sustainability from a business worldview,

with which they were familiar as they were teaching in the marketing discipline within a business school.

The following sub-section provides a detailed interpretation of research participants' perceptions towards sustainability in marketing education and a synthesis of the literature, to fully answer the first research question: *What do marketing teachers at a sustainability-focused university in Canada perceive sustainability in marketing education to be?*

Teachers' Perceptions of Sustainability

According to the interview data, participants showed mixed perceptions towards sustainability in marketing education. Their reflections on the concept were not consistent, even in the small sample of this case study. Whereas all participants fully acknowledged the rising importance and necessity of sustainability for society, two out of five did not clearly show a holistic understanding of sustainability in marketing education. As presented in Chapter 4, four participants defined sustainability emphasizing environmental aspects and one participant placed emphasis on the social dimension. Hence, participants did acknowledge that sustainability would mean caring for the environment and the society. This finding is inconsistent with previous research indicating that marketing teachers do not acknowledge the importance of environmental and social issues in business contexts (Kemper et al., 2018).

In the current research, three out of five participants did mention a holistic conceptual definition of sustainability embracing the triple bottom lines (people, planet, profit) as equivalent to the social, environmental and economic dimensions. This is also reflected in the sustainability marketing context proposed by Hoadley and Baumann (2020), which include social sustainability, environmental sustainability and economic sustainability. Nevertheless, participants' perceptions of sustainability in marketing in the current research highlight the goal

of profit maximization for the business sector. In their opinions, the application of sustainability in marketing centered on satisfying consumers' demand for sustainable products and services, rather than an inherent need to practice sustainability arising within business firms. This echoes prior literature stating that marketing teaching is focused on meeting consumers' current needs and wants (Lunde, 2018) or creating new consumers' needs for new products and services (Deepak & Jeyakumar, 2019).

There are possible explanations as to why the teachers participating in the current research expressed a limited conception of sustainability. A review by Lunde (2018) indicated that there is no well-established definition of sustainability in marketing in the literature. Though sustainability has received more research attention from the academic community since the 2010s, with articles centered on sustainability in marketing appearing in journals dedicated to the marketing discipline, such as *Journal of Macromarketing*, *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, and the *Journal of Marketing* (Lunde, 2018), research on sustainability in marketing has been fragmented (Kemper & Ballantine, 2019), resulting in a lack of conceptual framing. Marketing scholars often define sustainability with an environmental meaning, such as eco-performance (Arquitt & Cornwell, 2007), environmental claims (McCarty & Shrum, 2001), green marketing (Roberts & Bacon, 1997) or an expression of the environmental concern of consumers (Pujari et al., 2004). This could contribute to the perceptions of participants in this research, where most reported placing a priority on the environmental aspect of sustainability.

Furthermore, one commonly cited definition of sustainability in the marketing literature borrows the holistic concept from the Brundtland Commission (1987) that defines sustainability in the sense of sustainable development and Sustainable Development Goals—SDGs (United

Nations, 2020) (e.g., Ford & Despeissem, 2016; Kumar et al., 2012). The second most used a concept of sustainability that originates from the triple bottom lines: economics, environment and society (also labeled as profit, planet, people) proposed by Elkington (1994). That may explain why two participants in this study cited the term “the triple bottom lines” when they mentioned sustainability.

On the other hand, teaching in the marketing discipline is based on the assumed knowledge of marketing. Marketing directly influences the way firms develop products and promote consumption (Gorge et al., 2015). These two areas, product development and consumption promotion, are closely related to environmental and social conditions since natural resources are needed to produce products and promotion often deals with consumers who are embedded in the society (Kemper & Ballantine, 2019). What is more, teachers’ perceptions of sustainability could be attributed to marketing experience since more than half of the research participants said they had worked in industry where the business worldview on profit maximization is prominent (Öhman & Östman, 2019). As pointed out by Kemper et al. (2020a), the dominant business worldview can prevent marketing professionals and academics from grasping the full meaning of sustainability. Some participants did mention that firms should incorporate sustainability into their operations, especially in producing products with sustainable features to gain competitive advantages in the market. Businesses are aware that sustainability has now become a market obligation (Farley & Smith, 2020). Thus, the lived experiences in marketing, coupled with additional searches in marketing discourse to prepare for teaching, may have added to the formation of the research participants’ perceptions of sustainability, which is primarily based on the business need for growth.

In short, participants' perceptions of sustainability in marketing education do reflect the sustainability term in the marketing literature and industry application, which acknowledges the triple bottom lines but has a heavy concentration on creating competitive advantages to satisfy consumers' demands in order to increase sales and market share. Competitive advantages can accrue to businesses offering products that customers want, and therefore firms are starting to produce products with sustainable features. This may be why most marketing teachers in this research put the environment in the first position while trying to maintain social dimensions (customer markets and society at large) and economic dimensions (firms' financial performance) in balance. As argued by Varey (2011), it is hard to avoid a conflict between environmental goals and the bottom-line profit of businesses. That helps to explain why one participant in this case study said that sustainability would just be a nice add-on in marketing education.

As research on marketing teachers' perceptions of sustainability is scarcely reported, few similar studies are available to compare with the findings of this study. A rare report on faculty perceptions of sustainability in the US indicated that university teachers cannot typically give a holistic definition of sustainability—their own definitions lack important concepts, including almost any “mention of two of the three pillars of sustainability (economy and society)” (Owens & Legere, 2015, p. 381). Most definitions of sustainability from faculty members from across disciplines center on the environmental aspects of using natural resources with a sustainable view into the future (Owens & Legere, 2015). In contrast to Owens and Legere (2015), participants in the current study showed broader knowledge of the term sustainability by mentioning the triple bottom lines, though they did place priority on the use of natural resources with a long-term view for future generations.

Teachers' Perspectives of Sustainability Integration in Marketing Education

The data suggest that research participants' perspectives regarding the practice of sustainability integration in marketing education were accumulated from their lived experiences teaching assigned marketing courses. Current practices present a lack of sustainability teaching and learning across the marketing program in this case study.

Although current practice does not show substantial sustainability integration, all participants did indicate their motivation to teach about sustainability issues in their courses where possible. However, in their experience, there were barriers to overcome to make them ready. They expressed expectations for resources, support and professional development.

The next sub-sections provide discussions on research participants' perspectives towards sustainability integration in marketing education within the context of a business school at a Canadian sustainability-focused university. The discussions are based on a synthesis of the literature, to respond to the second research question: *What are marketing teachers' perspectives at a sustainability-focused university in Canada regarding sustainability integration in marketing education?*

Current Practice in Marketing Education

As mentioned in Chapter 2, although many studies have investigated the practice of sustainability teaching in higher education, research on sustainability teaching in the marketing discipline is scarcely reported. Knowledge of what is currently happening in marketing classrooms can be used to improve sustainability integration in marketing education.

Most participants stated that they did not teach much sustainability in their marketing courses. The bright spot is that they strived to bring some sustainability topics into their classrooms, either in examples or in discussion questions. The intent was to develop in their students the knowledge about "what is going on" (Kirk), "ethics and the society" (John), or to

develop skills such as “critical thinking” (Kelly, Alex) and “soft skills” (Kelly, Hannah). Only two participants reported two courses that included one chapter dedicated to sustainability-related concepts, such as corporate social responsibility, societal marketing, and behavioral changes for the better. As teachers decide what to teach in their courses, participants’ profit-maximization orientation as found earlier in response to the first research question seemed to hinder their ability to integrate sustainability more fully into their marketing courses. This resonates with Kemper et al.’s (2020a) findings.

This finding adds to previous research positing that the teaching of sustainable marketing practices should be supported by curricula advocating the triple bottom line approach to marketing strategy (Bridges & Wilhelm, 2008). Scholars have proposed transformative changes in the marketing curriculum (Albinsson et al., 2020; Bridges & Wilhelm, 2008; Markley Rountree & Koernig, 2015; Perera et al., 2016; Upadhyaya et al., 2019; von der Heide, 2018). To some degree, prior studies have proposed recommendations about what should be included in the marketing curriculum to teach about sustainability; however, I encountered no previous study that reported marketing teachers’ reflections as to what extent sustainability topics are actually covered in their own classrooms. The current research therefore adds their perspectives to the literature.

In terms of teaching and learning activities, the lecture-based approach was commonly used by participants. All participants shared that they used examples, discussions and case studies to enrich the learning experience and to engage students in critical thinking. In doing so, at times they bring some controversial topics about firms practicing sustainability into the class, primarily for students’ application of marketing concepts and strategies but partly for the purpose of introducing the trends of sustainability in marketing. The limited incorporation of

sustainability-related topics in marketing does not lead students to any opportunities for experiential learning. That being the case, course assessments have a heavy concentration on concept checking and application of marketing theories, although some participants did encourage students to do their major team-based assignments on firms that have sustainable practices.

Participants did think about sustainability and at times tried to include examples and discussion questions on sustainable marketing practices to reflect what has been happening in the marketplace. Still, such a practice was reportedly done on an ad-hoc basis, not based on a strategic approach to sustainability teaching to marketing students. This was reported to be due partly to the unavailability of course content on sustainability topics, but may have been mostly because of the business worldviews in the marketing discipline. Teaching and learning activities focused on the thinking level as students discussed examples and questions on sustainable or unsustainable marketing practices. The application of sustainability in marketing is thus limited in participants' marketing classrooms.

Overall, in view of the three categories of sustainability educators (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019), I conclude that participants in the current research sit in the "thinker" cluster, trying to engage students in conversations to develop critical thinking about ethics and the society. The difference is that participants in Kemper, Ballantine and Hall's (2019) study were leaders in the field of sustainability in marketing while those in this research were teaching marketing, but sustainability in marketing was not their main focus or interest.

Factors Affecting Sustainability Integration Practice in Marketing Education

The interviews gave research participants the opportunity to reflect on their lived experiences regarding the way they deliver marketing teaching. Factors affecting sustainability

integration in marketing teaching include internal motivation and external factors arising from the current circumstances at the research site.

Participants felt that it was appropriate to include some sustainability content in their marketing courses. They wished to embed more sustainability content where relevant and possible despite some thinking not all marketing courses are suitable for sustainability inclusion. The most noteworthy theme that emerged from the narrative data was the intrinsic motivation within each individual teacher, since their jobs are “to mold the students’ minds” (John), “to be an advocate for changes” (John), to develop “critical thinking” (Kelly), to make “students think critically”, “to have a lively engaging class on topical discussions” (Alex), to “engage students in a good conversation about key issues” (Kirk) and to “make students understand the influences of sustainability on marketing” (Hannah).

On the other hand, the obstacles to sustainability integration cited by research participants were a combination of internal and external factors, including lack of knowledge and resources on sustainability topics, perceived gaps between sustainability and marketing, and lack of a culture that expects sustainability integration. These findings echo prior studies to a large degree. Participants felt their limited knowledge created a barrier to incorporating sustainability content in their courses, as reported by Kemper et al. (2020a) for marketing academics. Lack of knowledge on sustainability topics has led to marketing academics seeing sustainability only as a nice add-on item in marketing education (Kemper et al., 2018).

Participants held a profit-maximization view of marketing which hindered their incorporation of sustainability. This resonates with Painter-Morland et al. (2015), who posited, “the ontological and epistemological assumptions in business education undermine the kind of orientation that is necessary to engage with sustainability” (p. 69). Such a gap might cause a

perceived separation between sustainability and marketing, given that marketing teachers at higher education institutions may have gone through years of marketing education and even marketing research themselves. This perception reflected in the opinions of participants in the current research, such as: “To me, sustainability seems like a separate topic, rather than it is being built into marketing. I see a gap between sustainability and marketing” (Kelly).

The second barrier to sustainability teaching which participants highlighted in this study was lack of resources. Textbooks and other resources can help teachers to develop course content, teaching and learning activities and assessments. Inadequate resources cause difficulties in teaching design and delivery. This finding is no surprise as several previous studies have also mentioned lack of resources as one of the major hinderances (Kemper et al., 2019, 2020a, 2020b). Furthermore, as noted above, sustainability in business school curricula is often confined within the framework of business discourse that has a concentration on profit maximization (Andersson & Öhman, 2016). Such a discourse may limit sustainability as a separate topic or may interpret sustainability only as a mechanism for increasing profit (Edwards et al., 2020). The reality is that there are not any marketing textbooks that incorporate substantial sustainability content.

The final obstacle to sustainability integration in teaching marketing may be student resistance. As shared by research participants, “there is resistance in learning about sustainability” (John), “students will question why?” (Alex) and “students are overwhelmed” (Hannah). This finding is dissimilar to prior research reporting that students who represent younger generations and who are open to changes are considered as a source of motivation for teachers to teach about sustainability in a marketing class (Kemper et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the current research reflects other studies which found that students’ skepticism poses a huge

challenge to sustainability integration (e.g., Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019; McNamara, 2010). This can be attributed to the dominant business worldviews present in business student mindsets (Kilbourne & Carlson, 2008), causing students to have low demand for sustainability education (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019). Prior research suggested that students are influential stakeholders in initiating sustainability topics in the classroom (McNamara, 2010), but resistance from students can also cause difficulties to teachers in the process of teaching about sustainability in the marketing classroom.

Support and Development

In this research, participants expressed a willingness to integrate sustainability in their marketing courses where possible. Most participants said that more support would be required before they could increase sustainability integration in the marketing curriculum. They reported three types of support needed, including resources, professional development opportunities and leadership to create a culture for sustainability education to develop in the business school.

The first type of support that participants mentioned was access to textbooks and resources on sustainability in marketing, a means to help them supplement their knowledge on the topic. Participants wanted to have useful and relevant materials not only on the content but also on concept test banks, case studies and assessments. As pointed out by Kemper et al. (2020b), it is essential to include content in marketing courses that helps increase competency and knowledge on sustainability so that teachers can teach about it in their class. The provision of resources on sustainability for the marketing discipline should address the specific requirements of concerned marketing teachers. Such materials may start from the general meaning of sustainability in the business context and then proceed to the marketing discipline (Lambrechts et al., 2017). To have effective sustainability integration in marketing education, the

teacher needs to deliver course content and develop types of assessment that assess students' knowledge and application of content (Lozano et al., 2015). Based on the research participants' responses relating to their perceptions of sustainability discussed above, their needs for additional resources on sustainability should be examined in consideration of a thorough needs analysis to decide on a framework for the inclusion of relevant materials.

The second type of support participants wanted was to have professional development opportunities to gain more knowledge on sustainability. Such opportunities could range from having access to a network of people who have studied, taught and researched in sustainability to attending seminars where they could learn from sustainability experts and even from an informal learning community of practice within the teaching team, the faculty and across faculties. Whereas prior research only highlighted the need for professional development (e.g., Lambrechts et al., 2017; Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019; Kemper et al., 2020b), this research outlined specifically what marketing teachers wanted.

Their needs may reflect the specific conditions within the context of their worksite. For instance, participants wanted formal networking opportunities to attend seminars and workshops where they can learn from colleagues who have researched and taught sustainability. This demonstrates teachers' needs to engage in conversations about sustainability integration in higher education. This is similar to what was proposed as a 'Debate Café' in Lambrechts et al. (2017) where teachers get motivated to discuss and learn about sustainability topics in a friendly way, helping to clear uncertainty and increasing the level of involvement with sustainability education. This could be a good way to gain exposure to different sustainability perspectives with colleagues to widen individual perspectives as teachers can step out of their comfort zone to initiate conversations and learn from each other about sustainability teaching ideas (Kemper et

al., 2020b).

The third type of support desired was leadership from the dean of the business school, considered the most influential factor for teachers wishing to incorporate sustainability into marketing education. Participants considered educational leaders' support indispensable in creating a collaborative culture that facilitates a transformative process towards sustainability education. Business school deans can provide leadership for change, even in the view of marketing academics who lead in teaching and researching sustainability (Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019; Kemper et al., 2020b). Hence, it is not surprising that participants expressed a pressing need for leadership and a culture of sustainability. Research has shown the need for strong leaderships to create a supportive teaching and learning culture for sustainability education (Barber et al., 2014; Wright & Horst, 2013). Teachers want to feel they are part of a community that supports sustainability integration. Teachers are not always the experts in sustainability (Edwards et al., 2020) and hence, a culture supporting communities of practice where people can share ideas, exchange experiences for reflections and learning by doing is required. An unsupportive culture does not help with sustainability, even if resources are available (Slager et al., 2020).

A supportive culture should allow teachers to reframe how they approach sustainability and make it relevant, meaningful and valuable to the discipline they are teaching in (Edwards et al., 2020). As reported by Wright and Horst (2013), teachers often want to be agents for change and they in turn need a leader for inspiring change. In the same way, participants in this research feel that their educational leaders are responsible for inspiring a culture supporting leaders of sustainability not only within the marketing discipline but also across the business school.

In summary, the findings point to the importance of culture in facilitating the teaching of

sustainability in the business school. Adequate support cannot be given to marketing teachers without a culture supporting sustainability integration in place. As defined by Ansari et al. (2010), cultural fit reflects the alignment between core values and practices of organizational members. A supportive culture will involve communities that share similar values and practices (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). The more members are convinced of support and the upholding of values of sustainability in the business school, the more likely they will be devoted to teaching sustainability. As expressed by participants, “knowing that is a high value for the faculty, the teaching team and students, that would bring the biggest changes. It is so important that we are talking about sustainability more at the workplace” (Kelly). Thus, this research emphasizes the role that educational leadership could play in nurturing the type of culture within which members are willing to learn and cooperate to integrate sustainability into their teaching.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

This research adds to the literature by providing a view of marketing teachers’ perceptions of sustainability in marketing education within the context of a sustainability-focused university in Canada. It explored the ways marketing teachers perceive sustainability and how they integrate or fail to integrate sustainability into their marketing teaching. Although increasing attention has been paid to how educators teach sustainability in higher education (e.g., Christie et al., 2015; Dziubaniuk & Nyholm, 2020; Melles, 2019; Sund, 2016), the literature on marketing teachers’ perspectives on sustainability integration is limited, except for some studies recently conducted by Kemper and colleagues (e.g., Kemper et al., 2018, 2020a, 2020b; Kemper, Ballantine, & Hall, 2019; Kemper, Hall, & Ballantine, 2019). The current study therefore belongs to a niche focused on sustainability in marketing education.

The strength of the current research is that it used a case study approach to collect narrative data from participants who are also marketing teachers in semi-structured one-on-one interviews, strengthened by data triangulation via a review of course syllabi, thereby improving the research credibility. This research revealed considerations of marketing teachers who are experiencing a dilemma between the important necessity of sustainability and the business worldview that somehow hinders the formation of a holistic view towards sustainability in teaching. Moreover, it disclosed the paradox inherent within individual marketing teachers between their self-motivation to transform teaching and their hesitation to take steps to incorporate sustainability content into marketing teaching. It reported internal and external factors that can help facilitate a transformation process to move marketing education towards sustainability.

First, the research partly echoed prior research arguing that the dominant business worldviews present challenges to marketing teachers regarding sustainability integration (e.g., Kemper et al., 2018; Toubiana, 2014; Varey, 2012). What is novel is that this study provides marketing teachers' personal reflections on their perceptions regarding sustainability in marketing education. To some degree, they acknowledge the triple bottom lines of sustainability in terms of economics, environment and society; still, their business backgrounds do affect how their marketing teaching prioritizes satisfying customers' needs and wants to make profit.

Second, this research is consistent with previous findings that sustainability integration in business education still has a long way to go, as the knowledge delivered is concentrated on business performance (Olalla & Merino, 2019; Storey, 2020; Toubiana, 2014). Moreover, limited knowledge of and inadequate resources about sustainability topics can be obstacles to facilitating sustainability teaching in the marketing discipline (Beusch, 2014; Kemper et al., 2020b). What is

new is that this research points out internal and external factors that can facilitate the inclusion of sustainability in marketing education from individual teachers' perspectives. These teachers are not necessarily sustainability leaders or advocates like those who teach and research sustainability. They are among the many teachers who teach marketing directly to students in higher education institutions, with a motivation to teach to prepare students for the future. Resources, professional development opportunities and a culture supporting sustainability integration within the business school, of which the marketing discipline is a major part, are external factors that can push sustainability integration. Fostering a sustainability culture enables the provision of resources, professional development opportunities and communities of practice to support sustainability education. As teachers directly impact the learning experience of students, the teacher needs to be part of a culture that clearly communicates values and practices of sustainability. Achieving a supportive culture also gives direction for the development of sustainability curricula and assessment that are embedded in the students' choices of learning programs. This may help reduce the level of skepticism and resistance of students towards learning about sustainability components inherent in each business course.

With regards to practical implications, by understanding marketing teachers' perception of sustainability in marketing education, business deans and faculty heads can develop professional development agendas that support the transformation of the business worldview to become more accepting of sustainability worldviews. As proposed by Holdsworth et al. (2008), professional development can help enhance awareness, involvement and competency to design and deliver sustainability education. Educational leaders in business schools should acknowledge the limitations of the profit-maximization business worldview, which, as found in this case study, may hinder marketing teachers' awareness of sustainability in the marketing discipline. This

knowledge will help widen business perspectives in marketing education to welcome diversity and inclusion of alternative worldviews that support sustainability integration. Further research is required to explore what alternative worldviews are complementary and relevant to be embedded in the existing business programs to facilitate sustainability teaching.

Next, this thesis highlights the importance of culture connecting members with access to useful resources, professional development and communities of practice for the purpose of sustainability integration into teaching. For a cultural shift to happen, involvement of members is the key driver (Lambrechts et al., 2017). Hence, professional development opportunities should be provided to marketing teachers. Furthermore, resources introducing content about and assessment of sustainability knowledge and skills—particularly in the marketing stream—are important elements in the implementation of sustainability integration. Therefore, marketing textbook authors and publishers can take this requirement into consideration to write and publish relevant, meaningful, valuable and in-demand materials. In addition, people in charge of professional development within business schools can conduct a training needs analysis relating to sustainability integration in teaching to supply the right programs to their staff.

Finally, this research recommends framing professional development in a supportive culture that allows faculty to step out of their traditional comfort zone to learn, understand and apply sustainability worldviews in business schools. As the marketing teachers in this case study strongly placed an emphasis on culture, then leaders of business schools, faculties and marketing departments should take action to embed a culture that supports sustainability values and practices to encourage their members to engage in teaching sustainability. In such a culture, individuals will feel empowered through resources, professional development and communities of practice where they can comfortably and confidently voice their concerns as well as support

for sustainability integration.

Changing business worldviews is hard, especially when they are embedded in business schools, where they impact teaching (Giacalone & Thompson, 2006). Individuals need to be supported so that they can engage in collective dialogues that support sustainability education (Pilar et al., 2011). Individual teachers cannot do it alone, without knowing that they are within an organizational culture that requires, supports, and inspires them to do so. Since the motivation to take the role as agents of change is already inherent in individual teachers, it is now the time to implement sustainability education with a supportive culture.

Research Limitations and Research Directions

The current research has the following limitations. Firstly, it used purposive sampling to recruit research participants at the preselected research site. As a qualitative case study, it was limited to the marketing discipline team. Further research could gain more insight from studying across the disciplines in business schools, thus allowing a cross-disciplinary analysis to recommend a balanced approach to teaching sustainability in business programs. Secondly, though the interviews helped collect narrative data from research participants, the research covered only 71% of the population under investigation, and the sample is modest with five participants, four of whom are contract marketing teachers and thus may feel less free to innovate course content. Therefore, the research findings are specific only to the designated research site at a sustainability-focused university in Canada. The characteristics of this context do not necessarily represent other universities in Canada. Future studies into university teachers' experience of sustainability integration in marketing and business education are needed to cover varied contexts across and beyond Canada.

This case study did not include observing the teaching practice of participants and their effort to provide examples and discussions on sustainability in marketing classrooms. Future research could use mixed methods including surveys, interviews, focus groups and class observations to provide a holistic picture on the topic.

Finally, the current research only collected opinions from marketing teachers. Their viewpoints may differ from other stakeholders, such as students, university staff, educational leaders and industry personnel. More research involving these stakeholders will provide a more comprehensive view on sustainability integration, not only in the marketing discipline but also across business schools, higher education institutions and industry.

Personal Reflections

I started this master's thesis with my personal interest and motivation to find out what marketing teachers perceive to be 'sustainability' and their perspectives regarding sustainability integration in marketing education. As a marketing teacher with more than ten years' experience, I felt allegiance with the research participants in terms of their business worldviews formed over time through their own business education and industry experience. I have been deeply immersed in teaching about marketing concepts and strategies for so long that it has become an obstacle for me to transform my teaching to incorporate sustainability. With the awareness of the necessity of sustainability in higher education and increasing exposure to sustainability topics, I felt a drive within myself to become an advocate for transformative changes through my marketing teaching.

I found the research process very rewarding for my personal growth. With the opportunity to interview marketing teachers and analyzing their responses on the topic, I have become very passionate about what was truly a transformative experience to open my perspectives to welcome differences and to acknowledge similarities. As a marketing teacher, I

share the motivation to bring the best learning experience to students to transform them into good marketers and effective managers. Despite some differences in how we approach sustainability, the motivation to teach to transform students' ways of doing and thinking can help us overcome obstacles to integrate sustainability in marketing education. We will not only teach marketing knowledge but also train our students to be sustainable marketers and managers for a sustainable society embracing the triple bottom lines. However, we cannot do it by ourselves, without resources and support. Most importantly, we teachers need to feel empowered by a culture nurturing sustainability teaching in business schools. The role of such a culture is so influential and important that we need to take time to build one before we can see the effort of sustainability integration move in the right direction to see the output of our work: students with sustainability mindsets and skills who will become agents of change in the future.

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Appendix A: Research Ethics Approval

Research Ethics Board
t: (807) 343-8283
research@lakeheadu.ca

September 01, 2021

Principal Investigator: Dr. R. Paul Berger

Co-Investigator: Anh Thu Nguyen

Education

Lakehead University
955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5E1

Dear Dr. R. Paul Berger and Anh Thu:

Re: Romeo File Number: 1468832

On behalf of the Research Ethics Board, I am pleased to grant ethical approval to your research project titled, "Exploring marketing teachers' perceptions regarding sustainability in marketing education: A case study in Canada".

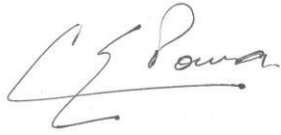
Ethics approval is valid until September 1, 2022. Please submit a Request for Renewal to the Office of Research Services via the Romeo Research Portal by August 1, 2022, if your research involving human participants will continue for longer than one year. A Final Report must be submitted promptly upon completion of the project. Access the Romeo Research Portal by logging into myInfo at:

<https://erpwp.lakeheadu.ca/>

During the course of the study, any modifications to the protocol or forms must not be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. You must promptly notify the REB of any adverse events that may occur.

Best wishes for a successful research project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Pousa', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Claudio Pousa
A/Chair, Research Ethics Board

/sa

955 Oliver Road, Thunder Bay, ON, Canada, P7B 5E1 | lakeheadu.ca

Appendix B: Recruiting Email

Dear _____,

I am Anh Thu Nguyen, a Master of Education student at Lakehead University. With this email, I am inviting you to consider participating in my research. The research aims to explore the perceptions of university teachers regarding sustainability and sustainability integration in marketing education. It is a qualitative case study focusing on the marketing discipline. Data collection is by one-on-one interview via Zoom. Participation in interviews will have no bearing on your job performance review, or otherwise affect your employment.

My supervisor is Dr. Paul Berger, Faculty of Education. This research has received support from the Dean, and the ethics application has been approved.

Please find attached the Cover Letter providing details of the research for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the research. Please do not hesitate to contact me by email at anguyen3@lakeheadu.ca.

If you would consider participating, please let me know and we will set a time that is convenient for you to meet via Zoom. We then can proceed with an interview if you agree.

Thank you very much for considering this request.

Yours sincerely,

Anh Thu Nguyen

Master of Education student

Faculty of Education

Lakehead University

Appendix C: Cover Letter

(Printed on Lakehead letterhead)

Dear Potential Participant,

This letter is to give you information about my Master of Education research and to invite your participation. I am Anh Thu Nguyen, a Master of Education student at the Faculty of Education, Lakehead University, with Dr. Paul Berger as my supervisor. I am conducting a qualitative research study as part of the requirements to fulfil my Master's degree.

Background of the research and research questions

The title of my research project is: "Perceptions of marketing teachers regarding sustainability in marketing education: A case study in Canada". My research questions are listed below:

- (1) What do marketing teachers perceive sustainability in marketing education to be?
- (2) What are marketing teachers' perspectives regarding sustainability integration in marketing education?

Research participants

You are invited to participate in this research as you are a current marketing teacher.

Data collection

I would like to interview you for data gathering purposes. Each one-to-one interview will take approximately 60 minutes to complete and will be conducted via Zoom. You may decline to answer any question. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed by me. In addition to the raw data in the transcripts, I would also like to review educational documents (current marketing syllabi) to add the richness to the research data. I will send an email to request one of your

marketing course syllabi after the interview when I send the transcript to you for checking, though it is not necessary to share your syllabi.

Benefits associated with participation

Though there is no direct benefit to you, your participation in this research will contribute findings on sustainability and sustainability integration in marketing education, particularly within a Canadian context.

Risks or disadvantages associated with participation

There is no foreseeable harm associated with participating in this research. Participation in this research project will not affect your work performance review and employment.

Data security

I have completed the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans Tutorial Course on Research Ethics*.

Raw data (audio files and transcripts) will be securely stored by me in password protected files on my personal computer while completing the research. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the raw data. Raw data will be safeguarded for five years after research completion as per Lakehead University Policy on a secured external hard drive locked within the Faculty of Education on the Lakehead University, Thunder Bay campus.

Your anonymity and confidentiality as a participant in the research will be protected, as far as possible, through use of pseudonyms in reporting. As the research involves a small pool of participants teaching marketing at the same faculty, complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Course syllabi (if used in the research) will be de-identified by using coding for sustainability topics and non-sustainability topics; course titles, course codes and topics will not be reported.

The name of the university involved in this study will not be identified nor reported in the final

thesis and potential articles. Instead, the phrase “a Canadian university with a stated sustainability focus” will be used in reporting.

Rights of participants

Your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. As a research participant, your rights include: the right to not participate; to withdraw at any time during the data collection phase without prejudice to pre-existing entitlements, and to continuing and meaningful opportunities for deciding whether or not to continue to participate; to opt out without penalty and to have any collected data withdrawn from the database and not included in the study (until completion of the analysis phase of the study; if you choose to opt out, any data pertaining to your participation will be destroyed); to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality; and to safeguards for security of data. Your consent will be obtained for audio-recording of the interview.

Dissemination of research results

The results of this research will be used in the master’s thesis on “Perceptions of marketing teachers regarding sustainability in marketing education: A case study in Canada” by Anh Thu Nguyen, Master of Education student at Lakehead University. A copy will be available in Lakehead University Library. The results may also be used in academic publications and conference presentations. If you wish to obtain a copy of research results, you may request by phone, email or in writing as described in this cover letter.

Contact details

If at any time, you have any concerns or questions regarding the project, please contact me by email: anguyen3@lakeheadu.ca, or you may contact my supervisor by email paul.berger@lakeheadu.ca.

This study has gained approval from the XXX. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the research and would like to speak to someone outside of the research team, please contact XXX.

Your support as a participant will be a valued component to my research and will support me in completing the research project. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Anh Thu Nguyen

Email: anguyen3@lakeheadu.ca

Appendix D1: Consent Form (for Online Interviews)

(Printed on Lakehead letterhead)

Study title: *Perceptions of marketing teachers regarding sustainability in marketing education:
A case study in Canada*

I, _____, (participant name) have read and understood the above information, including the associated benefits and potential risks of the study. I hereby consent to my participation in the research.

I understand:

- The potential risks and benefits of the study;
- Participation in this research project will have no bearing on my job performance review and will not affect my employment.
- I am a volunteer and may withdraw from the research at any point during the data collection period.
- I will give written responses by email.
- I may choose not to answer any question.
- All information gathered will be treated confidentially.
- As the research involves a small pool of participants, to protect the identity of each participant, pseudonyms are used throughout data analysis and reporting.

- Course syllabi (if used in the research) are de-identified by using coding for sustainability topics and non-sustainability topics; course titles, course codes and topics are not reported.
- The name of the university involved in this study is not identified nor reported in the final thesis and potential articles. Instead, the phrase “a Canadian university with a stated sustainability focus” is used in reporting.
- All raw data will be password protected and securely stored on the student researcher’s computer while completing the research.
- All raw data will be securely stored for five years after research completion by Dr. Paul Berger, using secured external hard drive locked within the Faculty of Education on Lakehead University, Thunder Bay campus; and
- I will not be identifiable in any written documents or presentations resulting from this research, unless I explicitly agree to have my identity revealed.

I also understand that the results of this research will be used only in the following:

- Presentation of research project as part of the Master of Education degree requirements.

Furthermore, I understand that if I request it, I will be provided with a summary of the results (i.e., a copy of the student thesis).

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

If requested by the student researcher, I hereby consent to be audio recorded as indicated by my signature below.

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

Please sign and return this form to me, the student researcher. A copy of the signed consent form will be provided to the supervisor. For further information concerning the completion of this form, please contact:

Student investigator:

Anh Thu Nguyen – anguyen3@lakeheadu.ca

And/or the supervisor:

Dr. Paul Berger – paul.berger@lakeheadu.ca

Appendix D2: Consent Form (for Written Interviews)

(Printed on Lakehead letterhead)

Study title: *Perceptions of marketing teachers regarding sustainability in marketing education:
A case study in Canada*

I, _____, (participant name) have read and understood the above information, including the potential risks and benefits of the study. I hereby consent to my participation in the research.

I understand:

- The potential risks and benefits of the study;
- Participation in this research project will have no bearing on my job performance review and will not affect my employment.
- I am a volunteer and may withdraw from the research at any point during the data collection period.
- I will give written responses by email.
- I may choose not to answer any question.
- All information gathered will be treated confidentially.
- As the research involves a small pool of participants, to protect the identity of each participant, pseudonyms are used throughout data analysis and reporting.
- Course syllabi (if used in the research) are de-identified by using coding for sustainability topics and non-sustainability topics; course titles, course codes and topics are not reported.

- The name of the university involved in this study is not identified nor reported in the final thesis and potential articles. Instead, the phrase “a Canadian university with a stated sustainability focus” is used in reporting.
- All raw data will be password protected and securely stored on the student researcher’s computer while completing the research.
- All raw data will be securely stored for five years after research completion by Dr. Paul Berger, using secured external hard drive locked within the Faculty of Education on Lakehead University, Thunder Bay campus; and
- I will not be identifiable in any written documents or presentations resulting from this research, unless I explicitly agree to have my identity revealed.

I also understand that the results of this research will be used in the following:

- Presentation of research as part of the Master of Education degree requirements in a master’s thesis; and/or academic conference presentations and/or journal articles.

Furthermore, I understand that if I request it, I will be provided with a summary of the results (i.e., a copy of the student thesis).

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

Please sign and return this form to me, the student researcher. For further information concerning the completion of this form, please contact:

Student investigator:

Anh Thu Nguyen – anguyen3@lakeheadu.ca

And/or the supervisor:

Dr. Paul Berger – paul.berger@lakeheadu.ca

Appendix E: Interview Guide

Debrief prior to interview: Thank you for agreeing to participate. I am very interested to hear your valuable opinion in the role of a university marketing teacher about sustainability and sustainability integration in marketing education.

- The purpose of this study is to learn how you as a marketing teacher perceive sustainability and sustainability integration in your teaching.
- Your participation will be kept confidential.
- There is no way that your name will be associated with anything you share in the interview.

Interview questions:

1. I know that you are a marketing teacher. Please describe the courses you teach.
2. In your opinion, what does it mean by sustainability in general and in the marketing discipline in particular?
3. Tell me, in more detail, about the content of your courses. What topics do you teach?
4. What topics of sustainability do you teach in your courses? If not, what topics of sustainability do you think should be developed and delivered in your courses?
5. What learning and teaching activities do you do to integrate sustainability into your courses? If not, what teaching and learning activities do you think should be developed and implemented in your courses?
6. What sustainability knowledge and skills do you think essential to your students?
7. How do you or would you assess your students' learning outcomes regarding sustainability knowledge and skills in your courses?

8. What challenges do you or would you experience regarding sustainability integration in your courses?
9. What support do you have, or would you like to have when integrating sustainability content into your courses?
10. What else would you like to share about sustainability in marketing education?