INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
BUSINESS RESEARCH MANAGEMENT (IJBRM)
2180-2165

A SPECIAL ISSUE ON

Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Finance: Theory and Practice in Challenging Times (SIBRM9)

ORGANIZED BY

- DR. NATHALIE COLASANTI - UNIVERSITY OF ROME "TOR VERGATA", ITALY
- DR. MONICA FREITAS - NOVA UNIVERSITY OF LISBO, PORTUGAL
- DR. NOEMI ROSSI - UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI MEDITERRANEA DI REGGIO CALABRIA, ITALY

Published: June 15, 2022

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH MANAGEMENT (IJBRM)

A SPECIAL ISSUE ON

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INNOVATION AND FINANCE: THEORY AND PRACTICE IN CHALLENGING TIMES (SIBRM9)

https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/special-issue-manuscripts.php?ic=SIBRM9

ISSN (Online): 2180-2165

International Journal of Business Research Management (IJBRM) is published both in traditional paper form and in Internet. This journal is published at the website https://www.cscjournals.org, maintained by Computer Science Journals (CSC Journals), Malaysia.

IJBRM Journal is a part of CSC Publishers

Computer Science Journals

https://www.cscjournals.org

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH MANAGEMENT (IJBRM)

Book: Special Issue SIBRM9 (2022)

Publishing Date: 15-06-2022

ISSN (Online): 2180-2165

IJBRM Journal is a part of CSC Publishers

https://www.cscjournals.org

Published in Malaysia

Typesetting: Camera-ready by author, data conversation by CSC Publishing Services – CSC Journals, Malaysia

CSC Publishers, 2022

EDITORIAL BOARD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Published on June 2022

Pages

EDITORIAL PREFACE

By Chief Guest Editor
Dr. Nathalie Colasanti
(University of Rome "Tor Vergata", Italy)

We are very grateful to the **International Journal of Business Research Management (IJBRM)**, and to the Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Matteo Cristofaro, for the opportunity to organize this special issue on "Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Finance: Theory and Practice in Challenging Times".

The approach of social innovation is based on the idea of finding better solutions to social needs while, at the same time, creating new relationships between participating actors. Cooperation between public and private sectors and civil society organizations is central for successful, systemic social innovation.

With this special issue, we want to investigate how socially innovative approaches, such as social entrepreneurship, social finance and the paradigm of social innovation itself, can contribute to navigate changing and challenging times, where boundaries between different sectors become increasingly blurred and the public, private and civil society find growing benefits in cooperation.

The Covid-19 pandemic makes it even more urgent to find appropriate responses to social needs and to promote collaborative practices across all social sectors. The issue will blend theory and practice together, since socially innovative approaches are often rooted in practice and tend to emerge from the bottom-up.

In this context, it is important to understand the new experiences on social entrepreneurship and social finance which have recently emerged. According to the Social Impact Bond database, 138 impacts bonds were launched so far all over the world, raising more than $440 million in capital and impacting close to 1.8 million lives; more than 70 social impact bonds are currently in development. For what concerns social enterprises, providing data about them is more difficult as they often fall under existing labels (such as social cooperatives) and not all countries have specific regulations regarding them. However, estimates indicate there are around 430.000 social enterprises across Europe. With this special issue, we start to investigate these topics.

The issue will include contributions by authors from several European countries (Italy, Switzerland, Portugal), that will investigate the many facets of socially innovative practices in order to understand, for example, how they can promote young rural entrepreneurship (Horta Parreira and Freitas), what is their role in promoting the co-creation of public value (Giuliani and Barreca) and how public networks can be governed in the process of co-producing community services (Giuliani, Maggi, Zugolaro).

Social Innovation and Young Rural Entrepreneurship: Identifying an Integrated Research in Less Favored Portuguese Rural Territories

Maria João Horta Parreira *mjoaoparreira@gmail.com*
Faculty of Social and Human Sciences
of NOVA University of Lisbon (FCSH-NOVA)
Lisbon, 1069-061, Portugal

Mónica Freitas *monica.freitas@fcsh.unl.pt*
Faculty of Social and Human Sciences
of NOVA University of Lisbon (FCSH-NOVA)
Lisbon, 1069-061, Portugal

Abstract

Schumpeter’s entrepreneurship theory associates entrepreneurship not only with organizations of businesses but also with innovation, where the human factor is a key. Concepts as entrepreneurship, innovation, social innovation need to be better understood in specific contexts, as for instance in the rural development context, developing new approaches and models, criteria and metrics, to explore, experiment, evaluate and rescale good practices and procedures, to achieve the common goals. In several countries, rural communities are vulnerable to different threats, requiring measures for territorial cohesion and the resilience of people, communities and ecosystems. The recent Portuguese statute “Young rural businesspeople” (Decree Law 9/2019) creates incentives for attracting young entrepreneurs to less favored rural areas, contributing to the dynamization of local economies and the valorization of endogenous resources. Furthermore, that legal figure aims to promote entrepreneurship and synergies between agriculture and other economic sectors, revitalizing the rural society and rural-urban partnerships, one of the challenges of the Portuguese National Program for Territorial Cohesion. In this article, we analyze the concept of social innovation and its operationalization in the context of rural development and rural entrepreneurship, specifically for empowering young people. We present insights and results from a literature review and pilot research about the potential of social innovation, specifying the research required to design tailored place-based policies for rural areas, in line with the goals of both Portuguese and European Networks for Rural Development.

Keywords: Youth Empowerment, Rural Development, Rural Entrepreneurship, Social Innovation, Territorial Cohesion.

1. INTRODUCTION

A globally accepted definition for social innovation does not exist, but it is generally agreed that social innovation is understood as a process of the transformation of social practices and of the production of new outputs, products and services, new models and new organizational forms (Ravazolli *et al.*, 2021). According to Bock (2012), social innovation may be interpreted in different perspectives:

- A social innovation mechanism: focus on the process itself;
- Social responsibility for innovation: focus on the involved social agents and in their degree of involvement;

- The need to innovate in society: focus on results, on the impact of social innovation.

By focusing in those three perspectives, the aim of this article is to create new ideas for new research on social innovation by answering the following two exploratory questions (EQ):

- EQ1: what is the relevance of social innovation for rural development, specifically in the context of entrepreneurship of young rural people?
- EQ2: in the EQ1 domain, adapting to each territorial socioeconomic particularities, which gaps and/or opportunities can be investigated more systematically?

In Portugal 79.0% of the national territory is located in predominantly rural areas, in contrast to 6.4% in predominantly urban areas (European Commission, 2018). Despite the rural society includes more than agriculture, the agrarian activity maintains a strong influence on the territorial and social dynamics of rural areas with farmers as key agents (Rolo and Cordovil, 2014). Farmers have a relevant role for society, creating food security, being the first stewards of the natural environment. At the same time, as food consumption is expected to increase, following population growth and dietary transition, farmers will have to deal with challenges like climate change, resource scarcity and reduction of the ecological footprint associated with food production and waste (Pires, 2018). Additionally, rural areas are suffering from a "rural young business problem", low generational renewal rates in the farming sector and low capacity for attracting and retaining young people (Eistrup *et al.*, 2019). These challenges are exacerbated in peripheral rural areas facing depopulation, population ageing, lacking attractiveness and a fragile social and economic cohesion (Cavaco, 2004).

To reverse that situation and improve local development, rural areas can make use of rural entrepreneurship (Fortunato, 2014), use territorial marketing for branding their identities and resources, improving communication (Uvarova, and Vitola, 2019) and innovation (Oliveira *et al.*, 2019; Parreira *et al.*, 2020). Local and regional authorities with local action groups of civil society may play a key role to develop that potential (Ceapraz, and Delhoume, 2017; Tarasovych and Tamulienė, 2017; Zawadzka, 2017), especially when they create synergies through cooperation (Lukesch*et al*., 2020). The process of 'thinking together' is a key process where people, facing the same problems in their joint area of interest, can redevelop knowledge instead of simply transferring it (Pyrko, *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, there is a need of more practice-oriented design methods that policymakers and practitioners can apply directly (Hoolohanand Browne, 2020).

Social innovation can have an important synergetic effect on policy intervention, enhancement of the social relations and the empowerment of local communities, boosting well-tailored strategies for local development (Lombardi *et al.,* 2020), but this requires a long-term, future-oriented perspective of development and collective action (Bruckmeier and Pires, 2018). In sectors as agriculture and in marginalized contexts, there is a lack of research about social innovation (Ravazolli *et al.*, 2021), especially about integration of top and the bottom, not merely top-down or bottom-up approaches (Murray *et al*., 2010). Although the representation of people and territories is important for their valorization (Moreno, 2013), there is a lack in literature of validated tools for evaluating social innovation initiatives in the agricultural context (Baselice *et al*., 2021). These authors demonstrated the adequacy of an evaluation framework based on an empirical application of the five types of criteria of the OECD: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, which may be replicated or adapted in future works.

The structure of the paper is as follows. First, we explore the relevance of social innovation for rural development in a global perspective, based on existing literature, to identify knowledge gaps and opportunities. The global perspective is specified for the needs of social innovation in

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

Portugal. In section 3, we specify the requirements of social innovation more concretely for rural entrepreneurship and empowerment of young people. In section 4, we translate the results for the literature review and own preparatory research on rural entrepreneurship in methodologically specified perspectives and approaches for new research. In section 5, we discuss the research requirements critically with regard to policy options and draw some conclusions.

2. SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT: BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

As political frameworks have a strong influence on governance processes and on civil society initiatives, Lukesch *et al.* (2020) developed a heuristic model to explore the conditions that foster or hinder social innovation. Those authors concluded that social innovation would create most benefits when a triad of actors works together: the state, intermediary organizations, and local actors. According to Bock (2012), social innovation presumes a search for social justice and the public goods in a meticulous and systematic analysis, looking to the inherent failures and obtaining answers throughout a debate: "What to change and how?".

Murray *et al.* (2010) identified six stages in the process of social innovation (figure 1). Those authors alert these six stages do not need to be always sequential and can include feedback loops. These six steps can be understood as overlapping stages, with different contexts, cultures and skills. Their main purpose is to achieve a functional framework to reflect and explore the challenges, addressing not only the symptoms of problems, but also their root causes, formulating relevant questions to obtain better solutions.

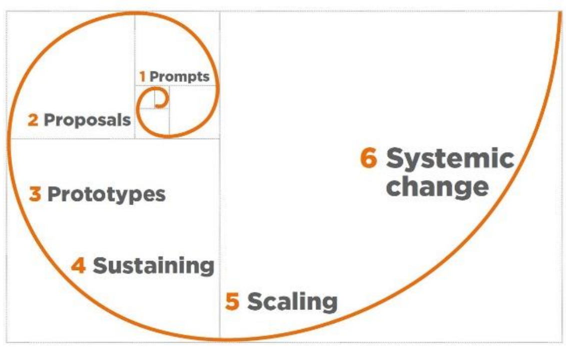


FIGURE 1: The Process of Social Innovation.
Source: Murray *et al.* (2010, p. 11).

In theory the concept and the importance of social innovation for rural development is acknowledged, but the mechanisms involved in that process and the capacities of the involved actors are not yet understood very well (Borzaga and Bodini, 2014). These authors emphasize the necessity to distinguish social innovation from other kinds of innovation, and to identify practices, supporting policy interventions that improve specialized social innovation policies. How policy measures that support social innovation can be designed to create and maintain social innovation within rural development is insufficiently known, although it is known that social innovation requires collective learning, co-ordination and communication processes in that domain (Neumeier, 2017).

According to Filipe Santos, Dean of Catolica-Lisbon, social innovation allows the development of new responses and solutions to social problems, at a low cost for the State, through the involvement of experienced entrepreneurs, third sector entities, communities and municipalities, ensuring the anchoring of innovative solutions in the territories. He emphasizes that social innovation needs to meet the wishes of new generations who want to improve and transform their

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

society. In an article written by him, published recently in July 2021 (available in this link: https://bityli.com/6gKZH), he highlights that:

"The innovation and social entrepreneurship ecosystem emerged in Portugal about a decade ago, through the development of new responses to social problems in favor of the common good, developed mainly by social entrepreneurs. The ecosystem is more solid, as it has a wide range of entities that develop social innovations, incubators that support them, public and private financing programs and dozens of success stories, many of them with replication and international reputation. However, it will be important to continue the social innovation policy successfully started in Portugal2020 and which has become an international reference, as Portugal runs the risk of losing its leadership and pioneering position in Europe if the Social Innovation program is not continued in the forthcoming framework program."

Generally, the concept of development is often associated with economic development, being measured by the Gross Domestic Product. Many authors discuss this critically as a reductive view, given the complexity of current socio-economic and environmental challenges, and the finite nature of natural resources (da Rocha Salles *et al.*, 2017). Innovation, both in terms of territorial dynamics and strategic planning, can leverage sustainable development in different dimensions beyond the economic. Porter and Kramer (2019) highlight the concept of "shared value", a new way to achieve economic value that creates value for society, where businesses must be connected with social progress, causing a new shift of business thinking. There are still many challenges in networks of cooperation, online or offline, of which the interaction between technology and territories is required to achieve a collaborative innovation and a creative territorial networking (Covas and de Mendonça, 2019).

In Portugal, rural areas have been suffering from demographic decline, the loss of importance of agricultural activity, depopulation, and the duality of development between remote rural areas and rural areas closer to large urban centers (Figueiredo, 2014). At the same time, new trends are emerging, as the migration of individuals from urban to rural areas with the aim of creating micro-enterprises. The same author highlights that more than the old vision centered in the dichotomy urban and rural, can local and regional differences explain the spatial changes of competitiveness, relevant to combine rural development to local development. In this perspective, it will be pertinent to replace endogenous development policies by others in which the local-global relationship occupies a prominent position, trying to address the deficiencies of each rural area with its social actors, to create diverse and unique spaces. At the local level, external knowledge and resources will be required, as it is not easy to do everything by own initiative (Bosworth *et al.*, 2016). Distinguishing between agrarian and rural development will be useful. According to Covas (2007), the agrarian development can be interpreted as a commercial act, where the products sell the territory they use but are not so concerned with reproducing the context they consume. On the other hand, Covas (2007) highlights that rural development is, more than just a commercial act, an act of cultural foundation based on the principles of multifunctional agriculture and on the production of positive externalities, that is, on the production of context. Chaudhuri *et al.* (2021) also highlight the links between agrarian development and rural development, the first one more rooted in technocratic solutions than in the social dimension of agricultural innovation.

Although research on rural social innovation has been developing, directing attention on community-led approaches to rural development, the meaning of social innovation requires further clarification, innovative means, practical support and evaluation of social innovation initiatives (Bosworth *et al.*, 2016). The authors highlight that rural communities are innovative when they have the necessary space and power to act, when limitation that remains is identified, and when scientific research becomes a source to guide the design of policies. The innovation of managing agriculture systems is crucial for the adaptation to economic, social and environmental changes, as the capacity to implement new practices according to the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) framework. Oliveira *et al.* (2019) highlight the necessity to review

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

critically the definition of innovation applied to agricultural systems for the purpose to boost rural development. The AKIS system links people and organizations in Europe to promote mutual learning, both from public, private and non-profit sectors in an organizational diversity of production and exchange of agricultural knowledge in each European country (Knierim *et al.*, 2015). These authors argue that, given the complexity and diversity of national institutions, laws and cultures in each European country, it is not possible to compare directly the AKIS diagrams. But they can be characterized in a continuum: strength (from weak to strong), and of level of integration (from fragmented to integrated). Furthermore, they mention that Portugal has a weak and fragmented AKIS profile: farmers are not reached neither beneficiate from advisory services and different knowledge networks exist without strong coordination and cooperation. Although agriculture is one important economic and social driver of rural areas in Europe, a lack of validated tools for evaluating social innovation initiatives remains (Baselice *et al*., 2021).

Concerning the literature about rural development in European territories, the role of the LEADER approach is a core theme, where innovation has a key role in the last years. There is, however, a need to improve the level of sophistication of innovation, specifically in the social innovation domain (Navarro *et al.*, 2018). The authors stress social innovation as one of the axes for neo-endogenous rural development and for the LEADER approach, as it implies the components of trust, cooperation, partnerships, leadership, common vision, bottom-up approach, governance and local linkages. One recent Portuguese research highlights the importance of the LEADER program and the role of the Local Action Groups (LAG) in the rural development strategy of the regions in Portugal. In this work, a limitation of LEADER was identified in the objectives previously assumed in this program related to innovation and the diversification of activities (Nascimento, 2019): the author warns that innovation is not included in the eligibility criteria to approve the projects. Consequently, the criteria of innovation remain vulnerable, each LAG can decide to assign or not about its importance for the respective approval of projects. In relation to the diversification of activities, it is observed that a large part of the investments have been made in a small number of sectors, with emphasis on agriculture and tourism. One of the conclusions of the study is to promote improvements in the Portuguese LEADER approach, studying in detail, and for each territory, the work carried out by the LAG communities. The geographical vision of social innovation by Bock (2012) highlights that social innovation efforts in rural areas must be a national concern, that is, it must address the interrelated effects of social changes, instead of looking for solutions in individual rural areas. The author presumes that urbanization and rural marginalization are two sides of the same coin, and, for that reason, rural-urban linkages, their interactions and mutual dependencies should be evaluated.

According to the considerations in the previous paragraphs and exploring answers to the two exploratory questions exposed in the introduction, the statute of young rural businesspeople (YRB) can become a promoter of social innovations for rural development. More than entrepreneurs and businesspeople, the YRB statute can be a driver of social and solidarity economy, whose focus, far beyond financial profits, may be on the notion of the "shared value" as highlighted by Porter and Kramer (2019). In the publication "54 LEADER 2014-2020 projects for the development of rural territories" *(*available in this link: http://leader2020.minhaterra.pt/54-projetos-leader-2014-2020-para-o-desenvolvimento-dos-territorios-rurais.T1016.php*)* we can consult relevant projects supported under the Measure 10 / LEADER of the 2020 Rural Development Program in mainland Portugal. They show the diversity in the implementation of projects: from investing in new production, diversification of farms, requalification of local markets, heritage enhancement, to the creation of agro-tourism units, sharing the same vision of territories and communities, and favoring local development. Regarding the 54 projects, 34 were developed by collective entities (municipalities, companies, cooperatives) and 20 projects by individual entities, 13 men and 7 women. More than 60% of the projects were implemented by collective entities, which may be pertinent to (re)think the applicability of the YRB statute, which can be requested either individually or collectively. There is a knowledge gap in this domain in Portugal: whether this statute can potentially function to drive social and rural development. One important reference is Mariana Mazzucato and her vision that Europe needs clear, targeted missions, a powerful tool to focus our research, innovation and investments on solving critical problems. Figure 2 illustrates the movement from grand challenges to mission projects.

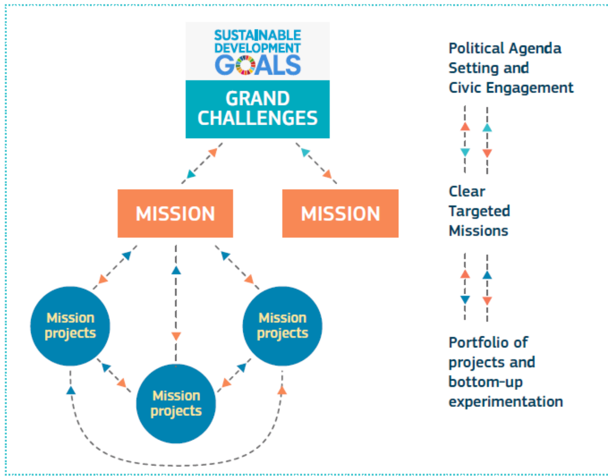


FIGURE 2: Mission oriented vision by Mazzucato: from grand challenges to missions.
Source: Mazzucato (2018, p. 11).

Missions are both a means of setting goals and a vehicle to get there and we must assume risks to launch a new vision of a problem-solving approach to innovation-led growth (Mazzucato, 2018). The relevance of social innovation to rural development, referring to the vision of Mazzucato, can be explored both as a means and as a vehicle, in different shapes and contexts of innovation missions. Complementing with the perspectives pointed out by Bock (2012) about social innovation, we can develop the research agenda for social innovation with such innovative components as process-oriented, agency and participation-oriented, result- and measurement-related processes and programs of socially inclusive rural development, where the impact of social innovation is a key criterion. Cristofaro *et al.* (2021) identified the need research and publications that deal with different management aspects, for themes as Entrepreneurship, Social Issues Management and Organization Development and Change. In the fourth section of the paper we specify these new research agenda.

3. RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR RURAL ENTREPREUNEURSHIP AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Entrepreneurship is more than creation of companies, when it is understood as involvement of different entrepreneurs, individual or collective, in a cooperative process of territorial valorization or "business function" (Moreno, 2009). According to Moreira (2006), more than the figure of the entrepreneur matters the business function, which implies a broad notion of entrepreneurship: every individual, group of individuals, institutions and even state bodies carry out that business function. For Schumpeter, the most important business function is that of innovating. In the scenario of the social innovation potentialities, it will be pertinent to change the focus from individual entities to that collective function. Thinking about the relevance of social innovation for rural entrepreneurship, it becomes necessary to develop the traditional entrepreneurship "business function" through the capacity of creating social innovation.

Malerba and McKelvey (2020) propose a novel conceptualization of knowledge-intensive innovative entrepreneurship, which, they see as the most important type of entrepreneurship in the modern knowledge economy. Inspired by sets of theory from Schumpeter entrepreneurship,

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

evolutionary economics, and innovation systems, they point out insights from their analysis of innovation systems concerning entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship:

- Entrepreneurs are highly dependent upon the knowledge infrastructure, the supporting actors and the institutional context. They are creators of opportunities, but, at the same time, the geographical and sectoral dimensions, in which they are acting, restrict them.

- Entrepreneurship is affected by the complementary knowledge and skills of actors linked with the innovation systems. Furthermore, it depends from the existence of networks and channels through which knowledge is communicated, shared or generated.

According to Pato and Teixeira (2018), not all the entrepreneurs who operate and manage a venture in rural areas are rural entrepreneurs in a strict sense. The authors distinguish between “Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas” and “Rural Entrepreneurship in a strict sense”, meaning that rural entrepreneurs are mainly motivated and working for the well-being of the place and community and less motivated by monetary benefits. To understand in greater depth the potential of rural entrepreneurship for rural development, highlighting potential limitations and constraints (Pato, 2020), more efforts and research of the type described in the fourth section are needed. This author argues that governmental and other regional entities should promote a culture of entrepreneurship based on local and endogenous resources, supporting the entrepreneurial initiatives, for example, in training or financial support. Pato (2020) mentions, in addition, that the concept of rural entrepreneurship, in the work of Wortman Jr. (1990), following the concept of innovation by Schumpeter, is still understood in the limited sense of the development of enterprises in rural areas to promote rural progress.

According to Pato (2020), the concept of social innovation is interconnected with that of rural innovation. We think this interconnection is useful to contextualize and materialize them for the specific situation in a territory, with the participation of local actors, to apply, monitor and evaluate social innovation processes and outputs, in accordance with defined objectives. More than searching for solutions directly, it will be necessary to work on the causes of the identified problems, through which solutions can emerge in directly. In one analysis of the relationship between territory and social inequalities in territories with low population density, the results show the persistence of inequalities, with greater incidence in territories with a rural matrix and further away from the large urban centers and their influence (Mauritti *et al.*, 2019). Focusing on the social responsibility for innovation perspective, we highlight the fact Mónica Freitas showed: networks which engage hospitals and universities were much more persistent and competitive because they promoted exchange of knowledge among the actors, as well as the inclusion of new ones (Freitas, 2016). To explore the networking potential among specific stakeholders in the connection of social innovation and rural young entrepreneurship can become a criterion for successful development.

With the pandemic crisis, youth unemployment has been growing and reaching alarming levels in Portugal. Self-employment and (youth) entrepreneurship are current alternatives, but “we must acknowledge that supporting self-employment and entrepreneurship is indeed a policy focus that will reach only a limited portion of young people, that is, those with the appropriate education, skills, and business ideas and it certainly cannot be regarded as the primary or sole solution for addressing youth unemployment” (Tosun *et al.*, 2016, p. 7). The National Plan for Youth was approved in Portugal by the Council of Ministers Resolution number 114-A/2018. One of the operational objectives of this resolution is “Diversifying the economic base of the rural world, through the entrepreneurial initiative of young people”. A corresponding measure is suggested as: "a set of incentives attracting and retaining young people in rural regions according to the Young Rural Businesspeople Statute”. Thinking about that statute, with a maximum age of 40 years to access it, we think that the age factor in accessing this statute may be a limitation to reach the

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

potential associated with the objectives. One of the general objectives of the strategic plan of the Portuguese Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is to strengthen the socio-economic context of rural areas along with specific objectives as the following: attract young farmers and facilitate business development in rural areas, promote employment, growth, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the bio-economy and sustainable forestry.

How to promote the inclusion of the huge number of Portuguese farms, about 40% of which according to Cordovil (2021) are currently excluded from CAP support? How to support the generational renewal of farmers, to maintain the continuity of family farming, access to resources, and the integration of new rural people? How to interconnect rural and urban youth, including both in participatory practices to explore new and innovative business ideas? How to strengthen the coordination, coherence and complementarily of policy measures with a territorial impact (environment and spatial planning and economic cohesion, social and territorial) from national to local level? We see these questions as most important to guide the research on new development paths for rural areas. Synthesizing research and managing expert and non-expert communities are two key skills to improve policy decisions through research (Parreira *et al.*, 2020). Stakeholders are looking, more and more, to challenges, which demand enormous data sets and calculations. At the same time, supercomputing demonstrated that is a vital support to boost problem solving approaches and decision-making, to solve current challenges, to uncover new problems in different domains of knowledge (including rural development and youth empowerment). In that vision, we point out supercomputing as a great ally in the domain of social innovation, due to its potential capability and capacity to support and obtain accurate results, with regard to innovation. Artificial intelligence is researched by Dargham *et al.* (2021), to find out how it contributes to the creation of social impact and how it can impact social innovation. In-depth, long-term research is required to better understand the processes of creating agency and social innovations, to deal with the challenges through digitalization in rural areas, and to monitor the inherent risks (Sept, 2020).

The literature review shows several possibilities to reduce the knowledge gaps on social innovation through combination of themes and integration of research perspectives. The significance of such integrative research can be substantiated through the neglect of rural areas in the social innovation research, although these areas represent a considerable part of the world´s territories and population (de Fátima Ferreiro *et al.*, 2021). Following the suggestions of Cristofaro *et al.* (2021), we want suggest for the investigation of entrepreneurship, social issues management, and organization development or change new integrating approaches and perspectives.

4. RESULTS ORIENTED FOR AN INTEGRATIVE RESEARCH ON SOCIAL INNOVATION IN RURAL TERRITORIES

In the next figure 3, we draw exploratory linkages between social innovation and rural entrepreneurship, in line with the designed suggestions, explained below. Its purpose is to show the integration of different thematic components, relevant for future research on social innovation in rural areas.

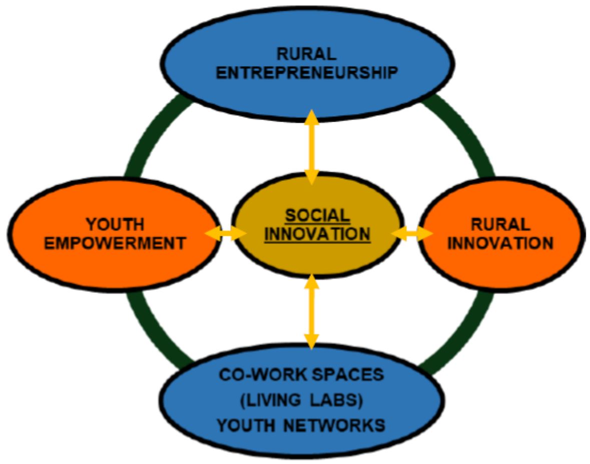


FIGURE 3: Exploratory linkages between Social Innovation and Young Rural Entrepreneurship
Source: Own elaboration.

The aims of integrative research on social innovation in rural areas are twofold:

- to understand the potential of the Young Rural Businesspeople (YRB), a Portuguese legal norm from 2019, to boost social innovation initiatives;
- to assess the relevance of social innovation in rural young entrepreneurship, including the potential of knowledge exchange networks between rural young entrepreneurs and other social agents, especially research institutions, non-profit organizations, state and private entities committed to rural development.

Research to achieve these aims requires case studies in actor-oriented network approaches, to provide knowledge for the:

- sharing and diffusion of knowledge (establishing networks between young entrepreneurs/farmers and other stakeholders);
- exploring the potential of social innovation for the development of more cohesive and resilient rural territories (through the involvement of several social agents);
- prospecting of an evaluation of the diversity of activities in rural areas (highlighting the connected opportunities and constraints).

More specifically, the research to carryout should enable:

- to evaluate, how the YRB statute can stimulate the articulation of agriculture with other economic sectors, fostering social innovation initiatives;
- to assess, how knowledge exchange can help rural young entrepreneurs to use effectively diverse and volatile networks (to be able to shape the networks according to the most relevant needs);
- to determine the key constraints/opportunities that influence the rural youth adherence to YRB;
- to elaborate a model to assess the relevance of social innovation in rural young entrepreneurship (identifying the key stakeholders and their influence in social innovation initiatives).

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

For integrating the research and action to carry out, the PDCA cycle can be followed: Plan - Do - Check - Act (through local partnerships, cooperation and networking, in an iterative process). In this preparatory phase, several rural municipalities can be chosen for case studies (based on the annex I of *Portaria* 143/2019: rural areas for the attribution of the statute of Young rural businesspeople), as well as the *Portaria* 5/2019 (list of less-favored Portuguese areas). Case studies should include the following criteria: population density, typology of agricultural production (small or large-scale), inland/coastal, rural-urban transition zones, existence/absence of rural entrepreneurship programs and Higher Education Institutions.

The complexity of the connected systems and processes requires mixed methods research with procedures and techniques widely used in science and action-oriented research (literature review, interviews, focus groups, questionnaire surveys, and specific methods for expert consultation). Additionally, Portuguese policies for rural young entrepreneurship should be analysed (to identify regional and sectoral asymmetries and possible alternatives).

A Glance report can serve as a model (a result of the OECD-Eurostat Entrepreneurship Indicators Programme, EIP). EIP started in 2006, with focus on exploiting existing sources and data to inform policy design through the development of policy-relevant indicators.

What can be expected from action-oriented research including the component mentioned are models for integrated assessment of the relevance of social innovation in less-favored Portuguese rural territories, specifically to boost rural young entrepreneurship initiatives, exploring key criteria as knowledge exchange, place-based policies and stakeholder influence in that dynamics (Meneguzzo et. al., 2014). Such models, complemented with practical tools for their application, will be useful to understand the concept of social innovation for rural young entrepreneurship. The integrated framework should be replicated, adapted and/or upgraded in other rural areas and in future research.

Based on such forms of integrated research it will be easier in future to develop road maps and guides for the assessment of regional/local trends identified in case studies, to be used as business cooperation models for rural young entrepreneurs and other stakeholders in rural development. Experimental mentoring platform scan, furthermore, be imagined (to be used by rural young entrepreneurs/farmers and potential mentors), helping to develop future workshops and their innovation potentials.

5. DISCUSSION AND FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Reliable and comparable data, showing the relevance of social innovation for rural development initiatives and youth empowerment, can improve future-oriented decisions in the interfaces between science, policy and society. To build social innovation frameworks for rural areas, boosting new collaborative approaches for rural young entrepreneurship initiatives, is especially important in countries as Portugal, where the rural component is still strong.

The suggestions described and discussed in this article can help to improve more effectively than prior non-integrated research, also to boost measures in rural development programs and to strengthen rural-urban partnerships, through processes of co-creation and social innovation. These components can be formulated in new systemic visions of rural development, that can be matched with the broader scenarios of socially, economically and environmentally sustainable development that underlie the policies of the European Union and its member states.

The great challenges for such research should not only be shared it with the international scientific community. Necessary will be critical debates about such integrated research that crosses the boundaries between the disciplines and sub-disciplines specialized in rural research, requiring inter- and trans-disciplinary cooperation of scientists, decision makers and other stakeholders in rural development.

At a time when it is urgent to obtain more examples of win-win situations in rural development, we highlight the importance of creating new data, integrated models, and new forms of organization, for effective knowledge and production of knowledge, which can be used by all stakeholders and social actors.

Due to pressing societal challenges, as the ageing of Europe's population, high index of young people unemployment, global competition, social inequalities and problems through climate change, there is a growing need for new approaches, conceptual processes, organizational changes and tools, which may contribute to the achievement of solutions through interdisciplinary research on interconnected social, economic and environmental challenges.

Social Innovation has not been ignored, as we showed in this article, but underestimated in its significance for rural development to meet the global challenges just mentioned. The concept of the “business function”, interpreted as a collective effort with an important political role, gains here new importance. As Michael Porter emphasizes in a TED talk (available in this link: https://youtu.be/0iIh5YYDR2o)*,* the government does not have to be the only one to make decisions in the face of increasingly urgent social problems, it cannot be the only one establishing partnerships, cooperation, and, the creation of shared value requires new models of governance where non-governmental actors participate.

We stress the need of new research avenues to address the most pressing problems of our time (as environmental risks and social inequalities) through an integrative approach of social innovation research in rural areas. This strategy will be closer to an interactive dialogue between the scientific community and the rural communities, in a multi-actor approach, which applies different sources of knowledge in the co-construction of solutions to tackle complex problems.

Joining efforts in the building capacity to better represent diminished social groups in rural areas, as well as encouraging the co-design of rural policies in collective initiatives, can promote opener and flexible governance structures that have not yet materialized in less favored territories.

Given the current uncertainties and unpredictability, we believe it is essential to open the scientific discussion, incorporating social actors and dimensions that traditionally would not be part of this dynamic. Specifically in the integration of various components of social innovation to improve the capacity to create social innovation missions in different forms and contexts, stimulating territorial cohesion and the empowerment of young people and entrepreneurship in rural territories.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors thank the Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology, for funding the research developed by the first author as part of her PhD in Human Ecology at the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences of NOVA University of Lisbon (FCSH-NOVA). In addition, they are grateful to Professor Iva Pires and Professor Karl Bruckmeier, both from CICS. NOVA hosted in FCSH-NOVA, and to Professor Fátima Oliveira from the Centre for Natural Resources, Environment and Society (CERNAS) in Coimbra, for their useful advice. The authors also thank anonymous reviewers, for their valuable comments to improve the quality of the paper.

7. REFERENCES

Baselice, A., Prosperi, M., Marini Govigli, V., and Lopolito, A. (2021). Application of a Comprehensive Methodology for the Evaluation of Social Innovations in Rural Communities. *Sustainability*, *13*(4), 1807.

Bock, B. B. (2012). Social innovation and sustainability; how to disentangle the buzzword and its application in the field of agriculture and rural development. *Studies in agricultural economics*, *114*(2), 57-63.

Borzaga, C., and Bodini, R. (2014). What to make of social innovation? Towards a framework for policy development. *Social Policy and Society*, *13*(3), 411-421.

Bosworth, G., Rizzo, F., Marquardt, D., Strijker, D., Haartsen, T., and Aagaard Thuesen, A. (2016). Identifying social innovations in European local rural development initiatives. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, *29*(4), 442-461.

Bruckmeier, Karl; Pires, Iva (2018) Innovation as transformation – integrating the socio-ecological perspectives of resilience and sustainability, in Pinto, H.; Noronha, T.; Vaz, E. (Ed.) Resilience and Regional Dynamics: an International Approach to a New Research Agenda (chapter 11, pp209-232). Regional Science Series. Switzerland: Spinger International. ISBN 978-3-319-95134-8; ISBN 978-3-319-95135-5 (e-Book).

Cavaco, C. (2004). Desafios do desenvolvimento rural. Notas de leitura. *Finisterra*, *39*(78).

Ceapraz, I. L., and Delhoume, C. (2017). How Social Capital Can Improve the Territorial Innovation? The Case of the French Agriculture. Some Conceptual Issues. *Romanian Journal of Regional Science, 11*(2), 26-35.

Chaudhuri, S., Roy, M., McDonald, L. M., and Emendack, Y. (2021). Reflections on farmers' social networks: a means for sustainable agricultural development?. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, *23*(3), 2973-3008.

Cordovil, F. C. (2021). *Agricultura e Política Agrícola*. Retrieved from: https://iniav.pt/images/publicacoes/livros-manuais/Agricultura_e_Poltica_Agrcola.pdf

Covas, A. M. A., and de Mendonça, M. d. M. C. (2019). A Inteligência Dos Territórios: os Terroirs como Espaços De Inovação Colaborativa. *Informe Gepec, 23*, 40-54.

Covas, António (2007) "Ruralidades I – Temas e Problemas do mundo Rural", Edições Universidade do Algarve, Economia e Gestão, 1ºedição.

Cristofaro, M., Giardino, P. L., & Leoni, L. (2021). Back to the Future: A Review and Editorial Agenda of the International Journal of Business Research and Management. *International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)*, *12*(1), 16-33.

da Rocha Salles, F., Fernandes, V., & Limont, M. (2017). Capital social e sustentabilidade: uma relação intrínseca. *Desenvolvimento e Meio Ambiente*, *42*.

Dargham, M., and Hachimi, H. (2021). Artificial Intelligence and the emergence of social innovation Case of the Group" Crédit Agricole" in Morocco. In *2021 7th International Conference on Optimization and Applications (ICOA)* (pp. 1-5). IEEE.

de Fátima Ferreiro, M., Sousa, C., Sheikh, F. A., and Novikova, M. (2021). Social innovation and rural territories: Exploring invisible contexts and actors in Portugal and India. *Journal of Rural Studies*.

Eistrup, M., Sanches, A. R., Muñoz-Rojas, J., and Pinto Correia, T. (2019). A "Young Farmer Problem"? Opportunities and Constraints for Generational Renewal in Farm Management: An Example from Southern Europe. *Land, 8*(4), 70

European Commission (2018) European Commission (EC). CAP context indicators 2014-2020: 2018 update. Luxemburg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2018.

Figueiredo, A. R. D. (2014). *Desenvolvimento rural e empreendedorismo: estudos de caso* (Doctoral dissertation).

Fortunato, M. W. P. (2014). Supporting rural entrepreneurship: a review of conceptual developments from research to practice. *Community development*, *45*(4), 387-408

Freitas, M. D. M. (2016). Responsabilidade Social no Setor da Saúde: Representações, Valores, Motivações e Instrumentos.

González-Yebra, Ó., Aguilar, M. A., and Aguilar, F. J. (2019). A first approach to the design component in the agri-food industry of southern Spain. *Revista de la Facultad de Ciencias Agrarias UNCuyo*, *51*(1), 125-146.

Hoolohan, C., and Browne, A. L. (2020). Design thinking for practice-based intervention: Co-producing the change points toolkit to unlock (un) sustainable practices. *Design Studies*.

Knierim, A., Prager, K., & Hutton, J. (2015). Agricultural knowledge and information systems in Europe: Weak or strong, fragmented or integrated. *PRO AKIS, EC 7th FP project*.

Lombardi, M., Lopolito, A., Andriano, A. M., Prosperi, M., Stasi, A., and Iannuzzi, E. (2020). Network impact of social innovation initiatives in marginalised rural communities. *Social Networks*, *63*, 11-20.

Lukesch, R., Ludvig, A., Slee, B., Weiss, G., and Živojinović, I. (2020). Social innovation, societal change, and the role of policies. *Sustainability*, *12*(18), 7407.

Lukesch, R., Ludvig, A., Slee, B., Weiss, G., and Živojinović, I. (2020). Social innovation, societal change, and the role of policies. *Sustainability*, *12*(18), 7407.

Malerba, F., and McKelvey, M. (2020). Knowledge-intensive innovative entrepreneurship integrating Schumpeter, evolutionary economics, and innovation systems. *Small Business Economics*, *54*(2), 503-522.

Mauritti, R., Nunes, N., Alves, J. E., and Diogo, F. (2019). Desigualdades sociais e desenvolvimento em Portugal: um olhar à escala regional e aos territórios de baixa densidade. *Sociologia Online*, *19*, 102-126.

Mazzucato, M. (2018). Mission-oriented research and innovation in the European Union. *European Commission*.

Meneguzzo, Marco; Frondizi, Rocco; Colasanti, Nathalie; Freitas, Mónica and Ricardo Altamira Vega. (2014). "1+1=3: How can Social Innovation Change Cultures and Create Public Value? Experiences in Southern European Countries" in *Business- Government Relations and Social Enterprises. Lessons and Experiences from South- Eastern Europe. Chapter III: 179-195.* Edited by Lucica Matei, Marco Meneguzzo, Cristina Mititelu. Dipartimento Study Imprensa Governo Filosofia, Universitá Tor di Vergata, Rome, EGPA/GEAP IIAS, IISA SNSPA. Bogdan Berceanu. ISBN 978-2-8027-5459-6

Moreira, M. B. (2006). Empresariado Rural. Tópicos para Reflexão. *DEPÓsocial innovationTO LEGAL*, 171

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

Moreno, L. (2009). Empreendedorismo e promoção territorial das áreas rurais. *BATISTA, F. et al*, 121-132.

Moreno, Luís. (2013). Governança nas Políticas de Desenvolvimento Local e Inovação Institucional. 10.13140/2.1.1986.3686.

Murray, Rubin; Caulier- Grice, Julie and Geoff Mulgan. 2010. "The Open Book of Social Innovation" in *Social Innovator Series. Ways to Design, Develop and Grow Social Innovation.* The Young Foundation. The LAB, NESTA Innovating Public Services.

Nascimento, M. A. D. D. (2019). *O programa LEADER e o papel dos Grupos de Ação Local (GAL) na estratégia de desenvolvimento rural das regiões em Portugal* (Doctoral dissertation).

Neumeier, S. (2017). Social innovation in rural development: identifying the key factors of success. *The geographical journal*, *183*(1), 34-46.

Oliveira, M.F., Silva, F.G., Ferreira, S., Teixeira, M., Damásio, H., Ferreira, A., and Gonçalves, J.M. (2019). Innovations in Sustainable Agriculture: Case Study of Lis Valley Irrigation District, Portugal. *Sustainability, 11*, 331.

Parreira, M. J., Oliveira, F., Reis, P., and Coelho, I. (2020). A pork value chain in Portugal: the case study of Porco Alentejano, Montanheira system and traditional products. *AGROFOR International Journal*, *5*(2), 62-69.

Pato, L., & Teixeira, A. A. C. (2018). Rural Entrepreneurship: the Tale of a Rare Event. *Journal os Place Management and Development, 11*(1), 46-59.

Pires, Iva (2018) Desperdício Alimentar. Série Ensaios, nº86. Lisboa: Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos. Depósito Legal nº444169/18

Porter, M. E., and Kramer, M. R. (2019). Creating shared value. In *Managing sustainable business* (pp. 323-346): Springer.

Pyrko, I., Dörfler, V., and Eden, C. (2017). Thinking together: What makes Communities of Practice work? *Human relations, 70*(4), 389-409.

Ravazzoli, E., Dalla Torre, C., Da Re, R., Marini Govigli, V., Secco, L., Górriz-Mifsud, E., ... and Nijnik, M. (2021). Can social innovation make a change in European and Mediterranean marginalized areas? Social innovation impact assessment in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and rural development. *Sustainability*, *13*(4), 1823

Rolo e Cordovil (2014) Rolo, J.C. & Cordovil, F. (2014), *Rural, Agricultura e Políticas*. Edição: Animar|Ruranimar, 64 p., in http://www.iniav.pt/fotos/editor2/rural_agricultura_politicas.pdf.

Sept, A. (2020). Thinking together digitalization and social innovation in rural areas: An exploration of rural digitalization projects in Germany. *European Countryside*, *12*(2), 193-208.

Tarasovych, L., and Tamulienė, V. (2017). Marketing as a tool for social and economic rural areas development. *Management Theory and Studies for Rural Business and Infrastructure Development, 39*(4), 524-536.

Uvarova, I., and Vitola, A. (2019). Innovation challenges and opportunities in European rural SMEs. *Public policy and administration, 18*(1), 152-166.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

Wortman Jr., M. S. (1990). Rural Entrepreneurship Research: An Integration into the Entrepreneurship Field. *Agribusiness, 6*(4), 329-344.

Zawadzka, A. K. (2017). Making Small Towns Visible in Europe: The Case of Cittaslow Network– The Strategy Based on Sustainable Development. *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences, 13*(social innovation), 90-106.

B Corp Movement and the Development of Corporate Social Responsibility Practices: Ethnography of A Pharmaceutical Company

Sónia Coutinho *sonia.coutinho@aln.iseg.ulisboa.pt*
Phytoderm
Lisbon, 1069-061, Portugal

Mónica Freitas *monica.freitas@fcsh.unl.pt*
Faculty of Social and Human Sciences
of NOVA University of Lisbon (FCSH-NOVA)
Lisbon, 1069-061, Portugal

Abstract

Consideringthe emerging social and environmental needs, companies are beginning to awaken to the awareness that they must take responsibility for changing the business paradigm, whose objective does not have to be exclusively profit for their own benefit. This work focuses on the development of Corporate Social Responsibility practices and the transformation process into a B Corp company based on ethnographic research carried out in a Portuguese pharmaceutical company, which aims to understand the functioning, values and motivation for involvement with what they call the common good. Establishing a clear social or environmental improvement purpose and developing practices to achieve it is the basis for a company to become B Corp1[1]. This work concludes that there is no recipe for a company to become B, taking into account that its performance depends on various internal and external factors, as well as its business area. However, it verified the undeniable weight of stakeholder networks in the adequacy of organizational values and practices according to the parameters dictated by social responsibility, including in the pharmaceutical sector.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Ethics, B Corp Movement, Ethnography In Companies, Certification.

1. INTRODUCTION

This work aims to understand the restructuring process of the operating model, organizational values and motivations of a pharmaceutical company based on the "B-Corp" model. For this purpose, the method of ethnographic study was used. The investigation was designed from the questions: What are the mobilizing factors for companies to obtain B Corp certification? How does B Corp certification influence a closer attention to emerging social and environmental issues?

[1]B Lab, a non-governmental company founded in 2006, in Pennsylvania, with the objective of creating a movement of companies that consider their impact on communities and the environment a priority above profit. The process begins by completing the BIA (B Impact Assessment) assessment tool, available on the B Lab website free of charge, and which considers the impact areas – Community, Governance, Employees, Customers and Environment (Silva, 2017) on which evidence of responsible practices must be submitted – including energy consumption, waste, water use, employee conditions, diversity and management transparency. Each of these areas is scrutinized so that what is said to be done is proven. This Impact Assessment tool does not have to be used solely for the purpose of certifying a company, and can be used by any company, free of charge, in order to understand what is being done and what can be improved.

In order to answer these questions, weestablished as a general objective to understand the impact that the B Corp certification has on companies in Portugal in terms of the development of ethics and social responsibility practices, as well as the strengthening of collaborative networks of cooperation/stakeholders. As specific objectives, we intend to 1) investigate the assumptions of the "B-Corp" movement and the path taken in Portugal and 2) understand whether this practice can bring benefits of differentiation in themarket, through the study of the dynamics and commitments assumed by a certified pharmaceutical company, in this case the company Phytoderm – Pharmaceutical Specialties.

This theme was chosen either because of the need to demand attention to the subject, at a time when there is a global commitment, in particular through the 2030 Agenda, on issues of climate change and the guarantee of human rights for all, and for reasons of great interest personal and professional of one of the authors, who currently holds the position of responsible for the sustainability department of the company Phytoderm. Initially, the process of adapting organizational values and practices in accordance with the parameters dictated by B-Corp corresponded to the mere fulfillment of a task with a view to the company's subsequent certification. However, enthusiasm and dedication dictated the appointment of one of the authors as the main responsible for the management and maintenance of the "B-Corp" certification and for everything that involves Social Responsibility in the aforementioned company, in a perspective of continuity and search for innovation. That said, the fact that the research was carried out in a business context, through the ethnography of a Portuguese pharmaceutical distribution company - Phytoderm – Especialidades Farmacêuticas, Lda. This company exists in Portugal since 2005 and is representative of Aboca, an Italian pharmaceutical company whose business is based on agriculture, research, production and distribution of 100% natural medical devices and food supplements. It distributes products in Portugal aimed at diseases of the digestive system, upper airways and dermatology, and food supplements for weight control and sleep. In addition to marketing these products, Phytoderm provides training aimed at the practice of conscious health to physicians and pharmacists, and attracts pharmacies to practice the culture it intends to instill in the pharmaceutical market. Although CSR has traditionally been practiced informally by many companies, as is the case of the company we intend to study (this topic will be discussed further), in Portugal, companies have been increasingly concerned and focused on implementing policies and practices that take into account the environment, the people and the involvement of the communities in which they operate.

In Portugal, the only regulation in this regard comes following Directive 2014/95/EU, signed by the member states of the European Union, and whose interveners have committed to implementing standards in their countries for the "disclosure of related non-financial information to the social, environmental and corporate governance areas, it contributes decisively to the analysis of the performance of companies and their impact on society, to the identification of their sustainability risks and to the reinforcement of investor and consumer confidence." (Decree-Law No. 89/2017). This decree determines the preparation of an annual non-financial report by companies with more than 500 employees, which must contain a brief description of the business model, implemented policies and their results. After several agreements established at European and World level, as is the case of the UN 2030 Agenda that promoted the Sustainable Development Goals, the concern with CSR has been implemented in a more systematic way (Leite, 2009). It has been possible to witness an effort by companies, often in response to the growing information and interest of consumers about what they buy, and seeking to respond to the competitiveness that has been installed in this matter, to become more transparent and innovative (Leitão, 2009).

According to the interviews made for this investigation to General Director of B Corp in Portugal, Luís Amado, the main motivations for CSR practices are directly related to the values of the

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

companies' managers themselves. Various measures and activities can be implemented, but if the base is not fully aligned with that will, then the results will not manifest in the long term. Another motivation is related to marketing and the need to show work done on sustainability because it looks good, because it sells, and attracts talents and investors. According to him, it will be progressively easier to distinguish the true commitment because people are more aware, more attentive and go to investigate what is done in addition to what is said. With the exponential demand for socially responsible products and services, CSR will increasingly assert itself in the market. The challenge will be to ensure that this is here to stay as we are more aware that ethics are assured and that this is not a "fashion" of current issues. Luís Amado also spoke about the pressure that has been exerted, in large part by the B Lab, to regulate these issues at a European level. He also mentioned that soon all companies will have the obligation to provide satisfaction on essential issues for society and the environment, such as energy consumption, number of employees, gender, etc., and that at the moment they are done by some companies only on a voluntary basis.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Ethical Values and Motivations for Social Responsibility

Social responsibility comprises a political-normative concept that is based on the idea that organizations, regardless of their statutes, have increased obligations towards the environment and towards society. Therefore, they should seek, whenever possible, to develop actions that contribute to a cleaner environment, a fairer society and a more transparent economy (COM, 2001). The CSR theory emerged in the 1950s based on the idea that business is central to social life, and that its actions and decisions directly affect people's lives in various perspectives. Thus, companies, in addition to the exclusive demand for profit, have a duty to better understand and assess its impact so that management practices are adapted to the environment in which they operate (Bertoncello and Junior, 2007). According to Dolan and Rajak (2006), CSR is an evolutionary, flexible and overlapping set of practices and discourses through which the company asserts itself as an ethical actor that balances its principles with the achievement of profit. It emerged in 1990 in the wake of financial scandals, ecological disasters and human rights violations committed by multinationals. The development of communication allowed companies to go further in their business, but at the same time made their conduct exposed, so that, to regain credibility, companies sought to start acting based on ethics and transparency (Jenkins, 2005).

Mirrored in the world's sustainable development agendas, CSR has evolved to defend companies as a solution for solving social problems, going beyond economic responsibility and seeking to boost social and environmental awareness. In the last decade, it has been possible to witness the emergence of movements that can often be considered oppositional, but that seek to promote fair and ethical trade and that promise to turn social issues into business opportunities. However, if the foundation of CSR implementation is not based on ethical principles, it can have the opposite effect and, instead of adjusting the business model to social imperatives, it can seek to reformulate the interests of the community to meet the company's needs.Marketing is a powerful vehicle for this. Likewise, the CSR study has revealed that sometimes there is no cohesion in the implementation of CSR practices, arising in a reactive way to external pressures (Dolan and Rajak, 2016). Since itsprinciple is to reconcile market needs and social emergencies, the concept is not stable, assuming different meanings and practices according to the political ideologies of the places where the company is located, business schools, organizations linked to the development and social issues, etc. (Ong and Collier, 2005) as well as the ethical orientation of the actors (Almeida, 2010) (Freitas, 2016).

SR has been the target of great interest on the part of companies and NGOs linked to development, which have been very critical with regard to the initiatives adopted by the business

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

sector, which has contributed so that organizations can act as a complement to the initiatives of the Governments, aiming to achieve change with regard to ethics in marketing, quality work assurance and environmental impacts. A central point of CSR is that companies that continue exclusively in search of profit, at the expense of collaborating in the achievement of development goals, will be harmed in the long term, considering that their practices have resulted in social and economic insecurity, the perpetuation of inequalities and the retraction of markets due to scarcity of raw materials (Jenkins, 2005). The competitiveness of companies has grown along with the increase in productivity and the advancement of new technologies, giving rise to an increasing need for differentiation that meets the consumer's attitude. However, CSR can be adopted as a strategy to increase profitability and credibility, in the sense that there is a growing consumer interest and concern in acquiring products whose value chain is based on a posture of care for people and the environment (Bertoncello and Junior, 2007). The study of the evolutionary path of social responsibility shows two contradictory movements. On the one hand, we find social movements demanding a greater commitment from companies in creating answers to the main problems faced by society and the environment. On the other hand, we find some companies strongly committed to solving the social and environmental problems of populations. Although they are on contradictory sides, it can be said that the values that drive the actors in this search for change can be: ethical/virtuous, utilitarian, contractualist and deontological (Almeida, 2010). In virtuous ethics, individuals seek to work for the common good even if they do not benefit from it. According to this philosophical doctrine, individuals would seek it if they were endowed with high powers of discernment (science). For, through the practice of the common good, the individual achieves happiness, that is, his flourishment (evolution, nirvana). The main thinkers of this philosophical current were called “Sophists” and the best known were Plato and Aristotle. In deontological ethics, the individual adopts morally accepted values and behaviors. In the specific case of this ethics, there are standards of moral conduct which individuals adopt in order to achieve the freedom and autonomy they need. That is, it proposes a pattern of action that can be replicated by anyone regardless of their natural inclination. In utilitarian/consequentialist ethics, as the name implies, individuals are strongly motivated to maximize tangible (e.g. increased profit) and intangible (e.g. image and reputation gain) results. According to this current, an action is ethical insofar as it manages to produce the greatest amount of happiness, in the longest period of time, with the least possible pain and to the greatest number of people. In contractual ethics, the social relationship established between individuals and organizations is managed based on contracts because they reflect the moral duty to society. Therefore, the signed clauses seek to guarantee the fair sharing of benefits and losses, taking into account the social, economic and intellectual specificities of the individuals involved. The ethical guidelines described essentially translate two types of motivations for social responsibility: strategic motivations and idealistic motivations. In the idealist ones, the pursuit of the common good supersedes individual or corporate interests, while, in the strategic one, individual or corporate interests supersede the interests of the common good.

According to Garriga and Mellé (2004), the motivations of actors in the field of social responsibility can be: instrumental, ethical, political or integralist. In instrumental motivation, the well-being of the company/organization is neglected to the detriment of the common good. It includes all the choices made by the organization in order to maximize its effectiveness/efficiency gain (e.g. implementation of a performance evaluation system based on indicators of effectiveness in public administration). In ethical motivation, the well-being of society or the protection of the environment is neglected over the company's profitability. In political motivation, the company/organization makes the decisions that best fit therole they play in society. They see themselves as a moral agent endowed with moral responsibility to society. In integralist motivation, the company/organization integrates the requirements/demands presented by its different partners/stakeholders in the decisions it takes in order to benefit the greatest number of people involved. (e.g. civic forums, civic audit offices, stakeholder management models, etc.).

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

According to Pasquini "ethics is the reflection in search of excellence, of the full realization of the human being" (2019:22). If we define ethics as the starting point for our conduct, we consider that individual values and morals determine the behavior and interpretations of each individual. Knowing that companies have their own values and standards, and that they are made up of people, can we distinguish the ethics of a company from the ethics of each of its employees? It is believed that many companies adopt socially responsible attitudes in the expectation of receiving admiration and preference from customers or even with interest beyond market gains, such as privileged access to bank loans or government incentives. Companies that move away from purely instrumental interests usually adopt ethical behaviors, determined by codes of conduct, which are disseminated in the organizational culture and which are passed on to its employees (Mendonça& Gonçalves, 2004), in the expectation of ensuring that there is consistency in what they disseminate and in those that are their actions, which may consider them as socially responsible companies. To clarify, we can apply the phrase "it is not enough to appear, it has to be". Here, the importance of making available a Code of Ethics and Conduct that guides the relationship between the proper functioning of interpersonal relationships, the fulfillment of the company's objectives, and the commitment to its values is elevated. These standards, which may be presented through a formal document, or informally, such as a speech or company presentation, will somehow allow to guide individual behaviors, and should also consider their needs and emotions, taking into account what will be established a long-term emotional commitment (Bainton, 2012). For Kotler (2020), business ethics goes beyond what is applied by companies and their professionals, and can be identified throughout the value chain, including in Marketing. How the message is delivered will have major influences on financial and social results, and it is important to ensure your true interests beyond what you sell. In a company with well-defined ethical principles, with written policies and the example of managers, all its stakeholders must ensure compliance with them beyond their personal values, so that the company achieves its financial and social goals, adopting a posture of commitment and partnership in achieving goals. Ethics is essential in organizations, because it means that, alongside consumers, companies are also more aware (Pasquini, 2019).

2.2 The Role of Stakeholder Networks In Creating Value In Social Responsibility

It is a theory of a non-consensual method because it introduces profound changes in the role of the company and managers. The company's main concern is no longer the production of profit and sharing of dividends with shareholders (Friedman, 1970), as it voluntarily integrates environmental, social and fair trade concerns (Scherer and Palazzo, 2011). Cultural factors condition managers' adherence to stakeholder networks (Ismael, 2008), as well as geographic dispersion (Castels, 2002), and the company's choice of maintaining a business logic that favors short-term results, rather than the long term (Porter and Kramer, 2004). We are witnessing the creation and stabilization of stakeholder networks in the different productive sectors of society for the following reasons: 1) they increase the competitive capacity of companies thanks to the reduction of transaction costs with the acquisition of raw materials, equipment and professionals talented, 2) they increase the innovation capacity of companies thanks to the new knowledge generated and the inlay in new business networks (Porter, 1996), (Castels, 2002;Swift and Zadek, 2002). However, according to Swift and Zadek (2002), there is an urgent need to better understand the networks of consolidated stakeholders, more precisely, in terms of the actors involved, the transacted added values, the implemented projects and the performative effects achieved at the level of development of territories.

The principle of responsible and strategic business management must be based on the consideration of all stakeholders. Stakeholders are all parties interested and involved in the performance of a given organization, therefore any individual who may benefit or be affected by it (Freeman, 2016) and vice versa, in a constant perspective of reciprocity. Although this is a complex concept, it is here to make it understood that, for a company to be socially responsible, it must have at the basis of its management the consideration of all those it will affect, directly or indirectly. It is at this point that the true commitment of organizations is identified, bearing in mind that it is easier to manage without thinking too much about the consequences, while, on the other hand, it is important to consider the consequences to manage effectively, in order to guarantee social and economic results in the long run. It is important to highlight that CSR calls for the establishment of a network of support stakeholders so that consensus around concepts and practices is reached as expected levels of transparency and governance are achieved (Freitas, 2016).

The idea of sustainability and corporate responsibility became clearer when John Elkington (2004) proposed the sustainability tripod concept. The idea is to consider three dimensions as a reference for decision-making – profit, people and the Planet, with the aim of guaranteeing economic prosperity, environmental quality and human rights. Porter and Kramer (2011) also argue that a company's performance must be interconnected with social progress, there must be a purpose. The concept of shared value is based on the assumption that the success of a company is greater the more prosperous the society in which it operates, in the same way that this same community benefits from the success of companies, having access to jobs and opportunities to improve life. In the end, it can be said that shared value refers to operational practices that, at the same time as they increase productivity and competitiveness, improve the economic and social conditions of the communities in which they operate.

From a theoretical point of view, this research will help us to deepen our knowledge of the external factors that drive the implementation of social responsibility values and practices, contrary to Almeida (2010), who believed that social responsibility resulted only from the ethical values of managers. From a practical point of view, this reflection will help us to question the role of state institutions, business, business associations, etc., in: 1) introducing and reinforcing disciplines related to stakeholder management in undergraduate and graduate courses in schools of economics and management and 2) draw the attention of the regulatory entities of economic activities to develop training actions together with educational institutions and local business associations, in the area of stakeholder management and social responsibility.

3. METHODOLOGY

Considering that companies are made up of people and that each of these individuals play a role in the organizational structure of a business, this theme falls within the area of Corporate Anthropology, a subfield of Cultural Anthropology, which Pasquini (2016) defines as an application of anthropological theories to the understanding of organizational culture with aview to studying and solving business challenges. Regardless of which anthropological approach to pursue, business anthropologists have developed their own insights and created a cultural approach to studying organizational dynamics. The model to be followed is not the most relevant one, but the way in which the anthropologist sees a company as a culture of people to be analyzed and understood, in the same way as anthropologists who study communities outside the business environment (Tian, 2010). The uniqueness of the methodology applied by anthropologists has contributed to the development and knowledge of this area in the business world, which according to Jordan (2010) can be divided into three fields: 1) organizational anthropology, which studies the complexity of organizations to establish results and guidelines of change, 2) the anthropology of marketing and consumer behavior, and 3) the anthropology of product and service design. Anthropologists can also make their contribution and play very different roles in unlimited areas, such as human resources, competitiveness strategies, operations management and international business mediation, etc. Regardless of their position in a company, business anthropologists use the same methods as applied anthropology, especially ethnography, participant observation, focus groups, interviews and document analysis, as well as

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

analyzing from the same cultural variables as other anthropologists such as gender and ethnic relations, social structure, values and beliefs, etc. (Tian, 2010). An anthropologist does not have a position in what will be, from the outset, the principle of creating a business and which is related introduced at the level of values, motivations and the organization's operating structure, taking into account the assumptions brought by social responsibility.This research was carried out using ethnography, considered the most appropriate approach to deepen the organizational culture, social practices and the feelings of those associated with the organization (Marcon and Soriano-Sierra, 2017).

In the context of ethnography, and since one of the authors belong to the company under study, we chose to carry out participation-observation, which differs from participant-observation and that, given that an author is actively inserted in the context intended to study, it will make sense to use as a means of investigation. Taking on a more involved role in the field, the choice to use the participation-observation method allows us to go deeper into what is written and said, being also more sensitive to the development of internal processes . Although either method allows the observer to enter the fieldwork, participation-observation facilitates access. We tried to study keeping an attitude of seriousness with the object of study, without offering privileges (Seim, 2021). In order to meet our goals, we will also resort to the analysis of documents instituted and made available by the company, such as impact reports, accounts reports, codes of ethics and conduct, human resources manuals, meeting and training minutes, as well as from our personal experience with regard to ensuring the compliance of the aforementioned documents, as well as liaison with employees in dealing with CSR practices. An interview was also carried out with the General Director of Phytoderm, Dr. João Sousa, through which we intended to understand to what extent the company's communication with customers and partners corresponds to what is practiced by the company on a daily basis, and whether the B Corp certification had any responsibility in what is found. In addition to this interview, a semi-structured interview was carried out with the Executive Director of B Lab Portugal, Luís Amado, in order to know his perspective on the development of the movement in Portugal, to understand what changes have been made in the development of CSR actions of the companies that adhere to the movement, and how the initiatives that seek to implement the Declaration of Interdependence signed by all those who certify are carried out. In temporal terms, the survey took place between September 2020 and June 2021. As one of the authors is inserted in the environment to be studied, there were no difficulties either in accessing documents or in accessing the people interviewed. However, the fact that there is little scientific research on Social Responsibility in Portugal, and more specifically on B Corp, imposed some limitation in terms of comparison and obtaining more specific results. However, we were faced with concerns about the level of involvement we should have with the object we were willing to study, taking into account that we wanted to ensure ethics and transparency in the calculation of our results, without being conditioned by relationships and experience in matter. In order to overcome this difficulty, weproposed to carry out the study with an outside perspective, which led to its undeniable overcoming. In retrospect, this study ended up contributing to one of the authors' professional self-assessment, leading her to deconstruct what she thought she knew, now becoming even more alert to what personal performance in the Phytoderm company should be with a view to prosecution of established sustainability purposes. In calculating the results of our research, we adopted the qualitative analysis method to try to understand the whole phenomenon excluding preconceived ideas, highlighting the importance of events for their actors (Pasquini, 2016).

3.1. Phytoderm, Portugal: History, Mission and Values

Phytoderm was born in 2005 after a meeting with Aboca at an international event, where some business opportunities in the area of innovative pharmaceutical distribution were identified. Aboca, an Italian company recognized worldwide for therapeutic innovation based on 100% natural molecular complexes and for its development, innovation and production of its products, going through a rigorous care from the cultivation of the seed to the final product. The entire process of creating the product is done in a single location, Quinta Aboca in Sansepolcro, in Tuscany, Italy, with the sole purpose of preserving the culture and benefits of botany, through sustainable and biological agriculture, thus ensuring a total respect for the environment, while ensuring human health. General Director João Sousa, founding partner, says that at the time they were looking for something truly differentiating that could add value to the Portuguese market and immediately identified with the philosophy of the parent brand. Thus came Phytoderm, with the mission of "Benefiting people and the environment, creating value by providing society with innovative products with high quality standards, which promote and offer effective prevention and treatment solutions, successfully incorporating natural substances in health chain" (Phytoderm, 2019) and that over the past 15 years has been committed to valuing the relationship with consumers, suppliers and employees to achieve what it defends as its main purpose: the common good.

The company is currently headquartered in Lisbon, with employees in various parts of the country. Of the 32 employees, 60% are women. The direction is composed of 5 elements, 2 of which are women. 65% of employees have academic training and internal training actions are promoted every four months, as well as the company has a team of trainers available for monitoring whenever the employee feels this need. Additionally, employees can propose courses of interest to them, whose approval decision is discussed by the members of the Board. According to the records, in-house employees were privileged in case of hiring for management positions, promoting career progression[2].

As noted, there is a close relationship between teams, each of which promotes weekly follow-up meetings where space is given for everyone to speak. In the cycle meetings, which take place every 4 months, reports and future perspectives are presented in the formal posture, and these dates are used to also foster team spirit through relaxed meals and group activities that, as the documents report, seek always have a positive impact on the community. These activities consist mostly of team games in which the winner has the opportunity to choose to whom the company offers a monetary donation or, as happened in the most recent activity, in August 2021, employees join teams and each one of them chooses to whom to donate a basket of goods sponsored by Phytoderm, which resulted in 5 institutions being helped.

To guide employees, Phytoderm provides all new employees with a human resources manual where they can see all their duties and rights described, a code of conduct by which they should be governed, a code for combating harassment at work, environmental, philanthropy and supplier policies in place, the most recent impact report, and also have access to a presentation on the B Corp movement so that they can immediately fit into the organizational culture[3].

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Results of Semi-structured Interviews

The General Director defends having a business model that is economically viable, ecologically sustainable and socially fair, which distributes products that benefit people and do not harm the environment. He says this is not because they are good people or not, but because they really believe that economic success is a consequence of value creation. There is a systemic perspective of health, considering that a system is a set of parts that interact with each other. If we stop to analyze the human body in detail, we can see that when one of the organs of a system does not work well, it directly affects all the others. We cannot look exclusively at the symptoms,

[2]Results obtained through internal company documentation.

[3]Code of conduct, environmental policy, philanthropy policy and the supplier policy are available for consultation on the website www.phytoderm.pt

but also assess the process that gave rise to them and Phytoderm offers a new form of treatment that, respecting humans and the environment, contemplates these aspects in the sense that it respects and understands the human body as a whole. This work goes far beyond the commercialized products, through the work developed with pharmacies that are increasingly identifying with this way of being in the market in which financial return cannot be the primary objective.

According to Dr. João Sousa, director of the network, the core of this entire process is the person, respecting their organism and the environment in which they live, working through prevention and changing habits and lifestyles. At the end of 2020, the network Apoteca Natura already had 79 pharmacies adherent and for which Phytoderm is responsible when it comes to product and culture formation. The advice of these Pharmacies[4] for the treatment or prevention of minor pathologies always leans towards products that do not have side effects and have greater proven efficacy compared to other similar products. João Sousa states in interview that natural products without components harmful to health and the environment are a reflection of the co-evolution between nature and man. Investment in training is essential for Phytoderm, as training means more productivity, more knowledge, more up-to-date information sharing, market differentiation leading to greater consumer health and well-being success. Phytoderm trains and informs to spread culture, science, lifestyles and to regain awareness of the link between human health and the environment. In addition to informing physicians, the Training and Medical Information teams are responsible for providing support in terms of providing technical and scientific information, as well as clinical studies that are published annually by Aboca.

Annually, the company gives, on average, about 800 annual training courses that are not exclusively focused on products, but on the pathology and its origin, offering tools for the identification and correction of bad eating and lifestyle habits. Phytoderm works with around 550 doctors in the areas of Gastroenterology, General and Family Medicine and Pediatricians in order to, as they have a huge responsibility to ensure an awareness of individual health, direct them to this perspective of channeling nature for health, seeking to eliminate side effects caused by taking chemical drugs and the persistence of bad habits that give rise to certain pathologies. Partly conditioned by the sustainability culture promoted by the company it represents, Phytoderm has sought to develop its own path of social responsibility. According to Dr. João Sousa, globally, the percussion of the common good has been present in the company's path over the years.There is a systemic perspective of the human body, just as there is of business, considering that all networks of relationships are part of the same complex system and that nature also provides us with principles on how to manage business.

> When seen from this perspective, a business is a life project where there is no longer a line between ethical codes for work and for private life. To make this possible, our values are easily identified through our conduct and shared with our employees, partners and consumers so that we are all aligned. Coherence is the ability to remain consistent and permanently make our values prevail over proposals that are not consistent with health and well-being within nature without ever compromising it. Humility is a constant investment to demonstrate the scientific validity of our ideas and respect and realize that not everyone understands them at first sight due to their great differentiation in health. Work, because in fact it is the basis of all our success: learning, sharing knowledge, distributing health, are all results of hard work. And I can proudly say that we remain true to our core values and that this trust on the part of our partners has been reflected in the increase in our market share over the past few years.
>
> João Sousa, June 23, 2021

[4]It should be noted that these pharmacies will now have to comply with certain contractual rules, namely with regard to directing the focus of sales to Aboca and Apoteca Natura products, and to complying with the agreed sales volume. Benefiting in exchange, from Marketing, training and monitoring in the purpose that is common to all: conscious health. Some awareness-raising activities for certain diseases are also frequently promoted, as well as screenings and follow-ups are offered to users of these pharmacies.

Although there was an informal code of conduct that was easily identified in team meetings and business strategies, as well as social initiatives and environmental concerns, it was not easy to identify at the outset that it was a socially responsible company. The B Corp path began with the presentation of the main manager of the Aboca group, who, being also certified, spoke about the project to the Director of Phytoderm. As he says, he immediately felt identified and embarked on a path that has been one of great learning, but also one of great personal fulfillment.

4.2. Results from Ethnography Analyzes

The B Impact Assessment adoption process at Phytoderm Portugal

Filling out the BIA (B Impact Assessment) turned out to be a path to self-discovery of Phytoderm's identity. According to the first author, every time they moved into the impact areas, they were confronted with the idea of “how come we didn't think about this before?”, because in fact there were questions for which we had answers, but we had no proof, no measures implemented.

Dr. João Sousa says that, in terms of purpose, nothing has changed at Phytoderm, but it was an important process to validate and formalize what we have always believed. On the other hand, there is the mission to be one more company driving change, and to be an example that it is necessary to find and adopt new business models, to also ensure that what guarantees economic success and allows companies to continue doing the good, remains intact. No company survives if it only seeks profit, it has to be a consequence of creating shared value. “We create value to sell, we don't sell to create value, and few people understand this phrase” (João Sousa, June 23, 2021). Value creation presupposes that the company has to look at the impact on employees, society and the environment, in a long-term view. In practical terms and evaluating the certification path, there have been many changes, especially in the greater attention paid to small things. If before, although the values were already there in a more macro way, no great importance was given to details such as the origin of the paper used when there is a need for printing and the ethical values of the restaurant where the Christmas dinner was made. Today thecompany's posture is to look more objectively at all the little things, because this path is a process. In the words of Dr. João, the B Corp “(…) is a World that does not end.” in the sense that the more knowledge we acquire, the more responsibility we have. Another big change concerns what is communicated to teams. Currently, all group initiatives must have a sustainable and educational basis, and there is always a space in the quarterly meetings dedicated to emerging social issues, aggregating the collaborators for this path and working on the awareness that we all depend on everyone. Measuring economic outcomes and social outcomes is among the most important tools to drive the paradigm shift in companies. It is not possible to know if they are creating value if they do not measure the results of the social objectives they have set, nor to ascertain whether this posture is contributing to bettereconomic performance. While allowing them to reproduce and improve initiatives,offering opportunities to innovate and increase their social impact, they are a fundamental basis for communication with partners, customers, suppliers and employees. The impact reports, being voluntary, are made with the objective of publishing the results and practiceswith a focus on the environment, people and community.

Both interviewees in this study, when asked about the difference between a B and a non-B company, stated that only using impact assessment measures are they able to ascertain results, and only by measuring results can one trust the true commitment. Although he does not want to question the principles of non-certified companies that operate on a sustainability basis, Luís Amado says that those with a B can be trusted beyond what they say they do and the publicity that is generated around it.

At Phytoderm, the Impact Report has been an excellent engine both in organizing social and environmental initiatives, as well as in determining their results. Because there is a need to stop, look at what was done, what it generated and what could be improved.

During the completion of the B Impact Assessment and respective assessment by the B Lab team, during the period 2020-2021, all the company's procedures and initiatives in each impact area were taken into account. Phytoderm obtained 86 points (Annex 2) out of a possible 200, and certification would only be feasible if it finished the assessments with at least 80 points. The most relevant impact area (Annex 3) concerns the environment, with 25 points, obtained mostly due to the type of product that Aboca produces and Phytoderm sells and which, being 100% natural and with fully recyclable packaging, represents an almost zero impact on the environment. In this field, the building in which the company operates, the water and electricity bills, the amount of waste entering the market, the car fleet and respective CO_2 emission, the trips that are made and all the initiatives that may result were also evaluated in this field. have an influence on the degradation of the environment.

The next highest-scoring area was employees, with 22.4 points, after scrutiny of human resources policies and salary assessment, employee turnover, ages, education, gender, prevalence of female elements in management positions , prizes and perks offered to employees, training. The company promotes initiatives aimed at providing quality jobs, with respect and care for the employees in charge. The Community area represents 19 points and took into account the way in which society is taken into account in management practices. It assesses the origin of the main suppliers and whether they also have conscious business commitments, Phytoderm's criteria in choosing suppliers such as management and location principles, the way in which information about the company's initiatives is disseminated, in particular the promotion of a conscious health, volunteer activities and the way it is chosen to create internal initiatives that impact the community, such as Christmas baskets which, as a gift to employees, are purchased from the SEMEAR association, which promotes the inclusion of people with disabilities and development difficulties. After certification, Phytoderm proved to be more sensitive and alert when choosing suppliers, favoring sustainable raw materials, Portuguese brands or services and other B Corp companies. The Governance Area Obtained 16.1 points and verified the transparency of management practices, accountability and the relationship between what was bought and what was sold, how decisions are made and by whom. Here, it was also intended to assess whether the highest element of the hierarchy took decisions by initiative or whether it included other members of the administration.

At Phytoderm, decision-making is the responsibility of the members of the Board, composed of 5 elements, 2 of which are women, and operates on a voting system. During certification, codes of conduct were created in order to guide the way in which everyone who contributes to the operation of the company acts, and to declare, in an open manner, which principles and values should prosper. A major change that resulted from this assessment was the creation of an advisory board, composed of the members of the Board and two elements from outside the company, which added the perspective of outsiders and allowed management to be fairer and to consider exempts all stakeholders.

Finally, the area that gave Phytoderm the lowest score was Customers with only 3.2. At the time of the evaluation, this score was questioned because during the filling of the BIA the questions were closed due to the fact that Phytoderm does not generate billing from its training services. The members of B Lab, as well as the General Director in PortugalLuís Amado, agreed that this would be a gap in the assessment, and that, according to Luís, he lacks these experiences to progress and adapt to all types of business. It was not possible to show in this area the work that is done in raising awareness for health and for the practice of healthy eating and lifestyle in the prevention of numerous pathologies, such as the availability of surveys to pharmacies to better assess users, monitoring initiatives and heart care, obesity and even happiness and daily training in pharmacies, for which the company has two full-time employees dedicated exclusively to this area. With the commitment to return to using the impact assessment tool, the BIA, every 2 years, it is expected that all areas can suffer significant improvements in score, thus complying with the agreement to increase scores by at least 10% . Based on the institutional documents studied, it was possible to verify that most of the documental support that proves CSR practices were implemented during and after certification, therefore, when they were already inserted in the process. According to one of the authors' experience while responsible for the formulation of most of the documents mentioned in the previous paragraph, these were created first for practical reasons of the answers, and it became obvious that they become excellent guides for the conduct of the company's elements. After B Corp certification, Phytoderm adopted a system of documentation and internal promotion of initiatives and practices within the scope of B Corp, resulting in greater transparency.

	Before B Corp	After B Corp
Workers	Additional vacations indexed to goal achievement Profitsdistribution Lowest salary is 30% above the minimum wage ~Meal allowance higher than legally required Additional cost assistance for workers in mobility Diningarea for breaks Career training andadvancement Healthinsurance Gym	Alloftheabove Adicional vacations indexed to goals achivement Cavations self-scheduling Humanresources manual Celebrationofsustainability dates Continuous awareness social and invironmental issues B Corp presentation to new employees
Environment	100% natural products Packagingwithrecyclable material Waste management with Ponto Verde society	Alloftheabove Environmentalpolicyimplementation Alldepartmentspracticerecycling Water and electricity consumption assessment Gradual change of car fleet to electric vehicles Digital transition to avoid unnecessary travel
Governance	Transparent management Commitment to the common good Consideration of the impacts of decisions taken	Alloftheabove Implementation of code of conduct Creation of an advisory board with elements external to the company Focus on commitment B in management practices ImpactReport Availability of policies and reports on the website
Community	VolunteerInitiatives Promotingconscioushealth Create events with a positive impact on the community	Alloftheabove Implementationofsupplierpolicy Implementation of volunteering and philanthropy policy Greater concern when choosing suppliers Better expiration management, following products for donations
Clients	Training Focusonpreventingpathologies Promotion of healthy lifestyle and eating habits	Alloftheabove B logo onpackaging Including the relevance of certification in the discourse with pharmacies

FIGURE 2: Chart of responsible management initiatives before and after B Corp certification (elaborated by the first author).

5. DISCUSSION

When a company believes in social responsibility as a basis of its conduct and is faced with a series of questions for which it has no immediate answer, we can conclude that either the questions are complex and not accessible to concrete practices and answers, or the organization has values and beliefs, but in practice his way of operating is not entirely consistent with what he thought he was.

The first author experienced this phase that we can call transition. Although it was possible to safely say that people and the environment are a concern taken into consideration on a daily basis, the truth is that the practices, bureaucracy, procedures, did not totally go against what was stated.

Taking into account grafts taken from the semi-structured interview carried out with the director of the company Phytoderm, we can infer that the ethical values of social responsibility were used to substantiate the discourse formulated above all by invoking respect for human beings and the environment. Equally or more important than identifying the ethical valuation models was to verify in which types of social responsibility programs the company's social responsibility strategy was structured.

The study carried out showed that the company's strategy was mainly based on the practice of voluntary activities and monetary and material donations to institutions. However, it was found that these initiatives, although voluntary, do not have a representative weight in the company's invoicing volume or working hours, which is a situation that is intended to be reversed if the real purpose is to share with the community.

In addition to the regular donations, the company invests heavily in training pharmacies in the sale of natural medicines with the aim of consolidating a health culture that is closest to nature in the country. This purpose comprises one of the axes of action of the the Apoteca Natura network, which emerged in Portugal in 2019 in partnership with Aponatura Portugal and Farminveste with a view to creating a network of Pharmacies that adhere to a new way of treating, seeking to ensure the complete integration of the healthcare chain and professional advice on natural products as a means of achieving health, and not as an end, within a path of “conscious health” elaborated by the pharmacist for the final customer.

In terms of ethical values, we can infer that the interviewees used the ethical and utilitarian values of socialresponsibility to justify the importance that training occupies in the social responsibility strategy. Ethical values are marked by clairvoyants above all when they invoke the need to “recover awareness of the link between human health and the environment”, as the right to health comprises a right of citizenship based on the UniversalCharter of Human Rights.

As for the utilitarianvalues, thesewere invoked above all to mention their importance for product differentiation and for increasing the company's gain in competitiveness. They are retrospective and based on more or less complex assessment methods, depending on the level ofinvestment in this matter, and cancontribute to the company's reputation and consequently to better economic results (Porter et al., 2012).

Disclosure in addition to financial reports represents more transparency on the part of companies and generates greater trust from stakeholders, as well as encouraging the discussion of non-financial issues that are fundamental for socially responsible management practices (Romão et al., 2018). Measuring the value created allows companies to have the opportunity to assess what can still be done, countering the usual tendency to remain unaware of the improvements that can be achieved, so that, when the time comes to apply them, they can be materialized (Porter et al., 2012).

In this sense, it can be said that ethical values of an instrumental nature, followed by integralist motivations, stand out in the speeches formulated around the use of impact assessment metrics in matters of social responsibility. The instrumental values are proven by invoking the pertinence of the indicators for their scaling, that is, for their gain in size, while the integralist motivations stand out when invoked the reasons related to the generation of greater gain trust in the stakeholders.

6. CONCLUSION

Although the way in which companies can contribute to social and environmental challenges is complex, as they depend on numerous factors and business areas, any strategies adopted in this regard contribute for us all to win, since the company's competitiveness is in growth while contributing to the resolution or minimization of some social problems.

The challenge we are going through is to make companies understand that this will be the correct way to act and, in this sense, B Corp companies will have a very important role in a future in which the movement is better known, which is believed, not it will take time to happen. It is so demanding to obtain the minimum score to achieve certification, that it can be assumed that B companies are more likely to manage considering the care of people and the environment.

Voluntary initiatives translate into results that, however small they may be, were motivated by strong ethical principles. Entrepreneurs also learn that formalizing their practices allows them to sustain these activities over the long term and with greater employee involvement. It is also concluded that measuring and evaluating the impact of business activity, as well as voluntary initiatives, are the greatest asset for achieving results. Because in addition to making the initiatives tangible, they offer strategies to extend them in the long term. It makes no sense for companies to create initiatives and not feed them, if the objective is to guarantee the well-being of people and the environment, so that they can also continue to guarantee the livelihood of their businesses.

Anthropology can make a great contribution in this area, as it has the ability to look from the inside out, studying behaviors and results in depth, tend to be more neutral and, not being directly involved in the management of the company, to measure what matters.

The anthropologist is a keen observer, with the ability to notice things that no one had noticed, and which allows them to understand the relationship between people, what they buy, and the mission of the companies from which they consume or contract services.

It is visible, in recent times, the number of companies that use the ride on the sustainability theme to promote their businesses, there is no TV ad that does not mention something along these lines. Coming from all sides, it will be a great challenge from now on to be able to fully trust and distinguish “the wheat from the chaff”, i.e., those who have a true purpose and whose mission is not only for the organization's own benefit.

This is another field in which the contribution of anthropology is of great relevance in the sense that it can help companies to have ethics in first line of account, being able to use ethnography to better confront what is said and what is done. In the same way that consumers are increasingly demanding, employees themselves must take an active role in this matter and consider the posture of companies during the active job search. With job rotation and the training of young

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

people more aware of these issues, acting in a socially and environmentally responsible manner and with transparency will also be a way of attracting talent and strengthening collaboration networks with key stakeholders. This has also been the mission of one of the authors at Phytoderm. Ensuring that the company continues to make a commitment to all who depend on it, seeking to innovate and create mechanisms to continue the path of awareness outlined, as it is up to us all, in the way we deem most relevant, to find strategies to be better, as well as make others better. Because profit and good don't have to be far apart. On the contrary, they work much better together.

7. REFERENCES

Almeida, Filipe (2010). Ética: Valores Humanos e Responsabilidade Social das Empresas. Editora Principia.

Bainton, B. R. (2012). Applied ethics: Anthropology and business. International Journal of Business Anthropology, 3(1), pp. 114-133.

Bertoncello, S. L. T., & Chang Júnior, J. (2007). A importância da Responsabilidade Social Corporativa como fator de diferenciação. FACOM–Revista da Faculdade de comunicação da FAAP. (17), pp. 70-76.

Castells, Manuel. 2002. A Era da Informação: Economia, Sociedade e Cultura, vol. 1, A Sociedade em Rede. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.

Comini, G., Fidelholc, M., & Rodrigues, J. (2014). Empresas B: Princípios e desafios do Movimento B Corp. In XVII SemeAd. São Paulo -SP: XVII SemeAd FEA-Universidade de São Paulo, pp. 7-12.

Cruz, G. P. D. A. (2020). A sustentabilidade como requisito para o alcance do lucro e desenvolvimento social. Dissertação de Mestrado em Direito. Universidade Nove de Julho, São Paulo.

Dolan, C., &Rajak, D. (Eds.). (2016). The anthropology of corporate social responsibility (Vol. 18). Berghahn books. Nova Iorque.

Elkington, J. (2004). Enter the triple bottom line. In Henriques, A. and Richardson, J. (Eds); The Triple Bottom Line: Does It All Add up. Earth scan, Londres.

Europeia, C. (2001). Livro Verde–Promover um quadro europeu para a responsabilidade social das empresas. Bruxelas: ComissãoEuropeia, COM, 366.

Freeman, R. E. (2016). Ethical Theory and Business. A stakeholder theory of the modern corporation (pp. 125-138). University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Friedman, Milton. 1970. “The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits”. The New York Times Magazine, 1-6. http://umich.edu/~thecore/doc/Friedman.pdf.

Garriga, Elisabet; Melé, Domènec (2004). Corporate Social Responsibility Theories: Mapping the Territory. Journal of Business Ethics 53:51-71, 2004. Kluwer Academic Publishers. Printed in the Netherlands.

Ismael, Barry Anthony. 2008. “Clusters And Competitiveness: The Development of Sustainable Competitive Industries in Small Developing Countries”. The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs. 97(396): 453-74.doi 10.1080/00358530802057517

Jenkins, R. (2005). Globalization, corporate social responsibility and poverty. International affairs, 81(3), pp. 525-540.

Jordan, A. T. (2010). The importance of business anthropology: Its unique contributions. International Journal of Business Anthropology, 1(1). pp. 15-25.

KOTLER, P. (2000) Administração de Marketing. Prentice Hall, São Paulo.

Kramer, M. R., &Porter, M. (2011). Creating shared value. Harv. Bus. Rev. 89: pp. 62–77.

Leite, C. F. T. G. (2009). A responsabilidade social das empresas em Portugal. Dissertação de Mestrado em Psicologia das Organizações e do Trabalho. Universidade de Coimbra,Coimbra.

Marcon, G. A., & Soriano-Sierra, E. J. (2017). Etnografia como estratégia investigativa da cultura organizacional para a sustentabilidade. Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental, 11(1), 38.

Marquis, C. (2020). Better Business: How the B Corp Movement Is Remaking Capitalism. Yale University Press. pp. 20-32.

Mendonça, J. R. C., & Gonçalves, J. C. D. S. (2004). Responsabilidade social nas empresas: uma questão de imagem ou de essência? Organizações&Sociedade, 11(29), pp. 115-130.

Ong, Aihwa, and Stephen Collier. 2005. Global assemblages: Technology, politics, and ethics asanthropological problems. London: Blackwell.

Pasquini, N. C. (2016). Uma abordagem antropológica sobre ética na empresa. Revista Científica on-line-Tecnologia, Gestão e Humanismo, 6 (1). Disponível em http://www.fatecguaratingueta.edu.br/revista/index.php/RCO-TGH/article/view/122.

Porter, M. E., & Kramer, M. R. (2003). Corporate philanthropy: Taking the high ground. Foundation strategygroup, 13, 1-12.

Romão, Ana Lúcia; Cabrita, Isabel; Soares e Castro, Andreia e Ferreira, Ana Paula (2018). A divulgação de informação não financeira nas empresas portuguesas. XVIII Encontro Internacional AECA. As contribuições da contabilidade para os desafios da gestão pública e privada. Disponível em https://aeca.es/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/162h.pdf

Scherer, Andreas Georg, e Guido Palazzo. 2011. "The New Political Role of Business in a Globalized World: A Review of a New Perspective on CSR and its Implications for the Firm, Governance and Democracy". Journal of Management Studies (48)4: 899-931. doi 10.1111/j.1467-6486.2010.00950.x

Seim, J. (2021). Participant Observation, Observant Participation, and Hybrid Ethnography. Sociological Methods & Research, DOI? 0049124120986209.

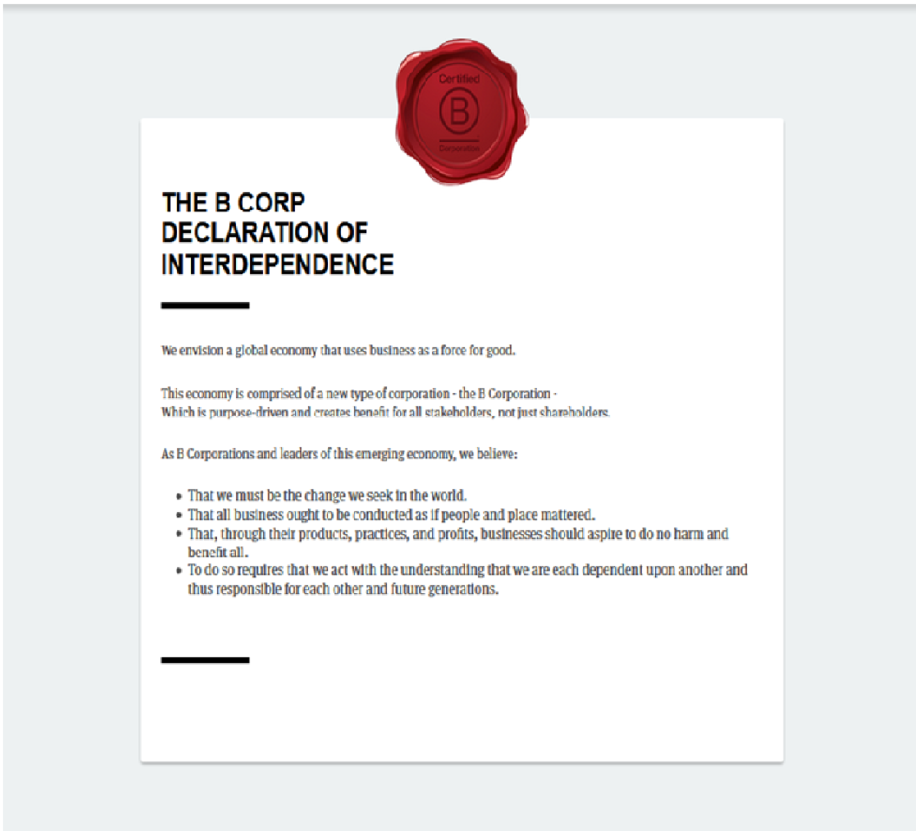
Silva, S. L. G. L. D. (2017). How to become a B Corporation: the case of Manipedi. Mestrado em Gestão. Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Lisboa.

Swift, Tracey, e Simon Zadeck. 2002. Corporate Responsibility and the Competitive Advantage *of Nations.* London e Copenhagen: AccountAbility e The Copenhagen Centre. http://www.accountability.org/images/content/0/9/095/Competitive%20Advantage%20-%20Full%20Report.pdf

Tian, R. G. (2010). The Unique Contributions and the Unique Methodologies: A Concise Overview of the Applications of Business Anthropology. International Journal of Business Anthropology, 1(2). pp. 70-88.

8. ATTACHMENTS

Annex 1 - Declaration of Interdependence



THE B CORP DECLARATION OF INTERDEPENDENCE

We envision a global economy that uses business as a force for good.

This economy is comprised of a new type of corporation - the B Corporation -
Which is purpose-driven and creates benefit for all stakeholders, not just shareholders.

As B Corporations and leaders of this emerging economy, we believe:

- That we must be the change we seek in the world.
- That all business ought to be conducted as if people and place mattered.
- That, through their products, practices, and profits, businesses should aspire to do no harm and benefit all.
- To do so requires that we act with the understanding that we are each dependent upon another and thus responsible for each other and future generations.

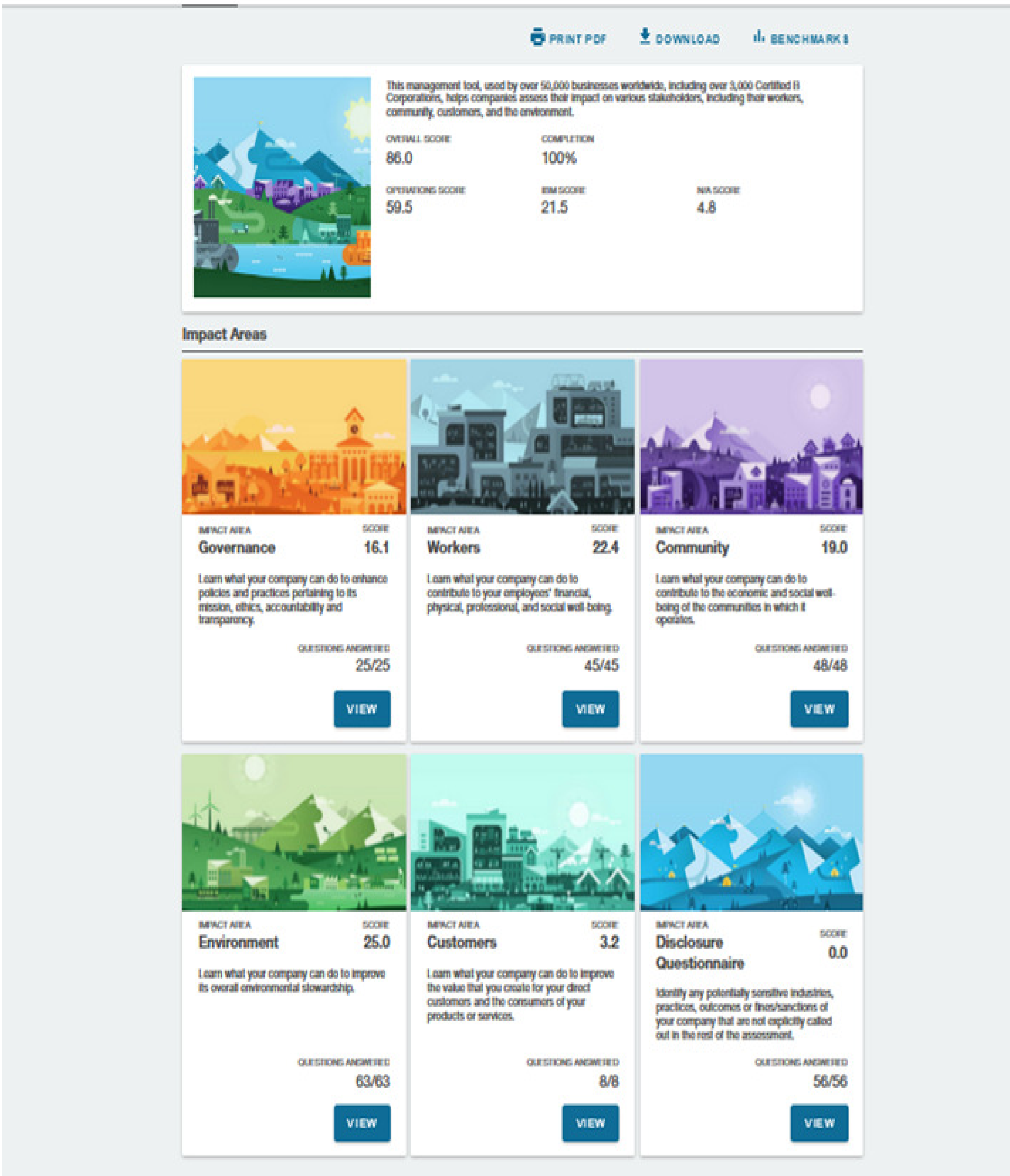
Source**:** B Corp official website.

Annex 2 - Phytoderm Score - BIA

Source: B impact assessment – Phytoderm

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

Annex 3 – Score of each impact area



Source: B impact assessment - Phytoderm

Annex 4 - Interview Guide

Line of research: B Corp Certification

Topic: Corporate Social Responsibility
Exploratory Items:

1. Purposes/motivations of companies with CSR practices
2. Itsimportance in management practices
3. Relationofethicswith CSR
4. Impact on the community in which they operate
5. Communication/Marketing vs. CSR
6. How to identify the true commitment
7. Developmentexpectations in Portugal
8. Obstacles to the development of CSR in the country

Topic: Management Practices
Exploratory Items:

1. History and trajectory of the company
2. Importance of CSR in the course
3. How CSR practicesdeveloped
4. Purpose/motivation of CSR in the company
5. How does the business area intersect with CSR
6. What differentiates the company/movement from others with the same business/goal
7. Management practices that would respond to emerging social and environmental development issues
8. Profitandgood

Topic: B Corp
ExploratoryItems:

1. How did the topic come about
2. Factorsthatinfluenceddecisionmaking
3. Objectiveswhenstartingtheprocess
4. Descriptionoftheprocess
5. Obstaclesencountered
6. Importance of certification for the company/companies
7. Relevanceofcertification to stakeholders
8. Interdependenceandthe B Corp
9. Future expectationsregardingthemovement
10. BCorpandconsumptionhabits
11. Reassessment of expectations regarding the beginning of the process

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

Social Responsibility and Social Innovation – Contributions from a Portuguese Law Firm –

Ana Sofia Firmino *anafirmino@hotmail.com*
Legal Adviser
Lisbon, 1200, Portugal

Abstract

The present study aims to analyze how a big law firm – in this case, Vieira de Almeida Law Firm (based in Portugal) – can adjust and accommodate general framework regarding social responsibility and social innovation to meet specific responsibilities (and needs) of lawyers.

It will be highlighted how this law firm has developed, especially in the last two decades, a solid program of social responsibility – with special focus on *pro bono* legal assistance, citizenship education, third sector capacity building, corporate volunteering, internal campaigns and environmental sustainability – and how it encouraged the promotion of social innovation actions, aligning different interests and agents and contributing for the development and dissemination of this area (for example, through the support of nonprofit civil society organizations).

Vieira de Almeida Law Firm (VdA) was chosen as a leading example in the Portuguese market of big law firms, since it supports a different approach on how lawyers can (and should) act when practicing law; appealing for a practice with purpose, in line with the values that are recognized by this law firm to be at the core of Justice.

Through the present study, we expect to enrich research on corporate social responsibility and social innovation regarding specifically law firms and contribute for the future development of studies in this area by the International Journal of Business Research and Management, promoting investigation that has not been particularly explored previously.

The Special Issue in which the present study is published – dedicated to "Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Finance: Theory and Practice in Challenging Times" – constitutes an opportunity to reveal how social responsibility and social innovation can be an important contribution to face new challenges, caused, for example, by pandemic times.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Law Firm, Social Innovation, Vieira de Almeida Law Firm, Social Demands.

1. INTRODUCTION

The main goal of the present research is to understand how a big law firm – like Vieira de Almeida Law Firm – can adjust and accommodate general framework regarding social responsibility and social innovation to meet specific responsibilities (and needs) of lawyers.

Supported by the case study of Vieira de Almeida Law Firm, some of the questions that led this research were: Can a law firm engage in social responsibility programs and social innovation like a common private company? If not, what are the responsibilities and needs of lawyers that require attention? Should law firms be strategic in the choice of initiatives to be integrated in social responsibility programs or should they indiscriminately choose causes to support?

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

Considering the purposes of the present manuscript (and after *Introduction*), the present research has been structured according to the following sequence: ***Part 2*** begins with a theoretical framework regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (**2.1.1** Concept, **2.1.2** Normative Recognition and Institutionalization of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Beginning of the 21st Century and **2.1.3** Social Responsibility in the Sector of Law Firms) and Social Innovation (**2.2.1** Literature Review, **2.2.2** Social Innovation in the Sector of Law firms); ***Part 3*** refers to the methodology used for research; ***Part 4*** focus on the Case Study (covering the external and internal dimension of social responsibility at Vieira de Almeida Law Firm); in ***Part 5*** we discuss and interpret the results of our findings, exploring how Vieira de Almeida Law Firm has accommodated general framework regarding social responsibility and social innovation to meet specific responsibilities and needs of lawyers; and, in ***Part 6***, we present our conclusions, give notice of the limitations and implications of our work and offer some directions for future studies to be carried out for a better understanding of social responsibility and social innovation of law firms.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Corporate Social Responsibility

2.1.1 Concept

The concept of corporate social responsibility is not unanimous and each author describes social responsibility according not only to their own perspective and experience, but also inspired by external circumstances, like the social expectations of corporate behaviour.

Numerous authors have already focused on the concept of corporate social responsibility, describing how it was born and how it has developed through times.

Very recently, Carroll (2021) analysed the concept of corporate social responsibility since 1950 until present time and presented some important observations for the future.

Also, in the perspective of a literature review, Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir, and Davídsdóttir (2019) offer a good outlook of the concept of corporate social responsibility.

According to Carroll, it is possible to say that the modern age of corporate social responsibility began in 1953, with the release of the book *Social Responsilities of the Businessman*, of Howard Bowen (an American economist), who analysed which responsibilities should be expected to be assumed by businessman towards society.

In his book, Bowen defined corporate social responsibility as the group of obligations of employers related to the adoption of policies and the development of lines of action that are able to respond to the values and desires of society.

In the 60th, several social movements (like the civil rights movement, the women’s movement, the consumer movement or the environmental movement) started changing the relation between Society and Business.

Literature on corporate social responsibility increased meaningfully during this decade and different researchers started expressing different views in what concerns this concept (Xuan and Teal, 2011).

For example, McGuire (1963) supported the idea that companies do not have only legal and economic obligations, but also duties towards society. For this reason, companies should be interested in politics, as well as in social welfare, education and the well-being of the employees (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

Likewise, Walton, in 1967, sustained that the concept of corporate social responsibility implied the recognition of a relation between companies and society and companies should play a role in what concerns the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the time (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

In this decade, however, the concept of corporate social responsibility was still contested by some authors, like Milton Friedman, who, in 1962, considered that, in a free capitalist system, firms should limit themselves to the pursuit of economic benefits (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

During this decade, the implementation of corporate social responsibility had (mostly) a philanthropic character.

It was, however, only in the 70th that corporate social responsibility discussions truly began, definitions started to proliferate between academics and researchers and the expression gained notoriety.

Davis, in 1973, considered that corporate social responsibility should be considered as an answer from companies to questions that overcome economic, technical and legal aspects. For this author, firms should evaluate, in its decision-making process, the effects of its decisions on the external social system in a manner that should accomplish social benefits along with the traditional economic gains which the firm seeks (Xuan and Teal, 2011).

For Davis, social responsibility should begin where the law ends.

In 1979, Carroll considered that social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time.

Regardless of these developments, in the 70th, some authors, like Milton Friedman, still continued to express their opposition to the concept of corporate social responsibility.

To Friedman, the only obligation of managers was to maximize profits of the companies, in the limits accepted by society in what concerns law and moral. Social performance would be exclusive to managers acting not as businessmen but as human beings (Carroll, 2021).

In the 80 th, numerous concerns aroused from society – like environmental pollution, employment discrimination, employee health and safety, quality of work life –, which allowed new concepts to be developed, like “business ethics” and “stakeholder management”.

Nevertheless, in this decade, Freeman gave a huge contribution for the development of corporate social responsibility, with his Stakeholder Theory (1984).

According to this theory, corporate social responsibility should go beyond what business has to satisfy to its shareholders to different social groups called stakeholders.

In the 90th, there was a growing interest in corporate social responsibility and it was a decade of institutionalization (for example, in 1992, the Association Business for Social Responsibility was created and, in 1995, the European Business Network of Social Cohesion – later renamed CSR Europe – was launched) and several companies began to publicize periodically annual social reports (describing actions in relation to community, workers and other stakeholders and towards the environment).

Despite this institutionalization, there were, however, no major developments in what concerns the definition of corporate social responsibility.

Nonetheless, in 1991, Carroll published his article *The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility*, expanding on areas that this author believed were crucial when implementing corporate social responsibility in an organization.

According to this author (2021), companies had four main responsibilities: i) economic responsibilities which can be considered at the foundation for the other levels of the pyramid; ii) legal responsibilities of the firm; iii) ethical responsibilities that shape the company's behaviour beyond the law-abiding duties; and iv) philanthropic responsibilities of the corporation with regards to its contribution to improve the quality of life of society.

During this decade, there was also an important contribution to the development of the relation between Business and Society with the concept of "The Triple Bottom Line", conceived by Elkington, in 1994, according to which corporations need to have socially and environmental responsible behaviour that should be positively balanced with its economic goals (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

After 2000, several new definitions were proposed by researchers, with an emerging concern on environment and on the relation between corporate social and financial performance across industries.

Craig Smith, in 2001, explained that the scope of social responsibility (from a business perspective) should include a broader set of stakeholders (people affected by corporate policies and practices) and that the fulfilment of the firms' obligations towards these stakeholders should minimize any harm and maximize the long-run beneficial impact of the firm on society (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

In the same year, Lantos, included strategic considerations to the definition of corporate social responsibility, considering that it can became strategic when it is part of the company's management plans for generating profits. For this author, companies should take part in activities that can be understood as socially responsible only if they result in financial returns for the firm (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

Since Lantos, other authors started using the term "strategic corporate social responsibility" (Porter and Kramer, 2006).

In the first decade of the 21st century, companies became more aware of the importance of dealing with global issues, like poor labour practices, human rights violations, anti-corruption policies and sustainable development.

In a context of globalisation, decisions regarding corporate social responsibility became more relevant affecting both sustainability and stakeholders.

The definitions of corporate social responsibility began, as a consequence, to reflect the belief that corporations have a new role in society in which they need to be responsive to social expectations and should be motivated by the search for sustainability, which means they need to make strategic decisions.

Still, in the early 2000's, Freeman and Mcvea also provided a new perspective to stakeholder theory; which reinforced the belief that corporations should be managed in the benefit of a broader set of stakeholders (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

On the other hand, Friedman and Miles (2002) highlighted that the relation between corporations and their stakeholders is dynamic and has different levels of influence on the firm (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

In the beginning of the century, there were also some important institutional contributions for the definition of corporate social responsibility, like the one developed by the *World Business Council for Sustainable Development*, according to which corporate social responsibility involves a business commitment to contribute to sustainable economic development working with employees, their families, the local community, and society at large to improve their quality of life.

Also, in 2003, *Corporate Social Responsibility Europe* (CSR Europe) considered that corporate social responsibility allows companies to manage and improve its social and environmental impact to generate value for both its shareholders and its stakeholders, by innovating its strategy, organization and operations.

In 2006, Porter and Kramer emphasised that companies can achieve a competitive advantage through corporate social responsibility (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

From the point of view of these authors, a strategic approach to corporate social responsibility can result in the creation of shared value in terms of benefits for society while improving the firm's competitiveness.

For that reason, Porter and Kramer consider that companies should, first, look inside to map the social impact of its value chain and, consequently, identify the positive and negative effect of its activities on society; focusing on the ones with the greatest strategic value. Then, companies should look outside to understand the influence of their social context on their productivity and on the execution of their business strategy.

Porter and Kramer developed the idea that companies should look at corporate social responsibility from an holistic point of view (instead of using it as a tool for achieving a social license to operate, achieving and maintaining a reputational status or addressing stakeholder satisfaction), maximizing the interdependence between business and society and increasing the company's potential to create social benefits while supporting their business goals.

The notion of creating value through corporate social responsibility was further developed by these authors, in 2011, considering it as a necessary step in the evolution of business and defining it as: "*policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates*" (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

In 2015, Carroll underlined that corporate social responsibility has been accepted in the business community as part of the social contract between business and society and should be considered as "*the benchmark and centerpiece of the socially conscious business movement*" (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

Very recently (and as mentioned before), Carroll (2021) reflected on the period 2000-2020 and presented several observations about the future of corporate social responsibility and the new normal after pandemic time.

According to this author, the pandemic's effects have been deep and wide and business will have an enormous rebuilding mission when all it is over.

To Carroll, the pandemic times reminded companies of the critical role that business can play in what concerns social responsibilities in the world, especially when societies are confronted with major problems like unemployment or human rights violations.

Companies will, therefore, have to ensure that their two primary stakeholder groups – employees and consumers – are attended to in a sustainable manner. On the other hand, with the huge development of the digital age, urgent concerns with cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and governance must be attended.

In what concerns corporate social responsibility, this author considers that certain areas like the health industry or the educational system will have to adapt to the changing expectations of the public.

Companies' commitment to corporate social responsibility must become more strategic and more cohesive in the future, prioritizing people, making digitalization, health and wellness matter, building resilience to accelerated change and championing stakeholder capitalism.

It is expected, however, that, in the next years, alternative concepts will continue to develop – like corporate citizenship, stakeholder management, sustainability, creating shared value, conscious capitalism, responsible management and purpose-driven business – and sustainability will remain at the center stage.

In this sense, business frameworks will have to adapt through a holistic framework that is based on the principles of social responsibility, in a way that it combines the notions of sustainability, the generation of shared value, and the belief that companies can redefine their purpose to do what is best for the world.

To summarize our research on the concept of corporate social responsibility, we can say that it can be considered as an "umbrella concept", covering several understandings on the relation between Business and Society.

The vision of management according to which companies exist to give profit and contribute to social purposes by the payment of taxes and by creating jobs – allowing that richness can overturn to society – has been replaced by the idea that corporate social responsibility should go beyond profit and the respect for law.

In this context, companies should contribute actively to social development, not only through profit, but being active in the resolution of social problems, minimizing eventual prejudicial damages that may result from their activity and contributing to meet the demands and requirements of stakeholders and the goal of sustainability.

For those purposes, two main dimensions must be considered by companies: the internal dimension and the external dimension.

The internal dimension is centered on the corporation itself, concerning especially employees (in relation to working conditions, wages, administrations of benefits, health and safety, work life balance, mental health, adaptations to change, management of environmental impact, diversity and inclusion, among others) and shareholders (companies are expected to promote an honourable code of conduct amongst its business partners, for example).

The external dimension integrates the relation between the company and external actors, (stimulating ethics in business and demanding a responsible behaviour in relation, for example, to human rights), like clients (including the prevention of conflict of interest, resolution mechanisms, confidentiality issues, firm policies against bribery and money laundering), supply chain management, competitors (preventing or minimizing practices that can cause real damages to the competitors and supporting the principle of free competition), public entities, regulators and local communities (companies are expected to be part of the local economy by providing jobs, consuming local products and services, charity and contributing to local taxes, among others).

2.1.2 Normative Recognition and Institutionalization of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Beginning of the 21st Century

As will be described further bellow, according to VdA's Corporate Social Responsibility Report of 2018, this law firm institutionalized its *Pro Bono and Corporate Social Responsibility Programme* in 2008.

This event occurred on a decade of vigorous normative recognition and institutionalization in what concerns corporate social responsibility (Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

In fact, in the year 2000, the *United Nations Global Compact* was launched, with the purpose of encouraging businesses and firms worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies (and to report on their implementation), stating ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption.

Also in the year 2000, the United Nations adopted the *Millennium Declaration*, with its eight *Millennium Development Goals* and set an international agenda for the following fifteen years.

The promotion of corporate social responsibility, as a European strategy, began one year after with the adoption of the *Millennium Development Goals*, when the European Commission presented, at 2001, a *Green Paper* called *Promoting a European framework for Corporate Social Responsibility*.

Since then, the European Commission has led a series of campaigns for promoting the European approach to corporate social responsibility.

In 2005, the European Commission launched the *European Roadmap for Businesses – Towards a Competitive and Sustainable Enterprise*, which outlined the European objectives with regards to corporate social responsibility for the following years.

In 2011, the European Commission published the renewed *European Union strategy for Corporate Social Responsibility for the years 2011–2014*.

Already in 2015, CSR Europe launched the *Enterprise 2020 Manifesto*, which aimed to set the direction of businesses in Europe and play a leading role in developing an inclusive sustainable economy (CSR Europe 2016).

The global recognition of corporate social responsibility has also been influenced by international certifications designed to address social responsibility; such as the ISO 26000, approved in September of 2010.

ISO 26000 summaries the principles and themes that social responsibility embraces, in line with international treaties like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Labour Organization's fundamental conventions.

According to ISO 2600, social responsibility should be defined as *"the responsibility of an organisation for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour".*

In article 6, ISO 26000 invites organisations to structure their approach around different areas of action: 1. Organisational governance; 2. Human rights (due diligence, avoidance of complicity, discrimination, civil rights etc.); 3. Labour practices (social protection, social dialogue, health and safety at work etc.); 4. Environment (prevention of pollution, sustainable resource use, protection of the environment and biodiversity etc.); 5. Fair operating practices (anti-corruption, fair competition, respect for property rights etc.); 6. Consumer issues (protecting consumers' health and safety, data protection and privacy, education and awareness etc.); and 7. Community involvement and development (community involvement, employment creation and skills development, social investment etc.).

In 2015, it was the launch of the 2030 *Agenda for Sustainable Development*, and the adoption of seventeen *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs).

The United Nations Sustainability Development Goals provided organizations with a standard framework they can adopt to build corporate social responsibility programs around.

Even if the SDGs do not represent any commitments for the private sector, countries that adopted them have been creating specific policies and regulations that will translate into pressure for firms to implement new business practices or to improve their current ones.

This is particularly important considering that SDGs cover a wide range of areas, from climate change to the eradication of poverty and hunger, as well as the fostering of innovation and sustainable consumption.

In the European Union, Directive 2014/95/EU requires large companies of public interest (listed companies, banks, insurance companies and other companies designated by national authorities as public-interest entities) to disclose non-financial and diversity information beginning on their 2018 reports and onwards.

In 2015, the *Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals* reflected a new social contract in which corporations are expected to play a relevant role in the global efforts to achieve SDGs.

Already, in 2021, the *COP26 United Nations Climate Conference* completed the technical negotiations on the Paris Agreement Rulebook, which fixes the transparency and reporting requirements for all parties to track progress against their emission reduction targets. The Rulebook also includes the article 6 mechanisms, which set out the functioning of international carbon markets to support further global cooperation on emission reductions.

At COP26, all parties agreed, for the first, time to accelerate efforts towards the phase-down of unabated coal power and inefficient fossil fuel subsidies and recognised the need for support towards a just transition.

2.1.3 Social Responsibility in the Sector of Law Firms

As access to law is considered a fundamental value for justice, citizenship and social cohesion, lawyers have always been associated to social responsibilities towards the society, mainly through *pro bono* legal services – which consist, primarily, in free legal services for those who need and cannot afford its payment – and charity.

However, in the last decades, practice of law has changed significantly and lawyers are now being asked to answer to different challenges that came from clients (specially, large enterprises that have been incorporating, at their management, strong programs of corporate social

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

responsibility) and from organizations of the social economy (whether by assisting the capacity building of social organizations or providing *pro bono* legal support).

In fact, as many (or most) of the law firm clients started being involved in corporate social responsibility programs and law firms are also considered as suppliers of services, it has been realized, by many law firms, that there should be an alignment with their clients in what concerns corporate social responsibility policies.

Law firms started being requested to meet a certain standard of behavior regarding social corporate responsibility and, as a consequence, began developing their own programs of social responsibility and publishing, in a regular basis, information about it (Branco and Rodrigues, 2008).

Simultaneously, several representative organisations of the legal sector realized the importance of the theme and started publishing some guidance on corporate social responsibility and the role of the legal profession.

For example, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and the International Bar Association have developed some guidance on corporate social responsibility and the role of the legal profession, highlighting that lawyers will increasingly be called to advise their clients on social responsibility matters and, simultaneously, will be subject to social corporate responsibilities as “enterprises” and as suppliers of services in their client´s supply chain.

To CCBE, the essential elements of Corporate Responsibility of the Legal Profession are:

i) National laws and Bar Rules regulating attorneys’ responsibilities and ethical standards;

ii) CCBE Charter of Core Principles of the European Legal Profession and Code of Conduct for European Lawyers, covering the economic and governance side of lawyers’ responsibilities;

iii) Environmental responsibilities (compliance and voluntary measures, such as the reduction of carbon footprint; electronic file keeping, waste management, etc.);

iv) Social responsibilities (diversity, programmes for female professionals, social inclusion etc.);
v) Governance (conflict of interest resolution mechanisms; confidentiality issues; firm policies against bribery and money laundering; insider trading guidelines; organizational structures for the implementation and compliance with these rules);

vi) Supply chain management of law firms and bars and law societies;

vii) *Pro bono* and community services; and

viii) Philanthropy / charity.

In Portugal, the Bar Association has not developed (yet) any general guidance on how lawyers can contribute to the development of social responsibility, but it has highlighted the need that it should respect deontological rules.

In fact, according to the rules of the Portuguese Bar Association, lawyers are not allowed to identify the name of their clients (even if they are *pro bono* clients), as well as to make publicity for client acquisition.

In this context, the Portuguese Bar Association considers that, even if the identification of *pro bono* clients (in the law firm website, for example) could be understood as a reward for the commitment of lawyers in no profit activities – as a public recognition for the implementation of the values of social responsibility or even as an incentive to other lawyers work *pro bono* – such an identification opens the door to serious ethical questions, as it can serve the interests of publicity and client acquisition, which is forbidden by the lawyers' bar rules (according to a legal opinion published in 2009, available for consultation at the website www.oa.pt, only in portuguese).

Other Portuguese organizations, like GRACE – *Corporate Citizenship Reflection and Support Group* –, have already given an important contribution to the development of social responsibility by law firms in Portugal, through publications like "The Challenges and Opportunities of Corporate Social Responsibility in Law Firms".

Despite the growing interest of representative organisations and the development of studies, in the last decades, regarding the relation between social responsibility and lawyers (for example, Farrow, 2008, Hutchinson, 2006, Whelan and Ziv, 2012, Spiesshofer, 2021, Gutterman, Walter, Miler and Cassidy 2019, Seck, Devlin and Quigg, 2021), our research reveals, though, that it is not possible to identify an agreed definition on social responsibility of lawyers in the academic world.

This is, however, similar to what happened, in the last decades, in what concerns the general concept of corporate social responsibility. In fact, as Wan-Jan (2006) already mentioned, despite the lack of a universally agreed definition on corporate social responsibility, private companies have been implementing their programs and integrating it into their business management.

The lack of academic advance in Portugal in what concerns social responsibility has not prejudiced, however, the development, by several big law firms, of social responsibility programs since the first decades of the 21st century (for example, Abreu Advogados; Cuatrecasas. DLA Piper ABBC, Garrigues, Linklaters, Morais Leitão, PLMJ, SRS Advogados, Vieira de Almeida, Sérvulo and Uria Menéndez Proença de Carvalho).

Actually, big law firms have developed, in the last decades, their own social responsibility policies and are now publishing annual reports on their websites covering, specially, *pro bono* and community giving and environmental matters.

In these annual reports, law firms also make some disclose on their motivations in undertaking social responsibility; which can be, firstly, associated to ethical responsibilities towards Society, (that go beyond the accomplishment of the mandate given by clients).

As already mentioned, besides their relations to clients – vital to lawyers – public interest of the profession demands the fulfilment of other obligations and responsibilities, like towards the community, law students, regulators, Government, academics and others.

Social commitment of lawyers is an essential part of lawyers' work in society in what concerns their mission in the protection of freedom, justice and human rights.

The importance of this dimension is well recognized in several legal instruments that regulate lawyers' role.

For instance, in 1990, the United Nations stablished the *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*, in order to assist member states in their task of promoting and ensuring the proper role of lawyers.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

In this context, it was set forth that governments, professional associations of lawyers and educational institutions shall ensure that lawyers have appropriate education and training and be aware of ethical duties, human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized by national and international law (number 9 of the *Basic Principles*).

In what concerns their duties and responsibilities, it is set forth in this document that lawyers shall at all times maintain the honour and dignity of their profession as essential agents of the administrations of justice (number 12).

According to this *Basic Principles*, lawyers have important and relevant duties towards their clients, like advising them as to their legal rights and obligations, assisting in every appropriate way and taking legal action to protect their interests.

While protecting the rights of their clients and promoting the cause of justice, lawyers shall seek to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms recognised by national and international law and shall at all times act freely and diligently in accordance with the law and recognized standards and ethics of the legal profession.

In this *Basic Principles* lawyers are considered to have an essential role in what concerns the administration of justice and therefore it must be guaranteed that they act with freedom and diligence, with respect to the laws and deontological rules recognised to the profession.

In the European field, it is important to mention the *Code of Conduct for European Lawyers*, established by the CCBE Plenary Sessions, on 19 may 2006.

According to this *Code of Conduct*, in a society founded on the respect for the rule of law, lawyers fulfil a special role which does not begin and end with the fulfilment of the clients' mandate.

Lawyers have a variety of legal and moral obligations, towards: clients, the courts and other authorities, other lawyers and professionals from this sector, the public for whom the existence of a free and independent profession is an essential means of safeguarding human rights in face of the power of the state and other interests in society.

In what concerns general principles, the *Code of Conduct* establishes: independence, trust and personal integrity, confidentiality, respect for the rules of other bars and law societies, incompatible occupations, personal publicity, the client's interest and limitation of lawyer's liability towards the client.

There are several principles set forth in what concerns the relation with clients, courts and between lawyers.

Still in the European context, it is important to mention that it is at discussion the approval of a *European Convention for lawyers*.

In fact, on the 24 January of 2018, the Parliamentary Assembly adopted a Recommendation on "The Case for Drafting a European Convention on the Profession of Lawyer" (Recommendation n.º 2121, 2018), in which it calls on the Organisation's Committee of Ministers to draw up and adopt a convention on the profession of lawyer.

In the national context, it should be mentioned that the Constitution for the Portuguese Republic (adopted in 1976, by Decree 10/04, with subsequent amendments) foresees, in article 20, that subject to the terms of the law, everyone has the right to legal information and advice, to legal counsel and to be accompanied by a lawyer before any authority.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

It is, however, in the *Portuguese Bar Association Statues* (approved by Law 145/2015, of 9 September, and last reviewed by Law 23/2020, of 6 July) that the role of lawyers is specially regulated, namely in what concerns duties towards community (article 90 of the Statues).

Before that, however, it is in article 88 that lawyers are associated to an ethic conception, since it is considered that lawyers are essential to the administration of justice and therefore, they should have a public and professional behavior adequate to the dignity of the profession at stake.

Lawyers should, therefore, accomplish all duties established by the Portuguese Bar Association, as well as all that arise from general law and tradition. Honesty, integrity, loyalty and sincerity are considered to be professional obligations.

In what concerns duties towards the community, article 90 statues that lawyers are obliged to defend rights, freedoms and guarantees, defending the good application of laws, prompt administration of justice and improvement of law institutions.

As it can be noted, legislative authorities have been worried to associate lawyers to an ethic-social dimension that goes beyond the simple defence of clients' interests; looking (also) after other intentions like the construction of a fairer society in social terms.

While the State has been strengthening its social role in the last decades, lawyers are also invited to evaluate their role on society, as drivers and promoters of social change.

As mentioned before, in the last decades the practice of law has been changing a lot and, along with it, lawyers need to adapt to new dimensions and (maybe) even more demanding tasks, as they overcame the (simple) application of law.

In this context, social purpose of lawyers has become an important part of lawyers contribution to a more fair and sustainable society.

Public interest related to the practice of law demands not only technical competence, but also a sense of commitment to the construction of a society that is more cohesive.

From lawyers it is expected that they are willing to fulfil their commitments towards clients, but also that they accept their special role in what concerns social responsibility.

Lawyers have become actors not only in the administration of justice, but also in the universe of social responsibility.

Regardless of the paper that belongs to the State, lawyers have to be associated to the effort of promoting a more fair and just society.

In this context, we can consider that programs of social responsibility of law firms shall reflect specific responsibilities of lawyers in regards to ethical standards, governance, environmental responsibilities, supply chain management, p*ro bono* and community services; and philanthropy / charity.

Moreover, and bearing in mind what has already been mentioned about the concept of social responsibility, law firms must also pay attention to lawyers, since they are one of the most important stakeholder group, having high power, urgency, and legitimacy to influence the organisation.

The definition, by law firms, of initiatives that go beyond legal obligations are, therefore, indispensable, as they contribute for the increase of lawyers' engagement, attraction and retention.

By creating a good working environment and developing practices towards lawyers, law firms can expect higher motivation and productivity, especially when lawyers are, nowadays, seeking to practice law that "allow them to get home at night and on weekends, see their families, work full or part-time, practice in diverse and "alternative" settings, and generally pursue a meaningful career in the law rather than necessarily a total life in the law (Farrow, 2008).

Internal social responsibilities practices towards lawyers can, therefore, give law firms competitive advantages.

Questions like balance between work and private life, mental health, diversity and inclusion, and workplace harassment cannot be neglected by law firms, especially when compared to the attention paid to other dimensions of social responsibility.

As noted further bellow, in what concerns this dimension of social responsibility, few information is made available through annual reports of Vieira de Almeida law firm (which focus almost exclusively on *pro bono* legal assistance, citizenship education, third sector capacity building, corporate volunteering, internal campaigns and environmental sustainability) and for our research on this topic it was necessary to collect information through an interview held to the partner of the law firm that is responsible for social responsibility.

2.2 Social Innovation

2.2.1 Literature Review

Considering the purpose of the present study, our research also focuses on the concept of social innovation, as well as in the development of this concept by law firms.

In recent years, several authors have been reflecting on the relation between corporate social responsibility and innovation, as drivers of business growth (Rexhepia, Kurtishib and Bexheti, 2013).

For some, corporate social policies influence innovation (Halkos and Skouloudis, 2018) and the company's capacity for innovation is a necessary organizational factor for the implementation of corporate social responsibility (Kallanci, Rahmani and Toktay, 2018).

For others, however, innovation and corporate social innovation can influence each other (González-Ramos, Donate and Guadamillas, 2014).

Studies that focus on the relation between social responsibility and innovation have been analysing several issues, such as Corporate Social Innovation; Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Innovation.

In what concerns, more specifically, the concepts of social innovation, our research reveals that, although it has always been present in the evolution of the society, as a field of study (namely, in the social science area), social innovation does not have a long tradition.

In fact, innovation studies have begun in the economic field, namely with the work of Schumpeter (1942), who, in 1930, introduced the term "*social innovation*" to describe a process of creative destruction leading to the emergence of new combinations of resources in business, political and cultural environments.

Since Schumpeter, studies on innovation have advanced through different areas, such as management, technological studies, urban development and even in the law sector.

Innovation practices were first applied mostly to technological and industrial areas; but, with the development of the studies, new areas were covered, like social innovation, marketing innovation or administrative innovation.

The concept has been developed during the last decades, often through studies focused on various disciplines, but it was only since the last half of the twentieth century that social innovation has acquired greater importance and its concept has been specially studied.

Regardless of the developments observed in the field of social innovation, literature still remains dispersed through different fields and the concept of social innovation still can be found in different studies like management and social economy.

Since Schumpeter, there have been many attempts to define "*social innovation*" and until now there is not a commonly agreed definition of the term.

This may be the reflection of the fact that social innovation has predominantly emerged through practice and not so much as a result of academic work.

But, even in the academic field, and depending on the area of study, authors are not unanimous on what should be considered social innovation and emphasize different aspects of this concept.

Over the last decades, there has been a considerable increase in the studies on social innovation, with many researchers and academics contributing with their own definitions.

Regarding the definition of social innovation, we can highlight the following:

i) For Mulgan et al. (2006), "*social innovation refers to innovative activities and services that are motivated by the goal of meeting a social need and that are predominantly diffused through organizations whose primary purposes are social*". Contrarily, "*business innovation is generally motivated by profit maximization and diffused through organizations that are primarily motivated by profit maximization*";

ii) For Phills Jr, Deiglmeir and Miler (2008), social innovation relates to "*a novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions for which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals*". From this point of view, a social innovation can be a product, production process or technology, but it can also be a principle, an idea, a piece of legislation, a social movement, an intervention or a combination of these. This concept of social innovation highlights the importance of increasing dialogue and bridges between different areas on behalf of the society as a whole;

iii) For Howaldt and Schwarz (2010), "*social innovation is new combination and/or new configuration of social practices in certain areas of action or social contexts prompted by certain actors or constellations of actors in an intentional targeted manner with the goal of better satisfying or answering needs and problems than is possible on the basis of established practices. An innovation is therefore social to the extent that it, conveyed by the market or "non/without profit", is socially accepted and diffused widely throughout society or in certain societal sub-areas, transformed depending on circumstances and ultimately institutionalized as new social practice or made routine. As with every other innovation, "new" does not necessarily mean "good" but in this case is "socially desirable" in an extensive and normative sense*";

iv) Westley and Antadze (2010) refer to social innovations as "*a complex process of introducing new products, processes or programs that profoundly change the basic routines, resource and authority flows, or beliefs of the social system in which the innovation occurs*". These authors highlight that "*social innovation does not necessarily involve a commercial interest, though it does not preclude such interest. More definitively, social innovation is oriented towards making a change at the systemic level*";

v) Murray, Caulier-Grice and Mulan (2010) define social innovations as "*new ideas consisting of products, services, and models that simultaneously meet social needs and create new social relationships*";

vi) The European Commission (2020) considers that social innovation may *"refer to a product, production process, idea, social movement or a combination of the above*";

vii) Cajaiba-Santana (2014) sustains a "*more holistic view of the phenomenon of social innovation in which agentic actions and social structures can be conceived as both dualistic and interdependent*". In this "*structuration perspective*", social innovation "*is conceived as interactively influenced by both agents and social structures*". For this author, *the adequacy of such a perspective is based on two pivotal characteristics of social innovation processes: First, social innovation is based on collective actions that take place inside a given social system, which are determined by underlying institutions. Second, the historical and cultural context in which social innovation occurs is an important consideration for understanding its processes since it is historically and culturally situated*";

viii) For Tracey and Stott (2017), "*social innovation*" - used to "*describe a broad range of organizational and inter-organizational activity that is ostensibly designed to address the most deep-rooted problems of society, such as poverty, inequality and environmental degradation*" – can be categorized according to different types: "*social entrepreneurship*" (for example, creating a venture), "*social intrapreneurship*" (which means addressing a social issue from the inside of an organization), and "*social extrapreneurship*" (mixture of peoples, ideas, resources that address social challenges);

As we can see, in academic literature, the definition of social innovation is not unanimous.

Some authors view social innovation mainly as a goal or an outcome.

That is the case, as we mentioned above, of Mulgan (2006) that defines social innovations as innovative activities or initiatives, motivated by the ambition or goal of meeting a certain social need.

From another point of view, other authors concentrate on the process of creating social change.

As we observed, Westley and Antadze (2010), for example, refer to social innovations as a process of designing or inventing products, processes, or programs which change certain aspects of the social system in which the innovation is implemented.

From this perspective, social innovations are defined as a means to an end, concentrating on the process of creating social change.

Some authors, however, adopt, nowadays, an integrated view of social innovation, considering that it should be seen both a means and an end.

From this perspective, social innovations include the use of social means to reach social goals creating both economic and social shared value.

Murray, Caulier-Grice and Mulan (2010), for instance, define social innovations as "*new ideas consisting of products, services, and models that simultaneously meet social needs and create new social relationships*".

This perspective implies that social innovation has two dimensions: the process and the outcome.

From our point of view, this combined perspective is able to provide a most inclusive and comprehensive approach on the concept of social innovation.

2.2.2 Social Innovation in the Sector of Law firms

In what concerns the sector of law firms, we can say that, considering that social needs are not the core business of law firms, lawyers can impact on social innovation as partners and experts of clients who need legal assistance in that sector or as service providers to clients engaged in social impact (*pro bono* or not).

In fact, regardless of the initiatives promoted by law firms in which lawyers can be appointed as main actors of social innovations (through direct initiatives developed to tackle social challenges like social injustice or social inequality – the creation of a foundation with social purposes, for example –, law firms (and lawyers) can play an important role in the sector of social innovation, mainly, as partners or as service providers to clients engaged in social impact.

In this context, law firms and lawyers became a part of the architecture of social innovation and embrace the goal of "*doing good*" through social impact.

As Mulgan (2006) underlines, "*social innovation is not unique to the non-profit sector. It can be driven by politics and government (for example, new models of public health), markets (for example, open-source software or organic food), movements (for example, fair trade), and academia (for example, pedagogical models of childcare), as well as by social enterprises (microcredit and magazines for the homeless)*".

Over the past decades, nonprofits organisations, governments, and private companies realized that the complexity of global problems, such as climate change and poverty, require integrated solutions, with the joining of different sectors of society.

For that reason, Mulgan (2006) highlights that social change depends on alliances between what could be called the "bees" and the "trees": "*The bees are the small organizations, individuals and groups who have the new ideas, and are mobile, quick and able to cross-pollinate. The trees are the big organizations – governments, companies or big NGOs – which are poor at creativity but generally good at implementation, and which have the resilience, roots and scale to make things happen. Both need each other, and most social change comes from alliances between the two, just as most change within organizations depends on alliances between leaders and groups well down the formal hierarchy*".

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To carry out the present study, we used of a qualitative case study, since it allows a better understanding of the reality of social responsibility and social innovation at law firms, it consents the characterization of the specificities of such reality and it privileges a direct and interpretative approach.

Given the objectives of the present research, we chose Vieira de Almeida Law Firm as a leading example in the Portuguese market of big law firms, once it supports a different approach on how lawyers can (and should) act when practicing law; appealing for a practice with purpose.

With respect to the collection of data, we made use of the information that is available in the website of Vieira de Almeida Law Firm, especially the one about Corporate Social Responsibility and Social Innovation – www.vda.pt, under the separator *About Us*, *Responsible Business* – and particularly the annual reports, complemented by an interview held to the partner of the law firm who is responsible for the program of social responsibility (Margarida Couto), in the month of July 2020.

This interview was focused on the aspects of the program of social responsibility at Vieira de Almeida that are not fully described on the website of the law firm or that, to some extent, required clarification in what concerns the internal dimension of this program.

In what concerns social responsibility annual reports, it can be noted that they do not comply with rigid standards (such as the ones required by the *Global Reporting Initiative*, for example) and only synthesizes and make public information regarding the impact of Vieira de Almeida action on the community and on the environment.

In relation to environmental goals, this law firm also discloses (annually) a Carbon Footprint Report, including associated resource consumption levels.

4. CASE STUDY

4.1 The Law Firm

Vieira de Almeida Law Firm was founded in 1977, by its partner Vasco Vieira de Almeida and is, nowadays, a leading firm with a team of more than 440 professionals, including more than 300 lawyers, working in 21 practice areas.

The law firm has two offices in Portugal (Lisbon and Porto) and it works internationally in twelve jurisdictions through VdA Legal Partners (a network that connects lawyers and independent law firms associated with VdA to provide integrated legal services in both Portuguese and French-speaking Africa, as well as East Timor).

4.2 Culture and Values

In terms of culture and values, it results, in general, from the law firms' website, that lawyers are committed to:

> *i)* Being ethical: lawyers should not only deliver a high-quality work to their clients, but also do it with integrity and respect for the clients and other colleagues;
>
> *ii)* Exceeding the client's expectations: VdA wants to be seen as a real partner of the clients, turning their objectives into the lawyer's goals;
>
> *iii)* Being innovative: the best solutions for the clients can demand innovative answers to their problems;
>
> *iv)* Working as a team: one of the keys for success is working as a team, with accuracy and discipline, but in a relaxed and harmonious environment.

4.3 Social Responsibility

As most of the law firms in Portugal (and through the world), Vieira de Almeida Law Firm has begun its path in the field of social responsibility through *pro bono* legal services; which consist, primarily, in free legal services for those who need and cannot afford its payment.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

This law firm considers that access to the law is fundamental for citizenship and social cohesion and lawyers must give their contribution to the community, placing their expertise at the service of those who cannot afford the payment of legal services.

However, through the years, this law firm felt the need to answer to different challenges that came from the organizations of the social economy (whether by assisting the capacity building of social organizations or providing *pro bono* legal support) as well as, from clients (specially, large enterprises), who were incorporating, at their management, strong programs of corporate social responsibility.

In fact, as many (or most) of the law firm clients started being involved in corporate social responsibility programs and law firms are also considered suppliers of services, it was realized, by many law firms, that there should be an alignment with their clients in what concerns corporate social responsibility policies.

Law firms started being requested to meet a certain standard of behavior regarding social corporate responsibility and, as a result, lawyers started developing their own programs of social responsibility.

In what concerns the history of social responsibility at Vieira de Almeida law firm, the *10 years of VdA's Pro Bono and Corporate Social Responsibility Report*, published in 2018, and the subsequent reports (2019 and 2020), highlights the following fundamental events:

i) In 2008, Vieira de Almeida Law Firm institutionalized a program of *Pro Bono Legal Services* as well as a *Program of Corporate Volunteer*;

ii) In the same year, this law firm also became a member of *BCSD Portugal – Business Council for Sustainable Development* (a non-profit organization which aggregates several enterprises that commit to the transition for sustainability);

iii) In 2009, the *Green Project* – an environmental sustainability program – was introduced at the law firm;

iv) Also, in this year, VdA became a member of *Grace – Corporate Citizenship Reflection and Support Group* – and made a partnership with *Entrajuda* and with the *Portuguese Foundations Centre*;

v) In 2010, VdA introduced the *Carbon Offsetting Program* and participated in the *European Year of the Fight Against Poverty and Social Exclusion*;

vi) In 2011, the first *Carbon Footprint Report* was published;

vii) In 2012, VdA became a member of the *Legal Sustainability Alliance* (a group constituted by several law firms with the objective to share sustainable practices);

viii) In 2013, the first edition of the *Spring School* was promoted to support youth employability;

ix) In 2015, two social enterprises were created "*powered*" by VdA (*Social Help* and *Blindesign*);

x) In 2016, *Vasco Vieira de Almeida Foundation* was established and the law firm made a partnership with the *Girl Move Academy*;

xi) In 2017, VdA joined the *United Nations Global Compact* and signed a protocol with *Mozambique's Nacional Park: Education of Vulnerable Project*;

xii) In 2018, VdA was elected President of Grace's Steering Committee and created a *Social Economy Practice Area*;

xiii) In 2019, the law firm promoted the *United Nations Agenda to 2030*, aiming to contribute for the achievement of the objectives of sustainable development;

xiv) In 2020, in the context of the pandemic brought by Covid-19, VdA participated, through the VdA Foundation and with the support of several partners, in the crowdfunding campaign *Liga-te@Escola* (a project through which it was possible to purchase 70 computers, that were distributed to several public schools to guarantee remote schooling) and organized a series of free webinars for its *pro bono* clients and other social sector partners to clarify numerous legislative measures that were approved by the Portuguese government in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic (providing a record level of *pro bono* legal services – almost 9000 hours).

xv) Also, in 2020, VdA launched a competition *Encontro com Impacto*, through which bridges were built between companies and innovation/social entrepreneurship which already had a close relationship with VdA (the winner of the competition was the *Organization 55+*, which has the mission of empowering professionally inactive people 55 years or older, using an innovative approach);

xvi) In the same year, the law firm deepened its commitment to reduce carbon emissions by consuming electricity exclusively from renewable sources across all facilities;

xvii) In 2020, VdA also joined the *SDG Ambition Program of the United Nations Global Compact*, adopted the global *United Nations Women's Empowerment Principles* and joined the *Target Gender Equality Project* (giving focus on the SDG 5).

Through its website, Vieira de Almeida Law Firm affirms its commitment to be a socially responsible firm, which takes into account the interests of both its internal and external stakeholders, in particular towards the Community and the Planet.

According to the information provided by the website, the main pillars of VdA's Responsibility and Sustainability Programme are:

i) Networking and Partnerships (cooperation and networking are considered to be key mechanisms to implement projects that address the needs of the Communities in which the law firm operates and promote human rights protection and capacity building for active citizenship);

ii) Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship (in the last years, VdA has assisted in the development and strengthening of numerous projects in the area of social innovation, social entrepreneurship and social investment); and

iii) Involvement (through the *Pro Bono* Programme, the Green Project and the Corporate Volunteering Programme, all workers are able to accomplish their personal and social goals and to exercise their civic rights, within the firm and as part of the work carried out with partners).

4.4 The External Dimension of Social Responsibility at Vieira de Almeida Law Firm

In what concerns the external dimension of social responsibility, Vieira de Almeida Law Firm has been developing its work towards:

4.4.1 The Community:

a) Through *pro bono* work

Through the last decades, VdA has been cooperating with numerous third sector organizations, providing legal services focused on innovation and social entrepreneurship projects.

For example, VdA has cooperated with the organization *Teach for Portugal*, which is a pioneering project in the field of education, developed under the aegis of the international organization *Teach for All*.

This non-governmental organization operates by identifying and hiring recent graduates with strong leadership potential to act as mentors, in the classroom context, at schools in Portugal's most disadvantaged communities for a period of two years, with a view to improving the students' capacity for learning.

Vasco Vieira de Almeida Foundation supports *Teach for Portugal* as a social investor, in the context of the *Parcerias para o Impacto* (Partnerships for Impact), a tool of the European Fund Portugal Social Innovation, while VdA provides it with comprehensive *pro bono* services.

Another example of *pro bono* services is the collaboration provided to the *World Wide Web Foundation* – an organization created by Tim Berners-Lee in the context of the "*Contract for the Web*" project –, in the field of telecommunications and technology.

The main objective of the *World Wide Web Foundation* is to help democratize the access to knowledge and internet in developing countries and, consequently, contribute to promoting human rights and improve conditions in health, employment, education and citizenship.

b) Education to Citizenship

According to its statues, education for citizenship is the key mission of Vasco Vieira de Almeida Foundation, which seeks to "*develop and implement activities that promote the construction of a more informed, integrated and inclusive society and a heightened sense of civic responsibility, using education, knowledge and culture as vehicles to uphold human rights and the rule of law*".

One example of this investment in education is the *Professor Francisco Vieira de Almeida Award: Promoting education and knowledge to build a more informed and inclusive society*, in partnership with the Faculty of Arts of the University of Lisbon (FLUL), with the aim of fostering research and contributing to the advancement of knowledge.

c) Third Sector Capacity Building

As an example of this third sector capacity building, we can mention the collaboration of Vasco Vieira de Almeida Foundation with the *Portuguese Foundations Centre* and with *GRACE*, in the organization of the conference "*Corporate Foundations: Agents of Change*".

d) Corporate Volunteering

As we mentioned before, corporate volunteering is encouraged by VdA as a form of collectively exercising citizenship, allowing all workers (and not only lawyers) the chance to participate in the tackling of social and environmental challenges.

Most initiatives are organized in partnership with other entities that pursue a relevant social or environmental mission.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

For instance, VdA annually participates in *GIRO*, the biggest corporate volunteering initiative in Portugal, which is organized by GRACE and mobilizes around 1000 volunteers from dozens of member companies.

Another example that can be highlighted is the partnership between VdA and the *Girl MOVE Academy*; a project that intends to give women access to job opportunities and the possibility to become leaders and agents of positive change.

VdA participated in two of its three programs: *BELIEVE Programme*, through which VdA lawyers and staff raised enough money to fund 180 scholarships for socially vulnerable Mwarusi girls living in the north of Mozambique (therefore ensuring that they remain in school for another academic year); and *CHANGE Program*, focused on leadership and social entrepreneurship.

4.4.2 Environmental Sustainability

As mentioned before, VdA is a member of BCSD, a business association that is part of the global network of the *World Business Council for Sustainable Development*, which brings together forward-thinking companies working together to accelerate the transition to a more sustainable world.

Since 2011, this law firm is also a member of the *Legal Sustainability Alliance*, an international organization of law firms committed to promoting and adopting environmentally sustainable practices in their activity.

Vieira de Almeida is also a member of the United Nations Global Compact and has joined the SDG Ambition Programme, through which the law firm committed to actively contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

4.5 The Internal Dimension of Social Responsibility at Vieira de Almeida Law Firm

According to the information collected through the website and the interview held with the lawyer responsible for the program of social responsibility, Vieira de Almeida Law Firm is committed in providing lawyers (and other workers) excellent working conditions in terms of facilities and equipment; promoting, simultaneously, ethical purposes through volunteering initiatives, internal campaigns and *pro bono* work.

Moreover, this law firm considers that to provide a high-quality service to their clients it is essential to provide a good environment to their workers, through team spirit, humor and informality.

In relation to lawyers, we can mention the following aspects:

- All lawyers participate in volunteer actions promoted by the law firm;

- VdA has founded, in 2009, an academy to provide legal training, as well as training in management and soft skills development (*VdA Academy*);

- *Pro bono* work is accounted for lawyers in all aspects, including annual objectives;

- Balance between professional and personal life is taken into account and several measures have been adopted towards this goal, like working hours flexibilization and remote working (it is recognized, however, that this is a difficult subject considering the constraints that arise from the need to fulfil deadlines);

- Paternity protection: although it is not legal binding, VdA pays parental leave to lawyers and, in the first year of children, working hours are reduced with no impact on payment;

- Gender equality: VdA pays serious attention to this topic and has elected gender equality as a development sustainability objective to work during 2021 (in VdA there are several women already partners of the law firm);

- Guidelines to prevent harassment at the work place: VdA has approved an *Ethical Conduct Code*;

- Working rewards: there are several mechanisms regarding the reward of best workers including money rewards and career development;

- Health and safety at work place: this is a subject of concern at VdA for all workers (for example, lawyers have the right to a health insurance);

- Adaptation to change: in difficult times, efforts are made to prevent, for example, the dismissal of workers (for example, during pandemic time, it was decided not to dismiss any workers).

In what concerns the internal environmental sustainability:

- The environmental component of VdA's Corporate Social Responsibility Programme is developed through its *Green Project*, which annually promotes a set of internal measures targeting sustainable development, eco-efficiency and carbon footprint reduction;

- Vieira de Almeidas' new office in Lisbon – where more than 90% of the Firm's lawyers and staff are based – integrates several measures designed to improve environmental performance.

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this Chapter, we intend to discuss and interpret the results of our research.

As mentioned before, we pretended to explore if (and how) a big law firm, like Vieira de Almeida Law Firm, can adjust and accommodate the general framework regarding social responsibility and social innovation to the specific responsibilities (and needs) of lawyers.

In general, the findings of the present study are consistent with our initial expectations.

From the research conducted, it is possible to note, firstly, that Vieira de Almeida Law Firms has developed, especially in the last two decades, a solid program of social responsibility and encouraged the promotion of social innovation actions, aligning different interests and agents and contributing for the development and dissemination of this area (for example, through the support of nonprofit civil society organizations).

In what concerns the different dimensions of social responsibility (internal and external), our research reveals that Vieira de Almeida law firm has been focusing on two distinct elements of social responsibility: i) responsibilities towards the community (with special focus on *pro bono* legal assistance, citizenship education, third sector capacity building, corporate volunteering, internal campaigns); ii) and environmental sustainability.

Others dimensions, like the internal dimension towards lawyers and other employees of the firm – which should include aspects regarding, for example, recruitment and career progression, diversity and inclusion, prevention of sexual harassment, as well as training and work-life balance

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

– have not (yet) been object of report from the law firm and practices regarding these subjects remain almost unknown for other stakeholders.

In relation to motivations beyond the practice of social responsibility by Vieira de Almeida Law Firm, our findings, in relation to culture and values of this law firm, reveal a commitment with ethical values and sustainability.

In fact, it is assumed, at the website, that, since lawyers play an essential role in ensuring access to justice, it is believed that big firms such as VdA, have an increased responsibility to ensure the effective exercise of civic rights.

For all members of the law firm, social responsibility is a way to accomplish their personal and social goals and to exercise their civic rights within the firm.

Simultaneously, social responsibility allows the reduction of environmental impact and a more sustainable performance

The goal of social justice and sustainability has, therefore, been embraced, at Vieira de Almeida Law Firm, through the integration of social demands and the aim to articulate actions that seek to overcome social problems and to improve quality of life in several communities (even outside Portugal) and through the reduction of environmental impact.

Regardless of the motivations that are recognized explicitly by the law firm to be at the core of social responsibility, it is possible, however, to note that the integration, by Vieira de Almeida, of such a solid program of social responsibility and innovation, contributes, simultaneously, to:

i) The strengthening of the relations stablished with stakeholders, especially corporate clients, which, mainly, have incorporated social responsibility programs at their organisations;

ii) Competitive advantage towards other law firms (which can also feel encouraged to develop social responsibility programs);

iii) Withstand to external pressures (specially in times of crises and exposition to *media* cases);

iv) Reinforcement of network; and

v) Talents' attraction (lawyers and other workers who identify themselves with the values and culture supported by VdA).

In this context, social responsibility and social innovation allows Vieira de Almeida law firm not only to integrate social demands and ethical values, but also to meet objectives that can contribute to wealth creation and long-term profits

Regarding this subject, we can recall what Garriga and Melé (2004) point out about the different theories that justify the integration of social responsibility.

According to these authors, corporate social responsibility can be classified under four groups: 1) instrumental theories (it is assumed that the corporation is an instrument for wealth creation and that this is its sole social responsibility; social activities are accepted only if they are consistent with wealth creation); 2) political theories (according to which the social power of corporation is emphasized, specifically in its relationship with society and its responsibility in the political arena associated with this power); 3) integrative theories (it is considered that business should integrate social demands, since its continuity and growth depends on society); and 4) ethical theories (it is understood that the relationship between business and society is embedded with ethical values and, therefore, firms should accept social responsibilities as an ethical obligation above any other consideration).

These four dimensions (which relate to profits, political performance, social demands and ethical values) need to be integrated into a new theory on the business and society relationship.

The concept of Business and Society relationship should, therefore, include four dimensions - instrumental, political, integrative and ethical – and some connection among them must exist: "*a proper concept of the business and society relationship should include these four aspects or dimensions, and some mode of integration of them*" and "*most of current CSR theories are focused on four main aspects: (1) meeting objectives that produce long-term profits, (2) using business power in a responsible way, (3) integrating social demands and (4) contributing to a good society by doing what is ethically correct*" (Garriga and Melé, 2004).

Despite the positive aspects that were mentioned above, our study reveals, however, some fragilities in what concerns the program of social responsibility of this law firm, like the lack of certification in what concerns social responsibility and the fact that limited information is divulgated about internal social responsibility (namely in relation to lawyers).

On the other hand, Vieira de Almeida reports do not detail how stakeholders (like clients, lawyers and other support staff, law students, regulators, Government, academics, suppliers and others) contribute for the definition of the program of social responsibility and what is the unifying factor that links the choice of the initiatives to be integrated and developed by the law firm.

Furthermore, reports on corporate social responsibility do not publicize what is included on *pro bono* legal work and what is the impact of it on the people and institutions that the law firm advises (for example, from the more than 8000 of hours spent on *pro bono* work in 2020, which were targeted to legal assistance at courts or legal advice to organizations from the third sector and public institutions).

6. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter provides conclusions, followed by limitations of the present study, implications and possible directions for future researches.

As set up in the introduction, the main goal of the present research was to understand how Vieira de Almeida Law Firm has adjusted and accommodated the general framework regarding social responsibility and social innovation to meet specific responsibilities (and needs) of lawyers.

From the research conducted, and summarily, it is important to note that Vieira de Almeida law firm has been building a solid program of corporate social responsibility towards the community (that goes far beyond the traditional *pro bono* and charitable giving) and the environment and has become an important driver of social innovation.

In fact, in what concerns the external dimension of social responsibility towards the community and the environment, it is undeniable that this law firm promotes regularly a large set of measures – namely in relation to *pro bono* legal assistance, citizenship education, third sector capacity building, corporate volunteering, internal campaigns and environmental sustainability.

These initiatives meet the specific responsibilities of lawyers in what concerns the administration of justice and their duties towards the community (as mentioned before, lawyers shall defend rights, freedoms and guarantees, the good application of laws, the prompt administration of justice and the improvement of law institutions).

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

Furthermore, the link between corporate social responsibility and social innovation at this law firm can be considered as a distinctive characteristic of this law firm, since, as results from the present study, it is possible to identify several initiatives that serve simultaneously the objective of social responsibility and social innovation (for example, the creation of the Vieira de Almeida Foundation, the promotion of the *Spring School* to support youth employability, the support given to social enterprises or the partnerships established with several social organizations, like the *Girl Move Academy*.

In what concerns the internal dimension of social responsibility, we can conclude, however, that, until present time, limited information has been publicized by Vieira de Almeida Law Firm (at their website or at their social responsibility reports), especially in relation to lawyers (for example, about work life balance or diversity and inclusion).

For this reason – and even if Vieira de Almeida Law Firm is paying the necessary attention to the internal dimension of social responsibility in what concerns lawyers (as it results from the interview that was held to the partner of the law firm who is responsible for the program of social responsibility) –, it is not possible to draw a clear conclusion on how lawyers' needs are being met by the program of social responsibility.

Nevertheless, it is unquestionable that this law firm became an important player in the integration of social demands through social responsibility and social innovation.

To sum up, and coming back to our initial questions about the engagement of law firms with social responsibility and social innovation, we can note that Vieira de Almeida Law Firm has developed, in the last decades, a program of social responsibility (with impact on social innovation) not as a common private company but considering the essential responsibilities that can be appointed to lawyers in ensuring access to justice and the effective exercise of civic rights.

In relation to the internal dimension of social responsibility, however, annual reports of Vieira de Almeida Law Firm do not publicize information regarding lawyers – namely what are the commitments of this law firm towards these professional and if they have been successfully achieved – and not detail if (and how) lawyers have contributed for the definition of the program of social responsibility.

These conclusions may contribute for a better understanding of social responsibility (and social innovation) in law firms, inspiring academics to further studies on this area and encouraging practitioners to the development of social responsibility programs or to the improvement and adjustment of these programs in line with the outcomes that were presented in the present research.

Naturally, these outcomes cannot be generalized, since other (big) law firms might have different approaches to social responsibility, in what concerns, for example, the nature of the responsibilities that should be assumed by law firms.

On the other hand, particular circumstances of each law firm (like client's profile, international presence of the law firm, areas of legal practice, among others) may determine different results.

Therefore, and due to the nature of the present study – based on the case study of Vieira de Almeida Law firm – different results can be achieved when applied to other law firms.

In addition to this, it should be noted that some limitations of the present study arise, in what concerns the internal dimension of social responsibility of lawyers, from the circumstance that few information was available in the website of the law firm and only from the interview held to the partner responsible for social responsibility it was possible to gather important data on this topic.

Subsequent to this, however, there were no further interviews in order to understand the impact of the measures that have been promoted, by the law firm, in relation to lawyers.

Considering the results of the present research and its limitations, future studies could be carried out for a better understanding of social responsibility and social innovation at law firms, namely, if law firms should be more strategic in what concerns the selection of causes to support, if they should reveal a unifying factor that links the choice of initiatives (considering, for example, the mains practice areas of the law firm or the industries to which legal services are provided), what is the impact of social responsibility on lawyers or to what extent law firms can (or should) be constrained in the development and promotion of social responsibility (namely through regulation of social responsibility by the Lawyers' Bar Association) and in which direction those programs should be delineated (either to alleviate legal needs of the society or for other purposes).

7. REFERENCES

Agudelo, M., Jóhannsdóttir, L. and Davídsdóttir, B. (2019). A Literature Review of the History and Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility. International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility. 4(1), 2-23. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-018-0039-y.

Branco, M. and Rodrigues, L. (2008). Factors Influencing Social Responsibility Disclosure by Portuguese Companies. Journal of Business Ethic. 83, 685-701. https://www.jstor.org/stable/25482407.

Cajaiba-Santana, G. (2014). Social Innovation: Moving the Field Forward. A Conceptual Framework. Technological Forecasting and Social Change. 82(C), 42-51. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2013.05.008.

Carroll, A.B. (2021). Corporate Social Responsibility: Perspectives on the CSR Construct's Development and Future. Business & Society. 60(6), 1258-1278. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00076503211001765.

European Commission (2020). Social Enterprises and their Ecosystems in Europe. Publications Office of the European Union. https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8274.

Farrow, T. (2008). Sustainable Professionalism. German Law Journal. 10, 1001-1046. 10.1017/S2071832200001462.

Freeman, R.E. (1984). Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach. Pitman.

Garriga, E. and Melé, D. (2004). Corporate Social Responsibility Theories: Mapping the Territory. Journal of Business Ethics. 53(1-2), 51-71. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/B:BUSI.0000039399.90587.34.

González-Ramos, M., Donate M. and Guadamillas, F. (2014). Technological Posture and Corporate Social Responsibility: Effects on Innovation Performance. Environmental Engineering and Management Journal. 13, 2497-2505. 10.30638/eemj.2014.279.

Gutterman, A., Walter, A, Miller, T., Cassidy, M. (2019). The Lawyer's Corporate Social Responsibility Deskbook: Practical Guidance for Corporate Counsel and Law Firms. American Bar Association.

Halkos, G. and Skouloudis, A. (2018). Corporate Social Responsibility and Innovative Capacity: Intersection in a Macrolevel Perspective. Journal of Cleaner Production. 182, pp. 291-300. http://centaur.reading.ac.uk/75508/.

Howaldt, J. and Schwarz, M. (2010). Social Innovation: Concepts, Research Fields and International Trends. Studies for Innovation in a Modern Working Environment - International Monitoring. https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/5420652/social-innovation-concepts-research-fields-and-international-trends

Hutchinson, A. (2006). Legal Ethics and Professional Responsibility, Irwin Law, https://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/faculty_books/103.

Kalkanci, B., M. Rahmani, Toktay, L. (2018). The Role of Inclusive Innovation in Promoting Social Sustainability. SSRN Electronic Journal. 28(12), 2960-2982. https://doi.org/10.1111/poms.13112.

Mulgan, G. (2006). The Process of Social Innovations. Innovations: Technology, Governance, Globalization 1(2), 145–162. htpp://direct.mit.edu/itgg/article-pdf/1/2/145/704243/itgg.2006.1.2.145.pdf.

Mulgan, G. and Tucker, S., Ali, R. and Sanders, B. (2007). Social Innovation: What it is, Why it Matters And How It Can Be Accelerated. https://www.youngfoundation.org/publications/social-innovation-what-it-is-why-it-matters-how-it-can-be-accelerated/.

Murray, R., Caulier-Grice, J. and Mulgan, G. (2010). The Open Book of Social Innovation. https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/The-Open-Book-of-Social-Innovationg.pdf.

Phills Jr., A.J., Deiglmeir K. and Miler, D.T. (2008). Rediscovering Social Innovation. Stanford Social Innovations Review. 6(4), 34-43, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/rediscovering_social_innovation.

Rexhepia, G., Kurtishib, S. and Bexheti, G. (2013). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Innovation The Drivers of Business Growth?. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences. 75, 532-541. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042813005946.

Schumpeter, J. (1942). *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. Harper & Brothers.

Seck, S., Devlin, R. and Quigg, S.. (2021). Soft Law, Legal Ethics and the Corporate Lawyer: Confronting Human Rights and Sustainability Norms. Legal Ethics. 24(1), 1-3. https://doi.org/10.1080/1460728x.2021.1979729.

Spiesshofer, B. (2021). Be Careful What You Wish For: A European Perspective on the Limits of CSR in the Legal Profession. Legal Ethics. 24(1), 73-88, https://doi.org/10.1080/1460728x.2021.1979732.

Tracey, P. and Stott, N. (2017). Social Innovation: A Window on Alternative Ways of Organizing and Innovating. Innovation: Management, Policy & Practice. 19(1), 51-60. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14479338.2016.1268924.

Wan-Jan, W.S. (2006). Defining Corporate Social Responsibility. Journal of Public Affairs. 6(3-4), 176-184. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229578267_Defining_corporate_social_responsibility.

Westley, F. and Antadze, N. (2010). Making a Difference: Strategies for Scaling Social Innovation for Greater Impact. The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal. 15(2), 1-19. https://www.innovation.cc/scholarly-style/2010_15_2_2_westley-antadze_social-innovate.pdf.

Whelan, C., and Ziv, N. (2012). Law Firm Ethics in the Shadow of Corporate Social Responsibility. Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics, Forthcoming. 63, 1-30. https://ssrn.com/abstract=2164615.

Xuan, L.T.T. Xuan and Teal, G. (2011). A Review of the Development in Defining Corporate Social Responsibility. Science and Technology Development Journal. 14, 106-115. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340268942_A_REVIEW_OF_THE_DEVELOPMENT_IN_DEFINING_CORPORATE_SOCIAL_RESPONSIBILITY.

Civic Crowdfunding At The Intersection with Multi-Stakeholder Engagement: An Approach To Co-Create Public Value

Veronica Giuliani *veronica.livia.giuliani@gmail.com*
Dipartimento di Studi per l'Economia e l'Impresa
Università del Piemonte Orientale
28100 Novara (No), Via Perrone n. 18

Manuela Barreca *manuela.barreca@usi.ch*
Faculty of Economics / Institute of Economics
Università della Svizzera italiana
Lugano, 6900, Switzerland

Abstract

In an era of increasing citizen needs, financial constraints, and dwindling trust in government, the traditional top-down approach to providing public services and goods is often flanked by innovative strategies of multi-actor involvement to attract new investments and generate public value, social wellbeing, and inclusion. Many areas of the public sector respond to these challenges by increasingly recurring to civic crowdfunding. The cultural sector is an ideal domain for exploring this emerging trend. This article proposes a theoretical framework conceptually integrating civic crowdfunding and stakeholder management to examine the creation of public value as a process involving different actors of society. Adopting a multiple case study analysis based on five projects realized in the city of Milan. The results highlight how project initiators and stakeholders co-create public values to satisfy their needs and interests in logic of social responsibility and mutual benefit confirming how civic crowdfunding goes beyond fundraising but becomes a source of participation in the creation of public value. Finally, implications for both academics and professionals are discussed and ideas for future research presented.

Keywords: Civic Crowd Funding, Stakeholder Engagement, Co-creation, Public Value, Cultural and Creative Sector.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the public sector, the term collective co-production describes an emerging strategy to connect public service providers to other members of the community (Boivard, 2007), which has proven to be relevant for the allocation of resources – efficiency, effectiveness, problem solving – (Osborne, 2010), and the promotion of social goals – citizen empowerment, participation, and democracy – (Pestoff, 2012). Similar to its definition coined for the business sector, the co-production applied to the civic sphere is the provision of goods or services, where all parties make substantial resource contributions, from co-designing to co-financing a project, with the purpose to produce benefits for the entire community (Bovaird, 2007; Alford, 2014; Bovaird et al., 2015; Nabatchi et al., 2017). In general, it emphasizes networks and multi-actor relationships, collaborative partnerships, participatory public governance (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003; Emerson et al., 2012; Sorrentino et al., 2018), which are essential elements for satisfying those social needs that neither the government nor the other spheres of society can meet on their own. The participation of citizens and civil society in public governance is a response to austerity conditions, but also to the diminishing capacity of state and market to support socially cohesive and economically sustainable local communities (Dochrty et al., 2011). Over the last decade, some areas of the public sector have witnessed increasing use of social innovation tools due to difficulties not only

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

in accessing to traditional forms of capital but also in establishing multi-actor processes for systematic changes (Murray, 2010). Civic crowdfunding emerges as a particular form of collective co-production. The state's role in the production of social wellbeing is complemented by participation of non-public actors. In this system of circular subsidiarity, public administration, private enterprises, the third sector and citizens actively co-operate to create value for the entire society (Zamagni, 2015; Maino, 2013).

Civic crowdfunding is linked to the concept of civic culture, which in turn revolves around two bearing themes: civic community and citizenship. Civic community is characterized by reciprocity, a strong associational life (Putnam, 2000), and civic engagement, which reshapes the traditional redistributive welfare paradigms (Venturi and Zandonai, 2014). Citizenship comprises a set of social institutions that inspires participation, responsibility and the sacrifice of the self-interest for the common good (Bruni and Zamagni, 2015). Civic crowdfunding increases the intrinsic level of civic culture, builds confidence in the efficacy of participation (Dochrty et al., 2011), and generates local benefits, competencies and resources that otherwise would be submersed (Marcon and Scilletta, 2013). The multiplicity of stakeholders involved becomes proactive co-producers of local value for themselves as well as for society as a whole. As the literature suggests, the involvement of multiple stakeholders across sectors is vital to success of societal change initiatives (Bryson et al., 2014; 2016). From this perspective, civic crowdfunding is not merely a tool for collecting financial resources, but it becomes a leverage in fostering social regeneration, stakeholder engagement, community empowerment and thus an enhancer of participation at the creation of public value (Ley and Weaven, 2011; Stiver et al., 2015a).

Starting from these considerations, this paper aims at exploring the universe of public values emerging from the collaborative practice of civic crowdfunding. It proposes a theoretical framework, built up over the literature on the creation of public values, stakeholder theory and civic crowdfunding, that relates the needs and motivations behind the participation in co-financing a given civic project with the values generated by the realization of the project itself.

The research focuses on those values that stakeholders, identified among the generic crowdfunders[1], create to satisfy their own needs and interests, interacting with the project and the project initiator. To sort out this, we identified the cultural and creative sector[2]as an ideal context to study how different constellations of stakeholders shape the creation of public values. As matter of fact the cultural sphere has an extraordinary ability to mobilize latent synergies in the local economy, and to build networks of collaborative relationships within a community and across different spheres of society (OMC, 2014; UNCTAD, 2018). At the same time, the cultural sector is representative of how the contraction of public funding leads to scarcity of productions, goods and activities (Bonet and Donato, 2011), which calls for systemic innovations inciting citizens to become responsive and participative (Coliandro and Sacco, 2011; Napolitano, 2015; Giuliani et al., 2018). Using the cultural sphere as a testbed for the theoretical framework, the empirical part of the paper adopts a most-similar case study design, based on a selection of five civic crowdfunding projects in the cultural sector in the municipality of Milan. Consistent with the theoretical framework, the qualitative analysis provides evidence that crowdfunding projects create distinct types of public values according to the different stakeholders involved in the crowdfunding campaign.

[1] The literature indiscriminately uses the terms crowdfunders, financial supporters, and supporters, crowd of supporters, backers, investors and donors, to describe who provides capital during a crowdfunding campaign. In this paper, we use 'crowdfunder' and "financial supporter"interchangeably, but the term "donor" to denote financial supporters who contribute without expecting anything in return. For the sake of readability, in the remainder of the article we always use the short form 'stakeholders' intending only those stakeholders identified as a subset of crowdfunders.

[2] The 'cultural and creative sector' refers to the creation, production and distribution of a broad range of cultural and creative goods and services, including parks and architectures, art and antiquities, design, fashion, film and video, performing art, education, music, concert and concert hall, publishing literature and libraries (Bennet, 2013).

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the extant literature on civic crowdfunding, stakeholder theory and definitions of public values. Section 3 builds the theoretical framework drawing upon the literature. Section 4 describes the methodology and applies the theoretical framework in a multiple case study analysis. Section 5 discusses the results, at the end implications for both practitioners and academics are presented offering suggestions for future research (Figure 1).

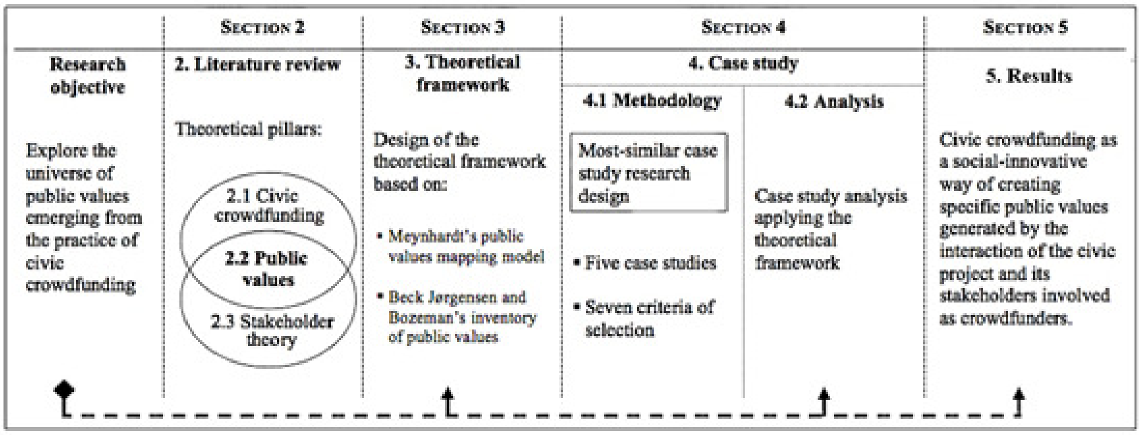


FIGURE 1: Structure of the paper.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Civic Crowdfunding

While crowdsourcing describes outsourcing of specific tasks, based on an open call to the general crowd (Howe, 2008), crowdfunding represents a particular type of crowdsourcing aiming at the collection of one specific resource of the crowd: funds. Crowdfunding applied to civic projects, precisely civic crowdfunding, can be defined as a process whereby a large number of actors (citizens, civil society organizations, companies), in collaboration with the public administration, use web-based technologies to mobilize collective resources so as to provide common utilities (Davies, 2014; Mayer, 2018; Bonini and Pais, 2017). The definition highlights three features of civic crowdfunding: (1) Where? Civic crowdfunding takes place on the internet, where online platforms act as a catalyst of the funding process, matching projects and their initiators with interested investors faster than traditional financial intermediaries (Charbit and Desmoulins, 2017). However, in the specific context of civic crowdfunding, the boundary between online and offline community is blurred. Often built on local community-based initiatives, civic crowdfunding takes advantage of pre-existing offline links within the community, using online activities to communicate and coordinate offline initiatives (Stiver et al., 2015b). (2) For what? Purpose and motivation of civic crowdfunding is the public interest. The objective is to initiate, promote and finance community-focused projects. (3) Who: the actors involved are citizens, civil society organizations, companies and the public administration. Different actors with specific needs, roles, claims and interests who together establish a network of stakeholders, defined as individuals and groups who are able to affect or can be affected by the realization of the project (Freeman, 1984; 1994; Mitchell et al., 1997; Bryson, 2004; Freeman et al., 2010). The civic nature in terms of objectives (2) and agents involved (3) distinguish civic crowdfunding from other (non-civic) crowdfunding campaigns. Another specific characteristic of civic crowdfunding is the exchange that occurs between the initiator of a project and its financial supporters, generating a motivational stimulus to contribute to community benefit by providing financial support to initiatives of common interest (Mollik, 2014; Stiver et al., 2015a; Charbit and Desmoulins, 2017; Davies, 2014; Mayer, 2018). As noted by Charbit and Desmoulins (2017), six main motivations can influence the crowd's participation in civic crowdfunding: (1) the expected benefit from the realized civic project; (2) the reward received in exchange for contributions; (3) altruistic, social and moral values; (4) the sense of belonging to a group or network; (5) the desire of re-building trust in public action and inciting citizen participation; (6) the creation new partnerships. Civic crowdfunding features three categories of active subjects: (1) the project initiator, i.e. the individual or organization that proposes an initiative and aims at collecting funds to realize a civic project. Initiators can be of any type including civil society organizations, individual citizens and private companies; (2) the crowdfunders, that is, the online community of supporters who provide funds; (3) the crowdfunding platform, generic or entirely dedicated to civic crowdfunding, which operates as an intermediary, connecting the former two categories via internet (De Buysere et al., 2012). In this innovative form of collaboration, the project initiator meets the users/consumers, investors, potential partners, stakeholders, ideas, social needs and resources on the online platform. Consequently, the crowdfunding platform becomes an interactive space of dialogue in which the customer value proposition – the dynamic of values exchange – occurs to the mutual advantage of both initiators and funders (Assadi, 2015). In this sense, civic crowdfunding can be interpreted as a means by which initiators and funders exchange and co-create value (Vargo and Lush, 2008).

2.2 The Universe of Public Values

The universe of public values is complex and dynamic, often difficult to circumscribe and to define. Introducing concepts deduced from philosophy, sociology, psychology and economics, Meynhardt (2009) defines public value as value for the public and from the public, its creation being situated in the relationships between individuals and society. Stoker (2006), sharing the view that society is the proper arbiter of public value (Benington and Moore, 2011), defines public value as collectively built, thus representing the common good, which is more than the sum of individual preferences. Following Dahl and Soss (2014), two traditional strains of literature can be distinguished. The first tradition puts forward the concept of creating public value by achieving an efficient and just public organization (Moore, 1995; Stoker, 2006; Benington and Moore, 2011). Representative for this line of thought is Moore's strategic triangle (Moore, 1995; Moore and Sanjeev, 2004), a framework intended to support the public manager as the primary actor in creating public value as a result of public services provided on behalf of the politician and the society that confers legitimacy to the public organization. The triangular model is composed by three elements: (a) the authorizing environment, which confers legitimacy and support; (b) the operational capacity subsuming organizational skills, innovation and the effective allocation of resources (3) the public value, i.e. the improvement of wellbeing resulting from public policies and services. This approach to creating public value has been criticized for its reliance on managerial techniques borrowed from the private sector, which over emphasizes the role of the public manager and downplays the intrinsic value of active citizen engagement in the democratic process. To address this shortcoming, Bryson et al. (2016) propose a new representation of the strategic triangle, called public governance strategic triangle that highlights the multi-actor, multi-sphere and multi-level aspects in the co-creation of public value. The second strain of literature thinks of public values, in the plural form, as specific and identifiable, with an amplified domain over politics and society that widens the former tradition's narrow focus on public service alone (Bozeman, 2007; Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman, 2007; Meynhardt, 2009; 2015). A leading representative of the public values tradition is Bozeman (2007), who emphasizes the social nature of the public value, composed by a plurality of values. Bozeman argues that the public administration plays a role as guarantor of public values, though these would not be exclusive prerogative of the state. He defines public values as emerging from inclusive dialogue and deliberation, i.e. as those values providing a normative consensus about (a) the rights, benefits, and prerogatives of citizens, (b) the duties that connect citizens to society and the state, and (c) a set of principles that guide governments and policies. Based on these characteristics, Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007) propose a list of public values, clustered into eight nodal categories of values – human dignity, secrecy, integrity, citizen involvement, compromise, robustness, sustainability, and openness. Relatedly, the theory elaborated by Meynhardt (2009; 2015) defines public value as «situated in the relationship between the individual and society,

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

founded in individuals, constituted by subjective evaluation against basic needs, activated by and realized in emotional-motivational states, and produced and reproduced in experience-intense practices» (Bryson et al., 2014: 450). Drawing on Epstein's (1989) theory of basic needs, Meynhardt (2009) constructs a public value landscape along four dimensions: moral-ethical, political-social, utilitarian-instrumental and hedonistic-aesthetical. Combining these dimensions with the aforementioned eight nodal values identified by Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman, Meynhardt constructs a matrix of sixteen values: human dignity, secrecy, integrity, diversity, citizen involvement, compromise, equal opportunities, social innovation, robustness, sustainability, openness, self-initiative, cultural heritage, beauty of public space, reliability and service quality. Figure 2 shows the overlap of the Meynhardt's public value landscape and the public values identified by Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman, forming the base of the theoretical framework proposed in this paper (see section 3). The theory elaborated by Meynhardt recognizes that the public value is grounded in subjects' needs that motivate and drive their personal decisions and actions. Where multiple needs, interests and different perspectives coexist, the key element to achieve mutual benefit is building collaborative networks in the collective interest, and thus to shift from pursuing individual value to the shared co-creation of public values (Freeman et al., 2010). Especially in the social context, where a large number of actors (governments, citizens, nonprofit organizations, firms, beneficiaries, providers) coexists and interacts, this logic connects the generation of value with the theories of multi-stakeholder engagement and public value co-creation.

2.3 Multi-stakeholder Engagement In The Creation of Value

During the last decades, the notion of stakeholder has been subject to academic debate and analyzed from various perspectives. Freeman, who defines a stakeholder as a «group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of an organization's objectives» (1984: 46), sets a milestone in the field. Among the definitions collected by Bryson (2004), stakeholders are variously interpreted as: «any person, group or organization that can place a claim on the organization's attention, resources, or output, or is affected by that output» (Bryson, 1995: 27); or «those individuals or groups who depend on the organization to fulfill their own goals and on whom, in turn, the organization depends» (Johnson et al., 2002: 206). These definitions show the complex nature of a stakeholder, characterized by specific needs and claims, and, at the same time, by the level of power and influence on the organization/project. Reflecting the strategic role of stakeholder engagement, Mitchell et al. (1997) develop the concept of stakeholder salience, in which the priority degree of a stakeholder is determined as a function of urgency, legitimacy and power. Another widely used technique to identify and analyze stakeholders is the power versus interest grid by Eden and Ackermann (1998) which will allow to isolate the stakeholders among the whole set of crowdfunders in the case studies discussed below (see section 4). The two-by-two matrix identifies four categories of stakeholders: (1) players who have both power and interest at a significant level. They are key stakeholders whose engagement is essential; (2) subjects with an interest but little power; (3) the context setters who, despite having a limited interest, are able to influence the setting by exerting their power; finally (4) the crowd, with low power and low interest. A prototypical model for stakeholder management consists in four stages: identifying the relevant stakeholder groups; determining their interests; their needs and expectations; modeling priorities, policies and activities considering the different stakeholder interests and the value-objective to reach (Freeman et al., 2007; 2010). In the public sector, the stakeholder approach is oriented to adding value, improving the quality of public decisions and promoting reciprocity between public administration and citizens (Hajer, 2003). Highlighting the social nature of value creation, this suggests an approach consistent with the principle of stakeholder cooperation: multiple types of stakeholders, in order to satisfy their needs and desires, seek a common ground to enjoy mutual benefits (Freeman et al, 2010). In the context of societal change initiatives, multi-stakeholder involvement and the shared creation of public value play a vital role to success. At the civic level, the system of public value co-creation and the interaction among actors are key elements to improve social wellbeing, to share civic objectives, and to co-create values for a more inclusive society (Agrawal et al., 2015). Under this perspective, civic crowdfunding, as a tool of collective co-production, provides an ideal space to foster synergies, accessibility, active participation and co-creation of social benefits (Payne et al., 2008; Vargo and Lusch, 2008).

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on Meynhardt's (2009) landscape of public values as well as the inventory of public values by Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007), this paper proposes a unified theoretical framework, as summarized in figure 2. The first column sets out the basic needs drawn from Epstein (1989), which translate into motivations and actions directed towards their satisfaction, as exemplified in column 2. The next two columns resume Meynhardt's landscape of sixteen public values (column 4) along the four basic value dimensions – i.e. moral-ethical, political-social, utilitarian-instrumental, hedonistic-esthetical (column 3). The rightmost two columns complete the framework with Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman's neighbour and co values (column 6) centered around eight nodal values (column 5). This unified framework not only highlights the complementarity of the landscape and the inventory of public values, but also represents a comprehensive collection of public values identified in the literature, which proves useful to distinguish public values in applied case studies.

Epstein (1989)		Constellations of values Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007) / Landscape of values Meynhardt (2009)		Nodal values	Extensions of values (Neighbour and Covalue)
Basic needs	Translate into a motivation for… (examples)				
Positive self-evaluation	▪ positive self-concept and self-worth ▪ consistent relationship between self and environment ▪ feeling of high self-esteem (in social comparison)	Moral-Ethical	Human dignity	Human dignity	Protection of the rights of the individual, justice, benevolence, equity
			Secrecy	Secrecy	The rule of law, productivity
			Integrity	Integrity	Honesty, dignity, fairness, ethical consciousness, moral standards, professionalism, impartiality, loyalty to the regime
			Diversity		
Positive relationships	▪ relatedness and belongingness ▪ attachment, group identity ▪ optimal balance between intimacy and distance	Political-Social	Citizen involvement	Citizen involvement	Listening to public opinion, responsiveness, dialogue, citizens' self-development
			Compromise	Compromise	Balancing interests, reasonableness
			Equal opportunities		
			Social innovation		
Gaining control and coherence over one's conceptual system	▪ understanding and controlling one's environment ▪ predictability of cause-and-effect relationship ▪ ability to control expectations to cause desired outcome	Utilitarian-Instrumental	Robustness	Robustness	Stability, adaptability, legality, social cohesion, flexibility, timeliness, effectiveness
			Sustainability	Sustainability	Voice of the future, continuity, the common good, the public interest, solidarity
			Openness	Openness	Accountability, democracy, the will of the people, collective choice
			Self-initiative		
Maximizing pleasure and avoiding pain	▪ positive emotions and avoidance of negative feelings ▪ flow experience ▪ experience of self-efficacy due to action	Hedonistic-Esthetical	Cultural heritage		
			Beauty of public space		
			Reliability		
			Service quality		

FIGURE 2: Public values mapping - theoretical framework.

Furthermore, the above literature review suggests two stylized facts: While (1) every stakeholder has needs to satisfy and hence a particular motivation to support the project, (2) the creation of public value is based on the fulfillment of particular needs. It follows by hypothesis that particular needs of particular types of stakeholders give rise to the creation of corresponding public values as suggested by the rows in figure 2. Civic crowdfunding, as a practice involving multiple stakeholders as well as initiators of different nature – public administration, private for-profit, nonprofit organizations and citizens –, which interact to co-create public values, lends itself as an ideal filed to investigate this hypothesis and to apply the theoretical framework in order to explore the universe of public values created by stakeholders of civic crowdfunding campaigns.

4. METHODOLOGY

The empirical part of the paper applies the theoretical framework to the analysis of five cases illustrating how the constellation of stakeholders and initiators affects the kind of co-created public values in the context of crowdfunding projects. The most-similar case study research design (Yin, 2014) is employed to form valid conclusions about the nexus between the nature of stakeholders and the public values by comparing cases that differ only in these aspects of interest. Therefore, the crowdfunding projects to be selected as cases had to fulfill seven criteria. The first six conditions ensure that cases are similar regarding confounding factors that affect the types of public values created, such as the civic objective (Duijn and Van Popering-Verkerk, 2018; Giuliani et al., 2018), the sector (Scott, 2010), and the socio-cultural and institutional context (Shaw, 2013). Meanwhile, the seventh criterion guarantees variation in the variable of interest: different constellations of project initiators and stakeholders involved can be observed in otherwise comparable cases. Following the criteria used, each case should pursue: a civic objective, in the cultural and creative sector, geographically located in the city of Milan, using a reward-based all-or-nothing crowdfunding model[3], in the Eppela platform (eppela.com/it), with the successful realization of the project, as a final point involving a multiplicity of actors. From the projects satisfying all seven criteria, one representative case was selected by nature of the initiator as public administration, private for-profit, private nonprofit and citizens in either association or individuals. Table 1 summarizes the research design and case selection criteria of cases with common factors held constant across cases, the constellation of initiators and stakeholders (explanans) that supposedly drives kind of public values generated (explanandum) by successful civic crowdfunding projects.

The qualitative analysis of the five cases proceeds in two stages. The first stage identifies the stakeholders among the crowdfunders using the power versus interest matrix (Eden and Ackermann, 1998) and data retrieved from the crowdfunding platform Eppela. The second stage applies the theoretical framework to study the association between the basic needs of the different stakeholders identified and related public values, providing a list of the public values generated at the intersection of initiator and stakeholders for each of the five projects.

COMMON FACTORS	EXPLANANS	EXPLANANDUM
1) civic objective; 2) cultural and creative sector; 3) City of Milan; 4) reward-based all-or-nothing crowdfunding model; 5) crowdfunding platform Eppela; 6) successful campaign	7) Multiplicity of actors involved a) Different nature of initiators (public administration, private for-profit, private non-profit and citizens, either in association or individuals) b) Different stakeholders (categorized by nature) identified among the general crowd of funders	Public values generated i.e. what adds value to the public sphere, focused not just on individual interests but also on the general shared public interest (Benington, 2007)

TABLE 1: Most-similar case study research design.

4.1 Case Studies Overview

- **Case 1:** Experimentation of civic crowdfunding actions. The experience of Milan. Initiated by the local government of Milan, this initiative aims at realizing a large number of projects of public interest, exclusively via civic crowdfunding. Launching an open call for tender in 2016,

[3] The model of reward-based crowdfunding allows individuals to contribute to projects and receive a non-financial, often symbolic reward, whose monetary value is lower than the amount of the donation, but entails significant intangible benefits to the funders; the all-or- nothing method is a fixed funding, in which if the proponent does not reach its capital-goal-target, none of the pledges are collected.

the public administration invited structured organizations (for-profit, nonprofit, associations, etc.) to design proposals for local civic projects. Once approved by the city council, the municipality would co-finance the project up to 50% or a maximum of € 50'000 per project, provided that (1) funds are collected by a civic crowdfunding campaign, (2) using Eppela as platform; (3) and at least 50% of the target budget is reached through this tool. This experimentation has led to the realization of 16 civic projects promoted by 8 non- profit organizations, 5 associations of citizens, and 3 for-profit enterprises, the main stakeholders of the initiative (see table 1). Total investments have amounted to € 656'549: € 333'136 raised from 1'308 crowdfunders and € 323'413 co-financed by the municipality of Milan.

- **Case 2:** #IWant Cinewall. The private for-profit film distributor WantedCinema s.r.l. launched this project with the objective to promote cinema culture and the performing arts in the subareas of the city, and to build a democratic and unconventional space where the supply and fruition are tailored to meet different cultures and needs. The general idea is to use a common visual language to include in the community activities also those individuals at high risk of discrimination or social exclusion (e.g. speech communities, people with disabilities, etc.).The amount of funds requested to realize the project was of € 100'000. The total of crowdfunders involved in the civic crowdfunding campaign was 235. As shown in table 1, six of these are identified as stakeholders of the project, belonging to the private for-profit (2) and nonprofit sectors (4).

- **Case 3:** Il cantiere dell'Ortica. The project initiator is Il Melograno onlus, a nonprofit organization, specifically a social cooperative dedicated to social healthcare services. The project planned to create a cultural urban incubator with the scope of enhancing knowledge and skills among citizens and to develop social capital within the local community. The realization of this creative and professional laboratory required a total funding of € 44'411 and got support from 39 crowdfunders, five of which are identified as stakeholders belonging to the spheres of public administration (1), private for-profit (2), private nonprofit (1), and citizens in association (1).

- **Case 4a:** Gallab. This project is launched on the initiative of Non Riservato Aps, an association of citizens founded with the purpose of innovating public spaces and using creativity as a tool of urban transformation and social innovation. Designed as a production workshop to share knowledge and exchanging technical expertise, the Gallab hub needed € 50'000 for the realization. 169 crowdfunders have contributed to the success; seven of these are identified as stakeholders, among which the most represented spheres are citizens in association (3) and the private nonprofit sector (2).

- **Case 4b:** Il mondo in 100 libri. Compared to the other cases, this project is the smallest in terms of both the number of crowdfunders (19) as well as the funding requested to realize it (€ 1'000). Initiated by a group of students, the project aims at creating a new section in the school library with 100 books about migration, hospitality, diversity and intercultural integration. Among the 5 stakeholders out of 19 crowdfunders, there are two for-profit enterprises: Step 4 s.r.l. and Zona Geografica - DeAgostini, both engaged in another social initiative, known as Do you speak global? Innovative models of education for world citizenship, which promotes social and cultural inclusion in the dialogue between schools and territory.

4.2 Applied Analysis

A qualitative approach has been used to emphasize the intention to carry out an exploratory and descriptive multiple case study analysis based on the selected projects realized in the city of Milan, to achieve a comprehensive understanding of a "contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (Yin, 2014). The city of Milan is considered a best practice given its strong

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

tradition of civic mutualism and rich local ecosystem of social economy that sustained today's international attitude and capacity to overcome the last economic crisis that affected all western countries globally, generating massive cutting of public funding. Since 2011, the Municipality of Milan has supported and implemented a series of policies and activities oriented to combine the development of innovation and investments in different sectors (e.g., tourism, fashion, design, culture, art, creative industries, agri-food, finance…) and the social inclusion of the most fragile segment of the city (suburbs). During the last years, all these initiatives have supported new financial initiatives. In 2016 Milan is considered the first case in Italy of a local government using the crowdfunding tool for match-funding with the public administration.

The current analysis shows that the practice of civic crowdfunding goes beyond fundraising but becomes a source of participation in the creation of public value.

Following the sequence of our analysis, the first stage isolates the stakeholders from the whole set of crowdfunders using the power versus interest grid (Eden and Ackermann, 1998). For each of the five case studies, table 3 – column 3 describes identified stakeholders by nature (public administration, private for-profit, non-profit organizations, and citizens). Third sector organizations (associations, foundations, social enterprises, etc.) represent a large percentage of crowdfunders and identified areas stakeholders in the entirety of the cases analysed. This confirms the relevance of the non-profit sector in local governance and is in line with the view that the third sector contributes significantly to co-production (Pestoff, 2012). The second stage carries the theoretical framework to the data, as shown in table 2. The table maps each case to the basic needs of the identified stakeholders (columns) and the landscape of values (rows). The cells report the code of the project when a specific type of need is detected, and a particular value associated with that need occurs. The result of this association is explained in more detail in table 3. The basic value dimensions and Meynhardt's categories of values are listed in the fourth and fifth columns, respectively. Column 6 extends these categories to the correlations from Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman's inventory.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

PROJECT	Nature of the initiator	Stakeholders categorized by nature	BASIC VALUE DIMENSION	LANDSCAPE OF VALUES	CORRELATED VALUES
1. Experimentation of civic crowdfunding actions	Public Administration **(PA):** *City of Milan*	▪ **P. For-Profit:** Mare srl social enterprise, Enbelive srl, Cinema srl; ▪ **P. Non-Profit:** L'Impronta onlus, Spazio Aperto Servizi cooperativa sociale, Punto Service cooperativa sociale, Comunità nuova onlus, Acli Milanesi, Medicina Italia onlus, CFM Milano, Consorzio SIS Milano; ▪ **Citizens in association (APS):** Non Riservato Aps, Mitades Aps, Casa per la pace Milano Aps, Il Melograno cooperativa sociale onlus, Area Ridef	Moral-Ethical	Human dignity Secrecy Integrity	**Human dignity,** protection of the rights of the individual, justice, equity; **Secrecy,** the rule of law, productivity; **Integrity,** impartiality, professionalism
			Political-Social	Citizen involv. Compromise Equal opport. Social innov.	**Citizen involvement,** citizens' self-development, listening to public opinion, dialogue, responsiveness; **Compromise,** balancing interests, fairness; **Equal opportunities;** **Social innovation**
			Utilitarian-Instrumental	Robustness Sustainability Openness	**Robustness,** stability, adaptability, legality, social cohesion, flexibility, timeliness, effectiveness; **Sustainability,** continuity, the common good, the public interest, voice of the future; **Openness,** accountability, democracy, the will of the people, collective choice
			Hedonistic-Esthetical	Cult. heritage Beauty of p.s. Service quality	**Cultural heritage;** **Beauty of public space;** **Service quality**
2. #IWant Cinewall	Private For-Profit **(PFP):** *WantedCinema srl*	▪ **P. For-Profit:** SKE Productions, Insidephotoart; ▪ **P. Non-Profit:** Progetto Atrii, Amicicinema, Circolo Arci Magnolia, Vene associazione	Moral-Ethical	Secrecy Integrity	Productivity; Moral standards, ethical consciousness, professionalism
			Political-Social	Citizen involv. Compromise	Responsiveness, listening to public opinion, dialogue; **Compromise,** balancing interests
			Utilitarian-Instrumental	Robustness Sustainability Openness	**Robustness,** stability, adaptability, flexibility, timeliness, effectiveness; **Sustainability;** **Openness,** the will of the people
			Hedonistic-Esthetical	Service quality	Service quality
3. Il Cantiere dell'Ortica	Private Non-Profit **(PNP):** *Il Melograno onlus*	▪ **PA:** City of Milan; ▪ **P. For-Profit:** Edilfea, Cima; ▪ **P. Non-Profit:** Coopezio cooperativa sociale; ▪ **Citizens in association (APS):** Casa per la pace Milano Aps	Moral-Ethical	Human dignity Integrity Diversity	**Human dignity,** protection of the rights of the individual, benevolence, equity; **Integrity,** dignity, fairness, ethical consciousness, moral standards, professionalism, impartiality; **Diversity**
			Political-Social	Citizen involv. Equal opport. Social innov.	**Citizen involvement,** citizens' self-development, listening to public opinion, dialogue; **Equal opportunities;** **Social innovation**
			Utilitarian-Instrumental	Robustness Sustainability Openness	Social cohesion **Sustainability,** voice of the future, solidarity; **Openness,** the will of the people
			Hedonistic-Esthetical	Cult. heritage Beauty of p.s. Reliability Service quality	**Cultural heritage;** **Beauty of public space;** **Reliability;** **Service quality**
4a. Gallab	Citizens in association **(APS[*]):** *Non Riservato Aps*	▪ **PA:** City of Milan; ▪ **P. For-Profit :** Coin; ▪ **P. Non-Profit:** Terzo Paesaggio associazione, Ateatro associazione culturale; ▪ **Citizens in association (APS):** Mitades Aps, Asterisma Aps, Le compagnie malviste Aps;	Moral-Ethical	Human dignity Secrecy Integrity Diversity	**Human dignity,** protection of the rights of the individual, benevolence; Productivity; **Integrity,** dignity, ethical consciousness, moral standards, professionalism; **Diversity**
			Political-Social	Citizen involv. Compromise Equal opport. Social innov.	**Citizen involvement,** citizens' self-development, dialogue; Balancing interests **Equal opportunities;** **Social innovation**
4b. Il mondo in 100 libri	Citizens: *students*	▪ **P. For-Profit:** Project Do you speak global Step4 srl, Zona Geografica di De Agostini; ▪ **P. Non-Profit:** Ciessevi-volunteers organization, Fondazione Cariplo; ▪ **Citizens in association (APS):** Non Riservato Aps	Utilitarian-Instrumental	Robustness Sustainability Openness Self-initiative	Adaptability, social cohesion; **Sustainability,** voice of the future, the common good, the public interest, solidarity; **Openness,** the will of the people, collective choice; **Self-initiative**
			Hedonistic-Esthetical	Cult. heritage Beauty of p.s. Reliability Service quality	**Cultural heritage;** **Beauty of public space;** **Reliability;** **Service quality**

[*] APS: Associazione di Promozione Sociale – association of social promotion- here considered as the category "citizens in association" to emphasize the scope of the association rather than its legal status.

TABLE 2: Case studies: stakeholders and public values.

Basic value dimension		Landscape of values	Basic needs: Positive self-evaluation	Positive relationships	Gaining control and coherence	Maximizing pleasure
Moral-Ethical	(Hd)	Human dignity	(1) - (3) - (4a)			
	(S)	Secrecy	(1) - (2) - (4b)			
	(I)	Integrity	(1) - (2) - (3) - (4a) - (4b)			
	(D)	Diversity	(3) - (4a)			
Political-Social	(Ci)	Citizen involvement		(1) - (2) - (3) - (4a) - (4b)		
	(C)	Compromise		(1) - (2) - (4b)		
	(E)	Equal opportunities		(1) - (3) - (4a) - (4b)		
	(Si)	Social innovation		(1) - (3) - (4a)		
Utilitarian-Instrumental	(R)	Robustness			(1) - (2) - (3) - (4a)	
	(Sb)	Sustainability			(1) - (2) - (3) - (4a) - (4b)	
	(O)	Openness			(1) - (2) - (3) - (4a) - (4b)	
	(Sf)	Self-initiative			(4a) - (4b)	
Hedonistic-Esthetical	(Ch)	Cultural heritage				(1) - (3) - (4b)
	(B)	Beauty of public space				(1) - (3) - (4b)
	(Rb)	Reliability				(3) - (4a)
	(Sq)	Service quality				(1) - (2) - (3) - (4a) - (4b)

Legend: (1) Case: Experimentation of civic crowdfunding actions
(2) Case: #IWant Cinewall
(3) Case: Il Cantiere dell'Orica
(4a) Case: Gallab
(4b) Case: Il mondo in 100 libri

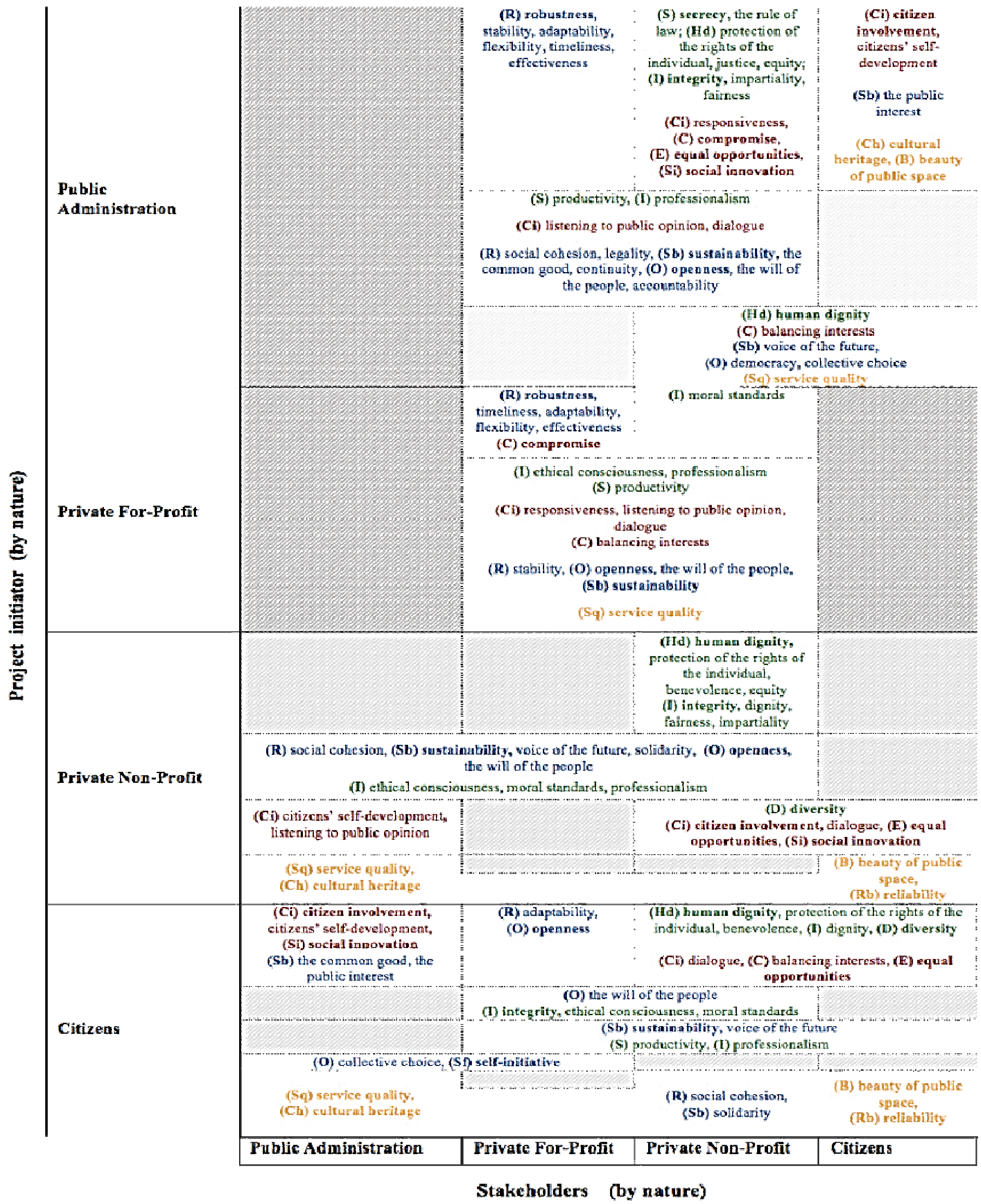
TABLE 3: Case studies: association basic needs - basic values.

5. RESULTS

This analysis utilized 5 of the 18 projects project proposals from civic crowdfunding platforms Eppela launched in 2016.

Summarizing the results of the analysis, figure 3 presents the main public values co-created by different types of initiators (rows) and stakeholders (columns) of different nature. The cells contain the public values generated at the intersection of initiators and stakeholders. Colors indicate Meynhardt's basic value dimensions: moral-ethical (green), political-social (red), utilitarian-instrumental (blue), hedonistic-esthetical (yellow). Single public values in normal type pertain to Beck Jørgensen and Bozeman's inventory, while public values of Meynhardt's landscape are in boldface and take on the same color as the dimension to which they belong. Grey spaces indicate the absence either of a certain type of stakeholder (dark grey) or of values produced exclusively by a certain type of stakeholders (light grey). Finally, the values shared by two or more types of stakeholders are entered in a unique cell spanning the columns of the respective stakeholders.

When the public administration initiates a civic crowdfunding campaign, the public values created tend to be political and social (e.g. (Ci) citizen involvement, citizens' self-development, dialogue, (C) balancing interest, (E) equal opportunities), and utilitarian-instrumental (e.g. (R) stability, social cohesion, (S) sustainability, (O) openness, accountability, collective choice). Utilitarian-instrumental values, however, are predominant in the case where for-profits are initiator as well as main stakeholder. On the other hand, projects launched by nonprofit organizations or citizens mainly produce moral-ethical (e.g. (Hb) human dignity, equity, (I) integrity, impartiality, (D) dignity) and political-social types of public values. Lastly, the hedonistic-esthetical group of values – (Ch) cultural heritage, (B) beauty of the public spaces, (Sq) service quality – is common to projects initiated by public administration, private nonprofit and citizens, and is only exceptionally generated when the initiator is private for-profit ((Sq) service quality). A very similar pattern emerges when analyzing the kind of public values created by nature of the stakeholders. The presence of the public administration as a stakeholder activates the values referred to the political-social and utilitarian-instrumental types. If one or more nonprofit organizations are identified as stakeholders, the values generated gravitate towards the moral-ethical and political-social dimensions. When citizens, either as individuals or in association, have a stake in the realization of a certain civic project, the values created fall into moral-ethical, political-social and hedonistic-esthetical categories. In the areas shared by more than one types of stakeholders, (Ci) citizen involvement, (O) openness and (Sq) service quality, are the most represented public values.



Legend: Moral-Ethical (green); Political-Social (red); Utilitarian-Instrumental (blue); Hedonistic-Esthetical (yellow)

FIGURE 3: Relationship project initiator-stakeholders-public values created.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

6. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH

Given our previous assumptions that (1) civic crowdfunding, as a collective action driven by and for a specific community, relates to intangible benefits such as better well-being, solidarity among citizens and between them and public administrations, inclusiveness, sense of belonging to a community (Stiver et al. 2015; Giuliani et al. 2018); (2) the public value – as created through economic prosperity, social cohesion and cultural development – is concerned with the entire community of citizens rather than single individuals (Horner and Hazel, 2005); and (3) the management of stakeholders is crucial element in successfully managing an organization or an initiative (Fifka and Loza Adaui 2015), the overall analysis and results supports hypothesis that the specific needs and interests drive the type of public values generated in civic crowdfunding projects associated to the nature of stakeholders and initiators who co-create them. Specific public values are produced at the intersection of different project initiators and stakeholders. Moreover, the results reveal that the generation of certain public values is related to the nature of the actors (public administrations, private for-profit, private nonprofit, citizens) rather than to the role (initiator or stakeholder) they assume in a civic crowdfunding campaign. The fact that initiators and stakeholders co-create public values in order to satisfy their needs and interests in a logic of social responsibility and mutual benefit confirms once again that civic crowdfunding is more than a tool of collecting funds, but represents a means of bringing out the internalized values, needs and stakes of actors involved, transforming the customer value proposition in a civic proposition which presupposes an exchange for the benefit of the entire community.

This perspective of civic crowdfunding as an opportunity to express and satisfy intrinsic needs complements the views of civic crowdfunding as a collective action driven by and for a specific community where actors become beneficiaries and producers values at the same time (Scott, 2010; Stiver et al., 2015b), as a form of social innovation producing public value for the entire community rather than for single individuals (Horner and Hazel, 2005; Sorrentino et al., 2018), and as a tool to build and maintain multi-stakeholder engagement for successful social change (Freeman et al., 2010).

This paper contributes to the literature by building a theoretical framework that conceptually links intrinsic needs of actors to the creation of public values and multi-stakeholder engagement in the context of civic crowdfunding.

The framework may prove relevant to both practitioners and academics:

- for practitioners implementing integrative and hybrid policies similar to the crowdfunding testing in the city of Milan, the framework can serve as a guidance to predict and evaluate the public values created by such a policy in a way that goes beyond a mere measure of financial transactions. Moreover, the civic crowdfunding offer the opportunity to amplify collaborative practices and to incentive citizens' participation overcoming the traditional and hierarchical role of public administrations, promoting a more sustainable and inclusiveness to allow communities led regeneration approach.
- For academics, the framework emphasizes a new direction in the narrative of civic crowdfunding for local governments, focusing on the relevance of multiple actors of different nature in creating and shaping public value, hence the need to develop new measures of the public values generated by civic crowdfunding campaigns.

The case study analysis paves the ground for further research in this direction. First, conducting the analysis on an expanded sample of projects would allow for a more detailed categorization of the different types of stakeholders using for instance the typologies of Mitchell et al. (1997). Second, the limits of the deductive approach call for an assessment of the validity the framework, for example by conducting semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders and initiators during and after civic crowdfunding campaigns. A detailed mapping of stakeholders and initiators, together with a deeper knowledge of their needs and motivations, would lay the basis for revisiting the public value scorecard (Meynhardt, 2015) in order to build a new set of indicators to evaluate civic crowdfunding campaigns, and, potentially, the value added by other public projects involving multiple stakeholders of different nature (e.g. public-private partnerships, civic programs sponsored by governments and/or non-profit organizations, etc).

7. REFERENCE

Agranoff R., Mc Guire M. (2003), Inside the matrix: integrating the paradigms of intergovernmental and network management, in International Journal Of Public Administration, 26 (12): 1401-1422.

Agrawal A., Catalini C., Goldfarb A. (2015), Crowdfunding: geography, social networks, and the timing of investment decisions, in Journal of Economics and Management Strategy, 24 (2): 253-274.

Alford J. (2014), The multiple facets of co-production: building on the work of Elinor Ostrom, in Public Management Review, 16 (3): 299–316.

Assadi D. (2015), In search of crowfunding business models, in Assadi D. (eds.), Strategic approaches to successful crowdfunding, Advances in Business Strategy and Competitive Advantage (ABSCA), Burgundy School of business, France: 1-33.

Beck Jørgensen T. B., Bozeman B. (2007), Public values: an inventory, in Administration and Society, 39 (3): 354-381.

Benington J., Moore M. H. (2011), Public value in complex and changing times, in Benington J., Moore M. H. (eds.), Public value: theory and practice, Basingstoke, UK, Palgrave Macmillan: 1-20.

Bennet T. (2013), Making culture, changing society, London, Routledge.

Bonet L., Donato F. (2011), The financial crisis and its impact on the current models of governance and management of cultural sector in Europe, in Journal of Cultural Management and Policy, 1(1): 4-11.

Bonini T., Pais I. (2017), Hacking public service media funding: a scenario for rethinking the license fee as a form of civic crowdfunding, in International Journal on Media Management, 19(2): 123-143.

Bovaird T. (2007), Beyond engagement and participation: user and community co-production of public services, in Public Administration Review, 67(5): 846–860.

Bovaird, T., Van Ryzin G. G., Löffler E., Parrado S. (2015), Activating citizens to participate in collective co-production of public services, in Journal of Social Policy, 44 (01): 1–23.

Bozeman B. (2007), Public values and public interest: counterbalancing economic individualism, Washington, D.C., Georgetown University Press.

Bruni L., Zamagni S. (2015), L’economia civile, Il Mulino, Bologna.

Bryson J. M. (1995), Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Bryson J. M. (2004), What stakeholders matter. Stakeholder identification and analysis techniques, in Public Management Review, 6 (1): 21-53.

Bryson J. M., Crosby B. C., Bloomberg L. (2014), Public value governance: moving beyond traditional public administration and the new public management, in Public Administration Review, 74 (4): 445-456.

Bryson J. M., Sancino A., Benington J., Sørensen E. (2016), Towards a multi-actor theory of public value co-creation, in Public Management Review, 19(5): 640–654.

Charbit C., Desmoulins G. (2017), Civic crowdfunding: a collective option for local public goods?, OECD Regional Development Working Papers, 2017/02, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Coliandro C., Sacco P.L. (2011), Italia reloaded. Ripartire dalla cultura, Il Mulino, Bologna.

Dahl A., Soss J. (2014), Neoliberalism for the common good? Public value governance and the downsizing of democracy, in Public Administration Review, 74 (4): 496-504.

Davies R. (2014), Civic crowdfunding: participatory communities, entrepreneurs and the political economy of place, MSc Thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA. Available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2434615

De Buysere K., Gajda O., Kleverlaan R., Marom D. (2012), A framework for European crowdfunding. Available at: http://www.crowdfundingframework.eu/.

Docherty I., Goodlad R., Padison R. (2011), Civic culture, community and citizen participation in contrasting neighbourhoods, in Urban Studies, 38 (12): 2225-2250.

Duijn M., Van Popering-Verkerk J. (2018), Integrated public value creation through community initiative – Evidence from Dutch water management, in Social Science Journal, 7 (12): 1-14.

Eden C., Ackerman F. (1998), Making strategy: the journey of strategic management, Sage, London.

Emerson K., Nabatchi T., Balogh S. (2012), An integrative framework for collaborative governance, in Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 22 (1): 1–29.

Epstein S. (1989), Values from the perspective of cognitive-experiential self-theory, in Eisenberg N., Reykowski J., Staub E. (eds.), Social and moral values. Individual and societal perspectives, Routledge, Hillsdale: 3-22.

Freeman R. E. (1984), Strategic Management: a stakeholder's approach, Pitman, Boston, MA.

Freeman R. E. (1994), The politics of stakeholders theory: some future directions, in Business Ethics Quarterly, 4 (1): 409-421.

Freeman R. E., Harrison J. S., Wicks A. C. (2007), Managing for stakeholders: survival, reputation and success, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.

Freeman R. E., Harrison J. S., Wicks A. C., Parmar B., De Colle S. (2010), Stakeholder theory. The state of the art, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Giuliani V., Colasanti N., Frondizi N., Barreca M. (2018), Civic crowdfunding, social marketing and the co-creation of public value, in the Journal of the Italian Marketing Association, Franco Angeli, 2/2018: 109-130.

Hajer M. (2003), Policy without polity? Policy analysis and the institutional void. in Policy Sciences, 36: 175-195.

Horner L., Hazel L. (2005), Adding public value, The Work Foundation, London.

Howe J. (2008), Crowdsourcing: why the power of the crowd is driving the future of business, New York, Crown Business.

Johnson G., Scholes K., Whittington R. (2002), Exploring corporate strategy, Pearson College Div, Harlow, UK.

Ley A., Weaven S. (2011), Exploring agency dynamics of crowdfunding in start-up capital financing, in Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal, 17 (1): 85-110.

Maino F. (2013), Tra nuovi bisogni e vincoli di bilancio: protagonisti, risorse e innovazione sociale, in Primo Rapporto sul secondo welfare in Italia, Percorsi di Secondo Wefare, Centro di Ricerca e Documentazioni Luigi Einaudi: 17-46.

Marcon G., Scilletta C. (2013), Il ruolo del welfare civile nel welfare mix. I bisogni non evasi dal welfare pubblico, Osservatorio di Economia Civile, Camera di Commercio di Treviso, Treviso.

Mayer M. (2018), Examining community dynamics of civic crowdfunding participation, in Journal of Computer Support Cooperative Work, 27 (3-6): 1137-1151.

Meynhardt T. (2009), Public value inside: what is public value creation?, in International Journal of Public Administration, 32 (3): 192-219.

Meynhardt T. (2015), Public value: turning a concept framework into a scorecard, in Bryson J. M., Crosby B. C., Bloomberg L. (eds.), Public value and public administration, Georgetown University Press, Washington, DC: 147-169.

Mitchell R., Agle B., Wood D. (1997), Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: defining the principle of who and what really counts, in Academy of Management Review, 22 (4): 853-886.

Mollick E. (2014), The dynamics of crowdfunding: an exploratory study, in Journal of Business Venturing, 29 (1): 1-16.

Moore M. (1995), Creating public value: strategic management in government, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

Moore M. H., K. Sanjeev (2004), On creating public value: what business might learn from government about strategic management, in Corporate Social Responsibility Working Paper, n. 3, Cambridge, MA, J.F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

Murray R., Caulier-Grice J., Mulgan G. (2010), The open book of social innovation: ways to design, develop and grow social innovation, NESTA.

Nabatchi T., Sancino A., Sicilia M. (2017), Varieties of participation in public services: the who, when, and what of co-production, in Public Administration Review, 77(5): 766–776.

Napolitano M. R. (2015), Valore della cultura e cultura del valore. Riflessioni per il futuro del Bel Paese, in Il capitale culturale, Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage, 11: 371-393.

OMC - Open Method of Coordination (2014), Good practice report on the cultural and creative sectors' export and internationalization support strategies, European Agenda for Culture 2011-2014.

Osborn S.P. (2010), The new public governance?, Routledge, London.

Payne A. F., Storbacka K., Frow P. (2008), Managing the co-creation of value, in Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 36 (1): 83-96.

Pestoff V. (2012), Co-production and third sector social services in Europe. Some concepts and evidence, in International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 23(4): 1102-1118.

Putnam R. (2000), Bowling alone: the collapse and revival of American community, Simon and Schuster, New York.

Scott C. (2010), Museums, the public, and public value, in The Journal of Museums Education, 35 (1): 33-42.

Shaw R. (2013), Another size fits all? Public value management and challenges for institutional design, in Public Management Review, 15(4): 477-500.

Sorrentino M., Siciali M., Howlett M. (2018), Understanding co-production as a new public governance tool, in Policy and Society, 37(3): 277-293.

Stiver A., Barroca L., Minocha S., Richards M., Roberts D. (2015a), Civic crowdfunding research: challenges, opportunities, and future agenda, in New Media & Society, 17 (2): 249–271.

Stiver A. Barroca L., Petre M., Richards M., Roberts D. (2015b), Civic crowdfunding: how do offline communities engage online?, in Proceedings of the 2015 British HCI Conference, ACM: 37–45.

Stoker G. (2006), Public value management a new narrative for networked governance?, in The American Review of Public Administration, 36 (1): 41-57.

UNCTAD – United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2018), Creative economy outlook: trends in international trade in creative industries. Avaible at: https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted2018d3_en.pdf

Vargo S .L, Lusch R. F. (2008), Service-dominant logic: continuing the evolution, in Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 36 (1): 1–10.

Venturi P., Zandonai F. (2014), Ibridi organizzativi. L'innovazione sociale generata dal gruppo cooperativo Cgm, Il Mulino, Bologna.

Yin R. K. (2014), Case Study Research Design and Methods (5th ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.

Zamagni S. (2015), L'evoluzione dell'idea di welfare: verso il welfare civile, in Quaderni di Economia del Lavoro, 103/2015:337-360.

https://www.eppela.com/it/mentors/comunemilano

https://www.eppela.com/it/projects/10182-iwant-cinewall

https://www.eppela.com/it/projects/10568-il-cantiere-dell-ortica https://www.eppela.com/it/projects/9112-realizziamo-il-gallab-non-riservatohttp://www.nonriservato.net/en/projects/gallab

https://www.eppela.com/it/projects/13252-il-mondo-in-100-libri?t=contributorshttps://www.innovationinpolitics.eu/uploads/project/files/docs/5ba9fcae5dd4d.pdf

Digital Social Innovation and Sustainability: An Analysis of the Large-Scale Retailing Sector during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Federica Bosco *federica.bosco@uniroma2.it*
Faculty of Economics/Department of Management and Law
"Tor Vergata" University of Rome
50 Cracovia St., 00133 Rome, IT

Gloria Fiorani *fiorani@economia.uniroma2.it*
Faculty of Economics/Department of Management and Law
"Tor Vergata" University of Rome
50 Cracovia St., 00133 Rome, IT

Luana La Bara *luana.la.bara@uniroma2.it*
Faculty of Economics/Department of Management and Law
"Tor Vergata" University of Rome
50 Cracovia St., 00133 Rome, IT

Chiara Di Gerio *di.gerio@economia.uniroma2.it*
Faculty of Economics/Department of Management and Law
"Tor Vergata" University of Rome
50 Cracovia St., 00133 Rome, IT

Abstract

The following paper analyzes the Digital Social Innovation (DSI) phenomenon and focuses on why new technological trends are essential both for the country's growth and for Sustainable Development. The study conducted focused on the consequences of Covid-19 on society and sectors in Italy, analyzing how a digital response was able to positively affect the growth of the Large-Scale Retailing (LSR) sector.

The ultimate goal is to understand the extent to which digitization affects economic, social, and environmental sustainability, and how this can have a positive impact on a country's long-term growth. All this is related to the case of the large-scale retail sector, examined as one of the few to have responded better, through processes of digital evolution, to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Keywords: Digital Social Innovation, Covid-19, Large-scale Retailing, Sustainability.

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology and Social Innovation, two themes that are as relevant as they are often distant from each other. In the common vision, digital and technological development are rarely considered as prerogatives of Social Innovation. Instead, these two concepts are strongly connected, and new technologies can be fundamental for social issues.With the increasing complexity of products and technologies, the rising costs of innovation coupled with shorter development lead times, organizations today are forced to open their innovation activities and to enter into new forms (Durst & Ståhle, 2013).

The impact of digitization has, therefore, led to the development of emerging technologies, defined as technical innovations that represent progressive innovations within a field for competitive advantage (International Congress Innovation and Technology XXI, 1997). Resorting to new technologies allows us to significantly modify our individual and collective behaviors, thanks to a multitude of information that can produce new types of collective services, changing the power dynamics that local governments, citizens, and private companies have in governing these phenomena (Tricarico, 2019).

The Large-Scale retailing sector has always been one of the least digitized due to the consumption habits of customers, who prefer to touch products, be the ones to choose those with the earliest expiration date, or have staff available for any questions. However, in recent years this sector has also begun a process of digitization and technological development. The advent of the Internet, mobile devices, and the new generations have pushed the sector to technological development and the use of smart systems. Precisely in the period analyzed, the digitization of the sector, although not adequate, has facilitated the response to the health crisis, as it was the Pandemic itself that made the LSR aware of the enormous opportunities that online channels and technological innovation can provide. The lockdown period certainly served to raise awareness of this aspect, even considering the numbers that were recorded in 2020 regarding online sales.

The 2020 year marked the beginning of the Covid-19 Pandemic and brought great changes to the entire global economic landscape. Most of the working sectors have been affected but, at the same time, there have been others that have managed to adapt to the situation, even managing to benefit from the containment measures. One of these is the Large-Scale Retailing (LSR) sector which, thanks to the type of services offered and the use of innovative sales systems, is reporting unprecedented growth.

Therefore, the remainder of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 provides a brief literature review on Social Innovation (SI) and Digital Social Innovation (DSI); Section 3 explains the choice of sample, the process of data collection, and the methodological approach used; Section 4 provides findings, later discussed within Section 5. In the end, Section 6 concludes.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Social Innovation

In the literature, there are numerous definitions of Social Innovation (SI), more generically identified in all those initiatives oriented to "the creation and implementation of new solutions to social problems, with the benefits of these solutions shared beyond the boundaries of the innovators" (Tracey &Stott, 2017). Proceeding to a comparative analysis of the current definitions of Social Innovation we notice how each of them focuses on a specific aspect of the concept, inviting a reflection on the intrinsic characteristics of Social Innovation that impacts the actors, the diffusion processes, and the results. According to a pragmatic approach, "Social innovation refers to innovative activities and services that are motivated by the goal of satisfying a social need and that are predominantly disseminated through organizations whose primary purposes are social" (Mulgan, 2006). According to the author, the starting point for innovation is an idea of a need that is not being met, along with an idea of how it could be met. In contrast, according to a managerial approach, IS is "a new solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions and for which the value created goes primarily to society as a whole rather than to private individuals" (Phillis *et al.*, 2008). The following definition, compared to the previous one, takes into account two criteria explained by the authors: "novelty", in that innovations must be new to the user, context or application, and "improvement" in terms of effectiveness and efficiency compared to a previous solution, to which is added the concept of "sustainable" which means solutions that are environmentally and organizationally sustainable - those that can continue to function for a long period. Moulaert (2009) develops a more critical definition of IS by defining it as "the satisfaction of alienated human needs through the transformation of social relationships". In "The Open Book of Social Innovation" (Murray *et al.*, 2010) the authors provide a simplified version of IS "new ideas - products, services, and models - that satisfy social needs - more effectively than existing alternatives - while creating new relationships and new collaborations". From a system approach, we derive that "Social Innovation is a complex process of introducing new products, processes, or programs that profoundly change the basic routines, flows of resources and authority, or beliefs of the social system in which the innovation occurs. Such successful social innovations have durability and broad impact" (Westley & Antadze, 2010). According to the comparative analysis of Bassi (2011) in which the author compares the above definition of IS with those of Mulgan (2006) and Phillis, Deiglmeier, Miller (Phillis *et al.,* 2008) previously illustrated, only that of Westley and Antadze (Westley & Antadze, 2010) would be complete and exhaustive defining too tautological the first and from the setting too rigid the second (Busacca, 2013). Finally, according to the European Commission, "Social innovation can be defined as the development and implementation of new ideas (products, services, and models) to meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations. It represents new responses to pressing social demands, influencing the process of social interactions. It aims to improve human well-being. Social innovations are innovations that are social in both their ends and their means. They are innovations that are not only good for society but also improve the ability of individuals to act" (European Commission, 2013a). From the definitional variety it emerges how, to date, Social Innovation has been approached according to a broad definition, which brings out its polysemic value (Montanari*et al.,* 2017) but which, at the same time, respects several characteristics, such as the response to a social need, the realization of change through the creation of social and collaborative relationships and the focus on the collective value generated. It seems evident, therefore, how the strong social dimension represents the distinctive determinant trait of social innovation such as to also influence the processes underlying social innovation initiatives (Montanari*et al.,* 2017).

2.2 Digital Social Innovation

Caroli identifies the following as key elements for Social Innovation: better satisfaction of a collective need, innovation in the relationships between economic and social actors, better use of available goods and resources, structural impact, economic strength, and new technologies. These elements are interdependent and evolve (Caroli, 2015). Technology represents an important component for the realization of the IS because it makes new ways of interaction between people and organizations possible and therefore a factor of competitive advantage is detected for those who use it. The spread of digital technologies in the global socio-economic fabric is leading many scholars to argue that there is a need for new theories in this age of Digital Innovation (Hinings *et al.,* 2018). For Nambisan et al. Digital Innovation is the use of digital technology during the process of innovating (Nambisan *et al.,* 2017). Digital Innovation is not only about putting new products and services into action but also about creating novel value creation and value appropriation pathways that enable the involvement of dynamic groups of actors with different goals and capabilities (Hinings *et al.,* 2018). This transition from Social Innovation to Digital Innovation can be defined more properly by the term of Digital Social Innovation (DSI).

Because DSI is a broad and ever-evolving field, it is difficult to find an all-encompassing definition that perfectly fits all the different nuances this term can take on. One of the most comprehensive definitions is that given by Bria *et al.* (2015), according to whom Digital Social Innovation is "a type of social and collaborative innovation in which innovators, users, and communities work together using digital technologies to co-create knowledge and solutions for a wide range of social needs and with a scope and speed unimaginable before the advent of the Internet" (Bria *et al.,* 2015). Technology emerges as a tool capable of exponentially multiplying the benefits of Social Innovation, leveraging tools such as social media, the internet of things, open data, and many others. According to Milwood and Roehl DSI emerged as a sort of Social Innovation that would rely on new technologies to solve a wide range of social problems (Milwood & Roehl, 2019). The ability of the professionals involved to engage users, citizens, and communities in their projects is fundamental. Only by breaking free of old patterns of isolation, paternalism, and antagonism and striving to understand, embrace and exploit intersectoral dynamics can new ways of creating social value be found (Phills *et al.,* 2008). Rigorous mathematical studies show that the value of any network, including social networks, grows exponentially with the number of users N, in fact, with N people can, in theory, form 2N - N - 1 group (Luvison, 1999; 2013). In this direction, enterprises are becoming more agile, adaptive, and ambidextrous to boost innovation in the current digital transformation era (Giudice *et al.,* 2020).

3. RESEARCHMETHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection and Measurement Development

Covid-19 has had a direct influence on various sectors and the large-scale retail trade has been one of the most affected by these changes. This has led to major changes not only within the sector itself but above all in people's consumption habits, which have suddenly found themselves in a situation impossible to predict. The biggest change has been in the role of digitization, with online taking over from physical channels in numerous situations. Restrictive measures together with the fear of contagion have meant that for many people the way they do their shopping has changed. All this has led to the LSR players having to adapt their sales channels to the new requirements.

The change in consumption habits, oriented towards the use of innovative sales methods such as food e-commerce and home delivery, has also had an impact at the level of sustainability, in all three of its variants: economic, environmental, and social.

To describe this change, a survey method was used to collect data in this study. The survey research process is described as a process of collecting data from respondents through questionnaires (Lubis*et al.,* 2019).The survey was conducted in the period from May 14, 2021, to May 19, 2021, administered, through the help of social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn and messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram, to the market segment represented by all Italians aged 18 and over who had the opportunity to go shopping in the last year.

The questionnaire consisted of four sections:

1. Sociodemographic characteristics;
2. Consumption habits before Covid-19;
3. Consumption habits during Covid-19 period;
4. Variables that might have influenced the change in consumption habits.

The various sections consisted of multiple-choice questions (in which only one option could be selected) and checkboxes (in which multiple alternatives could be selected).

The goal of the research was to understand the extent to which Covid-19 has impacted consumption habits about mass retail, the role of technology in this, and the effects on sustainability. Therefore, questions were asked to investigate how the use of online sales channels and those habits that can be easily traced to a more sustainable consumption style has changed from the pre-Covid period to today.

The first section was dedicated to the segmentation of the interviewees and to the collection of socio-demographic data useful to filter the results according to characteristics such as age or region of origin. Five modules were included for this analysis, three of which related to demographic characteristics (gender, age, region of residence) and two necessaries to have information useful for a social breakdown (highest level of education attained, employment status).

Section 2 and 3 were directly linked to each other, to investigate whether and to what extent consumption habits were in the period before the pandemic crisis and how these had changed with the onset of the Covid-19 crisis. In this module, the same questions were asked as in Section 2, changing the time frame from the “pre-Covid period” to the “Covid period”. This made it possible to measure how respondents' answers and consequently their habits changed.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

The last section was useful to understand how much certain factors had influenced the buying habits of the target respondents. In this module, only two questions were included with a checkbox that would allow more options to be selected, to understand which of the different variables considered had the greatest impact on the changes in the large-scale retail sector.

These questions were used to investigate what factors have most impacted digital industry awareness and sustainable spending.

Table 1 summarizes the questions on which the survey was structured.

TABLE 1: Questionnaire Structure.

Section	Questions
1. Sociodemographic characteristics	*- gender* *- age* *- region* *- education* *- job position*
2. Consumption habits before Covid-19	*- in the pre-Covid period, how often did you shop for groceries?* *- in the pre-Covid period, how much did you spend on average each month on shopping?* *- in the pre-Covid period, where did you usually go shopping?* *- in the pre-Covid period, how often did you shop online?* *- in the pre-Covid period, how far did you go from your home on averageto do your shopping?* *- if home delivery means delivery directly to your home, and click&collect means buying online and picking up at a drop-off point (the supermarket itself or a local grocery store), which of these services did you use pre-Covid to do your shopping?* *- in the pre-Covid period, when shopping, how much importance did you give to the sustainability of the products purchased (origin, packaging, production method, etc.)?*
3. Consumption habits during Covid-19 period	*- from the Covid-19 period, how often do you shop for groceries?* *- from the Covid-19 period, how much do you spend on average each month on shopping?* *- from the Covid-19 period, where do you usually go shopping?* *- from the Covid-19 period, how often do you shop online?* *- from the Covid-19 period, how far do you go from your home on averageto do your shopping?* *- if home delivery means delivery directly to your home, and click&collect means buying online and picking up at a drop-off point (the supermarket itself or a local grocery store), which of these services do you use from the Covid-19 period to do your shopping?* *- from the Covid-19 period, when shopping, how much importance do you give to the sustainability of the products purchased (origin, packaging, production method, etc.)?*
4. Variables that might have influenced the change in consumption habits	*- why, since the start of Covid, has the frequency with which you shop online increased?* *- why, since the start of Covid, has your awareness of sustainable shopping issues increased?*

SOURCE: Authors' Elaboration.

3. 2 Sample Characteristics

The random sampling method was used in this research, conducted in an Italian population. A total of 186 people responded to the market survey and all responses were used for data analysis purposes. Values are represented as percentage data.

According to the socio-demographic data of the sample analyzed, 60.8% of the responses came from women while the remainder came from men (39.2%). Most responses came from the 18-25 age group (37.6%) and the 26-35 age group (25.8%), indicating that it is easier to reach a younger target through online channels. 26.9% belong to the 36-55 age group, 9.1% are

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

represented by people aged between 56 and 65, while only 0.5% responded that they were over 65. The territorial distribution of respondents is over the entire peninsula, with a bias towards the regions of the Center (47.8%). The North and South represent 26.3% and 19.9%, respectively. Finally, 5.9% reside on the Major Islands. Out of the entire sample, only 5.4% of the people have not obtained at least a high school diploma, highlighting how there is a high level of education among those interviewed, with several graduates equal to 50% of the total. Finally, concerning the work situation, it emerges that out of all the people who participated in the survey, 36% belong to the category of students, 55.9% have a job (also considering those who define themselves as "housewives"), while 8.1% are unemployed.

TABLE 2: Socio Demographic Characteristics.

Items	Classification	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	39.2%
	Female	60.8%
Age	18-25	37.6%
	26-35	25.8%
	36-55	26.9%
	56-65	9.1%
	Over 65	0.5%
Region	North	26.3%
	Center	47.8%
	South	19.9%
	Major Island	5.9%
Education	Primary education	5.4%
	Secondary education	6.7%
	High School education	49.1%
	Bachelor/MSc' degree	35.6%
	PhD	3.2%
Job position	Student	36%
	Employee	55.9%
	Unemployed	8.1%

SOURCE: Adapted from Yue Et Al. (2020).

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

For the identification of the results,Sections 2 and 3 are the fulcrum of the survey form, since, as already explained, they contain the same questions but related first to the pre-Covid period and then to the beginning of the pandemic crisis. Through a direct comparison of the answers in the two sections, it is possible to understand what has changed in the period analyzed, and above all to what extent. By crossing the data of sections 2 and 3 with those of the first section, it is also possible to make considerations based on social and demographic characteristics. Comparing the answers of the two sections on shopping habits, we can first analyze whether there has been a change in the frequency with which people do their shopping. The possible answers were:

- 1 or 2 times a month;
- once a week;
- several times a week.

From the survey between the pre-Covid period and today, there have been no significant variations, especially with those who do their shopping 1 or 2 times a month the drop is only a few percentage points (from 18.8% to 17.7%). The greatest variation was among those who did their shopping several times a week and once a week. The data shows how the percentage of people who shop once a week has increased at the expense of those who used to shop several times a week. In essence, from the pre-lockdown period to today people are shopping less frequently every week.

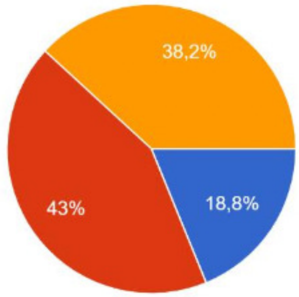


FIGURE 1: In the pre-Covid period how often did you shop for groceries?
SOURCE: Author's elaboration.

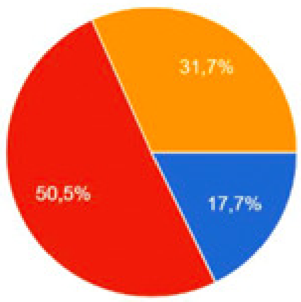


FIGURE 2: Since starting Covid how often do you shop?
SOURCE: Authors' elaboration.

Interesting data is related to the budget devoted each month to food purchases. Given the severe economic crisis to which Covid-19 has led, one would expect a drop in monthly purchases. Instead, the data shows that consumers continued to spend the same amount on groceries. Most respondents spent between €100 and €200 (38.7%) and between €200 and €500 (41.9%) in the pre-Covid period, and this average has remained virtually unchanged to date.

The use of sales channels has also varied over the period considered. The third question in sections 2 and 3 was aimed at analyzing which large-scale retail players were the most widely used and what role e were- commerce played in the pre-Covid period.

Respondents were asked via a form that allowed them to select multiple options, where they used to shop before and what channels are used now. Possible responses were:

- small grocery stores;
- Supermarkets and Hypermarkets;
- Discount stores;
- Online.

In the period before the crisis, it was found that supermarkets and hypermarkets were the most popular with 90.3% of people have selected this option. In the second place, we find Discount stores with 35.5% of responses, while only 19.4% of respondents used small food stores. As was natural to expect, at the bottom of the ranking were online channels (4.3%), synonymous with the low level of digitization in the industry before the Covid-19 outbreak.

The situation with the advent of the crisis has changed. The most important figure is relating to the use of e-commerce to buy groceries there has been an 8.1% increase in responses, going from 4.3% use in the pre-Covid period to 12.4% since the lockdown began.

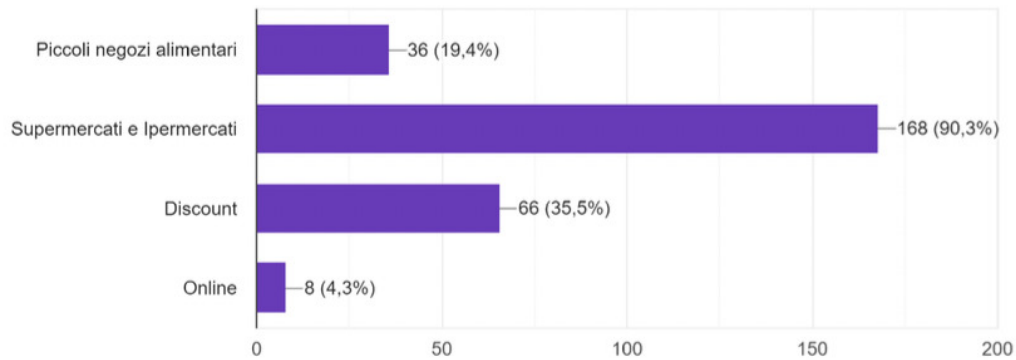


FIGURE 3: In the pre-Covid period, where did you used to shop?
SOURCE: Authors' elaboration.

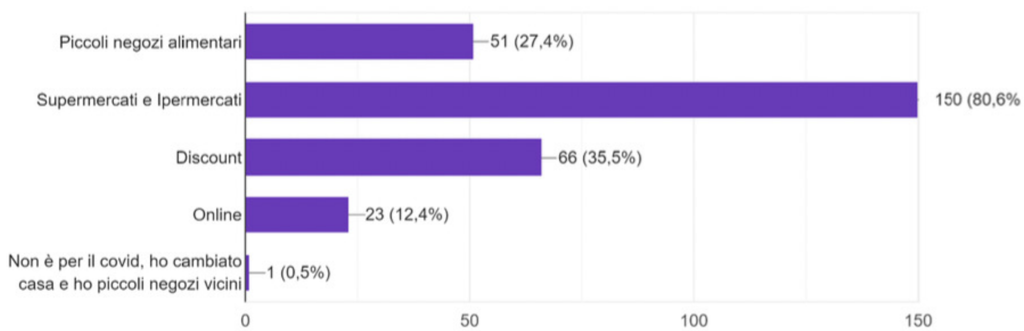


FIGURE 4: Since the beginning of Covid, where do you usually shop?
SOURCE: Authors' elaboration.

This trend also emerged when comparing how many people used online shopping in the two periods under review. In the pre-Covid period, 77.4% of people surveyed had never purchased groceries through Internet sites. This percentage drops when analyzing the period from the first lockdown to the present, where the percentage drops to 65.6%, with an 11.8% increase in the number of people who used online channels with the advent of the Pandemic.

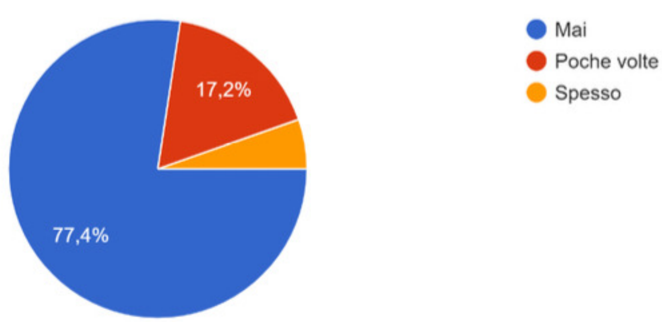


FIGURE 5: In the pre-Covid period, how many times did you shop online.
SOURCE: Authors' elaboration.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

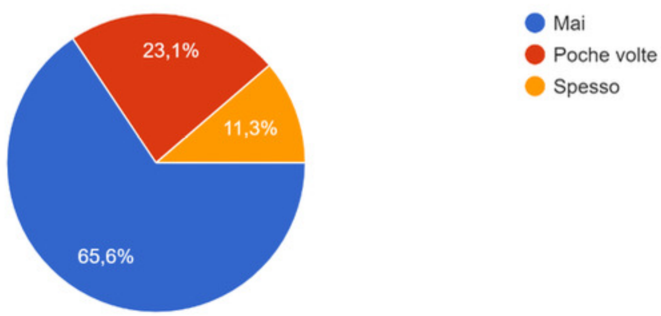


FIGURE 6: Since starting Covid, how many times have you shopped online?
SOURCE: Authors' elaboration.

Also of note, only 51.3% of consumers who shopped online "A few times" in the pre-Covid period maintained their frequency of use of these shopping channels. 12.5% of them started using e-commerce "Often" in the Pandemic period.

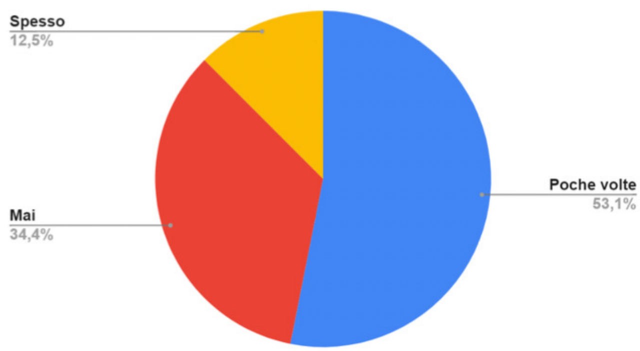


FIGURE 7: Since starting Covid, how many times have you shopped online?
SOURCE: Authors' elaboration.

About the two different services offered with online purchases, namely home delivery, and click&collect, we find a predisposition of consumers towards home delivery both in the pre-Covid period (69.7%) and since the beginning of the crisis (79%). Click&collect went from being used at 18.2% to 9.7%. Finally, individuals who were using and continue to use both services dropped from 12.1% to 11.3%.

This data demonstrates both that customers prefer the convenience of home delivery over having to leave their homes to pick up what they have purchased, and that with the onset of Covid-19, nearly 10% of click-and-collect users preferred to switch to home delivery. This may be due above all to the fear of contagion brought by the virus.

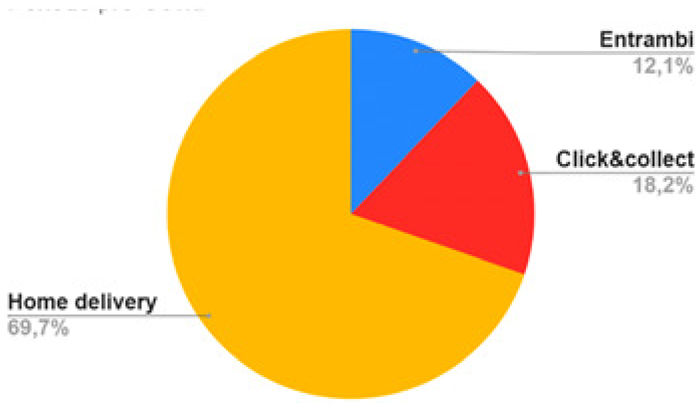


FIGURE 8: Pre-Covidperiod
SOURCE: Authors' elaboration.

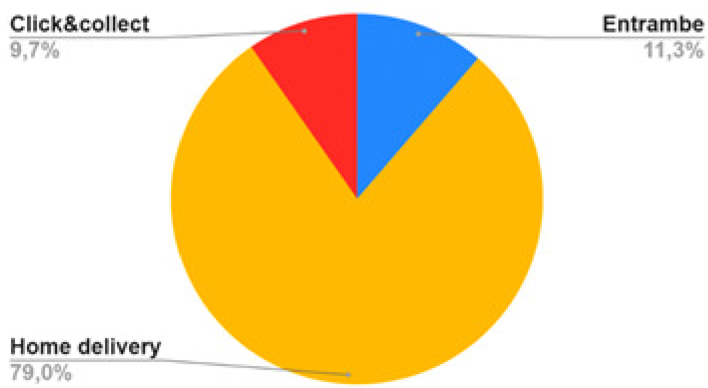


FIGURE 9: Covid-19 period
SOURCE: Authors' elaboration.

Looking at the reasons expressed by respondents as to why there was an increase in the use of online channels for shopping during the period of Covid-19, it emerges that the most frequent reasons are those related to the convenience of the service (15.1%), fear of contagion (16.7%) and saving time (9.1%).

Of note, some respondents confirmed that they had not used e-commerce before the lockdown due to the lack of supermarkets that performed this service (7%) and the lack of information regarding the possibility of online shopping (4.8%).

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

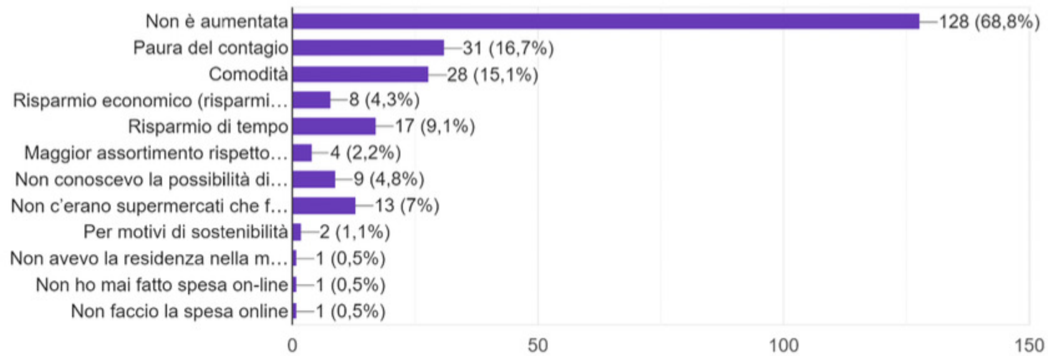


FIGURE 9: Motivations that have pushed to the use of the channels online for the expense.
SOURCE: Authors' elaboration.

In conclusion, it can be said that from the pre-Covid period to today there has been an effective change in consumer habits. The survey confirms that Pandemic has accentuated the use of online channels for shopping. From the consumer's point of view, as confirmed by previous data, this is due to the restrictive measures and the fear of many people towards a possible contagion, the greater ease of access to home delivery and click&collect and other factors that have increased trust and awareness towards these new purchasing methods. These trends have led many players in the retail sector to meet the needs of consumers who are increasingly inclined to use digital technologies, implement online stores if they are not yet present, and improve existing ones if they are not adequate to process the many requests.

4.1 The Effects on Industry Sustainability

With the Pandemic and the consequent digitization, consumer habits have changed and there is a greater predisposition towards sustainability issues. The objective of the survey was to understand to what extent the Pandemic and the digital response of the retail sector have had a positive effect on sustainability, analyzed in its three variants: environmental, economic, and social.

The analysis of the survey revealed two different types of effects that Covid-19 and digitalization have caused on sustainability: direct effects and indirect effects.

The direct effects are linked to the greater awareness that has arisen in recent months, concerning sustainable spending, which has led to greater attention being paid to these issues during the purchasing phase.

Indirect effects, on the other hand, can be related to the change in the habits of clients, which have had an impact on sustainability, but not due to a conscious choice on the part of the consumer.

Certainly, direct effects are the most important, since, deriving from conscious choices made by the subject, they are replicable even if the current context were to be changed again.

To understand if and to what extent from the pre-Covid period to today attention to sustainability issues has increased among large-scale retail consumers, one can compare the question posed in sections 2 and 3 in which respondents were asked, in the two periods examined, "how much importance do you give to the sustainability of the products purchased (origin, packaging, production methods, etc.)?"

There were four possible answers:

- none;
- little;
- enough;
- a lot.

As can be assumed from the period before the lockdown to today, the predisposition towards eco-sustainable product types has increased greatly. Of those interviewed, less than half (47.3%) gave “quite a bit” or “a lot” of importance to these issues when purchasing food products. Of those, 12.9% even gave no importance to the provenance and packaging of what they purchased, and 39.8% gave it little. This has changed greatly with closures resulting from the danger of contagion and the increased use of online channels.

Survey data showed that the percentage of people who began to give “quite a bit” or “a lot” of importance to these issues in the purchasing phase rose from 47.3% to 66.1%, an increase of 18.8 percentage points. The greatest growth occurred on the “enough” option, which went from 39.2% of responses to 50%. On the other hand, clicks on the “a lot” option doubled from 8.1% in the pre-Covid period to 16.1% today. This denotes a change in habits that brings with it a greater awareness of the consumer regarding environmental and sustainable issues. The one just analyzed is a direct effect of the Pandemic, since the sudden change in lifestyle caused by the restrictions, has pushed people to give more importance to what they buy, to safeguard their health and that of the environment.

To confirm this, one can analyze the data relative to the second question in section 4, which served to provide an overview of the variables that influenced purchasing and consumption habits. Respondents were asked why, since the start of Covid-19, sensitivity to sustainable spending issues has increased.

First, it must be said that for 59.7% of them, there was no increase in attention to these issues between the two periods. However, it is encouraging that for 40.3% of people today there is a greater awareness of the importance of sustainable spending, especially if we think that this figure could grow in the future.

From the responses, it emerged that the main reason why attention to sustainable spending has increased between the pre-Covid period and today comes from the greater number of times people have had to eat at home because of the closure of restaurants. 20.4% of respondents said that having to eat at home many more times increased their focus on the sustainability of the products they cooked. The control of food ingested is therefore the most widespread motivation that drives people to buy eco-sustainable products.

Interesting data is related to another of the most widespread motivations among those interviewed and directly linked to the digitalization that has taken place in recent months within the large-scale retail sector. 12.4% of the people who responded to the survey declared that they pay more attention to sustainable purchases because by purchasing online they have more time to inform themselves about the characteristics of the product to be chosen.

Finally, the information disseminated by the media (13.4%) and supermarkets (8.1%) are also two of the causes of this growth in the Covid-19 period.

In addition to the direct effects just analyzed, one can also consider the indirect impact caused by the change in habits, on sustainability to evaluate these indirect consequences, one can analyze previous and current behaviors about:

- to the monthly frequency with which shopping is done;
- the monthly budget dedicated to food purchases;
- the channels used;
- the distance covered to make purchases.

As already mentioned, the data showed a predisposition to make more weekly purchases. This can be seen as an advantage at an environmental level since shopping more times a week avoids the accumulation and waste of products which will be subsequently thrown away because they have expired or to buy fresh products. Making more weekly purchases leads to buying only what is needed by the consumer, in this way also lightening the processes of disposal of food not consumed. The responses also reveal a small difference between customers who have never shopped online since the start of Covid-19 and those who said they do so “often”. Filtering the results reveals a greater predisposition for those who shop via the Internet to purchase products several times a week (38.1%), compared to those who have never purchased food on the web (33.3%). From this data, even if in a small way, we can understand how online can influence environmental sustainability in a certain positive way.

Analyzing the monthly income used to do the shopping, from the answers it might seem that there has been no change in the budget dedicated each month by families to food purchases. The figure takes on different connotations if one examines the data for unemployed persons. In this case, there is a drop of about 7% of people who, before Covid-19 spent between 100 and 500 euros, in favor of spending between 100 and 200 euros. If we consider that if we take the data in an aggregated manner (employed and unemployed), the percentages of monthly spending are almost unchanged between the two periods examined, we can understand how this is even due to an increase in monthly spending by the wealthiest families. Thus, there appears to be a negative impact on social sustainability even more significant than one might think.

In addition, among the unemployed, there is less tendency to use online channels to do their shopping, with 86.7% of respondents without employment having never used the Internet to do their shopping compared to 63.6% of workers. This may stem from both the higher price of online groceries (the price of shipping must also impact) and the difficulty many households have in having high-billed electronic devices, which are very often essential for navigating complex websites.

In essence, it can be said that Covid-19 and the use of technological devices have hurt sustainability at the social level, increasing and creating inequalities based on household income. Still analyzing the responses since the period of Covid-19, trust in small food retailers has increased. The reason for this is certainly the limits imposed on travel, especially during lockdown periods, and the possibility of buying most foods online, so that small grocery stores can be used for those daily purchases that do not require the use of mass retailers, which often require a longer commute. Doing the shopping in the small stores under the house has surely a positive effect also at the environmental level because in this way is avoided the phenomenon, already highlighted above, of the accumulation of large quantities of expenditure, which occur mainly within the supermarkets. Moreover, to make greater use of food stores within the inhabited centers presupposes a lesser use of vehicles, contributing to fighting the environmental pollution deriving from smog. The theme just highlighted is confirmed by the data on marriages for shopping collected through the survey. Respondents were asked how far they traveled, on average, to do their shopping. The possible answers were as follows:

- I almost always do it online;
- a few hundred meters;
- between 1 and 5 kilometers;
- between 6 and 10 kilometers;
- more than 10 kilometers.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

In the pre-Covid period, most people (53.2%) traveled between 1 and 5 kilometers, about 27% made more than 6 kilometers to make purchases, and if we consider that of the latter, 30% responded that they shop several times a week, we can understand what the impact may be at the environmental level. Only 0.5% stated that they made almost all their purchases online, while 19.4% traveled a few hundred meters. Looking at the situation from the first lockdown to now, the data improves slightly. More than half of the respondents (52.7%) continue to make purchases in supermarkets located between 1 and 5 kilometers from home, while people who travel more than 6 kilometers have dropped from 26.9% to 16.1%, then a reduction of more than ten percent points. On the other hand, the consumers who have started to travel fewer kilometers since the beginning of Covid-19 have gone up, with 25.8% stating that they do their shopping a few hundred meters from home (+6.4%), and 5.4% using e-commerce frequently (+4.9%). The use of online channels to make shopping, since the beginning of Covid has had a positive impact on the environmental sustainability of the country, reducing the distance traveled by people to reach the supermarket most suitable to their needs. With the rise of food e-commerce, many people have begun to prefer online shopping for “big” purchases, also beginning to use small grocery stores to make daily purchases (milk, bread, etc.), and this reduces the pollution of means of transport that have a harmful effect because of emissions.

5. DISCUSSION

The Large-Scale Retailing sector has always been one of the least digitized due to the consumption habits of customers, who prefer to touch products, be the ones to choose those with the earliest expiration date or have staff available for any questions. However, in recent years this sector has also begun a process of digitization and technological development.

The advent of the Internet, mobile devices, and the new generations have pushed the industry to an ever-increasing Digital Innovation. In fact, what customers value most these days is time, and digital commerce can offer consumers speed and convenience. The lockdown period has certainly served to bring greater awareness to the topic of Digital Social Innovation, even considering the numbers that were recorded in 2020 regarding online sales.

This awareness emerged especially in the initial phase of the Pandemic when most supermarkets found themselves having to handle more requests for online purchases than they could handle through the technologies and management capacity of that time. While, up to that point, many supermarket sectors did not have an online store or did not do home delivery, within weeks of the onset of the health crisis, they had to implement these services to keep up with their competitors (VTEX, 2021).

In addition, the impact that Covid-19 has had on the digitization of the industry must be evaluated. In the period from March 2020 to February 2021, the turnover on the online channels of the large-scale retail sector was 1.49 billion, which in percentage terms is worth +133% compared to the previous year. February 2021 alone saw a +112%, which makes it clear that online grocery shopping didn't just increase in the 3 months of total lockdown. If in 2020 ago e-commerce in total retail sales was completely marginal standing at 1%, after one year this figure has doubled, and it is estimated that by 2025 it will reach 4%-5% (Repubblica, 2021). So, on the one hand, the opening of the sector to Digital Social Innovation, even if not totally adequate, has facilitated the response to the health crisis, on the other hand, it was Pandemic itself that made the LSR aware of the enormous opportunities that online channels and technological innovation can provide.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Despite the positive impact of Digital Social Innovation on the entire retail sector and on large-scale retailing, it must be said that in this sector the digital component will never completely replace offline. The lockdown period certainly served to raise awareness of these issues:consumption habits have changed and will continue to change in the future, and in a perspective that is increasingly oriented towards improving social needs, the importance of integration between technology and the needs themselves cannot be overlooked. Also, in this case, the Digital Social Innovation becomes fundamental to respond to these needs and innovate the processes that underlie them.

In conclusion, it is important to understand what the strengths and weaknesses of the Retail sector have been during the Covid-19 period so that we can have a more in-depth view of why we have seen growth in this sector while others have experienced a decline resulting from closures and changes in people's habits.In addition, capturing what may be the threats and opportunities of the external environment allows us to speculate on whether this growth can continue in the future or if it was simply a consequence of the period we just went through. To this end, SWOT analysis of the industry was conducted; using this tool, it is possible to identify to what degree strengths and weaknesses can influence changes in the competitive environment (Johnson *et al.,* 2017).

Strengths are what add value and give a competitive advantage to the industry. They are the set of capabilities, competencies, and resources. In this case:

- Multichannel: during the Covid-19 period, many customers had the choice of relying on the usual offline channels or staying at home and ordering directly from their smartphones, minimizing the chances of contagion;

- A wide assortment of food: the possibility to find in a single store everything one needs, has pushed many people to prefer large retailers compared to small local stores, which certainly have an inferior assortment;

- Few big brands: the large-scale retail sector is a sector with a few supermarket chains located throughout the country, which hold most of the market share. For a customer, it becomes easier to always rely on the same 2/3 distributors for whom he has greater trust. This ensures that even in a pandemic period you retain the majority of your customers, even more so if you offer omnichannel services;

- Customer loyalty: the possibility of holding loyalty cards and points cards means that the consumer will always try to buy from the same franchise, so as not to lose the points accumulated and take advantage of the discounts deriving from them;

- Use of online channels: one of the main reasons that made the large-scale retail sector have an unexpected growth compared to other sectors or even compared to small local stores, comes from the use of e-commerce and delivery services for the sale of food. Many people due to the fear of contagion and the impossibility of moving from home have started to buy their groceries online.

The weaknesses are all those features of the industry that are detrimental to growth. They can usually be solved through structural interventions. The weaknesses of the sector Large-Scale Retailing in time of crisis are the following:

- Centralized decision-making processes: most of the Large-Scale Retailing players are part of franchises and therefore depend in many of their choices, especially strategic ones, on central decisions, which can imply a slowdown in innovation and adaptation to customer habits. For example, supermarkets' adoption of online sales channels in the Covid-19 period had barriers stemming from the heavy-handedness of the overly centralized administrative system;

- Inadequate logistics systems: during the lockdown period, demand for groceries increased exponentially, with many of the supermarkets and discounters finding themselves in crisis both

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

in terms of the number of products available, but also, and above all, in guaranteeing customers a rapid and on-time delivery service;

- Lack of attention to workers: one of the most debated points concerns the working conditions in which many retail employees found themselves during the lockdown period.Exhausting shifts without a break in which they had to wear protective gear (mask, gloves, etc.) for several hours in a row, combined with inadequate pay. This has negatively affected the motivation of the workers and brought criticism from the media.

Opportunities represent the external factors that characterize the sector and can have a positive impact on the performance and possibilities of retail players. These to be exploited must fit with the strengths and be financially feasible. They are:

- Diffusion of technology: in recent years we have witnessed a technological evolution. The use of smartphones and PCs by any person exponentially increases the possibility of reaching an increasing number of customers through digital channels, also minimizing costs compared to traditional sales channels;

- Development of logistics processes: as already stated, during the lockdown period many supermarkets found it difficult to process orders due to logistical processes that were not up to scratch. The development of distribution and processing methods based on cutting-edge techniques will lead to clear improvements in all logistics mechanisms;

- Growth of e-commerce: online sales channels have been one of the factors behind the growth of the retail sector during the period of total closure of the country. The use of this channel to carry out shopping continued even after the restrictions were relaxed. Undoubtedly, this trend is set to grow, and e-commerce will play an increasingly prominent role within an industry that must focus on digitization if it is to adapt to customer needs;

- High barriers to entry: in an industry where there are few big brands, it is becoming increasingly difficult to enter. This is due to both the experience gained by these franchises, but also the economies of scale that make it difficult to replicate what current players have built over years of business.

Threats also stem from the relationship with the external environment and are all those factors that could pose a danger to the future strategies of the industry. They are not always negative they can be seen as challenges that, if overcome, lead to improvements. Within the retail sector:

- Continuous changes in consumer preferences: in the last period, the large-scale retail sector has had to adapt to the new needs of consumers, who have begun to prefer online purchases and the use of digital services to carry out their shopping. If, on the one hand, this has been a good thing because it has allowed the entire sector to become more aware of the potential of digital, on the other, it could represent a demanding challenge, since changes in habits are unpredictable and require continuous monitoring to be foreseen and anticipated;

- Continuous technological evolution: technological development runs fast, and this means that innovations in companies are often obsolete after a few years if not months. This implies a continuous updating of both the workforce and the organizational structure, and many times it is also costly;

- Price wars: in a market made up of few companies, there is often the risk of having to compete on price rather than innovation. It's no coincidence that discounts and offers are increasingly being advertised on online and offline channels. This war on price risks compromising the quality of products, trying in every way to reduce production costs to sell at the lowest possible price.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

The world we live in is constantly changing, and so are the technologies used in various historical moments. What we are going through is called the Fourth Industrial Revolution or Industry 4.0, at the basis of which there are cutting-edge digital technologies that can play a fundamental role for both companies and individuals.

In a historical context in which environmental and social issues are increasingly relevant, it becomes essential to be able to integrate technological development with sustainable development.Exploiting the full potential of digital technology to achieve long-term sustainable growth becomes the prerogative of every one of us, starting with states, passing through companies, and ending with ordinary citizens.

Sustainability and digitalization must therefore grow simultaneously, especially in the light of the Next Generation EU funds, which will provide many European countries with the opportunity to improve digitally, but always with an eye to sustainable development. In Italy, the large-scale retail sector has certainly been one of those that have initiated processes aimed at digitalization and sustainability since the beginning of the crisis, and this has had a positive impact on the sector's economic growth in recent months.

Thanks to the use of online sales systems, large-scale retailers have been able to cope with the pandemic crisis and the possible drop in turnover that could have resulted from it. Through a sudden change in the sales methods adopted up to that point, players in the sector have been able to meet the new needs of consumers, leading to improvements for both the company and its customers. All this has had a positive effect on sustainability, both directly and indirectly. It can certainly be said that consumer attention to environmental issues has increased significantly in recent years. This is largely due to the change in habits during the Covid-19 period as emerged from the survey, the possibility of being able to buy groceries online has allowed many people to take extra time to analyze the products purchased. The greater use of digital channels and technologies such as e-commerce and home delivery has also decreased the use of own means of transport to carry out the shopping, indirectly having a positive impact on the pollution that derives from them.

Digitization and innovation are fundamental steps for any industry that wants to keep up with the times. Consumption habits have changed and will continue to change in the future, and in an increasingly customer experience-oriented perspective, the importance of integration between technology and needs cannot be overlooked. Also, in this case, digitization becomes fundamental to respond to these needs and innovate the processes that underlie them. Covid-19 has played a key role in all of this, making the large-scale retail sector a key player in digital change.It is evident how digitization can bring benefits in various areas of interest of a country, and among these, there is certainly sustainable development. The combination of circular economy and Industry 4.0 is essential and only through actions that enhance the development of innovative technological systems within companies and the country can have growth that includes processes of an individual or collective interest such as sustainability.

6. REFERENCES

Bassi A. (2011). “Social Innovation: Some Denitions”, Boletín del Centro de Investigación de Economía y Sociedad, Barcelona, 88, Marzo.

Bria, Francesca &Gascó, Mila &Kresin, Frank. (2015). “Growing a Digital Social Innovation Ecosystem for Europe”. DOI:10.2759/448169.

Busacca M. (2013). “Oltre la retorica della Social Innovation”, Rivista Impresa Sociale, Saggi, numero 2, pp. 51.

Caroli M.(2015). “Modelli ed esperienze di innovazione sociale in Italia”. Franco Angeli. ISBN: 9788891734044.

Durst, S.,&Ståhle, P. (2013). “Success Factors of Open Innovation - A Literature Review”. International Journal of Business Research and Management, 4(4), 111-131.

European Commission (2013). “Guide to social innovation. Brussels: DG regional and urban policy and DG employment”. Available on: http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/20182/84453/Guide_to_Social_Innovation.pdf/88aac14c-bb15-4232-88f1-24b844900a66.

Hinings B., Gegenhuber, T.,& Greenwood R. (2018). “Digital innovation and transformation: An institutional perspective”. Information and Organization, Volume 28, Issue 1, Pages 52-61. ISSN 1471-7727, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoandorg.2018.02.004.

La Repubblica (2021).“GDO, in 12 mesi di Pandemia l’online ha raddoppiato le sue vendite”. Available on: https://www.repubblica.it/economia/rapporti/osserva-italia/mercati/2021/03/22/news/gdo_in_dodici_mesi_di_pandemia_l_online_ha_raddoppiato_le_sue_vendite - 293300488/

International Congress Innovation and Technology XXI (1997). “Strategies and Policies Towards the XXI Century”, & Soares, O. D. D. Innovation and technology: Strategies and policies. Dordrecht: KluwerAcademic.

Linee guida per trasformare la rivoluzione tecnologica in un’opportunità. XXII edizione dei Colloqui internazionali di Cortona. “Social Transformation in a Digital World”. ISBN: 978-88-6835-375-9 pp. 36-45.

Lubis M.M., Effendi I., &Lubis Y. (2019). “Fishermen's food consumption behavior at Bubun Village”, Langkat, IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science, 348.DOI:10.1088/1755-1315/348/1/012127.

Luvison A. (1999). “Reflections on the information society and related technologies”, In W.R. Wells: Proc. 7th International Conference on Advances in Communications and Control (COMCON 7), Atene, 28 giugno-2 luglio, pp. 29-40.

Luvison A. (2013). “Apologia della ragione scientifica”, Mondo Digitale - Rassegna critica del settore ICT, anno XII, n. 45, marzo, pp. 1-28, http://mondodigitale.aicanet.net/2013-1/articoli/05_LUVISON.pdf

Luvison A. (2013). “Strategie di business innovation: il valore della rete”.In M. Cannata, S. Pettineo: Manager e imprese di fronte al cambiamento. Strategie e strumenti, Fondazione IDI, ebook, pp. 265-283, http://www.fondazioneidi.it/group/ ebook/home.

Milwood, P.A., Roehl, &W.S. (2019). “Towards a measurement scale for digital social innovation: a responsibility-sustainability framework”. In: Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism, pp. 371–382.

Montanari F., Rodighiero S., Sgaragli F., &Teloni D. (2017). “Le dimensioni dell’innovazione sociale per il design e l’implementazione di politiche pubbliche efficaci”, Impresa sociale, 10(12), pp. 5-13. DOI: 10.7425/IS.2017.10.06.

Moulaert F., &Vicari H. S. (2009). "Innovazione sociale e sviluppo integrato del territorio", in Vicari Haddock S., Moulaert F. (a cura di), Rigenerare la ci à. Pratiche di innovazione sociale nelle città europee, pp. 51-74, Il Mulino, Bologna.

Mulgan G. (2006). "The process of social innovation", Innovations, 1(2), pp. 145-162. DOI: 10.1162/itgg.2006.1.2.145.

Murray R., Caulier-Grice J., &Mulgan G. (2010)."The Open Book of Social Innovation", The Young Foundation, Nesta.

Nambisan, S., Lyytinen, K., Majchrzak, A., &Song, M. (2017). "Digital innovation management: Reinventing innovation management research in a digital world". MIS Quarterly, 41, 223–236.

Phills J. A., Deiglmeier, K., &Miller D. T. (2008). Rediscovering Social Innovation. Stanford Social Innovation, Review, 6.

Tracey P., &Stott N. (2017)."Social innovation: a window on alternative ways of organizing and innovating", Innovation, 19(1), pp. 51-60. DOI: 10.1080/14479338.2016.1268924.

Tricarico, L., (2019). "Innovazione sociale" In Cittadini, territori, economie alla prova del digitale.

VTEX (2021)."Come la Pandemia di Covid-19 ha cambiato per sempre il settore della GDO".Available on: https://vtex.com/it/blog/strategia/come-la-pandemia-di-covid-19-ha-cambiato-per-sempre-il-settore-della- gdo/.

Westley F., &Antadze N. (2010). "Making a Difference: Strategies for Scaling Social Innovation for Greater Impact", The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal, 15(2), pp. 3-20.

Yue B., Sheng G., She S., &Xu J. (2020). "Impact of Consumer Environmental Responsibility on Green Consumption Behavior in China: The Role of Environmental Concern and Price Sensitivity". Sustainability, 12(5):2074. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12052074.

Social Innovation, Urban Regeneration, Circular City: A Cross-Country Analysis Post-Covid 19

Luana La Bara *luana.la.bara@uniroma2.it*
Department of Management and Law
University of Rome "Tor Vergata"
Via Columbia 2, 00133 Rome, IT

Gloria Fiorani *fiorani@economia.uniroma2.it*
Department of Management and Law
University of Rome "Tor Vergata"
Via Columbia 2, 00133 Rome, IT

Federica Bosco *federica.bosco@uniroma2.it*
Department of Management and Law
University of Rome "Tor Vergata"
Via Columbia 2, 00133 Rome, IT

Chiara Di Gerio *chiara.di.gerio@uniroma2.it*
Department of Management and Law
University of Rome "Tor Vergata"
Via Columbia 2, 00133 Rome, IT

Abstract

The document studies urban regeneration as a sustainable development strategy for any city, emphasizing the sphere of urban reality (economic, social, and environmental). The aim is to examine the topic of urban regeneration to the concept of sustainable development after the impact of Covid-19. The paper analyzes how urban regeneration policies can contribute positively to the economic-social-environmental progress of the city. The research proposes a comparative analysis of three case studies of urban regeneration: Hammarby Sjöstad (Stockholm), Euromediterranée (Marseille), and the 'Ex Poligrafico (Rome).

Keywords: Circular City, Circular Economy, Urban Regeneration, Social Innovation, Sustainable Development.

1. INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of 2020, the virus SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) unleashed a worldwide pandemic that is still facing. The effects of Covid-19 have been heavy, creating very significant damage both from a health and economic point of view, often making people talk about the specter of recession (Campra et al., 2020; Donthu et al., 2020). However, the pandemic has highlighted something much deeper and more critical: how not all cities can react and resist crises of this type. Looking back has already happened for cities to have faced a crisis or a pandemic; the most famous and relevant examples may be the Spanish flu or the Black Death. From all these situations and experiences, the hardest-hit cities are always those marked by inequalities and a high concentration of urban poor; these are more vulnerable than those with better, less crowded, and more equal resources. The pandemics often emerge on the fringes of cities, as viral outbreaks are, in most cases, incubated and transmitted through peri-urban communities and transport corridors on the outskirts of cities before they spread into the city center. The crisis caused by Covid-19 can provide cities and their inhabitants with the opportunity to rethink and drastically change, from scratch, their paradigm of consumption, production, and travel (Rahman, et al., 2021; Campra, et al., 2021; Škareet al., 2021). Therefore, a new way of thinking about the city and rebuilding it in the long term is necessary, based on a new approach to urban spaces that takes more excellent account of the different needs and moves from a vision of mobility to that of accessibility to comforts and essential services. Therefore, concepts such as the "Circular Economy," "sustainable development goals," "tactical urban planning," and "city of 15 minutes" become guidelines for an urban center capable of offering a better quality of life while preserving productivity social inclusion and the environment. Therefore, for a city to get up and react to a crisis must absorb the principles of resilience (European Union, 2015), preparation, prevention, and response. Resilience in cities can be achieved not only by responding to a crisis but especially by having the capacity to anticipate and prepare for solid moments of shock. Preparation provides a basis for managing and limiting damage, considering the costs and times required for recovery in advance. Prevention urges urban centers to invest in resilient infrastructures and tax instruments to reduce exposure to social, economic, and environmental crises. The strategies to be pursued must focus on inclusive, innovative, and green recovery. However, these three guidelines that the city must follow to improve and aim for organic growth aimed at the benefit of its citizens and the environment do not appear to be independent and autonomous. Indeed, all three work on a holistic relationship, recognizing the need to adopt a holistic resilience lens for urban development by updating or developing global resilience strategies; in this period, several urban centers have already begun to develop and implement strategies capable of reviving the economy and resisting any future "waves."

This contribution aims to explore the theme of urban regeneration to the concept of sustainable development following the impact of COVID-19. The purpose of the paper is to analyze how urban regeneration policies can contribute positively to the economic-social-environmental progress of the city. Therefore, this research provides a comparative analysis of three urban regeneration case studies: Hammarby Sjöstad (Stockholm), Euromediterranée (Marseille), and Ex Poligrafico (Rome). The paper is structured as follows: a) literature review and Background: Economic, Social, and Environmental Impacts of Covid-19 on cities; b) comparative case study analysis of three case studies of urban regeneration.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The circular economy is a new way of doing economics and seeing the relationship between supply and demand; this mentality has begun recently. It represents the perfect combination of economic and social growth, protection, and respect for the environment and SDGs. Unlike the model used up to now, that of the linear economy, also called "take-make-dispose," where the production of a good, its use, and abandonment is foreseen (involving a high waste of resources with a strong impact environmental); the circular economy seeks to completely reverse this concept by moving towards the progressive reduction of the number of resources, materials, and energy used in production processes (Campra et al, 2021; MacArthur, 2013). The transition to a circular economy does not just mean adjustments to reduce the negative impacts of the linear economy. Instead, it represents a systemic change that creates long-term resilience, generates economic and business opportunities, and provides environmental and social benefits.

The idea of a Circular Economy was born in 1966, when Kenneth Boulding published his essay, The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth, raising awareness of an open economy with unlimited resources and production wells (a conception in contrast to the idea of a closed economy, in which resources and productive wells are linked and filed). In 1989, on the other hand, the intervention of the British environmental economists David W. Pearce and R. Kerry Turner was fundamental, underlining how the traditional economy was structured on the tendency not to recycle and indeed on the idea of the environment as a waste reservoir (Economics of Natural Resources and the Environment, Johns Hopkins University Press). This new way of

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

thinking about consumption and supply is based on rejection and differentiation between consumable and durable components of a product. First, it aims to design waste; the latter is subject to analysis and planning to optimize the disassembly and reuse cycle. Secondly, however, circularity introduces the analysis of the consumables that make up the asset, distinguishing between those suitable to be reabsorbed into the biosphere and those that are harmful and require different treatment. In this regard, the circular economy model distinguishes between technical cycles and biological cycles: biological, consumption of the good that will reintroduce into the system through natural processes such as composting; technicians, recovery, and restoration of products not assimilable by the system through strategies such as reuse, repair, regeneration or recycling.

As explained above, it works directly on goods production, consumption, and waste management. As far as production is concerned, it is necessary to rethink the design of the product and its production; if well designed, products can last longer, be more easily repairable, have a faster disassembly chain and, in general, achieve the most significant possible resource savings. The production processes also require the efficient use of resources and, consequently, a lower loss of commercial opportunities and waste. Primary raw materials, including renewable ones, will play an essential role in production processes, even in a circular economy. Therefore, it is necessary to pay more attention to the environmental and social repercussions deriving from their production (Brussels, The Missing Link - European Union Action Plan for the Circular Economy, 2015). For consumption, on the other hand, a fundamental role is played by the consumers themselves, who can positively or negatively affect the impact of the circular economy; however, these choices determine the information consumers have access to, the range and prices of products on the market, as well as the regulatory framework. This phase is essential to avoid and reduce the production of household waste. Finally, the Circular City is a transposition of the circular economy into a more contained and restricted context such as an urban center, a new way for cities to respond to the crisis and, above all, to use their waste as new resources. For example, annual waste generation in the EU is estimated at around 1.3 billion tonnes and includes waste from the industrial sector (427 million tonnes), power generation, and water supply (127 million tonnes). The building and construction sector (510 million tons), and municipal waste (241 million tons). Significant quantities of waste are also produced by the agricultural, fishing, forestry sectors, extractive industries, and the public and service sectors. Despite the different recycling policies promoted by the Union, more than a quarter of waste is still landfilled. Less than half is subjected to recycling or composting, with significant differences between the Member States in the treatment of municipal waste (accounting for around 10 % of total waste), packaging waste (paper and cardboard, glass, plastic, wood, and metal) and other waste streams (Chamber of Deputies, Environment and land management - The circular economy). Therefore, the circular city, in addition to paying attention to waste management, as already mentioned above, also turns more significant attention to consumption and production. In this regard, Amsterdam, one of the first cities to incorporate and apply the principles of Circular Economy, has collected what should represent the guidelines for a resilient city ready to abandon the take-make-dispose economy. These seven principles are:

1. Closed Loops: all materials are reused and recycled indefinitely;
2. Reduced Emissions: all energy is generated from renewable sources;
3. Value Generation: resources are used to generate shared value (financial and social);
4. Modular Design: all products are designed in a modular and flexible way, and the production chains allow the adaptability of the systems;
5. Innovative Business Models: all the new business models implemented allow the transition from the possession of goods to the use of goods through services;
6. Region-oriented Reverse Logistics: Logistics systems are moved to a more region-oriented service with reverse logistics capabilities;
7. Nature Systems Upgradation: all human activities contribute positively to ecosystems, ecosystem services, and the reconstruction of "natural capital."

Therefore, a city must invest in different sectors, always with a holistic vision, passing through a study to give attention to energy consumption, waste production, or even the creation of natural capital. The example of Amsterdam is followed more and more often by many cities, which thus embody the idea of the Circular City. Examples are the urban centers of Malmö (Sweden) and Berlin (Germany).

The regeneration processes that concern the reconversion, thanks to cultural and social activities different from the primary ones of the regenerated place, are often carried out by bottom-up models that start from the bottom and, more particularly, by associations or private individuals. In this case, the "pioneering" actors are multiple (Litardi et al.; 2019).) Furthermore, the project's success derives from the ability to carry out multi-sector partnerships, which provides for the "synergistic combination of resources and skills to achieve a common purpose of a social nature whose benefits fall on the promoters and their stakeholders "(ICSR, 2012).

The "new social partnership" (Nelson et al., 2003) sees, in the form of collaboration between different subjects (public, private, and third sector), the management of social problems following organic operational methods, with its dynamics, to provide services to the person through the development of joint multidimensional projects that cannot be pursued independently by the individual reality (Litardi et al, G; 2019).

2.1 Background: Economic, Social, and Environmental Impacts of Covid-19 on Cities

The main actors in the fight against crises, be they economic-social imbalances or pandemics, in addition to the individuals themselves, are the cities; during 2020 and 2021, even urban centers were subjected to significant stress, causing negative consequences on the three pillars that make up the city, namely the economic, social and environmental ones. According to the United Nations "World Urbanization Prospects 2018", almost half of the population lives in cities, and it is expected that by 2050 this share will increase to 55%. In a pandemic situation, such as Covid-19, urban centers are better equipped to respond and fight against a virus thanks to their health systems. At the same time, due to population density, urban centers are more likely to become hotbeds due to the proximity between residents and social distances, in some cases completely absent, highlighting that metropolises allow meeting people from other nations, implying a more significant and more accessible spread of the virus (Biancone et al, 2021).

Regarding the economic impact of the pandemic on urban centers, the OECD predicted a GDP contraction of 9.5 percentage points by the end of 2020 if there was a second wave, a prediction realized in Europe at the beginning of the new year there was a third wave, and there is already talk of a fourth wave; this implies a further decline in GDP for countries and a contraction for the global economy. Around the world, some 300 million full-time jobs could be lost, and nearly 450 million companies face the risk of severe disruption. Cities continue to suffer from the pandemic, and the lockdowns imposed by governments more than all the others are those that depend on tourism. As presented in the document published by the OECD (Cities Policy Responses, July 2020), each city has experienced significant economic losses. Paris (France) has recorded a 37% reduction in its economic activity since mid-March; it is estimated that this loss will cost the city 400 million euros. Barcelona (Spain) estimates a drop of 14% in GDP, four times higher than that of the financial crisis of 2009. According to a study on the impact of imprisonment, the other Spanish economic center, Madrid, after three months of closure, the city has risked losing 60,500 direct jobs, which could double to 108,000 if indirect employment (5.4% of total employment) were also included. The breakdown by sector of the data places hospitality as the sector most affected (31.8%, with 19,227 fewer jobs), followed by retail (11.3%, with 6,850 fewer jobs), the personal services (5.6%, which means 3,425 fewer jobs), and culture (2.5%, with 1,497 fewer jobs). The Netherlands, on the other hand, estimated a further economic impact for Amsterdam due to the many tourist activities that remained closed; even if the estimates are not confirmed or in any case-specific, the economic loss is around 1.6 billion euros per month, thus reversing a previous forecast that gave citizens growth equal to 2.3% for a reversal of 1.52, 8 percentage

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

points. In the UK, major UK cities (Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, and Sheffield) have estimated that the crisis has incurred costs of £ 1.6 billion alone. City by May 22 2020. More precisely in Florence, there has been a drastic drop in GDP in Italy, caused by the block that tourism represents 15% of the 35 billion euros of annual GDP (estimated a loss of 200 million euros out of the usual 800). The same negative notes were recorded in the United States; in Washington DC, Covid-19 and the impacts of the pandemic have led to business closures, leading 70,000 workers to apply for unemployment and creating a $ 700 million revenue gap in the current 2020 budget. New York plans to lose $ 7.4 billion in tax revenue in two years while Los Angeles estimates a loss of between $ 425 and $ 829 million. Still, San Francisco experienced a layoff of 5,676 employees and an economic vulnerability that is difficult to stop; it is estimated that the deficit for the next two-year budget will increase between 1.1 and 1.7 billion dollars. Countries to cope with the spread of the virus and the economic losses caused by the closure have recorded an increase in spending mainly due to the purchase of protective devices for public and health workers, the implementation of blocking and protection measures to support the most vulnerable. In addition, a decrease in the income received is motivated by a reduction in tax revenue on individuals and corporate taxes so as not to burden further the costs of citizens (CCRE, May 2020).

On the second pillar of the city, the social aspect, the pandemic has succeeded in highlighting and highlighting the problems already present in the city, making the most vulnerable social groups suffer more. For example, low-paid workers have been struck by closures and social distancing, perhaps due to their business or workplace; again, the elderly who often cannot count on family and friends, have found themselves abandoned and vulnerable, to a change in their habits. Homeless people, estimated at 1.9 million in OECD countries, have no or limited means to isolate themselves and protect themselves from infection. Another sore point concerns that women, who often occupy workstations in the service sector (e.g., tourism, hotels, and restaurants) and are forced to stay at home, will suffer more from the recession-induced by the pandemic and the increase in cases of violence housekeeper. In this regard, the European Union has recognized a correlation between the spread of the virus and social inequalities; in urban areas where there are more significant cases of inadequate housing and a precarious work situation, the cases of Covid19 are higher and with a higher concentration. This correlation was first found and measured in the UK; while in London and the south of the country, the infections seemed to be under control and the R rate (contagion index) had dropped below 1, it was quite another matter for the north-west of the country where the contagion index was still above 1.

Furthermore, the pandemic is also causing damage to people's mental health and the psychological consequences of Covid-19; the long periods of lockdown, political/economic instability, and a continuous spread of the disease undermine people's health. The research company "Open Evidence" compared the reactions recorded in Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom. In Italy, 41% of the population, in Spain 46, and the United Kingdom 42, both at mental health risk due to various socio-economic vulnerability factors.

Finally, for the environmental sphere, globally, there was a reduction of CO_2 equal to 8 percentage points and 17% worldwide for daily CO_2 emissions. These decreasing data began to register with the spread of the pandemic and the onset of lockdowns. For example, in New York (USA), a 38% reduction in CO_2 emissions compared to the pre-pandemic level was monitored; in Europe, on the other hand, daily emissions fell by 58% during the blocks, thanks also to an 88% reduction in car and motorcycle emissions.

The tangible consequence of these green results was the shift of the Overshoot day (day of overrun), i.e., the date on which the resources offered by the Earth are exhausted in that current year. This date has been postponed by one month, i.e., to August 22; this news is essential as the overshoot day since it is monitored, was getting closer and closer to the beginning of the new year without ever reversing the trend and demonstrating man's inability to use the available resources correctly without exploiting those destined for future generations. Reduction in transport has not pushed towards a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions; it has generated an overall improvement in the air in large cities; in the countries where the lockdown has been imposed, a 50-75% drop in road transport activity and up to 95% in traffic congestion during peak hours has been monitored. The global level of nitrogen dioxide (pollution related to cars) has plummeted worldwide; as reported by the OECD, the cities of Madrid, Milan, and Rome have recorded a decline of 45%, while Paris has a decline. 54%. This toxin is monitored because it causes many complications for human health, such as the increased likelihood of developing respiratory problems and lung and heart damage (responsible for at least seven million premature deaths). In the 3,000 cities that monitor air pollution globally, more than 80% of residents are exposed to air quality exceeding the World Health Organization limits. By studying the data provided by Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service, it was possible to monitor the air quality of 50 European cities. During the months of lockdown, 42 of these recorded lower than average levels of nitrogen dioxide in March compared to the previous year. However, with the gradual reopening of activities and the increase in circulation, these parameters have increased again, reducing the air quality (Figure 1). This phenomenon occurred even outside the EU; in China, for example, nitrogen dioxide concentrations have returned to "normal" levels. The image below makes it possible to observe the air quality in two different historical moments: before and during the lockdown.

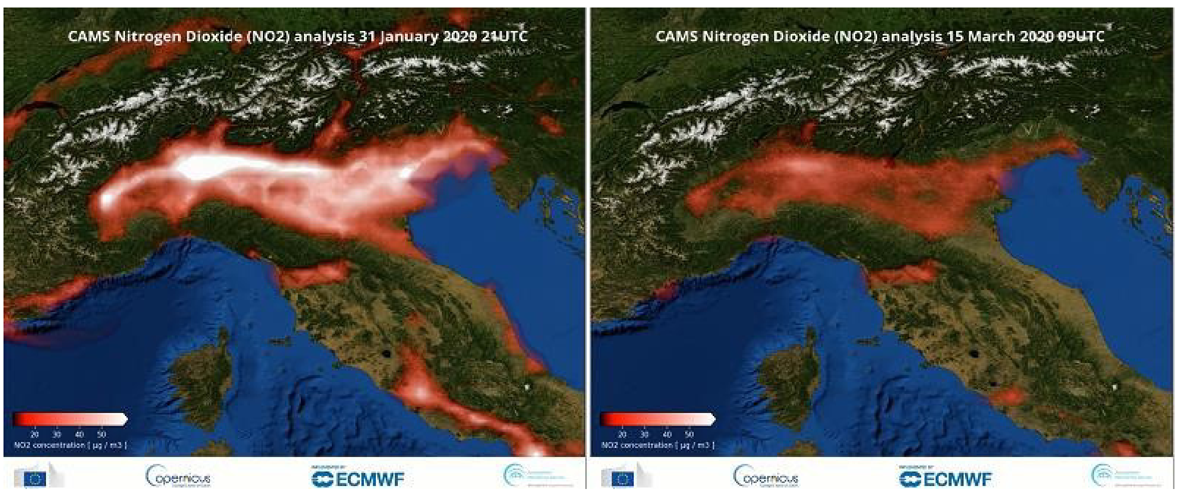


FIGURE 1: Air quality in Northern Italy before and after the national lockdown.

Experts suggest that such progress may only be momentary, given that periods of economic recovery preceding a global crisis are always followed by an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, without coordinated and substantial action, the Covid-19 crisis can put low-carbon investments at serious risk, for several reasons: firstly, economic uncertainty pushes to reduce the funds allocated to the activity. Investment and innovation; second, low fossil fuel energy prices provide weaker incentives for investments in green technologies. The only negative note recorded during this closure period is the increase in solid waste, including non-recyclable waste such as disposable masks and gloves; Infectious medical waste increased by 600%, for example, in Hubei (China) from 40 tons per day to 240 tons of medical waste during the Covid-19 outbreak.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research conducts a qualitative analysis by crossing the issues of Social Innovation and Urban Regeneration focused on Cities and their development towards the Circular City.

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

Specifically, it deals with Cross-country analysis post-Covid 19 of Three case studies: Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm, Euromediterranée in Marseille, and Ex Poligrafico in Rome. Data collection was conducted through a documentary analysis (Bower et al.; 2009) of the three case studies. Data collection was conducted using different categories of investigation: historical and geographical context of the case study, analysis of the proposed and implemented project (timing, objectives, management, and subjects involved), impact on sustainability and sustainable development, and economic investment. Therefore, the following paragraph deals with a Comparative case study divided into six steps as Goodrick (2020) indicated.

4. COMPARATIVE CASE STUDIES

In this paragraph, three urban regeneration projects and interventions are studied: Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm, Euromediterranée in Marseille, and Ex Poligrafico in Rome.

4.1 Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm (Sweden)

It is a district near the city center which has been chosen as a site undergoing sustainable development; it is located in the southern part of the city and is located along the lake (Sjo) Hammarby and its name means "City waterfront in Hammarby" (Hammarby Waterfront Town) (Figure 2). Industrialization, born initially as an agricultural area, began to be present only towards the end of the nineteenth century, given its strategic position with the city center. During those same years, particularly from 1917 onwards, Hammarby Sjöstad underwent several urban interventions that made it more and more fertile territory for investments, such as the construction of a canal to connect the city to the Baltic Sea or even lines of railways to promote heavy industry (e.g., General Motors, Luma bulbs).

FIGURE 2: Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm.

Since the early 90s, there has been a strong demand for housing, in conjunction with the economic boom, which led to a redevelopment of Hammarby Sjöstad; despite being a functioning industrial area, its strong residential potential has prompted the city of Stockholm to do without it and focus on a revival of this area and a more ecological footprint. From 1996 onwards, it has been the protagonist of careful analysis of urban regeneration, so much so that it was incorporated into the city improvement project after the city's candidacy for the 2004 Olympics. With the unsuccessful candidacy, however, the city of Stockholm continued to pursue the principles of sustainability and environmental care, pursuing to create a wholly self-sustainable and independent neighborhood. The end of the project was set for 2012, the year in which 20,000 people would be welcomed in 9,000 housing units, in addition to providing 200,000 m ^ 2 of commercial space, providing jobs for more than 10,000 people. The general objective of Hammarby Sjöstad's mission was to create an urban district capable of responding to all the needs of its citizens by embodying the concept of Sustainable Development as much as possible and respecting the environment; in this regard, the city of Stockholm has promoted decontamination of disused land, provisions for public transit, water, and waste recycling programs and zero impact energy consumption for residents. The entire Stockholm project is conceptually based on one of the critical objectives of the then United Nations Agenda 21, namely "Promote the sustainable development of human settlements." This goal aimed at the social promotion of sustainable development from an environmental point of view, anticipated Agenda 2030, a document which, as seen in the previous chapters, represents a much more decisive line of action for achieving sustainable development. It is working on the idea that it is the law to guarantee all citizens the same services and possibilities, providing the same primary and standard services throughout the city's jurisdiction (Dastu 2005). In the development of Hammarby Sjöstad, the city of Stockholm completely reconfigured its urban infrastructure landscape to build more significant systemic equity and establish a more solid welfare state (the formation of metabolism that unifies both energy infrastructures and the management of resources and waste). The creation of urban metabolism can significantly increase the economy's efficiency in the short and long term both for the government, the public sector, and the private sector. Therefore, Hammarby Sjöstad, and the entire city of Stockholm, sought to set and pursue four social objectives, such as Social Sustainability, Human Sustainability, Social Equity, and Environmental Education, to realize a complete social sphere.

In terms of Social Sustainability, a balance for both residents' space private and public space exists, guaranteeing the priority and attention paid to the share capital. Considering the high density destined to inhabit this neighborhood, this must promote a greater sense of community through the development and cultural enrichment. A specific example of this type of intervention is the construction and inclusion of the overhanging balconies of the individual apartments. This design element increases the sense of a common space under the balconies and encourages greater social interaction. Hammarby Sjöstad's second form of social sustainability is human sustainability. This element examines how the "feelings" manage to influence the inhabitants' feelings about the neighborhood. That is, rego out and create areas capable of being in harmony with the human State of the resident; an example will certainly clarify this aspect. Within Hammarby Sjöstad, areas of "silence" have been created, that is, places where people can stop to relax and escape from the fast pace of the city; this is just one of several examples of therapeutic destinations for residents. The third sphere of social development is Social Equity; although this was immediately considered a key objective to pursue, it has still not been successfully achieved today. Indeed, the analysis shows that this district is still far from this result, often underlining a marked socio-economic difference and segregation. The residents are described as belonging to a "homogeneous" social group, thus far from the idea of a neighborhood capable of welcoming different social classes with various economic possibilities. At the root of this inability to make housing accessible even to the less well-off, there is certainly the obstacle of increasing construction costs and the gradual elimination of social subsidies for housing, which began during the 1980s. To get a concrete idea of how much the original prices have changed, reflect on the fact that the condominium apartments initially were sold for 8,000 SEK per square meter, while today those same buildings cost 30,000 SEK per square meter (2.7 million for a 90 sqm apartment). On average, the residents' incomes are the highest of all other citizens of Stockholm, and the price of the apartments is comparable to that of the houses in the historic center, even though Hammarby Sjöstad requires much higher monthly management costs. Finally, in terms of the rental market, prices are always very high; this is because the national housing policy does not require developers to provide affordable housing; the only exception is some specific houses, which, however, suffer from their position within the neighborhood, as they do not have a direct view of the bay. The ultimate social goal is Environmental Education; Stockholm has made major investments in educating and encouraging its residents to respect and protect the environment. A fundamental role was played by the Glass House, a building built in the center of the district to promote Green-style technical solutions to advise locals on problems of this nature. The lessons learned from Hammarby development influence the sustainable development niche worldwide to be taken as a benchmark for many other cities. Concerning the environment and its protection, Hammarby Sjöstad immediately placed great importance on the use of renewable and zero-impact energy sources and also on the ability not to create waste. The total energy supply for the community that will serve 30,000 people living and working in the neighborhood comes entirely from renewable energy sources, such as solar energy, hydroelectric energy, and biofuel technology. For the first source, the entire area was equipped with solar panels and solar cells, capable of autonomously generating electricity (the electricity coming from a single module can create 100kWh / year, equivalent to domestic energy used. for three square meters of housing). All heating energy comes from combustible waste from the area recycled in heat or from renewable sources. A significant intervention was also made for the sewers: the water is cleaned and purified in a large sewer system just outside the city and the waste is then recycled into natural gas. Each house, in order to increase the residents' awareness of their actual environmental impact, is equipped with a display in the kitchen where it is possible to monitor how much has been used for electricity, heating, and water. In addition, to reduce the amount of runoff that enters the drainage system, the surface water is cleaned locally. Rain and water of the surrounding houses and gardens are guided by a drainage system that carries it all to the main channel, known as an equalizer, where the water is purified and filtered through sand filters or artificial wetlands in the area. After this process, the water then travels to Lake Hammarby Sjöstad, where it will be used to reorganize the lake level. To further improve traditional ways of recycling and reuse, the district opened (2003) its pilot wastewater treatment center, called Sjostadsverket. The plant of sewage treatment is to test new technologies for waste recycling. Finally, to demonstrate the city's commitment to respecting the environment, the city has also devised a plan for waste management. This plan proposes to achieve a 20% reduction in waste, compared to the average of all new centers, whose statistics are already significantly low. To date, Stockholm aims for two rather ambitious goals: reducing 50% of waste materials and 60% of nutrients from recycled waste or with possible purposes on agricultural land. A different way to avoid impacting the environment is a correct organization of transport that encourages residents not to travel with their car or in any case independently, if not in an ecological way, such as the use of their bicycles; in this regard, the entire neighborhood has been provided with efficient cycle paths and numerous parking spaces for one's vehicle. Otherwise, Hammarby Sjöstad benefits from a transport system based on a light railway infrastructure (Tvarbanan) that has made four stops for this district to quickly connect it to the center and thus provide the same services to every citizen. In addition, in the next few years, it is planned to: extend the tram further east to connect to one of Stockholm's main transport hubs and increase the number of buses also with the addition of a night run, all eco-friendly buses as they are biogas vehicles. Great importance was also given to water transport. The city has implemented the Ferry link service (a ferry that takes five minutes to cross the entire lake), keeping it in service all year round from early morning until midnight. With The Sea Bus (Sjobussen) service, it is possible to reach Nybroviken, the city center, through small biogas boats, a service that will then be implemented in the summer months with the addition of a specific ferry. Finally, for the use of cars, the new highway, Södra Länken, was designed in line with the environmental needs of the city.

Regarding the economic aspect and the financing of the entire project, the national government, through the Local Investment Program (LIP), a subsidy offered by the Swedish government to encourage local governments to adopt new technological ecosystem measures. This grant, approved in January 1998 and became operational on February 3 of the same year, was created to bring the whole of Sweden into an environmentally sustainable society and at the same time encourage the creation of new jobs. The program born with a budget of 5.4 billion crowns, was intended to last for only two years, from '98 to 2000, but was then extended until 2004. The Local Investment Program recognized specific measures that the municipalities had to comply with to benefit from the funds granted. There is talk of reducing the environmental load, increasing energy efficiency and other natural resources, promoting renewable raw materials, greater reuse of assets and their recycling, and finally, contributing to conserving and strengthening biological diversity and safeguarding their environmental and cultural value. In 1998 the city of Stockholm then submitted an application to the government requesting funds for 16 projects (including Hammarby Sjöstad), the request above was approved as 678 million crowns were granted to the city, or 67 million euros, which is about one-tenth of the total amount allocated nationally.

Stockholm thus allocated 400 million crowns (42 million euros): 200 million only for Hammarby Sjöstad and the other 200 instead to be allocated to the districts of Skarholmen and Ostbergahojden. The total cost of the operation was also expected to be around 5.7 billion crowns for the neighborhood studied here and 700 million crowns for the remaining areas by 2006. The government then imposed restrictions on how to invest and use the funds granted, and in which sector and proportion, most of the grant (67% of the 400 million) was allocated to development projects and their demonstration, thus demonstrating the importance of the city places on innovation and technological progress. Destination of the 400 million:

- Technology procurement, to accelerate the development of new technologies and technologies on the way to the commercial application (SEK 60 million / 15%);
- Cooperative procurement, for the reduction of costs and the creation of technology suitable for the environment and capable of expanding the I number of stakeholders (MSEK 15 / 3.75%);
- Knowledge transfer and sharing (SEK 6 million / 1.5%);
- Development and demonstration projects of technological testing systems to achieve commercial acceptance (270 million crowns / 67.5%);
- Incentive for those who present the best proposal for new development and refurbishment (SEK 5 million / 1.25%);
- Incentive for better construction and renovation (SEK 35 million / 8.75%);
- Creation of a new environmental load model for assessing and describing the current situation and the consequences deriving from the application of new projects and alternative solutions (9 million crowns / 2.25%).

4.2 Euroméditerranée Marseille (France)

This case study is an urban regeneration project of the entire French city to rejuvenate it and give it new impulses after the disposal of the port, an event that recorded a significant decline in earnings and, consequently - an increase in unemployment (Figure3). The French government has recognized how to direct interventions in the city can make Marseille more attractive for national and international investments and try to make it one of the most famous and wealthiest cities in the Mediterranean, thus challenging the dominance of metropolises such as Genoa,

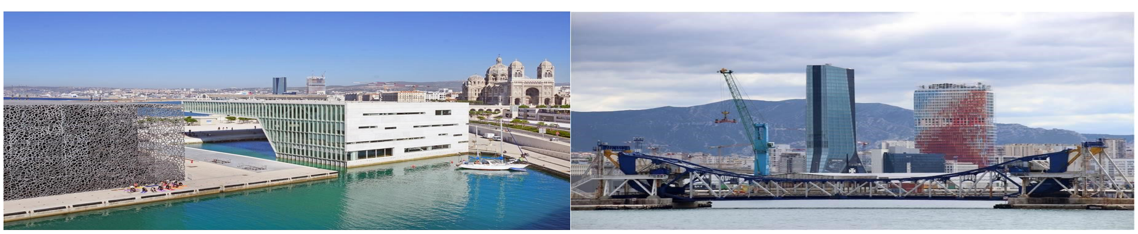


FIGURE 3: Euroméditerranée in Marseille.

Palermo, Naples and of course Barcelona. Initially, the project involved a twenty-year waterfront regeneration, from 1995 to 2015. Subsequently, given the first encouraging results, the French government decided to extend the entire work with new funding from 2007 to 2030. The Euroméditerranée concerns a type of urban regeneration that is not limited to a single building, neighborhood, or area. However, instead, it concerns an entire city, with the ultimate aim of putting it back on its feet to give a shock to its economy but above all to "challenge" the hegemony of other cities in the Mediterranean and to support the other economic pole French, which is Paris.

The history of Marseille is firmly linked to its port and the Mediterranean. Since its foundation by the Greeks in 600 BC, it has benefited from its privileged position between northern Europe, the Mediterranean countries, and Africa, basing its main economic activities on the exploitation of

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

maritime traffic (Irene Marotta, 2014). After the Second World War, however, the city of Marseille recorded a significant decline in industrial and port activities, the central hub of the city's economy; between 1975 and 1990, the city lost more than 100,000 inhabitants and 58,000 jobs, tripling its unemployment rate (from 7.1% to 23.3%). A similar collapse caused Marseille to collapse from second place as a port of Europe, after Rotterdam, so much so that in 2010 it was relegated to fourth place (after Antwerp, Hamburg, and Amsterdam). The cause of the decline is most likely attributable to various factors, such as the decline of traditional colonial industries and also the increase in international competition, represented by the ports of northern European cities, and the long process of relocation of port and industrial activities in the territories adjacent to the city. The cité phocéenne has suffered so much during this economic collapse, to the point of seeing many citizens abandoning Marseille, because, as happens for many other cities, it was built without any criteria or urban planning consistent with its perspectives. future. Over the decades, this has grown, accentuating the diversity between its two parts: the Southern City, which houses the tertiary and administrative activities, the services of great metropolitan importance, and which houses the residences of the bourgeois class; the North City, which was characterized by working-class neighborhoods, commercial areas and industrial areas in the nineteenth century, but which today are mainly inhabited by less well-off classes and a high percentage of non-EU citizens. Before looking closely at Euromed I and II interventions, the last note is also to consider how during the second half of the twentieth century, the city "ruined" the historic center with aggressive interventions that changed its appearance and integrity, such as the construction of the A7 motorway or the 55 motorway, the latter has formed a natural barrier between the city and the sea. The municipality abandoned former port areas and neighborhoods behind them, thus leaving part of the city heritage to fend for itself. Therefore, urban regeneration interventions became necessary due to the reasons listed above. It was reorganizing an entire city that - after a reckless, irrational growth and a period of general abandonment - needed a well-structured plan and above all in line with the new needs of citizens, always maintaining the proper respect for the protection of the environment.

The Project Euroméditerranée is composed of two actions:

- Euroméditerranée I (Euromed I), from 1995 to 2015, which provided for the recovery of the waterfront, the former port area north of the city, with its slums, the railway station area, and part of the historic center;
- Euroméditerranée II (Euromed II), from 2007 to 2030, with the recovery of the former industrial areas north of the perimeter of Euromed I; in this case of regeneration, however, in addition to the aim of redeveloping the urban heritage, the project plans to create an eco-sustainable city through the rules of environmental sustainability.

It began in the early 90s, during the economic crisis that hit several European countries; Marseille managed to react by carrying out new economic and urban strategies that became the engine of the city's economic, urban and social development. Thus, in 1995, the French State, together with the local authorities, established the Etablissement Public D'amenagement Euroméditerranée (EPAEM), a public structure operated by the State and Local Public Bodies to manage the entire urban regeneration project. . This highlights the complete cohesion and cooperation that is established between the state and local administrations. As previously announced, the affected area was the one containing: a part of the port, ancient abandoned industrial complexes, a part of the historic center, residential districts that host Haussmanian buildings of great value, the architecture of little interest, large infrastructural networks, monuments, and urban voids. EPAEM has envisaged the design of five distinct operations: the new Joliette business district; the Cité de la Méditerranée with the Arena district; the Saint-Charles pole; the redevelopment of the rue de la République and the Belle de Mai. One of the most interesting is undoubtedly that of the Cité de la Méditerranée district (2000 - 2015), which involved the redevelopment of a part of the former port area of the city. The intervention involved the construction of ample public space, the Esplanade du J4, in place of the ancient pier J4, in which it is possible to visit several critical monuments for

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

the change of Marseille, such as the Mucem (Musée des Civilizations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée), the Fort Saint-Jean and the Villa Méditerranée. The Mucem is a cubic-shaped museum of 19 meters in height, covered with perforated concrete panels, containing various works of art that have the task of narrating and making known the cultural heritage of the populations who inhabited the Mediterranean. Through a metal walkway, this building is connected to the exhibition halls of Fort Saint-Jean. A building that not only performs exhibition and cultural functions but, thanks to the terraces and open spaces on the roof and which have been recovered and open to the public for free, becomes one of the new public spaces that all can use. Another iconic building of Euromed I is undoubtedly the Villa Méditerranée located along the Marseille waterfront. Funded by the Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur region and designed by the Italian architect Stefano Boeri, the same creator of the Bosco Verticale in Milan; the Villa is an international center that aims to encourage reflections on dialogue and exchanges in the Mediterranean. The latest works by Euromed I are two new squares, the Place de la Joliette and the place de la Méditerranée, connected by a new road, the Boulevard du Littoral, which replaced the A55 motorway viaduct. These two squares were built to give the Marseillais new pedestrian spaces where they can relax, but above all, they were created to reduce car traffic in a city where, until recently, public spaces were very few. With Euromed I, Marseille has made great strides, albeit through a not very innovative strategy; the one done by the French city is a type of intervention that can be defined as "standard." Many cities in the Mediterranean have already implemented and applied a similar intervention twenty years earlier; this is the case in Barcelona, Lisbon, Bilbao, and Genoa. Marseille thus put itself on par with the other cities, moreover what was done by the cité phocéenne was more than enough given how the city seems to have been reborn from a tourist point of view. The culture-related strategies of Euromed I contributed to Marseille's victory as the European Capital of Culture in 2013.

Given the considerable progress and goals achieved, EPAM then decided in 2007 to continue the vast urban regeneration intervention through a second phase, Euromed II; as previously anticipated, this new intervention will be aimed at the northern part of the Euromed I perimeter. EPAM intends to redevelop one of the most degraded parts of the city, that is, the area located next to the natural valley of the Aygalades stream; this area was initially born as one of the economic poles of the city, so much so that it was the subject of major industrial transformations and massive infrastructural networks (the A55 motorway first of all). However, after the industrial crisis, the area experienced a drastic economic decline and consequent abandonment, making this part of the city one of the most degraded and dangerous. After having announced an international competition in July 2008 for an appointed team that would take care of creating and managing an action plan, after a few months, the project was launched, and a probable end date was also set, namely 2030. In this regard, however, due to the pandemic and general blockades, the works will inevitably be prolonged, postponing the closing date of the construction sites. However, it is estimated that in these twenty years of interventions, 14,000 new accommodations will be built, of which 4,200 social residences and 2,100 accessible accommodations at controlled prices; in addition, these new accommodations will be joined by the 1,500 already existing but in the process of recovery. Euromed II will then create 500,000 m^2 of offices, 176,000 m^2 of public services and commercial activities, and 14 hectares of public green spaces (Irene Marotta, 2014). The entire work that revolves around Euromed II will be based on eco-sustainable development (Marseille as a sustainable Mediterranean city); the project aims to enhance the city's strengths, both from a morphological and geographical point of view. In addition, the project envisages the enhancement of the underground stream des Aygalades, which, once brought to light, will have the function of recovering rainwater; a sizeable metropolitan park is planned around it, which will try to solve the problems related to the overflow of the areas around the river. As regards the theme of the recovery of industrial heritage, strongly present in this area, especially in the Les Crottes district, it is possible to say that progress has been made concerning the experience of Euromed I; in the first phase of the project, in fact, most of the private industrial buildings, present in the perimeter of the intervention, were demolished. For the case of Euromed II, EPAEM instead avoided possible demolitions, purchasing the buildings that appeared to be the most interested to recover them and integrating them into the final project. As a demonstration of the progress made by the city of Marseille, although the works are still far from being completed, it won the recognition of EcoCité in 2009, conferred on it by the French State.

As for the economic aspect and the loans granted, both Euromed I and Euromed II received funding from the public and private sectors. State and local authorities have signed four funding agreements for the following periods: 1995-2001, 2001-2006, 2006-2012, and 2011-2020. In addition, a significant contribution was also provided by the European Union through funding for specific interventions; between 1995 and 2012, the EU granted a reasonable 50 million euros, all aimed at the creation of public structures. The first project, Euromed I, obtained public-private funding of 3.5 billion euros to be allocated to the five main projects listed above (Joliette, Cité de la Méditerranée, Saint - Charles, rue de la République and la Belle de Mai). These investments indeed recorded positive and encouraging results; in fact, it is estimated that every euro invested by the public sector has generated a further investment of 2.50 euros by the private sector. The goal of Euroméditerranée I was to give Marseille a new facade and recover abandoned areas and, above all, strengthen the tertiary sector, a real weak point of the Marseille economy. In fact, in 2012, 19,000 new jobs were registered, demonstrating that the economic recovery has taken place. In this regard, the French government itself has suffered from the positive effects, so much to push, as mentioned before, to an extension of the experience, giving life to Euroméditerranée II, this new project born in 2008 has received a total investment of 531 million euros; to which it is estimated that a further 3 billion euros of private investments will be added. Until 2018, total investments for urban development in the Euroméditerranée amounted to around 6.7 billion euros (of which 1.2 billion euros from public funds). Finally, private and public investments of 7 billion euros are expected for the next few years, thus bringing total investments to around 14 billion euros.

4.3 The Ex Poligrafico in Rome

Historic building located in the Parioli - Pinciano residential district, precisely in Piazza Verdi, between two large green lungs of the city, Villa Ada to the north and Villa Borghese to the south. This urban regeneration intervention is considered a "particularity" compared to the previous ones in Stockholm and Marseille. In this case, we are talking about a single building that will be wholly reorganized after urban regeneration interventions are promoted - and here is the further peculiarity - by a private company, both Enel S.p.a and Rosewood Hotels and Resort International limited. In this case study, the State intervention does not seem to exist, or in any case, it seems to be marginal to the completion of the work.

FIGURE 4: Ex Poligrafico in Rome.

The former Poligrafico was built in 1914 to host the headquarters of the Italian Post Office and then converted as the headquarters of the State Printing and Mint Institute and inaugurated in 1928 by Benito Mussolini; initially, its original name was Regia Officina Carta e Valori and remained operational as a Poligrafico until 2010. It is considered one of the most representative buildings of Art Nouveau architecture in Rome. The building occupies an entire block of about 17,000 square meters and is spread over seven floors above ground for a gross area of about 72,000 square meters. The building, sold in 2005 to Fintecna, is currently owned by the Cassa Depositi e Prestiti Group (CDP). The complex initially envisaged two different renovations from

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

two different entities respectively. The construction of the luxury hotel and the rationalization of the Enel offices within the complex was planned.

Regarding hotels construction, some talk of negotiation and intervention started some time ago but has been wholly skipped since 2019. A considerable part of the Ex Poligrafico (i.e., 50% of the area) had to be converted into a luxury hotel of about 200 rooms and 171 residential units, as well as four underground floors for parking for an area of 11,000 m2, managed by Rosewood Hotels and Resort International, limited, controlled by New World China Land Ltd, based on a specific management agreement. The agreement has already been found and signed between the companies in 2015. In this regard, investments of approximately 180 million euros were expected, a small amount destined for the refurbishment and pedestrianization of Piazza Verdi. However, in June 2019, the agreement between the parties fell apart; the reasons still do not seem straightforward, but there has been talking of excessive slowdowns. The only intervention that seems to be being carried out is intended for the remaining part of the property in Piazza Verdi. After negotiation between Enel S.p.a. and CDP and the stipulation of a 24-year lease agreement with Residential real estate (a company also of the CDP Group), will host the new offices of Enel S.p.a. Initially, the leading company in Italy in the energy field intended to move its offices to the Eur towers, taking over from Tim. However, the agreement was not found, and also for reasons of economic savings, it was decided to turn its attention to the Ex Poligrafico. After some negotiations, the agreement was found and provided for CDP to build a new operational headquarters for Enel on approximately 30,000 square meters. The collaboration between the parties will lead to the recovery of the property, thanks to a set of solutions based on sustainability, thus making it fully compliant with the new energy and environmental standards.

Furthermore, thanks to the fruitful collaboration between CDP and Roma Capitale, it was possible to launch a project to make the former Poligrafico a virtuous international example in recovering historic buildings for office use. Unfortunately, with the abandonment of the idea of the hotel, however, total recovery will not be possible as we are talking about a mammoth building that Enel does not need in its entirety; we are therefore perhaps waiting for further tenants. For the moment, the redevelopment already started in 2019 with the construction of an underground car park with four floors for a total of 285 parking spaces, the strip-out works (selective dismantling and demolition), and the restoration of the facades, will continue with the construction of the offices until completion expected in 2022 / early 2023 (maximum in May). From an economic point of view, however, the investment established by the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) is equal to 35 million euros:

- 27 million for works (77.15%);
- 5 million for internal fittings (14.27%);
- 3 million for technical and administrative expenses (8.58%).

Instead, the cost of regenerating the entire property, excluding these 35 million euros, is around 120 million. With this initial urban regeneration intervention, it will be possible to resume a historic building that has long been abandoned, not only by finding a new use but by restoring it and making it compliant with the new sustainability criteria; due to the pandemic. However, the completion times have slipped and therefore the new Enel offices will most likely see the light in late 2023. The intervention itself will include a project aimed at increasing the well-being of people, through modern, comfortable, and in line with a more agile organization. The lighting and air conditioning systems will ensure the best comfort conditions while the distribution of spaces will ensure the alternation of work environments with indoor and outdoor green spaces and areas dedicated to psycho-physical well-being; the building will also increase the spaces for personal use services. Finally, the works will follow a line of intervention aimed at the sustainability and comfort of the building, to obtain, after careful analysis by external and international bodies, the LEED and WELL certifications, both with the minimum Gold level.

5. DISCUSSION

Based on the literature review, supported by comparative cases studies, this paper has reflected the concept of the circular economy, urban regeneration, and social innovation—their applications in different countries and economic, environmental, and social impacts. The research confirms the need for cities to achieve sustainable development (Agenda 2030, 2015) based on the logic of a circular economy. Therefore, a city is not based on a linear "take-do-dispose" growth model (production of an asset, its use, and abandonment) but on a model that aims to progressively reduce the resources, materials, and energies used in the production processes. (Campra et al., 2021; MacArthur, 2013). The different characteristics of the cases studies are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Comparative Case Studies.

Case Study / characteristics	Hammarby Sjöstad	Euromediterranée	Ex Poligrafico
City / Country	Stockholm / Sweden	Marseille / France	Rome / Italy
Impact on Society	Example: 1. overhanging balconies of the individual apartments; 2. areas of "silence"; 3. Glass House; 4.Display to monitor consumption in the apartments	Example: New public spaces such as Esplanade du J4; several key monuments; green spaces to reduce pollution	Building recovery; Economic and Touristic Incentive
Impact of Covid-19	Strength: Through transit-oriented development strategies (TOD), land use and transport policies have enabled safer transport use through transit-oriented development strategies (TOD). There are no delays in future planning.	Strength: financial, economic, and tourist support; Weakness: slight slowdowns	Waiting for promoters due to disagreements and "pandemic" changes": competent working and dismissal of offices; tourism sector in decline.
Promoter	Public	Public and Private	Private
Completed / in progress	Completed and European Green Capital in 2010 but in continuous improvement towards the Sustainable Development	Euromed I: completed (1995 - 2015); Euromed II: In progress (2007 - 2030); Recognition of EcoCité in 2009	In progress. Delay due to dissonance and of promoter
Sustainable Development (SS)	Purpose (SS): Promote the sustainable development of human settlements; four social objectives: 1. Social Sustainability, 2. Human Sustainability, 3. Social Equity 4. Environmental Education	Purpose (SS): economic, tourist, and a social impulse to "challenge" the hegemony of other Mediterranean cities; Specific objective: Marseille as a sustainable Mediterranean city	Purpose (SS): Initially, luxury hotels and sustainable offices, are currently being defined.
Urban Regeneration	District	City	Building
Circular City	Systemic equity: energy infrastructure, resource and waste management. E.g. Energy supply of the	Designed but not built: valorization system of the underground stream and recovery of	Redevelopment with energy, sustainable and green environmental

International Journal of Business Research and Management (IJBRM)
ISSN: 2180-2165, https://www.cscjournals.org/journals/IJBRM/description.php

	district from renewable energies; sewer system that recycles natural gas; Green transport	rainwater, recovery, industrial assets, and urban development.	standards

SOURCE: Author's elaboration.

In general, there are different approaches to the development of projects in the different states (Sweden, France, Italy), although we have all incorporated the concept of SS (SDGs). This one could be associated with a different cultural heritage. Furthermore, urban regeneration projects require a multi-sector collaboration (Nelson et al., 2003) that exploits the skills and peculiarities of the subjects (Litardi et al., 2019). Despite this, the three case studies (Hammarby Sjöstad, Euromediterranée, Ex Poligrafico) show the need for a public promoter. The Italian case study (promoted only by private subjects) highlights the lack of a public promoter to protect the interest of the project (by its nature of public interest) present in the other two case studies. The Ex Poligrafico is the project that has encountered the most obstacles, brought about delays and changes, and is still in progress. Furthermore, the analysis highlights different redevelopment areas (District, City, Building) and different circular city activities.
The advent of Covid-19 triggered a significant economic impact (Campra et al., 2020; Donthu et al., 2020) that has developed within cities in different ways depending on the promoter of the projects.

6. CONCLUSION

The planet shows signs of intolerance, which need to be captured and understood due to climate change and resource scarcity. In a general context where sustainable development (Agenda 2030, 2015) is the only way to thrive, urban regeneration can be an excellent tool to achieve it. This is why a linear growth model, also called "take-make-dispose", where the production of a good, its use, and abandonment (involving a high waste of resources with a substantial environmental impact) is no longer conceivable and instead, it must give way to a new way of interpreting supply and demand. The Circular Economy, therefore, arises as a possible solution to this problem, demonstrating that it is possible to grow and progress, as humankind has always done in history, without however going to have a significant impact on the planet (Rizos et al.; 2017). Moreover, it must also represent a systemic change capable of creating long-term resilience - knowing how to adapt to the changes, generating economic and commercial opportunities, and providing environmental and social benefits.

The general awareness of sustainable development took shape with the definition of the 2030 Agenda. During the drafting of the paper, the impact generated by the COVID-19 pandemic was studied both on the progress made and on future predictions, observing that Covid-19 has significantly worsened the odds of successfully achieving the Agenda 2030 goals, (Campra et al., 2020; Donthu et al., 2020) mainly - but not only - for the Italian case study. However, the pandemic has generated positive effects on specific goals: Goal 7 (Clean and accessible energy); Goal 13 (Fight against climate change); Goal 14 (Life underwater); Goal 15 (Life on Earth) facilitated by the lockdown, as illustrated for example in Figure 1. A momentary condition limits such progress given the socio-economic-daily recovery. Thus, it appears necessary to find a new way to grow economically by respecting the old environmental, economic, and social criteria, and a new one, highlighted by the pandemic, namely the ability to be resilient.

Furthermore, without coordinated and substantial action, the Covid-19 crisis can put low-carbon investments at serious risk, for several reasons: firstly, economic uncertainty pushes to reduce the funds allocated to the activity. Investment and innovation; second, low fossil fuel energy prices provide weaker incentives for investments in green technologies.

Therefore, during the drafting of the paper, an attempt was made to identify a perfect combination of the two elements: sustainable development and urban resilience. An answer to this need exists and is precisely urban regeneration; this demonstrates how it is possible to revive sections of abandoned cities by giving new economic and social impulses, while at the same time managing to do so in a green and economically sustainable way; in this regard, towards the conclusion of the paper, various case studies were presented to support the thesis.

What has transpired about urban regeneration is how it provides for an intervention method that is always applicable, regardless of the place and historical moment. However, it requires applying four fixed and repeating steps: Scoping, Planning, Financing, and Implementation. Scoping is a process that provides private and public investors with a strategic assessment of a specific environment. Planning establishes the long-term vision and context, i.e., the planning system and process, financing is the economic aspect of the project, the search for funds from both the public and private sectors. Implementation of the transposition of the sole idea of long-term change in the financial, contractual, and institutional relationship between the public and private sectors.

Generally, the research is limited by the different timing of activation and development of the projects of the study groups analyzed and consequently by the impact of Covid-19, which has changed programming times.

However, the study observes that the key to success is urban governance. This new government model provides for less hierarchical control but greater cooperation between the actors, thus encouraging a tendential increase in social capital made up of synergies and mutual trust. (Lizardi et al., 2019) always and in any case add unitary agreements. This aspect can be further investigated in future research. What makes the new urban governance genuinely innovative is the concertation, that is, the cooperative aspect that brings together actors whose interests are different and potentially in contrast; in fact, the new governance does not imply that the various actors always and in any case reach unitary agreements. This aspect can be further investigated in future research.

7. REFERENCES

Alessi, L., Benczur, P., Campolongo, F., Cariboni, J., Manca, A. R., Menyhert, B., & Pagano, A. (2020). The resilience of EU member states to the financial and economic crisis. *Social Indicators Research*, *148*(2), 569-598. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-019-02200-1.

Amendola, G. (1997). *La città postmoderna: magie e paure della metropoli contemporanea*. Laterza, Roma-Bari.

Bianchi, M. (2018). Rigenerazione urbana ed innovazione sociale: Il caso di Gillet Square, progetto di cultura urbana guidato dalla comunità (A New Place, a New Community: The Case Study of Gillet Square, a Community-Led Urban Regeneration Project). *Euricse Working Papers, No. 105 | 18*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3297508.

Biancone, P., Brescia, V., & Jafari-Sadeghi, V. (2021). The impact of the COVID-19 on policies and investments of the European Green Deal. *European journal of volunteering and community-based projects*, *1*(3), 60-77.

Bobbio, L. (2002). *I governi locali nelle democrazie contemporanee*. Laterza, Roma-Bari.

Boulding, K. (1966). The economics of the coming spaceship earth. In Markandya, A., & Richardson, J. (eds.), *Environmental Quality in a Growing Economy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 27-35.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative research journal, 9*(2), 27-40. https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027.

Bruschi, I. (2017). Economia circolare: produrre, consumare, riutilizzare. *Rienergia: ambiente e risorse,* https://rienergia.staffettaonline.com/articolo/32825/Economia+circolare:+produrre,+consumare,+riutilizzare/Bruschi, consulted on December 2021.

Camagni, R. (2003). Città, governance urbana e politiche urbane europee. *DISP-The Planning Review*, *39*(152), 26-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2003.10556831.

Campra, M., Brescia, V., Jafari-Sadeghi, V., & Calandra, D. (2021). Islamic countries and Maqasid al-Shariah towards the circular economy. The Dubai case study. *European Journal of Islamic Finance*, (17). https://doi.org/10.13135/2421-2172/4560.

Campra, M., Esposito, P., & Brescia, V. (2020). State of the art of COVID-19 and business, management, and accounting sector. A bibliometrix analysis. *International Journal of Business and Management*, *16*(1). https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v16n1p35.

Cavalli, L., & Lizzi, G. (2020). Agenda 2030: il freno della pandemia, *Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale*, www.ispionline.it.

Couch, C., Fraser, C., & Percy, S. (2008). *Urban regeneration in Europe*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Crouch, C., Gales, P. L., Trigilia, C., & Voelzkow, H. (2001). Local production systems in Europe: Rise or demise?. *OUP Catalogue*. Oxford University Press.

Donthu, N., & Gustafsson, A. (2020). Effects of COVID-19 on business and research. *Journal of business research*, *117*, 284-289. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.06.008.

Goodrick, D. (2020). *Comparative case studies*. SAGE Publications Limited.

Healey, P. (1991). Urban regeneration and the development industry. *Regional studies*, *25*(2), 97-110. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343409112331346327.

Hwang, K. H. (2014). Finding urban identity through culture-led urban regeneration. *Journal of Urban Management*, *3*(1-2), 67-85. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2226-5856(18)30084-0.

Kirchherr, J., Piscicelli, L., Bour, R., Kostense-Smit, E., Muller, J., Huibrechtse-Truijens, A., & Hekkert, M. (2018). Barriers to the circular economy: Evidence from the European Union (EU). *Ecological economics*, *150*, 264-272. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2018.04.028.

Litardi, I., Fiorani, G., (2019). La rigenerazione territoriale come processo di cambiamento per lo sviluppo sostenibile. il patrimonio ferroviario italiano. *Azienda Pubblica, Maggioli Editore*, 99-108.

MacArthur, E. (2013). Towards the circular economy. *Journal of Industrial Ecology*, *2*(1), 23-44.

Maes, J., Zulian, G., Günther, S., Thijssen, M., & Raynal, J. (2019). Enhancing resilience of urban ecosystems through green infrastructure (EnRoute). *Publications Office of the European Union: Luxembourg*, 1-115.

Manca, A. R., Benczur, P., & Giovannini, E. (2017). *Building a scientific narrative towards a more resilient EU society. Part 1: A conceptual framework*. JRC Working, Joint Research Centre (Seville site).

Mayntz, R. (1999). La teoria della governance: sfide e prospettive. *Italian Political Science Review/Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*, *29*(1), 3-21. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0048840200026472.

Moldan, B., Janoušková, S., & Hák, T. (2012). How to understand and measure environmental sustainability: Indicators and targets. *Ecological Indicators*, *17*, 4-13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2011.04.033.

Rahman, M. K., Gazi, M. A. I., Bhuiyan, M. A., & Rahaman, M. A. (2021). Effect of Covid-19 pandemic on tourist travel risk and management perceptions. *Plos one*, *16*(9), e0256486. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0256486.

Ribeiro, F. L. (2008). Urban regeneration economics: The case of Lisbon's old downtown. *International Journal of Strategic Property Management*, *12*(3), 203-213. https://doi.org/10.3846/1648-715X.2008.12.203-213.

Rizos, V., Tuokko, K., & Behrens, A. (2017). The Circular Economy: A review of definitions, processes and impacts. *CEPS Papers*, (12440).

Sachs, J., Schmidt-Traub, G., Kroll, C., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G., & Woelm, F. (2021). *Sustainable development report 2020: The sustainable development goals and covid-19 includes the SDG index and dashboards*. Cambridge University Press.

Škare, M., Soriano, D. R., & Porada-Rochoń, M. (2021). Impact of COVID-19 on the travel and tourism industry. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, *163*, 120469.

WCED (World Commission on Environment and Development) (1987). *Our common future*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTRIBUTORS

As a peer-reviewed journal, *International Journal of Business Research Management (IJBRM)* invite papers with theoretical research/conceptual work or applied research/applications on topics related to research, practice, and teaching in all subject areas of Business, Management, Business research, Marketing, MIS-CIS, HRM, Business studies, Operations Management, Business Accounting, Economics, E-Business/E-Commerce, and related subjects. IJRBM is intended to be an outlet for theoretical and empirical research contributions for scholars and practitioners in the business field.

IJBRM establishes an effective communication channel between decision- and policy-makers in business, government agencies, and academic and research institutions to recognize the implementation of important role effective systems in organizations. IJBRM aims to be an outlet for creative, innovative concepts, as well as effective research methodologies and emerging technologies for effective business management

To build its International reputation, we are disseminating the publication information through Google Scholar, SemanticScholar, RePEc, IDEAS, J-Gate, Docstoc, Scribd, Slideshare, Bibsonomy and many more. Our International Editors are working on establishing ISI listing and a good impact factor for IJBRM.

The initial efforts helped to shape the editorial policy and to sharpen the focus of the journal. Started from Volume 13, 2022, IJBRM appears with more focused issues. Besides normal publications, IJBRM intend to organized special issues on more focused topics. Each special issue will have a designated editor (editors) – either member of the editorial board or another recognized specialist in the respective field.

We are open to contributions, proposals for any topic as well as for editors and reviewers. We understand that it is through the effort of volunteers that CSC Journals continues to grow and flourish.

IJBRM LIST OF TOPICS

The realm of International Journal of Business Research Management (IJBRM) extends, but not limited, to the following:

- Interdisciplinary Research Relevant to Business,
- Business & Economics Education
- Business Accounting
- Business Law
- Business Model and Strategy
- Business Processes
- Case Studies
- Cross-Culture Issues in Business
- Customer Relationship Management
- Decision Support and Knowledge-based Systems
- E-commerce, Collaborative Commerce and Net-enhancement
- Economics Business and Economic Systems
- Finance & Investment
- General Business Research
- General Management
- Global Business
- Globalisation, Business and Systems
- Knowledge Management and Organisational Learning
- Labor Relations & Human Resource Management
- Management Information Systems
- Management Systems and Sustainable Business
- Managing Systems

- Marketing Theory and Applications
- Modelling Simulation and Analysis of Business Process
- Organizational Behavior & Theory
- Production and Operations Systems
- Production/Operations Management
- Public Administration and Small Business Entreprenurship
- Public Responsibility and Ethics
- Strategic Management and Systems
- Strategic Management Policy
- Supply Chain and Demand Chain Management
- Technologies and Standards for Improving Business
- Technology & Innovation in Business Systems
- Technopreneurship Management
- Trust Issues in Business and Systems
- Value Chain Modelling Analysis Simulation and Management
- Value-based Management and Systems

CALL FOR SPECIAL ISSUES

IJBRM invites research scholars, scientists and students to address the latest issues and recent trends based on your research area by organizing special issues through the platform of IJBRM. Further details regarding who can organize special issue, how to organize and the terms of special issue organization can be access through the following links.

SPECIAL ISSUE GUIDELINES
https://www.cscjournals.org/editors/launch-special-issue.php

PROPOSE YOUR SPECIAL ISSUE
https://www.cscjournals.org/sm/si/step1.php

CONTACT INFORMATION

Computer Science Journals Sdn BhD

B-5-8 Plaza Mont Kiara, Mont Kiara

50480, Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA

Phone: 006 03 6204 5627
Fax: 006 03 6204 5628
Email: cscpress@cscjournals.org

Computer Science Journals Sdn BhD
M-3-19, Plaza Damas, Sri Hartamas
50480, Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia
https://www.cscjournals.org