

FSB-CBSM

Fostering sustainable behaviours: community-based social marketing

DURATION OF THE PROJECT
 Phase 1: 01/01/2007 – 31/01/2009
 Phase 2: 01/02/2009 – 31/01/2011

BUDGET
 737.414 €

KEYWORDS
 social psychology, marketing, fostering sustainable behavior

CONTEXT

Our project focuses on the development of ecological practices and sustainable behaviour in consumers. It has been built partly on the results of a previous project (SPSD2-CP15) developed by our KUL partner. Our project aims at examining psychosocial barriers and levers that can be used in order to develop new social marketing techniques. It involves cognitive social researchers from Liège (ULg), social marketing researchers from Leuven (KUL) and applied researchers from non-profit organizations (Ecolife, Leuven, and Espace – Environnement, Charleroi).

We will also pay special attention to the impact of affect and emotion elicited by consumer's sustainable behaviour or lack of it.

C. Developing and assessing original social marketing communications

In the third and final objective, we would like to develop social marketing techniques that would then be applied in real settings on different and relevant populations. We would like to develop promotion tools not only for marketing campaigns, but also for educators and animators who wants to sensitize their audience.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Objectives

This project has three main objectives:

A. Determining what is hidden behind the label "ecological behaviour" and which dimensions differentiate these behaviours

First, we aim at developing a typology of ecological and sustainable behaviours. We will try to have a better understanding of the classification of what ordinary people and experts call sustainable behaviours. This will help to know which behaviours have to be promoted in Belgium. In this first phase of the project, we also intend to study the Ecological Footprint Measure, its psychometric properties, and examine whether we may consider it as a good index of ecological behaviours.

B. Investigating cognitive, emotional and psychosocial antecedents of ecological behaviours

As our second objective, we would like to utilize the data of the first line of studies in order to propose and investigate a psychosocial model of ecological behaviour. This model would integrate cognitive and psychosocial variables like subjective norms, perceived personal control, attitudes, social identity, etc. In addition, we would control for different socio-demographical factors, mainly gender.

Methodology

To reach our three main objectives and provide convergent data, we will use a mix of research methods and data analyses :

A. In order to develop a classification of ecological behaviours, we will use interviews and standardized questionnaires addressed to both ordinary people and experts.

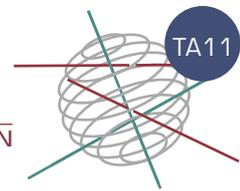
With the collected data, we will mainly realize exploratory statistical analyses (multi-dimensional scaling, discriminant analyses, etc). In order to examine psychometric properties of the ecological footprint measure, we will administer it with other measures in order to study convergent and discriminant validities (multitrait multi-method approach).

B. In order to study the impact of cognitive and psychosocial factors on ecological behaviours, we will use questionnaires and interviews, in addition to quasi-experimental designs (where the variables would be manipulated).

We will conduct mediation analyses to identify the relations between the different factors and their impact on different types of ecological behaviours.

C. Finally, we will develop marketing tools in pilot studies in our universities labs, before assessing the direct impact of these tools in real settings. The methods will be experimental and quasi experimental designs.





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INTERACTION BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT PARTNERS

It is our intention to conduct every aspect of the research jointly. We will meet regularly to discuss results, we will write research reports jointly.

EXPECTED RESULTS AND/OR PRODUCTS

- We intend to develop a theoretical model of ecological behaviours and psychological factors that affect them. This model will subsequently be used as a reference to develop marketing tools.
- The psychological properties underlying ecological footprint measure will be clarified and relevant organizations will be informed of the results for this task.
- We also intend to develop effective marketing strategies yielding positive effects on ecological consumer choices.
- Finally, we aim at publishing our results in the top international journals in both social psychology and marketing/consumer behaviour. Moreover, we plan to write reports for submission to publications with practitioner audiences (website of consumer associations, publications of the non profit partners, etc.).

PARTNERS - ACTIVITIES

- Social Psychology Unit – ULG : As part of a university department, the main activities are research and teaching. Both are in the domain of social cognition, attitude and stereotyping.
- The KULeuven marketing research group works on research and teaching in the fields of (social and commercial) marketing and consumers behaviours.
- Ecolife is a NGO specialised in campaigns and models aiming at ecological behavioural change. One of the most important tools for this is the Ecological Footprint. Ecolife runs several campaigns for households and organisations.
- Espace Environnement is an independent organisation (of general interest ?) that works with citizens, associations, companies, and authorities. Its main objective is to help citizens to become “eco-responsible”.

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Follow-up Committee

For the complete and most up-to-date composition of the Follow-up Committee, please consult our Federal Research Actions Database (FEDRA) by visiting <http://www.belspo.be/fedra> or <http://www.belspo.be/ssd>

