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WHY COMPANIES GO POSITIVE MARKETING INNOVATIONS: A NEW THEORETICAL PROTOTYPE FOR 4PS OF INNOVATION

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- Addressing to the particular gap in the innovative marketing literature, which is little is known about what the positive marketing is, its nature and benefits, and how it works on the levels of innovation (i.e. product, process, position, paradigm), this study aims to: define and establish the characteristics of a positive marketing practice; distinguish positive marketing practices from other pro-social marketing concepts; discuss the role of positive marketing on the innovation types.

Methodology- This paper explains the differences between positive marketing and other pro-social marketing concepts and provides a conceptual model describing positive marketing practices for the four types of innovation. The article also elaborates on how positive marketing works using contemporary examples.

Findings- This paper provides 1) a deeper understanding of what positive marketing is, 2) a comprehensive literature review on positive marketing research, 3) an insight for understanding how firms engage in positive marketing activities in their innovation strategies.

Conclusion- This article makes two conceptual advances toward a theory of positive marketing in the innovation context. The article: 1) recognizes what constitute positive marketing practices in contrast to other innovative marketing concepts, 2) elaborates on how positive marketing practices work on the four levels of innovation. Also, implications for practice are discussed.

Keywords: Positive marketing, innovation, types of innovation, innovative marketing.

JEL Codes: M30, M31, O30, L19.

1. INTRODUCTION

Changing customer demands and expectations, shortening technology and product life cycles, increasing competitive pressures force firms to develop and then implement marketing strategies in general and “positive marketing practices” in particular to become more successful in their innovation activities (Stoeckl and Luedicke, 2015). In this respect, researchers have paid increasing attention to the concept of “positive marketing”, which refers to any marketing activity that creates value for the firm, its customers, the society at large (Gopaldas, 2015), in the innovative marketing literature (Mittelstaedt et. al., 2015). Given the importance of positive marketing practices to firms’ innovations and performance, such as strengthening the loyalty of customers and society and leveraging firms’ competitive advantages by maximizing the mutual benefit for consumers, firms and society (Bublitz and Peracchio, 2015), researchers have highlighted a variety of positive marketing practices to enhance firms’ innovations, including material-meaning innovation (a reconfiguration of a product/service with more environment-friendly and humanitarian materials) and practice innovation (an original assemblage of existing/new materials, meanings, competencies) (Gopaldas, 2015). Nevertheless, what a positive marketing

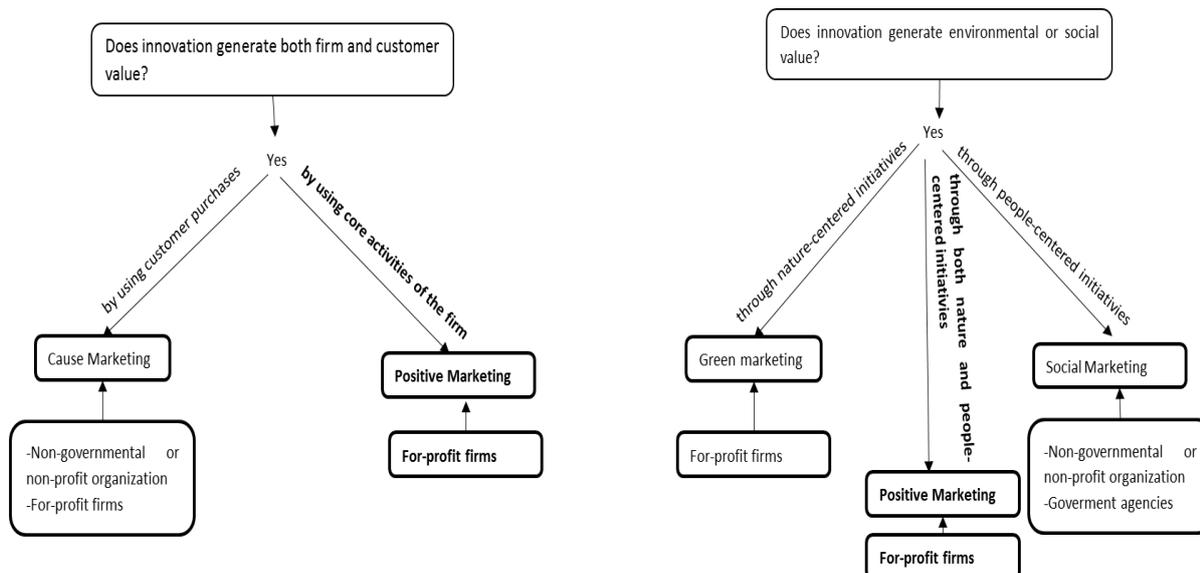
practice is comprised of is still missing in the literature (Lerman and Shefrin, 2015). Also, while the role of positive marketing practices on two patterns of innovation (i.e. material-meaning and practice) has been mentioned in the literature (Gopaldas, 2015), their role was not argued on the four levels of innovation (i.e. product, process, position, paradigm). Accordingly, this article will make two conceptual advances toward a theory of positive marketing in the innovation context. First, the article will recognize what constitute positive marketing practices in contrast to other innovative marketing concepts. Second, the article will elaborate on how positive marketing practices work on the four levels of innovation. We will present a conceptual model that aids researchers and marketers in describing positive marketing practices for the four types of innovation.

2. DEFINITION OF POSITIVE MARKETING

Since Fordham University's inaugural conference for positive marketing in November 2011, the term "positive marketing", which is defined as marketing "in which individual consumers, firms and society as a whole exchange value such that individually and collectively they are better off than they were prior to exchange" (Center For Positive Marketing, 2012), is given a great deal of attention in the marketing theory literature (Mittelstaedt et. al., 2015; Krush et. al., 2015). Students of marketing theory indicate that positive marketing is associated with all equilibrium marketing activities which create positive effect for the combination of beneficial, value expressive, and emotional benefits related to transactions and consumption (see, Lerman and Shefrin, 2015). For instance, Tesla Motors' business model is a contemporary example of a positive marketing innovation. "Tesla Motors, the American producer of electric cars, pursues a radical environmental vision and strategy to replace fossil fuels as a primary energy source for mobility. To do so, Tesla develops unique business case drivers, such as an increasingly competitive cost structure and pricing model, a unique reputation as a technology leader, and particularly innovative capacities. In this sense, Tesla's business model deviates fundamentally from the traditional car-manufacturing model. Partnerships with competitors such as Daimler and Toyota, or complementors such as Panasonic, are remarkable features of Tesla's business model, as is the installation of an independent supercharger network that could be used for free. It is also based on a whole business eco-system ranging from battery manufacturing to supplying green power at charger stations across the USA and in a growing number of countries worldwide" (http://nbs.net/wp-content/uploads/NBS-SA_Main_Report-161128.pdf). Such business model contributes to the transformation of national mobility infrastructures (societal value), develops offerings for the full spectrum of customers, not only luxury-oriented customer segments (customer value), thus, grows market share (Firm value).

Marketing scholars also note that positive marketing differs from other pro-social marketing concepts, which are cause marketing, green marketing, and social marketing (Gopaldas, 2015) (See Figure 1.). Cause marketing uses customer purchases as a tool for engaging in corporate philanthropy. For example, "Starbucks has teamed up with (RED) to raise funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS on World AIDS Day. As part of the campaign, Starbucks committed to donating 10 cents for every handcrafted beverage sold in participating U.S. and Canada stores, and raised a whopping \$12 million in donations. The red cup ensures that consumers take note of the commitment, resulting in an increase in brand loyalty" (<https://causegood.com/blog/cause-marketing-examples/>). In contrast to cause marketing, positive marketing seeks to enhance societal value through core activities of the firm (Gopaldas, 2015). As mentioned above, "Tesla Motors' mission is to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy". Thereby, Tesla Motors is characterized not only as an "automaker", but also as a "technology and design company with a focus on energy innovation" (<https://www.tesla.com/about>).

Green marketing and positive marketing are similar in the way that they intend to deliver societal value but while green marketing only focuses on delivering environmental value through nature-centered initiatives such as reducing electricity use and employing eco-friendly company vehicles, positive marketing may seek to create social value through people-centered initiatives as well, such as improving labor conditions (Gopaldas, 2015). While Johnson and Johnson is the second-largest corporate user of solar power in the United States, and has been working consistently over the past 20 years to reduce production wastes, United Colours of Benetton has been constantly highlighting racial diversity through its campaigns in which multiethnic models participate in promoting its apparels. Further, social marketing seeks to build societal value for public welfare, either by environmental innovations or people-centered initiatives. However, "social marketing is a not-for-profit practice in the public sector while positive marketing is a for-profit practice in the private sector" (Gopaldas, 2015). For example, in order to emphasize the importance of wearing seat belts, police departments run social marketing campaigns using slogans such as "Buckle up for life" and "Click it or ticket", communicating the benefits of wearing a seat belt, which is lifesaving, and also the negative implications of violating the law, which is a traffic ticket.

Figure 1: Distinguishing Positive Marketing from Other Pro-Social Marketing Concepts

3. MARKETING CRITICISMS AND POSITIVE MARKETING

The positive marketing movement has been inspired by the persisting negative reputation of the marketing profession. Moral demands for legitimate marketing practices and the way these moral demands are articulated have evolved overtime leading to a range of marketing criticisms from the realm of consumer, the local community, the society, and natural and human resources (Stoekl and Luedicke, 2015). In consumer realm, criticisms for marketing focus on deceptive pricing, product, and promotion policies, and also intrusion into consumers' private life through disclosure of information and aggressive advertising in digital platforms. Firms are criticized for charging astronomical prices for products and pretend to make significant discounts by decreasing the prices to the usual levels then. Deceptive product policies involve offering dysfunctional or physically harmful products, such as fast foods, tobacco and alcoholic beverages, as well as hazardous products, of which dangers are known, such as car tires burning at high speed or vehicle fuel systems that carry the risk of exploding in times of crash. Criticisms for deceptive promotion policies stem from building fallacious perceptions about human appearance inconsistent with real life facts. Additionally, aggressive advertising practices through different communication channels, such as e-mails, phone calls, web page pop-ups, without asking for consumer solicitude, and data collection and storage on consumers' buying preferences and browsing information are criticized for violating private life of consumers. These criticisms awake a heightened concern for trust and privacy issues. Also, consumers respond to these marketing practices by sharing their negative experiences with brands in online platforms and shifting their purchasing preferences (Stoekl and Luedicke, 2015).

From the community perspective, criticisms against marketing include erosion of cultural contexts, aggressive promotion in public spheres, and restriction of cultural propagation and innovation. The commercialization of cultural aspects, involving local ideas, styles, and materials, in seek for profit is a major criticism against marketing practices. Second marketing criticism in community realm is "excessive promotional noise" in public domain. While aggressive use of public advertising channels, such as billboards, leads consumers to have a negative sense of aesthetic, placement of non-local brands advertisements in community's advertising channels causes commercial interests of local communities to be sacrificed at the expense of non-local commercial interests. Another source of promotional noise in public sphere is restaurant and store chains of global brands located in community, leading the fall down of local businesses and putting in danger the "originality of local commercial offerings, tastes and brand meanings". Although investors and sponsors are appreciated for facilitating production of cultural products in fine arts, literature, and music, property rights restrictions they impose on cultural products are considered as a barrier on cultural innovation since they put limitations on spreading cultural products. Also, restrictive property rights limit the control of local community on its own communication process through the "privatization of language" and "limitation of non-commercial and brand-critical contents in media consumption". Intrusive advertising is a focus of concern, also in online communities. These marketing criticisms lead to moral demands for "commerce-free community spaces" and protection of cultural and subcultural aspects in a community (Stoekl and Luedicke, 2015).

Marketing criticisms in society realm stem from the marketing practices causing degeneration in the society, changing the nature of the social interrelations among people, consumers' perceptions about themselves, and consumers' physical body conditions. Marketing practices, which associate the level of consumption with the degree of happiness and inspire "hardworking, high-earning, hedonistic life-styles", transform consumers into isolated persons overly consuming and devoid of social skills, dissolving the unity in a society. Also, marketing practices, inducing consumers to overly purchase, put high financial burden on individuals and the society. Overconsumption brings additional profits to the firms but results in external costs to the society. Food industry, in particular, is criticized for promoting "unhealthy and excessive" food consumption level, resulting a heightened level of obesity in the society (Stoekl and Luedicke, 2015).

Regarding the exploitation of human and natural resources, marketing criticisms are directed to the "unethical and unsustainable use" of these resources in production processes disguised under the "glossy" brand images. Marketers are criticized for promoting "quick and easy buy-use-dump consumption cycles", resulting in high external costs to society in terms of recycling and disposing of used products. Another criticism stems from firms' "window-dressing practices", that is firms' deceptive communication by promising socially or environmentally commitment to the public although these claims are not realized. Not only these practices weaken the credibility of the positive marketing practices in public eye, but also awaken moral demand for fair and sustainable use of human and natural resources, also considering the needs of future generations (Stoekl and Luedicke, 2015).

Positive marketing is offered as a response to moral demands in each of these four realm. From the consumer perspective, disclosure of information on product, pricing policies, and production processes from both the company itself and its suppliers, openness to external control, and cooperation in innovation process with stakeholders help a company to build customer trust in its brand and marketers. For example, LEGO Group, strengthen trust in their brand by working in collaboration with their customers. Rather than suing the customers who hacked the software of their robotic product Mindstorms and changed the original code of the product by developing new applications, they gave them the opportunity to collaborate in innovation process of this product. This not only adds to the innovativeness of the company, but also enhances the credibility of the brand name in customer eye. Also, understanding and supporting "non-commercial interests" of consumer communities enable companies to enhance positive relations with these communities as a response to criticisms underlying aggressive promoting practices and exploitation of cultural epicenters. Volcom, a sport brand selling clothing for board sport members, sponsors the events of this community in order to communicate that it is not a "commercial freeloader", but it also appreciates the non-commercial interests of the community. Enhancing product flexibility by offering value-added services and having a socio-cultural focus is suggested as a response to moral demand for a healthy level of consumption. For example, Zipcar provides easy access for temporary cars on a usage and membership basis, not only satisfying the customers' utilitarian needs but also satisfying them pro-socially. Patagonia, a sport equipment brand, builds an awareness for "conscious consumption" by communicating its customers to consider the ecological impacts of their purchases. Finally, building consumer awareness about their responsibility in environment protection, maintaining industry partnership and consumer cooperation, and engaging in new "triple (economic, ecological, and social) bottom-line" strategies respond to moral demand for sustainable and ethical use of natural and human resources. For example, some hotels convince their customers to reduce their towel and linen use by promising to donate savings from reduced usage of these products to charities (Stoekl and Luedicke, 2015).

4. REVIEW OF RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS ON POSITIVE MARKETING

Researchers in the field investigate the need for positive marketing from different frameworks. From the perspective of neoclassical analysis, Lerman and Shefrin (2015) associate positive marketing activities with "all equilibrium marketing activities". According to them, market imperfections lead to a quest for engaging in positive marketing activities. In perfect competition, the ideal market form, resources are allocated in both an effective and an efficient way. In imperfectly functioning markets, profit motives may disrupt efficient social allocation. Therefore, firms seek to implement "win-win" strategies, through which they are able to meet customer demand efficiently, while they make profits at the same time. Also, in the framework of behavioral economics, positive marketing helps consumers in their decision making (Lerman and Shefrin, 2015).

Gopaldas (2015) explains the motivation behind promoting positive marketing activities by two main factors that are underexplored by the pressure theory of corporate social innovation. These factors are "activist executives" who have a tendency to engage in positive marketing activities for their personal interest rather than for an intend to satisfy external pressures, and "network customers" who are well informed about the experiences of other consumers and stakeholders with a particular brand, through communication channels, such as employee blogs, product reviews, and social media tools, and put a pressure on firms to deliver benefits to individual consumers as well as other stakeholders. The example of activist executives is Patagonia's founder CEO Yvon Chouinard, who made extraordinary efforts in order to green every activity within the company's value chain. Despite his continuous efforts to make his company "truly sustainable" with no environmental impact were already more than required by external pressures, and brought him and his company public

appreciation, he did not become satisfied and he continued his efforts to realize a “self-directed goal” of zero environmental impact. PepsiCo’s CEO Indra Nooyi is another example of activist executives. PepsiCo has become a positive marketing leader just after Nooyi’s appointment to the company, despite the PepsiCo’s numerous social initiatives had been constantly carried on until that time. Chouinard and Nooyi are activist executives because they have made unusual efforts, beyond the external pressures they face and the progress of organizational initiatives have gone in parallel with their “personal conviction” progress. On the other hand, the example of network customers are consumers who generate product reviews on Amazon website enabling other customers to be informed about Amazon’s deceptively communicated product attributes. Also, activist customers who are in network on social media platforms, such as Change.org, Facebook, and Reddit may force companies to make changes in their business processes to deliver value to both individuals and the society (Gopaldas, 2015).

Mittelstaed et al. (2015) adopt a macro marketing perspective and investigate whether the two contradictory schools of thought in macro marketing - developmental school and critical school - can be adapted in positive marketing discipline. Whereas developmental school considers marketing as “a part of solution to the human condition”, critical school sees marketing as “a source of human suffering”. Developmental school sees marketing as a tool for improving human life and enhancing economic development. On the other hand, critical school identifies five aspects of marketing - technological, political, economic, organizational, and competitive - as challenges to development, preventing from creating mutual value for consumers, firms, and society. Both perspectives, contributing to the development of each other, are seen valuable in positive marketing research.

From the theory of practice perspective, Gopaldas (2015) explains how positive marketing builds value for the firm, customer, and the society. He suggests that positive marketing has two main patterns, which are, material-meaning innovation and practice innovation. Material-meaning innovation, which refers to offering differentiated products, involves new materials and meanings but does not lead to new customer competencies whereas practice innovation, associated with new market space, requires new materials, new meanings, and also new competencies for customers. Material meaning innovation can be implemented by reducing the amount of material used, using a more environmentally material, or using a more humanitarian material. For example, Aquafina’s Eco-Fina bottle, which includes 50% less plastic in production, helps Pepsi Co to build a pro-social brand image, as well as reduces plastic waste in the environment and provides consumers the opportunity to contribute in plastic waste reduction. Similarly, hair color products of Palette by Nature, including natural ingredients, enable the brand to differentiate its products using more environmental-friendly materials and to create value for customers in terms of prevention of skin disorders. These two examples of material-meaning innovation lead to new materials and new pro-social meanings in consumer perceptions but do not require changes in the ways that consumers behave. An example to practice innovation is MaxBack, a service for purchasing old and damaged electronic devices from consumers to fix up and resell in secondary markets. General Motor’s hybrid gas-electric vehicle, the Volt, which provides a superior performance in terms of distance driven and can be recharged by electricity is also a practice innovation. Both of these practice innovations create new market spaces for the firms pursuing them. They also create values for both consumers and the society. Consumers benefit from MaxBack service in terms of reduction in their costs while MaxBack creates value for the society in terms of electronic waste reduction. Similarly, while consumers enjoy low fuel costs and superior performance of the General Motor’s hybrid vehicle, the Volt, the society benefits from energy saving and use of a cleaner energy that Volt provides. Also, in addition to leading to changes in materials used and meanings associated with, these innovations also entail in changes in behaviors of consumers, requiring new competencies.

5. POSITIVE MARKETING FOR 4PS OF INNOVATION

The effect of innovation on improving firm performance and maintaining competitive advantage is an empirically supported and a widely accepted phenomenon in innovation and new product development literature. However, there is no single typology on innovation universally accepted by the researchers. In the literature, there is a wide range of typologies identifying innovation types based on the outcome of the innovation process (Baregheh et al., 2014; Rowley et al., 2011; Baregheh et. al, 2016). Among these typologies, Knight (1967) proposes four types of innovation, which are product or service innovation, production-process innovation, organizational structure innovation and people innovation. Binary model innovation typologies suggested in 1970s and 1980s categorize innovation as product/process, administrative/technical and radical/incremental. Oke et al. (2007) offer three types of innovation - process, product and service – distinguishing product innovation and service innovation. Within the framework of this study, we focus on the taxonomy proposed by Tidd et al. (2005), which examines innovation in four Ps: product, process, position and paradigm. This taxonomy has no strict boundaries for each type of innovation and does not consider either type of innovation as a substitute for the others. All innovation strategies can be adopted simultaneously (Francis and Bessant, 2005). We will explore each of these four types of innovation individually in the subsequent sections.

5.1. Product Innovation

Product innovation, which is perhaps the most common innovation strategy pursued by firms to sustain competitive advantage, is considered as the changes in products and/or services provided. A wide range of studies provide empirical evidence on the effect of new product development on retaining market share and enhancing firm profitability. Increasing competition and shortening product life-cycles force firms to engage in new competitive strategies requiring changes in “quality, customization, and design” of their products, rather than pursuing a mere price-cutting strategy (Şener and Saridoğan, 2011). All new/improved products (a new design of an established car model or a high-performance electric car, improved performance light bulbs or LED-based lightings) are in the target of product innovation.

Firms also have to give timely responses to their constantly changing environment due to changes in customer needs and preferences, development in technology and changes in legislation in order to sustain competitive advantage through providing new products (Tidd et al., 2005). Service firms also engage in product innovation. Singapore Airlines’ providing slumberettes and jack point machines in planes is an example of product innovation made by service firms (Francis and Bessant, 2005).

Product innovation is the most visible application field for positive marketing. Through product innovations, firms provide with markets differentiated products, and thus, 1) satisfy customer demands and expectations (customer value), 2) earn profits enjoying the competitive advantage of being preferred by the customers or come to be known as innovative firms (firm value), and 3) serve to social life (social value). For example, Toto brand is recognized as a product innovator for its differentiated toilets with low-volume flushing systems in its customers’ eyes, (firm value), preferred by customers due to reduced water costs and improved flushing performance (customer value), and also, appreciated for contributing to reduction in water usage in the society (social value) (Gopaldas, 2015).

5.2. Process Innovation

While product innovation is mostly recognized in the leading position in innovation, process innovation, which is defined as the “changes in the ways products and services are created and delivered”, is also a powerful source of competitive advantage (Tidd et al., 2015). A process innovation can take place in either eliminating “waste”, in the form of unnecessary activities in production and delivery processes or exploring new processes to improve performance (Francis and Bessant, 2005).

Process innovation is “being able to make something no one else can, or to do so in ways which are better than anyone else”, that is faster, at a lower cost or more customized. Examples to firms engaging in successful process innovations are car manufacturers, such as Toyota, Honda and Nissan, developing production systems leading to superior quality and productivity. Southwest Airlines, the most effective firm in the US, succeeded to become a low-cost leader by improving its processes such as reducing airport turnaround times. Citi Bank is also an example of a process innovator in terms of providing ATM services before its competitors and becoming a technology leader in the banking sector (Tidd et al., 2015).

From the positive marketing perspective, process innovation is closely related to material-meaning innovation, which is proposed by Gopaldas (2015). In producing products and services, firms benefit from the value of positive marketing when they use 1) less materials, 2) more environmentally-friendly materials and 3) more humanitarian materials. Patagonia, an outdoor clothing manufacturer, enjoys the benefits of environmental innovations in its value chain. In production facilities, for example, it uses solar power to reduce electricity consumption. It also uses environmentally-friendly materials, such as organic cotton, to produce its apparels. These process innovations Patagonia engage in provide with the brand the opportunity to build a pro-social brand image, gaining the support of customers, employees, and activist groups (firm value). Customers see themselves as a member of an environmentalist brand community by purchasing the brand’s products (customer value). Finally, the society benefits from energy saving and waste reduction (social value) (Gopaldas, 2015).

5.3. Position Innovation

Position innovation, defined as the “changes in the context in which the products/services are introduced”, does not require major changes in product attributes but rather focuses on changes in the way how customers understand or perceive the product and services offered. Changing the perception of Lucozade, introduced in the UK as a glucose-based drink associated with helping recovery from illnesses to as a performance-enhancing drink for exercise is an example of position innovation (Tidd et al., 2015).

Positional innovation can transform an existing market or build a completely new market. Haagen Daz, an ice cream brand originally developed for children, changed its target market from children to adults via changes in firm processes such as formulation, packaging, advertising and distribution channels. This example emphasizes the importance of “product identity” as other “tangible product attributes” in managing a positional innovation. Also, it shows that positional

innovation can embrace other innovation types, leading to changes in product attributes and also changes in production and delivery processes (Francis and Bessant, 2005).

The objective of positive marketing is to provide multiple benefits for firms, customers, and the society. Similarly, firms intend to have positive and attracting brand associations. Based on this, positive marketing provides with firms unique market positioning. Thus, firms like Tesla, Apple, and 3M enjoy being recognized as innovative firms. On the other hand, firms may prefer to engage in position innovation in circumstances in which target market is already satisfied, the number of competitors in the market increases, and the product loses its popularity. For example, when Aspirin was firstly introduced to the market as a pain reliever, a large number of similar pain reliever products emerged and Aspirin lost its influence in the market. After its blood-diluent effect was discovered, it was positioned as a blood diluent product enabling the brand to appeal a new market consisting of cardiac patients. In the context of positive marketing, new product position must create firm, customer, and social value. For example, yogurt, which has been associated as a meal accompaniment for long years, is recently positioned as a healthy alternative for dessert lovers with fruit flavors included or as a supplementary food to protect health with prebiotic ingredients included. This new positioning enables the yogurt producers to differentiate their products from competitors (firm value) and satisfy customer needs providing with a different range of product alternatives with different tastes, and appealing to new customer groups consisting of health seekers (customer value), and also promoting the consumption of healthy foods in the society (social value).

5.4. Paradigm Innovation

While position innovation seeks to change products or services to adapt to a new market or a new customer segment, paradigm innovation, associated with “changes in the underlying mental models which frame what the organization does”, requires a radical change in markets or customer perceptions (Rowley, et al., 2011). “Shift to low-cost airlines, the provision of online insurance and other financial services, and the repositioning of drinks like coffee and fruit juice as premium ‘designer’ products” are examples of paradigm innovation (Tidd et al., 2015). Similar to innovation in position, paradigm innovation must not be considered in isolation with other innovation types, either. It can consist of product and process innovations. For example, Henry Ford, changed the underlying model in transportation by shifting from a craft-based production system, targeting at few wealthy customers to mass-production, addressing all people with different income levels. This shift includes both product and process innovations, such as changes in component design, machinery and layout etc. (Tidd et al., 2015).

As in other innovation types, firms can create multiple values for themselves, their customers, and the society through paradigm innovation. This can be either in the form of new products, processes, re-positioning an existing product, or with a combination of these. PlumpyNut, a peanut flavored, ready-to-use therapeutic product, originally developed in French to treat acute malnutrition in Southern countries is an example of paradigm innovation, including a new delivery process and re-positioning. This product allows children suffering from malnutrition to be treated outside the medical centers, through the monitor of communities’ health systems. By enabling the children to be fed at home easily, it radically changed the perception that malnourished children must be hospitalized and fed under medical supervision (<http://www.nutriset.fr/en/innovation/plumpynut-cmam-example.html>). It is also an example of positive marketing since it creates multiple values for the producer itself (pro-social brand image), its customers (low-cost and easily accessible treatment with a good-taste, ready-to-use product) and the society (saving millions of children’s lives, even in countries where access to medical service is limited).

6. CONCLUSION

This conceptual study makes several contributions to positive marketing literature, which has been recently attracting a number of researchers in the area of marketing. First, by explaining the differences between positive marketing and other pro-social marketing concepts, which are green, cause, and social, with examples for each, it provides a deeper understanding of what positive marketing is. For a marketing activity to become positive marketing, it must create multiple values simultaneously for the firm, its customers, and the society. Second, the study proposes a detailed discussion of criticisms against marketing practices and moral demands emerged which provide basis for the rise of the concept of positive marketing. Criticisms are considered in four domains, which are the customer, the local community, the society, and the human and natural resources. Then, it is discussed how positive marketing addresses to criticisms in each domain. Third, the study provides a comprehensive literature review on positive marketing research through different studies from different frameworks, including the neoclassical analysis, macro marketing, and practice theory, explaining the need for and motivation behind the positive marketing concept. Perhaps the most important contribution of this study is to integrate positive marketing practices with four types of innovation, which are product, process, position, and paradigm. Each innovation type is explained with examples and then they are related with positive marketing activities. The study provides an insight for understanding how firms engage in positive marketing activities, that is, how they create multiple and simultaneous values for themselves, their customers, and the society, in their innovation strategies.

Based on this article, the implication for marketing managers is that marketers should improve positive marketing innovations. In this respect, marketing managers should enhance the positive marketing practices in the organization. For that, management should foster a positive marketing culture, awareness of the mutual benefit for consumers, firms and society, in the organization. For instance, managers should elevate the creativity and imagination of employees and encourage them to create new values for firm, customer and society. Managers should cultivate positive marketing activities by paying special attention to the prosocial behaviors in the organization. Here, managers should focus on human needs, societal problems, firm benefits. Specifically, managers should also help people become more aware of how they translate values into innovation activities. In addition, management should send the message that a mutual benefit for firm, customer and society is important in the firm's priorities.

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