

## Advertising in "green" indoor media according to its consumer audience

### *Propaganda em mídia indoor "verde" segundo seu público consumidor*

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#### Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the influence of an advertisement characterized as societal and green marketing (with evidence of greenwashing) advertised in indoor media before its consumer audience, in terms of memory and image evaluation. Initially, a literature review was carried out, focusing on the discussion about societal marketing, its origin and evolution, also discussing green marketing, its concept and importance, and the practice of greenwashing. Using literature as a support, a quantitative approach was methodologically adopted, carried out through a quantitative survey with 120 students (probabilistic sample), as well as 11 professors and 7 administrative employees (census) from a business course of a private college, totaling 138 respondents. It was possible to observe, contradictorily, a positive evaluation, with the purchase of the green image by the consumer, despite the sign of greenwashing, but without the linkage of this to the promoting brand. Thus, the results were intuitive in the sense of illustrating signs of practice of greenwashing and its possible influences on the consumer, but counterintuitive in relation to the advantages and importance defended on societal marketing and green marketing.

**Keywords:** Societal Marketing. Green marketing. Greenwashing. Green image. Consumer.

#### Resumo

O trabalho teve como objetivo analisar a influência de uma propaganda caracterizada como de marketing societal e verde (com indício de *greenwashing*) divulgada em mídia indoor perante seu público consumidor, em termos de memória e avaliação de imagem. Procedeu-se, inicialmente, a uma revisão da literatura, focando na discussão acerca do marketing societal, sua origem e evolução, discorrendo também sobre o marketing verde, seu conceito e sua importância, e a prática do *greenwashing*. Tendo a literatura como suporte, adotou-se metodologicamente uma abordagem quantitativa, realizada por meio de um levantamento quantitativo (*survey*) junto a 120 alunos (amostra probabilística), bem como 11 docentes e 7 funcionários administrativos (censo) do curso de administração de uma faculdade privada, totalizando, assim, 138 respondentes. Foi possível observar, contraditoriamente, uma avaliação positiva, com a compra da imagem verde pelo consumidor, apesar do indício de *greenwashing*, mas sem a atrelagem disso à marca promotora. Assim, os resultados se mostraram intuitivos no sentido de ilustrar indícios da prática de *greenwashing* e suas possíveis influências no consumidor, mas contraintuitivos em relação às vantagens e à importância defendidas sobre o marketing societal e o marketing verde.

**Palavras-chave:** Marketing societal. Marketing verde. *Greenwashing*. Imagem verde. Público consumidor.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

A topic in growing discussion is the problem of the impacts arising from organizational action, with its possible harmful effects. In this context, there is an urgent need for awareness on the part of the population, organizations and consumers, demanding, on the one hand, more conscious consumption, and, on the other, more sustainable organizational practice, both in order to minimize the consequences in terms of social and environmental degradation (ANDREOLI; LIMA; PREARO, 2018; NASCIMENTO, 2019).

As a consequence, organizations are required to adapt to this new competitive environment, even in order to stand out from their competitors, adding sustainable value to the supply. A survey conducted by the Akatu Institute in 2018 investigated the opinion and expectations regarding the organizations' sustainability and social responsibility practices, pointing out that 56% of the respondents (in a sample of 1,090 participants) expect the organizations to do more than what is foreseen in the laws and to look more towards society (AKATU, 2018).

Seen in these terms, one of the main exponents in this movement is the societal marketing, which emerged from a reformulation of the concept of traditional marketing (KOTLER, 1978; ANDREOLI; LIMA; MINCIOTTI, 2019). Accordingly, societal marketing encompasses considerations related to social problems in marketing strategies, thinking about consumer satisfaction and the long-term well-being of society (ANDREOLI; LIMA; MINCIOTTI, 2018; ANDREOLI; LIMA; MINCIOTTI, 2019).

Following the same approach, the concern with the environment has led to a demand for more ecologically favorable products and practices (BRAGA JUNIOR et al, 2016). In this sense, the practice of green marketing gains strength, a second great exponent of this market movement towards sustainability. The green marketing

can be seen as a maturation of the thought and marketing practice, which also includes the concern about its impacts on the ecological balance of the planet (ANDREOLI; LIMA; PREARO, 2018).

Despite this, it should be noted that not every green practice has real proof. In order to benefit of the advantages of green marketing, especially those aimed at the consumer market, some organizations have chosen to disseminate a green speech, but without its real practical implementation, with all the complexity and difficulty that this involves. This is characterized as greenwashing, which denotes exactly the green image attributed to a product or brand, without its real practice (ANDREOLI; CRESPO; MINCIOTTI, 2017).

The Market Analysis Institute (2015) investigates the practice of greenwashing in Brazil. According to the latest report, from the year 2015, the number of products self-declared as green has grown almost five times (478%) in the last five years. The report also points out that the two sectors that make most use of this practice are cleaning products, cosmetics and hygiene. Besides, it is estimated that eight of each ten products commercialized in the country presents greenwashing signs.

The great problem in relation to the practice of greenwashing is focused on its ability to influence the consumer market, which, in general, is still quite uncritical and not conscious (ANDREOLI; LIMA; PREARO, 2018; ANDREOLI; BATISTA, 2017). For this reason, the practice of greenwashing seems to be able to fulfill its objectives, since consumers end up buying the green image transmitted, without much thought or questioning about what is disclosed (BRAGA JUNIOR et al, 2016).

In view of that, this study aimed to analyze the influence of an advertisement characterized as marketing both societal and green (with evidence of greenwashing) advertised in indoor media (dispensers) before its consumer audience, in terms of memory and image evaluation. Initially, a

literature review was carried out, focusing on the discussion about societal marketing, its origin and evolution, also discussing green marketing, its concept and importance, and the practice of greenwashing.

Having the literature as support, a quantitative approach was adopted methodologically, carried out through a quantitative survey with the students, related professors and administrative employees of the business course of a private college in the interior of the state of São Paulo. In relation to the students, a probabilistic sample of 120 respondents was obtained (with a sample error of 6% and reliability of 99%); for the professors (eleven) and administrative employees (seven), a census was possible. Thus, a total of 138 respondents were accumulated.

## 2 THEORETICAL REFERENCE

The theoretical reference is developed in the discussions about societal marketing and green marketing, also talking about the practice of greenwashing.

### 2.1 Societal marketing

With the growing concern of consumers regarding conscious consumption, marketing has been developing a new thinking, capable of meeting the new needs of the market, mainly related to the collection of a more responsible posture of organizations (SILVA; MINCIOTTI; ROMEIRO, 2011). Faced with this new market demand, organizations are now driven to inform the dangers of the products supplied and the harmful results they could cause, in the same proportion that they informed the advantages offered, the strengths and attributes (SILVA; MINCIOTTI, 2005).

As a consequence, the emergence of a "new" marketing era is driven, in which products are evaluated by the consumer not

only on the basis of performance or price, but on the sustainability actions of those responsible (SCHNEIDER; LUCE, 2014). In this context, Kotler (1978, p. 62) proposed a new application of marketing, Societal Marketing, defined as a new way of thinking and positioning the organization, whose purpose is not only to generate satisfaction in the short term, but also to contribute to well-being in the long term.

In that way, it can be affirmed that Societal Marketing refers to the incorporation of considerations related to social problems into marketing strategies, developed and implemented with a view to increasing the acceptability of the organizations' products (ANDREOLI; LIMA; MINCIOTTI, 2018). In other words, it is argued that, unlike traditional marketing, societal marketing does not consider everything to be valid in order to please the consumer, but should make sure that the marketing of the product will not bring any social harm. (SILVA; MINCIOTTI, 2005).

In this regard, Societal Marketing can be understood as the development of the marketing concept, a more conscious branch, which extends the orthodox line of thought, merely commercial (ANDREOLI; LIMA; MINCIOTTI, 2018). This new philosophy starts to understand a whole conjuncture of factors that can cause damage to the individual and to society, in the long term, as a result of the actions of commercialization, consumption and disposal of products.

### 2.2 Green marketing

The concept of marketing and the definition of its scope of action developed in the nineteenth century, formalizing itself in the 1950s, although its practice has been made since the beginning of civilization, evolving since then (YANAZE, 2007). Despite this, it was only in the mid-1960s and 70s that the organizations began to

worry about the environment, resulting from society's discussion of environmental problems, with obstacles such as the depletion of natural resources, the extinction of animal species, the accumulation of waste and garbage, the contamination of soil and water, among others.

The organizations begin to pay attention to the framing of environmental standards, even if, at an initial moment, still without many foundations (CARSON; 1962). This movement was especially fostered by the emergence of NGOs - non-governmental organizations, such as Greenpeace, founded in 1971, and SOS Amazônia, founded in 1980 (PEREIRA; AYROSA, 2004; DEUS; FELIZOLA; SILVA, 2010). As a consequence, after the 1980s, in the mid-1990s, proactive organizations began to emerge and act, i.e., organizations that not only really complied with the established standards, but also practiced environmental management in a comprehensive manner, analyzing all areas, since the purchase of raw materials, logistics, means of cleaner production, among others (GUIMARÃES; VIANA; COSTA, 2015)

Therefore, one begins to think about green marketing, or even environmental marketing. The relevant literature states that green marketing has evolved in four subsequent stages, being them: embryonic, ecological, green and sustainable (PEATTIE; CHARTER, 2001; LOPES; PACAGNAN, 2014; KATRANJIEV, 2016), as exposed in Andreoli, Lima and Prearo (2018). Thus, according to the authors, the embryonic stage began in 1950 and remained in force until 1970, as a result of Alderson's research, still in 1957, on the interaction of marketing with society and its possible consequences, whether positive or negative.

In a second moment, ecological marketing covers the period of 1975, after the first workshop on this subject, held by the American Marketing Association (AMA), going until 1989. This marketing

stage was characterized by the concern with the preservation of the environment and with the production and commercialization of products that are not harmful or aggressive to the environment. The green marketing, in a third moment, covers the period of 1990 and 2000, having as relevance the initiative of comprehension and the insertion of marketing on the ecosystem view and the importance with the extinction of plants, animal species and with the poverty of developing countries.

Finally, sustainable marketing begins after the 2000s, guided by a serious and radical position about thinking and practicing marketing in a more responsible way. Thereby, the main objective is the complete overcoming of the negative effects of the production and commercialization of goods and services, aiming at a sustainability policy with a strong future orientation.

For that matter, despite the aforementioned evolution, it is pointed out that the use of the concept of green marketing, understood as the most recurrent in literature, was adopted in this study. Thus, green marketing can be defined as the use of sustainable resources in manufacturing, the optimization of all necessary supplies and even the adaptation of the production process, aiming not only the efficiency of performance, but the continuous improvement of the environmental quality of the organization. That is, as pointed out by Andreoli, Lima and Prearo (2017), green marketing reflects a maturity of thought and marketing practice, which extends its perspective from specific issues to a more holistic way of facing its performance, also embracing the concern about its impacts on the ecological balance of the planet.

In this sense, the adoption of green marketing can bring different advantages to organizations (SILVA, 2013; GUIMARÃES; VIANA; COSTA, 2015; ANDREOLI; LIMA; PREARO, 2017). Firstly, in relation to production, there is an economic advantage for organizations,

adopting cleaner and leaner production processes, reducing costs, especially related to waste, whether raw material, labor, time, disposal and waste. It also begins to practice processes of reversion and reuse of what was previously considered unuseable, adopting processes of reuse, recycling or even transfer to other purposes in which they are useful. In addition, there is the differential before consumers, since, currently, the practice of green marketing, with the premises of transparency, becomes a source of competitive advantage, increasing the value delivered to the market (SILVA, 2013; ANDREOLI; LIMA; PREARO, 2017). As a consequence, it contributes to a greater market share, especially among the more environmentally conscious consumers, a niche that is in broad growth (ANDREOLI; LIMA; PREARO, 2017).

Nevertheless, it should be noted that this process is not easy, fast or cheap. It requires a level of awareness on the part of the organization, which should have the time, investments and efforts to adapt its production process to the green demands; in more extreme cases, even the modification of the production arrangement is necessary, or even the physical infrastructure of the organization. The green posture should be made explicit to all employees, in order to create an engagement and even a promotion in this sense, creating a true organizational culture with sustainable and environmentally correct values. This guideline should also permeate the organizational stakeholders, especially suppliers, who directly impact the performance of the organization, acting as co-responsible for the final product. The consumer market should also be covered, propagating green marketing as a responsible and sustainable practice, which interests all of society, thinking not only of the current generation but also of the future ones. Only in this way can the skepticism or resistance of consumers about it be

diminished, consolidating green marketing as a competitive differential in fact.

Given the complexity and difficulty involved in adopting green marketing, many organizations end up going down a relatively easier path, of disseminating a green practice, without any real support for it, a practice that is conceptualized as greenwashing (ANDREOLI; CRESPO; MINCIOTTI, 2017). This topic will be explored below.

### **2.2.1 Greenwashing**

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2019), greenwashing is defined as "disinformation disseminated by an organization in order to present an environmentally responsible public image. For this reason alone, the term greenwashing already denotes the idea of disguise, mislead or even green falsehood. In this sense, Andreoli, Crespo and Minciotti (2017) define greenwashing as the washing of products or organizations to make them look environmentally friendly, without them being in fact. In other words, it is a matter of adapting only the disclosure to the green appeal, but not the other variables of the market compound (ANDREOLI; BATISTA, 2019).

That way, it is argued that greenwashing consists of a practice that goes against or in opposition to the concept of green marketing. Such action aims to take advantage of the advantages of green marketing, especially those turned to the consumer market, but without its real practical implementation, with all the complexity and difficulty that this involves, as discussed previously.

We must also consider a certain haziness in relation to this, in the sense that there are organizations that do not have and/or do not disclose clear criteria that support their claims or even their environmental actions (OTTMAN, 2012; FIALHO; MARQUESAN, 2018). Even so, these organizations use images, symbols

and other visual appeals that may induce the consumer to misinterpret the product he wishes to buy or even the organizations with which he is linked (ANDREOLI; CRESPO; MINCIOTTI, 2017; ANDREOLI; LIMA; PREARO, 2019; FIALHO; MARQUESAN, 2018).

For this reason, there is a clear difficulty on the part of consumers to distinguish real greenwashing practices from those of greenwashing (NYILASY; GANGADHARBATLA; PALADINO, 2014; ANDREOLI; LIMA; PREARO, 2017; ANDREOLI; BATISTA; PREARO, 2020). This is also because the consumer already has, in advance, a doubt about the real intention of the organizations to promote responsible appeals, generally seen as alternative ways to influence the market (ANDREOLI; CRESPO; MINCIOTTI, 2017). In other words, it is already assumed that the organizations' main objective is profitability, regardless of the means to achieve it. Thus, even organizations that in fact practice green marketing, in an ideal manner, are viewed with a certain fear by the consumer market.

With this, one can think in terms of a vicious circle, that is, the practice of greenwashing generates confusion in the consumer market, and this confusion ends up encouraging the practice, on the part of unintended organizations, thus deceiving consumers and may make green marketing initiatives less effective. More aggravatingly, a renowned environmental consulting institute, Terra Choice Environmental Inc. (2010), is emphatic in stating that greenwashing is a significant impediment to the continued progress of

society, supported by the premise of responsible development.

### 3 RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative approach, carried out through a quantitative survey, collecting primary data through the application of questionnaires via the online platform. The collection took place on April and May 2019.

The sample selected was the students, professors and administrative employees of a private college located in the interior of the state of São Paulo. The records made available by the college (end of March 2019) were used, with the invitation sent to the 195 registered e-mails from the students, the 11 linked professors and the 7 administrative employees. Regarding the students, a probabilistic sample was obtained, with 120 respondents (with a sample error of 6% and reliability of 99%); already regarding the professors and administrative employees, a census was possible.

The object of the study was the indoor media placed in the dispensers of the bathrooms of that college, such as hand towels, soap, toilet paper and alcohol gel. The media is the brand Soft Paper VIP, which illustrates a green sheet with water drops, in addition to the slogan 'Conscious Consumption'. This media was intentionally selected by the authors, as it is considered a practice of both societal and green marketing (with indication of greenwashing).

Picture 1 – VIP Soft Paper Media Indoor



Source: BR Supply (2019).

### 3.1 Research instrument

The questionnaire was composed of four main blocks. Before starting, there was a consent form, of free and voluntary participation, with subsequent publication of the data, which the respondent had to agree to give continuity.

In the first place, the memory about the image or message arranged in the dispensers was analyzed in a general way, first by means of a dichotomous question, asking themselves whether they had noticed it before and, second, in an open way, asking them to write down what it would be.

Secondly, through a scale, the evaluation of six attributes about the image in question was analyzed: quality, cost-

benefit, positive image, ecologically correct, environmental responsibility and purchase/consumption intention. These attributes were randomly presented to each respondent, who should assign their level of agreement, from 0 to 10.

Thirdly, it was taken back to the memory, in a more incisive way, asking the participant to write, in an open question, what would be the image, the brand and the message disposed.

Finally, the recognition capacity was tested, presenting five possible images. In addition, it was also requested to assign the degree of certainty in this response, on a semantic differential scale from 0 to 10, being 0 absolutely no certainty and 10 total certainty.

Picture 2 - Recognition – Different Indoor Media Images



Source: Own elaboration from images available at Google.

Lastly, there was the respondent's profile, with the identification of gender, age, grade level/ work and monthly family income.

The questionnaire was submitted to a pre-conceptual test by a jury of experts, made up of three professionals trained and active in the marketing area, both academically and business-related. Only after that, the questionnaire was considered suitable for application.

### 3.2 Data analysis techniques

Some data analysis techniques were used. First, basic descriptive statistics were performed. Secondly, possible differences between the groups of participants were verified, adopting the parametric one-factor ANOVA statistical test, with the Tukey HSD post hoc test. In the case of the scale, an Exploratory Factor Analysis was run. The Pearson parametric correlation test was also used. In the open questions, the technique of content analysis was adopted, of qualitative nature, with grouping and categorization of similar answers.

## 4 PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSES

This topic is divided into four parts: sample profile, descriptive statistics and differences between groups, correlations and discussion of results.

### 4.1 Sample profile

The sample (n=138) was divided into three audiences.

In relation to the students, there were 120 respondents, with the majority female gender (68.6%), average age of 26 years, varying from 17 to 48, and personal monthly income up to R\$2,900 (78.1%), followed by the second income class (19% between R\$2,900 and R\$7,250). Great part

of the students is on the last year of the course (38,1%), followed by the first year (31,4%), second (19%) and third (11,4%).

As for the eleven professors, the majority is male (63.6%), with average age of 41 years, ranging from 28 and 59, with income of \$ 2,900 to \$ 7,250 (63.6%), followed by the third income class (36.4% between \$ 7,250 and \$ 15,000). And concerning to the seven administrative employees, most of them female (71,4%), with medium age of 29 years old, varying 16 and 38, and income until R\$2.900 per month (78,1%), followed by the second and third income class (28,6% and 14,3%, respectively).

Thus, the sample was composed of a majority of students (87%), followed by professors (8%) and administrative employees (5.1%). In a general way, this joint sample was characterized, mainly, by female respondents (65,9%), with low income (69,9% until R\$2.900) and medium age of 28 years (varying between 16 and 59). The response time was four minutes.

### 4.2 Descriptive statistics and differences between groups

First of all, when asked about the memory about the image/message arranged in the dispensers, most respondents (60.2%) said they never noticed. But comparing the three groups, it was found that the students declared to have noticed much less (64.3% did not notice) than the professors (36.4%) and the employees (28.6%), possibly because they attended college for less time.

The low rate of having noticed was evident in the next issue, where they were asked to write what the image/message was on the dispensers. Only 43 participants (31.2%) presented a response, being 34 students, 5 professors and 4 administrative employees.

When analyzed, the answers could be inferred from 49 different reports. An analysis of these 49 reports showed that 21



of them referred to the call for "conscious use or consumption", followed by 11 that mentioned the indication of sufficiency of the use of two leaves, and, in third place, six

other calls that referred to nature, environment or ecology appeared. The other 10 reports were diverse, mentioning hygiene, cleanliness, among others.

Chart 1 - Remembrance and Reminder Analysis

- 39,8% claimed to have already noticed (53 participants)
- 31,2% presented written evocation (43 participants)
- 49 different responses: "Conscious use or consumption" (21 reports/ 44%)
  - Use of two sheets (11 reports/23%)
  - Nature, environment or ecology (6 reports/13%)
  - Other (10 reports/ 20%)
- 23,9% - 23.9% correct evocations

Source: Own elaboration.

Still concerning the memory, when asked to actually write what the image, brand and message would be, the answers were even less expressive. First, on the image, only 27 participants (19.6%) wrote their answers, 14 of them literally correct (leaf, tree leaf, leaf with drops, wet leaf), followed by 7 close to the correct one (tree, nature, environment and something green). That is, only 21 participants (15.2%) seem to really remember the image arranged. Second, in relation to the brand, only 18 participants (13.1%) wrote their answers,

with 4 allusions to the brand really (SoftPaper), besides 7 references to the dispenser brand (BrSupply). Thus, the brand seems unable to establish itself before the market, since less than 3% of consumers reported it correctly. Finally, regarding the sentence, 26 answers were written (18.9%), with 13 allusions to conscious use or consumption, 4 answers related to the indication of two sheets, in addition to 5 referring to the environment and sustainability.

Chart 2 – Evocation Analysis

	Answers	Correct
Image	19,6%	15,2%
Brand	13,1%	2,9%
Message	18,9%	9,4%

Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding the recognition capacity, the index remained negligible, with a mere 16 participants (16.8%) correctly matching the option, which was even the least selected alternative. Comparing the three groups, the lowest recognition capacity was in relation to professors (9.1% of correct answers), followed by students (13.1%) and employees (14.3%).

Also, questioning the degree of certainty attributed in the previous answer, the answers ranged from 0 to 10, with an average of 5.6 and fashion 5, illustrating the doubt that the participants felt when trying to recognize the image correctly. When

comparing the three groups, a significant difference was found, verified by means of the one-factor ANOVA statistical test ( $F=3.124$ ,  $p=0.048$ ). Thus, using the Tukey HSD post hoc test ( $p=0.036$ ), the differences were observed between the groups of students ( $M=5.4$ ) and administrative employees ( $M=8.3$ ). This greater certainty attributed by the employees is justified by the longer time they stay in college, which, as a consequence, allows more interaction with the analyzed dispensers.

In a second moment, the evaluation of six attributes about the image in question,

arranged in a scale, was analyzed. A factorial analysis was run, whose results meet the assumptions of consistency, obtaining a KMO of 0.881 ( $p=0.000$ ), with MSA of all variables ( $>0.82$ ) and communality ( $>0.79$ ) above that proposed by Hair et al (2005). It is noteworthy that the model obtained 80.1% of the total variance explained.

Joining these attributes in a general evaluation scale (Cronbach alpha of 0.950), there was a positive trend, with an average of 6.97, indicating a good image evaluation. By contrasting the three groups, a better assessment was observed by the students (average 7.1), followed by the employees (average 6.9) and the professors (5.7), although without significant difference between them.

Analyzing the attributes separately, all assertives had responses ranging from 0 to 10, but averages above the intermediate point, and most responses at grade 10 (fashion). The best evaluated attribute was Environmental Responsibility, with an average of 7.35, which indicates that respondents bought the idea of sustainability. Secondly, the Positive Image

question answered for an average of 7.26. In third place, the Ecologically Correct aspect was highlighted, with an average of 7.22. That is, again it seems to reinforce the green image on the part of the participants. Next came the attributes Quality (average 6.74), Cost-Benefit (average 6.71, and only one with fashion 5), and Intention to buy/consume (average 6.52).

Finally, comparing the three groups, no significant differences were found between them, all of which were rated between average and positive. The lowest average was in relation to the Intention of purchase/consumption by professors (5.09) and the highest about the Environmental Responsibility by students (7.51). Despite this, it is important to point out that the professors answered for the highest criticality in the evaluation, both in terms of each one of the attributes, in an isolated way, and in relation to the general evaluation. In spite of this, it is important to point out that the attributes of Environmental Responsibility and Ecologically Correct were among the three best evaluated in all groups.

Chart 3 - Summary Table of Results

<b>Recognition</b>	Observe	39,8%	<b>Evaluation</b>	General	6,97
	General Evocation	23,9%		Environmental Responsibility	7,35
	Image Evocation	15,2%		Positive Image	7,26
	Brand Evocation	2,9%		Ecologically Correct	7,22
	Message Evocation	9,4%		Quality	6,74
	Recognition	16,8%		Cost-Benefit	6,71
	Certainty	5,6		Intention to buy/consume	6,52

Source: Own elaboration.

No significant differences were found regarding the characteristics of the sample, whether gender, age, grade level or income.

#### 4.3 Correlation

As expected, all attributes of the image evaluation were significantly and strongly correlated with each other, verified by Pearson's parametric test (all over 0.674,  $p=0.000$ ).

In addition, the fact that the respondent stated whether he or she had already noticed the image was significantly correlated with both the overall assessment and the degree of certainty in recognition, both negatively and weakly ( $P=-0.200$ ,  $p=0.021$  and  $P=-0.301$ ,  $p=0.001$ , respectively). This indicates that intuitively, the less the participant claims to have noticed, the lower are their evaluations and degrees of certainty in recognition. This highlights the previous discussion that the

brand has to be present in the consumer's head in order for him or her to evaluate it properly.

The degree of certainty in recognition was also significantly correlated with the general evaluation, positive and weak form ( $P=0.340$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), as well as with the actual recognition, negative and weak form ( $P=-0.194$ ,  $p=0.03$ ). That is, the greater the evaluation, the greater also tends to be the degree of certainty in the recognition. Also, the closer to correct recognition (option 1), the greater tends to be the degree of certainty of this response, demonstrating that the participants did not want to guess their responses.

Interestingly, the participant's income also appeared significantly correlated with the general evaluation, in a negative and weak form ( $P=-0.212$ ,  $p=0.019$ ), denoting that respondents with higher purchasing power are more critical in relation to the assigned evaluation. Possibly these are represented by professors who in fact presented more critical responses.

#### 4.4 Discussion of the results

As a conclusion of the discussion, it can be argued that the target image of this study was well evaluated in general, especially in relation to green appeals, such as environmental and ecologically correct responsibility. These results corroborate the literature raised, which defends the importance and benefits of the practice of green marketing, increasingly demanded by the market and practiced by organizations (SILVA, 2013; GUIMARÃES; VIANA; COSTA, 2015; ANDREOLI; LIMA; PREARO, 2017). In that way the green calls do indeed seem to contribute to the formation of an assessment not only positive, but to the construction of a green image in the opinion of consumers.

However, this result can also be seen from a negative, even alarming, perspective due to the greenwashing sign identified. In other words, similar to the capacity of

influence of green marketing, also the appeals with greenwashing seem to be able to sell the green image to the consumer public, which even shows itself quite vulnerable and uncritical in relation to the ads received (ANDREOLI; CRESPO; MINCIOTTI, 2017).

In addition, contrary to the first result, one should highlight the low memory capacity on the part of consumers, who noticed little and were even worse able to evoke any mention of the image or even recognize it in front of similar ones. In other words, despite the favorable evaluation, it was not perceived connection of this with the brand in fact. This indicates that the disclosure is not having the desired effect, since there is no point in having a good image before the market, if it is not tied to the brand in question.

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aimed to analyze the influence of an action characterized as marketing both societal and green (with the beginning of greenwashing) advertised in indoor media (dispensers) before its consumer audience. With this, it was possible to observe that, contradictorily, the consumer evaluates positively and buys the green image of the indoor media in question, but does not identify or recognize the brand. In other words, the effort of green disclosure, in this case, seems to work by half, relying on favorable public reaction, but it is not tied to the promoting brand.

Thus, the lack of attention of the consumer on the piece in question seems to cause a certain blockage, which culminates with the non-register neither of the brand nor of the message disposed in it. Thus, the managerial implication is that this action of societal marketing and green marketing is not having the effect completely desired, and should be reviewed by the organization. That is, the intention of linking the brand to the green image or the environmental aspect

did not seem to have been effective. Despite this, on the other hand, it was noted an effect of awareness regarding consumption and the environment, due to the dissemination of "conscious consumption". Some effectiveness of 'education' could be attested in terms of reception and understanding by consumers, which may encourage new actions in this direction.

Therefore, it is believed that this study contributes to expand the literature on topics not so addressed by the literature so far, especially by linking societal marketing, green marketing and greenwashing together. In addition, empirical evidence is added in this sense, whose results are, in a first interpretation, against intuitive, since they do not corroborate with the advantages and importance defended neither on societal marketing nor on green marketing. However, they are intuitive in the sense of illustrating evidence not only of the use of incorrect practices, such as greenwashing, but mainly of possible influences on the receiving public.

Both green and societal marketing have the mission to inform, collaborating for the creation of a sustainable conscience, adding values to society and to the environment through its goods and services, with an enlarged vision and with thought in the collectivity. It is about considering the organizational practice under a long-term perspective, valuing the environment in which one is inserted and considering future possibilities. In spite of this, the benefits related to this do not yet have a consensus, with contradictory results, sometimes pro-cause, and sometimes neutral. This fact is aggravated by the possibility of practicing greenwashing, which shows itself capable of confusing and deceiving consumers, who are still quite uncritical about their buying

and consumption behavior. The limitations of this study result especially from the methodological delimitation, that is, the results are valid only in the context of application of the research. Among the possible effects resulting from this, it should be noted that the material researched here presents a message not unheard of, which can even be considered as of great exposure in other contexts for a considerable time. Thus, possibly the participants of the research may have seen it in a previous moment, or even be known by them, which brings a bias of previous exposure to the study.

Considering this, some possibilities for future studies are recommended. First, one can concentrate on objects of similar studies, but expanding the variables analyzed, covering, for example, the issue of brand strength and consumer involvement with the product. Another possibility is to investigate other study objects, such as an outdoor media or in a certain public space. Especially, the hypothesis of media effectiveness in terms of market awareness should be tested and extended to other applications.

The results found here can be analyzed even under a possible extension of the scope of this study, adding theories of reverse marketing or demarketing (DAZIE, 1989), that is, the marketing actions that differentiate themselves for the purpose of discouraging consumption. In this sense, another approach given to this same problem would be the investigation of the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the dissemination campaign in this inverted way, which alerts the consumer of the importance of reducing consumption, even maintaining all the known and inherent interest in sales and profitability.

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