


What Do Customers Demand? Inclusive and Sustainable Entrepreneurial Marketing

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Keywords: Entrepreneurial Marketing, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Market Orientation, Inclusivity, Societal Sustainability, CROWAI Model, ISEM Model.

Abstract: There is a lack of research that links start-ups' entrepreneurial marketing with the increased customers' demand for inclusivity and sustainability. This paper proposes and substantiates a new conceptual model – Inclusive and Sustainable Entrepreneurial Marketing. This model includes the context and resources as the base for value creation; objectives and entrepreneurial will for developing a business model, followed by planned and unplanned actions, and inclusivity and societal sustainability as the significant impacts. The empirical substantiation of the model followed a design-science approach and was done through 55 interviews with entrepreneurs. Most entrepreneurs do not consider societal sustainability and inclusivity as primary objectives. However, these goals present an increased prevalence among the customers' current requirements. This paper contributes to the theoretical and empirical development of entrepreneurial marketing studies.

1 INTRODUCTION


Today's competitive environment is characterised by increased risk, uncertainty, change, and more demanding customers (Hills et al., 2008). Customers expect quality and innovative products (goods, services, ideas, experiences, information) from organisations and inclusive, sustainable, and socially responsible behaviours and products (Chiscano & Jiménez-Zarco, 2021). As such, entrepreneurs and managers should consider these demands to be more successful in the market. Moreover, inclusivity and sustainability became competitive advantages that may allow for better financial performance of the organisations (Longoni & Cagliano, 2018).

To cope with a context of limited resources and uncertain markets, the need for a new perspective on how organizations developed their entrepreneurial and marketing strategies emerged, which turned out to be the discipline of entrepreneurial marketing (Alqahtani & Uslay, 2020). A recent paper reviews the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing

(EM) and business sustainability (Al-Shaikh & Hanaysha, 2023). However, there is not any study relating EM to both inclusivity and sustainability. Thus, there is a lack of research linking start-ups' entrepreneurial marketing with the increased customers' demand for inclusivity and sustainability. This study aims to fill that gap, presenting and substantiating a conceptual evolution through a new model that implies the response to the ethical market demands related to inclusivity and sustainability, called Inclusive and Sustainable Entrepreneurial Marketing (ISEM). As such, our research question is: What do entrepreneurs consider the more critical aspects regarding entrepreneurial marketing, societal sustainability, and inclusivity impacts?

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

EM concept was already latent in Murray's work (1981) when he pointed out the need to discover new

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This work was supported by the UIDB/05105/2020 Program Contract, funded by national funds through the FCT I.P.

product-market relationships instead of improving marketing in already established markets.

Traditionally, marketing had been a discipline predominantly focused on large organizations (Hills et al., 2008). Then, EM emerged as an approach to the characteristics and challenges faced by starting entrepreneurs and small firms (Collinson & Shaw, 2001; Morris et al., 2002). Today, it can be suited for all kinds of organizations (Kraus et al., 2010).

At the core of EM is value creation (Hills et al., 2010; Kraus et al., 2010; Morris et al., 2002; Pane-Haden et al., 2016) through an entrepreneurial process that depends on the political, economic, natural, social, cultural, and technologic context, the availability of resources, the venture objectives, the entrepreneur's will, and planned and unplanned actions (Carvalho, 2022; Sarasvathy, 2001). One can say that EM can be added to complete the statement of Lam and Harker (2015): if entrepreneurship is the soul of a business and marketing is the flesh, then EM should be the right mindset for entrepreneurs (Alqahtani & Usley, 2020).

Morris et al. (2002) proposed one of the most cited definitions of EM and its dimensional design, which includes the proactive identification and exploitation of business opportunities, market orientation, innovativeness, value creation, risk management, and resource leveraging.

Based on Morris et al. (2002) and Kraus et al. (2010), Eggers et al. (2020) presented EM as a strategic orientation related to organizational marketing attitudes and behaviours that are entrepreneurial, defending that EM is a formative construct based on entrepreneurial, innovation, market, and customer orientations.

On the other hand, Alqahtani and Usley (2020) emphasised the stakeholders' role and defined EM as "an agile mindset that pragmatically leverages resources, employs networks, and takes acceptable risks to proactively exploit opportunities for innovative co-creation, and value delivery to stakeholders, including customers, employees, and platform allies" (p.64).

Other authors (e.g., Kilenthong et al., 2015, 2016; Sodhi & Bapat, 2020) proposed six dimensions for the EM construct: growth orientation, opportunity orientation, total customer focus, value creation through networks, informal market analysis, and closeness to the market.

Following Eggers et al. (2020)' approach, one considers that the EM construct is based on entrepreneurial, innovation, and market orientations, which could be its main formative dimensions, as is also implicit in the study of Baker and Sinkula (2009).

However, the overlapping among EM, market orientation (MO), and entrepreneurial orientation (EO) must be clarified. Baker and Sinkula (2009) considered that EO and MO are distinct but complementary constructs, the former more related to the entrepreneur's will and action, and the latter viewed as an intangible organizational resource (Carvalho, 2022). Additionally, Narver et al. (2004) distinguished between responsive and proactive MO, which partially overlap the proactiveness dimension of EO. To separate these two approaches to proactiveness, Eggers et al. (2020) consider that responsive MO is more about current and manifest customer needs, and proactive MO is more related to latent or future customer needs.

MO signifies a marketing strategy that implies the organizational responsiveness to the market based on its effort to obtain and generate market information about the customers and other stakeholders, which is the subject of internal dissemination and analysis, with inter-functional coordination (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990; Narver & Slater, 1990). Consequently, entrepreneurs must gather, leverage, and know how to manage the resources needed to create value that allows them to fulfil the identified opportunity in the market, i.e., being customer and stakeholder-oriented (Gorica & Buhajoti, 2016). The relationship with different stakeholders lies at the foundation of entrepreneurial marketing, as this often represents a capability that allows entrepreneurial ventures to gain an advantage (Hills et al., 2008).

Market and marketing research are closely related to MO. Entrepreneurs need to have good information about the markets they want to serve. If they have enough resources, they can do more formal marketing research; otherwise, they will rely on their intuition or knowledge, seeking more informal ways to know the markets (Stokes, 2000). EM is extended to all types of organizations, so one must consider all possible approaches to gathering information.

The EO construct was proposed by Miller (1983), including proactiveness, innovativeness, and risk-taking. Hills and Hultman (2006) showed that when EO is high, EM behaviours are more present. In this context, innovation is crucial, namely concerning the business model, which plays a critical role in making the proposition value of a technology explicit (Wallnöfer & Hacklin, 2013) and designing value creation and value capturing (Zott et al., 2011).

Developing a new product and/or organization may rely on planned or unplanned actions. Thus, depending on the business environmental context and available resources, the entrepreneurs must follow a strategic or a business plan claimed by investors,

donors, or lenders and/or use a non-causation path, like effectuation (Sarasvathy, 2001), tinkering (Barinaga, 2017), experimentation (Baum et al., 2011), bricolage (Baker & Nelson, 2005), bootstrapping (Harrison et al., 2004; Salimath & Jones III, 2011), or pivoting (Blank, 2013; Ries, 2011).

Developing a new business model also appeals to the traditional strategic marketing concepts of segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Today's technology allows the possibility to customize most products. Thus, customization is a competitive advantage for any entrepreneur.

However, customers in wealthier countries are demanding more from entrepreneurs. They want organizations to be more inclusive, both from the point of view of inclusion in the production of socially or biologically disadvantaged people (inclusiveness), as well as the need for the products themselves to be inclusive, not discriminating against anyone concerning their use or consumption (inclusivity).

For example, Licsandru and Cui (2018) develop the construct of subjective social inclusion in the context of inclusive marketing, including acceptance (feeling that other people wish to include them), belongingness (cognitive judgement of fit and emotional connectedness), empowerment (control, contribution to, and self-efficacy), equality (equal opportunities and chances), and respect (recognition as a person) as its dimensions. This approach is essential for entrepreneurs' decision-making regarding multi-ethnic and disadvantaged people marketing communications and can be extant to different levels of vulnerability: sexual orientation, disability, gender, age, or social status (Licsandru & Cui, 2018). Friedman et al. (2007) also talked about multicultural marketing, which implies using differentiated marketing strategies with diverse ethnic, religious, and national groups.

The study of Reyes-Menendez et al. (2020) presented results expressing the relevance of gender equality at work and in communication campaigns, defending that marketing advertisers should become more inclusive and respectful. Rivera et al. (2020) argued that entrepreneurs should manage diversity and inclusion, by "developing inclusive products and marketing strategies focused on people with disabilities" (p.37). These authors defended that education for inclusiveness is crucial to enable students to recognize differences as assets that can potentiate business. They explained the universal design method to create inclusive products as a

condition of social sustainability (Smith & Preiser, 2011).

In this context, everybody benefits from inclusive products and production. First, because entrepreneurs have more people at their disposal to produce and consume their products, it also gives an image of social responsibility that benefits the organization and the general well-being. Second, the identification of a brand with specific social groups has positive and negative effects (Mishra & Bakry, 2021): consumers' preference for a brand could be associated with a social group they belong to or want to belong to (Escalas & Bettman, 2003) or, on the contrary, they prefer to avoid the association with a particular social group and, consequently, they do not buy that brand (White & Dahl, 2007). Thus, being inclusive in producing and marketing activities may avoid this negative group identification.

Although 'inclusiveness' and 'inclusivity' may be considered synonymous (Cambridge Dictionary), it is noticed that the term 'inclusivity' is more used in the literature. It seems that 'inclusivity' is a more dynamic approach related to practice or policy aiming to include people who are excluded or marginalized, such as those with physical or mental disabilities or are members of minority groups. On the other hand, 'inclusiveness' may be seen as a characteristic that already exists, related to embracing all people or objects.

Inclusive marketing is congruent with MO, requiring a strategic orientation to manage diversity with equity and justice sustainably (Ruiz-Alba et al., 2019).

This study considers societal sustainability as a fundamental issue for customers, namely in rich countries. Following previous studies (e.g., Carvalho, 2019), sustainable entrepreneurship presents four dimensions: (1) economic, which is related to the capacity of the product to satisfy human needs as a condition of the financial sustainability of the organizations; (2) ecological, related to the preservation of the natural capital (planet, environment, biodiversity, climate); (3) social, implying the preservation of social cohesion in terms of well-being, nutrition, shelter, health, education, quality of life, etc.; and (4) psychological, that means achieving and maintaining positive emotional states, improving physical and mental health balance, and personal perception of the quality of own's life (Carvalho, 2016; European Commission, 2011). All these dimensions are linked, and their interaction contributes to societal development and sustainability (Assefa & Frostell, 2007; Carvalho, 2016).

This research uses the concepts related to EM studied in previous research, arranging them within the framework of the intra/entrepreneurial process model (CROWAI – context, resources, objectives, will, action, impact) developed by Carvalho (2022). This paper defends that inclusivity and societal sustainability should be privileged in modern entrepreneurship, implying that all the variables of the CROWAI model are aligned with those desirable impacts. The context and available resources must allow the development of inclusive and sustainable ventures, which nowadays are more effortless, particularly with the technological advances of recent years with this type of concern. Of course, the entrepreneur needs to have these goals and the will to achieve them. These goals imply planning in that sense but do not prevent the use of unplanned actions to pursue the entrepreneurial action successfully.

However, how sensitive are entrepreneurs to issues of inclusivity and societal sustainability?

Which factors were considered more important when they developed their ventures?

The empirical part of this paper will provide an updated answer to these questions.

This paper uses the concepts related to EM studied in previous research, arranging them within the framework of the intra/entrepreneurial process developed by Carvalho (2022). Figure 1 presents the model that summarizes the main concepts around the proposed construct of inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurial marketing (ISEM).



Figure 1: ISEM model.

After the analysis of all definitions and descriptions of entrepreneurial marketing, inclusivity, and societal sustainability (not all presented in this paper) and following the recommended approaches (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 2016), one came to a definition of the new construct: Inclusive and Sustainable Entrepreneurial Marketing is about the creation of customer value and a business model through the exploration and/or identification of a societal need in a specific activity context and resource availability, which leads to the establishment of objectives and an entrepreneurial will to achieve stakeholders' satisfaction, and more inclusive and sustainable society, through planned and unplanned actions.

3 METHODS

The research method was based on a design-science approach, which has the potential to validate artifacts, such as constructs, models, methods, and instantiations, and fill up the theory-practice gap (e.g., Rosemann & Vessey, 2008). After the theoretical substantiation of the model constructs, which together are aligned with the ISEM model, it is presented the three-stage approach based on the widely accepted guidelines in design science research (e.g., Peffers et al., 2008): (1) Problem Definition, (2) Design and Development, and (3) Evaluation.

3.1 Problem Definition

This study aims to fulfil the lack of research about organizational EM and customers today's demand for products that, besides satisfying their needs, can also contribute to societal inclusivity and sustainability. For this purpose, this study started with the theoretical substantiation of the well-established EM construct and the concepts of inclusivity and societal sustainability, which can be considered objectives and impacts of the entrepreneurial process (Carvalho, 2022).

3.2 Design and Development

ISEM model is pictured presenting the core concepts that are more accepted in the literature. Following other published models that describe the entrepreneurial process (e.g., Carvalho, 2022), the ISEM model considers that the entrepreneurs must cope with exogenous variables (context and resources) through market orientation, marketing research, and resource management to explore and identify a business or a social opportunity. Then, they use entrepreneurial orientation ability to analyse the endogenous variables (entrepreneurial will and objectives), assessing the opportunity, the risks involved, their innovative capacity to create a solution, and being proactive in their efforts to achieve their objectives. At last, they decide to create and develop the product and/or organization, taking into account the new demands of the markets related to inclusivity and societal sustainability in the production, marketing, and impact phases.

The questionnaire follows the CROWAI model approach (Carvalho, 2022). It is a conceptual and practical systematisation of the entrepreneurial process, starting from the context and resources available to create something new, passing through the entrepreneurs' goals and personal will, which can

lead to an entrepreneurial action with an impact on society.

The nine interview questions allowed multiple responses, which implies only a descriptive statistical analysis measured by the percentage of entrepreneurs in the sample that expressed each particular answer.

3.3 Evaluation

To test the ISEM model’s accuracy in describing what today concerns entrepreneurs, one performed 55 interviews with owners of start-ups launched in the last five years. This period is enough to guarantee that the start-ups overcame the first years of implementation and that the entrepreneurs can more easily reflect on what they have done to achieve success.

It was decided to carry out a snowball sample to guarantee that a reasonable number of entrepreneurs would accept to answer the interview survey. Each entrepreneur was asked to contact two other entrepreneurs they knew to minimize the refusals to participate in this study. In the first phase, the author identified five entrepreneurs related to creating new companies who agreed to participate in the research, and these interviewees identified another ten entrepreneurs. Even so, in this second phase, only eight entrepreneurs accepted the interview and indicated another 16 potential participants. One failed, obtaining the identification of another 30 entrepreneurs, having in this last phase failed three. Thus, it was obtained a total sample of 55 entrepreneurs as follows: 35 created a new company with known products; 12 created a new company with a new product; and eight were equally divided among those who launched a new product in their existing company, those who created a new social organization, those who created a new social product in an existing organization, and those who created a new project or profitable product in the company they worked for. Therefore, six of the respondents are intrapreneurs. Table 1 presents the profile of the participants in this study.

Table 1: Description of the sample.

| Sex | n (%) | Average age (SD) | High School | Professional education | University education |
|--------|-----------|------------------|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Female | 24 (43.6) | 32.79 (9.04) | 6 | 3 | 15 |
| Male | 31 (56.4) | 35.26 (10.74) | 6 | 0 | 25 |

SD – Standard deviation

All the entrepreneurs agreed to respond to the questionnaire during the interview, signing an informed consent. They knew that their participation would be strictly voluntary, anonymous, and

confidential, that obtained data would be for statistical treatment only, and that no answer would be analysed or reported individually. Our ethical commission considered it unnecessary to assess or produce an official authorization for this research because no personal or sensitive data were involved or collected in this study.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The question related to the context when the entrepreneur decided to launch a new product, project, or organization was: When you thought about becoming an entrepreneur or launching a new product, service, business model, or social responsibility project, what favourable conditions existed in the political, economic, social, cultural and technological context? (Table 2).

The most critical item was the existence of a business opportunity in the market identified by the entrepreneur (67.3% of the entrepreneurs).

Table 2: The context.

| Contextual favourable conditions | % |
|---|------|
| There was a business opportunity in the market | 67.3 |
| Entrepreneurship training was available | 32.7 |
| There was a societal need that was not satisfied or poorly satisfied | 30.9 |
| I had a social support network | 29.1 |
| There were other people and/or groups interested in my business | 29.1 |
| The social environment was favourable to the new business | 25.5 |
| There was the possibility of strategic alliances | 21.8 |
| The business or innovation ecosystem was favourable | 14.5 |
| There were public and/or private institutions favourable to the new venture | 10.9 |
| I take advantage of entrepreneurship-friendly public policies or programs | 7.3 |
| There was a business opportunity from within the company where I work | 7.3 |
| The social sector welcomed this new venture | 7.3 |
| There were research and development networks | 3.6 |
| It was possible to innovate with the contribution of the community | 3.6 |
| Entrepreneurial spirit and motivation of the initial team | 3.6 |
| There were no favourable conditions in the social, economic and legislative context | 3.6 |

It follows the availability of entrepreneurial training (32.7%); the existence of a societal need that was not satisfied or was poorly satisfied (30.9%); having a social support network (29.1%); there were other people and/or groups interested in their business (29.1%); the social environment was favourable to the new business (25.5%); and there was the possibility of strategic alliances (21.8%).

These results confirm the importance of the existence of an opportunity for exploration and exploitation (e.g., Gorica & Buhajoti, 2016; Renton & Richard, 2020), the opportunity to attend

entrepreneurial education or professional training (e.g., Higgins et al., 2013; Kuratko, 2005), the identification of a societal need that is not satisfied being market-oriented (e.g., Eggers et al., 2020; Kohli & Jaworski, 1990), the entrepreneur's network of personal relationships (e.g., Aaboen et al., 2013; Elfring & Hulsink, 2007), being flexible and open to stakeholders' collaboration (e.g., Alqahtani & Uslay, 2020; Most et al., 2018), and a favourable social environment (e.g., Hills et al., 2008; Kostetska & Berezyak, 2014). All these contextual dimensions are included in the entrepreneurial marketing concept, as well as the others that present less expression in this study.

The question related to the resources when the entrepreneur decided to launch a new product, project, or organization was: What resources did you need to be able to design, produce, and implement your product, service, business model, or project? (Table 3).

The most critical items were the existence of financial (100% of the participants), and physical or material (78.2%) resources.

Table 3: The resources.

| Resources | % |
|---|------|
| Financial resources | 100 |
| Physical or material resources | 78.2 |
| Market orientation | 63.6 |
| Strategic planning | 61.8 |
| Human resources or human capital | 50.9 |
| Innovation capacity | 50.9 |
| Intellectual capital (human, organizational and relational) | 45.5 |
| Intellectual assets (trademark, copyright, trade secrets, contracts, patents) | 43.6 |
| Knowledge management | 34.5 |
| Internal competitive advantages | 32.7 |
| Dynamic capabilities | 30.9 |
| Organizational learning | 27.3 |
| Sustainable competitive advantages | 21.8 |
| Core competencies | 7.3 |

It is worth noting that the resources needed by more than 50% of entrepreneurs also include human resources (50.9%), as well as three capabilities closely related to entrepreneurial marketing: market orientation (63.6%), strategic planning (61.8%), and innovation capacity (50.9%). Many studies pointed out the relevance of these resources (e.g., Carvalho, 2012, 2020, 2022; Covin et al., 2016; Eggers et al., 2012; Eggers et al., 2020; Eggers & Kraus, 2011; Morris et al., 2002; Ostendorf et al., 2014).

The question related to value creation was: What factors were crucial for creating value in your entrepreneurial project? (Table 4).

The most critical items were the importance of intuition in decision-making (76.46 of the participants), the focus on customers' needs (69.1), efficient management of resources (65.5), monitoring customers' satisfaction (61.8), and decision-making based on exchanging information within the entrepreneur's networks (58.2). All the items were chosen by the participants, reinforcing the role of value creation in its diverse aspects.

Table 4: Value creation.

| Factors | % |
|--|------|
| It was important to believe in our intuition to make decisions | 76.4 |
| The focus on the customer or consumer needs was crucial | 69.1 |
| We always seek to manage the available resources efficiently | 65.5 |
| We constantly monitor the level of customer satisfaction | 61.8 |
| Many marketing decisions were based on exchanging information with people in our personal and professional networks. | 58.2 |
| We get the collaboration of customers or consumers to create value | 47.3 |
| We have collaborated with industrial partners and friends to create value | 40.0 |
| Our employees contributed new ideas for value creation | 36.4 |
| Some decisions were not taken due to the existence of excessive risks | 34.5 |
| Information about successes and failures is transmitted to our employees | 29.1 |
| There were limitations on access to material resources | 25.5 |
| There were limitations on access to intellectual resources | 25.5 |
| There were limitations in access to financial resources | 23.6 |
| Project risk management has been carefully studied | 23.6 |
| The new project or product did not involve much formal market research | 20.0 |
| There was good cross-functional coordination to respond to the market | 16.4 |
| There were limitations in access to human resources | 16.4 |
| We get the collaboration of suppliers and distributors to create value | 10.9 |

These main issues corroborate what is mentioned in the literature, namely the use of intuition or informal ways to know the markets (e.g., Stokes, 2000), the use of entrepreneurial and market orientations to face uncertain economic contexts (e.g., Eggers et al., 2012; Eggers & Kraus, 2011), the more efficient use of the resources (e.g., Jones & Rowley, 2011), and the crucial role of entrepreneurs' networks (e.g., Aaboen et al., 2013; Elfring & Hulsink, 2007). One can notice the relationship of value creation with the context and the resources available for a new venture, as depicted by the ISEM model.

The question related to product characteristics was: What characteristics does the new product present (good, service, idea, experience, information), social project, or business model?

Table 5 shows that the most critical items were economic value (89.1% of the participants), the profitability of the product (65.5%), psychological value depicted by increased open-mindedness (50.9%), and greater self-confidence (50.9%).

Some aspects related to psychological value (third, fourth, and sixth items in Table 5) are more

chosen than those related to social and ecological values (e.g., Carvalho and Sousa, 2018).

Table 5: Product characteristics.

| Product characteristics | % |
|--|------|
| Satisfies the need of the customer or consumer. | 89.1 |
| Is it a sufficiently profitable product or project | 65.5 |
| Contributes to a mindset more open to new ideas | 50.9 |
| Contributes to greater self-confidence | 50.9 |
| It allowed the creation of new jobs. | 49.1 |
| Contributes to a healthy change in attitudes or behaviours | 45.5 |
| Contributes to improving the quality of life, safety, or health in society | 38.2 |
| Provides new knowledge or skills | 38.2 |
| It is an environmentally friendly product or project | 21.8 |
| Contributes to greater awareness of harmful discrimination | 21.8 |
| Contributes to the preservation of animal species or flora | 10.9 |

The question related to innovation was: In what aspects is the new product (good, service, idea, experience, information), social project, or business model innovative?

Table 6 shows that the most critical items were product differentiation or innovation (69.2% of the participants), business model innovation (61.5%), marketing communication (55.8%), customization of the product (44.2%), and process innovation (42.3%).

Table 6: Innovation.

| Innovation aspects | % |
|---|------|
| It is a differentiating/innovative product or project in terms of features/benefits for customers or consumers | 69.2 |
| We managed to innovate in terms of our business model | 61.5 |
| Marketing communication follows a different paradigm from the competition | 55.8 |
| The product can be customized | 44.2 |
| One or more of the processes followed (production, logistics, distribution, marketing, customer relations, payment, etc.) is innovative in the context of the activity. | 42.3 |
| The pricing system is different from the competition | 36.5 |
| Our employees make a difference in the product on the market | 34.6 |
| The product or project has the collaboration of public or private partners | 26.9 |
| Our advertising includes images with cultural, sexual, and age diversity. | 23.1 |
| We were able to innovate in terms of our social or profit purposes | 19.1 |
| We managed to innovate in terms of product distribution | 15.4 |
| The product can be used by people with mental or physical disabilities | 15.4 |
| The product is also promoted to ethnic minorities | 13.5 |

One of the dimensions of EM mentioned in the literature is innovativeness (e.g., Covin et al., 2016), and/or innovation orientation (e.g., Eggers et al., 2020), and/or marketable innovation (e.g., Alqahtani & Uslay, 2020). Thus, this study confirms all the aspects predicted in the literature related to innovation. In particular, business model innovation plays a critical role in making explicit a value proposition (e.g., Wallnöfer & Hacklin) and its design and capture (e.g., Zott et al., 2011). A business model depends on the product type and the entrepreneur’s objectives and will to create a new market offer and/or a new organization.

The question related to entrepreneurs’ objectives was: What specific goals did you aim for with the new product, service, business model, or project?

(Table 7) shows that the most critical items were the will to be an entrepreneur (65.5% of the participants), create a new product (65.5%), innovate (58.2%), contribute to societal sustainability (41.8%), and create a new business model (27.3%). However, one can notice that societal sustainability and inclusivity are not the main objectives of the majority of these entrepreneurs. Several studies (e.g., Chiscano & Jiménez-Zarco, 2021; Longoni & Cagliano, 2018) have demonstrated the importance for consumers of aspects related to inclusivity and societal sustainability and their positive impact on organizational financial performance.

Table 7: The objectives.

| Objectives | % |
|---|------|
| To be an entrepreneur | 65.5 |
| Create a new value proposition | 65.5 |
| Innovation | 58.2 |
| Contribute to societal sustainability (economic, social, ecological, psychological) | 41.8 |
| Create a new business model | 27.3 |
| To have a corporate social responsibility program | 10.9 |
| Contribute to social inclusion | 10.9 |
| To be a social entrepreneur | 7.3 |
| Contribute to digital inclusion | 5.5 |
| Social innovation | 3.6 |
| To be an intrapreneur (entrepreneur in the company where you work) | 3.6 |
| To be a social intrapreneur | 3.6 |
| To be an inclusive entrepreneur | 3.6 |

The question related to the entrepreneurial will was: What factors contributed to your being an entrepreneur?

Table 8 shows that they are entrepreneurs mainly because they strongly desire to be one (100% of the participants). Many (74.5%) are constantly looking for new business opportunities or creating something new. The entrepreneurs view themselves as people with technical (69.1%), leadership (61.8%), thinking and analysis (56.4%), influence (54.5%), goal achievement (52.7%), and people and group management (49.1%) skills. All the aspects predicted

Table 8: The entrepreneurial will.

| Factors contributing to being an entrepreneur | % |
|--|------|
| Own will | 100 |
| I am constantly looking for new business opportunities or creating something new | 74.5 |
| I have technical skills | 69.1 |
| I have leadership skills | 61.8 |
| I have thinking and analysis skills | 56.4 |
| I have the ability to influence others | 54.5 |
| I have goal-achievement skills | 52.7 |
| I have people and group management skills | 49.1 |
| I have (had) businesspersons or entrepreneurs in the family | 49.1 |
| I have enough knowledge | 49.1 |
| I like to take the initiative in every situation | 49.1 |
| I have self-management skills | 47.3 |
| I have the necessary psychological capital | 40.0 |
| I have high emotional intelligence | 30.9 |
| I look for new societal needs to satisfy | 30.9 |
| The available human and social capital were an excellent motivation | 27.3 |
| I got an entrepreneurship education | 23.6 |

in this construct are present, confirming its importance reported in the literature (e.g., Bird, 2015; Fine et al., 2012; García, 2014).

The question related to the action was: What fundamental actions helped you to carry out your project?

Table 9 shows that the most critical items were the non-planned way to develop their businesses, namely adjusting small details (81.8% of the participants), improvising (63.6%), improvising without financial support (58.2%), adapting to contingencies (58.2%), and using experimentation (50.9%). Other important action issues focused on the customers (60%) and the commitment despite difficulties (58.2%). One can notice here, again, that market orientation and the entrepreneurial will guide action. It is interesting to find that, besides the fact that 61.8% of the entrepreneurs (Table 3) considered strategic planning as a fundamental resource, a significant majority confirmed that they used tinkering (e.g., Barinaga, 2017), bricolage (e.g., Baker & Nelson, 2005), bootstrapping (e.g., Salimath & Jones III, 2011; Winborg & Landström, 2001), pivoting (e.g., Blank, 2013; Ries, 2011), effectuation (e.g., Sarasvathy, 2001), and experimentation (e.g., Baum et al., 2011).

However, entrepreneurial action views are compatible and complementary (Carvalho, 2022; Fisher, 2012). Many authors (e.g., Carvalho & Jonker, 2015; Moroz & Hindle, 2012) defended that planning is necessary when an entrepreneur wants to achieve specific goals, namely in terms of access to resources, processes' organization, or public and private support. All entrepreneurial processes can be helpful, depending on the business context, development stage, and objectives the entrepreneurs want to achieve.

Table 9: The action.

| Actions | % |
|---|------|
| I was adjusting small details throughout the process | 81.8 |
| I was improvising and doing, overcoming the limitations | 63.6 |
| Our strategy has always focused on understanding the needs of our customers or consumers. | 60.0 |
| I improvised without external financial support, managing the available resources well | 58.2 |
| I kept adapting to contingencies, uncertainties and risks, creating solutions | 58.2 |
| I felt committed to succeeding despite all the difficulties | 58.2 |
| I've been using some experimentation throughout the process | 50.9 |
| I changed the organizational strategy depending on the context of the activity | 43.6 |
| We have achieved a very relevant strategic positioning | 41.8 |
| Our employees have the motivation to overcome difficulties | 40.0 |
| I always managed to overcome the constraints of the project or business | 36.4 |
| Our employees have always adjusted to the needs | 30.9 |
| Our employees have the necessary training and skills for all situations | 30.9 |
| The entrepreneurial action was thoroughly planned | 27.3 |
| I had to plan a lot of steps because of the programs I was in | 16.4 |
| I used a design thinking approach | 14.5 |
| We did an excellent segmentation of the market | 14.5 |
| I had to plan the business as required by the financier or partner | 9.1 |

The question related to the impact was: What are the impacts of your new product, service, business model, or project? (Table 10).

Table 10: The impact.

| Impacts | % |
|--|------|
| I managed to achieve my goals partially | 47.3 |
| I achieved all my goals | 40.0 |
| I managed to reduce the financial costs | 36.4 |
| I achieved economic and financial sustainability | 34.5 |
| I managed to contribute to improving the quality of life in society | 34.5 |
| I contributed to psychological sustainability (people's psychological balance, etc.) | 30.9 |
| I was able to improve the financial performance of the organization | 29.1 |
| I managed to contribute to the increase in social inclusion | 27.3 |
| I managed to contribute to the development of the territory (local, regional or national | 21.8 |
| I managed to contribute to ecological sustainability (environmental preservation, etc.) | 18.2 |
| I contributed to social sustainability (social cohesion, social equity, etc.) | 10.9 |
| I managed to reduce non-financial costs | 3.6 |

The most critical items were goals' achievement, partially (47.3% of the participants) and entirely (40%), the reduction of financial costs (36.4%), the achievement of economic and financial sustainability (34.5%), improvement of quality of life in society (34.5%) and contributing to psychological sustainability (30.9%).

As expected, the economic and financial viability of the new ventures is crucial for the entrepreneurs. They are also pleased to have managed to win in the market by ensuring the survival of the organization, product, or project so far.

What is interesting is their consideration of customers' psychological sustainability besides social sustainability. This result reinforces the idea that entrepreneurs seek some kind of positive results with their customers besides the social impact of their businesses.

It seems that many of these entrepreneurs do not privilege ecological sustainability. However, all the possible impacts have less than 50% of the entrepreneurs' agreement. Today's customers are increasingly demanding (Hills et al., 2008), including concerns about organizational inclusivity, sustainability, and socially responsible behaviours (Chiscano & Jiménez-Zarco, 2021). Entrepreneurs and managers should consider these demands to succeed in the market. Inclusive and Sustainable Entrepreneurial Marketing could be the way to achieve those goals.

5 CONCLUSIONS

There is a lack of research that links start-ups' entrepreneurial marketing with the increased customers' demand for inclusivity and sustainability.

Based on the literature, this paper proposes and substantiates a conceptual model that considers Inclusive and Sustainable Entrepreneurial Marketing (ISEM) within the entrepreneurial process: context, resources, objectives, entrepreneurial will, action, and impact. The empirical substantiation of the model, following a design-science approach, was done through 55 interviews with entrepreneurs.

In the business context, a market opportunity identified by the entrepreneur is the primary response, followed by the availability of entrepreneurial training, a societal need, and a social support network.

Regarding business resources, entrepreneurs must have access to financial, material, and human resources and use market orientation, strategic planning, and innovation capacity.

In the domain of the objectives, they preferred their will to be entrepreneurs, followed by the creation of a new product, innovation, contribution to societal sustainability, and creation of a new business model.

The entrepreneurial is based essentially on their desire, followed by constantly looking for new business opportunities or creating something new.

Regarding action, entrepreneurs preferred non-planned ones to adjust their businesses over time. However, when the business context demands a strategic plan, they consider that tool essential to their success. At the beginning of their projects, it seems they try to follow strategic planning, which needs to be complemented by improvisation to resolve the business developing problems better.

Finally, the impacts related to entrepreneurs' ventures were achieving their goals, followed by economic, financial, social, and psychological sustainability. However, one can notice that societal sustainability and inclusivity are not the main objectives of the majority of these entrepreneurs, which could be a problem for them in market competition.

Entrepreneurial marketing is evident in the answers of these entrepreneurs, combining entrepreneurial, market, and innovation orientations. To create value and decision-making, they seemed to rely a lot upon their intuition and focus on customers' needs and the efficient management of resources. They were concerned with the product's profitability and psychological value (impact on individual lives). The majority also look for product and business model innovation and marketing communication.

Inclusive and multicultural marketing, as well as societal sustainability issues, are on the current agenda of economics, marketing, and management studies because consumers are more demanding, and

entrepreneurs should listen to the market to be successful. Thus, this exploratory paper aims to contribute to the research stream of entrepreneurial marketing, highlighting the importance of inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurial impacts.

Another critical aspect of this study was the possibility of discussing with the interviewed entrepreneurs many of these concepts and alerting them to the importance of market orientation, innovation, planning, inclusivity, and societal sustainability.

This paper also shows that EM can be combined with the entrepreneurial process as a new analysis tool for entrepreneurial behaviour.

The limitations of this study involve the use of a snowball sample made in only one country. Thus, this study cannot be generalized to all entrepreneurs' populations. However, the sample has a great diversity of ventures and entrepreneurs, providing reasonable indications about what is happening now.

Future research can better explore entrepreneurial marketing aiming at inclusivity and societal sustainability by using larger samples in several countries and measuring the variables to validate a future model that could explain a significant part of the population variance.

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