

MACRO-SOCIAL MARKETING AS A GOVERNMENT'S OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON SOCIETAL BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract. Governments work hard to make their district a better place to live, sometimes when society does not recognize what has been done and it indicates the real issue – information asymmetry. To improve information flow between government and society as well as active social change it is possible to use macro-social marketing. In a few cases, it is already happening but there are many more where it could be used by the government.

Problem statement – there is information asymmetry between government and society, that reflects on the social development of the country on a macro-level.

Aim – to investigate macro-social marketing and its ability to improve the communication flow between government and society while making a positive impact on society.

Main research methods used – scientific publications and previous conducted research analysis, for empirical part a quantitative non-parametric method for statistical. The authors study macro-social marketing and its implementation of good practice, CSDD, in Latvia.

First, it is important to get a common understanding of what macro-social marketing is and how it differs from micro-social or social marketing.

Second, macro-social marketing is already in use but not always governments are aware that they are using it, so authors will stimulate awareness by mentioning successful cases where macro-social marketing has been used in addition by doing one in-depth case study of a Latvian government organization called CSDD that is responsible for road traffic security in Latvia.

In the end, there will be available main conclusions, proposals, and recommendations for the Latvian government that can be used to positively influence society as well as other stakeholders.

Main results and findings of the paper – the article provides new information about macro-social marketing and its ability to make a positive impact on society if used right by the Latvian government and public institutions. Analyze macro-social marketing Latvia CSDD case; make conclusions about macro-social marketing and assemble recommendations for Latvian government. Overall, the article answers do macro-social marketing is a way for the government to make a positive influence on society.

Keywords: *macro-social marketing; social marketing; society; government; public sector.*

JEL code: M310, M380, M390

Introduction

Recent scientific publications and previously conducted research have indicated that there is information asymmetry between government and society, which reflects on the social development of the country on a macro-level.

Aim of this research is to investigate macro-social marketing and its ability to improve the communication flow between government, public institutions and society while making a positive impact on society and recognize where the Latvian government already has successfully used it and what benefits it can offer if used in other situations as a communication tool between government and society.

Tasks:

- 1) To determine the difference between micro-social or social marketing and macro-social marketing;
- 2) To analyze successful macro-social marketing examples;
- 3) To determine macro-social marketing's possible applications by the Latvian government.

Main research methods used – scientific publications and previously conducted research analysis, for empirical part a quantitative non-parametric method for statistical analysis. The authors study macro-social marketing and its implementation of good practice, CSDD, in Latvia.

To make the article more sophisticated authors are drawing attention to different country experience including Latvia example – government’s organization called CSDD that already is successfully using macro-social marketing. CSDD is a Latvian government organization, which is responsible for road traffic security. All the information about the CSDD case is available online.

Research limitations/implications – the in-depth case study refers to a single national context. Future investigations are required in a broader geographical context as well with more regional cases where macro-social has been used.

We must also take into consideration that even though this article answers many important questions it leaves space for future research. As one of the most important questions to answer next is – why governments try to limit their marketing and macro-social marketing expenses while successful companies spend so much money on marketing to accomplish their business interests by influencing behavior? In addition, why society is much more exposed to commercial marketing than to social marketing?

Literature Review

Although social marketing is looked at as an effective consumer-oriented approach to promoting behavioral change and improved well-being for individuals and communities, its potential for generating societal change is still under-researched (Truong, 2016). Social marketing has been mainly outside the scope of macro marketing. Previous articles on social marketing are scarce mostly because much of social marketing has had a general focus on individual-level behavior change and community-centered approaches (Kennedy, 2016). Macro-social marketing is advanced as a separate area of social marketing even more recently making it more contemporary and relatively unknown. Both of those factors have influenced information available and assumptions made about the topic in this article.

(Micro) Social marketing and macro-social marketing is a relatively new topic that could bring freshness in communication between government and society. To do so authors are looking at the history of social marketing’s and macro-social marketing’s definition as well as distinguishing the difference between both terms to make clear objective that needs to be reached with macro-social marketing used by the government. A leading expert in macro-social marketing is Ann-Marie Kennedy who has done research on her own as well as collaborated with others to widen the field of macro-social and social marketing.

1. Macro-social marketing and its purpose (history)

Governments and public sector organizations have used marketing for not only the promotion of particular services (e.g. the provision of a free flu jab) or promotion of public transport but also – voluntary or recommended behavior (e.g. campaigns against racism or gun crime). “The use of marketing tools and techniques by governments is noticeable as a natural adoption of private-sector-based approaches in the organization of public services. This introduction of market rationalities and tools into public management issues has been defended on the basis that it improves efficiency and focuses more on people’s needs. Although the umbrella term for this field of marketing application is “public sector marketing”, when referring to voluntary behavior change for the benefit of the individual or society as a whole, the term “social marketing” is seen as more appropriate” (Raftopoulou, Hogg, 2010, p. 1208).

That means public sector marketing refers to any marketing activity undertaken by organizations in the public sector (commercial and social marketing). (Kotler, Zaltman, 1971). Social marketing is noticeable as a type of public sector marketing when it is used by public organizations to promote social objectives (Buurma, 2001). Deriving on this, acceptable definition and cause of social marketing consists of “the adaptation of commercial marketing technologies to programs designed to influence the voluntary behavior of target audiences to improve their personal

welfare and that of the society of which they are a part” (Andreasen, 1994). Social marketing literature sometimes also includes public sector marketing campaigns as a part of it because public sectors social marketing is related to public sector marketing (Goldberg, Fishbein, Middlestadt, 1997; Buchanan, Reddy, Hossain, 1994; Hastings, 2003; Raftopoulou, Hogg, 2010). Authors indicate that misunderstandings about what is social marketing and macro-social marketing are still happening so it is always important to clarify the term to make a united view about the subject.

The primary reason for not having a united understanding of the “macro-social marketing” definition is that social marketing is a relatively new area in marketing. The first time “social marketing” as a term is mentioned in 1971 by Kotler and Zaltman where they highlight social marketing’s main focus - influencing the acceptability of social ideas by designing, implementing and controlling marketing in a specific way (Kotler, Zaltman, 1971). Therefore, the term “macro-social marketing” has developed even more currently by differencing it from micro-social or social marketing. In general, making macro-social marketing new and relatively unfamiliar.

Until this social marketing is at risk of not meeting its full potential because of several barriers that partially consist of existing perception. The barriers are also the result of the absence of a clear understanding of the field, its role, and the field’s relation to other approaches to social change (Andreasen, 2002). Lack of clarity in the field of social and macro-social marketing is the key obstacle to reaching fields’ full potential.

To be on the same page it is vital to establish a common understanding of micro-social or social marketing and macro-social marketing. Based on that we will be able to unveil the potential of macro-social marketing in a more detailed setting and analysed its past, present and possible future (Brychkov, Domegan, 2017) as well as role of corporate social marketing (Polonsky, 2017).

Social marketing involves activities undertaken by public and private individuals and organizations with the purpose of achieving specific social goals. Social marketing is the use of adapted standard marketing principles in order to change the attitudes and behaviors of individuals and groups, to help minimize social problems and enhance the general welfare of society. The main objective of social marketing is to encourage positive social behavior (Bašić, Mihanović, 2018). Authors derive that marketing and social marketing, and macro-social marketing has the same foundation – activities done according to standard marketing principles or marketing-mix, but with a different purpose.

Micro-social or social marketing creates some sort of exchangeable “product” to drive behavior change; often this equals to alternatives to the behavior (e.g. electronic cigarettes) or programs for behavior management (e.g. smoking cessation programs). These “products” are then ostensibly what the social marketer markets using marketing-mix. Micro-social marketers are unable to affect the actual product in question (e.g. cigarettes) except through lobbying of government or counter-marketing or remarketing where a negative view of product use is desired (Kennedy, Parsons, 2012). In other words, micro-social marketing would not solve the problem by addressing the root cause rather than advancing to a quick solution that has a greater good than the existing one.

Macro-social marketing seeks to decrease the efficiency of the traditional marketing mix surrounding the desired behavior change. In cases where social marketing is directed at changing the levels of use of a product (e.g. smoking, drinking, and birth control), aspects of the traditional marketing mix for the product can be directly influenced by the government. Here the government shapes the societal context of product usage, by limiting the effectiveness of commercial marketing techniques, with the aim of societal level or macro-level behavior change for the benefit of society. It is possible to classify that as the polar opposite to popular thought regarding what social marketing is. However, given the definition of social marketing as the use of the traditional marketing mix, this can still be classified as social marketing, but at a macro-level (Kozinets, Hemetsberger, Schay 2008; Kennedy, Parsons 2012). Several aspects of social fairness and social marketing are rised by researchers (Kennedy, A., Santos, N., 2019) to analyse integrative justice approach in creating an ethical framework for social marketers. It suggests that macro-level

behavior change on society can be done best if it is done by the government and it can include not only solving the root problem by introducing something new but also by trying to decrease the value of something existing (demarketing). Researchers cover not only the best gains from macro – social marketing but are investigating also critical aspects (Truong, *et al*, 2019) where the researchers have identified issues that need to be addressed if social marketing to become a more system-oriented means for positive influence of societal change with implications for theoretical and practical development of the social marketing field.

Macro-social marketing is the use of social marketing techniques to shape the social context of behavior change. Macro-social marketing seeks societal rather than individual behavior change. There are many strategic ways how to execute macro-social marketing and create macro-level change, e.g., upstream, midstream, and downstream social marketing, community participation, de-marketing, and systems social marketing (Hamby, Pierce, Brinberg 2016; Kennedy, 2016). One of the largest differences social marketing has from macro-social marketing is its macro-level scale – seeking societal change, not individual.

The main challenge any governments' institution has with macro-social marketing is having a systematic approach and it is important because society's values and attitudes reflect on the success potential of social marketing. Without a systematic approach, it is not possible to make a change in society's values and attitudes. Influencing it is vital due to much of the individual's environmental milieu affects an attitude, but attitude is determined mostly by an individual's values. Social ideas or attitudes are concerned with stating that something is "right or wrong," "good or bad," etc., and these concepts form the individual's value system (Robin, 1974). It is debated that if social marketing's purpose was to change people's attitudes towards social ideas, it must first be acknowledged that a person's attitudes were shaped by their values. Therefore, social marketing's real purpose was to change a person's values – a formidable task (Kennedy, Parsons, 2012). This clearly shows that macro-social marketing would not be a quick fix that would last for a while but rather a long-term fix that would take time to show results as well as it would make a long-lasting shift. The scale at which macro-social marketing can operate is enormous and in every case, the resources need to be adequate including time for getting first results.

2. Case studies from several countries

Recent scientific publications confirm that there are many researchers in many countries are analyzing aspects in social behavior change by influence of social marketing (Wood, 2019) and taking into account several strategies possibilities and their influence on society (Wymer, 2011). In United States of America social marketing influence is analysed in great extent (Hamby, et al., 2017) focusing on social entrepreneurship, community action and social marketing. While field-leading researcher Ann-Marry Kennedy has researched anti-smoking campaigns in Canada (Kennedy, 2016), Van Dao Truong (Truong, 2016) has researched different macro-social marketing examples in Vietnam, researchers group leading by Duffy have analysed several aspects of macrosocial marketing in Iceland (Duffy, *et al*, 2017), aspects in Ireland are analysed in detail for possible future developments (Brychkov, Domegan, 2017). New – Zealand experience is covered (Kemper, Ballantine, 2017) stressing that “Obesity, climate change and poverty are some of the most serious health, environmental and social issues of the 21st century. Current initiatives to address these wicked issues typically focus on the individual and community, with social marketing being a common tool.” (Kemper, Ballantine, 2017).

The Canadian anti-smoking campaign (CAS) started in 1985 with a \$1.5 million anti-smoking social marketing campaign aimed at youth, and regulations that banned tobacco sponsorship of amateur sports events. This was the beginning of a systematic strategy to decrease the use of and exposure to tobacco products (Hay, 1996) in Canada under the tenets of “prevention, protection cessation and product regulation” (Kennedy, Parsons, 2012). To date, the CAS is considered one of the most successful in decreasing tobacco usage and users (Kennedy, Parsons, 2012) and is

seen as an example of positive social engineering (Hay, 1996). Data shows that in 1983 there were smoking 37,5% of people in Canada, in 2000 it decreased to 24% (Kennedy, Parsons 2012), and in 2018 there were only 15,8% people who smoked on a regular basis (Statistics Canada. 2019). Macro-social marketing can make a significant impact, to do so it needs to be early and clearly focused.

Research done by Van Dao Truong shows that the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) indicated significant improvements in different social aspects and influenced behaviors of Vietnamese adults with respect to cigarette smoking. The proportion of smokers reduced to 48.8 percent. From 2002 to 2010, the percentage of male smokers fell from 56.1 to 47.4, while that of females decreased from 1.8 to 1.4. The survey also suggested that 95.7 percent of adults believe smoking causes serious illnesses, 55.5 percent believe smoking causes stroke, heart attack, and lung cancer, and 87 percent believe exposure to tobacco smoke causes serious illnesses in nonsmokers. Moreover, nearly 95 percent believe cigarettes are addictive and nearly 70 percent plan to quit smoking (World Health Organization. 2010). In 2013, the proportion of smokers was reportedly 42.8 percent (Truong, 2016).

In addition, the Alcohol-free Journeys program has contributed to the considerable decrease in road traffic accidents, from 27,993 in 2002 to 12,441 in 2011. In the same period, the number of deaths and injuries also decreased, from 13,186 to 10,543 and from 30,999 to 9,671, respectively. Before the program, drunk driving accounted for about eight percent of the total number of road crashes. In recent years, drink driving causes five percent of road accidents, which is much lower than speeding and overtaking. However, Table 4 also suggests that the number of road traffic crashes has increased dramatically since 2012 but the number of deaths appears to be decreasing. Thousands of lives been saved from the increased helmet-wearing rate as noted above (Truong, 2016). In both cases significant role plays that macro-social marketing contains not only a campaign but also regulations that go hand in hand with the campaign, making it monolith and maximizing its impact.

Research results and discussion

The most of discussion is around macro-social marketing's definition and its ability to solve complications faced by society. In addition, in this article authors will inspect how macro-social marketing has been used in different countries as well as how it is and could be used in Latvia.

Research shows that different governments already have successfully used macro-social marketing. It indicates that macro-social marketing can be a useful tool to address social issues along with improving communication between government and society. Overall, authors have evidence that macro-social marketing has improved the situation in different countries including Latvia. In Latvia, authors examined the CSDD case whereby using macro-social marketing campaigns amount of road traffic accidents has decreased.

In-depth case study - Latvian Government's "CSDD campaigns"

CSDD is a government company that is responsible for road traffic security including the registration of vehicles and watercraft, qualification of drivers as well as all the information and services that come with it. Since 2007 CSDD has emerged with social campaigns which are a representation of good macro-social marketing in use by the government.

CSDD has created social campaigns with one main goal – to decrease the amount of road traffic accidents. To do so they are aiming to change drivers' and pedestrians' behavior. The approach used in these campaigns creates a link between disobeying the rules and experiencing strong, negative emotions. Only a few campaigns from 39 are not linked to experiencing strong, negative emotions. Since 2007 when the first campaign was launched it is evident that the number of road traffic accidents has been decreased drastically. Latvia is experiencing a decrease in road traffic accidents, deaths total, deaths per 100,000 population, injuries total, and injuries per 100,000 population since the

CSDD social campaigns were launched for the first time. Except for a few fluctuations between 2007 and 2019 tendency shows that roads are getting safer because fewer people are dying – the main data are included in table 1.

Table 1

Road traffic accidents in Latvia from 2007 to 2018

Year	Road traffic accidents (resulting in death or serious injury)	Deaths total	Deaths per 100,000 population	Injuries total	Injuries per 100,000 population
2007	4 781	419	19	6 088	277
2008	4 196	316	15	5 408	248
2009	3 160	254	12	3 930	184
2010	3 193	218	10	4 023	192
2011	3 386	179	9	4 224	205
2012	3 358	177	9	4 179	205
2013	3 489	179	9	4 338	216
2014	3 728	212	11	4 603	231
2015	3 692	188	10	4 566	231
2016	3 792	158	8	4 648	237
2017	3 875	136	7	4 824	248
2018	3 975	148	8	4 798	249

Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Republic of Latvia (CSB, 2019)

If we take off the focus from year to year development but focus more on how the situation has changed in Latvia between 2007 and 2018, we can see that in 2007, there were 4 781 road traffic accidents and in 2018 less than four thousand, experiencing 17% decrease (Table 2). In 2007, there were 419 deaths but in 2018 only 148 and that is 271 deaths less, experiencing a 65% decrease (Table 2). In 2018, Latvia lost 8 people per 100,000 population compared to 19 people per 100,000 population in 2007, experiencing 58% decrease (Table 2). The same situation is with injuries, in 2007 there were 6 088 injuries related to road traffic accidents but in 2018 only 4 798, and it is a 21% decrease (Table 2). Injuries per 100,000 population have decreased (10%) as well, if in 2007 there were 277 than in 2018 there is 249 (Table 2).

Table 2

Road traffic accident comparison between 2007 and 2018

Year	Road traffic accidents (resulting in death or serious injury)	Deaths total	Deaths per 100,000 population	Injuries total	Injuries per 100,000 population
2007	4 781	419	19	6 088	277
2018	3 975	148	8	4 798	249
Decrease between 2007 and 2018, %	17%	65%	58%	21%	10%

Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Republic of Latvia (CSB, 2019)

CSDD has addressed 4 different types of complications – passengers are not using seatbelts; drunk driving; pedestrians not using reflectors; mobile device usage while driving. To do so as good as possible they have used different classical marketing-mix elements, marketing channels and made marketing materials that are catchy and easy to understand (Figure 1-4). These marketing materials connect with the target audience not only on a technical level by providing necessary information for safe travel but also on an emotional level by making them feel the consequences of disobeying the safety measures.

Since 2007 CSDD has made 39 campaigns 4 of them are addressing the importance of seatbelt usage. They have targeted drivers as well as passengers and in Figure 1, there is an example of a campaign from the fall of 2019 that is addressing the issue of insufficient usage of seatbelts and how important it is to use a seatbelt in a backseat as well in a front seat.

Figure 1 is only a part of the social campaign. It also includes different articles in the press, radio and video appearances, surveys and even some gorilla marketing elements – seatbelt effectiveness simulator. Seatbelt effectiveness simulator allows a person to sit in a car seat and put on a seatbelt, right after it is done, a car seat simulates and impacts a person gets when the car experiences a crash or a very sharp and long push on brakes. These simulators were installed at gas stations. Once more CSDD is a connection with the target audience on an emotional level.



Source: CSDD website, CSDD, 2019)

Fig. 1. CSDD campaign in 2019 highlighting importance of seatbelt usage

The most addressed issue by CSDD is drunk driving. They have produced 10 campaign highlighting that it is better to be angry and sober up than drive while being intoxicated. In Figure 2, there is an example of one of these campaigns from 2011. The social campaign also includes articles for the press and a few videos.



Source: CSDD website, CSDD, 2014

Fig. 2. CSDD campaign in 2014 highlighting importance of sobering up before driving

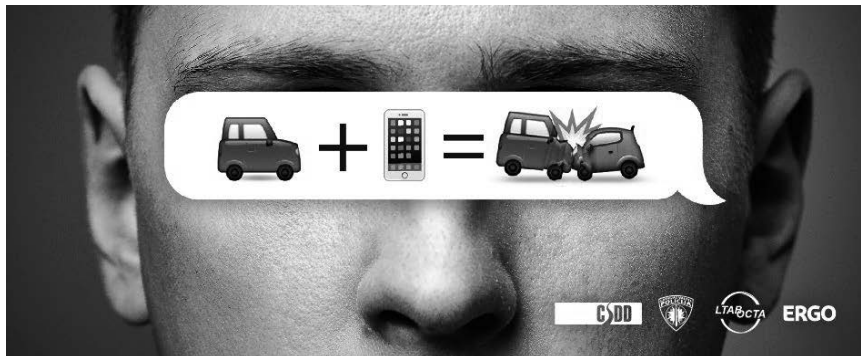
From 39 social campaigns, 4 have been made to address the importance of reflectors and reflective vests. Figure 3 shows one example of these campaigns. The message sent by this campaign is that being visible means being alive. This campaign contains many articles for the press and one video.



Source: CSDD website, CSDD, 2014

Fig. 3. CSDD campaign 2014 highlighting importance of using reflectors, specifically reflective vests

The popularity of mobile devices is at its all-time peak and it only continues to rise. Since 2007 CSDD has made only 3 social campaigns addressing the issue of mobile device usage while driving but the amount of social campaigns addressing this issue might arise in the near future. Figure 4 shows an example from 2015. This campaign contains many articles for the press and one video and two TV show appearances. In this campaign, CSDD used a catchy way to raise target audiences' awareness of mobile devices bad influence on driving safety.



Source: CSDD website, CSDD, 2015

Fig. 4. CSDD campaign in 2015 highlighting importance of not using mobile devices while driving

In a survey done by CSDD, 55% of respondents admitted that road traffic culture has positively changed in the last ten years (CSDD, 2017). Overall, the CSDD is among the most successful realizers of macro-social campaigns in Latvia having a significant influence on society and their activities.

Conclusions, proposals, recommendations

1. Research results confirm macro-social marketing's ability to make a positive influence on society. Many developed countries use of macro-social marketing to influence societal behavior and analysis of activities.
2. Macro-social marketing must include marketing activities as well as regulations on the issue supporting the solution macro-social marketing campaign is addressing.
3. Macro-social marketing systematically used by government and public institutions can make a positive impact on societal behavior and positively influence all stakeholders. It has already used by different governments worldwide including the Latvian government.
4. Government and public institutions could use macro-social marketing in communication with society more often. Good experience in many countries has confirmed that it is possible to use macro-social marketing to address social issues and introduce society to new regulations, legislation, taxation, policies, and programs as well as educate society by stressing important aspects.
5. Macro-social marketing can serve as a healthy way of addressing the main misunderstanding between Latvian government and society as well as it can be aimed at decreasing informational asymmetry.
6. Since 2007, social marketing activities carried out by CSDD of Latvia suggest that macro-social marketing used more often by the Latvian government can positively influence societal behavior in Latvia in such a way it benefits all stakeholders.
7. Results highlight the potential of macro-social marketing as a communication tool between the Latvian government institutions and society. It takes a closer look at the CSDD case that represents a good way to effectively use macro-social marketing.
8. It is proposed to make further research on social marketing in Latvia in order to examine specific areas before and after social marketing campaigns to measure the impact of social marketing campaigns in Latvia.

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