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Why and How Commercial Marketing Should Promote Sufficient Consumption: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Although marketing strategies are often accused of stimulating overconsumption, businesses increasingly show potential as enablers of sufficiency. The concept of sufficiency contributes to sustainable development through the absolute reduction of resources and energy used for consumption by questioning the level of demand. This study analyzes reasons and potential practices for commercial marketing to promote sufficiency through a systematic literature review of scientific publications, guided by the following research questions: Why should commercial marketing promote sufficiency? How can commercial marketing promote sufficiency? Which barriers for promoting sufficiency occur? The content-based study of 17 publications in the final review sample delivers recommendations for how to practically implement marketing for sufficiency, and theoretical considerations for strengthening the discourse within macromarketing and beyond.

Keywords

sustainable consumption, sufficiency, marketing management, macromarketing, systematic literature review

Introduction

Global sustainability concerns challenge the consumption and production levels of a growing well-endowed population segment who overexploit Earth's resources. Current efforts to reduce resource usage, cut CO_2 emissions, and decrease social inequality focus on securing economic growth and material living standards through technology-based and efficiency-driven strategies. Yet, human consumption continues to exceed the planetary boundaries and stresses the common pool resources (Duffy, Layton, and Dwyer 2017). Efficiency-driven strategies fail in the aspect of "doing more and better with less" (United Nations 2015), because they ignore rebound effects (Sorrell 2007; Santarius 2016) and tackle a reduction of consumption levels only in relative terms, giving the delusive promise that environmental protection and materialistic lifestyles are compliable.

Therefore, sufficiency is a much-needed concept in meeting sustainable consumption levels (Hansen and Schrader 1997; Schaefer and Crane 2005; Brown and Vergragt 2016; Fuchs et al. 2016). The purpose of this article is to investigate potentials of the counterintuitive approach to foster sufficiency through commercial marketing. By conducting a systematic literature review, we offer an analysis of motives, barriers and techniques of commercial marketing to encourage sufficient consumption. The aim is to provide a common framework for scholars and develop future research directions.

Although sufficiency lacks a universally agreed upon definition, we understand the concept as the avoidance of over- and underconsumption, which implies a reduction of material consumption levels in absolute terms in affluent societies. It aims at ensuring human well-being while securing ecological stability through reducing the use of scarce natural resources and energy (Princen 2005; Gorge et al. 2015).

Examining sufficiency requires the consideration of the broader societal, political, technical, and economic settings. The way these settings form needs, individual attitudes, and beliefs has been studied as the dominant social paradigm (DSP) in macromarketing (Kilbourne, McDonagh, and Prothero 1997; Gollnhofer and Schouten 2017). The DSP impedes the reduction of individual consumption, because such reductions oppose the mainstream rhetoric of materialism, consumerism, technological progress, and economic growth (Kilbourne et al. 2009; Gorge et al. 2015). The business sector and its profit-oriented marketing practices are often criticized for driving excessive consumption and causing negative ecological and social consequences (Assadourian 2010; Varey 2010;

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Achrol and Kotler 2012; Stoeckl and Luedicke 2015; McDonagh and Prothero 2014). Commercial marketing, therefore, is one of the spheres requiring a radical transformation to overcome the DSP (Kilbourne 2004). Yet, marketing also holds the means for changing behavior towards sufficient consumption. Companies such as Patagonia, which asked consumers to reflect their needs and create awareness for the environmental impact of consumption through its 2011 campaign "Don't buy this jacket", prove the existence of opportunities for experimentation and the viability of commercial marketing techniques to support the adoption of sufficient lifestyles (Hwang et al. 2016).

This article addresses the questions of why and how commercial marketing should be used for an absolute reduction of individual consumption levels. We focus on commercial marketing, because marketing is the preferred tool to create and maintain customer relationships and can thus have a targeted influence on consumer decisions towards sufficiency. Our research adds a specific focus to existing work on sufficiency-driven business models (Bocken and Short 2016; Bocken 2017) by investigating not only practical marketing techniques but also the reasons for and against encouraging sufficient consumption from a marketing perspective. We conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) on publications in international scientific peer-reviewed journals and books, which present specific implications for commercial marketing to support the voluntary absolute reduction of consumption levels for sustainability. This approach serves the critical macromarketing discussion on strategies for fostering sufficiency (Varey 2010; Gorge et al. 2015; Sandberg 2017), while also considering the potential of micro-structures within a company. Consequently, three main research questions guide our exploratory research:

- RQ 1: Why should commercial marketing promote sufficiency?
- RQ 2: How can commercial marketing promote sufficiency?
- RQ 3: Which barriers for promoting sufficiency through commercial marketing occur?

The next chapter provides a comparison of different behavioral concepts and marketing approaches related to sufficient consumption. The methodology applied to the SLR and its qualitative data analysis follows. Findings to the research questions are then provided and complemented with a discussion of relevant themes occurring in the sample which induce future research directions. A summary of implications and outlook conclude the article.

The Link Between Sufficient Consumption and Marketing

Behavioral Concepts Related to Sufficient Consumption

Sufficiency as the avoidance of over- and underconsumption through a reduction of material consumption levels does not necessarily imply "less" in a negative sense, but rather a notion of "enough" as an intuitive, individually correct measure of consumption without entailing sacrifice (Princen 2005). Some scholars, combining the concepts of sufficiency and "a good life", suggest that a simplistic and less materialistic lifestyle predicated on richness in time and social interaction contributes to personal happiness and well-being (Dittmar et al. 2014; Kasser et al. 2014; Seegebarth et al. 2016). On an individual level, sufficient consumption involves rethinking personal needs for changing excessive consumer behavior (Jenny 2016) and reflecting on the relation between affluent consumption and life fulfilment (Cherrier, Szuba, and Özçaglar-Toulouse 2012). Three behavioral categories lead to sufficiency's immanent absolute reduction of consumption levels: (1) reducing the purchase of new resource-intense goods, (2) choosing goods that are smaller or of lower capacity, and (3) using resource-intense goods and services less often (Jenny 2016).

Different behavioral concepts dealing with materially reduced consumption patterns can be summarized by sufficient consumption as an umbrella term. Adopting Lim's (2017) approach of combining multiple theoretical perspectives for a comprehensive understanding of sustainable consumption, we include these concepts in our literature review search process and explain their relation to sufficiency, summarized in Table 1. While obligatory sufficiency exists (Gorge et al. 2015), this article focuses on voluntary activities as potential subjects of commercial marketing, including voluntary simplicity, frugality, downshifting, anti-consumption, mindful, slow, ethical, and responsible consumption.

Not necessarily led by sustainability motivations, but avoiding overconsumption through highly disciplined purchase behavior and sacrifices by denying short-term shopping whims (Lastovicka et al. 1999), frugality may cause sufficient consumption unintentionally. Voluntary simplicity is described as a consumer movement (Etzioni 1998; Alexander and Ussher 2012) aiming at an increase in life satisfaction and meaning through focusing on non-material aspects of life instead of owning non-essential products and services (McDonald et al. 2006; Huneke 2005; McGouran and Prothero 2016). Downshifting refers to the process of consciously deciding to work less and reducing personal consumption due to lower income (Etzioni 1998), with the aim of leading a less stressful and more qualitatively rich life (Chhetri, Stimson, and Western 2009). Simplifiers and downshifters connect to sufficiency because they share the motivation to reduce material consumption for increased life satisfaction (Shaw and Newholm 2002; Ballantine and Creery 2010). Voluntary simplifiers do not eschew market interactions but use the market system to create and practice more ethical and environmentally friendly lifestyles for themselves (Shaw and Moraes 2009). On the contrary, anti-consumers consciously and deliberately reject, avoid, reclaim, and reduce only specific products, brands, and commercial transactions in opposition to the market system (Lee, Fernandez, and Hyman 2009; Chatzidakis and Lee 2013). Their practices

Table 1. Behavioral Concepts Related to Sufficient Consumption.

Behavioral concepts	Relation to Sufficiency	Motivation
Voluntary Simplicity	Overall reduced consumption for increased life satisfaction	Focusing on non-material aspects of life instead of owning non-essential products and services
Downshifting		Consciously deciding to work less and reducing personal consumption due to lower income
Frugality		Self-interested motivations, highly disciplined purchase behavior, and sacrifices by denying short-term shopping whims
Anti-Consumption	Consciously and deliberately reject, avoid, reclaim, and reduce only specific products, brands, and commercial transactions	Reasons against consumption (ethical, environmental, or societal concerns, consumer resistance)
Mindful consumption	Decrease of aspirations to consume	Temperance in acquisitive, repetitive, and aspirational consumption, motivated by a sense of caring for one self, community, and nature
Slow Consumption	Producing less waste and reduced resource usage	Avoidance of excessive consumption and accelerating production cycles, trends, and inferior quality
Ethical and Responsible Consumption	Potentially includes the decision to reduce the absolute levels of consumption	Minimum harmful and maximum long-term benefit for the environment and society

relate to sufficiency because they are often rooted in sustainability, potentially decrease the use of natural resources and waste (Black and Cherrier 2010; Kropfeld, Nepomuceno, and Dantas 2018), and increase individual well-being (Lee and Ahn 2016; Seegebarth et al. 2016). A marketing concept for mindful consumption is built around temperance in acquisitive, repetitive, and aspirational consumption, motivated by a sense of caring for one's self, community, and nature (Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011). Mindfulness activities potentially increase consumers' awareness of their own consumption habits and thus relate to sufficiency, as mindful consumption motivated by nonmaterialistic values may cause a decrease in aspirations to consume (Bahl et al. 2016; Fischer et al. 2017). Slow consumption means the avoidance of excessive consumption and accelerating production cycles, trends, and inferior quality, thereby extending the product life span of household goods and reducing waste and resource usage (Cooper 2005; Bocken and Short 2016). Ethical and responsible consumption are often studied in an overlapping manner, with both referring to consumption decisions based "on a desire to minimize or eliminate any harmful effects and maximize the long-term beneficial impact on the environment and society" (Lim 2017, p. 72). This desire may cause consumers to withdraw from the market through collective actions (Özçaglar-Toulouse 2009) and therefore potentially reduce their absolute levels of consumption (Newholm and Shaw 2007).

This rather scattered landscape of knowledge about sufficiency and consumer behavior determines the terms to include in our review search process. Research also shows that in practice, sufficient consumption appears through individually and situationally combined activities that do not necessarily take place outside the market system (Özçaglar-Toulouse 2009; Shaw and Moraes 2009) or subvert social norms (Sandberg 2017), and which can therefore be shaped by marketing.

Marketing Concepts Related to Sufficient Consumption

Marketing usually focuses on the stimulation of demand and the acquisition of material goods or commercial services to satisfy consumer needs (Kotler 2018). In this regard, sustainable or green marketing is no exception as it "was almost entirely geared towards trying to persuade consumers to buy more (if different and environmentally sounder) products, or to dispose of them more responsibly" (Peattie and Peattie 2009, p. 2). Although marketing is often accused of driving growth in global consumption (Jackson 2009; Peattie and Peattie 2009), the research discipline offers approaches for consumption reduction. Fisk (1973) was one of the first marketing scholars to discuss the need to limit consumption, followed by several studies investigating the role of macromarketing for consumption reduction (e.g. Kilbourne, McDonagh, and Prothero 1997; Kjellberg 2008; Varey 2012). Two alternative concepts offer a good fit between marketing and consumption reduction: social marketing and demarketing, which seek to discourage customers from consuming certain products or services.

Social marketing addresses public social problems and promotes a voluntary behavior change of target audiences to increase the well-being of individuals or society (Andreasen 1994) and to pursue an effective, efficient, equitable, fair, and sustained social transformation (Saunders, Barrington, and Sridharan 2015). The principles of social marketing are transferable to promote sustainable behavior (Geller 1989), proven by the emergence of studies on recycling, sustainable transport use, or energy efficiency (Gordon, Carrigan, and Hastings 2011). Peattie and Peattie (2009) examine the potential of a health-oriented social marketing campaign to contribute to consumption reduction, thereby relating it to sufficiency. While often critically discussed (Deshpande 2016), the involvement of companies through corporate social marketing potentially benefits individuals, the society, and firms (Lee 2016; Polonsky 2017).

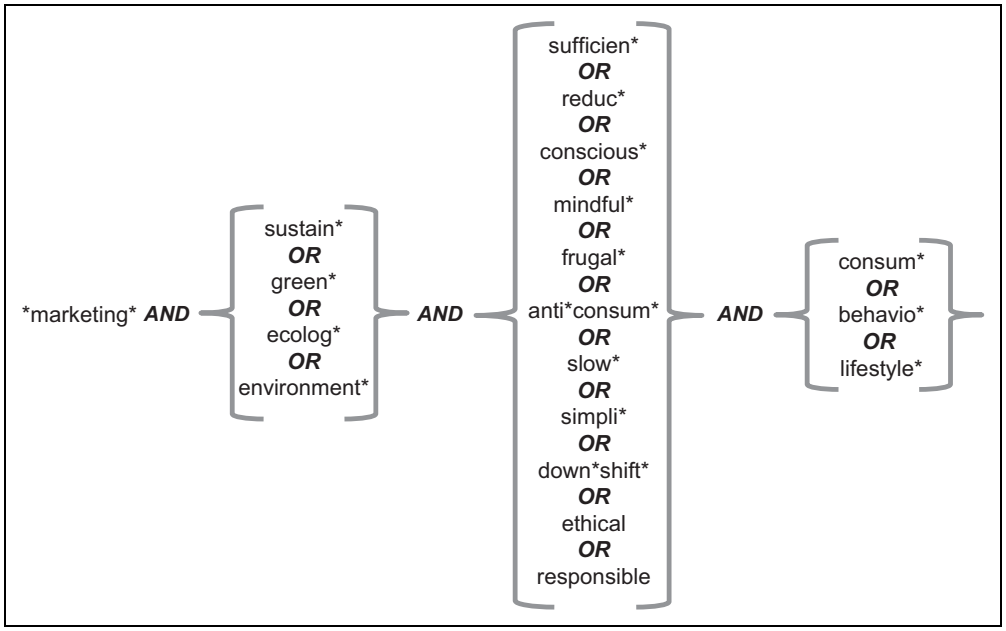

Figure 1. Search string.

Demarketing aims at the suppression of demand in times of shortage by reversing traditional marketing tools (Cullwick 1975; Kotler 2011). It can either occur as general demarketing (to adjust to supply shortage), selective demarketing (to support segmentation strategy) or ostensible demarketing (to signal product scarcity) (Kotler and Levy 1971). The concept of demarketing is applied and studied across a wide variety of contexts (see Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017 for an overview). Yet, sustainability is usually not the motivation for demand suppression and few pro-environmental demarketing studies exist (Heath and Chatzidakis 2012).

Although both concepts provide references for consumption reduction, they have not been far-reaching enough for the goal of sufficiency. Social marketing initiatives are primarily implemented in the health sector (Peattie and Peattie 2009) and by public policy institutions, while demarketing is mostly not designed to achieve sustainable consumption. Furthermore, companies rarely apply these marketing concepts, due to their commitment to profit, growth, and increased consumption, and tend to reject any responsibility for negative consequences of high consumption levels (Lorek and Fuchs 2013; Brown and Vergragt 2016). Thus, if marketing discourses acknowledge sufficiency at all, it is often seen as an individual consumer preference rather than a company's responsibility (McDonald et al. 2006). Commercial marketing to promote sufficiency operated by businesses with the aim of reducing absolute consumption levels is a "missing link" that combines aspects of social marketing and demarketing for the purpose of sufficient consumption.

Methodology

Prompted by the untapped potential in connecting commercial marketing and consumption reduction, the present study adopts an SLR approach to identify the state-of-the-art of the research field.

Data Collection

An SLR is a structured approach to identify, evaluate, and interpret the existing body of academic research on a specific topic through an organized and reproducible analysis (Fink 2014). SLRs provide transparency through an audit trail of the reviewers' decisions, procedures, and conclusions (Tranfield, Denyer, and Smart 2003). Through confirming, rejecting, contrasting, and complementing previous research outcomes, SLRs are a scholarly contribution in their own right which provide ground for subsequent research (Seuring and Gold 2012). Our procedure followed for the SLR meets the recommendations of usual guidelines for reviews in the fields of health, social science, and management (Moher et al. 2009; Higgins and Green 2011; Institute of Medicine 2011) and is divided into three main phases: planning the review, conducting the review, and reporting and dissemination. The activities of phase 2 (conducting the review) include three search techniques based on recommendations by Fischer et al. (2017), who reviewed a similar topic (mindfulness and sustainable consumption): database, supplementary, and conclusive search.

For the database search, we first constructed a search string using four keywords linked by the Boolean operator *AND*: marketing, sustainability, sufficiency, and consumption. Within the sustainability, sufficiency, and consumption components, the Boolean operator *OR* includes several related terms derived from existing literature. Wildcards (*) take alternatives or synonyms of the terms into account. The full search string reads as pictured in Figure 1.

Second, the formal search parameters for the database search were defined, clarified, and refined. For the initial

Table 2. Formal Criteria for the First Step of Database Search.

Criterion	Sample inclusion	Sample exclusion
Search scope	Web of Science Core Collection, Business Source Complete, Emerald Insight	Other databases
Source	Peer reviewed journal articles, book chapter	Any other source, e.g. conference papers or dissertations
Type of research	Empirical and conceptional work	No exclusion
Time period	Publications published until December 31, 2017	Publications published after December 31, 2017
Search parameters	Search string terms appear in the title, abstract, or author-supplied keywords	Search string terms do not appear in title, abstract or author-supplied keywords
Language	English	Any other language

Table 3. Content Criteria for the Database Search.

Criterion	Sample inclusion	Sample exclusion
Definition of sufficiency	Absolute reduction of consumption levels for sustainability	No clear definition of sufficiency; sustainability means choice of "greener" product option
Business perspective	Commercial marketing as enabler for consumption reduction	No consideration of commercial marketing as enabler for consumption reduction
Marketing implications	Specific implications for commercial marketing for consumption reduction	No specific implications for commercial marketing for consumption reduction

sample, studies to be included in the review were identified in the databases Web of Science Core Collection, Emerald Insight, and EBSCO Business Source Complete. The SLR focuses on peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters in English to meet the highest standards of recent academic work, including both conceptual work and empirical studies. We restricted the database search only by date (December 31, 2017). Table 2 provides the formal criteria of the database search.

The Web of Science Core Collection search led to 1075 hits, the Emerald Insight search to 1904 hits and the EBSCO Business Source Complete search to 529 hits. After subtracting duplications, the initial sample of 3081 publications underwent a practical screening of titles and abstracts against content-related criteria by two independent researchers. The content-related criteria as described in Table 3 refer to the thematic relevance for this review's scope. Publications fit the requirements when they (1) consider sufficiency in terms of an absolute reduction of consumption levels in favor of sustainability, (2) consider commercial marketing as a potential enabler for consumption reduction, and (3) nominate specific business-to-consumer marketing implications for consumption reduction. The researchers marked all sample titles as (a) definitely fitting the final sample, (b) possibly fitting the final sample, or (c) definitely not fitting the final sample. The researchers compared and discussed their ratings to settle on a preliminary sample, with a third senior researcher deciding in case of disagreement. Options (a) and (b) make up the preliminary sample of 89 publications.

This preliminary sample of the database search entered in-depth screening, where the full texts of all publications were checked for the content criteria in detail and discussed by the researchers. 14 publications passed this selection to form the pre-final sample.

By performing supplementary searches on the pre-final sample through the citation mining strategies "bread crumbing" and "pearl growing", we identified further relevant publications. In a bread crumb search, the reference section of a publication is screened for further eligible publications. In a pearl growing search, citation reference databases are used to identify further publications that are citing an already selected paper (Fischer et al. 2017). 248 publications (29 identified through bread crumbing and 219 through pearl growing) entered the initial sample and underwent the standard procedure, i.e. practical screening followed by in-depth screening. This supplementary search yielded two relevant publications.

In the conclusive search, the pre-final sample ($N = 16$) was submitted to three senior experts in the field of sustainable consumption and sustainable marketing, asking them to complement the selection with relevant publications. The expert review took place in November 2018 and identified one further publication. The final sample comprised 17 publications (see Table 4). The steps of the iterative search process and its results are reported in Figure 2.

Data Analysis

We conducted a qualitative content analysis on the final data set, an effective method for analyzing a sample of research documents in a systematic and controlled way following step by step models (Mayring 2000). The analysis was performed on the full texts of all selected publications using MAXQDA, a software that allows organizing, categorizing, and coding of qualitative data. The central instrument of analysis

Table 4. Final Sample.

#	Authors	PY	Title	Journal	Research Step
1	Fisk G.	1973	Criteria for a theory of responsible consumption	Journal of Marketing	Database Search
2	Schaefer, A.; Crane, A.	2005	Addressing Sustainability and Consumption	Journal of Macromarketing	Bread Crumbing
3	Sheth, J. N.; Sethia, N. K.; Srinivas, S.	2011	Mindful consumption: a customer-centric approach to sustainability	Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science	Database Search
4	Sodhi, K.	2011	Has Marketing Come Full Circle? Demarketing for Sustainability	Business Strategy Series	Bread Crumbing
5	Heath, M. T. P; Chatzidakis, A.	2012	Blame it on marketing': consumers' views on unsustainable consumption	International Journal of Consumer Studies	Database Search
6	Ertekin, Z. O.; Atik, D.	2015	Sustainable Markets: Motivating Factors, Barriers, and Remedies for Mobilization of Slow Fashion	Journal of Macromarketing	Database Search
7	Gorge, H.; Herbert, M.; Oezcaglar-Toulouse, N.; Robert, I.	2015	What Do We Really Need? Questioning Consumption Through Sufficiency	Journal of Macromarketing	Database Search
8	Lowe, B.; Lynch, D.; Lowe, J.	2015	Reducing household water consumption: a social marketing approach	Journal of Marketing Management	Database Search
9	Soule, C. A. Armstrong; Reich, B. J.	2015	Less is more: is a green demarketing strategy sustainable?	Journal of Marketing Management	Database Search
10	Bocken, N. M. P.; Short, S. W.	2016	Towards a sufficiency-driven business model: Experiences and opportunities	Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions	Database Search
11	Hwang, C.; Lee, Y.; Diddi, S.; Karpova, E.	2016	Don't buy this jacket: Consumer reaction toward anti-consumption apparel advertisement	Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management	Database Search
12	Jung, S.; Jin, B.	2016	From quantity to quality: understanding slow fashion consumers for sustainability and consumer education	International Journal of Consumer Studies	Database Search
13	Reich, B. J.; Soule C. A. Armstrong	2016	Green Demarketing in Advertisements: Comparing "Buy Green" and "Buy Less" Appeals in Product and Institutional Advertising Contexts	Journal of Advertising	Database Search
14	Seegebarth, B.; Peyer, M.; Balderjahn, I.; Wiedmann, K.-P.	2016	The Sustainability Roots of Anti-Consumption Lifestyles and Initial Insights Regarding Their Effects on Consumers' Well-Being	Journal of Consumer Affairs	Expert review
15	Yakobovitch, N.; Grinstein, A.	2016	Materialism and the Boomerang Effect of Descriptive Norm Demarketing: Extension and Remedy in an Environmental Context	Journal of Public Policy & Marketing	Database Search
16	Bocken, N. M. P.	2017	Business-led sustainable consumption initiatives: impacts and lessons learned	Journal of Management Development	Database Search
17	Ramirez, E.; Tajdini, S.; David, M. E.	2017	The Effects of Proenvironmental Demarketing on Consumer Attitudes and Actual Consumption	Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice	Database Search

Note: PY = Publication Year.

constitutes a category system, which contributes to the inter-subjectivity of the procedure, helping others to reconstruct or repeat the analysis (Mayring 2014). To classify the reviewed material, the coding framework is based on a procedure of inductive-deductive coding. To guarantee the validity and reproducibility of results, the intercoder-reliability (i.e. the accordance of the coding of several coders) was examined (Mayring 2000). The objectivity was ensured by the exact operationalization of the terminology used, which in turn allowed the intersubjective traceability of the analysis (Berelson 1971). Each publication was individually analyzed and independently coded by two researchers. When they disagreed about a classification, they discussed the publication in cooperation with a senior researcher until an agreement was reached.

Table 4 presents the final sample of 17 publications, sorted by publication year.

The publication years show that until 2011, despite Fisk's early outlier from 1973, marketing for sufficiency was no subject of scholarly interest. The recently growing interest in in the 21st century might be due to the occurrence of alarming data on environmental effects of overconsumption and manifestation of business cases for sufficiency marketing. We found four conceptual papers, and nine empirical studies which pick up existing business examples as a basis for experiments or surveys, most prominently Patagonia's "Don't buy this jacket" campaign. The sample represents a diverse research community with a focus on marketing, management, and consumer behavior journals (possibly due to our search criteria).

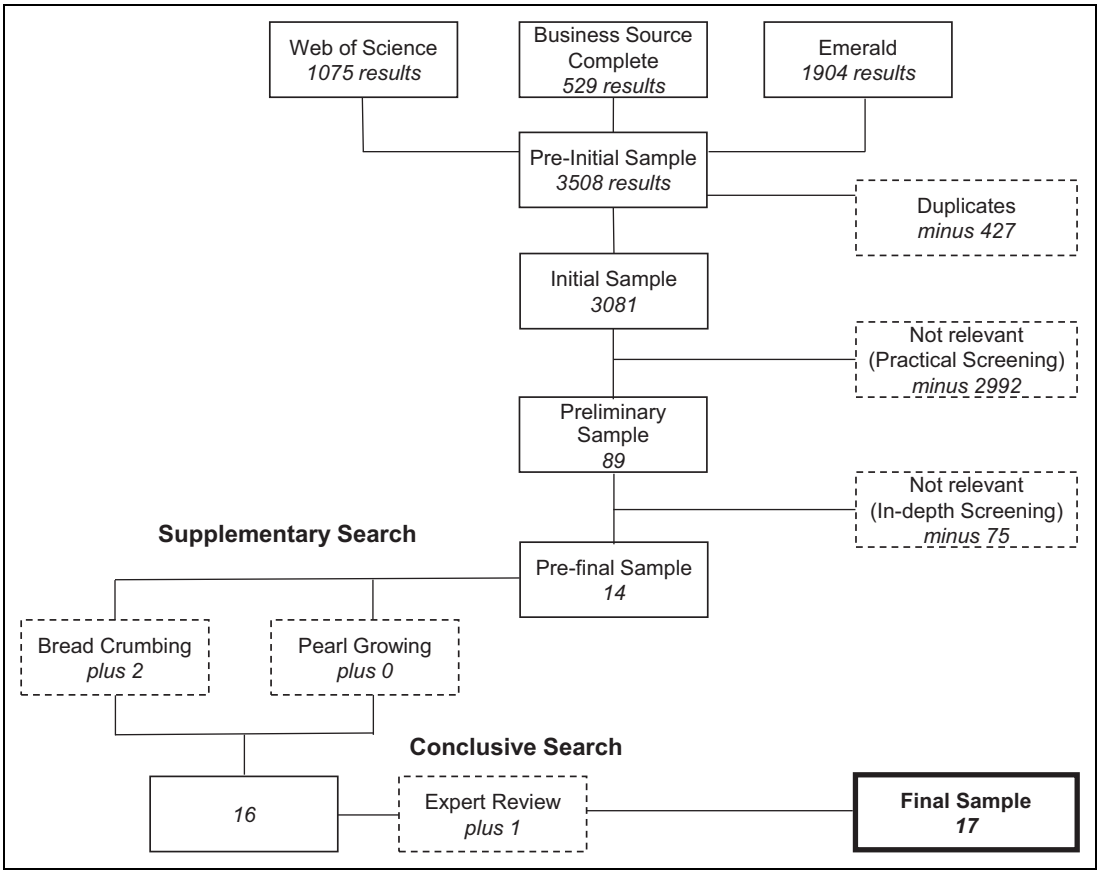

Figure 2. Steps of the search process.

The following sections present the research findings of the publications in the final sample, structured according to the research questions.

Why Should Commercial Marketing Promote Sufficiency?

All publications of the final sample mention reasons why businesses should engage in fostering sufficiency. These reasons concern two perspectives: a societal demand to pursue sufficiency as an external perspective for companies, and a company-internal perspective on altruistic and strategic motives to act as sufficiency catalyzers.

Societal Demand

Most sample publications document an external demand for companies to take holistic responsibility. As companies create and fulfill needs through the provision of products and services, they play a significant role in society. In the same manner as they promote a consumer culture resulting in high levels of consumption, they are expected to emphasize sustainable consumption patterns and sufficiency (Heath and Chatzidakis 2012; Bocken 2017). Specifically the marketing sphere is held responsible for operationalizing sustainability (Fisk 1973; Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011; Sodhi 2011; Soule and Reich 2015; Bocken and Short 2016; Reich and Soule 2016; Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016; Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017; Lowe, Lynch, and Lowe 2015), "since [marketing] is the consumer interface and creates the consumer touch points and shapes product experiences" (Sodhi 2011, p. 179).

Altruistic Motives

The need for taking societal responsibility leads to altruistic motives, which originate internally from the organization itself and enclose a normative dimension, explained by Soule and Reich (2015), who observe a "recent, growing desire and perhaps a sense of obligation among marketers to attempt to undo the ecological damage presumably caused by consumption" (p. 1407). Fourteen publications state that reaching sustainability or related goals such as environmental protection (Ertekin and Atik 2015; Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017; Lowe, Lynch, and Lowe 2015), saving of scarce resources (Fisk 1973; Lowe, Lynch, and Lowe 2015), waste reduction (Hwang et al. 2016; Jung and Byoungho 2016), or good living conditions for the present population (Seegebarth et al. 2016) and future generations (Heath and Chatzidakis 2012) are important ethical considerations for pursuing sufficiency.

Another altruistic motive is to contribute to changing the role and meaning of consumption in society, referred to by three publications in a rather general fashion (Fisk 1973; Heath and Chatzidakis 2012; Hwang et al. 2016). Bocken and Short (2016) illustrate this motive with the specific case of Riversimple, a company which intends to change the meaning of ownership through its car leasing business and marketing activities. Jung and Byoungho (2016) address slow fashion as a suitable way of achieving a shift in consumer mindset from quantity to quality.

Three publications legitimize marketing measures to promote sufficiency with the precautionary principle, a sense of responsibility for operationalizing sustainability (Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011; Sodhi 2011; Bocken and Short 2016). Furthermore, a marketing approach to moderate consumption is conceived in one paper focusing on European consumers (Seegebarth et al. 2016), as an opportunity to increase individuals' well-being through avoiding over-indebtedness.

Strategic Motives

Marketing for sufficient consumption may also be based on rather strategic motives. Some publications mention that communication campaigns and advertisements to promote sufficiency can create a favorable image "while positively positioning the firm in the mind of the consumer" (Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017, p. 300). By fostering positive word-of-mouth recommendations, the positive anticipation can even be reinforced (Bocken and Short 2016). Hwang et al. (2016) conclude that Patagonia's anti-consumption campaign "Don't buy this jacket" contributed to the company's sustainable image. Reich and Soule (2016) show that companies find it beneficial to discourage consumption as a sign of commitment to environmental sustainability. Three publications in the SLR sample link product design decisions to a premium brand image, which stands for high quality regarding the material, design and manufacturing choices, or high levels of service and extended warranties (Bocken and Short 2016; Hwang et al. 2016; Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017). Ramirez, Tajdini, and David (2017) state that marketing aiming at consumption reduction can improve the image of a product's quality. According to four publications, marketing attempts at demand reduction are often build on good customer relationships. Ramirez, Tajdini, and David (2017), and Yakobovitch and Grinstein (2016) find evidence that marketing to promote sufficiency positively affects consumers' attitudes towards the company and can lead to an increase in perceptions of the organization's trustworthiness. For example, the price and product strategy of the furniture manufacturer Vitsœ highly depends on the loyalty of its regular customers (Bocken and Short 2016; Bocken 2017).

Three publications observe that an appropriate strategy to respond to a discrepancy between a company's commitment to sufficiency and the pressure to increase market share and profit margins would be to develop new business areas and customer segments (Soule and Reich 2015; Bocken and Short 2016; Jung and Byoungho 2016). This includes "undermining or displacing the conventional more environmentally harmful businesses" (Bocken and Short 2016, p. 57) or extending the company offer by providing repair services (Jung and Byoungho 2016). According to seven publications, marketing tools to promote sufficiency can create competitive advantage. The examples of Vitsœ and Patagonia demonstrate that a business or marketing strategy relying on sufficiency can lead to positive impacts on sales and profit (Bocken and Short 2016; Hwang et al. 2016; Bocken 2017) as well as maintaining or increasing profitability (Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011; Reich and Soule 2016). Financial benefits emerge because marketing activities for sufficiency can be carried out in an inexpensive way and consumers may be willing to pay more for a sustainable product (Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017) or high quality and durable designs (Jung and Byoungho 2016).

How Can Commercial Marketing Promote Sufficiency?

The sample offers diverse practical implications which can be structured according to the classic 4P of the marketing mix (Kotler 2018). Product, promotion, price, and place allow operationalizing a sufficiency marketing mix and provide a sometimes interdependent, but adequately distinguishable structure for our analysis.

Product

In one of the earliest papers in the sample, Schaefer and Crane (2005) doubt that business will "construct some form of green commodity that can be made to appeal to symbolic consumer needs" (p. 89) due to companies' growth imperative. Nevertheless, publications since 2011 display ideas and cases of products and services as an essential aspect of commercial marketing for sufficient consumption, longevity of products being one of them. Longevity may be achieved in the production processes through avoiding obsolescence and mandatory longer warranties (Bocken and Short 2016), using high quality materials (Ertekin and Atik 2015; Seegebarth et al. 2016), slower production terms (Jung and Byoungho 2016), and design focused on durability and timelessness, instead of trends (Bocken 2017; Jung and Byoungho 2016). Six publications name the repair and reuse of products as a means to save resources through enhanced product longevity, which is described as smart strategy (Hwang et al. 2016) and business opportunity (Seegebarth et al. 2016). This approach is, for instance, realized through a collaboration with a repair service in the case of Patagonia (Bocken and Short 2016; Bocken 2017) and as a precondition in successful product design for durability and recyclability (Ertekin and Atik 2015). Jung and Byoungho (2016) recommend repair services especially for consumers with conservative values who might wish to wear their clothes longer.

Four publications discuss secondhand markets. Ertekin and Atik (2015) suggest secondhand products as a contribution to

sufficient consumption. Seegebarth et al. (2016) recommend further studying secondhand markets as a business opportunity, which is already used by Vitsœ and Patagonia, who encourage their customers to buy and sell used products of their brands (Bocken and Short 2016; Bocken 2017).

The addition of certain services assists consumers in avoiding unnecessary purchases according to four papers. Bocken and Short (2016) present the cases of Riversimple's sharing vehicles and Kyocera's service fee for consulting and monitoring to reduce printer and paper usage. Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas (2011, p. 31) describe a general business opportunity connecting longevity and services, because "there will be a greater need for service, maintenance and upgrading of products". Fisk (1973), Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas (2011) and Seegebarth et al. (2016) recommend renting or leasing options for (usually expensive) products and the inclusion of either commercial or peer-to-peer collaborative consumption platforms. Firms may assist consumers in enacting sufficiency by offering not only services, but also innovative technology tools. In the case of water conservation, Lowe, Lynch, and Lowe (2015) explain how the incentivized installation of water-saving devices increased actual saving behavior through enabling, not just changing attitudes.

Many of these examples include the 3R (reuse, repair, recycle), which Gorge et al. (2015) differentiate from sufficiency as activities which "do not challenge consumption in itself, but rather encourage solutions that may require fewer material and energy resources" (p. 12). This suggests that many scholars and commercial marketers apply a rather pragmatic understanding of sufficiency.

Promotion

Bocken and Short (2016) find "radically different marketing initiatives and campaigns relative to industry norms – focused on moderate sales" (p. 56) as one important enabler of sufficiency-based business. Their positive impact on a company's image was mentioned as strategic motive previously. Five publications discuss the general appeal to consume less in the contexts of anti-consumption (Hwang et al. 2016) and demarketing (Sodhi 2011; Reich and Soule 2016). Vitsœ and Patagonia directly encourage consumers to consider not buying a product through communicative measures like sewn-in labels asking wearers to repair their garment and think twice before buying (Bocken and Short 2016; Bocken 2017). Awareness-raising education for sufficiency and a consumer's responsibility is mentioned in a general matter by Ertekin and Atik (2015), Heath and Chatzidakis (2012), as well as "consumer advertising programs designed to discourage extravagant consumption" by Fisk (1973, p. 25). Gorge et al. (2015) suggest macro-environmental pedagogical tools that can help voluntarily sufficient consumers gradually decrease their consumption volume, until narrative tools, like storytelling, shape sufficiency as a positive collective process. Yakobovitch and Grinstein (2016) present the more specific case of carbon-labels on products combined with social norm messages at the point of sale.

Schaefer and Crane (2005) caution that sufficiency must be carefully positioned so as not to restrict the cultural value of consumption, but to lead it into compatible frames, so consumers are not appalled by images of abstinence. Seegebarth et al. (2016) suggest that positive role-models for simplified lifestyles should be included in campaigns, as well as the highlighting of personal benefits "such as reduced debt, greater space available for storage, less time spent on shopping, and the advantages of a nonmaterialistic approach to life" (p. 91). Jung and Byoungho (2016) suggest emphasizing authenticity, exclusivity, and functionality, because these aspects of slow fashion appeal more to consumers than sustainability or ethical values. Pro-environmental demarketing claims are effective for reduced private energy consumption according to Ramirez, Tajdini, and David (2017), but should not be connected to a particular product to avoid consumer confusion (Reich and Soule 2016).

Considering that consumers rarely associate sufficiency with commercial activities, Lowe, Lynch, and Lowe (2015) advise organizations to be transparent about their goals, progress, and own sufficient resource management to strengthen their own credibility, thereby increasing consumer motivation to act, and avoiding distrust or accusations of hypocrisy.

Price

Four papers mention price-related instruments. Vitsœ offers no product discounts and no employee sales commissions, but life-long services at cost-price for installation, repair, and relocation (Bocken 2017). Bruno Cuccinelli applies premium pricing for their high-quality apparel. Bocken and Short (2016) argue for premium price models to be a more sustainable option when luxury goods "are cherished, last longer and are used more" (p. 49). Jung and Byoungho (2016) argue that high prices in slow fashion cause consumers who are highly fashion-involved or exclusivity-oriented to value quality over quantity, making them keep clothes longer and buy less as a result. The paper-saving business model of Reduse shows how cost savings can be generated through sufficiency (Bocken and Short 2016). Sodhi (2011) makes a claim for full-cost pricing to incorporate external effects of consumption and production in product prices.

Place

The place-related findings propose direct customer contacts and innovative experiential settings. Schaefer and Crane (2005) refer to a satisfying experience of when consumers search for ways of achieving goals with lower resource use. Ertekin and Atik (2015) suggest swapping and swishing parties for clothes as an attractive means to promote product sharing, sustainable habits, and environmental awareness. Through only selling directly via phone, their stores or own online shop, Vitsœ sacrifice short-term growth for the benefit of keeping

personal contact to their customers and control over their sale techniques (Bocken and Short 2016). Yakobovitch and Grinstein (2016) derive the implication of placing high-carbon labeled products "in areas with high consumer traffic or near products with low carbon labeling to create perspective and a reference point" (p. 100).

Which Barriers for Promoting Sufficiency Occur?

Fewer publications explore barriers than motives, yet we identified two groups of barriers: systemic and organizational barriers.

Systemic Barriers

Companies operate within a growth-driven economy, so current business practices are mostly profit-oriented. Supporting sufficiency may therefore "seem very much at odds with current business practices and perhaps unviable in competitive markets" (Bocken and Short 2016, p. 43) and can result in competitive disadvantages and declines in sales (Bocken and Short 2016; Bocken 2017; Schaefer and Crane 2005).

Observed by three publications, the widespread consumerist culture can hinder companies in advertising sufficiency, as it does not overlap with what many consumers consider their social and cultural needs (Bocken and Short 2016; Schaefer and Crane 2005; Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016). Concerning consumer sovereignty, efforts to moderate demand could be criticized because they limit the consumers' freedom of choice and are sometimes recognized as an undue interference with competitive market operations (Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011; Heath and Chatzidakis 2012; Bocken and Short 2016). Bocken and Short (2016) further state that the promotion of sufficiency can result in consumer resistance as shifting consumer behavior is a challenging task.

Organizational Barriers

The overall economic growth paradigm often leads to a strong sales orientation on the micro business level. Four publications (Schaefer and Crane 2005; Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011; Bocken and Short 2016; Hwang et al. 2016) see this as a possible reason for companies to resist the promotion of sufficiency "because of an automatic assumption that this would mean lower profits" (Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011, p. 30). If the legal form of a causes a focus on short-term shareholder value maximization, a company unlikely implements sufficiency-orientated marketing (Bocken and Short 2016). Hwang et al. (2016) argue that activities to support sufficiency may seem hypocritical, as Patagonia was accused of grabbing public attention and thereby raising sales of outdoor products, instead of seriously trying to reduce consumption. If this leads to an image loss, companies might refrain from implementing a marketing approach which promotes sufficiency.

Table 5 summarizes the main findings regarding the leading research questions.

Discussion of Future Research Opportunities

In the following, we elaborate findings which occur as relevant for further developing a framework for commercial marketing to promote sufficient consumption and display future research opportunities.

Innovation for Sufficiency beyond the Status Quo

The SLR sample offers implications on how to practically strengthen sufficient consumption but leaves room for innovative thinking.

On the one hand, sufficiency practitioners do not necessarily have to reinvent the wheel but can creatively implement ideas already existing in the practice of sustainability. Virtues known from less affluent contexts, like reusing, maintaining, and sharing goods, show smart ways of dealing with a lack of resources. The product-related elaborations on sharing services (Botsman and Rogers 2010; Polonsky 2011), secondhand alternatives, and overcoming planned obsolescence (Echegaray 2016) reflect vivid rationales in the sustainability and marketing discourse.

On the other hand, to further endorse sufficiency and offer effective impulses, scholars need to be more forward-thinking and develop innovative ideas. For instance, Gorge et al. (2015), who identify a need to reshape consumer needs for challenging the DSP, suggest pedagogical processes or the creation of solidarity networks that emphasize being, rather than having, for well-being. A business opportunity lies in moving business models towards immaterially oriented services which do not rely on owning and consuming material resources, but enhance social well-being and personal abilities, such as music lessons or group activities. Further innovative, promising, and contemporary means would be digital tools and social media marketing. The digitalization and in particular the growing amount of personal data about customer needs, new communication and distribution channels, social media applications, and strategies such as search engine marketing, hold opportunities and risks for sufficient consumption. Gossen and Frick (2018) show that customers of an online retailer for sustainable goods evaluate digital marketing tools for sufficiency positively, as the retailer's online advertisement promoting sufficient clothing consumption leads to an altruistic, trustworthy, and likeable image. Moreover, experimental interventions like Herziger et al.'s (2017) research proposal on reducing excessive consumption via user-generated content are necessary. In the digital age, social media is becoming a growing force in consumers' decisions. While consumers may tweet and blog about a company's efforts in favor of sufficiency, these aspects are still out of scope in our sample.

A preference for rather conservative tools in marketing for sufficiency may also be rooted in traditional research trajectories and literature being bound to the economic growth

Table 5. Overview of Findings Related to Research Questions.

Results	Sources
RQ 1: Why should commercial marketing promote sufficiency?	
Societal demand	
External demand to take responsibility for society in general and for non-sustainable consumption in particular	Bocken 2017; Bocken and Short 2016; Fisk 1973; Heath and Chatzidakis 2012; Lowe, Lynch, and Lowe 2015; Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017; Reich and Soule 2016; Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011; Sodhi 2011; Soule and Reich 2015; Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016
Altruistic motives	
Reaching sustainability	Bocken 2017; Bocken and Short 2016; Ertekin and Atik 2015; Fisk 1973; Heath and Chatzidakis 2012; Hwang et al. 2016; Jung and Jin 2016; Lowe, Lynch, and Lowe 2015; Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017; Reich and Soule 2016; Seegebarth et al. 2016; Sodhi 2011; Soule and Reich 2015; Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016
Changing societal role of consumption	Bocken and Short 2016; Fisk 1973; Heath and Chatzidakis 2012; Hwang et al. 2016; Jung and Jin 2016
Following the precautionary principle	Bocken and Short 2016; Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011; Sodhi 2011
Increasing individuals' well-being	Seegebarth et al. 2016
Strategic motives	
Creating a favorable image	Bocken and Short 2016; Hwang et al. 2016; Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017; Reich and Soule 2016
Establishing a good customer relationship	Bocken 2017; Bocken and Short 2016; Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017; Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016
Developing new business areas and customer segments	Bocken and Short 2016; Jung and Jin 2016; Soule and Reich 2015;
Achieving positive impacts on sales and profits	Bocken 2017; Bocken and Short 2016; Hwang et al. 2016; Jung and Jin 2016; Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017; Reich and Soule 2016; Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011
RQ2: How can commercial marketing promote sufficiency?	
Product	
Maximal longevity of products	Bocken 2017; Bocken and Short 2016, Ertekin and Atik 2015; Jung and Jin 2016: Seegebarth et al. 2016
Repairing and reusing products	Bocken 2017; Bocken and Short 2016, Ertekin and Atik 2015; Hwang et al. 2016; Jung and Jin 2016; Seegebarth et al. 2016
Secondhand products	Bocken 2017; Bocken and Short 2016; Ertekin and Atik 2015; Seegebarth et al. 2016
Addition of services	Bocken and Short 2016; Fisk 1973; Lowe et al. 2015; Seegebarth et al. 2016; Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas 2011
Promotion	
General appeal to consume less	Bocken 2017; Bocken and Short 2016, Hwang et al. 2016; Reich and Soule 2016; Sodhi 2011
Awareness-raising education	Ertekin and Atik 2015; Fisk 1973; Gorge et al. 2015; Heath and Chatzidakis 2012
Carbon-labels on products	Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016
Positive framing (role models, personal benefits)	Jung and Jin 2016; Schaefer and Crane 2005; Seegebarth et al. 2016
Pro-environmental demarketing claims	Ramirez, Tajdini, and David 2017; Reich and Soule 2016
Organizational transparency	Lowe et al. 2015
Price	
No discounts	Bocken 2017
Premium pricing	Bocken and Short 2016; Jung and Jin 2016
Product life-extending services at cost-price	Bocken and Short 2016
Full-cost pricing	Sodhi 2011
Place	
Emphasizing experiences	Ertekin and Atik 2015; Schaefer and Crane 2005
Direct sales only	Bocken and Short 2016
High-carbon labelled products next to low-carbon labelled products	Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Results	Sources
RQ 3: Which barriers for promoting sufficiency occur?	
Systemic barriers	
Operating within the economic growth paradigm	Bocken 2017; Bocken and Short 2016; Schaefer and Crane 2005; Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016;
Consumerist culture	Bocken and Short 2016; Schaefer and Crane 2005; Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016;
Orientating at the principle of consumer sovereignty	Bocken and Short 2016; Heath and Chatzidakis 2012; Sheth, Sethia and Srinivas 2011
Organizational barriers	
Orientating at increasing sales and profits	Bocken and Short 2016; Hwang et al. 2016; Schaefer and Crane 2005; Sheth, Sethia and Srinivas 2011;
Focusing on short-term shareholder value	Bocken and Short 2016
Fearing an image loss	Hwang et al. 2016

paradigm, therefore nurturing a "blind spot" for sufficiency. After all, the majority of our sample publications stem from marketing and business journals. Endorsing interdisciplinary thinking in sufficiency research might be helpful for overcoming this.

Sufficiency as a Dominant Business Strategy?

The sample shows that marketing for sufficiency can benefit companies, thereby providing an incentive to actively engage for sustainability in an ambitious manner. Yet, only 5% of companies worldwide refer to ecological limits in their corporate responsibility reports, and even fewer companies use the ecological limits to define business targets that actually lead to a reduction in emissions, resource consumption, or adjustment of the product portfolio (Bjørn et al. 2017). Nevertheless, sustainable business practices play an increasingly important role for global firms (Peterson and Lunde 2016), and sufficiency is a logical path for taking sustainability seriously. Marketing itself has the means to transfer a company's vision and purpose to a target audience. Only if that purpose is fundamentally compatible with the concept of sufficiency, are marketing means void of serving greenwashing (Nyilasy, Gangadharbatla, and Paladino 2014).

Furthermore, marketing for sufficiency might have favorable effects, such as improving the image of a company. For a different company, however, it might damage its reputation, due to accusations of acting hypocritically. The occurring effect depends on the positioning and context of the business activities. Trust and reputation, deeply founded in the companies' holistic business activities and customer relationships, are key to benefiting from marketing to promote sufficiency. While our SLR focuses on the means of marketing, to be truly effective and avoid greenwashing, sufficiency must be embedded in all business activities of a company, including the business model (Bocken and Short 2016).

Most of the motives for and barriers against marketing to promote sufficiency are derived by secondary analysis or rely on case studies of selected sustainability-focused (Bocken et al. 2014) and degrowth-oriented business models (Khmara and Kronenberg 2018). We find a balanced quantitative ratio between altruistic and strategic motives in the sample. More empirical research, including the expertise of marketing practitioners, could offer deeper insights into motives, and into the applicability of specific marketing mix tools for different business models in realistic contexts. We also see further research needs regarding how altruistic and strategic motives of sufficiency-oriented companies complement or contradict each other and how companies balance profitable growth and sustainability. While research explored employees' motivation for and concerns against sustainability in their organization (Guerci et al. 2015; Law, Hills, and Hau 2017), it also remains unclear whether sufficiency as a more radical notion towards sustainability might be a motivator or barrier from an employees' perspective.

A Fifth P: Policy

Displaying a rather optimistic view with few critical comments, the publications in the sample represent commercial marketing for sufficiency as an opportunity to proactively face the necessity of prevailing in a market of increasingly scarce resources. Nevertheless, businesses are just one necessary element in the broader macromarketing dynamic to adapt the DSP in favor of consumption styles that are "enough". While our SLR focuses on voluntary sufficiency lifestyles, policy measures are also discussed in the sample.

In a critical stance, Schaefer and Crane (2005) doubt the effectivity of environmental consumer education for sufficiency, and express pessimism about regulatory tools like brand-free zones, advertising bans, and eco-taxes through governments. Sheth, Sethia, and Srinivas (2011) argue that policy or regulation are unlikely to succeed in changing patterns of consumption because of the conflicting interests of parties involved, including the protection of consumer sovereignty and competitive market operations.

Bocken and Short (2016, p. 59) argue contrastively that "reduced material consumption will not mean the end of business" and that changes for sufficiency should be introduced incrementally rather than in reaction to regulatory pressure. While mandatory longer product warranties, product bans, and choice editing against the most environmentally damaging goods are regulatory prospects, Bocken (2017) also emphasizes private-public partnerships. For instance, public procurement might serve as role-model and enabler of sufficiency business models. Lowe, Lynch, and Lowe (2015) refer to visible strategies for saving water in public institutions. Public education programs and awareness-raising campaigns are prominently featured (Heath and Chatzidakis 2012; Bocken and Short 2016; Seegebarth et al. 2016), possibly challenging materialistic values in favor of psychological well-being (Yakobovitch and Grinstein 2016).

More research on adequate policy measures for making the sufficient consumption option the more affordable one is required – regardless of whether these are regulatory, informational, or market-based instruments. As initiatives supporting sufficient consumption on a voluntary basis require consumers to value sufficiency, effective policies should be directed at processes that engender non-sustainable consumption and materialism, which are, in the first place, institutions of the Dominant Social Paradigm (Kilbourne et al. 2009).

A Sixth P: Partners

Our sample prominently emphasizes community-building structures as an appropriate tool for business and politics to support sufficiency. This approach is most strongly represented by Gorge et al. (2015). Schaefer and Crane (2005) also establish the notion that "those seeking to negotiate the difficult terrain of reducing or shifting consumption toward more responsible patterns are less likely to suffer social stigma when acting within a community of likewise individuals" (p. 86). Ertekin and Atik (2015) suggest a community approach to break unsustainable habits in buying and using fashion items, while Bocken and Short (2016) present two companies which engage for their local communities. Individuals who obligatorily or voluntarily live under sufficient circumstances often feel marginalized from their families, peers, or colleagues because they diverge from conventional consumerism and social norms of the DSP. This is a main barrier for their well-being (Gorge et al. 2015). The more wide-spread sustainability activities are within a community, the easier individuals will pick them up (Meng 2015). Community structures provide opportunity to make living sufficiently easier through collectively organized projects, social interactions, and shared sufficiency values (Shaw and Moraes 2009). This compensates for the social function which conspicuous consumption established in individualized, postmodern societies Moreover, the sample publications' emphasis on product quality and price premium raises questions on sufficiency as a luxury phenomenon and status symbol, as well as concerns about injustice, when access to goods is further determined by the economic endowment of people. How companies using collective activities for their marketing to foster sufficiency might strengthen their own positioning, but also support the re-evaluation and reorganization of satisfying needs and wants, is a promising endeavor for future research.

Some consumers, often organized in communities, engage in self-sustaining practices like growing agricultural products for their own use (subsistence farming) or by producing self-sufficient energy with home solar power. These strategies towards sufficiency avoid or even aim at transforming the traditional market system, which limits opportunities for conventional marketing (Polonsky 2017). It remains an exciting research question as to how marketing can address ways of supporting these people to find desirable consumption alternatives.

Furthermore, the potential role of retailers as intermediaries between producers and customers in marketing for sufficient consumption remains rather untapped. Morgan, Tallontire, and Foxon (2017) tentatively venture into this topic by analyzing large UK retailers' initiatives to reduce consumer emissions. They identify campaigns and product design to enable lower washing temperatures as initiatives for sufficiency. We argue that retailers hold stronger means to do marketing for sufficiency than those tools recommended and like to encourage further research in such matters.

Further Research Questions

From our discussion and the elaboration of future research opportunities, we suggest the following selection of specific research questions:

- Does the increasing importance of digital marketing instruments (e.g. big data, personalization) provide an opportunity or risk for sufficient consumption?
- What motivates companies to implement marketing to promote sufficient consumption? Do they accept economic disadvantages? How can the promotion of less consumption (and consequently loss of profits) and corporate growth coexist?
- How are companies perceived by consumers, if they try to promote sufficient consumption? Do they "reward" or "punish" the commitment to sufficiency?
- Which political measures are best suited to motivate or oblige companies to promote sufficiency?
- What common values are shared in communities that support sufficiency? How can business marketing credibly support this?
- Which commercial marketing instruments can strengthen the potential role of retailers for sufficient consumption?

Conclusion

The conducted SLR presents a young and controversial research field on why and how commercial marketing should

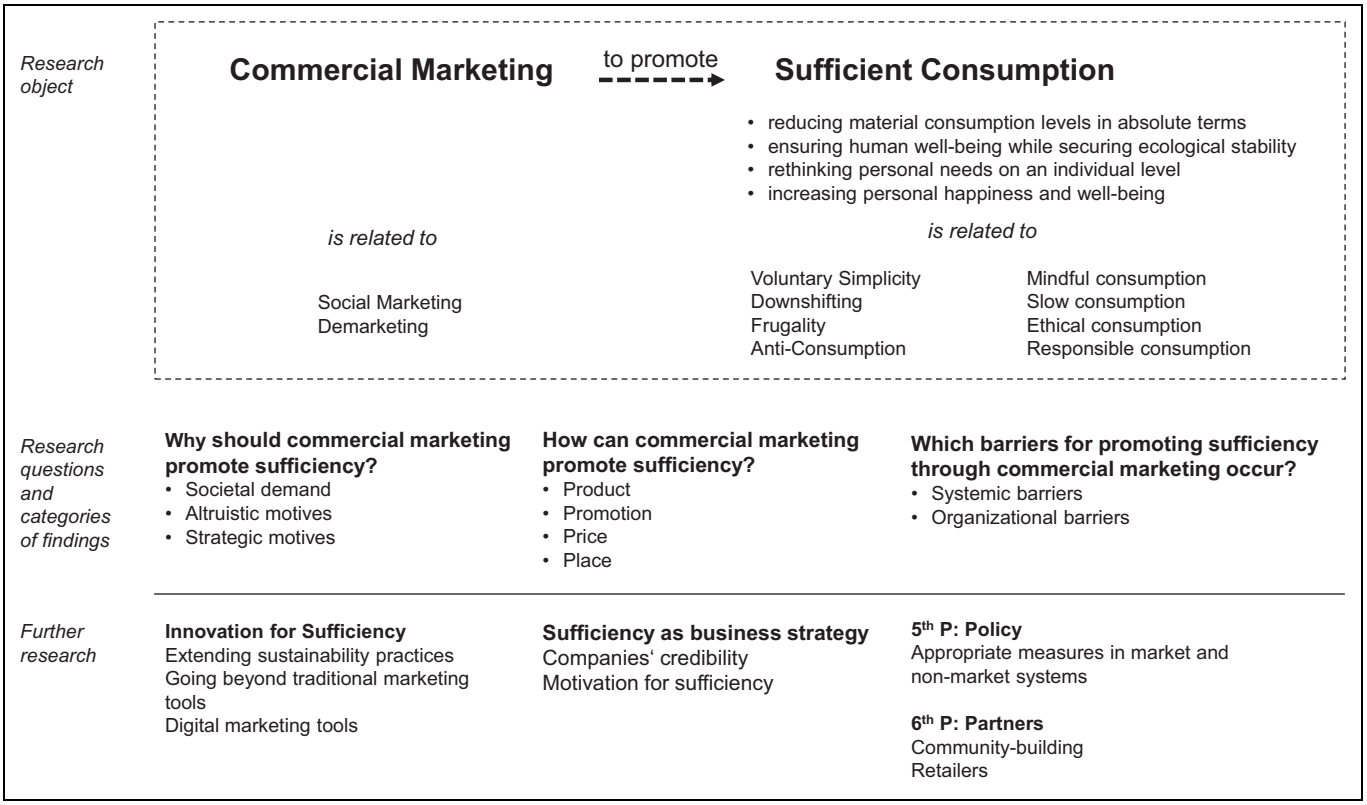

Figure 3. Integrative research framework.

encourage sufficient consumption. Figure 3 offers an integrative framework for this research.

As surprising as it may seem at first glance, several reasons for promoting sufficiency from a marketing management perspective are documented in the final sample. Business cases from diverse industries, and varied instruments for operationalizing a marketing mix to foster sufficiency featured in the final sample, offer orientation for companies that seek serious and substantial contributions to sustainability challenges. The instruments of the micromarketing mix are vehicles to reach a significant audience for sufficiency. From a macromarketing perspective, commercial marketing techniques can only be as substantial for sufficiency as the underlying business model. Also, marketing for sufficiency can only be successful within the mainstream if the DSP and economic framework allow it to be. For sufficiency to reach mainstream relevance, changes are required on the societal level, to be fueled by public policy.

Some limitations to the SLR methodology need to be considered. We developed the search string after thoroughly considering existing literature on sufficiency and commercial marketing. Given the exploratory nature of much of the research, our search string was deliberately broad in order to identify relevant literature that did not explicitly employ the terminology of commercial marketing and sufficiency. Its comprehensiveness led to a huge initial sample, which was reduced by about 99% for the final sample of 17 publications due to several reviewing steps and implementing our strict content-related criteria. Nevertheless, as the search was restricted to three selected databases and to two specific types of sources (peer-reviewed journal publications and book chapters), we may have missed research that uses different terminology and publication media. Although not all papers and chapters in the 89-publication-strong preliminary sample satisfy all required content criteria, this extended sample is highly represented in the theoretical foundation and discussion section of our research.

We do see the relatively small number of publications in the final sample of our SLR not as a shortcoming of our study, but as a relevant result. Academia so far has widely overlooked the role commercial marketing might play in fostering sufficient consumption. This negligence might be due to the rather high amount of critical self-reflection required for the marketing discipline, as the current need for sufficiency was partly created by some of marketing's inherent characteristics. Nevertheless, the recently increased emergence of publications on our topic shows that marketing to promote sufficient consumption may leave its niche and potentially attract more mainstream attention.

Sufficiency is highly subjective – every individual will have a personal idea of what their "enough" means, defined by needs and desires. In the review sample, examples for rather efficiency-enhancing products like trash bags made of stronger plastic are used as examples for sufficiency. We would argue that sufficiency means more than that. The lines between marketing for sufficiency, which contributes to less consumption,

and green marketing, which targets a specific group with a high willingness to pay for quality goods, are blurred.

Our discussion of sufficiency focuses on affluent societies in the Global North, where sufficiency questions the economic ideal of continued growth of production and consumption and profoundly diverges from mainstream ideas of living conditions (Sachs, Loske, and Linz 1998; Princen 2005; Lloveras and Quinn 2017). Reaching sufficient consumption levels for people in scarce living conditions who have less than enough to sustain themselves is a pressing matter, but not in the scope of our research and needs to be discussed elsewhere.

Considering the inevitable sustainability challenges for companies and citizens, marketing is an essential mediator in enabling and fostering the absolute reduction of resources and energy used for consumption by questioning the level of demand and the value system of our society. A revised marketing theory inspiring practice is necessary - one that turns away from limitless satisfaction and creation of material desires, towards moderating wants and needs within the planetary boundaries. Helping consumers to increase their well-being and enhance the "enough" of consumption without wasting money, material, and energy on products that do not improve the quality of life in the long term, is the purpose of marketing for sufficient consumption. Our analysis shows that the theoretical and practical debate regarding commercial marketing to promote sufficiency is in its early days. Thus, we hope to encourage researchers in marketing and sustainability to further investigate potentials and conditions of marketing to promote sufficiency.

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