



Identify the components of meaningful marketing hierarchy

Mahsan Hajirasouliha¹, Bahram Kheiri², Mandan Momeni³

¹*PhD candidate in Marketing Management, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran*

²*Department of Business Management, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran*

bah.kheiri@iauctb.ac.ir

³*Department of Human Resources Development, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran*

Abstract

The paradigm shift in marketing science in recent years has highlighted the need for fundamental reform in this concept, these changes necessitate the need to rethink more about marketing. Therefore, one of the concepts proposed to achieve this important, is to provide a model for the concept of meaningful marketing. The purpose of this study is to identify the dimensions and components of meaningful marketing hierarchy. with a qualitative approach of several methods based on contextual-phenomenological theory and through in-depth interviews with researchers and professors in the fields of business management, sociology, psychology, ethics and philosophy, the dimensions and components of the meaningful marketing hierarchy are identified. Participants were selected through a purposive sampling process and the interviews were continued until theoretical saturation was reached and finally 27 interviews were conducted. For data analysis, principles related to contextual theory were used. The results of data coding led to the identification of three concepts that were classified into three categories. Accordingly, the dimensions of the meaningful marketing hierarchy are: achievement-oriented marketing, connection-oriented marketing, solution-oriented marketing. One of the four goals and responsibilities of marketing science is to improve the quality of life of individuals and because the dominant paradigms of this science do not meet the changing needs of today's human beings, attention to creating meaning in this concept can be examined. In this regard, the present study has identified the dimensions and components of the meaningful marketing hierarchy.

Keywords: Meaningful Marketing, Achievement-oriented marketing, Connection-oriented marketing, Solution-oriented marketing

Introduction

A look at the history of marketing science and the different schools of this science reveals the

evolution of the meaning and concepts of this science more than ever. The evolution of marketing concepts from production-oriented

and sales-oriented philosophy to market-oriented marketing shows the process of rationalism and modernity. Marketing helps to create meanings of life and plays an important role in the cultural process of constructing meanings of life and even the functional consumption is to create meaning in life. People often buy products not only for the work they do, but also for the meanings they have. This principle does not mean that the basic function of a product is insignificant, but it does mean that the roles that product consumption plays in our lives are far greater than what they do. (Solomon, 1392: 46). Marketing management can be defined as the art and science of selecting profitable target markets and attracting, retaining and increasing customers by creating, exchanging and delivering superior value to them.

In the new age of marketing, the consumer is no longer a mere consumer of productive value, but as a member of the consumer society, a producer of meanings and ideas, life experiences, identities and values. As a result, marketing theory needs to be rethought in understanding consumer orientation and purpose. In fact, products and services are tools to convey an idea or value to customers. (Cutler and Keller, 2016: 19) And real value not only exists within products or services, but

is also created in the minds of customers. (Divandari, Haghighi, Al-Hayari, 1390)

The science of marketing has shown itself in various forms and applications, from the past to the present. Throughout this path and over the years, different concepts, components, and analyzes of this science have emerged, each of which has been forced into a paradigm shift due to failure and sometimes expiration in its time. But the point is that in the midst of this transformation, the goals of marketing science from the beginning to the present have been summarized in four fixed components, the ways of which have been defined in each period differently from the previous period. These four components are increasing the right to consume, increasing the right to choose, increasing satisfaction and increasing the quality of life. In fact, in marketing science, we seek to increase the quality of life of communities and consumers, which one of the tools to achieve this can be considered as injecting meaning into people's lives, and especially in consumer relations. Today, the use of traditional marketing systems and a functionalist view of the product and the customer does not meet the changing needs of human beings.

Over the past sixty years, marketing has shifted from product-centric to customer-centric. Today we see that marketing is



changing again in response to new dynamics in the environment. (Philip Cutler, Hermann Carthage, Ivan Setie Van, 2010: 69) It seems necessary to pay attention to the material and spiritual dimensions of human life to see in what areas can be examined and revised.

In line with these concerns, one of the concepts that has been considered in recent years is the concept of meaning in each of the organizational and marketing blocks.

Many researchers have explored different patterns and definitions of meaning, for example in previous researches, concepts such as meaning-making in business relationships and networks (Roca et al., 2015), transformational leadership, and participation in mediating the effect of meaning in Work (Qadi, Fernando, 2012), Creating meaningful customer relationships: Why do some companies and brands mean more to consumers? (Barnes, 2003), From Design Driven Innovation to Meaning Strategy (Batistella et al., 2012), Making Time Important, A Review of Research on Time and Meaning (Rood et al., 2019), a new generation of marketing, with your customers through meaningful marketing Stay in touch (Gilbert, 2010) has been reviewed. But most of the researches still seem to maintain the line between meaning and profit, means that they either use meaning as a means to profit, which

is a modern manifestation of social marketing, or so much in the mystical and spiritual sense. They drown in forgetting the definition and purpose of marketing altogether. In the existing literature, there seems to be an extremism in the moral-religious view, which is an escape from the reality of social life, which, in our view, fuels the inability to solve the problem of tendency to these thoughts, because we believe that man with no economic power in order to fulfill his elementary, he will not be able to flourish on his own. One of the concepts considered in the discussion of meaningful marketing is to pay attention to the hierarchy of this type of marketing, which we will explain its levels in the following. Achievement-oriented marketing is one of the levels of the meaningful marketing hierarchy that is very close to the peak of Maslow's self-actualization factor, which allows people to significantly improve their lives, make a dream come true, or change their society and world. Therefore, according to the explanations provided, due to the importance of the meaningful marketing hierarchy and the existing paradigm shift, and also due to the lack of exploratory research to identify the dimensions of the meaningful marketing hierarchy in the country, examine the dimensions of the meaningful marketing hierarchy for strategies and policies, In order

to create continuous mutual satisfaction in a two-way consumer marketer relationship, is important. The studies clearly show the vacuum of a conceptual-paradigm model that can respond to the sense of human meaning today and, on the other hand, put organizations and stakeholders on the path to profit and success. Meaning is reflected in the way we deal with product and marketing.

Meaningful marketing does not have a value view of meaning and seeks to create continuous satisfaction by using meaningful marketing and instrumental marketing simultaneously. Thus, in this article, we try to identify and examine the components of the "Meaningful marketing hierarchy". Therefore, the main purpose of this research is to find the dimensions of "Meaningful marketing hierarchy" and in fact the main question of the present study is, what are the dimensions and components of meaningful marketing hierarchy.

Literation Review

Meaningful marketing:

How is the future of marketing? Marketers around the world are surprised. Many factors have changed the principles of marketing, and this is just the beginning of a reorientation. Customer power has increased with the spread of the Internet, and technology companies are

trying to use applications to fundamentally change customers' habits. The Corona virus pandemic will create new uncertainty in 2020, bringing new insights and pushing the customer more into the real necessities of being human. Around the world, the creation and distribution of information has begun a new dynamic in the markets, and customers are becoming more aware of the options and facilities available to them. Digitization has reached different parts of the world in various forms. Marketing automation and the use of artificial intelligence pave the way for everyday life. Marketing science now faces the challenge of developing new approaches to address the current situation.

With the development of business to business (B2B) marketing, a new concept of meaningful marketing is being developed. Over the years, marketing concepts to create value have changed. In the current situation, it is necessary to determine a specific value orientation for each marketing activity. This orientation should be focused on the benefits of human for human. Meaningful marketing philosophy is a new approach that puts people at the center of marketing. These conscious and unconscious priorities use people as a means to success in marketing. Marketing should work for people, not against them. Marketing can change the world for the better.



Over the past decades, marketing has undergone many revolutionary changes that have added to the quality of life of many people.

However, not all changes have been for the better. Due to some unethical actions of marketers who are too eager to make a profit, the current image of marketing, presented by employees and customers, has deteriorated to the point that most people attribute negative words such as lies, deception, annoyance and manipulation to marketing. (Cutler, 2020: 45) The main purpose of marketing is to identify and satisfy the different needs of individuals and society. One of the shortest definitions defines marketing as "profitable satisfaction of needs" (Cutler and Keller, 2016: 17).

Meaningful marketing is an approach to expanding relationships with people through understanding mutual value. Meaningful marketing is about creating a brand value that aligns with customer values. The systems and tools used for this type of marketing are varied, but rely primarily on a compassionate and empathetic customer attitude and a willingness to use data and results to improve efforts over time (Bob Gilbert, 2010). Meaningful marketing requires a hierarchy in order to better execute and implement the implementation to clarify the steps of the

work. Hierarchies whose application in the present concept, seems necessary.

Theoretical Gap

Human-ethical literature, the phenomenon of the Industrial Revolution and the Renaissance led to theories that initially had a purely materialistic and economic approach to the concept of marketing that is easily seen in marketing schools, then, marketers with a slight injection of human nature into these schools, continued to emphasize profitability. Then schools like social marketing also considered the social responsibility of marketers. Since then, marketing has shifted from an interactive-economic perspective to an interactive-non-economic perspective, and the school of social exchange marketing has become even stronger. After this period, the marketing literature seems to have shifted from a speculative to a value-oriented perspective, and in the aftermath of these changes, Kotler shifted from Neanderthal marketing to modern marketing and then to marketing three. It is clear that the business schools, on one hand, and the moral-human confrontation, on the other, caused the capitalist schools to try to critique themselves and come to their senses, and also leads us to marketing with a view to social responsibility

and attention to meanings. Mankind today finds himself empty of meaning and identity and seeks to fill this gap with various tools. Since marketing is scientific in order to overcome the problems and concerns of today's human beings, it seems that examining the concepts of meaningful marketing hierarchy at the micro and macro levels can also be a tool to get out of the confusion of today's human beings.

The strategy of meaning, which has received much attention in economic and marketing theories today, considers value as a transferable concept in the feeling and meaning of subjects. (Drucker, 2002; Payne and Gilmore, 1999). This concept was introduced in an article entitled "From Innovation-Based Design to Meaning Strategy" by Sinzia Betistella et al. (2012). In this article, the authors first discuss the need to change the approach of organizations in line with environmental changes and chaos in order to create a successful organizational

policy. They believe that the meaningful dimension that products and companies pay attention to in order to send emotional messages to their audiences is vital and creates a broad competitive advantage over other competitors. The paper then emphasizes that meaningful strategy should not only be included in the concept of product as one of the building blocks of the business model of organizations, but also that the injection of meaning into other organizational business blocks seems vital. This article also defines "strategy of meaning", a strategy that carries the intentional-selective meanings of organizations and defines the business model as a way of doing business that reflects the core values of the company to customers. The business model reflects the importance of how organizations create and present economic, social, and other dimensions of value.

In another article, three stages of marketing are discussed that meaningful marketing is one of the types of this division. (Gilbert, 2010)



Direct Marketing	Permission Marketing	Marketing with Meaning
Approach the consumer directly, using targeted information.	Seek consumer approval and input prior to the approach.	Create marketing that invites consumer participation.
"Advertising arrives at my home, whether I like it or not."	"I can choose whether or not to receive relevant advertising."	"The marketing itself improves my life, so I will both notice you and give you my business."
"Tell and sell" monologue	"Give and take" dialogue	"Value-added" benefit
Interruption	Authorization	Service
Focus on medium	Focus on message	Focus on meaning

Fig 1. Hierarchy offers three levels of meaningful marketing - solution, communication and achievement - as a tool to help you better identify your customers' needs and think about how your marketing can meet those needs. Meet at the relevant levels:
 Survival needs (food, shelter, safety and clothing) = meaningful solutions.
 Attachment needs (love, belonging, friendship, family) = meaningful communication.
 Needs of self-esteem (self-confidence, creativity, problem solving, respect for others and by them) = meaningful achievements.

The Meaningful Marketing Hierarchy, Abraham Maslow's Needs Hierarchy, a brilliant 60-year-old sociological snapshot of higher-level consumer needs, with a hierarchy of brand equity, a familiar tool marketers use every day to locate a brand. They use themselves, in the hearts and minds of consumers (Figure 1).

Methodology

Today, meaning is studied as one of the social phenomena with wide dimensions. The study of social phenomena requires an understanding of the social world that people produce and reproduce through their continuous and daily activities (Victims, 1398: 973). Therefore, the present study, which deals with the dimensions of the meaningful

marketing hierarchy, is based on the tradition of qualitative research and in terms of paradigm is based on the principles of constructivist-interpretive paradigm. Also, since the concept of meaning and meaningful marketing is more intertwined with the lived experiences of consumers and seeks to analyze the type of relationship with products from a meaningful perspective, it is necessary to use the emerging tradition of chance along with the data tradition of the foundation. It seeks to identify the dimensions and expansion of the concept of meaningful marketing hierarchy, which has been proposed by researchers in a few articles on the subject, which necessitates field research to expand this concept. Therefore, the present study, which seeks to complete a theoretical atlas on the concept of

meaningful marketing hierarchy from qualitative data, is based on ground-phenomenological theory.

The present study can also be considered based on the classical approach of grounded theory, because despite the methodical coding in data analysis, the main concern of the researcher is the depth, creativity and freedom of action in exploring categories to identify the dimensions of the meaningful marketing hierarchy. An identical paradigm pattern in line with what is expected in a systematic approach is rejected. According to Glaser (1987), the classical approach to grounded theory emphasizes that theory emerges naturally and creatively from data, rather than imposing the same framework and predetermined paradigm on data. (Farasatkah, 1395: 101).

The present study population is experts, consumers and individuals who have academic and executive experiences in the face of this concept and have full knowledge

of the category of meaning and its derivatives. Therefore, because the subject of research has been to determine the dimensions of the meaningful marketing, hierarchy and requires full mastery of the category of meaning and thought experience in relation to it, and on the other hand, due to the nature of interdisciplinary marketing in today's world to gather information to researchers and professors the university referred to business management, sociology, psychology and marketing ethicists who were more aristocratic in expressing their lived experiences due to their knowledge and familiarity with the theoretical foundations of the research subject. Therefore, a purposeful sampling process was used and data collection in each area continued until theoretical saturation was achieved. The data collection tool was in-depth interviews and finally 27 interviews were conducted, the distribution of which is shown in Table (1).

Table 1. Research interviews

Number of interviews	Specialized field	Number of interviews	Specialized field
5	Sociology	12	Ethicists
3	Psychology	7	Business Management

In general, the main axes of the protocol in interviews are questions about the dimensions of meaningful marketing hierarchy,

meaningful concepts and the impact of this view on people's lives, functionalist and meaningful relationship of consumers with



products, relationship of identity and personality with their consumption, life and meaningful consumption. And the mutual duty of the organization and consumers in this regard, the social relations between consumers and organizations were formulated.

The duration of the interviews lasted from about 30 minutes to two hours. In a continuous comparative process, the duplicate and less important codes are removed and the duplicate and more important codes are reduced to concepts.

Also to evaluate the quality of this qualitative research in the form of validity and reliability of 4 tests including verifiability (providing feedback and results after the interviews), acceptable or believable (obtaining feedback from the interviewees about the results), transferability (Emphasis on common concepts in reviewing results and presenting results and interviewees), and reliability (in many cases interviewing more than one person in each case and reviewing cases from different angles), in this qualitative study different from quantitative research Has been performed (Esfidani, Nazari and Karimi Davijani, 2017). Accordingly, as shown in Table 1, to review cases from different angles with experts in different fields in each field with several people interviewed, the text of the interviews and the results of the coding were

informed and the interviewees also confirmed the results.

Research Findings (Theoretical Participation)

The results of data analysis led to the identification of three concepts that were finally classified into three general categories. These three categories are in fact the identified dimensions for the meaningful marketing hierarchy.

Dimensions of the meaningful marketing hierarchy

The meaningful marketing hierarchy matches the needs of the higher level of consumers with the characteristics of the brand, so there are three categories of marketing whose consumption is increasingly meaningful:

solution-oriented marketing: Like the lower levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, solution marketing covers the basic needs and benefits of the household, such as helpful offers, savings, and basic rewards for shopping.

Communication-oriented marketing: This represents an important step in building a link between people and brands. This is closely related to Maslow's love / belonging category, and includes benefits beyond information and

related principles, and includes something that is more important to the consumer mind: social media and creative expression.

Achievement-oriented marketing: This is the culmination of Maslow's self-realization, which allows people to significantly improve their lives, make a dream come true, or change their society and world. When people can feed and clothe themselves, they can focus on building healthy relationships and then changing the world, because they do not have to worry about where their next meal will come from. Similarly, when your motivation as a consumer is not as great as a 50-cent

coupon, it is mainly because 50 cents does not set you up or break you - you are more responsive to the marketing that communicates your goals. Align with like-minded people, express creativity or have a positive impact on the community around you. The higher the level of marketing (with the highest success rate), the more it meets the need (the highest the level of respect), and vice versa, the higher the level of marketing required. This does not mean that marketers of basic goods and services are exempt from creating it. For them, marketing opportunities that mean more than what they sell are endless.



Figure 2. Semantic marketing hierarchy



Table 2. Coding

Statement	Concept	Sub category	Main category
We strongly believe in the need to meet living needs before the meaningful needs.	The need to provide the necessary economic conditions	Solution-oriented marketing	Meaningful marketing hierarchy
Because in a society that does not have a proper economic infrastructure, the meaning is absurd.			
How can a person who is unable to meet her minimum needs think of meaning?			
People connect with the brand, which means that sometimes they see brands as a member of their family, and they mean that without them, they are not a member of their family, which leaves a big gap.	Intermediate dependence and love	Communication-oriented marketing	
Love is the highest goal of mankind.			
We emphasize the relationship between the customer and the supplier and build a relationship instead of a deal. The customer likes to be perceived as valuable during the exchange process and not just as a wallet to buy goods.			
Today's consumer is looking for something more important than the benefits of functional information, she is looking for love.			
People are looking to make their dreams come true.	Realization of ideals	Achievement-oriented marketing	
Today's consumer seeks to change the world.			

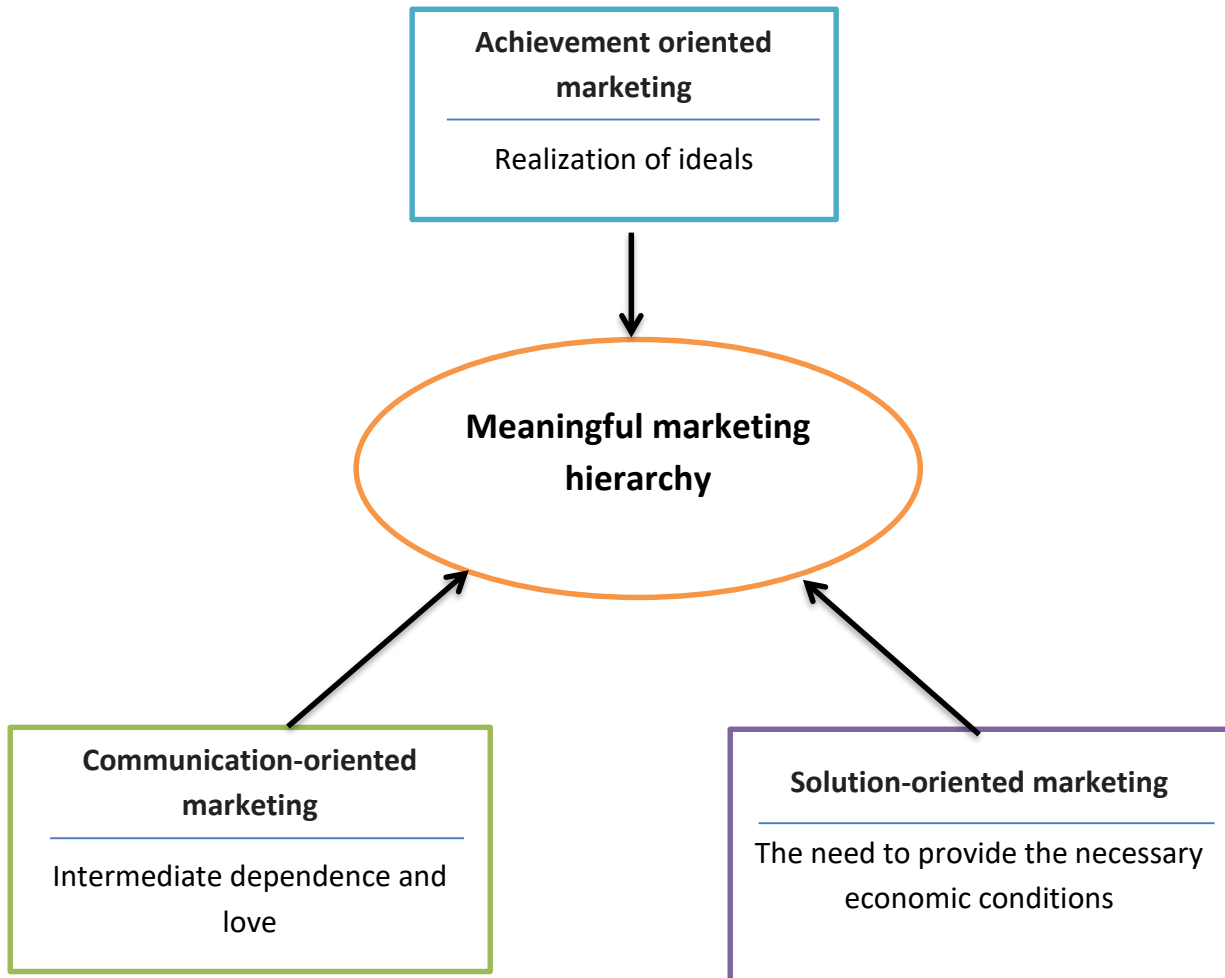


Figure 3. Identified dimensions of meaningful marketing hierarchy

Discussion

The current trend of marketing and its interaction with today's modern consumer requires a paradigm shift that no longer seeks pure profitability for companies, nor denies the economic infrastructure of a society and pays attention only to the socio-ethical superstructure. When existing paradigms are

not able to meet the changing needs of human beings, we are forced to shift from old paradigms to new paradigms, which seems to be felt more and more today in marketing science. In the meaningful marketing paradigm, we seek to inject value into the lives of our consumers with respect to the economic-functional dimension. This injection of value means the introduction of



enhanced quality into the lives of our audiences through each of the marketing and communication blocks that goes beyond the needs of the elementary levels and their expectations. Therefore, the starting point of the present study is a critical look at the current patterns of marketing in the country and the need to pay attention to the criteria for implementing meaningful marketing at the macro level and then examining the hierarchy of meaningful marketing to cover the functional dimension of this concept. This research tries to expand and complete the presented concept with a field study. Thus, the dimensions of the meaningful marketing hierarchy that can lead to a paradigm shift in marketing are identified. The dimensions identified for the meaningful marketing hierarchy in this study include achievement-oriented marketing, communication-oriented marketing, and solution-oriented marketing.

Suggestions

Today's consumers, who are the beating heart of marketing science, have taken a completely different approach to what existed in the past, believing that the unique function of a product or service can no longer create a sense of emotional satisfaction in them, but rather Today, dominant intellectual organizations and paradigms that seek to provide useful

value with a transcendent level in their lives play a more important and lasting role in their mental-meaningful frameworks. Today's man is confronted with an interpretive approach to the products and services that strive to survive and promote a superior quality of life, and is far removed from the consumer-centered stage. Meaningful marketing is a pragmatic approach that seeks to inject a new and practical concept to meet the changing needs of human beings today in order to make the best and richest use of marketing, and since the task of science is to focus on the everyday problems of society and human beings. It is scientific and can be studied in academic circles, so examining and identifying the component of meaningful marketing hierarchy as one of these issues seems to be important and vital.

One aspect of the meaningful marketing hierarchy has been identified as achievement-oriented marketing, where when people can feed and clothe themselves, they can focus on building healthy relationships and then changing the world, because they do not have to worry about their next meal. As mentioned, this dimension corresponds to the self-actualization dimension in the Maslow pyramid. Therefore, it seems necessary for organizations to focus on providing a type of marketing whose ultimate goal is to meet the

biological needs of individuals, help them to make the world a better place to live and achieve self-fulfillment. Also, according to one of the primary marketing goals mentioned earlier, improving the quality of life by injecting this concept into all marketing blocks as well as the marketing mix for today's modern consumer who experiences a completely different level of needs and wants from his predecessors.

The other dimension is communication-oriented marketing. This concept represents an important step towards establishing a link between people and brands. This is closely related to Maslow's love / belonging. Therefore, it seems that organizations, considering the relevant elements, need to create long-term emotional-cognitive loyalty based on this principle, between their consumers and their brand, so that it is another fundamental step in creating a bond of love and empathy between your own company and consumers.

Finally, solution-oriented marketing, which is the last dimension in this regard, like the lower levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, covers the basic needs and benefits of the family, so it seems that the efforts of officials and relevant factors to provide a suitable platform for providing conditions. Appropriate to human biology and physiological needs of

individuals in order to provide the necessary ground to achieve higher existential ideals in consumers is necessary and essential. Obviously, meaningful marketing ultimately seeks to improve the quality of life of consumers, and meaning in this compound term, should not evoke the conventional and spiritual use of meaning, in the sense that corporate executives and marketing managers should not look one-sided. Next, to make sense and pursue the purely meaningful needs of consumers. Consumers do not pursue meaning in their secondary sense until they are able to meet their material, livelihood, and primary needs. It is emphasized that meaning in meaningful marketing refers to the attitude of consumers and its change and not to the type of behavior or product. Therefore, it should be noted that meaningful marketers seek to meet the material and spiritual needs of consumers simultaneously.

Another recommendation of meaningful marketing to marketing managers is that meaningful marketing does not seek to forget its predecessor, meaningful marketing seeks to add value to all of its previous philosophies and schools with originality, meaning that this type of marketing uses other philosophies as a tool to achieve its goals.

Another meaningful marketing recommendation according to the extracted



model is a comprehensive view of consumer needs. In the sense that meaningful marketers should first of all try to identify the needs and understand the level of needs of consumers and accordingly seek to inject this concept. This concept will certainly not be well received if meaningful marketers in a society who are struggling to meet their subsistence needs simply offer meaning without any context. As mentioned, the purpose of meaningful marketing is to improve the quality of life of consumers and because of the different meanings of quality of life, meaningful marketing seeks to create a common concept based on the minimum intersubjective commonalities resulting from agreement, understanding and interaction. Finally, it is important to mention that one of the limitations of the present study is the breadth of the research topic and the impossibility of studying the details of each of the identified dimensions and the relationships between these dimensions with each other. Discuss the dimensions identified for meaningful marketing as well as the relationships between the variables of this concept. Future research can also conduct quantitative field research in this area using the identified dimensions for the meaningful marketing hierarchy.

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