

## PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

### THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUSTAINABLE MARKETING AND INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION: A CASE STUDY

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**Basheer Ismail Mahmoud, Sarmad Hamza Jassim. The Relationship Between Sustainable Marketing and International Distribution: A Case Study-- Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology 18(18), 160-181. ISSN 1567-214x**

**Keywords: Sustainable Marketing, Environmental Dimension, Social Dimension, Economic Dimension, International Distribution.**

#### **ABSTRACT**

The research dealt with the relationship of sustainable marketing and international distribution, as the research aims to know the reality of sustainable marketing in the Iraqi General Company for Cement and how to use it in marketing the cement product in a way that reflects the sustainable state of the product. to exploit this in the international orientation and move to foreign markets through international distribution in choosing the channel that will suit The company and the product and its competition with the products of other companies. The study problem focused on how to move to international markets and any international distribution channel that can be followed to move the cement product internationally, and does the company market its products in a way that focuses on sustainable aspects? Does sustainable marketing have a prominent role in moving the product to international markets?

The study was conducted in the General Company for Iraqi Cement for a sample that included the advanced owners in the company and the answers received amounted to (126) answers. In analyzing, the results obtained from the research sample. The research reached a set of conclusions, the most important of which is that there is a weakness in some aspects of sustainable marketing in terms of the importance of its dimensions to the environment, and that the company focuses its attention on the direct channel of international transmission. and the study reached a set of recommendations, the most important of which is that the company should work on improving the environmental dimension as it is one of the priorities Sustainable marketing before other dimensions. and the company should direct its thinking to establish sites in other countries to which it is affiliated (the hierarchical channel) and not rely (the direct channel) only.

## INTRODUCTION

The cement industry is one of the most important construction sectors in all countries of the world and has a direct connection and a clear impact on the environment and its natural resources such as water, air and soil. It requires industries and companies to apply and adopt sustainable concepts that protect and preserve natural resources. This will lead to achieving a competitive advantage for the company through its interest in producing a product that is environmentally friendly, takes into account the societal aspect and reduces the pollution status of these factories.

And that most companies are trying to excel locally through all aspects that meet the needs and desires of local customers to go to foreign markets and then start with how to move internationally and what are the mechanisms that they will follow and what are the international distribution channels that they will define for the flow of their products to those markets and will these channels need intermediaries or will they work Directly without the need for intermediaries or it will work in the form of direct investment by owning sites in the target international markets.

The study aims to move the Iraqi cement product to international markets within a distribution channel that ensures its proper transmission and that reaches the target markets, by focusing on the environmental, social and economic aspects of the Iraqi cement product to use that as a sustainable marketing aspect to move the cement product to international markets. and this will lead to achieving Material revenues for the company by finding new international markets and encouraging the national industry to advance the rest of the products of our Iraqi industry and move them internationally.

## METHODOLOGY

### *Research problem*

The problem of the research is represented in several aspects, including the lack of information among managers in the General Company for Iraqi Cement about the main and sub-researched variables in terms of details, contents and application requirements. About the following questions:

- The company applies sustainable marketing of the cement product through (attention to the environmental, social and economic aspects of the marketing process).
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- The General Company for Iraqi Cement produces its product within the local and international standards.
- The company follows the sustainability processes with its raw materials and production processes to produce a product that is environmentally friendly.
- The company uses modern technology tools to help reduce emissions from the company's (18) plants spread across all Iraqi governorates?

- Does the cement product have the specifications and quality to move it to foreign markets?
- Does the company have the ability to cover the needs of global markets?
- Is there an impact of the sustainable marketing variable on the international distribution and its variables?

### ***The Importance of Research***

The importance of the research can be clarified through the following:

- The study shows the importance of sustainable marketing for the company and the cement product by addressing how to reduce emissions and the use of sustainable raw materials that will contribute to making the product sustainable.
- The importance of cement marketing, which contributes to reducing environmental and social damages, and adopting sustainable promotion methods, as well as packaging, which contributes to reflecting the sustainable aspect of the product.
- Achieving material revenues for the company by finding new global markets.
- Encouraging the national industry to advance the rest of our Iraqi industry's products and move them internationally.
- Informing customers in international markets about the quality of Iraq's industry products.

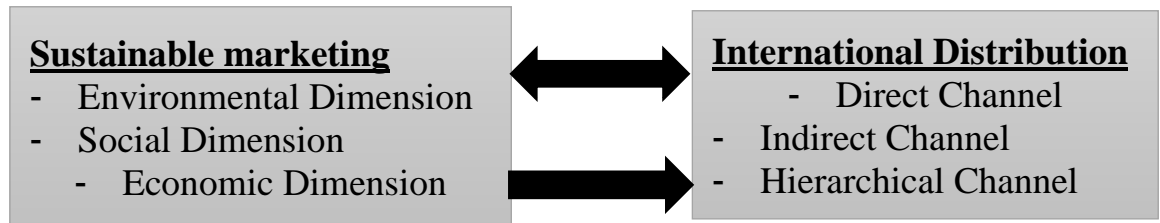
### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the research can be clarified through the following:

- Focusing on the environmental, social and economic aspects of the Iraqi cement product to use that as a sustainable marketing aspect to move the cement product to international markets.
- Knowing the quality of the cement product compared to the imported products in order to contribute to its transfer globally.
- Diagnosing the appropriate marketing channel for the cement company in the field of transporting the local cement product through it to regional and international markets, in a manner that provides the lowest costs and the largest possible marketing space.
- Determining the nature of the correlational and influencing relationships between the main and sub-variables of the study.

## RESEARCH MODEL

The search model can be illustrated as in Figure (1).



**Figure 1** Research Model

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- The first main hypothesis: (Sustainable marketing is significantly associated with the international distribution channel).
- The second main hypothesis: (there is a significant effect of the combined dimensions of sustainable marketing "the environmental dimension, the social dimension, the economic dimension" in the international distribution channel and its dimensions "the direct channel, the indirect channel, the hierarchical channel").

### *Research limits*

The study was conducted in the General Company for Iraqi Cement, one of the formations of the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, and its location in Baghdad. The research was conducted during the year (2021), which included the period of distributing the questionnaire and personal interviews conducted by the researcher at the General Company for the Iraqi Cement Industry.

### *Community and sample research*

One of the industry sectors in Iraq, represented by the General Company for Iraqi Cement, one of the formations of the Iraqi Ministry of Industry and Minerals, was chosen as an application field for the study. in the company and laboratories). Their number was estimated at (168) in the company's headquarters and the Southern and Northern Associate and its laboratories, and one of the reasons for choosing this sample is their accurate knowledge of the nature of the study and that the global launch is among their proposals as a result of the detailed study of the reality of the company. Its laboratories and its products.

### *Metrics and statistical tools used*

The research adopted a set of statistical methods for the purpose of data analysis, achieving the objectives of the study and testing its hypotheses using the (SPSS V.26) program (Excel).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Sustainable Marketing*

Sustainable marketing is a fairly recent term, as marketing philosophies have evolved over time until we reach what we are now. and the process of development began with the belief that consumers prefer products that are widely available and inexpensive, moving to the belief that consumers prefer those products that offer the highest levels Quality, performance and innovative features. then to refer to the concept of selling in this context through that consumers and companies usually do not buy enough of the organizational product unless intensive promotion and selling efforts are taken, and all these things promoted the idea of the marketing concept.

Then, the need to confront social problems and the dangerous environmental pollution that emerged, which led to the emergence of the concepts of social marketing and environmental marketing that emerged during the seventies and eighties. and the concept of social marketing includes the application of marketing principles, concepts and tools to market various socially beneficial ideas and causes of social changes, in turn The concept of environmental marketing includes environmental stewardship as a business development responsibility and business growth opportunity (Hunt, 2017: 57).

The concept of sustainable marketing appeared after all that in order to meet long-term consumer and societal goals, and on the other hand from the perspective of consumers. sustainable marketing must be a promising approach to meet the growing consumer demand in a sustainable manner, yet the idea of sustainable marketing is still relatively in its infancy. although it It has been the subject of research over the past two decades and there is still a need for research on sustainable marketing to reveal all its aspects (Quoquab, et al., 2019: 798).

And sustainable marketing sometimes referred to as green marketing is when a company uses social and environmental investments as a marketing strategy. Marketing for companies is sustainable over a period of time, and this leads to organizations that use sustainable marketing to gain a positive outlook. Environmentally enlightened marketing, it focused more on being environmentally friendly and was just called environmental marketing (Loy, 2019: 46).

He explained in this context (Zubedi, et al., 2020: 37) that many studies have shown that integrating sustainable marketing into business would actually lead to more returns because it improves brand image and good reputation in the corporate world.

Sustainable marketing can be used as a strategic marketing plan for better business performance. Today's companies are investing in more sustainable business practices and this includes their marketing activities. Sustainable marketing is a complex challenge for companies and marketers, as it requires meeting consumer demand and staying competitive in the market with changes to core business activities. Including new sourcing methods, production

processes and distribution channels, compliance with sustainability regulations and standards is critical and must be done simultaneously (Kotler and Armstrong, 2018: 599).

And that many companies initially opposed the application of the concept of sustainable marketing, but now they have become an initiative in adopting it as a way to generate value for their current and future customers and strengthen relationships with society and regulatory bodies that ensure that the company is Environmentally friendly (khoja, et al., 2020: 314). The company must not fail to take care of the society's needs in the long run. and if it fails to do so, the social view of the company will be on the basis that it makes fun of its members and society will view it as an opportunistic company, so the company must look at societal problems as opportunities (Lozowicka, 2019: 27).

### *Dimensions of sustainable marketing*

The construction of sustainable marketing includes the environmental, economic and social dimensions, which provides a balanced view of the company's environmental and social efforts in relation to its economic performance. Then, the three dimensions of sustainable marketing were improved to reflect the company's marketing efforts. The environmental dimension states that companies create an environmentally friendly image. Emphasize environmentally friendly concepts in their advertisements and demonstrate efforts to provide environmental protection (song, 2017: 265). Corporate marketing activities focus on meeting the social and ethical needs of consumers, by providing cultural promotion, environmental protection and disaster relief activities. Sustainability marketing activities have a positive impact on brand image improvement, corporate profit growth, and longevity (Choi and Sung, 2013: 168), and we can find various terms that are used as synonyms for sustainable marketing such as ecological marketing, green marketing, environmentally responsible marketing...etc.

Sustainable marketing can be referred to as the process of planning, implementing and controlling the development, pricing and promotion policies and the distribution of products in a way that meets the three criteria. which are to meet the needs of customers and achieve the company's goals, and that the process is compatible with the ecosystem. and we can clarify environmental marketing that it includes all marketing activities that appear as causes of environmental problems and those that help solve environmental problems, and in this way, environmental marketing studies the positive and negative aspects of marketing activities with regard to pollution, depletion of energy sources and depletion of non-renewable resources. We can also define green marketing as a set of activities designed to create and facilitate any exchanges aimed at satisfying human needs and desires. in such a way that those needs and desires are satisfied with a minimum negative impact on the natural environment (Omkar, 2014: 26), Sustainable marketing includes the three dimensions of sustainability, and the following is a brief overview of these three dimensions of sustainable marketing as indicated by them (Quoquab, 2020: 7).

- Environmental dimension: The environmental dimension refers to commercial activities related to natural resources and the companies' contribution to environmental sustainability. This dimension focuses on companies' efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, energy and water consumption, waste consumption and the like. To a large extent, it takes into account the amount of energy, effort and money that Organizations invest it to replace their non-renewable energy with renewable energy and the amount of replacing non-renewable materials with renewable materials, and this dimension also indicates a commitment to the perspective of "love of nature." Companies that adopt the environmental dimension tend to participate in marketing activities related to environmental management and taking care of natural resources and contribute to reducing consumption and reducing negative impacts on the planet and ecosystems. Positive on company performance due to improved use of energy and raw materials and reduced risk of environmental pollution (Varadarajan, 2017: 13).

- Social Dimension: The social dimension refers to the company's impact on society and complete well-being, which focuses on social justice and community relations. This dimension emphasizes companies' attempt to deal with people, meet their needs, and promote equal development opportunities for all. From a sustainable marketing perspective, it can be implied that identifying Marketing strategies and daily business operations must adhere to the motto of "people love."

And companies that focus on the social dimension tend to engage in marketing activities that have a good impact on society such as sponsoring charities, advocating community relations and supporting education, and not only that. Such companies are likely to create good relationships with customers because of their focus on human well-being and employee welfare. Customers and society as a whole, and in this way, sustainable marketing contributes to equality and quality of life (Porral, 2019: 268), and this will lead us to the practice of social responsibility by companies, and the concept of sustainable marketing is derived from corporate social responsibility that focuses specifically on budgeting and developing environmental and economic goals. and social long-terms to attract customers and contribute to stakeholder needs (Sun and Kim, 2014: 74).

- Economic dimension: The economic dimension focuses primarily on value generation and the financial performance of indigenous peoples, and emphasizes the efforts of companies in assessing short- and long-term value and their relationships with stakeholders. ". (Sun and Kim, 2014: 79), companies that are motivated to achieve economic gains focus on creating value, increasing financial performance, developing competitive advantage and ensuring fair profits. interest, and that the combination of all three dimensions of sustainable marketing equally specifically provides benefits to all stakeholders, and it is expected that if sustainable marketing is adopted on a large scale, it may reduce the environmental, social and economic obstacles prevailing globally, especially in developing countries (Sun, 2019: 772).

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The economic dimension requires companies to achieve short and long-term economic goals, develop a competitive advantage, create value, enhance financial performance, and distribute profits equitably. The corporate social dimension encourages the promotion of social and human well-being through improving the welfare of employees, sponsoring charities, and establishing good relationships with society and stakeholders (Lobber, 2017: 73).

### *International Distribution*

Companies today adopt different strategies in order to expand and develop their businesses and reach different segments and categories of customers. These strategies include the use of different platforms in marketing, the use of different marketing methods, the promotion of products and services they provide, or expansion into new markets. The process of international expansion is one of the best effective marketing strategies to keep pace with development. The result, that the process of going internationally means that the product or service is available and easily accessible for purchase to achieve the success of the company (Albaum, et al., 2016: 199).

When developing a global market strategy, the company must know the purchasing preferences of customers or end users, including information that end users may need before they can make purchasing decisions, after-sales services, their expectations, willingness to pay for extras, their delivery preferences, their financing needs, and ordering method. When the company decides to go international, it must be aware of the costs and benefits associated with different methods of marketing and balance them with the preferences of customers, as well as the company's desire to cover the market, and developing a strategy to go to the international market requires three main steps. Comprehensive channel industry practices to isolate successful critical factors, secondly, channel managers must identify areas for improvement in their practices. and thirdly the company develop policies and procedures to motivate and change channel partner behaviors to stimulate effective implementation of channel missions, i.e. most distribution systems rely on independent third parties that may not be compatible with Their own incentives with the seller. so the implementation of the strategy To go to market also entails managing the relationship with partners to motivate them to do what the company wants from them (Hollensen, S., 2017: 82).

Through this, (Vapa and Tankosić, 2019: 36) indicates that distribution channels are a major and important process in the success of the orientation towards international markets, and that the lack of interest in distribution channels to go internationally is a major reason for the failure of the international transition. He emphasizes this (Camargo, et al., 2016: 582), indicating that companies take over distribution functions by building an internal distribution system in which they retain full control, but such a system also requires developing internal expertise and making significant investments to build company-owned distribution channels that It is compatible with its products to move it internationally as planned. and (Kotler, et al., 2017: 167) points out that most products need to pass through multiple marketing channels before reaching end users, and a direct distribution model in which items go directly from the



manufacturer to the end user without any intermediaries is rare due to conflicting demands. Related to resource availability, cost, coverage, specialization requirements and end consumer preferences, brokers can perform many required tasks at lower costs or more efficiently and effectively especially when they have higher operational experience or better infrastructure such as warehousing facilities, market knowledge or contacts with consumers.

### *International Distribution Channels*

Addressed (Hoffman, 2016: 178) that there are direct and indirect channels related to the idea of short and long channels. as (Neves and Campomar, 2015: 419) pointed out that short channels are those channels that do not contain an intermediary or perhaps only one intermediary. and this was what was It refers to somewhat direct channels, but without even referring to the presence of an intermediary, as direct refers to moving the product from the producer to the buyer or user directly. and this is what was referred to (Al Bakri, 2020: 300) by calling it the outlet or the zero channel, while long channels refer to The presence of a number of intermediaries and according to the choice of the channel to deliver the product to the end user, and this is also what the indirect channels were referring to. Which stipulates the presence of intermediaries without specifying their number, but it depends on the requirements of the product and markets, and the researcher extracts from the opinions of researchers and relying on their books and research and what they dealt with that The types of global marketing channels can be defined into three channels. as (Pegan, et al., 2020: 24) addresses the addition of hierarchical channels represented by companies, subsidiary and marketed. which are as follows:

- Direct channel: Many companies rely on building their own internal distribution system, which is the best way for them and according to their capabilities to reach foreign markets. Companies that want to design a special distribution system without the presence or dealing with intermediaries aim to sell their products to foreign markets through The shortest and least expensive path. and (Green and Keegan, 2020: 298) indicates in the same context that companies that follow direct channels aim to link directly with foreign markets. as well as increase market share, and that companies that adopt these decisions must provide a set of capabilities As the company's ability to distribute its experience in foreign markets and the volume of its activity in the foreign market. which plays a role in carrying out the management and organization of external marketing, and adds (Bertoli and Resciniti, 2012: 133) that companies that choose export as an entry method in the early stages of their internationalization strategy because it is the least An investment. less costly and less demanding because it prefers caution when entering abroad, and the company can carry out the export process in two ways: direct export, which involves under the name of direct channels to His dependence on intermediaries or indirect export, which falls under the umbrella of indirect channels. because he needs intermediaries.

- Indirect channel: channels that rely on intermediaries in the process of moving products from the producer to the industrial buyer or the end user, and in this channel the producer does not distribute his products directly to the

- consumer. and in this channel the intermediary bears the responsibility for transporting products to foreign markets and this will provide the company with ease Dealing through these channels. and (Rajagopal, S., 2016: 254) adds that the most challenging aspect of this channel is that intermediaries will be assigned or included within the distribution channel to transport products to foreign markets. so, the manufacturer will face the challenge of choosing the intermediaries who will represent the company carefully and carefully because they will be the face of the company in the international markets. and deals with (Pegan) in his book a number of operations. which represent the indirect channels of its need and its dependence on intermediaries to move internationally and deal with foreign markets through those business.

- The hierarchical channel: The hierarchical channel of entry is a form of foreign direct investment where the company owns facilities in the foreign market. and the hierarchical channel is followed by companies that want to ensure control of their activities abroad and investment to achieve significant sales penetration in the target market. and this channel is the most dangerous A way to enter. In fact, even if a company acquires greater knowledge of the market and competitive environment and exercises a high degree of control over the activities developed in the foreign market, the business risks associated with investment remain high, and much depends on the type of direct investment.

## **SEARCH RESULTS ANALYSIS**

### ***Presentation, analysis and diagnosis of the first independent variable sustainable marketing***

The independent variable sustainable marketing was measured through three dimensions (environmental dimension, social dimension, economic dimension) through (22) paragraphs and through answers (126) observations in the General Cement Company, as the independent variable sustainable marketing in total got a calculated mean of (3.70). High level, to indicate that the Iraqi Cement Company has a philosophy that calls for socially, environmentally and economically responsible business, to meet the current and future needs of each of its customers and achieve its own requirements as part of its mission. A relative difference (10.67%) indicates the homogeneity and convergence of opinions about the availability and practice of sustainable marketing in the General Cement Company, as shown by the results of Table (1)

**Table (1)** Presentation and Analysis of Sustainable Marketing Data (n=126)

<b>n</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Arithmetic mean</b>	<b>standard deviation</b>	<b>Relative importance</b>	<b>Variation coefficient</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>The company meets the current and future needs of its customers at the same time.</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>1.177</b>	<b>74.4</b>	<b>31.63</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>The company's employees, including consultants and executives, participate in the company's environmental activities.</b>	<b>2.16</b>	<b>0.539</b>	<b>43.2</b>	<b>24.95</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>The company's marketing strategy is characterized as a sustainable strategy that achieves the company's goals and preserves the natural environment at the same time</b>	<b>2.12</b>	<b>0.592</b>	<b>42.4</b>	<b>27.92</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>The company seeks to compete in entering the market with innovative and sustainable products</b>	<b>3.73</b>	<b>0.463</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>12.41</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>The company has a purposeful, clear and understandable mission to all the stakeholders of the company which is to achieve an environmentally friendly product</b>	<b>4.02</b>	<b>0.874</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>21.74</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>The central management of the company relies on the (Green Sustainability Team) for the purpose of controlling the use of energy and water and managing the waste generated by the company's manufacturing operations.</b>	<b>3.79</b>	<b>0.741</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>19.55</b>

7	<b>The company markets only environmentally friendly products.</b>	<b>2.11</b>	<b>0.666</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>31.56</b>
	<b>environmental dimension</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>0.412</b>	<b>61.8</b>	<b>13.33</b>
8	<b>The company's brand is accepted and respected by society due to its commitment to social responsibility in its marketing work.</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>0.541</b>	<b>85.6</b>	<b>12.64</b>
9	<b>The company emphasizes the principle of (sustainability is everyone's responsibility in the company).</b>	<b>4.35</b>	<b>0.478</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>10.98</b>
10	<b>The company considers its customers as partners in its marketing campaigns for all its products.</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>0.496</b>	<b>85.4</b>	<b>11.61</b>
11	<b>The company holds all of its directors to be accountable for the success of its sustainable marketing program for its products.</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>1.093</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>30.19</b>
12	<b>The company uses modern technological means of production that allow it to meet the needs of the sustainable marketing of all its products.</b>	<b>3.76</b>	<b>0.950</b>	<b>75.2</b>	<b>25.26</b>
13	<b>The company has sustainability databases that document the tasks that the company's employees perform in order to protect society and preserve the environment.</b>	<b>4.53</b>	<b>0.441</b>	<b>90.6</b>	<b>9.73</b>
14	<b>The company has competent public relations managers</b>	<b>4.38</b>	<b>0.736</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>16.80</b>

	<b>who have the ability to promote the company's successes and create a good impression of the company's image in the minds of the community.</b>				
	<b>social dimension</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>0.475</b>	<b>82.4</b>	<b>11.39</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>The company is making current financial savings in order to meet the requirements of building sustainable marketing in its future business.</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>0.860</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>20.72</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>The company strives to provide high quality products through innovative processes with minimal resources.</b>	<b>2.25</b>	<b>0.570</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>25.33</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Financial allocations directed to sustainable marketing are fixed allocations that cannot be reduced under the various circumstances the company faces.</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>0.777</b>	<b>81.2</b>	<b>19.13</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>The company encourages development proposals aimed at raising the levels of production and sustainable marketing, provided that this is not accompanied by an increase in costs.</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>0.602</b>	<b>85.4</b>	<b>14.09</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>The company sells by-products and generates financial returns that contribute to sustainable marketing.</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>0.829</b>	<b>80.2</b>	<b>20.67</b>

<b>20</b>	<b>The company receives government and third-party grants and donations that support its sustainable marketing campaigns.</b>	<b>3.92</b>	<b>1.008</b>	<b>78.4</b>	<b>25.71</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>The company leases ideal equipment from other companies to produce the product in order to provide a sustainable product.</b>	<b>4.33</b>	<b>0.615</b>	<b>86.6</b>	<b>14.20</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>The company's management allocates additional financial compensation to employees in the program of sustainable marketing of its products.</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>1.024</b>	<b>74.4</b>	<b>27.52</b>
	<b>Economic Dimension</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>0.476</b>	<b>76.8</b>	<b>12.39</b>
	<b>Sustainable Marketing</b>	<b>3.70</b>	<b>0.395</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>10.67</b>

*Presentation, analysis and diagnosis of the dependent variable International Distribution Channel*

The approved variable was measured according to the title and the procedural scheme of the research, the selection of the global marketing channel through three dimensions (direct channel, indirect channel, hierarchical channel) through (32) paragraphs and through answers (126) views in the Iraqi Cement Company

The adopted variable, the choice of the global marketing channel in general, obtained a calculated average of (3.33) at a moderate level, indicating that the Iraqi Cement Company possesses an integrated series of operations through which the products pass until they reach the final consumer or the industrial buyer. It includes the absence of intermediaries and is called zero or direct. Or when there are intermediaries and it is called indirect or bilateral. It may be hierarchical through the establishment of specialized companies in a specific country. Overall, the variable obtained a standard deviation (0.445), relative interest (66.6%), and a relative coefficient of variation (13.36%) indicating homogeneity and convergence of opinions about its availability and practice in an average manner in the General Cement Company, as shown by the results of Table (2).

**Table (2)** Presentation and Analysis of International Distribution Channel Selection Data (n=126)

<b>n</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Arithmetic mean</b>	<b>standard deviation</b>	<b>Relative importance</b>	<b>Variation coefficient</b>
1	The direct channel is the best way for the company to reach foreign markets.	3.65	1.097	73	30.05
2	The company plans to sell its products to foreign markets through the shortest and fastest way.	4.03	0.574	80.6	14.24
3	The company seeks to follow this channel to reduce the cost of moving to foreign markets.	4.02	0.950	80.4	23.63
4	The company works to provide the company's internal capabilities of marketing information systems and product quality for direct transfer to foreign markets.	4.06	0.487	81.2	11.99
5	The company uses the direct channel to enter the foreign market when the company is wary and apprehensive about the transition.	2.67	0.631	53.4	23.63
6	The company distributes its product to foreign markets without the presence of any intermediary.	3.30	0.531	66	16.09
7	The company needs to know the foreign markets accurately and clearly when adopting the direct channel.	2.58	1.012	51.6	39.22
8	The company makes high profits through this channel because there are no intermediaries.	3.05	1.017	61	33.34
	direct channel	3.42	0.548	68.4	16.02
9	The company relies on intermediaries in the process of moving products from the producer to the industrial buyer.	3.88	0.689	77.6	17.75
10	The company uses high quality and experienced intermediaries to sell the company's products in foreign markets.	1.98	0.526	39.6	26.56

11	The process of selecting the international intermediaries responsible for transporting the product to foreign markets is easy.	3.29	1.003	65.8	30.48
12	The company owns intermediaries in foreign markets who work on selling the company's products.	2.80	1.052	56	37.57
13	The company owns intermediaries in the local markets who work on exporting the company's products abroad.	3.97	0.633	79.4	15.94
14	The profits of the company fall due to the presence of a number of intermediaries in this channel.	3.80	0.941	76	24.76
15	The company bears the time, effort and cost when following the indirect channel.	2.31	1.041	46.2	45.06
16	The company does not need to study foreign markets and bear the risks and costs of searching for customers, because the broker is the one who will adopt this issue.	3.97	0.627	79.4	15.79
	indirect channel	3.25	0.654	65	20.12
17	The company owns a facility (company) in the foreign market that is fully responsible for the product.	3.26	1.037	65.2	31.80
18	This channel is considered the most expensive channel for the company because it requires high investments.	4.03	0.649	80.6	16.10
19	These channels represent the most dangerous way to enter foreign markets because they represent a long-term way and require careful strategic planning.	3.52	1.007	70.4	28.60
20	The hierarchical channel is suitable for large corporations and government corporations	2.39	1.042	47.8	43.59



	<b>that have the ability to bear the risks and costs.</b>				
<b>21</b>	<b>The company is considering opening subsidiary companies in foreign markets that are administratively and legally independent in their work while preserving the product brand.</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>0.555</b>	<b>64.8</b>	<b>17.12</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>The company is thinking of establishing marketing companies in foreign markets whose work is only marketing for the company's products.</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>1.142</b>	<b>57.2</b>	<b>39.93</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>The firm selects foreign markets, which are economically stable and have flexibility in the restrictions imposed when following the hierarchical channel.</b>	<b>3.92</b>	<b>0.627</b>	<b>78.4</b>	<b>15.99</b>
	<b>hierarchical channel</b>	<b>3.32</b>	<b>0.617</b>	<b>66.4</b>	<b>18.58</b>
	<b>International Distribution Channel</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>0.445</b>	<b>66.6</b>	<b>13.36</b>

*Test the hypothesis of the link between sustainable marketing and the international distribution channel*

Through Table (3), it is clear that sustainable marketing in general has achieved four out of four relationships, with a percentage of (100%) of the relationships, all of which are below a morale level of less than (5%), and they were as follows:

Sustainable marketing achieved a strong positive correlation (0.779\*\*) with the selection of the international distribution channel at the significance level (0.000), indicating any increased interest by the General Cement Company in the sustainable marketing of a single unit. This increase will lead to its additional interest in choosing the international distribution channel as much as the value of the correlation coefficient between them and vice versa. As for the dimensions of choosing the international distribution channel, sustainable marketing was able to find a strong direct correlation (0.774\*\*) with the hierarchical channel dimension, and with the direct channel a strong significant direct correlation (0.573\*\*), and with the indirect channel a direct correlation (0.437\*\*) medium strength. From all of the above, the first main hypothesis is accepted (sustainable marketing is positively and morally linked with the international distribution channel and its dimensions).

**Table (3)** the sustainable marketing correlation matrix with the selection of the international distribution channel and its dimensions\

relationship strength	correlation	international distribution channel	hierarchical channel	indirect channel	direct channel		
powerful	my expulsion	<b>0.767**</b>	<b>0.508**</b>	<b>0.576**</b>	<b>0.701**</b>	<b>r</b>	environmental dimension
		<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Sig</b>	
		<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>n</b>	
powerful	my expulsion	<b>0.845**</b>	<b>0.669**</b>	<b>0.578**</b>	<b>0.708**</b>	<b>r</b>	social dimension
		<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Sig</b>	
		<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>n</b>	
From medium to strong	my expulsion	<b>0.434**</b>	<b>0.821**</b>	<b>0.014</b>	<b>0.117</b>	<b>r</b>	economic dimension
		<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.874</b>	<b>0.192</b>	<b>Sig</b>	
		<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>n</b>	
From medium to strong	my expulsion	<b>0.779**</b>	<b>0.774**</b>	<b>0.437**</b>	<b>0.573**</b>	<b>r</b>	sustainable marketing
		<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Sig</b>	
		<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>n</b>	

*Testing the impact hypothesis of sustainable marketing in the international distribution channel*

The researcher directed to test the second hypothesis (there is a significant effect of the combined dimensions of sustainable marketing "environmental dimension, social dimension, economic dimension" in choosing the international distribution channel and its dimensions "direct channel, indirect channel, hierarchical channel")

The results of Table (4) showed an interpretation coefficient (0.727) at the significance level (0.000), and an adjusted interpretation coefficient (0.721). The combined dimensions of sustainable marketing (the environmental dimension, the social dimension, and the economic dimension) were able to explain a percentage of (72.1%) of the changes that occur in the selection of international distribution channels. While the remaining percentage (27.9%) is attributed to other variables that were not included in the tested model. It was found that the calculated value of (F) for the model (108.423) at the significance level (0.000) is significant for the model. While it was found that there was a positive direct effect of the social dimension (0.638) at the significance level (0.000), and the calculated (T) value (7.162), and a positive direct effect of the economic dimension (0.234) at the significance level (0.000) and the calculated (T) value (2.626) ... While the Iraqi Cement Company was not able to employ the environmental dimension in choosing the international distribution channel, and from all the results reviewed, the third main hypothesis is accepted (sustainable marketing, in its dimensions, affects the selection of international distribution channels significantly), according to the following predictive equation:

<p><b>* 0.638 + (0.309) = (Y) International distribution channel</b>  <b>(economic dimension) * 0.234 + (social dimension)</b></p>
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**Table (4)** the impact of sustainable marketing in its dimensions on the international distribution channel (n = 126)

International distribution channel							independent variable
F	T	Sig	A R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\alpha$	
<b>108.423</b>	<b>0.471</b>	<b>0.710</b>	<b>0.721</b>	<b>0.727</b>	<b>0.042</b>	<b>0.309</b>	environmental dimension
	<b>7.162</b>	<b>0.000</b>			<b>0.638</b>		social dimension
	<b>2.626</b>	<b>0.037</b>			<b>0.234</b>		economic dimension

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Conclusions*

- Sustainable marketing is one of the requirements of the business world today because of its high importance for providing attention to the aspects of society and customers, by working to achieve the basic aspects that the sustainable marketing program aims for by paying attention to the environmental, social and economic aspects.
- The company seeks to apply sustainable marketing in order to obtain international certificates in this aspect for the purpose of promoting the company's products and increasing its sales.
- The company's interest in the social dimension was demonstrated through sustainability databases and work to document the tasks performed by its members in order to protect society and preserve the environment. At the same time, the company emphasized the obligation of its managers to be responsible for the success of the sustainable marketing program for their products, but it was not within the required level.
- The company seeks to achieve the requirements of sustainable marketing in its products that are largely internationally exported, while it achieves the same requirements in local products to a lesser extent.
- The company employs a large number of workers in its production departments, while it employs a small number in its marketing departments, on the one hand. and on the other hand, the employees responsible for tasks related to sustainable marketing are no more than 12 employees with limited experience and rely mainly on international standards related to issues the natural environment The company rarely contracts with external environmental agencies.
- The company uses technology tools that help reduce emissions in a number of the company's factories, as well as sustainable production processes that contribute to aspects related to this issue, while a number of other factories do not use these tools so far.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Giving the issue of sustainable marketing the utmost importance in all companies, especially industrial ones, and directing companies to activate the supervisory authorities for sustainability for the process of monitoring the implementation of all requirements of sustainable marketing in accordance with international requirements.
- The company should set a clear goal to implement sustainable marketing in its business, justifying the costs incurred by the company in this regard, and that this goal requires that it be consistent with the marketing goals and does not conflict with them.
- The need to promote sustainable marketing by adopting the social dimension in directing this, in addition to applying the following mechanisms:
  - a) Requiring all company members and managers to be responsible for the success of its marketing programme.
  - b) Adopting modern technology means of production that meet the needs of the sustainable market.
  - c) Adopting competent managers who have the ability to promote the company's successes and build a good impression of its image in the minds of society.
- The company's emphasis on meeting the requirements of sustainable marketing in a uniform and fair manner in its products, which are received by both international and local distribution outlets without any discrimination, and that the company is committed to protecting the environment and human consumers of all its products, whether Iraqis or foreigners.
- The company contracts with the consulting offices of Iraqi universities specialized in sustainable marketing and cooperates with public and private environmental agencies in a way that maximizes the expertise of the company's employees responsible for sustainable marketing applications. with reference to the need to balance the returns from those contracts with the cost of manufacturing the product in the company.
- Work to disseminate and apply sustainable processing, production and marketing methods in all the company's joints and in all its factories, and work to oblige the lagging factories to use sustainable mechanisms by providing them and allocating funds by the higher authorities to expedite the implementation of this.

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