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## A new marketing education concept for “Integrated Education in Green Promotion” based on Mezirow’s perspective

### Abstract

The research aim of this paper is to discuss the potential benefits of a new marketing education concept, the “Integrated Education in Green Promotion” (IEGP) based on the fundamental assumptions of Mezirow’s “critical reflection” through the investigation of two research questions. IEGP substantially covers the transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will allow in each promotion manager-learner to plan, to launch, and to manage green promotion activities. This new concept must be approached from leadership perspective and as a lifelong learning process. The paper attempts to examine this new concept by categorizing 78 identified empirical papers into conceptual categories in accordance to the theoretical framework. Second, it summarizes the literature review findings and the interpretive claims. Third, it examines the case of the new curriculums (2010-2011) of three Executives Transformative Learning Based Programs in: “Professional and Applied Certificate in Skills Management, Communication, Ecological Literacy and Carbon and Energy Leadership” offered by the Continuing Studies Center of Royal Roads University (Canada), an award winner in the Major Annual Brochure category for Marketing and Innovation 2007-2008 by CAUCE. The author considers the above case as critical, because it is the only award winner of Transformative Learning based program of continuing education that aims to develop managerial and leadership skills in a ecological context related to: (1) communication and collaboration; (2) social, personal and environmental responsibility, leadership, mentorship and stewardship, design; (3) planning and performance; (4) diverse perspectives, and ways of knowing; (5) engagement and influence, whole systems and critical thinking; (6) creativity; and (7) community and relationship-building.

**Keywords:** green marketing, green promotion, marketing education, continuing education, lifelong learning, TLT and critical reflection.

### Introduction

The executive Summary (2008) of the “Breaking the Climate Deadlock Report – A Global Deal for Our Low Carbon Future” (a briefing paper by the Climate Group and McKinsey’s Global Institute’s consultants under the leadership of former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair) underlines that without a change in energy policies and consumption behavior, global energy demand and energy-related carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions will grow by 45 percent to 2020.

According to the 2011 Annual Energy Outlook (Energy Information Administration of U.S., 2011) energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will grow by 16 percent from 2009 to 2035, reaching 6.3 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (or 1.7 GtC). Promotion media impacts the environment as a result of the: (a) production and distribution of the print media; (b) manufacturing and operation of servers and datacenter devices, networking devices and client computers as well as the e-waste impacts of these devices at the end of their useful lives regarding to the digital media and their impact due to the greenhouse gas emissions. According to the 2009 Deloitte Media and Entertainment Industry Outlook (Printing News, 2011), about \$950 billion was spent on products and services provided by media and entertainment companies in 2006. That spending is expected to grow by 38 percent to \$1.3 trillion by 2011. The U.S. Department of Energy reports that approxi-

mately 360,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent greenhouse gas emissions are associated with each billion dollars of economic activity, which would mean the carbon footprint of the media industry, could be as much as 500 million metric tons of greenhouse gas. That would be equivalent to the annual greenhouse gas emissions of 130 coal-fired power plants burning 2.6 million railcars of coal; or the annual greenhouse gas emissions from 95 million four-passenger vehicles burning 56 billion gallons of gasoline.

Deepening our understanding of how existing and potential marketing and promotion managers learning can significantly influence education of green promotion and create new opportunities for existing and potential marketing and promotion managers to be involved in the meaning of the modern “green marketing and promotion activities”<sup>1</sup>. Activities that must be aligned with the requirements of corporate social responsibility (CSR), which suggests that modern organizations have not only economic and legal obligations but also responsibilities to society (Borin & Metcalf, 2010). In response to political, social, and competitive forces, many organizations (from profit and non-profit sector) are adopting environmentally friendly approaches for many business activities including marketing and promotion (Sriram and Forman, 1993; Me-

<sup>1</sup> The terms “green marketing activity” and “green promotion activity” in this paper is based on an adaptation of Gilbert’s definition (2007) for “green business activity”. Therefore, we define the “green marketing activity” and the “green promotion activity” in this study as any marketing and promotion activity that is performed in a way so that it has either limited negative ecological impact or it directly benefits the natural environment in some way.

non and Menon, 1997; Polonsky and Rosenberger, 2001; Gurău and Ranchhod, 2005; Selby, Jones & Kagawa, 2009; Leonidou, Leonidou, Palihawadana & Hultman, 2011). Regarding to green promotion it seems that there is a very significant growth in the last 20 years as a driving force for the increase of public awareness for eco-friendly goods, eco-consuming and other ecological issues (Easterling, Kenworthy & Nemzoff, 1996; Polonsky, Carlson, Grove & Kangun, 1997; Futerra, 2008).

On many cases of misleading claims in promotion messages of “green products” (see some green rules provided by the US Federal Trade Commission and the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission); there are some significant lifelong learning-related issues that are raised. Issues such as: (1) what do promotion managers and advertisers understand by “green”; (2) what does “green rules” compliance, in an ethical and regulatory level mean; and (3) what skills and competences do the promotion managers and advertisers possess in order to communicate effectively symbols of a “green” identity for corporate and marketing brands?

According to Gilbert (2007), Bridges and Wilhelm (2008) and Borin and Metcalf (2010) in response to political, social, and competitive forces, marketing educators can play a crucial role. Their role is arisen from their ability to assist effectively and efficiently the marketing organizations to cover the transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes to contribute to the management of green promotion activities. Consequently, marketing education in an adult education context seems may play crucial role for providing a clearer and deepen understanding of the lifelong-related issues underlined above.

Through the application of Mezirow’s “critical reflection” in marketing education, education leaders, policy-makers, researchers and extension marketing educators can create a learning environment to motivate marketing and promotion managers to evaluate their experiences and provide them the opportunity to review their beliefs, opinions, and values. It involves observation, asking questions, putting facts, ideas, and marketing experiences together to derive new meaning. According to Mezirow (2000, p. 4), critical reflection is a term that stems from Transformative Learning Theory (TLT), which describes a learning process of “becoming critically aware of one’s own tacit assumptions, presuppositions and expectations and those of others and assessing their relevance for making an interpretation”. Mezirow’s 1978 theoretical perspective of transformative learning theory increased the research and theory building in the field of adult education, according to Taylor (2007). Based on the extended review of empirical works in the field of adult education, Mezirow (influenced by the adult education

fathers Freire (1970) and Perry (1970)) is probably the major contributor of modern adult education, inspiring significant adult education scholars.

This study reports the benefits of the Integrated Education in Green Promotion (IEGP). IEGP substantially covers the transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will allow in each promotion manager-learner to plan, to launch, and to manage green promotion strategies and campaigns. This new concept must be approached from leadership perspective and as a lifelong learning process. Through various stages of development, IEGP and marketing may constitute an important factor that determines the level of “sustainable marketing orientation” (in accordance to the conceptualization of Mitchell, Wooliscroft & Higham, 2010). Consequently, education in green promotion is defined as an effort developed individually or collectively for the exploitation of organizational resources that the individual or the team allocates for the management of green promotion activities. Activities that are performed in a way so that it has either limited negative ecological impact or it directly benefits the natural environment in some way, satisfying CSR requirements.

This article is organized as follows. The first section explores the background context presenting: (1) the evolution of marketing thought; (2) the challenges and the difficulties of implementing green marketing education (in an adult education context); (3) the raising importance of “integrated education” (in an adult education context); (4) the value of incorporating Mezirow’s critical reflection in this study; and (5) the research questions related to the investigation of the new marketing education concept (IEGP). The next section summarizes the theoretical framework. The third section presents the literature review process and the research activity for each conceptual category. The literature review findings and their interpretation based on the assumptions of the theoretical framework are presented in the fourth section. The fifth section explores the evidence based on their classification in a chronological order. The sixth section presents the research methodology of the study focusing on: (1) the selection of the critical case and the determination of data gathering and analysis techniques; (2) the data analysis; and (3) the data evaluation. The seventh section summarizes the findings and the last section summarizes the conclusion and the implications of the new marketing education concept.

## 1. Background context

Based on the history of marketing, three fundamental schools of thoughts have emerged: (a) classical and neoclassical economics (1800-1920); (b) early/formative marketing (1900-1950); (c) marketing management (1950-1980); (d) marketing as a social and economic process (since 1980).

In the last years more and more commentaries (see Witkowski, 2005) stress the issue of strengthening the sense of proportion among the fundamental schools of marketing thought despite the predominance of the managerial school of marketing thought. These discussions lead “green marketing” or “environmental marketing” (originating in the early 1970s, see Crane, 2000), one of the three component fields of macro-marketing, to gain the appropriate attention from the beginning of the 1990s. The environmental parameter has been included in the marketing strategy (see for example, Peattie, 1999; Lampe & Gazda, 1995), under rubrics such as ‘green marketing’, ‘environmental marketing’, ‘ecological marketing’, ‘eco-marketing’ and ‘sustainable marketing’ (Fuller, 1999). The approach developed and presented in the American literature under the rubrics, ‘societal marketing’ (Kotler, 1972) and ‘ecological marketing’ (Henion & Kirner, 1976). ‘Environmental marketing’, ‘green marketing’ and ‘sustainable marketing’ are used as synonyms. The above terms were introduced with the purpose of describing and fine-tuning this form of marketing that aims at addressing social and environmental concerns (Peattie & Crane, 2005).

Many researchers recently (e.g., Pride and Ferrell, 2008; Vaccaro, 2009; Kuckertz & Wagner, 2010) in total accordance to older empirical evidence (e.g., Kaufman, 1999; Laroche, Bergeron & Barbaro, 2001) consider ‘green marketing’ as an important entrepreneurial opportunity to innovate even more and as a strong competitive advantage. KPMG’s survey (KPMG International, 2008) found 47.7% of organizations considered sustainability and corporate responsibility an important driver of innovation.

Borin’s and Metcalf’s work (2010) (an interesting extension of Bridges’ and Wilhelm’s work (2008)), presents the critical issue of the appropriate knowledge and skills related to sustainability frameworks that are needed to be transferred to the future marketers, in typical education context. To define the knowledge base that fosters a sustainability-focused mindset and identify the tools and skills required to design products that meet the criteria outlined, an extensive review was conducted of the literature in marketing, new product development, product design, and sustainability, along with a review of corporate sustainability initiatives. Nevertheless, what about the marketing and promotion managers whose actions and decisions are performed in a way with a negative ecological impact?

The answer of such a question may become more complicated, if we consider that marketing and promotion managers from different countries experience the green marketing tendency because the countries are in different stages of this tendency (Papadopoulos, Karagouni, Trigkas & Platogianni, 2010) with different edu-

cational backgrounds in sustainability and green marketing. For many countries, this background does not exist.

This examination may become more complicated if we consider that the new wave for green promotion, according to Institute for Sustainable Communication (see 2012 DRUPA event) prerequisites sustainable green innovations for the packaging of knowledge and goods. This means: (a) culture of innovativeness and creativity; and (b) R&D. On the other hand, based on the evidence about the application of innovative entrepreneurship in different countries, the data are not quite encouraging. According to Ailawadi (2010), less innovation-driven economies are not truly innovators in the traditional sense. They rarely produce brand new products: rather they imitate the products and production processes that have been invented elsewhere in the world – typically in developed countries. This imitation exists also for many other marketing and promotion practices. According to Ailawadi (2010), this process is called “creative imitation”.

Creative imitation in marketing takes place when the imitators better understand how innovative marketing can be applied, used, or sold in their particular market niche (namely their own countries) than do the people who actually create or discover the original innovative, idea, approach and practice. Since relative knowledge and skills for self-motivation and creativity are prerequisites for successful green marketing and green promotion activity (e.g., Isaak, 1997; Isaak, 1998; Isaak, 2002; Sanyang & Huang, 2008; Papadopoulos et al., 2010; Spais, 2010), the importance of inserting the appropriate adult educational models for the advancement of green marketing and green promotion seems to be proven a raising issue in the marketing education literature regarding to the promotion of green marketing education in a world-wide scale.

Modern empirical and theoretical evidence underline the raising importance of the “Integrated Education” concept linked to lifelong and adult learning context (Rao, 1970; Ghazzali, 1978; Nomura, 1982; Nomura, 1998) and became very popular its application in the fields of entrepreneurship education and management education in the decade of the 2000 (e.g., Fan, 2004; Dagada, 2005; Shen, 2006; Shen, 2008; Brockhaus, Hills, Klandt & Welsch, 2007; Dhliwayo, 2008; Kolb & Kolb, 2009; Spais, 2010). This recent literature stream is largely based on the theoretical perspectives of Experiential Learning Theory, which go beyond constructivist approaches that rely heavily on reflection. Nevertheless, in this literature stream only one study identified (Spais, 2010) in the adult education context of entrepreneurship, management and marketing education considering the assumptions of Mezirow’s “critical reflection”. Therefore, the nature and



process of reflection in management and marketing remains a largely undifferentiated mystery, even executive education is changing regarding to learning needs, learning content, pedagogy, instructors, participant mixes, and organizational integrating mechanisms (Conger & Xin, 2000). According to the little available empirical evidence, there is a demand for an integrated marketing education (Peltier, Schibrowsky & Kliemenhagen, 1995; Peltier & Boyt, 2002). Surprisingly, there are very few research tries deepening on Mezirow's research tries. Some of them, quiet interesting and of high research value (Petier, Hay & Drago, 2005; Peltier, Hay & Drago, 2006) have considered an adult learning theoretical perspective – Mezirow's "critical reflection" – (Mezirow, 1978; Brookfield, 1990; Mezirow 1990; 1991; 1998; Taylor, 1998; Mezirow, 2003) from the informal and non-formal education context, in order to integrate it in a formal education context.

**1.1. Mezirow's critical reflection of TLT on IEGP and the research questions.** There is a growing interest in the concept of critical reflection in the adult learning and management literature (Van Woerkom, 2010). Mezirow's conceptualization of critical reflection in terms of Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) can be proven an emerging fundamental concept, with valuable implications in the marketing education literature. It is a conceptualization of high value, which can offer a new interpretation of marketing education and new practices. This work will focus on steps 3 to 8 and will investigate the following **two research questions**: (1) *Is the IEGP model appropriate for developing skills for green promotion for marketing and promotion managers?* (2) *Can the IEGP model be used in continuing professional training programs for marketing and promotion managers?*

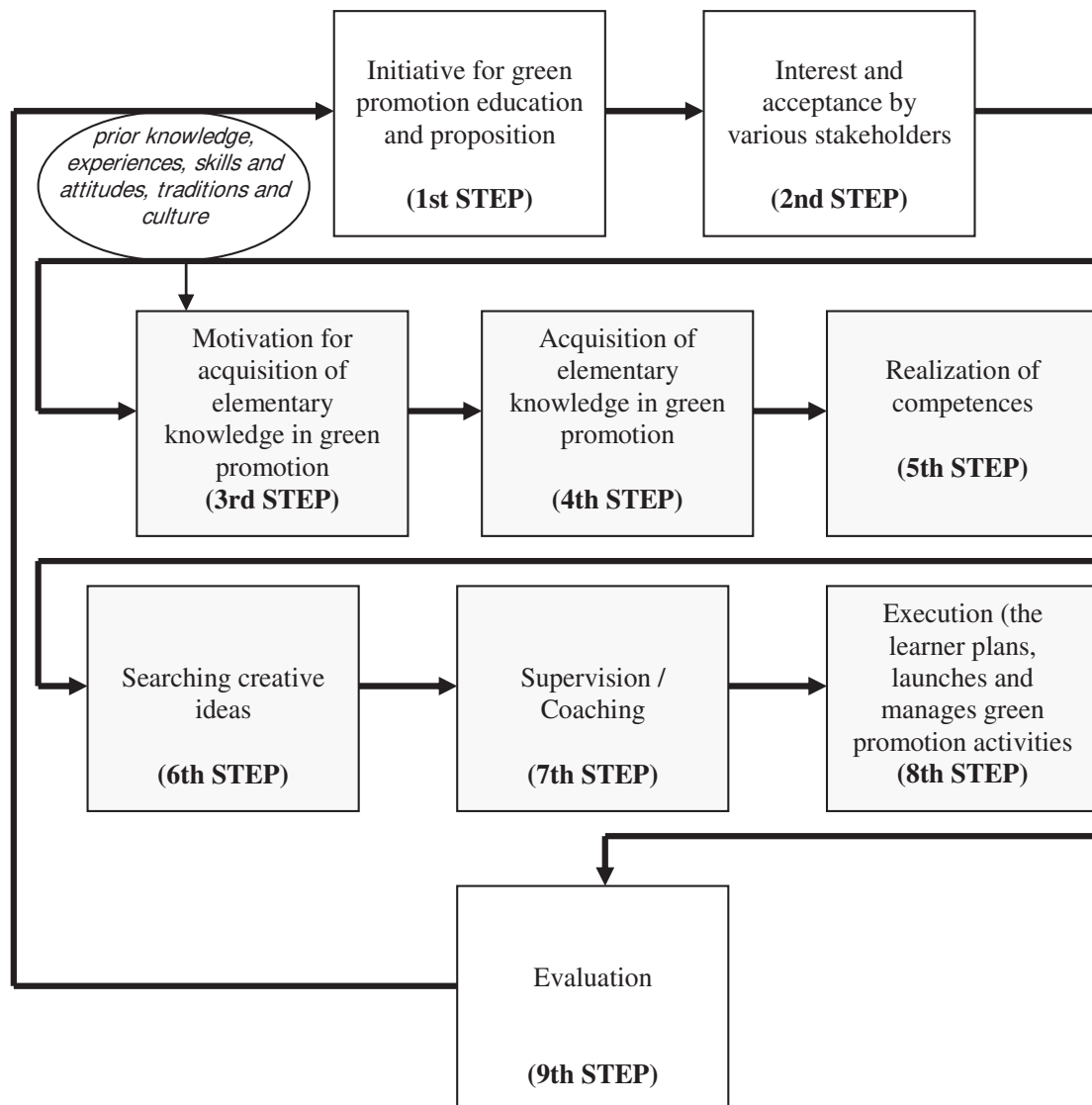
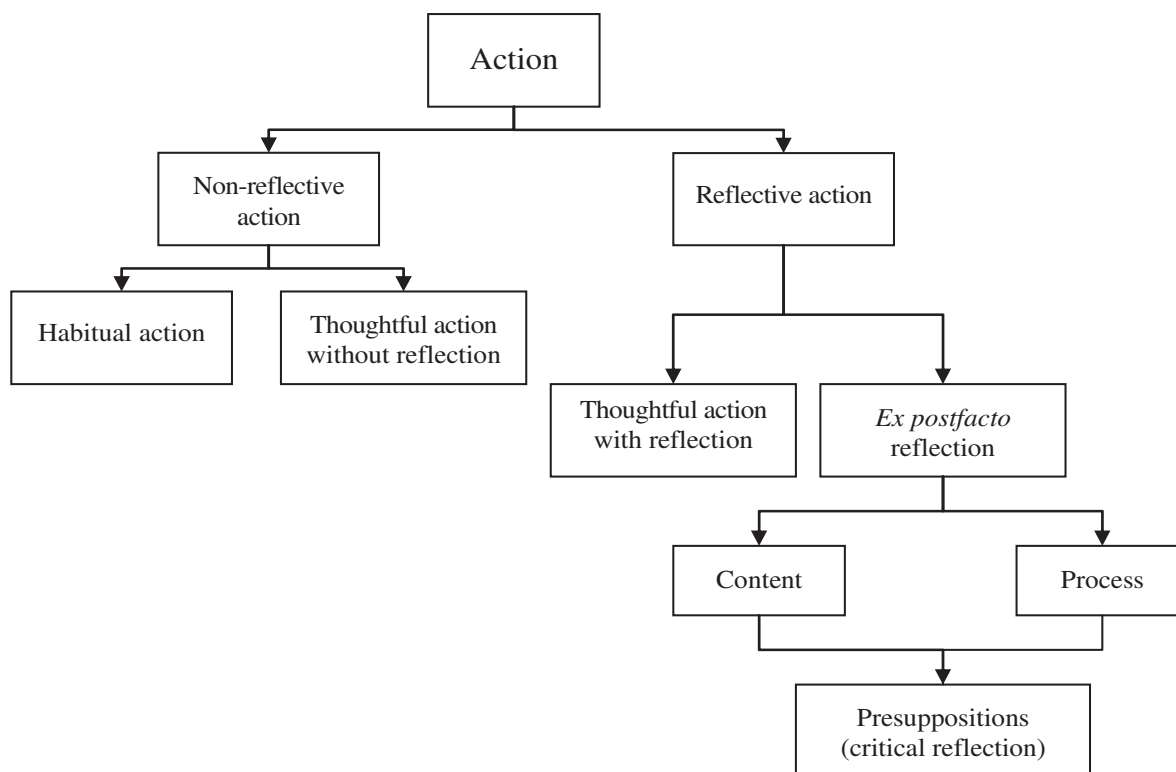


Fig. 1. The proposed IEGP model

## 2. Theoretical framework

In this section, I present the theoretical framework of this study based on Mezirow's theoretical perspective of transformative learning theory and his

model of critical reflection, introducing the fundamental assumptions (see Mezirow, 1991, 1998, 2000, 2003; Kitchener & King, 1990), in accordance to Figure 2.



Source: Mezirow (1990).

Fig. 2. Mezirow's critical reflection model

**2.1. Assumptions of Mezirow's theoretical perspective.** The beginning point of the line of argument for transformative learning is the axiom about the way that reality is interpreted, which is determined by each individual's system of perceptions. This system of perceptions is imposed from individuals' cultural context and is unconsciously internalized through the process of socialization. Often, it contains wrong and problematic values, beliefs, assumptions, and presuppositions. Therefore, the interaction of the individuals with reality presents many dysfunctions. Mezirow (1991) considers "reflection" as the mean to achieve this and defines it as a process of reviewing perceptions and values to comprehend reality and act. Reflection is possible to be limited in the investigation of the procedural and methodological sides of a problem. Sometimes, however, reflection is extended in questioning established assumptions and presuppositions, as a basis for facing problems (i.e., it does not concern simply how adults act but why they do, the deeper reasons and consequences of their behavior). Critical reflection can lead to the re-assessment of the problematic beliefs for the reality that adults got used to consider them

as given – and reach even in the critical auto-reflection (the holistic revision of the way adults perceive, believe, feel and act (Brookfield, 1990). Mezirow describes transformative learning as having several stages that progress from a characteristic "disorienting dilemma" in an individual's life as an opportunity for considering new perspectives. From this new vantage point, the individual may continue to examine unfamiliar views, critically reflect and evaluate them, test and explore new perspectives, and make choices as to whether to adopt those positions and finally reintegrate these new perspectives.

## 3. Literature review

**3.1. Process.** Literature data are collected in three stages: (1) bibliography collection and search strategy. The first strategy, brief search, helped us to collect a series of research works. In order to achieve an added value in the search process, a second search strategy, citation pearl growing, was adopted which helped identify some key research works to adopt useful terminology and concepts for search of other research works; (2) from stage one, an

extension of the literature review was achieved progressively; and (3) abstractive synopsis and homogenization based on the key words, allowed me to categorize the research works. The G.I.S.T. principle (“Given” based on current assumptions, “Introduce” of a theorem/technique, “Such that” in order such a goal to be accomplished and “Tested” in terms of definition criteria) provided us a safe guide to identify broader groups arisen from the research questions. Based on Mezirow’s theoretical perspective of transformative learning theory, his critical reflection model, and the research themes, the following basic concept categories helped us deepen our understanding of the research themes, identify significant concepts, and helped us recognize and identify the research activity for each conceptual category through the key features of critical reflection.

**3.1.1. Skills for green promotion.** For the first research question, I categorize the concepts linked to the basic concept of the “skills for green promotion” (tasks, skills, social context, and attitudes).

**3.1.2. Lifelong learning process in education of green promotion.** For the second research question, I categorize the concepts linked to the basic concept of the

“lifelong learning process in education of green promotion” (lifelong learning, elementary knowledge, realization of competences, searching creative ideas, supervision and execution).

**3.2. Research activity for each conceptual category.** I present the related research activity for the following conceptual category of the examined concepts: “skills for green promotion”, “lifelong learning process in education of green promotion”. Tables 2 and 3 present the focus of the published research works. Based on an initial sample of 100 published research works (selected at the first stage of the literature review and using the above conceptual categories as key words) I scanned, and reached at one to 78 research works regarding to “skills for green promotion” and “lifelong learning process in education of green promotion”. The search and process stage took place from November 25, 2010 to January 30, 2011.

Although the research activity for lifelong learning in green marketing is significant, the research activity for most of the new conceptual categories for green promotion education in a lifelong learning context is almost at zero. Therefore, I broadened the search process.

Table 1. The research activity for each of the conceptual categories of “skills for green promotion” presented in a chronological order (newest to oldest)

Categories of concepts linked to “skills for green promotion”		Empirical evidence	N = 32
A.	Tasks	Sharma, Iyer, Mehrotra & Krishnan (2010); Dubey (2008); Hartmann, Ibáñez & Sainz (2005); Prakash (2002)	4
B.	Skills	Blewitt (2010); Borin & Metcalf (2010); Kilbourne & Carlson (2008); Fishbein & Cappella (2006); Schaefer & Crane (2005); Desjardins & Diedrich (2003); Uhl & Anderson (2001)	7
C.	Social context	Stavens, Gerber & Hendra (2010); Boshier, Huang, Song & Song (2006); Peñaloza & Venkatesh (2006); Belzer (2004); Chang (2004); Alfred (2003); Morrison & Bergin-Seers (2002); Diouf, Sheckley & Kehrhaan (2000)	8
D.	Attitudes	Bridges & Wilhelm (2008); Karna, Hansen & Juslin (2003); Van Marrewijk & Were (2003); Karna, Juslin, Ahonen & Hansen (2001); Crane (2000); Heiskanen (2000); Meriläinen, Moisander, & Personen (2000); Zinkhan and Carlson (1995); Davis (1992); Frankel (1992); Gillespie (1992); Ottman (1992); Monette (1979)	13

Table 2. The research activity for each of the conceptual categories of “lifelong learning process in education of green promotion” presented in a chronological order (newest to oldest)

Categories of concepts linked to “lifelong learning process in education of green promotion”		Empirical evidence	N = 46
A.	Lifelong learning	Misra (2010); Spais (2010); Viertel (2010); Wang & Wang (2009); Bradfield (2009); Peoples (2009); Sandeem (2009); Walker, Gough, Bakker, Knight & McBain (2009); Neu & Quantanilla (2008); Shrestha, Wilson & Singh (2008); Conger & Xin (2000); Ballou, Bowers, Bpyatzis & Kolb (1999); Weinrauch (1979); Jenks & Haskell (1979)	14
B.	Elementary knowledge	Cegarra-Navarro & Martínez Martínez (2010); Harung (2010); Po-Shin & Li-Hsing (2009); Frick, Kaiser, & Wilson (2004); Fryxel & Lo (2003); Boiral (2002); Polonsky, Rosenberger III & Ottman (1998); Wouters (1998); Nevis, DiBella & Gould, (1995); Ferrel & Gresham (1985)	10
C.	Realization of competences	Fahy & Twiss (2010); Segon, Booth, O’ Shannassy & Thompson (2010); Pires (2007); Latham, Latham & Whyte (2004); Cannon & Burns (1999); Kline (1986)	6
D.	Searching creative ideas	Titus (2007); Anderson (2006); Titus (2000); Taylor (1997); Ramocki (1994)	5
E.	Supervision	Gray (2006); Enos, Kehrhaan & Bell (2003); Brinkerhoff & Montesino (1995); Billet (1994); Rouiller & Goldstein (1993); Stoltenberg (1993); Bordin (1983)	7
F.	Execution	Rhee & Sigler (2010); Viertel (2010); Harrison (2009); Jelev (2009); Eriksen (2007)	5

#### 4. Literature review findings

A short description of the 32 published research works for the first basic concept is presented in Table 2. The findings from Table 2 and their interpretation are summarized as follows.

**4.1. Tasks and skills.** It seems that the most important green marketing task is to translate the benefits of a marketing strategy to direct environmental benefits. Thus, organizations pursuing economic objectives could strategically employ stakeholder and CSR arguments for adopting green marketing. Another interesting finding is that the non-market environment supplements the tasks of green marketers who favor collective sacrifices as vehicles for achieving their objectives. Consequently, there is clear signal for radical changes of the nature of marketing and promotion tasks of the modern organizations. Regarding the green promotion management skills, it seems that marketing educators can play an important role in assisting these organizations by developing curricula that build the required knowledge and skills to contribute to sustainable marketing efforts. It is widely accepted that the necessity of marketing education in order such skills to be developed and strengthened, as it seems that it is the basic prerequisite for the development of an innovative green marketing and green promotion activities through effective and efficient execution of the green marketing work. Marketing education must be oriented to the application of a green marketing thought process to the challenges of the organizations.

Empirical evidences show that increased focus from marketing educators can help learners to understand society's environmental attitudes and change their behavior. Skills seem to play a more catalytic role than attitudinal changes regarding to the change of a behavior. It seems that in non-formal education programs in sustainable development learner's behavior seem to be influenced by environmental factors and by his/her skills and abilities, as well as his/her intentions that are formed by societal norms and perceived self-efficacy.

Additional research shows that the knowledge base and skill sets required to design sustainable products and systems are broad and it is proposed that using life cycle cases as a learning technique can reveal the economic and ecological consequences of product development, marketing, use and disposal. The marketing opportunities that are emerging as a more sustainable world is developed requires the knowledge and skills that can capture and move then forward but in a complex and uncertain worlds learning needs to non-linear, creative and emergent.

**4.2. Role of the social context and attitudes.** It seems that there is a tendency in the marketing literature to examine attitudes for green marketing from the point of view of morality. According to their responsibility

values based on the concepts of redirecting customers towards sustainability and the role of governmental balancing of markets. "Proactive green marketers" (companies emphasizing pursuing sustainability and believing in free market system) emphasize environmental issues in their marketing planning clearly more than traditional "consumption marketers", and more than "reactive green marketers" (companies emphasizing pursuing sustainability under governmental balancing). It seems that there is a raising interest and popularity for environmental management systems and green marketing programs in western market economies. They are viewed as cost-efficient, effective and just means of tackling problems associated with the impact of economic activity on the environment. Quiet interesting is the following remark. The evidence show that cultural traditions influence the what, when, why, and from whom – but not the how – of adult learning, which is in total accordance to Mezirow's assumptions. He underlines that social context may facilitate or inhibit the reflection process. In addition, socioeconomic class may play important parts in the reflection process. On the other hand, green sustainable marketing and marketing education fail to recognize and thus explain the complex social and cultural context in which organizations and other members of society (re-)produce, maintain, negotiate, resist and transform values and meanings about sustainability and learning experiences.

Empirical evidences show that the outcomes of the involvement of learners in writing and critically reflecting on past and, in some instances, personal experiences are very significant in order to transform learners and facilitate the development of a new sense of confidence and ability to make new meanings of experience. This process is very important to bridge their prior meaning schemes and new meaning schemes. Meaning schemes are frames of reference that are based on the totality of an individual's experiences over a lifetime of cultural assimilation. Meaning schemes consist of specific beliefs, value judgments, attitudes, and feelings. In accordance to Mezirow's assumption that critical reflection involves questioning the integrity of an individual's assumptions and beliefs, which results in transformation or change in an individual's perspective, then the above literature review finding is indeed of high value for green promotion education, as it may spur the learners to make changes inside as well as outside the self. Therefore, I can conclude that TLT changes learner's epistemic, sociolinguistic, and psychological perspectives and transforms the learners themselves. In the marketing education literature it is underlined the crucial role of the curricula that may advocate a "triple bottom line" approach to personal and marketing decision-making, emphasizing requirements for a sustainable lifestyle, organization, economy and society.



A short description of the 46 published research works for the second basic concept is presented in Table 3. The findings from Table 3 and their interpretation are summarized as follows.

**4.3. Lifelong learning.** There is a raising need for adult marketing and management education in the last 30 years. It seems that the mission of lifelong learning is to equip learners with skills based on an inter-disciplinary approach to “real life” problems in relation to sustainable development and the integration of economic, social and environmental considerations. One of 12 goals created by Mezirow that must fulfill the practitioners of andragogy is the progressive decrease learner’s dependency on the educator. This raises the issue of building the ability of adults to learn how to learn – to become skilled at learning in a range of different situations and through a range of different styles – has often been proposed as an overarching purpose for those educators who work with adults. Learning to learn should be conceived as a lifelong learning project as Brookfield (1995) underline. Learning how to learn suffers for lack of a commonly agreed on definition, functioning more as an umbrella term for any attempts by adults to develop insight into their own habitual ways of learning. The available empirical evidences show that regarding to adult marketing education programs it must be seriously considered: (1) how the learning content is developed; (2) the format; (3) the learning techniques. Such programs must be designed based on the learning behavioral characteristics in order to meet the specific educational needs. Empirical evidences show that executives who participate in lifelong learning programs had (a) greater self-confidence, in particular the confidence to change; (b) increased sense of taking control of their lives; (c) created a legitimacy for working on life/career transitions; and (d) become members of a new reference group. This suggests a different pedagogy for advanced professionals with possibilities for innovation in management and marketing education programs. This emphasis on experience is central to the concept of andragogy that has evolved to describe adult education practice.

**4.4. Elementary knowledge.** In accordance to Mezirow’s conceptualization for critical reflection, one of the key concepts is “meaning making”, which is found most frequently in constructivist approaches to education (and it is not the same with “critical thinking”). In the constructivist view, meaning is constructed from knowledge. Based on the empirical evidences it seems that more and more marketing managers integrate the environmental issues in marketing decision-making. Their behaviors regarding to ecology and the related ethics are largely influenced by the level of tacit environmental know-

ledge, attitudes, intentions, values and perceptions of opportunities. The studies argue that such knowledge is interdisciplinary in nature. Based on the literature the advantages of interdisciplinary knowledge are: (1) perspective; (2) reflection; (3) learning; (4) simplification; (5) creativity; and (6) learning for life. The above findings are quite valuable as they underline the importance of introducing elementary knowledge that is interdisciplinary in nature for lifelong learning programs in green promotion management. Mezirow posits that all learning is change but not all change is transformation. There is a difference between transmissional, transactional and transformational education. In the first, knowledge is transmitted from educator to learner. In transactional education, it is recognized that the learner has valuable experiences, and learns best through experience, inquiry, critical thinking and interaction with other learners. It could be argued that some of the research regarding transformative learning has been in the realm of transactional education, and that what is seen as transformative is in fact still within the realm of transactional learning.

**4.5. Realization of competences.** Taylor (1998) suggests that two of the phases where transformation process occurs, in accordance to Mezirow are: (1) the provisionally trying out new roles; and (2) building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships that follow the phase of acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Based on the available empirical evidences it seems that there is a research interest for examining new practices of recognition and validation of the experiential learning of adults into a lifelong learning paradigm and their impact to the realization of competences. The available empirical evidences show that adult literacy practitioners’ uses of and experiences with online technologies for professional development has an impact on competences’ realization. Some studies proposed a process for validating gaming experience (in accordance to the “centrality of experience” – the starting point of Mezirow’s model – discussed in the previous subsections) linked to actual demands of managerial experience, including performance measurement. Some of the most known models are the AACSB and the AMA, which seem to be proven of high value in the process of business/management education, training and development. The research interest in these studies is focused on if the underlined set of models in a life-long learning context are able to answer such questions as to who can most effectively develop which competences for present managers and managers-to-be at what point in time. Then, to examine if the models could play a central role in this evolutionary educational process. The research intention in these studies is the examination of such models in

terms of creation of a learning environment within which both the competences of “resistance to stress” and “accurate self-assessment” can be gained.

**4.6. Searching creative ideas.** In the marketing education literature, the CMB model is underlined as one of the well-known established and unique of value models, referred to as the creative marketing breakthrough (CMB) model. The model views creative marketing as a systematic problem-solving activity undertaken with the express purpose of producing creative marketing breakthroughs. Such creative marketing breakthrough consists of any novel and valuable marketing idea, product, process, strategy, or tactic. One of the positive consequences that occurred for people after transformative experiences is increased creativity. The inherent psychological challenges associated with creativity suggest the need for educators to provide marketing instruction that adequately prepares students to meet those challenges. This psychological preparation is necessary because learners often bring serious misconceptions about the nature of marketing problems and what is required to creatively resolve them. These misconceptions often serve as psychological barriers that prevent learners from being open and receptive to creative marketing instruction. According to Mezirow, adult learners are usually tenacious in holding on to their assumptions, and even if they overcome the initial personal and social resistance to questioning their assumptions, their critical reflection does not become any less troubling. Based on the review of the evidences, these misconceptions often prohibit learners from readily embracing and employing useful problem-solving heuristics. Therefore, dispelling these misconceptions marketing educators can help to produce positive attitudinal changes in learners and improve their receptiveness to creativity instruction. The above remark is very significant if we consider that there are many conceptualizations for green and sustainable marketing and learners may often bring serious misconceptions about the nature of green marketing and promotion problems and what is required to resolve them in a creative way. Empirical evidences show that psychological preparation and groundwork must be undertaken if marketing educators are to find a receptive audience for their creativity instruction.

**4.7. Supervision.** Coaching and supervision is now emerging as one of the most significant approaches to the professional development of senior managers and executives. All coaches, however, need to be aware that the coaching process may open up deep-seated anxieties, some of which are more appropriately addressed by a psychotherapeutic approach in some studies. In other studies, it seems that the supervisory work is approached as a working alliance based mod-

el where it emphasizes mutuality in respectful engagement and teamwork.

Empirical evidences show how the extent to which managers engaged in informal learning, perceptions of support in the transfer environment, and level of managerial proficiency related to transfer of learning in managerial skills. The results suggested that informal learning is predominantly a social process and that managers with high levels of proficiency who experience low levels of coworker, supervisor, and organizational support learn managerial skills mostly from informal learning and transfer learning more frequently. It seems that new perspectives are offered on the interrelationship between informal learning and transfer of learning, the role of metacognition and self-regulation in informal learning, and the influence of informal learning in the development of managerial proficiency. In accordance to Brookfield (1995), metacognition such as learning how to learn suffers for lack of a commonly agreed on definition, functioning more as an umbrella term for any attempts by adults to develop insight into their own habitual ways of learning

**4.8. Execution.** The role of practicing in vocational education for sustainable management seems to gain the research interest the last three years. It seems that it becomes broadly accepted in the literature that in order to develop enlightened leaders for industry and community, executive education and service learning through professional practice is a fundamental prerequisite. The above remark is quite interesting if we want to build the future leaders in green marketing and promotion and transform the existed one. Based on the very little empirical evidence the process of professional practice seems to be examined in order to deepen the understanding for developing professional practice, in terms of human resource development for human resource management professionals. Of high interest seems to be following remark based on the review of the empirical evidences. In accordance to Mezirow's assumption that experience provides the grist for critical reflection. It seems that learners' engagement in problem-based learning and reflection on their experience to develop a clear understanding of their conundrum and how they might resolve it in practice. Such exercises provide a structure through which any kind of learner can become lifelong learner.

## 5. Classifying empirical evidence according to chronological order

Given that IEGP through the key features of Mezirow's critical reflection is a new research field and the IEGP concept is presented for the first time in the marketing education literature. The chronological order of the conceptual categories in Tables 2 and 3 will allow us to identify: (1) the level of research activ-

ity; (2) the research priorities for each time period; (3) the research gaps; and (4) valuable research directions and suggestions for further research. I classified the research works into four categories for the first basic concept and six for the second basic concept. The chronological order is presented according to the following 5 periods: (a) -1989; (b) 1990-1994; (c) 1995-1999; (d) 2000-2004; and (e) 2005-2010. In the following two figures, 78 publications are presented with author's observations.

Figure 3 shows that there is a significant research activity but not constant for attitudes for green marketing in the last 20 years (1990-2010). It is impressive that the research activity for the conceptual categories: "tasks", "skills", and "social context" is at zero until 2000. After 2000, there is a very significant research activity for the above conceptual categories. Quiet interesting is the remark about the increase of the research activity for "skills" and "tasks" of the last years (2005-2010) in comparison with the period of 2000-2004.

According to Figure 4, over the past two decades (1990-2010), the research interest has been sustained for the role elementary knowledge of the environmental issues in marketing decision-making and the importance of supervision and coaching in a lifelong learning process. The research activity after 2005 has increased significantly regarding the importance of lifelong learning in green marketing, the role of learner's realization of competences in a lifelong learning process and the importance of professional practice in terms of a lifelong learning program and green marketing. Although the research activity the previous decade (1990-2000) is very low in terms of lifelong learning process in green marketing and promotion, the research activity for the stages of the transfer of elementary knowledge, realization of competences and support the learners to search for creative ideas are also almost at zero. In summary, based on Mezirow's theoretical framework I can conclude that marketing and promotion managers' education in green marketing must be based on learning processes for the revision of the interpretations of their experiences. In order to be achieved both the effective transfer of elementary knowledge in green marketing and promotion and the realization of the competences. Brookfield (1990) underlines the importance of detection and questioning previous meaning structures, which lead to a particular interpretation. There are difficulties that are derived from the subjective nature of the sentiments that are involved in each traineemarketing/promotion manager's experience influenced by the social, economic, and cultural environment per country, which in turn keeps from the realization of the "green" competences. The developmental process, through sequential reflective actions, can lead to the re-assessment of trainees expe-

riences and lead to the realization of their competences for green marketing and to the successful management of some constraints from the side of the marketing and promotion managers (such as their general attitudes). According to Rogers (2002), there is a wide acknowledgment that the experience is the basis of learning and the critical reflection is an intermediate and inextricable stage of the "learning cycle" (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

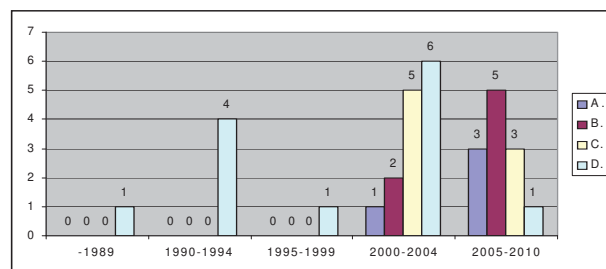


Fig. 3. The research activity in the last 20 years (1990-2010) for the basic concept: "skills for green promotion"

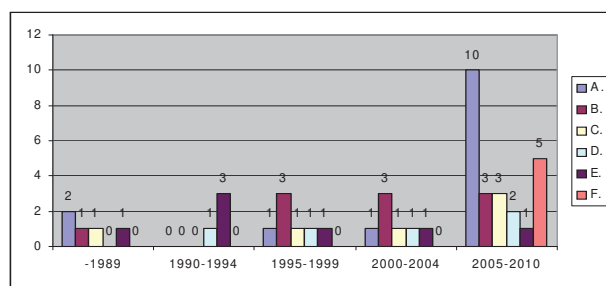


Fig. 4. The research activity in the last 20 years (1990-2010) for the basic concept: "lifelong learning process in education of green promotion"

Control is significant for the supervision of the green marketing and promotion activities development through "communicative learning". According to Mezirow (Kitchener & King, 1990), communicative learning is mostly about intuitive searching of themes and metaphors, in order the unfamiliar views to be interpreted, such as the green marketing and promotion activities development process. The revised experience through action (in accordance to the "stage of verification" in Mezirow's critical reflection process) mostly at the stages (6-8) of the IEGP process can contribute significantly at the green marketing and promotion activities development, if there is a qualitative interaction among the members of the project team. This will lead marketing and promotion managers to revisit values, attitudes, and management practices.

## 6. Methods

**6.1. Research method and unit of analysis.** In order to determine Mezirow's theoretical perspective of the proposed constructs of IEGP model and their relationship, it is incumbent upon marketing scholars to take the above perspective, which allows these issues to be arisen. The use of the case study is considered to be of



high value in our analysis because in the empirical studies none of adult education and marketing education phenomena is very well understood (Spirer, 1980; Tellis, 1997; Merriam, 1998; Qi, 2009; Bove & Davies, 2009). The research method of case study is introduced in order to reveal very new constructs and to attempt to establish an initial understanding of the constructs and their relationship with other constructs (Yin, 1994). Human activity is the basic unit of analysis.

**6.2. Selection of a critical case and determination of data gathering and analysis techniques.** Flyvbjerg (2006) suggested since 1991 the concept of the critical case, where a case of particular interest and strategic content in relation to the investigated research themes are presented. I believe that the case of the new curriculums (2010-2011) of three Executive Transformative Learning Based Programs in: “Professional and Applied Certificate in Skills Management, Communication, Ecological Literacy and Carbon and Energy Leadership” offered by the Continuing Studies Center of Royal Roads University (Canada) available on-line ([http://www.royalroads.ca/NR/rdonlyres/CBA38CF1-16EC-4DE9-9324-D855083F2F5B/0/rru\\_continuing\\_studies\\_calendar\\_2010\\_2011.pdf](http://www.royalroads.ca/NR/rdonlyres/CBA38CF1-16EC-4DE9-9324-D855083F2F5B/0/rru_continuing_studies_calendar_2010_2011.pdf)) gives us valuable information. Information on the potentiality of developing IEGP model based on the fundamental assumptions of Mezirow’s “critical reflection” (one of the most known theoretical perspectives of TLT, an adult learning theory) and, thus, the phenomenon studied can become more visible. The different aspects of a context, from which a particular problem situation originates, can become increasingly visible and more accessible for a marketing education researcher. I consider the above case as critical, because it is the only award winner Transformative Learning based program of continuing education that aims to develop managerial and leadership skills in a ecological context related to: (1) communication and collaboration; (2) social, personal and environmental responsibility, leadership, mentorship and stewardship, design; (3) planning and performance; (4) diverse perspectives, and ways of knowing; (5) engagement and influence, whole systems and critical thinking; (6) creativity; and (7) community and relationship-building.

The case is selected based on the following criteria: (1) the under examination program is an executive Transformative Learning based program focusing mostly on the development of managerial and leadership skills in an ecological context related to CSR, communication, collaboration, creativity and community based relationship building (critical to the new proposed marketing education concept); (2) the Center that offers the program is an award winner in the Major Annual Brochure category for Marketing and Innovation 2007-2008 by the Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE); (3) the under examina-

tion executive program is based on interdisciplinary learning. Interdisciplinary education’s value is underlined in the marketing education literature (e.g. Borin & Metcalf, 2010). According to Keller and Otjen (2007) and Wiese and Sherman (2011), interdisciplinary learning overcomes the fragmentation and compartmentalization of knowledge, and thus better prepare learners to function in a world that is increasingly dynamic, complex, and interconnected and allows educators to incorporate problem-based learning and to promote higher-order critical thinking skills (also quiet critical to the new proposed marketing education concept).

**6.3. Information about the continuing studies center of the Royal Roads University and the carbon and energy leadership certificate.** The following information is retrieved from 2010-2011 calendar of the program and the homepage of the Continuing Studies Center of Royal Roads University.

The Continuing Studies Center – the award – Winner in the Major Annual Brochure category for Marketing and Innovation 2007-2008 – offers the following certificate programs: (1) professional and management skills certificates; (2) professional and applied communications skills certificate; (3) ecological literacy certificate; (4) carbon and energy; and (5) leadership skills certificate. The learning partners of the center are: The Animas Valley Institute; The BC Film Institute; The Berkana Institute; The Canadian Earth Institute; The Canadian Program Evaluation Society; The Child Nature Alliance; Cruise Holidays Pacific; Earth Literacies and the Living Language Institute; Gaia College; The Ginger Group Collaborative; The Greater Victoria Film Commission; Habitat Acquisitions Trust (HAT); The Haven Institute; O.U.R. Ecovillage; The Power of Hope; Mpambo Multiversity, Indigenous House of Culture (Uganda); The West Shore Arts Council; and Victoria Storytellers Guild.

The motto of the program is borrowed from the motto of one of the known transformative learning philosophers, Paulo Freire (1997): “What makes me hopeful is not so much the certainty of the find, but my movement in the search”. According to Hilary Leighton, M.Ed., Director of the Continuing Studies of the Royal Roads University is a space to immerse in creativity, learn reasoning and critical thought; social marketing and increased personal, social and environmental responsibility.” Characteristically she states that: “We believe that when we better ourselves, foster wider skills and abilities, and learn from each other, we can transform our lives and selves, and be in a better position to contribute meaningfully to our organizations and communities. Research shows that when people are highly skilled and set the direction for their own careers, they are happier, more productive and more likely to stay with the organization”.



The New Continuing Studies Professional and Applied Certificate in: Skills Management, Communication, Ecological Literacy and Carbon and Energy Leadership (2010-2011) each include comprehensive and experiential suites of 270 short, non-credit courses supported by more than 60 educators called as “facilitators” and designed to broaden understanding and competency development in; communication and collaboration, social, personal and environmental responsibility, leadership, mentorship and stewardship; design, planning and performance; diverse perspectives, and ways of knowing; engagement and influence, whole systems and critical thinking; creativity; and community and relationship building. Guest speakers from culture (such as philosophers and poets) called as “cultural agents” support the program. Their contribution is to transcend normally exclusive learning realms to offer visionary models of human development toward a deeply imaginative life-stream of vocation and leadership. Through courageous conversations that encourage the uniqueness of each learner to become more themselves in service to the whole, in a willingness to continue living the learning.

**6.4. Data analysis.** The research questions are addressed and analyzed based on the following criteria (Spais, 2010; Van Der Merwe & Albertyn, 2010; Strongman, 2009; Franz, 2007; Blackmore, 2007; Scott, 2003): (1) if there are difficulties in green education that are derived from the subjective nature of the sentiments that is involved in each experience influenced by the social, economic, and cultural environment; (2) if green education should be approached as a process of producing new experiences or a process of revised interpretations of the experiences to be achieved the educational aim of developing skills for green promotion; (3) if there is a need for reflective or non-reflective educational action for the development of skills for green promotion for marketing and promotion managers; (4) if the developmental process contributes at the realization of promotion managers’ green marketing competences; and (5) if control is the most significant determinant for the effective supervision of the green promotion strategy.

**6.5. Data evaluation.** Summary of data analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of data analysis of the case “professional and applied certificate in skills management, communication, ecological literacy and carbon and energy leadership” offered by the Continuing Studies Center of Royal Roads University

Categories of concepts linked to: A. “Skills for green promotion” and B. “Lifelong learning process in education of green promotion”	Continuing education program “professional and applied certificate in skills management, communication, ecological literacy and carbon and energy leadership”					
	Frontline supervisor skills (managing people)		Mid-management skills (managing operations)		Leadership skills (managing strategies)	
A. “Skills for green promotion”	Competency	Course	Competency	Course	Competency	Course
	Communication	Core communications skills	Communication	Communicating with clarity and impact: professional writing, public speaking and presentation skills	Communication	Communicating with clarity and impact: professional writing, public speaking and presentation skills
	Relationship and team building	Developing high performance teams	Relationship and team building	Developing high performance teams or the heart of collaboration: an arts-based approach to teamwork	Relationship and team building	The heart of coaching: using transformational coaching to create a high-performance culture
	Performance management	On-the-job orientation	Performance management	Coaching for performance	Performance management	Talent management: developing leaders through intentional succession planning
	Planning and problem-solving	Plan the work and work the plan	Planning and problem-solving	Plan the work and work the plan or project management essentials	Planning and problem-solving	Strategic planning that works: turning vision into results!
	Self-development and creativity	Positive strategies for a healthy workplace or energy management	Self-development and creativity	Positive strategies for a healthy workplace or whole brain thinking: cultivate 21st century creativity and leadership	Self-development and creativity	Whole brain thinking: cultivate 21st century creativity and leadership
	The self that leads	Lead from your strengths or providing excellent customer service	The self that leads	Lead from your strengths	The self that leads	The alchemy of leadership: turning leaden thinking into gold

Table 3 (cont.). Summary of data analysis of the case “professional and applied certificate in skills management, communication, ecological literacy and carbon and energy leadership” offered by the Continuing Studies Center of Royal Roads University

Categories of concepts linked to: A. “Skills for green promotion” and B. “Lifelong learning process in education of green promotion”	Continuing education program “professional and applied certificate in skills management, communication, ecological literacy and carbon and energy leadership”					
	Frontline supervisor skills (managing people)		Mid-management skills (managing operations)		Leadership skills (managing strategies)	
	Competency	Course	Competency	Course	Competency	Course
B. “Lifelong learning process in education of green promotion”						
1. Elementary knowledge	X		X		X	
2. Realization of competences	X		X		X	
3. Searching creative ideas	X		X		X	
4. Supervision/ coaching	X		X		X	
5. Execution	X		X		X	

Note: X denotes that all the above competencies and courses with the specific order, as presented in the Studies Calendar, are aligned to the five-stages lifelong learning process in education of green promotion.

Source: Royal Roads University Continuing Studies Calendar 2010-2011.

## 7. Findings

In this section, I present the summary of the analysis and an interpretation for each conceptual category in accordance to the data analysis criteria. The summary is based on a content analysis of the courses’ descriptions and the learning outcomes presented in the calendar. Table 4 provides the summary of data analysis from the critical case.

### 7.1. Adoption of transformative learning process.

Based on the analysis of the course descriptions, the covered topics and the learning outcomes of the program (as presented in the calendar) it seems that indeed there is a clear orientation to TLT philosophy that encourages learners to: (1) question their own points of view and interpretations; (2) alter what learners are and do by allowing us to use new tools and predictive models; and (3) enable to be put into a novel situation and use the new knowledge gained to view the experience differently, which is the feedback loop that changes learners’ actions and ways of interacting with the world and developing new perspectives and heuristics.

In this case, the necessary conditions and processes of transformational learning theory are adopted in accordance to the TLT literature (e.g., Taylor, 1998; Cranton, 2002; Illeris, 2003; McGonigal, 2005; Kitchenham, 2008; Synder, 2008; Brock, 2010). Analytically:

- ◆ Events that activate learners (such as conversations with the “cultural agents” and the workshops) in order to expose the limitations of a learner’s current knowledge through the presentation of conflicting viewpoints and the creation of disorienting dilemmas.

- ◆ Opportunities for the learner to identify and articulate the underlying assumptions of the current knowledge. This is achieved through critical question techniques and presentation of problem-solving strategies in studying a case study as a team.
- ◆ Critical self-reflection as the learner considers where these underlying assumptions came from and how they influenced understanding of a situation. This is achieved through encouraging participation in the conversations and in learning activities for the evaluation of previous experiences and self-assessment questionnaires.
- ◆ Critical discourse (the social aspect of TLT) with others as learners gains new insights from having their beliefs challenged by other ways of viewing the situation. This is achieved through discussions and debates when introducing a new concept, methodology or paradigm. Learners are asked to compare it with their previous assumptions in a study group of a case or cases.
- ◆ Opportunities to test and apply new paradigms and/or perspectives.

The above processes facilitate the learners to revise their underlying assumptions, adopt and apply a new paradigm (Cranton, 2002; Synder, 2008; Brock, 2010). Transformative learning theory also recognizes that changing one’s perspective is not simply a rational process. Being forced to consider, evaluate, and revise underlying assumptions can be an emotionally charged experience. Resistance to perspective transformation is common, even among learners who are motivated to learn (Illeris, 2003). For this reason, facilitators must create an environment that encourages and rewards intellectual openness (Taylor, 1998).

**7.2. Role of the social context and attitudes and skills.** Learners' socio-cultural environment influences their skills. Concerning attitudes are important in determining a green behavior as also the necessity for differentiation of learners' communication and promotion attitudes in an ecological context from other categories of communication of promotion managers. In summary, there are difficulties that are derived from the subjective nature of the sentiments that is involved in each experience influenced by the social, economic, and cultural environment and learners' personality traits. According to Brookfield (1995), there must be a special emphasis at "our habits" that are derived from socio-cultural, psychological, and epistemological warps. Because of the impact of personal values at learners' promotion attitudes and the problematic perception of learners' identity and their role in modern ecological economy, training must be focused on learning processes for the revision of learners' interpretations of their experiences. Such a focus will successfully lead to the accomplishment of the educational aim of developing green communication and promotion skills. Brookfield (1995) underlined the importance of identifying and questioning previous meaning structures, which lead to a specific interpretation. There is a need for reflective action to be achieved the development of green promotion skills at different levels of managers (see front-line supervisor skills, mid-management skills and leadership skills).

The executive programs allow focusing on areas of professional interest and strength, building on existing skills and experience, and applying new knowledge and strategies in the workplace. Regarding skills, it seems that it is widely accepted that the necessity of education in order communication and promotion skills to be developed and strengthened, as it seems that it is the basic prerequisite for the development of innovative green communication and promotion activities through effective and efficient execution of the communication and promotion work.

**7.3. Elementary knowledge.** The description of the "Core Communication Skills" course: "The ability to communicate skillfully is the critical core competency for successful supervisors and managers in every organization. This is an introduction to the key concepts and skills that help us all communicate more clearly including the practice needed to communicate effectively in the workplace. Gain insight into your own communication style, and map out an ongoing plan to continue to develop as a skilled communicator beyond your attendance" (p. 26). Regarding the description of the "Communicating with Clarity and Impact: Professional Writing, Public Speaking and Presentation Skills" course: "If you understand that

writing, speaking, and presentation has the power to engage, move, and transform, then join us for this 2 day course in professional writing, public speaking, and presentation skills" (p. 26).

In this initial stage, learners must test different views of communication principles, tools and models. It seems that emphasis should be given at the following: (a) the understanding of the basic principles of the communication; (b) the functional principles of managerial communication; and (c) the career opportunities that lead to the need of acquiring basic skills to be successful as communication and promotion managers in a modern ecological economy. The motive of learning and the feeling of an opportunity is an adding effect of this stage of learning in communication.

**7.4. Realization of competences.** Participative approaches, teamwork, and volunteering behavior of change from learners have significant effects at the realization of the green marketing competences. An important determinant of the realization arises from the following constraints: (1) level of education; (2) timing; (3) nature of training infrastructure; (4) stage of life cycle as a communication and promotion manager; (5) cost; and (6) destination and general attitudes.

**7.5. Searching creative ideas.** The development of workshops for producing communication and promotion plans in a continuing education process has a very significant effect at developing learners' skills related to searching, processing, assessing, and evaluating information, which are necessary for the successful scanning and evaluation of opportunities and searching for creative promotion ideas.

**7.6. Supervision/coaching and execution.** In p. 2 of the calendar it is presented personal coaching: "As an additional benefit you can have a personal coach while you learn! We offer one-on-one coaching in collaboration with the RRU Graduate Certificate in Executive Coaching, and Concept Coaching. Coaching is designed to focus energy on achieving specific results through finding new ways of thinking and behaving, and becoming a catalyst for change. Leadership coaching offers a confidential, non-judgmental sounding board that fits with your agenda by phone or face to face." Educators' CVs show that are highly skilled in coaching in continuing education contexts.

The adoption of a reciprocal approach of such continuing education programs is one of the most significant challenges. Evidence showed us also that a successful supervision is determined by how the relationships among the members of the team can be strengthened more and more. Another determinant of successful supervision is how skilled supervisors-mentors in information technologies are, to respond effectively and efficiently at the demands and tasks of the supervision.

The succeeding learning synergies among the teams' members and the compatibility of their professional visions play a very crucial role in the last and most difficult stage of this continuing education programs. The quality of interaction among the members seems to be determinant in order those learners' to change eagerly values, attitudes, and management practices.

### Summary, conclusions and implications

The education for sustainability in business fields seems that increasingly being incorporated in the decade of 2000 in both typical and non-typical education contexts (Wright, 2002; Holt, 2003; Moore, 2005; Walker et al., 2009). The importance of educating for sustainability is underscored by the recent United Nations declaration calling this the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014). According to UNESCO, as presented in its homepage (<http://www.unesco.org/en/esd>), education for sustainable development aims to help people to develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge to make informed decisions for the benefit of themselves and others, now and in the future, and to act upon these decisions. In totally accordance to Bridges and Wilhelm (2008), the focus on sustainability provides an excellent opportunity for marketing educators to take the lead in teaching the existed and potential marketing and promotion managers about sustainable marketing strategies and tactics. Marketing education especially in the continuing education context can cover the transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will allow in each promotion manager-learner to plan, to launch, and to manage green promotion activities.

The research aim of this paper was to investigate the potential benefits of a new marketing education concept, the "Integrated Education in Green Promotion" (IEGP) based on the fundamental assumptions of Mezirow's "critical reflection". As presented in the background context of section, modern empirical and theoretical evidence underline the raising importance of the "Integrated Education" concept linked to lifelong and adult learning context and application became very popular its in the fields of entrepreneurship education and management education in the decade of the 2000. This recent literature stream (including executive education programs in promotion management, see Bencke & Bezuidenhout, 2011) is largely based on the theoretical perspectives of Experiential Learning Theory, which go beyond constructivist approaches that rely heavily on reflection. Nevertheless, in this literature stream only one study identified in the adult education context of entrepreneurship, management and marketing education considering the assumptions of Mezirow's "critical reflection". Therefore, the nature and process of reflection remains a largely undif-

ferentiated mystery. Surprisingly, there are very few research tries deepening on Mezirow's research tries. Some of them, quiet interesting and of high research value have considered an adult learning theoretical perspective (Mezirow's "critical reflection") from the informal and non-formal education context, in order to integrate it in a formal education context.

However, the organized bodies, organizations and adult learning institutions involved directly in advancing green marketing and promotion activities need persuasive and clear answers in questions related to the effectiveness and the quality of the offered lifelong learning and continuing educational programs in management and marketing to practitioners (Weinrauch, 1979; Jenks & Haskell, 1979; Ballou et al., 1999; Conger & Xin, 2000; Walker et al., 2009) regarding to sustainability and marketing related issues (Neu & Quantanilla, 2008; Bradfield, 2009; Peoples, 2009; Porter & Córdoba, 2009; Litzky, Godshalk & Walton-Bongers, 2010). The above-organized bodies, organizations and adult learning institutions would mostly be interested in formalizing the IEGP process, to evaluate and adjust the educational programs in green promotion for keeping an acceptable level of efficiency and effectiveness.

The underlined theoretical approach of transformative learning and the proposed IEGP concept are valuable as both contribute to the increase of the individual and organizational effectiveness. The present work connected life-learning with the education of marketing and promotion managers and it contributed in the field of marketing education with the following three ways. First, it deepened the comprehension for the adults' learning, regarding to the community of marketing practitioners, and moreover to the gravity of adult marketing and promotion managers learning in green marketing and promotion for social changes. Second, it opened new directions marketing and promotion managers' education in green marketing and promotion in terms of corporate eco-globalized and knowledge economy. Finally, it deepened understanding of empowerment of the individual effectiveness of adults' instructors and to the organizational effectiveness of adults' learning institutions.

The research intention was to categorize the constructs of the following fundamental concepts: "skills for green promotion" and "lifelong learning process in education of green promotion" to assess the existing research activity in the area of green promotion education. In relation to the theoretical and practical implications of this work, the practice of "critical reflection" in educational programs revealed that past – and in all likelihood – wrong assumptions and pre-suppositions that are ruling the organizations from different countries. This is largely due to the personal



experiences from any kind of marketing action. This type of “critical reflection” is a social action including the imagination and the broadening of alternative solutions in the current assumptions and presuppositions. Researchers, extensionists, business leaders and

policy makers must seriously consider engaging in discourse for both the underlined theoretical perspective of TLT and the IEGP model as they can achieve higher levels of effectiveness at the individual and organization levels.

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