

Multidimensional Strategic Perceptual Mapping: Integrating ESG As A Core Competitive Dimension For Dynamic Brand Positioning

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Abstract

This study is an effort to solve the systemic weaknesses of the conventional strategic brand positioning instruments as it designs a high-fidelity, multi-dimensional perceptual mapping framework integrating Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors as the key competitive dimensions. The modern global market has embarked on a paradigm shift towards a multi-stakeholder value, making the traditional two-dimensional paradigms (which are largely based on the price-quality corollary) to be inadequate in explaining the complexity of consumer psychology and ethics consumption. Based on Signaling Theory and Cognitive Dissonance Theory, a post-positivist approach is employed in this study in order to consider how the 3D and 4D dynamic variable inputs help firms to recognize and occupy untapped market niches, or blue oceans, that are unaware of the flat-earth strategic approaches. The study constructs and authenticates the model of Sustainable Space through a stringent synthetic analysis of longitudinal market data, indexes of consumer perceptions, and the performance indicators of ESG. The results show that companies with an integrated, unified ESG coordinate in this volumetric map have better brand resonance, perceptual inertia, and competitive advantage in the environmental-sensitive segments. On the other hand, the research measures a strong penalty of Dissonance, in which discrepancies between the ESG signals claimed by a firm and the actual governance performance results in the creation of cognitive dissonance in the consumer, which is quickly induced to destroy the brand identity and market position. This study closes this gap between qualitative sustainability narratives and quantitative spatial geometry, in addition to providing a finely-tuned diagnostic instrument of dynamic positioning, and a predictive instrument of brand health in the long term within the context of radical transparency and corporate accountability.

Date of Submission: 12-05-2026

Date of Acceptance: 22-05-2026

I. Introduction

Background

The world competition has experienced a paradigm shift in the economic metrics to an aspect of multi-stakeholder value propositions. The Perceptual Map (PM) has been a primary pillar of strategic marketing in decades, allowing managers to understand the competitive environment by putting themselves in the shoes of the consumer. But these maps have been one dimension-two dimension and the price and quality dimension has not managed to reflect the complexity of the modern consumer psychology. The historical dependence of the price-quality corollary is based on the paradigm of the industrial age at which the utility of the consumer was the paradigm of a strictly functionalist approach. In this kind of a model, optimizing tangible attributes was the source of value, and strategic positioning was a twofold cost leadership or differentiation exercise.

With a faster transition towards the green, sustainability ceases to be a marginal issue but the key driver behind brand equity. This is because Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) measures have become important indicators of sustainable operation and consumer confidence. The emergence of the so-called conscientious consumer especially among Millennials and Generation Z has radically changed the landscape of competitive forces in the market. These generations do not perceive price and quality separately, but consider the brands as moral agents whose contribution to society cannot be separated with their product value. Thus, the Triple Bottom Line (Elkington, 1994) that started as a mandatory reporting requirement has turned into a competitive stage. The capacity to indicate its ethical location, in this new era, has become as crucial to the firm as is the capacity to indicate its technological exquisiteness or cost effectiveness. The methods of visualizing these indicators have, however, been frozen in the two-dimensional Euclidean space, which can no longer be used to describe the volumetric complexity of the contemporary ethical variables.

Research Problem

The given issue is the flat-earth strategy of strategic positioning. Companies still use two-dimensional and inactive perception mapping where ESG is seen as a secondary feature and not a major competitive one. This brings a strategic blind spot: the firms can seem to be in a very strong position on a

conventional axis of price-quality, and be on the brink of collapse or invisibility on a sustainability axis. This is unidimensional as firms are unable to find the blue ocean opportunity with sustainability, technology, and price finding a 4D competitive space.

This issue can analytically be expressed as a Geometric Strategic Mismatch. The consumer will be assessing the firm on three or four dimensions and the firm will be evaluating it on two and now the firm has to optimize its position based on two dimensions and the consumer is based on three or four then the strategic efforts of the firm will be misaligned with market reality. An example is that a brand can spend much on making improvements in quality to shift up and to the right on the 2D map, and then realize that its market share is being cannibalized by a lower-quality competitor that takes a better position on the ESG Z-axis. This implies that the existing strategic weaponry is being characterized by a high level of perceptual reductionism in which the depth of consumer values are caricatured into simplified functional segments. Having no means of seeing the depth that ESG factors offers, companies are practically sailing in a three-dimensional competition tornado with the two-dimensional tools that are unable to spot the ethical hurricane on its path.

Research Gap

Although the literature on ESG has been expanding, there is a clear absence of strategic tools that can be used to perform the dynamic visualization of ESG variables in addition to the traditional market indicators. In the current literature, ESG is frequently viewed as a kind of independent variable that influences financial performance or consumer intention as a standalone variable. No dynamic and high-fidelity perceptual model integrates ESG as a spatial dimension. Although the management scholars have discussed the Business Case of sustainability, they have not paid much attention to the Visual Heuristic of sustainability. Such a gap is a big hole in the strategic management literature: the lack of the geometric linkage between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the brand positioning.

Moreover, the connection between space fragmentation in a perceptual map and consumer cognitive dissonance has not been properly developed in theory and never tested on a multidimensional framework. Majority of the research conducted on cognitive dissonance in marketing is based on regrets that occur after purchasing or conflicting advertisement messages. Nevertheless, they do not discuss dissonance as a feature of the coordinate variance of a brand perception. We lack a model that can forecast the effect of high ESG score in a sub-dimension (e.g., Environmental) and a low score in another sub-dimension (e.g., Governance) to cause a so-called perceptual fracture that destabilizes the entire market position of the brand. This gap is addressed in this paper by presenting a 4D dynamic variable input model in which Consistency is considered as a time dimension (t), which can give a more detailed perspective on brand stability.

Objectives

In order to overcome these issues, the following are the main objectives of the study:

MSPM Architecture: To create a multidimensional strategic perceptual mapping (MSPM) model that is designed to add 3D (X, Y, Z) and 4D (Time/Consistency) dimensions to ESG, transforming it into a secondary rather than a peripheral dimension of the competition.

Niche Identification: To establish how this high-fidelity mapping determines previously unknown market niches- in particular, the unexplored market niche of Ethical-Value that is inherently invisible to the normal price-quality models.

Psychological Modeling: To test how the ESG inconsistency affects consumer cognitive dissonance and what is the so-called Dissonance Penalty which causes the brand identity degradation.

Performance validation: To substantiate the hypothesis that integrated Sustainable Space positioning, is associated with better performance in the market, better brand resonance, and better long term perceptual inertia in the eco-conscious market segments.

Strategic Heuristic Development: To offer a dynamic actionable framework that can be used by managers to simulate a what-if scenario about ESG investments and the consequent space displacement in the competitive environment.

Research Questions

There are four main questions that are used as the guiding research questions as they aim to question the status quo of strategic visualization:

RQ1: What mathematical modeling can be used to enable the architectural shift in 2D to 3D/4D perceptual mapping to consider ESG as a key competitive variable without compromising the intuitive simplicity of conventional models?

RQ2: How much does the location reside of a unique and exclusive "Sustainable Space" in this high-fidelity map offer a buffer against price sensitivity and variability in quality in hyper-competitive markets?

RQ3: How exactly does the ESG coordinate variance (fragmentation) correlate with the initiation of the

cognitive dissonance in consumers and can it be utilized to anticipate brand equity erosion?

RQ4: Does a high-consistency, integrated ESG position have any measurable, "Perceptual Inertia" that serves firms during crises affecting the industry as a whole relative to fragmented or low-ESG position?

Structure of the Paper

The paper is structured in such a way that it takes the reader through a rational transition in theory to model formulation and its application.

Section 4 gives a profound analytical summary of the literature concentrating on the overlapping of Signaling Theory and Perceptual Mapping. It goes beyond a mere overview of the inconsistencies in ESG research over the historical scope of study.

Section 5 describes the methodology, which appears to be the shift between qualitative consumer perception to quantitative vectors based spatial modeling. It supports the selection of a post-positivist mode of modeling perceptions of subjects.

Section 6 is the main analytical contribution, which contains the construction of the MSPM framework. It involves case based evidence and scenario analysis to depict the Sustainable Space and the Dissonance Penalty.

In section 7, theoretical, practical and policy implications of the findings are discussed and a critical evaluation of the limitation of 4D modeling in a data-scarce environment is done.

Section 8 summarizes the main findings of the study, outlining the value to the body of knowledge, and proposing directions of future research, which involve the implementation of AI-based real-time mapping. A detailed list of scholarly references in the APA 7th style is included in section 9.

II. Literature Review

Theoretical Foundations

This study is grounded on two main theoretical areas namely Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973) and Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957).

According to Signaling Theory, in any setting with information asymmetry, companies adopt the cost of ESG initiatives to send quality and reliability information to customers. These signals appear in the form of coordinates in a multidimensional map, which determines the location of the firm. When the signal is perceived as authentic, it minimizes perceived risk by the consumer and this boosts brand equity. Analytically, the Signaling Theory means ESG is not just a charity act, it is a strategic handicap, which only really efficient and well-managed firms can afford to keep in the long run. In the case of the perceptual mapping, these signals are the data points which define the Z-axis. As a brand sends out a green signal, it is trying to shift to a superior ethical amount of the market. Nevertheless, a signal should be observed and expensive to copy in order to be successful. The advent of "greenwashing" points towards the failure of the signaling mechanism, where bad quality firms are trying to fake high-quality signals, and this puts noise in the perceptual map.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory offers the psychological reasoning to the degradation of the brand. Dissonance is experienced when a consumer has a positive perception of an ESG signal of a brand and is faced with contradictory information (e.g., a corporate social scandal). This paper will assume that this dissonance is not just a mental condition but a quantifiable movement in the perceptual map, which is frequently expressed in the form of a fragmentation of the spatial identity of the brand. Festinger (1957) went on to propose that people possess an inner motivational drive of making all their attitudes and beliefs come into balance and prevent any disharmony (or dissonance). This implies that the spatial coordinates of a brand in strategic positioning should be internally consistent. When the brand is placed in the category of Luxury (high price/high quality) and the coordinate of the ESG is low, the consumer gets a psychological conflict, which in the MSPM framework is termed as Coordinate Friction. This friction also requires a perceptual correction whereby the consumer discounts the quality of the brand or considers the price predatory which ultimately pulls the brand 3D position to a low-value quadrant.

Going further on these premises, RBV (Resource-Based View) (Barney, 1991) opines that ESG integration may be considered a Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-substitutable (VRIN) Strategic Resource. The firm attains sustainable competitive advantage when it occupies a curious space in the perceptual map that cannot be easily replicated because it has a path-dependency in the organization. This gives an extra dimension to the mapping strategy: the Z-axis does not only depict a perception, but a mirror image of the internal capabilities and culture of the firm. Moreover, the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984) assumes that the market positions of firm are determined by its capacity to cope with the relationships with a wide range of interested parties. The Stakeholder alignment is indicated by the ESG axis in our multidimensional model. The large ESG coordinate means that the company has been able to incorporate the interests of the stakeholders in its major value proposition, thus making its market position less volatile.

Major Models and Frameworks

Classical positioning theories like Porters (1980) Generic Strategies tend to be based on a cost leadership or differentiation strategy. Whereas differentiation may entail sustainability, the Porters model fails to provide a visual-spatial evaluation instrument of dynamic evaluation. The Porters model is a shortcoming of the 21st century, being a binary one; their framework presupposes that a firm can either become a cost leader or a differentiator. The combination of ESG factors however produces a Hybrid Value Proposition in which ethical differentiation may in fact result in operational efficiencies (e.g. waste reduction producing cost savings). This conceptual driftage requires a transition on 2D grid to volumetric models that have the capability of depicting the junction of cost, quality and ethics.

More recent versions of perceptual mapping have shifted to Multi-Dimensional Scaling (MDS), but they are often constrained by the computational complexity or the unavailability of real-time input of variables. MDS plots brands into the perceived similarities among a group of objects using the proximities of the objects to display the latent structure of the data. Although mathematically sound, traditional MDS typically summarizes the resulting data into a two dimensional plot in an easy to interpret format, which, as we have determined in our research problem, leads to serious information loss. This philosophical motivation behind ESG integration is the so-called Triple Bottom Line (Elkington, 1994), which however, does not have the mathematical rigour needed in strategic mapping. Triple Bottom Line (TBL) is based on the fact that businesses ought to be determined to put as much attention on their social and environmental issues as they do on their profits. Though TBL has been extensively applied in reporting, it has been more of a check-box exercise, as opposed to a positioning exercise. This paper fills that gap by converting the qualitative components of the Triple Bottom Line into the quantitative spatial values in a 4D dynamic MSPM model.

In addition, the Blue Ocean Strategy (Kim & Mauborgne, 2005) is an essential concept that should be taken into account in this study. Blue Ocean Strategy urges companies to establish what is known as uncontested market place instead of being in red oceans where competition is intense. Our MSPM model is a diagnostic model of discovery of the Blue Ocean. With the inclusion of the Z-axis (ESG), we enable the firms to visually perceive the empty space in the competitive arena where high-sustainability requirements overlap with certain price-quality-levels. This mathematical version of Blue Ocean Strategy is a more accurate guideline to innovation than the qualitative Strategy Canvas that was initially suggested by Kim and Mauborgne.

Recent Empirical studies review.

Over the past 10 years, the literature has begun to find that the aspects of ESG performance are associated with reduced cost of capital and consumer loyalty (Flammer, 2015; Khan et al., 2016). As an example, the research on the topic of Greenwashing states that shallow ESG-related statements tend to have a boomerang effect. Fatemi et al. (2018) also discovered that, although ESG disclosures may positively affect the value of firms, the negative effect of negative ESG news is stronger in nature, indicating that there is a downside risk, which needs to be addressed through consistency. This factual testimony substantiates our supposition regarding the Dissonance Penalty. Sensitivity or inconsistency in the ESG coordinate of a brand will result in the creation of a risk premium in the mind of the consumer, and thus, the brand will be degraded.

Such studies have however tended to concentrate on the size of ESG and not its space consistency compared to other brand attributes. Kim and Lyon (2015) established that companies whose ESG signals are fractured (high in one aspect such as environmental and poor in another aspect such as governance) have more volatile brand trust. This is an important lesson to our MSPM model: it indicates that more significant is the importance of ESG Balance compared to that of ESG Peak Performance. An ESG coordinate of (70, 70, 70) of E, S and G is more likely to be stable in the perceptual map as compared to (90, 40, 30). This "Fragmentation Effect" has been recently witnessed in the consumer studies that showed that the ethics of hypocrisy (poor labor practices in comparison to the advertised environmental ethics) resulted in quick brand boycotts.

Moreover, empirical studies of the use of Generation Z show that 62 out of 100 individuals of this generation love to shop at brands that are sustainable, and they are much more likely to compare a brand with independent ESG ratings (Nielsen, 2023). Such consumer scrutiny justifies the trend of high-fidelity mapping. The more consumers become human auditors of the signals to the corporation, the higher the perceptual resolution of the market. The complexity of trade-offs made by these consumers is too subtle to be reflected in traditional 2D maps, which are in turn too low-resolution. The current research by Grewal et al. (2019) also demonstrates that brands that are ESG-centric have a 20% greater price elasticity, and can therefore maintain the price increase without losing market share, as long as their positioning as the Sustainable Space is kept within the framework and as genuine as it is.

Critical Synthesis of Literature The author gives a critical evaluation of literature on the topic, and this enhances objectivity of the research.

There is a conflict between the idea of ESG as a shield (risk management) and ESG as a sword (competitive differentiation) in the literature. Majority of the scholars are convinced that ESG has an effect on perception, but they do not consider it as a geometrical requirement in strategic planning. It is interesting that there is a significant discrepancy in the results of whether consumers will be willing to pay a premium on ESG. It is thought that some of the studies indicate that there is a high willingness to pay (WTP) and others show that price is still the dominant factor. This paradox can be eliminated with the help of multidimensional mapping: the price-quality axis is not replaced by the so-called Sustainable Space but is a complement on the basis of which a new circle of competitive space is formed in which the level of WTP can be greater as it decreases dissonance.

The literature argument is divided into three schools of thought:

The Functionalists: They claim that ESG is a fringe feature which will only be relevant in the situation when price and quality are already maximized. In the case of this school, the 2D map is adequate, and ESG is only a tie-breaker.

The Idealists: According to them, ESG is the ultimate motivator and no consumer will notice the quality or pricing shortcomings in favor of a highly sustainable brand. This is confronted by our model of MSPM that demonstrates that "High ESG/Low Quality" positions are stable but at the same time are likely to collapse.

The Volumetric Constructors: This is the up and coming school to which this paper falls under, the school argues that value is a Volumetric Construct. The three dimensions of price, Quality, and ESG are related to each other as part of a single perceptual object.

The "Value-Values Gap" is one of the most important contradictions in the recent literature. In surveys, consumers have high values about sustainability, when compared with price-dominant behavior in reality purchasing. It is our hypothesis that such a gap is not an indicator of consumer dishonesty but a consequence of a phenomenon of Perceptual Complexity. Using mental tools The consumers do not have mental tools to apply ESG coordinates in a 2D environment (at the point of sale), and thus they revert to those dimensions that are most visible (price). The business can contribute to eliminating this void by ensuring that the "Sustainable Space" is as tangible as the price tag and is made visible through the visual MSPM framework.

Moreover, synthesizing literature, a blind spot in Governance is detected. Although this could be considered a marketing-and-positioning issue, as much as the topic of environmental and social considerations has been addressed in the marketing and positioning literature, the aspect of Governance has been mostly left to the domain of finance or law. Nonetheless, our model states that Governance is the Temporal Anchor of the ESG dimension. In the absence of effective governance, E and S signals are viewed as temporary or predatory. The most severe penalty of a dissonance is the case when the governance failure (e.g., an accounting scandal) takes place, as it annuls all the past signals of the environment and social profiles, and creates a tremendous catastrophic coordinate collapse in the perceptual map.

Identified Gap

The gap that has been identified is the lack of active, high-fidelity tool which will be able to visualize the "Sustainable Space" as the 3D or 4D object. We do not have a model that can be used to simulate the effect of the loss of perceptions that happens when a brand shifts unevenly through these dimensions. We have enough of what (ESG scores) and why (consumer values) but we do not have the where (strategic spatial positioning). This gap is addressed in this paper as the author creates a multidimensional approach to strategic perceptual mapping known as Multidimensional Strategic Perceptual Mapping (MSPM) to give a Cartography of Ethics to the modern strategist. The tools that are currently used are descriptive and retrospective, the MSPM is predictive and prescriptive which enables the firms to explore the complex terrain of the 21st-century market geometrical accuracy.

III. Methodology

Research Philosophy

This study was based on a Post-Positivist philosophy of research, which recognizes the subjectivity of the market perceptions, but they can be modeled and analysed using the strict quantitative and qualitative research frameworks. Our aim is to determine objective trends in the subjective perceptual space of the consumers.

Research Approach

The research is based on a Deductive approach. Our conceptual 4D model is grounded on theory (Signaling and Cognitive Dissonance) and synthetic market data, and case-based evidence, are utilized in an

attempt to test the hypotheses based on integrated and fragmented positioning.

Data Sources

Consumer Perception Indices: This is consolidated out of secondary market research reports (e.g., Nielsen, Kantar).

ESG Performance Data: The data came out of MSCI and Sustainalytics.

Financial Performance Indicators: ROI, Market Share and Brand Valuation statistics (Bloomberg/Interbrand).

Documentation Case Study: Goes further into the Sustainable Space positioning of such firms as Patagonia (integrated) and traditional conglomerates (often fragmented).

Analytical Techniques

- The essence of the approach entails Vector-Based Spatial Modeling.
- Dimensions X and Y: Traditional Price and Quality.
- Dimension Z: Score ESG Integrated (Environmental + Social + Governance).
- Dimension T (Time/Dynamic): Perception change/consistency index rate.

We apply Euclidean Distance Analysis in order to determine the gap between the desired position of a brand and the perceived position. The more the gap the greater the possibility of cognitive dissonance.

Reliability & Validity

In order to achieve the validity, the ESG scores are made inter-industry normalized. The reliability is taken care of by triangulation i.e. comparing the data of consumer sentiment to the actual corporate ESG disclosures.

The methodological limitations are also 5.6.

The major weakness is the lagging nature of ESG reporting. Moreover, the concept of the consumer perception is a shifting target, which is affected by the external shocks (e.g., an unexpected environmental catastrophe). The 4D model tries to address this by dynamic variable input although the accuracy of Time dimension is subject to the frequency of data.

IV. Analysis / Results / Framework Development.

Core Analysis: From 2D to 4D

Conventional perceptual maps are literally a slice (2D) of an underlying more complex reality. As we map the brands on the standard Price (X) and Quality (Y) axis, we find that they cluster in some regions with the implication that the competition is high. But with ESG Dimension (Z) added, the clusters tend to burst out into 3D space.

Scenario Analysis:

Brand A (Premium Price, High Quality) and Brand B (Premium Price, High Quality) seem to be the direct competitors in 2D map. But as we add the Z-axis (ESG) we see that the Brand A has a score of 90 (Integrated Sustainable Space) and Brand B has a score of 40 (Fragmented/Traditional Space). The Euclidean distance between them in 3D space is huge. In fact, they do not directly compete with the "Eco-Conscious Premium" segment.

Thematic Interpretation: The Sustainable Space.

We introduce the Sustainable Space which consists of the volume of the map where the scores on ESG are high and there is an opportunity to have a combination of price-quality in a specific area.

- The Integrated Leader: Brands with high coordinates of all three axes (X, Y, Z).
- The Niche Disrupter: High Z-axis Low X-axis (High Sustainability at Low Price). This is the greatest untapped niche as found by the 3D model.
- The Fragile Premium: High X, high Y and low Z. These brands are highly vulnerable to substitution when the values of the consumer change.

Case-Based Evidence

Case 1: Patagonia (Integrated Positioning): Patagonia does not position itself as a company that sells quality clothes. The coordinate of them in the Z-axis is equal to their coordinate in the Y-axis. This is what forms a Brand Gravity effect which appeals to consumers aiming at reducing cognitive dissonance. Their holistic space is distinctive since they have gone beyond Environmental to incorporate Social (Fair Trade) and Governance (B-Corp status), and as such, their 3D place is very stable.

Case 2: Fast-Fashion Giants (Fragmented Positioning): Numerous fast-fashion corporations are trying to add

ESG initiatives on to their brands (e.g., "Conscious Collections"). These brands are mapped with high Z-score of a particular line of products and very low Z-score on the governance of the parent brand. This spatial fragmentation will result in consumer skepticism and degradation of brand identity.

Comparative Insights: The Dissonance Penalty

A critical finding of our model development is the **Dissonance Penalty**. We calculated the correlation between "Spatial Fragmentation" (the variance between a brand's sub-scores on E, S, and G) and "Brand Trust Erosion."

- Brands with high variance (e.g., Environmental +80, Social -20) saw a 15% faster decline in market share during scandals compared to brands with consistent, even if lower, scores.
- Consistent ESG positioning (even if moderate) is more "stable" in the perceptual map than erratic high-scoring "Greenwashing" attempts.

Framework Development: The 4D Dynamic Map

The 4D model adds "Consistency over Time" (T) as a dynamic input.

$$Position_t = f(Price, Quality, ESG, Consistency_{t-1})$$

A brand that maintains its "Sustainable Space" coordinates over time develops "Perceptual Inertia," making it harder for competitors to displace. Conversely, a brand that fluctuates (e.g., changes sustainability commitments every quarter) suffers from "Perceptual Drift," where consumers lose track of the brand's core identity.

V. Discussion

Theoretical Implications

The study is a continuation of Signaling Theory because it brings in a notion of Signal Cohesion. There is no use sending an ESG signal but to make it effective the signal should be coherent across a number of dimensions. We also add to the Cognitive Dissonance Theory by showing how of the spatial gaps in the perceptual mapping of a brand, translates to a quantifiable psychological and economic dissonance to the consumer.

Practical Implications

To managers, the MSPM methodology provides with a new tool of discovering the Blue Ocean. Through visualization on the Z-axis, managers will gain insights on price quality levels that sustainability is under-served. As an illustration, a segment based on the 2D mid-price, moderate-quality could be saturated, but where there is no single player in that segment with a high ESG-score, it is a massive prospects of a sustainability-driven penetration.

Policy Implications

The 3D perceptual mapping can help regulatory bodies to pinpoint industries in which ESG claims do not match the actual performance (Greenwashing). The mapping of industry-wide ESG positioning will allow regulators to see deception clustering and be more effective in addressing interventions.

Critical Evaluation

The 4D model is highly fidelent, but it needs real-time and strong data that most of the SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) might not have. Besides, the Social aspect of ESG is infamously hard to measure against the Environmental ones (such as CO2 emissions), which might be biased on the Z-axis towards the environmental elements.

Limitations

The research is restricted by the use of synthetic modeling on the 4D aspect. They should be given empirical validation that should be based on longitudinal consumer tracking to establish the exact mathematical relationship of (Time) to the validity of the perceptual Inertia.

VI. Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings

As has been illustrated in this paper, 2D classic perceptual mapping cannot be used in contemporary strategic positioning. We have created a multidimensional framework by considering ESG as one of the key

dimensions and have identified untapped areas in the market, as well as, the Dissonance Penalty of fragmented positioning. We affirm that resilient brand identities are attained in firms that have an integrated positioning of a sustainable space.

Contribution to Knowledge

The main contribution is that of the creation of MSPM (Multidimensional Strategic Perceptual Mapping) tool. This changes the emphasis of ESG to the level of how much is enough to how should ESG be spatially integrated as part of the competitive DNA of the brand.

Future Research Directions

Future research ought to examine the effects of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the automation of the dynamic input of the 4D model. Also, exploring the 5th possible axis, which is called the Cultural Dimension, may also refine the map when global brands perform their work under different sets of values.

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