



Master's degree thesis

IDR950 Sport Management

**Enhancing Corporate Sustainability - A Holistic
Framework for Organizational Practices Based on the
Case Study of the Norwegian Outdoor Organization
Uteguiden**

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Preface

This master's thesis marks the end of my long academic journey, which has led me through various countries and cities in which I have met amazing individuals and made friendships that will last a lifetime. I want to thank everyone who has been part of this journey.

I extend my deepest gratitude to the Høgskolen i Molde for allowing me to study at this institution and to my thesis advisor Professor Harald Dolles, whose guidance, patience, and mentorship have been instrumental in shaping this research.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the whole team of Uteguiden, which gave me an unforgettable time working for them and experiencing the Norwegian way of doing business and the strong connection and appreciation for nature. To anyone reading this, I totally recommend trying out one of Uteguiden's activities – it's a blast!

Thank you very much to my fellow students and friends who have made the two years in Norway even more special to me. I am very grateful for everything that we have experienced together and the joy that you gave me. It will never be forgotten.

I sincerely want to thank my family for allowing me to study abroad and for their unmatched support throughout the entire time that I have been studying in Molde. I would have not come this far without you.

To whoever will read this, I sincerely hope you find enjoyment and value in this work!

Simon Lücke

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Abstract

Sustainability has emerged as a critical concern in recent years, driven by the pressing issues of climate change and environmental degradation. The concept of sustainability encompasses three fundamental dimensions: environmental, economic, and social, making it a multidimensional challenge for organizations. While individuals may make incremental changes in their daily lives, corporations have the capacity and motivation to achieve a higher degree of sustainability across multiple aspects of their operations. However, this creates a critical problem as organizations require guidance on how to improve sustainability across different aspects. Merely adopting individual sustainable practices may not suffice. The current body of literature lacks a comprehensive guide that organizations can follow to improve their sustainability efforts. This master's thesis delves into the realm of corporate sustainability, aiming to bridge the existing knowledge gap by providing a comprehensive framework for organizations to enhance their sustainability practices. To achieve these objectives, this research presents a case study of the Norwegian outdoor organization, Uteguiden, following an inductive research approach. The qualitative data was gathered by participant observing, analyzing corporate documents, studying the organization's website, conducting a social media analysis, and reviewing relevant literature.

The results indicate that the organization is actively involved in seven primary areas of focus, including environmental initiatives and certifications, business operations, customer engagement and education, local community engagement, staff engagement, partnerships and collaborations, and leadership commitment. Additionally, a review of the literature identified Sustainability Reporting as an eighth focus area. The thesis also introduces essential concepts that play pivotal roles in promoting sustainability within organizations. These include the Triple Bottom Line concept, Learning-Based Change for Sustainability mechanisms, Shared Value Creation, Employee Engagement Theory, Ecologically Dominant Logic in Supply Chain Management, the 6C Sustainable Leadership Model, and Sustainability Reporting. By embracing these concepts collectively, organizations can cultivate more sustainable and responsible business practices.

This research is a valuable resource for organizations looking to make a meaningful impact on the environment, society, and the economy while fostering sustainability in their operations.

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Abbreviations

CEO	–	Chief Executive Officer
CSR	–	Corporate Social Responsibility
EMS	–	Environmental Management System
ED	–	Ecologically Dominant
EV	–	Electric Vehicle
ISO	–	International Standard Organization
NPO	–	Nonprofit Organization
SL	–	Sustainable Leadership
TBL	–	Triple Bottom Line
UN	–	United Nations
VEI	–	Voluntary Environmental Initiative

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the reader with background information on sustainability. Further, the problem discussion will lead to the introduction of the research questions before presenting the aims, motivation, and relevance of this study. The chapter concludes with an overview of the structural design of this study.

Background Information

Sustainability has become a widely used term and is still becoming increasingly important for people. Especially in the last few decades climate change and its noticeable effects on the planet have led to an increased interest in sustainability on every level of society. From individuals trying to be more sustainable through more conscious ways to live and consume, to organizations implementing sustainability into their business models, to governments enacting laws to protect the environment. The United Nations (UN) (1987) defined sustainability in the Brundtland Report as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In simple terms, sustainability means the resource-conserving behavior that exploits neither people nor nature. The sustainability concept consists of three dimensions – environmental, economic, and social affairs. Khan et al. (2021) explain that environmental sustainability means responsibly using resources so that the needs of today and tomorrow are met without harming the ecosystems that provide them. Further, they provide key principles which include conserving biodiversity, meeting current and future social needs, ensuring resources can regenerate, promoting reuse and recycling, and staying within the Earth’s capacity to support our activities. It is about finding a balance between our needs, resource conservation, and protecting nature. Osburg and Lohrmann (2017) state that economic sustainability is about managing resources wisely to achieve enduring financial success while safeguarding the needs of both the business and society for the future. Finally, UN Global Compact (n.d.) states that social sustainability in business means understanding and managing how a company’s actions affect people. It involves creating positive relationships with employees, customers, and communities while avoiding negative impacts.

Thus, sustainability is a highly important concept that concerns everyone. Being more sustainable in each aspect of life is the goal of many to guarantee and secure an acceptable

life for future generations. That is why humans are becoming increasingly aware of consuming more sustainably to satisfy a wide range of needs. The demand for sustainable organizations and the offer of “green” products and services is higher than ever. That means organizations across all industries must adapt their business operations. This adaptation of sustainable aspects could consequently lead to advantages in competition. Companies with a strong focus on sustainability enjoy better images and can ask for higher prices for their products or services due to the willingness of consumers to pay more (Simon-Kucher & Partners 2021) and benefit from cost efficiency through reliance on renewable energies to name a few.

Problem Discussion

The existing academic literature on sustainability falls short of providing a comprehensive list of focus areas and practices that organizations can adopt to achieve a higher degree of sustainability. While individuals may perceive certain everyday practices, such as avoiding the use of single-use plastic including bottles, straws, and packaging material, reducing overall waste, supporting recycling practices, switching to renewable energies, and reusing material or equipment, etc. as “more sustainable”, “[...] corporations are the only organizations with the resources, the technology, the global reach, and, ultimately, the motivation to achieve sustainability” (Hart 1997). This creates a critical problem as organizations require guidance on how to improve sustainability across different aspects, including their products and services, their treatment of employees, and their economic practices. Merely adopting individual sustainable practices may not suffice. Organizations need a holistic approach that integrates sustainability into the multiple dimensions of their operations. Consequently, there is a pressing need to bridge this knowledge gap and explore the untapped potential for organizations to go above and beyond conventional sustainability practices. By addressing this problem, this research aims to develop a framework that offers organizations concrete focus areas and best practices to enhance their sustainability efforts by considering the existing literature in combination with case study research.

Research Questions

The following research questions form the foundation of this study, considering the circumstances that were outlined in the problem discussion before.

RQ1: *What key sustainability practices are implemented in a Norwegian outdoor organization?*

RQ2: *Are those sustainability practices consequently established and communicated across different communication channels?*

Aims of Study

This study aims to identify focus areas and specific actions in sustainability for organizations to increase the degree of corporate sustainability, which contributes to meaningful environmental stewardship. Ideally this results in the creation of an easy and hands-on framework with key concepts that can be used by organizations of any kind.

Motivation and Relevance

The topic of sustainability is of crucial relevance in today's business world. With the growing global concern for environmental issues, organizations are under increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices. The motivation for this study is rooted in personal interest, the wish to support organizations, such as the chosen one for this study, with their effort in sustainability, to inform other organizations about sustainable practices that have positive outcomes. The wish to create something meaningful with this study, which can be easily used in practice, played an important role in identifying the topic.

Outline

The structure of this thesis is as follows: Chapter 2 will serve as an introduction to the methodology employed in the study, based on the research onion framework presented by Saunders et al. (2019). Given the inductive approach adopted in this research, Chapter 3 will encompass a detailed description of the case country and the case organization. Chapter 4 will present the outcomes of participant observations and document analysis. Key sustainability concepts will be expounded upon in Chapter 5, and these will be interconnected and discussed in conjunction with the data-derived categories in Chapter 6. Finally, Chapter 7 will serve as the concluding section of the study, summarizing its findings and suggesting potential avenues for further research in this field.

2.0 Methodology

This chapter aims to establish the foundation for the conducted research, by adhering to the research onion framework, which encompasses the six layers of research methodology proposed by Saunders et al. (2019), and will guide the reader through this chapter. Before introducing the framework, the ethical values and characteristics of this study's conduction will be determined within the research ethics sub-chapter. The research onion framework was involved in this study since it guided the structural aspect of this chapter and assisted in making the entire research process as transparent as possible. As sustainability is a relatively new and complex phenomenon requiring a deeper understanding of best practices within it, a multi-method qualitative approach using an exploratory case study research was chosen. The data was collected through participant observations and document analysis of the case company. Additionally, an overview of the empirical data analysis is provided. The six layers of the research onion, as shown in *Figure 1*, will include a description of each layer's chosen concepts and reasoning for the selection.

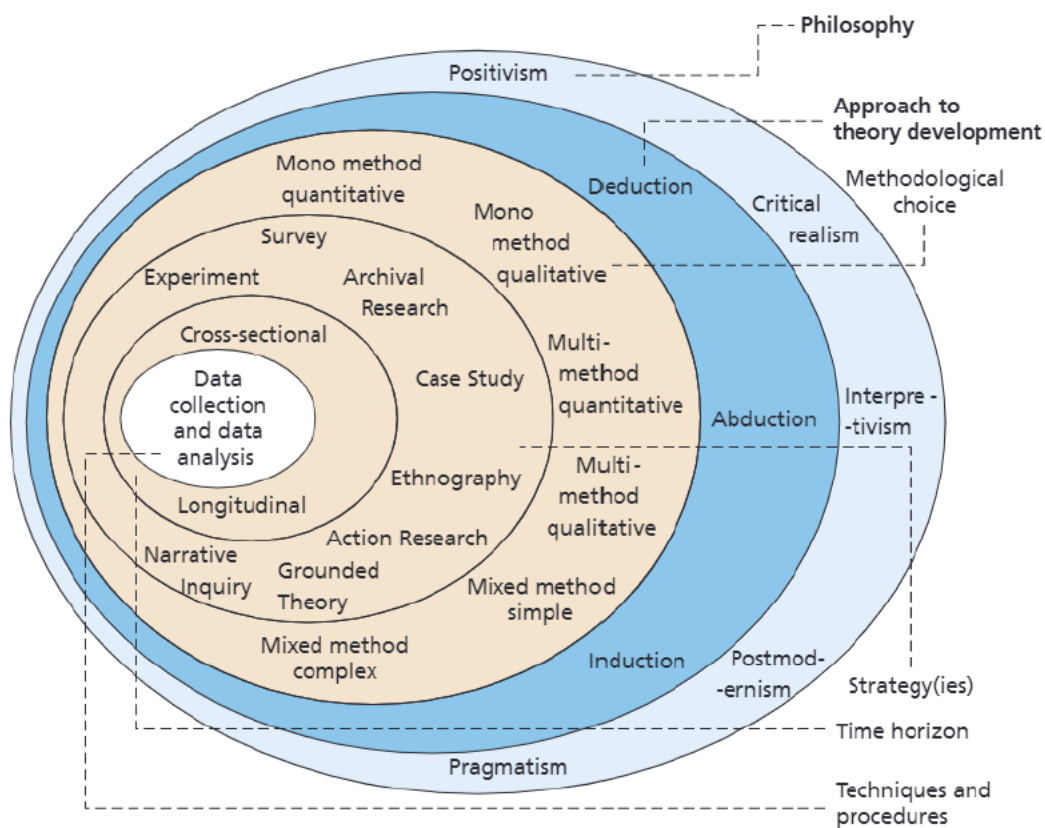


Figure 1: Research Onion (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2019, 130)

2.1 Research Philosophy – Interpretivism & Pragmatism

The research philosophy makes the first layer of the research onion and comprises fundamental convictions that direct the structure and implementation of the research investigation. In their book, Saunders et al. (2019) bring forward the five most common philosophies in research, which are positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism, and pragmatism. Qualitative research approaches often embed interpretivism since it requires researchers to derive meaning from the subjective and socially constructed interpretations conveyed regarding the phenomenon under investigation. According to Alharahsheh and Pius (2020, 41), interpretivism acknowledges that variations in cultures, situations, and historical contexts give rise to the emergence of distinct social realities. According to Legg and Hookway (2021), pragmatism highlights the importance of practical actions and utility in the pursuit of comprehending the world and shaping philosophical perspectives.

For this study, the combination of the philosophies of interpretivism and pragmatism was chosen. In doing so, interpretivism on the one hand covers the subjective part and aims to delve into subjective meanings attached to sustainability practices and gain a deeper understanding of the social and cultural factors influencing it. Often, individuals have different experiences and perspectives within an organizational context, that could bring forward valuable insights.

“If research focuses on the experiences that are common to all at all times, much of the richness of the differences between them and their individual circumstances will be lost, and the understanding of the organization that the research delivers will reflect this” (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2019, 149).

Pragmatism on the other hand covers the practicality of this study because it emphasizes the practical and real-world application. By incorporating pragmatism into interpretivism, the research outcomes are ensured to be applicable and beneficial for organizations and align to identify best practices in sustainability and the creation of a framework within this study.

2.2 Research Approach – Induction

Within the second layer of the Research onion, the approach to theory building of abduction was chosen. The distinction is made between deduction, abduction, and induction. Deductive research starts with the development of a theory through the academic literature, for example, a research strategy is then designed to test this theory. Abductive research is a combination of both deduction and induction and typically begins with an empirical phenomenon and attempts to arrive at a conclusion or best guess based on available evidence. Inductive research starts with the observations and the gathering of data and proceeds to the description and analysis to formulate a theory. The value of induction lies in its emphasis on grasping how humans interpret and comprehend the social world. In contrast to deduction, which concentrates on establishing cause-and-effect links between specific variables, the inductive approach adopts a more adaptable stance. It emphasizes alternative explanations and places significance on subjective interpretations. This adaptability and focus on understanding human perspectives render the inductive approach an effective tool that aligns with the interpretivist philosophy. (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2019)

In the context of this study, the inductive approach to theory development was chosen because it aligns with understanding and interpreting the nuances of sustainable practices within organizations. Induction allows for a flexible exploration of various aspects, considering alternative explanations and valuing subjective interpretations—essential elements when dealing with the complexities of sustainability. It allows for a derivation of insights from specific examples and observations, contributing to the development of a practical framework with key concepts for organizations.

2.3 Research Design – Explorative & Qualitative

The third layer of the research onion includes the research design, which refers to the overall strategy outlining how the research questions will be addressed. It encompasses well-defined objectives derived from the research questions, specifies the data sources to be utilized, outlines the proposed data collection and analysis methods, and addresses potential limitations that might be faced, such as data accessibility, time constraints, location factors, and financial considerations (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2019, 173-174).

Purpose of research design

According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), research can be structured to serve an exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, or evaluative purpose. Additionally, a combination of these purposes is also possible. An exploratory study serves as a valuable approach for inquiring into a topic of interest by asking open-ended questions and gaining insights. Research questions in exploratory studies often begin with “What” or “How” questions. This type of study is particularly beneficial when there is a need to enhance understanding or clarify uncertainties regarding an issue, problem, or phenomenon. The objective of descriptive research is to create a precise profile of events, individuals, or situations. Descriptive research questions typically start with “Who”, “What”, “Where”, “When”, or “How”. Explanatory research refers to studies that establish causal relationships between variables. Research questions seeking explanatory answers often start with “Why” and “How”. The primary focus of this research is to investigate a situation or problem to explain the relationship between variables. Evaluative research aims to assess the effectiveness or performance of something. Research questions that seek evaluative answers often begin with “How” or include “What” in the form of “To what extent”. According to Swedberg (2020, 17), the fundamental essence of exploratory research lies in the endeavor to uncover novel and interesting insights while systematically delving into a research subject.

The purpose of this study’s research design can be defined as exploratory as it requires an open-minded approach to answer the two research questions - *RQ1: What are the key sustainability practices implemented in a Norwegian outdoor organization?; RQ2: Are those sustainability practices consequently established and communicated across different communication channels?*

With an explorative and open-minded approach, the insights into an organization that is strongly engaging with nature and relies on its continued and unrestricted existence, the overall goal of creating a framework with best sustainability practices was considered reachable.

Methodological choice

As Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019) state, a fundamental methodological choice is whether to use a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods research design. Research methods can be categorized as either quantitative, which involves numerical data gathered

through questionnaires etc., or qualitative, which is based on verbal data gathered through interviews, etc. A mixed-methods research is the combination of both. Quantitative methods are typically aligned with a scientific approach to research, while qualitative methods have traditionally been associated with phenomenology. The most noticeable difference between quantitative and qualitative research lies in their respective approaches during the analysis stage. In quantitative research, a clear separation is made between data collection and data analysis. In contrast, qualitative research often involves simultaneous collection, analysis, interpretation, and report of data, with the results of one activity potentially influencing the direction of the others (Iacono, Brown, and Holtham 2009). Moreover, in research, a “qualitative method is used to understand people’s beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviors, and interactions” (Pathak, Jena, and Kalra 2013). Hence, a multi-method qualitative research approach was chosen, encompassing a review of literature, active participant observations, and document analysis for data collection. The primary objective is to gain insight into the implementation of sustainability practices within the day-to-day operations of the organization. By harmonizing these methods, the study is anticipated to uncover a wealth of information, drawing from the existing literature as well as direct engagement in the organization's practices. This is expected to result in the identification of recurring patterns, successes, challenges, and potential innovations within sustainability practices. Additionally, this approach is anticipated to yield more robust findings, further enriching the development of a practical sustainability framework. A qualitative approach was chosen over a quantitative approach, because of the opportunity to carry out a study as an intern within one organization that allows for deep insights into the sustainability phenomenon rather than collecting numerous data that is rather superficial and relies on the honest complementation of chosen organizations. The selection of a qualitative research approach also fits the fact that qualitative research is commonly linked to an interpretative philosophy due to its emphasis on making sense of subjective and socially constructed meanings related to the phenomenon under study. (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2019)

2.4 Research Strategy – Case Study Research

To investigate how sustainability practices are carried out in a Norwegian outdoor organization, a case study research method was chosen within the fourth layer of the research onion framework. According to Yin (2014), a case study is a comprehensive empirical investigation of a topic or phenomenon that is conducted in a real-world context.

“Researchers use this method to build upon theory, to produce new theory, to dispute or challenge theory, to explain a situation, to explore or to describe a phenomenon or an object” (Krusenvik 2016). Yin (2014) also points out that when the research questions involve understanding "how" or "why", and the researcher has little control over behavioral events, using case study research is the preferred method compared to other approaches. Additionally, case studies are particularly useful for investigating contemporary phenomena within their real-world context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly defined. To address the unique technical challenge of having more variables of interest than data points, case study design often includes triangulation as a key feature to decrease researcher bias and increase validity. Triangulation is understood as the use of multiple methods for data collection (methodology triangulation), multiple investigators on the same phenomenon (investigator triangulation), multiple theories for analyzing and interpreting the data (theory triangulation), and multiple data sources for gaining higher validity (data triangulation) (Carter et al. 2014). A case study can provide valuable insights into complex and nuanced phenomena in their natural setting and “aims to explore and depict a setting with a view to advancing understanding of it” (Cousin 2005, 421).

Case study research is a method that is applicable in a wide range of situations and fields including individuals, groups, and organizations, and “to an increasing extent, the case study approach has become a common method in many scientific disciplines” (Dubois and Gadde 2002, 554). Consequently, case study research can be employed in an organizational context to gain an understanding of the managing, implementation, and adaption of practices and actions that result in valuable insights that can enrich theoretical and practical aspects.

Through its open and exploratory nature (Cousin 2005), this study conducted a case study research approach, due to the broad field of sustainability, which was set initially to investigate. Thus, it supported the identification of the research questions. Moreover, this study has made use of case study research, due to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept of sustainability including a wide range of social, economic, and environmental factors. Further, sustainability practices are often context-dependent and can vary widely depending on the context in which they are implemented. Therefore, case study research is particularly useful for examining how sustainability practices are adapted to suit specific contexts, and for identifying the factors that contribute to their success. Through case study

research, rich and detailed data can be generated that provide importance, attitude, beliefs, and experiences in sustainable practices of the organization investigated. Moreover, Eisenhardt (1989, 548-549) argues that theory developed through case study research possesses key strengths such as novelty, testability, and empirical validity due to its close ties with real-world evidence. It is especially valuable in uncharted research areas or where existing theories fall short. This approach complements incremental theory building from traditional research, offering fresh perspectives in the early stages while traditional research comes into play later. This process entails an ongoing exchange between theory and data.

Using case studies, one must be aware of the challenges that this method brings. According to Flyvbjerg (2006), generalization from case studies, the superiority of theoretical knowledge over practical knowledge, the unsuitability of testing hypotheses and theory building, the limitation of verification due to researchers' bias, and the difficulty in developing general propositions based on one specific case are the most common issues of case study research. However, to address these challenges this study is aiming at transferability of the findings rather than generalization (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2019). This way the findings can inform decision-making in comparable organizational settings and acknowledge the uniqueness of each organization. Further, this study is making use of a qualitative method triangulation including a close integration of existing literature, document analysis, and participant observations in the field, to increase the validity of the findings.

2.5 Time Horizon – Cross-Sectional

Within the fifth layer of their framework Saunders et al. (2019) provide a distinction between the cross-sectional and longitudinal time horizons of a study. While cross-sectional studies focus on a single data collection of a specific phenomenon at a particular time, longitudinal studies emphasize data collection at multiple points in time, allowing to document change and development of a specific phenomenon over time. Additionally, Kesmodel (2018) argues that a cross-sectional study collects data at a single point in time, focusing on the prevalence of specific characteristics or behaviors in a population. It does not track changes over time and provides a snapshot of the current situation. White and Arzi (2005, 138) state that a longitudinal study involves multiple measures or observations of the same individuals or entities, taken at different times over a minimum period of one year, to assess whether a change has occurred. The measures or observations must be comparable to reveal changes

accurately. Therefore, this study is considered a cross-sectional study since it involves the collection of data at a particular moment or rather within a short time frame and does not meet the criteria for a longitudinal study.

2.6 Data Collection Methods

The seventh layer of the research onion framework is split into this and the following chapter. For this case study, a multi-method qualitative approach was adopted. The qualitative data has been collected using two ethnographic methods, namely participant observations as well as document analysis. In this chapter, the two chosen approaches and the reasoning for choosing them will be described in detail.

2.6.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation is a research method utilized by anthropologists and social scientists to gain knowledge about the explicit and tacit aspects of the life routines and culture of a group of individuals. In the case study research approach, participant observation is commonly utilized for data collection and can help develop theories or generate and test hypotheses (DeWalt and DeWalt 2010), which was the first reason for choosing this method. It helped to narrow down, identify, and formulate the research questions of this study. This method involves the researcher taking part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of the group. The "explicit" culture, as defined within this method, is what the individuals can communicate about themselves (DeWalt and DeWalt 2010, 1). "Participant observation involves spending time, living or working with people or communities in order to understand them" (Laurier 2010, 116), and can also find application in a diverse range of everyday settings including organizations (Yin 2014).

Dibben and Dolles (2013, 482-483) summarized six key strengths of participant observations. First, it places a focus on behavior rather than relying solely on interviews, improving data quality. Second, it provides a holistic perspective by examining relationships within a broader context. Third, it enables observers to notice overlooked details that can become subjects of discussion. Fourth, cross-cultural research, prompts a shift from an outsider's perspective to an insider's viewpoint, fostering a deeper understanding. Fifth, it encourages serendipitous discoveries by immersing the researcher in the context of

discovery, potentially leading to unexpected data that can drive theory development. Sixth, the technique involves the observer immersing themselves in the daily life of the group or organization under study, necessitating the establishment of legitimacy within the community or organization.

Gold (1957) identified four stances of field observation. The *complete observer* is the most involved form of participant observation, where the researcher disguises their role within the group being studied to prevent disrupting regular activities. The potential loss of objectivity as well as distrust from the group members, once the deception is uncovered, are drawbacks of this stance. In the *participant-as-an-observer* approach, the researcher is a member of the group being studied, and the group is aware of the research being conducted. The researcher is primarily interested in observing rather than participating. The drawback of this approach is, as there is a balance that could be struck between the depth of the data revealed to the researcher and the confidentiality of the group's information. In the *observer-as-participant* approach, the researcher is allowed to participate in the group activities as needed, but their primary role is to collect data, which is made known to the group being studied. As an observer, the researcher is not a member of the group and is interested in participating only to facilitate better observation and generate a more comprehensive understanding of the group's activities. The last approach is the *complete observer*, where the researcher remains completely hidden from view while observing or is present in plain sight in a public setting, but the public being studied is unaware of being observed. In either case, the observation is unobtrusive and unknown to the participants.

Participant observation has gained popularity in organizational research as organizations can be considered societies that have their own customs and practices and is therefore deemed as an appropriate and useful method in this study. Another reason for choosing participant observation is the greater validity and relevance for organizational actors of the knowledge, which has been obtained from the inquiry of the inside of an organization (Iacono, Brown, and Holtham 2009). Further, "it offers the chance to obtain unique insights into the organization or social group" (Iacono, Brown, and Holtham 2009, 1), and could therefore have a meaningful contribution to the goal of this study. When designing research that employs participant observation, the aim is to gain a comprehensive and objective understanding of the phenomenon being studied, within the constraints of the method's limitations. There are clear downsides to this method of data collection starting with the

accessibility of fieldwork. Iacono et al. (2009) mentions that gaining access to organizations as a fieldworker is often connected to challenges, due to confidentiality. Being an internal researcher within the scope of a study-related ten-week internship, this challenge was tackled and allowed the conduction of observations using an approach that finds itself in between the *complete observer* approach and the *participant-as-an-observer* approach. This is because the organization was aware that data was being collected and that the collection was not superior to participation. Schensul et al. (1999, 93) states, that researchers doing participant observation often face inclusion and acceptance issues due to personal characteristics including gender, race, age, ethnicity, appearance, and language. These, however, were no significant impairments for me as the researcher. Although each one of my colleagues was fluent in Norwegian, English was the language spoken in my presence, and the amount of responsibility that was given to me, led to the conclusion that I was being fully accepted. In the subjective nature of qualitative research methods, researcher bias and ensuring objectivity in participant observations can be challenging since the researcher is an active participant in the group being studied. The researcher's personal preconceptions, beliefs, and perspectives can potentially influence the interpretation and comprehension of the phenomena being observed (Yin 2014). Therefore, data triangulation including document analysis and the review of literature aimed at mitigating this challenge. The data collection process through participant observation was conducted from the 9th of January 2023 until the 31st of March 2023, being an intern in the organization of Uteguiden AS. The process included observations in the field in the Activity Centers in Ålesund and Stranda during regular working hours in the office, during trips, and outside the office hours on business-related events. Moreover, the participant observations included profound conversations with colleagues, business partners, and customers that developed on the aforementioned occasions.

2.6.2 Document Analysis

Document analysis is a structured method employed to scrutinize and assess an extensive array of textual and visual materials, encompassing both physical and digital content, including data transmitted via electronic means such as computers and the Internet. These materials encompass text and images that are collected without any researcher interference, and a diverse range of document types can be employed in a methodical assessment within a research context. This, however, should not be misconstrued as a conventional literature

review. Examples of documents that can be evaluated are books, brochures, journals, charts, newspaper articles, organizational or institutional reports, public records, as well as websites and social media accounts. These documents can usually be found in libraries, newspaper archives, and organizational or institutional files. The analytical process of documents involves locating, choosing, interpreting, and combining data found in documents. As part of data triangulation, which was explained earlier in case study research, document analysis is frequently applied alongside other qualitative methods of data collection to strengthen research findings. The main advantages of the document analysis method are efficiency, availability, cost-effectiveness, non-obtrusiveness, and non-reactiveness. That means the document analysis method is a time-saving method, which involves the selection of data rather than its collection. Many documents are accessible in the public domain and can be obtained without the author's permission. Cost-effectiveness is given due to the reason that the data in the documents have already been collected before one's study. Moreover, document analysis is considered "unobtrusive" and "non-reactive" since the documents are unaffected by the research process itself. However, limitations of this method are insufficient detail and biased selectivity, which means that the documents being analyzed are typically made for purposes unrelated to the research and therefore sufficiently address research questions. Also, the selection of documents may be influenced by the researcher's biases or preferences, which leads to an incomplete collection of documents because certain documents have been left out. Document analysis encompasses three main stages: skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation. These stages are iterative, meaning they are repeated and refined throughout the analysis. This process combines elements of content analysis and thematic analysis. Content analysis involves organizing information into categories that are relevant to the central research questions. Thematic analysis is the process that entails a thorough and focused re-reading and review of the data. The reviewer closely examines the selected data, conducts coding, and constructs categories based on the unique characteristics of the data. This process aims to uncover themes that are relevant to the phenomenon being studied (Bowen 2009, 27-32).

The method of document analysis was chosen as a form of data triangulation to gain new possible insights into the phenomenon of sustainability and to compare the data found in the documents with the data gathered in the participant observations. Thus, the documents chosen involved organizational documents, as well as the organization's website, and the social media accounts on Instagram and Facebook.

Organizational documents

An examination of organizational documents such as sustainability reports, policies, and other types of internal documents, offers direct information about Uteguiden's sustainability practices, objectives, and strategies. Through this analysis, insights into specific sustainability initiatives implemented by the organization, and comprehension of their goals and targets related to sustainability can be gathered.

Organization's Website

Uteguiden's website plays a crucial role as the main platform for communicating its sustainability endeavors and highlighting its economic, environmental, and social initiatives to stakeholders. Visiting and analyzing the website assists in investigating their sustainability commitments, and gaining knowledge about specific projects and initiatives as well as how sustainability is embedded in the organization's core values and operations. Moreover, it allows the identification of any certifications or partnerships that underline their dedication to sustainability.

Organization's Social Media Accounts

The power and importance of social media platforms are a fundamental part of today's business world. It is, therefore, necessary to consider these. Facebook and Instagram are the main platforms on which Uteguiden is active. These offer immediate and real-time information about an organization's interaction with stakeholders, public opinion, and communication tactics. When analyzing the social media accounts, an assessment of their communication initiatives and how they actively engage with their audience on sustainability matters can be achieved. This includes monitoring stakeholders' reactions and comments, as well as identifying any inconsistencies between the organization's public image and its actual sustainability practices.

2.7 Data Analysis Methods

The second part of the seventh layer of the research onion framework consists of the methods used to analyze the data collected through participant observations and document analysis. Both data sets were analyzed employing the thematic analysis approach. It was chosen

because according to Saunders et al. (2019) and Clarke et al. (2015), the thematic analysis aims to identify recurring themes or patterns within a dataset. It involves coding qualitative data to uncover themes and patterns that are relevant to the research questions. The thematic analysis provides a systematic approach that is both flexible and accessible for analyzing qualitative data. Further, they provide how a thematic analysis is carried out. It follows four steps that ensure a logical and organized process, allowing for detailed descriptions, explanations, and the development of theories. The first step is familiarization with the data, which is an ongoing process of immersion throughout the research project. It involves reading and revisiting the data during the analysis process. The focus is on uncovering meanings, identifying recurring themes, and detecting patterns within the data. The second step is coding the data, which is the process of categorizing data based on their shared meanings. It involves assigning a code to each unit of data within a larger data set, such as documents, to represent or summarize its meaning. This process aims to make relevant data easily accessible for further analysis. The third step is the identification of themes and the exploration of relationships within these. This phase of analysis involves examining the extensive list of codes to identify patterns and relationships and create a concise list of themes that are relevant to the research questions. A theme represents a broad category that encompasses multiple codes and indicates an important concept related to the research questions. The search for themes is part of the overall process of considering the raw data, starting with coding, and then organizing the coded data into meaningful analytical categories. The fourth and last stage includes refining themes and testing propositions. The continuous exploration of the data set, codes, and themes will potentially lead to refining and further developing the themes. Moreover, through the process, the opportunity to formulate propositions that can be tested will arise. It is important to validate any perceived relationships or connections between themes by conducting thorough tests. By rigorously examining the propositions considering the data, it allows the progression toward the development of robust and well-grounded conclusions.

2.8 Research Ethics

During an internship that I have been doing at the organization of Uteguiden AS, I collected data through participant observations and document analysis. The organization was aware of the aim to combine the internship with my master's thesis and supported me whole out the process, giving me access to all their facilities and allowing me to review organizational

documents. Thus, the management was aware of my double role as an intern and researcher within the company. The participant observations did not include any explicit interviews, but conversations with staff, customers, as well as business partners within natural settings in their daily business operations. This study will not involve any names of those individuals mentioned before, to ensure full anonymity. Therefore, it was not necessary to apply to the Norsk senter for forskningsdata for approval.

3.0 Case Description

This chapter serves as an introduction to the case organization chosen. Further, it will present the actions and goals Norway is taking regarding sustainability and the fight against climate change. Facts about why Norway and Uteguiden AS are suitable for this study will be outlined.

3.1 Case Country – Norway

Norway stands as a prominent example in the aspect of sustainable practices, policies, and initiatives. With its population of approximately 5.5 million inhabitants (Statista.com 2023), Norway ranks among the world's most sustainable countries, alongside its Scandinavian neighbors Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. The country's remarkable success can be attributed to its elevated levels of innovation, technology, social welfare, human capital, and environmental indicators (Robeco 2023). Notably, Norway took an early and decisive step towards fulfilling the goals of the Paris Agreement in 2016 by enacting its climate change act in 2017, demonstrating its commitment to this global accord (IEA 2022).

The Norwegian government has established ambitious goals for greenhouse gas emission reduction. By 2030, they aim to achieve a 50-55% decrease from 1990 levels, with a long-term objective of attaining a 90-95% reduction by 2050, while concurrently establishing a low-emission society by the same year (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment 2021).

In the area of transportation, Norway has attained the highest percentage of electric vehicles (EVs) globally. In 2022, 79% of all vehicles in the country operate on battery power. The government has set a goal for all cars sold by 2025 to be zero-emission vehicles. The achievement of this number can be attributed to a range of incentives, guided by the principle that "It must pay to make green choices" (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment 2021, 14). The implementation of tax reductions for EVs and increased taxes for high-emission vehicles has made the purchase of EVs more appealing and economically efficient. Revenues from emission-related taxes have long supported incentives for zero-emission cars

(Elbil.no n.d.). Norway relies extensively on its abundant hydropower resources, which account for 92% of its electricity generation (IEA 2022), resulting in an almost entirely renewable power sector. Notably, the country has already achieved zero emissions in electricity generation and has made significant steps in electrifying its buildings and industrial sectors, leading to low emissions in these sectors. However, the oil and gas sector holds substantial economic importance, contributing significantly to the country's prosperity. Paradoxically, it also represents one of the country's primary sources of greenhouse gas emissions. Nevertheless, Norway has demonstrated its pioneering stance by adopting the polluter-pays principle as early as 1991, which remains central to its climate change policy. Just like the tax on high-emission vehicles, this principle is implemented through a carbon tax that encompasses fossil fuel combustion and the petroleum sector. The transition process toward a greener economy entails substantial costs, focusing on the sectors of power, industry, mobility, buildings, agriculture, forestry and other land use, and waste. A sustainability study conducted by McKinsey (2022) highlights the global-scale transformation necessary along the aforementioned sectors to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, estimating an annual average expenditure of \$9.2 trillion on physical assets, which is \$3.5 trillion more than current levels. In the context of Norway, the adoption of a cross-sectoral instrument involving the taxation of greenhouse gas emissions assumes a critical role. This approach places a financial value on emissions, thereby incentivizing households and businesses to reduce their emissions and actively pursue climate-friendly solutions. However, the feasibility of abandoning high-emission alternatives depends on the availability and viability of low-emission alternatives. Consequently, alongside the emissions pricing, the government of Norway remains committed to providing financial support for the research, development, and implementation of new technologies. As part of this commitment, the government plans to successively increase the taxation level, ultimately reaching NOK 2000 (around 170€ as of June 2023) per ton of CO₂ by the year 2030 (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment 2021, 14).

Within the Scandinavian countries, the concept of “friluftsliv” (translated to “open-air-living”) is deeply integrated into the culture. With historical roots in Norway, “friluftsliv” is about actively engaging with nature without motorized transportation, relying primarily on one's physical strength. The concept emphasizes deep experiences in nature and acquiring specific skills and knowledge through firsthand encounters to feel comfortable and safe in the natural environment. It encompasses respect and reverence for natural processes and all

living beings. The concept emerged as a mindset and highlights the significance of simplicity to live an enriching life with basic means in nature (Gröninga.de n.d.). In the two years that I was living in Norway, I was able to gather many personal experiences regarding “friluftsliv” and I would claim that most of the Norwegian population has adopted this mindset and is strongly engaging in it.

In this study, Norway serves as an ideal setting due to the country’s proactive efforts to sustainability, encompassing various sectors such as emission reduction, transportation, renewable energy, and cultural values. These factors form a good foundation for investigating sustainable practices within an organization that is operating in this environment. The Norwegian mindset toward nature and its deep connection with it is a significant aspect, as it underlines the importance of recognizing the value of nature and embracing sustainability on an individual level.

3.2 Case Company – Uteguiden AS

Uteguiden AS is a guide company in the northwestern part of Norway. It finds itself in the outdoor tourism industry offering a wide range of guided tours and courses connected such as skiing, snowshoeing, climbing, rafting, canyoning, coasteering, stand-up paddling, hiking, kayaking, and biking. Its main business area is the province of Møre og Romsdal and the Sunmøre region. Countless mountain summits, fjords, and the raw nature, for what Norway is known for, make this region highly attractive for domestically and internationally outdoor tourists. Based on a study project, Uteguiden AS was founded in 2012 in Stranda, Norway. The main focus of the organization has been guided ski tours and avalanche courses, however, due to its rapid growth the offered program was extended by the before-mentioned activities. The acquisition of a new company location in Ålesund in 2017 and a company merger with Valldal Naturopplevingar in 2021 and the associated opening of a third branch in Valldal was the key factor for the organization’s program extension and strengthened position. With the three so-called Activity Centers in Stranda, Ålesund, and Valldal, Uteguiden AS has a strong position in the northwestern part of Norway being able to offer outdoor activities all year round in different difficulty levels for almost every age group. Each activity center has several office rooms, offers a wide range of equipment that can be rented, and serves as a meeting/starting point for activities. The headquarter in Stranda has a café connected to the offices where self-baked specialties and locally produced

food and drinks can be bought. Because of the high frequency of cruise ships throughout the year in the city of Ålesund, Uteguidien AS has a for its business strategically important location there. The activity center has a shop connected to the office and sells all kinds of clothing and equipment that could be useful for their tours. The offer includes kayak paddles, skis, ski boots, dry suits, base layers, goggles, Uteguidien merchandise, etc., and can also be purchased in their online shop.

Uteguidien AS employs five full-time workers all year round and about 15 to 35 full-time guides in the winter and summer seasons. On social media Uteguidien AS is active on Facebook and Instagram, with 14 thousand and almost 20 thousand followers respectively. Impressions of previous tours, videos connected to the maintenance of products, collaboration announcements, etc. are mainly shared in the English language on Instagram, while the activity on Facebook adds advertisements for tours and courses in the English and Norwegian language as well as products that are sold.

The team of Uteguidien AS is multicultural, which consists of people from around the world. The five full-time employees are from Sweden, Norway, France, and Russia, making this team highly diverse and allowing them to bring different knowledge, values, and ideas together. In addition to that, the seasonal guides are coming from all around the world contributing to the quality of Uteguidien's product portfolio. Several have lived in Norway for some time or are recurring guides to work for Uteguidien. The passion for the outdoors is what connects all of them and this is what Uteguidien's core business is.

This also forms the reason why this organization was chosen. The fact that this organization depends on nature and its well-being is of particular interest, especially because it operates in Norway, which is considered one of the world's most sustainable countries and actively engages in sustainability means, as presented in the previous sub-chapter.

4.0 Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents data obtained from participant observations and document analysis. The observational data is presented chronologically, spanning from January 9th to March 31st, during which I was engaged with the organization as an intern. Categories will be derived from the data, and the analysis follows an inductive approach.

4.1 Participant Observations

Observation from the 9th of January until the 31st of January

Before the start of the internship, I made a deliberate decision to initially engage in passive observation during the first week while actively seeking specific information at a later stage. I aimed to assess the type of information offered to me, both directly and indirectly. The first week of the internship was relatively calm, and I used the time to acclimate myself and familiarize myself with the diverse programs, systems, and communication channels employed by Uteguiden to run its business. Additionally, I received a guided tour through the Activity Center in Ålesund, where I was shown the equipment utilized for courses, tours, and rentals, as well as the products available in the connected shop. Notably, my attention was drawn to the presence of the stickers representing the 1% for the Planet and Rainforest Trust initiatives in various areas of the Activity Center, such as the entrance door and the payment counter, both of which serve as visible indicators of the organization's commitment to environmental protection. Both, "1% for the Planet" and "Rainforest Trust" are non-profit organizations (NPOs) that support environmental protection. The "1% for the Planet" NPO is an association of organizations that are willing to donate at least one percent of their annual sales to environmental organizations. A member organization gets certified, can donate to environmental organizations that are approved by "1% for the Planet" and can use the initiative's network to directly connect with other member organizations (onepercentfortheplanet.org n.d.). "Rainforest Trust" is an NPO that creates "legally-recognized protected areas where forests and their species can continue contributing to the health of the global ecosystem" (rainforesttrust.org n.d.).

I had informed myself before the internship regarding Uteguiden's involvement with the aforementioned initiatives, thus I was aware of their existing support and memberships. Consequently, I closely monitored these affiliations during my observations.

Furthermore, I learned that a large proportion of Uteguiden's clients, particularly tourists visiting Ålesund and its surrounding areas, lacked personal transportation opportunities. As a solution, the company owned a total of eight vehicles to facilitate transportation to the starting point of booked tours, three of which were EVs. Moreover, I was informed that Uteguiden has plans to replace all its current vans with EVs in the near future as part of its sustainability efforts. During my interactions with my colleagues, I became aware of the option for clients to purchase lunch packages for physically demanding activities and tours, ensuring participants are adequately nourished during their long-lasting excursions. These lunch packages are sourced from a local coffee shop in Ålesund, located near Uteguiden's Activity Center. Furthermore, I was told that Uteguiden has established collaborative partnerships with local hotels, thereby providing its clients with convenient accommodation options. As I familiarized myself with the products in the shop, I noticed that prominent brands such as Dynafit, Devold, and Salewa held a significant share of the store's offerings. Given my personal interest and experience as a passionate skier, I recognized that both Dynafit and Salewa were renowned for their strong commitment to sustainability. My curiosity led me to inquire about Devold, a Norwegian wool manufacturer headquartered on the opposite side of the fjord in Ålesund, thereby expanding my knowledge of their product's origin. Additionally, I discovered a dedicated section in the shop where clients could donate clothes or equipment they no longer needed. These items were then made available for purchase at affordable prices, depending on their condition, promoting a circular economy, and minimizing waste.

In the second week of my internship, on January 17th, I participated in a kayak trip with clients from Germany, the United States, and Canada. During this excursion, the head kayaking guide shared historical insights about the city of Ålesund and encouraged all participants, me included, to collect floating trash encountered during the trip. The guide explained that trash picking during tours has always been part of Uteguiden. The conversations I had with the clients underscored their genuine concern for sustainability and they expressed appreciation for the activity's integration of environmental stewardship. Furthermore, my environmentally engaged colleague elaborated on the versatile uses of seaweed as an eco-friendly alternative for various purposes.

On January 18th, I was invited to join an event called "Utetur", a complimentary tour offered by Uteguiden once a month with changing activities. This initiative aims to foster a

sustainable community centered around the organization and strengthen people's connection with the region and their passion for outdoor activities. Participants, whether experienced or inexperienced, local or international, are welcome to join this tour, which takes place in different places of the Sunmøre Alps, located just outside of Ålesund and close to the headquarter in Stranda. The event information is shared as a Facebook event, limiting the number of participants for safety reasons, thereby allowing interested individuals to partake. On this day, the tour involved ski touring, and approximately 20 people took part. Before the tour started, relevant information about the current conditions and a reminder to avoid leaving trash behind while picking up any litter encountered were communicated. In contrast to the previous tour I had joined, I engaged in discussions solely with local participants on the topic of sustainability. These individuals emphasized the imperative of preserving nature, noting their observations of deteriorating conditions in the mountains over recent years. During the tour, my colleagues organized stops for rest and educational moments, including guidance on avalanche safety and insights about the area we crossed. One of my colleagues stated, "The great thing with ski touring is that it leaves nothing behind but tracks in the snow, and it has minimal impact on nature since it does not require constructing lifts or deforesting areas, as participants ascend the mountain on skis and ski down afterward".

Observation from the 1st of February until the 28th of February

After a three-week working period at Uteguiden, it became evident that the entire business operates in a paperless manner, with all its processes digitized. Customers can conveniently book tours and rentals through the website, receive electronic invoices, and complete the necessary letter acknowledging potential hazards during excursions, all of which are handled electronically. Similarly, receipts are transmitted via email for any purchases made.

Furthermore, Uteguiden adopts a sustainable approach by extending the lifespan of their rental equipment, even if some items show signs of usage or damage. Instead of discarding such equipment, the company offers it for sale at affordable prices in their shop. This practice primarily applies to skis, bikes, and skiing poles.

It was not until the fourth week of my internship that I learned about Uteguiden's participation in the "1% for the Planet" initiative, during a visit by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to Ålesund. I inquired about this commitment and the CEO explained that many of the products available in the shop originate from another member organization

within the “1% for the Planet” network. For instance, Uteguiden sources ski goggles and sunglasses made from bio-based materials from the organization Sepktrum Sports in Sweden. Additionally, their bike clothing is provided by Velocio Apparel, and their thermos bottles are supplied by Klean Kanteen, both of which are members of the initiative. In addition to these certified brands, Uteguiden also collaborates with other companies outside of the “1% for the Planet” network. These partnerships include Fara Cycling for bikes, Dynafit for various skiing and track running gear, Arva Equipment for avalanche safety equipment, Devold for woolen base layers and socks, and Aqua Bound for paddles.

On February 7th, an additional ski touring event took place as part of the “Utetur” program near Stranda. This event involved a partnership with Moonlight Mountain Gear, an organization based in Åndalsnes, which is in the neighboring region of Stranda, renowned for producing high-quality headlamps, alpine skis, and touring skis. Participants of the event were given the opportunity to equip with headlamps and touring skis in preparation for the upcoming excursion. Prior to the tour’s commencement, I accompanied a colleague to the Activity Center in Stranda for a meeting with the representatives of Moonlight Mountain Gear. During this meeting, it was explained that all their products are designed and tested in Åndalsnes and manufactured within Scandinavia. Afterward, I took the opportunity to explore the facilities at Stranda and discovered that Uteguiden featured a café named “Hygge” connected to the office, offering ample seating and recreational activities such as table tennis. The café also retailed locally produced goods like baked items, beverages, and regional specialties such as jams, juices, and sausages. I had the privilege of engaging in a brief conversation with the CEO, during which he expounded on the concept of “Hygge” and emphasized that all items sold there are locally sourced, excluding some soft drinks and branded bars like Coca-Cola or Snickers. Additionally, Uteguiden has established the “Ungdomsklubb”, which translates to “youth club”, providing local youth with a weekly opportunity to socialize, study, and spend time in the café bar.

A week later, on February 14th, I participated in a theoretical and practical first aid in the mountains course at the Activity Center in Stranda and its surroundings. During this course, I had the opportunity to interact with numerous seasonal guides who specialize in ski touring, snowshoeing, and various other winter and summer sports activities. This encounter offered valuable insights into their individual attitudes toward sustainability and environmental aspects. The prevalent use of reusable containers for food and bottles for

beverages served as a notable indicator of waste minimization efforts. Several guides shared their experiences of traveling to Norway, wherein they predominantly opted for trains and buses to reduce their reliance on air travel. Furthermore, many guides conveyed their personal dedication to sustainability, actively supporting or participating in different initiatives to combat pollution and promote environmental well-being. Where appropriate, they consistently encouraged their clients during previous excursions to partake in social or environmental initiatives as well. A common trait among these guides was their profound respect and gratitude for nature, as their work and leisure activities involved spending time outdoors. Consequently, they were deeply committed to leaving the places they visited in an even better state than before.

During the second half of February, the Activity Center in Ålesund underwent a series of maintenance works. The office space was restructured, resulting in the installation of new desks and office furniture. Notably, an interesting practice was observed during this process, wherein certain components from the old furniture were repurposed for use in other areas, while the remaining non-usable parts were made available for purchase at affordable prices, instead of being discarded as waste. Additionally, it was observed that most of the furniture in the basement, which serves as the storage area for equipment, was of a self-made nature. During this period, I actively participated in constructing new furniture items with the assistance of one of my colleagues. However, it is worth noting that the building housing Uteguiden's Activity Center shows numerous indications of wear and tear, and it appears relatively aged when compared to the more modern Activity Center in Stranda, featuring old heating devices for drying clothes and shoes that have been worn during ski or kayak excursions and an old heater in the office area.

Observation from the 1st of March until the 31st of March

During the final month of my internship, my attention was primarily directed toward engaging in discussions that could provide valuable insights into various aspects of sustainability, encompassing environmental, social, and economic dimensions. In a meeting with my supervisor, I learned about Uteguiden's collaboration with Hofseth Aqua, a local fish grower with multiple fish farms in the surrounding area of Ålesund. The collaboration involved organizing an educational trip that includes an electric boat ride to Hofseth Aqua's visitor center, where visitors can gain insights into fish farming practices. Notably, the Activity Center in Valldal was responsible for operating the boat and could also utilize it for

their own activities. Furthermore, I discovered that Uteguiden actively incorporates interns into their operations, providing young individuals with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience. Additionally, I became aware that Uteguiden frequently holds lectures at the University of Volda, where students studying “Friluftsliv” (outdoor life) are educated about the organization’s operations and initiatives. Moreover, in collaboration with Bybadet, the municipal swimming pool in Ålesund, Uteguiden organizes the “Bedriftschallenge”, or the “Business Challenge”. This multi-sport event is designed to engage and involve local organizations, encouraging their active participation.

Toward the conclusion of my internship, I realized that when seeking for information about Uteguiden’s sustainability practices from my colleagues, the responses were often inaccurate, and specific practices were not readily provided. However, I was referred to a document titled “Welcome to Uteguiden”, intended to inform new guides about the organization’s practices and focal points.

In my final discussion with the CEO of Uteguiden, I gathered essential information, building upon my observations throughout the internship. The CEO emphasized that every action undertaken by Uteguiden should be driven by thoughtfulness and purpose. A key emphasis is placed on sourcing products locally, and all activities offered by Uteguiden are designed to be unmotorized, relying solely on the participant’s physical abilities. The organization is dedicated to creating activities that benefit the guides, clients, and nature. Notably, when faced with larger groups of clients from cruise ships, Uteguiden opts to split them or engage them in kayak excursions to minimize the impact on nature, compared to conventional hiking activities. Despite cruise ship tourists representing a significant customer base in the summer, a way of traveling known for its environmental impact, Uteguiden leverages this opportunity to educate tourists about the environment and promote sustainable actions. Moreover, this customer base plays a crucial role in generating revenue that supports the entire organization and its operations.

Regarding Uteguiden’s participation in the “1% for the Planet” initiative, I learned that the CEO made the decision to support it in 2016 due to the extensive network of organizations that share similar values. The organization annually donates around 150.000 NOK to projects like “Protect our Winters” and “GreenKayak”. Additionally, a yearly contribution of approximately 10,000 – 15,000 NOK is made to the “Rainforest Trust” initiative, which

aims to protect rainforests and their habitats on a global scale. The CEO's decision to support this initiative was influenced by a friend who had personal knowledge of its effectiveness in conservation efforts. Member organizations are expected to display the logos of these initiatives on their websites and social media platforms for marketing purposes. One notable incident by the CEO involved an intern discovering Uteguiden through the "1% for the Planet" network. Additionally, he made a side note that Uteguiden aspires to attain Eco-Lighthouse certification in the future. To achieve this, they will need to accurately monitor various aspects, such as their carbon footprint, waste generation, and energy consumption.

The CEO emphasized that the organization prioritizes action over talking and aims to avoid becoming one of those entities that merely talk about sustainability without taking tangible steps. Social and environmental considerations are given precedence over economic interests in decision-making processes. As exemplified by Hygge, Uteguiden's café bar in Stranda, the organization sources all the ingredients for their baked goods from local farmers and producers, even though cheaper alternatives may be available elsewhere. This choice reflects Uteguiden's commitment to supporting the local community and prioritizing social and environmental values.

Observation after the 31st of March

After the completion of my internship, I frequently crossed the vicinity of the Activity Center in Ålesund, where I observed that Uteguiden had initiated a partnership with "Green Kayak", an environmental non-governmental organization that provides complimentary kayak rentals to individuals under the condition that they engage in trash collection activities and share their experiences on social media platforms, specifically tagging "Green Kayak".

Furthermore, I observed that Uteguiden had expanded its vehicle fleet by incorporating an additional EV.

4.2 Observations Analysis

The completion of the participant observation revealed distinct focal areas within the organization, which led to the creation of several categories, some of which were anticipated. Considering Uteguiden's active engagement with various NPOs dedicated to environmental causes, the category of *Environmental Initiatives and Certifications* was conceived. Given Uteguiden's integration of sustainability principles into its day-to-day operational business, particularly in connection to its products and services, the category of *Business Operations* emerged. The establishment of the category *Customer Engagement and Education* stemmed from the inclusion of educational initiatives and engagement aimed at the organization's client base.

The pronounced significance of locality and community engagement that manifested during the observational phase prompted the creation of the category *Local Community Engagement*. The collaborative interaction with Uteguiden's staff and guides offered insights into their role as representatives of the organization and its values toward customers, hence leading to the establishment of a dedicated category named *Staff Engagement*. The recognition of Uteguiden's emphasis on sustainable collaborations and partnerships, gathered from additional research and discussions with colleagues, led to the inception of the category *Partnerships and Collaborations*.

The ultimate category, *Leadership* includes the foundational underpinnings of Uteguiden, notably the core values that steer its operations. Given that the organization was founded by the current CEO based on his values and convictions, his distinctive leadership style assumes a crucial role in this regard. *Table 1* provides an overview of the categories, their descriptions, and examples of data strings within each category. These categories can be broadly categorized into the overarching dimensions of sustainability as described in the introductory chapter. However, it is important to note that strict demarcation is difficult, as these categories often include elements that cover one, two, or all three dimensions of sustainability. The *Environmental Initiatives* category can be primarily located in the environmental sustainability dimension, as it encompasses efforts to support initiatives aimed at preserving the environment and reducing environmental impacts.

The *Business Operations* category is most likely to fall under the economic sustainability dimension, as it focuses primarily on optimizing resource use and generating revenue efficiently. Similarly, the category *Partnerships and Collaborations* can be assigned to the economic dimension, as it generally generates financial benefits or contributes to economic expansion through collaborations.

Conversely, the category of *Customer Engagement and Education* can be assigned to the social dimension, as it focuses on meeting the needs of customers and fostering positive interpersonal relationships. Further, *Local Community Engagement* is a key component of the social dimension and involves building relationships and meeting social needs, as well as strengthening the local economy. Both the *Staff Engagement* and *Leadership* categories are primarily related to the social sustainability dimension, as they are closely linked to human resources and interpersonal dynamics within the organization. As previously noted, it is crucial to emphasize that the practices within these various categories may encompass elements spanning multiple dimensions of sustainability. For instance, consider the promotion of a circular economy within the *Business Operations* category. While it primarily pertains to economic considerations, aiming for a continuous revenue stream, it concurrently incorporates environmental facets by diminishing waste production. Furthermore, if we consider the numerous companies that collaborate with Uteguiden, as listed in the *Partnerships and Collaborations* category, these links are primarily related to the economic dimension due to the financial benefits associated with them. However, it should be emphasized that these partners are also selected for their commitment to sustainability and thus also overlap with the social dimension.

Categories	Description	Examples
Environmental Initiatives and Certifications	Focuses on Uteguiden's involvement in environmental causes	"1% for the Planet" "Rainforest Trust" "Green Kayak" "Protect Our Winters Norge"
Business Operations	Involves activities that are connected to Uteguiden's business operations	"Trash collection" "Electric Transportation (EVs)" "Extending equipment lifespan and offering used items for sale" "Circular economy and minimizing waste" "Unmotorized activities" "Digitized processes and paperless operations"
Customer Engagement and Education	Includes Uteguiden's efforts to educate and engage customers	"Educational trips" "Cruise ship tourists' engagement and education" "Promoting sustainability to clients and tourists"
Local Community Engagement	Focuses on Uteguiden's interaction with the local community	"Local sourcing of products and ingredients" "Hygge café and support for local farmers" "Ungdomsklubb (translated to Youth Club) for local youth" "Lectures at Volda University" "Bedriftschallenge (translated to Business Challenge) for local businesses"
Staff Engagement	Covers all aspects connected to Uteguiden's Staff	"Guides attitude toward sustainability" "Use of reusable containers and waste minimization" "Personal commitment to environmental initiatives"
Partnerships and Collaborations	Includes partnerships and collaborations with, local, national, and international organizations that focus on sustainability	"Dynafit" "Devold" "Salewa" "Spektrum" "Velocio Apparel" "Klean Kanteen" "Fara Cycling"
Leadership	Includes all aspects of Uteguiden's CEO	"CEO's commitment to action and tangible steps"

		"Prioritization of social and environmental considerations" "Donations to environmental initiatives"
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Table 1: Categorization of Participant Observations

4.3 Document Analysis

Organizational Documents

The organizational document titled “Welcome to Uteguiden” represents the only resource encompassing references to sustainability within the organization. This document serves as an important source of information for new guides or employees, offering comprehensive insights into the organization’s identity and principles. The document comprises several sections, including a concise introduction to the company itself and its permanent staff. Furthermore, a dedicated chapter titled “Who we are” explains Uteguiden’s general goals, vision, and core values. The organization’s vision is as follows:

“Through sustainable use of local resources – nature and culture – give our guests a personal and deeper contact with the area they visit. When they leave us, they should have the urge to come back for new adventures and the feeling of getting more than they expected. We are working with a glocalised mindset, we work locally with clients from a global market.” (Uteguiden AS n.d.-b)

Sustainability

Working towards becoming as sustainable as possible, is an important fundament in Uteguiden. We need to think about the future when we are acting today.

Sustainable development is defined as a development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland Report, 1987). It seen from three perspective – Social, Ecology & Economy – as seen in the model bellow. Keep in mind that sustainability is in the middle and is not possible without all three perspectives equally assessed. Are you not ecological sustainable, it doesn't matter if you are super sustainable economically and socially.



Figure 1 Youth entrepreneurial projects for the sustainable development of global community: evidence from Enactus program - Scientific Figure on ResearchGate. Available from: <https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-interconnection-of-the-elements-of-the-Triple-B>

Figure 2: The sustainability chapter in the organizational Document "Welcome to Uteguiden" 1 of 2 (Uteguiden AS n.d.-b)

The core values Uteguiden is following in its business operations are “locally based”, “quality”, and “professionalism”. After this, a short sustainability section is followed, providing the Brundtland Report’s definition of sustainability and a triple-bottom-line model with different social, ecological, and economic actions as shown in *Figures 2 & 3*. Moreover, Uteguiden states, that they want to become certified by The Eco-Lighthouse, a Norwegian certification scheme for an environmental management system.

Social

- Creating a good work environment with social events and courses.
 - Offer our employees the best working conditions possible for us.
 - Offering trips and courses which doesn't give us a big income, but keeps our guides in work, and give our guides new and interesting tours / courses to work with.
 - Offer our employees good deals on equipment and clothing.
 - Welcoming interns to Uteguiden throughout the year.
 - Supporting local teams and organizations.
-

- Teaming up with local partners offering local food and products.
- Looking into new ways of supporting local community and getting other businesses to support also.
- Being responsible for Ungdomsklubb (youths club) at Hygge by Uteguiden – once a week.

Ecology

- Choosing electric cars as our new cars.
- Waist reduce, recycling and letting guests/customers sell used equipment in our shops.
- Striving to partner up with partners who share our values – clothing and equipment
- Leave No Trace – clean up after others – teach our guests good manners.
- Supporting [1% for the planet](#)
- Supporting [Rainforest Trust](#)

Economy

- Keep detailed track of our income and expenditure
- Close connection between income and salary for employees
- Keeping our focus on the tours, courses and events that gives us income

A few key points for the winter

- Reduce driving as much as possible.
 - Look for good snow, but don't drive longer than you need.
 - Share cars & drive together.
- Ask the farmer or landlord if it's ok to park where you are planning to park – respect others.
- Leave no trace other than ski tracks in the snow.
- Let environmental awareness be topic at your guided tours.

In Uteguiden we are always looking for how we can improve, and who we can take one step further. One major thing we are working toward these days are becoming [eco-lighthouse certified](#) within 2023.

Figure 3: The sustainability chapter in the organizational Document "Welcome to Uteguiden" 2 of 2 (Uteguiden AS n.d.-b)

Organization's Website

Uteguiden's website is made accessible in both Norwegian and English languages, with the primary distinction being that the Norwegian version features an online shop and a broader offering of courses. Towards the lower section of the main homepage, a small segment displays affiliations with various organizations, including "Rainforest Trust" and "1% for the Planet". Clicking on the respective initiative logos directs users to their corresponding websites. Next to this, users have the option to access recent entries on Uteguiden's blog, where the most recent posts feature educational videos related to ski touring. Notably, one of the recent posts announces the organization's affiliation with "Rainforest Trust", with the corresponding blog entry published in November 2021 (Website accessed in July 2023). Selecting this post provides a comprehensive and informative perspective on the practices and objectives of the mentioned initiative.

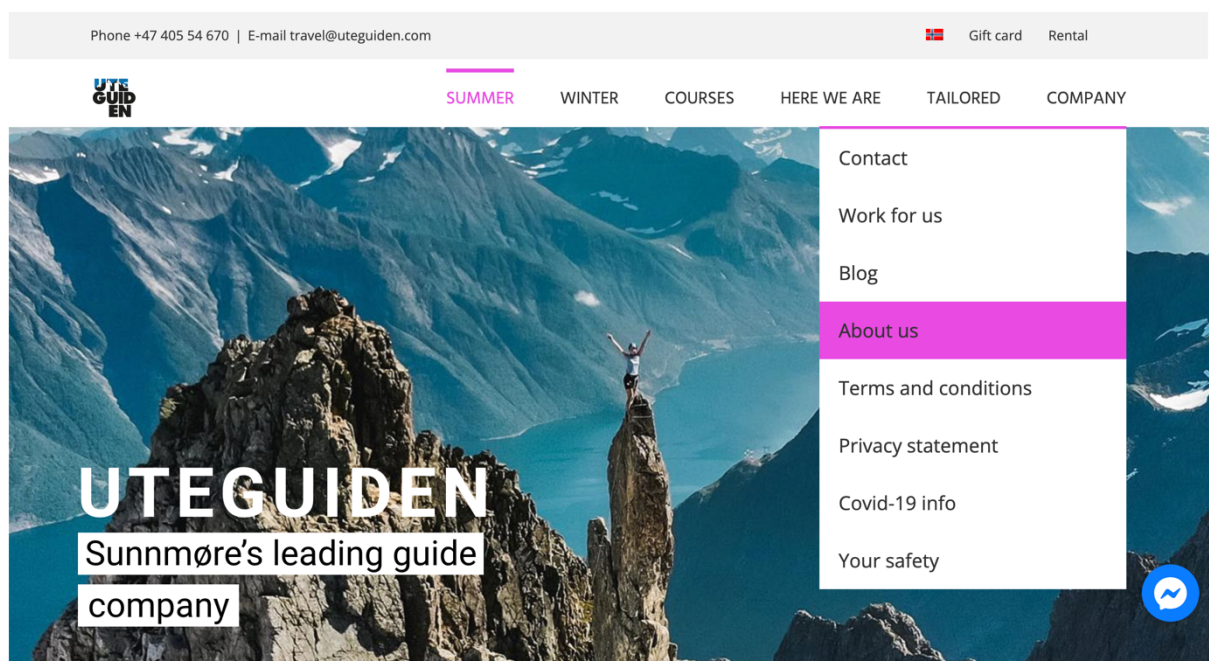


Figure 4: Screenshot of Uteguiden's Homepage, uteguiden.com/en (Uteguiden AS n.d.-a)

In the "Company" section, users can find the "About us" page as illustrated in *Figure 4*, which, upon scrolling down, contains a concise part titled "Our support to the planet". Within this section, a brief introduction is provided for both "Rainforest Trust" and "1% for the Planet", as depicted in *Figure 5*.

Our support to the planet



Uteguiden is proud to be a Conservation Circle Partner of [Rainforest Trust](#), one of the world's most effective conservation charities. Uteguiden is donating to Rainforest Trust to support and protect endangered species, threatened rainforests and other tropical ecosystems around the world. Our donations will safeguard real acres of rainforest!



1 percent for the planet member. We have been a member here many years now and it's an great way for us to give back to the nature we love and live of. "The intent of 1% for the Planet is to help fund these diverse environmental organizations so that collectively they can be a more powerful source in solving the world's problems." – YVON CHOUINARD

Figure 5: Screenshot of Uteguiden's Website, section About us, uteguiden.com/en/about-us (Uteguiden AS n.d.-a)

4.4 Social Media Analysis

The analysis of Uteguiden's Instagram account encompassed a total of 2,685 posts, of which 67 included elements that could be connected to social, environmental, or economic sustainability. The analytical scope extended from the first post in June 2012 to August 2023. Since no new categories emerged during the examination of Uteguiden's Instagram account, the posts were classified using the categories previously formulated in Chapter 4.2. *Table 2* presents exemplary posts for each category.

The distribution of the posts within the identified categories is as follows: the category *Partnerships and Collaborations* comprised the most substantial representation with 24 posts, succeeded by 17 posts in the *Customer Engagement and Education* category, and 13 posts within the realm of *Local Community Engagement*. Furthermore, seven posts were associated with *Business Operations*, six exhibited dimensions of *Environmental Initiatives and Certifications*, and one post related to *Leadership*. Notably, the category *Staff Engagement* yielded no identifiable posts and thus has been omitted from the table. A comprehensive table can be found in Appendix 1.

Category	Description	Number of Posts	Example Post
Environmental Initiatives and Certifications	Posts of Uteguiden's involvement in environmental initiatives	6	"To create a better planet and future for all, we commit to giving back 1% of every sale to our environmental nonprofit partners. Not just on Earth Day. Every day." (@uteguiden 2021e)
Business Operations	Posts of Uteguiden's activities connected to business operations	7	"Our goal in Uteguiden is to not only deliver world class adventures but also do it with a minimal impact on our surrounding and with big creation of value for our local community. We strive to find local partners to collaborate with to keep on making magic." (@uteguiden 2021d)
Customer Engagement and Education	Posts of Uteguiden's efforts to educate and engage customers	17	"In Uteguiden we focus on learning our staff and clients new things, [...]" (@uteguiden 2021f)
Local Community Engagement	Posts of Uteguiden's interaction with the local community	13	"Everyday we try to make the world a better place in Uteguiden contributing to the local community, supporting local clubs, using as much local products and partners as possible and reducing our Co2 emissions are just parts of the stuff we're doing." (@uteguiden 2021h)
Partnerships and Collaborations	Posts that include partnerships and collaborations with organizations that care about sustainability	24	Announcing Velocio Apparel as new partner saying, "Our goal is to only work with brands that stand for the same things as us. [...] We always strive to partner up with companies in our own 1 percent for the planet family, companies that really want to make a difference" (@uteguiden 2021a)
Leadership	Posts about CEO's values and beliefs	1	"CEO shares interview on entrepreneurship and love for the outdoors (@uteguiden 2023b)

Table 2: Results of Instagram Posts Analysis

The analysis of Uteguiden's Facebook account encompassed a total of 4,599 posts, of which 151 included elements that could be connected to social, environmental, or economic sustainability. The analytical scope extended from the first post in December 2010 to August 2023. No new categories emerged during the examination of Uteguiden's Facebook account. Therefore, the posts were classified using the seven categories that have been formulated in Chapter 4.2. Table 3 presents exemplary posts for each category.

The distribution of the posts within the identified categories is as follows: the category of *Business Operations* exhibits the highest frequency with a total of 71 posts, which can be attributed to the increased occurrence of posts in which Uteguiden offers various used items available for purchase. Subsequently, the *Local Community Engagement* category follows, with 25 posts, while the *Partnerships and Collaborations* category with 22 posts, and the *Customer Engagement and Education* category with 21 posts are closely ranked after. *Environmental Initiatives and Certifications* with nine posts, *Staff Engagement* with two posts, and *Leadership* with a single post are concluding the distribution of the analysis. A comprehensive table can be found in Appendix 2.

Category	Description	Number of Posts	Example Post
Environmental Initiatives and Certifications	Posts of Uteguiden's involvement in environmental initiatives	9	Uteguiden asks followers where they should donate their money to in the scope of their 1% for the Planet membership "[...] Every year we donate money to a non-profit organization in the world in connection with our membership in 1& for the Planet. This year we want to ask you – where do you think we should donate money? [...]" (@Uteguiden 2021i)
Business Operations	Posts of Uteguiden's activities connected to business operations	71	Uteguiden announces purchase of their first EV "After an inspiring course [...] we decide to make the shift over to electric cars. We have now sold 2 of the fossil cars we where using before and just got the delivery of our first of 2 ordered electric cars. In 2023 we should have shifted our entire fleet of cars over to electric and we hope many other business will follow us." (@Uteguiden 2021c)
Customer Engagement and Education	Posts of Uteguiden's efforts to educate and engage customers	21	Uteguiden encourages followers to clean up their trash "This is what we found on a 15 min morning break just around the office in Stranda this morning. Just imagine the impact if all of you 7000+ followers used 15 min of you're day today to pick up some trash?" (@Uteguiden 2018)
Local Community Engagement	Posts of Uteguiden's interaction with the local community	25	"[...] Jo for at vi har lyst å gi tilbake til våre lokale ungdommer på samme måte som at vi arrangert gratis sommerskule for store deler av ungdommene i regionen vår. Vi kan ikke bare snakke om bærekraft uten det viktigste vi gjør som bedrift er å vise veien videre! [...]" (@Uteguiden 2021g)

			<p>Translated to:</p> <p>Creating a youth club, “because we want to give back to our local youth in the same way we arranged a free summer school for most of the youth in our region. We can’t just talk about sustainability without the most important thing we do as a company, to show the way forward!”</p>
Staff Engagement	Posts that show engagement of Staff	2	<p>Course for Guides — “As a big employer in the outdoor industry it’s important for us with employees that loves their work and get the best available working environment. [...] This year we have had a lot of guide gatherings and courses around the different activities we guide around like kayaking and climbing. This way we’re able to learn from each other and get even better guides out in the field.” (@Uteguiden 2021b)</p>
Partnerships and Collaborations	Posts that include partnerships and collaborations with organizations that care about sustainability	22	<p>Refurnishing the shop in Ålesund with “more or less only local furnitures and style here and with a wide selection of local brands that’s not a hard thing to succeed with [Winking Face Emoji]” (@Uteguiden 2022)</p>
Leadership	Posts about CEO’s values and beliefs	1	<p>Post of an interview Uteguiden’s CEO gave about “Building a Business with the Planet in Mind” (@Uteguiden 2023a)</p>

Table 3: Results of Facebook Posts Analysis

5.0 Theoretical Underpinning and Literature Review

Considering the inductive approach of this thesis, this study is based on observations and the analysis of organizational documents, its website, and social media platforms, and seeks to find appropriate reasoning for the established categories in the literature. Therefore, this chapter is dedicated to examining the literature about sustainability and finding suitable concepts for the introduced categories.

5.1 Effectiveness of Environmental Initiatives

In their book chapter Khanna and Brouhle (2009, 144) define voluntary environmental initiatives (VEIs) as voluntary programs created by regulatory agencies, codes of conduct formulated by trade associations and external entities, environmental management system certification standards established by the International Standards Organization (ISO), and self-regulation by companies, where they establish internal benchmarks, objectives, and policies to enhance their environmental performance. The primary objective of these VEIs is to motivate companies to voluntarily reduce pollution, enhance the energy efficiency, embrace environmental management techniques, and undertake various actions aimed at increasing their environmental performance beyond the requirements of current regulations. Further, they argue that VEIs serve as a means for firms to demonstrate their commitment to environmental responsibility, address public concerns regarding their environmental impact, and potentially preempt stringent environmental regulations. However, it is important to note that mere participation in voluntary initiatives by a firm does not guarantee actual improvements in its environmental performance. Some companies may opt to join a VEI solely to enhance their reputation without making substantial changes to their environmental practices. To counteract this inclination to avoid meaningful changes, a VEI can establish specific goals or performance standards for participants and put in place mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing the achievement of these objectives by the participating firms. Additionally, Khanna and Brouhle (2009) identify another issue that VEIs vary widely in the standards they establish, including whether they are quantitative or qualitative, performance-oriented or practice-oriented, and their methods of enforcement. Importantly, many VEIs do not require public accountability or third-party oversight, nor do they require substantial improvements in environmental performance. This flexibility can enable firms to participate symbolically for reputational gain, potentially engaging in free-

riding behavior and neglecting their environmental responsibilities, as discussed by Barber (1998), Gunningham et al. (2003), and Macdonald (2007). The book chapter of Khanna and Brouhle (2009) aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of various studies examining the effectiveness of VEIs.

In doing so, the authors categorized VEIs into four main groups: public voluntary programs, industry association initiatives, third-party efforts, and self-regulation within companies. They then analyzed variations in the characteristics of these VEIs within each category using these insights to draw broader conclusions regarding the design of VEIs that can effectively encourage both participation and performance enhancements. Their analysis reveals that the effectiveness of VEIs varies. Public voluntary programs typically yielded unsatisfactory results, and industry association programs did not seem to significantly enhance the environmental responsibility of participating firms.

In contrast, third-party ISO programs and organizations that implemented ISO-type management procedures in the scope of self-regulation within companies did encourage participants to improve their environmental performance when compared to nonparticipants. Khanna and Brouhle (2009) conclude their chapter by referencing the perspective offered by Parkash and Potoski (2006) who suggest that participating in VEIs is like joining a “green club”.

These clubs can differ in how effectively they enforce rules and how strict their environmental expectations are. Some require third-party auditing for club membership and offer an attractive environmental reputation, which discourages companies from slacking off and motivates them to maintain a good image. On the other hand, others lack strong enforcement mechanisms and do not require members to implement their codes of conduct.

However, the “green club” perspective does not explain why firms implementing environmental management systems (EMS) apart from being a member of such a club also improve their environmental performance. EMS adoption does not offer the same benefits as club members. The authors suggest a possible explanation: companies primarily adopt EMS to improve their internal efficiency, and a better external image is a byproduct. In such a case, incentives for slacking off and free-riding may be less common because firms are adopting EMS for private gain (Khanna and Brouhle 2009, 181-182).

5.2 Triple Bottom Line

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) concept was initially introduced by Elkington (1997). Rooted in the principles of sustainability, TBL presents a framework for evaluating a company's performance and its contributions across three key dimensions: economic, social, and environmental, as outlined by Goel (2010). In his article, Alhaddi (2015) offers a compact overview of the TBL concept's dimensions.

Within the TBL framework, the economic facet delves into the impact of an organization's business practices on the broader economic system, as elucidated by Elkington (1997). Alhaddi (2015) clarifies that this dimension establishes a connection between the growth of the organization and that of the larger economy, examining its contribution to economic well-being. Essentially, it focuses on the economic value generated by the organization, advocating for prosperity and sustainability within the broader system.

According to Elkington (1997), the social aspect of the TBL revolves around the adoption of business practices that are advantageous and equitable for labor, human capital, and the community. Alhaddi (2015) expounds upon this notion, asserting that such practices create value for society and contribute positively to the community. Examples he provides include fair wages and the provision of healthcare coverage. Beyond the moral imperative of benefiting society, Alhaddi underscores that neglecting social responsibility can impact business performance and overall sustainability.

The environmental aspect within the TBL framework is primarily focused on implementing practices aimed at preserving environmental resources for the benefit of future generations, as discussed by Alhaddi (2015). According to Goel (2010), this commitment includes the efficient use of energy resources, the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, and the minimization of the ecological footprint, among other relevant considerations. Alhaddi (2015) further argues that similar to the social dimension of the TBL, environmental initiatives substantially influence the sustainability of businesses.

In their article, Rogers and Hudson (2011) state that the TBL framework emphasizes the interconnectedness between the primary components. Ideally, the aspiration is to operate at the intersection, where all three objectives find fulfillment, as shown in *Figure 6*.

The authors also mention that the TBL exposes certain conflicts and compromises among competing objectives, necessitating decisions at a higher level of systemic thinking.

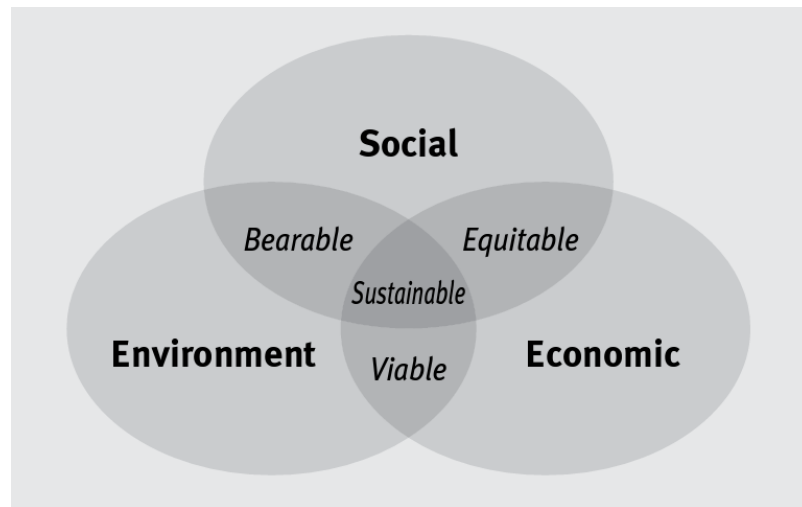


Figure 6: *The Triple Bottom Line (Rogers and Hudson 2011, 4)*

5.3 Learning-based Change for Sustainability

In her book chapter, Tilbury (2007) states that no nation has achieved sustainability, and despite extensive experience in implementing sustainability initiatives, there remains no one-size-fits-all formula for success. Considering this, she further explains that people worldwide have come to acknowledge that sustainability is fundamentally an ongoing social learning process that actively engages stakeholders in shaping their vision, taking action, and evaluating progress, which she is basing on Tilbury and Cooke (2005). This recognition also clarifies that learning in the context of sustainability is more of a reflective journey than a fixed milestone that must be attained. Tilbury also explains that a significant portion of education for sustainability involves engaging individuals in actions such as consumer involvement and conservation volunteering. Learning-based sustainability change takes this concept further, equipping learners with skills to drive systemic change within organizations and society. This approach emphasizes identifying connections that can embed change rather than focusing on isolated actions. It seeks structural and institutional transformation instead of individual change or short-term fixes. By adopting a holistic view, systemic changes can be made in our lives and society by redesigning existing systems and lifestyles in line with sustainability principles, Tilbury (2007) argues.

Moreover, the author explains that learning for sustainability encourages people to think deeply about their decisions and explore genuine alternatives, aiming to address the root causes of problems. Instead of merely raising awareness or one-time activities, it fosters critical and systemic thinking skills in learners to delve into the core issues. This represents a shift from environmentalism to sustainability, stressing the importance of addressing issues at their source. Tilbury (2007) goes on to provide approaches to learning-based change, including mentoring, facilitation, participative inquiry, action learning, and action research. The author explains that each of these approaches relies on well-informed, collaborative, and structured procedures that incorporate learning, reflection, and transformation to enhance the efficiency of an organization, strategy, program, or action plan. They all involve the learner in delving into concepts related to involvement, influence, and the potential for change. In the end, they also cultivate proficiency in the workplace and teach individuals how to effect change, both independently and as part of a team. According to Tilbury (2007, 121), the *mentoring approach* provides support for individuals and groups navigating the complexities of sustainability, enabling them to engage with this concept. It encourages people to critically assess opportunities for change within their local communities or workplaces. The *facilitation approach* empowers learners to take control of their education and fosters critical reflection, promoting open dialogue and reducing power imbalances. The *participative inquiry approach* explores sustainability questions deeply, stimulating fresh ideas and a better understanding of community or organizational change. The *action-learning approach* is a structured process for building competence through reflection and improvement of practice. The *action research approach* combines action and research through a cyclical process, aiming for innovation and addressing sustainability in specific contexts. It serves as a valuable approach for exploring how sustainability pertains to participant's workplaces or lifestyles.

5.4 Shared Value Creation

In their journal article Kramer and Porter (2011, 6) state that “At a very basic level, the competitiveness of a company and the health of the communities around it are closely intertwined.” The authors explain that a business relies on a thriving community not just to stimulate demand for its products but also to offer essential public resources and a healthy environment. Conversely, a community depends on prosperous businesses to generate employment opportunities and foster wealth creation for its residents. This interdependence

underscores the counterproductive nature of public policies that undermine the efficiency and competitiveness of businesses, especially in a global economy where facilities and jobs can easily relocate (Kramer and Porter 2011). The authors further argue that conventionally, businesses contribute to society merely by turning a profit, which in turn supports employment, salaries, purchases, etc. Operating business as usual is deemed a sufficient societal contribution, and a firm is generally seen as a self-contained entity, with social and community matters falling outside its primary purview. When it comes to societal issues, the authors mention, that businesses have traditionally not taken a value-centric approach and have instead treated these concerns as secondary matters. The diminished connection between companies and their communities is a result of the widespread adoption of outsourcing and offshoring and the more frequent self-identification as “global” corporations without a “home” (Kramer and Porter 2011). Many companies have not fully appreciated the significance of the broader business environment that envelops their primary operations. Therefore, Kramer and Porter (2011, 6) introduced the theory of creating shared value, which they define as:

“Policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates. Shared value creation focuses on identifying and expanding the connections between societal and economic progress.”

The authors identified three key approaches to creating shared value: (1) reconceiving products and markets, (2) redefining productivity in the value chain, and (3) building supportive industry clusters at the company’s location.

Reconceiving products and markets: Exploring society’s significant, unmet needs like health, housing, financial security, environmental preservation, and more, while continuously assessing a company’s products for their genuine benefit to customers, can pave the way for innovative solutions and the establishment of shared value. Businesses often excel in driving customer adaption of products and services that generate societal benefits, such as healthier foods or environmentally friendly products, making their impact more substantial than that of governments and nonprofits (Kramer and Porter 2011, 7-8).

Redefining productivity in the value chain: A company's value chain is inherently intertwined with various societal concerns, spanning areas like natural resource and water consumption, health and safety, labor conditions, and workplace equality. The potential for shared value emerges as societal issues can impose economic expenses within the company's value chain. Energy use and logistics, resource use, procurement, distribution, employee productivity, and location are some of the key ways in which shared value thinking is reshaping the value chain, with these often being interconnected and mutually strengthening (Kramer and Porter 2011, 8-11).

Building supportive industry clusters at the company's location: No company exists in isolation; its success is intertwined with the supporting businesses and infrastructure in its surroundings. "Clusters" are geographic hubs of related firms and resources, which significantly influence productivity and innovation. These clusters encompass businesses, academic programs, associations, and more, drawing from community assets like education, equitable regulations, and infrastructure. They are pivotal for regional growth and competitiveness. By building clusters and improving productivity while addressing systemic issues, companies generate shared value (Kramer and Porter 2011, 12-15).

However, the authors conclude their article with the following quote:

"Not all, societal problems can be solved through shared value solutions. But shared value offers corporations the opportunity to utilize their skills, resources, and management capability to lead social progress in ways that even the best-intentioned governmental and social sector organizations can rarely match. In the process, businesses can earn the respect of society again." (Kramer and Porter 2011, 17).

5.5 Employee Engagement

In their paper, Casey and Sieber (2016) argue that organizations are facing increasing challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified personnel due to environmental concerns and demographic shifts. They state that a lack of purpose in the work undertaken by employees has led to alarmingly low levels of job-related motivation and engagement on a global scale. In this regard, the authors are introducing an employee-centric process model that companies can leverage as a framework that involves actively engaging employees in sustainability and

corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, thus enabling them to perceive their roles as meaningful. This, in turn, is anticipated to boost employee engagement, which has been found to positively correlate with business performance and profitability.

This approach features management encouragement and supervisory support, as it plays a crucial role in getting employees' commitment to advancing environmental or social progress (Paillé, Chen, Boiral, and Jin 2014, 6). Supervisors, in particular, are positioned to act as catalysts for change, facilitating the incorporation of sustainability and CSR initiatives into the company's strategy, culture, structure, and behavior. In addition to supervision, Renwick et al. (2013, 3) states, that offering training and support represents another vital approach to signal organizational commitment and understanding of sustainability implications. Training empowers companies to grow their human capital and enhance organizational capabilities, encompassing various objectives, from imparting technical knowledge to fostering social integration and promoting innovative thinking, as Cantor et al. (2012, 37-38) state. Finally, Renwick et al. (2013, 5) and Paillé et al. (2014, 3) argue, that rewards and performance appraisal serve as potential motivators and supporters of employee behavior. Well-structured rewards that link specific actions to fair recognition signal the organization's appreciation for individual contributions, independence, professional development, and behavior. When this connection aligns with sustainability and CSR principles, it motivates employees to innovate solutions for environmental, economic, and social challenges, according to Cantor et al. (2012, 38)

Casey and Sieber (2016, 75) argue, that achieving sustainability and CSR starts with establishing an environmental and social vision, which guides the formulation of a plan and strategy. Then, as Paillé et al. (2014) states, that responsibilities need to be assigned, and employees must be trained to understand the company's vision. To effectively address sustainability and CSR, all levels of the organization, from top management to frontline workers, should be engaged and aware of social and environmental concerns (Pojasek 2008, 89). Further, Casey and Sieber (2016, 75) mention that human resource activities, such as training and managerial support, centered on the triple bottom line (environmental, economic, and social aspects), have the potential to foster a business culture that is socially and environmentally conscious.

“The individual concerns of each employee have to converge with the company’s vision, including its goals and strategies. For organisations that consequently aspire to this status, it can be presumed that their employee’s work motivation and identification with the company will be reinforced” (Casey and Sieber 2016, 75).

Sustainability and CSR values, such as environmental protection, attract consumers and investors and enhance the ability to attract and retain highly talented and motivated candidates (Casey and Sieber 2016). In general “Job seekers prefer organizations that have a close fit between their and the organizations’ values [...]” (Renwick, Redman, and Maguire 2013, 2). Casey and Sieber (2016, 75) conclude their paper by stating that the transformation toward higher employee engagement starts in the collective mindset of all staff and the permanent adjustment of visions, strategies, production methods, and organizational structures.

5.6 Ecologically Dominant Logic

In their article, Montabon et al. (2016) criticize that previous research on sustainable supply chains has typically employed an instrumental logic, examining how a supply chain can benefit from addressing environmental or social issues (Gao and Bansal 2013; Garriga and Melé 2004) rather than how it can become truly sustainable. This approach often emphasizes economic interests over environmental and social concerns. Therefore, their study aims to shift the focus from reducing environmental and social problems to creating genuinely sustainable supply chains. In this regard, their study points out the shortcomings of previous approaches. It introduces a new approach called the Ecologically Dominant (ED), where the environment and society are more important than profit, as illustrated in *Figure 7*, which they adapted from Griggs et al. (2013).

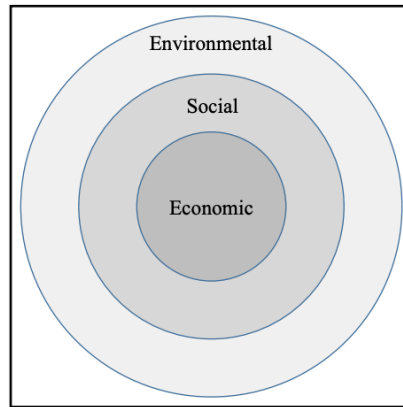


Figure 7: Ecologically Dominant Logic (Montabon, Pagell, and Wu 2016)

The Authors identify two significant shortcomings of the instrumental logic. First, this logic takes a backward-looking approach, analyzing existing unsustainable supply chains to determine how they can become less unsustainable (Pagell and Shevchenko 2014). They argue that the sustainability perspective primarily revolves around what existing companies can do to reduce their environmental and social impact while maintaining or increasing profits.

“Research of this nature cannot lead to truly sustainable supply chains because it addresses trade-offs by prioritizing the profits of existing firms over other sustainability outcomes including the survival of society and the environment” (Montabon, Pagell, and Wu 2016, 12).

Second, the authors explain, that while sustainable supply chain research allegedly targets the entire chain and all its stakeholders, it is frequently conducted from the perspective of a focal firm.

“This means that research to date has mainly investigated sustainability-related performance measures of the focal firm while generally overlooking other members of the chain and the communities in which the supply chain operates” (Montabon, Pagell, and Wu 2016, 12).

The authors present a comparison between the propositions associated with the instrumental logic and those of the ED perspective, on which they base their assertions. *Figure 8* illustrates this comparison.

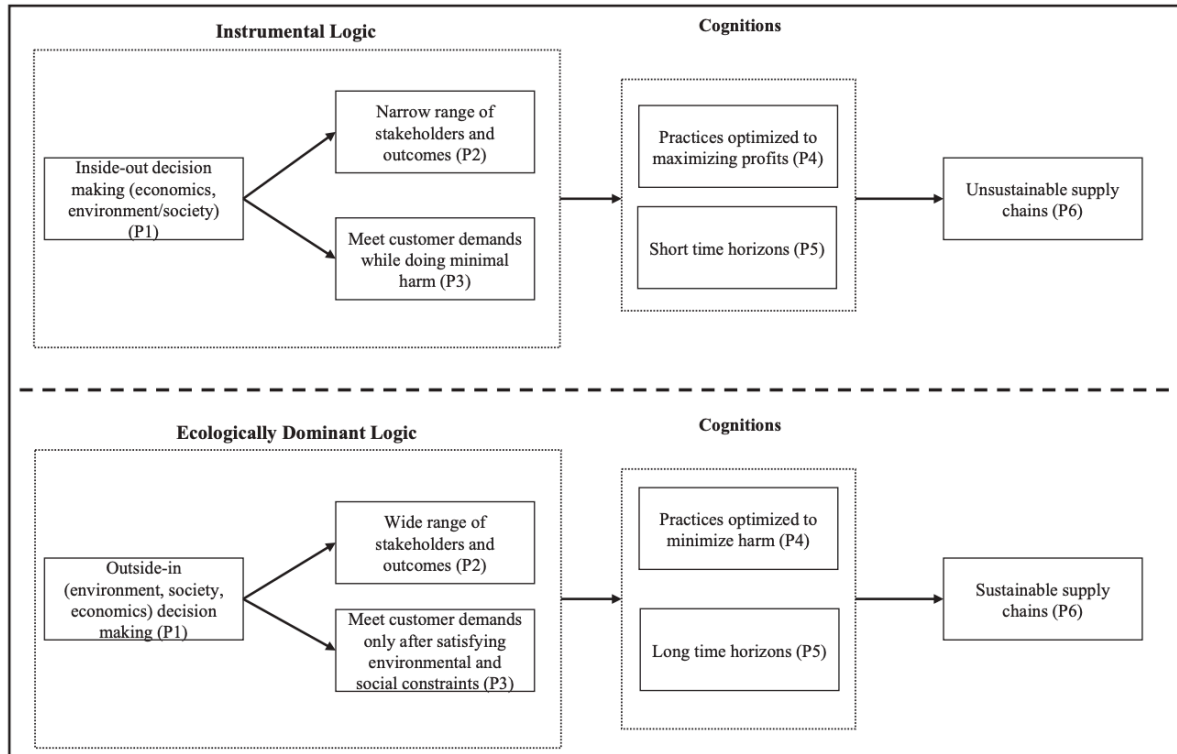


Figure 8: Comparison of Propositions (Montabon, Pagell, and Wu 2016, 19)

The authors further argue, that in contrast to the instrumental logic, the ED prompts supply chain managers to initiate their evaluation by appraising the effects of their economic activities on the environment and society. This outward-focused approach necessitates a comprehensive examination of various stakeholders and outcomes, compelling the supply chain to prioritize avoiding harm. In order to remain economically viable, a supply chain operating under this paradigm must substantially transform its actions and methodologies. In doing so, it may uncover opportunities to reorient current practices toward harm reduction instead of profit maximization. These changes demand a long-term perspective and a willingness to shoulder organizational responsibility, even if it means not fully satisfying certain customer demands. They conclude their paper by saying “Following this trajectory can lead to solutions to the complex problems of sustainability and does not lead to organized irresponsibility; rather, it leads to sustainable supply chains“ (Montabon, Pagell, and Wu 2016, 24).

5.7 6C Sustainable Leadership Model

In their paper, Tidemann et al. (2013) introduce the concept of sustainable leadership (SL) as a crucial element in the establishment of sustainable organizations. They begin by exploring economic trends, organizational transformation, sustainability, and leadership, and they expand their insights with information gathered from interviews with sustainability experts. The authors claim that SL necessitates a fundamental shift in conventional business leadership paradigms, emphasizing a transformative change in how individuals perceive the creation of value. It exceeds mere profit-making and instead underscores the generation of value through collaborative efforts involving diverse individuals and groups, all aligned toward a shared goal. The authors further divide SL into six attributes – context, consciousness, continuity, connected, creative, and collective - comprising the 6C model, as illustrated in *Figure 9*.

SL elements	Concepts used in economics and business
Context	Recognising interdependence; complexity; ambiguity; interconnectedness; resource constraint; regulators; mega-trends
Consciousness	Mind-sets; world-views; beliefs; mental models; attitudes
Continuity	Long-term horizon; courage; strength; common purpose; centredness; change processes
Connectedness	Serving needs of all stakeholders; both long and short term influencing; collaboration; trust; fairness; altruism; relatedness; needs instead of wants
Creativity	Innovation for sustainable shared value creation; sustainable business models; new value measurement models; flow
Collectiveness	Scale up for collective impact; embedding sustainability in business structures; sustainable consumption

Figure 9: Elements of sustainable leadership (Tideman, Arts, and Zandee 2013, 25)

In the scope of their study, the authors conducted a comparison between SL and the concept of transformational leadership (TL) initially introduced by Burns (1978) and updated by subsequent scholars such as Bass and Avolio (1994), Roberts (2012), Senge (2008), and Lueneburger and Goleman (2010). Their findings indicate that SL is built upon the foundations of TL. However, it is noteworthy that SL presents a more comprehensive framework, which extends both in terms of its scope, encompassing shifts in context,

acknowledging interdependence among multiple stakeholders, and adopting a long-term perspective. Additionally, it deepens the approach by emphasizing the importance of meeting the needs of all stakeholders, creating shared value, and facilitating collective scaling-up efforts.

Tidemann et al. (2013, 30) conclude their paper by asserting that achieving success in transforming sustainable businesses relies on the interplay between leadership consciousness and a deep understanding of the surrounding context, considering both space and time dimensions. As a result, within the 6C framework of SL, it becomes clear that the context, consciousness, and continuity mindset serve as the primary driving forces behind SL. Combined with the competencies associated with connected and creative leadership, these elements facilitate the emergence of collective leadership, which is imperative for effecting transformative changes in value chains that support sustainability and making a substantial, widespread, and enduring positive impact on society.

5.8 Sustainability Reporting

According to Amran and Keat Ooi (2014), sustainability reporting assumes a critical role in businesses' efforts to demonstrate their effectiveness in advancing their sustainability objectives, fostering future growth, and securing long-term prosperity. GRI (2006) defines sustainability reporting as "the practice of measuring, disclosing, and being accountable to internal and external stakeholders for organizational performance towards the goal of sustainable developments". Amran and Keat Ooi argue that globalization, market complexities, climate change, and the financial crisis in 2008 led to an increased demand for better governance and sustainability. Business stakeholders seek a deeper understanding of how environmental, social, and economic factors shape corporate strategies and require stricter daily reporting. The authors also stress the importance of transparency for businesses in reporting. It ensures that stakeholders are kept well-informed and knowledgeable about ongoing developments and their underlying rationale. Further, they explain, that informed stakeholders are less likely to cultivate unfavorable perceptions of business activities, thereby contributing to the preservation of the business's image and legitimacy. Higgins and Coffey (2016, 18-19) state:

“Sustainability reporting has played an important role in how companies have come to understand sustainability. It has provided business with a voice about sustainability, it has enabled business to demonstrate social and environmental performance, and it has provided the community with a greater insight about how companies grapple with sustainability challenges.”

Additionally, Amran and Keat Ooi (2014) state, that non-financial reporting allows the public to scrutinize corporate operations, evidencing accountability and transparency to all stakeholders. According to Koskela (2023), sustainability reporting offers businesses several advantages. It helps in sharing information with both internal and external stakeholders, showcasing a dedication to transparency. Additionally, it aids in measuring impacts for performance enhancement, fostering a more realistic vision and attainable strategy for implementation, boosting employee motivation, enhancing reputation and trust, attracting capital and investments, improving engagement with stakeholders, gaining a competitive advantage, identifying organizational strengths and weaknesses, building goodwill, reducing reputational risks, attracting new talent, and increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

6.0 Discussion

This chapter aims to discuss the categories derived through inductive analysis and explore their connections with the concepts identified in the existing literature. It delves into the interplay between the empirically derived categories and the theoretical frameworks found in the literature, offering a nuanced reflection on their relationships and implications.

6.1 Environmental Initiatives and Certifications

Uteguiden's active involvement with the NPO, 1% for the Planet, is noteworthy at this point. They have committed to donate a minimum of one percent of their annual sales to carefully vetted environmental partners affiliated with the NPO. Since its membership initiation in 2016, Uteguiden has contributed to a range of initiatives, including Protect Our Winters Norge, Green Kayak, and Rainforest Trust, the latter of which they also joined as a dedicated member. In return for their donations, Uteguiden has gained the right to use the certification of the NPOs for promotional purposes. These initiatives can be categorized as public voluntary programs, a topic explored in Chapter 5.1 concerning the Effectiveness of Environmental Initiatives. The research by Khanna and Brouhle (2009) state that such programs may not significantly enhance the environmental responsibility of participating firms. It is arguable that Uteguiden's support for these initiatives primarily serves to boost the organization's image and reputation.

However, Uteguiden's CEO stated that their initial motivation to support this initiative was to access a network of like-minded organizations which came as a personal recommendation from a friend. Indeed, Uteguiden is actively collaborating with several companies that are also members of this initiative. Furthermore, Uteguiden only occasionally communicates its involvement in these initiatives, as evidenced by the small proportion of its social media posts (6 out of 2,685 on Instagram and 9 out of 4,599 on Facebook) dedicated to the environmental initiatives it supports. Additionally, Uteguiden has made financial contributions to Green Kayak, an organization whose activities align with their own, integrating waterway cleanup efforts into their daily kayaking operations. This also corresponds with the CEO's viewpoint, which highlights the organization's focus on prioritizing action over rhetoric, and its commitment to steer clear of being an entity that merely discusses sustainability without implementing concrete measures.

Given that Uteguiden's core business is focused on winter activities, their decision to support an initiative dedicated to protecting essential outdoor areas is rational and does not necessarily indicate a strategic exploitation of these initiatives for reputational gain.

Additionally, Uteguiden aspires to attain the Eco-Lighthouse certification, a move that would likely enhance its environmental performance. The Eco-Lighthouse certification is a third-party program based on ISO14001, and Khanna and Brouhle (2009) have found that third-party ISO programs have a positive impact on environmental performance. According to their website (n.d.), the Eco-Lighthouse program imposes stringent requirements for both obtaining and maintaining certification, including the creation of an annual climate and environmental report.

In summary, Uteguiden's current engagement is limited to participating in voluntary programs that demonstrate their financial support for environmental causes, yet this alone does not establish them as a sustainable organization. The pursuit of a certification like the Eco-Lighthouse Certification aligns with their intentions to enhance their environmental performance and moves them in a more sustainable direction. Therefore, one may infer that endorsing environmental initiatives and achieving certification are effective methods for organizations to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability matters.

6.2 Business Operations

The research conducted has unveiled a range of Uteguiden's activities, all of which align somehow with the principles of the TBL concept. The illustration of the TBL in the analyzed organizational document underscores the organization's understanding of the interconnectedness between the environmental, economic, and social dimensions in the pursuit of sustainability, which Rogers and Hudson (2011) emphasized. The activities exemplify Uteguiden's commitment to this perspective. They include strategies like extending the lifespan of equipment and the resale of used items. Such practices benefit the organization by generating revenue, while the community gains access to affordable goods, and the principles of a circular economy and waste reduction are promoted. Notably, Uteguiden's decision to go paperless not only conserves resources but also improves the efficiency of their business operations. Furthermore, the organization's use of non-

motorized activities and EVs for transportation minimizes its environmental impact. Another aspect to contemplate within the environmental dimension is Uteguiden's practice of engaging large groups, typically cruise ship tourists, in activities like kayaking, which tend to have a lower environmental impact when compared to activities like hiking. This aligns perfectly with the statement from Uteguiden's Instagram page, which emphasizes its mission to deliver world-class adventures with minimal environmental impact. In the context of electrifying its vehicle fleet, Uteguiden greatly benefits from the supportive national efforts for EVs and the predominance of renewable energy sources in the country's electricity mix. These factors enhance the attractiveness and sustainability of EV use, contributing to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and a smaller ecological footprint, which are key objectives in environmental practices as outlined by Goel (2010) and Alhaddi (2015) within the framework of the TBL. Furthermore, Uteguiden's introduction of trash-picking events within its activities not only promotes environmental well-being but also fosters a sense of community engagement. These events make the local environment more habitable and encourage residents to participate. Additionally, they offer both locals and visiting tourists the chance to participate in meaningful activities that support the environment and the community, thereby enriching the social fabric of the areas Uteguiden operates.

In conclusion, it is evident that Uteguiden carefully takes into account the various dimensions of the TBL. Consequently, aligning business operations with the TBL perspective stands as a pivotal element for organizations striving to enhance their sustainability. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that the primary objective of any organization is to achieve profitability and longevity. Incorporating the TBL into organizational practices does not imply giving precedence to one dimension over the others, but rather assigns equal importance to social and environmental factors alongside financial gains. Uteguiden's business operations also encompass community support, the sourcing of local products, and collaborations with local partners, all of which align with the social facet of the TBL. Nevertheless, these aspects will be addressed separately in subsequent discussions as they each constitute distinct categories.

6.3 Customer Engagement and Education

Uteguiden's commitment to sustainability aligns closely with Tilbury's (2007) Learning-based Change for Sustainability approach, emphasizing the transformative power of ongoing social learning processes. Following Tilbury's perspective, Uteguiden recognizes that achieving sustainability involves engaging stakeholders in a reflective journey, actively involving them in shaping a vision, taking action, and evaluating progress. The organization's multifaceted engagement and education initiatives serve as a testament to its commitment to fostering systemic change rather than superficial, isolated actions. Uteguiden's dedication to avalanche safety education, as highlighted in its series of events and CEO's radio discussions, reflects the organization's alignment with Tilbury's mentoring approach. By actively involving both clients and the broader community in discussions on safety and environmental sustainability, Uteguiden goes beyond simple actions and encourages a deeper understanding of the root causes of issues. The organization's educational excursions, such as visits to a fish farm, demonstrate a holistic approach to learning, addressing both natural and industrial facets of the environment. This aligns with Tilbury's emphasis on learning for sustainability, which encourages individuals to think deeply about their decisions and explore genuine alternatives. Uteguiden's activities foster critical and systemic thinking skills in its clients, moving beyond mere awareness to cultivate a mindset geared towards addressing sustainability challenges at their source. Furthermore, Uteguiden's engagement with its substantial social media follower base is in line with Tilbury's idea of participative inquiry. By actively seeking input from followers on environmental projects and educational events, Uteguiden involves its audience in the exploration of sustainability questions, stimulating fresh ideas and a deeper understanding of community and organizational change. In embracing the Learning-based Change for Sustainability approach, Uteguiden not only educates its clients but also empowers them with the skills to drive systemic change within their communities. The organization's commitment to sustainability extends beyond individual actions, aiming for structural and institutional transformation. By incorporating elements of mentoring, facilitation, participative inquiry, action learning, and action research, Uteguiden demonstrates a comprehensive and informed approach to fostering sustainability, aligning with Tilbury's vision of creating proficient and empowered individuals capable of effecting meaningful change.

Recognizing the critical importance of customer engagement, Uteguiden aims to take a significant step toward sustainability by actively involving and educating customers. This approach harnesses the organization's power and influence to effect positive change. Identifying sustainability topics that resonate with its identity and mission, Uteguiden prioritizes customer education as a significant aspect of its sustainability journey.

6.4 Local Community Engagement

Uteguiden places a significant emphasis on local engagement, a commitment, that is based on my personal experience and the comprehensive analysis conducted during this study. This local dedication is strikingly evident in an Instagram post, where Uteguiden openly pledges “[...] contributing to the local community, supporting local clubs, using as much local products and partners as possible [...]” (@uteguiden 2021h).

One notable example of their dedication to local sourcing can be found in their company-owned café. Uteguiden goes to great lengths to procure all the ingredients for its products from nearby farmers, showcasing a various array of locally produced items. When questioned about the possibility of obtaining ingredients and products from external sources at more cost-effective rates, the CEO explained their strong commitment to sourcing locally, a decision firmly rooted in their core values. Furthermore, the café serves as a vital social hub, catering to individuals of all age groups. By organizing after-work events and establishing the “Ungdomsklubben” (Youth Club) for local young people, Uteguiden has identified and invested in the youth as an essential demographic for community development. It recognizes that engaging the youth is crucial for the sustainable growth of their community, both now and in the future. In addition to fostering youth engagement, Uteguiden actively participates in educational initiatives by conducting regular sustainability lectures at the local university. They also extend their outreach to older generations by organizing a series of winter and summer activities known as “Utetur.” This program brings sports and outdoor activities closer to anyone interested, promoting inclusivity and community bonding. Uteguiden's commitment to community development is further exemplified through their “Bedriftschallenge” (Business Challenge), which involves local businesses competing in a unique triathlon-style event. This not only fosters healthy competition but also reinforces their dedication to supporting local enterprises. An exceptional highlight of Uteguiden's local engagement is the annual trail-running event

initiated by the CEO and a friend. This event has not only achieved remarkable success but has also garnered international recognition, drawing significant media attention and tourism to the local community.

Examining Uteguiden's actions through the lens of shared value creation, as proposed by Kramer and Porter (2011), it becomes evident that their policies and practices enhance the company's competitiveness while simultaneously improving the economic and social conditions within the communities they serve. By addressing the community's diverse needs for example, for physical activity, education, and enjoyment through a range of complimentary events, Uteguiden has the potential to bolster its reputation, attract new customers, generate fresh revenue streams, and ultimately secure a competitive advantage. Furthermore, their active engagement with the local community represents a valid and robust approach to advancing sustainability. By building strong local connections and actively participating in community activities, Uteguiden aligns itself with a more sustainable future for the region. This dual commitment to economic growth and community well-being underscores their dedication to a holistic and sustainable approach to business.

6.5 Staff Engagement

Based on my experience during my internship at Uteguiden, it has become abundantly clear that the employees at this organization are deeply committed to sustainability. This dedication is palpable in their overall attitude toward sustainability-related issues. One notable aspect of their eco-conscious approach is the consistent use of reusable containers for both food and drinks by most of the guides. This practice reflects a genuine commitment to waste reduction.

Several staff members have taken it upon themselves to support environmental initiatives independently, outside the scope of their work-related responsibilities at Uteguiden. This self-initiated support underscores the organization's positive influence on its employees' values and their personal connection to environmental causes. It is important to note that the majority of Uteguiden's workforce consists of seasonal guides, many of whom return year after year to work with the company. This high rate of employee retention serves as evidence of their satisfaction and strong identification with the organization and its core values. Uteguiden consistently provides a supportive and empowering work environment, allowing

its employees a degree of autonomy in shaping and designing their own tours. Additionally, the organization extends valuable equipment and clothing deals to its staff, facilitating their work in the field. Investment in training and professional development courses is another crucial aspect of their strategy, ensuring continuous improvement in their skills and knowledge. In terms of communicating sustainability principles, Uteguiden has developed an effective organizational guide for its employees. This guide not only serves as a clear reference for sustainability practices but also designates supervisors in specific areas of expertise. During my internship, it was evident that all employees possessed a keen awareness of proper conduct in natural settings and actively conveyed these principles to clients. Considering the viewpoint of Casey and Sieber (2016), who emphasize the importance of supervision, training, and rewards in enhancing employee engagement, Uteguiden appears to excel in this regard. While specific reward systems weren't explicitly identified in this study, the alignment of the employees' values and perspectives with those of the organization is striking. Given Uteguiden's nature-centric work environment, it's likely that the strong connection between its employees and the natural world contributes significantly to this alignment, fostering a heightened sense of environmental responsibility.

As a result, it can be reasonably assumed that promoting employee engagement is a pivotal aspect of Uteguiden's sustainability efforts. This is not only vital for the organization's success but also for the broader business landscape. Employees serve as the driving force of any organization, conveying its values to customers and external stakeholders, making their commitment to sustainability crucial in achieving lasting environmental goals.

6.6 Partnerships and Collaborations

The comprehensive exploration of Uteguiden's partnerships and collaborations with various organizations has unveiled the organization's commitment to prioritizing sustainability in its operations. This dedication extends to the careful selection of suppliers for equipment used in outdoor activities and merchandise sold in their shop. Uteguiden places a strong emphasis on choosing suppliers who align with sustainability goals, underlining their commitment to environmentally responsible practices. Furthermore, the organization's dedication to supporting local, national, and Scandinavian brands reflects its commitment to reducing the environmental footprint through shorter supply chains. This approach seamlessly ties in with the principles discussed in the earlier section on Local Community Engagement, which

highlighted Uteguiden's effort to source local ingredients and products for its café. Notably, Uteguiden also actively seeks collaborations with organizations affiliated with the 1% for the Planet initiative, reinforcing their commitment to environmental stewardship. Uteguiden's organizational document includes its aspiration to partner with organizations that share similar values, reinforcing its dedication to sustainability. This commitment is also shown in their social media presence, as exemplified by a recent Instagram post proclaiming, choosing "[...] companies that really want to make a difference" (@uteguiden 2021a). In a candid conversation with the CEO, it became apparent that the organization prioritizes social and environmental concerns, valuing them above purely economic considerations. Considering the ED, as introduced by Montabon et al. (2016) in Chapter 5.6, which emphasizes the primacy of societal and environmental welfare over profit maximization, Uteguiden and its CEO's approach harmonize with and actively embrace this logic. This study uncovered a diverse array of partners and collaborators within Uteguiden's network. However, to comprehensively assess the sustainability of Uteguiden's supply chain, an examination of the sustainability efforts of their partner organizations is essential. This is an additional step to the inductive approach taken in this study, necessitating the creation of an additional list detailing all suppliers and their respective sustainability statements, certifications, and initiatives. It is important to acknowledge that this evaluation of partners is confined to a surface-level review of each company's website. This evaluation is essential for making a statement regarding the potential sustainability of Uteguiden's supply chain.

The analysis encompassed 26 organizations that Uteguiden sources from, as detailed in Table A3 in the appendix. Nevertheless, one website was undergoing construction and could not provide any information, reducing the count to 25. The concise examination of these websites unveiled that seven out of the 25 did not make any mention of sustainability, while 18 explicitly articulated their commitment to embedding sustainability in their business practices. Meanwhile, 12 organizations had no information available regarding sustainability certifications or supported environmental initiatives, but 13 were either certified or endorsed sustainability-related initiatives. This data suggests that a majority of Uteguiden's partners prioritize sustainability within their organizations. Nonetheless, since nearly half of these partners lack official certification, one could argue that their sustainability commitment might be more talk than action. Consequently, it can be inferred that while Uteguiden's supply chain considers sustainability, it falls short of achieving a fully

sustainable status. Nonetheless, establishing a genuinely sustainable supply chain is a crucial aspect for an organization looking to elevate its overall sustainability performance.

6.7 Leadership

The examination undertaken in this study, particularly through participant observations, has unveiled that Uteguiden's fundamental principles and actions are rooted in the CEO's viewpoints, with a specific emphasis on sustainability. When he established the company, he embedded his personal values as the foundational principles of Uteguiden and its operations. As previously mentioned in earlier sections, his perspective places a strong emphasis on taking concrete actions and practical measures rather than mere discussions about sustainability. Additionally, he takes responsibility for contributing to environmental initiatives through donations. His outlook forms the basis for all the practices and actions discussed in the preceding subsections. His prioritization of social and environmental considerations over pure profit results in a well-rounded approach following the TBL framework. The focus on creating shared value aligns with the principles of the 6C Sustainable Leadership concept introduced by Tidemann et al. (2013) in Chapter 5.7.

Uteguiden's top management effectively incorporates the six elements of SL. They acknowledge the multifaceted nature of sustainability, extending beyond environmental concerns to encompass social and economic aspects, which fall under the context element. Their beliefs and perspectives align with sustainability, addressing the consciousness element. The pursuit of high-quality activities and sustainability as a common purpose provides continuity. Collaborations with like-minded organizations and a focus on meeting the needs of all stakeholders fulfill the connectedness element. Regarding creativity, Uteguiden's leadership employs various strategies to generate shared value for the local community. Furthermore, Uteguiden offers a variety of activities, courses, and events throughout the year, ensuring a sustainable revenue stream. In recognition of their success in establishing a stable, year-round outdoor tourism company, Uteguiden received the Travel Award in 2018. The collectiveness element is addressed by incorporating sustainability into Uteguiden's business structure through various means, such as supporting environmental initiatives, using electric vehicles, and providing educational opportunities. Leadership plays a pivotal role when an organization seeks to elevate its level of sustainability, perhaps even being the most critical factor. In the case of Uteguiden, leaders are often the

organization's founders, and they shape it with their values and perspectives, leading the way toward a more sustainable future for their employees. Without a leader who embraces sustainability, an organization cannot truly attain sustainability. The 6C sustainable Leadership model represents an ideal strategy for elevating the sustainability of an organization.

“Effective Leadership is essential and key to the adoption of sustainability in every organization.[...] Leaders should embed sustainability in their organizational activities and make sustainable development part of their overall business strategy”
(Opoku and Fortune 2011, 1145)

6.8 Sustainability Reporting

Up to this point, Uteguiden has not been actively involved in sustainability reporting. However, it is now contemplating the possibility of attaining Eco-Lighthouse certification in the future. This impending certification program necessitates the establishment of a comprehensive sustainability report.

As highlighted by Koskela (2023), the implementation of sustainability reporting can yield a variety of positive impacts that extend across various dimensions of the organization, as elaborated upon in Chapter 5.8 of this study. These potential benefits encompass an improved flow of information with stakeholders, resulting in heightened transparency. This, in turn, can foster a deeper level of trust among stakeholders and enhance the organization's reputation. It is worth noting that during the examination of Uteguiden, specific objectives or targets have not been identified. Furthermore, their organizational vision, as detailed in Chapter 4.3, is rather vaguely articulated. In this context, the adoption of sustainability reporting can offer a structured framework for measuring performance, demanding the establishment of precise objectives and the development of a more distinct and attainable vision statement.

Within the realm of any organization, employees play a pivotal role as the driving force behind its operations. Providing employees with meaningful purposes and objectives in their work can significantly boost their motivation, subsequently increasing their productivity in working towards the organization's goals. From the broader perspective, a more transparent

organization becomes inherently more appealing to external parties, including potential new hires, investors, and various other stakeholders.

Sustainability reporting, therefore, is presumed to be a significant avenue for fostering sustainability within an organization. Not only does it make the organization more conscientious about sustainability issues, but it also encourages greater engagement with these concerns. This proactive approach not only aids in achieving sustainability goals but also strengthens the organization's position in the eyes of the public, reinforcing its commitment to environmentally responsible practices.

7.0 Conclusion

This chapter marks the conclusion of the study, addressing the research questions, introducing a corporate sustainability framework for practical implementation, and exploring the practical and theoretical implications of the study's findings. It wraps up with recommendations for future research.

7.1 Conclusion of the Research

This study aimed at the creation of a conceptual framework for organizations to implement certain practices to enhance the corporate level of sustainability. To achieve this, data was gathered inductively in a three-month participant observation period, and the analysis of organizational documents, the corporate website, and the social media platforms on which Uteguiden is active. The following research questions were formulated to achieve the overall goal of creating a framework.

The proposed research questions:

- *RQ1: What key sustainability practices are implemented in a Norwegian outdoor organization?*
- *RQ2: Are those sustainability practices consequently established and communicated across different communication channels?*

can be answered as follows:

RQ1: The investigation into Uteguiden, a Norwegian outdoor organization, revealed a comprehensive set of sustainability practices across seven key focus areas. After reviewing the literature and identifying key concepts related to these categories, an additional focus area was added, expanding the framework to a total of eight categories.

1. Environmental Initiatives and Certifications

Uteguiden actively supports environmental causes through the 1% for the Planet initiative, committing to donating one percent of annual sales to vetted environmental partners. Financial contributions to initiatives like Protect Our Winters Norge and Rainforest Trust,

along with the aspiration to attain the Eco-Lighthouse certification, showcase a commitment to enhancing environmental performance.

2. Business operations

In the realm of its business operations, the organization places a strong emphasis on balancing the three essential dimensions of sustainability: environmental, social, and economic aspects. This commitment manifests through various key practices, such as integrating EVs and participating in trash clean-up efforts, advocating for a circular economy and waste reduction, adopting a fully paperless approach to conducting their business, and the design of non-motorized activities with lower environmental footprints.

3. Customer Engagement and Education

When it comes to engaging with customers and educating them about sustainability, the organization actively involves and informs its stakeholders through its social media, outdoor activities, and events. Initiatives cover essential topics like safety, equipment use, and environmental sustainability. The organization's broad reach, especially on social media, allows it to effectively communicate its commitment to sustainability and involve customers in selecting environmental projects for support.

4. Local Community Engagement

The organization's dedication to local community engagement is another crucial aspect of its sustainability efforts. Uteguiden puts a strong emphasis on this category, including the promotion of the local youth by organizing complimentary events, the support of local businesses, hosting sports events that contribute to the local economy's well-being, sourcing café ingredients locally, and conducting sustainability lectures at the local university. The organization actively supports inclusivity and community bonding through programs like "Utetur."

5. Staff Engagement

Within the category of staff engagement, the organization under investigation provides employees with supervisory support, training opportunities, and a degree of autonomy in designing their activities and tours, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility among the team. Moreover, the employees are offered equipment deals, and provided with sustainability guidelines.

6. Partnerships and Collaborations

Uteguiden prioritizes sustainability in partnerships, carefully selecting suppliers aligned with environmental goals. The organization actively supports local, national, and Scandinavian brands, reducing its environmental footprint through shorter supply chains. Collaboration with 1% for the Planet partners reinforces its commitment to environmental stewardship.

7. Leadership

At the heart of this Norwegian outdoor organization's commitment to sustainability stands its leadership, which actively promotes and champions sustainable practices. The leadership's unwavering dedication forms the very foundation of the organization's sustainability initiatives, setting an example for others to follow.

8. Sustainability reporting

Uteguiden has not been involved in sustainability reporting, but it is actively pursuing certification from a third party that mandates the development of a sustainability report. This endeavor underscores the organization's acknowledgment of the significance of transparency and accountability. Additionally, it reflects Uteguiden's recognition of the advantages that sustainability reporting can offer, both in terms of organizational performance assessment and the communication of its commitment to sustainable practices.

RQ2: Uteguiden primarily utilizes its website and social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, for communication. While these social media accounts feature a significant number of posts, only a small percentage (151 and 67, respectively) touch upon the identified seven categories. This rather sporadic posting aligns with the CEO's emphasis on prioritizing actions over words and recognizing that social media is predominantly used for entertainment. To enhance its sustainability communication strategy, Uteguiden could consider implementing a consistent monthly posting schedule, ensuring that sustainability-related content is regularly shared without compromising follower engagement. The corporate website showcases the organization's commitment to environmental initiatives and provides educational blog posts and videos. However, detailed information about sustainability efforts is lacking elsewhere on the site.

Conversely, Uteguiden has compiled a comprehensive internal document, "Welcome to Uteguiden," encompassing core values, mission statement, vision, and sustainability practices aligned with the TBL concept. While intended for internal use, a suggested improvement is to make this document, or relevant portions of it, accessible to the broader public, perhaps on the organization's website. This, combined with the strategic use of social media, could effectively communicate Uteguiden's sustainability endeavors to stakeholders without the risk of being perceived as engaging in greenwashing—misusing environmental actions for reputational gains.

7.2 Practical Implications

The practical implications of this study underscore the actionable steps organizations can take to enhance their corporate sustainability. By examining and adapting these categories to their contexts, businesses can develop a more well-rounded approach to sustainability. Organizations worldwide can draw inspiration from the organization's experience and learn how to apply sustainability principles effectively. The findings suggest the following recommendations by integrating the outcomes of the second research question with the eight categories identified. However, the last two points outlined here are not to be understood as individual categories, but as further suggestions for the category's implementation:

Strategic Focus on Environmental Initiatives and Certifications:

Organizations should actively engage with environmental initiatives and pursue sustainability certifications to demonstrate commitment. Ideally, third-party entities implementing ISO programs conduct these certifications to ensure their efficacy. Forming partnerships with like-minded organizations, as exemplified by Uteguiden's involvement with 1% for the Planet, can amplify impact.

Holistic Approach to Business Operations:

Organizations should adopt a comprehensive approach to business operations, balancing environmental, social, and economic aspects and incorporating sustainable practices into daily operations to align with the TBL concept.

Effective Customer Engagement and Education:

Organizations can implement learning-based change approaches, such as mentoring, facilitation, participative inquiry, action learning, and action research, to actively engage and educate customers on sustainability. This fosters a culture of continuous improvement and adaptation.

Local Community Engagement for Shared Value Creation:

Organizations should focus on local community engagement by supporting local businesses, organizing events, and contributing to the community's well-being. The Shared Value Creation framework offers a strategic approach to positively impact local communities.

Employee Engagement Strategies:

Organizations can enhance sustainability efforts by providing supervisory support, training opportunities, and autonomy to employees. Implementing the Employee Engagement Theory can motivate the workforce to actively contribute to sustainability initiatives.

Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations:

Organizations should strategically select partners aligned with their sustainability values. Embracing the Ecologically Dominant Logic in supply chain management ensures that social and environmental considerations are central to decision-making and have the potential to form a truly sustainable supply chain.

Leadership Commitment and Sustainable Practices:

Leadership plays a pivotal role in driving sustainability initiatives. Organizations can utilize the 6C Sustainable Leadership Model to guide leaders in fostering sustainable practices and setting examples for others.

Embracing Sustainability Reporting:

Organizations committed to transparency and accountability should embrace sustainability reporting. This involves creating a comprehensive document showcasing all sustainability activities, serving as a bridge to the external world for stakeholders, which can lead to several advantages within the provided categories and beyond.

Enhanced Communication Strategy:

Improve sustainability communication strategies by implementing a consistent posting schedule on social media. This ensures regular sharing of sustainability-related content without compromising follower engagement.

Accessibility of Internal Documents:

Make internal sustainability documents, such as "Welcome to Uteguiden," accessible to the broader public through the organization's website. This transparent approach enhances communication and builds trust with stakeholders.

By examining and adapting these categories to their contexts, businesses can develop a more well-rounded approach to sustainability. Moreover, organizations worldwide can draw inspiration from the organization's experience and learn how to apply sustainability principles effectively.

7.3 Theoretical Implications

This research project is built upon the inductive collection of data, employing participant observations alongside an analysis of the organization's documents, website, and social media channels. Drawing on various sustainability concepts from the existing literature, the study has crafted a comprehensive framework encompassing eight distinct focus areas. Notably, these focus areas are not newly established in isolation, but their merging serves to amplify the impact on an organization's sustainability initiatives. Within this framework, established models such as the TBL and the Employee Engagement Theory are seamlessly integrated, accentuating the critical importance of maintaining a delicate balance among the environmental, social, and economic facets of sustainability. It is essential to underscore the interconnectedness of these focus areas, as their synergy is integral to achieving meaningful and lasting sustainability outcomes. Sustainability, by its very nature, demands a holistic approach that extends across all categories. Each facet — environmental, social, and economic — plays a distinctive and vital role in cultivating responsible and sustainable business practices. Inspired by the egalitarian philosophy embedded in the TBL concept, the study advocates for the equitable treatment of all sustainability categories, avoiding hierarchical rankings.

However, it is prudent to acknowledge that further research could enhance our understanding and provide robust substantiation for this approach, ensuring its applicability and effectiveness across diverse organizational contexts.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study has certain limitations, primarily stemming from its exclusive focus on a solitary organization within Norway's outdoor industry. To corroborate and generalize the findings, it becomes imperative to conduct additional case studies encompassing a broader spectrum of organizations across various industries. Furthermore, a holistic assessment of the effectiveness of implementing the seven primary categories, coupled with an additional category of sustainability reporting, within different organizational contexts is warranted to ascertain whether such integration genuinely elevates the sustainability quotient. In essence, a more comprehensive research approach would entail diversifying the study scope and probing deeper into the multifaceted dimensions of sustainable practices. To further explore the sector-specific significance of the identified factors, and if needed, establish a ranking, it is recommended to reference additional research involving other companies within the same industry in Norway.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Analysis of Instagram Posts – Table of Categories and Results

Category	Description	Number of Posts	Posts	Sustainability Dimension
Environmental Initiatives and Certifications	Posts of Uteguiden's involvement in environmental initiatives	6	Announcing the new membership of 1% for the Planet (post from November 28, 2016)	Environmental
			On "Earth Day" 2021, Uteguiden shared their commitment to 1% for the Planet (post from April 22, 2021)	Environmental
			Sharing their membership of 1% for the Planet and call out their followers to do so too (post from July 27, 2021; July 28, 2020)	Environmental
			Sharing their membership of 1% for the Planet and Rainforest Trust, and calling out for their followers to join those initiatives (post from December 31, 2021)	Environmental
			Sharing their membership of 1% for the Planet and their donations toward Protect Our Winters Norge and Rainforest Trust, and point out for 1% for the Planet's Network Auction (post from November 5, 2022)	Environmental
			Uteguiden wins Innovation Norway Travel Award for efforts in sustainable tourism (post from November 7, 2018)	Economic
Business Operations	Posts of Uteguiden's activities connected to business operations	7	Organizing a trash-picking event in Ålesund (post from November 7, 2018)	Environmental
			Sharing their values "[...] Support our locals [...] Focus on the future [...] Get outside [...]" (post from March 18, 2020)	Environmental Social
			"[...] Everyday we try to make the world a better place in Uteguiden contributing to the local community, supporting local clubs, using as much local products and partners as possible and reducing our Co2 emissions are just parts of the stuff we're doing[...]" (post from November 10, 2021)	Environmental Economic Social

			Upcycling of older products to extend their lifespan (January 17, 2023)	Environmental Economic
			Having a complimentary ski touring event in the scope of "Utetur" (post from January 26, 2023)	Social
			Officially implementing trash picking in their business operations as an offer together with Green Kayak (post from April 24, 2023)	Environmental
Customer Engagement and Education	Posts of Uteguiden's efforts to educate and engage customers	17	Organizing Avalanche Awareness events (posts from January 27, 2016; January 28, 2016; February 10, 2016; February 16, 2016; January 24, 2018)	Environmental Social
			Free Webinar during Covid on different topics including avalanche avoidance (posts from March 23, 2021; April 20, 2020; June 8, 2020)	Social
			Educational videos on what to pack in a backpack during a ski tour, how to correctly prepare skis and skins for skis, what to focus on when buying avalanche safety equipment and what to bring to a tour (post from November 19, 2020; November 30, 2020; January 2022; October 30, 2022; December 23, 2022)	Social
			Sharing awareness of removing batteries of Beacons when not in use to guarantee their functionality (post from May 25, 2021)	Social
			Call out their followers to always bring home trash when in the outdoors (post from July 27, 2021)	Environmental
			"[...] In Uteguiden we focus on learning our staff and clients new things, whether its about kayaking, skiing, climbing or avalanches [...]" (post from November 12, 2021)	Social
			CEO was holding a speech of Uteguiden's work regarding sustainability at the Innovation festival (post from November 24, 2022)	Social
Local Community Engagement		13	Arranging the Stranda Fjord Trail Race from 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 (posts from May 27,	Economic Social

	Posts of Uteguiden's interaction with the local community		2015; January 5, 2016; June 20, 2017; August 22, 2018)	
			CEO talks about avalanche safety in Radio Ålesund (post from January 6, 2017)	Social
			Complimentary Avalanche courses for local youth together with Sparebank Møre (posts from February 25, 2017; February 9, 2018; January 30, 2020)	Social
			Introducing Hygge Café with Coffee from Jacu Coffee Roastery and Ice Cream from Storfjord Iskrem (post from December 13, 2019)	Economic Social
			Posting about Hygge Café with caption of local coffee, food, and beer. Also offering it as a venue for companies (post from November 2, 2021)	Economic Social
			"[...] Everyday we try to make the world a better place in Uteguiden contributing to the local community, supporting local clubs, using as much local products and partners as possible and reducing our Co2 emissions are just parts of the stuff we're doing [...]" (post from November 10, 2021)"	Environmental Economic Social
			Stranda Fjord Trail Race, started in 2015 becomes part of Golden Trail World Series (post from December 10, 2021)	Economic Social
			Green shift in Uteguiden is explained to Norwegian Prime minister during his visit of the Activity Center in Ålesund (post from February 15, 2022)	Economic Social
Staff Engagement	Posts that show engagement of Staff	0	_____	_____
Partnerships and Collaborations	Posts that include partnerships and collaborations with organizations that care about sustainability	24	Dynafit, Kaks of Sweden (now Live A Little), Mammut, Vertical Playground, and Swix Sport (post from May 1, 2014)	Economic Social
			Suunto watches (post from April 14, 2015)"	Economic Social

		Kask of Sweden as Merchandise provider (posts from July 24, 2015; September 8, 2016)	Economic Social
		Skis from Dynafit, distributed by 7blaner (now Vertical Playground) (posts from November 30, 2015; December 21, 2016; June 21, 2020)	Economic Social
		Backpacks from Mammut (post from December 16, 2015)"	Economic Social
		Split boards from G3 Gear (post from December 3, 2016)"	Economic Social
		Announcing Arva Equipment as new partner (post from November 28, 2020)"	Economic Social
		Spektrum Sports, also a member of 1% for the Planet, providing sustainable eyewear (post from November 10, 2021)	Economic Social
		Announcing Fara Cycling as new partner saying: "[...] We cheer on other Scandinavian brands that think a like with us [...]" (post from November 20, 2021)	Economic Social
		Announcing Velocio Apparel as new partner saying: "[...] Our goal is to only work with brands that stand for the same things as us. [...] We always strive to partner up with companies in our own 1 percent for the planet family, companies that really want to make a difference [...]" (post from December 5, 2021)	Economic Social
		Dynafit, Devold, Arva, NRS, Komperdell, Spektrum (post from December 18, 2021)	Economic Social
		Partnering with Hofseth Aqua and Maritime Partner using their 100% electric powered boat (post from January 26, 2022)	Economic Social
		Insulated bottles from Klean Kanteen (Story from November 5, 2022)	Economic Social
		Collaborating with Moonlight in a complimentary event (post from January 26, 2023)	Economic Social
		Partnering up with Green Kayak (post from April 24, 2023)"	Economic Social

			Northern Playground saying: "[...] Buy less play more [...]"; conduction of lotteries to win clothing (posts from May 2, 2023; January 3, 2019; May 2, 2019; May 13, 2019)"	Environmental Economic Social
Leadership	Posts about CEO's values and beliefs	1	Interview of Uteguiden's CEO on bulding a company with the Planet in mind(post from January 29, 2023)	Environmental Economic

(Source: [instagram.com/uteguiden/](https://www.instagram.com/uteguiden/))

Appendix 2: Analysis of Facebook Posts – Table of Categories and Results

Category	Description	Number of Posts	Posts	Sustainability Dimension
Environmental Initiatives and Certifications	Posts of Uteguiden's involvement in environmental initiatives	9	Uteguiden joins 1% for the Planet (post from November 25, 2016)	Environmental
			Sharing their membership of 1% for the Planet (posts from November 28, 2016; December 22, 2018; June 4, 2019; April 22, 2021; November 5, 2022)	Environmental
			Uteguiden asks followers where they should donate their money to in the scope of their 1% for the Planet membership (post from August 25, 2021)	Environmental Social
			Uteguiden announces membership of Rainforest Trust as a Conservation Cycle Partner (post from November 11, 2021)	Environmental
			Uteguiden shares membership of 1% for the Planet and Rainforest Trust and encourages followers to do the same (posts from December 31, 2021; November 5, 2022)	Environmental Social

Business Operations	Posts of Uteguiden's activities connected to business operations	71	<p>Uteguiden sells used equipment from previous seasons (posts from March 7, 2014; December 30, 2014; June 10, 2015; June 14, 2015; May 2, 2016; May 10, 2016; May 24, 2016; June 16, 2016; January 31, 2017; April 17, 2017; April 18, 2017; May 7, 2017; May 8, 2017; June 11, 2017; August 31, 2017; November 23, 2017; November 29, 2017; March 7, 2018; April 20, 2018; May 22, 2018; May 28, 2018; June 12, 2018; August 29, 2018; September 4, 2018; September 12, 2018; September 21, 2018; September 24, 2018; October 22, 2018; January 13, 2019; March 25, 2019; April 7, 2019; April 8, 2019; April 12, 2019; April 18, 2019; April 29, 2019; June 27, 2019; September 21, 2019; September 26, 2019; October 8, 2019; February 11, 2020; February 12, 2020; February 18, 2020; March 16, 2020; March 19, 2020; April 1, 2020; April 17, 2020; March 18, 2021; September 15, 2021; March 7, 2022; March 16, 2022; April 12, 2022; May 2, 2022; November 17, 2022; November 30, 2022; December 6, 2022; December 12, 2022; December 15, 2022; January 20, 2023; May 1, 2023; May 2, 2023; May 12, 2023; May 14, 2023)</p>	<p>Environmental Economic</p>
			<p>Uteguiden hosts "Plogging" (Jogging while picking up trash) event (post from May 24, 2019; May 25, 2019)</p>	<p>Environmental Social</p>
			<p>Trashpicking while kayaking "To pick up litter we find in the nature when we're out on guided trips and courses is just one of many important things we do." (post from September 9, 2021)</p>	<p>Environmental</p>
			<p>Uteguiden announces purchase of their first EV "After an inspiring course [...] we decide to make the shift over to electric cars. We have now sold 2 of the fossil cars we where using before and just got the delivery of our</p>	<p>Environmental</p>

			<p>first of 2 ordered electric cars. In 2023 we should have shifted our entire fleet of cars over to electric and we hope many other business will follow us." (post from November 25, 2021)</p>	
<p>Customer Engagement and Education</p>	<p>Posts of Uteguiden's efforts to educate and engage customers</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>Officially implementing trash picking in their business with Green Kayak (post from June 15, 2023)</p>	<p>Environmental</p>
			<p>Uteguiden's CEO talked about avalanche safety in local radio station (post from January 6, 2017)</p>	<p>Social</p>
			<p>Uteguiden encourages followers to clean up their trash "This is what we found on a 15 min morning break just around the office in Stranda this morning. Just imagine the impact if all of you 7000+ followers used 15 min of your day today to pick up some trash?" (post from June 11, 2018)</p>	<p>Environmental Social</p>
			<p>Educational posts about what essentials to pack for ski touring trips (post from October 22, 2018)</p>	<p>Social</p>
			<p>Avalanche Awareness event (post from February 21, 2019; February 27, 2019)</p>	<p>Environmental Social</p>
			<p>Asking their followers what kind of lectures they should host in their offices (post from September 9, 2019)</p>	<p>Social</p>
<p>Free webinars on safe execution of skiing trips, avalanche safety, hiking equipment, skiing equipment (post from April 16, 2020; April 23, 2020; July 5, 2020; August 20, 2020; January 18, 2021; March 17, 2021; March 23, 2021, September 29, 2021; November 13, 2021; December 21, 2021; December 26, 2021, January 4, 2022; January 5, 2022; January 19, 2022; December 20, 2022)</p>	<p>Social</p>			

Local Community Engagement	Posts of Uteguiden's interaction with the local community	25	<p><i>"Sparebanken møre har vært en av våre viktigste støttespillere helt siden starten og er fortsatt det."</i></p> <p>Translated to: "Sparebanken Møre (local bank) has been one of our most important supporters since the beginning and continues to be." (post from November 20, 2018)</p>	<p>Economic Social</p>
			<p>Arranging the Stranda Fjord Trail Race (post from June 29, 2015; August 31, 2016; August 15, 2018; August 22, 2019; December 10, 2021)</p>	<p>Economic Social</p>
			<p>For the third time holding a 4 day glacier course for students from Åre (post from September 11, 2015)</p>	<p>Social</p>
			<p>Complimentary avalanche, freeski, and kayak course for local youth (post from February 14, 2017; February 25, 2017, February 19, 2018, December 23, 2018; February 27, 2019; March 1, 2019; February 23, 2020; September 29, 2020; August 19, 2021; February 17, 2022)</p>	<p>Social</p>
			<p>Criticizing local polluted areas and encouraging local municipality and DNT Sunnmøre (Norwegian Tourist Organization) to step in and starting an initiative (post from August 2, 2020)</p>	<p>Environmental Social</p>
			<p>Uteguiden holds first aid course and "On this course we also invited colleges from other companies in the business [...] Because of this we're able to build a great guide-environment with good learning" (post from September 25, 2020)</p>	<p>Social</p>
			<p>Hosting an afterwork event for locals (post from October 12, 2020)</p>	<p>Social</p>

			<p><i>"Jo for at vi har lyst å gi tilbake til våre lokale ungdommer på samme måte som at vi arrangert gratis sommerskule for store deler av ungdommene i regionen vår. Vi kan ikke bare snakke om bærekraft uten det viktigste vi gjør som bedrift er å vise veien videre! "</i></p> <p>Translated to: Creating a youth club, "because we want to give back to our local youth in the same way we arranged a free summer school for most of the youth in our region. We can't just talk about sustainability without the most important thing we do as a company, to show the way forward" (post from September 15, 2021)</p>	Social
			<p><i>"Blandt det viktigste vi gjør i Uteguiden er å gi tilbake til lokale aktiviteter"</i></p> <p>Translated to: "Among the most important things we do in Uteguiden is to give back to local activities [oncoming fist emoji]" (post from December 12, 2021)</p>	Social
			<p><i>"Vi lanserer et nytt konsept vi kaller Utetur, der kan du som gjest av oss bli med på ulike sosiale turer gjennom hele året på Sunnmøre. Det beste, turene er gratis - men vær kjapp vi har begrenset antall plasser."</i></p> <p>Translated to: "We are launching a new concept we call Utetur, where you as a guest of ours can join various social trips throughout the year at Sunnmøre. [...] the trips are free [...]" (post from November 6, 2022)</p>	Social
			<p>Complimentary ski touring event in the scope of "Utetur" (post from January 19, 2023)</p>	Social
			<p>Holding a lecture in Volda University College (post from March 4, 2023)</p>	Social

Staff Engagement	Posts that show engagement of Staff	2	<p>Course for Guides - "As a big employer in the outdoor industry it's important for us with employees that loves their work and get the best available working environment. [...]</p> <p>This year we have had a lot of guide gatherings and courses around the different activities we guide around like kayaking and climbing. This way we're able to learn from each other and get even better guides out in the field." (post from October 18, 2021)</p>	Economic Social
			<p>Guide Training - "This week we have had 3 days together with parts of our guides for the winter season to discuss and go through how we want to work in Uteguiden. Focus on [...] Uteguiden's goals for the future and more." (post from December 17, 2021)</p>	Economic Social
Partnerships and Collaborations	Posts that include partnerships and collaborations with organizations that care about sustainability	22	"Dynafit is one of our sponsors on clothing & equipment [...]" (post from July 1, 2016)	Economic Social
			"We are stoked to launch our new collaboration with Fimbulvetr [...]" (post from December 7, 2016)	Economic Social
			Posts about partnership with Kaks Of Sweden (posts from December 15, 2016; February 23, 2017; March 14, 2017)	Economic Social
			Posts with several partners mentioned including Dynafit, Mammut, Kaks Of Sweden, 7Blaner, Suunto, Julboeyewear, Fara Cycling, and Velocio Apparel (posts from September 8, 2017; November 26, 2022)	Economic Social
			"We're providing you with the best skis on the market due a good collaboration with Dynafit/7Blåner" (post from December 7, 2017)	Economic Social
			Announcing the collaboration with local chocolate manufacturer Gerianger Sjokolade, Fjordnaer (post from May 28, 2019)	Economic Social
			Partnership with Vertical Playground (posts from November 7, 2019; February 7, 2023)	Economic Social

			Selling local products in Hygge Café from JACU and Storfjord iskrem (post from December 13, 2019)	Economic Social
			Partnership with Northern Playground (post from December 19, 2020)	Economic Social
			Collaboration with Spektrum Sports, which is also a 1% for the Planet member (post from November 10, 2021; November 19, 2021)	Economic Social
			Collaboration with Velocio Apparel, which is also a 1% for the Planet member (post from December 9, 2021)	Economic Social
			Partnering with Hofseth Aqua and Maritime Partner using their 100% electric powered boat (post from January 26, 2022)	Economic Social
			Selling and renting products in the shop from Devold, Dynafit, G3, and Arva (post from February 4, 2022)	Economic Social
			Collaboration with Aqua Bound (post from May 19, 2022)	Economic Social
			Refurnishing the shp in Ålesund with "more or less only local furnitures and style here and with a wide selection of local brands that's not a hard thing to succeed with ;)" (post from November 3, 2022)	Economic Social
			Partnering with Moonlight Mountain Gear for one of their "Utetur" (post from February 8, 2023)	Economic Social
			Collaborating with Edge Kayak (post from July 19, 2023)	Economic Social
Leadership	Posts about CEO's values and beliefs	1	Post of an interview Uteguiden's CEO gave about "Building a Business with the Planet in Mind" (post from January 29, 2023)	Environmental Social

(Source: facebook.com/Uteguiden)

Appendix 3: Analysis of Uteguiden's partners' and collaborators' websites

Organization	Location	Statements about Sustainability	Certifications and Supporting Initiatives
Aqua Bound	Wisconsin, United States	✓	✓
Arva Equipment	Annecy-le-Vieux, France	✓	✗
Devold	Langevåg, Norway	✓	✓
Dynafit	Kiefersfelden, Germany	✓	✓
Edge Kayak	Ålesund, Norway	✗	✗
Fara Cycling	Oslo, Norway	✗	✗
Fimbulvetr	Oslo, Norway	✓	✗
G3 Gear	Vancouver, Canada	✗	✗
Geiranger Sjokolade Fjordnaer	Geiranger, Norway	✗	✗
Green Kayak	Copenhagen, Denmark	✓	✓
Hofseth Aqua	Ålesund, Norway	✓	✓
JACU	Ålesund, Norway	✗	✗
Julboeyewear	Longchaumois, France	✗	✗
Klean Kanteen	California, United States	✓	✓

Komperdell	Mondsee, Austria	✓	✗
Live A Little (former Kask of Sweden)	Rättvik, Sweden	n.a.	n.a.
Mammut	Seon, Switzerland	✓	✗
Moonlight Mountain Gear	Åndalsnes, Norway	✓	✗
Northern Playground	Oslo, Norway	✓	✓
NRS	Idaho, United States	✓	✓
Salewa	South Tyrol, Italy	✓	✓
Spektrum Sports	Åre, Sweden	✓	✓
Storfjors Iskrem	Stordal, Norway	✗	✗
Suunto	Vantaa, Finland	✓	✓
Swix Sport	Lillehammer, Norway	✓	✓
Velocio Apparel	New Hampshire, United States	✓	✓

(Sources: aquabound.com; arva-equipment.com; devold.no; dynafit.com; edgekayak.com; faracycling.com; fimbulvetr.no; genuieguidegear.com; geirangersjokolade.no; greenkayak.org; hofseth.no; jacu.no; julbo.com; kleankanteen.com; komperdell.com; livealittle.se; mammut.com; moonlightmountaingear.com; northernplayground.no; nrs.com; salewa.com; spektrumsports.com; storfjordiskrem.no; suunto.com; swixsport.com; velocio.cc)