

# An Examination of the Sustainability in Private Healthcare Companies from the Past to the Present: An Abstract



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**Abstract** Sustainable development implies closing a gap between two points in time. There is a need to complement the evolutionary determinants reported by Høgevold and Svensson (2016) and Høgevold et al. (2014). The research objective is therefore to frame the sustainable development in private hospitals based on descriptive determinants of orientation and organization from the past to the present.

The fact is that sustainability, as a mantra for the “new societies”, has “drastically changed the way in which companies do business” (Linnenluecke and Griffiths 2013, p. 382). Nowadays, sustainability: (i) is a central element of the business itself (Yang et al. 2017); (ii) is integrated into a company’s strategy, vision and culture (Jin and Bai 2011; Stead and Stead 2000); and (iii) relevant decisions are made at a strategic level (Engeert et al. 2016). Even so, Daily and Huang (2001) indicate that there is a lack of clarity on how to implement sustainability in organizations. Authors such as Plakoyiannaki and Saren (2006), or Quintens and Matthyssens (2010) argue that time can be seen as a frame of reference for explaining and understand organization, management and marketing processes.

This study was conducted in the Spanish healthcare industry, but specifically in the private sector, and focusing on hospitals. The selection of each hospital was based on judgmental sampling (Fischhoff and Bar-Hillel 1982). The inductive approach proposed by (Thomas 2006) was considered relevant to this study. As in Høgevold et al., (2014) and a follow-up study by Høgevold and Svensson (2016) in the in-depth interviews, informants were asked about sustainability initiatives across different areas through a large number of questions, in order to assess the direction through time of the hospital.

This study contributes to framing the sustainable development through descriptive determinants in private healthcare organizations. It also contributes dividing

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these determinants into two groups, namely the orientation and organization of sustainability initiatives. The organization of sustainability focuses on three internal determinants to describe an organization's sustainable development, while the orientation of sustainability initiatives focuses on three external determinants to describe an organization's sustainable development in relation to the market and society. Furthermore, each group of determinants contains three spectra of anchor criteria that enables the positioning of past and present sustainability initiatives, such as: (i) orientation: value/business, environmental/social, reactive/proactive and (ii) organization: employee/top staff, improvised/planned and unstructured/structured.

**Keywords** Private healthcare · Sustainability · Past · Present

References Available Upon Request