



Sustainable Healthcare: The Missing Theme In The Sustainable Consumption Discourse

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Introduction

- Sustainable consumption has received recent attention in light of the publication of the United Nations' framework for the post 2015 development goals ¹
- Era of “patient driven healthcare” and the healthcare consumer is rapidly emerging ²

Objectives

- Determine the visibility of the theme of sustainable healthcare and the sustainable consumption of healthcare in sustainable consumption scholarly and non-scholarly literature
- Identify the themes present in the academic literature of sustainable healthcare

Methods

- Articles containing the phrase “sustainable healthcare” were downloaded from three academic databases (Science Direct, Scopus and EBSCOAll). A total of 153 articles were collected
- Atlas.ti qualitative data analysis software was used to deductively, inductively and iteratively code for themes around what is seen in need of being sustained in healthcare and what the problems are for the sustainability of a given identified target in healthcare
- Google Scholar and Google searches were also conducted using the phrases “sustainable consumption of” and various arrangements of “sustainable healthcare”, “healthcare consumption” and the “sustainable consumption of healthcare”

Results and Discussion

- Areas such as architecture, education (interprofessional), waste management, cost effectiveness/finances and policy development were discussed in the sustainable healthcare literature
- Consumption of healthcare or healthcare products was not discussed in the articles covering sustainable healthcare as was not “sustainable consumption of healthcare”.

Searched Phrases	Frequency of Results in Google Scholar	Frequency of Results in Google
Sustainable healthcare	1,640	178,000
Sustainable health care	2,600	2,360,000
Sustainability of healthcare	302	123,000
Sustainability of health care	754	453,000
Healthcare sustainability	147	16,200
Health care sustainability	172	156,000
Consumption of healthcare	840	265,000
Consumption of health care	3,060	375,000
Healthcare consumption	1,280	14,700
Health care consumption	4,740	366,000
Sustainable consumption of healthcare	0	0
Sustainable consumption of health care	0	0

- There are streams of engagement on the topics of sustainable healthcare and healthcare consumption as evident when one searches Google Scholar and Google (Table 1)
- However the search for “sustainable consumption of healthcare” yielded no results in Google Scholar or Google searches (Table 1).
- There needs to be a fusion between the streams of sustainable consumption, sustainable healthcare and health consumerism in order to avoid unsustainable consumption of healthcare, which can lead to public health issues and to an inequitable healthcare system which will impact socially disadvantaged groups over proportionally.

References

1. The United Nations. A New Global Partnership: Eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development: *The United Nations* [Online], 2013, p.1-84
2. Wolbring, G., V. Leopatras, and S. Yumakulov, *Information Flow and Health Policy Literacy: The Role of the Media*. Information, 2012. 3(4): p. 391-402.