

Mindfulness for Sustainable Consumption. First Findings from a Qualitative Research on Religious Beliefs Oriented Consumers

Patrizia de Luca

University of Trieste, DEAMS, Italy
patrizia.deluca@deams.units.it

Giovanna Pegan

University of Trieste, DEAMS, Italy
giovanna.pegan@deams.units.it

Mindful consumption is an evolving and still debated phenomenon, often referred to sustainability (Fischer, et al. 2017). It is pursued by consumers who believe they can contribute to improving the environment and society also through their purchasing and consumption decisions. Numerous articles, with even divergent results (Thapa 2010; Minton, Kim e Khale 2015), underline the importance of studies on the intrinsic motivations behind conscious purchasing attitudes and choices and their relationships. Among the various motivations, the literature has also considered religious values, which can represent a crucial antecedent for understanding the phenomenon of purchasing and consumption (Pegan, de Luca, & Vianelli, 2018). In marketing literature, however, there are still few studies that examine religious values from a purchasing and consumption behaviour point of view (Agarwala, Prashant, & Singh, 2019; Al-Hyari, Alnsour, Al-Weshah, & Haffar, 2012; Patel, 2003), whereas other disciplines, such as sociology and psychology, have long recognized the relevance of these values.

This paper, based on suggestions from previous studies (Fischer, et al. 2017), tries to fill this gap, and presents the first results of a larger study (Pegan, de Luca, Vianelli, 2018) that has its theoretical basis on a specific model of conscious consumption (Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas, 2010). According to this model the consumer, aware of the consequences of consumption, is free to choose how much and in which way to buy and consume. He can therefore make conscious choices in accordance with his own values and preferences, under a framework structured in mindsets (values, thoughts, attitudes) oriented to "care" for himself, for nature, for the community, and in purchasing behaviors aimed to temperance, in terms of repetitive, acquisitive, and aspirational consumption.

From an intra-cultural point of view, with specific reference to the religious sub-culture of evangelical Christians, a qualitative research has been carried out, through open interviews. The interview trace was developed on the basis of the model of Sheth et al. (2011). In 2019, researchers conducted 22 in-depth interviews¹. The data collected were codified and qualitatively analyzed. The first findings, which have allowed an interpretation of the theoretical model on the basis of specific religious values, highlight these values as a significant antecedent of the phenomenon of sustainable consumption. The analysis allowed us to describe and understand, on the basis of the answers of the interviewees, the relationships between religious beliefs, attitude dimensions (cognitive, affective, behavioral) and main components of the theoretical model considered, in relation to mindfulness for a sustainable consumption behavior.

Keywords: mindful consumption, sustainable consumption, religious beliefs

¹ Alessia Di Meo and Roxana Andreea Tegean participated in the data collection.

References

- Agarwala, R., M. Prashant, and R. Singh. "Religiosity and consumer behavior: a summarizing review." *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion* 16, no. 1 (2019): 32-54.
- Al-Hyari, K., M. Alnsour, G. Al-Weshah, and M. Haffar. "Religious beliefs and consumer behaviour: from loyalty to boycotts." *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 3, no. 2 (2012): 155-174.
- Fischer, D., L. Stanzus, S. Geiger, P. Grossman, and U. Schrader. "Mindfulness and sustainable consumption: A systematic literature review of research approaches and findings." *Journal of Cleaner Production* 162 (2017): 544-558.
- Minton, E., C.H. Kim, and L.R. Khale. "Religion and motives for sustainable behaviors: A cross-cultural comparison and contrast." *Journal of Business Research* 68, no. 9 (2015).
- Patel, M. "Influence of religion on shopping behaviour of consumers - An exploratory study." *ABHINAV Journal* 1, no. 5 (2003): 68-78.
- Pegan, G., P. de Luca, and D. Vianelli. "Impegno religioso e consumo verde: quali relazioni?" *Atti XV Convegno Annuale della Società Italiana di Marketing*. Bari: SIM, 2018. 1-6.
- Sheth, J.N., N.K. Sethia, and S. Srinivas. "Mindful consumption: a customer-centric approach to sustainability." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 39, no. 1 (2010): 21-39.
- Thapa, B. "The mediation effect of outdoor recreation participation on environmental attitude–behavior correspondence. , 41(3), 133–150." *The Journal of Environmental Education* 41, no. 3 (2010): 133-150