



Religiosity

Do Religiosity Creates Socially Responsible Consumption Behavior?

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Introduction

According to Worldometer sites (www.worldmeter.com), world population by the end of 2018 will reach 7,632,819,325 people. This number will grow to 9,771,822,753 people in 2050. At this level, earth resources can no longer fully support human life.

New Economics (n.d) stated that the problem related to world high population is not only about limited earth resources to support of human life, but also from the pattern of

consumption that endangers environment quality directly and indirectly. Consumption activity can damages environment directly. For example, the use of electricity as source of energy in mostly households and the dependence of most people on cars for their mobility are the main source of air pollution and the increase of emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) that lead to climate change. Indirectly, consumption activities damage environment through the uncontrolled procurement of input and production process.

Our planet is facing a global state of emergency in which environmental capacity and the recovery thresholds of ecosystems, societies and weak institutions are being pushed to their limits (Castano et al., 2016). This reality forces corporation and consumers to think about socially responsibility of consumption and production (Web et al. 2008; Jeseviciute-Ufartiene, 2017; Pepper , Jackson, and Uzzell, 2009) that concerns about the interaction of social and ecological issues such as environmental protection, human needs, quality of life, and intra-generational and inter-generational equity (Pepper , Jackson, and Uzzell, 2009; Giesler and Veresiu, 2014).

Until 1960's there was still no social and environmental concern of consumption (Shet et al. 1988). Castano et al. (2016) stated that the work of Berkowitz and & Lutterman (1968) was the corner stone for the subsequent studies in this field. But, the first definition of socially responsible consumption is from Webster (1975). He defines it as an effort in which a consumer takes into account the public consequences of his or her private consumption or attempts to use his or her purchasing power to bring about social change.

Since then this idea is grown all over the world. In 2015, based on their global survey, AC Nielsen noted that purchase decisions are "heavily" and "very heavily" influenced by: (1) the products are made by a trusted company (62%), (2) product is from company known for its commitment to social values

(43%), (3) the product is known for its health & wellness benefits (59%), the product is made from fresh, natural and/or organic ingredient (57%), the product is from company known for being environmentally friendly (45%), the product packaging is environmentally friendly (41%), the product is from company known for its commitment to my community (41%) and I saw an ad on television about the social and/or environmental good the product's company is doing (34%).

Prosocial behavior is produced by moral values (Pepper et al., 2009; Rodriguez-Rad and Ramos-Hidalgo, 2018). One factor that creates moral values is religiosity (Rodriguez-Rad and Ramos-Hidalgo, 2017; Graafland, 2017; Poios and Poios, 2017).

Religion remains relevant as a significant cultural element in modern era. It represents the large and universal social institutions with a powerful influence on the attitudes values and behaviors of believers (Delener, 1994; Ursanu, 2012; Engelland, 2010; Khraim, 2010; Arli and Pekerti, 2014; Rodriguez-Rad and Ramos-Hidalgo, 2017). However, there is little attention about the role of religion in socially responsible consumption behavior (Engelland, 2010; Graafland, 2017; Mokhlis, 2009). Moreover, existing studies about the relationship of religion and socially responsible consumption, so far, shown the diverse results.

In his study among Malaysian customers, Lau (2010) found positive and strong direct effects of religiosity on three dimensions of socially responsible consumption, i.e. perception about corporate social responsibility performance, consumer recycling behavior and environmental impact of purchase and use of the product. In his study in Holland, Graafland (2017) found the opposite results. He said that religiosity has no direct on demand for socially responsible products. He also found that that influence should be mediated by attitude toward SR product and subjective norms related with SR products.

We noted that above studies treated religiosity as single dimension construct. Arli and Pekerti (2017) treated it as two-dimensional construct that consists of intrinsic and extrinsic religiosities and verified the influence of those dimensions on consumer ethics. He found that intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity has no effect on environmental-related consumer ethic.

Rodriguez-Rad and Ramos-Hidalgo (2017) found no direct effect of religiosity, which is treated as single dimension construct, on attitude toward environmental-related issues. They found that this relationship is mediated by moral identity.

Beside reported different results, in our opinion, previous studies gave no clear understanding about how religiosity creates socially responsible behavior. In 'direct influence' model, the influence of religiosity on socially responsible behavior is viewed as something that automatically occurred. As Arli and Pekerti (2017: 2010) stated:

" ... It is reasonable to believe that consumers with high intrinsic religiosity would place a high degree of importance on religion, thus making these individuals more ethically aware and more sensitive towards various unethical behaviours".

This shortcoming is overcome by Rodriguez-Rad and Ramos-Hidalgo (2017) by putting moral identity as moderating variables. But, these approaches can't get way from the tendency for the religious holder to be higher in self-enhancement and impression management (Shariff, 2015; Baker, 2015; Aquino and McFerran, 2011) that potentially creates the inflation of moral identity. Moreover, the influence of moral identity on behavior is not always be consistent in every situation because of the malleability of moral self (Jordan et al., 2015).

In this study we attempt to decrease this instability by treating moral identity as two dimensional construct that consists of internalization and symbolization dimensions (Aquino and Reed, 2002). They have different sensitivity to situational changes. Aquino and McFerran (2011) stated when stimulated with moral emotions related to an act of uncommon moral goodness, internalization is elevated higher than symbolization moral identity. It means that symbolization is more stable than internalization dimension. Moreover, Aquino and Reed (2002) said this symbolization dimension is moral sensitive to the moral self.

We rely on Rodriguez-Rad and Ramos-Hidalgo (2017), Graafland (2007), Proios and Proios (2017), Pepper et al. (2009), Rodriguez-Rad and Ramos-Hidalgo (2017) to postulate that religiosity influences moral identity and moral identity influences socially responsible consumption behavior.

McKay and Whitehouse (2015) warned that studies that link religiosity and morality should specify which part of the religiosity and morality to be focused. To respond to this suggestion, we treat religiosity as two dimensional construct that consists of intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity based on Allport and Ross (1967) we found in Maltby and Lewis (1966), the most widely religiosity construct used in research (Banister, 2011; Darvyril, 2014). So, the first question in this study is how is the influence of religiosity (intrinsic and extrinsic) on moral identity (internalization and symbolization).

The second question is how is the influence of moral identity (internalization and symbolization) on socially responsible behavior. To complete those two questions, we add the third question, i.e. whether the effect of religiosity on socially responsible consumption occurs directly or indirectly (through moral identity). These research questions are still less investigated so far and this study contributes to academic and practical world by answering them.

To answer these research questions, we arrange this study as follow. First, we present underlying theories, model and research hypothesis. Second, research method is explained to guarantee robustness of the research. Third, we present data analysis and its result. Third, we make the discussion about research finding. In the final section, we present the weakness of the research, followed by suggestion for further research and for practical world.

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