Attitude of Indian Consumer towards Environmental Fair Consumption of Products

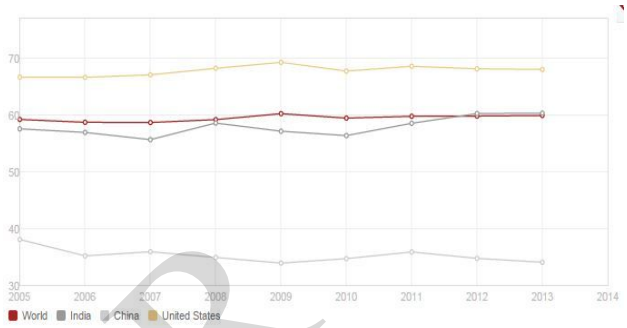
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***Abstract*- Available literature review suggested that perception and consciousness of consumers has been related to all the aspect of environmentally friendly consumption and existing construct for measurement usually misperceived social and ecological issues. The aim of present research is to study the social issues and fair labour conditions in trading and manufacturing process of India.It is important to understand the difference between liking of service or product due to it being less harmful and less damaging to the environment or due to its abiding with international labour standards and social justice. Objective of this study was also to propose a scale for Consciousness of Fair Consumption, Moral and other oriented reasoning (MR), Environmental concern (EC), Intention to buy Fair-Trade Products, Purchase of Fair Trade products which would be unidimensional in nature. Secondary objective of this study was to assess reliability, validity and construct model fit in consumer durable products. Researchers used descriptive research design by selecting 240 respondents from Indian consumer product industry through multi stage sampling methods. Structured questionnaire has been developed based on the literature review and filled by face to face personal interview methods through mall intercept method of data collection. The result explained that Consumer Fair Consumption scale is unidimentional, reliable and valid as a proposed scale for fair consumption.**

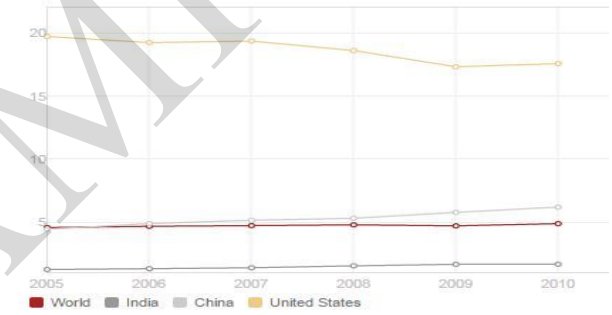
***Key Words:* Fair Consumption, Environmental Concern, Validity, Reliability**

I. INTRODUCTION:

Household final consumption expenditure (formerly private consumption) is the market value of all goods and services, including durable products (such as cars, washing machines, and home computers), purchased by households. It excludes purchases of dwellings but includes imputed rent for owner-occupied dwellings. It also includes payments and fees to governments to obtain permits and licenses. Here, household consumption expenditure includes the expenditures of nonprofit institutions serving households, even when reported separately by the country. This item also includes any statistical discrepancy in the use of resources relative to the supply of resources.



CO2 Emissions (Metric Tons Per Capita)



- *CSR and ConSR:*
  - CSR encompasses "company's commitment to minimizing or eliminating any harmful effects and maximizing its long-run beneficial impact on society". (Mohr et al. 2001)
  - ConSR: the conscious and deliberate choice to make consumption choices based on personal and moral beliefs" (Devinney et al., 2006)
  - While CSR has already received considerable attention in science and practice, to date very few studies on socially conscious behaviour of consumers (ConSR) exist (Auger et al., 2003; Brenton and ten Hacken, 2006; Brinkmann and Peattie, 2008; Carrigan and Attalla, 2001, p. 563; de Pelsmacker and Janssens, 2007; Pomering and Dolnicar, 2006; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001; Shaw and Shiu,2002; 2003; Vitell, 2003, p. 33).
  - Existing models either mix social and ecological issues of consumption or social issues of consumption are not addressed at all.

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- However it is a major difference if someone prefers a product due to the fact of its less damaging impact on the environment than other products or because it is produced in compliance with international labor standards and social justice.

Fair consumption means that the consumer should act in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. It is an important aspect of social consumption.Fair consumption is motivated personal intention to make a contribution to the protection of workers involved in production process of products against poverty, oppression and exploitation.

Conscious Consuming is a social movement that is based on increased awareness of the impact of purchasing decisions on the environment and the consumer's health and life ingeneral. It has its roots in voluntary simplicity, in which people re-evaluate their work-life balance in order to spend more of their time and money on the things that matter to them. When consumers' do purchase something new, the decision to buy that product or goods are made consciously.

Consciousness for Fair Consumption (CFC) is defined as a latent disposition of consumer to prefer products that are produced and traded under or in compliance with fair labour and business practices. Since the consciousness for fair consumption measures general predisposition to buy products manufactured and traded according to fair conditions, beliefs and importance are not assessed for a specific brand or product. Thus we get the following

CFC-Model:

$$\text{Consciousness for Fair Consumption} = \sum_{j=1}^{J} B_{ij} \times I_{ij}$$

- *B=Belief*
- *I= Importance*

To buy products manufactured and traded according to fair conditions.

The concept of sustainability covers the areas of environmental protection (planet), creation of economic progress (profit), and taking responsibility for others (people) (Collins and Kearins, 2010). This general concept of the triple bottom line can provide individual, political, social, and economic players with guidelines for their decisions and actions that essentially fosterthe assumption of responsibility for environment and society. Sustainability in firms refers to the integration of ecological and social goals into the corporate system of objectives. Sustainabilityin a consumption context implies to consume in such a way that the opportunitiesof life and consumption of other people and future generations are as little as possible affected.The responsibility of companies towards society as well as towards specific stakeholdersis expressed through the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Accordingto Mohr et al. (2001, p. 47) CSR encompasses „a company's commitment to minimizingor eliminating any harmful effects and maximizing its long-run beneficial impact on society".

Consumers can also take responsibility for other people by favoring products from companies with positive CSR and avoid or even actively boycott products of socially irresponsiblecompanies (Smith, 2001, p. 143 ff). Consumer Social Responsibility (ConSR) „can be definedas the conscious and deliberate choice to make consumption choices based on personaland moral beliefs" (Devinney et al., 2006, p. 32). In contrast to CSR, the motive for consumers to consume in a socially responsible manner is primarily based on the consciousnessof doing something good for others.

However, socially conscious consumption should not be conceived as purely altruistic behavior. Purchasing fair-traded products for example can satisfy moral needs of the consumer, i.e., such products can evoke an additional ethical or moral benefit (Oloko and Balderjahn, 2011). While CSR has already received considerable attention in science and practice, to date very few studies on socially conscious behavior of consumers (ConSR) exist (Auger et al., 2003; Brenton and ten Hacken, 2006;

Brinkmann and Peattie, 2008; Carrigan and Attalla, 2001, p. 563; de Pelsmacker and Janssens,2007; Pomering and Dolnicar, 2006; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001; Shaw and Shiu, 2002; 2003; Vitell, 2003, p. 33).

Conceptual Development: ETHICAL, SOCIAL, AND FAIR CONSUMPTION

- Ethical Consumption is the conscious and deliberate choice to make certain consumption choices due to personal and moral beliefs.(Carrigan et al., 2004,).
- Mainly ecological consumption has been scientifically investigated e.g. green consumption. (Anderson and Cunningham, 1972; Auger et al., 2003; Auger and Devinney, 2007; Balderjahn, 1988; Carrigan et al., 2004; Gardner and Stern, 2000; Muller et al.,2007; Schlegelmilch et al., 1996; Shrum et al., 1995; Webster, 1975).
- In contrast SOCIAL CONSUMPTION and specifically FAIR CONSUMPTION has received little attention in scientific research.
- (e.g. Auger et al., 2003; Brenton and ten Hacken, 2006; Brinkmann and Peattie, 2008; Carrigan and Attalla, 2001, p. 563; de Pelsmacker and Janssens, 2007; Pomering and Dolnicar, 2006; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001; Shaw and Shiu, 2002; 2003; Vitell, 2003, p. 33).

II. CONSCIOUSNESS FOR FAIR CONSUMPTION

Human social consciousness may be defined as the willingness to assume responsibility for the community and to act in a responsible manner (Harrison et al., 2005, p. 2). The considerationof environmental and social consequences of consumption mean a rejection or relativismof purely selfish motives for individual consumption. Based on this definition, sociallyconscious consumers try to take into account social consequences of their buying behaviour in order to express their responsibility for the society. According to the classification of socialconsumerism into the three areas of

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philanthropic, fair and political consumption the focus ofthe present paper is on the consciousness for fair consumption.

Fair consumption is motivated by the personal intention to make a contribution to the protectionof workers involved in production processes of products against poverty, oppression andexploitation. We define consciousness for fair consumption (CFC) as a latent disposition ofconsumers to prefer products manufactured and traded to fair conditions.

The guidelines of the *International Labor Organization (ILO)* and the *UN Global Compact* provide social labor standards that fair companies should adhere to: freedom of association and right to collective bargaining, elimination of forced labor, etc... These guidelines form the conceptual basis forthe development of items for the scale of consciousness for fair consumption in the next section. In order to operationalize consciousness for fair consumption we apply expectancy-value theory. This theoretical approach combines the strength of an expectation that an action leads to a specific consequence (belief) with the value or the importance of this consequence for the individual (value; c.f. Mazis et al., 1975, p. 38f.).

Objectives:

- To develop and test a scale of the consciousness of fair consumption.
- To assess dimensionality and reliability of consciousness of fair consumption scale.
- To assess Construct validity (Convergent, Discriminant and Nomological validity) of CFC.

Table I. Literature Review

RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC	AUTHER NAME	PLACE /LOCATION OF RESEARCH	CONCLUSION/FINDING
The Conscious Consumer: Promoting Economic Justice Through Fair Trade	Rose Benz Ericson	Africa	Desire to improve conditions and opportunities for Underprivileged producers.
Fair Trade Consumerism as an Everyday Ethical Practice	Dr Dana Wilson-Kovacs (Researcher)	Devon, England, Württemberg and Germany.	Limits to consumer-choice led fair trade growth Fair trade consumption is highly identity relevant.
Evaluating fair trade consumption: politics, defetishization and producer participation	Sarah Lyon	US.	1. Fair trade consumption arises from the political choices and conscious Reflexivity of Northern consumers. 2. It defetishizes coffee by revealing the social and environmental conditions of the coffee production. 3. It copies unbiased trade relationships between producers and consumers.
Determinants for the Purchase of Fair Trade Products.	Patrick Schenk	Germany and Switzerland	Germany: World shops are main, Fair Trade is mainly a social movement → political consumption Switzerland: Supermarkets are leading, market proximity → ethical Consumption.
consumer values and fair-trade beliefs, attitudes and buying behaviour	1.Patrick De Pelsmacker 2.Wim Janssens 3.Caroline Mielants	Belgians	Personal ethics perform to be really relevant in clarifying differences in attitudes and behaviour with respect to fair trade.
Conscious Consumers Are Changing the Rules of Marketing. Are You Ready?	Raphael Bemporad and Mitch Baranowski		
Do Consumers Care about Ethics? Willingness to Pay for Fair-Trade Coffee	Patrick de Pelsmacker, LiesbethDriesen, and Glenn Rayp	Belgian	Consumers value the ethical aspect in a product.

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The political rationalities of fair trade consumption in the United Kingdom	Nick Clarke, Clive Barnett, Paul Cloke and Alice Malpass	U.K	Paper analysis of fair trade consumption in the setting of debates about civic activism and political participation. It argues that fair trade consumption should be supposed as a political phenomenon which, through the mediating action of organizations and campaigns, makes claims upon states, corporations and institutions.
Consumer Confidence and Consumer Spending	Sydney C. Ludvigson	U.S	The research has focused only on the consumer spending consumer confidence relation; It is possible that there are more complex, possibly nonlinear, interactions between consumer assurance and economic variables, such as the stock market or unemployment.
Consumer confidence as a predictor of consumption spending: evidence for the united states and the euro area	StéphaneDées and Pedro SoaresBrinca	United States and the euro area	Results show that the consumer conodence index can be in certain circumstances a good predictor of consumption.
Consumer's perception and purchase intentions towards organic food products	Siti Nor Bayaah Ahmad and NuritaJuhdi	Malaysian	Study discriminates shoppers at different topic including those who buy no organic food, Many studies indicated that one major factor that considered to be the barrier to organic food consumption is its price, but given the broad range of possible factors that influences organic food decision making, there are others that might considered as barriers to organic food consumption among Malaysian
Consumer behaviour on Fair trade labelled products	Angelika Schmitz		Research find out the variables involved in decision making on Fair trade products by mainstream customers. Applying the modified Theory of Planned Behaviour model for forecasting purchase intention and choice, the variables influencing consumers' buying intentions for Fair trade products will be identified and examined.
Fair trade labels	Castaldo et al		Study about the link between Corporate Social Responsibility and Consumer Trust, also covering partially the issue of fair trade labels. Basics about fair trade labels out of the perspective of both producers and consumers, some characteristics of fair trade labels in general, recent view on the topic
Determining the Characteristics ofthe Socially Conscious Consumer	Frederick E. Webster	Chicago	Attention should be drawn to the absence of a strong relationship between the Social Responsibility Scale (SR) and the behavioural actions developed in the study
Conscious Consumption and its Components	Caroline Roux, Jacques Nantel	Canada	People appear to become anxious about the environment first, possibly because it is real and easy to understand, and then become more conscious about their social responsibility and ethics.

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Measures of Social Consciousness:

- Ecologically Concerned Consumer: by Anderson and Cunningham, 1972; Antil and Bennett, 1979; Balderjahn, 1988; Webster, 1975.
- Socially Responsible Purchase and Disposal Scale: social and ecological issues are also often measured simultaneously using a scale without distinguishing between environmental consciousnesses. (Mohr und Webb, 2005; Webb et al., 2008)
- Ethical Consumer Behaviour by Cowe and Williams, 2001.
- Socially Responsible Consumer Behavior Scale by Roberts, 1995.
- Consumer Ethics Scale by Vitell, 2003; Vitell and Muncy, 2005.
- Machiavellism Scale (MACH IV) by Auger et al., 2003.

Research Methodology:

- *Research approach*: Qualitative as well Quantitative.
- *Types of Research Design*: Exploratory followed by Conclusive Descriptive Cross Sectional Sample Survey Research Design.
- *Sampling Design*:
- Target Population:
- Sampling Unit: Students of Post Graduation Management Program
- Sampling Design:
- Probabilistic Systematic Random Sample
- *Sample Size:* Total Sample size is 250. (According to Nunnally,(1978) ten times of total number of items)
- *Types of Data*: Primary as well as secondary data
- *Data Collection Methods*: Face to face Personal Interviews Methods through mall intercepts method.
- *Instruments Used in Research*:
  - Structured Questionnaire
- *Software Used for Data Analysis*: EXCEL-2007, SPSS-19.0 and AMOS 19.0
- *Test Used:*Preliminary Analysis, Correlation coefficient Analysis, Structural Equation Model (SEM),

III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table II. Basic Assumptions of Multivariate Analysis

		Recommended Value	CFC
Normality	Skewness	-3 to 3	.043 to -.666
	Kurtosis	-10 to 10	-1.070 to -.106
Collinearity Statistics	Correlation between independent variables	< 0.90	0.283 - 0.488
Independence of Residual	Cook's Distance for Residuals	< 1.0	.005
Reliability Analysis	Cronbach's Alpha	>.60	.93

Table III. Assessment Of Unidimensionality And Reliability

CFC-Scale	***B:* I buy a product only if I believe that in its production…** ***X*** ***I*: How important is it for you personally that in companies...**	**f1**	**α**	**ITT**
1	… the workers' rights were adhered to.	.88	.93	.83
2	… no worker was subjected to forced labor.	.90		.86
3	… no illegal children labor were involved.	.81		.74
4	… workers were not discriminated against.	.92		.87
5	… the working conditions complied with the international labor standards.	.86		.79
6	… the workers were treated fairly or were fairly compensated.	.88		.82
Eigenvalue of the factor		4.61		

In a first validation step the unidimensionality of the consciousness for fair consumption scalehas to be assessed. This is generally done using an explorative factor analysis of the items I measuring a construct. The construct measurement is one-dimensional if only one factor withan eigenvalue higher than one is extracted and all factor loadings $\lambda i$are sufficiently high ($\lambda i \geq 0.5$). An exploratory factor analysis covering all six items produces only one factor with an eigenvalue greater than one which explains a total of 76.8% of the measurement variance.

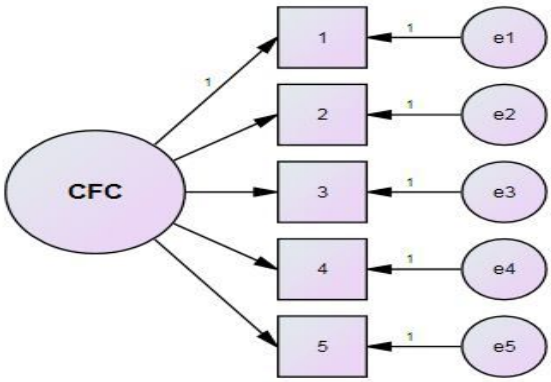
These results support the unidimensionality of the CFC-Scale. A Cronbach's α 0f 0.93 is above the recommended threshold of 0.8 (Carmines and Zeller, 1979, p. 51, Gerbing and Anderson, 1988, p. 187f.). The item-to-total correlations are also substantial (Bernstein and Nunnally, 2006, p. 265). These results clearly indicate unidimensionality and reliability of our CFC-Scale.

Table IV. Assessment Of Construct Validity

CFC	**SRMR**	**CFI**	**AVE**	**Reliabilities (xi)**	**Composite Reliability (ξij)**
5 items	0.03	.92	.788	> .60	.933

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- *CFC- Scale Model*



To test convergent validity, we specified a confirmatory factor model with 6 reflective items (BI) i and one factor that represents the consciousness for fair consumption. Mplus 6.0 was used for model estimation (Muthen and Muthen, 1998-2010). A first analysis, however, revealsthe presence of an error term correlation *r (ε2ε3)* between items 2 (no forced labor) and3 (no child labor) (cf. M1 in Table 1). Instead of deleting one of these items, we decided tocombine the two conceptually related items via computing their mean in a modified item (BI) 2, 3. Thereby**,** it is possible to retain both aspects of fair production processes in the scale (cf. M2 in Table 2 and Figure 1).

Model M2 with the mean of item 2 and item 3 has an acceptable fit according to the recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1998, p. 446ff.): standardizedroot mean square residual (SRMR) 0.029, comparative fit index (CFI) 0.955. All individual item reliabilities values are above the recommended threshold of 0.4. Composite reliability of the consciousness for fair consumption scale is with 0.933 clearly above the requiredthreshold of 0.6. The average variance extracted (AVE) of 0.737 is also above the desired value of 0.5.

IV. DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

A test of discriminant validity of the CFC-Scale is conducted with two conceptually related constructs of environmental concern (EC) and moral reasoning (MR). In model M3 a confirmatory factor analysis with the three constructs as exogenous latent variables was specified and estimated. To support discriminant validity the correlation betweenthe CFC-scale and environmental concern φ*CFC,EC* as well as the correlation between theCFC-scale and the moral and other-oriented reasoning scale φ*CFC, MR* should be significantlysmaller than 1 (Terblanche and Boshoff, 2008, p. 115).

Both correlations met this requirement (cf. Table 3). An even more stringent test of discriminant validity is the use of the Fornell/Larcker criterion (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). For all correlations φ*jk* of a focal factor ξ*j*with any other factor ξ*k* (j ≠ k) the following condition must be fulfilled: AVE (ξj) ≥ φ2jk. In ourcase the square of the correlation (φCFC, EC) 2 and (φCFC, MR) 2 should be smaller than the averagevariance extracted (AVE) for the CFC-factor in order to fulfil the Fornell/Larcker criterion.Both correlations meet the Fornell/Larckercriterion . Thus, it can beconcluded that the new CFC-scale possesses discriminant validity.

Test criteria	Recommending Value	CFC	Full Model
Reliability			
Indicator reliability: Rel. (xi)	≥ 0.4	CFC > 0.67	CFC: > 0.67 MR: 0.31 - 0.56 EC: 0.22 - 0.43
Cronbach's α	≥ 0.8	CFC: 0.93	CFC: 0.93 MR: 0.81 EC: 0.78
Convergent validity			
Composite Reliability (ξij)	≥ 0.6	CFC: 0.933	CFC: 0.933 MR: 0.817 EC: 0.778
AVE (ξij) Average Variance Extracted	≥ 0.5	CFC: 0.737	CFC: 0.737 MR: 0.429 EC: 0.337

V. NOMOLOGICAL VALIDITY

In a last step we tested the nomological validity of the new consciousness for fair consumptionscale. Therefore we tested whether a consumer´s consciousness for fair consumptionboth predicts the intention to consume fair trade products and the actual stated purchase of fair trade products).The related constructs of environmental concern (EC), and of moral and other oriented reasoning(MR) were included as controls in the model. Overall, the fit values indicate a reasonablemodel fit with a standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) of 0.045, and a comparativefit index (CFI) of 0.930 (Hu and Bentler, 1998). Consciousness for fair consumptionhas a strong and significant direct impact with γ11 = 0.378 on the intention to buy fair tradedproducts. In addition consciousness for fair consumption has also a significant direct impacton the actual purchase of fair traded products with γ21 = 0.154.

Both controls, environmental concern and moral and other oriented reasoning, possess no significant direct effect on theactual purchase of fair traded products. Only moral and other oriented reasoning significantlyimpacts γ13 = 0.257 the intention to buy fair traded products. Our results clearly confirm thatthe newly developed scale of consciousness for fair consumption explains variance in boththe intention to buy fair traded products and the actual purchase of fair traded products overand above the existing constructs environmental concern and moral and other oriented reasoningin the domain.

Including these two controls in the model increase explained variancein intention to buy fair traded products by only 4.9% and in actual purchase of fair tradedproducts by only a marginal 1.1%. These results support the nomological validity of the consciousness for fair consumption scale. They also show that existing constructs are due totheir conceptual ambiguity not suited to explain intention to buy and actual purchase of fairtraded products.

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VI. CONCLUSION

- CFC-scale can help companies to understand which consumer segments are most likely to purchase fair trade products, for which product categories fair trade products are most relevant, what prevents consumer with high social consciousness for fair consumption to actually purchase fair traded products and more.
- Future applications and tests should apply the newly developed CFC scale in different settings (products, populations) in order to further validate this new measurement instrument.

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