Hypocrisy in Socially Responsible Consumption: testing a model of the intention-behavior gap
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Acknowledgments

My sincerest thank you to Prof. Beatriz Casais, for leaving breadcrumbs of ethics in her teachings of marketing, that resonate long after her classes with those that increasingly become aware of social responsibility, as both marketers and consumers. As my advisor, her support and constant guidance were vital for the development and continual improvement of this dissertation, hence another warm thank you is due.

To my partner João, for his immense support in general, and his teachings in data analysis in particular, that allowed me to complete this chapter of my life, and some chapters of this dissertation.

To my family, for providing me with every tool I ever needed in life, from baby steps to adult steps.

To my friends, for every moment of pure joy that is always at arm’s length.

And finally, to my faithful companions, Bee and Boo. Even though they can’t read this, their ability to master the biggest lessons of all go beyond their canine limitations: to live in the present and love unconditionally.
Abstract

Hypocrisy in Socially Responsible Consumption: testing a model of the intention-behavior gap

Despite good intentions, socially responsible consumers don’t always turn their beliefs into purchases. Intentions predict behaviors, yet intending to purchase ethically doesn’t seem to translate into actually purchasing ethically – something is falling on a gap in this relationship. While some attribute this phenomenon to methodological flaws in research, studies on the intention-behavior gap focus on the obstacles in purchasing ethically, by proposing or adding constructs to be tested in the intention-behavior relationship. Supported on research that propose such constructs, we test a qualitative model of the intention-behavior gap in ethical consumption.

This model proposes that turning intention into ethical purchases is affected by consumer’s formation of plans and habits, their willingness to make commitments and sacrifices for ethical consumption, the manner in which they shop and the priorities they set for their ethical concerns. We thus test these influencing factors, (1) Plans and Habits, (2) Commitment and Sacrifice, (3) Modes of Shopping and (4) Prioritization of Ethical Concerns, in the intention-behavior relationship, by assessing moderation and mediation effects.

An online questionnaire was conducted, and data was obtained from a sample of 346 respondents. As not to limit this research to a single ethical theme, the constructed survey provides results applicable to ethical consumption in general, not just a single context or ethical issue. In this model, Plans and Habits as a merged construct was found to mediate the intention-behavior relationship, and Commitment and Sacrifice was found to moderate the intention-behavior relationship, though it was not a full moderation. Modes of Shopping showed no effects of moderation. Prioritization of ethical concerns was significantly correlated to most variables of the model and the majority of respondents prioritize one or two ethical issues over others that also concern them, they have essential and secondary ethical concerns at the moment of purchase and find it difficult to purchase according to secondary ethical concerns.

This research sheds light on the fact that ethical consumption involves complex decisions and steps which may not be considered in either research or markets. We confirm previous exploratory qualitative findings and model on a larger sample of ethical consumers. We show that these influencing factors indeed have grounds for future and more in depth quantitative studies, and that much of the gap between intention and behavior in ethical consumption could be explained by these untested contributions.
Resumo

Hipocrisia no Consumo Socialmente Responsável: teste de um modelo do gap de intenção-comportamento

Apesar das boas intenções, os consumidores socialmente responsáveis nem sempre transformam crenças em compras. Intenções preveem comportamento, no entanto, ter intenção de comprar de forma ética não parece traduzir-se em comprar de forma ética – algo cai no gap desta relação. Enquanto alguns atribuem este fenómeno a erros metodológicos em pesquisa, os estudos do gap de intenção-comportamento focam-se nos obstáculos à compra ética, propondo ou adicionando construtos a esta relação. Apoiado em pesquisa que propõe esses construtos, este estudo testa um modelo qualitativo do gap de intenção-comportamento em consumo ético.

Este modelo propõe que a tradução de intenções em compra ética é afetada pela formação de planos e hábitos do consumidor, pela sua disponibilidade para se comprometer e fazer sacrifícios pelo consumo ético, pela forma como compra e pela priorização que faz às suas preocupações éticas. Para isso, testamos os seguintes fatores de influência na relação de intenção-comportamento em compra ética, (1) Planos e Hábitos, (2) Compromisso e Sacrifício, (3) Modos de Compra e (4) Priorização de Preocupações Éticas, medindo efeitos de moderação e mediação.

Foi administrado um questionário online e obtidos dados de uma amostra de 346 participantes. De forma a não limitar a pesquisa a um único tema ou contexto ético, o questionário foi desenvolvido para ser aplicável ao consumo ético em geral. Neste modelo, Planos e Hábitos, enquanto construto agregado, medeia a relação de intenção-comportamento, Compromisso e Sacrifício modera a relação, embora não seja uma moderação total. Modos de compra não apresentou efeitos de moderação. Priorização de questões éticas está significativamente correlacionada com a maioria das variáveis do modelo e a maioria da amostra prioriza uma ou duas questões éticas sobre outras que também as preocupa no momento da compra, tem preocupações éticas essenciais e secundárias no momento da compra e sente dificuldade em comprar de acordo com preocupações éticas secundárias.

O presente estudo evidencia os complexos passos e decisões envolvidos no consumo ético, que poderão não estar a ser considerados pela literatura ou mercado. Confirmaram-se os resultados e modelo de um estudo qualitativo numa amostra maior de consumidores éticos. Demonstrou-se que estes fatores de influência têm relevância para futura pesquisa quantitativa e aprofundada, e que grande parte deste gap de intenção e comportamento em consumo socialmente responsável pode ser explicado por estas contribuições que permaneciam por testar.
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List of Abbreviations

CnSR – Consumer Social Responsibility
CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility
I-B gap – intention-behavior gap
PEC – Prioritization of Ethical Concerns
SRCB – Socially Responsible Consumer Behavior
TPB – Theory of Planned Behavior
Chapter 1 – Introduction

The present chapter introduces the chosen theme of the dissertation, as well as the motivations underlying that choice. The theoretical framework of the dissertation is briefly addressed, summarizing the main points covered in the literature review, followed by the relevance of the study. The main objectives that conduct the present research are then presented, as well as the identified gap in the literature that lead to the research. The methodological approach that will answer the proposed research questions are also address, as well as the overall structure of the dissertation.

1.1. Motivations

The motivation for the present dissertation arose from the researcher’s personal interest on the topic of social responsibility and ethical consumption. Having questioned her own actions and decisions as a consumer and attempting to make respective changes toward relying on more ethical products, the author took interest in deeply understanding ethical consumption and the difficulties in making the most ethical decisions in the day-to-day life.

This personal inclination towards the subject goes side by side with the growing relevance of Corporate Social Responsibility, which is considered an indispensable component in business activity today (Shim, Chung, & Kim, 2017). In recent decades, the focus has shifted from corporate to consumer social responsibility (Öberseder, Schlegelmilch, & Gruber, 2011; Vitell, 2015). Specifically, there is a documented need to better understand socially responsible consumers and to portray ethical consumption as a complex issue beyond the dominant environmental concern (Hassan, Shiu, & Shaw, 2016).

The urgency to advance the literature on the topic and the author’s personal inclination towards the subject constitute the main motivations for the present paper which aims to contribute to the growing knowledge of CSR and its impending development.

1.2. Theoretical Framework and Relevance of the Study

The subject of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has received significant attention throughout the years, by both academics and corporate professionals (Shim & Yang, 2016; Wan,
Many circumstances have called for greater attention to the issue in recent years, from increased environmental degradation, to corporate fiscal abuse, greater multinational power, and social inequality between countries (Martínez, Fernández, & Fernández, 2016).

Despite this focus on CSR, very few studies emphasize the role of the consumer in social responsibility (Vitell, 2015). The very existence of socially responsible consumers is crucial for CSR. Consumers’ demand for socially responsible products and services may be the best way to influence more socially responsible corporate behavior (Vitell, 2015), and therefore potentiate social responsibility as sustainable and generalized economic pillar.

Fortunately, it is not a matter of ‘if’ when it comes to consumers demanding social responsibility, as individuals have become more aware of corporate action with the proliferation of knowledge and information. Consumers do show an increasing concern with a firm’s socially responsible behavior, which is reflected in their purchase decisions (Wan et al., 2016). Where consumer trust usually resided in the functionality of the product, nowadays it extends to refraining from breaking laws or codes of conduct or from exploiting humans, animals or ecosystems (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014). These consumers assume many designations in the literature, as will be further discuss, but can generally be referred to as Socially Responsible Consumers. These are consumers who rely on their personal and moral beliefs to make conscious and deliberate consumption choices (Devinney, Auger, Eckhardt, & Birtchnell, 2006).

Aside from the overall improvements to the environmental or social sustainability, engaging in CSR can show benefits for both corporations and consumers. Consumers tend to have a positive attitude towards companies that engage in CSR activities (Fatma & Rahman, 2015) and are usually more satisfied with socially responsible firms (Lee & Heo, 2009). Becker-Olsen, Cudmore and Hill (2006) identify an increased purchase intention for companies that engage in CSR, while Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) identify increased consumer-company identification as positive outcomes of CSR.

Considering these benefits, it’s tempting for firms to adopt a socially responsible positioning, even those that don’t follow through with their actions, falling into corporate hypocrisy. These may be situations in which what is stated by the corporation and what is practiced is mismatched, when there is a lack of sincerity or when motives are based on self-interest (Shim & Yang, 2016). When this positioning of social involvement is perceived as insincere, consumers react by punishing the firm (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001), denoting once more the involvement of consumers in social responsibility.
The phenomenon of corporate hypocrisy has been widely studied, specifically regarding consumer reactions to perceived wrong behavior (Arli, Grace, Palmer, & Pham, 2017). But hypocrisy in social responsibility may not be an exclusive phenomenon of corporations. Studies identify a vocal socially responsible consumer in opinion polls, with stated intentions to buy ethically, but that doesn’t translate into high demand or high market share for ethical products (De Pelsmacker, Driesen, & Rayp, 2005).

There is little doubt that the socially responsible consumer exists (Belk, Devinney, & Eckhardt, 2005), but in practice, their actions and behaviors may not be mirroring their stated ethical values (Auger & Devinney, 2007; Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2014). We could be witnessing a phenomenon of consumer hypocrisy, in which attitudes and beliefs communicated by the consumer are not reflected in their purchase behavior. This could be explained by a number of factors, such as unreliability of consumer surveys, with responses being influenced by social desirability (Auger & Devinney, 2007), the identified difficulties in the moment of purchase (Carrington et al., 2014; Szmigin, Carrigan, & McEachern, 2009) or the prioritization of factors such as price and quality (Belk et al., 2005; Szmigin et al., 2009).

This mismatch of consumer beliefs and behavior is referred as the intention-behavior gap or attitude-behavior gap (Auger & Devinney, 2007; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Carrington et al., 2014; De Pelsmacker et al., 2005; Roberts, 1996), that is, when consumers intentions to purchase ethically don’t translate into actual buying behavior (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Castaldo, Perrini, Misani, & Tencati, 2009). Though countless studies identify and suggest the existence of this gap in ethical consumption, a lot of research is still needed, as the influencing factors of the gap, as well as its magnitude have still not been systematically examined (Hassan et al., 2016).

When it comes to further enhancing our knowledge of the influencing factors of the gap, an important contribution in the literature suggests a model of the ethical intention-behavior gap which resulted from an immersive qualitative study on responsible consumers (Carrington et al., 2014). The model considers four interrelated factors that influence the translation of ethical intention into purchase behavior, which can contribute to the identification of the reasons underlying the gap. As far as it is possible to determine, this model has not been tested quantitatively in the literature, remaining a qualitative contribution to this day. Specifically, the proposed constructs of Prioritization of ethical concerns (PEC), the merged construct of Plans and Habits, as well as the proposition that Commitment and Sacrifice and Modes of Shopping affect the ethical consumption
decisions (Carrington et al., 2014), hasn’t been examined as an integrated model that explains ethical consumption or the intention-behavior gap.

These factors considered, it is essential that the literature on Social Responsibility increasingly focuses on the role of the consumer, as stated previously. Consumers are a fundamental pillar of the market, and understanding its behavior is what ultimately connects the goals of the business to society’s needs. More specifically, brands and products with a focus on social responsibility can more easily understand the needs, difficulties or drivers of the socially responsible consumer and adjust their strategy accordingly, in order to meet those needs.

The ethical intention-behavior gap alerts to an urgent incongruency in this market. Socially responsible corporations wish to be acknowledged for their fair behavior and favored in their products and services (Vitell, 2015). On the other side, consumers increasingly wish to buy products and services that correspond to their ethical values (Han & Stoel, 2017). However, this connection often fails to be made, as evidence by the literature on the intention-behavior gap (Hassan et al., 2016), which means both parties aren’t reaping the full potential of CSR benefits.

The relevance of the study is precisely the enhancement of our understanding of the intention-behavior gap. Even when accounts for purchase intention are unbiased and based on full information, most findings don’t consider the contextual difficulties of purchasing ethically oriented products, such as competing alternatives and their prices, opportunity relating to the availability of alternatives, social norms surrounding acceptable brands or the social context in which the purchasing occurs (Devinney et al., 2006). Understanding the factors influencing the ethical intention-behavior gap would allow us to precisely identify the obstacles and difficulties found by the consumer in buying ethically, and the issues that hinder the concretization of ethical purchase (Carrington et al., 2014).

The intention-behavior gap has been proven in countless studies (Hassan et al., 2016), which means brands that have or intend to adopt a socially responsible positioning may not reap the benefits of segmenting their products to the ethical consumer (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000). It means that brands cannot simply rely on the existence of socially responsible consumers but must equate their difficulties or hindrances in purchasing ethically as well. This will be of extreme relevance for brands in determining the right steps to take to avoid these gaps and incentivize ethical purchase (Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2010).
1.3. Objectives and Research Questions

The present dissertation seeks to advance the literature in hypocrisy of socially responsible consumption, by testing a previously published model of the influencing factors of the ethical intention-behavior gap.

The model identifies four interrelated factors that affect the intention-behavior gap: (1) the prioritization of ethical concerns, into primary and secondary, (2) the formation of plans and habits, (3) willingness to commit and sacrifice and (4) modes of shopping behavior (Carrington et al., 2014). Each of these factors are composed of actions, attitudes and/or beliefs identified by socially responsible consumers as influencing their ethical purchase behavior. As far as it is possible to determine, this model of intention-behavior gap hasn’t been quantified or tested in a quantitative method. The construct of PEC is severely understudied, Plans and Habits hasn’t been tested quantitatively, as far as it is possible to determine, and recent studies urge the intention-behavior gap to move beyond assessing the antecedents of intention and to explore further effects, such as effort and commitment (Hassan et al., 2016), both of which are contemplated in the constructs of Commitment and Sacrifice and Modes of Shopping of the proposed model.

The main purpose of the present paper is thus to test this model of intention-behavior gap on a larger sample and identify moderating or mediating effects of the proposed influencing factors of the model. This approach allows for a more detailed picture of which factors are affecting ethical purchase, either positively or negatively, and thus pinpointing the aspects that are widening or narrowing the gap.

The present study also encompasses objectives that are more specific to the model in question, which make up the study’s research questions.

- Determining if socially responsible consumers prioritize some ethical issues over others that also concern them;
- Understanding the influence of Plans and Habits on ethical purchase;
- Testing the influence of Commitment and Sacrifice in purchasing ethically;
- Analyzing consumers’ modes of shopping and its influence on ethical purchase.

In sum, the purpose of this research is to test the validity of the factors proposed in the model, that is, if these four factors are confirmed or denied as influencing ethical purchase behavior. The present study thus intends to analyze, in a quantitative approach, the socially responsible consumer’s behavior and detect possible incompatibilities between their ethical intention and their buying behavior.
1.4. Methodological Approach

The urgency for quantitative studies on the ethical consumer has been referenced in the literature for several years (Carrington et al., 2014; Mohr, Webb, & Harris, 2001; Szmigin et al., 2009). A recent literature review on the ethical intention-behavior gap shows that there is limited empirical evidence that quantifies this gap in ethical consumption (Hassan et al., 2016).

The present paper thus empirically tests a previously published model of the intention-behavior gap, which identifies four interrelated factors that affect the translation of intentions into behavior (Carrington et al., 2014).

The online questionnaire was the selected survey method. An online questionnaire was built based on the four interrelated influencing factors, and its measures were analyzed to uncover mediating or moderating effects between the different variables and intention and behavior. As this study attempts to portray ethical consumption in general, the survey is applicable to several issues, from environmental concerns to human and animal rights, consumer safety, among others. The quantitative analysis of the data show the presence of these moderating and mediating effects.

1.5. Structure of the Dissertation

The present dissertation is organized as follows: an introductory chapter, the literature review, the methodology, data presentation and discussion of results, and final discussion.

The introductory chapter presents the main motivations for writing the present study, and a brief theoretical framework and relevance of the study. Objectives and research goals are then presented, followed by the adopted methodological approach and structure of the dissertation.

The second chapter comprises the Literature Review, in which relevant theoretical insights from the literature on the main theme are presented and discussed. Four main topics comprise this review, namely CRS, the socially responsible consumer, hypocrisy in social responsibility and the ethical intention-behavior gap.

The next chapter focuses on the empirical investigation. We address the objectives and research questions in more detail, present the conceptual model and the adopted methods and procedures based on reviewed literature. Data collection is also discussed, as well as the sample and data analysis procedures.

A fourth chapter presents and discuss the obtained results, and the fifth and final chapter addresses final discussions, limitations, managerial implications and future research.
Chapter 2 – Literature Review

The present chapter presents the state of the art on the issues relevant to the present study. Firstly, the definitions and dimensions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are presented, as well as consumer perceptions and responses to CSR. Secondly, theoretical insights on the socially responsible consumer are analyzed, namely its definitions and conceptualizations, profile and behavior. A following topic focuses on hypocrisy in social responsibility, briefly introducing corporate hypocrisy, and addressing hypocrisy in socially responsible consumption, which leads us to the final topic, the ethical intention-behavior gap.

2.1. Corporate Social Responsibility

The present chapter addresses the main theme in which the present dissertation is supported – Corporate Social Responsibility. By firstly introducing the main definitions of the construct, as well as briefly referencing its evolution, a basic understanding of the topic is offered. The different dimensions of CSR are then presented, to better explain the differing and converging debates and frameworks of CSR. Lastly, we assess the literature for consumer perceptions and responses to CSR, a topic which will aid the integration of the consumer in CSR in later chapters.

2.1.1. Definitions and brief evolution of the concept

Though it would be appropriate to start the present topic by introducing a definition of CSR, despite many decades of research, a single and agreed definition of the construct is not found in the literature (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004; Martinez et al., 2016; Taneja, Taneja, & Gupta, 2011).

The first discussions on CSR date as early as the twentieth century, accompanying the intense increase of production of the time (Martinez et al., 2016). Academics and professionals first efforts toward social responsibility recognized the need to educate businessmen and drew attention to responsible action as a competitive model for business professionals and corporations, for example, fair wages for employees or responsible contracts in supply chains, among others (Martinez et al., 2016). But it was only in 1953 that Bowen (1953, p. 6) first introduced a definition of corporate social responsibility as ‘the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society’. The author, referred commonly as the father of CSR (Carroll,
Martínez et al., 2016), recognized the influence of companies on society and highlighted their duty to improve the lives of citizens and correct social and economic imbalances (Bowen, 1953).

Soon, opinions diverged as to what CSR was or entailed, and two main schools of thought on CSR can be distinguished in the literature (Jamali & Mirshak, 2007; Schwartz & Carroll, 2003). The first perspective sees CSR as the maximization of profit, considering the boundaries of the law and ensuring minimal ethical constraints, and is defended by authors such as Friedman (1970) or Levitt (1958). The second perspective considers a wider range of obligations, duties or responsibilities, where corporations are expected to behave as ‘good citizens’ (Jamali & Mirshak, 2007) defended by Davis and Blomstrom (1975), Carroll (1979) or Epstein (1987). The first perspective, however, can be too narrowing, as maximization of profit while operating within the law closely resembles the traditional way of doing business, and doesn’t account for bigger and wider responsibilities of a moral, ethical or philanthropical nature (Jamali & Mirshak, 2007). Hence, the definitions further presented are more congruent with the second perspective.

As early as 1960, Davis puts forward an interesting viewpoint, already accounting for the impact of CSR on stakeholders’ trust, endorsement, support and respect, considered fundamental for business consolidation and success (Davis, 1960). In 1973, Davis further contributes to the definition of CSR, by stating that firms need to consider and respond to issues bigger than economic, technical or legal requirements, and proceeds to separate social responsibility from mere compliance to the law (Davis, 1973). Jones (1980) distanced CSR even further from abidance by the law, defending that the corporation’s obligations must be voluntarily adapted, and emphasizing that coercive forces obliging one to obey the law or union contract is not voluntariness.

The decades following the 1980s registered an increase in measuring, research and proposals of alternative themes for CSR, such as public policy, business ethics or stakeholder and management theories (Carroll, 1999), which reflects the broadness of the concept of CSR to this day.

Further conceptualizations of CSR started to consider stakeholders, with authors agreeing that corporations were not responsible for society in general, but only for those that affect or are affected directly or indirectly by their actions (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004). Epstein (1987) contributed significantly to the definition of CSR through stakeholder theory by defending that CSR consists of achieving outcomes from the organizational decisions for issues or problems which favor stakeholders, as opposed to adversely affecting them. By also considering obligations towards other
groups beyond shareholders, such as customers, employees, suppliers or neighboring communities, Jones (1980) was also one of the first to put forward this notion of obligation towards stakeholders.

Recognizing the company’s dual impact on society or stakeholders, Petkus and Woodruff (1992) extend the concept of CSR as doing good, while also avoiding doing harm. During this decade, Elkington (1997) greatly contributes to the literature by presenting three issues of CSR as part of its definition: people, as social responsibility; planet, as environmental responsibility; and profit, as economic responsibility.

More recent conceptualizations of CSR include the Commission of the European Communities (2002), which considers CSR as the company’s voluntary integration of social and environmental concerns in their action, as well as in its interaction with stakeholders; or a more recent and concise definition presented in 2011, as ‘the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society’ (European Commission, 2011, p. 6). This new definition encompasses respecting legislation and agreements and integrating concerns of social nature, as well as environmental, ethical, human rights and consumers. But it also considers the notions of doing good while avoiding doing harm, by proposing that enterprises aim to create shared value for stakeholders, while also preventing and extenuating possible adverse effects (European Commission, 2011). A summary of these definitions is presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowen (1953)</td>
<td>CSR as an obligation of corporations to act in a manner favorable to society’s values and objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis (1973)</td>
<td>CSR as the consideration and response to issues beyond economic, technical or legal requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones (1980)</td>
<td>CSR as voluntary obligations towards shareholders and other societal groups, distinct from simply obeying the law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epstein (1987)</td>
<td>CSR as achieving outcomes from the organizational decisions for issues or problems, with favorable rather than adverse effects on stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elkington (1997)</td>
<td>CSR as social responsibility, environmental responsibility and economic responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission of the European Communities (2002)</td>
<td>CSR as the company’s integration of social and environmental concerns in their action, as well as in its voluntary interaction with stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Commission (2011)</td>
<td>CSR as the responsibility of enterprises for their impact on society, by aiming to create shared value for stakeholders and extenuating adverse effects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
CSR may have begun as a marginalized concept, discarded or deemed irrelevant, but it steadily transitioned to a mainstream, widely accepted subject (Lee, 2008), and a popular one (Taneja et al., 2011). Notions of CSR have gradually shifted from a choice to be moral that could create additional expenditures and hinder profits, to a strategic resource that can improve performance (McWilliams, Siegel, & Wright, 2006). Still, even after decades of research and practice, there is still not a single and agreed definition of CSR by the community of researchers and businesses (Martínez et al., 2016; Taneja et al., 2011). CSR is a complex, multifaceted subject (Cochran, 2007) and this very plethora of definitions is characteristic of the its multidisciplinary nature (Martínez et al., 2016).

The absence of a single definition and theoretical framework of CSR is one of the main limitations of the construct (Martínez et al., 2016; Taneja et al., 2011), impeding a rapid growth of the literature and even causing wrong interpretation of results (Taneja et al., 2011). To further contribute to this impending issue, CSR is expected to evolve further, adapting to modern issues of globalization and mass communication and encompassing local situations, global trends and international law (Taneja et al., 2011). This calls for a greater synergy between the contributions of the past while also considering the advances of the future.

2.1.2. Dimensions of CSR

When it comes to the dimensions of CSR, most studies are supported by Carroll’s contributions (e.g. Alvarado & Shlesinger, 2008; Arli et al., 2017; Kim, 2017; Maignan, 2001; Maignan & Ferrell, 2003; Ramasamy & Yeung, 2009; Shim et al., 2017). These refer to Carroll’s four-part definition of CSR (1979), which later translated into the pyramid of CSR (1991). Having recognized the diverging nature of past conceptualizations, and a time gap on the focus of CSR – firstly on the economical and legal dimensions, and secondly on the ethical and discretionary aspects – Carroll (1979) proposes a definition of CSR which combines all four of these dimensions. Hence, in this conceptualization, CSR operates simultaneously in economic, legal, ethical and discretionary categories, and these dimensions comprehend the different responsibilities that corporations are expected to assume (Carroll, 1979).

In 1991, this concept was revisited in a pyramid model, to better incorporate the hierarchy of the different dimensions, which can be seen in Figure 1.
Other perspectives are also referenced in the literature, though not as universally as Carroll’s. Preston and Post (1975) are often cited (e.g. Garriga & Melé, 2004; Windsor, 2006; Wood & Jones, 1995) for their contribution of the CSR framework within public policy. Their perspective of public responsibility considered that businesses had a responsibility for outcomes concerning the primary and secondary areas in which they are involved (Wood, 1991), which made way for the later conceptualization of corporate social responsiveness (Wood & Jones, 1995). Wood (1991) is also cited frequently (e.g. Garriga & Melé, 2004; Jamali & Mirshak, 2007; Windsor, 2006), for her conceptualization of Corporate Social Performance, a perspective that greatly contributed to the CSR literature. This model includes principles of CSR at the institutional, organizational and individual levels; processes of social responsiveness and outcomes of the company’s responsible behavior as social impacts, programs and policies.

More recent attempts to converge the literature on CSR are disperse. Garriga and Melé (2004) propose four dimensions of CSR as instrumental, political, integrative and ethical theories; Maignan and Ferrell (2004) propose an integrative framework composed of four dimensions of CSR based on social obligations, stakeholder obligations, as ethics driven and as managerial
processes. Succeeding Carroll’s first conceptualizations (1979, 1991), a more interconnected model was later proposed by Schwartz and Carroll (2003), known as the Three-Domain Model of CSR, which considered the economic, legal and ethical domains as overlapping, which would ideally be balanced, but are likely to assume different proportions within corporations.

According to Shim et al. (2017), studies are supported in different categories to present the construct of CSR, namely strategic motivations, political motivations, altruistic motivations and self-interest of management. Another recent study found, through content analysis, six key CSR activities inherent to various firms, (1) products and services, (2) production processes, (3) environmental impact, (4) employees, (5) suppliers, and (6) geographical location (de Jong & van der Meer, 2017).

Though a variety of dimensions and perspectives can be attributed to CSR, according to Caruana and Chatzidakis (2014) there is growing consensus on a few key dimensions that underline the construct. These are essentially five dimensions which seem to be present throughout all definitions: environmental, social, economic, stakeholder and voluntariness dimensions (Dahlsrud, 2008). This variety of dimensions and motivations is characteristic of CSR, which seems to encompass more issues than addressed by the literature so far, and a growing need to adapt to future issues of an increasingly globalized world.

2.1.3. Consumer perceptions and responses to CSR

The literature on CSR soon showed interest in assessing consumers’ perceptions and responses to CSR initiatives. Consumers are, after all, a fundamental stakeholder of corporations, and their reactions to CSR activities may weigh on the corporations’ decision to engage in such activities. Consumer perceptions of CSR are not to be confused with socially responsible consumption. While the later may refer to consumer actions or inactions in the context of social responsibility, consumer perceptions of CSR relates to the importance consumers place on companies that are socially responsible (Ramasamy & Yeung, 2009).

Many authors draw attention to the prevalence in the literature of a positive relationship between CSR initiatives and consumer perceptions and responses (Alvarado-Herrera, Bigne, Aldas-Manzano, & Curras-Perez, 2017; Y. Kim, 2017; Yoon, Gürhan-Canli, & Schwarz, 2006). This seems to be the case for different relationships between consumers and corporations. For example, consumers react positively towards the company and its products when CSR engagement is shown (Brown & Dacin, 1997; David, Kline, & Dai, 2005; Dutta & Singh, 2013; Ellen, Mohr, & Webb,
Reputation also plays a role in consumer perceptions of CSR. CSR has been positively associated with enhanced brand reputation (Brammer & Millington, 2005) and a positive reputation through CSR can determine consumers’ perceived quality of products and services (Swaen & Chumpitaz, 2008).

Consumer may also respond positively to CSR in the choice of products over competitors. When assessing otherwise undifferentiated products, a company’s CSR efforts may be the deciding factor in product choice over competitors (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004). Similarly, Hasford and Farmer (2016) find that although socially responsible attributes of a product don’t affect its evaluation, it will lead to contrasting evaluations of competing products.

Consumer responses to CSR are also translated into purchase intention, and indeed, a positive link is shown between the two (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Dutta & Singh, 2013; Klein & Dawar, 2004; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001; Sen, Bhattacharya, & Korschun, 2006; Tian, Wang, & Yang, 2011). Positive CSR perceptions have been shown to positively impact purchase intention and attitudes towards the firm (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2011; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001; Trudel & Cotte, 2009). Though CSR is not seen as a purchasing criterion in developing countries, consumers in this context still favor the socially responsible company when price and quality are the same (Arli & Lasmono, 2010).

However, for positive perceptions and responses to emerge, several studies mention some necessary conditions. According to Bhattacharya and Sen (2004), CSR has positive impacts when consumers support the main issue of the company’s CSR actions, when a perceived high fit between the company and the cause exists, when the product is of high quality and when a premium price is not asked for social responsibility. Other studies also document the importance of these factors, for example, that a desirable consumer-company identification, as eco-friendly or socially responsible, leads to positive company evaluations (Marin & Ruiz, 2007; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001), as well as a desire to associate with the company and a sense of belonging (Kim, 2017). CSR also shows a positive impact when consumers’ goals match the nature of the CSR (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001; White & Simpson, 2013).

As varied as CSR issues or concerns can be, Auger, Devinney, & Louviere (2007) propose a number of issues broad enough to cover the range of ethical concerns that relate to this consumer-company identification. These issues can be summed up into (1) Environmental concerns, which entail product biodegradability, recyclable materials and packages and product
disposability; (2) Animal rights and animal by-products used; (3) Worker rights, minimum wage and living conditions, safe working conditions, and no child labor; (4) Individual rights, which entail human, sexual, gender-religious-racial rights; (5) Consumer protection, concerning safety information provided and genetically modified material usage; and (6) Labor rights.

For this positive relationship between consumers and socially responsible companies to occur, some studies show that another important precedent must be present – consumer awareness of CSR activities. Higher levels of awareness and trust of CSR are likely to increase positive corporate evaluation, associations and purchase intention (Dutta & Singh, 2013; Tian et al., 2011). Studies show that this awareness is what enables consumers to respond positively to CSR (Auger, Burke, Devinney, & Louviere, 2003; Dutta & Singh, 2013; Pomerling & Dolnicar, 2009; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001; Tian et al., 2011) or to show purchase intention (Lee & Shin, 2010; Tian et al., 2011; Wigley, 2008) and that in the absence of awareness, positive reactions are not shown (Auger et al., 2003; Pomerling & Dolnicar, 2009; Tian et al., 2011). However, according to Lee et al. (2017), consumer awareness of a company’s CSR programs doesn’t necessarily translate into intention to participate in CSR activities. Public engagement is seen as essential to the implementation of CSR programs and to leverage consumer behavior (Lee et al., 2017).

Despite the majority of studies finding a positive relationship between CSR and consumer perceptions, negative perceptions or effects of CSR have also been documented. For example, if a company with a negative reputation communicates CSR, it can result in consumer skepticism (Bögel, 2016). Yoon et al. (2006) suggest that when suspicions are high, CSR campaigns can have even more negative results in the company’s image, than if no CSR activity were undertaken. But a more recent study seemed to arrive at different conclusions. By exposing consumers to continuous CSR activities, Bögel (2016) shows that even corporations with a damaged image have a better chance at regaining consumer trust after communicating CSR than in the absence of these communications.

Similarly, when CSR associations are negative, there is a detrimental effect on product evaluations, whereas positive CSR associations can favor product evaluations (Brown & Dacin, 1997). However, when strength-related attributes are emphasized in a given product category, these CSR activities can have a negative impact on attitudes and the likelihood of choice (Luchs, Naylor, Irwin, & Raghunathan, 2010).

Consumers also show more sensitivity to negative CSR than positive CSR information about a company (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Consumers react negatively to negative corporate actions,
but only some consumers react positively to positive CSR information, which may contradict the generalized findings of positive responses (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Another challenge that Morsing, Schultz and Nielsen (2008) evidence is that consumers expect companies to engage in CSR, but don’t appreciate ‘loud’ communications about this engagement (e.g. Yoon et al., 2006). Also, the fact that a low level of awareness of CSR initiatives is corroborated in some studies (Ingenhoff & Sommer, 2011), or that CSR communication may not be reaching stakeholders or consumers (Morsing et al., 2008) is worrying for the success of CSR. The fact that simplified indicators of CSR and limited dimensions of the construct were used when examining consumer’s responses to CSR (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004) may have contributed to a limited understanding of the subject.

Despite some of these challenges, overall, there seems to be consensus in the literature that consumers respond favorably toward companies and their products when CSR is present (Arli & Lasmono, 2010; Beckmann, 2007; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Fatma & Rahman, 2015; Kim, 2017). In fact, the majority of consumers demonstrate an interest in CSR issues (Beckmann, 2007). But it’s important to consider that some consumers are more sensitive to CSR brands than others (Wan et al., 2016) and show more awareness and knowledge of CSR activities than others (Beckmann, 2007). Given the importance of consumers in the role of CSR, the next topic will cover the main findings in the literature on the socially responsible consumer, namely its definitions, profile and behavior.

2.2. Socially Responsible Consumer

The literature on CSR is abundant (Beckmann, 2007), and the consumer aspect of social responsibility soon witnessed a growing interest (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004; Peloza & Shang, 2011; Schlaile, Klein, & Böck, 2016; Vaaland, Heide, & Grønhaug, 2008). A number of studies state an increasing concern over the environmental impacts of purchase decisions and consumption (de Barcellos, Krystallis, de Melo Saab, Kügler, & Grunert, 2011; Ma & Lee, 2012; Pedregal & Ozcaglar-Toulouse, 2011). Still, the attention given to the topic is low compared to CSR (Schlaile et al., 2016) and fairly recent, with a review of the literature, revealing the majority of studies emerging after 2009 (Fatma & Rahman, 2015). Many studies mention weak definitions and conceptualizations, or insufficient links to CSR (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Schlaile et al., 2016;
Vitell, 2015), which denotes an urgent need to advance the literature on socially responsible consumers.

In this topic, we will discuss the main definitions and conceptualizations of the socially responsible consumer found in the literature as well as its evolution in time, followed by an assessment of the socially responsible consumer profile and behavior.

2.2.1. Definitions and conceptualizations

Just a glance at the literature and the array of terminologies used to describe the type of consumer susceptible to CSR is evident. With a lot of work still required in the development of the construct, some focus should be given to its definition, which is still not widely established (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Vitell, 2015). In the present topic, we will address the multiple definitions associated with the consumer susceptible to social responsibility.

One of the first terminologies to arise in the literature was the socially conscious consumer (e.g. Anderson & Cunningham, 1972; Webster, 1975), which Webster (1975) first defined as those consumers ‘who takes into account the public consequences of his or her private consumption or who attempts to use his or her purchasing power to bring about social change’ (p. 188). Though the term socially responsible consumer wasn’t frequent, Webster already distinguished the two through empirical research, stating that it was the socially responsible consumer, and not the conscious consumer, who had internalized and was influenced by accepted social values.

Antil (1984) was one of the first works to refer to socially responsible consumer and consumption, although his definition constricts the concepts to ‘environmental-resource problems’. Building on this definition and Webster’s (1975), Roberts (1995) later defines socially responsible consumption as a practice of consumers who express social and environmental concerns through the purchase of products, which they perceive to have a positive (or less negative) impact. This definition is consistent with the concept of CSR, since it accounts for the consumer’s consideration of how their purchasing affects the well-being of other stakeholders (Villa Castaño, Perdomo-Ortiz, Dueñas Ocampo, & Durán León, 2016).

Simultaneously, the field of consumer ethics was developing, dating back to the 1980s, with studies focusing on shoplifting (Kallis, Krentler, & Vanier, 1986) or ecological consumption (Antil, 1984; Haldeman, Peters, & Tripple, 1987). Ethical consumers were best defined by Harrison, Newholm and Shaw (2005) as those who chose one product over another based on political, spiritual, religious, environmental or social motives, among others. In that sense, ethical
consumerism can be seen as ‘the conscious and deliberate decision to make certain consumption choices due to personal moral beliefs and values’ (Crane & Matten, 2004, p. 290).

Subsequent studies continued to employ the different terminologies: ethical consumer/consumption (e.g. Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Shaw, Shiu, & Clarke, 2000; Vitell, 2003), socially responsible consumers/consumption (e.g. Antil, 1984; Janssen & Vanhamme, 2015; Roberts, 1996; Vitell, 2015), among other less frequent terminologies, such as socially conscious consumer (e.g. Castaldo et al., 2009; Szmigin et al., 2009). This demonstrates little consensus, decades later, on the designations used. In fact, early in the literature, Antil (1984) already evidenced this variety of semantics that seemed to refer to the same concept, pointing to an inconsistency in terminologies and definitions of the socially responsible consumption. Although distinctions can be made between social responsibility and ethics (see Fisher, 2004), the present study will include findings based on both terminologies, as not to exclude relevant insights, and use these terms interchangeably (e.g. Han & Stoe, 2017; Villa Castaño et al., 2016; Vitell, 2015). Since the present paper’s theoretical background is rooted in social responsibility, the dominant terminology adopted will be the socially responsible consumer and consumption.

But the disagreement of terminologies isn’t the only issue faced by this field of studies. The inconsistent scope of definitions is also referred as a problem. Some definitions are more constricted in nature, and consider only a limited range of social issues (Han & Stoel, 2017), particularly earlier ones, which seemed focused on the environment, ecological sustainability and policy implications (Schlaile et al., 2016). Other definitions, however, have a broader spectrum and account for a wider range of social and economic issues (Han & Stoel, 2017; Schlaile et al., 2016), such as environmental issues, human rights or community support (e.g. Mohr & Webb, 2005; Roberts, 1995).

One important concept that draws more directly from CSR is Consumer Social Responsibility. Devinney et al. (2006) present CnSR as “the conscious and deliberate choice to make certain consumption choices based on personal and moral beliefs” (p. 32). Based on Muncy and Vitell (1992), Vitell (2015) proposes a definition of Consumer Social Responsibility (CnSR) as the moral principles and standards that drive individual behaviors regarding the obtainment, use and disposal of goods and services.

When it comes to conceptualizations of the construct, these seem scarce. Devinney et al. (2006) mention the duality of the construct, as entailing both an ethical component and a consumerism component – the first one consists of the importance of the social components of a
company’s products and services, and the second implies the preferences and desires of consumers, which in turn increase the influence of ethical and social factors. Vitell (2015) not only proposes a valuable conceptualization, but also contributes to the distinction between consumer ethics and CnSR. The author states consumers have two major responsibilities: firstly, they have a responsibility toward other stakeholders to act ethically when purchasing, using or disposing of goods/services, which the author presents as consumer ethics; secondly, toward society as a whole, consumers have a responsibility to avoid societal harm and to act proactively for social benefit, which equally entails the purchase/use/disposal of goods/services – the author termed this CnSR (Vitell, 2015).

Because the concept of CnSR is largely unexplored, most of its scope has remained in the context of a single agent, that is, personal responsibility choices made by consumers or citizens (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014). Acknowledging the potential for CnSR to go beyond the ethical or socially responsible consumer and include other agents or actors, Caruana and Chatzidakis (2014) propose a multi-agent conceptualization of CnSR. This important contribution defines CnSR as “the application of instrumental, relational, and moral logics by individual, group, corporate and institutional agents seeking to influence a broad range of consumer-oriented responsibilities” (p. 578). This conceptualization defends a broader scope of CnSR beyond ethical product purchases and draws from the concept of CSR itself by entailing multiple stakeholders. Through this conceptualization, CnSR better translates and integrates the interests of the system, and can potentiate consumer society to take part in responsibility issues through their commercial relationship with corporations (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014). A more recent study also contributes to the theoretical advancement of CnSR, by re-conceptualizing it as a relational and shared social responsibility (Schlaile et al., 2016), contributing to a transdisciplinary theoretical understanding of the issue.

Table 2 summarizes the various conceptualizations identified and discussed in the present topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terminology</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socially conscious consumer</td>
<td>Consumers who consider the public consequences of their consumption and employ their purchasing power to incentivize social change.</td>
<td>Webster (1975)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Socially responsible consumer**
Consumers who express social and environmental concerns through the purchase of products, which they perceive to have a positive (or less negative) impact.
Roberts (1995)

**Ethical consumer**
Consumers who have “political, religious, spiritual, environmental, social or other motives for choosing one product over another”.
Harrison et al. (2005), p. 2

**Consumer Social Responsibility (CnSR)**
CnSR as the obtainment, use and disposal of goods and services, which consider responsibility toward other stakeholders and society as a whole.
Vitell (2015)

CnSR as “the application of instrumental, relational, and moral logics by individual, group, corporate and institutional agents seeking to influence a broad range of consumer-oriented responsibilities” (p. 578)
Caruana and Chatzidakis (2014)

Source: Author

### 2.2.2. Socially Responsible Consumer Profile

When studying the socially responsible consumer, some focus was given early on to its profile, with the first discussions dating back to the 1970s, using Berkowitz’s and Lutterman’s (1968) profiling of the “traditional socially responsible personality” as reference (Beckmann, 2007). Antil (1984), Leigh, Murphy and Enis (1988) and Roberts (1995) are some of the works that best contributed to socially responsible consumer profiling by the development of measurement scales and exploration of related demographics and attitudes. However, the difficulty in profiling these consumers is often referenced (Auger et al., 2003; Hustad & Pessemier, 1973; Mohr et al., 2001; Roberts, 1995, 1996).

Studies account for small percentages of socially responsible consumers, making up around 30% of samples (Roberts, 1996; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Unlike the average consumer, which can be segmented through demographics alone, this doesn’t seem to be effective in identifying the socially responsible consumer (Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch, Sinkovics, & Bohlen, 2003; Roberts, 1995; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006).

When attempting to segment consumers who might respond to responsible marketing efforts, the focus was firstly on demographics, and secondly on sociographic and psychographic aspects (Anderson & Cunningham, 1972; Brooker, 1976; Kinnear & Taylor, 1973; Kinnear, Taylor, & Ahmed, 1974; Mayer, 1976; Scherhorn & Grunert, 1988; Webster, 1975).

Still, some assertions can be made about this type of consumer, with some studies agreeing that they are generally middle-aged, with high income, highly educated and informed
consumers (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Roberts, 1996), and that ethical decision-making doesn’t seem to be influenced by gender (MORI, 2000; Sikula & Costa, 1994; Tsaklikis & Ortiz-Buonafina, 1990). Auger et al. (2003) found that demographic variables, such as age, gender, lifestyle, ethnicity and others, appear to be useful in segmenting socially responsible consumers, which is inconsistent with most literature. A more recent work, however, showed no influence of gender or age, but still accounts for income, university education and country of origin as possible predictors of social responsibility in consumers (Auger et al., 2007).

Overall, there seems to be consensus that when profiling socially responsible consumers, psychographic variables are better predictors than demographic variables (Dickson, 2001; Roberts, 1996; Robinson & Smith, 2002; Webster, 1975). This means that finding the socially responsible consumer is more effective when assessing attitudes, values, beliefs, personality traits or behaviors (Roberts, 1996; Robinson & Smith, 2002). For example, socially responsible consumers tend to have stronger feelings of obligation and accountability for others, which in turn influences their purchase decisions (Shaw & Clarke, 1998). Roberts (1995) finds socially responsible consumers to be more liberal, more environmentally concerned and with higher perceived consumer effectiveness, that is, the belief that one’s individual choices as consumer influence environmental problems. Other traits that are associated with ethical behavior of consumers are dogmatism, conservatism, cosmopolitanism, status consciousness (Anderson & Cunningham, 1972), altruism (Koschate-Fischer, Stefan, & Hoyer, 2012) and greater social consciousness (Auger, Devinney, Louviere, & Burke, 2008). However, the literature on these value systems and socially responsible consumers seems disperse, and there is a need to systematically relate them (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005).

Öberseder et al. (2011) present personal concerns as a core factor in ethical consumption. These personal concerns are subjective and comprise the attitudes consumers have toward CSR initiatives, such as child labor, fair wages, fair trade, environmentally friendly behavior, organic products, etc. Auger et al. (2007) found that different nationalities can be linked to different ethical concerns, showing heterogeneity of socially responsible consumers across cultures (Auger et al., 2007).

One study assessing consumer purchase of fair trade coffee, identified clusters of consumers based on preferences (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005). Though four clusters were identified, only two, the *fair-trade lovers* and *fair-trade likers*, show influence of social responsibility, as the other two groups purchase criteria fell on flavor and brand.
Since most early works found psychographic and sociographic characteristics to be more effective in identifying socially responsible consumers than demographic, the focus from these earlier works shifted from consumer profiling, to evaluations of CSR based on consumers’ cognitive, affective and behavioral responses (Alvarado-Herrera et al., 2017).

### 2.2.3. Socially Responsible Consumer Behavior

Ethical consumerism, as previously addressed, encompasses both an ethical component, evidenced in the company’s strategy and main values of focus (e.g., environmental protectionism, labor practices, animal rights, etc.) and a consumerism component, shaped by complex desires and preferences (Auger et al., 2008). In the present topic, we focus on the behavior of socially responsible consumers, and the factors that mold the enactment of ethical consumption.

Moral, social and environmental concerns started influencing behaviors in every stage of consumption (Yan & She, 2011). Some studies thus put forward definitions of socially responsible consumer behavior (hereinafter referred as SRCB). Mohr et al. (2001) build on Webster’s (1975) definition of the socially conscious consumer, which the authors consider compatible with the definition of CSR, and present SRCB as the ‘acquisition, usage and disposition of products based on a desire to minimize or eliminate any harmful effects and maximize the long-run beneficial impact on society’ (p. 47). The authors underline that SRCB requires the inclusion of CSR as an influencer of consumers’ consumption patterns.

Ethical consumer behavior, which was defined by Cooper-Martin and Holbrook (1993) refers to the consumer’s decisions-making, purchase or consumption experiences that are affected by their ethical concerns. Yan and She (2011) define it as the ‘recognition of long-term interests for society and the country as a whole in each stage of consumption’ (p. 260), a definition which considers geographic dimensions, such as national values. Heidbrink and Schmidt (2011; cited in Schlaile et al., 2016) define responsible consumer action as the act of consumption which prioritizes social and natural environment concerns as well as of the own well-being. It was also presented by François-Lecompte and Roberts (2006) as those consumer behaviors perceived to have a positive or less negative impact, which use purchasing power to express social concerns.

Definitions are close to that of socially responsible consumers/or consumption, but some authors reveal the link of CSR to consumer behavior is undertheorized, lacking in homogenous conceptualizations or in measurement instruments that can corroborate the reliability and validity of the scales used (Alvarado-Herrera et al., 2017; Green & Peloza, 2011).
When it comes to understanding SRCB, many research directions can be taken. Though one of the dimensions of consumer ethics and behavior is illegality or passive benefit from “wrong” situations, such as not reporting receiving too much change, copying computer software or buying counterfeit goods instead of the original products (Vitell, 2015) such analysis is beyond the scope of the present paper. Since much of the SRCB can be linked to or explained by the stages of decision-making process (Beckmann, 2007; Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014; Fatma & Rahman, 2015) we will focus on these identified processes to further examine SCRBP.

The stage of need recognition encompasses awareness, knowledge and perception of CSR activities (Fatma & Rahman, 2015). In this context, awareness and interest in CSR act as additional product attributes, based on the consumers’ value systems (Beckmann, 2007). However, assessments of this awareness in the literature point to contradictions. Some studies find that consumers are indeed aware and interested in CSR and use it as purchase criteria (Dawkins & Lewis, 2003; Handelman & Arnold, 1999), while others show that there is a lack of awareness, concern or knowledge about CSR (Auger et al., 2003; Beckmann, 2007; Belk et al., 2005). Understanding this phenomenon is important since awareness needs to be present for CSR to produce positive effects (Tian et al., 2011).

The next stage, information search and evaluation of alternatives, is influenced by the consumers’ attitudes and beliefs about the product, brand or company, which in turn are influenced by personal, commercial and non-commercial sources of information (Beckmann, 2007). Unlike the average consumer, who only seeks out information in complex decision environments, the socially responsible consumer seeks out information about products or manufacturers regardless of said complexity (Cherrier, 2007). Overall, consumers have a positive attitude toward brands and companies that engage in CSR (Ellen, Mohr, & Webb, 2006; Fatma & Rahman, 2015; Lichtenstein, Drumwright, & Braig, 2004) but other factors can impact consumer attitudes. These could be company or brand reputation (Albinger & Freeman, 2000; Arli et al., 2017; Brammer & Millington, 2005; Greening & Turban, 2000) distinction between proactive or reactive CSR initiatives (Groza, Pronschinske, & Walker, 2011; Lin, Chen, Chiu, & Lee, 2011), the company-cause fit (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004), the consumer’s identification with the cause (Lichtenstein et al., 2004; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001), consumer skepticism or cynicism about communications of CSR (Mohr et al., 2001; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013), product quality (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001) and price (Mohr & Webb, 2005). Similarly, the link between expressed opinions and actual consumer choices is weak (Beckmann, 2007).
The purchasing stage encompasses both purchase intentions and behavior (Fatma & Rahman, 2015). This stage of consumption is in fact the focus of the present study. A link between CSR and likelihood to purchase is more probable when products appear to comply to social and ethical requirements, and the company states a commitment to respecting the rights and interests of consumers (Castaldo et al., 2009; Pomering & Dolnicar, 2009). Trusting the company seems to matter in the consumers’ belief in the CSR attributes of the product (Vitell, 2015), which also affects the likelihood to purchase.

Still, consumers may state a preference for socially responsible products, but this doesn’t necessarily translate into actual purchase behavior (Öberseder et al., 2011). Though purchase intentions are often stated, consumers avoid purchasing socially responsible products unless prices are the same as ‘average products’ (Choi, 2011; De Pelsmacker et al., 2005; Vanclay, 2011). Indeed, much attention has been given to the influence of price on SRCB. While some find that a lower price does not compensate for less social responsibility, denoting CSR as a purchase criterion (Mohr & Webb, 2005), some studies find that socially responsible consumers aren’t willing to compromise on price and quality of products (Gupta & Hodges, 2012; Mohr & Webb, 2005).

Folkes and Kamins (1999) reach similar conclusions about product quality. When product features are superior, consumers are more drawn to ethical than unethical firms. But for lower quality products, a firm’s ethical behavior won’t help. Simply put, ethical behavior does not substitute for product quality, but higher product quality also doesn’t compensate for unethical behavior (Folkes & Kamins, 1999). This may indicate that social responsibility is more of a welcomed product features than the main purchase criteria (Vitell, 2015), since it may be overlooked is the face of higher prices or unsatisfactory product quality.

In fact, it may be easier to predict behavior, if the consumer has a positive product-specific attitude (Ajzen, 1985), that it, shows a predisposition to consistently answer favorably to a product (Richard, Habibi, Laroche, & Paulin, 2016). This explains why favorable behavior toward the environment may not translate into other environmentally friendly contexts (Thøgersen & Ölander, 2003).

The post-purchase stage, which entails consumer satisfaction and loyalty, overall reveals positive results (Anderson, Fornell, & Mazvancheryl, 2004). Consumers also tend to be more satisfied with socially responsible corporations (Carvalho, Sen, Mota, & de Lima, 2010; Lee & Heo, 2009) When companies engage in CSR, consumers tend to be less impacted by negative information about the company or product-harm crisis (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000; Klein & Dawar,
However, studies also find that consumers trade-off CSR features for traditional attributes of the product, which can result in negative evaluations of the product and thus deter consumers from repurchasing and decrease consumer loyalty (Beckmann, 2007; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Mohr et al., 2001).

Another stage that can be considered in the decision-making process is product disposal, which is extremely relevant in the case of SRCB, considering recycling is a form of socially responsible behavior (Beckmann, 2007) and disposal of consumed goods encompasses the definitions of socially responsible consumption (Vitell, 2015). Consistent with previous literature on stated intentions and behavior, Echegaray and Hansstein (2017) find that most consumers view recycling favorably, but only a minority adopts adequate recycling practices.

But SRCB doesn’t only reflect on the decision making process, spilling into advocacy behaviors as well (Sen, Du, & Bhattacharya, 2016), such as positive word-of-mouth (Du et al., 2011; Lacey, Kennett-Hensel, & Manolis, 2015; Xie, Bagozzi, & Grenhaug, 2015) or resistance to negative information about CSR companies. Consumers also behave differently when negative aspects of CSR are shown, for example, through consumer boycotting (John & Klein, 2003; Klein, Smith, & John, 2002).

Another dimension of SRCB goes beyond the individual level, to include behaviors that may occur within groups (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014). These consumption communities have been described as activists, voters or even rebels, which seek to avoid and transform negative aspects of businesses and consumption (Holt, 2002; Kozinets & Handelman, 2004). Groups can show ethically oriented behavior that reflects on businesses and CSR in general, such as boycotting irresponsible brands (Holt, 2002) or even abandoning markets (Moisander & Pesonen, 2002).

Some focus was given to the underlying reasons and motivations of SRCB. Mohr and Webb (2005) consider SRCB a personality trait, involving consumer’s self-concept. If the trait is present, the individual would modify its consumption behavior, having in mind the improvement of society. One study assessing the effect of green advertising finds that it is more effective in reaching consumers who are already purchasing ethically (Haytko & Matulich, 2008). These consumers are already predisposed to these types of products and are the ones who show more positive attitudes toward green advertising and willingness to pay a higher price (Haytko & Matulich, 2008).

Though Ajzen (1991) identifies normative influences as a key element of behavioral intentions and behavior, Osterhus (1997) found that consumers are less influenced by social norms and more influenced by personal cost and rewards. SRCB, in fact, goes beyond the positive attitude
toward the ethical value, such as environmental responsibility, to include expected personal benefits, which the consumer receives as he/she uses or consumes the product (Marchand & Walker, 2008).

As for affective motives behind socially responsible consumption, consumers are guided by feeling of pride, guilt, empathy and gratitude (Kim & Johnson, 2013; Xie et al., 2015). CSR strategies can even reduce consumers’ anger and regret, and increase guilt over harm done to the company (Joireman, Smith, Liu, & Arthurs, 2015).

A number of methodological flaws are attributed to studies in the field of SRCB. Scales that portray ethics in consumption are scarce, especially compared to measurements of ethics in business (Sudbury-Riley & Kohlbacher, 2016). In fact, the authors refer the existence of only one SRCB scale (Roberts, 1995) which analyzes actual ethical consumption, applicable to both environmental and social responsibility, and not assessing merely intentions, hypothetical purchases of attitudes (Sudbury-Riley & Kohlbacher, 2016).

2.3. Hypocrisy in Social Responsibility

As evidenced by the growing attention to social responsibility, CSR has become increasingly important for consumers when purchasing (Wan et al., 2016). Though corporations communicate and promise good behavior to stakeholders, consumers may perceive discrepancy between the company’s statements and their actions (Arli et al., 2017). When expressed CSR isn’t met by corporations, or when companies state to be something they are not, we witness CSR hypocrisy (Wagner, Lutz, & Weitz, 2009).

In fact, we are witnessing more and more a predominance of corporate irresponsibility (Arli et al., 2017). Parties involved in firm’s decisions and outcomes, such as employees, shareholders, governments or customers, share an increased responsibility, and therefore a greater commitment to social responsibility from these agents is called for (Martínez et al., 2016). Similarly, consumers may not always act responsibly, justifying their non-normative behavior by denying responsibility, injury or victims, or by backfiring condemnation to condemners (Grove, Vitell, & Strutton, 1989).

In this topic, we address hypocrisy in social responsibility, by briefly covering consumer perceptions of corporate hypocrisy, and hypocrisy related to consumers and socially responsible consumption.
2.3.1. Consumer perceptions of corporate hypocrisy

Highly visible companies, be it for their large size, high profitability or high-profile industries, appear to attribute greater importance to social and environmental issues (Arli et al., 2017). These corporations are more prone to pressure from the media, NGOs or regulations, and incorporating CSR issues in their decision process is a useful tactic in lessening those pressures (Arli et al., 2017). Firms are increasingly acting and communicating CSR, but irresponsible behavior is bound to appear, either through mass media coverage, advocacy groups, anticorporate web content or documentaries (Wagner et al., 2009). Examples of corporations affected by corporate hypocrisy are Starbucks’ tax avoidance scheme (Campbell & Helleloid, 2016), Volkswagen’s emission scandal (Rhodes, 2016) and other scandals associated with corporations such as ABW (Grebe, 2013), Enron, WorldCom or Tyco (Chandler, 2007).

Hypocrisy is frequently associated with individual character, but can also be perceived from corporate activities (Aaker, 1997). Consumers receive information about firms’ stated CSR policies which are sometimes inconsistent with their actual practices (Wagner et al., 2009). In the context of CSR, hypocrisy is reflected on the public’s ethical judgement of the company’s pro-social and philanthropic endeavors (Shim & Yang, 2016).

When this bifurcation between promises and actions is perceived, it can have a destructive impact on consumer attitudes towards the company (Arli et al., 2017). When it comes to understanding how hypocrisy is perceived by consumers, some research shows mediating effects of perceived sincerity of motives on the effectiveness of CSR. Corporate hypocrisy is viewed as lack of sincerity in the company’s motives and CSR activities are ineffective when the firm’s sincerity is ambiguous (Yoon et al., 2006). Bae and Cameron (2006) also find this mediating effect, suggesting that perceived self-interested motives for charitable giving might lead to negative attitudes towards a company, contrary to perceived altruistic motives, which are more likely to trigger positive attitudes.

Arli et al. (2017) also find that corporate hypocrisy and consumer attitudes toward a company is mediated by CSR beliefs and corporate reputation. This means that maintaining good reputation is key and that CSR campaigns need to be transparent, since many companies perceived as irresponsible, such as tobacco or alcohol companies, may trigger perceived hypocrisy when campaigning CSR (Arli et al., 2017).

The company’s communication of CSR can have different impacts on perceived hypocrisy, with hypocrisy being perceived as greater when the company positions itself as socially responsible
prior to negative behavior, as opposed to CSR as a reaction to wrong behavior (Wagner et al., 2009). Still, information inconsistency ultimately leads to perceptions of corporate hypocrisy (Wagner et al., 2009).

Corporate hypocrisy can also be reflected through CSR fit, which can be described as a congruence between the core business of the corporation and the social issue it engages in (de Jong & van der Meer, 2017; Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2010). This CSR fit influences the perception of CSR authenticity – when CSR actions are aligned with the product or service, with the brand concept or the needs of the target market (Alhouti, Johnson, & Holloway, 2016). In turn, when CSR authenticity isn’t perceived, skepticism (Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013) and suspicion occur, explaining perceptions of corporate hypocrisy (Jahdi & Acikdilli, 2009; Shim & Yang, 2016).

But these perceptions of hypocrisy can differ on an individual level. Shim et al. (2017) find that the ethical orientation of individuals, as deontological (rooted in perceptions of the action as moral or immoral) or consequential (rooted in the evaluation of the action’s consequences) affect the perception of corporate hypocrisy. That effect is also influenced by the way media presents CSR, which affects perceptions and evaluations of both the company and CSR activities. The authors found that perceptions of corporate hypocrisy are greater when consumer’s ethical orientation is deontological and when the company’s CSR message is strategic, that is simply a marketing tactic with the aim of long-term profits and economic returns (Shim et al., 2017).

When consumers internalize one aspect of a firm’s identity, corporate hypocrisy may lead to a sense of betrayal, and consumers distance themselves to protect their sense of identity (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Prior research shows several ways consumers may respond to such bad behavior, from boycotting, to outrage, cynicism, distrust, hatred, apathy and revenge (Arli et al., 2017).

Overall, corporate hypocrisy can be viewed as lack of sincerity in the company’s policies (Wagner et al., 2009), motives (Yoon et al., 2006) or when motives are based on self-interest (Bae & Cameron, 2006). Much research is still needed in understanding perceived corporate hypocrisy, namely the interaction of crisis, reputation or CSR history (Shim & Yang, 2016).

Though CSR may not be used in place of true altruistic motives (Shim & Yang, 2016), when consumers are exposed to negative information, a reputational defense of the company may reduce perceptions of hypocrisy and negative attitudes towards the company (Wagner et al., 2009). Even though corporate hypocrisy can have harmful consequences on consumer perceptions and responses, even corporations with a damaged image have a better change at regaining consumer
trust after communicating CSR than in the absence of these communication (Bögel, 2016). A pro-active CSR engagement can, thus, function as an ‘insurance policy’ (Beckmann, 2007), hence the best approach is still an engagement with CSR activities, as a safeguard against potential crisis (Klein & Dawar, 2004; Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006; Weber, 2008).

2.3.2. Hypocrisy in Socially Responsible Consumption

As previously seen, consumers play an important role in promoting ethical issues, since their decisions and purchases have a great impact on business and management in general (Uusitalo & Oksanen, 2004). Driven by the promised positive outcomes of CSR, firms communicate CSR, engage with socially responsible actions and position themselves as socially responsible. The literature seems to suggest that social responsibility is valued and could potentially lead to attractive market shares, but many studies have reached less idealistic conclusions (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005) and have demonstrated some form or other of hypocrisy in socially responsible consumption. The existence of socially responsible consumers has already been established in the literature (Belk et al., 2005), but is their behavior congruent with their stated beliefs?

Though many consumers claim or believe themselves to be socially responsible, they often don’t act according to these stated values and attitudes (D’Astous & Legendre, 2009; White, MacDonnell, & Ellard, 2012; Yeow, Dean, & Tucker, 2014). Early studies in the 1980s investigating the antecedents of socially responsible behaviors with the goal to develop more effective communication campaigns, were unable to link environmental attitudes and actual environmentally responsible behavior (Beckmann, 2007). The Social Responsibility Scale, often used as a dependent variable in studies of socially responsible consumers, may not be an accurate measurement of socially responsible consumption, as higher scores don’t necessarily translate into socially responsible behavior or consumption (Webster, 1975). Similarly, Ulrich and Sarasin (1995) questioned, early on, the reliability of the studies done on the responsible consumer, while Roberts (1996) found a weak relationship between consumer actions and expressed environmental/social concerns.

For instance, Elliott and Freeman (2001) found that products made under good conditions had low elasticity of demand, suggesting that there isn’t much to gain in communicating and marketing products as socially responsible. Although many studies seem to attest the growth of ethical behavior, that clashes with the fact that most products with ethical labels show small market shares (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005).
Studies often evidence the consumer’s lack of action, intention or interest in socially responsible consumption. For example, a qualitative approach on caring and commitment in ethical consumption proposes that consumers may simply not care about ethics and that the attitude-behavior gap could, in fact, be a caring deficit (Shaw, McMaster, & Newholm, 2016). A study exploring the reasoning behind ethical consumption in several countries finds the disinformation and disinterest shown by participants greatly contrasted with previous literature, filled with consumers who care and are aware of ethical issues (Belk et al., 2005). Carrigan and Attalla (2001) reached similar conclusions, that ethical issues don’t play an important role in purchase decisions.

However, some studies frequently cited on consumer social responsibility/ethical consumption, use a very limited sample of participants who don’t seem to be ethically oriented (e.g. Belk et al., 2005; Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000). In fact, Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) find that the level of awareness of ethical or unethical firm behavior in their group of participants was low and that in the consumer’s opinion, more information would do little to change their behavior. In other words, even when aware of unethical behavior, these consumers would still purchase from a given brand, which is not consistent with the profile of socially responsible consumers. Some studies rely on these findings and insights to portray socially responsible or ethical consumption, however, if no intent or consideration for ethical consumption is stated, this phenomenon translates only ‘average consumption’. Hypocrisy in socially responsible consumption seems better portrayed when socially responsible consumers are considered.

In Devinney’s et al. (2006) conceptualization, CnSR can be seen through the expressed activities regarding (1) specific causes (e.g. protests), (2) expressed activity in purchasing or non-purchasing behavior, and (3) expressed opinions in forms of market research. However, when these three dimensions are compared, an incongruence seems to appear between the stated actions and beliefs regarding ethical causes and the actual behavior of consumers (Devinney et al., 2006). Some authors point to social desirability bias as the problem (Echegaray & Hansstein, 2017; Johnstone et al., 2015; Shaw et al., 2016), that is, when respondents provide answers which they perceive to be more socially acceptable, rather than expressing their real opinions (Shaw et al., 2016). Belk et al. (2005) also attribute their findings of low information or interest in CSR to the extensive and intrusive methodology they applied, which eliminated the social desirability factor associated with simple survey methods.
In Szmigin et al. (2009), an interpretative study that seeks to understand contradictions in ethical purchase, ethical participants claim that price, quality and convenience are some factors that often override their ethical choices. Participants in this study reveal extensive awareness and willingness to purchase ethically (Szmigin et al., 2009). However, some difficulties in buying ethically are still recognized. The participants demonstrated certain behaviors to deal with the difficulties of shopping ethically (e.g. resorting to shopping at Co-ops), which the authors described as delegating ethical dilemmas or avoiding dissonance. When consumers demonstrated inconsistencies or flexibility in ethical purchase, those behaviors helped them manage the difficulties and problems that arose from their expenses, tastes and ethical concerns (Szmigin et al., 2009). Some participants were even willing to identify as hypocrites, however, most were reluctant to do so, as they understand the limitations of their behavior and recognize that ethical consumption is a flexible and complex process (Szmigin et al., 2009).

Thus, the authors propose introducing the notions of flexibility in decision making and dissonance as theoretical backgrounds, to better understand consumers who often buy ethically, but not always (Szmigin et al., 2009). Flexibility is here seen as ‘the inherent ability to change, adapt and/or react to decision-making environments with little forfeiture of time, effort, cost or product performance’ (Szmigin et al., 2009, p. 226). The moment of consumption and consumers’ concerns/decisions need to be seen in all its complexity, which will allow for a more understanding view of “competing priorities”, of paradoxical outcomes and real decision processes that require compromises (McDonald, Oates, Young, & Hwang, 2006). The socially responsible consumer does consume ethically, but they might also not engage in alternative consumption behavior when faced with real decision processes. Devinney et al. (2006) also highlight this issue, stating that the information collected by the literature does not account for many factors that influence purchase, such as competing alternatives and their prices, social norms surrounding acceptable brands or the social context in which the purchasing occurs, among other factors.

De Pelsmacker et al. (2005) assessed the consumer’s willingness to pay for fair-trade coffee, and found that only 10% of all consumers were willing to pay the current premium price for coffee with fair trade labels. Perhaps the most interesting finding was that, like the cluster of fair-trade lovers in their sample, the fair-trade likers were influenced by social responsibility attributes of the product, but this last group simply wasn’t willing to pay a premium price. This suggests that different consumers with socially responsible tendencies may act differently in purchase situations. Similarly, Vitell (2015) concluded that most consumers are not willing to pay more for socially
responsible products, and that CSR is a purchase criterion, but only a peripheral and not a deciding factor. Devinney et al. (2006) also state that most identified ethical consumers may prioritize lower costing products and not “moral” activities. Some consumers do purchase ethically, but only if the price and/or quality of the product is competitive with the less responsible alternatives (Vitell, 2015).

Another reason that may explain why socially responsible consumers don’t opt for ethical products is a disbelief in the products responsible attributes. This skepticism may lead consumers who wish to purchase ethically to buying non-green products instead, out of disbelief in the company’s or products’ positioning (Vitell, 2015). Similarly, when the consumer perceives its behavior as having no impact on the broader environment, that is, their individual choices don’t make a difference, they may choose the less responsible option, since the clear and immediate benefit of a lower price is more evident (Vitell, 2015). Consumer hypocrisy may also be attributed to a willful ignorance, that is a desire to not receive information about a product’s socially responsible attributes (or lack thereof), to avoid negative emotions, such as anger or sadness, from purchasing unethical products (Ehrich & Irwin, 2005).

Bénabou and Tirole (2010) provide valuable insights on individual motives of prosocial behavior. Prosocial behavior may be sustainable if it is rooted in genuine intrinsic altruism or even material incentives. Adversely, social concerns and self-esteem concerns may discourage social and ethical behavior. When high importance is attributed to reputation and image concerns, the act of appearing generous can become more important that the act of actually being generous, and thus the ethical behavior is less likely to be sustainable (Bénabou & Tirole, 2010).

Other obstacles have been proposed by (Carrington et al., 2014), such as alternative personal values, extant habits, inability to form plans, unwillingness to make a commitment/sacrifice, lack of available information and an unwillingness to conduct effortful searches for information, and the distraction of the situational environment in effortful and spontaneous shopping modes.

Webb and Sheeran (2006) highlight that intentions are deterred from turning into behavior when there is lack of control over the behavior (e.g. lack of resources, skills, opportunities or cooperation), when there are opportunities to engage in risky behaviors that might overwhelm good intentions, and when performance has become more habitual than intentional. These could translate into ethical consumption, as factors such as lack of finance, time, appropriate product/brand information and reluctance to change convenient shopping patterns have been
identified as obstacles to the translation of intention into behavior (Caruana, Carrington, & Chatzidakis, 2016).

As sufficiently evidenced, difficulties and obstacles seem inherent to ethical consumption. Some propose that intentions may simply conflict with what one wants to do and what they feel they should do (Milkman, Rogers, & Bazerman, 2008) or that consumers actions are influenced by motives complementing and competing with ethical ones (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014). Hassan et al. (2016) state that despite a strong desire and motivation to act ethically, market conditions can pose barriers to ethical consumption in the context of fair-trade, such as lack of information, lack of choice and poor fashionability in the small number of available sweat-shop-free clothing. Attempting to live a ‘green lifestyle’ guided by moral issues is problematic, as ethical consumption is filled with feelings of uncertainty and ambivalence and people are faced with many dilemmas when attempting to make the right choices (Connolly & Prothero, 2008). As evidenced by Sheeran, Trafimow and Armitage (2003), when behaviors are easier to perform, respective intentions are more likely to translate into action. Hence, understanding these obstacles and difficulties associated with ethical consumption is extremely important to bridging consumers’ and corporations’ desires to act ethically with sufficient incentives and benefits.

When consumers do act unethically, they rationalize their less responsible behaviors through strategies such as denial of injury, denial of the victim, or condemning the condemners, known as techniques of neutralization (Strutton, Vitell, & Pelton, 1994). When consumers resort to rationalizing or neutralizing their ‘unethical’ purchase behavior, an absence of cognitive dissonance is shown (Szmigin et al., 2009) thus, facilitating the gap between intentions to purchase ethically and actual behavior.

As covered in the present topic, many reasons can be appointed for ethical consumers not following through with ethical behavior. In the next topic, we go in depth in the phenomenon of the gap between intention and behavior in purchasing ethically.

2.4. The Intention-Behavior Gap in Ethical Consumption

As we’ve seen, studies on CnSR and ethical consumption show that consumer behavior often deviates from alleged attitudes or intentions to purchase ethically (Schlaile, 2016). Following these indications of consumer hypocrisy, many studies point to an intention-behavior gap in ethical purchase (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Castaldo et al., 2009;
Echegaray & Hansstein, 2017). While some acknowledge the possibility if its existence (Schlaile et al., 2016), a recent review finds that the ethical intention-behavior gap does indeed exist, and may account for a 50% variation in behavior that isn’t explained by intentions alone (Hassan et al., 2016).

Many gaps have been previously associated with behavior, such as the knowledge-action gap, awareness-behavior gap or attitude-behavior gap (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Regardless of the behavior gap identified or referenced in ethical literature, these illustrate the fact that ethically minded consumers rarely purchase ethical products (Auger & Devinney, 2007). Though the literature finds an increasing number of consumers motivated by ethical consumerism, an apparent change in ethical consumption behavior is not seen (Carrington et al., 2010). The attitude-intention-behavior gap thus refers to a mismatch between consumer beliefs and behavior, that is consumers claim to support ethical issues, but that may not reflect on their purchase behavior (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Castaldo et al., 2009; Devinney et al., 2006).

The attitude-behavior and intention-behavior gaps are often used as synonyms (e.g. Chekima, Oswald, Wafa, & Chekima, 2017; Schlaile et al., 2016). However, the majority of models of ethical consumer behavior are based on the following cognitive progression: (1) beliefs determine attitudes, (2) attitudes lead to intentions and (3) intentions inform behavior (Carrington et al., 2010). Thus, as denoted by Hassan et al. (2016), intentions have been introduced as a crucial intervening stage in the translation of attitudes into behavior. This means that we could witness a gap between the consumers’ attitude and purchase intent, as well as between purchase intent and behavior (Carrington et al., 2010). Both approaches, attitude-behavior and intention-behavior, are fundamental to our understanding of if and why ethical consumers purchase (or not) ethical products. However, given that intention is a more direct factor in predicting actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Webb & Sheeran, 2006), the present paper will focus more on the gap between intention and behavior, which better translates socially responsible consumption (see Carrington et al., 2010).

Many studies point to the existence of this gap. Futerra (2005) found that only 3% of consumers purchase ethically, despite 30% stating that they would (cited in Carrington et al., 2010). Webb and Sheeran (2006) conducted a meta-analysis of experiments manipulating intention and found that a medium-to-large change in intentions generated only small-to-medium-sized change in behavior. A more recent study that assessed the intention-behavior gap in disposal
of electronic waste also found that the majority of respondents hold a positive intention of recycling and appropriately disposing of electronic waste, but only a minority actually adopts this behavior (Echegaray & Hansstein, 2017). Perhaps one of the biggest contributions to the literature is Hassan’s et al. (2016) systematic review of studies measuring specifically intention-behavior, based on the two dominant theories – Theory of Reasoned Action and Theory of Planned Behavior. The authors find that approximately 50% or more of variation in behavior is not explained by intentions alone, and their empirical case study showed a weak association between intentions and behavior, evidencing indeed a large gap.

According to Sheeran and Webb (2016) the intention-behavior gap can be mainly attributed to the inclined abstainers - those consumers who intend to change their behaviors (vs those who don’t intend), but don’t act (vs. those who act). Yet this gap isn’t evidenced solely at the individual level. Though consumer communities and consumer movements try to spur the demand of ethically aligned products and services (Harrison et al., 2005), these may also be susceptible to the attitude-intention-behavior gap, affected by trade-offs between price, quality or convenience (Caruana & Chatzidakis, 2014).

The existence of an intention-behavior gap is sufficiently supported by the literature (Hassan et al., 2016), hence many studies attempt to understand why the phenomenon exists. According to Carrington et al. (2010) two streams of research dominate the literature and have attempted to explain the attitude-intention-behavior gap.

The first stream is based on a methodological approach of self-reported surveys and attribute the gap to responses inflated by social desirability. When consumers respond according to what they believe is expected or deemed more ‘correct’, they don’t accurately portray intentions to purchase ethically (Auger & Devinney, 2007; Berkeley, 2005; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Trudel & Cotte, 2009). These surveys could be encouraging rational answers rather than true accounts for everyday hedonistic shopping responses (Caruana et al., 2016). But social desirability bias is not the only obstacle in the assessment of this gap associated with methodology, as consumers are also likely to make errors in their predictions of future purchases (Carrington et al., 2010), and the use of simpler models may lead to inaccurate attitude expressions (Devinney et al., 2006).

The second stream of research is a modeling approach focusing on identifying factors that directly or indirectly influence ethical attitudes and purchase intention and behavior (Carrington et al., 2010), which is more relevant for the present analysis. For example, Schlaile et al. (2016) attribute the attitude-behavior gap to a cognitive dissonance, which is characteristic of many
decision-making processes, especially when moral issues are involved. This could result from (1) low moral intensity, when consumers don’t feel close to those being harmed by their actions; (2) moral stupefaction, characterized by consumers’ numbness when faced with large scale irresponsibility; (3) the information complexity and (4) lack of perceived consumer effectiveness (Schlaile et al., 2016).

Information complexity accounts for (1) information asymmetry, which hinders consumers from obtaining the complete information about products and services and the consequences of consuming them; (2) information overload, as consumers’ attention could be seen as a scarce resource, translated in limited time and information-processing capabilities; and (3) reliability of information, related to trust, reputation and credibility of corporations often damaged by cases of misinformation (Schlaile et al., 2016).

A lack of perceived consumer effectiveness can also be linked to the gap. Attitudes of an affective nature (based more on feelings about performing the behavior) are better predictors of behavior than cognitive attitudes, based on thoughts about the likely consequences of acting (Conner, McEachan, Lawton, & Gardner, 2016; Keer, Conner, Van den Putte, & Neijens, 2014). Hence, this rationalized approach leads consumers to perceive their individual behavior as having no impact in combating social or environmental issues, which can deter consumers from consuming responsibly (Schlaile et al., 2016). Connolly and Prothero (2008) present an interesting testimonial of a green consumer that reveals both feelings of moral stupefaction and lack of perceived consumer effectiveness in ethical behavior: the consumer ‘stopped thinking about environmental issues (...) because it was too difficult to think about’, also adding that ‘there was nothing that I could do, that I had no influence’ (p. 139).

Research on the intention-behavior gap is supported on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). This theory seeks to explain human behavior, through a framework of integrated constructs that account for variance in behavior – attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and intentions (Ajzen, 1991). Although this theory has been subject of criticism for only partially explaining behavior, the model remains a useful tool in understanding intention and behavior (O’Connor, Sims, & White, 2017) and the integration of additional constructs is possible and recommended (Ajzen, 1991).

Sheeran and Orbell (1999) suggest behavior is better predicted by intentions based on personal beliefs about the outcomes of acting (or attitudes) than intentions based on social pressure (or norms). Yet, social norms and behavioral control were also shown to moderate
intentions and behavior (De Pelsmacker & Janssens, 2007), and moral obligation has been shown to increase the changes of intentions turning into actions, similarly to anticipated regret about failing to act (Abraham & Sheeran, 2004; Conner, Sandberg, McMillan, & Higgins, 2006; Godin, Conner, & Sheeran, 2005; Godin, Germain, Conner, Delage, & Sheeran, 2014; Sheeran & Abraham, 2003).

The addition of further constructs to the model has been proposed by several authors, for example ethical obligation, self-identity, commitment and sacrifice (Caruana et al., 2016), prior planning, consumers’ control over the buying experience and the buying environment (Carrington et al., 2010).

Studies on the intention-behavior gap are faced with many limitations. One of the most hindering phenomenon of this field of research is the fact that studies of the purchasing stage of the decision-making process often don’t explore behavior, stopping at the measure of purchase intentions (Andorfer & Liebe, 2012; Beckmann, 2007; Carrington et al., 2010). Other refer the problematic of the majority of research on the ‘attitude-intention-behavior gap’ focusing on the relationship and gap between attitudes and intentions (Carrington et al., 2010).

Hence, many studies urge the need to close this gap (Chekima et al., 2017), to facilitate the translation of intentions into action (Webb & Sheeran, 2006), to understand how intentions convert (or not) into actions (Hassan et al., 2016), to test the identified obstacles and difficulties in ethical purchase (Carrington et al., 2014), and especially to employ quantitative methods that could potentiate generalized conclusions (Carrington et al., 2014; Hassan et al., 2016). A broader range of ethical issues in consumption also needs to be considered in future research, as Hassan et al. (2016) find that most studies are centered on ecological issues, such as recycling or energy conservation, rather than ethical issues in general.

Thus, the present paper seeks to address two gaps in the literature. Firstly, it aims to provide quantitative findings to the addition of further constructs to the model of the intention-behavior gap, and secondly, to portray several ethical issues in the context of the ethical intention-behavior gap, which tend to be confined to one ethical theme.

To test additional constructs to the model, the present research is supported on Carrington’s et al. (2014) model of the influencing factors of the intention-behavior gap. In a nine-month immersive qualitative study, participants were asked to categorize their level of success as ethical consumers and were followed through a series of research methods, such as interviews, shopping diaries, accompanied shopping trips or events, such as workshops and films with ethical
themes, among other approaches (Carrington et al., 2014). Carrington’s et al. (2014) qualitative findings reveal four influencing factors in the translation of ethical purchase intentions into behavior: (1) prioritization of ethical concerns into primary and secondary, (2) formation of plans and habits, (3) willingness to commitment and sacrifice and (4) modes of shopping behavior. As far as it is possible to know, this particular model of the intention-behavior gap has yet to be quantitatively tested. In the following topic, this model is presented, as well as the constructs that pertain to it, in accordance to the TPB.

Figure 2 represents the model proposed by Carrington et al. (2014), illustrating the process of transforming ethical consumption intention into behavior, showing the four influencing factors as stages in which the consumer may fall on their path to ethical consumption. In the next topics we discuss the implications of such factors evidenced in recent literature, in order to present a valuable and up-to-date picture of their influence on the ethical intention-behavior gap.

**Figure 2 - The translation of ethical consumption intentions into behavior**

2.4.1. Constructs of the intention-behavior gap

In the present topic, we introduce the constructs linked to the intention-behavior gap. Firstly, the constructs related to intention and behavior are presented in line with the TPB model, followed by the constructs pertaining to Carrington’s et al. (2014) four influencing factors. These
are Plans and Habits, Commitment and Sacrifice, Modes of Shopping behavior and Prioritization of Ethical Concerns (PEC).

**Intentions** were defined by Ajzen (1991) as “indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior” (p. 181). Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior (Ajzen, 1991), and indeed they have been found to predict behavior in numerous correlational studies, offering a superior prediction when compared to attitudes, norms or self-efficacy (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). Intention directly precedes behavior in the current TPB model, although planning has been proposed and confirmed to fully mediate this relation (Hassan et al., 2016).

**Behavior** here refers to volitional behaviors, that is those that can be performed by individuals if they are inclined to do so (Ajzen, 1985). The Theory of Reasoned Action, which paved the way to TPB, assumes individuals act in volitional behaviors, which implies accounting for available information, and implicitly or explicitly considering the implications of their actions (Ajzen, 1985).

The first influencing factor to be addressed relates to the formation of plans and habits, which comprises two constructs – plans and habits. **Planning** can be defined as mental stimulations that link concrete behavioral responses to situational cues, with the purpose of achieving a goal state, or intention (Wiedemann, Schuz, Sniehotta, Scholz, & Schwarzer, 2009).

Planning has been proposed as an influencing factor in the relationship between intentions and behavior in previous studies (Carrington et al., 2010; Scholz, Schüz, Ziegelmann, Lippke, & Schwarzer, 2008; Wiedemann et al., 2009). Scholz et al. (2008) find that action planning predicts behavior when intentions are high, and similarly, Wiedemann et al. (2009) find that when individuals hold sufficient levels of intentions, planning mediates the relation between intention and behavior. Both studies, however, were conducted in the context of health behaviors, such as physical exercise or dental hygiene, and don’t portray ethical consumption. A recent study assessed the effect of planning specifically related to ethical consumption, and found that planning fully mediates the effect of intention on behavior (Hassan et al., 2016). Planning or implementation intentions may also lessen the intention-behavior gap, since studies show it decreases the influence of distractions, temptations, emotions and social influence (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). Grimmer et al. (2016) also find that forming a specific plan to purchase environmentally-friendly products increase the likelihood of intentions translating into consumption.
Building on previous findings on implementation intentions/plans, Carrington et al. (2014) propose extending the concept of plans with the integration of **habits** in ethical consumption. Habits can be defined as psychological dispositions to repeat past behavior (Neal, Wood, Labrecque, & Lally, 2012), gradually acquired as individuals repeatedly respond to recurring contexts (Wood & Neal, 2009). Research on sustainable consumption has shown that behaviors are shaped by routines and habits (Fischer & Hanley, 2007). In Carrington et al. (2014), participants formed plans through research, creation of shopping lists or more complex multi-step processes imagined or rehearsed, that allowed them to gain practical knowledge of what, where and how they are going to purchase according to their ethical concerns. Practical knowledge is developed, specific plans are formed, enacted and repeated, thus making ethical consumption *habitual* (Carrington et al., 2014). Forming plans may help avoid spontaneous purchases and distractions, while pre-planning assisted respondents to break old habits and form new ones in line with ethical values (Carrington et al., 2014).

Experience with a behavior can both strengthen and weaken the consistency in intention–behavior – greater experience was found to enhance the predictive validity of intention, but eventually reflects automatization in behavior, thus declining the intention (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). As Verplanken and Wood (2006) put it, people with strong habits seek to repeat prior experiences, which is also the reason why behavior is perpetuated over alternative courses of action. Drawing from Verplanken’s (2006) contribution on habitual behaviors, Carrington et al. (2014) state that in the absence of an implementation plan, consumers will resort to non-ethical habitual behavior, thus overriding their ethical attitudes and intentions. However, since regular automated consumption starts being replaced with conscious consumption, successfully and frequently implementing this new intention will result in the formation of a new habit that replaces an old one (Biel, Dahlstrand, & Granskvist, 2005). As evidenced by many studies, habits are a valuable factor in the intention-behavior relation, while also aiding in identifying strategies to maintain goal pursuit (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). Habits thus may play a dual role in ethical consumption: they may perpetuate non-ethical consumption behaviors, as well as facilitate ethical consumption, once those new habits have been formed.

Similarly to plans, habits have been proposed and proven to mediate the relationship between intention and behavior (Potthoff et al., 2017), hence it is consistent with previous literature that both constructs can mediate the intention-behavior relationship and thus would be appropriate to also assess mediating effects of the merged concept of Plans and Habits.
As the markets sometimes fail to provide acceptable options for ethical consumptions (Hassan et al., 2016), the ethical consumer’s behavior is often influenced by a willingness to commit and sacrifice, which constitutes the third influencing factor of the applied model. Goal commitment is defined by Nenkov and Gollwitzer (2012) as “the extent to which personal goals are associated with: a strong sense of determination, unwillingness to abandon or lower the original goal, willingness to invest effort, and effortful striving for goal implementation” (p. 108). Ajzen, Czasch and Flood (2009) propose that when strong goal intention is supplemented by an implementation intention, there is a higher sense of commitment to perform a behavior. Commitment has previously been examined and proven as a moderator of the intention-behavior relationship (Conner, Sheeran, Norman, & Armitage, 2000; Doll & Ajzen, 1992; Sheeran, Orbell, & Trafimow, 1999).

Commitment’s role in ethical consumption is evidenced by consistent choices of products that fit the consumers’ particular needs: “[it] is a satisfactory product for us and we buy it again and again” (Carrington et al., 2014, p. 2763). Yet, participants don’t commit to ethical consumption when products lack quality or the prices are too high (Gupta & Hodges, 2012; Mohr & Webb, 2005; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Consumers also didn’t commit to ethical consumption when they felt they were choosing one ethical concern at the expense of another (Carrington et al., 2014). Hence, a heightened sense of commitment increases the likelihood of following through with behavior (Ajzen et al., 2009). Baca-Motes et al. (2013) find, in this context, that when a specific commitment is made, subsequent behavior is significantly more eco-friendly. The absence of this commitment means consumers are unwilling to shop ethically, despite their intentions (Carrington et al., 2014).

Committing to long-term ethical consumption routines may mean that sacrifices are often made, for example, for perceived quality (Berens, Van Riel, & Van Rekom, 2007) or higher cost, and convenience (Maignan, 2001). In this context, sacrifice can be defined as a voluntary restriction in consumption patterns, under the condition that this abandonment has emotional or financial consequences (Hutter & Hoffmann, 2013).

Sacrifice has also been linked to pro-environmental behavior through anti-consumption and boycotting (Hutter & Hoffmann, 2013), since refusing to purchase certain items can often be emotionally and/or financially costly (Cherrier & Murray, 2007). Sacrifice was also found to moderate the impact of ecological concern on attitudes toward the carrotmob, a reverse form of
boycotting which entails supporting a responsible brand through increased purchases (Hutter & Hoffmann, 2013).

The link between commitment and sacrifice has been made previously, such as in the case of romantic relationships (Powell & Van Vugt, 2003; Rusbult & Farrell, 1983), yet to the author’s knowledge, this connection hasn’t been examined in the case of ethical consumption. Accepting these sacrifices requires a great deal of commitment from consumers (Carrington et al., 2014). As individual costs are high, the willingness to make sacrifices has to be high (Hutter & Hoffmann, 2013). Consumers may also sacrifice secondary ethical concerns, as commitment tended to be greater for the primary ethical concern (Carrington et al., 2014). Carrington et al. (2014) thus propose that sacrifice and long-term commitment reduce the ethical intention-behavior gap.

The final influencing factor refers to modes of shopping, which can evidence the previous influencing factors, as well as influence the translation of intention into behavior (Carrington et al., 2014). Shopping modes is more commonly referred to as shopping orientation, which can be defined as a context-specific motivational orientation driven by consumers’ process goals (Büttner, Florack, & Göritz, 2010), or “varying patterns of information search, alternative evaluation, and product selection” (Brown, Pope, & Voges, 2003). Carrington et al. (2014) observe three behavioral modes of ethical consumption in their exploratory study: (1) rapid and pre-mediated behavioral mode, (2) effortful decision-making at the point of purchase, and (3) spontaneous shopping.

The first mode, rapid shopping, demonstrates planning and habit, as products are quickly and effortlessly put into shopping baskets. This behavior translates an absence of conflict, either internal or external (Carrington et al., 2014). Hence the authors propose that this shopping mode reduces the ethical intention-behavior gap.

By contrast, the other two shopping modes contribute to the widening of the intention-behavior gap. Effortful shopping implies effort in decision making, a construct of its own complexity, addressed in depth by authors such as Dholakia, Bagozzi and Gopinath (2007) or Bagozzy, Dholakia and BasuRoy (2003). This mode is characteristic of lack of planning or specificity in planning, and unestablished shopping habits of particular categories (Carrington et al., 2014). When information is not collected beforehand, consumers demonstrated additional effort in decision-making at the moment of purchase (e.g. reading labels and searching for information), which extended the effort, frustration and time-consumption of the moment of purchase. Consistently, intentions are more likely to turn into action when behaviors are easier to perform
(Sheeran et al., 2003), thus effort in the moment of purchase may deter consumers from turning ethical intentions into behavior.

The last shopping mode identified, *spontaneous shopping*, is influenced by situational environments and also reflects lack of planning and a sporadic behavior. Participants relate impulsion and lack of awareness to this behavior, with one informant referring the low price as a reason for buying sweatshop clothing, and another stating buying “a pair of sunglasses for no good reason at all” (Carrington et al., 2014, p. 2764).

Parallels can be drawn from research on shopping orientation, which has mainly been summarized in two shopping motives: (1) task-focused, in which consumers seek to maximize utilitarian shopping value by shopping efficiently, and (2) experiential orientations, in which consumers seek to maximize an hedonic shopping value through entertainment in a stimulating store environment (Büttner et al., 2010). The first could be related to Carrington’s et al. (2014) rapid shopping as well as to effortful shopping, while the second appears closely related to spontaneous shopping.

Research on ethical consumption doesn’t typically portray the moment of purchase. One study on ethical consumption, which found that personal values, goals and strategies do influence purchase behavior (Jayawardhena, Morrell, & Stride, 2016), was conducted specifically at the moment of purchase, but doesn’t focus on participants’ modes of behavior. Though not portraying ethical consumption, a recent study assessing consumer behavior in-store finds that some consumer decisions are made under time pressure, and consumers often spend a limited amount of time making decisions in many product categories (Sorensen et al., 2017). The study confirms a pattern of consumption characterized as a quick shopping trip, that covers only a small portion of the store and includes the purchase of just a few items. Peterson and Balasubramanian (2002) have also described consumer behavior at the moment of consumption in supermarkets as automatic and preconscious. These insights could be linked to Carrington’s et al. (2014) proposition of a rapid and pre-meditated mode of shopping behavior.

A study assessing the effect of purchase situation in ethical consumption finds that purchase situations moderate the intention-behavior relationship (Grimmer et al., 2016). The study further contributes to the literature by finding that situational factor such as price, shopping at the end of the work day, willingness to drive long distances, availability and ease of purchase influence the relationship between intentions and behavior. In each of these situations, less favorable situations hindered the translation of intentions into behavior (Grimmer et al., 2016), which is
congruent with the proposition of an effortful shopping mode. The amount of time spent in-store can also affect how shoppers make purchase decisions (Dhar & Nowlis, 1999). Previous studies had suggested that the likelihood of consumers deferring from their choice is contingent on the ease of making the selection decision (Dhar & Nowlis, 1999). This could also be associated with an effortful purchase experience, which may deter consumers from purchasing ethically, as Carrington et al. (2014) propose.

Previous research has also commonly associated unplanned purchases to consumer susceptibility to in-store stimuli (Stilley, Inman, & Wakefield, 2010). Unplanned purchases have been described as items that the consumer forgot to include in their shopping list, but later remembered the desire or need to obtain it (Gilbride, Inman, & Stilley, 2015) and can include items purchased on an impulse, or a sudden unreflected urge to buy (Rook, 1987). This is congruent with Carrington’s et al. (2014) finding of a spontaneous shopping mode that deterred consumers from purchasing ethically.

Finally, the last influencing factor refers to Prioritization of ethical concerns. Carrington’s et al. (2014) findings point to not all ethical concerns being of equal salience, but rather prioritized into issues of primary importance and of secondary importance. Issues of primary concern are a “high priority to how I live...not an optional extra to my life” and “guide a lot of decision making” (Carrington et al., 2014, p. 2762). These are the ethical concerns which consumers successfully integrated in consumption or were attempting to do so. In contrast, secondary ethical concerns are peripheral to consumers’ conscious ethical consumption and “further down on the ethical scale, where they might be more sporadic kinds of smaller activities” (p. 2762). These concerns are often forgotten, unplanned for or rarely integrated into purchase behavior. Participants displayed significant cognitive dissonance when choosing products that conflict with their primary ethical issue, but demonstrated flexibility in purchasing when it came to their secondary concerns (Carrington et al., 2014). Interestingly, secondary ethical concerns may also override the primary concern when purchasing. This overriding of both primary or secondary concerns is congruent with Szmigin’s et al. (2009) notion of flexibility in ethical decision-making.

This proposed construct of Prioritization of ethical concerns can be linked to research on goals. Some studies account for competing goals that hinder goal pursuit (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). Sheeran and Webb (2016) state that intentions capture both the level of the set goal, as well as the individual’s level of commitment. However, as people are likely to set multiple goals, striving to
achieve one goal can compromise the pursuit of subsequent goals (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998).

Competing goals are activated automatically by situational features, without individuals being aware of those competing influences (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). While other salient concerns have been identified as competing with ethical issues, such as price and product quality (Belk et al., 2005; Szmigin et al., 2009), convenience (Szmigin et al., 2009) or social acceptance (Ajzen, 1991; Carrington et al., 2014; Echegaray & Hansstein, 2017), to the author’s knowledge, previous literature doesn’t address the prioritization of one ethical concern over others as competing goals within ethical consumption.

Auger et al. (2007) report the existence of several ethical concerns that affect ethical consumption and show that within a sample of socially responsible consumers, different consumers rank ethical issues in a variety of ways (2007), a conclusion also reached by Öberseder et al. (2011). One group which favors worker conditions and labor rights, ranks environment and consumer protection lower, while another group prioritizes those issues precisely in the opposite way (Auger et al., 2007). Yet these don’t translate purchasing behavior and the issues that may arise from multiple ethical concerns.

Despite these sporadic contributions, the issue of prioritization of ethical concerns is not sufficiently addressed in either qualitative or quantitative research, hence we lack reference for the construct, as well as its operationalization. The fact that the majority of studies on the intention-behavior gap assess only one major concern – ecological issues (Hassan et al., 2016) – could explain why more studies don’t account for competing ethical concerns or don’t consider different levels of importance within stated ethical concerns.

Carrington et al. (2014) propose that this prioritization is reflected on the other influencing factors of formation of plans and habits, and willingness to commit and sacrifice, and determines which concerns fall into the intention-behavior gap (Carrington et al., 2014). Carrington et al. (2014) thus propose that the prioritization of ethical concerns widens the gap between intention and behavior in ethical consumption for secondary ethical concerns. The conceptualization these constructs and influencing factors are summarized in Table 3.
Table 3 – Conceptualization of the constructs in model of the intention-behavior gap

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Conceptualization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intention</td>
<td>Ajzen (1991)</td>
<td>Indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior (p. 181).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>Ajzen (1985)</td>
<td>Volitional behaviors can be performed by individuals if they are inclined to do so, which implies accounting for available information, and implicitly or explicitly considering the implications of their actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritization of ethical</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014)</td>
<td>Prioritization of consumers’ “overall set of ethical issues into two groups, issues of primary importance and issues of secondary importance (peripheral to their conscious ethical consumption)” (p. 2762)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concerns</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Wiedemann et al. (2009)</td>
<td>Mental stimulations that link concrete behavioral responses to situational cues, with the purpose of achieving a goal state, or intention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habits</td>
<td>Neal et al. (2012)</td>
<td>Psychological dispositions to repeat past behavior, acquired gradually as individuals repeatedly respond to recurring contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wood &amp; Neal (2009)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Nenkov &amp; Gollwitzer (2012)</td>
<td>“the extent to which personal goals are associated with: a strong sense of determination, unwillingness to abandon or lower the original goal, willingness to invest effort, and effortful striving for goal implementation” (p. 108).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacrifice</td>
<td>Hutter &amp; Hoffmann (2013)</td>
<td>A voluntary restriction in consumption patterns, under the condition that this abandonment has emotional or financial consequences.</td>
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</table>

In sum, these influencing factors are interconnected and can help explain ethical consumption and the ethical intention-behavior gap. Previous research has found that consumers who start buying one or more organic food products are subsequently likely to gradually extend and generalize that behavior over time to the purchase of more product categories (Juhl, Fenger, & Thøgersen, 2017). This could denote the influence of increased planning to buy ethical products and/or the creation of habits and commitment to ethical consumption. As Kamakura (2008) points out, this change in patterns occurs due to varying perceived costs of adopting different products in...
a given context (Kamakura, 2008) which could be related to a willingness to make sacrifices in ethical consumption.

Despite consumers’ ethical goal pursuit, factors such as competing goals, bad habits, distractions, temptations and other stimuli can lead to derailing from these ethical goals (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). The authors then point to three fundamental tasks to translate intentions into behavior: the need to initiate, maintain and close goal pursuit. The importance of the intention-behavior gap is clear, since both CSR and CnSR need to be aligned to produce positive results, if social responsibility is to be a sustainable generalized phenomenon. The consumer still faces many challenges in the market place when seeking to buy ethically (Hassan et al., 2016) and insights on those challenges and difficulties are urgent, to better communicate the issue of the ethical intention-behavior gap to scholars and marketers. Table 4 sums up the main challenges of this research field and the many gaps identified which the present study addresses.

Table 4– Identified gaps in the literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature Gap</th>
<th>Literature Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To base future quantitative findings of the intention-behavior gap on qualitative insights.</td>
<td>Hassan et al. (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To employ quantitative methods in further studies to aid the exploration of mediating and moderating roles of the four emergent factors identified on the relationship between intentions and behavior.</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To explore the roles of effort and commitment in further studies of the intention-behavior gap.</td>
<td>Hassan et al. (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To examine other core values related to ethical consumption beyond environmental concerns.</td>
<td>Hassan et al. (2016)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
Chapter 3 – Methodology

The present chapter presents the empirical investigation of the dissertation. Firstly, we address the already presented objectives and research questions in more detail, followed by the hypothesis and conceptual model that guide the investigation. Secondly, we present the research design and operationalization of the constructs which were introduced in the previous chapter. We then address the selected survey method – the online questionnaire – and its structure. Lastly, we present the sampling criteria and introduce the methods of data collection and analysis.

3.1. Objectives and Research Questions

The present dissertation seeks to advance the literature in the identified gap between intention and behavior in ethical consumption. The existence of this gap has been quantitatively proven in previous studies (Hassan et al., 2016). However, much of the reasons underlying this gap are still in need of further research, which would contribute to our understanding of why ethical consumption fails to be implemented (Carrington et al., 2014; Devinney et al., 2006).

The empirical research is supported by a previously published qualitative model of the influencing factors of the intention-behavior gap in ethical consumption. The aim of the present study is to apply and test this model on a quantitative sample to assess the validity of its findings in a larger sample. As far as it is possible to determine, this model of intention-behavior gap hasn’t been quantified or tested in a quantitative method. This approach is especially relevant, as the need to conduct quantitative research based on previous qualitative findings has been underlined by authors such as Hassan et al. (2016).

The model by Carrington et al. (2014) identifies four interrelated factors that affect the intention-behavior gap: (1) Plans and Habits, (2) Commitment and Sacrifice, (3) modes of shopping and (4) Prioritization of Ethical Concerns (PEC) (Carrington et al., 2014). Each of these factors are composed of actions, attitudes and/or beliefs identified by socially responsible consumers as influencing their ethical purchase behavior. These factors may contribute to the widening or shortening of the gap between intentions and behavior in ethical purchase.

We then pose the following research question(s): Does prioritization of ethical concerns/formation of plans and habits/willingness to commit and sacrifice/modes of shopping
behavior affect the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption? Do these factors widen/shorten the relation between intention and behavior to purchase ethically?

The main purpose of the study is thus to test the influence of these factors in the ethical consumption intention-behavior gap, to widen our knowledge of this gap and communicate the phenomenon more clearly to scholars and marketers. If a gap is confirmed, it will be possible to observe and measure the influence of each of the four factors in the translation of ethical intention into behavior.

The present study’s research questions and objectives are drawn from the model in question.

Objective 1: Assessing intention and behavior in ethical purchase.

Objective 2: Determining the effect of Plans and Habits on the relation between intentions and behavior in ethical consumption.

Objective 3: Determining the effect of Commitment and Sacrifice on the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption;

Objective 4: Determining the effect of consumers’ Modes of Shopping on the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.

Objective 5: Determining the effect of prioritization of ethical concerns (PEC) on the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.

In sum, the purpose of this research is to test the validity of the factors proposed in the model, that is, if these four factors affect the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.

3.2. Hypothesis and Conceptual Model

Considering Carrington’s et al. (2014) propositions, as well as findings or insights from other research, we propose a series of research hypothesis that guided the present empirical investigation, summarized in Table 5.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Objectives</th>
<th>Research Hypothesis</th>
<th>Literature Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2: Determining the effect of formation of plans and habits on the relation between intentions and behavior in ethical consumption;</td>
<td><em>H1</em>: Plans and Habits mediates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td>Hassan et al. (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Carrington et al., (2010, 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Potthoff et al. (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3: Determining the effect of commitment and sacrifice on the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption;</td>
<td><em>H2</em>: Commitment and Sacrifice moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conner et al. (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sheeran et al. (1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 4: Determining the effect of consumers’ modes of shopping behavior on the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td><em>H3a</em>: Effortful shopping moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>H3b</em>: Spontaneous shopping moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>H3c</em>: Rapid shopping moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 5: Determining the effect of prioritization of ethical concerns on the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td><em>H4a</em>: Ethical consumers prioritize ethical issues over others that also concern them.</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>H4b</em>: Ethical consumers have essential ethical concerns.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>H4c</em>: It is difficult to purchase according to secondary ethical concerns.</td>
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<td>Source: Author</td>
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</table>

In Figure 3, the conceptual model is presented, based on Fairchild and MacKinnon’s (2009) guidelines for models of mediation and moderation effects.
3.3. Research Design

The need for quantitative findings in the field of ethical consumption is often stated (Carrington et al., 2014; Mohr et al., 2001; Szmigin et al., 2009). Hassan et al. (2016) not only affirm that limited empirical evidence exists that quantifies the intention-behavior gap in ethical consumption, but that future research should extract insights from qualitative studies and triangulate and assess these qualitative findings in quantitative research. That is precisely the approach adopted in the present study. We empirically test a previously published qualitative model, which identifies four interrelated factors that affect the intention-behavior gap (Carrington et al., 2014) and assess moderation and mediation effects.

The formulated research objectives and questions point to the adequacy of a quantitative exploratory research design (see Malhotra & Birks, 2007), since many of the constructs analyzed are loosely defined or unexplored and the sampling methods don’t allow for generalization. This type of research provides many advantages, such as defining a problem with more precision or gaining additional insights before confirming them in conclusive research (Malhotra & Birks, 2007).

Numerous studies have been supported on quantitative methodologies to assess intention and behavior, as well as the constructs pertaining to the influencing factors, with many studies using self-report as the main form of data collection (see Chekima et al., 2017; Hollenbeck, Klein, O’Leary, & Wright, 1989; Verplanken & Orbell, 2003). Therefore, the selected data collection
method is the survey method, specifically the online questionnaire. The data collected was subjected to a univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) multiple regression analysis.

3.3.1. Construct operationalization

In the present topic, we address the operationalization of the constructs pertaining to intention and behavior and the influencing factors. It is important to note that measurement scales of consumer ethics are rare, when compared to measurements of ethics in business decisions (Sudbury-Riley & Kohlbacher, 2016). Therefore, we mainly draw insights from TPB recommendations and Carrington’s et al. (2014) findings, to construct appropriate measures. Most operationalization decisions are based on Sutton’s (1998) guidelines for measuring intention-behavior.

The first construct to be measured is intention. In line with recommendations of the TPB, intentions can be asked in a single measure, through a statement or question format such as “intend to...” followed by the behavior (Ajzen, 2010). The measurement must specify the target, action, context, and time elements (Ajzen, 2010). Similarly to Hassan et al. (2016), we use the time frame “the next time you shop”. In this case, we study the consumer’s (target) purchase of products (action) for ethical reasons (context), the next time they shop (time). We employ a bipolar or semantic differential scale (Ajzen, 2010), namely a 7-point positive scale (0 to 6), similar to Hassan et al. (2016), from ‘no intention at all’ to ‘maximum intention’. Respondents who select the option 0 (no intention at all) are screened out from the survey and taken directly to the sociodemographic questions.

The next construct refers to measures of behavior. Many authors highlight the importance of including measures of behavior when assessing the intention-behavior gap (Andorfer & Liebe, 2012; Carrington et al., 2014; Hassan et al., 2016; Sudbury-Riley & Kohlbacher, 2016), since a significant part of the research on the gap stops at the measure of intentions (Hassan et al., 2016). Though observational methods can be accurate to measure shopping behavior (Gram, 2010), observational data is hard to predict, interpret and generalize (Shukla, 2008). In the impracticality of observing behavior, self-report can be used, as suggested by Ajzen (1985). Due to time and resource constrains, behavior was measured here at the same time as intention as past/current behavior, as opposed to future behavior. Previous research has highlighted the role of past behavior.
in predicting future behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Phipps et al., 2013), and its use as a proxy for future behavior is referenced by the author of the TPB (Ajzen, 2018).

Measurements of behavior don’t follow Hassan’s (2016) operationalization, since the authors point to their violation of one of Sutton’s (1998) guidelines of equal number of response categories for both measures. Therefore, similarly to intentions, behavior is here measured in a semantic differential 7-point positive scale (0 to 6).

We ask respondents how frequently they buy products for ethical reasons, from ‘have never bought’ to ‘always buy’. This is consistent with Richetin’s et al. (2012) measure of behavior in frequency, and the use of scales from never to always (Grimmer et al., 2016; Oreg & Katz-Gerro, 2006; Richetin et al., 2012). Respondents who select the option 0 are screened out from the survey and taken directly to the sociodemographic questions. These sampling decisions are further explored in Sampling criteria and screening of respondents.

The following constructs relate to Carrington’s et al. (2014) proposed influencing factors. Some conclusions were drawn from their findings, as well as other research. To maintain the principle of equal number of scale categories, 7-point scales are used throughout the remaining measures. Since maintaining scale correspondence is crucial (Sutton, 1998), the subsequent constructs are measured in frequency from Never to Always since all relate to past experience with ethical consumption. Although terms such as never-always can be perceived differently depending on individuals, this problem of subjectivity only arises when respondents are asked to switch scales between assessments, which is the violation of the principle of scale correspondence (Courneya, 1994).

The only exception of this scale are the measures of PEC, which aren’t integrated in the intention-behavior model. Respondents are asked their level of accord or discord in 7-point semantic differential scales from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

The next construct is referent to Plans and Habits. Carrington et al. (2014) propose the extension of the concept of plans in ethical consumption to include habits, hence we draw insights from the study by identifying those behaviors that translate the formation of both. Consumers searched for information about ethical products or brands, and unethical behavior of brands or companies; repeated the purchase of ethical products and frequented shopping establishments where ethical products can be found. We measure these actions in frequency, from Never to Always, in a 7-point semantic differential scale.
Next, we assess **Commitment and Sacrifice**. Examples of Commitment and Sacrifice appear as intertwined in Carrington’s et al. (2014) findings, since a willingness to make sacrifices demonstrates commitment to ethical consumption, and vice-versa. The statements used to measure commitment and sacrifice in ethical consumption are in line with items used by Hutter and Hoffmann (2013), namely related to higher prices and the shortened range of products available.

The last constructs to be analyzed are **Modes of Shopping**. Once again, we draw insights from Carrington’s et al. (2014) findings to construct statements, using wording as close as possible to the original study to avoid interpretation bias. We apply one item for each shopping mode, using a 7-point semantic differential scale, ranging from Never to Always. For **effortful shopping**, we use the statement “At the moment of purchase... I take too long to buy an ethical product”. For **spontaneous shopping**, we use “At the moment of purchase... I buy unethical products on an impulse”. For **rapid shopping**, we use “At the moment of purchase... I buy products rapidly for the ethical issues which are more important to me.”

Finally, we assess **Prioritization of Ethical Concerns** (PEC). As previously stated, we lack reference for the operationalization of the construct of prioritization of ethical concerns. Ranking was applied by Auger et al. (2007) to assess the importance attributed to each ethical concern. However, the order is not relevant for the present paper, and we also don’t wish to induce respondents to hierarchize ethical concerns, when this prioritization may not exist. Since the purpose it to assess whether or not consumers prioritize ethical concerns into primary and secondary, we draw statements from Carrington et al.(2014), and ask participants their level of agreement with the following statements: “When purchasing, I prioritize one or two ethical issues over others that also concern me”, “I have ethical concerns which are essential at the moment of purchase” and “I have ethical concerns which are secondary at the moment of purchase”, and “I find it difficult to purchase according to my secondary ethical concerns”. We use a 7-point semantic differential scale to measure agreement, from strongly disagree to strongly agree, a common scale type respondents are generally familiar with (Malhotra & Birks, 2007).

Carrington et al. (2014) propose that the other influencing factors can be related to the prioritization of ethical concerns. The authors take into account that some plans/habits/commitments/sacrifices can manifest for some ethical concerns but not others that also concern respondents. Hence, we add the following items which link PEC with Plans and Habits.
and Commitment and Sacrifice, measured in 7-point semantic differential scales, from Strongly disagree to Strongly agree.

For Plans and Habits and PEC, we use the measure “I make plans successfully for some ethical issues, but not for others that also concern me”, similar to Hassan’s et al. (2016) operationalization of plans, and “Some ethical issues belong to my routine, but not others that also concern me”, similar to Verplanken and Orbell’s (2003) operationalization of habits.

For Commitment and Sacrifice, we use the measure “I am committed to buying ethically for some ethical issues, but not for others that also concern me”, in line with Hollenbeck, Williams, and Klein’s (1989) operationalization of commitment, and “I make sacrifices (aesthetics, price or convenience) for some ethical issues, but not others that also concern me”, in line with items from Hutter and Hoffmann (2013) and Antil (1984).

From the efforts to operationalize these constructs, it is evident the absence of validated scales and items that portray ethical consumption in general. Many of the operationalizations used are constrained to either environmental behavior or a single ethical concern. Many adaptations had to be made to portray each influencing factor related to a wider variety of ethical issues, hence a number of limitations can be appointed to the present measurements, a topic which will be addressed further in Chapter 5.

3.3.2. Questionnaire development

The selected survey method for the present empirical investigation is the online questionnaire, which was created and administered with Qualtrics. The questionnaire is divided into 7 main sections.

The first section introduces the topic by providing a brief definition of ethical consumption. A text was adapted from an article by The Guardian (“Ethical Consumerism,” 2001), whose succinct vocabulary and explanation was deemed adequate to introduce the issue. The article also provides examples, which may be valuable in cases where the consumption of some ethical products may not automatically come to mind. This section goes on to measure intention to purchase products for ethical reasons. Since our sample needs to consist of respondents who intend to buy ethically, this intention (or lack thereof) needs to be identified primarily. An automated screening option directs respondents with ‘no intention at all’ to the demographic section.

In the second section, we ask which ethical concerns pertain to the intention to purchase ethically, with a list of ethical issues adapted primarily from Auger et al. (2007). We also include
issues identified by other authors, to widen the representability of issues related to ethical consumption. The selected ethical concerns are presented in Table 6, alongside the literature support for each topic. The subsequent measures are generic and applicable to the purchasing behavior for ethical issues in general.

Table 6 – List of ethical concerns identified in the literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethical concern</th>
<th>Literature Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Products not tested on animals</td>
<td>Auger et al. (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetarianism/veganism</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products without use of animal byproducts (leather, wool, skin, etc.)</td>
<td>Auger et al. (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodegradable products</td>
<td>Auger et al. (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic products</td>
<td>Chekima et al. (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions</td>
<td>Vanclay et al. (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycled or recyclable product/packaging</td>
<td>Auger et al. (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product safety information provided</td>
<td>Auger et al. (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National product</td>
<td>Yan and She (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair trade products</td>
<td>Castaldo et al. (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products without use of forced labor</td>
<td>O’Connor, Sims &amp; White (2017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products without use of child labor</td>
<td>Auger et al. (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genetically modified products</td>
<td>Auger et al. (2007)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

The original list by Auger et al. (2007) is adapted and expanded, for example, by including topics such as vegetarianism or veganism (Carrington et al., 2014), national products (see Yan & She, 2011), and by reducing the number of issues related to packaging, recyclability or disposability, which were extensive in the original list. This section ends with the measure of behavior. Respondents who indicate they have never bought a product for ethical reasons are automatically directed to the sociodemographic measures.

The third section relates to PEC. Since Carrington et al. (2014) frame this influencing factor as central to ethical consumption, and relate this prioritization to all other influencing factors, it is important to address it first. A brief explanation is provided using wording as close as possible to Carrington’s et al. (2014).

The fourth section relates to Plans and Habits. In this section, respondents are asked about their decision-making process when recognizing the need to obtain a product, and answer
questions that relate to both the formation of plans and the formation of habits, as well as to connect these factors to prioritization of ethical concerns.

The fifth section examines Commitment and Sacrifice, supported on statements for both commitment and sacrifice, and a second set of questions linking the constructs to PEC.

The sixth section assesses Modes of Shopping with the three items described previously.

The seventh and final section of the questionnaire employs a series of demographic measures, drawn from previous literature as the most relevant for the present study. Participants are asked their age, gender, level of education, occupation and level of income.

These questions and statements are presented in Table 7, with the operationalization of the construct as well as the translation of all statements and items to Portuguese, which is the language in which the questionnaire was written and applied. The sociodemographic measures are presented in Table 8.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Operationalization</th>
<th>Translation to Portuguese</th>
<th>Literature Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intention</strong></td>
<td>Do you intend to buy products for ethical reasons the next time you shop?</td>
<td>Tem intenção de comprar produtos por motivos éticos da próxima vez que fizer compras?</td>
<td>Ajzen (2010) Hassan et al. (2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7-point semantic differential scale, from “No intention at all” to “maximum intention”</td>
<td>“Intenção nenhuma” - “intenção máxima”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethical concerns</strong></td>
<td>For which ethical issue? Select all that apply. Multiple choice question, with multiple answers permitted.</td>
<td>Em relação a que questões éticas? Selecione todas as que se apliquem.</td>
<td>Auger et al. (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior</strong></td>
<td>How frequently do you buy products for ethical reasons? 7-point semantic differential scale, from “I have never bought” to “Always buy”</td>
<td>Com que frequência compra produtos por motivos éticos? Nunca comprei – compreço sempre</td>
<td>Richetin et al. (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prioritization of Ethical Concerns</strong></td>
<td>When purchasing, I prioritize one or two ethical issues over others that also concern me. I have ethical concerns which are essential at the moment of purchase. I have ethical concerns which are secondary at the moment of purchase. I find it difficult to purchase according to my secondary ethical concerns. 7-point semantic differential scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree</td>
<td>Quando compre, dou prioridade a uma ou duas questões éticas em relação a outras que também me preocupam. Tenho preocupações éticas que são essenciais no momento da compra. Tenho preocupações éticas secundárias no momento da compra. Sinto dificuldade em comprar de acordo com preocupações éticas secundárias. Discordo fortemente – concordo fortemente</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plans and Habits</strong></td>
<td>When I wish to buy a product… I search for information (internet, others, etc.) about ethical products and/or brands before the moment of purchase. I search for information about unethical behavior of brands/companies of that type of product before the moment of purchase. I repeat the purchase of products which I already know are ethical.</td>
<td>Quando desejo comprar um produto… Procuro informação (internet, terceiros, etc.) sobre produtos e/ou marcas éticas antes do momento da compra. Procuro informação sobre comportamento anti-ético de marcas/empresas desse tipo de produto antes do momento da compra. Repito a compra de produtos que já sei serem éticos.</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Plans and Habits and PEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I go to establishments where I already know I will find ethical products. 7-point semantic differential scale, from never to always</td>
<td>Dirijo-me a estabelecimentos onde já sei encontrar produtos éticos. Nunca – sempre</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014) Hassan et al. (2016) Verplanken and Orbell (2003)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Commitment and Sacrifice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I make plans successfully for some ethical issues, but not for others that also concern me. Some ethical issues belong to my routine, but not others that also concern me. 7-point semantic differential scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree</td>
<td>Faço planos com sucesso para algumas questões éticas, mas não para outras que também me preocupam. Algumas questões éticas fazem parte da minha rotina, mas outras que também me preocupam não. Discordo fortemente – concordo fortemente</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014) Hollenbeck, Williams, and Klein’s (1989) Hutter and Hoffmann (2013)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Commitment and Sacrifice and PEC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I buy an ethical product, ... Even if it is more expensive than less ethical alternatives Even if the choice of products is shortened. 7-point scale semantic differential scale, from never to always.</td>
<td>Compro um produto ético, ... Mesmo que seja mais caro do que as alternativas menos éticas. Mesmo que a escolha de produtos seja reduzida. Nunca - sempre</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014) Hutter and Hoffmann (2013)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Modes of Shopping: Effortful, Spontaneous and Rapid Shopping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Portuguese</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At the moment of purchase (at the store, establishment, market, etc.)... I take too long to buy ethical products. I buy unethical products on an impulse. I buy products rapidly for the ethical issues which are more important to me. 7-point scale semantic differential scale, from never to always.</td>
<td>No momento da compra (na loja, estabelecimento, mercado, etc)... Demoro muito tempo a comprar produtos éticos. Compro produtos não-éticos por impulso. Compro produtos de forma rápida para as preocupações éticas mais importantes para mim. Nunca - Sempre</td>
<td>Carrington et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
3.3.3. Sampling criteria and screening of respondents

A set of criteria was defined to ensure that a sample of ethical consumers was surveyed. First, having some level of intention (1 or >) to purchase products for ethical reasons was considered a prerequisite for assessing the intention-behavior gap. Respondents who showed no intention to purchase ethically were screened out of the survey.

Second, some level of behavior (1 or >) with purchasing products for ethical reasons was also considered a criterion. Though it would also be suitable to survey respondents with some level of intention and a 0 level of behavior, experience with ethical purchase is necessary for answering the subsequent measures of the questionnaire.

This sampling method constitutes a judgmental sampling method, which is non-probabilistic (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). A convenience sampling method was also applied, given

---

Table 8 - Sociodemographic measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Nominal category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male, Female, Other: (text box)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>Primary education, Elementary level, Secondary level, Bachelor’s degree, Master’s degree, Doctorate degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Employed, Student, Working Student, Retired, Unemployed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
that the population was reached based on easy accessibility, geographical proximity and willingness to participate (Dörnyei, 2007).

3.4. Data collection and analysis

Having presented the research objectives and design, as well as the methods for data collection, in the present topic we discuss the methods of data analysis. These methods allow us to draw conclusions from the collected data and confirm or refuse the proposed hypothesis.

As previously stated, the data was collected through an online questionnaire, developed in Qualtrics. A pilot testing of the questionnaire was conducted to a convenience sample of 16 individuals, and the feedback was incorporated into the improvement of the survey. The final version was administered between January 23\textsuperscript{rd} and 31\textsuperscript{st}. The questionnaire was shared on social media, in the author’s personal Facebook account, as well as Facebook groups related to ethical consumption.

The data was analyzed using SPSS Statistics Version 25. We firstly conduct a univariate analysis for all variables, with the purpose of clarifying dispersion and location attributes. This analysis allows the observation of means, medians, frequency and standard deviation, for a preliminary examination of each item.

Since multiple items were used to test the same variable, in the case of Plans and Habits, and Commitment and Sacrifice, it was necessary to assess the internal consistency and validity of the scales before conducting the bivariate and regression analysis. We assessed the psychometric properties, namely reliability and validity of these items, which were then averaged out and used as single items for the bivariate and regression analysis. This approach is in line with Hassan’s et al. (2016) analytical procedures.

A bivariate analysis was then conducted, to assess possible correlations between variables. This analysis provides additional insights into which influencing factors are more strongly correlated amongst each other and with intention and behavior. Since we use ordinal scales in the measurements, and because the data is non-parametric, that is, doesn’t follow a known distribution, we used Spearman’s correlation coefficient (Malhotra & Birks, 2007) to assess correlations between variables.

Next, we employ a multivariate data analysis. To test the hypothesis H1, H2, H3a, H3b and H3c, a regression analysis was conducted, a common approach amongst studies of the intention-behavior gap (e.g. Hassan et al., 2016; Sheeran, 2002). Regression analysis is a
statistical procedure used to analyze the associative relationships between variables (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). In the context of the present research, it allows us to assess moderation and mediation effects of the influencing factors on intention and behavior.

Assessing mediating effects allows us to observe how an independent variable affects a dependent variable, with the addition of an intervening variable, or mediator (Tan, Gan, Saleem, & Hassali, 2016). Since Plans has already been proposed as a mediator (Carrington et al., 2010), and proven to fully mediate the relationship between intention and behavior (Hassan et al., 2016), we propose that the extended concept of Plans and Habits put forward by Carrington et al. (2014) and Holland, Aarts and Langendam (2006) acts as a mediator in the relation between intention and behavior.

Next, we assess moderation effect for the constructs of Commitment and Sacrifice and Modes of Shopping. Moderation effects indicate how a variable – the moderator – affects the relation between a predictor (intention) and criterion (behavior), by changing the strength or direction of that relation (Karazsia, Berlin, Armstrong, Janicke, & Darling, 2014). If mediation is understood as “how” variables interact, then moderation would be “when or from whom” (Karazsia et al., 2014).

Using the Process Tool for SPSS, developed by Hayes (2013), we observe if the independent variable (intention) explains a significant variation in the dependent variable (behavior) and the strength of that relationship, as well as the moderating or mediating effect of the influencing factors on that relationship. More than one independent variable (the influencing factors) is introduced in this model, which points to the adequacy of a multiple regression analysis (Malhotra & Birks, 2007).

Next, we assessed the proposed construct of Prioritization of Ethical Concerns. To analyze data from these items, we conducted a median difference test, which allows us to assess if the majority of the sample agree with PEC, that is respond above 4 in a 1-7 scale measuring disagreement-agreement. Since the data is nonparametric, we use a Wilcoxon test (Siegel, 1956).

Finally, a cluster analysis was conducted using the data from the measure of ethical concerns. Cluster analysis allows us to classify objects or cases into relatively homogenous groups – or clusters (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). The objects pertaining to one cluster tend to be similar amongst themselves and dissimilar to those of other clusters (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). We performed a hierarchical Clustering with Ward’s minimum variance method, using asymmetric
binary distances, a method that generates clusters by minimizing the total within-cluster variance (Malhotra & Birks, 2007).

A summary of the hypothesis and the correspondent statistical tests introduced in this topic is presented in Table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Research Hypothesis</th>
<th>Statistical Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plans and Habits</td>
<td><em>H1</em>: Plans and Habits mediates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td>OLS multiple regression analysis, mediation effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment and Sacrifice</td>
<td><em>H2</em>: Commitment and Sacrifice moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Modes of Shopping  | *H3a*: Effortful shopping moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.  
*H3b*: Spontaneous shopping moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.  
*H3c*: Rapid shopping moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption. | OLS Multiple regression analysis, moderation effects |
| Prioritization of Ethical Concerns | *H4a*: Ethical consumers prioritize ethical issues over others that also concern them.  
*H4b*: Ethical consumers have essential ethical concerns.  
*H4c*: It is difficult to purchase according to secondary ethical concerns. | Median difference test |

Source: Author

3.5. Profile of the sample

In the present topic we address the composition and characteristics of the sample, through the frequency and percentage of sociodemographic variables. From a sample of 384 respondents, 346 fit the criteria of the sample of ethical consumers, which is in the typical range of responses for problem-solving research (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). These missing values correspond to the number of respondents which were screened out at either the measure of intention or behavior (see 3.3.3). Table 10 and 11 present the sociodemographic characteristics of the sample.
From these values we can observe that the sample is diverse in terms of age, but not gender, with a clear predominance of female respondents. Although the group is heterogenous in terms of individual monthly income, it is predominantly composed of employed individuals with higher education.
Chapter 4 – Data Presentation

Having presented the methodology and profile of the sample, in the present chapter we discuss the data referent to the constructs of the proposed model.

Firstly, we present the results of the univariate analysis, followed by a bivariate analysis which assesses correlations between the measures of the model. Next, we present the procedures and results of the regression analysis, which assess moderation and mediation effects of the proposed influencing factors. Finally, we present the results of the cluster analysis, to identify possible groups of consumers based on their ethical concerns.

4.1. Univariate data analysis

In this topic, the univariate data analysis of all variables is discussed, namely ethical concerns, intention and behavior and the influencing factors.

The percentage that is shown throughout this topic corresponds to the total number of respondents for each question, that is, subtracting the missing values. In terms of dispersion, values of standard deviation for all variables are relatively close, with the highest value being 1,892, and the lowest 1,49.

4.1.1. Ethical concerns

Respondents were asked to select, from a proposed list of ethical issues, those issues that pertained to their intention to buy ethically. Each ethical concern was treated as a binary variable (selected/not selected).

The most selected issues were child labor and national products, followed by recycled/recyclable product or packaging and products not tested on animals. The least selected ethical issues were GMO products and product safety information provided. The frequency and percentage of all the items pertaining to ethical concerns can be seen in Table 12.
Table 12 – Values of the measure of ethical concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethical concern</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Products not tested on animals</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>62,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetarianism/veganism</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>39,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products without use of animal byproducts (leather, wool, skin, etc.)</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>48,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodegradable products</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>61,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic products</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>46,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycled or recyclable product/packaging</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>63,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product safety information provided</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>38,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National product</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>66,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair trade products</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>41,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products without use of forced labor</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>54,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products without use of child labor</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>66,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genetically modified products</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=384

Source: Author

From Table 12, we can see that most issues are well represented. There are no clear tendencies to select single items or single ethical themes, showing a heterogenous sample in its ethical concerns. Further in the cluster analysis, we divide this population into specific groups based on these tendencies, to identify possible consumer segments.

We note that items for both “fair trade products” and products without use of forced/child labor were included, even though these could be synonyms, as not to assume that consumers would be familiar with the concept of fair trade. The fact that the frequency of selection for forced/child labor is superior to fair trade could potentially indicate an unfamiliarity with the concept.

4.1.2. Intention and behavior

As seen in Table 13, intention not only shows relatively high values, but the most selected option was the highest point in the scale, “maximum intention” to purchase products for ethical reasons. From a preliminary observation, these values, both mode and mean, of intention are superior to those of behavior, presented in Table 14.
Table 13 – Values of the measure of intention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5,2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4,21</td>
<td>1,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4,2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6,5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15,6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>20,3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13,5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>34,6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= 384 | 0 – no intention at all | 6 – maximum intention

Source: Author

Table 14 – Values of the measure of behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4,9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3,64</td>
<td>1,58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5,8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10,7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>20,3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>27,7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>18,1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>12,4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= 364 | 0 – have never bought | 6 – always buy

Source: Author

The same sample thus appears to demonstrate higher intentions than behavior in ethical purchase, though further tests need to be conducted to determine if this difference is statistically significant.

4.1.3. Plans and Habits

The measures for this influencing factor can be separated into two variables: plans and habits. As presented in Table 15, responses for Plans tend to stay neutral, while for Habits, these are positive. Curiously, the highest values of standard deviation in all measures of the study pertain to this influencing factor, indicating diversity in the sample when responding to these items.
Table 15 – Values of the measures of Plans and Habits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plans</td>
<td>I search for information (internet, others, etc.) about ethical products and/or brands before the moment of purchase.</td>
<td>10,1 10,1 13 15,3 20,2 15,3 15,9 4,35 1,892</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans</td>
<td>I search for information about unethical behavior of brands/companies of that type of product before the moment of purchase</td>
<td>9 13 17,6 16,2 18,8 11 14,5 4,14 1,85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habits</td>
<td>I repeat the purchase of products which I already know are ethical.</td>
<td>2 3,5 4 7,8 17,6 21,4 43,6 5,74 1,513</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habits</td>
<td>I go to establishments where I already know I will find ethical products.</td>
<td>5,2 7,2 7,8 13,9 13,3 18,8 33,8 5,14 1,861</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=346 | 1 – never | 7 – always

Source: Author

4.1.4. Commitment and Sacrifice

Similarly to Plans, responses to Commitment and Sacrifice also tend to be neutral, but positive, as demonstrated in Table 16.
Table 16– Values of the measures of commitment and sacrifice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment and Sacrifice</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I buy an ethical product... even if it is more expensive than less ethical alternatives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,8</td>
<td>11,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I buy an ethical product... even if the choice of products is shortened</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>5,8</td>
<td>12,1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=346 | 1 – never | 7 – always

Source: Author

4.1.5. Modes of shopping

Responses for this influencing factor are also neutral but positive. The only exception is the item for Spontaneous Shopping, which translates buying unethical products on an impulse. This item shows the only predominantly negative responses of all the variables of the study. The standard deviation of this item is relatively high, showing more dispersion of responses, yet surprisingly, the most selected option for this item was “Never”, the lowest point of the scale.

Table 17 – Values of the measure of Modes of Shopping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modes of Shopping behavior</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variable</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effortful shopping</td>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>11,3</td>
<td>14,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous Shopping</td>
<td>22,3</td>
<td>17,1</td>
<td>17,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid shopping</td>
<td>4,6</td>
<td>8,1</td>
<td>17,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

68
4.1.6. Prioritization of ethical concerns

The first item of Prioritization of ethical concerns, which best summarizes the construct, shows positive responses (Table 18). At 4,98, responses to the second item, having essential ethical concerns, could be interpreted as positive as well. This is a good indication that respondents generally agree with the constructs of Prioritization of ethical concerns, though further statistical tests will determine its significance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When purchasing, I prioritize one or two ethical issues over others that also concern me.</td>
<td>2,6 2,9 10,4 17,6 27,5 20,5 18,5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have ethical concerns which are essential at the moment of purchase.</td>
<td>1,7 5,2 13,3 18,5 20,2 16,5 24,6</td>
<td>4,98</td>
<td>1,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have ethical concerns which are secondary at the moment of purchase.</td>
<td>5,8 9 16,5 22,5 25,1 13,9 7,2</td>
<td>4,23</td>
<td>1,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it difficult to purchase according to my secondary ethical concerns.</td>
<td>7,5 6,9 13 24 24 14,2 10,4</td>
<td>4,34</td>
<td>1,649</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
4.1.7. PEC and the other influencing factors

Similar to the preceding measures, responses to the items of prioritization linked to plans, habits, commitment and sacrifice, tend to be neutral but still positive, as seen in Table 19.

Table 19 – Values of the measure of PEC and the other influencing factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEC with plans</strong></td>
<td>I make plans successfully for some ethical issues, but not for others that also concern me.</td>
<td>6.4 8.4 12.7 28.3 22.8 14.2 7.2</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>1.558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEC with habits</strong></td>
<td>Some ethical issues belong to my routine, but not others that also concern me.</td>
<td>4.3 8.1 15 21.4 25.1 19.4 6.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1.529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEC with commitment</strong></td>
<td>I am committed to buying ethically for some ethical issues, but not for others that also concern me.</td>
<td>5.2 11.8 14.5 25.4 22.5 14.7 5.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEC with sacrifice</strong></td>
<td>I make sacrifices (aesthetics, price or convenience) for some ethical issues, but not others that also concern me.</td>
<td>6.6 11 13.3 24.9 18.5 17.1 8.7</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>1.665</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=346 | 1 – strongly disagree | 7 – strongly agree

Source: Author

From this first analysis, we observe clear positive responses to Habits, I repeat the purchase of products which I already know are ethical and I go to establishments where I already know I will find ethical products, and to the measure of prioritization of ethical concerns that summarizes the construct, When purchasing, I prioritize one or two ethical issues over others that also concern me. The only negative responses are for buying unethical products on an impulse.

Though this univariate analysis alone cannot provide reliable tendencies or effects of the items, overall, these values demonstrate neutral but positive responses to the measures of the study. Further bivariate and multivariate procedures will provide more significant insights.
4.2. Scale reliability and validity

Since multiple items were used to test the same variable, in the case of Plans and Habits, and Commitment and Sacrifice, it was necessary to assess the internal consistency and validity of the scales. Although PEC and Modes of Shopping also make use of several items, these were analyzed individually, and therefore there was no need to apply the following procedures.

After grouping the items for the constructs of Plans and Habits and Commitment and Sacrifice, the mean and standard variation were also assessed, with the values presented in Table 20. Both show a neutral yet positive mean and a low standard deviation comparatively to the other measures.

Table 20 – Values of the combined measures of Plans and Habits and Commitment and Sacrifice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plans and Habits</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.8432</td>
<td>1.5335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment and Sacrifice</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7977</td>
<td>1.51403</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

To determine scale reliability, we observed the Alpha of Cronbach. The values 0.881 and 0.914 are superior to 0.7, which is the recommended minimum value (Nunnally, 1978), indicating good internal consistency of the scales.

For scale validity, we tested the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR). The corresponding values are presented in Table 21. All AVE values are superior to 0.5, which is the benchmark value (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and the CR values are superior the reference value of 0.6 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).
### Table 21 – Scale reliability and validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formation of plans and habits</strong></td>
<td>0.881</td>
<td>0.557169</td>
<td>0.737127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commitment and Sacrifice</strong></td>
<td>0.914</td>
<td>0.79924</td>
<td>0.864198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

From these results we can conclude that the scales used to measure these variables are reliable and safely portray the constructs we intend to analyze.

### 4.3. Bivariate data analysis

In this topic, we present the correlations between variables, using Spearman’s ordinal correlation coefficient. As seen in Table 22, most variables are significantly correlated with each other, and many correlations are superior to 0.5, considered moderate to high correlations (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1990).

Both intention and behavior show significant correlations with all other variables of the model. The variables that show the highest correlations with other variables are the core constructs of the regression analysis – Plans and Habits and Commitment and Sacrifice – as well the measure of Prioritization of ethical concerns of having essential ethical concerns at the moment of purchase.

Consistent with results of the univariate analysis, the only negative correlations shown pertain to Spontaneous Shopping, which translate impulse shopping of unethical products.

### Differences in intention and behavior

As indicated previously, the univariate analysis showed higher values of intention than behavior, which could be another indication of a gap between intention and behavior in the sample. Two separate samples pertain to these variables (one sample stopped at the measure of intention, the other sample continued to the measure of behavior). Hence, to determine if this difference is statistically significant, we used the Mann-Whitney-Wilcoxon non-parametric test to compare the medians. For a significance level of 5%, we could not state a significant difference of the medians of intention and behavior.

In the next topic, we cover the hypothesis testing and obtained results.
Table 22 – Correlations between the variables of the model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Intention</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Behavior</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PEC: Prioritization</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.46**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PEC: Essential concerns</td>
<td>0.64**</td>
<td>0.66**</td>
<td>0.62**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. PEC: Secondary concerns</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.50**</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. PEC: Difficulty with secondary concerns</td>
<td>0.23**</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.28**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Plans and Habits</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
<td>0.67**</td>
<td>0.48**</td>
<td>0.71**</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.18**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. PEC with Plans</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.44**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. PEC with Habits</td>
<td>0.32**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.44**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.58**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Commitment and Sacrifice</td>
<td>0.60**</td>
<td>0.67**</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>0.66**</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.19**</td>
<td>0.67**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. PEC with Commitment</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>0.41**</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.28**</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.53**</td>
<td>0.57**</td>
<td>0.44**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. PEC with Sacrifice</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.50**</td>
<td>0.55**</td>
<td>0.44**</td>
<td>0.71**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Effortful shopping</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.23**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.32**</td>
<td>0.35**</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.32**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Impulse shopping</td>
<td>-0.26**</td>
<td>-0.25**</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.24**</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
<td>-0.29**</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td>-0.21**</td>
<td>0.15**</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Rapid shopping</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.39**</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.18**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
<td>0.42**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** correlation is significant at the level 0.01  * correlation is significant at the level 0.05

Source: Author
4.4. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing is a statistical procedure that aims to evaluate evidence to support or refute a given hypothesis (Ren, 2009). It allows researchers to draw conclusions and more informed decisions about the object of their research (Ren, 2009). In this section, we present the methods for testing the proposed hypothesis. For H1 to H3, OLS multiple regression tests were applied. For H4, we employ a Median difference test. In each topic, we present the results obtained through those methods.

4.4.1. Regression analysis

Through a regression analysis, we now address both the mediation and moderation effects of the constructs introduced to the model. The terms were standardized, and the data was confirmed to meet the assumptions of linear regression analysis.

Mediation effects

We observe how intention affects behavior, with Plans and Habits as a mediator. The regular test used for mediation is the Sobel test (Tan et al., 2016). The initial step of the analysis is observing the regression of intention on behavior, ignoring the mediator Plans and Habits, which was significant, $b = 0.65$, $t(17.59) = 0.65$, $p$ value $< 0.001$. We then assessed the regression of intention on the mediator Plans and Habits and it was also significant, $b = 0.71$, $t(344) = 16.44$, $p$ value $< 0.001$. Next, we observed if the mediator Plans and Habits controlling for intention was significant and indeed it proved significant, $b = 0.36$, $t(343) = 7.62$, $p$ value $< 0.001$. The analysis also showed that, controlling for the mediator Plans and Habits, intention was not a significant predictor of behavior, $b = 0.39$, $t (343) = 7.84$, $p$ value $< 0.001$. A Sobel test was then conducted and the evidence of mediation is significant ($Z = 6.92$, $p$ value $< 0.001$).

Hence, the results support *H1, Plans and Habits mediates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.*

Moderation effects

In this study, we tested moderation effects of Commitment and Sacrifice (H2), and Modes of Shopping, namely, *effortful shopping* (H3a); *spontaneous shopping* (H3b) and *rapid shopping*
(H3c). To assess these moderation effect, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted.

For H2, we expected Commitment and Sacrifice to have an enhancing effect of intention on behavior, that is, as Commitment and Sacrifice increases, the effect of intention on behavior also increases. The values were observed at a significance level of 5%. Firstly, we included the variables intention and Commitment and Sacrifice. These variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in behavior, \( R^2 = 0.571, F(2, 343) = 227.949, p < 0.001 \). Secondly, we added the interaction term between intention and Commitment and Sacrifice to the regression model, and it accounted for a significant proportion of variance in behavior, \( \Delta R^2 = 0.007, \Delta F(1, 342) = 5.457, p = 0.020, b = 0.053, t(342) = 2.163, p = 0.031 \). The interaction plot demonstrated an enhancing effect of Commitment and Sacrifice as proposed, therefore, as intention increases and Commitment and Sacrifice increases, behavior also increases.

These results support H2: **Commitment and Sacrifice moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.** However, we should note that the main effects of this relation are also significant, which means it is not a complete moderation.

The next observed moderation effects pertain to Modes of Shopping. After testing for moderation effects, for an alpha of 10%, moderation effects were not significant. Hence, for hypothesis H3a, H3b and H3c, the results didn’t support the hypothesis that Modes of Shopping moderate the relation between intention and behavior.

### 4.4.2. Median difference test

For hypothesis H4a, H4b and H4c, pertaining to prioritization of ethical concerns, we conducted a median difference test. This allows us to assess if the majority of the sample agree with PEC. A non-parametric Wilcoxon Rank Sum test was conducted, using a significance level of 1%.

For hypothesis H4a: **Ethical consumers prioritize ethical issues over others that also concern them**, H4b: **Ethical consumers have essential ethical concerns**, and H4c: **It is difficult to purchase according to secondary ethical concerns**, the \( p \) value was lower than 0.001, rejecting the null hypothesis. Hence, at a significance level of 1%, it’s possible to say that more than half of the population responded positively (above 4) to the measures.

We also tested another measure of PEC ("I have ethical concerns which are secondary at the moment of purchase."). No hypothesis pertained to this item, since it is already implied in H4a
and H4c, but analyzing this item would provide insights on the consistency of responses. We conducted the same test for this measure, and the $p$ value was lower than 0.005, also rejecting the null hypothesis. Hence, at a significance level of 5%, one can state that the majority of the sample also agree with having secondary ethical concerns.

From these results we can then conclude that the majority of the population responds positively to prioritizing one or two ethical issues over others that also concern them; to having essential and secondary ethical concerns at the moment of purchase and to finding it difficult to purchase according to secondary ethical concerns.

Hence, for H4a, H4b and H4c, the results support the hypothesis. Table 23 sums up the results obtained for each of the hypothesis.

### Table 23 – Results of the proposed hypothesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Statistical test</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formation of Plans and Habits</strong></td>
<td>H1: The formation of plans and habits mediates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td>Multiple regression analysis, mediation effects</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment and Sacrifice</td>
<td>H2: Willingness to commit and sacrifice moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td>Multiple regression analysis, moderation effects</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modes of Shopping Behavior</td>
<td>H3a: Effortful shopping moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption. H3b: Spontaneous shopping moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption. H3c: Rapid shopping moderates the relation between intention and behavior in ethical consumption.</td>
<td>Multiple regression analysis, moderation effects</td>
<td>Not Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritization of Ethical Concerns</td>
<td>H4a: Ethical consumers prioritize ethical issues over others that also concern them. H4b: Ethical consumers have essential ethical concerns. H4c: It is difficult to purchase according to secondary ethical concerns.</td>
<td>Median difference test</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
4.5. Cluster analysis

The measure of ethical concerns collected information on the ethical issues that concerned respondents and were related to their intention to purchase ethically. With data from this measure, a hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted to identify groups of respondents based on tendencies related to their ethical concerns.

Based on the dendrogram (Fig. 4) of the sample, we can see four biggest ramifications, hence four clusters of consumers were identified.

Figure 4 – Dendrogram resultant from the cluster analysis

These clusters are characterized based on the respondents’ tendencies to select or not select items of the list of ethical concerns. The results of this cluster analysis are presented in Table 24.
### Table 24 – Results of the cluster analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Tend to select</th>
<th>Tend NOT to select</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Animals first</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Products not tested on animals; Vegetarianism/veganism; Products without use of animal byproducts.</td>
<td>Product safety information provided National product; Fair trade product; Products without use of forced labor; Products without use of child labor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. National products and environment</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>National product Organic products Recycled or recyclable product/packaging</td>
<td>Products without use of forced labor; Products without use of animal byproducts; Genetically modified products; Fair trade product; Vegetarianism/veganism; Products not tested on animals; Products without use of child labor;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Humans first</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>Products without use of forced labor Products without use of child labor</td>
<td>Vegetarianism/veganism Products without use of animal byproducts (leather, wool, skin, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. All-around ethical</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>ALL OPTIONS, especially: Products without use of forced labor; Products without use of child labor; Products not tested on animals; Vegetarianism/veganism; Products without use of animal byproducts Fair trade product.</td>
<td>Product safety information provided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= 364

Source: Author

Based on the results, we have identified four clusters of consumers, which we attempt to describe based on the predominance of their choices.
1. **Animals first**: this cluster is composed of people with a tendency to select issues related to animal rights and to not select issues related to human rights, showing a preference for animal related ethical issues.

2. **National products and environment**: this group tends to select national products most frequently, followed by organic products and recycled or recyclable packaging. They tend not to select issues related to either animal or human rights or genetically modified products.

3. **Humans first**: this group tends to select issues related to human rights and to reject the single option of vegetarianism or veganism, showing a preference for labor related ethical issues.

4. **All-around ethical**: this group tends to select all items of the list. Most notably, there is a tendency to select all the options relation to animal and human rights. The issue less frequently selected is product safety information provided.
Chapter 5 – Discussion of Results

In the present chapter, we discuss the results obtained through the various methods of data analysis, namely Spearman's correlations, regression analysis and cluster analysis, and summarize the implications of these results.

Spearman's correlations

The majority of variables of this study are significantly correlated with each other and many showed moderate to high correlations. Surprisingly, intention and behavior showed significant correlations with all the variables of the model. Their highest correlations are precisely with the core constructs of Plans and Habits and Commitment and Sacrifice, and to having essential ethical concerns at the moment of purchase, a measure of PEC.

As Carrington et al. (2014) propose, the path of intention to behavior is influenced by Plans and Habits, Commitment and Sacrifice and Prioritization of Ethical Concerns. The strength of these correlations is evidence of that proposition. As values of intention and behavior increase, so do consumers’ accounts for theirs Plans and Habits, Commitment and Sacrifice and having essential ethical concerns; as intention and behavior decrease, so do the influencing factors.

The negative correlations of the study also corroborate this interpretation. Spontaneous shopping of unethical products decreased when accounts for intention, behavior, essential ethical concerns (PEC), Plans and Habits and Commitment and Sacrifice increased. Although these correlations are low, they are statistically significant.

We also observe that the measures of PEC are significantly correlated with each other, showing congruency in responses in this first assessment of the construct as proposed by Carrington et al. (2014).

Variables for Modes of Shopping show the least number of significant correlations of the model, however still provide relevant insights. Impulse shopping showed significant positive correlations with several variables of PEC. In other words, consumers who shop on an impulse find it difficult to purchase according to secondary concerns, have some ethical issues in their routine but not others that concern them and are committed to and make sacrifices for some issues but not others that concern them. Effort in shopping was also positively correlated with spontaneous shopping of unethical products. According to Carrington et al. (2014), effortful shopping may translate lack of planning, habits, commitment or sacrifice, which is also reflected in shopping on
an impulse. Although these correlations are low, they are statistically significant, and may be an interesting starting point for further research on modes of shopping.

Overall, the variables of the study which were based on qualitative findings are significant in quantitative measurements on a larger sample. Most of the influencing factors are strongly correlated with each other and with intention and behavior, and appear to suit quantitative assessments of the intention-behavior gap. Supported solely by findings of this correlation test, we can confirm the adequacy of adding these influencing factors to the TPB model of the I-B Gap in ethical consumption and for subsequent quantitative analysis that can provide generalized results.

*Regression analysis*

A regression analysis, performed to Plans and Habits, Commitment and Sacrifice and Modes of Shopping, allowed moderation and mediation effects to be tested. Consistent with extant literature on plans (Carrington et al., 2010; Hassan et al., 2016) and literature on habits (Potthoff et al., 2017), we test the influencing factor Plans and Habits as a mediator in the I-B gap.

Similarly to Hassan et al. (2016) who showed plans to have a mediating effect in the relationship between intention and behavior, and Potthoff et al. (2017) who reached the same conclusion for habits, we expected the merged construct of Plans and Habits to show similar results, and indeed, it did. In the present model and empirical research, Plans and Habits mediated the relationship between intention and behavior.

Forming plans and habits is therefore shown to be an integral part of the path from intention to behavior. Continual plans to purchase ethically create habits that reinforce those intended actions (Carrington et al., 2014). In this model, intention was shown to better predict ethical purchases when consumers engaged in behaviors such as searching for ethical products and unethical behaviors of firms, going to establishments where they know will find ethical products and repeating the purchase of products they know to be ethical. Simply put, behaviors linked to plans and habits help determine when intentions to buy ethically will result in buying ethically.

Similar extrapolations can be made for Commitment and Sacrifice. Consistent with previous findings on commitment within the TPB model (Conner et al., 2000; Doll & Ajzen, 1992; Sheeran et al., 1999) and sacrifice in the context of attitude and intention (Hutter & Hoffmann, 2013), both have been tested and proven as moderators. In this model, Commitment and Sacrifice was shown to moderate the intention-behavior relationship, though this was not a full moderation effect. In other words, the main effects of intention in predicting behavior are also significant when
the variable of Commitment and Sacrifice is removed. Even though this moderation effect is not as strong, we can still state that consumers who are committed to ethical consumption and are willing to sacrifice price or shortened choice of products tend to better translate their intention into ethical purchases.

Overall, these results confirm that Carrington’s et al. (2014) findings and propositions are statistically significant in a regression analysis of the I-B gap, with Commitment and Sacrifice as a moderator and Plans and Habits as a meditator.

**Median difference test**

In the assessment of Prioritization of ethical concerns, we have found that the majority of participants responded positively to measures of PEC. In other words, when asking participants if they prioritize some ethical issues over others that also concern them, if they have essential and secondary ethical concerns at the moment of purchase and if they find it difficult to purchase according to their secondary ethical concerns, more than half of the population agreed.

Analysis of the construct of PEC could prove a turning point in research on ethical consumption. Very few studies have considered consumers’ multiple ethical concerns, and those studies don’t portray the construct of Prioritization as extensively as Carrington et al. (2014). The lack of reference for this construct shows that studies on ethical consumption don’t account for the fact that a single consumer may have several ethical concerns simultaneously, and that the priorities they set for each of those concerns may determine where and when they fall on the intention-behavior gap.

Measurements and items in ethical consumption are generally confined to either environmental concerns or a single ethical issue such as sweatshop clothing (see Hassan et al., 2016), fair trade (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005), e-waste recycling (Echegaray & Hansstein, 2017) or organic products (Chekima et al., 2017), among others. By also assessing a single ethical issue at a time, studies don’t consider the consumer’s endeavors and successes in behaviors with other types of ethical issues. As one ethical oriented behavior tends to spill over other areas of consumption patterns (Thøgersen & Ölander, 2003), continuing to assess ethical consumption one issue at a time may diminish our understanding of consumer behavior as a whole and of potential consumer segments and markets. Hence, confirming this construct of prioritization of ethical concerns sheds light on the need to integrate more ethical issues in studies of ethical consumption.
and to understand how those different concerns weigh on the consumer’s purchasing decisions and behaviors.

Cluster analysis

The cluster analysis also provides relevant insights for prioritization of ethical concerns, as well as studies of ethical consumption in general. We have identified four clusters based on the ethical issues selected – a first cluster is mostly inclined to animal rights, a second to national products and environment, a third is concerned with human rights and a final cluster is concerned with all the ethical issues presented in the survey.

These groups express concerns with several and different ethical concerns simultaneously, which may highlight the importance of measuring the weight of each of these concerns on consumer’s actual consumption patterns. It also highlights the diversity of ethical concerns in a relatively small sample of 364 respondents, a diversity which would be lost had the study centered its measurements on one specific ethical theme.

Implications of these results

By testing this model and constructs of the intention-behavior gap in ethical consumption proposed by Carrington et al. (2014), we have shown, through several statistical tests, that this model and results are confirmed on a larger sample of ethical consumers through quantitative analysis. Though these results cannot be generalized due to sampling criteria, they provide valuable insights for both marketers and scholars.

Understanding how these factors influence the ethical intention-behavior gap allows marketers to more precisely identify the obstacles and difficulties found in purchasing ethically aligned products. The issue of prioritization may indicate a higher demand for single products that integrate several ethical issues, to avoid conflicts of prioritization. This is especially evidenced by the second largest cluster of the sample, the all-around ethical, which tend to show concern for all ethical issues.

A possible solution would be to supply ethical products that respond to several ethical attributes simultaneously, for example, personal hygiene products or clothing items, that integrate environmental, animal and labor friendly practices. Some of these more complete integrations of CSR are already on the market, see, for example, One Green Planet’s (One Green Planet, 2018) list of clothing brands that meet sustainability, fair-trade and cruelty-free criteria. Yet, obstacles
related to ethical consumption like the need for information search (Davis, 1987) or reduced convenience (Memery, Megicks, & Williams, 2005) may be excluding a whole group of consumers who intend to purchase ethically but fail to develop plans and habits or to commit and sacrifice. By working on accessibility and information to more consumers, one could significantly reduce the need for planning in ethical intention-behavior gap or the need to sacrifice convenience or prices (Maignan, 2001). Another obstacle that could be appointed to ethical consumption is the fact that some studies discourage the communication of CSR practices (Morsing et al., 2008; Yoon et al., 2006), when in fact this could be beneficial to lead more consumers to purchasing responsibly.

We have also provided valuable insights for future research, which can draw from these findings to conduct conclusive research and extrapolate generalized results. We have shown the relevance of assessing the construct of Prioritization of ethical concerns for future studies of Intention-behavior Gap, and to portray a broader view of ethical consumption. We have also provided initial insights on the operationalization of the constructs of PEC and the merged construct of Plans and Habits, as well as insights on moderation and mediation effects of Plans and Habits and Commitment and Sacrifice in the I-B Gap of ethical consumption.

Modes of Shopping did not show moderation effects, nor strong correlations with other variables. Although these results are discouraging, these could be due to methodological flaws. As we’ve highlighted in 2.2.3, the decision-making process of ethical consumption often differs from average consumption, and understanding shopping orientation or modes of shopping is highly valuable for uncovering patterns of shopping, alternative evaluation and product selection (Brown, Pope, & Voges, 2003). In the case of ethical consumption, modes of shopping may translate gaps in the relationship between intention and behavior (Carrington et al, 2014). As highlighted by Gram (2010), consumers are not always aware of their behavior at the moment of purchase, due to the role played by routines and habits, occurring negotiations or unwillingness to account for their purchases. This likely makes self-reported behaviors unreliable and rather calls for observational research methods, which could be integrated in future studies of this construct.

The next chapter summarizes the present study and discusses its main contributions, limitations and suggestions for future research.
Chapter 6 – Conclusions

Having presented and discussed the results of the quantitative analysis, we now introduce the final chapter, in which we summarize the research and its major contributions, reflect on its limitations and suggest directions for future research.

6.1. Summary

The present study on Consumer Social Responsibility aimed to investigate why consumers intend to purchase ethically, but often fail to do so. This relates to what is known in the literature as the intention-behavior gap. Studies of this gap are most often supported on the Theory of Planned Behavior, which explains intention and behavior and other variables that may affect the relation between them (Ajzen, 1991). The current models of TPB find intentions to precede behavior, yet intending to do something doesn’t necessarily translate into behavior. Other variables may be affecting the relation between these two constructs, and as such, recent literature on the I-B gap is focused on the addition of further constructs as moderators and mediators of this relationship (Caruana et al., 2016).

Given the need for quantitative studies in this field, we employ a quantitative methodology and follow the recommended approach of supporting the study’s hypothesis on previous qualitative findings (Hassan et al., 2016). Since we lack reference for the operationalization of the model we proposed to test, and aimed to portray ethical consumption in general in the I-B gap and not the common approach of a single ethical issue, we drew insights and measurements directly from qualitative findings, which support the choice of an exploratory research design. This type of research is often considered the initial step that leads to further studies of a conclusive nature (Singh, 2007).

We thus test, on a larger sample, the model of the intention-behavior gap in ethical consumption proposed by Carrington et al. (2014), and assess moderation and mediation effects of the proposed influencing factors. We hypothesize that Plans and Habits mediate the relation between intention and behavior and that Commitment and Sacrifice and Modes of Shopping moderate this relationship. For lack of reference for Prioritization of ethical concerns, both at a theoretical level as well as for operationalization of the construct, we survey consumer’s agreement to this phenomenon and conduct a median difference test.
The results show that Plans and Habits, as a merged construct, mediate the relation between intention and behavior. Commitment and Sacrifice was found to moderate the I-B relation, although this moderation is not complete. No moderation effects of Modes of Shopping were found. For Prioritization of ethical concerns, we found that the majority of the population respond positively to its measures, and the items of Prioritization of ethical concerns showed significant correlations with most variables of this model.

By assessing ethical consumption in general, we have collected insights related to the ethical concerns of the population surveyed. We presented a list of ethical concerns that range from human and animal rights to environmental concerns, consumer safety and national products, and ask consumers which issues pertain to their intention to purchase ethically. From this measure, we were able to conduct a cluster analysis and found four significant clusters in the population that translate the priority of ethical issues: (1) animals first, (2) national products and environment, (3) humans first, and (4) all-around ethical.

6.2. Contributions of the present research

The major contributions of this research is in providing evidence of Carrington’s et al. (2014) findings and propositions on a larger sample using quantitative methods.

We have proved that the merged construct of Plans and Habits, which is still understudied, shows mediation effects in this model of the intention-behavior relationship. We confirmed that actions translating both Commitment and Sacrifice in ethical consumption are found to moderate the intention-behavior relationship. We have provided initial data and results for the proposed construct of prioritization of ethical concerns, and evidenced agreement to the construct. The overall correlations, effects and evidence of agreement, prove that this specific model and its constructs are consistent with and relevant to the I-B gap, indicating a strong potential for generalization.

In sum, this empirical contribution provides valuable findings for understanding the segment of socially responsible consumers, ethical consumption in general, the extension of the TBP model and measurements of unexplored constructs of the I-B gap. We provide evidence for prioritization of ethical concerns, which are still not addressed in quantitative research, and broaden our understanding of plans, habits, commitment, sacrifice and modes of shopping in ethical consumption.
These insights on ethical consumption have relevance for both scholars and marketers. Scholars may draw from these findings and mitigate the methodological flaws appointed in this research, to test its findings in a representative sample. Marketers should derive insights from the effects of these influencing factors to develop strategies that facilitate the purchase of their ethical products and mitigate obstacles to those purchases.

On a broader interpretation, these findings once again show ethical consumption to be a complex process, but nonetheless possible to uncover. Our study shows that consumers who are more likely to turn their intentions into ethical purchases are the ones who have planned and developed habits of ethical consumption, and who are willing to commit to ethical consumption and to sacrifice prices or choice of products for those concerns. We also show that consumers who have essential ethical concerns at the moment of purchase are also the ones forming more plans and habits, committing and sacrificing more for ethical consumption and overall demonstrating higher intention and behavior, which means that factors related to Prioritization of ethical concerns could offer many explanations for why intentions don’t translate into behavior when purchasing ethically. Therefore, the core items tested offer strong explanations of the consumers’ intention and behavior in ethical purchases, and serve to confirm the adequacy of this model to the context of socially responsible consumption.

In the next topic, we cover the limitations that can be appointed to the present study and directions for future research based on these findings.

6.3. Limitations and future research

The present research is nonetheless affected by faults and limitations. One of the limitation is the fact that intention and behavior are measured at the same point in time, a decision made due to time and resources constrains. Although this is possible (Ajzen, 2018), is not the most accurate way of measuring the intention-behavior relationship (Hassan et al., 2016). Another methodological flaw relates to the violation of Sutton’s (1998) guideline of scale correspondence, since we measured intentions for “the next time you shop” and behavior with “how frequently”. Also, we acknowledge that the measure of Plans more closely relates to the construct of information search, hence future research should rely on more adequate measures of this construct.

Another limitation needs to be pointed to the research design and its’ assessment of Prioritization of Ethical Concerns. By asking participants if they prioritize one or two ethical
concerns over others, we can grasp the general agreement and disagreement, but are unable to account for the reasons underlying the negative responses. For example, disagreement could come from a consumer who is concerned with only one ethical issue, and thus has no need to set priorities, the same way it can come from a consumer who is concerned with several ethical issues and able to translate all those concerns into purchases, also eliminating the need to prioritize. To mitigate this, we introduced items of PEC linked to the other influencing factors, to specifically ask consumers if they prioritize when making plans, when creating habits, when committing and making sacrifices for ethical concerns. Although we have found significant correlations of these items as well, we argue that this construct could benefit from a specific research design in the I-B gap, which allows for separation of ethical concerns into primary and secondary and assessing intention and behavior for both. Future research can further explore the issue of prioritization of ethical concerns at a theoretical level or by providing generalized results in conclusive research.

Another limitation which is common in studies of this nature, and to which this research may not be immune, is social desirability bias. Similarly to Hassan et al. (2016) and Andorfer and Liebe (2012), we acknowledge the possibility that intentions are inflated by respondents’ desire to appear more ethical, which may skew the results from reality.

Also, by identifying clusters based solely on ethical concerns, this cluster analysis only provides preliminary findings. It would be interesting to observe clusters based on intention, behavior and the other influencing factors, yet this task is of a magnitude beyond the scope of the present study. Future research should attempt to segment consumers based on these constructs of the I-B gap, to improve our understanding of the socially responsible consumer’s profile.

The fact that the sample was based on judgmental and convenience sampling methods, which are non-probabilistic, means these findings cannot be generalized. Future studies could attempt to build valid measures of the merged construct of Plans and Habits and test this effect on I-B gap using probabilistic samples to potentiate generalized results.

Another direction for future research could be related to the scope of the ethical issues. We point to the lack of measurements that can portray ethical consumption in general which lead to a need to be supported on Carrington’s et al. (2014) findings and disperse operationalization of the constructs. Future studies could provide validated scales or measurements to be used in the context of the I-B gap for ethical consumption in general. This would provide valuable knowledge for both multiple and singular ethical issues, while guaranteeing the validity of the measures.
Overall, we urge researchers to continue to explore the I-B gap in ethical consumption, by generalizing these results or adding further constructs to the TPB model, and urge marketers to address these identified obstacles in ethical consumption to impulse a market more supported on social responsibility.
References


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Appendix

Questionnaire

Consumo Ético

O presente estudo foi desenvolvido no âmbito da dissertação do Mestrado em Marketing e Estratégia e pretende estudar os hábitos e a experiência de consumo ético. Todas as informações recolhidas são anónimas, confidenciais e exclusivamente para fins académicos. O preenchimento deste questionário demora entre 5 e 6 minutos.

Muito obrigado, desde já, pela sua participação!

Ser um consumidor ético significa comprar produtos que foram produzidos de forma ética e que não prejudicam o ambiente e a sociedade. Pode ser tão simples quanto comprar ovos de galinhas criadas ao ar livre ou lâmpadas de eficiência energética, ou tão complexo como boicotar produtos produzidos por trabalho infantil. Incluem produtos biológicos, de comércio justo (fair trade), reciclados, vegetarianos/veganos, reciclados e energias renováveis (…)

Adaptado de The Guardian

O presente questionário pretende compreender melhor o consumo ético. Por favor, responda com sinceridade.

Tem intenção de comprar produtos por motivos éticos da próxima vez que fizer compras?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Intenção nenhuma  ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Intenção máxima
Tem intenção de comprar em relação a que questões éticas? Selecione todas as que se apliquem.

☐ Produtos não testados em animais
☐ Vegetarianismo/Veganismo
☐ Produtos sem materiais de origem animal (ex. couro, lã, pele, etc.)
☐ Produto biodegravível
☐ Produtos biológicos
☐ Redução de emissões de gases
☐ Produto/embalagem reciclados ou recicláveis
☐ Informação disponível acerca da segurança do produto
☐ Produto de origem nacional
☐ Produtos de comércio justo (fair trade)
☐ Produção sem exploração de mão de obra
☐ Produção sem trabalho infantil
☐ Produtos geneticamente modificados
☐ Outro(s): ________________

Com que frequência compra produtos por motivos éticos?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Nunca comprei  ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Compro sempre
Alguns consumidores desejam comprar de acordo com várias questões éticas. Por exemplo, querem comprar apenas produtos que respeitem os direitos humanos e dos trabalhadores, os direitos dos animais e o meio ambiente. No entanto, na hora da compra, priorizam uma ou duas dessas preocupações, que consideram fundamentais, e sentem dificuldade em comprar de acordo com as suas preocupações éticas secundárias (menos importantes).

Indique o nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações, sendo "1-Discordo fortemente" e "7-Conordo fortemente"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nível</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Quando compre, dou prioridade a uma ou duas questões éticas em relação a outras que também me preocupam.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tenho preocupações éticas que são essenciais no momento da compra.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tenho preocupações éticas secundárias no momento da compra.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sinto dificuldade em comprar do acordo com preocupações éticas secundárias.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Avalie a frequência com que as seguintes afirmações descrevem o seu comportamento, sendo “1-Nunca” e “7-Sempre”.

*Quando desejo comprar um produto...*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nível de conveniência</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Procuro informação (internet, terceiros, etc.) sobre produtos e/ou marcas éticas antes do momento da compra.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Procuro informação sobre comportamento anti-ético de marcas/empresas desse tipo de produto antes do momento da compra.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Repito a compra de produtos que já sei serem éticos.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Dirijo-me a estabelecimentos onde já sei encontrar produtos éticos.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indique o nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações, sendo "1-Discoordo fortemente" e "7-Concordo fortemente".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nível de concordância</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Faço planos com sucesso para algumas questões éticas, mas não para outras que também me preocupam.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Comprar de forma ética faz parte da minha rotina.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Algumas questões éticas fazem parte da minha rotina de compra e outras que também me preocupam não fazem.</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Avalie a frequência com que as seguintes afirmações descrevem o seu comportamento, sendo "1-Nunca" e "7-Sempre".

**Compro um produto ético...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. mesmo que seja mais caro do que as alternativas menos éticas.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. mesmo que a escolha de produtos seja reduzida</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Indique o nível de concordância com as seguintes afirmações, sendo "1-Discordo fortemente" e "7-Concordo fortemente":**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Estou comprometido(a) a comprar de forma ética para algumas questões éticas, mas não para outras que também me preocupam.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Faço sacrifícios (estética, conveniência ou preço) para algumas questões éticas, mas não para outras que também me preocupam.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Avalie a frequência com que as seguintes afirmações descrevem as suas experiências de compra, sendo "1-Nunca" e "7-Sempre".

No momento da compra (na loja, estabelecimento, mercado, etc.)...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Demoro muito tempo a comprar produtos éticos.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Compro produtos não-éticos por impulso.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Compro produtos de forma rápida para as minhas preocupações éticas mais importantes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lembramos que as informações providenciadas são anônimas, confidenciais e para uso exclusivo académico.

Idade:

Género:
- [ ] Feminino
- [ ] Masculino
- [ ] Outro

Nível de escolaridade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensino Primário</th>
<th>Ensino Básico</th>
<th>Ensino Secundário</th>
<th>Licenciatura</th>
<th>Mestrado</th>
<th>Doutoramento</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ocupação:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trabalhador</th>
<th>Estudante</th>
<th>Trabalhador-Estudante</th>
<th>Reformado</th>
<th>Desempregado</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Rendimento mensal individual:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Até 50€</th>
<th>51-100€</th>
<th>101-200€</th>
<th>201-500€</th>
<th>501-1000€</th>
<th>1001-2000€</th>
<th>Acima de 2000€</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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