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Effects of Personality, Environmental and Health Consciousness on Understanding the Anti-Consumption Attitudes

Ramazan KAYNAK ^{a *}, Sevgi EKŞİ ^a

^aGebze Institute of Technology, Faculty of Business Administration, Cayirova Campus, 41400 Gebze-Kocaeli-Turkey

Abstract

Considering the fact that personal and social awareness of individuals matures, the anti-consumption attitudes become more common. In this context, this study aims to reveal the main motivators behind anti-consumption attitudes by focusing on the relationships among personality dimensions, environmental consciousness, health consciousness and anti-consumption. A Structural Equation Model is developed to examine the factors that impact anti-consumption attitudes. Studying on the explanatory impacts of personality dimensions on anti-consumption, environmental consciousness and health consciousness are included into the model as moderators. 503 questionnaires are collected to analyse the relationships among the model variables. While SPSS 18.0 is used for all data screening tests, exploratory factor analysis and reliability statistics, LISREL-8.51 Statistical Program is used for measurement and structural model assessments. The study reveals several crucial findings related to significant impacts of proposed antecedents on anti-consumption attitudes. First, it is found that among the personality dimensions responsibility consciousness has significant effects on both environmental consciousness and health consciousness. Secondly, agreeableness is also found to have positive significant effects on environmental consciousness and health consciousness as the most explanatory variable. Lastly, both health and environmental consciousness have positive significant impacts on anti-consumption attitudes of anti-consumers.

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1. Introduction

Studies about anti-consumption have increased recently especially to reveal consumers' capability of resisting consumerism imposed by companies. As Iyer and Muncy (2008) emphasize in their study, while defining anti-consumption different approaches and various motivations for anti-consumption have been researched hitherto. Anti-consumption practices occur in a great deal of forms; consumer rebellion, consumer resistance, boycotting, counter-cultural movements and non-consumption (Cherrier, 2009). The common characteristic of all these forms is to resist against the strength and impacts of consumer culture which is perceived as main cause of environmental and health deterioration (Chen & Chai, 2010; Goodwin et al., 1997). Most of the studies focusing on this topic have

* Corresponding author: Sevgi Ekşi. Tel.: +90-505-633-7168

E-mail address: sevgi.oruc@gmail.com

mainly dealt with the outcomes of anti-consumption and consume resistance (McDonald et al., 2006). In order to understand anti-consumption more effectively there should be much more contribution to this field in terms of exploring the main motives behind anti-consumption and this study will explore the main motives behind anti-consumption.

2. Theoretical Background

Personality could be described as internal factors such as dispositions and interpersonal strategies that explain individuals' behaviours and the unique and relatively stable patterns of behaviours, thoughts, and emotions shown by individuals (Hogan et al., 1996). From the perspective of traits, it is widely accepted that personality is best conceptualized in terms of a five-factor model comprising the dimensions of extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness and neuroticism (e.g., Goldberg, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 1992).

Extraversion is associated with gregariousness, excitement seeking, activity, assertiveness, warmth, and positive emotions (McCrae & Costa, 1992). Their aforementioned traits lead them to be social and enthusiastic. Enjoying human interactions and caring society increase introverts' interests for ecological sustainability and society's health.

H1a. Extraversion will be positively associated with health consciousness.

H1b. Extraversion will be positively associated with environmental consciousness.

Openness to new experience is described with terms such as high levels of imagination, intellectual curiosity, tolerance for diversity, aesthetic interest, depth of emotions, and willingness to experiment (McCrae & Costa, 1992). Since these people are mainly driven by new and diverse experiences, they are willing to increase their health consciousness by researching new and alternative cures or treatments more for contributing both their own and society's health. Their curiosity also leads them to support alternative and new ways to decrease the environmental deterioration and find alternative, renewable resources for environmental sustainability.

H2a. Openness to new experience will be positively associated with health consciousness.

H2b. Openness to new experience will be positively associated with environmental consciousness.

Individuals having high agreeableness level tend to display higher levels of compliance, altruism, modesty, trust, straight-forwardness, and tender-mindedness (McCrae & Costa, 1992). These traits lead people having higher levels of agreeableness to comply with the rules of society. Their altruism increases their support for society's health; they shape their consumption attitudes in accordance with society's concerns. Since interpersonal relationships and society are really important for them, they could not adopt the consumption alternatives ignoring their negative effects on environment by considering group incongruity and negative self perception.

H3a. Agreeableness will be positively associated with health consciousness.

H3b. Agreeableness will be positively associated with environmental consciousness.

Conscientiousness factor of personality could be related with self-discipline, deliberation, dutifulness, order, competence, and achievement striving. Conscientious individuals are aware of their responsibilities towards society. Therefore, they shape their lifestyles considering their health and support the activities contributing society's health. Moreover, their responsibility consciousness increases their interest for environmental sustainability and they tend to consume less and choose greener alternatives taking the limited resources into consideration.

H4a. Conscientiousness will be positively associated with health consciousness.

H4b. Conscientiousness will be positively associated with environmental consciousness.

Neuroticism is characterized with high levels of anxiety, angry hostility, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, vulnerability, and depression (McCrae & Costa, 1992). Their impulsiveness and anxiety hinder people high on neuroticism from caring about their own health as well as society's health related concerns. Their angry hostility also paralyzes them in terms of prioritizing environmental issues while shaping their choices.

H5a. Neuroticism will be negatively associated with health consciousness.

H5b. Neuroticism will be negatively associated with environmental consciousness.

2.1. *Environmental Consciousness*

Schlegelmilch et al. (1996) describe environmental consciousness as a motive raising individuals' awareness of the negative environmental outcomes associated with humankind careless behaviors as well as companies, products or brands and reshaping their attitudes and behaviors in order to decrease hazards of these agents' operations upon nature. Environmentally conscious consumers are more likely to support anti-consumption by caring for nature since they believe that their avoidance of consumption might provide benefit for the society and world (Cherrier, 2009; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008). Moreover, most boycotts transforming anti-consumptional tendencies to activism are supported by consumers who have social and ecological concerns (Diermeier & Van Mieghem, 2008).

H6. Environmental Consciousness has a positive impact on anti-consumptional attitudes of individuals.

2.2. *Health Consciousness*

Health consciousness is a concept reflecting a person's readiness to do something to his/her own health. Health conscious individuals are aware of and concerned about their wellness. They are motivated to improve and maintain their quality of life by engaging in healthy behaviors and being self-conscious about health (Kraft & Goodell, 1993; Newsom et al., 2005). Thus, health conscious consumers have a consistent preference for healthier alternatives of products (Jayanti & Burns, 1998; Cherrier, 2009). Furthermore, consumption of products or brands harming society's health may be perceived as an immoral behavior and lead to moral incongruity (Lee et al., 2009).

H7. Health Consciousness has a positive impact on anti-consumptional attitudes of individuals.

3. Method

Research data were collected by means of a survey, totally, 518 questionnaires were collected; however, fifteen questionnaires were dropped because of missing data. Fifty two percent of the respondents ($n = 260$) were male while forty eight percent of the respondents were female ($n = 243$). In addition, 69% ($n = 348$) of the respondents indicated that they are at least bachelor's degree holders.

The personality scale used in this study is adapted from were adapted from the study of Costa and McCrae (1992). In order to evaluate environmental consciousness of the consumers, we used a scale including five items adapted from New Environmental Paradigm-NEP (Roberts and Bacon, 1997). For the measurement of health consciousness, the scale reexamined in Hong's study (2009) proposed by Dutta-Bergman (2004b, 2006, 2007) was included in the survey. Anti-consumption scale was adapted from the studies of Iyer and Muncy (2008), Lee et al. (2009) and Klein et al. (2001) covering the four subgroups of anti-consumption; voluntary simplicity, global impact consumers, anti-loyalty and market activism.

4. Results

In order to evaluate internal consistency and all scales dimensionality both exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis were conducted. Varimax rotation procedure was used for exploratory factor analysis in which all factor loadings are above 0.40. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value which is 0,909 and Barlett's Sphericity test

result, 8160,594, assure the adequacy of sample. For evaluating reliability and internal consistency of the scales, Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability results were scrutinized. Moreover, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were also substantiated for evaluating discriminant validity. All of the results support the acceptances of scales in terms of reliability and internal consistency since they are above .70.

Table 1 presents the reliabilities, means, standard deviations and construct correlations. According to the correlation analysis, all constructs were correlated with each other at the 0.01 level.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted, Standart Deviations, Means and Correlations

	<i>Alpha</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>AVE</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Sd</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. <i>Extraversion</i>	0,861	0.899	0.601	3,925	0,780	1,000							
2. <i>Openness to new experience</i>	0,807	0.863	0.514	3,871	0,715	,526**	1,000						
3. <i>Conscientiousness</i>	0,840	0.884	0.523	4,115	0,639	,447**	,537**	1,000					
4. <i>Agreeableness</i>	0,858	0.897	0.593	4,246	0,665	,416**	,470**	,639**	1,000				
5. <i>Neuroticism</i>	0,782	0.853	0.541	2,705	0,888	-,128**	-,145**	-,162**	-,190**	1,000			
6. <i>Health consciousness</i>	0,759	0.849	0.588	4,213	0,709	,336**	,358**	,459**	,533**	-,095*	1,000		
7. <i>Environmental consciousness</i>	0,724	0.829	0.551	4,065	0,725	,198**	,201**	,300**	,329**	-,085*	,356**	1,000	
8. <i>Anti consumption</i>	0,770	0.834	0.386	4,046	0,622	,296**	,333**	,467**	,463**	-,137**	,601**	,482**	1,000

All factor loadings in the confirmatory factor analysis, which was conducted with Lisrel 8.54, were significant at the 0.01 level and all individual reliabilities were above 0.4, the required value (Bagozzi and Baumgartner, 1994). The hypotheses were tested by using structural equation modeling through LISREL 8.54 (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1993). The fit of the data to the proposed model was quite good. The path coefficients results among the variables and the goodness of fit indices are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Structural Path Coefficients in The Structural Equation Model and Goodness of Fit Indices

<i>Structural Paths</i>	β
<i>Openness to new experience</i> → <i>Health Consciousness</i>	-0.00
<i>Openness to new experience</i> → <i>Environmental Consciousness</i>	0.01
<i>Extraversion</i> → <i>Health Consciousness</i>	0.04
<i>Extraversion</i> → <i>Environmental Consciousness</i>	-0.00
<i>Conscientiousness</i> → <i>Health Consciousness</i>	0.15*
<i>Conscientiousness</i> → <i>Environmental Consciousness</i>	0.21*
<i>Agreeableness</i> → <i>Health Consciousness</i>	0.58**
<i>Agreeableness</i> → <i>Environmental Consciousness</i>	0.35**
<i>Neuroticism</i> → <i>Health Consciousness</i>	0.06
<i>Neuroticism</i> → <i>Environmental Consciousness</i>	-0.03
<i>Health Consciousness</i> → <i>Anti-consumption</i>	0.56**
<i>Environmental Consciousness</i> → <i>Anti-consumption</i>	0.43**
$\chi^2/df=3,99$; $RMSEA=0.07$; CF	$I=0.94$; $IFI=0.94$; $NNFI=0.93$

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to examine the moderating roles of health consciousness and environmental consciousness on the relationship between personality dimensions and anti-consumption. The results show that responsibility consciousness and agreeableness correlate positively with health consciousness and environmental consciousness. These findings comply with the findings of previous studies (Webb, Mohr and Harris, 2008; Brinkmann and Peattie, 2008)

The literature on anti-consumption suggests that if individuals have higher level of health consciousness, they shape their lifestyle and preferences to support their well-being; therefore they are prone to consume less for their wellness (Dutta, 2004b). The results also prove that environmentally conscious consumers tend to have anti-consumptional attitudes, as well. Furthermore, individuals care about environmental issues such as limited natural resources and welfare of all species have socially responsible attitudes towards consumption culture and they resist against overconsumption (Webb, Mohr and Harris, 2008).

The future studies could focus on the other individual motives behind anti-consumption such as cultural values besides they could classify and differentiate the anti-consumptional attitudes of individuals in terms of the main anti-consumption motives differentiation and the impacts of anti-consumption upon companies and brand personality.

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