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Consumo Sostenible en Canadá. Un estudio teórico sobre los factores determinantes para el desarrollo de la Economía Social en Canadá.

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***Consumo Sostenible en Canadá. Un estudio teórico sobre los factores determinantes para el desarrollo de la Economía Social en Canadá.*** , de IKRAM BOUTAYIB LAMRAYAH

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**FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS EMPRESARIALES**

**TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO**

**GRADO EN ADMINISTRACIÓN Y DIRECCIÓN DE EMPRESAS**

**Sustainable Consumption in Canada. A theoretical study  
of the key factors for the development of Social  
Economy in Canada.**

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**Abstract:**

*This Bachelor's Thesis concerns the field of Social economy and sustainable consumption, its acknowledgement and its application in Canada. The purpose of this research is to investigate the behavior of the Canadian consumer regarding sustainable products. In order to achieve this objective, a study of the background of the Canadian context has been conducted. This paper further describes the public policy of social economy, being proved to be an efficient tool to define crucial concerns, such as environmental sustainability, poverty reduction, social inclusion or even the creation of employment. This study will address the sustainable development strategies used by the Canadian government, which are integrated into the decision making of Canada's Industry. Five types of social enterprises co-exist in Canada: cooperatives, non-profit organizations, community development, indigenous businesses and businesses with social mission. Each model is being defined and explained. This work determines the factors affecting consumers' sustainable consumption and the cultural differences in the knowledge, behavior and attitudes of Canadians. Furthermore, an experiment is conducted in the form of a survey, elaborated to find what makes students in Canada purchase sustainable products. Finally, a conclusion is provided regarding the acknowledgment of Canada's case.*

**Key words:** *Social Economy, Sustainable consumption, Eco-friendly products, Social enterprises, Canada.*

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# CHAPTER 1

## 1. Introduction

All human beings have basic needs, and we all must satisfy them; therefore, we buy goods in order to cover those needs. Those goods are food, where to live, clothes, services... The problem is, that most of the individuals buy more than they really need. Thus, we are talking about consumerism, that consumption turns into an excessive habit of buying. Making us and the resources that satisfy our needs used in an unsuitable way that can bring devastating consequences.

If we look from the economic, social and environmental perspective, we can find out that the system of consumption we are employing today is unsustainable. It brings severe consequences such as environmental pollution (making the future of the planet in risk). Wealth distribution is not fair (the system of consumerism makes rich people go richer and poor people even poorer than they are), the labor exploitation, the overexploitation of natural resources...

It is our responsibility to stop or at least moderate our consumption behavior because those economic, social and environmental impacts are caused by us and we are going to suffer the consequences in the future.

Experts are trying to find an answer to these problems, and a solution would be to use a different system of the economy more directed to the social path. As a matter of fact, this topic has gained relevance in the last years. Governments not only in developed countries but also the ones that are developing start to be more engaged and trying to include social policies. In the last decades, an evolution in pro-environmental knowledge is positively developing. Sustainable development is a term that everybody likes, but not everybody understands. Therefore, this thesis try to present how in a country is promoted an environmentally committed citizenship, for this reason we will look deeper into two critical aspects in Canada: social economy and sustainable consumption.

When we talk about the social economy, Canada can share a wealth of knowledge. This thesis will bring information about the social economy, its background, social enterprises, and sustainable consumption. Social economy and sustainable consumption are both sides of the same coin, ofert and deman, of a new economic understanding to defire development models for a country/region in a more sustainable way.

To make sure the economy grows is to ensure some environmental problems, such as climate change, pollution of water, overpopulation, deforestation, the disappearance of some plants and animals, desertification, etc. Thus, a significant question becomes urgent: how to ensure economic growth at the same time as ensuring environmental safety?

The aim of this study is to gain a better understanding of the Canadian development model. The laws of government, enterprises, main actors, movements, and individuals' behaviors and attitudes towards environmental issues, where the sustainable development includes key criteria: meeting the needs of the present generation, a threat to the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, the ability of each person to develop themselves in freedom, in a well-balanced society and harmony with the environment.

Regarding this paper's structure, the first part serves as an introduction to this research, providing an insight into what the study aims to reach and what is discussed in each part.

The second part defines and discusses the origins of the social economy. Also emphasizes in the Canadian background, briefly addressing its political, economic, social situation. And explaining the beginning of social economy in the North American country, which started in Québec, whose government is strongly committed with social economy and which is building a people-centered economy, referring with this to an economy that puts human life, environmental well-being and social development above every kind of capital interests. Including an analysis about the policy instruments and proposals used by the Canadian government to implant the new model of the economy, in which we'll explain how entrepreneurs in Canada are starting to generate responsible practices for people and for the environment. This part also explores the strategies that Canada's government is implementing, which consists of partnering with key associates to promote all the benefits that sustainable development brings with itself.

The third part names and discusses all social enterprises existing in Canada. Depending on which one of the regions we are talking about, either Atlantic Canada, Québec, Ontario, Western Canada or the territories of the North, it could be one kind of social enterprise or another. As it is implanted in each region in a distinct way, due to the variety of cultures.

The fourth part discusses factors affecting sustainable consumption of consumers and the cultural differences in the knowledge, behavior, and attitudes of Canadian consumers.

The fifth part includes an analytical study in the form of a survey that aims to investigate what makes and what prevents students in Canada to buy sustainable products.

And finally, to close this thesis, a series of conclusions will be presented to address all the relevant aspects of this research.

## **2. Origins of social economy**

We can relate the expression of "Social Economy" to the 19th century. Experts consider SE to be created in 1844 in the United Kingdom by "Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society", which is regarded as the first cooperative making the first modern example of social economy. The concept itself refers to a mutual association or to a cooperative and it gained huge knowledge in 1830 when Charles Dunoyer (French economist, journalist, and author.

He authored various works on political economy and history) published “Nouveau Traité d'économie sociale”.

When we talk about Social Economy, the word social focuses on the kind of ownership. By social, we mean ownerships are not by shareholders but by individuals. Thus, it follows the policy of one human, one vote. And the activities we talk about could be in every sector; agriculture, manufacturing, social services, accountancy...

The kind of social economy organizations with more relevance, as mentioned before, are mutual associations and cooperatives. Both types mostly form part of national organizations' membership. A very well-known example of good practices of these principles is Québec, the Canadian province, where we can find that social economy has a strong non-profit and a powerful cooperative enterprise sector. Going back to 1996, when the government of Québec adopted a set of principals in order to support some initiatives of social economy, suggesting and approving company laws such as the autonomy of the enterprise from the State; the process of decision-making must be democratic, meaning with this that workers and users have to necessary participate; the main objective is not to strive for financial benefit, but to serve the members of community. And the activities carried out are based on empowerment, participation, and individual and collective responsibility.

There is another definition for Social Economy, that appeared in the '90s, in English speaking countries. It is literally translated from the concept “économie sociale”, but here we are talking about a different meaning of the word social. In this case, it is not related to the ownership, it is related to the purpose of the activity, mostly in sectors such as health, day-care... In June 1997 the first definition of this social economy was published in Montreal. An expert for the LEED (Local Economic and Employment Development) program defines social economy in the following way:

*The term “Social Economy” is often used interchangeably with the “third sector”, “community sector”, or even “community or voluntary sector”. Moreover, its meaning can be different in different countries. ( ) The term “third sector” (or even sometimes the “not for profit sector”) is perhaps the most generic and can be thought of as encompassing all non-private and public sector groups. The “community” can be envisaged as those organizations representing specific communities of place (e.g. neighborhoods). The voluntary sector may be conceptualized as organizations representing specific groups or “communities of interest” (e.g. Black people or lone parents). The social economy may be defined as organizations comprising cooperatives, associations and mutual associations, and perhaps, community business, though these may be thought of being part of the community sector.*

According to the “2019 Index of Economic Freedom”, Canada is the second largest country by land area in the world. According to “Population of the World”, Canada's population this year is 35,540,672 people. Until 2015, the Conservative Party was leading. But in the last years, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau shifted the politics to the left, making the Liberal Party rule. The government makes green policies a priority, but they still significantly support the



fossil fuel industry as it is crucial for the economy. The Canadian system of the economic market is similar to the American one. Moreover, they have resemblances in patterns of production and high living standards. Canada exports approximately three-quarters of its production to the United States.

The economic freedom score of Canada is 77.7 (Heritage Organization), which means that the economy of Canada is the 8th freest worldwide. It has experienced labor freedom, increases in the integrity of the government and fiscal health thanks to trade freedom, the spending of the government and the effectiveness of the judicial system. Canada is the first among 32 countries in America, making the overall score superior to regional and world averages

## **2.1. Public policy for the social economy in Canada**

First, we should start describing the Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships (CSERP) which is a collaboration between six research centers across Canada. The main goal of the Social economy research has been to understand in a better way how perspectives within Social Economy can be applied in an efficient way so that civil society, researchers, community developers and community organizations can cooperate to empower communities to meet their economic and social needs (The Canadian CED Network).

The CSERP has been supporting all the efforts made by actors in Social Economy with the objective of a dialogue on how to reach a more people-centered economy in Canada. The process of constructing a public policy that could enable Social Economy to make socio-economic and environmental outcomes created a new policy structure that places people, communities and ecosystems at the center of the public policy for the future of Canada. This new vision of policy calls on values of co-operation, co-construction participation, and co-production in the policy-making process.

According to the book “Canadian Public Policy and the Social Economy”, published by University of Victoria (2012), people-centered economy, refers to the economy in which the relevance of human life, well-being, and social development are put above all kind of interests that has something to do with the accumulation of capital and greed. Thus, public policy must support the Social Economy as it looks for delivering on social, economic and environmental goals and seeks to end up with landlessness, poverty, community decline, environmental degradation, sustainable livelihoods, and social exclusion. This is not seen as something positive because increases the risk of monetizing areas of life that were already in a good position. As a matter of fact, policy supporting the social economy should or must reflect the basic principles of the Social Economy and help it to maintain these principles. Many say that the sector of Social Economy is too small to make a difference to global and national economic conditions. Nonetheless, the recognition amongst national and international agencies concerned with sustainable human development that the Social Economy does, in fact, play a relevant role, and not just in the creation of sustainable

livelihoods for communities and people, but also as a force that generates possible free market strategies in which there is a chance to balance environmental and social concerns with economic growth. The non-profit sector created over 48.4 million full-time jobs and it contributes over \$1.9 trillion annually to the global economy. Regarding Canada, it represents 7.8% of the total GDP, overcoming the manufacturing and the automotive industries). It represents \$79.1 billion and the number of employers is over 2 million people, also seen as more than 11.1% of the economically active population. The voluntary and non-profit sector in Canada is the second in the world. The co-operative sector employs 100 million people globally, 20% more than multinational corporations. The Social Economy and CED in Canada concluded “Social Economy enterprises share the objective of contributing to the economic and social development of the communities in which they are located... In addition, they play a role in terms of capacity building and empowerment, contributing to new forms of citizenship and participatory democracy”.

As mentioned before, Social Economy in Canada has been proved to be an effective tool to define key concerns for its public policy, including environmental sustainability, social inclusion, employment-creation, and poverty-reduction. How does Social Economy address these areas?

Regarding environmental sustainability, communities should completely change economies into more regionally and locally resilient. Global changes (environmental degradation, climate change, peak oil...) need noteworthy economic changes; “from a globalized growth economy to a federation of decentralized, social, and ecological economies”. Social Economy has a big role in the rebuilding of community food security. Also, in the production of sustainable energy, stabilizing long-term energy prices, encouraging the energy conservation culture and creating jobs.

Social economy has been also a huge tool to overcome poverty, economic marginalization, and social exclusion. And it has been recognized by the Government as a tool for the social policy kit. It also plays a major role in employment creation, as it is creating stable employment; providing social services and goods and producing money for local economies, meanwhile decreasing the level of poverty and social exclusion. When talking about people with disabilities, social enterprises are a very important tool for their integration.

Those are some examples of the policies implemented by the government to improve social, environmental and economic aspects within Canada.

- The Québec Action Plan for Collective Entrepreneurship that looks for strengthening the Social Economy and its actors in each region.
- Manitoba’s CED policy framework which supplies a cross-government policy to support CED objectives and postulations.
- Nova Scotia Community Economic Development Investment Funds who influence private investment for social enterprises locally controlled by the government with an incentive of a tax credit.

- Manitoba Sustainable Development Act orders the incorporation of sustainable development into public sector agencies' operations.
- Ontario Green Energy and Green Economy that encourages the development of renewable energy projects.
- British Columbia Coast Opportunity that encourages management based on ecosystem and the economic development of the community
- Montreal Social Economy Plan that made an agreement between Social Economy enterprises and organizations and the City of Montreal to contribute to sustainable development and quality of life.

Apart from the necessity of the support of policy instruments to the Social Economy, the attention to the policy process itself is important. Following the conception of co-construction from Villancourt's point of view, co-construction occurs both between the Social Economy, government and private sectors, and between actors in the Social Economy world. A more enabling and partnership approach to public policy is something needed (Brock and Bulpitt, 2007). Making Social Economy entities have an equal part in the design and implementation of policies, where the government would provide financial or another kind of support to the sector. This is a very similar approach to Villancourt's argument; the relevance of civil society engagement in creating (co-construction) and the applying (co-production) of public policies. Most government focuses more on the co-production than co-construction, being both of them equally relevant. He talks about a specific form of co-construction; democratic, solidarity-based co-construction. Which has four elements that make it distinct from neoliberal and corporatist state formations: the state retains a relevant role, close to stakeholders; he recognizes the plurality of the economy through the partnership with the market economy and civil society; it includes elements of representative democracy, and; it encourages an alliance between stakeholders and the state. Thus, with this model we can see that Social Economy is viewed as something more than just an instrument to achieve policy goals, it is an equal partner.

In Québec, they achieved the co-construction during the 1990s thanks to the years invested in building partnerships between the different social movements. The experience in Ontario was similar, Guy and Heneberry (2010) identified three lessons from their analysis: a need for a general strategy and an overarching vision with a timeline to develop; the existence of diverse cultures in the government and Social Economy that can generate challenges.

An international research by the national Hub points to the relevance of movement building for the Social Economy, talking about the "positive relationship between policy development to enable the Social Economy and organizing by Social Economy stakeholders to unite within common national structures to pursue mutual objectives based on their shared values of contributing to more equitable socio-economic development and environmental sustainability" (Downing and Charron, 2010).

## 2.2. Sustainable Development Strategies

Industry Canada is working with key partners with the objective of promoting sustainable development's benefits, as well as encouraging the adoption practices and resources by Canadian society, customers and enterprises. Industry Canada has a crucial role in promoting awareness of sustainable development practices' advantages and benefits and also fostering competitiveness and innovation. If Canadian consumers and businesses adopt sustainable practices, the benefits will be very positive for water, air, nature, and Canadians in general.

Sustainable development considerations are integrated with four ways into the decision making of Industry Canada (Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, 2013), as we have listed and briefly explained in the table below:

### *Industry Canada Instruments to integrate sustainable development*

Sustainable Development Management System	To integrate environmental considerations into decision-making and into policy development
Sustainable Development Performance Reporting	To report progress every year on implementing the commitments under the Federal and Departmental Sustainable Strategies
Participation in Interdepartmental Committees	To network in various interdepartmental working groups that are related to sustainable development.
Decision-Making tools	To ensure that the decision-making process includes consideration of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy objectives. The Strategic Environmental Assessment will analyze the policies, plans or programs to see which impact they have on the environment.

*Source:* Canada, Parliament of Canada (2013). *Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS)*. Consulted in November 2013.

Industry Canada is responsible for thirteen implementation strategies. Find below explained some of the most relevant strategies for this thesis as they affect consumers and businesses (also extracted from the article Industry Canada's 2015 Sustainable Development Strategy, which was tabled in Parliament in November 2013):

- Implementation Strategy 1.1.5: Promotes the utilization of corporate social responsibility (CSR) management tools by industries and using CSR values in the Canadian marketplace to support the sustainable way of consuming, producing, innovating and competing.
- Implementation Strategy 1.1.8: To continue working with key stakeholders to make sure the customers have the instruments and informative resources that they need to defend their significances. Meanwhile, supporting research and policy development on customer subjects including sustainable consumption.

- Implementation 1.1.9: Promote sustainable manufacturing practices to Canadian businesses, always with the recognition of the important role that adopting processes and technologies can enlarge environmental sustainability.
- Implementation Strategy 1.1.10: To progress environmental sustainability throughout fostering co-operatives as businesses with environmental, economic and social sustainability objectives by recognizing and addressing advantages and disadvantages to co-operative growth and allowing entrance to emerging market chances.

Industry Canada has been prepared with a list of additional sustainable development activities. Which is organized following the applicable Strategic Outcome and Program Activity. This list shows how some several sectors in Industry Canada foster and implement sustainable development practices (Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, 2013).

The application of the latest program progresses the objectives of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. The implementation of patents related to new creations with more efficient industrial processes and using sustainable fuel resources could decrease the greenhouse gas emissions of businesses and produce clean forms of energy.

Some of the forces that carry out these activities are the following (Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, 2013):

The Standard Council of Canada (SCC) fosters environmental sustainability through some initiatives such as supporting the development of tools that enlarge the ability of communities, businesses and consumers to reduce climate change impacts; following technologies that improve the resiliency and efficiency of the electrical network; supporting the GC's sustainability agenda; assisting Environment Canada for the Development of a new ISO Environmental Technology practices.

The Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), with the contribution to traditional businesses is environmentally responsible, directed by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. Furthermore, BDC is the unique financial institution in Canada who has received a B Corp certification which needed meeting complete values connected with purpose, transparency, and accountability, social and environmental functioning. It also attempts to lessen its operational footprint, incorporating recycling and the efficient management of energy usage. Industry Canada has a program called Canada Business Network which brings consistent access to information about programs, services, and tools employed by the government to Canadian entrepreneurs and businesses. The responsible institution for the Canada Business Network web site is Industry Canada. Canada Business Network corporate social responsibility information, making advancements in sustainable development. The foremost content units for the web site include Environment and Business; Corporate Social Responsibility; and encouragement to businesses to consider sustainable planning in the long term.

The Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario (FedNor), a regional organization specialized in economic development. Through this organization, Industry Canada invests in projects that support community economic development, business growth and evolution. They consent qualified project suggestions that may create a positive impact on sustainable development. Besides, they reinforce renewal energy projects as they decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

Statistics Canada, also a member of the Industrial Portfolio, fosters social and environmentally sustainable development. It uses a framework based on the notion of natural capital to influence in its behaviors or actions. It is one of the guiding statistical organizations to research on ecosystems nationally.

### **3. Social Enterprises in Canada**

Canada is divided geographically into five main regions (Atlantic Canada, Québec, Ontario, Western Canada and the territories of the North). Legislatively, Canada is governed at four levels: federal, provincial, local, and indigenous governments. The responsibilities are divided between the different levels of government. The ambiguity that exists at the legislative level because of the colonization and decolonization, creates various troubles for emerging organizations, including social enterprise because it is not well-defined who must endorse this form of activities, how to synchronize and formalized these policies (McMourtry & Brouard, 2015). However, the distinct institutions and cultures within one nation establish space for investigation and knowledge.

In Canada, we can find five foremost forms of social enterprise practices: cooperatives, non-profit organizations, community development organizations, indigenous businesses and businesses with a social mission (McMourtry & Brouard, 2015). What is more, these social enterprises are provincial government legislation and major enabling institutions, not only the result of the activities of entrepreneurs.

The variety of Canadian culture and legislation has affected the appearance and performance of the social enterprise in Canada. Social enterprises are implanted in the law and culture of Canadian communities in relevant manners. We also must understand that it is implanted in every region in a distinct way. In Québec, for example, it is favored to call it social economy instead of social enterprise. Being this the consequence of meaningful work by some social movements (remarkably the Chantier de l'économie sociale). In Atlantic Canada, a strong sense of history influences how social enterprises develop and are understood by policymakers. In Ontario, which is the financial center of Canada, the focus is on the enterprise, but we can likely find social organizations. In Western Canada, more precisely British Columbia and Alberta, the social service is more independent from the state (Elson and Hall). And, Indigenous communities across Canada turned out to be progressively



involved in social enterprise, but in topics such as colonial legacies, social inclusion or demographic trends (McMurtry and Brouard, 2015).

We can find three forms of the emergence of social enterprise in Canada: historical, contextual, and conceptual. Social enterprise is disputed as a practice in Canada.

### **3.1. Social enterprise models**

There are five main sets of social enterprise practice: cooperatives, market-oriented non-profit organizations, community development organizations, Indigenous businesses, and businesses with a social mission. These five models have well-defined, diverse, fields of activity, social missions, target groups, legislative support, and governance models. In most of the countries, we can find the same system of social enterprises. But we can distinguish two of them (Indigenous businesses and community development organizations) as peculiarities of Canada.

All the types and their explanations are defined below, based on the article “Social Enterprises in Canada: An Introduction” (McMurtry & Brouard, 2015):

#### *Cooperatives*

Cooperatives in Canada meet all the economic sectors (being the manufacturing one the main exception). There are six forms to achieve the needs of this kind of economic activity. First, consumer cooperatives, which deliver specific goods to consumers at affordable prices, such as organic food, outdoor equipment, cooperative advocacy groups, and supermarkets in rural areas. Second, producer cooperatives, that link producers to marketing to bring goods to market. Third, worker cooperatives, which provide social good of work and economic security for their associates. Fourth, financial and insurance cooperatives, which are playing a relevant role as financiers and facilitators of social enterprise and other forms of cooperatives. Fifth, cooperatives have evolved, creating innovative types of cooperative, called federations and other amalgamated organizations. The most famous organization of this kind in the world is Mondragon in the Basque country of Spain. In Canada, the most well-known federates cooperatives are the Co-operators Insurance Co-operative and Desjardins Credit Union. The sixth and last model of cooperatives in Canada are the multi-stakeholders or, more known as solidarity co-operatives in Québec, this kind unites distinct member groups in one cooperative to reach the social objectives enunciated, this form is the harder one to develop but it can be progressively popular. Cooperatives in Canada are formed by the most developed structure and experience among all social enterprises.

*Non-profit organizations*

Non-profit organizations in Canada are functioning in all regions, having an extended and differed background in the social enterprise area. They are much more linked to the federal government as they are given the status of charitable organizations and consequently, their organizational shape is not as diverse as other forms of social enterprise. Nevertheless, their activities are very variant even if they have similar governance structures. Recently, non-profits are becoming reliant upon income-enterprises, either as part of the practices of the non-profit or as wholly owned subsidiaries.

*Community development/interest (CD/CI)*

Community development/interest (CD/CI) organizations are a developing collection of social enterprise. Same as co-operatives and non-profits, community development is formed by a variety of activities, groups and social missions. Nonetheless, they are not as good articulated in legislation, governance, or policy nationally as the two types mentioned before. In fact, CD/CI are mainly self-regulating in their social objectives and organizational construction outside of Québec and the Atlantic region. We have to say, that CD/CI are fundamentally organizations emerged from social movements. An example of these kinds of entities in Canada is “fairly traded” or “level trading” organizations. CD/CI are unregulated social enterprises with a social mission or social movement, and it is converting more predominant in a social business model.

*Indigenous business*

Indigenous business is formed by a diverse field of activity as well, such as basic good provision, work integration, tourism, culturally specific services and goods, resource extractions and trade in commercial goods. The difference between this kind of social enterprise and co-operatives, non-profits, and CD/CI is that their main goal is the well-being of the Indigenous community. One example of Indigenous business is “Membertou First Nation” in Cape Breton. Their activities are very similar to capital businesses, except for the fact that they are owned and managed by Indigenous communities, often throughout councils, using the benefits to develop their resources, including infrastructure and schools. They dispose of tax exemptions, which makes them use it as a profit that can help them fund social projects for the well-being of the community. The indigenous community is the fastest and youngest demographic group in Canada, which makes them have a huge potential of social enterprise activity.

*Businesses with a social mission*

Ultimately, businesses with a social mission are a different model of social enterprise, mostly developed in western and central Canada. We are largely talking about sole-proprietorships corporations with a strong social mission in one or more areas of their business. The key difference between this last model and the three first ones is that they are traditional for-profit organizations first. What makes them a social enterprise is their focus on achieving a social mission.



**Table 1:** Summary of Canadian social enterprise models.

Models	Cooperative	Non-profit organization	Community development/interest organization	First nation businesses	Business with social mission
Legal structure	Cooperative	NPO, Charities (public or private), Association, Informal Group.	Community enterprise, Community-owned organizations, Associations	NPO, FPO, Partnership, Unincorporated business	FPO, Partnership, Unincorporated business, CIC, CCC
Ownership	Individuals	Members	Community, Government (local, provincial, federal)	First Nation	Public individuals

**Note:** NPO: Non-Profit Organization; FPO: For-Profit Organization; CIC: Citizenship and Immigration Canada; CCC: Criminal Code of Canada

**Source:** J.J. McMurtry and François Brouard. 2015.

## 4. Factors affecting consumers’ sustainable consumption

The concern for environmental issues from public institutions has progressively augmented over the last thirty years, appealing to preserve nature and biodiversity (Kim and Choi, 2005). Business makers are creating more environmentally friendly products and services as they observed the increasing interest from customers. But what makes consumers one way or another?

*Pro-environmental consumer behavior:*

Purchase, in general, is pushed by an evaluation of its profits and prices, that are relevant to only the consumer who is executing the behavior. On the other hand, eco-friendly conscious behavior does not produce sudden personal satisfaction, nonetheless a future outcome that usually advantages society in general (Kim and Choi, 2005). Hence, customers are more sensitive in their purchases because of the terrible environmental disorders we are experiencing the last years. A few decades ago until now, environmental issues are being significantly debated. The awareness of consumers about how thoughtful environmental degradation is, results in a desire to buy environmentally responsible products and services, choosing businesses that select environmental practices (Laroche et al 2001).

To answer why people choose to act environmentally friendly is complicated. Because being concerned about the environmental problems does not all the time reproduce in pro-

environmental behavior. Kim and Choi (2005) distinguished the following factors that affect the behavior of pro-environmental consumers:

*Environmental knowledge:*

Many people do not know about environmental issues. Thus, they cannot act in an environmentally responsible way. The definition of environmental knowledge could be “general knowledge of facts, concepts, and relationships concerning the natural environment and its major ecosystems”. Reaching a great level of environmental knowledge results in higher pro-environmental behavior. Therefore, environmental knowledge has a meaningful influence on the aim to buy eco-friendly products of consumers (Mostafa, 2009).

*Altruism:*

Pro-environmental behavior has more possibilities to happen when the consumer is concerned about the damaging costs to others and the environment, and when they feel the responsibility for the actual environment disorders. Competitive and selfish individuals are more likely to not act ecologically and people with their personal needs already satisfied are more likely to act pro-environmentally, as they have more resources such as energy, time, or money.

*Environmental awareness:*

We can define environmental awareness as the knowledge of the impact on the environment by the human being. It has a cognitive and effective component. The more individuals are aware of the issues of society and the environment, the more they become involved in pro-social and pro-environmental behavior.

*Environmental concern and attitude:*

The environmental concern is a global attitude with indirect results on the behavior. Attitudes are predictors of behavior and factors of variants in individual behavior (Kotchen & Reiling, 2000). A person’s level of concern about environmental issues such as recycling behavior or green buying behavior is a useful predictor of environmentally conscious behavior. Kim and Choi (2005) discovered that environmental concern has a direct influence on green purchasing behavior. For example, a study made about customers’ reactions towards gasoline that is eco-friendly as it decreases pollution, found out that the attitude toward air pollution was the most important variable in order to determine consumers’ behavior toward the product. Environmental attitude has a meaningful impact on consumer green buying behavior. And Mostafa (2009) found that attitude and environmental concern both strongly affect consumers intention to purchase green products.

*Availability of product information and belief about product safety for use:*

Part of the difficulty of locating green products is because of the lack of information. In contrast, a barrier to purchase environmentally is the lack of green and organic food accessibility in stores. Verbeke (2004) says that motivation to purchase green products that not translate into buying them due to the lack of options. Similarly, Mainieri et al. (1997)

state that the reason to not act pro-environmentally is the insufficient availability and marketing of green products. The availability of green products is crucial to make consumers involved in pro-environmental behavior (Ismail and Panni, 2008). To implicate consumers in the pro-environmental purchasing process, it is indispensable to make a huge promotional campaign in order to demonstrate their safety and friendly attributes, which is a relevant factor to be engaged in the pro-environmental buying behavior. Belief about product safety, has a big and positive influence on the intention of purchasing green products on customers, as it is sensed as a healthy alternative.

*Perceived consumer effectiveness:*

This term can be defined as the degree to which individuals believe that their attitude and actions make a difference in solving a problem. Kim and Choi (2005) also agreed with the fact that individuals with a high belief in changing the world thanks to their environmentally conscious behavior, are more likely to involve in these behaviors. So, self-efficacy beliefs can affect the likelihood of performing pro-environmental purchase behavior.

*Collectivism:*

Collectivistic or individualistic orientations can affect some of the social behaviors, including the motivation to be involved in pro-environmental or pro-social behaviors. Collectivism has a positive influence on the habit of recycling behavior of individuals (McCarthy and Shrum; 1994, 2001). Collectivistic people tend to be more co-operative, making collectivism have a strong impact on consumers green buying behavior.

*Transparency on Trade Practices:*

Some of the most discussed issues about fairness on trade are the following:

Misleading Advertisement: defined as “the standard that is generally relied on what a reasonable consumer would take away from an advertisement under the circumstances”. According to the American Management Association, “companies that desire a high degree of honesty, that have clear cut and define objectives, that have communicated to their agency exactly what they expect will no doubt have fewer problems if any, with the FTC consumers and its sales objectives”. The National Business Council reported “Advertising should avoid the use of claims whose validity depends upon the fine interpretation of meaning. Furthermore, it also stated that advertising shall not claim nor promise by implication any product performance or characteristic which is nor fully supported by test or research data or other similar factual information and the test of whether anything is permissible in advertising under the policy is to ask whether it is true, believable and good taste”.

A misleading advertisement is the one that is produced because of a misinterpreted insight, for which the advertiser maker is completely responsible. The misled consumer could be desirous to buy the advertised product and he could end up paying more than its real cost or be less satisfied than expected (Attas, 1999).

**Deceptive packaging:** deceive comes from a false believe caused to one person. This deceives can be verbal or non-verbal and it is intended as the deceiver wants the other person to hold false beliefs (Attas, 1999).

The packaging is used for wrapping the product to protect it and facilitate its utilization, whereas the label is the tag with information. Hence, a deceptive packaging refers to the packaging employed by enterprises containing fake information, unfairly endorsing the products to the customers.

**Customer care:** This is the engagement of companies in treating complaints from consumers and the after service.

Sherlaker (1999) suggests every manufacturer found a consumer affairs cell. The foremost goal of this cell is to be more receptive to the lawful protests of customers with solving grievances quickly. Moreover, it should be a must for businesses to promptly distribute customer information; counseling green products to customers and educating them about their responsibilities and rights. This could make consumers start being conscious of pro-environmental products, pro-environmental marketing in order to engage them in green purchasing.

**Product adulteration:** it refers to a kind of misconduct made by marketers where they miss superior and inferior ingredients. When talking about green marketing or green issues, product alteration concerns to the mingling of unnecessary additives or artificial colors that often permits marketers to present their products to their consumers as pro-environmental.

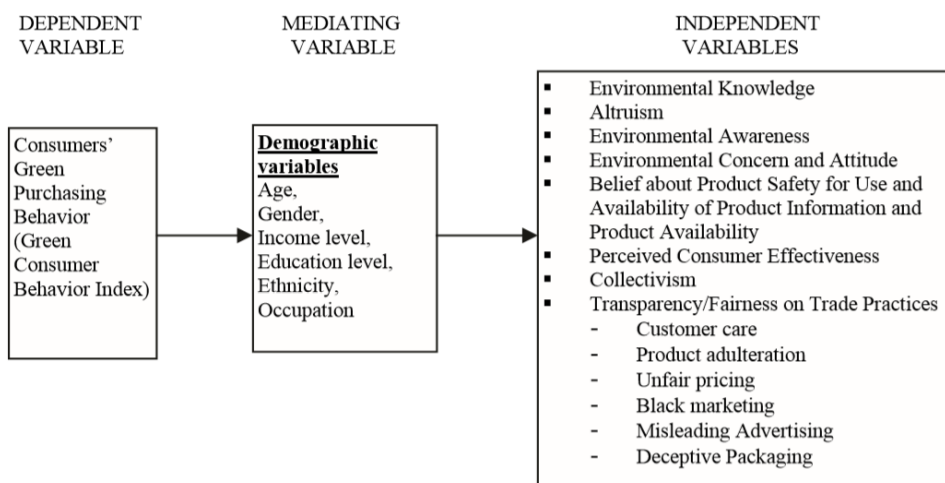
**Black marketing:** this is also a kind of not transparent business practice. Black marketing involves measures of products.

**Unfair Pricing:** refers to charging more price than its initial one or charging fictitious pricing. Even if consumers support strongly the environment, they are still delicate to green product prices (Mainieri et al. 1997). Some studies report that in various cases marketers often sell green products more expensive than their original prices, which can discourage individuals to be engaged in pro-environmental purchasing behavior. If consumers perceive unethical practices from companies, they will feel demotivated to be engaged in socially responsible consumption. Concepts such as recyclable, environmentally friendly and biodegradable have been utilized by numerous companies in an unverified and impractical way. Consumers are naturally cynical about environmental assertions except if they have a trustworthy base, this skepticism demotivate customers from acting ethically correct. Price fairness has a direct effect on perceived value and buying intentions.

#### *Demographic Factors:*

Demographic variables have a meaningful impact on the green buying behavior of consumers. Socially conscious consumers are typically women. Environmental conscious consumers are educated and young. Consumerists have a higher economic and social profile. Panni (2006) argued that individuals' pro-moral behaviors are highly affected by demographic features such as age, education level, occupation, and economic level.

**Figure 1:** Green consumer behavior



**Source:** H. Ruediger Kaufmann, M. Ali Khan Panni and Y. Orphanidou).

#### **4.1. Cultural differences in the knowledge, behavior and attitudes of Canadians towards environmental consumption**

The past years have been branded by intensified worries about environmental issues. Does culture influence the attitude or behavior of green Canadian consumers? This question has been investigated through research made by Michel Laroche (Concordia University), Jasmin Bergeron (University of Quebec in Montreal), Marc-Alexandre Tomiuk (HEC, Montreal) and Guido Barbaro-Forleo (Concordia University), which is going to be described in this paper.

The pro-environmental knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of consumers have been developing in an optimistic way. Businesses are coping with this new condition in various important and innovative ways. Green consumers are also acclimatizing to environmental problems in many manners. For example, they are disposing to pay more for eco-friendly products, such as products made from recycled materials when it comes to environmental issues or purchasing biodegradable products when it comes to ecology. Not many investigations have been done of pro-environmental studies and cross-cultural research together, most are made of the two sections separately. This study is looking for understanding the behavior of customers regarding their environmental knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors by examining differences between English and French Canadians.

Consumers with superior knowledge about environmental issues are more likely to pay an extra price for pro-environment products. The knowledge of customers is rising; hence, they reward enterprises that follow ecological imperatives in their marketing and penalizes businesses that disregard green practices. Therefore, the more a customer knows about

environmental issues, the more it will affect their attitude or behavior towards purchasing ecologically.

Attitudes are the most important prognosticators of individuals' inclination to pay eco-friendly products (Laroche et al., 2001). The two most influencing attitudes are an inconvenience and the importance of being environmentally friendly. Importance refers to the degree to which individuals express concern about pro-environmental issues and inconvenience refers to how inconvenient it is for the individual to behave in an ecological fashion (Laroche et al., 2001). After Shrum and McCarty (1994) studied the importance and inconvenience of recycling, they found that the more individuals thought recycling was inconvenient, the less they practiced this activity. Furthermore, they stated that inconvenience has a higher influence on individuals' actions than importance. The third type of attitude is the perception of the severity of environmental problems. Ecologically conscious individuals perceive that the environmental issues we are facing presently are thoughtful problems for the safety of the world, while less environmentally aware consumers believe that these problems could solve themselves. According to Wiener and Sukhdial (1990), some consumers don't have a strong consciousness about environmental issues as they believe it is the responsibility of businesses or governments. Laroche et al. (2001) argued that consumers that are not interested in paying more to purchase eco-friendly products think that businesses behave responsibly towards the environment.

French Canadians have less knowledge about the environment than English Canadians. The researchers were expecting this result as the influence of American media is lower on Francophones. Therefore, English Canadians have higher environmental knowledge than French Canadians. Moreover, French Canadian consumers show more pleasure-seeking consumption actions than English Canadians. Big levels of knowledge of the environment should convert to more green behaviors and attitudes.

Laroche et al., (2001) chose one area; Montreal, to investigate about the two different cultures. They selected this city because of the accessibility to pro-environmental products and the recycling program is the same for both. Furthermore, they would be able to estimate calculate the effect of acculturation between them.

The pro-environmental is younger than average. However, some studies found that age has no meaningful power on green behavior or attitude (Laroche, 2001). For both English and French Canadians, the intention to pay more for eco-friendly products highly depends on the sensed importance of being environmentally friendly. Hence, the more Canadian consumers viewed it was important to protect the environment, the more likely they were to pay an extra price for green products.

According to the research, for French Canadians, to recycle was highly connected to the perceived inconvenience of acting in an eco-friendly fashion. On the other hand, the inclination to pay more for English Canadians.

## CHAPTER 2

### 5. Empirical study

#### 5.1. Introduction

This research aims to analyze what drives and what prevents Canadian students from purchasing eco-friendly products. Based on the study made of what drives and what prevents consumer groups to buy green products from a study made by Camilla Barbarossa (2014) and Patrick De Pelsmacker (2014), titled “Positive and Negative Antecedents of Purchasing Eco-friendly Products: A comparison between green and non-green consumers”.

According to UNEP (2010), household consumption is classified as the foremost reason for environmental issues. The European Consumption states (2012) notes that household and European consumption has a considerable effect on the environment. It also addresses the importance of using eco-friendly that are used regularly, including biodegradable detergents, energy-saving light bulbs or tissue papers (European commission 2011).

Marketers and businesses are trying to develop some strategies, marketing campaigns (like for example Timberland’s Earth keepers or Green Party from Greenpeace). Nevertheless, although these policies, the market share of eco-friendly products currently is moderately low, around 1 to 6% (Nielsen, 2011). Marketers need researches about the decisional process that makes customers purchase or not purchase eco-friendly products, to understand what motivates them to purchase eco-friendly products and to examine if the purchasing of eco-friendly products changes across customer segments.

This study, as mentioned before, based on the study of Barbarossa et al. (2014) looks for finding understanding into what motivates consumers to purchase eco-friendly products and to compare green and non-green consumers. With green consumers, we mean those who are engaged in a set of ecological behaviors such as recycling, mainly for environmental aspects. In contrast, non-green consumers are not involved in this set of ecological actions.

Effects of EC (Care for the environmental consequences), GSI (Green Self-Identity), and MO (Moral Obligation) on the EFP (Eco-Friendly Product) Purchase Intention and Behavior of Green and Non-green Consumers

Individuals who are engaged in some green actions, like recycling or being an active member of ecological organizations for environmental causes are more likely to be involved in other ecological activities, such as buying eco-friendly products. Thøgersen and O’lander (2002)



state that the propensity of green behavior in more than one area is called the “spillover effect” (when an individual begins acting in an ecological way in one area, it is more prone to behave environmentally friendly in other areas). Hence, the implementation of a specific behavior for pro-environmental actions reinforces a consumer’s positive motivation to involve in other pro-environmental connected acts.

When a person begins to behave ecologically in one area, that person’s self-identity, attitude and moral norms are more willing to change reinforcing the positive and motivational origins of related ecological behaviors and consumers awareness about acting greenly increases.

Care for the environmental consequences of purchasing, green self-identity and moral obligation signify motivational causes of pro-environmental behaviors, like recycling, going to grocery stores with own bags, participating in charities, be activist... Thøgersen and Ölander noted that green consumers give more relevance to altruistic variables in their selections than non-green consumers.

Non-green consumers take more into account the utilitarian than moral aspects of purchasing green products when they intend to buy. And they compare negative personal ego-centric evaluations with ecological consumption. On the other hand, green consumers are more motivated to involve, as they associate high relevance to the existence of moral characteristics in the products, which drives them to form greater behavioral intentions to purchase eco-friendly products, compared to non-green consumers.

As mentioned before, after a brief summary of Barbarossa et al. research, we will proceed to study what makes students in Canada purchase eco-friendly products, more specifically plastic products. We chose this kind of product because of the known danger they can cause to the environment. Plastic pollution can adversely affect lands, waterways, and oceans (M. Subba Reddy et al., 2014).

## 5.2. Methodology

This work aims to study the eco-friendly behaviors in Canada. To this end we consider two areas of analysis: eco-friendly consumer and the pro-environmental behaviors. First survey’s aim is to identify the factors that influence on purchase intention of eco-friendly products. To carry out this study, a model was developed to measure the factors that influence on the consumers’ self-reported purchasing of plastic products. The exogenous variables included as in our model were environmental care (EC), Green self-identity (GSI), Moral Obligation (MO), and Perceived personal inconvenience of purchasing eco-friendly products (PPI) based on Barbarossa et al. (2014) study, who is the author of the main analysis that has been taken as an example to be able to carry out the research about the sustainable consumption of plastic products. A seven-point Likert scale was used in a scale that goes from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree).



The purpose of the second survey is to measure consumers' level of engagement in eco-friendly behaviors. Where respondents were requested to specify if they are engaged or not in a range of eco-friendly behaviors. Following the same theory in which the research of Barbarossa et al. (2014) is based on; to be considered a green consumer, respondents must be involved in the majority of eco-friendly behaviors for environmental reasons, more than 50% (Moons and De Pelsmacker's, 2012). Otherwise, they will be considered as non-green consumers. If they are involved, they must indicate the reason why. The scale is from one to five (1 - No; 2 - Yes, because I have to; 3 - Yes because it saves me money; 4 - Yes, because it is better for the environment; 5 - Yes, because everybody does it).

Both of them are surveys involving university students' consumption behavior in Canada. The survey was made to a total of 102 students in Canada. After surveys were answered, the data has been collected and used in the IBM SPSS program and Smart-PLS to make a complete analysis. The measuring instruments that have been used to find all the information collected from the survey database are in the annexes part.

Below, you can find all the aspects regarding the study:

**Participants**

Demographic data from respondents has been collected, where we asked about the age and the sex.

The size of the sample is 102 respondents, where 79 were female, 29 were male, and the rest chose the option of another gender. As the study is conducted for students, 96.1% are individuals between the ages of 18 and 34 years old, and the rest were individuals who are 17 years old (see Table 1 and Table 2).

**Table 1.** Socio-demographic characteristics (Age)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	0-17	4	3.9	3.9
	18-34	98	96.1	96.1

**Table 2.** Socio-demographic characteristics (Sex)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Female	71	69.6	69.6
	Male	29	28.4	28.4
	Other	2	2.0	2.0

## Part1: Model and Hypothesis

### *Care for the environmental consequences of purchasing (EC)*

Customers may buy products based on how much they worry about the consumption of the products could affect the environment (Follows and Jobber, 2000).

Values with concern for all people and nature, such as protecting the environment and the harmony with nature are meaningful backgrounds of worry about what purchasing environmental products could bring. Those values, according to Freestone and McGoldrick (2008), impact directly on the purpose of consumers of buying pro-environmental products, and the purchase behavior itself (Bamberg, 2003). Consumers that are more concerned about environmental issues are more likely to purchase products less harmful for the environment (Kilbourne and Pickett, 2008).

**+** H1: Care for the environmental consequences of purchasing has a positive effect on the intention to purchase eco-friendly products (EFP)

### *Green self-identity (GSI)*

The personal identity refers to what individuals think of themselves, which could be a positive cause for consumers to buy eco-friendly products. We can split self-identity into two levels of operation regarding ecological behavior: generic and behavior specific. The first one makes reference to one person's self-insight based on their mental identification with the green consumer (Sparks and Shepherd, 1992). The second one refers to the self-perception based on the involvement in some eco-friendly behaviors (Mannetti et al., 2004).

Individuals who distinguish themselves as environmentally friendly consumers buy more organic food than those who don't see themselves as green consumers. (Sparks and Shepherd, 1992). Likewise, individuals who perceive themselves as recyclers, do recycle more than those who do not.

**+** H2: Green self-identity has a positive effect on the intention to purchase EFP.

### *Moral obligation (MO)*

This term refers to the level of concern that an individual can experiment towards the sense of responsibility to act ethically in a moral situation. Behavioral options depend on the assessment about what is correct and what is incorrect. One consumer should obey particular eco-friendly principles because it is the good thing to make, and if she or he violates these principles, it is essentially incorrect.

The awareness of not behaving correctly, could lead individuals to feel guilty (Steenhaut and Van Kenhove, 2006). Hence, the act of buying eco-friendly products could be thought as an ego-centric motivation to ease individuals' own upset and enhance positive emotions.

Measures of moral obligation have been discovered to foresee intentions and behaviors regarding moral aspects, including purchasing eco-friendly products (Sparks and Shepherd, 2002).

- ✚ H3: Moral Obligation has a positive effect on the intention of purchasing EFP

#### *Perceived Personal Inconvenience of Purchasing eco-friendly products (PPI)*

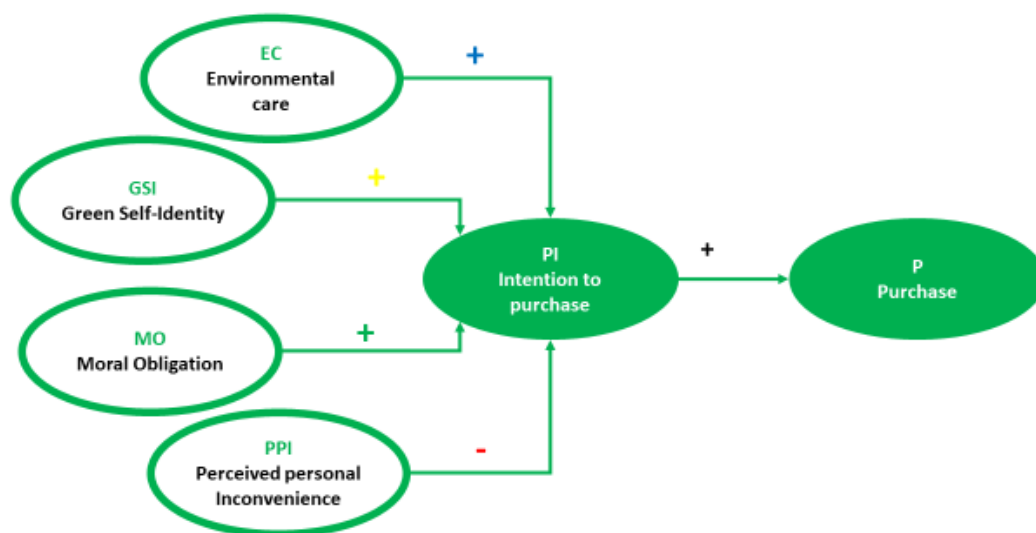
Perceived personal inconvenience of purchasing eco-friendly products is consumer's evaluation of bearing personal efforts when buying eco-friendly products. Some consumers perceive eco-friendly products time consuming, stressful and more expensive. The perception of high price, not a lot of variety and absence of availability from consumers lowers eco-friendly products consumption. A significant number of consumers live complexities in choosing eco-friendly products because of an uncontrolled abundance of ambiguous green brands that confuse consumers (D'souza et al., 2006). The not positive consequences that buying eco-friendly products could bring, such as paying a higher price, could be viewed a negative ego-centric motivation for not involving in the purchase of eco-friendly products.

- ✚ H4: Perceived personal inconvenience of purchasing EFP has a negative effect on the intention to purchase EFP.

#### *Purchase Intention and Behavior (IP and P)*

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suppose that the intention to behave in one way is the precursor of final behavior (De Cannière et al. 2009). Nonetheless, there are meaningful distinctions in the intention of behavior regarding buying eco-friendly products between green and non-green consumers. Non-green consumers obey their intention of selecting conformist replacements, showing a steady intention-behavior relation, they are keener to act according to their intentions because they reflected about the different options they could choose at the intention-formation stage. On the other hand, green consumers attach huge relevance to the moral and ethical characteristics of products (Auger et al, 2010), which makes them proceed stronger behavioral intentions than non-green consumers.

- ✚ H5: Intention to purchase EFP has a positive effect on the Purchase of EFP



**Figure 2.** Model Eco-friendly shopping behavior

**Source:** self-made

### 5.3. Results and discussion

#### *First part of the survey (self-reported purchase of plastic products)*

The first exogenous variable, EC, concerning for the environmental consequences of purchasing the results show that 47.1% of respondents agreed that how plastic products affect the environment is important for them, 55.9% of respondents indicated that they completely agree with the fact that is important for them how plastic products pollute the oceans, 62.7% of respondents are completely concerned about the damage that plastic products could cause to animals, 38.2% of respondents completely agree and 28.4% agree with the fact that it is important to them the amount of energy used to produce plastic products.

Concerning green self-identity, the majority of respondents consider themselves as someone highly concerned about environmental issues (22.5%) followed by the percentage of respondents that are environmentally concerned (15.7%). The results about auto-perception present that a third part of the total sample (think of themselves as green consumers). Considering the total sample, 28.4% and 43.1% of them answered that buying non-made of plastic eco-friendly products would make them feel satisfied. Finally, 22.5% and 34.3% stated that they would feel guilty if they purchase plastic products harmful for the environment.

Concerning moral obligation, 18.6% of respondents said that buying plastic products would be enormously morally wrong for them and 29.4% that they agree with the fact that

consuming damaging plastic products would be morally wrong for them. 15.7% of respondents completely agreed that consuming damaging plastic products would go against their principles and 20.6 agreed with this fact.

Regarding perceived personal inconvenience, 45.1% of respondents stated that they don't find it easy to recognize products that are not harmful for the environment. And 47% find it time consuming to search for not made of plastic products that damage the environment.

To identify the factors that influence on Intention to purchase and purchase eco-friendly products, the relationship between the factors and the endogenous variables were studied and are presented in the next figure. The evaluation of measurement is presented in Appendix 26.

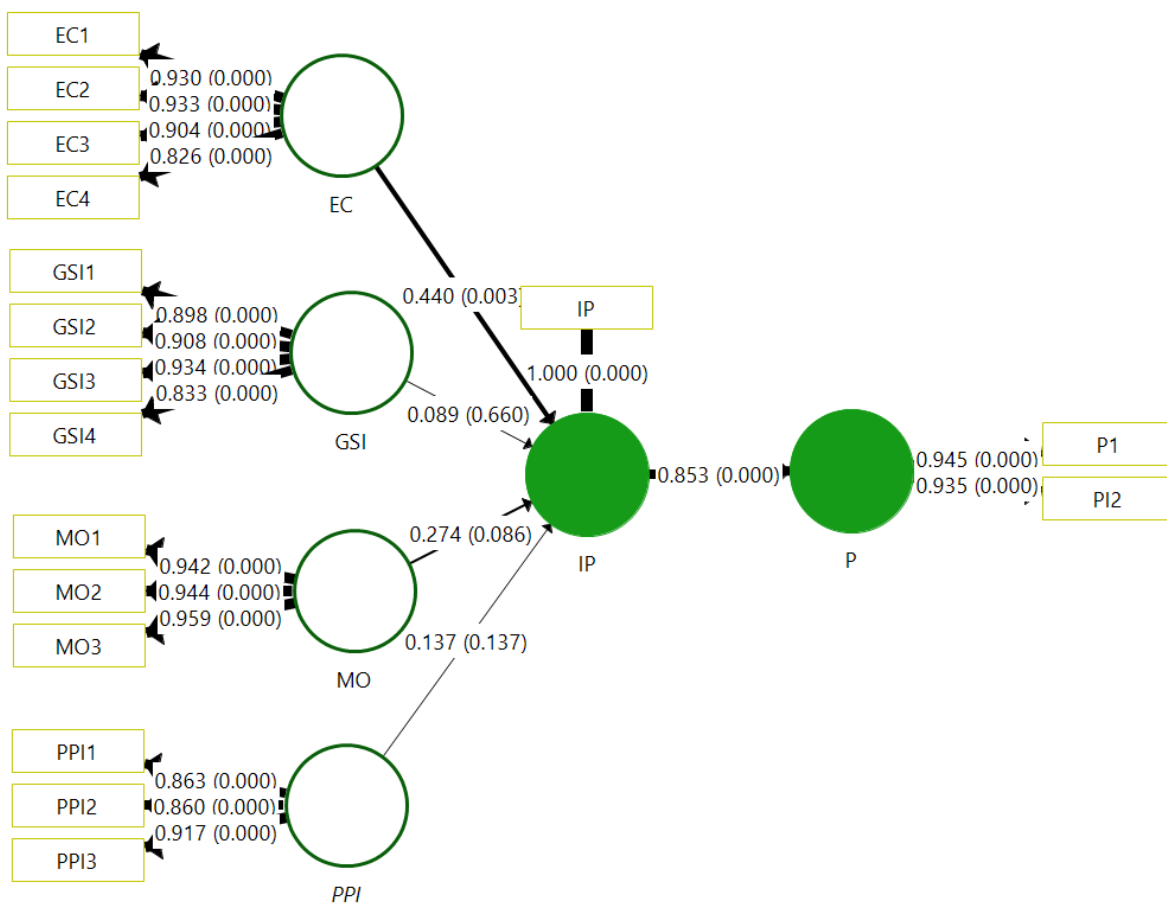


Figure 3. Results of the model

The results of the factors influencing on purchase eco-friendly products show us that some hypotheses are right, and some others are incorrect. The first hypothesis regarding the influence of care for the environmental consequences is accepted with a path coefficient of 0.440. The second hypothesis (the influence of green-self identity on the intention to purchase and the purchase of eco-friendly products) is rejected, meaning with this that green-self

identity does not affect the behavior of the consumer. The third hypothesis is accepted, moral obligation does affect the behavior of the consumer. With a path coefficient of 0.137, the fourth hypothesis based on the influence of perceived personal inconvenience is rejected, making this variable affect the consumer’s behavior in a very low level. The last hypothesis is accepted, being the intention of purchase the strongest variable influencing on consumer’s behavior (see table 3).

**Table 3.** Results of the model:

	Path coeff.	P-values	Hypothesis
EC -> IP	0.440	0.003	H1: Accepted
GSI -> IP	0.089	0.660	H2: Rejected
MO -> IP	0.274	0.086	H3: Accepted
PPI -> IP	0.137	0.137	H4: Rejected
IP -> P	0.853	0.000	H5: Accepted

In order to study the relationship between eco-friendly consumption and pro-environmental behavior, regarding the theory followed by Barbarossa’s methodology, the correlation of Pearson has been calculated. (A: I intend to reduce buying plastic products, B: At the present time, when I go shopping, I try to avoid buying plastic products, C: Last month, I bought EFP, non-made of plastic).

**Table 4.** Interpretation of Pearson Correlation

	A	B	C
EC1	0.758**	0.668**	0.593**
EC2	0.802**	0.641**	0.602**
EC3	0.705**	0.574**	0.595**
EC4	0.691**	0.677**	0.660**
GSI1	0.752**	0.649**	0.691**
GSI2	0.732**	0.721**	0.702**
GSI3	0.748**	0.681**	0.705**
GSI4	0.647**	0.619**	0.539**
MO1	0.799**	0.772**	0.714**
MO2	0.667**	0.673**	0.623**
MO3	0.746**	0.732**	0.687**
PPI1	0.544**	0.403**	0.532**
PP12	0.547**	0.482**	0.566**
PPI3	0.727**	0.622**	0.645**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Mean	A	B	C
1	0.739	0.64	0.6125
2	0.71975	0.6675	0.65925
3	0.7373	0.7256	0.6836
4	0.606	0.5023	0.581

The correlation in all the cases is positive, which means that the intention to purchase and purchasing itself are associated with variables 1 to 4. The care for the environmental consequences has a high correlation, most of the respondents care about the environmental consequences that plastic products could bring with itself, which has a positive effect on the intention to purchase and the purchase of eco-friendly products.

Although not all of them consider themselves as green-consumers, most of them are aware about environmental problems, a vast majority of them stated that they would feel morally satisfied if they bought eco-friendly products. After the study of the correlation, we can state that the intention of purchasing influences the green self-identity. And it affects to a lesser degree the act of buying eco-friendly products not made of plastic.

Half of the respondents would feel ethically guilty if they bought environmentally harmful products. The respondents that answer in an affirmative way, have moral obligation, which influences positively the intention of purchasing eco-friendly products. In the correlation results we can see that it intending to purchase and purchasing eco-friendly products, both highly depend on the moral obligation of consumers.

As already expected, respondents perceive purchasing eco-friendly products as an inconvenience as some of them stated that it is more expensive and time consuming, so it has a negative impact on the intention of buying and on the purchase itself of eco-friendly products. Thus, perceived personal inconvenience affects more the intention of purchasing eco-friendly not made of plastic products than it affects their purchase.

### Second part of the survey (green consumer or non-green consumer)

The second part of the survey presents the study of correlation between some behaviors of the consumers, that could characterize them as green or non-green consumers (see table 5). The results show us that 37.3% of respondents changed their lamps into energy lamps because it is better for the environment. 77.5% of respondents recycle their garbage because of environmental reasons. 38.2% buy biologically degradable soaps because it is ecologically friendly. Just 1% of the total of the respondents use rainwater or water from a natural resource because it is good for the environment. 10.8% of respondents stated that their household energy is provided by a green supplier because of its benefits for the environment. 4.9% of respondents are involved in a membership of environmental organizations. 77.5% of them avoid using unnecessary packaging because it is better for the environment. 52.9% take short showers because it is better for the environment. 61.8% talk to other about environmentally

friendly products. And 43.1% of respondents avoid using their car whenever it is possible to protect the environment.

**Table 5.** Frequency distribution of environmental behaviors

Cod	Description	1	2	3	4	5
EB1	I changed most of my lamps to energy-saving lamps	41,18%	1,96%	12,75%	37,25%	6,86%
EB2	I consistently sort my garbage	12,75%	4,90%	0,00%	77,45%	4,90%
EB3	Most of the time, I buy biologically degradable soaps	50,00%	5,88%	3,92%	38,24%	1,96%
EB4	In my house, I use rainwater from my own natural water resource	86,27%	8,82%	1,96%	0,98%	1,96%
EB5	My household energy is provided by a “green” supplier	81,37%	6,86%	0,98%	10,78%	0,00%
EB6	I am an active member of an environmental organization	86,27%	8,82%	0,00%	4,90%	0,00%
EB7	When doing my grocery shopping, I avoid unnecessary packaging	8,82%	3,92%	7,84%	77,45%	1,96%
EB8	I take short showers to avoid wasting water	29,41%	8,82%	8,82%	52,94%	0,00%
EB9	I regularly talk to other about more environmentally friendly products	24,51%	3,92%	0,00%	61,76%	9,80%
EB10	Whenever possible, I avoid using my car	19,61%	8,82%	28,43%	43,14%	0,00%

As mentioned before, to consider students in Canada as green consumers, respondents should engage in the majority of Moons and Pelsmacker’s (2012) ecofriendly behaviors (proposition number 4: Yes, because it is better for the environment, see appendix 2) , meaning with this that they should be at least 50% engaged in the activities due to environmental causes. As they are students, and most of them live in residences or in houses that are not theirs. And the result is 40.5%. Thus, we postulate, based on this survey, that students in Canada are non-green consumers as they don’t exceed the 50% necessary to be a green consumer.



## 6. Conclusions

The aim of this research was to provide a better understanding of the social economy in the Canadian context and its contribution to consumers and enterprises whether they start behaving sustainably with the environment. The study conclusions are summarized and presented:

-Social economy's beginning relates to the 19th century. We defined this concept as an economy in which the ownership is not in shareholders hands, but in individuals' hands. Following the policy of one person, one vote. Afterward, a general view of Canada's economic situation is made. Finding that Canada is a developed country, being one of the most developed countries worldwide. However, Canada faces some social and economic challenges. Therefore, social economy appeared, to provide practices that allow community and society to arrange in a socially and environmentally improved context.

-Social economy in Canada has its beginning in Québec, which suffered a transformation from being an economy dominated by outside interests to wellbeing of the community's concern, where the government has crucially supported all measures proposed by social actors in Québec.

-Canada enables a people-centered economy. Looking for constructing new policies that address socio-economic and environmental issues, putting humans and ecosystems in the center of public policies for the future of Canada.

-Some of the policies that would help to achieve the full potential of social economy in Canada and that are starting to be considered are, the support from the government to every kind of enterprises; the creation of innovative strategies supporting this new sector; easing the access to capital investment for social enterprises; or creating tax incentives.

-The government of Canada looks for reaching sustainable development through some strategies such as the awareness of the advantages of sustainable development practices for enterprises; the promotion of the benefits of sustainable consumption for individuals; or fostering the integration of environmental aspects into policy development and the decision-making.

-Social enterprises have emerged across the country, but the models differ widely due to the cultural context in each region of Canada. We can find five types of social enterprise: cooperatives, non-profit organizations, community development organizations, indigenous businesses and businesses with a social mission.

-After talking about the role of government and enterprises, who are crucial for the social economy. We try to understand the behavior of the consumer, which is also a key role in the development of sustainable consumption and social economy. The factors that influence consumer's attitudes are their pro-environmental behavior, their knowledge about the environment, their altruism, their awareness about environmental issues, their concern and

attitude towards ecological issues, the information that they have about the products, and the demography.

-We also address how cultural differences in knowledge, behavior, and attitudes through Canadians can affect their pro-environmental consumption. The study taken as an example makes a comparison between the behavior of French Canadians and English Canadians. Where the results showed that both have a strong level of knowledge regarding the environment. And Both of them have positive behaviors and attitudes towards environmental concerns.

-Finally, a study was conducted to analyze the behavior of students in Canada towards the sustainable consumption of plastic products. Where we found that the majority of the respondents care about the environmental problems that plastic consumption brings with itself, they also indicated that they would feel morally guilty if they purchased products that could be harmful to the environment or animals. However, they perceive buying eco-friendly products as an inconvenience because it could be time-consuming or more expensive. Also, just 40.5% of respondents are engaged in environmental activities, which means that they are non-green consumers, as they should be engaged in more than 50% of ecological activities to be considered green consumers.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix 1: consumers' self-reported purchasing of plastic products

Factor	Cod.	Item
1.Care for the environmental consequences (EC)	EC1	<i>How plastic products may affect the environment is important to me.</i>
	EC2	<i>It is important to me how plastic products pollute the oceans</i>
	EC3	<i>It is important to me how plastic products could kill animals</i>
	EC4	<i>The amount of energy used to produce plastic products is important to me</i>
2.Green Self-identity (GSI)	GSI1	<i>I consider myself as someone concerned about environmental issues</i>
	GSI2	<i>I think of myself as a green consumer</i>
	GSI3	<i>Buying EFP that are not made out of plastic would make me feel like a green consumer</i>
	GSI4	<i>I would feel totally satisfied with myself if I bought eco-friendly products</i>
3.Moral Obligation (MO)	MO1	<i>I would feel guilty if I bought plastic products that can be harmful for the environment</i>
	MO2	<i>Buying plastic products that damage the environment would be morally wrong for me</i>
	MO3	<i>Buying plastic products that affect the environment would go against my principles</i>
4.Perceived personal inconvenience of purchasing EFP (PPI)	PPI1	<i>I don't like to pay more to buy eco-friendly non-plastic made products</i>
	PPI2	<i>While shopping, I can't easily recognize which plastic products are harmful for the environment</i>
	PPI3	<i>Inside the store, I need a lot of time to find products that are not made of plastic</i>
5.Intention to purchase (IP)	IP	<i>I intend to reduce buying plastic products</i>
6.Purchasing (P)	P1	<i>At the present time, when I go shopping, I try to avoid buying plastic products</i>
	P2	<i>Last month, I bought EFP, non-made of plastic</i>

### Appendix 2: Eco-friendly behaviors

Cod	Item
EB1	<i>I changed most of my lamps to energy-saving lamps</i>
EB2	<i>I consistently sort my garbage</i>
EB3	<i>Most of the time, I buy biologically degradable soaps</i>
EB4	<i>In my house, I use rainwater from my own natural water resource</i>
EB5	<i>My household energy is provided by a "green" supplier</i>
EB6	<i>I am an active member of an environmental organization</i>
EB7	<i>When doing my grocery shopping, I avoid unnecessary packaging</i>
EB8	<i>I take short showers to avoid wasting water</i>
EB9	<i>I regularly talk to other about more environmentally friendly products</i>
EB10	<i>Whenever possible, I avoid using my car</i>

**Appendix 3.** Importance of plastic products influence in the environment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Not disagree, not agree	4	3.9	3.9	5.9
	Somehow agree	15	14.7	14.7	20.6
	Agree	33	32.4	32.4	52.9
	Completely Agree	48	47.1	47.1	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 4.** Importance of the pollution of plastic products towards the oceans

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somehow disagree	4	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Not disagree, not agree	4	3.9	3.9	7.8
	Somehow agree	6	5.9	5.9	13.7
	Agree	31	30.4	30.4	44.1
	Completely Agree	57	55.9	55.9	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 5.** Importance of the influence of plastic products on animals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somehow disagree	4	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Somehow agree	12	11.8	11.8	15.7
	Agree	22	21.6	21.6	37.3
	Completely Agree	64	62.7	62.7	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	



**Appendix 6. The amount of energy used to produce plastic products is important to me**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Somehow disagree	8	7.8	7.8	9.8
	Not disagree, not agree	4	3.9	3.9	13.7
	Somehow agree	20	19.6	19.6	33.3
	Agree	29	28.4	28.4	61.8
	Completely Agree	39	38.2	38.2	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 7. Green Consumer self-conception**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	6	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	7.8
	Somehow disagree	9	8.8	8.8	16.7
	Not disagree, not agree	10	9.8	9.8	26.5
	Somehow agree	36	35.3	35.3	61.8
	Agree	16	15.7	15.7	77.5
	Completely Agree	23	22.5	22.5	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 8. Green consumer feeling**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Somehow disagree	4	3.9	3.9	5.9
	Not disagree, not agree	8	7.8	7.8	13.7
	Somehow agree	19	18.6	18.6	32.4
	Agree	35	34.3	34.3	66.7
	Completely Agree	34	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 9.** personal satisfaction after buying eco-friendly products

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Somehow disagree	4	3.9	3.9	5.9
	Not disagree, not agree	6	5.9	5.9	11.8
	Somehow agree	17	16.7	16.7	28.4
	Agree	44	43.1	43.1	71.6
	Completely Agree	29	28.4	28.4	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 10.** Guilt feeling after buying harmful products for the environment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	6	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Somehow disagree	8	7.8	7.8	13.7
	Not disagree, not agree	10	9.8	9.8	23.5
	Somehow agree	20	19.6	19.6	43.1
	Agree	35	34.3	34.3	77.5
	Completely Agree	23	22.5	22.5	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 11.** Morality

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Somehow disagree	6	5.9	5.9	7.8
	Not disagree, not agree	20	19.6	19.6	27.5
	Somehow agree	25	24.5	24.5	52.0
	Agree	30	29.4	29.4	81.4
	Completely Agree	19	18.6	18.6	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 12. Principles**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	10	9.8	9.8	9.8
	Disagree	4	3.9	3.9	13.7
	Somehow disagree	12	11.8	11.8	25.5
	Not disagree, not agree	17	16.7	16.7	42.2
	Somehow agree	22	21.6	21.6	63.7
	Agree	21	20.6	20.6	84.3
	Completely Agree	16	15.7	15.7	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 13. Easiness of recognition**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	6	5.9	5.9	7.8
	Somehow disagree	2	2.0	2.0	9.8
	Not disagree, not agree	25	24.5	24.5	34.3
	Somehow agree	21	20.6	20.6	54.9
	Agree	26	25.5	25.5	80.4
	Completely Agree	20	19.6	19.6	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 14. Time consumed to find eco-friendly products**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	6	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Somehow disagree	11	10.8	10.8	16.7
	Not disagree, not agree	10	9.8	9.8	26.5
	Somehow agree	27	26.5	26.5	52.9
	Agree	35	34.3	34.3	87.3
	Completely Agree	13	12.7	12.7	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 15. Intention to reduce plastic products consumption**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Completely disagree	4	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	5.9
	Somehow disagree	2	2.0	2.0	7.8
	Not disagree, not agree	4	3.9	3.9	11.8
	Somehow agree	24	23.5	23.5	35.3
	Agree	29	28.4	28.4	63.7
	Completely Agree	37	36.3	36.3	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 16. Energy saving lamps**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	42	41.2	41.2	41.2
	Yes, because I have to	2	2.0	2.0	43.1
	Yes, because it saves me money	13	12.7	12.7	55.9
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	38	37.3	37.3	93.1
	Yes, because everybody does it	7	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 17. Garbage recycling**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	13	12.7	12.7	12.7
	Yes, because I have to	5	4.9	4.9	17.6
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	79	77.5	77.5	95.1
	Yes, because everybody does it	5	4.9	4.9	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 18.** Biologically degradable soaps

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No	51	50.0
	Yes, because I have to	6	5.9
	Yes, because it saves me money	4	3.9
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	39	38.2
	Yes, because everybody does it	2	2.0

**Appendix 19.** Rainwater or water from my own natural water resource

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No	88	86.3
	Yes, because I have to	9	8.8
	Yes, because it saves me money	2	2.0
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	1	1.0
	Yes, because everybody does it	2	2.0

**Appendix 20.** Household energy provided by a “green” supplier

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	83	81.4	81.4
	Yes, because I have to	7	6.9	6.9
	Yes, because it saves me money	1	1.0	1.0
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	11	10.8	10.8

**Appendix 21.** Member of an environmental organization

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	88	86.3	86.3
	Yes, because I have to	9	8.8	8.8
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	5	4.9	4.9

**Appendix 22. Avoid unnecessary packaging**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	9	8.8	8.8	8.8
	Yes, because I have to	4	3.9	3.9	12.7
	Yes, because it saves me money	8	7.8	7.8	20.6
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	79	77.5	77.5	98.0
	Yes, because everybody does it	2	2.0	2.0	100.0

**Appendix 23. short showers to avoid wasting water**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	30	29.4	29.4	29.4
	Yes, because I have to	9	8.8	8.8	38.2
	Yes, because it saves me money	9	8.8	8.8	47.1
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	54	52.9	52.9	100.0

**Appendix 24. Talking to others about more environmentally friendly products**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	25	24.5	24.5	24.5
	Yes, because I have to	4	3.9	3.9	28.4
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	63	61.8	61.8	90.2
	Yes, because everybody does it	10	9.8	9.8	100.0
	Total	102	100.0	100.0	

**Appendix 25.** Avoid using car

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	20	19.6	19.6	19.6
	Yes, because I have to	9	8.8	8.8	28.4
	Yes, because it saves me money	29	28.4	28.4	56.9
	Yes, because it is better for the environment	44	43.1	43.1	100.0

**Appendix 26.** Evaluation of the measurement and structural model

Construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity

	$\alpha > 0,7$	CR > 0,6	AVE > 0,5	EC	GSI	IP	MO	P	PPI
EC	0.920	0.944	0.809	<b>0.899</b>					
GSI	0.916	0.941	0.799	0.871	<b>0.894</b>				
IP	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.824	0.807	<b>1.000</b>			
MO	0.944	0.964	0.900	0.765	0.866	0.782	<b>0.948</b>		
P	0.869	0.938	0.884	0.740	0.792	0.853	0.789	<b>0.940</b>	
PPI	0.856	0.912	0.775	0.707	0.715	0.700	0.688	0.661	<b>0.880</b>

Note: The discriminant validity of the constructs was measured by comparing the square root of the AVE of each construct with the correlations between constructs. The square root of the AVE (diagonal elements in italics in the table) had to be larger than the corresponding inter-construct correlation (off-diagonal elements in the table).

Discriminant validity. Cross loadings

	EC	GSI	IP	MO	P	PPI
EC1	0.930	0.786	0.758	0.687	0.673	0.646
EC2	0.933	0.804	0.802	0.692	0.662	0.671
EC3	0.904	0.735	0.705	0.657	0.621	0.613
EC4	0.826	0.809	0.691	0.721	0.712	0.609
GSI1	0.835	0.898	0.752	0.770	0.712	0.590
GSI2	0.730	0.908	0.732	0.841	0.757	0.659
GSI3	0.811	0.934	0.748	0.799	0.737	0.687
GSI4	0.735	0.833	0.647	0.679	0.618	0.621
IP	0.824	0.807	1.000	0.782	0.853	0.700
MO1	0.793	0.878	0.799	0.942	0.791	0.712
MO2	0.661	0.788	0.667	0.944	0.690	0.589
MO3	0.712	0.791	0.746	0.959	0.756	0.646
P1	0.711	0.747	0.834	0.768	0.945	0.582
PI2	0.680	0.741	0.766	0.714	0.935	0.665
PPI1	0.509	0.587	0.544	0.590	0.494	0.863
PPI2	0.552	0.535	0.547	0.489	0.556	0.860
PPI3	0.766	0.737	0.727	0.711	0.673	0.917

Results of the structural model

	<b>R2</b>	<b>Q2</b>				
IP	0.744	0.704				
P	0.727	0.613				
	Path coeff.	Low CI	High CI	t	P-values	Hypothesis
EC -> IP	0.440	0.166	0.718	3.004	0.003	H1: Accepted
GSI -> IP	0.089	-0.310	0.532	0.440	0.660	H2: Rejected
IP -> P	0.853	0.768	0.901	24.670	0.000	H5: Accepted
MO -> IP	0.274	-0.069	0.553	1.719	0.086	H3: Accepted
PPI -> IP	0.137	-0.031	0.325	1.489	0.137	H4: Rejected