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Structural equation model for the evaluation of social initiatives on customer behaviour

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Abstract

Nowadays environmental and social problems are very important more and more for both modern consumers and firms, that cannot operate only in accordance with the logic of profit like in the past time. In the present paper, by administering a questionnaire to consumers, we have tried to assess the impact of responsible initiatives solidarity on the consumers' preferences: the conclusions are also a matter for thought for further discussion. The investigation was conducted through a sample size survey. The analysis was carried out considering a representative sample of more than three hundred and thirty families, selected on a functional relation to the objectives of the work in one of the most important and representative Italian city. This study has two main aims: the first is to investigate consumers' preferences regard responsible initiatives of company, the second is to propose a structural equation model to formalize the origins of behaviours regarding consumers' preferences towards responsible initiatives and detect the drivers of their purchase.

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1. Introduction

The theme of Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is not new, even if his knowledge is still poor. Many companies (above all, big groups) make considerable efforts more and more to follow the consumers' preferences regard to their requirements and responsible initiatives, very important in order to change the business strategies for better

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results. In recent years, firms tend more and more to sponsor social and environmental and charitable activities to improve their own image, but it is not always reflected in terms of benefits towards consumers (Boccia & Samo, 2013). Modern consumers have much more attention to social problems and require that firms do not operate only in accordance with the logic of profit, but also to improve social and environmental background. As a matter of fact, nowadays people is much in agreement about the need to take care of social problems. Therefore it can say that social responsibility should not be understood simply as a cost or constraint, but as a real investment from the perspective of functional marketing strategies, which eventually contributes to the development of companies and creates value for all stakeholders (not just those that pursue the goal of sustainable development).

Therefore, the enterprise's role has changed today, above all into industrialized world: it is not only an economic institution, but also a social one, whose decisions are of increasing importance for the welfare of community: it becomes an organism that must take a more responsible behaviour in satisfaction of human needs. A firm is responsible producing wealth and wellbeing, and contributing to create economic and social contexts suitable for development. In the work, by administering a questionnaire to consumers, authors have tried to assess the degree of knowledge that consumers have of CSR and if the use of ethical values by a company can influence their choices of purchase, this analysis is conducted through a structural equation model that permit to formalize the origins of behaviours regarding consumers' preferences towards responsible initiatives and to detect the drivers of their purchase. The conclusions are also a matter for thought for further discussion. Considering the new features of modern consumers, this work is based on a previous national research (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006): it has shown what a company must provide in order to be considered an ethical firm. The results indicated as key elements above all: environmental protection, respect laws, quality of products, respect workers' rights, transparency for consumers, fair price. Many of them indicate the new demands of consumer in relation to CSR, and this is precisely the theme of this study: it considers the knowledge that consumers have about the CSR, as well as the behaviour that persons in charge for purchasing (therefore not randomly selected) have towards food products meeting specific social responsibility requirements.

2. Materials

Within industrialized world it gives more and more attention to the enterprise's role, not only as an economic institution but also as a social one, whose decisions are of increasing importance for the welfare of community: it becomes an organism that must take a more responsible behaviour in satisfaction of human needs. A firm is responsible producing wealth and wellbeing, and contributing to create economic and social contexts suitable for development. Corporate social responsibility means integrating ethical concerns into the strategic vision of enterprise: it is a manifestation of the willingness of firms to effectively manage the impact of social and ethical issues in and out of their business areas. For several years the issue of CSR is increasing. It is the realization of the management philosophy of stakeholder value, based on the principle that the firm's objective is to generate value for all its stakeholders. It is opposed to a more limited management philosophy (the shareholder value): it affirms that the firm's objective is to generate a profit or value only to its shareholders (Covino et al., 2013; Covino et al., 2008). Many companies have been sensitized to CSR issues: as a matter of fact they draw up codes of ethical conduct (or integrate into their strategic principles). There are many examples into multinational agribusiness scenario for various reasons: direct decision as a strategic response to the actions of other major competitors, or to make up for past immoral behaviour towards consumers. So they have embarked on policies to promote social responsibility.

Above all in the food industry, the choice of goods and services requires the consumer decisions that seem to be increasingly dependent on factors not attributable only to the quality/price relationship: instead, they also involve issues directly related to ethics, environment and protection of labour. Today, companies do not limit themselves to undertake CSR, but often they choose to bring the stakeholders aware of such conduct, in an attempt to improve corporate reputation and business results. Therefore, it is to outline a synergy between businesses and consumers: consumer's choices affect companies' policies, which (if properly communicated) are able to influence purchases.

In this context Corporate social responsibility can be defined in several ways: as a social obligation, a stakeholder obligation, ethics-driven, or a managerial process perspective (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004; Covino & Boccia, 2014). The stakeholder perspective has become popular for research, as it offers scholars and practitioners help in identifying for whom corporations are responsible, namely those who are directly or indirectly affected by a corporation's business (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Jones, 1995). Different classifications of ethical business practices and CSR initiatives have been developed by identifying several common stakeholder groups — employees,

customers, the community, and suppliers (Panapanaan et al., 2003) — as well as shareholders and the environment (Spiller, 2000). Yet, Bowen (1953) defined it as the obligation to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society. Scholars supporting the notion of stakeholder obligation (Clarkson, 1995) have contended that such a definition is rather broad because companies do not have an obligation to the whole society but rather to those directly or indirectly affected by the companies' activities. So, others researchers (Ackerman, 1975; Swanson, 1995) have argued that CSR represents a positive commitment to society, and, consequently, have defined it as a managerial process: monitoring and assessing environmental conditions, attending to stakeholder demands, and designing plans and policies aimed at enhancing a firm's positive impact. Depending on which definition of CSR is used, research areas and units of analyses have been chosen differently (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004; Yoon & Cho, 2007; Li & Bernoff, 2008). Therefore, it is clear that the concept of CSR has been characterized as broad and complex (Mohr et al., 2001). Since more than dozens of definitions of CSR are offered in the literature (Dahlsrud, 2008), several scholars have now called for a unified definition (McWilliams et al., 2006; Van Marrewijk, 2003). In this case the study adheres to the definition by the European Commission (EC), since the definition is wide-ranging and captures the issues that are the focus of the paper. As a matter of fact, the EC defines CSR as a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis (European Commission, 2001). Moreover Campbell (2007) complements this position by stressing the centrality of stakeholders. He suggests that companies must not knowingly do anything that could harm their stakeholders and if corporations do cause harm to their stakeholders, they must then rectify it whenever the harm is discovered and brought to their attention. The authors view these definitions as appropriate for this research because they include a strong stakeholder focus and offer a broad view of CSR (Öberseder et al., 2013). Another important point is that CSR means integrating ethical concerns into the strategic vision of enterprise: it is a manifestation of the willingness of firms to effectively manage the impact of social and ethical issues in and out of their business areas. For several years the issue of CSR is increasing. The CSR is the realization of the management philosophy of "stakeholder value", based on the principle that the firm's objective is to generate value for all its stakeholders. It is opposed to a more limited management philosophy (the "shareholder value"): it affirms that the firm's objective is to generate a profit or value only to its shareholders (Sen et al., 2006; Covino et al., 2013). Many companies have been sensitized to CSR issues: as a matter of fact they draw up codes of ethical conduct (or integrate into their strategic principles). There are many examples into multinational agribusiness scenario for various reasons: direct decision as a strategic response to the actions of other major competitors, or to make up for past immoral behaviour towards consumers. So they have embarked on policies to promote social responsibility with strategies for the environment, employment and local development (Boccia & Sarnacchiaro, 2013; Pomarici et al., 2012). Above all in the food industry, the choice of goods and services requires the consumer decisions that seem to be increasingly dependent on factors not attributable only to the quality/price relationship, instead, they also involve issues directly related to ethics, environment and protection of labour. Today, companies do not limit themselves to undertake CSR, but often they choose to bring the stakeholders aware of such conduct, in an attempt to improve corporate reputation and business results. Therefore, it is to outline a synergy between businesses and consumers: consumer's choices affect companies' policies, which (if properly communicated) are able to influence purchases. This work has a purpose: considering the profile of modern consumer (careful to consequences of its purchasing decisions in terms of social, ethical and environmental aspects), to identify the role of CSR for consumer through a study on critical, ethical and responsible purchase of food products (Bhattacharya et al., 2008). From the point of view of dimensions that CSR is able to take, organized previous literature and insisted that for-profit companies need to take responsibility on four levels. Economic responsibility, the first and foremost responsibility of for-profit companies, is related to the notion that economic entities have to provide goods and services to members of society to produce economic profit. Legal responsibility is related to the notion that companies need to adhere to social contracts, such as laws and regulations, to subsist within a society. Ethical responsibility is related to the un-codified ethical norms that companies are expected to fulfill as members of society. Discretionary (philanthropic) responsibility refers to un-mandated company activities that produce positive effects on society, such as philanthropic contributions. Schwartz and Carroll (2003) further argued that the four CSR dimensions have a pyramid-like relationship: the economic, legal and ethical responsibilities are most fundamental, while philanthropic responsibility would be better represented as subsumed by the other responsibilities (Yoo & Jo, 2008; Baea & Kimb, 2013; Boccia et al., 2013).

At last, considering more closely the topic that we want to deal, prior research has demonstrated that CSR has an

impact on consumers' attitudes, purchase intentions, consumer–company identification, loyalty, and satisfaction. Initial studies indicate that consumers take a firm's commitment to CSR initiatives into account when evaluating companies and their products. The main conclusions from this previous research include the following points. As a matter of fact, consumers evaluate companies as well as products in terms of CSR, whereby negative CSR associations are more influential and have a more detrimental effect than positive ones. However, positive associations do boost company and product evaluations (Biehal & Sheinin, 2007; Brown & Dacin, 1997; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). The influence of CSR on consumers' purchase intentions is more complex than previously thought, in that CSR can affect purchase intentions directly or indirectly. The effect is indirect when a corporate context for purchase intentions is created, while it is direct when the CSR activity reflects the consumer's CSR beliefs (Mohr & Webb, 2005). However, only a small segment of consumers uses CSR as a purchase criterion (Mohr et al., 2001). Therefore, awareness of CSR activities has been found to be generally low (Sen et al., 2006), but a comprehensive communication program can raise the level of awareness (Pomeroy & Dolnicar, 2009). Communicating CSR activities is important, as consumers that are aware of CSR initiatives have more positive attitudes and behavioural intentions. Proactive communication strategies and company-controlled information channels are perceived as hypocritical compared to reactive communication strategies and are more likely to affect consumer behaviour negatively (Wagner et al., 2009). Consumers' perceptions of motives for engaging in CSR influence their evaluation and responsiveness to CSR (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Vlachos et al., 2009).

3. Methods

So, while these conceptualizations provide a basis for debate and empirical work, it is important to underline that they suffer from some main limitations: above all, they deal exclusively with business ethics rather than with corporate social responsibility; then, none really considers the knowledge that consumers have about the CSR, as well as the behaviour that persons in charge for purchasing (therefore not randomly selected) have towards food products meeting specific social responsibility requirements. For this reason, the investigation was conducted through a sample size survey. The survey was carried out by delivering a questionnaire: it was designed just to investigate the main aims mentioned before. The analysis was carried out considering a representative sample of 332 families, selected on a functional relation to the objectives of the work in one of the most important Italian city: Naples, in Campania Region. The sampling was carried using a multi-stage method. Consumers' food purchase behaviour and factors affecting food preferences are analyzed in two stages. The study employed a structured questionnaire (Table 1) in which the items were measured by different measurement scale, in particular an ordinal scale with five point for BEHA, STAT and ATTI variables and a dichotomous scale for KNOW variables.

In order to complement both quantitative and qualitative data, more information was collected through focus group discussions. In the first stage, the focus group method was used to analyze the market dynamics and consumers preferences. While the second stage comprises of a field research survey that was formed by 332 face-to-face, purposive sampling of samples that are suitable key informants for interview. The interviews included only closed questions: so, the questionnaire includes socio-economic aspects of the consumer, items regarding the knowledge of the different type of social initiatives and questions regarding the customer predisposition towards responsible initiatives in order to identify the consumer buying behavior.

The econometric strategy used to formalize the origins of behaviours regarding consumers' preferences towards responsible initiatives and detect the drivers of their purchase is based on the following steps: 1) Detection of the main aspects that influence consumers' preferences through a Factorial Analysis; 2) Identification of the SEM; 3) Estimation of the SEM; 4) Testing of the SEM; 5) Modification of the SEM.

In order to identify the main aspects (latent variables) that affected the behaviours regarding consumers' preferences, the data were analyzed by means of Factorial Analysis, performed using the method of minimum residual (MINRES) (Harman, 1960). This analysis was conducted on the polychoric correlation coefficient matrix because data collection were expressed by ordinal variables. The MINRES procedure, equivalent to an unweighted least squares method, was used because it does not require distributional assumptions and it is very robust. The data were analyzed using PRELIS (Version 2.54). The criterion used to determine the number of factors was based upon the derivation of factors associated with an eigenvalue greater than one. For examining the behavioural process, that drives consumer's preferences, a scheme via SEM was elaborated. In SEM we distinguish between covariance-based techniques, as represented by linear structural relations (LISREL) (Joreskog, 1970), and variance-based techniques, of which the partial least squares (PLS) path modelling (Wold, 1975) is the most prominent representative.

Table 1. Questionnaire

Item	Label
What is your age?	STAT1
What is your income bracket?	STAT2
Do you know the Corporate social responsibility?	KNOW 1
Do you know the quality-label product?	KNOW2
Do you know the functional product?	KNOW3
Do you know the fair-trade product?	KNOW4
What is your level of trust in companies?	ATTI1
Do companies have to worry about the social problems?	ATTI2
What do you think about social initiatives of companies?	ATTI3
Do you purchase food product according to the relationship quality/price?	ATTI4
Do you purchase food product according to trust in company?	ATTI5
Is it important to label the nutritional content?	ATTI6
Is it important to label the environmental help and rights' protection?	ATTI7
How much would you pay more for a food product of a socially responsible company?	ATTI8
How many times do you purchase a quality-label product?	BEHA1
How many times do you purchase a functional product?	BEHA2
How many times do you purchase a fair-trade product?	BEHA3

In the paper we have chosen the PLS, performed by Smart-PLS (Version 2), because it has less stringent assumptions for the distribution of variables and error terms, it is able to work with both reflective and formative measurement models. PLS path models are formally defined by two sets of linear equations called inner and outer model, respectively. The inner (or structural) model specifies the relationships between unobserved or latent variables (LVs), whereas the outer (or measurement) model specifies the relationships between a LV and its observed or manifest variables (MVs). PLS path modelling includes two different kinds of outer models: reflective and formative measurement models.

In SEM framework, the focus of the research is mainly on the structural model rather than on the measurement model. In reality, the relationships between the LVs and the MVs should also be thought of as hypotheses that need to be evaluated in addition to the structural paths. Such measurement model misspecification can create measurement error, which in turn affects the structural model (Jarvis et al., 2003).

Therefore, in our research particular attention has been given to the construction and validation of the measurement models. Depending on the causal priority between the MV and the LV (Bollen, 1989), the first choice to take for measurement model specification is: formative or reflective (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2006). Four primary theoretical decision rules proposed by Jarvis et al. (2003) have been used to discover the model specification. In the first rule the researcher should consider the theoretical direction of causality between each LV and corresponding MVs. In the second the researcher should analyze the interchangeability of the MVs, in another words the removal of an item does/does not change the essential nature of the underlying construct. The third and the fourth decision rules regard the presence of covariation among the MVs and the nomological net of the construct indicators. Next, to the aim to corroborate the suitability of the chosen model some empirical tests have been performed. In our research we chose for exogenous latent variables the formative specification and for endogenous latent variable the reflective specification, therefore our SEM is a formative model. PLS path modelling does not provide any global goodness-of-fit criterion. So, the evaluation model takes place in a two-step process: the assessment of the outer and inner models. At the beginning, the model assessment focuses on the measurement models. In formative measurement model framework traditional validity assessments and classical test theory do not apply to the MVs (Bollen, 1989; Bagozzi, 1994).

A first examination of the construct validity of formative indicators should use theoretic rationale and expert opinion (Rossiter, 2002). Next from empirical point of view, in order to evaluate the construct validity a researcher needs of assessing convergent and discriminant validity of the involved measures (Diamantopoulos & Winklhofer, 2001).

The former is when the measures for a construct are more correlated with one another more than measures of another construct, whereas the latter is when the measures can be isolated into distinct constructs (Petter et al., 2007). But, with formative constructs no restriction exists on the magnitude of correlations among indicators, so that there are no definitive rules on between vs within construct correlations (Bollen & Lennox, 1991). For that latter reason the classic methods of achieving construct validity may not be applied to formative factors (MacKenzie et al., 2005). Therefore we have chosen the MINRES method applied on the polychoric correlation matrix of the MVs, particularly we considered the correlation between items/factors for the evaluation of convergent validity and the correlation matrix among factors for the evaluation of discriminant validity. To complete the analysis of the convergent validity we considered for each weights magnitude estimation, linking the question/item to the relative corresponding LV, the bootstrapping results for assessing the statistical significance (Montuori et al., 2012).

The reliability evaluation for formative measurement model needs to examine the error term for each LV, since the measurement error is assessed at construct level and not at indicator level as it happens for reflective measures instead. This type of error is not random error, as a matter of fact it tells information about the items already existing in the model and it may be quite informative only regarding items not incorporated in the model. So, the only way to overcome measurement error is to design it out of the study before collecting the data. Particularly, it is possible to eliminate the error term or capturing all possible causes on the construct or specifying the focal construct in such a way as to capture the full set of indicators (Diamantopoulos, 2006). Both approaches legitimately exclude the error term ($\zeta=0$). Although elimination of the error term may sometimes be possible, in most instances, error would have to be incorporated in the formative model specification and no simple way exists to empirically assess it. A first analysis can be done considering the magnitude of the error term and the statistical significance of indicator coefficients. Particularly if it is small and all indicator coefficients are significant, then it could be concluded that the formative measure is accepted. If the error term is large, some aspects of the construct are not adequately captured (in case of statistical significance of indicator coefficients) or the construct should be redefine (in case of many indicators are not significant) (Diamantopolous, 2006).

Another approach for the assessment of measurement error in formative models is based on the tetrad test (Bollen & Ting, 2000) (Coltman et al., 2008). A “tetrad” refers to the difference between the products of two pairs of error covariances. The test is based on nested vanishing tetrads that are implied by comparing two theoretical measurement models (Spearman & Holzinger, 1924). In the case of a reflective model, the null hypothesis is that the set of non-overlapping tetrads vanishes. In simpler terms, when the intercorrelations between pairs of errors are compared, they should tend to zero. The tetrad test confirms whether or not this is true. The tetrad test is a confirmatory procedure that should not be used as a stand-alone criterion for distinguishing formative from reflective models. Another measurement issue that researchers need to check in formative measurement models is collinearity. The presence of highly correlated indicators will make estimation of their weights in the formative model difficult and result in imprecise values for these weights. In order to check the degree of multicollinearity among the formative indicators the variance inflation factor (VIF) has been computed (Sen & Srivastava, 1990). Reliable and valid outer model estimations allow an evaluation of the inner path model estimates. The essential criterions for this assessment are the statistical significance of the path coefficients and the coefficient of determination (R^2) of the endogenous LV.

4. Results and discussion

Factorial Analysis performed on the collected data underlined a four-factors solution (main aspects) and, as demonstrated by low correlation among factors (Table2), they are largely independent of one another. In our research we chose for exogenous latent variables the formative specification for measurement model, on the contrary for the endogenous latent variable we chose the reflective specification, therefore our SEM is a formative model. The first factor includes the socio-economic aspects of the consumer, so the corresponding latent variables can be conceptualized as a formative construct called “Status”. The second factor is associated with items regarding the knowledge of the different type of Social Initiatives and it can be conceptualized as a formative construct named “Knowledge”. The third factor, named “Attitude”, is connected with questions regarding the customer predisposition towards responsible initiatives. In our case we have chosen a formative model specification for all the exogenous constructs because it seemed more plausible to assume each measurement model as an index rather than as a scale. Moreover for each measurement model we observed that each variable was not interchangeable, in fact if we eliminate an indicator from the measurement model we became different the conceptual domain of the construct.

Table 2. Latent Variable Correlations

	Behaviour	Knowledge	Attitude	Status
Behaviour	1.000000			
Knowledge	0.788534	1.000000		
Attitude	0.358732	0.239984	1.000000	
Status	0.109809	0.060687	0.041199	1.000000

The fourth factor is associated with items regarding the Consumer Buying Behavior, therefore it was called “Behavior”. In this case, regarding the nature of the latent variable, we observed that it exists independent of the measures and the indicators all share a common theme. Moreover the causality flows from the latent variable to the indicators and the indicators are interchangeability, as in reflective models. In conclusion we chose for this latent variable the reflective measurement model. Starting from these results we hypothesized that Status, Knowledge and Attitude were exogenous latent variables, while Behavior was an endogenous latent variable. The involved relationship are described by the following equations :

$$\eta = B\eta + \Gamma\xi + \zeta \quad (1)$$

$$Y = \Lambda_Y \eta + \varepsilon \quad (2)$$

$$\xi = \Omega_X X + v \quad (3)$$

where (1) is the inner model, (2) and (3) are the outer models for reflective and formative measurement model respectively. η and ξ are two arrays of endogenous and exogenous LVs, B and Γ are matrices of unknown parameters; Y and X are the sets of MVs, the matrices Λ_Y and Ω_X are coefficients matrix. ζ , ε and v are the equation error components. In (2) the relationships among manifests and LVs are formulated according to a so-called reflective measurement model, differently in (3) the relationships among MVs and LVs are formulated according to formative measurement model. In model (1) the matrix B is assumed to be lower triangular with zero elements on the main diagonal, so the resulting model is said to be of the recursive type (Boari & Cantaluppi, 2010). The relationship and the results of the SEM using PLS are summarized in Fig. 1. In order to evaluate the goodness of the SEM a two-step process was performed. Firstly, SEM assessment focused on the measurement models.

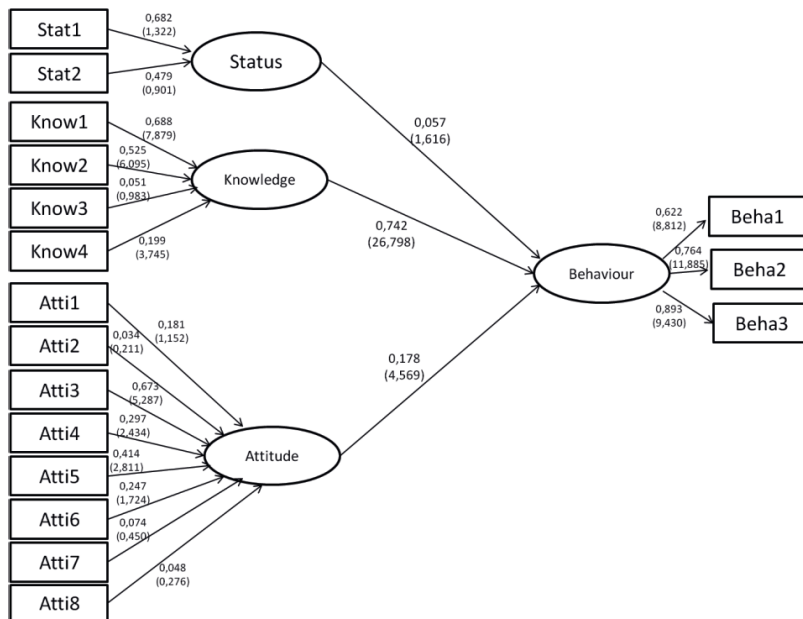


Fig. 1. Structural equation model to formalize the origins of behaviours regarding consumers’ preferences

For each formative LV, the construct validity has been analyzed by means the MINRES method applied on the polychoric correlation matrix of the MVs. The evaluation of discriminant validity (Table 2) are resulted acceptable. In Figure 1 are reported the estimated indicator weights magnitude linking the MV to the corresponding LV and all the bootstrapping results for assessing the significance of these weights (empirically convergent validity). These results added further support to the formative model, as the LVs predict the Consumer Buying Behavior well and the majority of outer MV coefficients and inner path coefficients have the right signs and adequate t-statistics. In any case we chose to keep non significant items to preserve content validity (Bollen & Lennox, 1991).

Regarding the measurement error and collinearity, we also apply the vanishing tetrad test to the construct Knowledge and Attitude. This test rejects the reflective model for all the two constructs, lending added support to the formative view taken here (Table 3).

Table 3. Tetrad test results for Formative Indicators

	Number of indicators	Chi ² (Df)	Significance	Implication
Knowledge	4	7.5	<0.01	Formative
Attitude	8	18.4	<0.01	Formative

The magnitude of error term evaluation for measurement model has been done according to the following guidelines: F^2 values of 0.02 ($R^2 = 0.0196$), 0.15 ($R^2 = 0.13$), and 0.35 ($R^2 = 0.26$) refer to a small, moderate, and large effect size, respectively (Diamantopolous, 2006). In our case all the error term are small magnitude. In order to evaluate the collinearity, the VIF was computed for each MV. Multicollinearity did not seem to pose a problem, the maximum VIF came to 3.122, which is far below the common cut-off threshold of 10. However, both theoretical and empirical analysis shows that the formative assumption is satisfactory. In the reflective model all the manifest variables are strongly correlated. Since reflective indicators have positive intercorrelations, we used to empirically assess the individual and composite reliabilities of the indicators the Cronbach alpha (> 0.70), the average variance extracted (> 0.45) and internal consistency (0.80). All these measures confirmed the suitability of the reflective measurement model. Moreover to verify the appropriate classification of each variable with the corresponding LV, the cross loadings between variables and LVs have been computed (Table 4).

Table 4. Cross Loading Latent/Manifest Variables

Item	Behaviour	Knowledge	Attitude	Status
What is your level of trust in companies?	-0.083	-0.031	0.232	-0.100
Do companies have to worry about the social problems?	0.072	0.048	0.202	-0.065
What do you think about social initiatives of companies?	0.265	0.142	0.739	-0.000
Do you purchase food product according to the relationship quality/price?	0.114	0.064	0.318	0.051
Do you purchase food product according to trust in company?	0.199	0.208	0.550	-0.011
Is it important to label the nutritional content?	0.155	0.128	0.434	0.031
Is it important to label the environmental help and rights' protection?	-0.061	-0.009	0.170	0.004
How much would you pay more for a food product of a socially responsible company?	0.068	-0.018	0.191	0.150
How many times do you purchase a quality-label product?	0.622	0.366	0.284	0.232
How many times do you purchase a functional product?	0.763	0.682	0.265	-0.022
How many times do you purchase a fair-trade product?	0.692	0.539	0.212	0.085
Do you know the corporate social responsibility?	0.633	0.803	0.206	-0.000
Do you know the quality-label product?	0.532	0.674	0.124	0.070
Do you know the functional product?	0.219	0.277	0.136	-0.184
Do you know the fair-trade product?	0.313	0.398	0.127	0.165
What is your age?	0.100	0.041	0.063	0.912
What is your income bracket?	0.090	0.069	-0.001	0.825

Verified the goodness of the measurement models, in the second step of the evaluation model, we underlined how the goodness of the fit of the inner model is substantial ($R^2 = 0.656$). Considering the path coefficients we observed that the impact of the Knowledge on the Behavior was considerable (0.742). The second latent factor that influences the Beauvoir is Attitude (0.178).

5. Conclusions

From data analysis we can say that (although attitudes are important, as well as the status but at a lower level) the most significant element in our study is the knowledge, that is the degree of consumer awareness when he buys. Therefore according to the obtained results, although the initiatives of enterprises regard to CSR are good and important, they appear to have a low effect: precisely because of the lack of knowledge that consumer shows about responsible corporate initiatives.

The reasons may be different: low degree of diffusion of information about CSR through different ways of mass communication, not explanatory packaging, absence of a good education on the topic of study, etc. As a matter of fact, from the rest of the analysis we can see that, essentially, only consumers who know the actions of CSR buy actually products of companies that implement them; whereas other consumers buy above all considering price, brand, perceived quality. So, surely a strong strategy of information and sponsorship is important to change this trend.

Lastly, as seen, using SEM framework, the focus of the research is mainly on the structural model rather than on the measurement model; moreover in order to identify the main aspects that affected the behaviours regarding consumers' preferences, the data were analyzed by means of factorial analysis, performed using the method of minimum residual. Therefore, from the analysis also it is possible to underline that the use of the quantitative method that the authors have chosen to apply on field has resulted in significant results, as well as a new representation model for the evaluation of the social initiatives on customer behavior. As a matter of fact, thanks to that method it was possible to do clusters of behavioural variables, identified in order to determine the attitude of the consumer towards the corporate social responsibility and, then, binding considerations on the main features of the individuals in the sample.

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