University of Muenster

Bachelor Thesis

The impact of group membership on individual sustainable consumer behaviour – a systematic literature review

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Executive Summary

The aim of this paper is to analyse the impact of group membership on individual sustainable consumer behaviour. The theories used to define group membership are social identity theory, social norms, norm activation theory, theory of normative social behaviour and the theory of planned behaviour. From these theories, two categories were made as measures of group membership. Namely, social norms and social identity. Demographic variables were added as a third category. The unique aspect of this paper is the fact that it attempts to link group membership and individual sustainable consumer behaviour together in a comprehensive overview.

To define the search queries, a meta-characteristics approach was used to deduct appropriate search queries. The first three pages of the results were scanned. The abstract of every paper was read to determine its relevance. The systematic literature search yielded 48 relevant papers.

When the papers were collected and analysed, two groups of individual sustainable consumer behaviours were analysed closely. Papers that analysed the relationship between group membership and sustainable fashion consumption or green food consumption were analysed closely, and it was found that demographic variables did not have a significant effect on sustainable fashion consumption. Measures of social identity and social norms were both found to have a significant effect on sustainable fashion consumption and green food consumption. The most interesting finding was that the preference for durability had a negative effect on sustainable fashion consumption.

The limitations of this research were found to be the range of different kinds of journals used. Most of the collected papers used questionnaires as their research method, there was not a lot of variation in that.

A surprising lack of longitudinal research into individual sustainable consumer behaviour leads to the conclusion that future research should focus on that to identify the long-term changes in sustainable consumer behaviour.

Furthermore, the implications for managers include the necessity of considering social groups in advertising messages to target specific consumers.

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1   Introduction

Sustainable consumption has become an important part of consumer behaviour over the last few decades. Bartels and Hoogendam have identified that eco-marketing have become crucial for increasing the market share on the sustainable consumption market. Their research finds that the use of social identity theory could help make more effective eco-marketing strategies (Bartels and Hoogendam 2011, p.698). With new products and services that specifically target the 'sustainable consumer', it becomes even more important to define the 'sustainable consumer' in question. The social identity behind being one is important to identify to stimulate sustainable consumer behaviour. In this paper, the effect of group membership on individual sustainable consumer behaviour, specifically "green food consumption" and "sustainable fashion" will be explored with the help of a systematic literature review.

This paper will first explore the background and definitions related to group membership and individual sustainable consumer behaviour individually. Here, important theories in consumer behaviour literature will be explained to lay a foundation for the next chapter, which will summarise the current state of research. The current state of research will be analysed using a systematic literature review. In total, six search queries were used in five relevant databases. Due to the limited space in this paper, two categories of papers will be analysed and compared. Namely "Green consumption" and "Sustainable fashion consumption". These categories were chosen due to the relatively large number of papers in both categories. Finally, there will be a chapter dedicated towards discussing the findings of the literature review. The limitations of this paper along with the practical relevance of the findings will also be discussed.

The main research question 'What is the impact of group membership on individual sustainable consumer behaviour' will be explored with the help of the following sub-questions:

- Which individual sustainable consumer behaviours were measured, and which types of group membership were identified?
- What were the identified relationships between group membership and those sustainable consumer behaviours?

2 Background and definitions

In this chapter, the underlying theories related to group membership and sustainable consumer behaviour will be explored. To elaborate on the concept of group membership, social identity theory and social norms will be used. Theories related to sustainable consumer behaviour will also be presented. One of the main theories that set the basis for research into sustainable consumer behaviour is the theory of planned behaviour, also called the theory of reasoned action, along with the theory of normative social behaviour which closely aligns with the idea of social norms as a basis for group membership.

2.1.1 Social identity theory

One of the fundamental theories behind group membership is social identity theory(Tajfel et al. 1979), which states that individuals define their sense of self with the use of social categories or group memberships (Guan and So 2016). The key idea behind this theory, is that social identity is shaped through social interactions and communicative behaviours. When communicating with others, an individual's belonging to different groups can be expressed along with that group's image and reputation. From these social interactions and evaluations, a defined identity is curated which can be used by the individual (Guan and So 2016, p.590). According to social identity theory, individuals hold up the unique characteristics of the group they feel they belong to. Past research in social identity theory has shown that individuals act in accordance with their perceived group membership and results in "group-approved behaviours" (Guan and So 2016, p.590). Guan and So have found that the reason why social identity exerts an influence on group-advocated behaviour, is self-efficacy. This means that it is expected that when someone identifies with a group, their level of self-efficacy goes up in accordance with how much the individual identifies with a group that advocates a particular behaviour. Self-efficacy can be defined as the level to which someone feels as though they have the capacity to engage in a specific behaviour required to get a specific outcome (Bandura 1977; Guan and So 2016). The connection between social identity and self-efficacy can be found in social cognitive theory.

Social cognitive theory states that individuals' behaviour can be influenced by the behaviour of their fellow group members. This means that an individual's actions can be influenced through observing how others behave themselves within the context of social interaction (Bandura 1977; Guan and So 2016). In the context of this paper, these theories are important to use when analysing the relationship between group membership and individual sustainable consumer behaviour, since the consumer behaviour of the individual must

be traced back to a specific group. An important distinction should be made between in-group rather than out-group members, since identification with in-group members can lead to the individual to believe that they have the same capabilities and can thus perform similar behaviours to their group members (Tajfel and Turner 1979; Guan and So 2016).

2.1.2 Social norms

Social norms can be divided up into two types of norms. Injunctive norms and descriptive norms. Injunctive norms appeal to what others in the social group approve and disapprove of, whereas descriptive norms appeal to what others in the social group are doing (Borg, Curtis, and Lindsay 2020). An example of an injunctive norm would be "it is generally frowned upon to pollute this neighbourhood", a descriptive norm would be "most residents do not pollute this neighbourhood". Goldstein, Cialdini, and Griskevicius also distinguishes provincial norms which describe normative appeals that described behaviour tailored to the specific situation of the individual.

Goldstein, Cialdini, and Griskevicius conducted research into the effects of social norms on conservation behaviour in hotel rooms. The results of the study showed that descriptive norms were most powerful in motivating people to engage in environmentally conscious behaviour. Descriptive norms were found to be more effective than the use of an industry standard, through provincial norms, which served to confirm the subjects' identities as 'environmentally conscious individuals' (Goldstein, Cialdini, and Griskevicius 2008, p. 476). This means that consumers are most motivated to engage on environmentally conscious behaviour when they know that others have chosen to do the same. The aim of using provincial norms in the research was to investigate the conformity to descriptive norms "as a function of the type of reference group attached to that norm" (Goldstein, Cialdini, and Griskevicius 2008, p. 475).

Schwartz developed a norm activation theory that describes the relationship between activators, personal norms, and behaviour (Schwartz 1970;1975;1977; Schwartz and Howard 1984; Harland, Staats, and Wilke 2007). Norm activation here is described as a process where people construct self-expectations around prosocial behaviour, which includes environmentally conscious behaviour. These self-expectations are the so-called 'personal norms' as they are experienced as feelings of moral obligation (Harland, Staats, and Wilke 2007, p. 323).The process of norm activation includes four situational factors and two personality trait activators. The personality trait activators include awareness of need and situational responsibility. The situational factors include awareness of consequences, efficacy,

ability, and denial of responsibility. These factors influence personal norms which in turn influence behaviour (Harland, Staats, and Wilke 2007, p.324). See figure 1 for more clarification.

Figure 1: Overview of Harland, Staats, and Wilke (2007) norm activation model
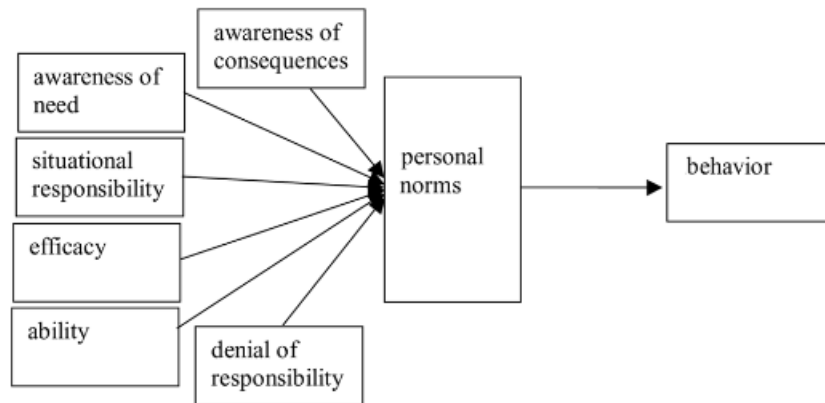
The theory of normative social behaviour states that behavioural intentions are influenced by descriptive norms as perceived by the individual, with perceived injunctive norms as a moderator along with outcome expectations, specifically the perceived benefits, group identity, and behavioural identity (Borg, Curtis, and Lindsay 2020, p. 595). See figure 2 for more clarification.

Figure 2: Borg, Curtis, and Lindsay (2020) components of the theory of normative social behaviour
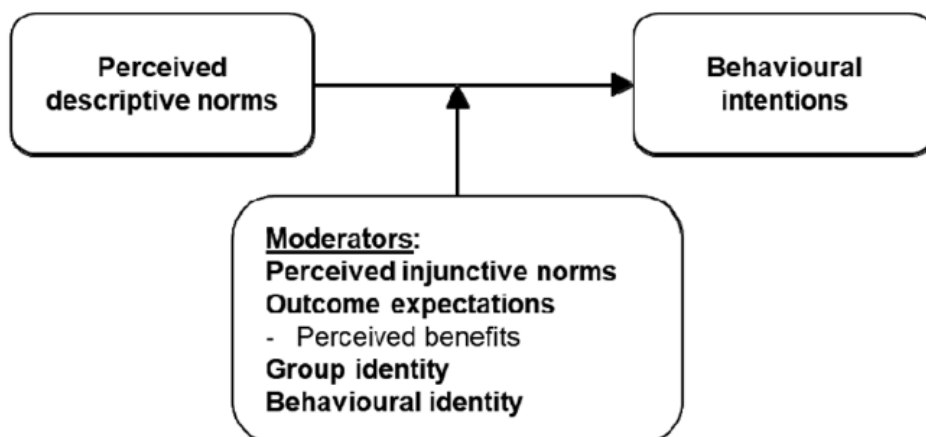
Norm activation theory is closely related to the theory of normative social behaviour. The main difference between these theories is that the theory of normative social behaviour uses perceived descriptive norms as the main determinant of behavioural intentions, which is the most prominent, and only, determinant of behaviour. Norm activation theory considers

multiple factors that influence personal norms which directly influence an individual's behaviour.

2.1.3 Theory of planned behaviour

The theory of planned behaviour states that subjective norms in combination with the attitude of an individual and perceived behavioural control is one of the main predictors of behavioural intention. The attitude includes the evaluation of the behaviour in question, positive or negative, while perceived behavioural control is the level to which someone feels capable of performing the behaviour (White et al. 2009, p. 136). This means that subjective norms, attitude, and behavioural intention influences behavioural intention which in turn influences behaviour.

2.2 Summary

Group membership can be defined by two main theories. Social identity theory and the concept of social norms. The former describes the way people self-categorise in terms of social groups through social interactions. The latter is based on the idea that the generally held belief of what is right and wrong can influence the way that people behave.

The theory of planned behaviour and the theory of normative social behaviour both form the basis of consumer behaviour in the consumer behaviour literature. The theory of planned behaviour states that subjective norms, attitude, and perceived behavioural control are a key predictor of behavioural intention, which influences behaviour in turn. Norm activation theory explains that perceived descriptive norms influence behavioural intentions, which in turn influences behaviour. The moderators of the relationship are perceived injunctive norms, outcome expectations, which include perceived benefits, group identity, and behavioural identity. The theory of normative social behaviour is an important theory to mention besides the theory of planned behaviour because it considers group and behavioural identity.

3. Current state of research

In this chapter, the current state of research into the effect of group membership on consumer behaviour will be explored. The definitions of types of group membership and measures of consumer behaviours will be drawn from the selected literature for this paper (Bartels and Hoogendam 2011; Dono, Webb, and Richardson 2010; White et al. 2009; White, Habib, and Hardisty 2019) along with a paper by Goldstein, Cialdini, and Griskevicius. The purpose of these definitions is to help categorize the literature retrieved from the systematic literature review.

3.1 Types of group membership

By types of group membership, the intention is to bring into picture what group membership would constitute in consumer behaviour literature, as that is the scope of this paper. Group membership will be used to define any type of categorization of consumers used. Bartels and Hoogendam, define the role of social identity in buying behaviours. Here, social identity of the consumer is used to categorize them for the purpose of analysing their sustainable consumer behaviour. The distinction is made between the "environmentally conscious consumer" and the "organic consumer". The results of this study found that a social identity that resembles the one of the "environmentally conscious consumers" has an indirect effect on buying behaviour for organic food products, whereas identification with the "organic consumer" has strong direct and indirect effects on consumers' buying behaviours. Identification with the "environmentally conscious consumer" had a strong and direct influence on an individual's identification with the "organic consumer". Research by Dono, Webb & Richardson underlines the effect that social identity has on pro-environmental behaviour by identifying a significant relationship between social identity and environmental behaviour. Goldstein, Cialdini & Griskevicius illustrate the importance of social norms in pro-environmental consumer behaviour by showing that appealing to consumers' norms had a positive effect on their pro-environmental consumption behaviour. Due to this identified relationship between social norms and consumer behaviour, social norms will be used as a measure of group membership along with social identity.

3.2 Measures of sustainable consumer behaviour

The measures of consumer behaviour are expected to vary from study-to-study and are therefore harder to categorize. The papers will be divided based on the individual sustainable consumer behaviour identified. An analysis will be made of two categories, along with a comparison between them.

4. Methods and techniques

For the systematic literature review, a deductive approach was used to make sure that the right literature was identified for the purpose of the systematic literature review. To do this, inspiration was drawn from the approach by Nickerson, Varshney, and Muntermann which suggests using meta-characteristics to define a general topic of your paper and then determining the ending conditions to develop a good approach for the data acquisition portion of the research. The meta-characteristics include all the topics within your topic that need to be researched, characteristics make up the smaller parts within the meta-characteristics (Nickerson, Varshney, and Muntermann 2013). The approach also includes dimensions, which represent the general research area.

This approach was used because of its conceptualization of an iterative approach to acquiring information. The dimension that was used is "the effects of group membership on sustainable consumer behaviour". This dimension could be split up into "group membership" and "sustainable consumer behaviour" as meta-characteristics, however for the purpose of this paper it was seen fit to add two additional meta-characteristics. The meta-characteristics that were identified were types of group membership, which can be narrowed down to "social identity" and "social norms", "sustainable consumer behaviour measures", "size of the impact", and "type of research used". The characteristics make up smaller parts of the meta-characteristics and were used in the draft of the search query, as seen in figure 3.

For this literature review, several databases will be used. The criteria for inclusion are a wide variety of literature in the business administration field and reliability. The reliability was assessed based on the number of well-ranked journals. The "Web of Science" library will be used first because of its wide variety of business journals, along with "Google Scholar" which provides a large range of well-cited papers, "Taylor & Francis" for its wide range of consumer behaviour literature, and "Scopus" for its access to reliable data. Next to that business source elite (EBSCO) will be used. The search queries were set up with the help of a standardized approach where keywords were picked out beforehand. Furthermore, papers that were published in 2018 or later were retrieved during the systematic literature

review from "Taylor & Francis", "Web of Science", and "Scopus". There was no time limit set for the papers retrieved from "Google scholar" and the "EBSCO" database, for the fact that there was a lack of relevant research with the time limit set, and that the databases would still be a good addition to this review. The papers that fall outside of this data range, however, were only included when they seemed to add a different approach to sustainable consumer behaviour. For example, Soyez used cross-country comparisons to analyse pro-environmental consumer behaviour and Harland, Staats, and Wilke used norm-activation theory to analyse their results.

The keywords that were curated based on the dimension of this research were:

- Sustainable, eco, green
- Consumer, behaviour, buying
- Group, membership, demographic
- Consumption

4.1 Search queries

During the search however, some queries were modified to address the most relevant papers the database had to offer. Figure 3 provides more clarification on the initial keywords used.

The final search queries were:

Search query 1 on "Web of Science":

- Abstract (Sustainable OR eco OR green OR environmental AND consumer OR behaviour OR buying OR consumption AND group OR membership OR demographic OR social OR identity) AND Publication date 2018 to present

Search query 2 on "Scopus":

- Title (Sustainable OR eco OR green OR environmental AND consumer OR buying OR consumption AND group OR membership OR demographic OR social OR identity AND behaviour) AND Publication date 2018 to present

Search query 3 on "Scopus" aimed at sources that were B+ rated only:

- TITLE (Sustainable OR eco OR green OR environmental AND consumer OR buying OR consumption AND group OR membership OR demographic OR social OR

identity AND behaviour) AND SRCTITLE (journal AND of AND marketing OR research) AND Publication date 2018 to present

Search query 4 on "Taylor & Francis" aimed at sources that were B+ rated only:

- (Sustainable OR eco OR green OR environmental AND consumer OR buying OR consumption AND group OR membership OR demographic OR social OR identity AND behaviour) AND SRCTITLE (journal AND of AND marketing OR research) AND Publication date 2018 to present

Search query 5 on "business source elite (EBSCO)":

- (Sustainable OR eco OR green OR environmental AND consumer OR buying OR consumption AND group OR membership OR demographic OR social OR identity AND behaviour)

Search query 6 on "Google Scholar":

- (Sustainable OR eco OR green OR environmental AND consumer OR buying OR consumption AND group OR membership OR demographic OR social OR identity AND behaviour) AND Publication date 2017 to present

4.2 Retrieved papers

During the systematic literature review, the first three pages of the search results were analysed. The abstracts of every paper were read to identify their relevance to the topic. What determined the inclusion was the clear distinction made between consumer groups based on characteristics that are unique to them. For a full overview of every paper identified per database, please refer to appendix A.

The number of relevant papers per database were 16 in Google Scholar, 7 in EBSCO and 11 in Web of Science. Scopus yielded 14 relevant results, of which 5 were retrieved using the first search query and 9 using the second search query. Taylor & Francis did not yield any relevant results. Using these databases, 48 relevant papers were identified in total.

Figure 3: Outline of keywords to use
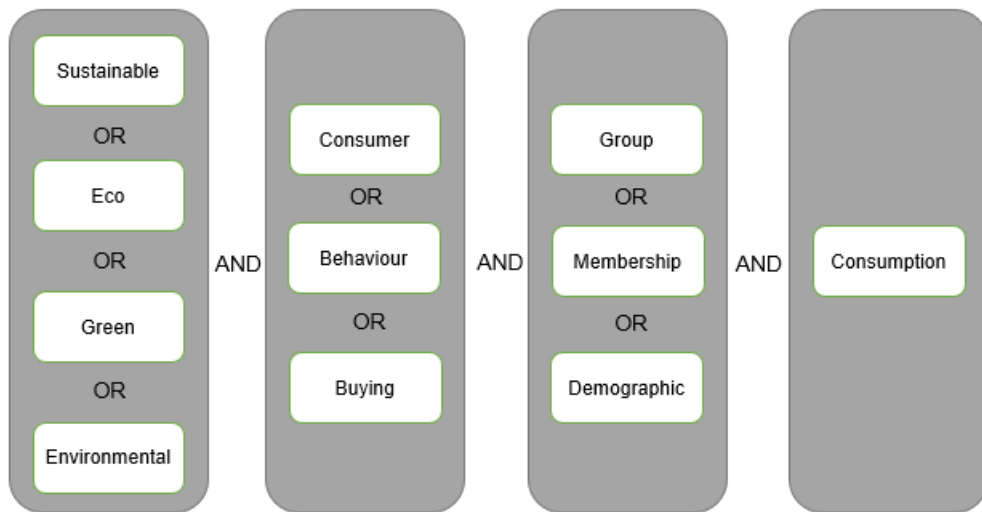
Table 1: Overview of the publishing years of the different papers

Year	Number of papers published in that year
2007	1
2012	1
2014	1
2016	1
2017	3
2018	3
2019	5
2020	12
2021	19
2022	2
Grand Total	**48**

4.3 Results

48 relevant papers were identified and reviewed. To categorize these papers, two research questions were introduced to support the main research question. These sub-questions will be used to structure this subchapter.

4.3.1 Individual sustainable consumer behaviours

The individual sustainable consumer behaviours were found to be either very specific, or not defined at all. This gap in the literature found made it so that the concept of sustainable consumer behaviour was left vague in most of them.

A lot of different sustainable consumer behaviours were identified in the papers reviewed. Most papers were found to have some overlap in topic, but a distinction was made due to the different purposes of the papers. Some papers included multiple sustainable consumer behaviours. The individual sustainable consumer behaviours that will be used in the literature analysis will be "sustainable consumption" and "sustainable fashion" as these behaviours yielded the most papers.

Table 2: Overview of the types of sustainable consumer behaviours identified

Type of sustainable consumer behaviour	Number of papers
Collaborative consumption	1
Eco-shopping frequency	1
Ecotourism (cleaner production)	1
Green battery, hybrid car	1
Green consumption values	1
Green producing, living, transport, and products	1
Green products	3
Green products and services	1
Green products with eco-labels, reusable bags	1
Green purchase intentions	2
Green purchasing attitude	1
Health-related behaviours	1
Home-based, hotel-based water conservation behaviour, product disposal, re-use behaviour, reusable hot drink cup	1
Other transport forms, closing the faucet, and volunteering for Green Aid	1
Plasma, LED or LCD television	1
Plastic items	2
Remanufactured products	1
Skincare products	1

Sustainable consumption (general)	11
Sustainable fashion	5
Waste reduction	1
Waste reduction, packaging, car usage, or to purchase local goods	1
Waste sorting intention	1
Eco-brand orientation	1
Intention towards sustainable fashion	1
Pro-environmental willingness, volunteering intentions	1
Green food consumption	4
Grand Total	**48**

4.3.2 Types of group membership identified

The term 'group membership' encompasses a lot of different factors, it was found that to analyse papers and their ideas of how to group people into different categories; the theoretical backgrounds of the papers had to be analysed and grouped into two of the identified categories namely social identity and social norms. Since not every paper follows the same categorization of people in either social identity or social norms, the previously used definitions of said concepts will be used to ascribe either the "social identity" label or the "social norms" label. Research focused on social identity were more aimed at the individual answering (Gilal et al. 2020), whereas research focused on social norms were aimed more at the interaction between the individual and the environment (Soyez 2012). Some papers also used demographic variables to categorize their respondents (Deliana and Rum 2019) and some papers used a mix of multiple types of group membership. In the end, most papers used the individual approach to sustainable consumer behaviour.

Table 3: Overview of the types of group memberships identified

Group membership	Number of papers
Social identity	26
Social norms	7
Demographic variables	4
Social norms & demographic variables	1
Social norms, social identity & demographic variables	2
Social identity & demographic variables	3

Social identity & social norms	5
Grand Total	**48**

4.3.3 Identified relationships between group membership and sustainable consumer behaviour

37 out of the 48 papers used a questionnaire as their research method. The papers that used this approach identified the following relationships between group membership and sustainable consumer behaviour.

The first group of research analysed social identity and identified the following relationships.

Green purchase intention was found to have a significant effect on sustainable consumption (Jaiswal and Singh 2018). Environmental knowledge, attitude, and a ban on plastic bags all had a positive effect on the green behaviour of consumers (Khan et al. 2020). Environmental knowledge had a significant effect on intention to purchase sustainable fashion. Price sensitivity has a negative effect on intention to purchase sustainable fashion. Surprisingly, scepticism was found to not significantly impact intention to purchase sustainable fashion (Brandão and Costa 2021).

Grimmer and Miles analysed the impact of green purchase intentions on pro-environmental consumer behaviour. Environmental involvement and shopping context were found to moderate the relationship between intention and implementation. Polonsky et al. found that future orientation had a positive effect on sustainable consumption, whereas past orientation had a negative effect. Taufique, Vocino, and Polonsky found that environmental and eco-label knowledge had a positive effect on pro-environmental consumer behaviour, positive environmental attitudes, and trust in eco-labels both had significant effects on pro-environmental consumer behaviour. Environmental social identity had a positive effect on volunteering intentions, social observability had an insignificant effect on pro-environmental willingness in individuals with high environmental social identity, for individuals with low environmental social identity there was a significant simple effect. The willingness to pay was lower in a socially observable environment for those with low levels of environmental social identity (Cabano, Nelson, and Mcdonald 2019).

Essiz and Mandrik conducted interesting research on the effect of intergenerational influences on sustainable consumption. They found that parent-child communication had a positive and significant effect on sustainable consumption and that younger generations tend to influence the decisions of their parents. Peer influence among children did however show a significant and negative effect on intergenerational agreement. Awareness of consequences was found to have a significant effect on personal norm, ascription of responsibility was found to have a significant effect on intention and behaviour when it came to waste sorting (Setiawan, Afiff, and Heruwasto 2021). Environmental ethics, moral obligation, and the green attitude of consumers have a significant influence on the willingness of consumers to consume green products, which in turn affected actual consumption (Akhtar et al. 2021). Environmental and corporate social responsibility (ECSR) initiatives were strongly and positively correlated with attitude towards green products, subjective norms, perceived behavioural, and green purchase intention. Perceived behavioural control played a partial mediating role in the relationship between ECSR intention and green purchase intention. Attitude towards green products and subjective norms did not have a significant effect on that relationship (Vu et al. 2021). Consumer engagement was found to have a significant impact on consumer behaviour. They suggested the application of the engagement construct in the context of sustainable consumption (Piligrimiene et al. 2020). Environmental knowledge, environmental concern, green attitude, and perceived behavioural control were found to have a strong interrelation and a significant impact on green purchasing behaviour towards eco-friendly products (Rusyani, Lavuri, and Gunardi 2021). Environmental concern was found to not have a significant impact on buying behaviour with regards to skincare products, with perceived product effectiveness having the strongest effect.

Some justifications respondents gave with regards to their non-green consumption practices included perceived consumer effectiveness and a sense of powerlessness (Chu 2020). Sharma et al. found that self-identity of consumers and their recognition as a green consumer had a significant effect on the intention to buy eco-friendly products. Chi found a significant association between eco-branding and eco-labelling on green consumption intention. Motivation was found to mediate the relationship, environmental concern was found to moderate and enhance the relationship between eco-brand, eco-label, social media, and green consumption behaviour in ecotourism. Schill and Godefroit-Winkel identified stimuli influencing consumer emotions positively, which in turn positively influenced consumer attitudes, such as environmental corporate social responsibility, luxury, and service quality. Abstract messages that used other-benefit appeals were found to produce more

positive consumer engagement than using self-benefit appeals. This finding illustrated that self-enhancement motivates consumers to engage with green product advertising messages when the advertising appeal is abstract, and the advertising message is associated with benefits for others (Kyu Kim et al. 2020).

The following papers analysed demographic variables in their research and identified the following relationships.

Paço, Shiel, and Alves found that Portuguese citizens were significantly less likely to participate in waste reduction, packaging, car usage, or to purchase local goods. British citizens were found to be significantly more likely to participate in such sustainable behaviours.

External motivation had a positive effect on sustainable consumption, introjected motivation had a negative effect on sustainable consumption. Gender was found to have a small moderating effect since men responded more strongly to identified and external motivation, whereas women responded more strongly to introjected motivation (Gilal et al. 2020).

Bedard and Tolmie conducted interesting research where they found that social media usage had a positive effect on green purchase intentions. Online interpersonal influence had a positive effect on green purchase intentions. A masculinity-femininity spectrum and an individualism-collectivism spectrum was introduced which showed that the masculinity-femininity spectrum had a significant moderating effect and weakened the relationships between online interpersonal influence, social media usage, and green purchase intentions. Individualism-collectivism did not play a significant role in moderating green purchase intentions.

Jaiswal et al. conducted research where they grouped people in three distinct groups, the determining factors for differentiating between the groups were found to be gender, age, occupation, income, and marital status. The only demographic variable that was not successful in distinguishing the categories was education level.

The following papers analysed social norms in their research and identified the following relationships.

Borg, Curtis, and Lindsay found that social norms had a significant effect on plastic avoidance. Research done in collaborative consumption showed that social norms positively influence perceived usefulness and intention of collaborative consumption (Małecka et al. 2022).

The following papers analysed social identity and demographic variables and identified the following relationships.

Generativity had a positive impact on green consumption values. Gender and country had no significant effect on green consumption values. Age and having children both had a positive impact on generativity (Shiel, Paço, and Alves 2020). Olasiuk, Jindal, and Bhardwaj found a significant relationship between level of environmental concern and buying frequency. Increasing demand for information about eco-brands did not have a significant effect on buying frequency. The relationship between age, gender and income level did not have a significant effect on buying frequency. Sun and Wang found that attitudes have a positive effect on consumers' intentions to purchase green products. This effect was found to be greater among men, in high-income households, and younger generations. Women and older generations were found to be subject to price consciousness.

The following papers analysed social norms and social identity and identified the following relationships.

Sun, Li, and Wang found that moral obligations, green self-identity, environmental concern, and social pressure were positively related to green purchase intention. Perceived cost of green purchasing and price sensitivity were found to be negatively related to green purchase intention. Social pressure was found to positively moderate the relationship between price sensitivity and consumers' purchase intention, but negatively moderates the relationship between perceived cost of green purchasing and consumers' green purchasing intention. Sharma et al. found that self-identity of consumers and their recognition as a green consumer had a significant effect on the intention to buy eco-friendly products. Roxas and Marte found that social norms and practices shape environmental knowledge and behavioural modification. Knowledge and self-efficacy, in turn, were found to affect the perceived positive outcomes of eco-behaviour. Guan and So found that individuals who had stronger social identity perceived greater social support from their environment, which in turn predicted higher self-efficacy in engaging with health-related behaviour advocated by their environment.

Two papers used interviews as their research method. These papers identified the following relationships. Beatson, Gottlieb, and Pleming found that consumers tend to exhibit mixed green and non-green behaviours throughout their consumption process. They did however find that this effect might be generational. Consumers were found to be sceptical of eco-

labels. Respondents identified recycling as one of the behaviours they would like to engage in but are currently not.

One paper conducted a literature review and found that intrinsic religiosity had a significant and positive effect on sustainable methods of disposal. Normative goals had a positive effect on the consumption of organic tomatoes. Age, environmental values, and behavioural intention had a significant effect on the use of reusable cups (Nguyen and Johnson 2020).

A longitudinal survey was conducted by (Caniëls et al. 2021). They found a significant indirect and mediating effect of social value in the relationship between pro-environmental beliefs and green purchasing attitude.

Singhal, Jena, and Tripathy conducted a meta-analysis and found that perceived green benefit had a positive effect on the purchase intention of consumers.

Zheng et al. conducted both a questionnaire and interview, they found that environmental knowledge had no significant effect on green buying behaviour. A positive attitude towards environmental issues did not have a significant effect on green buying behaviour.

Harland, Staats, and Wilke conducted a questionnaire and lab experiment. They found that personal norms were found to mediate the impact of activators on pro-environmental behaviour, inclusion of additional activators improved the norm activation theory's potential to explain pro-environmental behaviour (Harland, Staats, and Wilke 2007).

When a questionnaire, lab experiment, and field experiments were conducted, green identity labelling had a positive effect on the consumption of reusable bags. Income and education level had a significant and positive effect on the consumption of reusable bags. Surprisingly, advertised discounts had a negative effect on the consumption of reusable bags (Schwartz, Loewenstein, and Agüero-Gaete 2020).

Lin conducted an experiment among 815 people in Taiwan on the effect of advertising on sustainable food consumption. They found a significant interactive effect between reference group and advertising appeal on sustainable food consumption practices.

4.3.4 Literature analysis

Due to the wide range of consumer behaviours that were identified by the reviewed papers, the focus of this analysis will be on the categories "Green food consumption" and "Sustainable fashion" to allow for a comprehensive analysis.

During the systematic literature review, four papers were identified that analysed green food consumption (Soyez 2012; Takahashi 2021; Sadiq, Adil, and Paul 2021; Fernandes and Saraiva 2021).

Soyez analysed green food consumption using national cultural values to distinguish between different consumer groups and compare their motivation behind green food consumption. Soyez compared countries with traditionally collectivist cultures to countries with traditionally individualistic cultures. The conclusion was that national cultural values significantly affect the motivation of consumers engaging in individual sustainable consumer behaviours. Russia, which has a collectivist culture, was found to use anthropocentric values when engaging in green consumption (Soyez 2012, p.632). The individualistic countries that were analysed were Canada, Germany, Australia, and the USA. Here, it was found that eco-centric values were important to the motivation of individuals (Soyez 2012). The level of assertiveness in the different cultures were found to not have a significant impact on the motivations behind green consumption (Soyez 2012, p.637).

The purchasing behaviour of eco-friendly coffee specifically, was analysed by Takahashi. Through a nationwide experiment in Japan where vending machines had messages about the eco-friendly coffee they offered on them, Takahashi found that the environmental awareness of individuals had limited effect on their consumption of eco-friendly coffee. More surprisingly, the social spaces the vending machines were in had a significant effect on the consumption of eco-friendly coffee. Social spaces where individuals know each other, like a workspace, had a significantly higher number of sales in eco-friendly coffee than social spaces where people were generally anonymous, like a shopping mall (Takahashi 2021, p.8).

Sadiq, Adil and Paul conducted a survey in India to see what the effect of social influence was on pessimistic consumers, characterised as consumers who are concerned for the environment but do not engage in green consumption. They found that social influence significantly affects the green food consumption of individuals. Specifically, the concern-behaviour gap was found to be reduced when social influence was introduced (Sadiq, Adil, and Paul 2021, p.2943).

Fernandes and Saraiva conducted in-depth interviews with organic consumers in Portugal to analyse the motivation behind a green consumer identity. They found that the wish to become self-sufficient and to gain political agency, through activism, were key determinants of their green consumer identities. Next to that, they quoted high levels of ecological concern (Fernandes and Saraiva 2021).

The literature on sustainable fashion consumption included five papers (Jacobs et al. 2018; Dewanto and Belgiawan 2020; Sadiq et al. 2021; Pérez, Collado, and Liu 2021; Zhao, Lee, and Copeland 2019).

Jacobs et al. analysed the attitude-behaviour gap in sustainable fashion consumption. To do so, they conducted a questionnaire among women in Germany. They found that consumers' attitude towards sustainable fashion, along with values that are bio-spheric and altruistic have a positive effect on sustainable fashion consumption. Furthermore, they found that individuals who shop online and through catalogues tend to buy more sustainable fashion too (Jacobs et al. 2018). A preference for durable clothing had a negative effect on sustainable fashion consumption. Egoistic and hedonic values were also found to have a negative effect on sustainable fashion consumption (Jacobs et al. 2018). Here, it is found that personal values have a significant effect on sustainable fashion consumption.
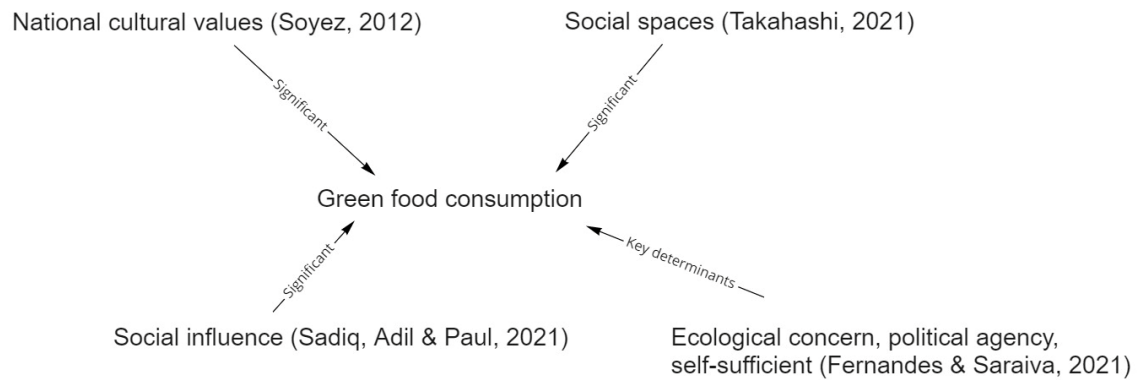
Dewanto and Belgiawan analysed the effect of social norms and attitudes on sustainable fashion consumption in Indonesia. They found that attitude was one of the strongest predictors of green purchase intention, descriptive norms were found to have a significant effect on purchase intention. Trust was found to be an indirect influencing factor for sustainable fashion consumption (Dewanto and Belgiawan 2020). Age, gender, and income were all found to have an insignificant effect on the purchase intention of sustainable fashion (Dewanto and Belgiawan 2020).

The role of consumer pessimism and optimism on sustainable fashion consumption was analysed by Sadiq et al. They conducted a survey in India and found that consumers' optimism was found to be a significant predictor of their sustainable fashion consumption, pessimistic consumers often expressed the intent to buy sustainable fashion but were less likely to buy it. Environmental orientation was found to mediate the relationship between consumers' optimism/pessimism and sustainable fashion consumption (Sadiq et al. 2021).

Perez, Collado, and Liu looked at how social and environmental concerns affect sustainable fashion consumption in Spain. They found that environmental beliefs do not predict consumer support, whereas environmental concern and knowledge were found to be predictors of consumer social and environmental support, which was found to affect support for ethical fashion, intention to buy, and willingness to pay. Consumer social support was found to have a slightly higher effect than environmental support (Perez, Collado, and Liu 2021).
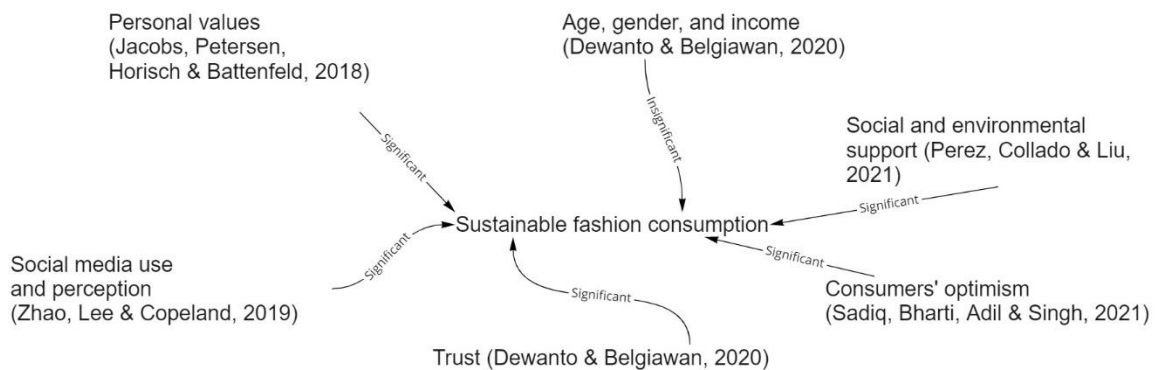
Zhao, Lee, and Copeland analysed the effect of social media on environmental consumer behaviour, specifically sustainable fashion, in China. They did so by conducting question-naires among users of WeChat, the most widely used social networking site in China (Zhao, Lee, and Copeland 2019). Social media use and perception were found to have a positive effect on the social influence of peers to use social media. Social media use and perception was also found to have a significant effect on subjective norm and attitude. Positive attitude was found to have a positive effect on purchase intention towards sustainable fashion, sub-jective norms however did not have a significant effect (Zhao, Lee, and Copeland 2019).

Figure 4: Key findings of the identified relationships with 'Green food consumption'

National cultural values (Soyez, 2012)   Social spaces (Takahashi, 2021)

Significant   *Significant*

Green food consumption

Significant   *Key determinants*

Social influence (Sadiq, Adil & Paul, 2021)   Ecological concern, political agency, self-sufficient (Fernandes & Saraiva, 2021)

miro

Figure 5: Key findings of the identified relationships with 'Sustainable fashion'

Personal values (Jacobs, Petersen, Horisch & Battenfeld, 2018)   Age, gender, and income (Dewanto & Belgiawan, 2020)

Social and environmental support (Perez, Collado & Liu, 2021)

Significant   *Insignificant*

Significant

Social media use and perception (Zhao, Lee & Copeland, 2019)

Sustainable fashion consumption

Significant

Significant   *Significant*

Consumers' optimism (Sadiq, Bharti, Adil & Singh, 2021)

Trust (Dewanto & Belgiawan, 2020)

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5. Discussion

In this chapter, the most interesting findings will be summarised and interpreted, the limitations will also be identified.

5.1 Summary and interpretation

During the systematic literature review, 48 relevant papers were identified. Out of these 48 papers a lot of variation in consumer behaviours was found. This led the scope of this research to limit itself to "green food consumption" and "sustainable fashion".

9 papers analysed the effect of group membership on "green food consumption" and "sustainable fashion". Out of these 9 papers, one used demographic variables, age, gender, and income to categorise respondents (Dewanto and Belgiawan 2020) and found no significant effect. They conducted their research in Indonesia using a questionnaire. In the end, 210 respondents were used in the research, of which most were young people. This research had limited scope and variety in respondents (Dewanto and Belgiawan 2020).

Fernandes and Saraiva conducted in-depth interviews among 31 individuals in Portugal. The scope of this research is thus very limited, although the aim of this study was to analyse the motivation behind green food consumption. The motivations behind green food consumption that was identified included ecological concern, political agency, and self-sufficiency (Fernandes and Saraiva 2021).

The effect of social influences, categorised under "social norms", on consumer behaviours, specifically green food consumption and sustainable fashion consumption, was also analysed. Takahashi found a significant effect of social spaces on green food consumption. They found that whether a vending machine serving eco-friendly coffee was in a social space or not significantly impacted the number of sales of eco-friendly coffee (Takahashi 2021). This study conducted a nationwide experiment in Japan, they did not make any cross-country comparisons. National cultural values were found to significantly affect green food consumption (Soyez 2012). Mainly through the motivation behind green food consumption. In this research, a distinction was made between collectivist countries and individualistic countries. However, there was only one collectivistic country included, Russia, and four collectivist countries, Germany, USA, Australia, and Canada. This limits the scope of this research and provides value for future research to make cross-country com-

parisons between different cultures (Soyez 2012). Sadiq, Adil, and Paul conducted a questionnaire among 300 individuals in India and found that social influence significantly affects green food consumption. Social influence was found to significantly influence pessimistic consumers to adopt organic foods. Social influence was also found to reduce the concern-behaviour gap (Sadiq, Adil, and Paul 2021). Social media use and perception was analysed by Zhao, Lee, and Copeland. A questionnaire was conducted among 238 individuals in China and found an indirect effect of social media on subjective norm and attitude, social media use and perception was found to have a positive effect on the social influence of peers (Zhao, Lee, and Copeland 2019). These results show that social context is important to the extent to which consumers engage in sustainable consumer behaviour.

Personal values and perceptions, categorised under "social identity", were analysed in relation to sustainable fashion consumption. Social and environmental support was found to have a significant effect on sustainable fashion consumption (Perez, Collado, and Liu 2021). Perez, Collado, and Liu conducted a questionnaire among 450 individuals in Spain. Through conducting surveys among 1085 women in Germany, personal values were found to significantly influence sustainable fashion consumption (Jacobs et al. 2018). The level of consumers' optimism was found to significantly affect sustainable fashion consumption (Sadiq et al. 2021). Sadiq et al. conducted a questionnaire in India among 450 individuals. Dewanto and Belgiawan also found that trust had a significant indirect effect on sustainable fashion consumption, through purchase intention. These results show that personal norms and beliefs influence the sustainable behaviour of consumers.

The scope of research and the low level of variety in respondents can lead to low generalizability of results. Generalizability of results is an important aspect of academic research because it is indicative of the extent to which data can reflect the interest of the broader population (Blair and Zinkhan 2006, p. 4). Low generalizability of results can be the consequence of sample bias which entails that sample elements differ in some systematic way from the general population where the results would be applied (Blair and Zinkhan 2006, p. 4). Sample bias can occur because of coverage bias, selection bias, or nonresponse bias. In the scope of this literature review, coverage bias can occur, which happens when some population segment is excluded from the sample. An example of coverage bias could be the selection of a specific age group. Selection bias is when some population segments are more likely to be included in the research, through data collection on a university for example (Blair and Zinkhan 2006).

5.2 Limitations

The systematic literature review was very broad, the identified method of using meta-char-acteristics turned out to give a much larger range of research than intended. Due to this, the scope had to be narrowed down to two specific consumer behaviours, namely "sustainable fashion" and "green food consumption". In focusing on these factors, a lot of identified relationships were aimed at measuring purchase intention and attitude towards green pur-chasing instead of actual consumption behaviour. This limitation goes together with the fact that a lot of the papers identified use questionnaires as their research method, which relies on respondents' ability to reflect. The use of experiments is very limited, only one paper out of the 48, used an experiment (Takahashi 2021). This might be due to the large costs of experiments, but this research did show interesting effects of social spaces on green food consumption, which is something that the other papers did not analyse (Takahashi 2021).

During the systematic literature review, many different journals were used. This was be-cause the meta-characteristics approach was used in the search queries, and no specifics for the journal were given. Also, since the preference was given to more recent papers, it was difficult to find relevant papers that were published meaning that some of the papers in-cluded were part of more niche journals. Due to this, two search queries were conducted with no time limit, but selecting a set of journals could not be done. An overview of the different included journals can be found in table 4.

Furthermore, there was not a lot of variation in research methods used in the reviewed literature. A lot of papers used online questionnaires, which have their limitations in the fact that they are self-administrated. Social desirability bias can skew the responses (Car-rington, Neville, and Whitwell 2010, p.140). As can be seen in table 5.

The papers included rarely made cross-country comparisons. As can be seen in table 6. The distribution of countries was also more skewed towards Eastern countries.

Table 4: Overview of the different journals included

Journal	Number of papers
Advances in consumer research	1
American International journal of business management	1
ASEAN marketing journal	1
Asia pacific journal of marketing and logistics	3
Asian journal of business ethics	1
Basic and applied social psychology	1
Benchmarking: an international journal	1
Business strategy and development	2
Business strategy and the environment	1
Communication studies	1
Corporate social responsibility and environmental management	1
Ecological economics	1
European Business Review	1
International journal of consumer studies	3
International journal of production research	1
International Marketing Review	1
Journal of business research	1
Journal of cleaner production	5
Journal of consumer behaviour	2
Journal of consumer marketing	1
Journal of fashion marketing and management: an international journal	1
Journal of marketing management	2
Journal of research in interactive marketing	1
Journal of retailing and consumer services	1
Journal of services marketing	1
Journal of social marketing	1
Journal of strategic marketing	1
Marketing and management innovations	1
Nature Sustainability	1
Psychology marketing	1
Resources, Conversation & Recycling	1
Social responsibility journal	1

Sustainability	3
Sustainable development	2
Grand Total	**48**

Table 5: Overview of the different countries' studies and the number of pages

Research method	Number of papers
Experiment	1
Interviews	3
Literature review	1
Longitudinal survey	1
Meta-analysis	1
Questionnaire	37
Questionnaire, lab experiment, and field experiments	1
Questionnaire and interview	1
Experiment	1
Questionnaire and lab experiment	1
Grand Total	**48**

Table 6: Overview of the different countries studied and the number of papers

Countries studied	Number of papers
Australia	4
Bangladesh	1
China	3
China, Malaysia, Turkey, and the US	1
Europe, Asia, and North America	1
France	1
Germany	1
Hong Kong	1
India	7
Indonesia	3
Japan	1
Lithuania	1
Malaysia	2
Malaysia and Thailand	1
Pakistan	1
Philippines	1
Poland	2
Portugal	1
Portugal and UK	2
Spain	1
Taiwan	1
The Netherlands	1
Turkey	1
USA	5
USA, Canada, Germany, Australia, and Russia	1
Vietnam	2
Denmark, Brazil	1
Grand Total	**48**

5.3 Future research

Future research can focus on conducting longitudinal research to see how social norms, social identity, and demographic variables influence sustainable consumer behaviour over time. There is also a lack of variety in research methods used in sustainable consumer research currently. It would be interesting to see more experiments or simulations in sustainable consumer behaviour.

6. Conclusion

A systematic literature review was conducted to analyse the effect of group membership on individual sustainable consumer behaviour. In the end, the scope of the analysis was narrowed down to include "green food consumption" and "sustainable fashion consumption".

To conclude, the effects of different types of group membership on green food consumption and sustainable fashion consumption were analysed. Demographic variables, age, gender, and income were found to have no significant effect on sustainable fashion consumption. Social norms and social identity both had significant effects on sustainable fashion consumption and green food consumption. Most research was conducted using questionnaires, the social desirability bias that can present itself in self-administrated research methods can skew the responses.

The identified relationships between group membership and green food consumption and sustainable fashion consumption imply that marketing managers should take national cultures and values into account when marketing a green food. Sustainable fashion products should be made durable since durability was found to have an adverse effect on the buying behaviour of individuals when it came to sustainable fashion.

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Appendix A: Retrieved papers from search queries

The first search query on "Web of Science" yielded the following relevant papers:

Zheng, Guang Wen, Abu Bakkar Siddik, Mohammad Masukujjaman, Syed Shah Alam, and Alvina Akter (2021), "Perceived environmental responsibilities and green buying behavior: The mediating effect of attitude," *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 13 (1), 1–27.

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Jaiswal, Deepak, Vikrant Kaushal, Pankaj Kumar Singh, and Abhijeet Biswas (2021), "Green market segmentation and consumer profiling: a cluster approach to an emerging consumer market," *Benchmarking*, 28 (3), 792–812.

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Akhtar, Rulia, Sayema Sultana, Muhammad Mehedi Masud, Nusrat Jafrin, and Abdullah Al-Mamun (2021), "Consumers' environmental ethics, willingness, and green consumerism between lower and higher income groups," *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 168.

The second search query on "Scopus" yielded the following relevant papers:

Takahashi, Ryo (2021), "How to stimulate environmentally friendly consumption: Evidence from a nationwide social experiment in Japan to promote eco-friendly coffee," *Ecological Economics*, 186.

Sadiq, Mohd, Mohd Adil, and Justin Paul (2021), "Does social influence turn pessimistic consumers green?," *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 30 (7), 2937–50.

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The effect of group membership on individual sustainable consumer behaviour – a systematic literature review

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Münster, den _____   _____

Aarezo Sha

**Einverständniserklärung
zur Prüfung meiner Arbeit mit einer Software zur Erkennung von Plagiaten**

Name: Sha   **Vorname:** Aarezo

Matrikelnummer: 522379   **Studiengang:** Business Administration

Adresse: P.a van deldenstraat 126, 7523HH, Enschede

Titel der Arbeit: The impact of group membership on individual sustainable consumer beh

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