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Cleaner production, social responsibility and eco-innovation as antecedents of environmental awareness and sustainable consumption: the generation's perception of a sustainable future

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Abstract

The increase in population, the high consumption of food and products, as well as the generation of domestic and industrial waste has triggered impacts on the environment, which compromises the maintenance of natural resources for a sustainable future. Cleaner production (CP), social responsibility (SR) and eco-innovation (EI) aim at sustainability, where environmental awareness (EA) and sustainable consumption (SC) include the principles and values linked to the environment issues that contribute to a sustainable future. The purpose of this study is to measure the EA antecedent relations, considering the constructs of CP, SR and EI. The study also analyzes the relationship between EA and SC, as well as their moderating effect on the Baby boomers and the X and Y generations on the relationships between the constructs. The research is based on the perception of 1123 participants from different generations from the region of south Brazil and the method includes a quantitative and descriptive research, through modeling of structural equations. The results highlight that there is an important relationship between CP, SR and EI, which positively influence EA and consequently, SC. The study also shows a strong correlation between CP and IE. In this context, both generations present different perceptions about those constructs, however the “Baby boomers” generation presented a greater perception from the CP actions carried out by the companies. Consequently, it is evident for the companies to start disclosing CP as an opportunity window, which stimulates SC and benefits the environment. Such positioning may become fundamental for the maintenance of natural resources and the quality of life for future generations.

Keywords: Cleaner production. Social responsibility. Eco-innovation. Sustainable consumption. Generations.