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I own therefore I am: impact of materialism and individualism on sustainable consumption practices

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► To cite this version:

Thomas Berrhoun, Raquel Bertoldo, Fabien Girandola. I own therefore I am: impact of materialism and individualism on sustainable consumption practices. 7ème Colloque Interdisciplinaire ARPEnv, “ Défis environnementaux d’aujourd’hui et de demain : mieux comprendre pour mieux accompagner le changement ”, Jun 2021, Nantes, France. hal-03602223

HAL Id: hal-03602223

<https://hal.science/hal-03602223v1>

Submitted on 8 Mar 2022

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Introduction

Sustainable consumption (SC) question traditional consumption in order to reduce our impact on nature. **However, western societies and modern marketing promotes materialistic values and a need for individuality.**

In addition, there is a possibility of a link between these two values: **people wishing to assert their individuality are likely to have recourse to a valuing and distinctive materialism.**

Research question and Hypotheses

How do individualism and materialism values impact sustainable consumption behaviors? Is individualism a factor of materialism ?

H₁: There is a **negative effect** of individualism on SC.

H₂: There is a **positive effect** of individualism on materialism.

H₃: There is a **negative effect** of materialism on SC.

H₄: Materialism **mediates the effect** of satisfaction on SC

Method

Scales:

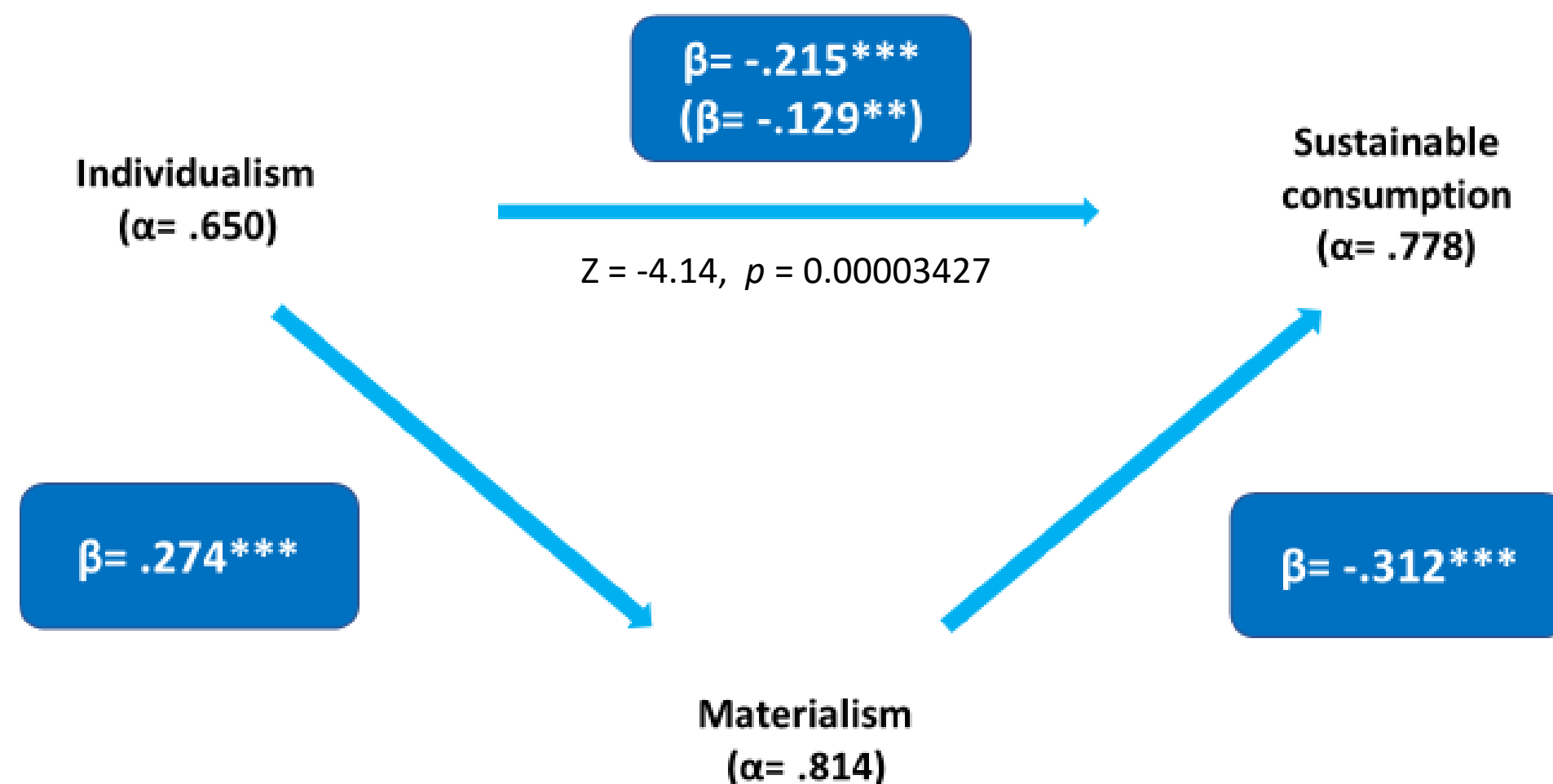
- Sustainable consumption
- Individualism-collectivism scale (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998)
- The Material Values Scale (Richins, 2004)

Analyze (N=380):

- Descriptive statistics
- Factor analysis and Reliability analysis
- Regression linear simple and multiple

Results

Model 1: Standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between Individualism and Sustainable Consumption as mediated by Materialism



Note: $p < .05$ *, $p < .01$ **, $p < .001$ ***. Coefficient in brackets is direct effect of X on Y

Conclusion and discussion

Results support our hypotheses: people who adhere to individualistic and materialistic values are less inclined to question the classic model of consumption. Also, part of individualism effect on SC is mediated by materialism which support the hypothesis of a self-affirmation process by materialism.

These results imply that awareness campaigns criticizing the classic consumption model are likely to create reactance. So, it is preferable to develop a social valuation of alternative consumption. Also, It underlines the importance of changing advertising models in order to stop promoting social values that obstruct the adoption of a new consumption model.

To confirm our hypotheses, it will be necessary to carry out experimental studies. Also, we believe it is possible that behind the adoption of materialistic and individualistic values lie the social needs of belonging and valuation.

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