Consumers green awareness trends: how to assess it through a composite index

A seminar by Ida D'Attoma

Department of Statistical Sciences – University of Bologna

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Department of Statistical Sciences

Companies are increasingly involved in eco-innovation activities and are investing heavily in sustainability. But do consumers really want to buy green products? Is green demand in turn a driver of companies' eco-innovation? It is acknowledged in academic literature that individuals with a high level of environmental consciousness are more inclined to engage in various pro-environmental behaviour, such as accepting energy-saving policies, choosing ecologically responsible packaging, and green purchasing behaviours. Environmental consciousness is a multi-dimensional construct that encompasses several dimensions related to pro-environmental attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. Therefore, the seminar aims to discuss how to measure this complex construct through a composite index that considers several primary indicators related to four broad domains of environmental consciousness: the affective, cognitive, active, and dispositional domains. The index is constructed following a fairly well-established methodology on composite index construction which encompasses the following stages: i) selection and normalisation of primary indicators, ii) weighting of primary indicators and iii) aggregation of primary indicators.

Results on more than 27000 "Eurobarometer 92.4" responses from consumers in the 28 EU Member States in 2019 will be presented. Using the same data, to assess the robustness of the index, the link between environmental consciousness and life satisfaction is also examined. The index is also compared with a big data-based index using Google Trends data on environmental search categories. Through the developed comprehensive measure of consumer environmental consciousness, we were able to capture consumers green awareness trends across European countries. In particular, the results shed light on differences in environmental consciousness between European countries. The relationship between environmental consciousness and life satisfaction is also supported, confirming previous research in this area. Finally, the index appears to be strongly correlated with actual consumer search patterns on Google.

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