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## **MINDFULNESS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION: A BIBLIOMETRIC AND SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS**

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**ABSTRACT.** *The aim of this paper is based on a systematic bibliometric review of the literature providing an updated analysis of the empirical research on the relationship between mindfulness and sustainable consumption. The structure of the paper comprises a first introductory section, followed by a comprehensive and thorough literature review. The third section discusses the methodology applied following SPAR-4-SLR. The results of a total of 65 studies are then analysed and obtained to help promote various streams of research related to marketing and offer a proven theoretical basis in the business world and implement it in people management. This is followed by a discussion of the findings, and concludes with theoretical and practical implications, along with a discussion of limitations and future research directions. In summary, a further exploration of individual dispositions that may facilitate SCBs and the role of mindfulness seems worth pursuing.*

**KEYWORDS:** sustainable consumption, responsibility, responsible consumption, literature review, marketing.

**JEL classification:** D23, D91, M31, N30.

## Introduction

Today's challenges are dominated by global transformations, the pursuit of sustainable development and the focus on knowledge development in society (Klaver, Rohlfing, 2022). In particular, facilitating sustainable consumption (SC) has been recognised as a challenge to be addressed by many parties. The latter include, first and foremost, individuals, as human motivations and behaviours are complex and multifaceted (Jackson, 2005). Other agents are inVol.ved, such as international organisations, educational institutions, or governments (Gasper *et al.*, 2019), and the subject inVol.ves disciplines that could lead individuals to shape their unsustainable behaviours, such as psychology (Shapiro *et al.*, 2006, Chang, Hung, 2022) and marketing (Laukkanen *et al.*, 2022).

It has also been recognised as an unmissable target for reaching the Sustainable Development Goal 12, continuing with the transition to a more sustainable economic model in which consumption is aligned with the SDGs (UN, 2015; Hsu, 2023; Chopra *et al.*, 2022). However, our consumption levels continue to grow at 50% per year (Fengler, Kharas 2021). Moreover, when taking into account generation groups, from the Salient generation to the Gen Z and Gen Alpha, they present completely different behaviours. Thus, the Gen Z generation presents itself as greener, sustainability-oriented, digitally savvy and looking for brands that enhance their feelings and expectations (Dabija *et al.*, 2019; Palalic *et al.*, 2021). The values with which the new generations identify themselves, together with technological development and the accessibility of knowledge provide the ideal scenario for the development of the sustainable development processes enunciated by Melnikas (2011) and Zhang (2022), fundamentally the processes of change supported by a knowledge-based society, knowledge economy and innovation, together with social values aligned with sustainable growth. However, all this change must be accompanied by a regulatory framework and an institutional and business context that enables the necessary shift towards sustainable consumption and living habits (Rosati, Faria, 2019; Scheyvens *et al.*, 2016). All things considered, SC seems to be both a priority and a tough endeavour (de Oliveira *et al.*, 2022).

Sustainable consumption refers to consumption that balances economic, social, and environmentally sustainable development needs (Quoquab, Mohammad, 2020). This description encompasses its relevance and complexity. While it is widely agreed that sustainable consumption behaviours (SCBs) determine the future of sustainable development, SC has also been proven to be a conflicting concept and an oxymoron (Jackson, 2014). By consuming, individuals already contribute to the use of resources needed to produce, distribute, and ultimately consume a certain good. Thus, from SC's conception, it has been naturally linked with the avoidance of "overconsumption" (see Quoquab, Mohammad, 2020 for a review). This is particularly relevant in later generations, where overconsumption represents a major issue that threatens sustainability transitions (Dabija *et al.*, 2019).

Beyond this view, SC is also considered an ongoing decision-making process influenced by many factors, namely, cognitive, emotional, attitudinal, and behavioural (Young *et al.*, 2010). Navigating through this process requires a change in our lifestyles to counteract the urge to consume. This change implies reshaping our idea of quality of life and wellbeing to become detached from ownership of products or use of services. New alternative consumption models (e.g., sharing economies) are being proposed to this respect and might help to accelerate change (Hsu, 2023). Alternative consumption models must be a lever to accelerate the proposed change, and to this end it is very important for companies to take into account the sustainability of their suppliers, not only at the product level, but also at the logistics level, especially in the current times of intense international trade (Khoury *et al.*, 2018). However, to embrace the adoption of new consumption modes, a multifaceted approach to individual behavioural change seems needed (Goran, 2007; Garcia *et al.*, 2021).

To address these issues, mindfulness has been suggested as a promising tool to address these challenges (Passmore, Marianetti, 2022; Sharma, Jha, 2017). It is described as the process of "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p.4). A relevant disposition can be trained through momentary mindfulness states or longer interventions (Kiken *et al.*, 2015). For SC, a mindful disposition entails multiple dimensions, namely, emotional, attitudinal, and behavioural. In fact, mindfulness and SC have been theoretically linked (Lim, 2017).

Additionally, the concept of mindful consumption has recently emerged (Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas, 2011), although it has been framed within an organisational approach so that business strategies can be better targeted to consumers. In its conception, it is posited that customers' pressure exerts a strong influence on businesses to change their unsustainable models of production (Chavez *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, working on strengthening the awareness of this role of consumers through mindfulness could be a potential driver for change.

The question then becomes how relevant the influence of mindfulness on SC is, as well as about the findings of previous studies of its determinants where emotions, attitudes, motivations, or its antecedents could play a key role. However, empirical analyses to deepen the understanding of this relationship from an individual perspective are still considered lacking (Tewari *et al.*, 2021).

This article aims to address these research gaps. Specifically, the following questions are put forward:

RQ1: What is the performance record of publications about the relationship of mindfulness and SC?

RQ2: What has been examined by the existing empirical research? In particular, what mechanisms have been assessed?

To answer these questions, this study is organised as follows. Section 2 offers a theoretical framework that supports the relationship of SC and mindfulness. Section 3 details the methodology followed by this study and presents a systematic literature review complemented with some bibliometric techniques. In Section 4, the results are offered, and in Section 5, a discussion of the main findings is provided. Finally, in Section 6, the main theoretical and managerial contributions are explained. The paper concludes with Section 7, where limitations and future research areas are outlined.

## **1. Theoretical Background**

To provide a solid theoretical background, it is worth mentioning previous reviews of the literature on the correlation between mindfulness and SC, although their approaches differ from that offered here and are explained next.

The review of Ericson *et al.* (2014) is theoretical. It suggests the following links: (1) subjective well being, (2) awareness of intrinsic values and (3) empathy and compassion. Following this theoretical approach, Tezel, Giritli (2017) also propose a potential role of mindfulness as a self-regulatory strategy to promote SC. Based on these reviews, Wamsler (2018), following an environmental behaviour approach, points out the need for more empirical evidence, given that some of these links seem insufficiently explored. Accordingly, Thiermann, Sheate (2020) complement these reviews by including a mixed theoretical and empirical approach; however, the authors consider the broad concept of pro-environmental behaviour (PEB). Their review complements previous theoretical knowledge by suggesting another mechanism, namely, the need for attention and acceptance to achieve enhanced awareness. Thus, due to such awareness, individuals might better reflect on their patterns of behaviour, which in turn could facilitate the disruption of habitual behaviours.

Some reviews complement this mainly theoretical corpus with empirical findings. For example, Fisher *et al.* (2017) list four mechanisms that have thus far been empirically supported, namely, (1) de-automatisation as the result of enhanced awareness, (2) coherence between attitudes and individual behaviour, (3) detachment from materialistic lifestyles, and (4) prosocial behaviour. Since only seven studies were examined, it is acknowledged that further evidence needs to be gathered. Subsequently, in the review by Thiermann, Sheate (2020), six different pathways have been proposed. Whereas three of them are closely related to the mechanisms previously suggested, namely, (1) de-automatisation, (2) coherence and (3) prosociality, three additional paths have been offered, (4) personal health and subjective wellbeing, (5) connectedness to nature, and (6) openness to new experiences. In this study, the examined relationship is between mindfulness and PEB. A closer view of the main concepts of this study is offered next.

*Sustainable consumption* has been generally described as the level of consumption that fulfils our basic needs without hindering or compromising the same ability for future generations (Quoquab, Mohammad, 2020). While several reviews of SC have been previously conducted (Fischer *et al.*, 2017; Kaur, Luchs, 2022; Liu *et al.*, 2017), there are still calls for a more robust and extensive comprehensive literature review to further understand the psychological and behavioural facets underlying SC (Frank, Stanszus 2019). In particular, further research on SCBs, as a specific construct, is needed (Geiger *et al.*, 2020). In contrast, so far much of research has been focused on studying this concept as part of a more general term. However, empirical research has proven that SCB is a distinctive term, and not

considering it often leads to inconclusive results (Böhme *et al.*, 2018; Helm, Subramaniam, 2019).

In addition, as a result of a decision-making process, SC might involve making decisions in the pre behavioural stages of a purchase (Geiger *et al.*, 2020). This alternative approach might help further understand its influential and interrelated aspects where attitudinal and motivational factors seem to be critical (Quoquab, Mohammad, 2020). Considering the predisposition of individuals, if any, to shape their behaviour consistently has led to the emergence of the concept of mindful consumption.

Such a concept of *mindful consumption*, first stated by Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas (2011), refers to a “temperance in acquisitive, repetitive and aspirational consumption at the behaviour level, ensuing from and reinforced by a mindset that reflects a sense of caring toward self, community, and nature” (p. 30). Therefore, it comprises two basic components: (1) a mindset linked to a sense of caring, and (2) a behaviour associated with an ability to refrain from overconsumption in its different forms, namely, excessive, impulsive, or competitive buying.

Mindful consumption is a novel concept (Gupta, Verma, 2019). It differs from SC, as the former is considered a mindset that results in a behaviour, while the latter mainly refers to a specific behaviour, namely, sustainable behaviour. The study of Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas (2011) provided a theoretical understanding of the nuances of this concept, which is linked to intangible (the mindset) and tangible (the behaviour) components of SC. Within the mindset of mindful consumption, a sense of care for the self, society and nature is assumed. As to behaviour, it should not only be referred to as overconsumption. The overall ability to self-regulate and refrain from excessive, impulsive, or aspirational buying should be addressed (Lim, 2017).

*Mindfulness* is described as the process of “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994: 4). Thus, mindfulness could be characterised as an individual disposition that can be trained. Mindfulness is related to the quality of the mind that allows us to acquire full awareness and focus our attention on the present moment. This enhanced awareness of internal and external stimuli, through the focus on attention, has become one of the fundamental behavioural features of mindfulness (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007). It also constitutes the basis of an ability to observe that is inherent within mindful individuals or that can be developed through practice (Baer, Walsh, & Lykins, 2009). Along with acting with awareness and observing, the ability to describe without judging or reacting constitutes the essence of this concept (Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney, 2006). Therefore, mindfulness is regarded as a promising transformative tool to shape SC (Fischer *et al.*, 2017).

Thus, to study SC as a specific behaviour and mindfulness as a key driver for mindful consumption as well as to analyse the proposed research questions, a systematic literature review complemented with a bibliometric analysis of performance is offered.

## **2. Methodology**

To collect literature comprehensively and thoroughly, the SPAR-4-SLR protocol was followed (Paul *et al.*, 2021). Thus, following the guidelines outlined by Paul *et al.* (2021), the review will be in the form of a structured review, i.e., focusing on the existing knowledge on the topic of mindfulness and SC. To properly do so, the review was also informed by previous studies using this protocol (Dhaliwal *et al.*, 2020; Mishra *et al.*, 2021). As a result, a three-step

systematic review process was followed: (1) the assembly stage, consisting of identifying and acquiring research, (2) the arrangement stage, involving organising and screening the previously identified results, and finally (3) the evaluation and reporting of results.

The bibliometric analysis followed the guidelines recommended by Donthu *et al.* (2021). Based on these recommendations and the scope of this review, a performance analysis of research on mindfulness and SC was deemed to be most pertinent. An intellectual structural analysis will be provided based on the discussion of the results of the systematic literature review. The full details of these two analyses are illustrated in Table 1 and discussed next.

### 2.1. Assembly Stage: Identification and Acquisition of Research

The review starts by *identifying* documents in two databases: the Web of Science (WOS) and Scopus. The combination of these databases was chosen to assure the high quality of the selected articles as well as higher coverage (Zhao, Strotmann, 2015). To ensure the rigour of the selection of articles, only peer-reviewed articles were collected. The homogenisation issues were considered and fixed when needed (e.g., performing deduplication) (Galati, Bigliardi, 2019).

**Table 1. Literature review process**

<b>Assembly</b>	
<i>Identification</i>	
	Domain: Sustainable Consumption & Mindfulness
(RQ1)	Research questions: Assessing the performance of existing empirical evidence and analyzing studies of this relationship (RQ2).
	Source type: Academic journals
	Source quality: Web of Science and Scopus
<i>Acquisition</i>	
	Search process and acquiring materials: Web of Science and Scopus
	Search period: Up to September 2023.
	Search keywords: ("pro-environmental behav*" OR "ecological behav*" OR "environmental behav*" OR "environmental actions" OR "ecologically responsible behav*" OR "environmentally responsible behav*" OR "environmentally significant behav*" OR "pro-ecological behav*" OR "environmentally conscious behav*" OR "environmentally friendly behav*" OR "sustainable behav*" OR "sustainable consumption" OR "eco-friendly behav*" OR "green behav*" OR "conservation behav*" ) AND mindfulness )
Total articles yielded by the assembly stage: 2,901 (Web of Science: 146   Scopus 2,755)	

<b>Arranging</b>	
<i>Organization</i>	
	Organizing codes: Language, document type, exact keyword, duplication
<i>Cleaning: inclusion criteria</i>	
	Language: English (Web of Science: 146   Scopus: 2,723)
	Document type: Article (Web of Science: 121   Scopus: 2,168)
	Keyword: Mindfulness (Web of Science: 121   Scopus: 231)
	Duplicates: 49
Total articles obtained after applying the inclusion criteria: 257	
<i>Cleaning: exclusion criteria</i>	
	Unrelated to sustainable consumption: 108
	Unrelated to mindfulness: 34
	Organizational or governance issues: 30
	Conceptual, non-empirical, review or methodological articles: 26
Total articles obtained after applying the exclusion criteria: 59	
<i>Snowballing technique (6)</i>	
Total articles obtained from the arrangement stage: 65	

**Assessing**

*Evaluation*

Total articles for analysis: 65 (Web of Science: 49 | Scopus: 16)  
Performance analysis (49): Top publications, sources, and authors. Top citation trend  
Intellectual structure (65): (1) mindfulness conceptualization, (2) sustainable consumption  
behavior, (3) sample size and recruitment of participants, (4) effects of the relationship  
Software: Microsoft Excel  
Agenda proposal method: Empirical analysis of unexplored mechanisms.

*Reporting*

Reporting convention: Tables, and textual descriptions.  
Limitations: Scope of the analysis, meta-analysis.  
Sources of support: This study did not receive financial support.

Source: created by the authors.

## 2.2 Arrangement Stage: Organising and Screening Criteria

During the *organisation* phase, articles were coded by language, document type and keyword matching by using the filtering functions of the two databases. Considering these criteria, a two-stage *screening* process was performed. First, inclusion criteria were applied. Thus, only peer-reviewed articles in English were selected. To increase accuracy, a matching keyword selection was run to ensure that only articles related to the keyword “mindfulness” were retained. Finally, deduplication was performed, resulting in finding 49 duplicates. This screening process resulted in a total of 257 articles being included.

To assure the quality and reliability of the search protocol, several measures were taken. First, two reviewers oversaw the screening and selection of the final sample of articles. Additionally, the listed articles were checked against previous literature reviews to confirm that all relevant studies were included. Moreover, to assure eligibility, a two-stage exclusion process was followed. First, the abstract was reviewed. Following Quoquab & Mohammad (2020), articles were excluded if a) they were not directly related to the two main topics of study, i.e., SC and mindfulness – therefore, articles related to ethical or socially responsible consumption, or health were excluded, as were those related to outcomes such as wellbeing and happiness; b) the research was not focused on individuals’ consumption decision-making – therefore, articles related to organisational or governance approaches were not considered; c) since this study is focused on exploring empirical evidence, reviews and conceptual or methodological articles were excluded from the analysis; however, these articles helped inform the theoretical background and discussion of the results.

Second, a snowballing technique was used based on the citations of the retrieved articles. This facilitated further obtaining relevant research within the scope of our analysis (Sayers, 2007). As a result, six articles were added. In summary, after the implementation of these inclusion and exclusion criteria, a total of 65 articles were retrieved.

## 2.3 Assessing Stage: Evaluation and Reporting

The final stage was the assessment. The full texts of 65 articles were examined. To thoroughly evaluate the selected articles, a bibliometric analysis and a systematic review were conducted. In the bibliometric analysis, techniques for analysing performance were used so that the existing research could be descriptively assessed. In addition, research questions were

considered. In the systematic review, the assessments of variables included in the studies, their definitions and operationalisation, as well as their empirical analyses and results constituted an intellectual and content evaluation. Microsoft Excel was used as the descriptive and content analysis tool.

In the final steps of the process, the reporting includes a combination of tables and text. After the discussion, limitations of this study are acknowledged. Specifically, even though high-quality databases were used, the steps followed in this process, such as keyword selection or screening criteria, might not have been sufficient for a full review of the available research. Overall, additional information is given to guarantee full transparency as well as describe further details for future research. The disclosure of the results is provided next.

### **3. Analysis of Results**

The full texts of a total of 65 studies were reviewed by conducting first an analysis of publications' performance and second, a more content-oriented analysis based on the systematic literature review's results. As the results are described, the proposed research questions are considered.

#### **3.1 Bibliometric Analysis of Results (RQ1)**

A performance analysis of 65 results covers the period between 2000 and September 2023. A broad-to-narrow approach will be followed to explain the results, i.e., research areas will be described first, and then the explanation will be narrowed down progressively to journals, publications, citations and finally, authorship. A summary of the results, classified by the database from which the information has been extracted, Web of Science (WOS) or Scopus, as well as the aggregate statistics, is presented in *Table 2*.

As per WOS results, most studies belong to two *research areas*, Environmental Sciences Ecology (TP: 17) and Psychology (TP: 16).

The main topics of these areas help illustrate how researchers try to identify the mechanisms that explain individual environmental behaviour through mindfulness (e.g., Riordan *et al.*, 2022). This seems to be supported when these data are complemented with the research categories of the citing articles, i.e., those that cite one of the articles included in the review. A review of WOS categories shows how the fields of *Environmental Studies* (TCA: 133) and *Environmental Sciences* (TCA:132) are those mostly covered when further understanding of the relationship between SC and mindfulness is obtained. Other areas such as *Business* (TCA:100) and *Economics* (TCA:22), although not as common, could also serve to illustrate how these behaviours are linked to their consequences, i.e., social prosperity. Interestingly, there is a specific domain that seems to gather a great amount of research about SCBs and mindfulness benefits, that is, *Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism* (TCA: 109).

**Table 2. Summary of results**

Publication statistics			
	WOS	SCOPUS	TOTAL
Total number of Publications (TP)	49	16	65
Top Publications' Year (TPY)	2023 (10)	2023 (7)	2023 (17)
Total number of Journals (TJ)	33	11	44
Total number of cited publications	40 (82%)	9 (56%)	49 (75%)
Citation statistics			
	WOS	SCOPUS	TOTAL
Number of times cited	1,015	194	990
Total number of citing articles	614	190	804
Average number of citations per year	78.08	13.57	91.65
Average per publication	20.71	12.13	32.83
H-index	16	4	16
Largest number of citations of a publication	161 (Barbaro & Pickett, 2016)	136 (Amel Manning, & Scott, 2009)	161 (Barbaro & Pickett, 2016)
Authorship statistics			
	WOS	SCOPUS	TOTAL
Total number of contributing authors (TCA)	143	47	190
Top publications per author (TPA)	5 (Schrader, U.; Geiger, SM.)	2 (Jansen, P.)	5 (Schrader, U.; Geiger, SM.)
Top main author	5 (Geiger, SM); 5 Schrader, U.	2 (Jansen, P.)	3 (Geiger, SM)
Single-author publications	3	2	5
Collaboration index (CI= TCA-TP ÷ TP)	1.92	1.94	1.94

As to *journals*, all the research was published in a total of 44 journals. Within these, *Sustainability* (TP:6); *Environment and behaviour* (TP:3), *Journal of Cleaner Production* (TP:3) and *Mindfulness* (TP:3) rank first. However, these journals were not the most influential. In this regard, starting in 2016, *Personality and Individual Differences* (TP:2; TC:187) and *Environment and Behavior* (TP: 3; TCB: 113) placed at the top.

Considering *publication* performance, 65 papers were published in 44 different journals with six publications on average per year. Out of these 65 publications, 49 (75%) were cited, indicating a strong interest in this field of research. In 2023, the greatest number of papers were published (TP: 17). From 2017 to 2018, the number of publications started to grow exponentially, and the count rose from one to eleven over five years. This trend was accompanied by that in the number of citations. Among the top publications, Barbaro, Pickett (2016) ranked first with 161 citations.

As to *citations*, 49 out of 65 publications have been cited. 11 out of the 16 publications not cited were published in 2023, which is a possible explanation. Based on WOS results, collectively, the publications gathered 1,015 citations from a total of 614 citing articles. The average number of citations per year is 78.08, and that per publication is 20.71. The citation impact, measured through the *h*-index, is 16, indicating that 16 (*h*) publications have been

cited at least 16 ( $h$ ) times. The  $g$ -index (citation influence) is 6, suggesting that the top 6 ( $g$ ) publications received at least 36 citations ( $g^2$ ).

Next, we take a closer look at the total number of citations (TC) of these articles. Together, they have gathered a total of 1,209 citations. The most cited articles are as follows: Barbaro, Pickett (2016) (TC:161), Amel *et al.* (2009) (TC:136), and Jacob *et al.* (2009) (TC:105), all of them were related to PEB. The first article referred to a more specific SCB (preferred hotel offerings), was published in 2014 (Barber, Deale, 2014; TC: 92).

Considering *authorship*, there are a total of 190 contributing authors. The top main author is Geiger, with a total of five publications. This author, along with Schrader, contributed to five different publications as a coauthor. Only five publications are single-author (Asthana, 2022; Chan, 2019a, 2019b, Dhandra, 2019; Ross, 2015). In summary, the collaboration index is 1.94.

Finally, we have also developed a study of the impact of the journals analysed in this bibliometric study (16 out of 65 are Q1 journals). This impact is very relevant, since getting the topic published in a scientific journal with a high impact positions the subject in a preferential place in the academic debate and can serve as a driving force for the interest in the study of this subject.

### **3.2 Content Analysis of Results (RQ2)**

The content of 65 studies included in the systematic review was classified based on the following categories: (1) conceptualisation and operationalisation of mindfulness, (2) type of study (correlational or experimental), (3) sample size and recruitment of participants, (4) the SC concept as the dependent variable, and finally (5) mechanisms and effects. The description and findings of various studies are presented next.

#### **3.2.1. Conceptualisation and Operationalisation of Mindfulness**

The approach to mindfulness is a relevant factor because it is necessary to better interpret the results. Thus, it can follow an Eastern conceptualisation, rooted in Buddhist practices (Brown *et al.*, 2007), or a Western and more cognitive perspective (Langer, Moldoveanu, 2000). An Eastern approach to the concept of mindfulness was followed in most studies. However, novel definitions of mindfulness are also mentioned when SCBs are considered. Here, mindfulness is described as “the unbiased awareness that emerges through intentionally and continuously paying attention to subjective momentary experience with an open, accepting, benevolent and compassionate attitude” (Böhme, *et al.*, 2016, p.6). Within this definition, the role of noncognitive factors, such as compassion and altruism, seems to be preserved.

In terms of its operationalisation for empirical measurement, mindfulness can be assessed in three different forms: as a trait (MAAT), a state or an intervention (MI). Accordingly, a set of scales can be selected. The use of multifaceted scales for the operationalisation of the mindfulness construct seems to be preferred in a questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, & Toney, 2006) that further supports the potential influence of factors other than cognitive to fully capture the potential benefits of mindfulness.

### *3.2.2 Sustainable Consumption as the Dependent Variable*

Among the most examined SCBs, nutrition, food and tourism have drawn the most attention. In this regard, some trends in the study of SCBs have been observed. First, an interesting topic has been recently mentioned, namely, that of behaviours related to predecisional stages of consumption (Klug, Niemand, 2021). Additionally, after the seminal work of Sheth, Sethia, & Srinivas (2011) proposed the concept of mindful consumption. As a result, several studies have examined the above behaviours (e.g., Gupta *et al.* 2023; Wongkitrungrueng, Juntongjin, 2022).

This evolution in the study of SCBs is also reflected in its operationalisation, where behavioural and attitudinal components have recently been represented. Thus, under the premise that this construct had multiple dimensions, namely, cognitive (e.g., awareness), affective (e.g., feelings) and Vol.itional (e.g., desire) components, a behavioural approach was proposed by Geiger *et al.* (2017). Consequently, this holistic view requires considering not only the behavioural aspects of consumption but also its attitudinal facets. Thus, a scale reflecting the attitudinal aspects of SCB has also been developed (Quoquab & Mohammad, 2020).

### *3.2.3 Mindful Consumption*

Five studies used mindful consumption as the dependent variable (Bhattacharjee *et al.*, 2020; Gupta *et al.*, 2023; Gupta, Verma, 2021; Teufer, Grabner-Krauter, 2023; Wongkitrungrueng, Juntongjin, 2022). Three of them were qualitative, whereas one of them followed a mixed-method approach (Gupta, Verma, 2021). All of them obtained positive results. The use of tailored scales for the operationalisation of mindful consumption was posited to be crucial (e.g., MCBS; Gupta, Verma, 2018).

### *3.2.4 Type of Studies*

Of 65 articles examined, some included more than one study (e.g., Gupta & Verma, 2021 – Studies 1 & 2). As a result, 79 studies were analysed. Most studies (48 out of 79) were correlational, while 24 studies followed an experimental approach (e.g., Bayle-Cordier *et al.*, 2023; Böhme *et al.*, 2018). Six studies used a qualitative methodology (e.g., Teufer, Grabner-Krauter, 2023; Wongkitrungrueng, Juntongjin, 2022). These approaches are intended to enrich the information provided by correlational studies and add further knowledge to the literature. Adding to this aim, the use of mixed-methods approaches was also observed (e.g., Gupta, Verma, 2021).

## **3.3 Sample Size and Recruitment of Participants**

Sample sizes ranged from 1,012 observations (Werner *et al.*, Spiller, Meyerding, 2020) to one case study (Garrido-Pastor *et al.*, 2021). Samples were mainly drawn from the general population or students. In this respect, the use of diverse samples is encouraged. In addition, the recruitment of a sufficient number of participants has been observed to be relevant so that the results and study procedures are not compromised (Grabow *et al.*, 2018; Geiger *et al.*, 2020).

### 3.3.1 Effects of the Relationship of Mindfulness and SCB

According to the overall examined results, mindfulness has been proven to be significantly correlated with SCBs, both directly and due to mediation by other variables. As to the direct association of mindfulness with SCBs, two mindfulness facets, namely, *acting with awareness* and *observing*, showed a stronger association with SCBs. Considering the focus of attention, studies showed how an enhancement of cognitive abilities led to greater *awareness* and reflection on self, others and nature. This in turn helped strengthen self-regulation (e.g., Hanley *et al.*, 2020).

The *observing* facet, interestingly, is linked to an enhanced awareness of the consequences of our behaviour. Thus, it helps to shift individuals' attitudes before unsustainable behaviour occurs (Colombo *et al.*, 2023; Siebertz *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, it makes current unsustainable habits more prominent (e.g., Chan, 2019), either suppressing values that are detrimental to the environment such as materialism (e.g., Grabow *et al.*, 2018) or highlighting sustainable choices (e.g., Barber, Deale 2014).

Empirical studies of specific behaviours such as mindful consumption show that mindfulness has been observed to be a strong predictor (e.g., Gupta, Verma, 2021). More importantly, it is posited that due to this, economic criteria are no longer regarded as a barrier to sustainable behaviours (Wongkitrungrueng, Juntongjin, 2022). Mindful consumers are more than willing to spend a great deal of their money whenever it is worth it.

The mechanisms through which SC can be promoted are discussed next. Materialism (e.g., Dhandra, 2019; Manchanda *et al.*, 2023), connectedness to nature (e.g., Hanley *et al.*, 2020), sustainable attitudes (e.g., Stanzus *et al.* (2019) and personal health (e.g., Bhattacharjee *et al.*, 2020) are the more prominent mediating variables identified in the studies. As to other mechanisms, self-control (Li *et al.*, 2021), construction of meaning (Hunecke, Richter, 2019), religious faith (Gupta *et al.*, 2023) and emotional intelligence (Park, Dhandra, 2017) emerged as concepts for further examination.

Four correlational studies obtained inconclusive results about the influence on mindfulness in SCB (e.g., Akhshik *et al.*, 2021). All of them point to the need for enhanced awareness to regulate consumption choices. Additionally, it is recognised that mindfulness should be complemented with factors such as engagement or sustainable attitudes for better results (Akhshik *et al.*, 2021; Yilmaz, Anasori, 2020).

Experimental and qualitative studies have also obtained some negative or inconclusive results (e.g., Böhme *et al.*, 2018). These results were mostly related to sustainable food consumption. Slight positive effects were observed months after the interventions, which suggests that longer interventions would facilitate a stronger influence of mindfulness. A discussion of these results is offered next.

## 4. Discussion of Findings

The stream of research on mindfulness and SC has proven to be promising in recent years, as evidenced by its exponential and steady growth. An analysis of the most prominent research areas (e.g., *psychology*) seems to indicate that an articulation of empirical results obtained by other disciplines, namely, *business*, should be emphasised. The eVolution of the mindfulness and SC concepts evidenced in the literature might help in considering specific facets in the design of business and marketing strategies. To this end, attitudinal factors seem to deserve more attention. Additionally, given the publications' performance, articles related

to environmental behaviours and mediators (e.g., connectedness to nature, Barbaro, Picket, 2016) seem overemphasised. Based on the eVolution of this research field, building a sustainable disposition by considering alternative mechanisms should be further explored.

Given the evidence in empirical research, mindfulness has proven to be a valid predictor of SCBs. Moreover, it could be argued that the potential role of mindfulness as a triple dividend (Dhendra, 2019) to the self, society and nature has been shown. This is reflected mainly in two ways. First, there has been a shift in the focus of SCB studies from an anti-consumption (behavioural) focus (e.g., Park, Dhendra, 2017) to an attitudinal approach (e.g., Gupta, Verma, 2021). Second, caring for oneself is interpreted as being a promoter of caring for others and nature rather than an egoistic orientation (Bhattacharjee *et al.*, 2020). The driver of societal change seems to have a major influence rather than be merely of personal interest (Kaur, Luchs, 2022; Ramstetter *et al.*, 2023). In this respect, psychological approaches to facilitate self-acceptance and coherence should be further examined.

Accordingly, a change in individuals' mindsets could result in the adoption of alternative forms of consumption. Instead of merely seeking to minimise their levels of consumption, individuals could also try to reuse, repair, or share and set these standards as their sustainable way of consumption. Therefore, fostering mindful consumption would be grounded not only in self-regulation techniques but also in an enhanced and sustainable awareness of stages preceding behaviour (Geiger *et al.*, 2019). Such a focus could inform future studies of mindful consumption.

Finally, even though some inconclusive results were obtained in experimental studies, this methodological approach should be encouraged. Recommendations provided here, such as using diverse samples, longer interventions or multifaceted scales, should be considered.

## **5. Theoretical and Managerial Contributions**

This literature review was performed to advance knowledge as well as facilitate establishing the context for theoretical development to inform future strategies (Snyder, 2019; Watson, Webster, 2020). Additionally, it intended to integrate the findings from disparate and interdisciplinary studies so that future research questions could be derived from this collective knowledge.

Two main theoretical contributions can be offered. First, this review has provided evidence of the role of mindfulness as a self-regulation strategy. Thus, the enhanced awareness of mindfulness via self-regulation may well constitute a valid facilitator of SCBs. Additionally, the critical role of mindfulness in the stages preceding behaviour has been demonstrated, particularly its role in reshaping values to ensure self-coherence and in turn adopt a mindful disposition. These elements, although not alone, could help initiate the change of mindset required as a prerequisite of behavioural change, i.e., SC. Accordingly, these consumption behaviours, preceding decisions and mindfulness, seem promising because they might determine a change in individuals' lifestyles by promoting alternative behaviours other than anticonsumerist behaviours. Additionally, these behaviours have the potential to be better connected with individuals' sense of wellbeing (Yani-de-Soriano, Slater, 2009).

Managerial contributions are consistent with projections of future lifestyles. In marketing in particular, calls are made for a shift in business strategies. Based on the existing research on SCBs, it could be argued that future generations might focus on long-term sustainability targets and long-term oriented lifestyles. This should be accompanied by preventive and educational strategies to minimise the human impact on the environment (e.g.,

waste prevention) (Wang *et al.*, 2019). These objectives contrast with those generations' focus on short-term consumption and targets (e.g., reducing or recycling waste). Given the transformative potential of mindfulness, mindfulness interventions through technological aids (e.g., smart home devices) should be further explored. Visual aids should also be promoted. Indeed, they should be naturally embedded in all marketing initiatives to assist mindful individuals and facilitate sustainability awareness (Errmann *et al.*, 2021; Li *et al.*, 2021). Since among mindful individuals, economic decisions are not an issue in adopting SCBs, a novel field of research also arises, namely, mindful financial decision-making (Schomburgk, Hoffmann, 2022). Finally, there are calls for more experimental studies that, along with correlational studies, could offer empirical evidence of mechanisms not yet examined (Ross, 2015).

### **Concluding Remarks and Limitations of This Study**

In summary, a further exploration of individual dispositions that may facilitate SCBs and the role of mindfulness seems worth pursuing. Moreover, fostering such dispositions through marketing strategies is deemed mandatory so that the discipline seen as a major force in individual consumption helps ease the transition to sustainability that is required (Sheth *et al.*, 2011). In addition, the results obtained help to promote various streams of research related to marketing and offer a proven theoretical basis in the business world and implement it in people management.

Although the aim of this review was to provide a comprehensive approach to empirical evidence on mindfulness and SC, it should be taken as a starting point for researchers. The information offered by the bibliometric and systematic literature review remains limited and should be contrasted and complemented. It should be noted that there is one main limitation and that is the changes in consumer consumption practices encouraged by digitisation and new lifestyles. Practices should be identified, and more sustainable consumption practices should be promoted. Kumar *et al.* (2023) emphasise the importance of attention in marketing and consumption in this era of globalisation. In this sense, one of the first proposals offered to give continuity to this study and reinforce the theoretical and current part, is to perform a meta-analysis. This could add solid empirical evidence in future studies.

Subsequently, it would be interesting to develop a program in which a series of mindfulness interventions are custom-designed on a sample of individuals. Its main objective would be to promote reconciliation on consumer behaviour and habits. In other words, to internalise one of the currents mentioned by Kaur, Luchs (2022), where conscious consumption is promoted. On the other hand, the theoretical framework on mindfulness and sustainable consumption should continue to be expanded in order to broaden knowledge in this area, as it has been seen that it is still a framework that can be further explored. Finally, marketing strategies informed by this review should integrate strategic analytical tools and techniques to ensure successful results.

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## **ATSAKINGUMAS IR TVARUS VARTOJIMAS: EMPIRINIŲ DUOMENŲ BIBLIOMETRINĖ IR SISTEMINĖ LITERATŪROS APŽVALGA**

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### **SANTRAUKA**

Ši bibliometrinė ir sisteminė literatūros apžvalga siekia suteikti naujausią, visapusę ir išsamią sąsają tarp atsakingumo ir tvaraus vartojimo empirinių tyrimų analizę. Ši apžvalga yra aktuali ir būtina dėl dviejų priežasčių. Pirma, tai pirmoji atlikta bibliometrinė analizė, skirta įvertinti esamų tyrimų veiksmingumą šioje srityje. Antra, nagrinėjamos įžvalgos apie šio tyrimo metu labiausiai išryškėjusias sąvokas ir naujas sąvokas, tokias kaip atsakingas vartojimas. Šiuo tikslu analizuojami 65 straipsniai. Remiantis gautais įrodymais, šioje apžvalgoje pristatomi teoriniai ir vadybos struktūros aspektai, skirti vykdyti vartotojų tyrimų analizę ateityje. Teorinė informacija apibendrina idėjas ir veiksmus, kurie skatintų būtinus pokyčius siekiant priimti tvarų gyvenimo būdą. Informacija apie vadybos veiksmus apibendrina rekomendacijas rinkodaros vadovams dėl to, kaip įgyvendinti veiksmingas strategijas remiantis gautais įrodymais.

**REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI:** tvarus vartojimas; atsakingumas; atsakingas vartojimas; literatūros apžvalga; rinkodara.