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A Comparison of the Green Mindset and An Array of Green Customer Citizenship Behaviours of Adult Residents in South Africa and the United States

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ABSTRACT

Independent samples of 513 South African and 938 American consumers responded to an invitation-only, Internet-based survey that captured behavioural and attitudinal data regarding five constructs germane to customer citizenship. The five constructs were green mindset, anti-consumption behaviour, consumer coaching, green advocacy, and customer helping behaviour. Multi-item scales for all five constructs that had been shown to produce a high degree of reliability in prior research were gleaned from the literature. Results from South Africa and the United States were compared. High degrees of reliability were in evidence for each scale in each country. A comparison of the mean scores documented statistically significant differences between the two countries for all five scales. For each scale, the results from South Africa produced a higher mean than that which was in evidence in the sample of residents of the United States. These results imply that the South Africans tend to possess a stronger green disposition (attitude) while also embracing and engaging in anti-consumption behaviour, green advocacy, consumer coaching, and customer helping (behaviours) more so do their American counterparts.

Keywords: *Green, Customer citizenship, Behaviour, Anti-consumption, South Africa, United States*

INTRODUCTION

Green consumption has been a popular topic of conversation and research over the past fifty years. From a pragmatic perspective, green consumption has been characterized as the "practice of using eco-friendly products that are harmless to consumers, the eco-system, and the environment" (Geetha & Laxman, 2017, p. 2). It is further stated that this practice addresses potential harm from three perspectives. First are the negative consequences emanating from less

desirable approaches germane to the sourcing of raw materials and the manufacturing of finished products for use by the buyers; for example, deforestation and carbon emissions are often criticized by consumers, consumer watchdog groups, politicians, the media, and governmental entities. Second are the ways in which products are used; celebrities flying on private jets and consumers driving high-horsepower cars that are viewed as gas guzzlers are but two examples of this phenomenon. Finally, there has been a growing emphasis on the methods by which products that have fulfilled their usefulness are disposed of; are they simply discarded in the weekly trash collection and dumped in a nearby landfill; is food waste composted; are durable goods with a remaining useful life donated to causes that help less fortunate citizens? Based on these examples, it is evident that the critics have a broad array of concerns that they deem to be in need of addressing in order to help secure the health of Planet Earth for future generations.

Inherent to this initiative are two broad considerations: *attitudes and behaviour*. First, from an attitudinal perspective, individuals must possess a *green mindset* that leads to a decision to personally engage in green consumption so that they themselves help to protect the environment. The second set of considerations involves overt behaviour on the part of the individual who is seeking to influence another individual's purchase behaviour. Included within this realm of overt behaviour is *anti-consumption*; this facet of consumer decision making involves the omission of products and brands that are viewed as detrimental to our environment being intentionally omitted from a consumer's own consideration set. Next, individuals with a green mindset need to engage others in an effort to induce them to behave in an environmentally responsible manner. These efforts include *green advocacy, consumer coaching,* and *customer helping behaviour*; collectively, these behaviours are often characterized as customer citizenship behaviour (Huang, Wei, & Ang, 2022). Each of these constructs represents behaviour whereby an individual provides guidance and insight in an effort to dissuade another consumer from purchasing a product that the influencer deems to be detrimental to the green cause. These vocal consumers may have significant influence within their own affiliative reference groups. There have been calls for more research to close the gap towards a deeper understanding of the antecedents of green consumption. One issue of particular interest is the effort by individual consumers to influence the behaviour of other consumers (Cavazos-Arroyo, & Sánchez-Lezama, 2022). The five constructs identified in the preceding paragraph (green mindset, anti-consumption behaviour, green advocacy, consumer coaching, and customer helping behaviour) represent the five considerations under scrutiny in the current study.

In addition to research on green behaviour by consumers (as well as green behaviour on the part of business enterprises), it has become evident that today's successful marketers are engaging in a broader international reach. No longer are firms relegated to a single domestic economy. While large multinational corporations have long sought to be competitive in a multitude of foreign markets, even the smallest mom-and-pop stores have used e-tailing to reach the broader global market. The dilemma for these marketers is that consumers in different countries often behave quite differently when confronted by problems that marketers seek to resolve. There are myriad differences, even among countries that, at face value, seem to have much in common. But in reality, consumers within any single country are far from homogeneous. Research has long documented differences in behaviour while acknowledging that these behavioural differences may well be traced to differences in attitudes in regard to their specific purchase-related

decisions. One of those attitudes that has been subjected to scrutiny is a nation's overall mindset regarding the environment and the appropriateness of behaving in ways that assist in efforts to protect the planet. Consequently, there has been an effort to document those differences across multiple countries. Yet, that documentation is far from complete. The current study addresses this deficiency, in part, by comparing the results from two countries on each of the five aforementioned constructs. As such, South Africa and the United States are compared on the bases of their green mindset, anti-consumption behaviour, green advocacy, consumer coaching behaviour, and customer helping behaviour.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the literature comprises two distinct sections. First is that of green attitudes that are precursors to customer citizenship behaviours. As such, the focus is on the identification of those constructs that can represent a form of customer citizenship behaviour. Second is an overview of research that potentially identify differences between South African residents and residents of the United States in regard to green attitudes and green behaviours.

Customer Citizenship Considerations

A rapidly growing topic for research on the B2C market is that of customer citizenship. It has been stated that in an increasingly competitive environment, customer citizenship behaviour is becoming increasingly important in terms of the performance of firms (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004), the competitive position of an organization (Van Tonder & Petzer, 2018), and the sustainability of a customer-brand relationship (Liu, et al, 2020). So, this literature review begins with an examination of the broader customer citizenship concept.

Customer citizenship has been defined as a bundle of customers' positive, voluntary, helpful, and constructive behaviours that are beneficial for the organization (IGI, 2022). The concept was earlier defined as behaviour that involves voluntary and discretionary behaviours that are not required for the successful production and/or delivery of the marketer's goods and services (Xie & Zhang, 2017). These advocates have even been referred to as partial employees (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). The broad nature of the aforementioned definitions implies that customer citizenship comprises a broad array of behaviours on the part of the consumer. According to Groth (2005) there are three subdimensions inherent to the customer citizenship behaviour construct. Specifically, these three subdimensions are the provision of feedback to the firms, the act of helping other customers, and the dissemination of advice to others regarding a marketer's goods and services that are being offered for sale. More recently Sarioglu (2020) proposed a customer citizenship scale; it incorporated 34 items that made up seven distinct subdimensions. What is apparent from this brief discussion is that there is no universal agreement as to how many, or even which, subdimensions should be incorporated within a viable scale that measures customer citizenship behaviour.

While individual consumers who chose to engage in customer citizenship behaviours may focus on a multitude of criteria (i.e., country-of-origin, consumer safety, and health), perhaps nowhere in marketing is this phenomenon more evident than it is with green consumption. Thus, there is

reason to presume that consumers who possess a green mindset not only purchase green products, but that they also engage in behaviours designed to influence other consumers to do the same. So, the question of interest is what customer citizenship behaviours might a green mindset induce.

Green Mindset

A green mindset, otherwise characterized as a green attitude, has been referred to as a tendency by consumers to refrain from the purchase of products that they deem to be harmful to the environment. As such, it has been posited that consumers with a stronger green attitude will exhibit a greater tendency to purchase green products that foster sustainability while concurrently avoiding brown products that are seen as harmful to the environment (Kautish & Sharma, 2019). There are numerous studies that support this premise. Among the most recent are Jose, Biju, and Vincent (2022) in their study of the purchase of organic foods; Amoako, Dzogbenuku, and Abubakari, (2020) who explored the purchase of organic foods by university students within the realm of the Theory of Planned Behaviour; and van Tonder, Fullerton, and DeBeer (2020) who examined the interaction among green attitude, green purchase behaviour, and customer citizenship. It is this last study that made the greatest contribution to the current study; the authors created and tested a multi-item scale for determining the green mindset of a consumer. In their study, that scale produced a metric of .902 for coefficient alpha, thus it was proven to be highly reliable. The decision was made to use that scale for green mindset in the current study.

Anti-Consumption Behaviour

Anti-consumption behaviour is predicated upon the desire to avoid purchasing products that the consumer views as unacceptable alternatives for a particular reason. These reasons include country-of-origin (refusal to buy Russian products), political considerations (refusal to play golf on a Trump-branded golf course), and perceived bias against the LGBTQ+ community (refuse to eat at Chick-fil-A) among many others (McCullough, et al., 2022). One of the most prominent in that "many others" category is that of environmental concerns. Recent studies that have documented anti-consumption behaviour because of environmental concerns include efforts by young consumers to help preserve the planet (Ziesemer, Hüttel, & Balderjahn, 2021); a study addressing anti-consumption and consumption decisions within the "organic community" (Saraiva, Fernandes, & von Schwedler, (2020); and one that looked at the decline in per capita meat consumption in Australia (Malek, Umberger, & Goddard, 2019). An additional study incorporated a multi-item scale designed to measure the anti-consumption construct (Chatzidakis and Lee, 2012); their scales was based upon four reasons against purchasing a particular product, and it exhibited a high degree of reliability. It was that scale that was deemed appropriate for the current study.

Consumer Coaching Behaviour

Much of the literature addressing the concept of coaching is focused on employees of the firm either coaching other employees or coaching customers of the firm. While there has been little research on the subject of consumer coaching, it has been noted that consumer coaching

behaviour occurs when "customers act as productive resources by creating suggestions for service development, purchasing other services, giving suggestions to others, attending brand-centered events, and participating in brand communities" (Johnson & Rapp 2010, p. 787). Referring to consumer coaching as *personal initiative taking,* Frese et al (1997) developed a multi-item scale designed to measure the construct. The alpha metric of .88 documented a high level of internal reliability. Furthermore, the authors characterized personal initiative as behaviour that "can be driven by traits such as a self-starting personality, proactivity, and the objective of overcoming difficulties" (ibid., p. 139). Despite the dearth of information on the topic, it has recently emerged as a key proactive behaviour designed to influence consumer purchase decisions, particularly within the realm of customer citizenship. Based on available information, a decision was made to use the scale developed by Frese, et al. (1997) in the current study.

Customer Helping Behaviour

At first blush, one might consider customer helping behaviour to be synonymous with consumer coaching. Yet multiple definitions for customer helping behaviour serve to differentiate between the two behavioural constructs. For example, it has been inferred that the pertinent actions associated with helping behaviour involve behavioural patterns such as helping other customers, submitting proposals, and providing feedback; these behaviours are examples of customer helping behaviour (van Tonder, et al., 2022). Bettencourt (1997), when referring to customers' voluntary behaviour, suggested that such activities comprise three dimensions: participation, loyalty, and cooperation. It was Groth (2005) who some eight years later posited that the act of helping other customers was one (of three) dimensions that fall within the sphere of customer citizenship behaviour. Perhaps the greatest distinction between the two constructs lies in the basic premise that it is always the customer that is providing help to another customer. Yi and Gong (2013, p. 1279) captured this distinction in their definition of customer helping behaviour as "*customer* behaviour aimed at assisting other customers in making informed decisions." From the broadest perspective within the services arena, it has been stated that "helping behaviours represent the act of assisting other customers in using the services properly" by "helping consumers to match needs to attributes" (Groth, 2005, p. 34). So, while there are many definitions of customer helping behaviour, they can be seen as addressing the concept from a common perspective. Perhaps this common perspective was best articulated by Roy, et al. (2020) who stated that this form of customer engagement is best characterized as an aggregation of multiple ways through which customers, outside of core economic transactions, influence value co-creation and firm performance. This characterization is also evident in the assertion that helping other customers is an important dimension of customer citizenship behaviour; that input from the customer represents behaviours that are helpful and constructive behaviours designed to help other customers (Gruen, 1995). Furthermore, these behaviours comprise voluntary, positive, constructive and helpful actions toward other customers by sharing information about a service, product or a firm; therefore, firms and other customers benefit from this voluntary behaviour by contributing to the marketer's profitability (Bove, Pervan, Beatty, & Shiu, 2009).

Among the scales that included customer helping behaviour as a sub-component of customer citizenship behaviour was that of Yi and Gong (2013) whose four-dimensional construct

encompassed feedback, advocacy, tolerance, and helping behaviour. Johnson and Rapp (2010) developed and tested a scale that included seven sub-dimensions; each produced an alpha value exceeding .7 and was subjected to construct validity evaluation. Sarioglu (2020) included 32 items comprising seven sub-scales in an effort to model customer citizenship behaviour; one of the seven sub-scales was the act of "helping others" (or HelpOth). Finally, another scale of this ilk was labeled "customers helping customers" (CHC); it produced a measure of reliability at .97 (Bartikowski & Walsh, 2011). While there were several scales from which to choose, the scale by Yi and Gong (2013) was deemed most appropriate for the task at hand.

Green Advocacy

The *Oxford Dictionary* defines advocacy as "publicly speaking on behalf of someone or in support of someone;" thus, it has been characterized as the act "of representing someone's interests underpinned by the belief in someone or something." (Wilk, et al., 2020. P. 416). From a broader B2C perspective, advocacy refers to the act of recommending a business to others such as friends or family (Groth, et al., 2004). Such advocacy could be for a brand (Apple), a country (Japan), or a cause (sustainability). For example, in a study of online financial service companies, it was surmised that a brand testimonial (brand advocacy) that featured visual cues would be a strong inducement for those exposed to the testimonial, especially if it was initiated by someone within the individual consumer's affiliative reference group (Harrigan, Roy & Chen, 2021). From a more narrow perspective, brand advocacy has been conceptualized as a form of positive word-of-mouth that is of great value to the targeted brand (Libai, et al., 2009). Hence the reasoning for extending this line of research into green advocacy comes to the forefront. Earlier discussion of the scale developed by Groth, et al. (2004) noted that their scale comprised three distinct dimensions; one of those dimensions is described as "advising the goods or services of the firm to other consumers." Using this premise as a basis, advocacy in a green marketing context relates to customers saying positive things about the green firm, being willing to recommend the service, and encouraging others to use the products (Hwang and Lyu, 2020). Two scales that address or can be adapted to address green advocacy were developed and subjected to empirical scrutiny by Yi and Gong (2013) and van Tonder, et al. (2020). Because of its recent application and a documented high alpha coefficient, the adaptation by van Tonder, et al, (2020) was selected for the current study.

Separating South Africa and the United States

From a broad cross-cultural perspective, the initial evidence that the two countries vary significantly when compared to each other comes from Hofstede's six cultural dimensions (Hofstede Insights, 2022). The countries varied significantly on the individualism scale with the South Africans exhibiting far more of a collectivist mentality. Along with being more individualistic, Americans scored higher on the indulgence trait. South Africans scored slightly higher on the power-distance and uncertainty avoidance constructs while concurrently exhibiting a greater propensity to adopt a long-term orientation. The South Africans also scored slightly higher (one point) on the masculinity index. These values indicate that the cultures of the two countries vary significantly, but perhaps the consideration that is most important for this study is the trait of individualism. By having more of a collectivist mindset (along with a greater

propensity to focus on long-term solutions), it is a logical premise that the South Africans are more open to green solutions. However, the literature does not necessarily support that line of thinking.

The search of the extant literature (using ProQuest) that focused on customer citizenship behaviour, green advocacy, customer helping, and consumer coaching yielded very little research of substance. There is, however, significant research on consumers' green mindset and their anti-consumption behaviour. But, when further narrowing the focus to the United States and South Africa, previous research was virtually nonexistent. Most of the recent research with an eye on South Africa has not been comparative in nature, and it offers somewhat contradictory assessments. For example, it was reported that South Africans continue to emit excessive levels of greenhouse pollution; however, young South Africans have become more vocal in their efforts to change South Africans' minds about protecting the environment (Bright, 2021). The South African Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment have issued their own National Framework for Sustainable Development with a proclamation that "South Africa aspires to be a sustainable…self-reliant nation state that safeguards its democracy by meeting the fundamental human needs of its people by managing its limited ecological resources responsibly for current and future generations" (Anonymous, 2008). A more recent cross-sectional survey of South African consumers concluded that "South African consumers have expressed a growing willingness to pay a premium for …... sustainability over the last two years" while noting that "sustainable packaging is already relatively well-established in South Africa, for example, with returnable glass bottles being more common than in many other countries." (Hattingh and Ramiakan, 2022, p. 1). Perhaps it is this emphasis which led to a recent study of the retail sector of South Africa concluding that a retailer's green image along with its environmental performance helps in its quest to attain a competitive advantage (Chinomona and Bikissa-Macongue, 2021). More recently, we have witnessed a "waste-to-soil" composting initiative in South Africa (Averda, 2021). But, despite such available opportunities for South Africans, it has been reported that the country's climate plan completely ignores waste reduction (Bega, 2021).

One recent study that did compare the two countries on the anti-consumption dimension reported that South Africans were more inclined to engage in anti-consumption behaviour than were Americans; however, that study focused solely on anti-consumption decisions based upon country-of-origin (Fullerton, et al., 2022). Since the current study is comparative in design, the most appropriate secondary data that facilitated a comparison of the two countries were some reported index values designed to reflect a country's green mindset and/or practices. The following examples from the literature are meant to provide insight as to differences that may well coincide with differences in consumer citizenship behaviours.

There is an environmental index that ostensibly measures a country's propensity to engage in green behaviours. The Environmental Performance Index (EPI) places the United States 43rd while South Africa is in 116th place (Anonymous, 2022a). This comparison clearly conveys the belief that the South Africans possess a browner mindset. A second study reported on a measure of a country's ecological footprint: it was 8.04 for the United States and 3.16 for South Africa (Anonymous, 2022b). These measures imply that South Africa produces less harm to the ecosystem than does the United States. *U.S. News & World Report* publishes an index that

provides an overview of the best countries for green living (a.k.a. most sustainable countries) The most recent report placed the United States 20th while South Africa was ranked 44th (Anonymous 2022c). So, the measures portray the United States to be more focused on sustainability. Unfortunately, both countries' position dropped three places from the 2020 ratings as other countries stepped up their focus on sustainability more so than did South Africa and the United States. These unbiased measures imply, though not unanimously, that consumers in the United States are deemed to have a greener focus than do their South African counterparts.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

There are two primary objectives pursuant to the current study. First is that of verifying the reliability of the five scales that form the basis for this project: green mindset, anti-consumption behaviour, green advocacy, consumer coaching, and customer helping behaviour. This objective involves three underlying tasks. Assess the reliability of each of the five scales for the aggregate sample, the South Africa sample, and the sample drawn in the United States. Second is the task of determining the extent to which attitudes and behaviours germane to customer citizenship differ when comparing the results from South Africa and the United States.

METHODOLOGY

The project began with a review of the customer citizenship dimension. The review identified a set of constructs that were plausibly associated with attitudes or behaviours specific to customer citizenship. The review was expanded in order to find a multi-item scale that had been empirically tested for reliability and validity in previous research projects for each of the five identified constructs. Based on this insight, a questionnaire was developed. The final five scales that were decided upon for this survey and their original source were as follow:

- Green Mindset (van Tonder, et al., 2020),
- Anti-Consumption (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2012),
- Consumer Coaching Behaviour (Frese, et al., 1997),
- Customer Helping Behaviour (Yi & Gong, 2013), and
- Green Advocacy (van Tonder, et al., 2020).

The instrument was pretested using a sample of 175 university students. The reliability of the scales was confirmed, and a small number of modifications in wording were incorporated. Though the survey was done in English in both countries, several modifications in the wording were made so as to assure the proper vernacular was used in each country. Multiple quality control checks were used in an effort to assure that the final dataset comprised a sample of attentive respondents.

The survey was then provided to a consumer research company in each country; their assigned task was that of drawing a sample from their national consumer panels. Though some questions, such as age and education, were unforced, respondents were required to respond to each question before moving on to the next. There was no item nonresponse within the two datasets. Data cleansing based upon the quality control checks was used to eliminate the inattentive respondents from the final datasets.

The reliability of the five scales was tested using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Each scale was subjected to three measurements: one for the aggregate sample, one for the South African sample, and one for the American sample. The mean score for each country was calculated for each of the five scales. Standard t-tests were then used to determine if the responses from the two countries were significantly different. A probability of .05 served as the benchmark for confirming that the difference between the two countries was statistically significant.

RESULTS

With the data in hand, a cleansing process was undertaken. This procedure was accomplished by virtue of the use of multiple quality control checks imbedded within the survey. For example, the version of the questionnaire used in the United States had four quality control checks: a time check, a ReCAPTCHA question, an instructional manipulation check, and a uniform identifier. The result was that 514 respondents were dropped from the database leaving a net usable sample of 938 respondents who reside in the United States. Similar procedures in South Africa resulted in a final sample of 513 respondents. The cleansing of the data resulted in the elimination of inattentive respondents thereby undoubtedly improving the integrity of the data.

The initial step in the analyses was the assessment of the reliability for each of the five scales under scrutiny. This procedure involved three separate assessments of the reliability of each of the scales as determined by calculation Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Specifically, coefficient alpha was calculated for the aggregate sample of 1,451 respondents from the two countries, the 513 respondents from South Africa, and the 938 respondents from the United States. When looking at the aggregate sample, the metric for the reliability of the five scales ranged from a low of .814 to a high of .947. Looking solely at the South African sample, coefficient alpha for the five scales ranged from .664 to .932. The American sample produced the strongest results overall with that same metric ranging from a low of .784 to a high of .948 (with four of the five values exceeding .9). For each of the three levels of aggregation, the highest measure of reliability was for the customer helping scale (.947, .932, and .948 respectively). The lowest values for coefficient alpha were all associated with the anti-consumption scale (.814, .664, and .784 respectively). In total, 14 of the 15 metrics exceeded the .7 value deemed appropriate for this type of assessment (Nunnally, 1978). In each case, the South African sample produced the lowest metric for reliability; however, all but one exceeded the .7 guideline for continuation of the analysis procedures. Perhaps the cleansing process for the South African data was not as effective as it was for the American data. Because the anti-consumption scale for the South African data was close to the .7 cutoff, and because other researchers have indicated that a level of reliability of .6 is acceptable for the type of analysis being undertaken in the current study (Wim, et al., 2008), a decision to retain that single outlier was made. The completion of the reliability assessment leads to the next step of the analytical process. Table 1 provides an overview of the reliability analyses.

Table 1. Results of Reliability Testing for the Five Scales Under Scrutiny

		Coefficient alpha	
Scale	Aggregate	RSA	USA
Green Mindset	.891	.760	.901
Anti-Consumption	.814	.664	.784
Green Advocacy	.898	.803	.916
Customer Helping	.947	.932	.948
Consumer Coaching	.929	.883	.931

The next step was the calculation of the means for the five scales. Each scale was additive in nature with either three or four items. In each case, a higher value of the mean is associated with stronger support of the behaviour or attitude under scrutiny. This analysis begins with an examination of green mindset as reflected by the mean scores of the two independent samples. This scale incorporated three items, so the range of potential means (using a balanced, six-point itemized rating scale) was 3.0 to 18.0. The mean score for the South African sample was an extremely high value of 16.16 while the mean for the American sample was a more moderate 14.20. A t-test was used to determine whether or not the difference was statistically significant. With a t-value of 11.850 with 1,449 degrees of freedom, the calculated probability associated with the difference was .0000. Therefore, the difference has been determined to be statistically significant.

The focus now shifts to overt behaviour. In this regard, the initial assessment is of the anti-consumption behaviour scale. The anti-consumption scale comprised four items, thus the range of potential means was 4.0 to 24.0. The actual means were 18.25 for the South African sample and 15.26 for the sample from the United States. The 2.99 difference in the two means resulted in a t-value of 14.072; with 1,449 degrees of freedom; that difference is significant at a level of .0000.

Green advocacy is the second behavioural construct under scrutiny. This three-item scale exhibited the weakest support, especially from the American sample. The mean for South Africa was 13.24 whereas the mean for the United States was 10.61. The difference of 2.63 resulted in a t-score of 12.558; this difference is also statistically significant at the .0000 level.

Attention is now turned to the third behavioural construct, that of customer helping behaviour. For the South Africa sample, the mean score for this four-item scale was 17.73. By comparison, the mean score for the American sample was 13.17. Thus, the observed difference was a sizable 4.46. This difference resulted in a t-score of 16.121 which is also significant at the .0000 level.

Table 2. Results of t-tests for Differences Between the Means on the Five Scales

Scale	RSA	USA	dif.	t-value	sig.*
Green Mindset (3)	16.16	14.20	1.94	11.850	.0000
Anti-Consumption (4)	18.25	15.26	2.99	14.072	.0000
Green Advocacy (3)	13.24	10.61	2.63	12.558	.0000
Customer Helping (4)	17.73	13.17	4.56	16.121	.0000
Consumer Coaching (4)	17.11	12.51	4.60	16.783	.0000

* Significance based on 1,449 degrees of freedom for each calculation
(*) Number within parentheses represents the number of items comprising each scale

The final scale under scrutiny is consumer coaching, or what Frese, et al, (1997) referred to as personal initiative taking. The difference between the means of the two countries on the consumer coaching scale was the largest observed difference among the five scales under scrutiny. The four-item scale also exhibited means whereby the observed difference between the two countries was statistically significant at the .0000 level. As with the previous four comparisons, the South African sample produced a higher mean score. The South African mean was 17.11 while the US mean was 12.51. This difference of 4.60 between the two samples produced a t-score of 16.783. The results of the five t-tests are summarized in Table 2 on the preceding page.

DISCUSSION

The cleansing of the dataset resulted in the decision to drop some 36 percent of the respondents from the analysis process. The respondents who were dropped failed one or more of the four quality control checks in the data collection process (with several failing all four). The inattentiveness of these respondents was deemed to be detrimental to the integrity of the data, thus their responses were not incorporated within the final dataset. This cleansing process is strongly recommended for future research efforts that involve survey research, particularly Internet-based surveys where the respondents are compensated for each completed questionnaire.

When engaging in research that is based upon the evaluation of constructs by calculating a single coefficient from a multi-item scale, it is imperative that each scale be internally consistent. In essence, the researcher needs to ensure that each item in the scale is measuring the same phenomenon. In this study, reliability for each scale was measured using Cronbach's alpha. Coefficient alpha was calculated three times for each of the five scales by assessing the aggregate sample and each country separately. Of the 15 measures, 14 exceeded the .7 standard as established by Nunnally (1978) and which remains a common goal in today's research efforts in order to assure meaningful measurements when using a multi-item scale to measure some phenomenon such as an individual's green mindset. The 15th measure was slightly lower than that standard, but it still exceeded the .6 guideline as delineated by Wim, et al. (2008). The anti-consumption construct was the scale that produced the lowest alpha score for all three iterations. So, while the scale used to measure anti-consumption behaviour is adequate, it is suggested that an alternative scale be identified or developed for future research of this ilk. The other four scales used in this study (green mindset, green advocacy, customer helping, and consumer

coaching) all withstood empirical scrutiny and are deemed appropriate for future research endeavours that feature customer citizenship.

The primary focus of this project was to identify differences between South African residents and residents of the United States when comparing attitudes and behaviours germane to customer citizenship. The observed differences between the five pairs of means were all statistically significant at a level of .0000. This outcome indicates that the differences are not due to random error, but to true differences in the population parameters. The five assessments of the pertinent pairs of group means all produced a positive t-score. This positive outcome means that the South African respondents had a stronger green inclination on all five of the constructs under scrutiny. From an attitudinal perspective, they exhibited a much stronger green mindset. From a behavioural perspective, they had higher scores for overt personal anti-consumption behaviour, participating as a green advocate, engaging in behaviour intended to help other customers make green decisions, and coaching individuals so that they learn the underlying logic for engaging in green behaviour.

Based on these results, it can be stated that South Africans appear to have a significantly stronger green mindset than do their US counterparts. So, from an attitudinal perspective, South African residents embrace the movement towards green consumption, production, and disposal more so than do consumers residing in the United States. Furthermore, it appears to be that a stronger green mindset does indeed contribute to greener actions on the part of the consumer. Based on the results emanating from the current study, the South African residents more openly embrace and engage in the four behaviours deemed to be related to customer citizenship behaviour: anti-consumption behaviour, green advocacy, consumer coaching behaviour, and customer helping behaviour. And while the statistical significance of the observed differences indicates that South Africa scored significantly higher on each of the five scales, it is worth noting that differences of the magnitude observed in the current study are managerially significant. So, not only are South African consumers more prone to engage in anti-consumption based upon green concerns, but they are also more inclined to engage in informal communications designed to influence their peers as to the perceived wisdom of engaging in green behaviour. This behaviour includes purchase, consumption, and disposal of products in ways that do not adversely impact the eco-system. Perhaps the South Africans view their country as more pristine today, or perhaps they have paid more attention to the warnings being articulated by those who openly elucidate their concerns. Despite this awareness, they are not strongly embracing green advocacy. So, while they are concerned about South Africa's green future, from a collective perspective they are not what has been referred to as Green Warriors (Fullerton, et al., 2021). But while not being strong green advocates, they are far more inclined to engage in customer helping and consumer coaching behaviours. Perhaps South Africans view their peers as being in need of information and assistance in the decision-making process. The results of this study run contrary contrary to much of the limited research on the two countries as well as some of the more noteworthy global indices on each country's green behavior.

A final commentary on green advocacy is appropriate at this point in the discussion. While both countries scored low on the green advocacy scale, the results for the United States (10.61) actually fell barely above the scale's midpoint (of 10.50). So, one area that needs to be addressed

by green advocates is the need to get consumers more involved, more proactive, and more vocal in their support of green initiatives, especially in the United States.

CONCLUDING OVERVIEW

This project focused on four key outcomes. First, it led to the identification of five scales that have been used in previous research on customer citizenship. Second, it verified the reliability of five scales that are commonly used within the realm of customer citizenship. Third, it provided a snapshot of the current perceptions and behaviours of consumers regarding customer citizenship. Finally, it provided empirical evidence as to the differences between consumers in South Africa and those in the United States on each of the five constructs.

Prior to data analysis being conducted, the databases from the two countries were cleansed. This process allowed for the elimination of *systematic noise* resulting from inattentive respondents such as speeders. Based on the sheer magnitude of the number of respondents who were dropped from the data base, thus not included in the analytical procedures, this cleansing process was instrumental in the task of acquiring quality data. Thus, the use of quality control checks such as instructional manipulation checks is strongly encouraged for all forms of survey research, especially when data collection is via an Internet platform.

Differences between South Africa and the United States were documented. In each case, the mean for the scale under examination for the South African sample was higher than was the corresponding mean for the American sample. These results indicate that consumers in South Africa have a stronger green mindset while concurrently being more likely to engage in the four customer citizenship behaviours of anti-consumption, green advocacy, consumer coaching behaviour (personal initiative taking), and customer helping behaviour.

Given the differences in both attitudes and behaviours that were documented for the two countries, it is apparent that marketers cannot treat the global market as a homogeneous entity. Standardized marketing strategies are inferior to those strategies that are customized for each market. This reality further documents the need for researchers – academicians and practitioners alike – to continue to engage in cross-national studies designed to not only identify differences, but to suggest how those differences can best be addressed by a marketer. Without such insight, a marketer might be headed for an embarrassing and expensive demise.

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