



UNIVERSIDAD
DE MÁLAGA



PhD Programme in Economics and Business, Faculty
of Economics and Business, University of Malaga

DOCTORAL THESIS

**Exploring the antecedents of organic food
purchasing:
A study focused on Brazilian and Spanish millennials.**

Presented by:

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3. Japutra, A., Vidal-Branco, M., Higuera-Castillo, E. & Molinillo, S. (2021). Unraveling the mechanism to develop health consciousness from organic food: a cross-comparison of Brazilian and Spanish millennials. *British Food Journal*, ahead-of-print, <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-10-2020-0952> (JCR 2021 IF 2020: 2.518, Agricultural Economics & Policy 10/21, Q2).

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La presentación formal y depósito de dicha tesis doctoral para el inicio del procedimiento de su defensa.

En Málaga, a 16 de septiembre de 2021.

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UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO GRANDE - FURG
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LABORATÓRIO DE ESTUDOS E PESQUISAS
EM METODOLOGIAS DE SISTEMAS DE APOIO À DECISÃO - LABSADI

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El abajo firmante, Sebastián Molinillo Jiménez, como coautor de las publicaciones que se titulan:

1. Vidal-Branco, M., Molinillo, S., Japutra, A., & Longaray, A. (2019). Organic Food Purchasing of the Millennials Generation: Case of Brazil. En Trespalcacios Gutiérrez, J.A., Vázquez Casielles, R., Estrada Alonso, E., y González Mieres, C. (Eds omnichannel marketing: las nuevas reglas de la distribución y el consumo en un mundo omnicanal (pp. 331-348). Editorial: Cátedra Fundación Ramón Areces. ISBN: 9788483676226. (SPI 2018 Editoriales españolas de Economía posición 19/26, Q3, ICEE: 8).
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3. Japutra, A., Vidal-Branco, M., Higuera-Castillo, E. & Molinillo, S. (2021). Unraveling the mechanism to develop health consciousness from organic food: a cross-comparison of Brazilian and Spanish millennials. *British Food Journal*, ahead-of-print, <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-10-2020-0952> (JCR 2021 IF 2020: 2.518, Agricultural Economics & Policy 10/21, Q2).

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Fdo. Sebastián Molinillo Jiménez

**AUTHORIZATION OF THE CO-AUTHORS TO INCLUDE THE ARTICLES IN THE
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The undersigned, Arnold Japutra, as co-author of the publications entitled:

1. Vidal-Branco, M., Molinillo, S., Japutra, A., & Longaray, A. (2019). Organic Food Purchasing of the Millennials Generation: Case of Brazil. En Trespalacios Gutiérrez, J.A., Vázquez Casielles, R., Estrada Alonso, E., y González Mieres, C. (Eds omnichannel marketing: las nuevas reglas de la distribución y el consumo en un mundo omnicanal (pp. 331-348). Editorial: Cátedra Fundación Ramón Areces. ISBN: 9788483676226. (SPI 2018 Editoriales españolas de Economía posición 19/26, Q3, ICEE: 8).
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3. Japutra, A., Vidal-Branco, M., Higuera-Castillo, E. & Molinillo, S. (2021). Unraveling the mechanism to develop health consciousness from organic food: a cross-comparison of Brazilian and Spanish millennials. *British Food Journal*, ahead-of-print, <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-10-2020-0952> (JCR 2021 IF 2020: 2.518, Agricultural Economics & Policy 10/21, Q2).

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Sgd. Arnold Japutra

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- I. Vidal-Branco, M., Molinillo, S., Japutra, A., & Longaray, A. (2019). Organic Food Purchasing of the Millennials Generation: Case of Brazil. En Trespalacios Gutiérrez, J.A., Vázquez Casielles, R., Estrada Alonso, E., y González Mieres, C. (Eds omnichannel marketing: las nuevas reglas de la distribución y el consumo en un mundo omnicanal (pp. 331-348). Editorial: Cátedra Fundación Ramón Areces. ISBN: 9788483676226. (SPI 2018 Editoriales españolas de Economía posición 19/26, Q3, ICEE: 8).

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Em Rio Grande, 24 de junho de 2021.

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LABORATÓRIO DE ESTUDOS E PESQUISAS
EM METODOLOGIAS DE SISTEMAS DE APOIO À DECISÃO - LABSADI

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El abajo firmante, Elena Higuera Castillo, como coautora de la publicación que se titula:

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En Granada, a 24 de junio de 2021.

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“Knowledge has to be improved, challenged,
and increased constantly, or it vanishes.”

Peter Drucker





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SUMMARY

In this thesis we present a compendium of three publications gathered together for a better understanding of the organic food consumer behaviour regarding millennials in Brazil and Spain:

- Vidal-Branco, M., Molinillo, S., Japutra, A., & Longaray, A. (2019). Organic Food Purchasing of the Millennials Generation: Case of Brazil. En Trespalacios Gutiérrez, J.A., Vázquez Casielles, R., Estrada Alonso, E., y González Mieres, C. (Eds omnichannel marketing: las nuevas reglas de la distribución y el consumo en un mundo omnicanal (pp. 331-348). Editorial: Cátedra Fundación Ramón Areces. ISBN: 9788483676226. (SPI 2018 Editoriales españolas de Economía posición 19/26, Q3, ICEE: 8).
- Molinillo, S., Vidal-Branco, M., & Japutra, A. (2020). Understanding the drivers of organic foods purchasing of millennials: Evidence from Brazil and Spain. *Journal of Retailing & Customer Services*, 52, 101926 (JCR IF 2020: 7.135, Business 32/153, Q1).
- Japutra, A., Vidal-Branco, M., Higuera-Castillo, E. & Molinillo, S. (2021). Unravelling the mechanism to develop health consciousness from organic food: a cross-comparison of Brazilian and Spanish millennials. *British Food Journal*, ahead-of-print, <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-10-2020-0952> (JCR IF 2020: 2.518, Agricultural Economics & Policy 10/21, Q2).

In the first publication, a book chapter, we conducted an analysis of the motivations of organic food purchase for Brazilian millennials. This first study was developed during an international stay in the Universidade Federal de Rio Grande (FURG), a public university in





the south of Brazil. During the three-month stay, we collected data and exchanged knowledge with local scholars related to the organic food industry. The LabSADI, translated from Portuguese as “Laboratory of studies and research in methodologies of decision support systems”, is a research department linked to the business and economics post-graduation programme located at FURG and is responsible for research in many fields, including the studies of organic food consumption and the optimisation of the local organic food distribution. The construction of the framework and the analysis of the results were done with the help of the LabSADI, who participated in the production of our first paper, published in October 2019 in the book entitled *Omnichannel marketing: las nuevas reglas de la distribución y el consumo en un mundo omnicanal*.

This study considered a framework consisting of four main variables that can impact purchase frequency. Based on the literature review, we conclude that the constructs of environmental concern, accessibility to organic food, fashion and trend and price fairness were relevant to build a specific analysis regarding their impact on Brazilian millennials’ purchase frequency.

A sample containing 267 Brazilian millennials showed us, after running an online survey, that the presented framework, built considering previous literature review, was very accurate. The results showed that the variables of environment concern, accessibility and price fairness were directly responsible for the purchase frequency of organic food among Brazilian millennials. However, the study also suggested that the results did not support the fashion and trend construct, showing that the frequency of organic food purchase is not affected by this variable. We could observe a specific bias that could be further explored in future research considering the difference between the inner perspective and the other perspective when analysing the construct of fashion and trend. The respondents mostly agreed that organic food



is a trend and that people consume organic food because it is fashionable, but, controversially, most of the research participants disagreed that they consume organic food because it is fashionable or trendy. In other words, it seems that the fashion and trend variable and behaviour of Brazilian millennials could influence the consumption of organic food by others but not by themselves. This bias could have impacted the overall analysis of the fashion and trend construct, and further studies could better explore the phenomenon and investigate if there are further elements that could have impacted the results.

The second research presented in this compendium focused on a comparative analysis of millennials from Brazil and Spain, considering a framework consisting of eight variables correlated with the goal to explain the correlation of the overall interaction with purchase frequency. The framework presents the central elements of health consciousness and social consciousness as pillars for the analysis. Therefore, variables such as food safety concern, natural content, environment concern and sensorial appeal are presented as antecedents, influencing both health and social consciousness. Finally, the willingness to pay a premium and the purchase frequency variables are impacted by health and social consciousness, and the willingness to pay a premium also affects the purchase frequency. This complex model was applied in a two-stage survey, and the analysis was done using data from 530 millennials from both countries to understand the main differences between the two regions and their consumption behaviour towards organic food.

The study showed similarities and differences of variables influencing the behaviour of both groups of millennials. We can highlight the greater health consciousness over the social consciousness found in Brazilian millennials compared to the Spaniards, who presented a more homogeneous balance between health and social consciousness. The study also showed





that both groups' purchase frequency and willingness to pay a premium were positively impacted by health and social consciousness. The findings of this work can help managers to produce specific marketing initiatives for the different groups of millennials in the different regions by understanding the relevant variables that impact each of them specifically and making the organic food communication strategy more efficient. The further results of the work and the full analysis were presented in a paper published in the high-impact *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* in January 2020.

The third paper consists of a deeper analysis of the very relevant variable of health consciousness and the antecedents that impact the understanding of this variable. During the literature review, we could recognise that many constructs are used to understand the consumer behaviour of organic food, but in the great majority of studies, we found the “health consciousness” variable to be a very important element of analysis in organic food purchase intention, coinciding with the findings of Rana and Paul (2017). Considering the relevance of this concept, we decided to go one step back and unravel the antecedents of health consciousness towards organic food purchase and the aspects that can impact it, proceeding with an in-depth analysis of the construct.

We built a framework considering two different components (cognitive and affective stimuli) with seven constructs as health consciousness antecedents: natural content, value for money, sensorial appeal, price fairness, trend, emotional appeal and food safety concern. Therefore, we extend the analysis of health consciousness to its impact on the willingness to pay premiums to confirm that health consciousness and food safety concern can have a high impact on purchase intention. We also conducted a cross-cultural analysis to understand how millennials from Brazil and Spain perceive the variables proposed in the model and how they





impact consumer behaviour towards organic food. We assessed the proposed model using the same dataset as the second publication (530 millennials from both countries). The results supported that food safety concern not only increased purchase intention toward organic food but also willingness to pay premiums by millennials from both countries. The findings also present the differences in purchasing behaviour between the two locations. For example, value for money is a predictor of food safety concern but not health consciousness for Brazilians. The value of organic food would not increase food safety concern and health consciousness for Spanish millennials, but sensorial appeal does impact the health consciousness factor among this section of the sample, while sensorial appeal was not important for Brazilians. These similarities and differences are explained more fully in the conclusion of the specific paper. This last work was published in the *British Food Journal* in the spring of 2021.

The three studies together accomplish the main goal of this thesis to explore the antecedents of organic food purchase behaviour among millennials of Brazil and Spain. The link among the works and the evolution of the theoretical models are clear considering the holistic view of the work. The first work specifically examines Brazilian millennials considering a straightforward model consisting of four variables and how they impact purchase frequency. The cooperation with FURG during the internship helped us to understand in depth the specific behaviour in that location and create findings to develop a further model applied in the second study of the compendium.

With the support of the experience of the first work, we designed the second study as a comparative and cross-cultural study, now conceiving a more complex framework composed of eight variables focused on the main pillars of health and social consciousness. The study





made a great contribution to the literature by filling some gaps in the literature suggested by Rana and Paul (2017). Finally, the third study presents an innovative approach to understanding the purchase behaviour of organic foods, presenting a model centred on the very relevant construct of health consciousness, analysing the background of the purchase behaviour of organic food, and exploring the antecedents that impact the main construct. The final study keeps the cross-cultural analysis and the evolution of the research.

In the following chapters of this thesis, I present an introduction to the topic (Chapter 1) and the compendium of the full publications (Chapters 2, 3 and 4) related to the main research summarised in this section. Finally, an overall conclusion is presented at the end of the thesis (Chapter 5), with the aim to conglomerate the findings of all three works in one direction.



SUMMARY OF THE THESIS IN SPANISH

[RESUMEN DE LA TESIS EN ESPAÑOL]

Explorando los antecedentes de la compra de alimentos orgánicos: un estudio centrado en los millennials brasileños y españoles

1. Introducción

La presente tesis doctoral se ha realizado a través de la modalidad de compendio de publicaciones reunidas para una comprensión más completa y precisa del tópico clave: El comportamiento de consumo de alimentos orgánicos de los millennials de Brasil y España.

El objetivo principal del estudio es contribuir al estado del arte de las investigaciones sobre la intención de compra de alimentos orgánicos y comprender mejor el comportamiento del consumidor relacionado con esa industria. Para ello, el estudio se centra en una cohorte de edad, la generación millennial, con el fin de explorar los posibles elementos o rasgos comunes entre los individuos que se comportan considerando patrones y hechos específicos que impactan en la sociedad en un período determinado. Además, para enriquecer la validez de los resultados, se evalúan los modelos comportamentales propuestos en dos países culturalmente diferentes, Brasil y España.

Consideramos como problema general de investigación la comprensión más profunda del comportamiento de consumo de alimentos orgánicos de los millennials en Brasil y España, que puede orientarse a través de la siguiente pregunta de investigación: ¿Cuáles son los impulsores que influyen en el consumo de alimentos orgánicos entre los millennials en Brasil y España?

Las contribuciones más relevantes presentadas en este trabajo están relacionadas con sus tres





objetivos principales: (1) la identificación de variables relevantes y de marcos teóricos específicos que permitan explicar el comportamiento del consumidor de alimentos orgánicos; (2) la mejora de la comprensión de las variables que influyen en el comportamiento de la generación millennial (o generación Y); y (3) la validación del modelo en dos países con diferencias sociales, económicas y culturales.

Creemos que este trabajo contribuye a mejorar el conocimiento de los factores que impactan en el comportamiento del consumidor de alimentos orgánicos por parte de los millennials, con una validación de los hallazgos a través de sendas muestras de consumidores de Brasil y España.

Esta tesis se compone de cinco capítulos. En el primero se introduce el trabajo y consta del propósito, las preguntas de investigación, los objetivos, y una revisión de la literatura general donde se muestran también detalles que no han sido incluidos en las publicaciones. En los capítulos 2, 3 y 4 presentamos las tres publicaciones que respectivamente conforman esta tesis. El capítulo 5 contiene las discusiones y las conclusiones globales de los resultados, así como la respuesta a cada uno de los objetivos de esta investigación. A continuación, presentamos un breve resumen en español de cada uno de los capítulos.

2. Revisión de la literatura

El consumo de alimentos está volviendo a las raíces ya que la tendencia de los alimentos orgánicos está aumentando en los últimos años (Cushman y Wakefield, 2017; Willer y Lernoud, 2018). Con la reinención de esta industria, las investigaciones se centran en la comprensión de este fenómeno considerando el análisis de por qué los clientes tienen la intención de comprar alimentos orgánicos y cómo las empresas deben prepararse para los

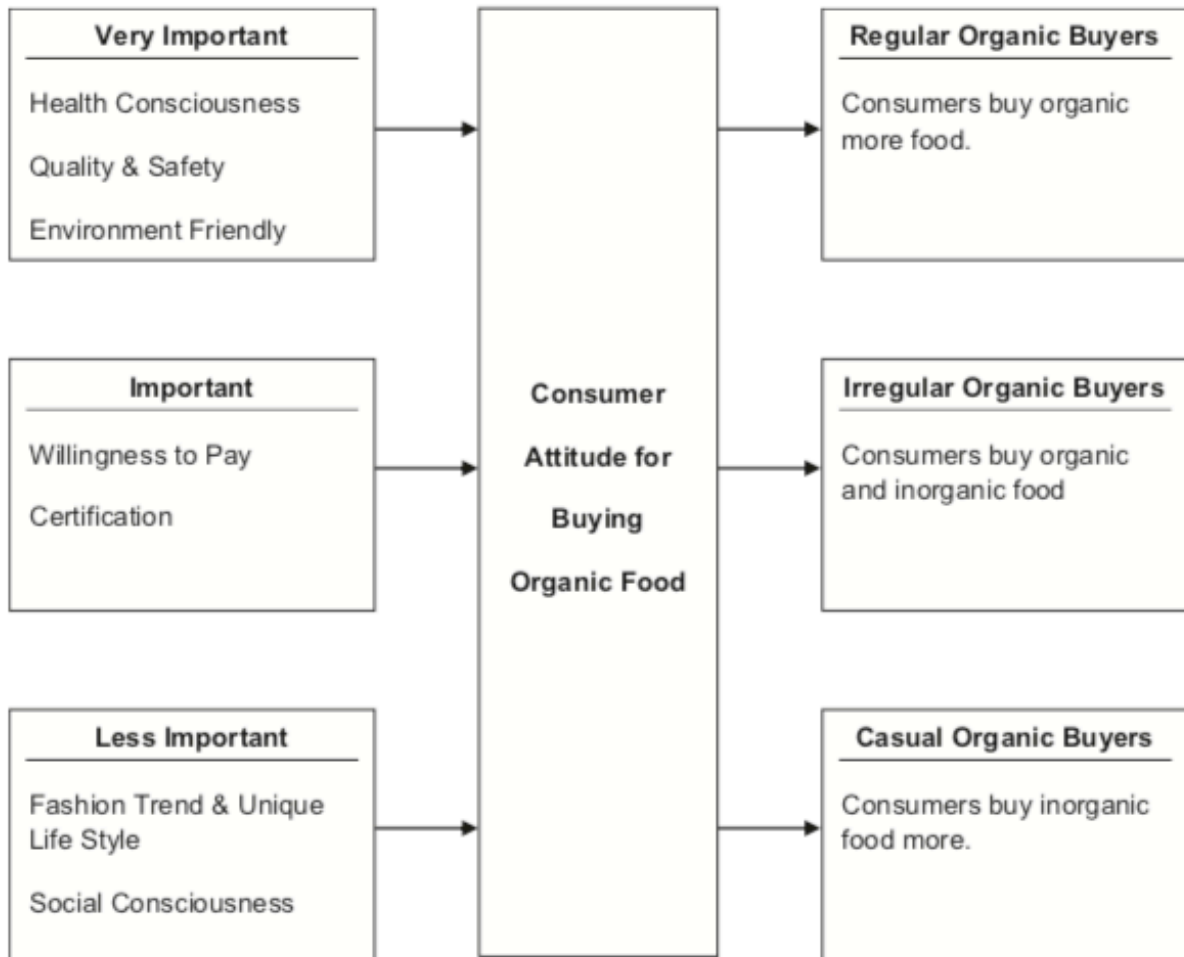


próximos cambios en este mercado (Guchait, Madera y Dawson, 2016; Konuk, 2018; Nie, Liang, y Chen, 2017). Durante las últimas tres décadas se han realizado diversos estudios sobre el tema, con varios enfoques, metodologías y marcos conceptuales (Bruschi et al., 2015; Nie et al., 2017; Nuttavuthisit y Thogersen, 2017; Paul y Rana, 2012; Prentice et al., 2019; Truong et al., 2012; Yadav, 2016).

Rana y Paul (2017) hicieron una revisión de la literatura existente sobre el estado del arte de los estudios realizados hasta el momento relacionados con el tema del consumo de alimentos orgánicos, como se presenta en la figura 1. Los autores identificaron 7 grupos de principales variables y las dividieron en variables menos importantes, importantes y muy importantes en lo que respecta al análisis de estudios previos relacionados con el consumo de alimentos orgánicos. Los autores también sugieren que hay tres tipos de consumidores de alimentos orgánicos: compradores ocasionales, compradores irregulares y compradores habituales, considerando la consistencia con la que compran alimentos orgánicos. El trabajo de Rana y Paul (2017) también presenta un análisis cualitativo de la brecha en la literatura en la que futuros trabajos deben enfocarse para mejorar el conocimiento en el campo. Los autores encontraron que la mayoría de los estudios presentados se enfocan en una sola cultura y país, y no asocian el impacto de diferentes culturas y sociedades en un análisis transversal del tema. Además, los autores demostraron que la mayoría de los estudios están dirigidos a países desarrollados y muy pocos direccionados a comprender el comportamiento de los países en desarrollo.



Figura 1. Categorías de factores que influyen la actitud del consumidor y sus consecuencias.



Fuente: Rana y Paul (2017)

Junto al marco teórico definido por Rana y Paul (2017), esta tesis doctoral encuentra sus bases teóricas en la teoría de los criterios de elección de Fahy y Jobber (2012), según la cual los consumidores toman decisiones en función de 4 aspectos principales: técnico, económico, social y personal. El criterio técnico está relacionado con las características prácticas del producto / servicio y sus beneficios centrales. Las características de la oferta de marketing que se relacionan con sus atributos, diseño y otros elementos prácticos perceptivos. En la tesis



exploramos factores técnicos como el contenido natural y el atractivo sensorial de los alimentos orgánicos que pueden impactar en el análisis del cliente del producto antes de comprarlo. Los criterios económicos consideran aspectos relacionados con el poder adquisitivo de los clientes, su disposición en pagar más caro y la conveniencia para encontrar la oferta del producto. En nuestras investigaciones consideramos los factores económicos que pueden afectar la elección del consumidor hacia los alimentos orgánicos, como el fácil acceso a los alimentos orgánicos, la equidad del precio propuesto, la disposición de pagar más caro y la frecuencia de compra de los clientes. Los criterios sociales se refieren a la influencia de los grupos a los que pertenecen los consumidores en sus elecciones. Esos grupos se reconocen comúnmente como amigos, familiares y comunidad local. En nuestro análisis se incluyen elementos sociales como el comportamiento respetuoso con el medio ambiente, la conciencia social y la tendencia del consumo de alimentos orgánicos. El criterio personal está relacionado con la identidad propia y cómo los consumidores perciben la oferta de marketing y la relacionan con su experiencia pasada, antecedentes y comportamiento psicológico. Los aspectos personales como la conciencia de la salud y el impacto de los alimentos orgánicos en el estado de ánimo del consumidor completan el grupo de constructos analizados en la presente tesis.

En esta tesis se presenta una mayor definición y explicación de la interacción de cada variable con el comportamiento del consumidor de alimentos orgánicos y las interacciones entre las propias variables. Los diferentes análisis realizados y sus modelos conceptuales se presentan en cada uno de los tres trabajos considerando el enfoque teórico específico utilizado para entender el consumo de alimentos orgánicos.





3. Millennials

Para una mejor comprensión del impacto de los constructos explicados anteriormente en la decisión del consumidor hacia la compra de alimentos orgánicos, consideramos oportuno acotar el análisis a la muy importante generación Y, también conocida como millennials. Existen varias definiciones sobre el rango de nacimiento de los millennials, pero en nuestro estudio consideraremos como tal a las personas nacidas entre 1980 y 1999. Los millennials se definen como la última generación en hacer la transición desde antes y después de la era de Internet (Chuah et al., 2017). Eso los convierte en la generación más informada, ya que no solo tuvieron acceso a toda la información web mundial en una edad temprana, sino también porque son la generación que exploró mejor los beneficios de tener tantos datos disponibles en apenas algunos clics.

Este enfoque de selección demográfica se justifica debido a la relevancia de este segmento específico para el campo del marketing. Según se pronosticaba, los millennials deberían ser el 35% de la fuerza laboral para 2020 (Statista, 2018b), y muchos autores consideran relevantes su poder adquisitivo, comportamiento e intención de compra (Chuah et al., 2017; Paulin et al., 2014; Valentine y Powers, 2013). Se considera que los millennials son más propensos a comprar productos ambientalmente responsables (Ivanova et al., 2018) y debido a su importancia en el mercado y al desconocimiento de los factores que motivan su comportamiento de consumo y la compra de alimentos orgánicos, consideramos este segmento demográfico como lo suficientemente relevante como para centrar esta investigación en su estudio.





4. Análisis transcultural

De acuerdo con la revisión de Rana y Paul (2017), hay muchos estudios relacionados con la comprensión del consumo de alimentos orgánicos en diferentes regiones del mundo o países, pero muy pocos comparando el comportamiento en diferentes regiones. Según los autores, este enfoque podría presentar aspectos específicos y relevantes del comportamiento cultural y social que podrían explicar la intención de compra local. Teniendo en cuenta esta brecha, nuestra investigación aborda la comparación del comportamiento de los millennials en España y Brasil, con el objeto de profundizar en el conocimiento en dos geográficas cultural, social y económicamente diferentes.

El análisis intercultural es importante para comprender el impacto cultural en el comportamiento y cómo las personas de todo el mundo pueden reaccionar de diferentes maneras, incluso si tienen el mismo desencadenante (Mooij y Hofstede, 2011). El autor desarrolló una investigación sobre cómo categorizar y comprender diferentes culturas. Identificando y categorizando 6 dimensiones de la cultura nacional: distancia de poder, individualismo/colectivismo, masculinidad/feminidad, evitación de la incertidumbre, orientación a largo/corto plazo, e indulgencia/moderación (Hofstede, 2011).

La definición de la dimensión de la distancia del poder puede relacionarse con la medida en que los miembros menos poderosos de una sociedad aceptan y esperan que el poder se distribuya de manera desigual. La jerarquía social es comúnmente aceptada y todos tienen su lugar.

La dimensión individualismo/colectivismo se puede definir como personas que solo se preocupan por sí mismas y su familia inmediata versus personas que creen que forman parte de grupos internos que los cuidarían, buscando a cambio la lealtad. La autorrealización es un





tema muy importante en las culturas individualistas asumiendo que sus valores son válidos para todo el mundo. Hofstede Insights (2018) también define las culturas individualistas como culturas de comunicación de bajo contexto con comunicación verbal explícita, a diferencia de las culturas colectivistas que utilizan un estilo indirecto de comunicación y las personas son conscientes del “nosotros”. Su identidad se basa en el sistema social al que pertenecen. La diferencia entre ambos se puede reflejar en los roles de la publicidad: persuasión versus generación de confianza.

La siguiente dimensión, masculinidad/feminidad, se puede definir como los valores de género dominantes percibidos en la sociedad. En una sociedad masculina están los logros y el éxito. En una sociedad femenina esos valores son el cuidado de los demás y la calidad de vida. El desempeño y los logros son muy valorados en las sociedades masculinas, y las personas deben mostrar su estatus con marcas y productos elegantes.

La definición de evitación de la incertidumbre puede ser la medida en que las personas se sienten amenazadas por la incertidumbre y la ambigüedad y tratan de evitar estas situaciones. Por lo general, las reglas y la formalidad se utilizan en culturas que evitan la incertidumbre para construir la vida. Los expertos son importantes para llevar a las personas la verdad y la fe. En las culturas de baja evitación de la incertidumbre la gente está más abierta al cambio y existe una necesidad de pureza relacionada con varias categorías de productos. Los miembros de culturas que evitan la incertidumbre tienen una actitud más activa ante la vida y practican deportes más activos.

Orientación a largo plazo versus orientación a corto plazo es la medida en que una sociedad lleva una perspectiva orientada al futuro en lugar de un punto de vista convencional a corto plazo. En la orientación a largo plazo se perciben valores como la perseverancia, ordenar las



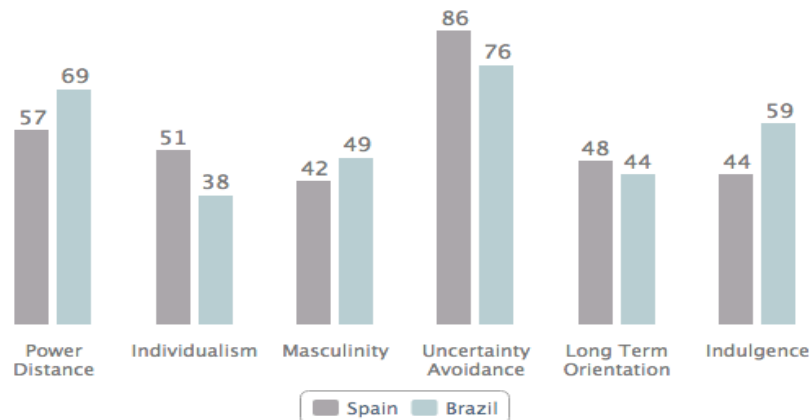
relaciones por estatus y observar este orden, la frugalidad y el sentido de la vergüenza. Por otro lado, la orientación a corto plazo incluye valores, firmeza y estabilidad personal, respeto por la tradición y la búsqueda de la felicidad en lugar de la búsqueda de la paz mental.

La dimensión de indulgencia/moderación se puede definir como la medida en que una sociedad permite la gratificación relativamente libre de los deseos humanos básicos y naturales relacionados con el disfrute de la vida y la diversión, representado por el punto de "indulgencia" en el continuo, relativo a una sociedad que controla la gratificación de necesidades y regula mediante estrictas normas sociales. Sienten que tienen control sobre su futuro de función y participación en las actividades de la vida; mientras tanto, los miembros de la restricción cultural pueden tener una sensación de impotencia y participar menos activamente en tomar el control de su participación en actividades funcionales.

5. España versus Brasil: comparación de las dimensiones culturales

En el presente estudio queremos comparar el comportamiento del consumidor de dos países culturalmente diferentes, España y Brasil. Para ello, en primer lugar, describiremos esas diferencias según Hofstede Insights (2018).

Figura 2. Seis dimensiones de la cultura nacional: España versus Brasil.



Fuente: Hofstede Insights (2018).



Según Hofstede Insights (2018), España y Brasil tienen similitudes en su cultura como naciones, pero también importantes diferencias que se pueden explicar atendiendo a las seis dimensiones de su modelo.

a) Distancia al poder.

Según Hofstede Insights (2018) España tiene una puntuación de 57 en la dimensión de distancia al poder, lo que significa que España tiene una sociedad jerárquica y los subordinados esperan que se les diga qué hacer, aceptándolo sin más justificación. La puntuación de Brasil es 69, más alta que la de España, lo que refleja una sociedad que cree que se debe respetar la jerarquía y que las desigualdades son aceptables. Los poseedores del poder tienen más beneficios que los menos poderosos de la sociedad. Por lo tanto, es importante mostrar respeto por los ancianos y cuidar a los padres ancianos. Las personas indican la posición social y el respeto que merecen de acuerdo con sus símbolos de poder de estatus.

De acuerdo con el punto de vista de la distancia de poder, el comportamiento de consumo de alimentos orgánicos podría verse afectado por la influencia de las jerarquías y responsable por construir el estatus social de la persona en ambos países, pero sería más fuerte en Brasil.

b) Colectivismo/individualismo.

En comparación con los países europeos, España es colectivista, por su puntuación de 51, inferior a la habitual en Europa (excepto Portugal). Sin embargo, en comparación con otras zonas del mundo se ve claramente individualista. De hecho, los españoles no suelen tener problema para relacionarse con diferentes culturas, principalmente no europeas. Por otro lado, los españoles están acostumbrados al trabajo en equipo y no necesitan la motivación de la gerencia para eso. Brasil puntúa 38 en ese atributo, lo que demuestra que la gente de este país





suele estar integrados en grupos fuertes y cohesionados, especialmente representados por la familia extensa, incluidos tíos, tías, abuelos y primos, y se supone que deben seguir protegiendo a sus miembros a cambio de lealtad.

Creemos que la influencia de los grupos colectivos, como familiares y amigos, afectaría un poco más a los brasileños que a los españoles en el comportamiento hacia el consumo de alimentos orgánicos.

c) Masculinidad/Feminidad.

España (42) y Brasil (49) puntúan de manera muy similar en esta dimensión, presentando Brasil un nivel algo más intermedio. Ambos pueden ser países donde la palabra clave es consenso. Preocupados por este aspecto, no se aprecian la polarización y la competitividad excesiva. Se educa a los niños en busca de la armonía, negándose a tomar partido o destacándose. Existe una simpatía natural por las personas débiles o necesitadas. En el ámbito laboral, a los directivos les gusta consultar a los demás para conocer sus opiniones y tenerlas en cuenta para tomar sus decisiones.

En ambos países, se supone que las personas están informadas sobre los beneficios generales para la salud y sobre la importancia de un fácil acceso a los productos orgánicos. La educación afectaría el comportamiento del consumidor en relación a la compra de comida orgánica.

d) Evitación de la incertidumbre.

Con 86 puntos, los españoles tienen reglas para todo, los cambios provocan estrés, pero, al mismo tiempo, están obligados a evitar reglas y leyes que, de hecho, hacen la vida más compleja. Existe una gran preocupación por situaciones cambiantes, ambiguas e indefinidas. Brasil también puntúa alto, pero más bajo que España, 76 puntos. También necesitan reglas y





sistemas legales para estructurar la vida de las personas.

Se supone que en ambas culturas la personas prefieran encontrar normas legales sobre el consumo de productos orgánicos como una forma de conducir su comportamiento como consumidores.

e) Orientación a largo plazo versus a corto plazo.

Ambos países obtienen una puntuación similar en este elemento de orientación a largo plazo (España 48 y Brasil 44). Culturalmente a la gente de ambos países le gusta vivir el momento, sin una gran preocupación por el futuro. España le ha dado el significado de "fiesta" al mundo y Brasil lo aprendió muy bien.

Podemos creer que en ambas culturas la gente se preocuparía por consumir productos orgánicos en el presente para prevenir problemas de salud a largo plazo.

f) Indulgencia/Restricciones.

España no es una sociedad indulgente considerando la puntuación de 44 puntos. Las sociedades con una puntuación baja en esta dimensión tienen tendencia al cinismo y al pesimismo. Las personas con esta orientación tienen la percepción de que sus acciones están restringidas por las normas sociales y sienten que ser indulgente está mal. La puntuación de 59 de Brasil la marca como una sociedad indulgente. Las personas generalmente exhiben una disposición a comportarse de acuerdo con sus impulsos y deseos en lo que respecta a disfrutar de la vida y divertirse, dando mayor importancia a su tiempo libre. Por tanto, las sociedades indulgentes poseen actitudes positivas y optimistas.

Creemos que, a diferencia de los españoles, los brasileños no se preocuparían por consumir comida orgánica a la hora de divertirse, ya que el tiempo libre podría ser una "excepción" para su comportamiento de consumo.



6. Presentación de las publicaciones y justificación de la unidad temática.

Para contestar la pregunta de investigación y alcanzar los objetivos propuestos, se realizaron tres publicaciones:

- Vidal-Branco, M., Molinillo, S., Japutra, A., & Longaray, A. (2019). Organic Food Purchasing of the Millennials Generation: Case of Brazil. En Trespalcios Gutiérrez, J.A., Vázquez Casielles, R., Estrada Alonso, E., y González Mieres, C. (Eds omnichannel marketing: las nuevas reglas de la distribución y el consumo en un mundo omnicanal (pp. 331-348). Editorial: Cátedra Fundación Ramón Areces. ISBN: 9788483676226. (SPI 2018 Editoriales españolas de Economía posición 19/26, Q3, ICEE: 8).
- Molinillo, S., Vidal-Branco, M., & Japutra, A. (2020). Understanding the drivers of organic foods purchasing of millennials: Evidence from Brazil and Spain. *Journal of Retailing & Customer Services*, 52, 101926 (JCR IF 2020: 7.135, Business 32/153, Q1).
- Japutra, A., Vidal-Branco, M., Higuera-Castillo, E. & Molinillo, S. (2021). Unravelling the mechanism to develop health consciousness from organic food: a cross-comparison of Brazilian and Spanish millennials. *British Food Journal*, ahead-of-print, <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-10-2020-0952> (JCR IF 2020: 2.518, Agricultural Economics & Policy 10/21, Q2).

En la primera publicación realizamos un análisis de las motivaciones de la compra de alimentos orgánicos con respecto a los millennials brasileños. Este estudio consideró un marco teórico que consta de cuatro variables principales que pueden afectar la frecuencia de compra. Con base en la revisión de la literatura, concluimos que los constructos de



preocupación ambiental, accesibilidad a alimentos orgánicos, moda y tendencia y equidad de precios fueron relevantes para construir un análisis específico sobre su impacto en la frecuencia de compra de los millennials brasileños.

Este primer estudio presentado en el compendio de esta tesis fue desarrollado durante una cooperación internacional con la Universidade Federal de Rio Grande (FURG), una universidad pública en el sur de Brasil. Durante la estancia de tres meses recopilamos datos e intercambiamos conocimientos con los académicos locales relacionados con la industria de alimentos orgánicos. El LabSADI, traducido del portugués como “Laboratorio de estudios e investigación en metodologías de sistemas de apoyo a la decisión”, es un departamento de investigación vinculado al Programa de Posgrado en Economía y Negocios ubicado en FURG y responsable de investigaciones en muchos campos, incluidos los estudios de alimentos orgánicos, consumo y optimización de la distribución local de alimentos orgánicos. La construcción del marco teórico y el análisis de los resultados se realizó con la ayuda de un investigador del LabSADI, quien participa en la producción de nuestra primera publicación.

La segunda investigación presentada en este compendio se centra en un análisis comparativo de los millennials de Brasil y España considerando un marco que consta de ocho variables antecedentes de la frecuencia de compra. El marco teórico presenta los elementos centrales de la conciencia de la salud y la conciencia social como pilares del análisis. Además, se presentan como antecedentes variables como la preocupación por la seguridad alimentaria, el contenido natural, la preocupación por el medio ambiente y el atractivo sensorial, que influyen tanto en la salud como en la conciencia social. Finalmente, la disposición a pagar más caro y la frecuencia de compra se ven impactadas por la conciencia social y de salud, y la disposición a pagar más caro también afecta la frecuencia de compra.





El tercer trabajo consiste en un análisis más profundo de la conciencia de la salud y los antecedentes que impactan en la comprensión de esta variable. Durante la revisión de la literatura pudimos reconocer que se utilizan muchos constructos diferentes para comprender el comportamiento del consumidor de alimentos orgánicos, pero en la gran mayoría de los estudios encontramos la variable “conciencia de la salud” como un elemento de análisis muy importante considerando la intención de compra de alimentos orgánicos, coincidiendo con los hallazgos de Rana y Paul (2017). Considerando la relevancia de este concepto, decidimos explorar los antecedentes de la conciencia de salud hacia la compra de alimentos orgánicos y los aspectos que pueden impactar en ella, procediendo a un análisis en profundidad del constructo.

Construimos un marco considerando dos tipos de componentes diferentes (estímulos cognitivos y afectivos) formados por siete constructos como antecedentes de la conciencia de la salud: contenido natural, valor por dinero, atractivo sensorial, equidad de precios, tendencia, atractivo emocional y preocupación por la seguridad alimentaria. Por lo tanto, ampliamos el análisis de la conciencia de la salud a su impacto en la disposición a pagar más caro para confirmar que la conciencia de la salud y la preocupación por la seguridad alimentaria pueden tener un alto impacto en la intención de compra.

Los tres estudios juntos logran el objetivo principal de esta tesis de explorar los antecedentes del comportamiento de compra de alimentos orgánicos entre los millennials de Brasil y España. El vínculo entre las obras para formar una unidad es claro a través de la evolución de los modelos teóricos analizados y de sus contribuciones.





7. Discusión de los resultados y conclusiones

Siguiendo los objetivos de investigación presentados anteriormente, a continuación, procedemos con el análisis global de los resultados de las tres publicaciones que forman esta tesis por compendio.

7.1 Objetivo de investigación 1: identificación de las variables de impacto en el consumo de alimentos orgánicos.

El primer objetivo se logró mediante el reconocimiento de diecisiete variables diferentes que pueden contribuir a explicar el consumo de alimentos orgánicos y la intención de compra. En esta tesis se presentan y evalúan tres modelos conceptuales diferentes definidos a partir de la relevancia de la revisión de la literatura. En la primera publicación el modelo contribuye a comprender las variables que pueden influir en la frecuencia de compra de alimentos orgánicos de los millennials brasileños. En la segunda publicación se amplía el modelo propuesto en la publicación anterior y se evalúa con datos de millennials de Brasil y de España. Finalmente, en la tercera publicación se profundiza en el conocimiento de los antecedentes y consecuencias de un constructo muy importante como es la conciencia de la salud.

7.2 Objetivo de investigación 2: comprensión del comportamiento de consumo de alimentos orgánicos de la generación millennial.

En segundo lugar, el presente estudio tiene como objetivo presentar un análisis específico del grupo demográfico de los millennials. Siguiendo la revisión de la literatura, los millennials se definen como la generación más ecológica por pertenecer a la generación con mayor acceso a la información debido a las condiciones de Internet. El compendio de los tres estudios juntos podría proporcionarnos la confirmación de que el comportamiento de los millennials está





relacionado con su preocupación por el medio ambiente y su salud personal, como se observa en la publicación 2. El estudio también mostró que prácticamente no existen diferencias entre los millennials de dos regiones diferentes del mundo, Brasil y España. Ambos hallazgos podrían usarse para respaldar decisiones gerenciales.

Por lo tanto, se realiza un análisis centrado en la generación millennials que contribuye al conocimiento teóricos y amplía la literatura previa sobre el comportamiento de compra de ésta generación y la alimentación ecológica.

7.3 Objetivo de investigación 3: validación del modelo en dos países con diferencias sociales, económicas y culturales.

Como se ha comentado anteriormente, el análisis de datos de dos muestras de consumidores procedentes de países culturalmente diferentes, y con desigual nivel de desarrollo económico, contribuye a cubrir las brechas o vacíos encontrados en la revisión de la literatura. La presente tesis alcanza este tercer objetivo mediante el análisis de las posibles diferencias entre los consumidores millennials de Brasil y España a través de la comparación la de validez de los modelos propuestos en las publicaciones 2 y 3. Las publicaciones 2 y 3 muestran que en ambos casos la preocupación por la salud y el medio ambiente son factores clave en la intención de pagar más por los alimentos orgánicos pero, además, se pone de manifiesto que existen diferencias en la influencia de otros factores como las características sensoriales y emocionales, el contenido natural del producto o la moda..

Las implicaciones gerenciales del análisis comparativo desarrollado en esta tesis se pueden traducir en una mejor comprensión de los clientes en ambas regiones, lo que pueden ayudar a las empresas a desarrollar campañas de marketing específicas para atraer a estos públicos. La contribución teórica de este trabajo contribuye doblemente mediante la validación de tres





modelos que contribuyen a mejorar el conocimiento del comportamiento del consumidor millennial y mediante el análisis transcultural en el que se han identificado diferencias y similitudes relevantes.

7.4 Limitaciones de la investigación y sugerencias para futuras investigaciones

El trabajo presenta limitaciones que deben explicarse para comprender mejor los hallazgos. Primero, la recolección de datos se produjo en un momento concreto de tiempo. Para una mejor validación de los resultados, futuros estudios podrían recoger y analizar datos en varios momentos a lo largo del tiempo, de manera que ese carácter longitudinal permitiera confirmar la consistencia de los hallazgos más allá de las posibles influencias coyunturales.

Como según factor limitante, el estudio promueve un análisis de la generación millennial pero no compara los hallazgos con el comportamiento de otras generaciones. El análisis centrado en una sola generación no se puede generalizar a otras generaciones y no podemos concluir si los hallazgos serían similares o no en esas otras generaciones. Como sugerencia para futuros estudios, creemos que una comparación de los modelos propuestos considerando diferentes generaciones contribuiría a mejorar el conocimiento.

Tercero, el trabajo presentado se centra en el enfoque cuantitativo utilizando modelos de ecuaciones estructurales como método principal de análisis. Futuros estudios podrían ampliar los hallazgos mediante un análisis cualitativo que contribuya a profundizar en el conocimiento de los factores que explican el problema.

En general, esta tesis contribuye al campo del marketing y la comprensión del comportamiento del consumidor al enfatizar la influencia de las principales variables encontradas en la literatura. Especialmente, el estudio contribuye al conocimiento de la generación millennial y del consumo de alimentos orgánicos, brindando información que





puede ayudar a los gerentes y académicos. Finalmente, la tesis contribuye a cubrir un vacío en la literatura identificado por Rana y Paul (2017), al presentar un estudio comparativo entre países con diferentes niveles de desarrollo y características culturales.



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Justification and aims

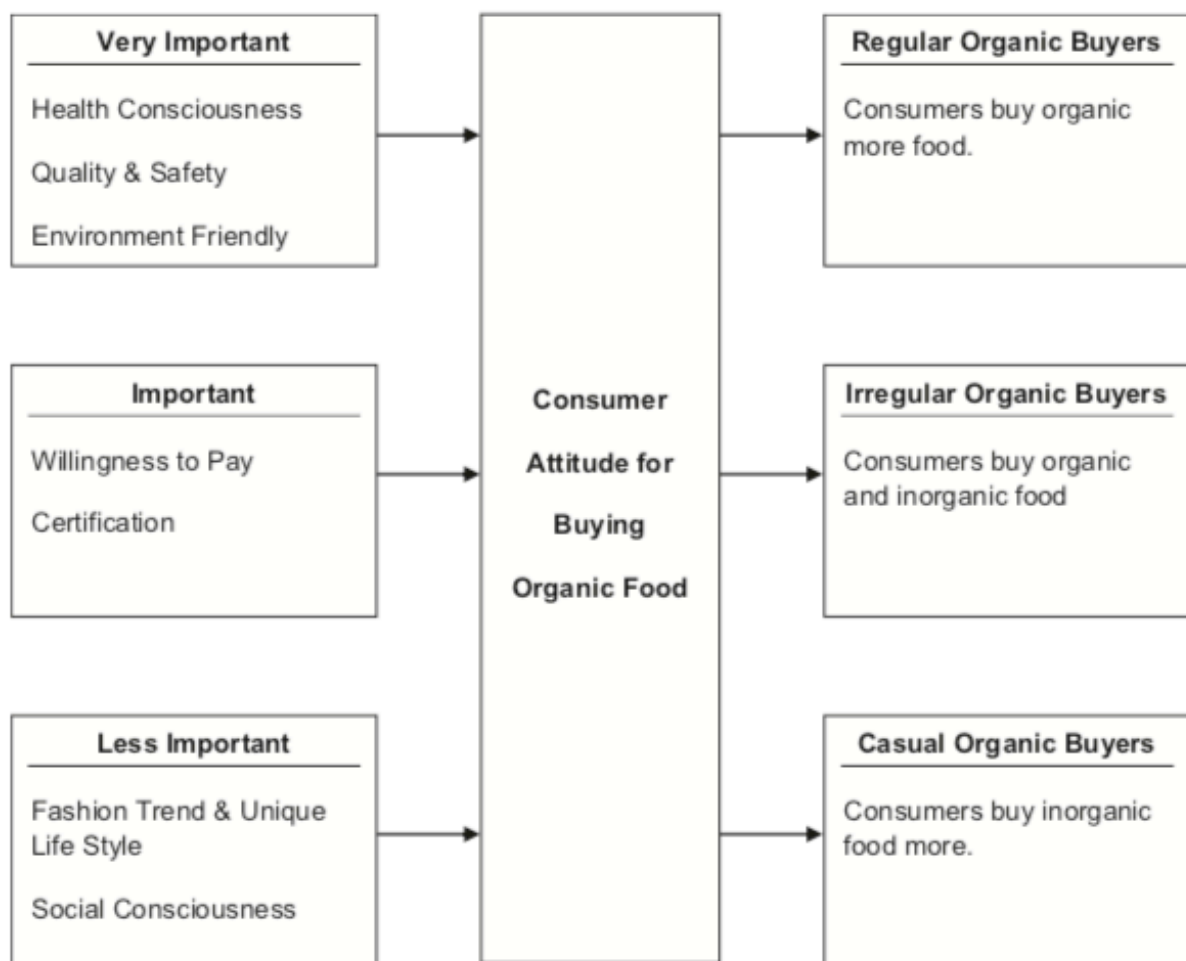
Food consumption is going back to its roots as the trend of organic food has been increasing in recent years (Cushman & Wakefield, 2017; Willer & Lernoud, 2018). The data show not just consumption growth in the last decade but also the increase of production, as more and more hectares are designated to the exploration of organic products and new techniques to produce organic foods more efficiently are on the rise (Willer & Lernoud, 2018). Therefore, the whole food chain is being affected by the old-new trend, and distributors, wholesalers, food shops, supermarkets, restaurants and other businesses related to the organic food business are being impacted by this behaviour change in society, impacting the business performance and the way businesses interact with customers.

With the reinvention of this industry, researchers are focusing on the understanding of this phenomenon, considering the analysis of why customers intend to buy organic foods and how businesses should prepare for the upcoming changes in this market (Guchait et al., 2016; Konuk, 2018; Nie et al., 2017). During the last three decades, many studies have addressed the topic with several approaches, methodologies and different variables (Bruschi et al., 2015; Nie et al., 2017; Nuttavuthisit & Thogersen, 2017; Paul & Rana, 2012; Prentice et al., 2019; Truong et al., 2012; Yadav, 2016).

Rana and Paul (2017) present an extant literature review considering the studies done so far related to the topic of organic food consumption, as presented in Figure 1. The authors identified seven of the main variables and divided them into less important, important and very important variables during their analysis of previous studies related to the consumption of organic foods. The authors also suggested that there are three types of organic food

consumers: casual organic food buyers, irregular organic food buyers and regular organic food buyers, based on the consistency with which they purchase organic foods. This study also presented a qualitative analysis of the gaps in the literature that should be focused on to improve the knowledge in the field. The authors found that most of the studies presented focused on only one culture and country and did not associate the impact of different cultures and societies in the cross-cultural analysis of the topic. Further, the authors showed that most of the studies are addressed to developed countries and show very little to understand developing countries' behaviour.

Figure 1. Categories of factors influencing consumer attitude and their consequences



Source: Rana and Paul (2017)



The study of Rana and Paul (2017) was the starting point of the present thesis. On the top of their work, we proceed to identify other variables that were used to understand organic food consumption in a review of the literature.

Therefore, this thesis is based on an analysis of the gaps found in the literature review and the author's suggestions for future research. The main goal of the study was to contribute to the state-of-art of organic food purchasing intention and to better understand the consumer behaviour related to that industry. The most relevant contributions expected in the present work are related to three main objectives: (1) the identification of important variables and theoretical frameworks related to organic food consumption; (2) the improvement of the understanding of millennials' consumption behaviour of organic foods; and (3) the validation of the proposed model in two countries with social, economic and cultural differences.

We considered a general research problem to further the understanding of organic food consumer behaviour considering the gaps found in the literature, which can be oriented by the following research question: What are the drivers influencing organic food consumption among millennials in Brazil and Spain? In answer to this question, this thesis contributes to consumer behaviour theory and brings insights regarding the behaviour of millennials in Brazil and Spain.

1.2. Framework

As shown in Table 1, after an extant literature review, we found 12 different constructs used to understand consumer behaviour toward organic food.



Table 1. Variables to measure organic food consumer behaviour

Variable	Definition	Sources
Health Consciousness	Health-conscious consumers are aware about their wellbeing and motivated to improve and maintain their health by engaging in healthy and self-aware behaviours.	Hansen et al., 2018; Newsom et al., 2005; Michaelidou & Hassan, 2008; Mahr et al., 2013; Shin & Mattila, 2019
Social Consciousness	Organic foods consumers intend to support and strengthen the local economy and community.	Canavari & Olson, 2007; Hansen et al., 2018; Seyfang, 2006
Environmental Concern	Consumer attitude primarily due to ethical concerns about the environment.	Brugarolas Mollá-Bauzá et al., 2005; Hansen et al., 2018; Paul et al., 2016; Rana & Paul, 2017
Accessibility	The ease of finding organic food is an important element consumers consider when intending to buy organic food.	Laroche et al., 2001; Lockie et al., 2004; Rana & Paul, 2017
Fashion & Trend	Organic food has become the latest trend in societies in some countries because of its expensiveness, uniqueness and lifestyle associations.	Cavani & Olson, 2007; Rana & Paul, 2017
Price Fairness	Price fairness is related to aspects that make consumers realise (or not) that the higher prices of organic foods are directly linked to the costs involved in the production chain.	Cavani & Olson, 2007; Lockie et al., 2004
Food Safety Concern	Food safety concern represents the consumers' concern in relation to the residues present in their foods.	Marwa & Scott, 2013; Michaelidou & Hassan, 2008; Mosier & Thilmany, 2016; Rana & Paul, 2017; Willer & Lernoud, 2018; Yee et al., 2005
Natural Content	the natural composition and native proprieties of organic foods is one of the determinants for customers to buy organic foods.	Chen, 2007; McFadden & Huffman, 2017
Sensorial Appeal	Sensorial appeal is concerned with the way in which food products engage the senses influencing customers in their buying decision.	Anderson et al., 2019; Canavari & Olson, 2007; Chen, 2007;

Variable	Definition	Sources
		Espejel et al., 2007; Mahr et al., 2013,
Willingness to Pay Premium	The willingness to pay premium for organic foods is related to the perception of added value represented by the environmental, health and social values found in organic products.	Laroche et al., 2001; Royne et al., 2011
Emotional Appeal	The consumption of organic food could trigger emotional reactions that could be determinant for its purchase, as the influence of organic foods on the consumer's mood.	Lockie et al., 2004; Prentice et al., 2019;
Purchase Frequency	The purchase frequency of organic foods differentiates the casual buyer, irregular buyer and regular buyer.	Rana & Paul, 2017

Considering the theory of choice criteria from Fahy and Jobber (2012), consumers take decisions accordingly to four main aspects: technical, economic, social and personal. The constructs analysed in the present work include all the four aspects. According to Fahy and Jobber (2012), the technical criteria is related to the practical features of the product/service and its core benefits; the characteristics of the market offering that are related to its attributes, design and other practical perceptive elements. We explored technical factors like the natural content and sensorial appeal of organic foods that can impact in the customer analysis of the product before buying. The economic criteria consider aspects related with the buying power of the customers, their willingness to pay and convenience to find the market offering. We considered economic factors that can impact the consumer's choice towards organic food, such as the easy access to organic food, the fairness of the price proposed, the willingness to pay a premium, and the customers' purchase frequency. The social criteria are about the influence of the groups consumers belong to in their choices. Those groups are commonly recognised as friends, family and local community. In our analysis, social elements like



environmentally friendly behaviour, social consciousness and the trend of organic food consumption are included. The personal criteria are related to self-identity and how consumers perceive the market offering and relate it to their experience, background and psychological behaviour. The personal aspects like health consciousness and the impact of organic food on a customer's emotions finishes the group of constructs analysed in the present study.

Further definitions and explanations of the interaction of each variable with organic food consumer behaviour and the interactions among the variables themselves are presented in this thesis. The analysis done and their conceptual models are presented in each of the three papers considering the specific theoretical approach used to understand organic food consumption.

1.3 Millennials

According to the Pew Research Centre (2015), generations are one way to group age cohorts. More specifically, a generation typically refers to groups of people born over a 15–20-year span, such as the millennial generation. Generations are important clusters to understand human behaviour, considering the global social impacts happening in the same range of time. Consequently, the purchase intention could also be discussed using the generational point of view. The differences in outlook between the various generations are given in Table 2 and demonstrate the behavioural differences in a multi-generation perspective.



Table 2. Generation relevance and differences

Generation	Period	Other names*	Behavioural patterns and values*	Age in 2021 ***	2020 pop. in billions ***
Traditionalist	1945 & before	Veterans, Silent, Radio Boomers, The Forgotten Generation	Conformers, dedication, sacrifice, duty before pleasure, discipline, patience, loyalty.	75+	0.7
		Moral Authority "Me" Generation	Anti-government, equal opportunities and rights, personal gratification.	56/74	0.8
Baby Boomers	1946 to 1964	Gen Y, Gen Next, Echo Boomers, Digital Natives, Net Generation	Self-confident, sociability, diversity, extreme fun, extreme techno savvy, instant gratification, self-learning.	21/39	2.3
		The Doers, Post Boomers	Balance, diversity, entrepreneurial, fun, highly educated.	57/40	1.53
Gen X	1965 to 1979	Gen Y, Gen Next, Echo Boomers, Digital Natives, Net Generation	Self-confident, sociability, diversity, extreme fun, extreme techno savvy, instant gratification, self-learning.	21/39	2.3
Millennials	1980 to 1999	Gen Y, Gen Next, Echo Boomers, Digital Natives, Net Generation	Self-confident, sociability, diversity, extreme fun, extreme techno savvy, instant gratification, self-learning.	21/39	2.3
Centennials	2000 onwards	iGen, Gen Z, Gen Zee	Vigilant outlook, tempered, expectations, less self-absorbed, more self-assured.	3/20	2.6

Source: Adapted from *Dutta and Jani (2016) and *** Our world in data (2021).

For a better understanding of the impact of the constructs outlined in Table 1, we consider narrowing the analysis to generation Y, also known as millennials. There are several definitions of the actual birth range of millennials, but for the purposes of this study, we will consider millennials to be those born between 1980 and 1999. Millennials are defined as the last generation to make the transition from before the Internet Age (Chuah et al., 2017). That makes them the most informed generation, as they not only had access to the worldwide web



at an early age but also because they are the generation that better explored the benefits of having this exciting amount of data available in a few clicks.

This demographic selection approach is justified due to the relevance of this specific segment to the marketing field. Millennials should be 35% of the workforce by 2020 (Statista, 2018b), and many authors are studying their buying power, behaviour and purchase intention (Chuah et al., 2017; Paulin et al., 2014; Valentine & Powers, 2013). Millennials are considered more likely to buy environmentally responsible products (Ivanova et al., 2018), and because of their importance in the market and the gap in understanding specifically their consumption and purchase behaviour of organic food, we targeted this demographic cohort in our research.

1.4 Cross-cultural analysis

According to Rana and Paul's (2017) review, there are many studies concerned with the understanding of organic food consumption in different regions, but very few comparing different regions. The cross-cultural study would make it possible to increase the validity of the proposed behavioural models and identify possible differences due to social and cultural characteristics. Considering this gap, this thesis approaches the comparison between the developed region of Spain and the developing region of Brazil to improve the understanding of consumer behaviour.

1.4.1 The six dimensions of national culture

Hofstede (2011) developed research on how to categorise and understand different cultures based on six dimensions of national culture: power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-/short-term orientation and indulgence/restraint.





The definition of the power distance dimension can be related to the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept and expect power to be distributed unequally. According to the author (Hofstede, 2011) Social hierarchy is commonly accepted, and everyone has their place.

The individualism/collectivism dimension can be defined as people only concerned about themselves and their immediate family versus people who believe they are part of in-groups that would take care of them, looking for loyalty in exchange. Self-actualisation is a very important issue in individualistic cultures, assuming their values are valid for the whole world. Hofstede Insights (2018) defines individualistic cultures as low-context communication cultures with explicit verbal communication, different from collectivistic cultures that use an indirect style of communication and people are “we” conscious. Their identity is based on the social system to which they belong. The difference between both can be reflected in the roles of advertising: persuasion versus creating trust.

The next dimension, masculinity/femininity, can be defined as the dominant gender values perceived in society. In a masculine society are achievement and success. In a feminine society, those values are caring for others and quality of life. Performance and achievement are highly valued in masculine societies, and people must show their status with fancy brands and products.

The definition of uncertainty avoidance can be the extent to which people feel threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity and try to avoid these situations. Rules and formality are usually used in strong uncertainty avoidance cultures. Experts are important in bringing people truth and belief. In low uncertainty avoidance cultures, people are more open to change. Accordingly to Mooij and Hofstede (2011), while members of low uncertainty avoidance





cultures have a more active attitude to life and play more active sports, members of high uncertainty avoidance cultures search for pure food products considering their health attitude, and this is expressed in their consumption behaviour.

Long-term versus short-term orientation is the extent to which a society conducts a perspective oriented to the future rather than a short-term conventional point of view in history. In long-term orientation, values such as perseverance, ordering relationships by status and observing this order, thrift and having a sense of shame are perceived. On the other hand, short-term orientation includes values in personal steadiness and stability, respect for tradition, and the pursuit of happiness rather than the pursuit of peace of mind.

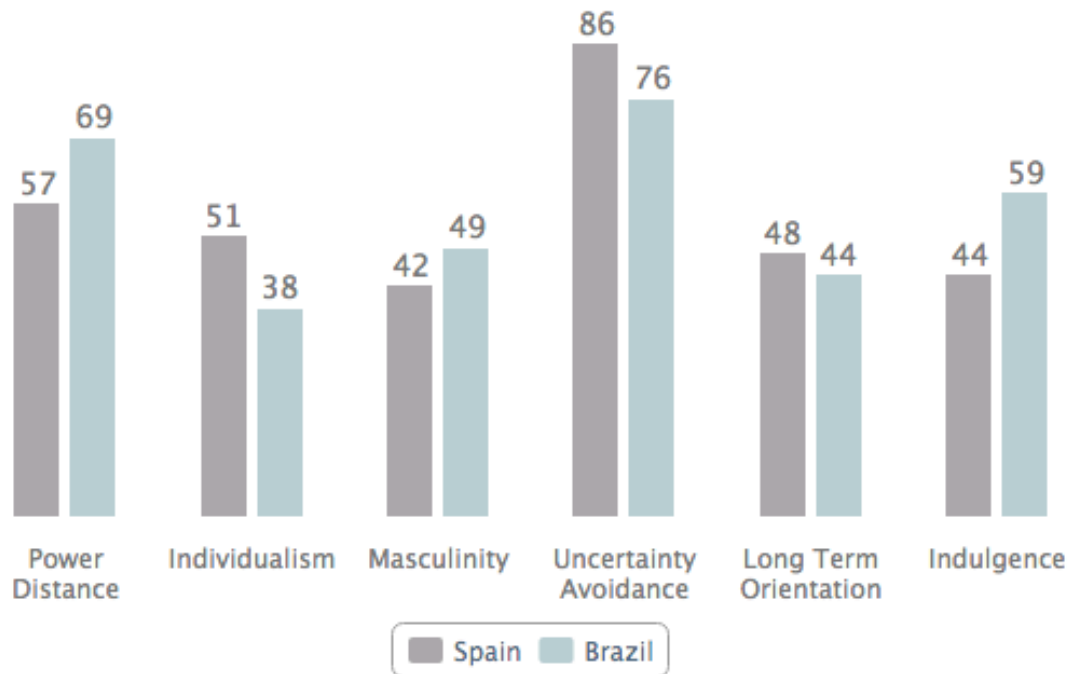
The indulgence/restraint dimension can be defined as the extent to which a society allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun, as represented by the "indulgence" point on the continuum, relative to a society that controls gratification of needs and regulates by means of strict social norms. Indulgent societies feel that they have control over their future level of function and participation in life activities; meanwhile, members from culturally restrained societies may have a sense of helplessness and be less actively involved in taking control over their involvement in functional activities.

1.4.2 Spain versus Brazil

In the present study, we compare the consumer behaviour of two different countries, Brazil and Spain. Using Hofstede's (2011) theory of cultural dimensions, we can understand the differences and similarities by considering the analysis of the six dimensions of cultural values between both countries. The comparative score is presented in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Six dimensions of National Culture – Spain versus Brazil.



Source: Hofstede Insights (2018)

According to Hofstede Insights (2018), Spain and Brazil have the following differences:

a) Power Distance: the higher the score, the higher is the power distance associated to the countries' culture. Spain's score 57 in the power distance dimension, which means that Spain has a hierarchical society and subordinates expect to be told what to do, accepting it with no further justification. Brazil's score is 69, higher than Spain, reflecting a society that believes hierarchy should be respected and inequalities are acceptable. Power holders have more benefits than the less powerful in society. Therefore, it is important to show respect and take care of elderly parents. People indicate social position and the respect that they deserve according to their status symbols of power.

Perhaps, according to the power distance dimension, the organic food consumption behaviour



could be affected by the influence of hierarchies and to build person's social status in both countries, but strongly in Brazil.

b) Individualism/Collectivism: The high side of this dimension is related to individualistic cultures. Comparing to European countries, Spain is collectivist, because of its score of 51, lower than usual in Europe (except from Portugal). However, compared with other areas of the world it is seen as clearly individualist. In fact, Spanish people usually have no problem to relate with different cultures, mainly non-European. By the other hand, Spanish are used to team work and don't need motivation from management for that. Brazil scores 38 in that attribute, showing that people from this country are used to being integrated into strong, cohesive groups, especially represented by the extended family; including uncles, aunts, grandparents and cousins. They are supposed to continue protecting its members in exchange for loyalty.

Collective group influence, such as family and friends, would slightly affect Brazilians more than Spaniards in the behaviour towards the consumption of organic food.

Masculinity/Femininity: The high score in this cultural dimension represents masculinity. Spain (42) and Brazil (49) score very similar in this dimension, with Brazil presenting a slightly more intermediate level. Both might be countries where the key word is consensus. Concerned to this aspect, polarisation and excessive competitiveness are not appreciated. Children are educated in search of harmony, refusing to take sides or standing out. There is a natural sympathy for weak or needy people. In the work environment, managers like to consult others to know their opinions, taking them into account to make their decisions.

We could say that people with a level of education about the overall health benefits and about the importance of easy access to organic products would impact consumer behaviour.



We could say that people with a level of education about the overall health benefits and about the importance of easy access to organic products would impact on consumer behaviour.

d) Uncertainty Avoidance: Spain's highest score is concerned about uncertainty avoidance. With 86 points, Spanish people have rules for everything, changes cause stress, but, at the same time, they are obliged to avoid rules and laws that, in fact, make life more complex. There is great concern for changing, ambiguous and undefined situations. Brazil also scores high, but lower than Spain, 76 points. They are also in need of rules and legal systems in order to structure people's lives.

In both cultures, people would rather have legal norms, such as food certification, about organic product consumption as a way to conduct their behaviour as consumers.

e) Long-term versus short-term orientation: Both countries score similar in this element of long-term orientation. (Spain 48 and Brazil 44). Despite the intermediate score, culturally people in both countries like to live in the moment, without a great concern about the future. Spain has shown the meaning of 'Fiesta' to the world, and Brazil learnt this very well.

In both cultures, people probably would not worry about consuming organic products in the present to prevent long-term health problems in the future.

f) Indulgence/Restraints: Spain is not an indulgent society considering the score of 44. Societies with a low score in this dimension tend to cynicism and pessimism. People with this orientation have the perception that their actions are restrained by social norms and feel that being indulgent is wrong. Brazil's score of 59 marks it as an indulgent society. People generally exhibit a willingness to act on their impulses and desires with regard to enjoying life and having fun, placing a higher importance on their leisure time. Therefore, indulgent societies possess positive and optimistic attitudes.





In contrast to Spaniards, Brazilians likely would not worry about organic food when having fun, as leisure time could be an “exception” for their consumer behaviour.

In the next chapters we present the three publications that form the core of this compendium thesis. In the last chapter, a general discussion of the findings and conclusions are presented.



CHAPTER 2: ORGANIC FOOD PURCHASING OF THE MILLENNIALS GENERATION: CASE OF BRAZIL

This chapter has been published as:

Vidal-Branco, M., Molinillo, S., Japutra, A., & Longaray, A. (2019). Organic Food Purchasing of the Millennials Generation: Case of Brazil. En Trespalacios Gutiérrez, J.A., Vázquez Casielles, R., Estrada Alonso, E., y González Mieres, C. (Eds.) *Omnichannel marketing: las nuevas reglas de la distribución y el consumo en un mundo omnicanal* (pp. 331-348). Editorial: Cátedra Ramón Areces de Distribución Comercial. ISBN: 9788483676226. (SPI 2018 Editoriales españolas de Economía posición 19/26, Q3, ICEE: 8).

Abstract:

In the last few decades, world citizens have substantially increased the consumption of organic food products. The purpose of this paper is to examine the drivers of millennials' purchase of organic food in an emerging market (i.e., Brazil). By understanding these drivers, future perspectives and actions could be undertaken to improve the organic food industry. A conceptual framework was developed consisting of four main drivers of purchase frequency of organic food. These four drivers are environmental concern, accessibility, fashion and trend, and price fairness. A survey of 267 Brazilian millennials was conducted and partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) approach was used to test the conceptual model. The results offer support to the model. Theoretical contributions and managerial implications are discussed.

Keywords: Customer purchasing behaviour, Organic food, Millennials, Brazil





CHAPTER 3: UNDERSTANDING THE DRIVERS OF ORGANIC FOODS PURCHASING OF MILLENNIALS: EVIDENCE FROM BRAZIL AND SPAIN

This chapter has been published as:

Molinillo, S., Vidal-Branco, M., & Japutra, A. (2020). Understanding the drivers of organic foods purchasing of millennials: Evidence from Brazil and Spain. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 52, 101926 (JCR IF 2020: 7.135, Business 32/153, Q1).

Abstract

This paper examines the antecedents of Millennials' organic foods purchasing. Two studies were conducted in two different countries using online surveys to test the conceptual framework. The results show that both utilitarian and symbolic appeal increase Millennials' health and social consciousness, which in turn increase their willingness to pay price premium and purchase frequency of organic foods. The results also show differences between Spanish and Brazilian. For example, Brazilians considers natural content as a predictor for health consciousness but not for Spanish. Theoretical contributions and managerial implications are discussed.

Keywords: Utilitarian Appeal, Symbolic Appeal, Health Consciousness, Social Consciousness, Millennials, Organic foods, Retailing.





CHAPTER 4: UNRAVELLING THE MECHANISM TO DEVELOP HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS FROM ORGANIC FOOD: A CROSS-COMPARISON OF BRAZILIAN AND SPANISH MILLENNIALS

This chapter has been published as:

Japutra, A., Vidal-Branco, M. Higuera-Castillo, E. & Molinillo, S. (2021). Unravelling the mechanism to develop health consciousness from organic food: a cross-comparison of Brazilian and Spanish millennials. *British Food Journal*, ahead-of-print, <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-10-2020-0952> (JCR IF 2020: 2.518, Agricultural Economics & Policy 10/21, Q2).

Abstract

Purpose: The aim of this study is to analyse the drivers of health consciousness related to millennials' organic food consumption, and the impact of health consciousness on millennials' willingness to pay premium through a cross-cultural study.

Design/methodology/approach: A comparative analysis was conducted in two countries (Brazil vs. Spain). Based on the stimuli-organism-response framework, we present a conceptual model to investigate the relationship between cognitive and affective stimuli (i.e., natural content, value for money, sensorial appeal, price fairness, trend, emotional appeal, and food safety concern) and customers' health consciousness with the mediating effect of food safety concern and their impact on the customers' response (i.e., willingness to pay premium). A survey and a structural equation approach are applied.

Findings: The results show that cognitive and affective stimuli and food safety concern improve millennials' health consciousness and, consequently, their willingness to pay a premium price for organic food. The results present a high validity correlation of constructs,

CHAPTER 5: OVERALL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Theoretical and practical implications

The main aim of this thesis is to understand the consumer behaviour of organic foods considering three premises: (1) the review of the state-of-art and the identification of the most relevant constructs used to measure organic food purchase intention so far; (2) the analysis of millennials as an important demographic segmentation; and (3) the validation of the proposed models through a cross-cultural analysis. The three objectives together, when accomplished, answer the main research question of this thesis: *What are the drivers influencing organic food consumption among millennials in Brazil and Spain?*

5.1.1 Research objective 1: definition of the theoretical framework

The first goal was accomplished through the identification of 12 variables as important antecedents of consumer behaviour related to organic food purchase intention. Apart from the extent research that connected the many relevant variables found to the research problem, the thesis presents three different frameworks considering the literature review and specific goals, such as: Paper 1, understanding the variables that can influence the purchase frequency of organic foods by Brazilian millennials; Paper 2, comparing the motives of organic food purchase by millennials in Brazil and Spain; and Paper 3, in-depth understanding of the very important concept of health consciousness when related to organic food consumption.

Therefore, in respect to the first objective, this thesis contributes to the theory of consumer behaviour in relation to organic food by consolidating the review of the literature and proposing new conceptual models.



5.1.2 Research Objective 2: understanding of millennial's consumption behaviour of organic food.

The second goal of the present study was to present a specific analysis of the demographic group of millennials. Following the literature review, millennials are defined as the greenest-oriented generation, as they belong to the generation with the greatest access to information due to their early exposure to the Internet and being the first to explore the use of it, following the societal changes that influence their purchase behaviour. The compendium of the three studies together could provide us the confirmation that millennials are really environmentally concerned and their behaviour towards organic food follows the greater information related to health and social consciousness, as indicated strongly in Paper 2. The study also succeeds in comparing millennials from two different countries, presenting similarities, properly from the behaviour related to this specific generation group, but also discrepancies, at a minor level, mostly probably related to cultural factors of each country.

5.1.3 Research objective 3: a cross-cultural validation

The third objective of the study was to provide a cross-cultural analysis between developed and developing countries also contributes to filling the gap found in the literature review, showing similarities and differences in consumer behaviour between the two countries analysed. Papers 2 and 3 highlight those findings by presenting the focus of the analysis, considering health consciousness and social consciousness as the centre of comparison of millennials from both countries.

The managerial contributions of the comparative analysis developed in this thesis can be translated into a better understanding of customers in both regions that can help marketers to develop specific marketing campaigns to increase customer service with the target market and





consequently influence the consumption of organic food. The theoretical approach of this work also contributed to the cross-cultural analysis, presenting important similarities and differences between developed and developing regions, following the approach suggested by Rana and Paul (2017).

This study presents a cross-cultural analysis considering the millennial generation in both countries. If we consider that the generations are related to individuals with similar behaviour, considering they were born in the same period, have similar age, and have the same significant life events at critical developmental stages (Chaney et al., 2017), then we could presume, even if it was not the main goal of this work, that the convergence of results extracted in the compendium of this work could be related to the generational aspect.

On the other hand, considering that cultural aspects can affect people's decision processes and generate different human behaviour (Hofstede, 2011), we could consider that the hypotheses that are divergent may be related to the impact of the cultural differences on millennials' behaviour.

5.2 Research limitations and suggestions for future research

The work presents limitations that should be explained for further understanding of the findings. First, this study used a convenience sampling method; thus, the total sample of 530 respondents considering both regions, Brazil and Spain, is not fully representative. The sample could have been better distributed using a probabilistic method. Moreover, there could be differences among the different regions in both countries, especially in Brazil, given its size. Thus, perhaps further analysis of the differences among the regions in the same country could bring to light other approaches to the problem in a different way or generate more



specific insights related to the culture, climate and economy of each of the regions in each country.

This research promotes an analysis of the millennial generation but did not include a comparison with other generations. The analysis focused on just one generation cannot be generalised to other generations, and we cannot conclude if the findings would be similar to other generations or not. As a suggestion for further studies, we believe that a demographic comparison of the proposed models should consider different generations or cohorts to determine the similarities and differences of these social groups.

Additionally, the presented work focuses only on a quantitative approach using the SEM-PLS data analysis method. A qualitative analysis could be conducted to understand the results generated in the quantitative approach in depth and reach further conclusions to explain the problem. For example, the fashion and trend construct used to analyse the Brazilian millennials in Paper 1 can be effectively understood using qualitative research.

Overall, this study contributes to the field of marketing by improving the understanding of consumer behaviour towards organic food. The study also contributes to the recent and reborn field of organic food, bringing insights that can help managers and scholars to understand this old-new industry and create the right actions to perform better. Finally, this thesis fills a gap in the literature mentioned by Rana and Paul (2017), presenting a comparative study considering two countries with different characteristics, and presenting not only the differences in behaviour but also the many similarities that our global society has nowadays. However, we could also perceive that world globalisation and millennial generation standards are important factors in consumer behaviour, but national culture and economic aspects still have some influence on it.





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