

# Drivers to and Barriers against Sustainable Consumption: Exploring the Role of Consumer Anticipated Emotions

## In the Context of Consumer Adoption of Alternative Fuel Vehicles

**Zeinab Rezvani**

### Akademisk avhandling

som med vederbörligt tillstånd av Rektor vid Umeå universitet för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen framläggs till offentligt försvar i Hörsal A, Samhällsvetarhuset, Fredagen den 22 September 2017, kl. 13:00. Avhandlingen kommer att försvaras på engelska.

Fakultetsopponent: Professor, Patrick De Pelsmacker,  
University of Antwerp, Department of Marketing, Antwerp, Belgium



**Umeå School of Business and Economics**  
Umeå universitet/Umeå University  
Umeå 2017

**Organization**  
Umeå University  
Umeå School of  
Business and Economics

**Document type**  
Doctoral thesis

**Date of publication**  
01 September 2017

**Author**  
Zeinab Rezvani

**Title**  
Drivers to and Barriers against Sustainable Consumption: Exploring the Role of Consumer Anticipated Emotions, In the Context of Consumer Adoption of Alternative Fuel Vehicles

### **Abstract**

With the increasing environmental problems, sustainable consumption is an important consumer behavior. Therefore, it is important to investigate further the significant drivers to and barriers against sustainable consumption, in order to increase the share of sustainable consumption and understanding of consumer behavior. This dissertation identifies two gaps. The first is in understanding consumer positive and negative anticipated emotions as an important factor influencing high-involvement sustainable consumption. The second gap relates to the lack of understanding about the associations between anticipated emotions and personal moral norms in high-involvement sustainable consumption. Against this background, the aim is to contribute to the sustainable consumption literature by investigating the roles and relations of anticipated emotions, personal moral norms, and weighing costs and benefits as drivers to and barriers against consumer adoption of a high-involvement sustainable product. A literature review and two empirical studies were conducted. Consumer adoption of alternative fuel vehicles is the specific sustainable consumption. Using quantitative methods, this phenomenon is investigated in the empirical studies conducted in Sweden. It was shown that anticipated emotions have direct effects on consumers' intention to adopt alternative fuel vehicles. Moreover, positive anticipated emotions (e.g. pride, pleasure, happiness) are drivers of sustainable consumption, while negative anticipated emotions (e.g. regret, embarrassment) are barriers against the sustainable consumption. This dissertation suggests an extension to the norm activation model, and shows that moral norms, ascription of responsibility, and awareness of environmental problems influence consumers' intentions through consumers' anticipated emotions. For people who perceive high social norms related to decreasing the environmental impacts of car driving, the influence of positive anticipated emotions and personal moral norms are stronger. This points toward the social aspect of sustainable consumption and suggests that targeting the consumers who perceive high social norms is an important step to promoting sustainable consumption. Findings would be of relevance to marketers, policymakers and environmental organizations. Creating awareness and communicating personal responsibilities and moral norms related to the environment and consumption are important drivers for consumer adoption of sustainable products. However, it is noteworthy that consumer anticipated emotions about high-involvement sustainable products (such as alternative fuel vehicle) have also important influence on the sustainable consumption. Thus, consumer anticipated emotions should be considered in designing promotion programs.

### **Keywords**

Consumer behavior, sustainable consumption, anticipated emotion, moral norm, attitudes, electric vehicles, alternative fuel vehicles,

**Language**  
English

**ISBN**  
978-91-7601-761-6

**ISSN**  
0346-8291

**Number of pages**  
67 + 4 papers