

THESIS

UNDERSTANDING ETHICAL CONSUMERS: ASSESSING THE MODERATING
EFFECTS OF PRICE SENSITIVITY, MATERIALISM, IMPULSE BUYING TENDENCY,
AND CLOTHING INVOLVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING ETHICAL CONSUMERS: ASSESSING THE MODERATING EFFECTS OF PRICE SENSITIVITY, MATERIALISM, IMPULSE BUYING TENDENCY, AND CLOTHING INVOLVEMENT

The purpose of the study was to explore the antecedents of ethical consumer behavioral intention. The first objective was to investigate the relationship between ethical traits and attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. The second objective was to determine whether the attitudes predict socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention. The third objective was to examine the roles of individual characteristics as moderators between the relationships of attitudes and behavioral intentions. Social desirability bias was also measured in order to control for potential effects it might have on the relationships examined in the study.

Data were collected from 302 consumers through store intercept and online survey approaches. The results of the study revealed that ethical traits predicted socially responsible attitudes. The socially responsible attitudes also predicted the behavioral intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically. Among the variables of individual characteristics, only price sensitivity moderated the relationship between attitudes and behavioral intentions. Social desirability bias was not detected; the only exception was the relationship between ethical concerns and socially responsible attitudes. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Ethical Consumers

Ethical consumers - Consumers who are concerned with a broad spectrum of issues ranging from environmental degradation to animal welfare to human rights including labor practices when purchasing products (Tallontire, Rentsendorj, & Blowfield, 2001)

Ethical consumers in study - Consumers who purchase socially responsible apparel and who complete their purchase process without return fraud (Based on Tallontire et al., 2001; Fullerton & Punj, 1993; Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003; Rosenbaum et al., 2011; Schmidt, Sturrock, Ward, & Lea-Greenwood, 1999)

Ethical consumption - Purchase decisions made not only on the basis of personal interests but also on the basis of the interests of society and the environment (Jobber, 2006)

Socially conscious consumers - Consumers who take into account the public consequences of his or her purchasing power to bring about social change (Webster, 1975)

Socially responsible consumption - Consumers' decisions and behaviors considering the results of their decisions with regards to environment and society (Henion & Wilson, 1976; Ozkan, 2009)

Ethical Traits

Altruism - Pro-social actions taken by an individual with voluntary intention to benefit others without any self-interested motivation (Eisenberg, 1986; Gates & Steane, 2009; Krebs, 1970; Macaulay & Berkowitz, 1970; Powers & Hopkins, 2006; Staub, 1978)

Environmental concern - The degree to which people are aware of problems regarding the environment and support efforts to solve the problems (Dunlap & Jones, 2002)

Ethical concern - An individual's internalized ethical rules, which reflect personal beliefs about appropriate behavior (Shaw & Shiu, 2002)

Personality - A set of points falling along several behavioral dimensions, each corresponding to a trait, resulting in a unique profile (Pervin, 1989)

Trait - A relatively stable tendency or disposition for an individual to react in a particular way over a wide range of situations (Ryckman, 1985)

Values - Abstract beliefs about behaviors that transcend specific situations and guide the selection or evaluation of behavior and events (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987)

Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Fair trade products - Goods that are produced with a purpose to improve the social, economic, and environmental living conditions of producers in Central and South America, Africa, and parts of Asia (Littrell & Dickson, 1999)

Social responsibility - An individual's determined attitude toward the relationships that happen in the circle of society from family to communities and the world (Harris, Clark, Rose, & Valasek, 1954)

Socially responsible apparel and textile business - Business that balances ethics/morality with profitability by protecting the environment, world, and its people (Dickson & Eckman, 2006)

Behavioral Intentions

Behavioral intention - An individual's subjective probability that he/she will perform some behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)

Consumer ethics - The rightness as opposed to the wrongness of certain actions on the part of the buyer or potential buyer in consumer situations (Dodge, Edwards, & Fullerton, 1996)

Ethical post-purchase returning intention - Avoidance of returning used or damaged clothing or returning products excessively (Based on Fullerton & Punj, 1993; Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003; Rosenbaum et al., 2011; Schmidt et al., 1999)

Ethics - Inquiry into the nature and grounds of morality where the term morality is taken to mean moral judgment, standards, and rules of conduct (Taylor, 1975)

Purchase intention - The buyer's mental state that leads him or her to decide to acquire certain products or services in the near future (Howard, 1989)

Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention - Consumers' willingness to purchase apparel that is produced through the process of minimizing or eliminating exploitation, avoidable suffering, and environmental damage (Based on Schwartz, 2010)

Socially responsible buying - The manner in which consumers consciously choose to buy from companies that run their businesses in an ethical manner (Based on Castaldo et al., 2009; Valor, 2007)

Individual Characteristics

Clothing involvement - The extent to which a consumer considers clothing related activities as a central part of their lives (O'Cass, 2004)

Impulse buying tendency - Consumers' likelihood to engage in an immediate and spontaneous purchase decision driven by strong feelings to buy without thoughtful consideration of consequences (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998)

Materialism - The importance a consumer attaches to acquisition and possession of objects in one's life (Belk, 1984; Richins & Dawson, 1992)

Price sensitivity - The extent to which individuals perceive and respond to changes or differences in prices for products or services (Monroe, 1973; Wakefield & Inman, 2003)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Justification

The study of *ethical consumer behavior* has been separated into two main streams of research: *ethical consumerism* and *consumer ethics* (Chatzidakis & Mitussis, 2007). Ethical consumerism has evolved out of the existing tradition of *green consumerism*. Green consumerism refers to the rational use of available information about environmental issues in the process of consumption as well as the consideration of the consequences of specific purchasing practices (Fraj & Martinez, 2007). The term of ethical consumerism is often interchangeably used with such terms as ethical consumption or socially responsible consumption. Jobber (2006) defined ethical consumption as “the taking of purchase decisions not only on the basis of personal interests but also on the basis of the interests of society and the environment” (p. 217). The terms of ethical consumption and ethical consumerism were used interchangeably by Goworek (2011) without any differentiation. Similar to the definition of ethical consumption, *socially responsible consumption* is defined as “a kind of consumption in which consumers’ decisions and behaviors are not only motivated by the desire to satisfy their personal needs but consider the results of their decisions with regards to environment and society” (Henion & Wilson, 1976; Ozkan, 2009, p. 947). For the purposes of this study, socially responsible consumption will also include the practices of ethical consumerism as well as ethical consumption.

Socially responsible consumption may take a variety of specific forms of action, including *purchasing, boycott, buycott, usage, non-consumption* and *disposal* (Gulyas, 2008). As the study focuses on consumers’ purchase behavioral intention, socially responsible consumption can be defined as the manner in which consumers consciously choose to buy from companies that run their businesses in an ethical manner (Castaldo, Perrini, Misani, &

Tencati, 2009; Valor, 2007). In this respect, socially responsible consumption involves the consumption of socially responsible apparel, which may include environmentally-friendly, sweatshop-free, fair-trade, second-hand, and animal-friendly clothing (Castaldo et al., 2009; Dickson, 1999; Dickson, 2000; Hiller Connell, 2010; Goworek, 2011; Kozer & Hiller Connell, 2010; Rudell, 2006; Sneddon, Lee, & Soutar, 2010). Alternative labels for environmentally-friendly apparel are green, organic or eco-conscious clothing (Goswami, 2008; Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009). Coined in relation to boycott, buycott refers to organized decisions on the part of consumers to patronize politically-deserving companies (Micheletti, 2003). These companies are those deemed to try to minimize the hazardous manufacturing effects of their products on the environment and society or to contribute to society by donating money, establishing non-profit organizations, and the like. While socially responsible consumption occurs regularly, buycotts are performed with a specific purpose of rewarding socially responsible companies.

Socially responsible consumption in the context of the apparel industry is a relatively new concept. It is only in the last two decades that consumers have begun to express their concern for environmental and societal issues by changing their consumption patterns. According to the Co-operation Bank (2010), from 2007 to 2009, the amount of money that consumers in the United Kingdom spent on socially responsible products and services increased by 18 percent. In the context of a slowing economy, this figure represents a net worth estimated to be between 48.7 and 57.6 billion USD. Among the varieties of this type of consumer expenditure, socially responsible apparel occupies the smallest niche. However, it represents the fastest growing sector within the industry. From 2007 to 2009, the sale of socially responsible apparel increased by 72 percent to reach a value of 246 million USD, while charitable organization shop sales, such as Salvation Army, grew by 62 percent, amounting to a figure of 473 million USD. In the United States, the marketplace for socially

responsible products and services is estimated to be 290 billion USD and this figure translates to approximately 41 million people considering environmental and societal issues when making purchasing decisions (LOHAS, 2011). One category amongst socially responsible products includes fair-trade products which are manufactured through comprehensive socially responsible practices, such as “paying fair wages, providing safe working conditions, being environmentally friendly, offering training, and contributing to community development” (Halepete, Littrell, & Park, 2009, p. 143). In 2008, according to the Fair Trade Federation (n.d.), the sale of fair-trade certified products represented a value of 4.1 billion USD, with sales increasing by 102 percent between 2004 and 2007 in the United States and Canada. In the same year, fair-trade certified cotton product sales also increased by 94 percent (Fair Trade Federation, n.d.). It was reported that the sales of fair-trade products benefits a total of 7 million people, including farmers, workers, and their families in 58 developing countries (Fairtrade Foundation, n.d.).

As the growth of socially responsible product market size shows, consumer interest toward socially responsible apparel has great potential. This interest is estimated to grow by as much as 19 percent from 2009 to 2014 (Slavin, 2009). In accordance with the growing consumer interest, understanding purchase intention of socially responsible apparel has been a topic to study among researchers in the area of ethical consumer behavior and business practitioners (Hiller Connell, 2010; Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009; Starr, 2009; Valor, 2007). Researchers have found that consumers have positive intentions to purchase from socially responsible companies (Madrigal & Boush, 2008). Greater knowledge about the impact of apparel production or ethical concern was related to consumers’ intentions to support such companies (Dickson, 2000; Kim & Damhorst, 1998; Mostafa, 2009). However, product-attributes, such as price, quality, or style, and availability of stores were identified as main factors that prevent consumers from purchasing socially responsible apparel (Iwanow,

McEachern, & Jeffrey, 2005; Kozar & Hiller Connell, 2010). It has been discussed that even though the market for socially responsible apparel has increased, the total sales are relatively small in comparison to the entire apparel market in the United States. Researchers have suggested that consumers generally have positive attitudes toward social responsibility, but only the consumers who have strong identity as ethical consumers actually purchase socially responsible products (Hiller Connell, 2011). Ethical consumers who purchase socially responsible apparel make up a small portion of the total consumers and results of various studies revealed that majority of consumers actually do not engage in active purchases even though they are ethically-minded (Bray, Johns, & Kilburn, 2010; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2010; Shaw, Shiu, Hassan, Bekin, & Hogg, 2007). In relation to this, researchers have discussed the “gap” between socially responsible attitudes or intentions and actual purchasing behavior. However, more research that investigates the reasons why ethical consumers do not consider socially responsible apparel as their first choice for apparel shopping should be done. This is the first attempt to investigate the socially responsible purchasing gap by examining individual characteristics. Through the investigation of individual characteristics such as price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement, as impeding factors, the study aims to examine this gap. While ethical consumers express environmental and societal concerns by purchasing socially responsible apparel, in contrast, consumers may also engage in fraudulent returning behavior, which can be unethical.

Instead of focusing on consumption activities, consumer ethics concentrates on consumer behavior during the purchase or post-purchase process. Consumer ethics refers to “the rightness as opposed to the wrongness of certain actions on the part of the buyer or potential buyer in consumer situations” (Dodge, Edwards, & Fullerton, 1996). The second definition refers to “the moral principles and standards that guide behavior of individuals or

groups as they obtain, use, and dispose of goods and services” (Muncy & Vitell, 1992, p. 298). Shoplifting, using expired coupons, or knowingly accepting too much change at the register are relevant examples of unethical purchase and post-purchase behavior. Buying counterfeit goods can also be included under the heading of consumer ethics as unethical behavior. However, the biggest retailer frustration is the phenomenon known as “return fraud.” An example of return frauds involves a consumer purchasing a suit for a wedding, with the intention of returning it immediately afterwards for a refund. In these situations, companies must spend extra money on these used or sometimes damaged garments in order to sell them again. In 2011, return frauds were estimated to have cost retailers 14.37 billion USD, representing 6.62 percent of all returned merchandise (National Retail Federation, 2011). In the same year, return frauds represented a loss of 3.48 billion USD during the 2011 holiday season. To prevent consumers from returning products unethically, companies have established a range of return policies that seek to address this problem. But it is still necessary to lessen the prevalence of this unwelcome consumer phenomenon.

To solve the problem of return frauds, researchers have made efforts to understand consumers’ fraudulent returning behavior as this negatively affects business operations. They found that consumers who return unethically tend to be high in cynicism (Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003) and Machiavellianism (Shen & Dickson, 2001), and impulsive (Kang & Johnson, 2009). That is, they tend to focus on satisfying their needs and purchase products without plans. Such unethical returning behavior was related to social group influence (Johnson & Rhee, 2008; King, Dennis, & Wright, 2008) and the extent of leniency on return policies (Harris, 2010; Kang & Johnson, 2009; King & Dennis, 2006). Even though studies have been done in relation to return frauds, a proper understanding of this fraudulent consumer behavior is rather limited and more information is needed to improve such dysfunctionality of apparel companies (Harris & Reynolds, 2003; King & Dennis, 2006). One

method is by investigating the profiles of ethical consumers in order to understand their differing personality types and to boost consumer ethics among less ethical consumers.

Within the field of apparel shopping, ethical consumers are defined to be those consumers who purchase socially responsible apparel (Hiller Connell, 2010; Dickson, 2000; Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008; Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009; Starr, 2009; Valor, 2007) and who complete their purchase process without return frauds (King & Dennis, 2006; Rosenbaum, Kuntze, & Wooldridge, 2011; Shen & Dickson, 2001). Consumers' behavioral intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically have been two separate areas for the research of ethical consumer behavior as discussed above (e.g., Harris, 2010; King & Dennis, 2006; Kozar & Hiller Connell, 2010; Sneddon et al., 2010). However, based on the study of Holbrook (1999), it is assumed that socially responsible apparel consumption and ethical returning behavior can be performed in the same context. That is, ethical consumers may carry out the purchase and post-purchase stages of the decision process under the guidance of their ethics as a community member who has responsibility to contribute to the environment and society. According to Holbrook (1999), *ethics* is comprised of *virtue*, *justice* and *morality*. *Virtue* refers to "the tendency for an individual's character to lead toward actions that follow the laws, obey the rules, or fulfill prescribed duties" (Holbrook, 1999, p. 21). As for *justice*, it is defined as "a situation in which the laws that govern society tend to produce beneficent consequences" (Holbrook, 1999, p. 21) and *morality* is the characteristic of an individual to behave toward outcomes that improve the welfare of others. Because ethics is something that can be performed by consumers to benefit others, ethical consumers may behave with consideration of people during the stages of purchases and post-purchases.

There is little previous research that deals with both areas of ethical consumer behavior--socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase

returning intention--at the same time. This is the first study that combines the two streams of research, with an assumption that ethical consumers may not only present their ethical traits through purchasing socially responsible apparel but engage in ethical post-purchase returning behavior also. Personal traits influence the formation of consumer attitudes, intentions, and ultimately actual purchase actions (Homer & Kahle, 1988). Due to the dynamic interactions among trait, attitude, and intention, it is important to investigate their relationships to better understand ethical consumers. This will enable the researcher to discover how consumers form positive intentions to be ethical during their decision-making processes. Meanwhile, the most challenging issue in ethical consumer behavior is the contradiction between implicit attitude or intention and explicit behavior (Hiller, 2010). Besides investigating the relationships between trait, attitude, and intention, the study also aims to identify the factors that may hinder consumers from behaving ethically. To do this, it will examine the characteristics of the individual consumer, such as price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement and the role of these characteristics in attenuating the intention to behave ethically. Because research that investigates ethical consumer behavior in relation to specific individual characteristics as moderating factors is limited, this may provide insights regarding ethical consumers and their contradictory shopping behavior. Also, there is little research which investigates the moderating effects of the characteristics of consumers on both ethical purchase and post-purchase behavioral intention. In this respect, the present study marks a departure in predicting ethical consumer behavior by investigating the effect of traits and attitudes on intentions, and the moderating roles of individual characteristics in constructing intentions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore the antecedents of ethical consumer behavior: the intentions of consumers to purchase socially responsible apparel and to perform ethical

returning behavior. There are three specific research objectives. The first objective is to investigate the association between ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation) and attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. The second objective is to determine whether the attitudes predict behavioral intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically. Finally, the moderating effects of individual characteristics, such as price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement, on the relationships between attitudes and intentions are examined.

It is meaningful to study consumer purchase and post-purchase behavioral intention together because both are related to ethical consumer values. If a consumer purchases an ethical product but subsequently fails to present ethical post-purchase behavior, that consumer may not be considered to be ethical. It is questionable whether ethical consumers exhibit consistent ethical behavioral intention throughout the purchasing and post-purchasing stages of the decision making process. By answering this question, the study aims to broaden the knowledge regarding the identity of ethical consumers; it also seeks to contribute to the understanding of the nature of ethical consumer purchase and post-purchase processes.

Theoretical Framework of Current Study

Values have been recognized as an effective predictor of human behavior because they are operated at the center of individuals' cognition structure (Dickson, 2000; Parsons & Shils, 1951; Vernon & Allport, 1931). Researchers have therefore studied personal values as a way to understand consumers' varying decision making processes and to predict the effects on consumption behavioral intention (Dickson, 2000; Homer & Kahle, 1988; Madrigal, 1995). Values are defined as "abstract beliefs about behaviors or end-states of existence that transcend specific situations and guide the selection or evaluation of behavior and events" (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987, p. 551). Shimp and Kavas (1984) suggested that cognitive

elements are likely to be grouped into several categories, which may distinctly influence attitude. Evaluated as overall affective states, attitude plays an important role that leads cognitive evaluations to behave in a certain way (Dabholkar, 1994). Homer and Kahle (1988) insisted that “within given situation, the influence should theoretically flow from abstract values to midrange attitudes to specific behavior” (p. 638), this sequence is called the *value, attitude, and behavior* hierarchy. With this notion, Homer and Kahle (1988) developed the model of the value-attitude-behavior hierarchy, and confirmed their relationships occurring along the formation of values, attitudes, and behaviors. The researchers found that values influence attitudes, which in turn results in the behaviors of the individuals through the hierarchical procedure.

Rokeach (1973) argued that individuals in certain situations perceive what is important to them according to their value system. In this respect, personal values are closely related to personality, which is defined as “consistent responses to environmental stimuli” (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2006, p. 271; Kassirjian, 1971). Pervin (1989) defined personality as “a set of points falling along several behavioral dimensions, each corresponding to a trait, resulting in a unique profile (i.e., type), different from that of other individuals” (p. 7). Traits are one type of five distinct perspectives in personality theories: others are (1) psychoanalytic and neoanalytic; (2) cognitive; (3) humanistic/existential; (4) social-behavioristic (Madrigal, 1995; Ryckman, 1993). As individuals’ abstract beliefs, their values are eventually turned into certain forms of personal traits (Smith, 1982), which play a central role in assessing problems or situations to behave in a certain way. For the purpose of the study, trait will be referenced instead of value. Because personality is composed of a set of traits (Kassirjian, 1971), this makes it appropriate for the study. Trait can be defined as “a relatively stable tendency or disposition for an individual to react in a particular way over a wide range of situations” (Ryckman, 1985, p. 260). Adopting these arguments, the theoretical

framework of the current study is presented in Figure 1.1, following the model suggested by Homer and Kahle (1988). Even though Homer and Kahle (1988) focused on values to confirm the hierarchical relationships, the current study uses traits instead of values as discussed above. The use of traits was also approved by various researchers who found the close link between traits and personal values (e.g., Crandall & Rasmussen, 1975; Feather, 1971; Madrigal, 1995; Rim, 1970; Rokeach, 1973).

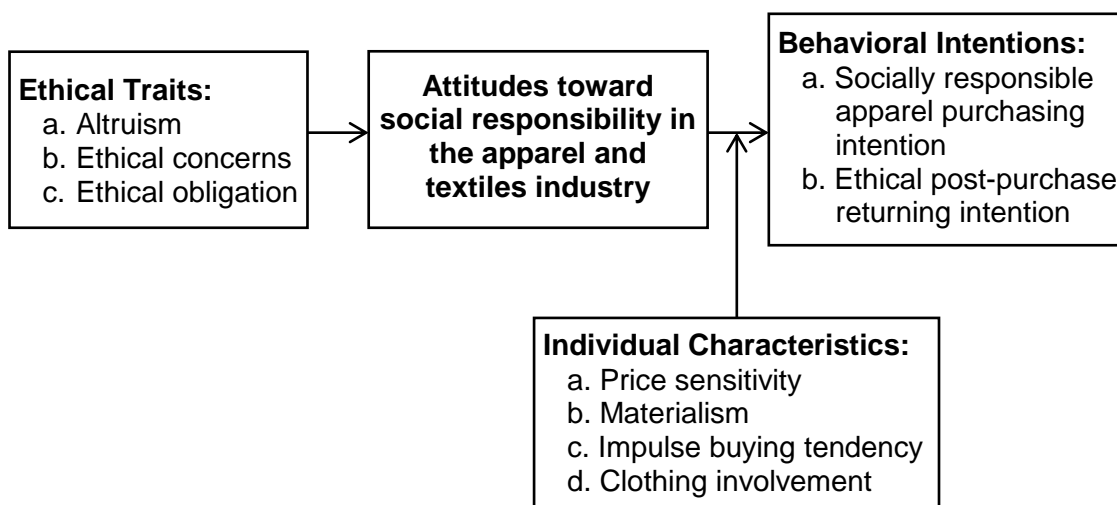


Figure 1.1. The Trait-Attitude-Intention Hierarchy of Ethical Consumer Behavior: Moderating Effects of Individual Characteristics (based on Homer & Kahle, 1988; Rokeach, 1973)

In order to investigate ethical consumer behavior, the current study focuses on the behavioral intention of consumers to purchase socially responsible apparel, which encompasses the realm of socially responsible consumption. The study also focuses on the behavioral intention of the consumers in regard to post-purchase returning intention, which is the realm of consumer ethics. The combination of these two concepts in an ethical hierarchical system represents something of a departure from previous research. The study aims to confirm the links between traits, attitudes, and behavioral intentions within the hierarchical system, and the moderating effects of individual characteristics in predicting

ethical consumer behavior. First, ethical traits -- altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation -- are included in order to investigate their roles as antecedents of consumer attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. A review of the literature revealed that altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation are important determinants of attitudes in the context of socially responsible consumption. Even though there is little research that investigates the effects of ethical traits on attitudes in product returning situations, the study proposes that ethical traits predict socially responsible attitudes, which in turn influence ethical returning intention as well as socially responsible purchasing intention. While altruism is pro-social activities to benefit others (Gates & Steane, 2009), ethical concerns are worries about ethical issues that are generated by self-focused reasons as well as other-focused reasons (Cowe & Williams, 2000). Meanwhile, ethical obligation is structured ethical rules that guide what is appropriate (Shaw & Shiu, 2002). This study initiates the combination of these ethical traits in order to understand ethical consumer behavior in relation to apparel shopping. Along with the roles of altruism, ethical concern, and ethical obligation, the study investigates consumer attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. This in turn is used to predict socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention. It is anticipated that those consumers who have positive attitudes will possess strong behavioral intention to purchase socially responsible apparel and to engage in ethical returning behavior. Researchers in the area of socially responsible consumption have discussed that the attitude- or intention-behavior gap may be due to inflated measures of intentions (Carrington et al., 2010). To reduce the interference with the interpretation of the results, the study controls for the effect of *social desirability bias* (i.e., tendency to respond in a socially acceptable way) that has been suggested as a problem in studying ethical consumer behavior. As researchers found the direct effects of attitudes on intentions (Dabholkar & Bagozzi, 2002; Fishbein & Ajzen,

1975), investigating the relationship between attitudes and intentions is meaningful to understand ethical consumer behavior in support with the control of social desirability bias.

The study proposes that consumers who have stronger beliefs about altruism, ethical concern, and ethical obligation will exhibit positive attitudes towards social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and thus have strong intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and demonstrate ethical post-purchase returning intention. The caveat to this model of ethically mindedness, however, is this: if consumers have strong tendencies toward price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying, and clothing involvement, the possibility of behaving socially responsibly or ethically may be attenuated. Another focus of this study is to investigate the moderating roles of individual characteristics, including materialism, price sensitivity, the tendency to buy on impulse, and clothing involvement. The study hypothesizes that the characteristic of an individual consumer will have an attenuating effect on the formation of positive behavioral intention to behave socially responsibly or ethically throughout the purchase and post-purchase stages in consumer decision making process. That is, consumers who are more price-sensitive, materialistic, impulsive, and involved with clothing will possess less behavioral intention to purchase products in a socially responsible or ethical manner than those who are not. Because consumers are more concerned with reasonable prices and specific products that signal their success and fulfill their emotional needs, these consumers may be less likely to present socially responsible purchasing and ethical post-purchase returning intention. The effects of individual characteristics on the hierarchical system, specifically on the relationship between attitudes and intentions, may provide insights about consumers' potential behavior by examining how the characteristics of consumers differ throughout the process of product purchase and post-purchase behavioral intention. This study attempts to examine why ethical consumers experience difficulty translating their positive attitude or intention into action, by focusing on

personal characteristics in combination with ethical traits and attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.

Contribution of the Study

By modifying the theory of the value-attitude-behavior hierarchy (Homer & Kahle, 1988), the study provides a systematic view of ethical consumer behavior and identifies relationships among traits, attitude, and intentions. The study extends the knowledge base about ethical consumers in terms of how they form positive intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically. By combining two streams of research concerning ethical consumer behavior (i.e., socially responsible consumption and consumer ethics) in the trait-attitude-intention hierarchical relationship (Homer & Kahle, 1988), this study provides further information about ethical behavioral intention during the purchase and post-purchase stages. The major contribution of the study is to examine whether ethically-minded consumers behave ethically, by focusing on the moderating role of individual characteristics, such as price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement. This is the first attempt to incorporate the impeding factors as moderating variables within the process of traits, attitudes, and intentions. There is little research that includes all four variables in one study to investigate ethical consumer behavior. Because previous research has very limited evidence about the behavioral contradiction of ethically-minded consumers, this study provides a broader understanding of the influences of individual characteristics on the choice of ethical shopping (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention).

The study focuses on ethical consumer behavior in the context of apparel shopping. An understanding of the ethical behavior of consumers making apparel purchases may provide insights for retailers who plan to supply socially responsible apparel or who want to target consumers who make few or no fraudulent returns. If companies have a better

understanding of the characteristics of desirable consumers, they can better manufacture products that encourage consumer purchases or present products in manners to generate sales. The knowledge of the characteristics of ethical consumers is also helpful for companies when they are trying to create effective return policies or when they hope to determine the exact degree of return leniency, according to specified target markets. Due to the differences among consumers, companies need to be strategic in formulating their return policies. While some consumers tend to be loyal to brands that have a policy of lenient returns, other consumers may seek to take cynical advantage of it.

Organization of the Study

This paper includes five chapters. In this Chapter one, introduction described the importance of studying ethical consumers and the purpose of the study. Theoretical framework and contribution of the study were also included in this chapter. In Chapter two, literature reviews for all variables used for the construction of the theoretical framework are presented. Hypotheses for tests are suggested under each review of studies in the chapter.

There are five sections for reviewing literature: (1) identifying ethical consumers; (2) ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation); (3) attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry; (4) behavioral intentions (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention); and (5) individual characteristics (i.e., price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement). First, what has been done in relation to the characteristics of ethical consumers is described to obtain basic knowledge about the consumers. Then, studies of ethical traits, such as altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation, are reviewed. Reviews for attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention are continued. There are two sections under this literature review, labeled as *attitudes toward social responsibility*

in the apparel and textiles industry and socially responsible apparel purchase intention, behavior, and impeding factors. First, consumers' attitudes toward socially responsible business practices of apparel companies are reviewed. The second section explores what has been done in relation to consumers' purchase intention of socially responsible apparel and impeding factors that have hindered consumers from purchasing such products. Next, reviews for attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention are continued. As there is little research that investigates the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and ethical returning behavior, this section mostly discusses the factors that encourage unethical returning behavior and the characteristics of consumers who return products unethically. It reviews previous studies with two sub-sections: *lenient return policy and unethical returning behavior* and *consumers who return products unethically*. Lenient returning policies are explained as prominent factors that have led consumers to return products unethically. The characteristics of consumers who engage in fraudulent returns are also included. Finally, next section introduces four kinds of individual characteristics, such as price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement, as impeding factors of the relationships between attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and behavioral intentions (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchasing and ethical post-purchase returning intention).

The method for the study is presented in Chapter three. It includes three sections: (1) sampling and data collection procedure; (2) instrument development; and (3) data analysis. The first section explains who the participants for the study were and how the data were collected. The next section introduces instrument development for each variable that is reviewed in Chapter two, including that of social desirability bias. Finally, data analyses are presented in terms of what kinds of statistics were used to analyze the results of the survey.

Chapter four presents the results of data analyses, including seven sections: (1) description of respondents; (2) measurements of ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation); (3) measurements of attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry; (4) measurements of socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention; (5) measurements of individual characteristics (i.e., price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement); (6) hypothesis testing; and (7) additional findings. The first section explains the demographics of respondents, which include age, gender, ethnicity, education, household income, and their apparel shopping behavior. Sections two through five describe the results of factor analyses and descriptive statistics (i.e., means and standard deviations) for the independent and dependent variables. Results of hypothesis testing are presented in section six. In this section, regression analyses for H1, H2, and H3 are described. The final section reports additional findings.

Chapter five discusses the results of H1 (i.e., traits as predictors of attitudes), H2 (i.e., attitudes as a predictor of behavioral intentions), and H3 (individual characteristics as moderators between attitudes and behavioral intentions). The results of additional findings, which compared different groups by social desirability bias and ownership of socially responsible apparel on the variables of the study, are also discussed in this section. The discussion regarding the correlation between the two key dependent variables are included as additional findings as well. Theoretical and practical implications, limitations, and future research are presented in the conclusions section.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

This chapter starts with the identification of ethical consumers. This literature explores previous studies related to ethical traits (altruism, ethical concern, and ethical obligation) and attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry as predictors of socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention. Ethical consumers are predicted to present positive intentions towards socially responsible apparel purchase and ethical post-purchase returning behavior. After the literature review of behavioral intentions, individual characteristics, such as price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement are reviewed, in order to identify their possible moderating effects on intentions to behave ethically. The hypothesized relationships among ethical traits, attitudes, intentions, and moderators within the hierarchical system are presented here (see Figure 2.1).

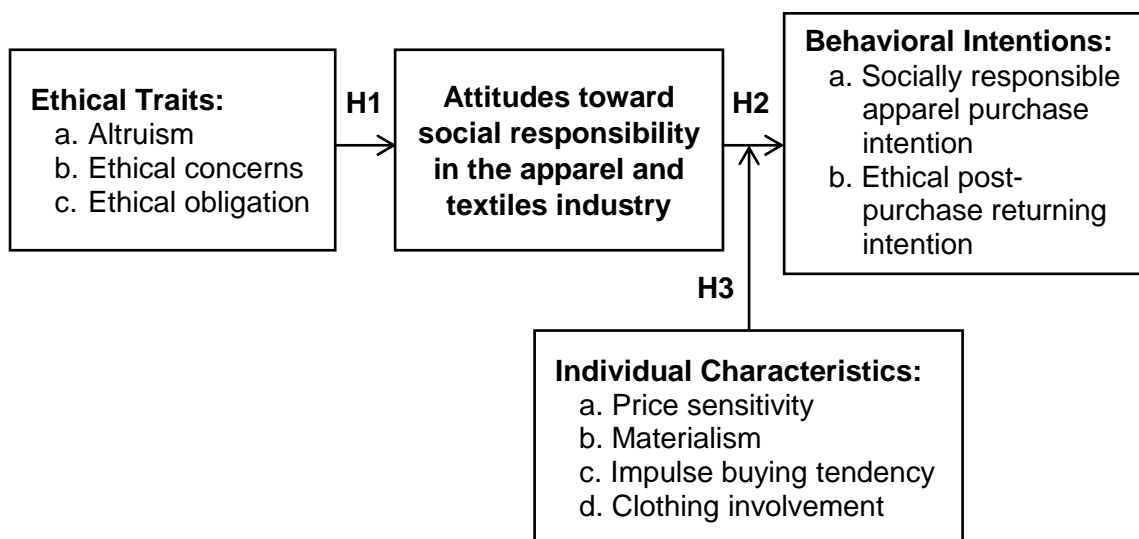


Figure 2.1. The Trait-Attitude-Intention Hierarchy of Ethical Consumer Behavior: Moderating Effects of Individual Characteristics (based on Homer & Kahle, 1988; Rokeach, 1973)

Identifying Ethical Consumers

Labeling ethical consumers started from the name of *socially conscious consumers* that was used by several researchers during the 1970s (Anderson & Cunningham, 1972; Brooker, 1976; Webster, 1975), and it has remained in the consumer literature (e.g., Pepper, Jackson, & Uzzell, 2009; Roberts, 1996). While Brooker (1976) explained socially conscious consumers as the groups who act in the ways to improve quality of life in the society, Webster (1975) defined socially conscious consumers as those who “take into account the public consequences of his or her purchasing power to bring about social change” (p. 188). The term of *green consumers* started to appear in the late 1980s (e.g., Elkington & Hailes, 1989), and began to be used in advertising and marketing research during the 1990s and continues to be used till today (e.g., Coddington, 1993; Shrum, McCarty, & Lowrey, 1995). Shrum et al. (1995) defined the green consumer as “anyone, whose purchase behavior is influenced by environmental concerns” (p. 72). Strong (1996) defined the green consumer more specifically as those who:

“ . . . avoid products that are likely to endanger the health of the consumer or others; cause significant damage to the environment during manufacture, use or disposal; consume a disproportionate amount of energy; cause unnecessary waste; use materials derived from threatened species or environments” (Strong, 1996, p. 5).

The concept of green consumers, however, was expanded to *ethical consumers*, as broader ranges of social concerns were recognized among consumers (Intel, 1994). Ethics refers to the “inquiry into the nature and grounds of morality where the term morality is taken to mean moral judgment, standards, and rules of conduct” (Taylor, 1975, p. 1). In this notion, ethical consumers can be defined as those who are concerned with a broad spectrum of issues ranging from environmental degradation to animal welfare to human rights including labor practices when purchasing products (Tallontire et al., 2001). That is, ethical consumers may

not buy products that have harmful effects on the environment and society, such as goods produced by child labor (Harper & Makatouni, 2002).

Scholars have recognized the highly principled groups of ethical consumers who not only engage in boycotting products that are made from non-socially responsible procedures but also keep tracking of companies' socially responsible activities (e.g., Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008; Mostafa, 2009; Shaw & Shiu, 2002; Strong, 1996). Even though the population of ethical consumers is considered to be small, consumers are becoming aware of ethical issues through marketing campaigns, and developing their own ethical views (Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008; Harrison, 2005; Macchiette & Roy, 1994). For example, in the environmental survey conducted by Lifestyle Monitor of the Cotton Incorporated, almost 80 percent of consumers reported their practices of environmental activism: energy conservation at home (80%), recycling (78%), and purchasing energy-conserving appliances (74%) ("Passive Activism," 2010). Its 2011 survey found that 44 percent of consumers put importance on environmental friendliness, while 76 percent did not seriously consider to purchase environmentally friendly apparel ("Creating a Greener," 2011). Furthermore, more than half of the consumers (66%) reported that they would feel uncomfortable if they found non-environmentally friendly apparel, but only a small portion of consumers (12%) answered that they would do something to correct the problems, such as complaining to the retailer or manufacturer. Half of the consumers (54%), on the other hand, would do nothing. Seven of ten consumers expressed their most favorable purchase intentions to 100% cotton material, followed by "natural" (54%), "sustainable" (52%), and "environmentally friendly" (47%). Only 29 percent of consumers reported that they would make efforts to find environmentally friendly apparel when shopping. Considering that consumers are more concerned about the increasing price at retailers (87%) than they are of any ethical issues mentioned above, it is not surprising that consumers would not clearly express their ethical concerns through

purchasing (“Passive Activism,” 2010). Similarly, in 2009, BBMG surveyed more than 2000 consumers in both the East Coast and West Coast of the United States, and found that 67 percent of consumers consented to the idea of purchasing products that provide benefits to the environment and society, and 51 percent expressed their willingness to pay more for such products (Seshagiri, 2009).

Even though many studies have revealed consumers’ likelihood to purchase socially responsible products, they have not yet been successful in identifying consumers’ socially responsible shopping behavior. Scholars therefore started to profile ethical consumers to distinguish them from other consumer groups. According to demographic factors, empirical findings were not consistent. While some studies revealed differences between female and male on ethical behavioral intention (Davidson & Freudenburg, 1996; Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch, Sinkovics, & Bohlen, 2003; Dickson, 2001; Mostafa, 2007; Roberts, 1996), other studies could not find any gender differences (Cervellon, Hjerth, Ricard, & Carey, 2010; Witkowski & Reddy, 2010). Researchers have suggested that individuals tend to respond in an ethical manner and such social desirability tends to distort the relationship among attitudes, intentions, and behaviors (Fernandes & Randall, 1992; Peltier & Walsh, 1990). The studies that found women are more ethical than men might have ignored the fact that females tend to respond more ethically than males. After controlling social desirability response bias, Dalton and Ortegren (2011) could deduce the effect of gender differences in ethical decision-making. Also, considering the sample of highly educated consumers in the study of Cervellon et al. (2010), consumers with higher educational status may show more ethical behavior regardless of their gender difference (Finisterra do Paco, Barata Raposo, & Filho, 2009). Starr (2009), however, found that women with higher education are more likely to engage in socially responsible consumption compared to men or consumers with lower education. In spite of inconsistent results in relation to the effects of gender on socially responsible purchasing, it

has been found that product labeling schemes seem to be more effective towards women than men (Dickson, 2001; Micheletti, 2004; Wessells, Donath, & Johnson, 1999). That is, women tend to react more to products with certified labels, such as sweatshop-free or environmentally friendly labels, compared to men. In terms of the effects of age on ethical behavioral intention, all results of the studies were inconclusive (Birtwistle & Moore, 2007; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Dickson, 2001). However, Witkowski and Reddy (2010) suggested that young people may have less chance to consume ethically, considering the limited financial resources and opportunities such as availability of transportation. Studies also identified the impact of levels of income on socially responsible consumption. Consumers with higher income are suggested to actively engage in ethical consumption behavior as they can afford the higher price (Cervellon et al., 2010; Finisterra do Paco et al., 2009; Starr, 2009; Straughan & Roberts, 1999; Webster, 1975). However, another study found that middle-income consumers are more likely to practice sustainable consumption through “3R (reduce-reuse-recycle) actions” than consumers of higher income (Abeliotis, Koniari, & Sardianou, 2010). That is, average-income consumers not only reuse and recycle products but reduce the use of natural resources and toxic materials in order to protect the global environment. High-income consumers, however, tend to waste natural resources by leaving the tap water running, not turning off lights when going out, or using their car to drive to work. Also, no-sweat labels were reported to impact consumers’ purchase intention regardless of income, age, status of employment, but the label users tend to be women of lower education levels (Dickson, 2001). Unlike this finding, Littrell and Dickson (1999) identified that consumers of alternative trading organizations have attained higher education.

In addition to demographic factors, researchers also investigated ethical consumers’ characteristics. Brooker (1976) suggested that ethical consumers tend to possess self-actualizing personality. Individuals of this characteristic tend to take action, such as

purchasing socially responsible products, to benefit the society as a whole as well as themselves. Ethical consumers were also reported to have strong opinion leadership and to shop carefully by researching information on products before making purchases (Shrum, et al., 1995). In addition, they are likely to be innovative (Bhate, 2001), outgoing, agreeable, and conscious (Fraj & Martinez, 2006). Although many studies have tried to distinguish ethical consumers from non-ethical consumers using socio-demographics and personality traits, these variables have not clearly examined who ethical consumers are. It may be more useful to study variables that can better predict consumers' ethical behavioral intention and the relationship between the variables and socially responsible consumption behavioral intention (Shaw & Clarke, 1999).

Considering the definition of ethics, which inquires about individuals' moral judgment, standards, and rules of conduct (Taylor, 1975), ethical consumers can also be those who exhibit consumer ethics in the apparel shopping situation (King & Dennis, 2006). That is, consumers who hold strong consumer ethics, tend to perform their rightness in certain actions as a buyer or potential buyer (Dodge, Edwards, & Fullerton, 1996). For example, they do not engage in fraudulent returning behavior, such as purchasing clothing with an intention to return after using it or returning intentionally damaged clothing (Piron & Young, 2000). Researchers tried to understand psychographic characteristics of consumers who present unethical returning behavior, but research that focused on demographic factors of such consumers was relatively limited. Only the study of Shen and Dickson (2001) informed that cultural values can determine consumers' ethical or unethical behavioral intention. The finding suggested that consumers in U.S. culture are more likely to accept unethical clothing consumption activities than those in the Chinese culture. As discussed briefly in Chapter one, the characteristics of consumers who engage in return frauds tend to be high in materialism (Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003; Johnson & Rhee, 2008) and Machiavellianism (Shen &

Dickson, 2001), and impulsive (Kang & Johnson, 2009). Consumers' fraudulent returning behavior will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

Ethical Traits

Today, societies around the world are undertaking crucial challenges. The environmental problems and the social issues have been generated by global companies' pursuit of producing products with lower costs to fulfill consumers' needs to be trendy but with lower expenditures. Apparel companies are also struggling because some consumers exploit their lenient return policies, which initially began as part of customer service. Certain personal traits, however, may make consumers avoid purchases that have negative effects on the environment and society or fraudulent purchasing behavior. It is thereby important to find out what types of consumer traits may lead consumers to behave ethically during the process of shopping apparel products.

The hierarchical relationship does exist among values, attitudes, intentions, and behaviors (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Bagozzi, 1981; Dabholkar & Bagozzi, 2002; Dickson, 2000; Scott & Lamont, 1973; Shaw & Shiu, 2002). Abstract personal values influence individuals' formation of attitudes toward certain objects or situations, which in turn leads to their behaviors. Values are individuals' abstract beliefs that are concentrated on establishing their self-concept, and appear as certain forms of personal traits (Smith, 1982). They support individuals in assessing problems or situations and determine their social and political positions as a consumer. Because personal values can be the basis for ethical action, it is valuable to study in terms of what kinds of ethical traits better explain consumers' attitudes toward socially responsible business practices, and predict their ethical behavioral intention in the context of apparel.

To investigate consumers' ethical traits, therefore, the study includes altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation, with the assumption that consumers' ethical attitudes and

behaviors are guided by altruistic, ethical considerations for others (Shaw, Shiu, & Clarke, 2000). By including these three concepts as ethical traits, the study aims to investigate their roles in predicting ethical consumer behavior.

As there is little research that investigated the relationship between ethical traits and ethical post-purchasing intention (i.e., returning intention), this section will focus on reviewing literature in relation to socially responsible apparel purchasing intention.

Altruism.

In today's global economy, consumers increasingly consider environmental and humanitarian issues when they purchase products more than ever before (Powers & Hopkins, 2006). This kind of consumer trait can be described as altruism. It is defined as pro-social actions taken by an individual with voluntary intention to benefit others without any self-interested motivation (Eisenberg, 1986; Gates & Steane, 2009; Krebs, 1970; Macaulay & Berkowitz, 1970; Powers & Hopkins, 2006; Staub, 1978). There are four categorical levels of altruism including *self-oriented* or *self-regarding*, *concerned*, *respectful*, and *altruistic* people. It is proposed that people need to be selfish in every respect of their lives (Peikoff, 2006). In general, these can be described as self-oriented or self-regarding people who do not concern about other people's benefits (Gates & Steane, 2009). Concerned people consider other peoples' benefits, respectful people restrict their behaviors for the benefits of others; on the other hand, altruistic people, on a higher level, are mostly motivated by good wishes to others (Schmidtz, 1993). With this respect, consumers' altruistic value may provide a useful basis to understand their attitude, intention, and behavior in relation to social responsibility and consumer ethics.

With its growing importance, altruism is increasingly included in many ethics and business literature (Batson, 1998; Carman, 1992; Gassler, 1998; Gates & Steane, 2009; Kelly & Hoffman, 1997; Locke & Woiceshyn, 1995; Mitchell, 1999; Mostafa, 2009). In order to

take advantage of consumers' growing sense of altruism, brands and companies are applying the idea into their business philanthropies to sustain long-term success (Brock, 2005; Dean, 2003; Nan & Heo, 2007; Windsor, 2006). This business activity is called corporate social responsibility (CSR), and ethical CSR practices include a basic shared principle of self-restraint and altruism (Benabou & Tirole, 2010; Windsor, 2006). With an effort to fulfill the demand for altruism, companies are increasingly engaging in a variety of socially responsible activities including producing environmental friendly products, setting laws of labor standards for fair labor practices, as well as donating money to charities and sponsoring special events (Barone, 2001). In relation to these activities, there have been debates if companies need to practice altruistic business activities because the purpose of their establishment is to make profitability and fulfill the need of shareholders. It is argued that greater social output is achieved by strategic approaches rather than by altruistic approaches (Husted & Salazar, 2006). In relation to this idea, Brock (2005) suggested that it may need time and resources to understand the nature and broad issues regarding CSR before the social and economic benefits are realized. In spite of the disputes, there are definitely growing demand for altruism among consumers, shareholders, employees, governments, and financial and non-governmental organizations (Benabou & Tirole, 2010; Brock, 2005; Henderson & Malani, 2009). They expect companies to be proactive in determining economic, environmental, and social welfare for communities in which they run businesses. Henderson and Malani (2009) insisted that even though CSR may cost and be against the purpose of their establishment to enhance profitability, consumers, employees, and shareholders may have preferences for altruism accepting tradeoffs. For examples, there may be some shareholders and employees who put more importance on altruistic utility than reward maximization. Some consumers may be willing to pay more for the same product if it is accompanied with altruism. Even though companies implement CSR, however, criticism

exists regarding if they are truly altruistic or self-interested (Benabou & Tirole, 2010; Brock, 2005; Henderson & Malani, 2009). Gates and Steane (2009) questioned that companies do good things for the society with altruistic motivation. Their altruistic philanthropy may merely be a strategic management with the scheme of enhancing or maintaining their reputation. Consumers, however, present their favorable attitudes toward socially responsible companies and intents to support such companies, only when the companies are motivated by being truly altruistic, not by recovering their bad images or by pursuing self-interests (Bae & Cameron, 2006; Barone, Miyazaki, & Taylor, 2000; Dean, 2003; Nan & Heo, 2007; Ramasamy, Yeung, & Au, 2010). Likewise, numerous studies have been done in relation to the concept of altruism, which is used as a business philosophy in implementing CSR and as a measurement in terms of how consumers perceive companies' CSR activities.

Altruism has been also used for consumer research as an antecedent to predict consumer behavior. Previous studies proved that altruism is a driving force of consumers to act socially responsibly or ethically. The basic consumer behavior regarding altruism may come into the form of protecting environment, such as saving energy or recycling (Hallin, 1995; Hopper & Neilsen, 1991; Stern, Dietz, & Kalof, 1993; Vining & Ebreo, 1992). In the moral norm-activation theory of altruism, Schwartz (1973) insisted that consumers who have altruistic values act in a pro-environmental way. In relation to this, researchers found that altruism is an important determinant that leads consumers to protect the environment (Cleveland, Kalamas, & Laroche, 2005; Granzin & Olsen, 1991). In addition to these, many studies have been done investigating how altruism influences consumers' shopping behavioral intention. Paek and Nelson (2009) tested the effects of altruism on consumers' willingness to engage in buycotting. Here, buycotting is an activity to reward socially responsible companies, while boycotting is intended to penalize non-socially responsible companies. The result revealed that altruism is an important predictor of consumers'

boycotting and boycotting behavior (Paek & Nelson, 2009). In a similar study, Chelminski and Coulter (2007) studied the effects of consumer altruism on complaining behavior in the context of a dissatisfactory shopping experience. Complaining behavior refers to a consumer's direct indication at a company at fault and negative communication with others about the company (Singh, 1988). The researchers found that altruistic consumers are motivated to raise their voices in an attempt to warn the company about their dissatisfactory shopping experience and prevent other consumers from having the same situation. It was also found that the greater the consumers' altruism, the greater the tendency to express complaint to the company at fault, and the greater the likelihood to deliver negative word-of-mouth to others (Chelminski & Coulter, 2007). Researchers also investigated the effect of altruism on consumers' green consumption behavior. Mostafa (2006) examined factors that influence the intention to purchase green products among Egyptian consumers, and altruism was one of the factors along with consumers' ecological knowledge, concern, and attitudes. Through the study, it was concluded that altruism is positively related to consumers' intention to purchase green products. In 2009, Mostafa replicated the study to examine green consumption behavior among Kuwait consumers and similar altruistic values were correlated with consumers' green consumption behavioral intention.

Researchers have recently focused on altruism as a way of fulfilling an individual's desire to gain status. Such kind of altruism can be explained by the concept of *conspicuous altruism*, which is defined as an individual's altruistic behavior to get reputation among group members (Roberts, 1998; Van Vugt, Roberts, & Hardy, 2007). Griskevicius (2008) questioned what makes people go green by switching to environmentally friendly behaviors. Conspicuous altruism was mentioned as one way of achieving status and reputation. That is, individuals engage in pro-social behaviors, such as conservation, especially in public, in order to earn an altruistic reputation. Although green products (e.g., hybrid cars or organic

cotton) do not provide certain luxuries, conveniences, or performance, green products definitely enable people to appear pro-social, providing an important reputational benefit (Griskevicius, 2008; Griskevicius, Tybur, & Van den Bergh, 2010). Instead of green products, Brown (2008) focused on fair trade products, such as fair trade coffee, as a commodification of altruism. Fair trade products are sold with a purpose to improve the social, economic, and environmental living conditions of producers in Central and South America, Africa, and some of Asia (Littrell & Dickson, 1999). Brown (2008) studied the motivation of consumers who purchase fair trade products and found that consumers purchase such products to signal their altruism to others with an attempt to gain status. After reviewing business and consumer behavior literature regarding charitable giving, Fine (2010) brought up the themes of altruism and hedonism. White and Peloza (2009) tested whether other-benefit appeals generate more positive donor support than self-benefit appeals in situations when public self-image concerns are heightened. Benefits to the self can refer to the situations when people feel good about providing donation, but benefits to others indicate the specific means in which the lives of experiences of charity recipients will be improved (Fine, 2010). The basic assumption of the study was that helping can be egoistic or self-serving rather than altruistic reasons (White & Peloza, 2009). The researchers' prediction was supported that other-benefit appeals are more effective than self-benefit appeals when donors are publicly accountable for their responses. This also reflects the tendency of consumers to manage impressions by acting in normatively approved ways (White & Peloza, 2009). Fine (2010) concluded her literature review by saying that some people, who signal their status through luxury hand bags or expensive watches, may be persuaded to fulfill their desire through altruistic consumption.

More specifically, researchers also investigated consumers' altruism in the context of apparel and textiles. Dickson (2000) investigated female consumers' intentions to purchase

from socially responsible apparel companies. The findings revealed that product attributes, such as comfort, fit, or quality, are more related to consumers' purchase intentions than altruism. Similar to these studies, researchers investigated fair-trade consumers to find out whether altruism has an effect on consumers' intentions to purchase hand-crafted apparel and textiles from alternative trade organizations (ATOs) (Dickson & Littrell, 1996, 1997; Dickson, 1994). ATOs refer to companies that sell crafts or clothing from developing countries with the purpose of helping the producers by maximizing the prices. The results of the studies suggested that even though consumers felt sympathetic to the goals of ATOs, they did not present their willingness to purchase ATOs' products. In 2009, Hustvedt and Dickson investigated organic cotton apparel consumers. The study divided the respondents into two groups: the Non-User (62% of the sample) and the Content-User (38% of the sample) segment. The second segment was most interested in the organic cotton content of the t-shirt, presenting their purchase likelihood of the organic cotton content. This group was mostly motivated by their beliefs that the purchase would benefit themselves, the organic industry, and the environment. Consumers in both groups, however, showed their self-centered behavioral beliefs more than altruistic behavioral beliefs, pointing out that the organic cotton purchase would improve their health and the health of their family (Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009).

Even though other factors including product-specific criteria have more of an influence on apparel consumers' decision making than altruism, in general, altruism has a strong effect on consumers' conservation and ethical consumption behavioral intention (Cleveland et al., 2005; Granzin & Olsen, 1991; Powers & Hopkins, 2006). It is also a way for consumers to signal their status (Fine, 2010; White & Peloza, 2009). As social beings, consumers make decisions considering others. In relation to this notion, Simon (1993) suggested that individuals do not form their preferences in isolation from others. Instead,

altruism is especially generated from group and organizational loyalties, and most importantly plays a basic and major role in society. Although there exist a variety of factors that influence consumers' decision making, altruism is considered to generate an essential secondary effect (Simon, 1993). Given this reasoning, the following hypothesis was developed:

H1a: Altruism will have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.

Ethical concerns.

Environmental and societal issues have been growing concerns and topics among scholars and business leaders. Consumers' growing concerns in ethical issues have also been well reported (Williams, Taylor, & Howard, 2005). According to the Cotton Incorporated research ("Passive Activism," 2010), around 80 percent of consumers felt concerned about ethical issues: water pollution (85%), food contamination (84%), air pollution (83%), child labor practices (79%), and limited natural resources (77%). People became aware of such issues during the 1970s (Anderson & Cunningham, 1972), and the late 1980s and the 1990s observed some major changes in their attitudes and purchase motivation in relation to product-related values that influence ethical issues (Harrison, 1997; Macchiette & Roy, 1994). Concerns about the environmental and social consequences have led consumers to practice responsible choices (Barnett & Cloke, 2010; Barnett, Cafaro, & Newholm, 2005). Such consumers' ethical behavior is not only their spontaneous reaction generated by concerns, but a phenomenon deliberately driven by pressure groups, which are also called as public interest groups (Libby, 1998) or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Murphy & Bendell, 2001). The groups endeavor to achieve their campaign goals for the wellness of the society (Barnett & Cloke, 2010; Birtwistle & Moore, 2007; Harrison, 2005).

Environmental concerns were first ignited among people before ethical issues came to the public awareness. Dunlap and Jones (2002) defined environmental concern as “the degree to which people are aware of problems regarding the environment and support efforts to solve them and/or indicate a willingness to contribute personally to their solution” (p. 485). It can also be defined as “the degree of emotionality and level of knowledge, and readiness to change behavior” (Finisterra do Paco & Barata Raposo, 2010, p. 431; Maloney, Ward, & Braucht, 1975). Concerns about the environment include scarce resources (Kilbourne, McDonagh, & Prothero, 1997) and chemical residues (Black, 2008; Chen & Burns, 2006), as well as the disposal of clothing and increasing textile waste resulted from the trend of fast fashion (Birtwistle & Moore, 2007; Morgan & Birtwistle, 2009). Environmental concerns are one of popular variables to investigate environmental consumer behavioral intention (Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009). Mostafa (2009) studied the relationship between environmental concerns among Kuwait consumers and their intention toward green consumption. In the study, the researcher found that environmental concerns were related to green purchase intention, and green consumers and non-consumers were different in terms of their environmental awareness. Other researchers also identified segmented consumers as well as their different environmental consciousness and green consumption intention and behavior. In their study of investigating consumers’ willingness to purchase organic cotton apparel, Hustvedt and Dickson (2009) found a greater green consumer segment even though they occupied smaller percentage of total participants (38% of the total). The segment was more concerned about the impact of clothing production on the environment, and preferred to buy locally. Compared to other consumer segments, they had a strong self-identity as organic, environmental, and socially responsible consumers. In relation to the effect of ethical concerns on the purchase intention of green fashion products, a study was performed to find out cultural difference between France and Canada (Cervellon et al., 2010). It was found that

environmental protection, health impact, and ethical concerns are the most important factors to engage in a green fashion purchase. Although the intentions to purchase green fashion products were not significantly different among the samples, Canadian consumers showed higher purchase intentions than French consumers. Regarding this, the researchers suggested that North American consumers are more aware of and concerned about the impact of clothing production on the environment, probably due to the effects of many famous fashion brands claiming their ethical concerns throughout business practices, such as Nike, American Apparel, Patagonia, or Levi Strauss & Co. (Cervellon et al., 2010).

Ethical concerns include a broader range of issues. Cowe and Williams (2000) thereby incorporated environmental issues into ethical concerns: an individual's worries and interests about ethical issues, such as the environment, animal welfare, fair trade, and social aspects of labor standards, as well as more self-interested health concerns. It was reported that consumers' concerns regarding ethical issues have an impact on the shift of consumer values from self-focused to other-focused (Embley, 1993; Mcchiette & Roy, 1994). In relation to the studies examining the impact of ethical concerns on purchase intention and behavior, most studies have been done in the context of apparel and textiles, as clothing market is considered as an emerging area of particular consumer concerns (Joergens, 2006; Shaw, Hogg, Wilson, Shui, & Hassan, 2006; Valor, 2007). Besides from environmental impacts, the apparel industry brings up many ethical issues, such as worker exploitation in developing countries including child labor, fair trade, and animal welfare (Adams, 2002; Castaldo et al., 2009; Dickson, 1999; Halepete et al., 2009; Smestad, 2009; Sneddon et al., 2010). Since the ethical consumption was raised as an important issue during the 1990s, socially conscious consumers have showed their willingness to express social concerns through their consumption (Roberts, 1995). Even though some exceptions may exist, however, it is generally agreed among researchers that consumers' ethical concerns are not

directly connected to their purchase behavior (Auger, Devinney, & Louviere, 2007; Belk, Devinney, & Eckhardt, 2005; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Chatzidakis, Hibbert, & Smith, 2007; Finisterra do Paco et al., 2009).

Researchers in the area of apparel consumer studies have also concurred that consumers may not translate their ethical concerns into ethical purchase behavior, except for certain consumers who possess strong ethical values (Kim & Damhorst, 1998). However, it is accepted that ethically-concerned consumers have favorable attitudes toward socially responsible businesses and show their willingness to support such companies (Dickson, 1999; Rudell, 2006). It is hard to predict consumers' actual purchasing behavior because of the complexity, but researchers have found some clues regarding the reasons why consumers rarely purchase ethical products in spite of their growing concerns. In their exploratory study, Shaw and Clarke (1999) studied which situations impede ethical consumers to purchase socially responsible products. Participants explained that the lack of support from significant others make them feel isolated, which in turn hinders ethical purchasing. It is also suggested that consumers' lack of knowledge, such as the impacts of apparel production on the environment and the society, the consequences of their actions, or socially responsible companies, may prevent them from purchasing ethical products (Dickson, 2000; Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008; Kim & Damhorst, 1998; Shaw & Duff, 2002; Shaw, Shui, Hogg, Wilson, & Hassan, 2004). In relation to worker exploitation during the process of apparel production, Dickson (2000) insisted that greater knowledge of apparel industry practices is related to greater concern for workers, which in turn directs into consumers' willingness to support socially responsible apparel businesses. Their willingness to support the businesses will increase to a point that more directly influences ethical purchasing. In addition to lack of information, in their study about sweatshop concerns and clothing choice, Shaw et al. (2004) found the importance of availability of socially responsible products or stores that carry such

products. The researchers explained that information and availability are the most important factors that enhance consumers' ethical choices. Credibility of ethical business practices or socially responsible labeling is also considered as one of the critical factors that enhance the positive relationship between ethical concerns and ethical purchasing (Sneddon et al., 2010).

Even though the actions of ethically-concerned consumers at times seem to be contradictory, ethical concerns are still considered as an essential consumer trait to build positive attitudes towards social responsibility and ultimately to socially responsible purchasing. Indeed, consumers' motivations to behave ethically are the function of their stages of ethical awareness, concern, and action (Freestone & McGoldrick, 2008). If consumers are only aware but not concerned about ethical issues, their motivation is not strong enough to take any forms of actions on the matters. This leads to the hypothesis:

H1b: Ethical concerns will have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.

Ethical obligation.

Ethical obligation can be considered as an antecedent to attitude in the context of ethical consumer behavior. It is defined as "an individual's internalized ethical rules, which reflect personal beliefs about appropriate behavior" (Shaw & Shiu, 2002, p. 287). An ethical consumer is considered as someone who holds strong feelings of responsibility toward others, which lead them to engage in ethical consumption behavior (Shaw & Clarke, 1999). While altruism refers to pro-social actions to benefit others without any consideration of self-interests (Gates & Steane, 2009), ethical concerns refer to worries and interests about ethical issues that are related to the environment and society (Cowe & Williams, 2000). Ethical concerns can be generated by self-focused reasons as well as other-focused reasons because individuals are also included in the environment and society. Meanwhile, ethical obligation is structured ethical rules that provide directions to individuals in terms of what is appropriate

and how to behave (Shaw & Shiu, 2002). Because of its personal responsibility toward others, it was discussed that ethical obligation is more effective to explain ethical consumer behavior than ethical concerns (Shaw et al., 2000).

Using regression analysis method, Shaw and Shiu (2003) identified ethical obligation's casual link with self-identity, which refers to "the pertinent part of an individual's self that related to a particular behavior" (Shaw & Shiu, 2002, p. 287), in the prediction of attitude toward the purchase of fairly traded grocery products. Like the finding of the study conducted by Shaw and Clarke (1999), the study suggested that consumers consider ethical issues as an important part of their self-identity (Shaw & Shiu, 2003). To better understand the direct contribution of ethical obligation and self-identity in the prediction of behavioral intention, the method of structural equation modeling was used by Shaw and Shiu (2002). The researchers could obtain similar results with the study conducted by Shaw et al. (2000), recognizing that attitude is driven by a sense of ethical obligation and self-identity with ethical issues, instead of self-motivated concerns.

Some researchers used another term, moral obligation or moral responsibility, instead of using ethical obligation. Moral obligation had been considered as a prevalent factor that predicts ecological behavior. Kaiser and Shimoda (1999) compared the feelings of moral responsibility with those of conventional responsibility to investigate which one better predicts individuals' ecological behavior. Conventional responsibility is driven by individuals' desire for social approval, and requires knowledge about what societies expect them to do (Kelman & Hamilton, 1989). Ecological behavior, however, is considered to happen through moral-related feelings, which is called moral responsibility (Kahn & Friedman, 1995). Structural equation analyses confirmed the effects of moral responsibility on consumers' ecologically responsible behavior, such as recycling. Their moral responsibility was related to the feelings of guilt. Due to the personal feelings of guilt,

consumers may feel morally responsible rather than conventionally responsible for the environment.

In relation to the role of ethical obligation in the domain of apparel consumption behavior, little research is found. Using a grounded theory and the sample of university students, Valor (2007) proposed a model that explains the influences of information about labor abuses on consumers' clothing choices. The researcher labeled the contradiction of consumers' intention and actual behavior as "ambivalence," and explained that this is caused due to the three related but independent factors: "should" (ethical obligation), "want" (conflicting identities), and "can" (personal action to change) (Valor, 2007, p. 688). The first theme was participants' perception of ethical obligation, which includes three sub-themes: self-perception of citizenship, visibility, and importance. Respondents who considered citizenship as an important trait of their self-identity also showed higher levels of ethical obligation. Some of the respondents exhibited lower levels of awareness and understanding regarding labor abuses. That is, labor abuses had low levels of visibility among the respondents. They perceived ethical obligation highly, on the other hand, and felt a strong responsibility toward ethical issues because the issues were familiar and important to them. Similar to this, an exploratory study found the feelings of ethical obligation among consumers in the United Kingdom, and they were connected to ethical purchasing only when the price difference was small (Bray et al., 2010). The consumers expressed the difficulties of shopping ethically, and provided various reasons including products' low quality compared to the high prices, as well as lack of information and cynicism against companies' ethical claims. Lee (2009) measured ethical obligation using a quantitative method to investigate its role in the prediction of college students' purchase behavior of fashion counterfeit goods. The researcher assumed that ethical obligation has a negative effect on college students' attitudes toward the purchase of fashion counterfeit goods, but the relationship was not influential.

This may be due to students' lack of knowledge regarding the negative impacts of counterfeit businesses on the economy and the society. The respondents did not think that purchasing counterfeit goods was unethical, instead, they considered counterfeits as an alternative fashion item they could select (Lee, 2009).

As Shaw and Shiu (2002) suggested, consumers who possess strong feelings of ethical obligation form favorable attitudes to purchase socially responsible products, influenced by not only self-motivated concerns to ethical issues but also a sense of ethical obligation. Obligation for the welfare of others is a common concern shared by many ethical consumers beyond their own interests (Stern et al., 1993). This sense of personal obligation may be a determinant in which consumers form favorable attitudes toward socially responsible activities and choose to act ethically to make a difference. McGregor (2010) also suggested that ethical consumers will behave based on their humility, moral discipline, and ethical obligation. They consider themselves with respect to other-interests and strive to contribute to the societies for future generations by mediating their decision processes. With the reasoning, the hypothesis was developed:

H1c: Ethical obligation will have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.

Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry and Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention

Attitude is a central part in consumer decision-making. Values are turned into positive or negative attitude, stimulated by personal experiences or relative information. This can be a baseline for a consumer to act in a certain way. If a person believes that certain action will bring positive outcome, he or she is likely to take an action (Bhaduri & Ha-Brookshire, 2011). That is, if a consumer has positive attitudes toward social responsibility, the consumer will act in the way to accomplish social responsibility. Before investigating ethical consumer

behavior, it is important to study how consumers think about social responsibility, specifically in the apparel and textiles industry. These may predict consumers' behavioral intention to purchase socially responsible apparel or return ethically.

Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.

Responsibility is explained as “a composite of attitude elements reflecting behavior classifiable as reliable, accountable, loyal, or doing an effective job” (Harris, 1957, p. 322). Rather than a knowledge, skill, or aptitude, it is more an attitude: attitudes toward work or any personal relationships with other people including family and the community (Harris et al., 1954). Social responsibility is therefore an individual's determined attitude toward the relationships that happen in the circle of society from family to communities and to the world. Attitudes tend to be consistent and are turned into certain forms of behavior incorporating other attitudes. Individuals who have positive attitudes toward social responsibility are likely to control themselves to present dependability, trustworthiness, and a sense of obligation as a member of a group or society (Gough, McClosky, & Meehl, 1952; Schaie, 1959). They also carefully consider the possible consequences of their behavior. Socially responsible attitudes do not necessarily require being a leader in a group or higher intelligence than average, but need a sense of integrity and commitment to the group or others (Gough et al., 1952).

Researchers have measured individuals' attitudes toward social responsibility. Two most popular scales in measuring them are the responsibility scale of Gough et al. (1952) and social attitudes scale of Harris (1957). In their study, Gough et al. (1952) revealed that individuals who possess good socially responsible attitudes are actually intelligent and successful in their academic performances. Schaie (1959) also found the positive correlation between socially responsible attitudes and individuals' intelligence, flexibility, and education. People who scored high on the measure of social responsibility were knowledgeable and had

their intellectual capacity to handle such information. Individuals' participation in society means their acceptance and adoption of the society's attitudes and values. Conservative people may exhibit more favorable attitudes toward social responsibility than people who are less conservative because they seem to feel stronger obligation toward something right. In this respect, Berkowitz and Lutterman (1968) found that socially responsible people are more likely to be religious young women with higher education status, liked and trusted by other people.

Social responsibility is one of the major business concepts that have been implemented by many business practitioners. It has also been the focus of attention and interest of many apparel and textile companies (Islam & Deegan, 2010; Perry & Towers, 2009). The process of apparel production generates a broad range of ethical issues from environmental impacts to human rights. As ethical issues in the apparel and textiles industry have been focused, the definition of social responsibility specifically for the industry is needed. Dickson and Eckman (2006) defined socially responsible apparel and textile business with three conceptual dimensions, including:

1. An *orientation* encompassing the environment, its people, the apparel/textile products made and consumed, and the systematic impact that production, marketing, and consumption of these products and their component parts has on multiple stakeholders and the environment
2. A *philosophy* that balances ethics/morality with profitability, which is achieved through accountability-based business decisions and strategies
3. A desire for *outcomes* that positively affect, or do very little harm to, the world and its people (Dickson & Eckman, 2006, p. 188).

With consumers' growing concerns with the impact of apparel production (Joergens, 2006), apparel and textiles companies have increasingly participated in socially responsible

production. Because consumers are ultimate users of the goods produced by apparel companies, studying consumers' attitudes toward socially responsible apparel is important to encourage ethical consumer behavior and consequently to enhance more ethical business practices. Even though consumer attitudes may not always predict actual behavior, it is generally believed that positive attitudes ultimately influence socially responsible purchasing behavior (Kim, Littrell, & Ogle, 1999).

Textile wet processing, including dyeing, printing, and finishing, have long been criticized for its harmful impact on the environment (Chen & Burns, 2006). It is generally known that synthetic fibers, such as nylon and polyester, have adverse environmental impacts because of the use and disposal of hazardous chemicals during the production process and their non-biodegradable nature. However, natural fibers like cotton and wool are not exceptional in their adverse impacts on the environment (Chen & Burns, 2006). In spite of its natural, renewable, and recyclable image, cotton generates adverse environmental impacts during the production process, and they are mainly due to the heavy use of toxic chemicals such as defoliants, pesticides, and fungicides (Chen & Burns, 2006). It is also criticized by its excessive water consumption during its production (Ha-Brookshire & Norum, 2011). To confront these problems, organic cotton was introduced, which is produced by natural fertilizers. Because naturally colored cotton can resist pests and disease better than traditional white cotton, it can reduce or eliminate the use of synthetic chemicals (Chen & Burns, 2006). In relation to this issue, Ha-Brookshire and Norum (2011) investigated consumers' attitudes toward organic, sustainable, and US-grown cotton shirts. The result revealed the positive relationship between attitudes toward socially responsible cotton apparel and willingness to pay more for the products. Consumers are willing to pay more for organic cotton shirts with brand names, and for sustainable cotton shirts with simpler care requirements. Consumers also expressed concerns about cotton farmers in the United States and showed more

willingness to pay more for US-grown cotton shirts when the color and fit of the products satisfy them. Among consumer groups, young women showed the most positive attitudes to pay a premium for such products. Most importantly, however, consumers who have the strongest attitudes toward the environment tend to avoid buying any cotton products. They may think less or non-consumption is more environmentally safe than buying socially responsible cotton apparel. Similarly, Hustvedt and Bernard (2008) investigated Texas consumers' willingness to pay more for organic cotton socks, and found that they prefer local fibers to US-grown or imported fibers. Even though the production of wool does not require the use of fertilizers or herbicides, other chemicals are used to turn wool into wearable and washable fabrics (Chen & Burns, 2006). In terms of environmental impacts, however, the consumers did not express negative attitudes toward wool products because they did not recognize any harmful effects from them. Contrast to this, Sneddon et al. (2010) recognized that consumers of wool apparel have positive attitudes towards the broad range of ethical issues including labor rights issues and environmental sustainability, and animal welfare, but their positive attitudes to purchase socially responsible apparel were influenced by perceived credibility of product labeling that provides information regarding socially responsible procedures.

As the world is globalized, companies can source internationally with lowering overall costs, but this has been trapped by sweatshop issues. This indictment pointed to the use of child labor, widespread harassment and abuse, poor working conditions, and extremely low wages (Klein, 2002). Consumers in the United States seem to have quite positive attitudes towards the U.S. apparel industry, but perceive foreign apparel industries negatively (Dickson, 2000, 2001). Consumers' negative attitudes are mostly generated by sweatshop practices in foreign countries. Such negative attitudes were revealed to have impacts on consumers' desire to avoid sweatshop apparel (Shaw et al., 2007). Consumers' emotive

feelings towards the labor issues can be effective in forming positive intention to avoid such clothing. Even though the researchers did not determine the strong relationship between attitudes and behavior, they determined necessity for the motivational stage of desire in connecting attitudes to intention. They also discussed the role of plan as a volitional construct that can impact behavior. Like other studies, perceived difficulties at the point of intention were identified (Dickson, 2000; Shaw et al., 2004). For example, even though consumers have intentions to purchase sweatshop-free apparel, lack of stores carrying such products or the limited range of choices hinders them from buying such apparel. In spite of the barriers in purchasing sweatshop-free apparel, consumers who have strong attitudes towards labor issues expressed their willingness to pay a premium for such clothes (Rudell, 2006). As for social labeling, they tend to perceive lack of credibility for the information on labels or labels themselves. This may be due to prematurity of social labeling or lack of availability (Sneddon et al., 2010).

Behavioral intention is defined as “a person’s subjective probability that he will perform some behavior” (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 288). In the cognitive progression of attitude-intention-behavior, positive attitude is suggested to be an effective factor in predicting intentions to engage in certain behavior. It is however questionable if attitudes or intentions can actually inform behavior in spite of the argument of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). Intentions can be a part of factors that predict behavior, but it is generally agreed that behavior is formed with various factors. Intentions by themselves are considered to be a poor predictor of behavior (Bagozzi, 1993). Especially, in the area of ethical consumer behavior, the argument is more supportive. For this reason, it is important not only to investigate consumers’ intention to purchase socially responsible apparel through their complex decision processes, but also to find out factors that may impede socially responsible purchase behavior.

Socially responsible apparel purchase intention, behavior, and impeding factors.

Socially responsible apparel means all kinds of clothing that is produced in an ethical manner. Apparel made from organic, disposable, or recycled fabrics without labor exploitation is an example. Fair trade and animal friendly apparel are also included in the product category. Purchase intention refers to a buyer's mental state that leads him or her to decide to acquire certain products or services in the near future (Howard, 1989). Based on the argument of Schwartz (2010) regarding non-socially responsible practices, the definition of socially responsible apparel purchase intention was developed for the study. It can be defined as consumers' willingness to purchase apparel that is produced through the process of minimizing or eliminating exploitation, avoidable suffering, and environmental damage. There is actually growing number of consumers who express their ethical concerns and interests through consumption. Companies are accordingly encouraged to run their business in a socially responsible manner because information regarding non-socially responsible activities negatively impacts their profitability and perception from consumers. In terms of socially responsible purchasing, however, positive intentions towards socially responsible products or brands do not necessarily turn into actual purchases even though consumers may boycott goods produced by unethical companies or brands (Carrington et al., 2010; Folkes & Kamins, 1999; Spranca, Minsk, & Baron, 1991). That is, consumers will not automatically reward socially responsible companies even though they may punish non-socially responsible companies by boycotting their products (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). It is therefore important to understand why ethically-minded consumers do not actively express their social responsibility by purchasing socially responsible apparel products.

It is inconclusive that consumers will reward socially responsible companies in spite of their positive attitudes towards such companies (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Castaldo et al., 2009). It is suggested that outcomes of socially responsible business activities also depend on

the type of products (Castaldo et al., 2009). When the dominant reason for purchases heavily rely on such attributes as quality, convenience, or the like, consumers may put less importance on companies' socially responsible behavior. When it comes to fashion, it is more complicated to investigate consumers' ethical purchasing behavior because apparel products are high-involvement goods.

Selecting clothing is a complex process due to its biological, aesthetic, and social roles. Fashion is not only a material product that provides functionality for protection and social interaction, but a symbolic product which plays an integral role in constructing self-identity and expressing through appearance (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Kaiser, 1990). An individual uses fashion to participate in certain social groups and classes, or to express individuality and uniqueness (Kim et al., 1999; Rose, Shoham, Kahle, & Batra, 1994). Due to these complex roles of fashion, investigating purchasing behavior of socially responsible apparel products is not easy and simple. Although ethical consumption can function as a way of expressing personal identity and social values with the creation of individual, other factors may prevail over consumers' ethical values. Consumers have reported that purchases of socially responsible apparel will be possible when the price, design, quality, or the like is equivalent to the conventional clothes (Bhaduri & Ha-Brookshire, 2011; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Dickson, 1999; Joergens, 2006; Kim et al., 1999; Mazar & Zhong, 2010). As fashion is frequently used to express harmonized self-image and balanced self-identity, consumers may not purchase socially responsible apparel when it is not adequate for their self-explanation in spite of their concerns with ethical issues. The ethical production process of clothing is not an enough reason for consumers to take an action. Consumers want to renew their style and appearance in accordance with the ever-changing fashion trend (Niinimäki, 2010). Beard (2008) argued that socially responsible apparel products should also be fashionable to satisfy consumers' aesthetic needs. Together with style, price is also one of dominant factors that

heavily influences on consumers' decision making. As lots of available options exist right in front of consumers in choosing clothing suitable for their tastes and budgets with convenience, consumers do not have a real opportunity to purchase socially responsible apparel (Joergens, 2006). Niinimaki (2010) revealed that consumers, who present strong ethical commitment, tend to put more importance on ethicality than renewing their appearance or aesthetic values. Ethical commitment and ethical values were reported to have strong influence on purchasing ethically made garment with little harmful effects on the environment. All consumers, however, expressed that quality and aesthetics are crucial factors in selecting clothing, even environmentally friendly clothing. In the qualitative research, Hiller Connell (2010) identified that consumers perceive environmentally friendly clothing to be less fashionable and think it is made more for consumers of sub-culture than for fashion conscious consumers of the mainstream. They also mentioned that fit and comfort are other factors that hinder purchasing. Due to the limited supply and short line of socially responsible apparel that are available to consumers, it makes purchasing these products much more difficult than conventional retail apparel. Certain consumers, however, tend to use the uniqueness of socially responsible apparel to express their individuality as such type of clothing (e.g., fair trade apparel) is considered to be nonconforming and differentiating from conventional styles of clothing (Halepete et al., 2009). Although the majority of consumers seem to purchase apparel considering product attitudes such as prices, materials, or styles (Bhaduri & Ha-Brookshire, 2011; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Dickson, 1999; Joergens, 2006; Kim et al., 1999; Mazar & Zhong, 2010), there are few consumer groups who care more about the ethical aspects and try to actualize their ethical values through consumption behavior. In the followed qualitative study, Hiller Connell (2011) could identify that certain groups of consumers are actually participating in ethical purchasing behavior by limiting acquisition times of clothing and purchasing apparel made from environmentally preferable

materials. They also buy apparel through sources considered to be environmentally friendly, such as second-hand stores, environmentally-conscious companies, local companies, and home sewing. Based on the results of the studies that found consumers' positive intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel, the hypothesis was developed:

H2a: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry will have a direct, positive effect on purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products.

Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles industry and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

This study attempts to broaden the knowledge base about ethical consumers by building a connection between attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical consumer behavior (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention). The concept of social responsibility has been an important consideration among practitioners of apparel companies because the industry generates environmental and societal issues (Klein, 2002) and consumers increasingly express their concerns with the impact of apparel production (Joergens, 2006). Even though some studies investigated the effects of attitudes toward socially responsible business practices of apparel companies on apparel purchasing intention, there is little research that explores the effects of socially responsible attitudes on post-purchase behavioral intentions. By adding the study of post-purchase to purchase intention, this study may provide deeper understanding of ethical consumers and how their socially responsible attitudes impact their purchase and post-purchase decision making.

Researchers in the area of consumer ethics have studied consumers' behavioral intentions after purchasing products. This post-purchase behavior is the process of comparison between an individual's pre-expectations and outcomes of actual purchases

(Kang & Johnson, 2009). According to the degree of satisfaction, the individual makes a decision about what to do. Complaining or returning behavior is an example of the decision. Among consumers' post-purchase behaviors, returning behavior is considered to be important to investigate as it is directly related to companies' profitability (Kang & Johnson, 2009; King & Dennis, 2006). Consumers' misbehavior in returning products is one type of *aberrant or fraudulent consumer behavior*, which refers to "behavior in exchange settings which violates the generally accepted norms of conduct in such situations and which is therefore held in disrepute by marketers and by most consumers" (Fullerton & Punj, 1993, p. 570). While some consumers return goods that do not satisfy specific needs or necessity, others return products after satisfactorily fulfilling their needs (Piron & Young, 2000). The situation in which consumers return a product after using it never intending to keep the product to start with, is conceptualized as *unethical retail disposition* (Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003; Rosenbaum et al., 2011). This kind of unethical returning behavior is also defined with the term of *deshopping*, which means "deliberate return of goods for reasons other than actual faults in the product, in its pure form premeditated prior to and during the consumption experience" (Schmidt et al., 1999, p. 292). Other researchers use the term of *retail borrowing*. The term is usually used when consumers return a non-defective product for a refund or an exchange to more casual wear after using it for a short-lasting, special occasion, such as for dates, weddings, or job interviews (Harris, 2010; Johnson & Rhee, 2008; Piron & Young, 2000). Researchers argue that this product usage theft or return fraud is generated by the lenient return policy that was originally initiated to obtain financial and competitive advantages (Kang & Johnson, 2009; Piron & Young, 2000; Schmidt et al., 1999).

Lenient return policy and unethical returning behavior.

Product returns are a critical and an integral part in providing customer service (Kang & Johnson, 2009; Peterson & Kumar, 2009), and return policy is considered to be an

influential tool to generate sales and build customer loyalty (Mukhopadhyay & Setaputra, 2007). Retailers apply generous return policy to retain as many customers as possible (Tax, Brown, & Chandrashekar, 1998), to sell expensive merchandise (Che, 1996), and generate favorable attitudes among customers (Bitner, Broome, & Tetreault, 1990; Stern, 1997). As consumers consider a return policy before deciding a purchase (Trager, 2000), the easiness of returning can be a major driver to boost sales (Mukhopadhyay & Setaputra, 2007).

The generosity of return policy, however, is not always ideal. Many retailers are actually struggling to find ways to balance between providing convenient post-shopping experiences for their customers and prohibiting “deshoppers” from taking advantage of the easy returning process (Davis, 2010). The amount of fraudulent returns in 2010 was estimated at \$13.95 billion, seven percent of the total merchandise returned, which was a two percent increase from the previous year (National Retail Federation, 2010). According to National Retail Federation’s annual Return Fraud Survey, completed by loss prevention executives at 111 retail companies, stolen products being returned were the most frequent type with 93.5 percent of all retailers having been exposed to such fraudulent returns during 2010. Employee return fraud or collusion with external sources was the second most common fraud that retailers experience with 88.8 percent, followed by return of merchandise purchased on fraudulent or stolen tender (68.2%), returns of used, non-defective merchandise (61.7%), and returns using counterfeit receipts (35.3%) (National Retail Federation, 2010). Due to increasing rates of return frauds annually, many retailers have limited the acceptability of returning products using stiffer policies to prevent return fraud as well as excessive returns. Sixty five percent of the loss prevention executives for the survey actually revealed that they tightened return policies to prevent return fraud. The stricter policies include limiting the possible return dates, requiring receipts or original conditions of products, and charging restocking fees (Bernard, 2009; Davis, 2010; Kang & Johnson, 2009; Leonard,

2011). Some apparel retailers, such as Express, do not allow returning certain items without tags. Dresses or clothing with delicate fabrics are the examples. In addition to this, bigger stores have adopted tightened security measures such as fraud detection system, Verify-1, to identify and curb aberrant return behavior (Chandler, 2005).

Consumers who return products unethically.

Kang and Johnson (2009) identified that excessive returning behavior is related to consumers' consideration of return policies. Consumers who purchase apparel impulsively, however, do not necessarily consider a store's return policy. These results suggest that tightened return policies may not prevent consumers' buying impulsiveness, but would be helpful to prohibit them from returning a lot or engaging in return fraud. Shen and Dickson (2001) focused on Machiavellianism and cultural identification, to study if these variables have effects on consumers' acceptance of unethical clothing consumption activities, such as returning a dress after wearing it for a special event. Consumers who have Machiavellian personalities are known to do whatever they need without considering how their actions impact other people (Shen & Dickson, 2001). The results suggested that U.S. consumers who possess Machiavellian personalities are more likely to engage in unethical clothing returning behavior.

Using the term of unethical retail disposition, Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003) examined anomie using two dimensions, *cynicism* and *valuelessness* to investigate its relationship with materialism, rationalization techniques, and unethical returning behavior. Anomie is defined as "a condition of normlessness and social disequilibrium where the rules once governing conduct have lost their savor and force" (Merton, 1964, p. 226). While cynicism implies individuals' little faith in relationships with people, valuelessness refers to consumers' denial of any existence except for money (Dodder & Astle, 1980). Between these two factors, Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003) identified that cynicism better explains

contemporary consumer anomie than valuelessness. It is suggested that consumers on high levels of cynicism are likely to judge success according to possession (materialism) and to make excuses using rationalization techniques in order to justify their unethical returning behavior. They accordingly present higher tendency to engage in unethical retail disposition than those who are lower in cynicism (Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003). The researchers, however, did not conclude that all materialistic consumers are at high levels of cynicism. Wealthy consumers can afford their materialistic lifestyle and possess whatever they want to have instead of borrowing products. Affluent, materialistic consumers actually “possess the means to obtain the ends” (Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003, p. 1088). Similarly, Johnson and Rhee (2008) found that consumers who scored high on the materialism subscale, *acquisition certainty*, have negative attitudes towards borrowing products and express their concerns with the morality of such activity. The researchers, however, did not find the relationship between cynicism and merchandise borrowing.

In their subsequent study, Rosenbaum et al. (2011) investigated consumers’ unethical returning behavior focusing on eight neutralization techniques. The five rationalization techniques, such as *denial of responsibility*, *appeal to higher loyalties*, *denial of the victim*, *denial of injury*, and *condemn the condemners*, were discussed again subsequent to their previous study. Most consumers who accept unethical returning behavior tend to deny their responsibilities by making excuses that they need products but cannot afford them for permanent usage. They also engage in the behavior for social approval to meet the demand of their social groups. Deshoppers are influenced by the culture of social groups, such as family members or friends. If they have social members who return products frequently or fraudulently around them, they tend to think merchandise borrowing is right and acceptable (Johnson & Rhee, 2008). The consumers may know their responsibility in the exchange processes, but tend to throw the blame on companies to rationalize their unethical behavior. It

is believed by the deshoppers that the responsibility is more on retailers or companies who seek profitability, and return frauds do not harm anyone as retailers can afford the restocking costs and resell the returned products. Johnson and Rhee (2008), however, did not identify the relationship between consumers' rebellious attitudes towards companies and merchandising borrowing. Instead of blaming their fraudulent tendency, the consumers condemn retailers' lenient return policies that are artfully applied to entice consumers and maximize profitability. In addition to these five techniques, the researchers have recently included three new rationalization techniques, such as *one-time usage*, *first-time*, *one-time crime*, and *outsmart the system*. The first justification has also been discussed by other researchers. Consumers purchase a dress for a single occasion such as a wedding or a "prom" with the intention to return it, and also can save money from doing so (Piron & Young, 2000). Such deshoppers also neutralize their guilt by explaining that it is first time for them to engage in the fraudulent return behavior, but it is unclear if they will continue performing the activity or not. Finally, consumers tend to feel thrilled by outsmarting retailers' return system and breaking the rules.

Other researchers developed a model using the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), in order to investigate if attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control impact consumers' deshopping behavior. King and Dennis (2006) and King et al. (2008) identified that attitudes toward deshopping are positively related to return frauds. Unlike other studies, the researchers found that deshoppers are influenced by significant others' opinions when making decisions in both negative and constructive ways. This interview result implied that consumers may not continue fraudulent returning activities when they have family members or friends who think returning used or damaged apparel as new is immoral. Therefore, it is important to inform consumers that returning used clothing is not moral and fraudulent returning behavior negatively impacts on companies' financial

situations (Harris & Daunt, 2011). In addition, as consumers are likely to perceive returning clothing unethically to be easy, retailers need to tighten return policies to reduce return frauds. Deshoppers do not always intend to return products when making purchases, but tend to be fraudulent to successfully return products.

Through in-depth interviews, Harris (2010) identified ten factors that explain consumers' fraudulent returning tactics. Consumers who continuously return products unethically tend to be knowledgeable about return policies and types of products that are returned easily. They also target specific times during the day or particular types of employees to return successfully. Similar to the result of the study performed by King and Dennis (2006), past experiences of successful returns or fabricated stories, such as unsatisfied fitting or small size, are well employed for successful returns. Generating personal connections or enjoyable conversation is used as a tool to distract employees while intending to return products. Finally, employees engage in supporting fraudulent returns.

The current study assumes that ethical consumers are those who not only purchase socially responsible apparel but return products ethically. They are ethical throughout purchase and post-purchase processes. This is the first attempt to investigate how attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry impact post-purchase returning intention. Thus:

H2b: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry will have a direct, positive effect on ethical post-purchase returning intention.

Individual Characteristics

Individual characteristics have potential effects on consumers' ethical purchase behavior (Abeliotis et al., 2010; Ferrell & Gresham, 1985). Niinimäki (2010) argued that "Uniqueness, individuality, constant change, and materialistic values are at the center of our society" (p. 154), and they impact consumers purchase and post-purchase decision processes.

In terms of fashion consumption, it may be hard for certain consumers to behave ethically, considering that companies continuously produce new, trendy, and cheap clothing which easily fulfills their fashion needs. Trevino and Youngblood (1986) argued that individual factors have moderating effects on ethical decision-making. Vitell (2003) also stated that individual characteristics impact consumers' ethical judgments and intentions. When consumers have strong tendencies to be price-sensitive, materialistic, impulsive, and clothing-involved, it can be harder to predict ethical purchase behavior in spite of their socially responsible attitudes. Consumers' own individuality impacts their own identity formation and accordingly their ethical choices (Niinimaki, 2011).

Price sensitivity.

Consumers seek to maximize their satisfaction within a budget constraint (Monroe, 1973). As price indicates costs of products, it is a crucial element when consumers are basing their decision on purchasing a good or service (Han, Gupta, & Lehmann, 2001; Lichtenstein, Ridgway, & Netemeyer, 1993). In spite of its determinant role in decision-making processes, it is not simple to explain how price influences consumers' purchase decisions (Monroe, 1973). Price is usually used as a barometer evaluating quality of products (Goldsmith & Newell, 1997). Prior knowledge provides important information when purchasing products. When consumers have little previous knowledge about a product, they usually use price to evaluate the quality and assume that higher price implies higher quality (Lichtenstein, Bloch, & Black, 1988; Rao & Monroe, 1988). Knowledgeable consumers accordingly may prolong purchase decisions until they find right price that is commensurate with the quality of a product. Appropriate pricing is therefore one of the most important strategies that companies perform not only to maximize profitability but also to maintain and increase consumer base. Retailers keep planning price-based promotions along with purchases to generate consumers' interests to spend money. How consumers react according to their perception of price levels

or changes can be explained by the term of *price sensitivity* (Goldsmith, Kim, Flynn, & Kim, 2005). Price sensitivity refers to “the extent to which individuals perceive and respond to changes or differences in prices for products or services” (Monroe, 1973; Wakefield & Inman, 2003, p. 201).

While lower price is the most important factor for price sensitive consumers in deciding product purchase, price insensitive consumers are more likely to buy the same product with higher price (Foxall & James, 2003; Shimp, Dunn, & Klein, 2004). Price sensitive consumers are traditionally considered to be rational and seek utilitarian values through purchasing activities (Tauber, 1972; Schindler, 1989). Researchers, however, identified that price sensitive consumers seek hedonic shopping values, and experience smart shopping feelings through hunting bargains or using coupons (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994; Jin & Kim, 2003). Consumers with a higher sense of fashion innovativeness are willing to pay for new products, and present lower price sensitivity than those who are less innovative (Goldsmith & Newell, 1997). In addition to fashion innovativeness, Goldsmith, Flynn, and Kim (2010) examined clothing involvement and brand loyalty in order to investigate their mediating roles performing between status seeking and price sensitivity. They confirmed that consumers who desire social status through brand-laden consumption have lower price sensitivity and put less importance on quality or functionality. Consumers who seek status consumption may not care about prices, because not only they perceive clothing as relevant with their inherent needs, values, and interests, but they also highly interested in purchasing new, trendy clothing. They also spend money on their favorite brands or styles of clothing regardless of prices. Ramirez and Goldsmith (2009) also found that price sensitivity is negatively related to fashion innovativeness, fashion involvement, and brand loyalty. The study, however, included perceived brand parity, which has positive relationship with price sensitivity. When consumers find little difference between

brands, they tend to purchase products with lower prices. Consumers who are more involved in fashion and prefer to purchase new products are likely to recognize more differences among brands, and therefore less price sensitive towards their favorite brands.

As discussed above, price is a crucial determinant when consumers purchase products except for some examples. Ethical consumers also consider prices as important even though there are other criteria applied in their decision-making process (Harrison, Newholm, & Shaw, 2005). This has been well reported throughout previous studies. Findings of studies suggest that consumers increasingly express their willingness to pay premium prices for socially responsible apparel, but only when the products are well ethically assured (McGoldrick & Freestone, 2008). Or certain physical attributes, such as brand name, color, fit, style, or quality should be provided for the premium prices (Ha-Brookshire & Norum, 2011). As for consumers who are sensitive in prices, they may not purchase socially responsible apparel because they can find cheaper clothes at conventional retail stores. As an example, one online fashion store (i.e., Fair Indigo, <http://www.fairindigo.com>) who carries environmentally friendly and fair-trade apparel sell regular T-shirts with a value of \$24.90, but organic cotton T-shirts are \$29.90, and fair-trade organic T-shirts are \$41.90. If clothing is attached with environmental or societal values, the price gets higher. Therefore, even though consumers have positive attitudes toward social responsibility, higher prices of socially responsible apparel may hinder them from purchasing the products.

In addition, it is assumed that ethical consumers may not return products unethically because they tend to concern themselves about the wellness of other people. Considerate ethical consumers understand that return frauds or excessive returns negatively affect the business operation of apparel companies. However, if consumers have strong price sensitivity, it is possible to expect that they may return products unethically even though they are considered to be ethical and to have positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the

apparel and textiles industry. As returning products are highly related to economic needs in addition to problems of products themselves (Piron & Young, 2000), it is valuable to study the effect of price sensitivity on unethical returning behavior. Even though they have positive attitudes toward socially responsible business activities of apparel companies, highly price-sensitive consumers may return used clothing that was bought for a single event or fabricate stories to return the product successfully. Given this reasoning, the hypothesis was developed:

H3a: With greater price sensitivity,

- a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.
- b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.

Materialism.

More issues than price are involved in influencing consumers' ethical purchase behavior. Materialistic values are at the center of society and this impacts individuals' identity formation and their choices (Niinimaki, 2011). *Materialism* is defined as "the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions" (Belk, 1984, p. 291). According to Richins and Dawson (1992), it refers to "a mind-set or constellation of attitudes regarding the relative importance of acquisition and possession of objects in one's life" (p. 307).

Belk (1985) confirmed that materialistic consumers exhibit the traits of *possessiveness*, *nongenerosity*, and *envy*. Possessiveness represents consumers' inclination to control or retain ownership of products, and nongenerosity explains their tendency to avoid giving possessions to or sharing them with others. Schoeck (1966) explained that people feel

envy or displeasure when another person is superior to them in terms of happiness, success, reputation, or possessions. With this sense, envy can be one of materialistic traits because materialistic people are more likely to feel envious when others possess something they wish to have than those who are not materialistic. Similarly, Richins, and Dawson (1992) included *acquisition certainty*, *acquisition as the pursuit of happiness*, and *possession-defined success* in order to explain consumers' materialism and measure the value. Consumers who value materialism put acquisition of products at the center of their lives. Possessing is baseline to set plans and their goal of life (Daun, 1983). As for materialists, possessing and acquiring are a main source of dissatisfaction or satisfaction and happiness or unhappiness, instead of personal relationships, experiences, or contributions. They also evaluate success according to the number or quality of possessions.

Materialistic consumers tend to waste money on something unnecessary or unimportant (Mason, 1981), and feel satisfaction when others admire what they possess (Liao & Wang, 2009). Through visible consumption, not only do they pursue the improvement of their social status (Christopher, Marek, & Carroll, 2004), but they also strengthen their self-esteem (Tatzel, 2002). For materialists, wealth represents "social status, achievement, and reputation" (Liao & Wang, 2009, p. 989). Purchasing luxurious brand-name goods can be a useful strategy to signal their wealth and success, or at least make others perceive them as successful. Prendergast and Wong (2003) identified that consumers with high levels of materialism prefer to purchase expensive products of famous brands. Similarly, Liao and Wang (2009) found that consumers who believe that possession signals a symbol of status tend to be self-conscious about how others think about themselves or their possessions. They accordingly have higher levels of brand consciousness, empowering themselves through purchases of brand-laden products. When consumers cannot afford or maintain a materialistic life style, they are likely to violate consumer ethics by purchasing counterfeit luxury goods.

Kozar and Marcketti (2011) identified the negative relationship between materialism and ethics. Consumers who exhibited stronger ethics in their decision making were less materialistic and accordingly less likely to purchase counterfeit apparel goods. As materialists tend to highly focus on possessing wealth products, which signal their success in life to others, they also evaluate people with what they have, and feel envious when others possess what they wish to have. The tendency to worship materials with lack of building meaningful relationships with others may explain why materialistic consumers tend to feel less satisfaction and happiness in their life (Richins & Dawson, 1992; Ryan & Dziurawiec, 2001). To investigate how materialism impacts the sense of concerning others, Kolodinsky, Madden, Zisk, and Henkel (2010) examined the relationship between materialistic values of business students and their attitudes toward corporate social responsibility. The result revealed that students who hold high levels of materialistic values tend to prefer companies that pursue profit maximization above all else. They did not agree that companies should perform CSR (corporate social responsibility) activities, sacrificing the profits. Or the students believed that socially responsible practices should be shown as a form of increasing worker compensation.

Clothing is not only an object but also an act (Uotila, 1995). Individuals select clothing as a means of social approval as it delivers meaning in social interaction processes. Based on the finding of the study conducted by Prendergast and Wong (2003), the current study assumes that consumers with greater materialistic tendencies may prefer purchasing products from luxury fashion brands that exhibit their social status to purchasing socially responsible apparel goods. Even though they have positive attitudes toward social responsibility, they may not purchase socially responsible apparel because they have stronger needs and desires to signal their wealth and success using well-known luxury fashion brands that may not practice socially responsible practices.

Considering the two different findings of Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003) and Johnson and Rhee (2008), it is questionable whether materialists reveal their tendency to engage in fraudulent returning behavior or not. While Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003) found the important relationship between materialism and cynicism, which lead consumers to return products unethically, Johnson and Rhee (2003) did not find the relationship. Rather, the latter researchers found that materialistic consumers prefer possessing to borrowing products, which was confirmed by the subscale of materialism, acquisition certainty. Even though the two studies had similar sampling methods (e.g., undergraduate students as participants), the results were different. In spite of the discrepancy, the study assumes that materialistic consumers may engage in fraudulent returning behavior with consideration for the findings of other studies. According to Liao and Wang (2009), consumers tend to purchase brand products not for material possessions but for social needs, which were the highest reason for consumers to borrow products (Piron & Young, 2000). Additionally, the current study conducts the survey with different sampling methods (i.e., participants above 18 years old who are shopping at popular fashion retailers in Fort Collins, Colorado) from the study of Johnson and Rhee (2003). As the participants of the previous study were university students, it is assumed that the results might be different from the study. Materialists are known as those who admire people who own expensive products and consider the people to be successful (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Older consumers tend to be interested in purchasing expensive products from luxury fashion brands and signal their success through the possession of such items more than younger people do (Willems et al., 2011). Considering the small percentage of consumers with high disposable income, majority of the study participants are assumed to be of average income. As Rokeach (1971) found, individuals with lower income are more likely to be materialistic than those who earn higher income. When they cannot afford the luxury lifestyle, these consumers may return products with unethical

reasons, such as purchasing expensive products with an intention to return after using them to show off status. Even though they have positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry, if consumers are highly materialistic, they may engage in unethical returning behavior. This reasoning led to the development of the hypotheses:

H3b: With greater materialism,

- a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.
- b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.

Impulse buying tendency.

Impulse buying is generally related to easiness of purchasing. Retailers have reported that half of their sales are generated by impulsive purchases (Nichols, Li, Roslow, Kranendonk, & Mandakovic, 2001). Consumers consider carefully and buy with a plan especially for products that require higher expenditure. When the expenditure is relatively lower, however, they tend to perform impulse purchases (Stern, 1962). Store ambiance, product displays, appropriate lighting, music selection, aromas, and promotions are all factors that boost consumers' sudden, unreflective purchase behavior by enhancing their mood and emotion (Coley & Burgess, 2003). In this sense, *impulse buying tendency* can be defined as consumers' likelihood to engage in an immediate and spontaneous purchase decision driven by strong feelings to buy without thoughtful consideration of consequences (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998).

In-store browsing is considered as a central element in the process of performing impulse buying. The more consumers spend time at a store, the more they are likely to

encounter stimuli. This eventually increases the likelihood that they experience impulse buying urges and engage in actual behavior (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Jarboe & McDaniel, 1987). All consumers who have impulse buying tendency do not necessarily participate in actual behavior (Rook & Fisher, 1995), because they use strategies to avoid impulsive buying (Hoch & Loewenstein, 1991). When desired products are encountered, however, consumers seem to feel great difficulties in resisting strong urge to buy (Rook, 1987). Researchers have also studied various factors that may impact consumers' tendency to purchase impulsively. Beatty and Ferrell (1998) identified the effects of positive feelings, such as excitement, enthusiasm, proud, or inspiration, on impulse buying tendency. Consumers also purchase products impulsively as a means to alter or manage moods such as depression or stress, and women tend to be more impulsive than men (Coley & Burgess, 2003). Besides from emotional status, involvement was confirmed as an important factor that influences consumers' impulsive purchases (Jones, Reynolds, Weun, & Beatty, 2003). Highly involved consumers tend to frequently browse stores that carry specific products for fun and pleasure, which leads them to engage in impulse buying in response to their "strong emotions generated from the close proximity with a product" (Jones et al., 2003, p. 507; Rook, 1987). Consumers, however, tend to feel negatively after making impulsive purchases, such as the monetary risk, unnecessary, shame, or guilt (Rook, 1987; Yi & Baumgartner, 2011).

Consumers tend to exhibit their impulsiveness differently according to product types, with apparel being the main focus for impulsive consumers (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980; Jones et al., 2003). Apparel companies accordingly try to boost consumers' impulsive purchasing through various tactics, such as store design, product displays, enjoyable music, or sales promotions (Coley & Burgess, 2003; Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997). Compared to the industry of conventional apparel, the socially responsible apparel industry does not encompass a variety of clothing stores, styles, or price ranges. While numerous companies

that are selling conventional clothes exist, companies that carry socially responsible apparel are limited (Hiller Connell, 2010). Because socially responsible companies produce clothes in the manner that does not harm the environment and society or minimizes the negative impact toward them, there is limitation in terms of styles, materials, or ranges of prices that can be applied to socially responsible apparel. Therefore, the current study assumes that consumers with impulse buying tendency may find more fun and pleasure from conventional apparel stores, and thereby prefer to shop at the stores to process their impulsiveness. Even though they have positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry, their impulse buying tendency may hinder them from purchasing socially responsible apparel.

It is also assumed that as impulse buying tendency increases consumers' negative feelings of dissatisfaction and regret (Rook, 1987; Yi & Baumgartner, 2011), impulsive consumers are likely to return products frequently, which may increase the possibility of their engagement in return frauds. According to Kang and Johnson (2009), consumers who present impulsive buying tendency tend to return products excessively. Even though the impulsive consumers did not necessarily consider return policies when they made purchases, the researchers suggested that tightening return policies would be an effective method to prohibit excessive returning behavior. Based on these assumptions, the hypotheses were developed:

H3c: With greater impulse buying tendency,

- a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.
- b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.

Clothing involvement.

Apparel is a high involvement product (Goldsmith & Emmert, 1991; Kim, 2005).

This means that consumers do not buy apparel just because it is cheap or necessary.

Consumers put their efforts and energy to find a perfect product for themselves as apparel is a means not only to improve their social and self-image, but also to express themselves to others. Because it is very close to the self, consumers carefully choose apparel products that are appropriate to certain situations. It has been known that consumers become more involved if they perceive the potential from an object to satisfy their needs and desire (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Therefore, clothing involvement is defined as the extent to which consumers consider clothing related activities as a central part of their lives (O’Cass, 2004).

Highly fashion-involved consumers have been focused by researchers and marketers because they play an important role as drivers and influencers of new, trendy apparel in the fashion adoption process (Goldsmith, Moore, & Beaudoin, 1999). According to O’Cass (2004), clothing involvement is influenced by materialism, gender, and age. The researcher argued that because materialistic consumers put importance on objects and possessions, they tend highly involved in fashion. In turn, they can develop product knowledge and make confident decision with an expertise in apparel. Also, consumers who are highly involved in fashion are more likely to be young females. These results were similar to those of Hourigan and Bougoure (2012) who found the importance of materialism and gender (i.e., females) in explaining consumers’ involvement in clothing. Income was another predictor of clothing involvement. According to Belleau, Haney, Summers, Xu, and Garrison (2008), affluent female consumers tend to be highly involved in fashion. Because the consumers consider prestige when it comes to apparel consumption, they are less conscious about price and less practical. In relation to this notion, Goldsmith et al. (2010) identified that clothing involvement is positively related to status consumption and negatively related to price

sensitivity. Park, Kim, and Forney (2006) also revealed that clothing involvement influences consumers' impulse buying behavior.

There is little research that investigated clothing involvement as a moderator between attitudes and behavioral intentions. Based on the findings of previous research, however, it is expected that clothing-involved consumers may not give up specific fashion needs such as updating styles by seasons or improving social status by purchasing brand-laden products so as to express their ethical commitment. Niinimäki (2010) argued that the main driver for apparel consumption is consumers' desires, not guilt. Consumers who are highly involved in apparel find pleasure and enjoyment from the process of selection and consumption, and develop their self-image and identity (Michaelidou & Dibb, 2006). Because apparel is symbolic consumption product, consumers may prefer to purchase it from conventional apparel stores that carry a variety of styles and more fashionable items than stores that carry socially responsible apparel. Hourigan and Bougoure (2012) also argued that if consumers are highly involved in clothing, they always search for up-to-date styles and trends of apparel, which may be easily found from conventional apparel stores. Therefore, highly clothing-involved consumers may prefer shopping at such stores which may satisfy their fashion needs and desires instead of shopping at stores that carry socially responsible apparel, even though they have positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.

With regard to the relationship between clothing involvement and ethical returning behavior, this study firstly attempts to investigate the relationship. Previous research found that consumers' materialism (Hourigan & Bougoure, 2012; O'Cass, 2004) and impulse buying tendency (Park et al., 2006) are highly related to their clothing involvement. There is little research that investigated the impact of clothing involvement on consumers' returning behavior. However, some researchers examined whether materialism or impulse buying tendency influences consumers' returning practices. While Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003)

indicated the tendency of materialistic consumers to engage in unethical returning behavior, Kang and Johnson (2009) revealed the effects of buying impulsiveness on excessive returning behavior. Therefore, the study assumes that consumers who are highly involved in clothing may engage in more unethical returning practices because they not only purchase apparel frequently, but also are more likely to be materialistic and impulsive. Based on the assumption, the hypotheses with clothing involvement were developed:

H3d: With greater clothing involvement,

- a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.
- b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

This research utilized a quantitative data analysis method. The types of data analysis methods are explained at the end of this chapter. As discussed in Chapter two, the study investigated the direct relationships between variables within the hierarchical system in order to investigate consumers' purchase intentions toward socially responsible apparel purchasing and ethical post-purchase returning behavior. As a first step, ethical traits, such as altruism, ethical concern, and ethical obligation, were examined to understand whether these variables positively predict consumers' attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. Here, attitudes toward socially responsible activities of apparel companies were investigated to understand consumers' opinions about the activities, such as producing socially responsible apparel or participating in various events to give positive influences on society. As for the behavioral intentions, the study measured consumers' willingness to perform ethical behavior through purchasing socially responsible apparel with intentions to avoid harmful effects on the environment and society. Consumers' ethical returning behavioral intentions were also investigated to examine whether ethically-minded consumers exhibit consistency throughout the purchase and post-purchase processes. Finally, individual characteristics, such as price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement were examined as moderators to signify their roles between attitudes and behavioral intentions.

Sampling and Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected during the last two weeks of April and the first week of May in 2012. A nonprobability sampling technique via store intercept was used for the research because the study did not rely on random or systematic selection of participants (Gliner, Morgan, & Leech, 2009). For data collection, a sample of 302 consumers who were shopping

for apparel at K-momo, Zumiez, Loft, and Old town shopping areas participated in the survey. The survey was conducted during both weekdays and weekends in the mornings, afternoons, and/or evenings in order to increase the possibility of recruiting the greatest range of diverse consumers. Targeted in the sample selection were 125-150 females and 125-150 males above the age of 18 years. A paper-and-pencil directly administered questionnaire was the primary source for collecting data because it ensured a higher response rate than other methods such as mailed or Internet questionnaires (Gliner et al., 2009).

K-momo, Zumiez, Loft, and Old town shopping areas were selected for data collection due to their target markets, product offerings, and price points. The study aimed to include survey participants who represented Fort Collins residents from various income levels. The Foothills Fashion Mall and Old Town shopping areas are the popular locations for Fort Collins residents. K-momo, Zumiez, and Loft are located in the Foothills Fashion Mall, while Cira, Tula, and Go Lite are located in the Old Town shopping area. K-momo carries brand/non-brand apparel and accessories for both males and females between the ages of 18 and 45. Brands include Baby Phat, Apple Bottom, and Ecko. The store not only carries different styles of clothing ranging in prices of \$10 to \$100, but also performs various types of sales promotions. Zumiez is for young consumers who are interested in apparel and related items for skateboards and snowboards with price ranges from \$10 to \$300. As for Loft, the retailer targets female consumers who are looking for semi-formal, casual styles of apparel and the price ranges from \$20 to \$300. While Cira sells non-branded casual and professional apparel with reasonable prices under \$100, Tula carries contemporary women's brand apparel including BCBG Max Azria, True Religion, and Diane Von Furstenberg ranging in prices of \$50 to \$800. As the study investigated the moderating effects of price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement, collecting data at those stores was appropriate to obtain participants who have various needs and requirements when

it comes to shopping for apparel. Even though this research investigated ethical consumer behavior, the researcher did not choose socially responsible apparel retailers, such as Patagonia, American Apparel, or second-hand stores, for the survey. The main reason was to understand socially responsible purchasing and ethical post-purchasing behavior among the average consumers who shop at conventional fashion retailers. Another reason was to avoid collecting data from consumers who were predicted to present ethical shopping behavior.

The researcher approached potential participants after they finished shopping at those stores. The researcher first explained the purpose of the study to the consumers and then asked them to participate in the survey. Consumers who were in a hurry or did not want to participate in the survey at the store were asked for their e-mail addresses to complete an online version of the survey. When participants received an e-mail, a direct link to a webpage for the online survey was provided (i.e., Survey Monkey, <http://www.surveymonkey.com>). To encourage participation, all participants who finished answering the pencil or online survey were entered into a drawing for a prize of a \$20 mall gift card as an incentive for completing the survey.

Instrument Development

A self-administrated paper-based questionnaire (see Appendix A) was developed based on the previous literature to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of six main sets of questions: (1) ethical traits; (2) attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry; (3) behavioral intentions (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchase and ethical post-purchase returning behavior); (4) individual characteristics (i.e., price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement); (5) social desirability bias; and (6) demographics.

Ethical traits.

Altruism.

Altruism is pro-social actions taken by an individual to benefit others (Eisenberg, 1986; Gates & Steane, 2009; Krebs, 1970; Macaulay & Berkowitz, 1970; Powers & Hopkins, 2006; Staub, 1978). Ethical consumers may present their altruism by selecting products with consideration of environmental and humanitarian issues (Powers & Hopkins, 2006). Seven items from the Self-Report Altruism Scale (Rushton, Chrisjohn, & Fekken, 1981) were used to measure consumers' altruistic trait. The items were modified to be suited for the purpose of the study. For example, "I have donated goods or clothes to a charity" was changed to "I would donate goods or clothes to a charity." A total of seven questions of the altruism scale were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*).

Ethical concern.

Ethical concern is an individual's worries and interests about environmental or human-related issues, such as pollution or worker exploitation (Cowe & Williams, 2000). To measure environmental concern, five items from the New Environmental Paradigm (NEP) Scale developed by Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig, and Jones (2000) were adapted for the study. The NEP scale measures individuals' general attitudes toward society and its resources (Kim & Damhorst, 1998). The scale has been evaluated as an effective tool in measuring environmental concerns and in differentiating concerned individuals from those who are not (Kim & Damhorst, 1998; Noe & Snow, 1990). One item for measuring environmental concern was adapted from Hustvedt and Dickson (2009). To measure consumers' societal concern, two items used for the study of Dickson (2000) were also used. The items were modified to measure the variable of ethical concerns. Only the item from the study of Hustvedt and Dickson (2009) was not changed. For example, "When humans interfere with nature it often produces disastrous consequences" was changed to "I am concerned with the

planet because disastrous consequences often occur when humans interfere with nature.” As another example, “I am concerned with issues affecting workers in U.S. clothing manufacturing businesses” was slightly modified to “I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in U.S. clothing manufacturing businesses.” The items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Among the total of eight items, three items were reverse coded so that higher scores reflect higher tendency of consumers to have ethical concerns.

Ethical obligation.

Ethical obligation is an individual’s internalized ethical rules, which reflect personal duties to act in an appropriate way (Shaw & Shiu, 2002). Consumers who have strong feelings of responsibility toward other people tend to present ethical consumption behavior (Shaw & Clarke, 1999). Three items from the study of Kaiser and Shimoda (1999) and two items from the study of Sparks, Shepherd, and Frewer (1995) were adapted in order to measure the feeling of ethical obligation in general and specifically in the apparel shopping situation. Two additional items were developed for the study, inspired by the wording of the questions developed by Kaiser and Shimoda (1999). As the scales were used for a specific issue, such as ethical obligation toward air pollution or avoiding eating foods produced by gene technology, the total of seven items were modified to be suited for the study. Some examples of the items used for the study are “I feel that I am responsible for purchasing apparel goods that do not generate negative impacts on the environment during the production process” and “I feel that I am responsible for purchasing apparel goods that do not generate negative impacts on workers during the production process.” The seven items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Four items out of seven were reverse coded so that higher scores reflect higher tendency of consumers to possess ethical obligation.

Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.

Social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry refers to companies' business practices that positively affect or harm less to the world and its people throughout the process of apparel production (Dickson & Eckman, 2006). As attitude plays a central role in constructing decision making, it is important to measure attitudes toward socially responsible apparel business in order to investigate the effects of consumers' socially responsible attitudes on their behavioral intentions. To examine consumers' attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry, scales developed by Dickson (1999) (one item), Dickson (2000) (one item), and Creyer and Ross (1997) (eight items) were adapted. Only one item, "I wish that there was a label on jeans telling consumers if they were made by socially responsible manufacturers," was slightly modified. As the current study does not focus on a specific item of clothing, "jeans" was changed to "clothing." Other examples of the items used for the study are "I believe in the ideals of socially responsible clothing businesses" and "Apparel firms who are socially responsible should be allowed to earn greater profits than apparel firms normally do." A total of 10 items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Three items from the total were reverse coded so that higher scores reflect higher tendency of consumers to have positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.

Behavioral intentions.

Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention.

As an individual's subjective probability to perform certain behavior, behavioral intention leads the individual to select specific products or services in the near future (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Howard, 1989). Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention can be therefore defined as consumers' willingness to purchase apparel that is produced through the practices of minimizing or eliminating exploitation and environmental damage

(based on Schwartz, 2010). To measure intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel, four items developed by Kim and Damhorst (1998) were modified to be used for the study. Additional five items were developed for the study. The items from the study of Kim and Damhorst (1998) were slightly modified to be suited for the purpose of the study. An example of the modified items was “In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel made from recycled material.” Some examples of the scale developed for the study were “In the near future, I would consider purchasing fair-trade apparel to support producers in developing countries,” and “In the near future, I would consider purchasing sweatshop-free apparel to support producers in developing countries.” A total of nine items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*).

Ethical post-purchase returning intention.

Post-purchase behavior is a buyer’s decision making after comparing between his or her pre-expectation and outcomes of actual purchases (Kang & Johnson, 2009). Returning products is one example of post-purchase behaviors. When consumers do not present fraudulent returning behavior, such as returning used or damaged clothing, this can be called ethical post-purchase returning behavioral intention (based on Fullerton & Punj, 1993; Piron & Young, 2000; Rosenbaum & Kuntze, 2003). To measure consumers’ ethical post-purchase returning intention, three items from the study of King et al. (2008) and one item from the study of Vitell, Lumpkin, and Rawwas (1991) were adapted. Three items were additionally developed for the study. The items adapted from previous studies were modified to be suited for the purpose of the study. For example, “I would return deliberately damaged clothes” was changed to “In the near future, I might deliberately damage clothes to be considered as a defective item for a return.” Some examples of the items created for the study are “In the near future, I might buy clothes for a single event (e.g., wedding or job interview) with the intention of returning them,” and “In the near future, I would not return clothes with

dishonest reasons in spite of the lenient return policies of apparel companies,” which were inspired by the results of the studies conducted by Piron and Young (2000) and Harris (2010). Responses for the total of seven items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Among the total of seven items, five items were reverse coded so that higher scores reflect higher tendency to return apparel goods ethically.

Individual characteristics.

Price sensitivity.

Price sensitivity explains how consumers perceive and respond to changes or differences in prices for products or services (Monroe, 1973; Wakefield & Inman, 2003). To measure consumers’ tendency to search for lower prices in general, two items from the scale developed by Anglin, Stuenkel, and Lepisto (1994) were adapted. Consumers may present different levels of price sensitivity when they go shopping for everyday products (e.g., grocery) or apparel. Therefore, two items from the scale created by Goldsmith and Newell (1997) were also adapted to measure price sensitivity in the apparel shopping situation. Only the latter scale was modified to be suited for the purpose of the study. For example, “I don’t mind spending a lot of money to buy new clothes” was changed to “I don’t mind spending a lot of money to buy clothes that I really like.” This was only one item that was reverse coded. Some examples of the scale used for the study were “I shop a lot for specials” and “In general, the price or cost of buying clothes is important to me even though I really like them.” A total of four items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*).

Materialism.

Materialism refers to the extent to which an individual attaches importance to worldly possessions (Belk, 1984). The scale developed by Richins and Dawson (1992) was adapted to measure materialism. It includes three constructs, “success,” “centrality,” and “happiness.”

One example of the questions for success was “I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.” The example for centrality, which measured consumers’ tendency to put importance on possessions at the center of their lives, was “I usually buy only the things I need.” This is a reverse-scored item because materialistic consumers tend to purchase certain products even though they are not important or necessary (Richins & Dawson, 1992). One of the questions for happiness was “It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can’t afford to buy all the things I’d like.” The nine items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Among the total of nine items, three items were reverse coded so that higher scores reflect higher tendency to be materialistic.

Impulse buying tendency.

Consumers who are high in impulse buying tendency tend to make an immediate and spontaneous purchase decision driven by strong feelings to buy (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). To measure impulse buying tendency, two scales from the studies of Rook and Fisher (1995) (four items) and Beatty and Ferrell (1998) (two items) were adapted. Some examples of the scale used for the study were “Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy,” and “It is fun to buy spontaneously.” A total of six items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Only one item out of six was reverse coded so that higher scores reflect higher tendency to be impulsive.

Clothing involvement.

Highly clothing-involved consumers view fashion-related activities as a central part of their lives (O’Cass, 2004). Seven items from the studies of Mittal (1995) and Mittal and Lee (1989) were adapted to measure clothing involvement. The examples of the scale used for the study were “Clothing is very important to me,” and “I choose clothing very carefully.” A total of seven items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 =

strongly agree). Only one item out of seven was reverse coded so that higher scores reflect higher tendency of consumers to be involved in clothing.

Social desirability bias.

Researchers in the area of ethical consumer behavior have suggested to measure social desirability bias to increase internal validity of methodology (Auger et al., 2007; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Hiller, 2010; Valentine & Bateman, 2011). This is because when respondents answer questions in a more socially acceptable way than they really are, results of ethics studies can be distorted, as the relationships between variables are attenuated, inflated, or moderated (Hiller, 2010). Due to the sensitive nature of research in ethical consumer behavior (Fernandes & Randall, 1992; Peltier & Walsh, 1990), the study includes the social desirability bias scale developed by Crowne and Marlowe (1960), in order to control for consumers' desire to present a positive image of themselves. By incorporating the social desirability scale into the questionnaire, the study aims to ascertain the possible presence of social desirability bias, in order to provide more accurate information regarding ethical consumer behavior. Based on the finding of the study performed by Reynolds (1982), a short version of the social desirability scale was used. Some examples of the scale are "No matter who I am talking to, I am always a good listener" and "I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake." A total of 13 items were assessed with a dichotomous response scale (1 = *true* and 0 = *false*). Among the 13 items, eight were reverse coded so that the true score reflects consumers' tendency to answer questions in a socially approved way. Scores were summated for a possible range of 0 to 13, and higher scores indicated increased social desirability.

Demographics.

In this section, a total of nine questions were included. The questions asked consumers' age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and household income. The categories for

ethnicity, education level, and household income were imported from the Census Bureau Homepage (Census Bureau, 2010). In addition to these, consumers were asked how much income they had spent during the last six months on apparel. Questions regarding their ownership of socially responsible apparel and their frequency of purchasing such products were also included in this section. Eco apparel was described as items produced environmentally-friendly production practices (Niinimaki, 2010); organic apparel as items produced using organic cotton or other organic fibers (Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009); recycled/reclaimed apparel as items constructed with fabric that has been recycled or reclaimed (Chang, Chen, & Francis, 1999); used apparel as items previously owned/worn or second-hand (Hiller Connell, 2011); sweatshop-free apparel as items produced without worker exploitation or child labor (Rudell, 2006); and fair-trade apparel as items sold to support farmers or manufacturers in developing countries (Castaldo et al., 2009). Finally, to examine their knowledge and interests about socially responsible apparel companies, consumers were asked questions about the companies from which they had purchased and the amount of money they had spent from such companies in the past six months.

Data Analysis

A pretest with 31 participants who were shopping at K-momo was conducted prior to data collection in order to refine the measures (Gliner et al., 2009). The participants were between the ages of 18 to 37 with 28 consumers being females and 3 consumers being males. Few suggestions were obtained from the participants. For example, a question for ethical concerns was revised according to the comments of a participant from the pre-test. That is, “I am concerned with the globe because it often produces disastrous consequences when humans interfere with nature” was slightly changed to “I am concerned with the planet because disastrous consequences often occur when humans interfere with nature.” Further, some participants indicated that certain words could be misread if the sentences were similar.

To correct this issue, some words of questions were underlined. For example, “I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in U.S. clothing manufacturing businesses” and “I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in foreign clothing manufacturing businesses.”

Descriptive statistics, factor analyses, correlations, *t* tests, chi-square tests, and regression analyses were used for hypothesis testing and additional findings. Descriptive statistics on demographic variables in relation to the constructs of the scales provided an overview of the sample. To compare owners and non-owners of socially responsible apparel on demographic variables, chi-square tests were conducted. In order to assess construct reliability of measures, factor analyses were conducted for multi-item scales. As for social desirability bias, *t* tests and multiple regression analyses were processed to identify if participants with a tendency to answer in a socially desirable way responded differently on research questions (Davies, French, & Keogh, 1998), and if the response bias influenced hypothesis testing.

Skewness was examined to identify the normal distribution of the sample on the key dependent variables and correlations were processed to identify the relationships between independent and dependent variables. As multiple regression has been suggested as a good statistical method for associational research approach that has several independent variables and one dependent variable (Gliner et al., 2009), the method is appropriate to be used for analyzing data of the study. Therefore, both simple and multiple regression analyses were conducted to test hypotheses. Ethical traits including altruism, ethical concern, and ethical obligation were examined as independent variables to predict attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry (H1). In turn, socially responsible attitudes were examined as an independent variable in two sets of simple regression to predict behavioral intentions, which included socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and

ethical post-purchase returning intention (H2). Multiple regression analyses were conducted to test H3. This statistical method was appropriate because the study aimed to identify the moderating effects of independent variables (i.e., price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement) on the relationships between socially responsible attitudes and two dependent variables (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention) (Gliner et al., 2009).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter is comprised of four sections: descriptions of respondents; measurements of variables; hypothesis testing; and additional findings. The variables that were examined to test hypotheses include ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation); attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry; socially responsible apparel purchasing intention; ethical post-purchase returning intention; and individual characteristics (i.e., price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement). Results of descriptive statistics, factor analyses, correlations, chi-square tests, *t* tests, and regression analyses are presented in this chapter. The first section describes the characteristics of respondents and their apparel shopping behavior by suggesting a mean score of age and percentages of gender, ethnicity, education attainment, and household income. Tests for consumers' socially responsible apparel shopping behavior according to gender, education attainments, income levels, and spending on clothes are also included in the section. Next, results of factor analyses for each variable and information regarding mean scores and standards deviations of each instrument are provided in the section. The third section presents results of single and multiple regression analyses for hypotheses testing. Finally, additional findings are provided in the fourth section. Independent samples *t* tests were conducted to investigate differences between consumers who had higher tendency to answer in a socially acceptable way and those who did not. Specifically, the *t* test statistics were used to examine differences between consumers grouped in accordance with their gender, education attainments, household income levels, clothing purchase frequency, and ownership of socially responsible apparel on independent and dependent variables used for hypothesis testing.

Description of Respondents

A total of 311 consumers completed the surveys, but nine questionnaires were not admissible because of missing information or unreliable answering patterns. Thus, the total of 302 questionnaires was retained for data analyses. Fifty-seven percent of the participants responded the questionnaire during weekdays, 37% during weekends, and 6.5% through online. The response rate for online survey was 8.2%. That is, only 18 consumers responded to the online survey out of the 220 requests sent out. Descriptive statistics were performed to determine the characteristics of the participants (see Table 4.1). To indicate the sample's representativeness of the population of residents living in Fort Collins, demographic information of the residents was provided in Table 4.1. Note that the information of Fort Collins residents was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau for the year 2010. No information was available for 2011. The median age of the respondents was 23, which was approximately seven years younger than the median age of Fort Collins residents. The ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 69 years. Females comprised the majority of the sample with 60.3% ($n = 182$) while males comprised only 39.7% ($n = 120$). The majority of the respondents were Caucasian ($n = 204$, 67.5%). With regard to education attainment, the sample presented lower education levels than those of Fort Collins residents. This may be due in part to the young age of the respondents. While only 37.6% of the sample attained college, graduate, or professional degree, 52.3% of the Fort Collins residents had a college degree or beyond. The respondents' income levels were also lower than those of Fort Collins residents. Only 31.1% of the sample earned over \$50,000 in 2011, while 42.8% of Fort Collins residents earned over \$50,000 in 2010.

In addition to the demographic information, consumers were asked about their apparel shopping behavior. Table 4.2 shows how much money the participants spent on clothing in the past six months. Approximately half of the respondents ($n = 150$, 50.4%) answered that

Table 4.1.
Demographics of Respondents (N = 302)

Characteristics	Sample Percentage (%)	Fort Collins Residents Percentage (%)
Age (range = 18 to 69)		
Mean	25.8	-
Median	23.0	29.6
Gender		
Female	60.3	50.1
Male	39.7	49.9
Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.7	.4
Asian	7.0	2.9
Black or African American	5.6	1.1
Hispanic	10.3	10.1
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	.3	.1
White	67.5	83.1
Other	7.6	2.3
Education		
Less than high school graduate	2.3	3.6
High school graduate	19.9	13.6
Some college or associate's degree	40.2	30.5
College degree	23.3	31.3
Graduate or professional degree	14.3	21.0
Education Recoded into Three Levels		
Less than high school graduate	22.2	17.2
Some college or associate's degree	40.2	30.5
More than college degree	37.6	52.3
Household Income		
\$19,999 or less	37.3	35.2 ^a
\$20,000 - \$34,999	22.6	
\$35,000 - \$49,999	8.9	16.6 ^a
\$50,000 - \$64,999	7.5	
\$65,000 - \$79,999	7.5	30.7 ^a
\$80,000 - \$99,999	5.5	
\$100,000 or above	10.6	17.5 ^a
Household Income Recoded into Two Levels		
\$49,999 or less	68.6	51.8
\$50,000 or above	31.1	48.2

^aUnited States Census 2010 provided the information for household income with ten levels. The study displayed the household income of Fort Collins residents with four levels (i.e., \$34,999 or less; \$35,000 - \$49,999; \$50,000 - \$99,999; and \$100,000 or above) that matched some break points of the study.

they had spent \$250 or less on clothing for themselves in the last six months. Over 30% of them ($n = 93$) responded that they had spent between \$251 and \$550 for clothing, and only 18.5% ($n = 55$) had spent \$551 and more.

Table 4.2.
Clothing Purchases for Yourself in the Past Six Months

Clothing purchases	Percentage (%)
\$100 or less	17.8
\$101 - \$250	32.6
\$251 - \$400	21.8
\$401 - \$550	9.4
\$551 - \$700	5.0
\$701 - \$850	4.4
\$851 - \$1,000	9.1

Consumers were also asked about their ownership of socially responsible apparel (i.e., eco, organic, recycled, used, sweatshop-free, and fair-trade apparel) and frequencies of purchasing those products yearly. As shown in Table 4.3.1, used apparel was the most frequently owned products from the consumers ($n = 166$, 55%). Next, 37.1% of the respondents answered that they owned eco apparel ($n = 112$), 36.1% organic apparel ($n = 109$), 34.4% recycled/reclaimed apparel ($n = 104$), and 26.2% fair-trade apparel ($n = 79$). As for sweatshop-free apparel, only 17.2% ($n = 52$) agreed that they owned the products.

Table 4.3.1
Ownership of Socially Responsible Apparel

Variable	Percentage (%)
Eco apparel	37.1
Organic apparel	36.1
Recycled/reclaimed apparel	34.4
Used apparel	55.0
Sweatshop-free apparel	17.2
Fair-trade apparel	26.2

To investigate whether consumers' ownership of socially responsible apparel differed by their gender, education, household income, and spending, chi-square statistics were conducted because of the categorical nature of those variables. Table 4.3.2 shows the Pearson chi-square results which indicated that female and male consumers are not significantly different on whether or not they owned the socially responsible apparel except for organic apparel ($X^2 = 6.37, p < .05$). That is, females reported higher ownership of organic apparel than male consumers.

Table 4.3.2
Chi-Square Analysis on Ownership of Socially Responsible Apparel by Gender

Variable	n	Gender		X^2	p
		Females	Males		
Eco apparel				.02	.904
Non-owners	190	115	75		
Owners	112	67	45		
Organic apparel				6.37	.012*
Non-owners	193	106	87		
Owners	109	76	33		
Recycled apparel				.11	.743
Non-owners	198	118	80		
Owners	104	64	40		
Used apparel				3.54	.060
Non-owners	136	74	62		
Owners	166	108	58		
Sweatshop-free apparel				.17	.677
Non-owners	250	152	98		
Owners	52	30	22		
Fair-trade apparel				.82	.364
Non-owners	223	131	92		
Owners	79	51	28		

Note. * $p < .05$

As shown in Table 4.3.3 and 4.3.4, no relationships were found between education/income levels and the ownership of socially responsible apparel. With regard to the relationship between clothing purchases and ownership of socially responsible apparel, the different spending groups were significantly different from one another in terms of their ownership of eco ($X^2 = 13.74, p < .01$) and organic apparel ($X^2 = 7.13, p < .05$) (see Table

4.3.5). That is, consumers who had spent more money on clothes in general during the past six months were also more likely to own socially responsible apparel such as eco or organic apparel.

Table 4.3.3
Chi-Square Analysis on Ownership of Socially Responsible Apparel by Education Attainments

Variable	<i>n</i>	Education			χ^2	<i>p</i>
		Less than high school	Some college or associate's degree	More than college degree		
Eco apparel					5.67	.059
Non-owners	190	40	86	64		
Owners	111	27	35	49		
Organic apparel					2.39	.303
Non-owners	192	46	80	66		
Owners	109	21	41	47		
Recycled apparel					.14	.931
Non-owners	198	44	81	73		
Owners	103	23	40	40		
Used apparel					2.66	.265
Non-owners	136	36	53	47		
Owners	165	31	68	66		
Sweatshop-free apparel					1.07	.585
Non-owners	249	58	100	91		
Owners	52	9	21	22		
Fair-trade apparel					1.15	.563
Non-owners	223	52	91	80		
Owners	78	15	30	33		

Table 4.3.4

Chi-Square Analysis on Ownership of Socially Responsible Apparel by Household Income Levels

Variable	n	Household Income		X^2	p
		Less than \$50,000	More than \$50,000		
Eco apparel				.08	.776
Non-owners	180	125	55		
Owners	112	76	36		
Organic apparel				.19	.664
Non-owners	185	129	56		
Owners	107	72	35		
Recycled apparel				2.69	.101
Non-owners	192	126	66		
Owners	100	75	25		
Used apparel				2.72	.099
Non-owners	130	83	47		
Owners	162	118	44		
Sweatshop-free apparel				.14	.713
Non-owners	241	167	74		
Owners	51	34	17		
Fair-trade apparel				.00	.999
Non-owners	215	148	67		
Owners	77	53	24		

Table 4.3.5

Chi-Square Analysis on Ownership of Socially Responsible Apparel by Clothing Purchases in the Past Six Months

Variable	n	Clothing purchases			X^2	p
		\$250 or less	\$251-\$550	\$551-\$1,000		
Eco apparel					13.74	.001**
Non-owners	188	110	50	28		
Owners	110	40	43	27		
Organic apparel					7.13	.028**
Non-owners	191	106	50	35		
Owners	107	44	43	20		
Recycled apparel					1.22	.545
Non-owners	196	102	57	37		
Owners	102	48	36	18		
Used apparel					3.35	.187
Non-owners	135	61	44	30		
Owners	163	89	49	25		
Sweatshop-free apparel					.48	.786
Non-owners	247	126	75	46		
Owners	51	24	18	9		
Fair-trade apparel					.41	.814
Non-owners	221	113	69	39		
Owners	77	37	24	16		

Note. ** $p < .01$

Used apparel seemed to be the most frequently purchased socially responsible products by the participants (see Table 4.4). For the question asking consumers' purchasing frequency of socially responsible apparel, only about 40% of the respondents reported that they had never purchased used apparel ($n = 121$, 40.2%), but over 70% of them reported that they had never purchased sweatshop-free apparel ($n = 211$, 70.3%). In the same manner, used apparel was the highest scoring products ($n = 34$, 11.3%) for the question asking if consumers had purchased socially responsible apparel ten or more times per year, but sweatshop-free apparel was the lowest scoring products ($n = 5$, 1.7%) for the same question.

Table 4.4.
Frequencies of Purchasing Socially Responsible Apparel per Year

Variable	Never (%)	1-3 times (%)	4-6 times (%)	7-9 times (%)	10 or more times (%)
Eco apparel	53.2	30.9	11.0	2.3	2.7
Organic apparel	55.1	29.6	9.6	2.0	3.7
Recycled/reclaimed apparel	52.7	31.0	7.3	4.7	4.3
Used apparel	40.2	28.2	13.3	7.0	11.3
Sweatshop-free apparel	70.3	21.0	5.3	1.7	1.7
Fair-trade apparel	64.3	22.3	7.7	3.7	2.0

The last set of questions for the demographic information and apparel shopping behavior asked consumers' experiences of purchasing apparel from socially responsible companies and frequencies of purchasing from those companies. Around eighty-three percent of the respondents ($n = 253$) agreed that they had purchased from such companies. The mean score of the money that consumers had spent on clothing purchases from the companies was \$148.67 with standard deviation of \$183.98 ($n = 149$). The minimum amount of money on the purchases was \$0.00 and the maximum was \$1,000. As shown in Table 4.5, sixty-seven

percent of the respondents answered that they had bought clothes from the companies one to three times a year. Only 7.6% of them reported that they had made clothing purchases ten or more times a year. The socially responsible apparel companies listed by the respondents included American Apparel, Whole Foods, NOTW, Toms, Life is good, ARC thrift, Plato's Closet, Patagonia, Alternative Apparel, Etsy, and Prana, to name a few of the companies.

Table 4.5.
Frequencies of Purchasing Clothing from Socially Responsible Companies

	Percentage (%)
1-3 times a year	67.0
4-6 times a year	21.1
7-9 times a year	4.3
10 or more times a year	7.6

Note. The mean score of the money that consumers had purchased on clothing from socially responsible companies in the past six months was \$148.67 and the standard deviation was \$183.98 ($n = 149$). The minimum was \$0.00 and maximum was \$1,000.

Measurements of Ethical Traits

Factor analysis was conducted to classify each variable of ethical traits, such as altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation. Results showed that only altruism has one factor. Ethical concerns and ethical obligation were revealed to have two factors, and each factor of the variables was labeled according to the items loading on that specific factor.

Altruism.

Among the total of seven items adapted from the study of Rushton et al. (1981), two items, "I would help push a stranger's car out of the snow," and "I would point out a clerk's error (in a bank, at the supermarket) in undercharging me for an item" were eliminated due to their cross-loading issues (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). One item "I would let a neighbor whom I didn't know too well borrow an item of some value to me (e.g., a dish, tools, etc.)" was deleted because its factor loading was lower than .60 (Nunnally, 1978). A

total of four items were included in this research variable. The internal consistency reliability estimate (i.e., Cronbach's Alpha) for altruism was .76 with 61% of variance extracted (see Table 4.6.1).

Table 4.6.1
An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Altruism

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Altruism</u>		.76	61.39
I would give money to a charity.	.89		
I would give money to a stranger who needed it (or asked me for it).	.64		
I would donate goods or clothes to a charity.	.77		
I would volunteer for a charity.	.82		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. A seven-point Likert scale response format (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) was used.

The mean score of the four items was 5.61 with standard deviation of 1.06. As shown in Table 4.6.1.1, 83.2% of participants ($n = 251$) agreed with the item, "I would give money to a charity." The largest percentage of participants (44.4%) strongly agreed that they would give money to a charity ($M = 5.87$, $SD = 1.32$). As for the item, "I would give money to a stranger who needed it (or asked me for it)," only half of the participants ($n = 151$, 50%) agreed with the question ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 1.72$). The mean score of this item was the lowest among the four items. Participants answered the most positively for the question, "I would donate goods or clothes to a charity" ($M = 6.37$, $SD = 1.04$). Over ninety-four percent of the participants agreed with the item ($n = 286$) and 62.6% of them strongly agreed with the question ($n = 189$). Many participants ($n = 237$, 78.5%) also agreed with the item, "I would volunteer for a charity" ($M = 5.83$, $SD = 1.37$).

Table 4.6.1.1
Means and Standard Deviations of Altruism

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor1: Altruism</u>	5.61	1.06
I would give money to a charity.	5.87	1.32
I would give money to a stranger who needed it (or asked me for it).	4.41	1.72
I would donate goods or clothes to a charity.	6.37	1.04
I would volunteer for a charity.	5.83	1.37

Note. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

Ethical concerns.

A total of eight items adapted from the studies of Dickson (2000), Dunlap et al. (2000) and Hustvedt and Dickson (2009) were used to measure consumers' ethical concerns. Only one item, "I am concerned with the globe because I believe that if things continue on their present course, we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe" was removed due to its cross-loading issue. An exploratory factor analysis suggested ethical concerns with two factors, *concern for environment* and *concern for production* (see Table 4.6.2).

Concern for environment included four items, such as "I am concerned with the planet because disastrous consequences often occur when humans interfere with nature," "I am not concerned with the environment because the earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them," "I am not concerned with the environment because the balance of nature is strong enough to cope with the impacts of modern industrial nations," and "I am not concerned with the environment because humans will eventually learn enough about how nature works to be able to control it." The reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) of these four items was .86 with 49% of variance extracted.

Table 4.6.2
An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Ethical Concerns

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Concern for environment</u>		.86	49.25
I am concerned with the planet because disastrous consequences often occur when human interfere with nature.	.65		
I am not concerned with the environment because the earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them. *	.90		
I am not concerned with the environment because the balance of nature is strong enough to cope with the impacts of modern industrial nations. *	.89		
I am not concerned with the environment because humans will eventually learn enough about how nature works to be able to control it. *	.85		
<u>Factor 2: Concern for production</u>		.77	21.56
I am concerned with the impact of clothing production on the environment.	.77		
I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in U.S. clothing manufacturing businesses.	.86		
I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in foreign clothing manufacturing businesses.	.81		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

Concern for production shows consumers' concerns specifically for the impact of apparel production on the environment. The factor included "I am concerned with the impact of clothing production on the environment," "I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in U.S. clothing manufacturing businesses," and "I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in foreign clothing

manufacturing businesses.” The reliability (Cronbach’s Alpha) of this factor was .77 with 22% of variance extracted, which was slightly lower than concern for environment ($\alpha = .86$).

Table 4.6.2.1 displays the mean score of the factor, concern for environment, which was 5.50 with its standard deviation of 1.25. Percentages of responses indicate that respondents were more likely to agree with the items: “I am concerned with the planet because disastrous consequences often occur when humans interfere with nature” ($n = 217$, 71.8%); “I am not concerned with the environment because the earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them” (reverse coded item, $n = 216$, 71.5%); “I am not concerned with the environment because the balance of nature is strong enough to cope with the impacts of modern industrial nations” ($n = 230$, 76.2%); and “I am not concerned with the environment because humans will eventually learn enough about how nature works to be able to control it” (reverse coded item, $n = 241$, 79.8%).

The participants agreed less with the items of concern for production than those of concern for environment ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 1.26$). Consumers seem to worry more about the environment in general than the environmental pollution generated by apparel production. Only 36.4% of the participants ($n = 110$) agreed with the item, “I am concerned with the impact of clothing production on the environment.” Consumers may not be familiar with the negative impact of apparel production on the environment. As for the issues related to working conditions in apparel production, the participants worried more about foreign workers ($n = 185$, 61.3%) than U.S. workers ($n = 146$, 48.4%).

Table 4.6.2.1

Means and Standard Deviations of Ethical Concerns

Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor 1: Concern for environment</u>	5.50	1.25
I am concerned with the planet because disastrous consequences often occur when humans interfere with nature.	5.30	1.41
I am not concerned with the environment because the earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them. *	5.43	1.61
I am not concerned with the environment because the balance of nature is strong enough to cope with the impacts of modern industrial nations. *	5.54	1.54
I am not concerned with the environment because humans will eventually learn enough about how nature works to be able to control it. *	5.71	1.38
<u>Factor 2: Concern for production</u>	4.55	1.26
I am concerned with the impact of clothing production on the environment.	4.21	1.50
I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in U.S. clothing manufacturing businesses.	4.49	1.47
I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in foreign clothing manufacturing businesses.	4.97	1.59

Note. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

Ethical obligation.

An exploratory factor analysis revealed that ethical obligation is explained by two factors (see Table 4.6.3). The factors were labeled as *personal contribution* and *self obligation*, according to the items loading on each specific factor. The first factor (i.e., personal contribution) represents how much consumers feel responsibility for the issues in relation to the environment and society considering their personal contribution. The second factor (i.e., self obligation) concerns how much consumers feel self obligation to purchase apparel products that do not harm the environment and workers during their production process. A total of seven items, five items adapted from the studies of Kaiser and Shimoda (1999) and Sparks et al. (1995) and two items developed for the study, were used to measure

Table 4.6.3
An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Ethical Obligation

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Personal contribution</u>		.82	49.80
Because my personal contribution is very small, I do not feel responsible for water pollution. *	.84		
I do not feel responsible for the greenhouse effect. *	.85		
Because my personal contribution is very small, I do not feel responsible for purchasing environmentally friendly apparel goods. *	.77		
Because my personal contribution is very small, I do not feel responsible for purchasing sweatshop-free apparel goods. *	.69		
<u>Factor 2: Self obligation</u>		.78	28.01
I feel that I am responsible for purchasing apparel goods that do not generate negative impacts on the environment during the production process.	.87		
I feel that I am responsible for purchasing apparel goods that do not generate negative impacts on workers during the production process.	.86		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

consumers' ethical obligation. Among the seven items, only one item, "I feel co-responsible for environment problems occurring now" was removed due to its lower factor loading than .60. The internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) of personal contribution was .82 with 50% of variance extracted, which was slightly higher than that of self obligation whose internal reliability was .78 with 28% of variance extracted.

As shown in Table 4.6.3.1, the mean score of personal contribution ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 1.26$) was slightly higher than self obligation ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 1.27$). Over the half of the participants agreed that they feel responsible for water pollution ($n = 177$, 58.6%), the greenhouse effect ($n = 170$, 56.3%), and purchasing environmentally friendly apparel goods

($n = 158, 52.3\%$) and sweatshop-free apparel goods ($n = 160, 53.0\%$) and can contribute to the environment and society with their personal contribution. For the questions that asked self obligation, however, less than half of the respondents agreed that they feel responsible for purchasing apparel products that do not generate negative impacts on the environment ($n = 121, 40.1\%$) and on workers ($n = 125, 41.4\%$) during the production process.

Table 4.6.3.1
Means and Standard Deviations of Ethical Obligation

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor 1: Personal contribution</u>	4.76	1.26
Because my personal contribution is very small, I do not feel responsible for water pollution. *	4.88	1.65
I do not feel responsible for the greenhouse effect. *	4.71	1.60
Because my personal contribution is very small, I do not feel responsible for purchasing environmentally friendly apparel goods. *	4.69	1.44
Because my personal contribution is very small, I do not feel responsible for purchasing sweatshop-free apparel goods. *	4.78	1.57
<u>Factor 2: Self obligation</u>	4.32	1.27
I feel that I am responsible for purchasing apparel goods that do not generate negative impacts on the environment during the production process.	4.31	1.40
I feel that I am responsible for purchasing apparel goods that do not generate negative impacts on workers during the production process.	4.34	1.41

Note. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

Measurements of Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles

Industry

In measuring consumers' attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry, a total of ten items adapted from the studies of Creyer and Ross (1997) (eight items), Dickson (1999) (one items), and Dickson (2000) (one item) were utilized. The exploratory factor analysis identified two separate factors underlying responses for attitudes

toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry in its specific content areas. The first factor included seven items of measurement while the second factor included three items which were, “Whether an apparel firm is socially responsible is not important to me in making my decision on what to buy,” “All apparel firms will be socially irresponsible sometimes; it is normal,” and “It is no big deal if apparel firms are sometimes socially irresponsible.” These three items were adapted from the study of Creyer and Ross (1997) and had similar meanings with five other items, which were included as part of the first factor of the study. Additionally, the internal reliability of the three items from Creyer and Ross (1997) ($\alpha = .71$) was lower than that of the seven items of the first factor ($\alpha = .86$). Due to this reason, the three items were deleted with an intention to condense the factors of socially responsible attitudes. The internal consistency reliability estimate of the seven items in the first factor (i.e., Cronbach α) was .86 with 54% of variance extracted (see Table 4.7.1).

Descriptive statistics revealed that the overall mean score of attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry was 5.07 with its standard deviation of 1.10 (see Table 4.7.1.1). Over the half of the participants had positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. The highest scoring item was “I believe in the ideals of socially responsible clothing businesses.” Over eighty percent of the participant ($n = 244$) believed the ideals of apparel companies to be socially responsible. The second highest scoring item was “I wish that there was a label on clothing telling consumers if they were made by socially responsible manufacturers” ($n = 238$, 78.8%). The third highest scoring item was “Apparel firms have a responsibility to always act with the highest of ethical standards.” 67.6 % of the participants ($n = 204$) agreed that apparel companies should maintain the highest of ethical standards. The participants also agreed that, “Apparel firms who are socially responsible should be allowed to earn greater profits than apparel firms normally do” ($n = 181$, 59.9%), “I would go several miles out of my way to buy from an

Table 4.7.1

An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry</u>			
		.86	54.38
I wish that there was a label on clothing telling consumers if they were made by socially responsible manufacturers.	.75		
I believe in the ideals of socially responsible clothing businesses.	.81		
I would go several miles out of my way to buy from an apparel store that I knew to be extremely ethical.	.77		
I would pay considerably more money for a product from an apparel firm that I knew to be extremely ethical.	.74		
Apparel firms who are socially responsible should be allowed to earn greater profits than apparel firms normally do.	.70		
I really care whether the apparel stores I patronize have a reputation for socially responsible behavior.	.78		
Apparel firms have a responsibility to always act with the highest of ethical standards.	.60		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. A seven-point Likert scale response format (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) was used.

apparel store that I knew to be extremely ethical” ($n = 180, 59.6\%$), and “I really care whether the apparel stores I patronize have a reputation for socially responsible behavior” ($n = 169, 55.9\%$). Unlike other items, less than half of the participants agreed with this item, “I would pay considerably more money for a product from an apparel firm that I knew to be extremely ethical” ($n = 144, 47.7\%$).

Table 4.7.1.1

Means and Standard Deviations of Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor 1: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry</u>	5.07	1.10
I wish that there was a label on clothing telling consumers if they were made by socially responsible manufacturers.	5.67	1.44
I believe in the ideals of socially responsible clothing businesses.	5.67	1.30
I would go several miles out of my way to buy from an apparel store that I knew to be extremely ethical.	4.77	1.70
I would pay considerably more money for a product from an apparel firm that I knew to be extremely ethical.	4.34	1.59
Apparel firms who are socially responsible should be allowed to earn greater profits than apparel firms normally do.	4.85	1.49
I really care whether the apparel stores I patronize have a reputation for socially responsible behavior.	4.78	1.46
Apparel firms have a responsibility to always act with the highest of ethical standards.	5.31	1.42

Note. Items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale response format.

Measurements of Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention.

Consumers' socially responsible apparel purchasing intention was measured using four items adapted from the study of Kim and Damhorst (1998) and five items developed for the study. As shown in Table 4.8.1, an exploratory factor analysis identified that all of the items were compliments to a single construct. They were all usable in measuring consumers' intention to purchase socially responsible apparel products. The internal consistency reliability estimate (i.e., Cronbach α) was .92 with 62% of variance extracted.

Table 4.8.1

An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention</u>		.92	61.84
In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel made from recycled materials, such as polyester.	.81		
In the near future, I would consider purchasing second-hand apparel with the consideration for the environment.	.76		
In the near future, I would select apparel that I can wear over a longer time compared to trendy apparel that goes out of style quickly.	.69		
In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel made of organically grown natural fibers.	.85		
In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel with low impact on the environment.	.86		
In the near future, I would consider purchasing fair-trade apparel to support producers in developing countries.	.82		
In the near future, I would consider purchasing sweatshop-free apparel to support improved working conditions.	.83		
In the near future, I would consider purchasing socially responsible apparel even if it costs more than conventional apparel.	.79		
In the near future, I would consider purchasing socially responsible apparel even if it is not stylish or trendy compared to conventional apparel.	.64		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. A seven-point Likert scale response format (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) was used.

The descriptive statistics revealed that the overall mean score of socially responsible apparel purchasing intention was 5.41 with its standard deviation of 1.14 (see Table 4.8.1.1).

The highest scoring item was “In the near future, I would consider purchasing sweatshop-free

Table 4.8.1.1

Means and Standard Deviations of Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor 1: Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention</u>	5.41	1.14
In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel made from recycled materials, such as polyester.	5.48	1.39
In the near future, I would consider purchasing second-hand apparel with the consideration for the environment.	5.20	1.65
In the near future, I would select apparel that I can wear over a longer time compared to trendy apparel that goes out of style quickly.	5.77	1.38
In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel made of organically grown natural fibers.	5.49	1.43
In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel with low impact on the environment.	5.64	1.37
In the near future, I would consider purchasing fair-trade apparel to support producers in developing countries.	5.50	1.44
In the near future, I would consider purchasing sweatshop-free apparel to support improved working conditions.	5.79	1.37
In the near future, I would consider purchasing socially responsible apparel even if it costs more than conventional apparel.	5.17	1.51
In the near future, I would consider purchasing socially responsible apparel even if it is not stylish or trendy compared to conventional apparel.	4.72	1.71

Note. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

apparel to support improved working conditions” ($n = 257, 85.1\%$). These two items, “In the near future, I would select apparel that I can wear over a longer time compared to trendy apparel that goes out of style quickly” and “In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel with low impact on the environment” were scored similar ($n = 245, 81.1\%$ and $n = 244, 80.8\%$ respectively). Approximately eighty percent of the participants answered that they would consider purchasing apparel made from recycled materials, such as polyester in the near future. Similarly, 77.2% of the participants agreed that they would consider

purchasing fair-trade apparel to support producers in developing countries in the near future. Consumers also expressed their interests in purchasing apparel specifically made of organically grown natural fibers ($n = 230, 76.1\%$) and socially responsible apparel in general no matter what the costs are ($n = 216, 72.5\%$). The lowest scoring items were “In the near future, I would consider purchasing second-hand apparel with the consideration for the environment” ($n = 207, 68.6\%$) and “In the near future, I would consider purchasing socially responsible apparel even if it is not stylish or trendy compared to conventional apparel” ($n = 176, 58.9\%$). Many consumers thought that they may not purchase socially responsible apparel if the products are not stylish or trendy.

Ethical post-purchase returning intention.

In order to measure consumers' ethical returning intention, four items from the studies of King et al. (2008) and Vitell et al. (1991) were adapted, and three items were additionally developed to measure the research variable. Consumers' ethical returning intention emerged as one factor as shown in Table 4.8.2. Two items, “In the near future, I would not intend to return clothes after wearing them,” and “In the near future, I would not return clothes with dishonest reasons in spite of the lenient return policies of apparel companies” were eliminated due to their cross-loading issues. One item “In the near future, I might return clothes after trying them and not liking them” was removed due to its lower factor loading than .60. The Cronbach's alpha for the combination of the four items was .82 with 66% of variance extracted.

Descriptive statistics found that the overall mean score of ethical returning intention was 6.07 with standard deviation of 1.20 (see Table 4.8.2.1). Over eighty percent of the participants agreed that they would not deliberately damage clothes to be considered as a defective item for a return ($n = 256, 84.8\%$), return worn clothes as new ($n = 255, 83.1\%$), and return damaged clothes ($n = 251, 83.1\%$). Compared to other items, only 79.1% of the

participants ($n = 239$) agreed that they would not buy clothes for a single event (e.g., wedding or job interview) with the intention of returning them.

Table 4.8.2
An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Ethical post-purchase returning intention</u>			
		.82	65.66
In the near future, I might deliberately damage clothes to be considered as a defective item for a return. *	.74		
In the near future, I might buy clothes for a single event (e.g., wedding or job interview) with the intention of returning them. *	.78		
In the near future, I might intend to return worn clothes as new. *	.88		
In the near future, I might return damaged clothes even though the damage is my own fault. *	.83		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

Table 4.8.2.1
Means and Standard Deviations of Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor 1: Ethical post-purchase returning intention</u>	6.07	1.20
In the near future, I might deliberately damage clothes to be considered as a defective item for a return. *	6.15	1.47
In the near future, I might buy clothes for a single event (e.g., wedding or job interview) with the intention of returning them. *	5.84	1.64
In the near future, I might intend to return worn clothes as new. *	6.14	1.40
In the near future, I might return damaged clothes even though the damage is my own fault. *	6.09	1.47

Note. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. Items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale response format.

Measurements of Individual Characteristics

Consumers' individual characteristics including price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement were measured in order to examine whether the relationships between attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically were moderated by those characteristics.

Price sensitivity.

Four items were adapted from the studies of Anglin et al. (1994) and Goldsmith and Newell (1997) in order to measure consumers' tendency to search for lower prices. An exploratory factor analysis suggested that the total of four items were grouped into two correlated factors. One item, "In general, the price or cost of buying clothes is important to me even though I really like them," was however eliminated due to its cross-loading issue. As the second factor included only one clothing-related item, the item was also removed from the set of the questions. The Cronbach' alpha for the two items left was .72 with 52% of variance extracted (see Table 4.9.1).

Table 4.9.1
An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Price Sensitivity

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Price sensitivity</u>		.72	52.47
I shop a lot for specials.	.89		
I usually watch the advertisements for announcements of sales.	.89		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. A seven-point Likert scale response format (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) was used.

The overall mean score for price sensitivity was 5.20 with standard deviation of 1.57 (see Table 4.9.1.1). Specifically, descriptive statistics indicated that the item "I shop a lot for

specials” has the higher mean score ($M = 5.61$, $SD = 1.59$) than that of the other item “I usually watch the advertisements for announcements of sales” ($M = 4.77$, $SD = 1.94$). Over seventy-seven percent of the participants ($n = 234$) agreed that they shop a lot for specials, but only 58.2% of them ($n = 176$) agreed that they watch advertisements for announcements of sales.

Table 4.9.1.1
Means and Standard Deviations of Price Sensitivity

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor 1: Price sensitivity</u>	5.20	1.57
I shop a lot for specials.	5.61	1.59
I usually watch the advertisements for announcements of sales.	4.77	1.94

Note. Items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale response format.

Materialism.

Nine items were adapted from the study of Richins and Dawson (1992). The present study revealed only two factors unlike the previous study that found three factors including success, certainty, and happiness. Because the first factor included all the three factors and showed higher internal reliability ($\alpha = .75$, 31% of variance extracted) than the second factor with internal reliability ($\alpha = .59$, 23% of variance extracted), the three items of the second factor were eliminated from the set of the questions. The scale for materialism therefore ended up as one factor (see Table 4.9.2).

Table 4.9.2
An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Materialism

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Materialism</u>		.75	30.59
I like to own things that impress people.	.62		
Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.	.60		
I like a lot of luxury in my life.	.69		
My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.	.82		
It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.	.72		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

Descriptive statistics showed that the overall mean score of materialism was 4.08 with standard deviation of 1.21 (see Table 4.9.2.1). The highest scoring item was “Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure” ($M = 4.58, SD = 1.57$). Approximately half of the participants agreed with this item ($n = 166, 55\%$). The second highest scoring item ($n = 162, 53.6\%$) was “It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like” ($M = 4.31, SD = 1.80$). Unlike these two items, only 39.4% of the participants ($n = 119$) reported that they like a lot of luxury in their lives ($M = 4.06, SD = 1.66$). In addition to this, smaller percentages of the participants agreed that life would be better if they owned certain things they don't have ($n = 113, 37.4\%$) and they like to own things to impress people ($n = 104, 34.5\%$).

Table 4.9.2.1

Means and Standard Deviations of Materialism

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor 1: Materialism</u>	4.08	1.21
I like to own things that impress people.	3.62	1.78
Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.	4.58	1.57
I like a lot of luxury in my life.	4.06	1.66
My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.	3.80	1.78
It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.	4.31	1.80

Note. Items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale response format.

Impulse buying tendency.

In order to measure impulse buying tendency, a total of six items were adapted from the studies of Rook and Fisher (1995) and Beatty and Ferrell (1998). As shown in Table 4.9.3, exploratory factor analysis revealed that the total of six items were grouped together into one factor. All the items were usable in measuring consumers' tendency to buy products impulsively. The Cronbach's alpha for the variable was .84 with 56% of variance extracted.

Table 4.9.3

An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Impulse Buying Tendency

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Impulse buying tendency</u>		.84	56.29
I often buy things without thinking.	.84		
"Buy now, think about it later" describes my shopping habit.	.83		
I carefully plan most of my purchases. *	.62		
Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy.	.76		
When I go shopping, I buy things that I had not intended to purchase.	.77		
It is fun to buy spontaneously.	.66		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

The overall mean score of impulse buying tendency was 3.54 with standard deviation of 1.28 (see Table 4.9.3.1). Even though it was the highest scoring item, only 49.1% of the participants ($n = 148$) answered that when they go shopping, they buy things that they had not intended to purchase ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 1.63$). Similar to this, only 47.4% of the participants ($n = 143$) agreed that it is fun to buy spontaneously ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.75$). Smaller percentages of the participants also answered that they are sometimes a bit reckless about what they buy ($n = 120$, 39.7%), often buy things without thinking ($n = 84$, 27.8%), and don't carefully plan most of their purchases ($n = 65$, 21.6%). In relation to the lowest scoring item, 18.6% of the respondents ($n = 56$) agreed that "Buy now, think about it later" describes their shopping habit.

Table 4.9.3.1

Means and Standard Deviations of Impulse Buying Tendency

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor 1: Impulse buying tendency</u>	3.54	1.28
I often buy things without thinking.	3.30	1.83
"Buy now, think about it later" describes my shopping habit.	2.65	1.76
I carefully plan most of my purchases. *	3.30	1.60
Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy.	3.76	1.73
When I go shopping, I buy things that I had not intended to purchase.	4.19	1.63
It is fun to buy spontaneously.	4.08	1.75

Note. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. Items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale response format.

Clothing involvement.

A total of seven items were adapted from the study of Mittal (1995) and Mittal and Lee (1989) in order to measure clothing involvement. Exploratory factor analysis for clothing involvement identified that the seven items were all grouped together as one factor as shown

in Table 4.9.4. The internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the items was .89 with 60% of variance extracted.

Table 4.9.4
An Exploratory Factor Analysis of Clothing Involvement

Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	Variance Extracted
<u>Factor 1: Clothing involvement</u>		.89	60.00
Clothing is very important to me.	.83		
For me, clothing does not matter. *	.69		
Clothing is an important part of my life.	.78		
I have a strong interest in clothing.	.82		
I choose clothing very carefully.	.73		
Which clothing I buy matters to me a lot.	.78		
Choosing clothing is an important decision for me.	.80		

Note. Only loadings greater than .60 are shown. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. A seven-point Likert scale response format was used.

Descriptive statistics revealed that the overall mean score of clothing involvement was 4.77 with standard deviation of 1.20 (see Table 4.9.4.1). The highest scoring item was “I choose clothing very carefully” ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 1.68$). That is, approximately seventy percent of the participants ($n = 212$) answered that they choose clothing very carefully. Similarly, many respondents agreed that which clothing they buy matters to them a lot ($n = 202$, 66.9%) and choosing clothing is an important decision for them ($n = 195$, 64.7%). Around half of the participants also agreed that clothing matters for them ($n = 168$, 55.7%), they have a strong interest in clothing ($n = 166$, 54.9%), clothing is very important to them ($n = 158$, 52.3%), and clothing is an important part of their lives ($n = 152$, 50.4%).

Table 4.9.4.1

Means and Standard Deviations of Clothing Involvement

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<u>Factor 1: Clothing involvement</u>	4.77	1.20
Clothing is very important to me.	4.49	1.68
For me, clothing does not matter. *	4.73	1.70
Clothing is an important part of my life.	4.51	1.52
I have a strong interest in clothing.	4.58	1.68
I choose clothing very carefully.	5.14	1.36
Which clothing I buy matters to me a lot.	4.96	1.47
Choosing clothing is an important decision for me.	4.98	1.47

Note. An asterisk (*) indicates reverse scored items. Items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale response format.

Hypothesis Testing

Both simple linear and multiple regressions were used to test the hypotheses of the study. According to the findings of the exploratory factor analyses from the previous section, the model for the trait-attitude-intention hierarchy of ethical consumer behavior was revised to include the factors indicated. As shown in Figure 4.1, two factors for ethical concerns (i.e., concern for environment and concern for production) and ethical obligation (i.e., personal contribution and self obligation) were included under each variable.

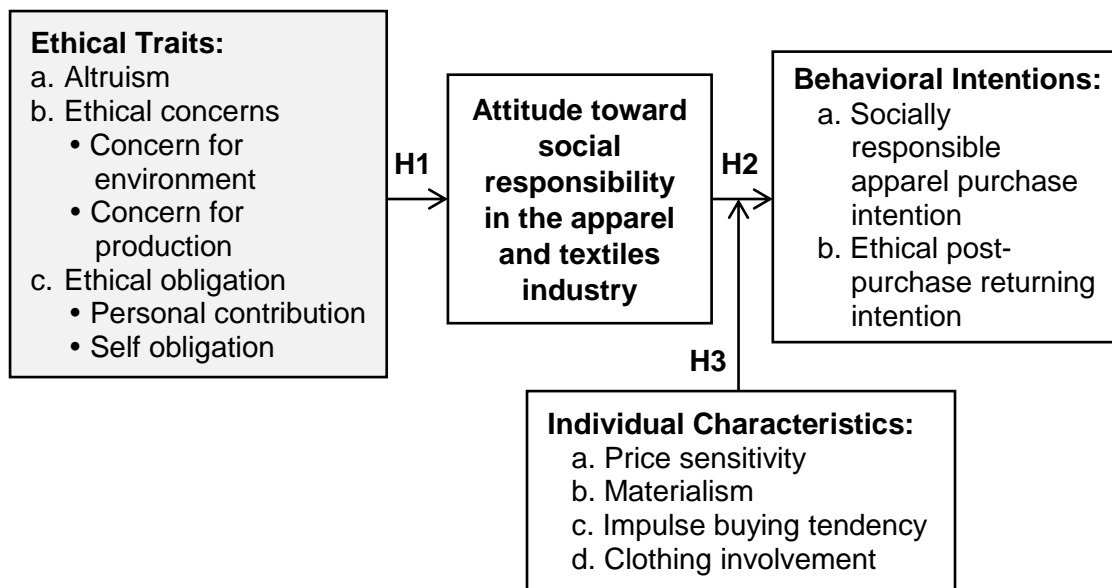


Figure 4.1 (revised). The Trait-Attitude-Intention Hierarchy of Ethical Consumer Behavior: Moderating Effects of Individual Characteristics (based on Homer & Kahle, 1988; Rokeach, 1973)

Data analysis procedures for hypothesis testing are presented in Table 4.10.

Preliminary analyses (i.e., factor analyses or regression analyses) for each hypothesis are presented in the table. As the first step for data analyses, single or multiple regressions were conducted to identify if each independent variable predicted each dependent variable. Ethical traits, such as altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation were used to predict attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. The second step involving multiple regression analysis was used to determine which of the independents variables (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation) might predict consumers' socially responsible attitudes. Next, single regressions were used to predict socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention from socially responsible attitudes. Finally, multiple regressions were conducted to investigate the role of individual characteristics (i.e., price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement) as moderators between socially responsible attitudes and socially responsible or ethical behavioral intentions.

In testing the hypotheses, social desirability bias was included to control for the potential effects it might have on the hypothesized relationships. As shown in the next section, social desirability bias did not influence the relationships between independent variables and dependent variables. Only the association between ethical concerns (i.e., concern for environment and concern for production) and attitudes towards social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry was influenced by social desirability bias. Therefore, except for that specific relationship, social desirability bias was removed from any other models which it did not impact.

Table 4.10.

Data Analysis Procedures for Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Preliminary Analysis	Analysis
H1a: Altruism will have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.	Factor analysis for altruism (one factor) Factor analysis for attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry (one factor)	Single regression IV: Altruism DV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry
H1b: Ethical concerns will have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.	Factor analysis for ethical concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factor 1: Concern for environment Factor 2: Concern for production Factor analysis for attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry (one factor)	Multiple regression IV: Ethical concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factor 1: Concern for environment Factor 2: Concern for production DV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry
H1c: Ethical obligation will have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.	Factor analysis for ethical obligation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factor 1: Personal contribution Factor 2: Self obligation Factor analysis for attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry (one factor)	Multiple regression IV: Ethical obligation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Factor 1: Personal contribution Factor 2: Self obligation DV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry
H1a, H1b, and H1c	Factor analysis and single linear regression for each variable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Altruism Ethical concerns Ethical obligation Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry 	Multiple regression IV: Ethical traits (i.e., Altruism, Ethical concerns, and Ethical obligation) DV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry

Table 4.10.

Data Analysis Procedures for Hypothesis Testing (Continued)

Hypothesis	Preliminary Analysis	Analysis
H2a: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry will have a direct, positive effect on purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products.	Factor analysis for socially responsible apparel purchasing intention (one factor)	Single regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry DV: Socially responsible purchasing intention
H2b: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry will have a direct, positive effect on ethical post-purchase returning intention.	Factor analysis for ethical returning intention (one factor)	Single regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry DV: Ethical returning intention
H3a: With greater price sensitivity, a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.	Factor analysis for price sensitivity (One factor)	Multiple regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry IV (Moderator): Price sensitivity DV: Socially responsible purchasing intention
H3a: With greater price sensitivity, b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.	Factor analysis for price sensitivity (One factor)	Multiple regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry IV (Moderator): Price sensitivity DV: Ethical returning intention

Table 4.10.

Data Analysis Procedures for Hypothesis Testing (Continued)

Hypothesis	Preliminary Analysis	Analysis
H3b: With greater materialism, a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.	Factor analysis for materialism (One factor)	Multiple regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry IV (Moderator): Materialism DV: Socially responsible purchasing intention
H3b: With greater materialism, b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.	Factor analysis for materialism (One factor)	Multiple regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry IV (Moderator): Materialism DV: Ethical returning intention
H3c: With greater impulse buying tendency, a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.	Factor analysis for impulse buying tendency (One factor)	Multiple regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry IV (Moderator): Impulse buying tendency DV: Socially responsible purchasing intention

Table 4.10.

Data Analysis Procedures for Hypothesis Testing (Continued)

Hypothesis	Preliminary Analysis	Analysis
H3c: With greater impulse buying tendency, b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.	Factor analysis for impulse buying tendency	Multiple regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry IV (Moderator): Impulse buying tendency DV: Ethical returning intention
H3d: With greater clothing involvement, a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.	Factor analysis for clothing involvement (One factor)	Multiple regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry IV (Moderator): Clothing involvement DV: Socially responsible purchasing intention
H3d: With greater clothing involvement, b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.	Factor analysis for clothing involvement (One factor)	Multiple regression IV: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry IV (Moderator): Clothing involvement DV: Ethical returning intention

Test of Hypothesis H1a, H1b, and H1c.

It was hypothesized that ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation) would have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. To test the hypotheses, both single and multiple regression analyses were conducted.

Single regression was conducted to investigate how well altruism predicts consumers' attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. The result was statistically significant, $R^2 = .08$, $F(1, 283) = 26.59$, $p < .001$ (see Table 4.11.1). The identified equation to understand this relationship was: socially responsible attitudes = $3.42 + .30 \times (\text{altruism})$. The adjusted R^2 value was .083. This indicates that 8% of the variance in socially responsible attitudes was explained by altruism. According to Cohen (1988), this is a small effect. Further, altruism was found to positively predict attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textile industry ($\beta = .29$, $t = 5.16$, $p < .001$). Thus, H1a was supported.

Table 4.11.1

Single Regression Analysis Summary for Altruism and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Altruism	.30	.06	.29	5.16	<.001
Constant	3.42	.33			

Note. $R = .29$, $R^2 = .08$; $F(1, 283) = 26.59$, $p < .001$.

As previously found, ethical concerns were comprised of two factors including concern for environment and concern for production. As shown in Table 4.11.2, the combination of the factors to predict socially responsible attitudes was statistically significant, $R^2 = .28$, $F(3, 273) = 37.36$, $p < .001$. The adjusted R^2 value was .283. This indicates that 28% of the variance in socially responsible attitudes was explained by the two factors of ethical

concerns. From the finding of Cohen (1988), this is a large effect. Further, concern for environment ($\beta = .33, t = 5.94, p < .001$) and concern for production ($\beta = .30, t = 5.39, p < .001$) were found to positively predict attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textile industry. That is, the more consumers concern about the environment and the impact of apparel production on the environment, the more likely they will present positive attitudes towards socially responsible apparel businesses. However, only this model was influenced by consumers' tendency to answer questions in a socially acceptable way (i.e., social desirability bias). This result is shown in Table 4.11.2. Through the data analysis, it was revealed that H1b was supported.

Table 4.11.2

Multiple Regression Analysis Summary for Ethical Concerns and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Concern for environment	.29	.05	.33	5.94	<.001
Concern for production	.26	.05	.30	5.39	<.001
Social desirability bias	.05	.02	.13	5.94	<.05
Constant	1.93	.31			

Note. $R = .53, R^2 = .28; F(3, 273) = 37.36, p < .001$.

As shown in Table 4.11.3, the combination of two factors (i.e., personal contribution and self obligation) to predict socially responsible attitudes from ethical obligation was also statistically significant, $R^2 = .24, F(2, 287) = 46.72, p < .001$. The adjust R^2 value was .240. This indicates that 24% of the variance in socially responsible attitudes was explained by ethical obligation. According to Cohen (1988), this is a large effect. The two factors, such as personal contribution ($\beta = .25, t = 4.65, p < .001$) and self obligation ($\beta = .35, t = 6.35, p < .001$), were found to positively predict attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textile industry. The data analysis revealed that H1c was supported.

Table 4.11.3

Single Regression Analysis Summary for Ethical Obligation and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Personal contribution	.22	.05	.25	4.65	<.001
Self obligation	.30	.05	.35	6.35	<.001
Constant	2.74	.25			

Note. $R = .50$, $R^2 = .26$; $F(2, 287) = 46.72$, $p < .001$.

Simultaneous multiple regression was conducted to investigate the best predictors of socially responsible attitudes. The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations are shown in Table 4.11.4.1. The variables were all correlated with each other at the .01 or .001 level (1-tailed). The combination of variables to predict socially responsible attitudes from altruism, ethical concerns (i.e., two factors, concern for environment and concern for production), and ethical obligation (i.e., two factors, personal contribution and self obligation) was statistically significant, $R^2 = .32$, $F(5, 268) = 26.10$, $p < .001$. As social desirability bias did not play an important role in the model ($p = .099$), it was taken out of the regression model. The adjusted R^2 value was .315. This indicates that 32% of the variance in attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry was explained by the model. According to Cohen (1988), this is a large effect. The beta coefficients are presented in Table 4.11.4.2. When all five variables were included, only the two factors of ethical concerns (i.e., concern for environment: $\beta = .23$, $t = 3.87$, $p < .001$, concern for production: $\beta = .19$, $t = 3.12$, $p < .01$) and the two factors of ethical obligation (i.e., personal contribution: $\beta = .12$, $t = 2.13$, $p < .05$, self obligation: $\beta = .19$, $t = 3.23$, $p < .01$) positively significantly predicted socially responsible attitudes at the significance levels of .05, .01, or .001. However, altruism ($\beta = .09$, $t = 1.64$, $p = .102$) did not predict socially responsible attitudes. The analysis revealed that concern for environment was the best predictor of socially responsible attitudes.

Table 4.11.4.1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations for Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry and Predictors

Variable	Altruism	Concern for environment	Concern for production	Personal contribution	Self obligation
Attitudes	.29***	.42***	.43***	.37***	.43***
Predictors					
Altruism	--	.24***	.28***	.15**	.24***
Concern for environment		--	.38***	.42***	.34***
Concern for production			--	.36***	.44***
Personal contribution				--	.33***
Self obligation					--

** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 4.11.4.2

Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis Summary for Ethical Traits and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Altruism	.09	.05	.09	1.64	.102
Concern for environment	.20	.05	.23	3.87	<.001
Concern for production	.16	.05	.19	3.12	<.01
Personal contribution	.10	.05	.12	2.13	<.05
Self obligation	.17	.05	.19	3.23	<.01
Constant	1.54	.36			

Note. $R = .57$, $R^2 = .32$; $F(5, 268) = 26.10$, $p < .001$.

Test of hypothesis H2a and H2b.

Before running single regression statistic for hypothesis 2, skewness was performed to indicate if the key dependent variables (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention) were normally distributed. As shown in Table 4.12.1, the distribution of the two variables was approximately normal. Even though the

skewness of ethical returning intention was out of the range between -1 to 1, it was assumed that the variable was normally distributed since the absolute value of one is a rough guide (Morgan, Leech, Gloeckner, & Barrett, 2011).

Table 4.12.1
Skewness of Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skew	<i>SE</i>
Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention	295	5.41	1.14	-.74	.14
Ethical post-purchase returning intention	299	6.07	1.20	-1.26	.14

Single regression was conducted to investigate how socially responsible attitudes predict socially responsible apparel purchasing intention. The results were statistically significant, $R^2 = .46$, $F(1, 285) = 242.71$, $p < .001$. The adjusted R^2 value was .458. This indicates that 46% of the variance in socially responsible apparel purchasing intention was explained by the socially responsible attitudes. According to Cohen (1988), this is a large effect. Further attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry were found to positively predict socially responsible apparel purchasing intention ($\beta = .68$, $t = 15.58$, $p < .001$). That is, the more consumers have positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry, the more likely they will exhibit positive intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel products. Thus, H2a was supported.

Table 4.12.2

Single Regression Analysis Summary for Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry and Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry	.71	.05	.68	15.58	<.001
Constant	1.85	.24			

Note. $R = .68$, $R^2 = .46$; $F(1, 285) = 242.71$, $p < .001$.

Single regression was also conducted to investigate the role of attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry as a predictor of ethical post-purchase returning intention. The results were statistically significant, $R^2 = .03$, $F(1, 290) = 9.88$, $p < .01$. The adjusted R^2 value was .030, which is a very small effect according to Cohen (1988). Specifically, socially responsible attitudes were found to positively predict ethical post-purchase returning intention ($\beta = .18$, $t = 3.14$, $p < .01$). This means that consumers who have positive attitudes towards socially responsible apparel businesses will be less likely to engage in return frauds. Thus, H2b was supported.

Table 4.12.3

Single Regression Analysis Summary for Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry	.20	.06	.18	3.14	<.01
Constant	5.07	.33			

Note. $R = .18$, $R^2 = .03$; $F(1, 290) = 9.88$, $p < .01$.

Test of hypothesis H3a, H3b, H3c, and H3d.

Regression analyses were conducted to investigate the moderating effects of individual characteristics on the relationship between attitudes and socially responsible or ethical behavioral intentions. In order to test the moderating effects of the four variables of

individual characteristics, the interaction terms for price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement were created by multiplying each individual characteristic with attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. The first test for the moderating effect was performed with price sensitivity. It was originally hypothesized that consumers who are price sensitive may be less likely to purchase socially responsible clothing considering its higher prices than conventional clothing. In contrast, the results revealed that price sensitivity had a positive effect on the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention (see Table 4.13.1.1; $\beta = .12, p < .05$). The finding was statistically significant. That is, consumers with greater price sensitivity displayed more likelihood than those with lower price sensitivity to purchase socially responsible apparel products. Thus, H3aa was partially supported.

Table 4.13.1.1

Moderating Effects of Price Sensitivity on the Relationship between Attitudes and Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitudes × Price sensitivity	.01	.01	.12	1.99	<.05
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry	.63	.06	.60	10.30	<.001
Constant	1.93	.24			

Note. $R = .69, R^2 = .47; F(2, 282) = 126.20, p < .001$.

In testing for the moderating effect of price sensitivity on the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and ethical post-purchase returning intention, the hypothesis was supported (see Table 4.13.1.2; $\beta = -.16, p < .05$). The moderating effect was statistically significant. Consumers with greater price sensitivity were more likely to engage in unethical returning behavior than those with lower price sensitivity. Thus, H3ab was supported.

Table 4.13.1.2

Moderating Effects of Price Sensitivity on the Relationship between Attitude and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitudes × Price sensitivity	-.02	.01	-.16	-2.10	<.05
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry	.32	.09	.29	3.77	<.001
Constant	4.93	.33			

Note. $R = .22$, $R^2 = .04$; $F(2, 287) = 7.28$, $p < .01$.

The second test was performed to investigate the moderating effects of materialism on the relationships between socially responsible attitudes and socially responsible or ethical behavioral intentions. As shown in Table 4.13.2.1 and 4.13.2.2, the regression analyses identified that the role of materialism as a moderator on the relationship between attitudes and socially responsible apparel purchasing ($\beta = -.07$, $p > .05$) or ethical post-purchase returning intention ($\beta = -.09$, $p > .05$) was not statistically significant. Thus, H3ba and H3bb were not supported.

Table 4.13.2.1

Moderating Effects of Materialism on the Relationship between Attitudes and Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitudes × Materialism	-.01	.01	-.07	-1.40	.164
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry	.75	.05	.72	13.83	<.001
Constant	1.87	.24			

Note. $R = .68$, $R^2 = .46$; $F(2, 277) = 121.68$, $p < .001$.

Table 4.13.2.2

Moderating Effects of Materialism on the Relationship between Attitudes and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitudes × Materialism	-.01	.01	-.09	-1.30	.196
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry	.24	.07	.22	3.16	<.01
Constant	5.21	.33			

Note. $R = .19$, $R^2 = .03$; $F(2, 281) = 5.10$, $p < .01$.

As presented in Table 4.13.3.1 and 4.13.3.2, regression analyses indicated that the third testing with impulse buying tendency was not statistically significant for both relationships of socially responsible attitudes with socially responsible apparel purchasing intention ($\beta = .00, p > .05$) and ethical returning intention ($\beta = -.07, p > .05$). Thus H3ca and H3cb were not supported.

Table 4.13.3.1

Moderating Effects of Impulse Buying Tendency on the Relationship between Attitudes and Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitudes × Impulse buying tendency	.00	.01	.00	.06	.951
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry	.71	.05	.68	13.97	<.001
Constant	1.84	.24			

Note. $R = .68, R^2 = .46; F(2, 277) = 120.11, p < .001$.

Table 4.13.3.2

Moderating Effects of Impulse Buying Tendency on the Relationship between Attitudes and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitudess × Impulse buying tendency	-.01	.01	-.07	-1.08	.282
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry	.22	.07	.21	3.19	<.01
Constant	5.17	.33			

Note. $R = .19, R^2 = .03; F(2, 282) = 5.15, p < .01$.

Finally, the fourth test was conducted to examine the moderating effects of clothing involvement on the relationships between attitudes and behavioral intentions. The interaction term of clothing involvement was not found to be significant in predicating socially responsible apparel purchasing intention ($\beta = -.08, p > .05$), neither was the effect significant in predicating ethical returning intention ($\beta = .12, p > .05$). Like the results of materialism and impulse buying tendency, the hypotheses (H3da and H3db) to test the role of clothing

involvement as a moderator were not supported (see Table 4.13.4.1 and 4.13.4.2). A summary of the results for all of the hypothesis testing is presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.13.4.1

Moderating Effects of Clothing Involvement on the Relationship between Attitudes and Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitude × Clothing involvement	-.01	.01	-.08	-1.30	.194
Attitude	.75	.06	.72	12.09	<.001
Constant	1.87	.24			

Note. $R = .68$, $R^2 = .45$; $F(2, 272) = 113.89$, $p < .001$.

Table 4.13.4.2

Moderating Effects of Clothing Involvement on the Relationship between Attitudes and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitude × Clothing involvement	.02	.01	.12	1.57	.118
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry	.09	.09	.08	1.06	.288
Constant	5.20	.33			

Note. $R = .19$, $R^2 = .03$; $F(2, 276) = 5.23$, $p < .01$.

Table 4.14.

Summary for Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statistics	Result
H1a: Altruism will have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.	Altruism → Attitudes $\beta = .29, p < .001$	Supported
H1b: Ethical concerns will have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.	Ethical concerns → Attitudes Concern for environment → Attitudes $\beta = .33, p < .001$ Concern for production → Attitudes $\beta = .31, p < .001$	Supported
H1c: Ethical obligation will have a direct, positive effect on attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.	Ethical obligation → Attitudes Personal contribution $\beta = .25, p < .001$ Self obligation $\beta = .35, p < .001$	Supported
H1a, H1b, and H1c	Altruism → Attitudes $\beta = .09, p = .102$ Concern for environment → Attitudes $\beta = .23, p < .001$ Concern for production → Attitudes $\beta = .19, p < .01$ Personal contribution $\beta = .12, p < .05$ Self obligation $\beta = .19, p < .01$	--

Table 4.14.

Summary for Hypothesis Testing (Continued)

Hypothesis	Statistics	Result
H2a: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry will have a direct, positive effect on purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products.	Socially responsible attitudes → Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention $\beta = .68, p < .001$	Supported
H2b: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry will have a direct, positive effect on ethical post-purchase returning intention.	Socially responsible attitudes → Ethical post-purchase returning intention $\beta = .18, p < .01$	Supported
H3a: With greater price sensitivity, a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.	Socially responsible attitudes → Socially responsible apparel purchasing $\beta = .12, p < .05$	Partially supported
H3a: With greater price sensitivity, b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.	Socially responsible attitudes → Ethical post-purchase returning intention $\beta = -.16, p < .05$	Supported
H3b: With greater materialism, a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.	Socially responsible attitudes → Socially responsible apparel purchasing $\beta = -.07, p > .05$	Not supported

Table 4.14.

Summary for Hypothesis Testing (Continued)

Hypothesis	Statistics	Result
H3b: With greater materialism, b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.	Socially responsible attitudes → Ethical post-purchase returning intention $\beta = -.09, p > .05$	Not supported
H3c: With greater impulse buying tendency, a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.	Socially responsible attitudes → Socially responsible apparel purchasing $\beta = .00, p > .05$	Not supported
H3c: With greater impulse buying tendency, b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.	Socially responsible attitudes → Ethical post-purchase returning intention $\beta = -.07, p > .05$	Not supported
H3d: With greater clothing involvement, a. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and purchase intention of socially responsible apparel products will be attenuated.	Socially responsible attitudes → Socially responsible apparel purchasing $\beta = -.08, p > .05$	Not supported
H3d: With greater clothing involvement, b. The positive relationship between attitude toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical post-purchase returning intention will be attenuated.	Socially responsible attitudes → Ethical post-purchase returning intention $\beta = .12, p > .05$	Not supported

Additional Findings

Intercorrelation between socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention.

To investigate whether there was a statistically significant association between socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention, a correlation was computed. As shown in Table 4.15, the correlation between the variables was significant with a small to medium effect size ($p < .001$) (Cohen, 1988). The direction of the correlation was positive, which means that consumers who are highly interested in purchasing socially responsible apparel products tend to engage in ethical post-purchase returning shopping behavior.

Table 4.15.

Intercorrelation between Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Variable	1	2	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention	--	.22***	5.41	1.14
2. Ethical post-purchase returning intention	--	--	6.07	1.20

*** $p < .001$

Comparing consumers who had lower and higher social desirability in relation to variables of the study.

Independent samples *t* test was conducted to investigate the differences between low versus high social desirability bias groups on variables included in the study. Consumers who scored from 0 to 6 were separated into the first group named *low social desirability* (Low SD) ($n = 112, 38.5\%$) and those who scored 7 to 13 were separated into the second group named *high social desirability* (High SD) ($n = 179, 61.5\%$). Table 4.16.1 shows that the low SD group was not significantly different from the high SD group on altruism, ethical concerns

(i.e., concern for environment and concern for production), and ethical obligation (i.e., personal contribution and self obligation). In spite of no significant difference between the two groups on the variables of ethical traits, there was a tendency that the high SD group did score higher on all the variables. This might be because they had tendencies to answer the questions of the survey in a socially acceptable way.

Table 4.16.1
Comparison of Low and High Social Desirability Group on Altruism, Ethical Concerns, and Ethical Obligation

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Altruism				-1.95	280	.052	.2
Low SD	109	5.47	1.11				
High SD	173	5.72	1.01				
Concern for environment				-.86	289	.393	.1
Low SD	112	5.42	1.24				
High SD	179	5.55	1.25				
Concern for production				-.14	280	.89	.0
Low SD	107	4.55	1.30				
High SD	175	4.57	1.21				
Personal contribution				-1.19	288	.24	.1
Low SD	111	4.65	1.23				
High SD	179	4.83	1.27				
Self obligation				-.76	285	.45	.1
Low SD	110	4.25	1.28				
High SD	177	4.36	1.25				
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry				-1.50	282	.134	.0
Low SD	110	4.95	1.10				
High SD	174	5.15	1.11				

As shown in Table 4.16.2, the low SD group was not significantly different from the high SD group on the variables of individual characteristics, except for materialism.

Inspection of the two group means indicated that the average score for materialism for the

low SD group ($M = 4.38$) was significantly higher than the score for the high SD group ($M = 3.88$) at the level of .001. Consumers who had higher tendencies to answer in a socially acceptable way presented their lower materialistic values ($M = 3.88$) than those who did not ($M = 4.38$). The effect size d was approximately .4, which is a small to medium effect. Even though the two groups did not present the significant difference on impulse buying tendency, consumers who had higher tendencies of social desirability ($M = 3.42$) showed lower impulse buying tendency than those who did not ($M = 3.69$). With regard to price sensitivity and clothing involvement, it seemed that the variables did not necessarily need to be analyzed with consideration of consumers' tendencies to answer in a socially acceptable way. This is because the low SD group presented higher price sensitivity and clothing involvement than the other group.

Table 4.16.2

Comparison of Low and High Social Desirability Group on Price Sensitivity, Materialism, Impulse Buying Tendency, and Clothing Involvement

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Price sensitivity				-1.30	287	.194	.2
Low SD	111	5.07	1.57				
High SD	178	5.31	1.55				
Materialism				3.58 ^a	264.2 ^a	<.001	.4
Low SD	108	4.38	1.02				
High SD	175	3.88	1.29				
Impulse buying tendency				1.76	282	.079	.2
Low SD	108	3.69	1.20				
High SD	176	3.42	1.34				
Clothing involvement				-.01	273	.990	.0
Low SD	103	4.76	1.18				
High SD	172	4.76	1.23				

^aThe *t* and *df* were adjusted because variances were not equal.

The main dependent variables of the study were socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention. As shown in Table 4.16.3, the high SD group did not differ significantly from the low SD group on the two dependent variables ($p > .05$). Inspection of the two group means indicated that the average scores of socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention for the high SD group ($M = 5.44, 6.20$) were higher than the scores for the low SD group ($M = 5.40, 5.94$).

Table 4.16.3

Comparison of Low and High Social Desirability Group on Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention and Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention				-.27	282	.791	.0
Low SD	111	5.40	1.16				
High SD	173	5.44	1.13				
Ethical post-purchase returning intention ^a				-1.76 ^a	200.5 ^a	.080	.2
Low SD	111	5.94	1.29				
High SD	178	6.20	1.07				

^aThe *t* and *df* were adjusted because variances were not equal.

Comparing consumers who have lower and higher social desirability in relation to age, gender, education, and household income.

Independent samples *t* tests were performed to examine the differences between two groups in terms of respondents' age, gender, education attainments, and household income levels on social desirability. First, consumers who were below the age of 25.8 (i.e., average age of the sample) were sorted into first group and consumers who were above the age, the second group. Table 4.17.1 shows that young consumers (i.e., under 25.8) were significantly different from old consumers (i.e., above 25.8) in terms of their social desirability. Thus,

Table 4.17.1

Comparison of Younger and Older Consumers on Social Desirability

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Social desirability				-3.29	289	<.01	.4
Younger consumers	185	6.91	2.70				
Older consumers	106	7.96	2.48				

younger consumers had less tendency to answer questions in a socially acceptable way than older consumers ($p < .01$). With regard to other demographic variables such as gender, education, and household income, no significant differences were found between the two groups who were sorted by the variables on social desirability (see Table 4.17.2 to 4.17.4).

Table 4.17.2

Comparison of Female and Male Consumers on Social Desirability

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Social desirability				-.28 ^a	267 ^a	.78	.0
Female consumers	176	7.26	2.81				
Male consumers	115	7.35	2.44				

^aThe *t* and *df* were adjusted because variances were not equal.

Table 4.17.3

Comparison of Consumers with Lower and Higher Education on Social Desirability

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Social desirability				-.52	288	.602	.1
Lower education	180	7.22	2.71				
Higher education	110	7.39	2.60				

Table 4.17.4

Comparison of Consumers with Lower and Higher Household Income on Social Desirability

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Social desirability				-1.74	279	.083	.2
Lower income	191	7.16	2.64				
Higher income	90	7.74	2.64				

Comparing owners and non-owners of socially responsible apparel in relation to variables of the study.

Independent samples *t* tests were conducted to investigate differences according to ownership of socially responsible apparel products on variables of the study, including ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation), socially responsible attitudes, and behavioral intentions (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention).

Ethical traits and Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry according to ownership of socially responsible apparel products.

As shown in Table 4.18.1, consumers who owned eco apparel were significantly different from those who did not on self obligation (the second factor of ethical obligation) (*p*

Table 4.18.1
Comparison of Owners and Non-owners of Eco Apparel on Ethical Traits and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Altruism				-0.46	291	.644	.1
Eco No	184	5.59	1.08				
Eco Yes	109	5.65	1.04				
Concern for environment				-1.42	300	.158	.2
Eco No	190	5.42	1.23				
Eco Yes	112	5.63	1.28				
Concern for production				-1.43	291	.155	.2
Eco No	183	4.47	1.21				
Eco Yes	110	4.68	1.33				
Personal contribution				-1.65	299	.101	.2
Eco No	189	4.67	1.23				
Eco Yes	112	4.92	1.30				
Self obligation				-2.05	296	<.05	.2
Eco No	186	4.20	1.20				
Eco Yes	112	4.51	1.36				
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry				-3.04	292	<.01	.4
Eco No	185	4.93	1.10				
Eco Yes	109	5.32	1.06				

< .05) and socially responsible attitudes ($p < .01$). Even though the differences were not statistically significant, owners of eco apparel scored higher on the other variables.

As for organic apparel, consumers who owned organic products were significantly different from those who did not on all variables of ethical traits and socially responsible attitudes at the level of .05, .01, or .001 (see Table 4.18.2). Thus, owners of organic apparel possessed more values of altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation and more positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry than non-owners.

Table 4.18.2

Comparison of Owners and Non-owners of Organic Apparel on Ethical Traits and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Altruism				-2.40 ^a	247.9 ^a	<.05	.3
Organic No	187	5.51	1.11				
Organic Yes	106	5.80	.95				
Concern for environment				-3.12	300	<.01	.4
Organic No	193	5.33	1.26				
Organic Yes	109	5.79	1.17				
Concern for production				-4.28	291	<.001	.5
Organic No	190	4.32	1.25				
Organic Yes	103	4.96	1.15				
Personal contribution				-3.48	299	<.01	.4
Organic No	193	4.58	1.25				
Organic Yes	108	5.10	1.23				
Self obligation				-4.35	296	<.001	.5
Organic No	190	4.09	1.26				
Organic Yes	108	4.73	1.18				
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry				-5.39	292	<.001	.7
Organic No	189	4.83	1.10				
Organic Yes	105	5.52	.95				

^aThe *t* and *df* were adjusted because variances were not equal.

As shown in Table 4.18.3, consumers who owned recycled/reclaimed apparel were rated significantly higher than those who did not when measuring concern for production ($p < .05$), self obligation ($p < .01$), and socially responsible attitudes ($p < .05$).

Table 4.18.3
Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Recycled/Reclaimed Apparel on Ethical Traits and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Altruism				.13	291	.894	.0
Recycled No	191	5.62	1.05				
Recycled Yes	102	5.60	1.08				
Concern for environment				-1.02	300	.308	.1
Recycled No	198	5.44	1.23				
Recycled Yes	104	5.60	1.28				
Concern for production				-1.98	291	<.05	.3
Recycled No	191	4.44	1.29				
Recycled Yes	102	4.75	1.16				
Personal contribution				-1.88	299	.061	.2
Recycled No	197	4.67	1.27				
Recycled Yes	104	4.95	1.25				
Self obligation				-3.24	296	<.01	.4
Recycled No	194	4.15	1.29				
Recycled Yes	104	4.64	1.16				
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry				-2.04	292	<.05	.3
Recycled No	192	4.98	1.11				
Recycled Yes	102	5.25	1.05				

Consumers who owned used apparel were rated significantly higher than those who did not when measuring concern for environment ($p < .001$), concern for production ($p < .01$), self obligation ($p < .05$), and socially responsible attitudes ($p < .01$) (see Table 4.18.4).

Table 4.18.4
Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Used Apparel on Ethical Traits and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Altruism				-1.84 ^a	252.5 ^a	.067	.2
Used No	131	5.48	1.16				
Used Yes	162	5.72	.97				
Concern for environment				-3.65 ^a	268.1 ^a	<.001	.4
Used No	136	5.21	1.32				
Used Yes	166	5.73	1.14				
Concern for production				-2.65	291	<.01	.3
Used No	131	4.33	1.30				
Used Yes	162	4.72	1.20				
Personal contribution				-1.76	299	.079	.2
Used No	135	4.62	1.33				
Used Yes	166	4.88	1.20				
Self obligation				-2.11	296	<.05	.2
Used No	132	4.15	1.32				
Used Yes	166	4.46	1.20				
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry				-2.91 ^a	254 ^a	<.01	.3
Used No	131	4.86	1.18				
Used Yes	163	5.24	1.00				

^aThe *t* and *df* were adjusted because variances were not equal.

As shown in Table 4.18.5, consumers who owned sweatshop-free apparel were rated significantly higher than those who did not when measuring the mean scores in concern for production ($p < .05$), personal contribution ($p < .01$), self obligation ($p < .01$), and socially responsible attitudes ($p < .001$).

Table 4.18.5
Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Sweatshop-Free Apparel on Ethical Traits and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Altruism				-0.82	291	.414	.1
Sweatshop-free No	241	5.59	1.01				
Sweatshop-free Yes	52	5.72	1.28				
Concern for environment				-1.10	300	.272	.2
Sweatshop-free No	250	5.46	1.24				
Sweatshop-free Yes	52	5.67	1.30				
Concern for production				-1.71 ^a	63.7 ^a	<.05	.3
Sweatshop-free No	241	4.48	1.17				
Sweatshop-free Yes	52	4.87	1.57				
Personal contribution				-3.09	299	<.01	.5
Sweatshop-free No	249	4.66	1.24				
Sweatshop-free Yes	52	5.25	1.26				
Self obligation				-3.17	296	<.01	.5
Sweatshop-free No	248	4.22	1.26				
Sweatshop-free Yes	50	4.83	1.21				
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry				-4.70	91.2 ^a	<.001	.7
Sweatshop-free No	243	4.96	1.11				
Sweatshop-free Yes	51	5.61	.84				

^aThe *t* and *df* were adjusted because variances were not equal.

Table 4.18.6 shows that consumers who owned fair-trade apparel were rated significantly higher than those who did not when measuring altruism ($p < .001$), concern for production ($p < .001$), personal contribution ($p < .05$), self obligation ($p < .001$), and socially responsible attitudes ($p < .001$). The owners of fair-trade apparel were not significantly higher than those who did not only on concern for environment ($p = .394$). Owners of fair-trade apparel ($M = 5.60$), however, scored higher on the variable than non-owners ($M = 5.46$).

Table 4.18.6

Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Fair-Trade on Ethical Traits and Attitudes toward Social Responsibility in the Apparel and Textiles Industry

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Altruism				-3.62	291	<.001	.5
Fair-trade No	217	5.48	1.05				
Fair-trade Yes	76	5.98	1.00				
Concern for environment				-.85	300	.394	.1
Fair-trade No	223	5.46	1.21				
Fair-trade Yes	79	5.60	1.34				
Concern for production				-4.23	291	<.001	.6
Fair-trade No	217	4.37	1.22				
Fair-trade Yes	76	5.06	1.23				
Personal contribution				-2.34	299	<.05	.3
Fair-trade No	222	4.66	1.21				
Fair-trade Yes	79	5.05	1.37				
Self obligation				-3.95	296	<.001	.5
Fair-trade No	219	4.15	1.21				
Fair-trade Yes	79	4.79	1.32				
Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry				-5.33	292	<.001	.7
Fair-trade No	217	4.88	1.09				
Fair-trade Yes	77	5.62	.93				

Individual characteristics according to ownership of socially responsible apparel products.

As shown in Table 4.19.1, no significant differences were found between owners and non-owners of eco apparel on individual characteristics, except for clothing involvement with a very small effect size ($p < .05$) (Cohen, 1988). As for the other socially responsible apparel products (i.e., organic, recycled/reclaimed, used, sweatshop-free, and fair-trade apparel), owners of those products were not significantly different from non-owners on all of the variables of individual characteristics (see Table 4.19.2 to 4.19.6).

Table 4.19.1
Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Eco Apparel on Individual Characteristics

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Price sensitivity				.83	298	.407	.1
Eco No	188	5.26	1.56				
Eco Yes	112	5.10	1.58				
Materialism				-1.05	290	.293	.1
Eco No	183	4.02	1.18				
Eco Yes	109	4.17	1.27				
Impulse buying tendency				-1.31	291	.193	.2
Eco No	183	3.46	1.26				
Eco Yes	110	3.67	1.31				
Clothing involvement				-1.98	283	<.05	.2
Eco No	179	4.66	1.20				
Eco Yes	106	4.95	1.20				

Table 4.19.2

Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Organic Apparel on Individual Characteristics

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Price sensitivity				.71	298	.477	.1
Organic No	191	5.25	1.56				
Organic Yes	109	5.11	1.58				
Materialism				-1.26	290	.210	.2
Organic No	187	4.01	1.18				
Organic Yes	105	4.20	1.27				
Impulse buying tendency				-.40	291	.693	.0
Organic No	187	3.52	1.30				
Organic Yes	106	3.58	1.26				
Clothing involvement				-.50	283	.616	.1
Organic No	181	4.74	1.18				
Organic Yes	104	4.82	1.26				

Table 4.19.3

Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Recycled/Reclaimed Apparel on Individual Characteristics

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Price sensitivity				-1.10	298	.272	.1
Recycled No	196	5.13	1.56				
Recycled Yes	104	5.34	1.58				
Materialism				.49	290	.626	.1
Recycled No	191	4.10	1.21				
Recycled Yes	101	4.03	1.23				
Impulse buying tendency				.42	291	.677	.0
Recycled No	190	3.56	1.27				
Recycled Yes	103	3.50	1.31				
Clothing involvement				-.02	283	.983	.0
Recycled No	186	4.77	1.17				
Recycled Yes	99	4.77	1.27				

Table 4.19.4

Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Used Apparel on Individual Characteristics

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Price sensitivity				.33	298	.739	.0
Used No	135	5.23	1.54				
Used Yes	165	5.17	1.59				
Materialism				-1.07	290	.286	.1
Used No	129	3.99	1.22				
Used Yes	163	4.14	1.21				
Impulse buying tendency				-1.10	291	.274	.1
Used No	130	3.45	1.35				
Used Yes	163	3.61	1.23				
Clothing involvement				-.42	283	.675	.0
Used No	125	4.74	1.25				
Used Yes	160	4.80	1.17				

Table 4.19.5

Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Sweatshop-Free Apparel on Individual Characteristics

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Price sensitivity				-.40	298	.690	.1
Sweatshop-free No	248	5.18	1.54				
Sweatshop-free Yes	52	5.28	1.68				
Materialism				.12	290	.904	.0
Sweatshop-free No	241	4.08	1.24				
Sweatshop-free Yes	51	4.06	1.07				
Impulse buying tendency				-.47	291	.683	.1
Sweatshop-free No	241	3.52	1.27				
Sweatshop-free Yes	52	3.62	1.37				
Clothing involvement				-.51	283	.612	.1
Sweatshop-free No	235	4.75	1.20				
Sweatshop-free Yes	50	4.85	1.22				

Table 4.19.6

Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Fair-Trade Apparel on Individual Characteristics

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Price sensitivity				-.52	298	.604	.1
Fair-trade No	221	5.17	1.60				
Fair-trade Yes	79	5.28	1.48				
Materialism				.14	290	.888	.0
Fair-trade No	216	4.08	1.20				
Fair-trade Yes	76	4.06	1.24				
Impulse buying tendency				-1.61	291	.110	.2
Fair-trade No	219	3.47	1.24				
Fair-trade Yes	74	3.75	1.38				
Clothing involvement				-1.62	283	.107	.2
Fair-trade No	209	4.70	1.18				
Fair-trade Yes	76	4.96	1.25				

Socially responsible or ethical intentions according to ownership of socially responsible apparel products.

Independent samples *t* tests were conducted to examine the differences between consumers who owned socially responsible apparel (i.e., eco, organic, recycled/reclaimed, used, sweatshop-free, and fair-trade apparel) on the two major dependent variables, socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention. As shown in Table 4.20.1, the results identified the significant differences between the consumers who owned those socially responsible apparel and those who did not on the socially responsible apparel purchasing intention ($p < .001$). That is, consumers who possessed socially responsible apparel products expressed that they were more likely to purchase the same type of products in the future as well.

As for consumers' ethical post-purchasing returning intention, no significant differences were found between the two groups, except for the analysis with used apparel (p

< .01) (see Table 4.20.2). Owners of used apparel ($M = 6.24$) presented lower tendencies to return apparel products unethically than those who did not own the product ($M = 5.86$). In spite of no significant differences between the groups on ethical returning intention, consumers who owned eco, organic, recycled, sweatshop-free, and fair-trade apparel had lower tendencies to engage in return frauds than those who did not.

Table 4.20.1
Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Socially Responsible Apparel Products on Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention				-4.03	293	<.001	.5
Eco No	187	5.21	1.16				
Eco Yes	108	5.76	1.03				
Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention				-6.06 ^a	251.2 ^a	<.001	.7
Organic No	189	5.14	1.15				
Organic Yes	106	5.90	.96				
Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention				-4.94	293	<.001	.6
Recycled No	193	5.18	1.14				
Recycled Yes	102	5.85	1.01				
Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention				-4.79	293	<.001	.6
Used No	133	5.07	1.17				
Used Yes	162	5.69	1.04				
Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention				-4.33 ^a	79.6 ^a	<.001	.6
Sweatshop-free No	245	5.30	1.15				
Sweatshop-free Yes	50	5.97	.97				
Socially responsible apparel purchasing intention				-6.93 ^a	197.5 ^a	<.001	.8
Fair-trade No	220	5.20	1.18				
Fair-trade Yes	75	6.03	.77				

^aThe *t* and *df* were adjusted because variances were not equal.

Table 4.20.2

Comparison of Owners and Non-Owners of Socially Responsible Apparel Products on Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Ethical post-purchase returning intention				-.01	297	.994	.0
Eco No	188	6.07	1.20				
Eco Yes	111	6.07	1.20				
Ethical post-purchase returning intention				-1.63	297	.105	.2
Organic No	190	5.98	1.20				
Organic Yes	109	6.22	1.19				
Ethical post-purchase returning intention				-.39	297	.696	.0
Recycled No	196	6.05	1.20				
Recycled Yes	103	6.10	1.21				
Ethical post-purchase returning intention				-2.70 ^a	252 ^a	<.01	.3
Used No	133	5.86	1.32				
Used Yes	166	6.24	1.07				
Ethical post-purchase returning intention				-1.21	297	.226	.2
Sweatshop-free No	247	6.03	1.21				
Sweatshop-free Yes	52	6.25	1.13				
Ethical post-purchase returning intention				-.32	297	.746	.0
Fair-trade No	220	6.05	1.19				
Fair-trade Yes	79	6.10	1.24				

^aThe *t* and *df* were adjusted because variances were not equal.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the study was to explore the antecedents of ethical consumer behavioral intentions (i.e., the behavioral intentions of consumers to purchase socially responsible apparel and to perform ethical returning behavior) based on the theories of trait-value-behavior by Homer and Kahle (1988) and Rokeach (1973). The first objective was to determine whether ethical traits including altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation predicted positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. The second objective was to investigate the association between socially responsible attitudes and behavioral intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and return products ethically. Finally, the study aimed to examine the moderating effects of individual characteristics including price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement on the relationships between attitudes and behavioral intentions.

This chapter for discussion and conclusions discusses the findings according to the order of hypothesis testing. Additional findings are also discussed. Relevant theoretical and practical implications, limitations associated with the study, and directions for future research are included in the section of conclusions. Findings from data analyses were applied to the model of the study (see Figure 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4). Figure 5.1 shows how individual ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation) predict attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry, which in turn predict socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention. The combination of the ethical traits as an antecedent of socially responsible attitudes and behavioral intentions is presented in Figure 5.2. The results of data analyses for the moderating effects of individual characteristics on the relationships between attitudes and behavioral intentions are shown in Figure 5.3 and 5.4.

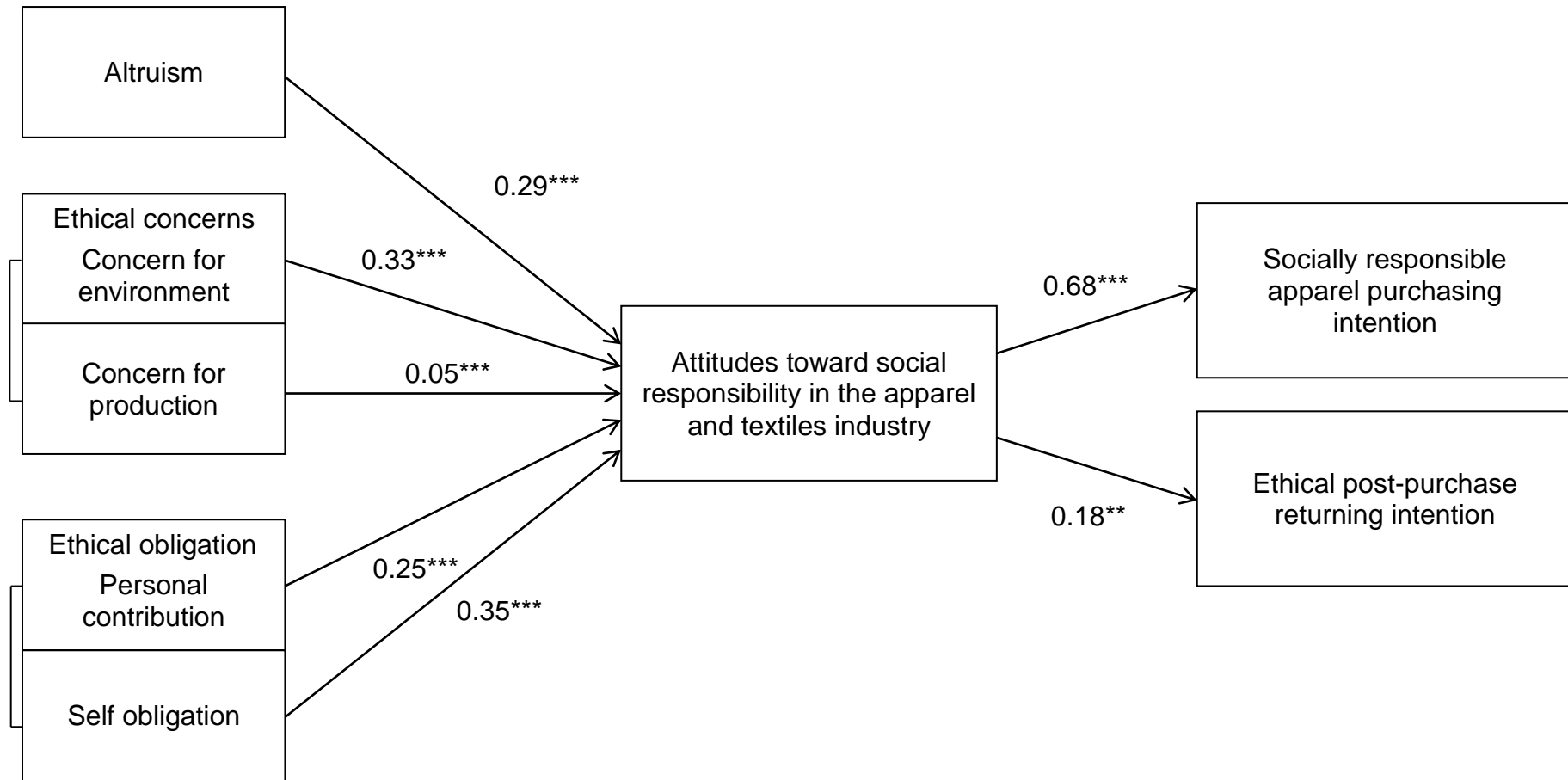


Figure 5.1. The Trait-Attitude-Intention Hierarchy of Ethical Consumer Behavior with Separate Ethical Traits (based on Homer & Kahle, 1988; Rokeach, 1973)

** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

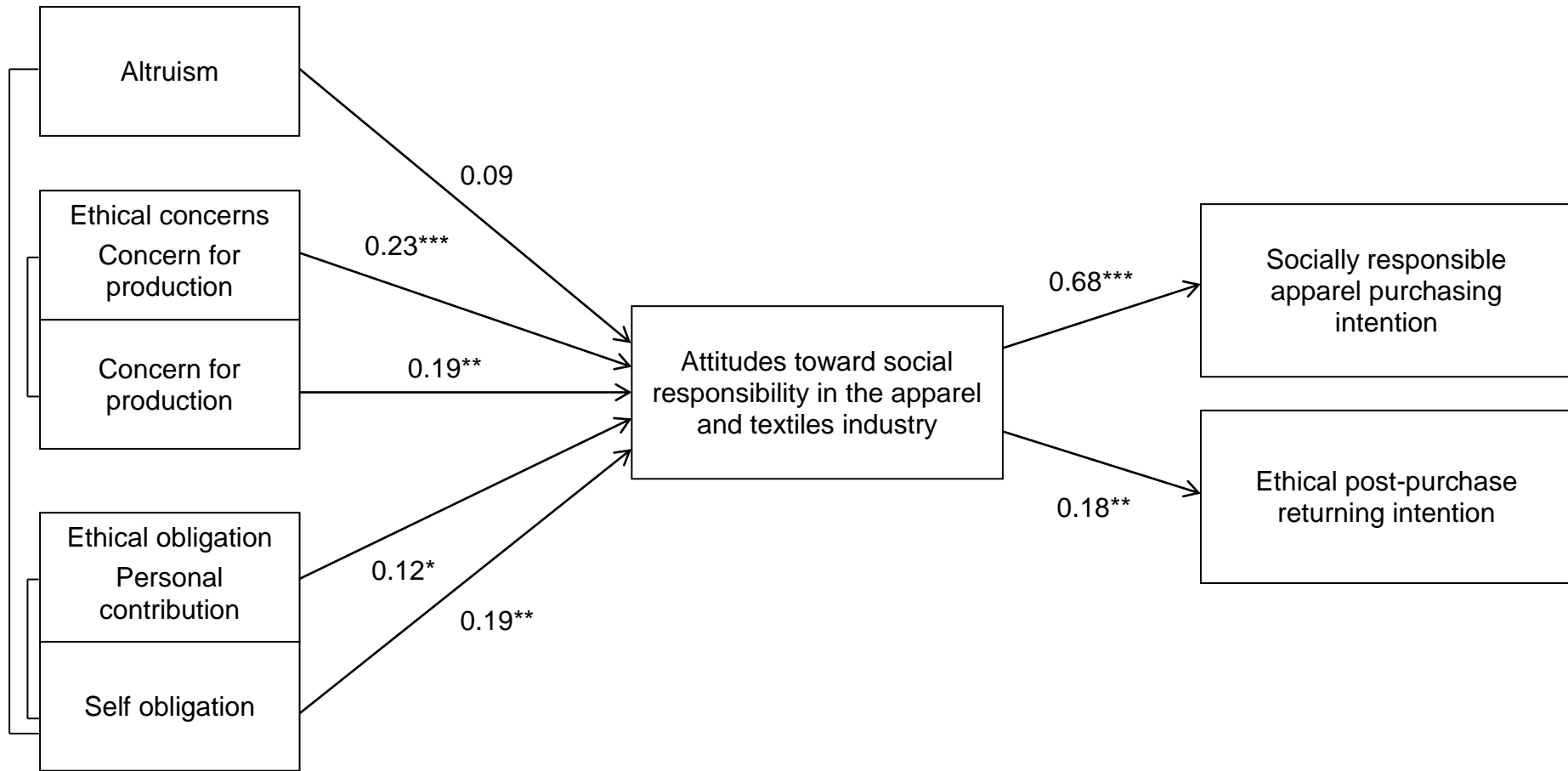


Figure 5.2. The Trait-Attitude-Intention Hierarchy of Ethical Consumer Behavior with Combined Ethical Traits (based on Homer & Kahle, 1988; Rokeach, 1973)

** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

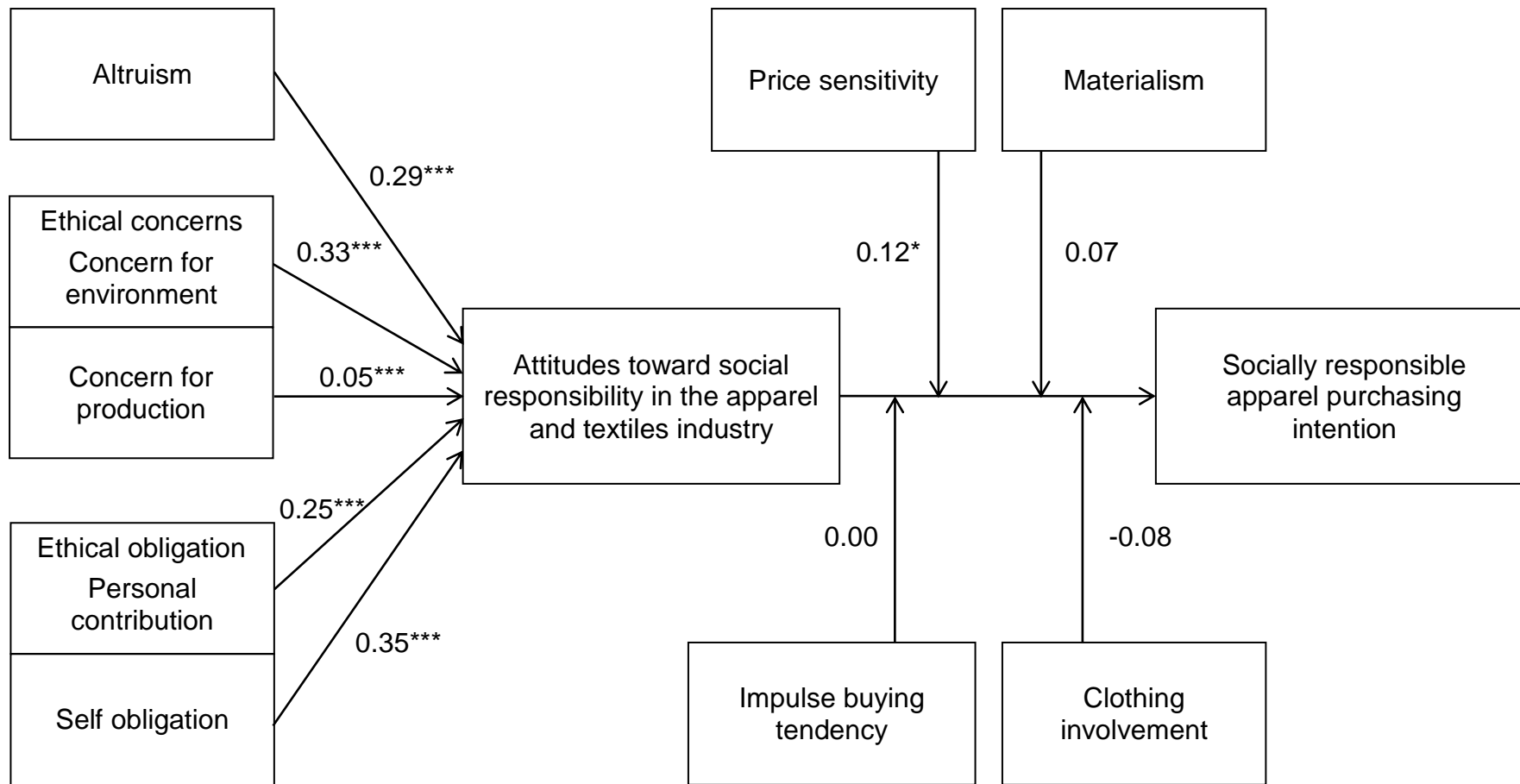


Figure 5.3. The Trait-Attitude-Intention Hierarchy of Socially Responsible Apparel Purchasing Intention: Moderating Effects of Individual Characteristics (based on Homer & Kahle, 1988; Rokeach, 1973)

* $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$

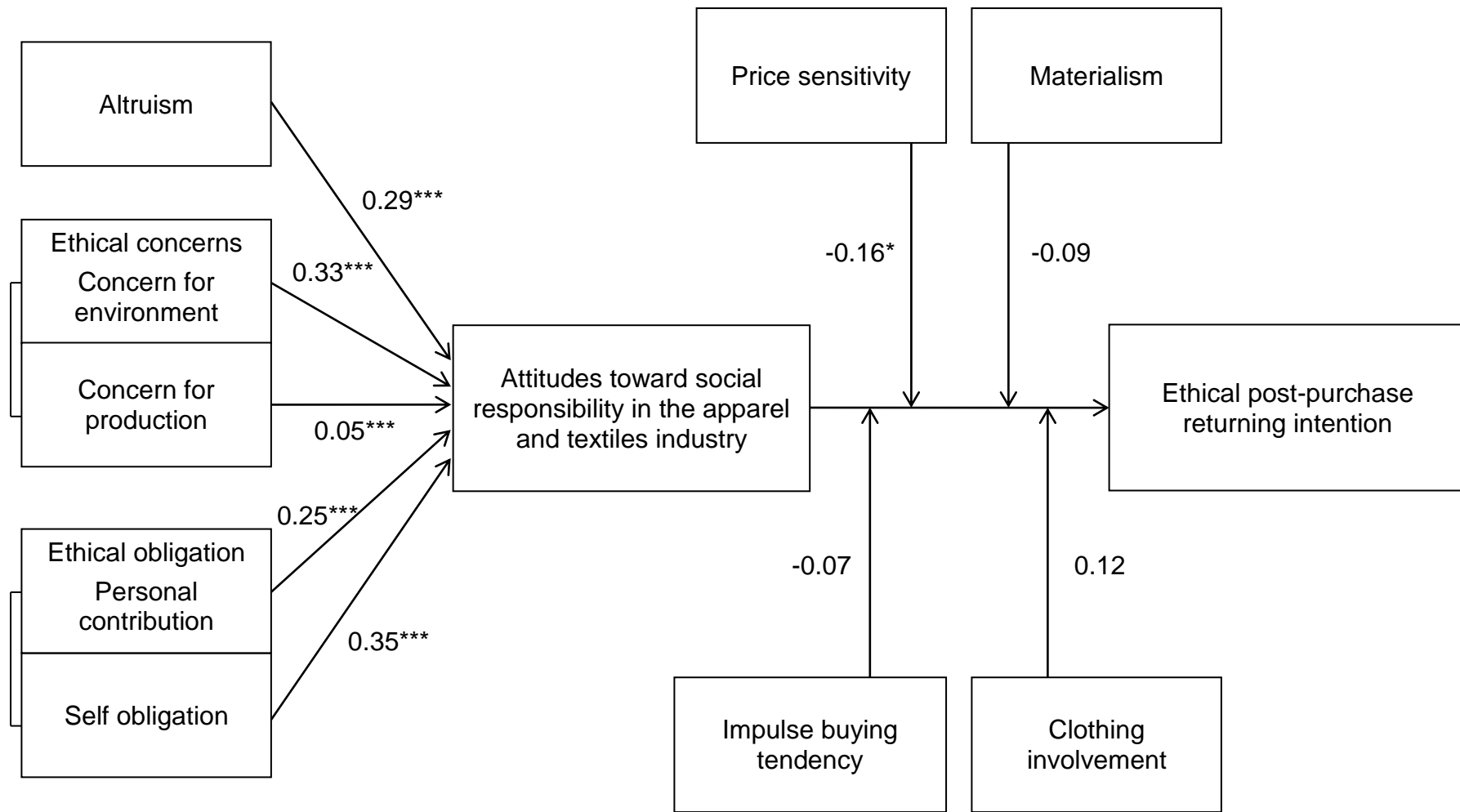


Figure 5.4. The Trait-Attitude-Intention Hierarchy of Ethical Post-Purchase Returning Intention: Moderating Effects of Individual Characteristics (based on Homer & Kahle, 1988; Rokeach, 1973)

* $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$

Discussion

The relationships between gender/education/income/frequencies of clothing purchases and ownership of socially responsible apparel were identified in the section for characteristics of respondent. As shown in Table 4.3.2, the study found the difference between female and male consumers on socially responsible apparel purchase experiences (i.e., organic apparel). The result was similar to the study of Dickson (2001), which revealed a difference between females and males on socially responsible behavioral intention. Unlike the findings of Finisterra do Paco et al. (2009) and Starr (2009), the present study did not identify the relationship between education attainments and tendencies to buy socially responsibly. In addition, the levels of household income were not related to consumers' purchase behavioral intention of socially responsible apparel. However, consumers' spending habits for clothes were related to their purchase behavioral intention, especially for eco and organic apparel.

Consumers also answered that they had experiences of purchasing apparel from socially responsible companies, such as American Apparel, Toms, Plato's Closet, and Patagonia. The present study focused on understanding such socially responsible consumers' ethical traits, socially responsible attitudes, and relevant behavioral intentions. The interaction among these variables and the moderating effects of individual characteristics on the relationships were tested in the previous chapter. The data analyses indicated that some of the hypotheses were supported and the results are discussed in the next section.

Hypothesis 1: Ethical traits as predictors of attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry.

Ethical traits were investigated to explain whether they predict attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. During the data analyses, social desirability bias was examined to identify its influence on the relationships between ethical traits and socially responsible attitudes. The study also investigated which ethical traits better predict socially responsible attitudes while controlling social desirability bias. The result revealed

that social desirability bias did not influence the relationships. Further, ethical concerns played the most important role in predicting attitudes than any other variables.

Hypothesis 1 examined ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation) as predictors of attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. Note that ethical concerns (i.e., concern for environment and concern for production) and ethical obligation (i.e., personal contribution and self obligation) included two factors. First, altruism influenced consumers' socially responsible attitudes. Thus, consumers who were willing to help other people also expressed their positive attitudes toward socially responsible business practices of apparel companies. The finding supported the studies of Mostafa (2006, 2009) with the significant relationship between altruism and socially responsible attitudes (i.e., environmentally favorable attitudes) and purchase intentions of green products among Egyptian and Kuwait consumers. The result of the current study was similar to the finding of Hustvedt and Dickson (2009). In their study, consumers believed that they can help others and the environment by supporting socially responsible businesses that produces organic apparel. Benabou and Tirole (2010) discussed that socially responsible attitudes and behaviors are driven by intrinsic altruism of caring about the environment and the welfare of other people.

Second, consumers who concerned about the environment and the negative impact of apparel production on the environment presented positive attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. This finding supported the study of Freestone and McGoldrick (2008). The researchers identified that consumers' socially responsible attitudes and choices are strongly motivated by their concerns about the environment and the issues generated during production processes of goods. Mostafa (2009) and Cervellon, et al. (2010) mentioned that ethical concerns are highly associated with consumers' positive attitudes toward green products.

Hustvedt and Dickson (2009) also identified the correlation between concerns about the impact of clothing production on the environment and attitudes toward socially responsible business practices of apparel companies such as producing organic cotton apparel. Similarly, Kozar and Hiller Connell (2010) found that college students with greater concerns about environmental issues related to clothing production have stronger environmental attitudes. As for the study of Rudell (2006), the researcher found that greater concern for workers in relation to sweatshop labor practices predict consumers' positive attitude to support socially responsible businesses. Based on their finding, Burke, Milberg, and Smith (1993) proposed a model that explains how consumers' ethical concerns about business practices impact their decisions to support a particular brand or not. Dickson (2000) identified the similar result that ethically-concerned consumers are more likely to support socially responsible apparel businesses.

The current study found that consumers concerned more about issues related to working conditions affecting workers in foreign clothing manufacturing businesses than the conditions affecting workers in U.S. clothing manufacturing businesses. In contrast, the study of Dickson (1999) revealed that even though consumers had more positive beliefs about labor practices of U.S. apparel industry compared to those of foreign industry, they concerned more about the U.S. workers than the foreign workers. With regard to the current study, labeling socially responsible apparel with information regarding ethical matters seem to be more effective to female consumers than to male consumers (Dickson, 2001; Micheletti, 2004; Wessells et al., 1999).

Third, ethical obligation was influential in explaining attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry. Thus, consumers' positive attitudes toward socially responsible business practices of apparel companies were guided by a sense of obligation to the environment and society. Consumers who felt obligated to improve the

environment and society by purchasing apparel products that do not generate negative impact on the environment and society also believed that apparel companies have responsibility to act with high ethical standards. They were willing to support such companies with a reputation for socially responsible behavior. The findings were similar to those of Shaw and Shiu (2002), Shaw et al. (2000), and Ozcaglar-Toulouse, Shiu, and Shaw (2006). Shaw and Shiu (2002) found ethical obligation as an antecedent not only to behavioral intention to purchase fair trade products, but also, attitudes toward ethical issues. The researchers additionally identified that behavioral intention is directly predicted by ethical obligation, not through attitudes. The findings of Shaw et al. (2000) were similar to those of Shaw and Shiu (2002). Ozcaglar-Toulouse et al. (2006) also found the relationship between ethical obligation and behavioral intention.

Finally, the study found that altruism did not predict attitudes toward ethical business practices of apparel companies when all the variables of ethical traits were computed together (i.e., the effects of other variables being controlled for the model). This might be because the scales for ethical concerns and obligation were more related to environmental or societal issues that can be generated by apparel production, which is in the same context of the scale for socially responsible attitudes. Meanwhile, the scale for altruism was generated by questions with no relation to the environmental or societal issues associated with apparel production. As ethical obligation is defined as structured ethical rules that provide directions to individuals in terms of what is appropriate and how to behave (Shaw & Shiu, 2002), it was expected that the variable would be more effective to explain ethical consumer behavior than ethical concerns (Shaw et al., 2000). The finding of the study, however, revealed that concerns about the environment were the greatest predictor of socially responsible attitudes.

Hypothesis 2: Attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry as a predictor of socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention.

The second hypothesis testing revealed that attitudes toward socially responsible business practices of apparel companies predicted intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel products and to perform ethical returning behavior. Social desirability bias between the relationships was not identified.

As mentioned above, attitudes toward socially responsible apparel companies played an important role in explaining socially responsible apparel purchasing intention. That is, consumers who concerned themselves with ethical business practices of apparel companies as the main factor to support businesses were more likely to purchase apparel products that have less impact on the environment and the workers of apparel manufacturing companies. Similar to the study conducted by Hiller Connell (2011), socially responsible consumers make great efforts to obtain environmentally friendly apparel made from organic cotton, hemp, and recycled fibers. The researcher also found that two of the most common environmentally friendly purchase behaviors were to limit consumption of clothes and to purchase used apparel. This may be the most practical way for consumers to be environmentally friendly considering limited financial resources. Similar to the finding, Kim et al. (1999) indicated that attitudes toward social responsibility are a critical motive for consumers to purchase socially responsible apparel. For example, consumers who purchase products produced by poor artists in developing countries are motivated by strong socially centered attitudes. Hustvedt and Dickson (2009) also revealed that consumers were willing to support organic farming and fair-traded fibers by purchasing organic cotton apparel from local businesses.

Second, this was the first attempt to connect the two concepts of social responsibility and ethics in the context of apparel shopping by examining the association between attitudes toward social responsibility and ethical post-purchasing behavioral intention (i.e., returning

behavioral intention). That is, the study aimed to examine whether consumers who have positive attitudes toward socially responsible business practices of apparel companies can be described to be ethical through the investigation of their post-purchase returning behavioral intention. From the data analysis, socially responsible attitudes were revealed to be influential in explaining ethical returning intention. That is, when consumers have positive attitudes toward socially responsible apparel businesses, they are also likely to perform ethical returning behavior. For example, they would not return clothes as new or buy them for a single event with the intention of returning. Muncy and Vitell (1992) conducted a similar study. The researchers investigated if questionable consumer practices including return frauds can be predicted by attitudes of consumers relative to business or people. It was originally expected that consumers who have greater positive attitudes toward people than businesses would have stricter ethical standards. However, the researchers identified that consumers who have greater positive attitudes toward businesses are less likely to engage in unethical consumer practices. For example, consumers who thought that most businesses in America truly care about individual consumers or deal with them in a fair way expressed that they would not intend to perform unethical consumer behavior.

Even though determining socially responsible attitudes as a predictor of returning behavioral intention was not the focus of the study, Johnson and Rhee (2008) identified that consumers' prior unethical returning behavior are influenced by their positive attitudes toward return frauds, specifically, merchandise borrowing for a single event with the intention of returning the clothes. That is, consumers who have more positive attitudes toward return frauds are also more likely to have experiences to purchase clothes for a single event (e.g., job interviews or weddings) and return them.

While the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and consumers' post-purchase returning behavior intention was found significant, the adjusted R^2 value of the

hypothesis testing was fairly small (see Table 4.12.3). The result may suggest that the items for measuring attitudes and ethical returning behavioral intention in this study should have been developed at the compatible level. For example, the study should have investigated the socially responsible attitudes as a predictor of ethical returning behavioral intention in the context of apparel shopping at socially responsible companies in order to increase the adjusted R^2 value. In addition, the result also suggests that there may be other predictors to be considered in future research to further understand consumers' returning intentions. For instance, consumers' prior returning behaviors and satisfaction with the products should be examined in the future.

Hypothesis 3: Individual characteristics as moderators between attitudes and behavioral intentions.

The study investigated whether individual characteristics (i.e., price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement) influenced the relationships between socially responsible attitudes and intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically as moderators.

Individual characteristics as moderators between attitudes and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention.

Many researchers identified that consumers hesitate to purchase socially responsible apparel in spite of their positive attitudes toward social responsibility. Product attributes have been discussed as a main barrier for consumers to purchase socially responsible apparel. Consumers have perceived the products to be less affordable, stylish, or durable than conventional apparel (Carrigan and Attalla, 2001; Joergens, 2006; Niinimaki, 2010). With an effort to examine why ethically-minded consumers rarely purchase socially responsible apparel, several variables including price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement were analyzed as moderators. To test the hypothesis more precisely,

social desirability bias was tested for each relationship, but it was not evident for any of the relationships.

The first analysis to investigate price sensitivity as a moderator in the relationship between attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention revealed that price sensitivity plays an important moderating role in the relationship between attitudes and intention. However, the direction was positive unlike the hypothesis. Thus, consumers who are more sensitive to prices will be more likely to purchase socially responsible apparel. Researchers in the area of socially responsible apparel identified the willingness of ethically-minded consumers to pay more for products that have less negative impacts on the environment or society (Ha-Brookshire & Norum, 2011; Hustvedt & Bernard, 2008; Rudell, 2006) and to support socially responsible companies (Mohr & Webb, 2005). Even though the researchers found that ethically-minded consumers are not sensitive to price when it comes to socially responsible apparel, the finding of the present study is quite new, considering the negative relationship between price and socially responsible purchase intention of the following studies. Previous studies identified that price is a key consumer issue while consumers shop for clothes, especially for socially responsible apparel (Bray et al., 2010; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Hines & Swinker, 1996; Niinimaki, 2010) and they care more about price than company ethics (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000). The finding of recent research showed that the attributes of stores or environmentally friendly apparel (e.g., displaying fashion trends) influenced consumers' purchase decision (Chan & Wong, 2012). However, they also identified that premium price of the products negatively impacted the relationship.

With regard to the unexpected finding of the present study with price sensitivity, the finding of this study may be explained by the fact that price sensitivity may be situational (Wakefield & Inman, 2003). For example, consumers' price sensitivity may depend on the

types of products (i.e., functional or hedonic) or consumption situations (i.e., purchasing products alone or with others). Also, price-sensitive consumers are careful and smart shoppers who maximize total utility and make purchase decisions that fulfill the goal (Kahneman, 2000; Shrum et al., 1995). In relation to the discussion of Wakefield and Inman (2003), it can be assumed that price-sensitive consumers may conserve money on everyday objects but still be willing to pay for premium products based on their value-consciousness (e.g., Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, & Burton, 1990). According to economic theory, consumers make rational choices that maximize their total utility (Cochrane & Bell, 1956). Bade and Parkin (2007) concluded that consumers maximize their total utility by selecting products with the most reasonable prices while obtaining the greatest benefit (Atkins, 2008). As for socially responsible consumers, the desirable outcome will be to contribute to the environment or society by purchasing socially responsible products. This may be a way for them to maximize the total utility even though they may pay more for such products than conventional goods in the same product category. They believe that the extra costs outweigh the benefits.

Second, the study hypothesized that materialistic consumers may be less likely to purchase socially responsible apparel even though they are ethically minded based on the results of previous studies (e.g., Liao & Wang, 2009; Kolodinsky et al., 2010; Kozar & Marcketti, 2011); however, the current study found that materialism did not moderate the relationships between socially responsible attitudes and intention to purchase socially responsible apparel. This might be because as being socially responsible is the trend in consumer movement (Cervellon et al., 2010), materialistic consumers of today may consider that socially responsible products are a status symbol (Griskevicius, 2008; Van Vugt et al., 2007). They may purchase socially responsible products for the needs of their independent self (i.e., individualists) or for their social needs to gain respect from others (i.e., collectivists)

(based on Liao & Wang, 2009). Consumers who have a strong desire to be different from others may purchase apparel that displays individuality or exclusive apparel products (Tepper & Hoyle, 1996). In relation to this argument, Halepete et al. (2009) found that consumers who have strong needs of their independent self have positive attitudes and intentions to purchase customized fair-trade apparel. Further, all marketing activities performed by companies are a set of behaviors to build brand personality that serves as a key factor in brand-customer relationship (Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004). Madrigal and Boush (2008) indicated that social responsibility is a unique dimension of brand personality and reinforces customer-brand relationship. As materialistic consumers are known to purchase brand-laden products (Kozar & Marcketti, 2011; Liao & Wang, 2009), they may be willing to purchase apparel from socially responsible companies to construct identity through the symbols of the products and to improve social image and signal social status.

Third, the study identified no effect of impulse buying tendency on the relationship between the attitudes toward socially responsible apparel business practices and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention. This might be because the study did not investigate store environment of socially responsible apparel products, considering that impulse buying tends to be driven by store environment instead of by products themselves (Park et al., 2006). The findings of Chan and Wong (2012) who also identified the important role of store-related attributes of eco apparel in consumers' purchase decisions may further explain why impulse buying tendency was not influential. It is also likely that impulsive consumers might not present their unplanned, immediate purchase behavior when it comes to socially responsible apparel because the industry is less developed than that of conventional apparel companies that are using all types of marketing tactics to increase impulsiveness of consumers (based on Coley & Burgess, 2003; Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997).

Finally, clothing involvement as a moderator in the relationship between attitudes and purchase intention was not influential. According to Carrigan and Attalla (2001), aesthetics (e.g., style, color, fit, and quality) are more important than social responsibility for consumers to purchase clothes (Iwanow et al., 2005). Joergens (2006) and Beard (2008) also argued that social responsibility is not enough to persuade consumers to purchase apparel just solely on the concept, but should suit consumers' aesthetic needs and reflect their lifestyles as well. Considering the findings of previous studies, the reason why clothing involvement did not play an important role in explaining the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention might be because the scale to measure clothing involvement was too general without measuring consumers' involvement in socially responsibly apparel. Involvement is "the motivational state of arousal or interest evoked by a particular stimulus or situation, and displayed through properties of drive" (Park et al., 2006, p. 436). Park et al. (2006) also identified that consumers who are highly involved in clothing are more likely to purchase clothing with a new style. Therefore, based on the previous studies (Beard, 2008; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Joergens, 2006; Niinimaki, 2010; Park et al., 2006), clothing involvement might have been measured with more detailed items such as: "Styles of clothing is very important to me"; "I have a strong interest in trendy clothing"; "Quality of clothing is an important factor for me to choose clothing"; "I construct my identity through clothing choices"; "My own individuality strongly affect my clothing choices"; and "Clothing is an important tool for me to communicate with people."

Individual characteristics as moderators between attitudes and ethical post-purchase returning intention.

First, price sensitivity negatively moderated the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and intention to return apparel products ethically. Similar to the findings from previous studies, the more consumers are sensitive to prices, the more likely they will

engage in unethical returning behavior even though they are socially responsible. There is little research that measured price sensitivity to identify consumers' unethical returning practices. Even though the study of Piron and Young (2000) measured the relationship between income levels (instead of price sensitivity) and return frauds, the results were similar to the current study. The researchers suggested that consumers who purchase clothes with an intention to return them are triggered by their limited monetary resources especially when they need clothes for social or professional needs (e.g., party outfit or business suit).

The second moderator was materialism. This study assumed that materialistic consumers would be less likely to engage in ethical returning behavior even though they were ethically minded. Data analysis, however, did not corroborate previous research indicating that materialistic consumers are more likely to engage in unethical returning behavior.

Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003) posited that materialistic consumers focus on their inward self and this may lead them to engage in behaviors that may negatively influence others. Instead, the current study supported the study of Johnson and Rhee (2008) who did not find the relationship between materialism and unethical consumer practices (i.e., merchandise borrowing). This was because the acquisition certainty of materialism (i.e., one of the three factors for the scale developed by Richins & Dawson, 1992) was associated with consumers' preferences to possess products instead of borrowing. Similar to the findings of Johnson and Rhee (2008), possessions and acquisitions of products might also be important to the respondents who participated in the current study; thus, they might not be interested in purchasing clothes for a single event with an intention to return, but prefer to purchase them to actually possess. The impact of materialism on ethical returning behavior should be further researched in the future.

Third, impulse buying tendency was tested as a moderator between socially responsible attitudes and ethical post-purchase returning intention. Previous research posited

that impulse buying tendency increases consumers' dissatisfaction and regret, which may in turn lead them to engage in return frauds (Rook, 1987; Yi & Baumgartner, 2011). Kang and Johnson (2009) also suggested that consumers who purchase clothes impulsively are more likely to return them excessively. The study, however, did not support any of these studies. Different from previous studies that investigated the relationship between impulsivity and unethical returning behavior among regular consumers, the current study examined whether socially responsible consumers may perform less ethical returning practices when they are impulsive. Individuals who have positive attitudes toward social responsibility are likely to control themselves to present dependability, trustworthiness, and a sense of obligation as a member of a group or a society (Gough et al., 1952; Schaie, 1959). They also carefully consider the possible consequences of their behavior. With consideration of the arguments, socially responsible consumers may be strong enough to deal with their impulse buying tendency by utilizing of problem-focused coping strategies (based on Yi & Baumgartner, 2011). In addition, as mentioned earlier, consumers' impulse buying tendency tends to be generated by store environment (Park et al., 2006). Because the study did not include store environment to measure impulsivity, the role of impulse buying tendency as a moderator might not be influential in explaining the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and ethical returning intention.

Finally, clothing involvement also did not moderate the relationship between attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and ethical returning intention. Based on the findings of O'Cass (2004) who found the relationship between clothing involvement and materialism, it can be assumed that consumers who are highly involved in clothing may purchase apparel products to possess them instead of borrowing, and thus, less likely to engage in unethical returning behavior. As clothing-involved consumers have great interests in the apparel product category, they may perform active search practices about

products or brands in advance of decision making to acquire certain products (Kim, 2005). Clothing involvement also serves as a main driver for consumers to develop knowledge and expertise regarding apparel products and thus, ability to make decisions during the process of apparel consumption. Therefore, as clothing-involved consumers tend to have greater knowledge and expertise regarding fashion and apparel industry, it may make it tougher for them to engage in unethical returning practices. In addition, Belleau et al. (2008) identified that income has a positive relationship with clothing involvement. As clothing-involved consumers tend to be more self-confident, affluent females, it can be assumed that clothing involvement may positively influence consumers' ethical returning behavioral intention.

Additional findings.

The study identified additional findings regarding intercorrelation between key dependent variables, social desirability response bias, and ownership of socially responsible apparel. The first analysis was conducted to investigate the intercorrelation between socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention. The second analyses with social desirability response bias were to compare two groups by the levels of social desirability response (i.e., high vs. low) on all the independent and dependent variables of the study (i.e., traits, attitudes, intentions, and individual characteristics). The third analyses with social desirability bias were to compare two groups by age, gender, education, and income on the response bias. The final analyses were to compare two groups by ownership and non-ownership of socially responsible apparel across all the main variables used for the study.

Intercorrelation between the key dependent variables.

There is little research that investigates the relationship between the two main areas of ethical consumer behavior (i.e., socially responsible consumption and consumer ethics). However, the study identified a positive relationship between socially responsible apparel

purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention. It was confirmed that ethical consumers are those who not only purchase socially responsible apparel products, but also perform ethical returning behavior. That is, consumers who possess ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation) and expresses positive attitudes toward socially responsible apparel business practices are ethical in both the purchase and post-purchase stages of consumption.

Comparison between research variables and social desirability bias.

Research on social responsibility and ethics frequently uses self-report questionnaires. However, researchers in the area have long expressed their concerns about the reliability of self-reported data (Randall & Fernandes, 1991). To identify the social desirability response bias in this research, it was assessed on the variables of the study. Among all the independent and dependent variables, only the measure for materialism was susceptible to social desirability response bias. This finding supported the study of Mick (1996) that identified the response bias during the process of analyzing materialism.

With regard to demographic variables, the analysis revealed that only age was influenced by the bias. That is, older consumers were more likely to answer questions in a socially desirable manner (Erskine, Kvavilashvili, Conway, & Myers, 2007; Ray & Lovejoy, 2003; Soubelet & Salthouse, 2011). Many previous studies for ethics also focused on gender differences and found that females are more susceptible to the social desirability bias than males (Bernardi & Guptill, 2008; Dalton & Ortegren, 2011). Even though the study did not find differences between genders, males scored higher on the social desirability response bias than females did unlike previous studies. In addition, education did not support previous research (e.g., Knudsen, 1995). Consumers with different income levels were not susceptible to the social desirability bias either.

Comparison between research variables and ownership of socially responsible apparel.

The study additionally investigated whether consumers were different on the variables included in the study according to ownership and non-ownership of socially responsible apparel. Eco, organic, recycled/reclaimed, used, sweatshop-free, and fair-trade apparel may be considered socially responsible apparel. The variables include ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation), attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry, behavioral intentions (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention), and individual characteristics (i.e., price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement). Note that the two factors of ethical concerns are concern for environment and concern for production, and the two factors of ethical obligation are personal contribution and self obligation.

The comparison of the owners and non-owners of socially responsible apparel on the independent and dependent variables was performed. First, the owners of eco apparel were different from the non-owners on self obligation, attitudes toward socially responsible apparel businesses, and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention, as suggested by Hiller Connell, (2011) and Niinimaki (2010), and clothing involvement as suggested by Gam, Cao, Farr, and Kang (2010). Second, the owners of organic apparel were different from the non-owners on altruism, ethical concerns (Cervellon et al., 2010), ethical obligation, socially responsible attitudes (Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009), and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention (Cervellon et al., 2010). Next, the owners of recycled apparel were different from the non-owners on concern for production, self obligation, socially responsible attitudes, and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention (Niinimaki, 2010). Fourth, the owners of used apparel were different from the non-owners on ethical concerns, self obligation, socially responsible attitudes, socially responsible apparel purchasing intention

(Hiller Connell, 2011), and ethical post-purchase returning intention. The most intriguing finding was consumers who owned used apparel were more likely to return products ethically without return frauds than those who did not. Fifth, the owners of sweatshop-free apparel were different from the non-owners on concern for production (Dickson, 1999; Kozar & Connell, 2010), ethical obligation (Valor, 2007), socially responsible attitudes (Rudell, 2006), and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention (Kozar & Connell, 2010; Rudell, 2006; Valor, 2007). Finally, the owners of fair-trade apparel were different from the non-owners on altruism, concern for production, ethical obligation, attitudes toward social responsibility (Castaldo et al., 2009), and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention (Castaldo et al., 2009; Dickson & Littrell, 1996; Halepete et al., 2009).

Conclusions

Guided by previous literature, the study proposed a conceptual framework that examined the antecedents of ethical consumer behavior which predicted the intention to purchase socially responsible apparel and to perform ethical returning behavior. Based on the theories of Homer and Kahle (1988) and Rokeach (1973), the model “The Trait-Attitude-Intention Hierarchy of Ethical Consumer Behavior: Moderating Effects of Individual Characteristics” was developed. Based on factor analyses, the proposed framework was revised. In other words, two factors for ethical concerns (i.e., concern for environment and concern for production) and for ethical obligation (i.e., personal contribution and self obligation) were included into the conceptual framework.

The study posited that ethical traits including altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation influenced attitudes toward socially responsible apparel businesses in a positive way. In turn, the socially responsible attitudes also played an important role in explaining consumers’ socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and ethical post-purchase returning intention. In addition, the moderating effects of individual characteristics were

examined to investigate if the moderators attenuated the relationship between attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry and intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically. Among price sensitivity, materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement, only price sensitivity influenced the relationship. Price sensitivity did not attenuate the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention as hypothesized. However, an interesting finding was that consumers who were more sensitive to prices and looked for specials when going shopping were more likely to purchase socially responsible apparel than those who were less price-sensitive. As for ethical returning intention, the hypothesis with price sensitivity was supported. That is, consumers who were sensitive in prices were more likely to engage in unethical returning behavior even though their attitudes were socially responsible.

Theoretical implications.

Due to the dynamic interactions of traits, attitudes, and behavioral intentions, the study attempted to better understand ethical consumers by investigating the antecedents of ethical consumer behavior and by incorporating socially responsible or ethical purchase and post-purchase processes. Including moderators in the hierarchical process was intended to improve the conceptual framework of the study in a systematic way. Several theoretical implications are discussed as follows:

First, this study expands the value-attitude-behavior hierarchy in the context of socially responsible apparel purchasing behavior. Specifically, the study conceptualized the theoretical framework of ethical consumer behavior by incorporating variables that were related to ethics and social responsibility in order to explain consumers' socially responsible or ethical decision making process. The theoretical framework underlying this research was the hierarchical relationship between values, attitudes, and behaviors that was found in many

consumer studies including research for ethics and social responsibility. By using the term trait instead of value, the study aimed to improve the theoretical framework and measure the antecedents of ethical consumer behavior in a more precise manner. According to Smith (1982), values as an individual's abstract belief are turned into certain forms of personal traits, which play a central role in deciding what to do and how to do.

Next, ethical consumer behavior has been separated into two main streams of research: ethical consumption (i.e., socially responsible apparel purchasing intention) and consumer ethics (i.e., ethical post-purchase returning intention). By incorporating ethical returning intention as a new variable within the research area of ethical consumer behavior, the study attempted to better understand ethical consumers and their decision making in both of the purchase and post-purchase stages. In addition, individual characteristics were included in the theoretical framework as moderators to understand how they influenced the relationships between socially responsible attitudes and behavioral intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically. Individual characteristics were not examined as moderators within the decision-making process of ethical consumers in previous research. As the study found the important role of price sensitivity as a moderator between the attitudes and behavioral intentions, this discovery will help further understand ethical consumer behavior.

Finally, social desirability response bias was measured for each hypothesis testing. By validating the nonexistence of the bias, the study contributed to a higher internal validity of the theoretical framework.

Practical implications.

The study corroborated that ethical traits (i.e., altruism, ethical concerns, and ethical obligation) and attitudes toward socially responsible business practices of apparel companies were the antecedents of consumers' socially responsible apparel purchasing intention and

ethical post-purchase returning intention. Several managerial implications have emerged from this study. First, the main contribution of this study was the creation of a psychographic profile, not only for segmenting a specific market of consumers interested in purchasing socially responsible apparel, but also for developing return policies of the market. Socially responsible apparel companies should keep in mind that ethical consumers tend to have strong interests in purchasing socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically. Further, consumers who are interested in socially responsible apparel tend to perform ethical returning behavior. Most importantly, marketing strategies should be developed with price sensitivity in mind. Ethical consumers are smart consumers who maximize total utility of their purchases (based on Kahneman, 2000; Shrum et al., 1995). They may consider whether prices are appropriate for certain products. When it comes to socially responsible apparel, ethical consumers may believe that it is worth purchasing such products even though the price is more than that of conventional apparel. Socially responsible apparel companies should notice that ethical consumers are willing to support companies that perform socially responsible business practices with high ethical standards (Madrigal & Boush, 2008; Mohr & Webb, 2005). Further, the companies should remember that price-sensitive consumers may engage in unethical returning behavior even though they are ethically minded. Socially responsible apparel companies may not need to tighten return policies but should make efforts to inform consumers how much unethical returning practices impact the efficiency of their business operations.

Second, socially responsible companies might also use the result of study when producing socially responsible apparel and planning their marketing strategies to develop favorable brand image or to boost sales. Participants who were willing to help the environment and society, concerned about the environment and apparel production, and felt obligation to contribute to the world expressed their positive attitudes toward socially

responsible apparel companies and willingness to support those companies. When all five ethical traits including all the factors were analyzed together to predict attitudes toward socially responsible apparel business practices, concern for environment was the best predictor of socially responsible attitudes. Concern for production and self obligation were the second highest predictor, and personal contribution was the lowest predictor. However, altruism did not predict socially responsible attitudes. In order to obtain consumers' support, companies should advertise with messages that convey how consumers can contribute to the environment by purchasing the products of the companies. Consumers who participated in the present research accordingly had strong interests in purchasing socially responsible apparel. Among various socially responsible apparel products, the highest scoring item was sweatshop-free apparel which participants were willing to purchase the item to support improved working conditions. Participants of the study also reported interests in purchasing apparel that can be worn over a long period of time compared to trendy apparel that goes out of style quickly. With regard to product attributes, consumers might concern more about style of socially responsible apparel than price. Companies that produce socially responsible apparel should consider the quality and style of the clothes. Through brief, informal interviews with the participants of the current study, it was found that participants were willing to pay more for socially responsible apparel if the clothes contain aesthetic values and if the price is affordable. It was apparent that corporate social responsibility affected purchase intention more strongly than price did. To reach as many consumers as possible, socially responsible companies should find a solution to produce apparel with a perfect combination of materials, style, and price.

With regard to ethical post-purchase returning intention, the study identified that participants who were altruistic, concerned about environment and the impact of apparel production, and felt responsibility to do something for the environment expressed positive

attitudes toward socially responsible apparel businesses. In turn, the positive socially responsible attitudes explained the consumers' ethical returning intention. Consumers of socially responsible apparel expressed their high consumer ethics in the post-purchase stage as well. Moreover, participants' materialism, impulse buying tendency, and clothing involvement had no impacts on their unethical returning intention. Therefore, socially responsible apparel companies may need to worry less about the negative impacts of impulse buying tendency (i.e., unethical returning behavior) on business operations than conventional apparel companies do, because ethical consumers may be able to control their impulsivity. Building marketing tactics (e.g., hedonic store environment) to generate impulsivity may be important for socially responsible apparel companies to boost sales and develop the industry (based on Nichols et al., 2001). As mentioned above, however, price-sensitive consumers are less likely to perform ethical returning behavior even though they are ethically minded. Therefore, even though lenient merchandise return programs will increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, companies must observe customers' returning behavior and record customer-stated reasons for merchandise returns in order to find out the characteristics of consumers who frequently engage in unethical returning practices and to prevent return frauds.

Even though consumers who have positive attitudes toward socially responsible apparel businesses do not seem to return products with dishonest reasons, the study revealed that there was no difference between owners and non-owners of socially responsible apparel in terms of returning behavioral intention. Only the owners of used apparel were different from non-owners on ethical returning behavior. That is, consumers who frequently shop for used apparel are less likely to engage in unethical returning behavior than those who do not. Therefore, companies of other socially responsible apparel products (i.e., eco, organic, recycled, sweatshop or fair-trade) should clearly communicate about their return policies to

customers at the point of selling products so that they do not encounter uncomfortable situations with customers who try to return products that cannot be returned. This may prevent loss of customers and help to build ideal relationships.

Limitations.

The sample size and procedures adopted were designed to produce a sample representative of the residents living in Fort Collins above 18 years of age. However, due to the nature of nonprobability sampling techniques (i.e., convenience sampling), the data could not be collected through systematic selection of participants (Gliner et al., 2009). Most of the participants were between 18 and 29 ($n = 237$, 78.5%). The median age of the sample was 23, which was around seven years younger than the median age of Fort Collins residents. Considering the median age of residents in Colorado (i.e., 36.1), Fort Collins residents were much younger than the Colorado population. The percentage of female participants was 60% and this was 10% higher than female residents of Fort Collins (50.1%). The majority of the participants were Caucasian, but the percentage was 15% lower than that of Fort Collins residents. The participants received less education in comparison to the Fort Collins residents (i.e., more than college degree). The household income of the participants was also lower than that of Fort Collins residents. The percentage of the consumers who earned more than \$50,000 in 2011 was 31%, which was 17% lower than the percentage of the residents living in Fort Collins (see Table 4.1). Because the sample did not mirror the population of the city identically, the generalizability of the results might be restricted. Because the city is located in a state where social responsibility and environmental impacts have been greatly discussed and embraced, the results of the study may not reflect the general population of the nation.

In addition, only one individual characteristic (i.e., price sensitivity) turned out to be influential as a moderator in the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and behavioral intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically.

This might be due to the demographic characteristics of the sample. If the respondents were more educated with higher income, the results regarding moderating effects might be different with different groups of samples. For example, consumers earning higher household income may have more means to purchase clothes, express more interests in selecting clothes from various brands, and accordingly present more possibility to purchase from conventional apparel stores or to engage in unethical returning practices.

Finally, store intercept surveys might engender limitation. Some consumers did not agree to participation the study. It may be possible that the characteristics of consumers who agreed to the participation of the study might be different from those consumers who did not agree to participate. The participants might have more positive personality to express ethical traits, socially responsible attitudes, and socially responsible or ethical behavioral intentions. Further, the combination of store intercept and online surveys might generate limitations. That is, the characteristics of consumers who were willing to participate in paper-pencil surveys at stores might differ from those who agreed to participate through the online survey. In-store participants that spent the extra time to complete the survey may tend to spend more time shopping or visiting apparel stores which could lead to greater knowledge or awareness possibly making them better informed about the apparel industry and thus answering the questions based of this knowledge.

Future research.

The study incorporated general questions for altruism. In future studies, researchers may need to measure altruism by including questions that are more specific to the apparel shopping situation. Conspicuous altruism is also an interesting research topic. Consumers may perform altruistic decision-making when going shopping for apparel with desire to achieve status and reputation among group members (based on Van Vugt et al., 2007). Conspicuous altruism can be a stronger motive for consumers to purchase socially

responsible apparel than consumers' general altruism. Similar to this, researchers may also consider investigating socially responsible apparel consumption as a sign of status for materialistic consumers.

Future research may need to be performed with different demographic characteristics of participants in different retail settings. Studies that are conducted with consumers who have higher education attainments or earn more money in upscale retailers may find the moderating effects of materialism, impulse buying tendency, or clothing involvement on the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and socially responsible or ethical behavioral intentions.

Next, the study identified the important role of price sensitivity as a moderator between attitudes toward socially responsible apparel businesses and intentions to purchase socially responsible apparel and ethical post-purchase returning intention. It may be an interesting study to investigate the relationship between price sensitivity and consumers' smart shopping behavior (Kahneman, 2000; Shrum et al., 1995) and how the relationship impacts consumers' socially responsible apparel purchasing intention. For example, smart shoppers may believe that improving the environment and society is the maximization of the total utility of their apparel consumption. Therefore, even though the consumers are price-sensitive, spending more money for socially responsible apparel is appropriate for them because the extra utility outweighs the cost. While the study found that price-sensitive consumers are more likely to purchase socially responsible apparel than those who are less price-sensitive, it is suggested to further investigate to what degree price would signal the actual value of socially responsible apparel for consumers.

Researchers may consider measuring clothing involvement with more specific items (e.g., "Styles of clothing is very important to me" and "I have a strong interest in trendy clothing"), as mentioned in previous section, in order to investigate the relationship between

attitudes toward socially responsible apparel business practices and socially responsible apparel purchasing intention. In addition, innovativeness, prestige-seeking, novelty-seeking, or need for uniqueness may be considered for future research to investigate their moderating roles in the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and behavioral intention to purchase socially responsible apparel products. As innovativeness is “the degree to which an individual is relatively earlier in adopting an innovation than other members of his social system” (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971, p. 27), innovative consumers may prefer to purchase up-to-date conventional apparel. This may be similar to novelty-seeking consumers who desire to seek out the new and different (Hirschman, 1980). Prestige-seeking consumers may also prefer to shop at conventional apparel stores as they are very concerned about conspicuousness, uniqueness, social nature, hedonicity, and quality values (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004), which can be fulfilled by shopping at popular or luxury brands. Similar to this, consumers who need to be unique (i.e., need for uniqueness) may prefer to shop at luxury fashion brands where they can find products that differentiate themselves from others and enhance their self-image (Kapferer, 1997).

Instead of materialism, researchers may consider investigating the role of anomie as a moderator between socially responsible attitudes and intentions to buy socially responsible apparel and to return products ethically. Here, anomie refers to “a condition of normlessness and social disequilibrium where the rules once governing conduct have lost their savor and force” (Merton, 1964, p. 226). Based on the study of Rosenbaum and Kuntze (2003), it is assumed that anomic consumers may be less likely to purchase socially responsible apparel or to perform ethical returning behavior because they are self-centered and pursue to satisfy their needs. In relation to ethical returning intention, researchers may be interested in measuring clothing involvement to identify whether fashion conscious consumers intend to perform ethical returning behavior or not. Even though clothing involvement did not play an

important role in explaining the relationship between socially responsible attitudes and ethical returning intention, findings did suggest that clothing-involved consumers may be more ethical in returning products than those who are less involved in clothing. This study may be performed to investigate the direct relationship between clothing involvement and ethical returning intention as there is little research that examined this relationship.

The present study only found the difference between owners and non-owners of used apparel on ethical returning intention. Consumers who own used apparel were more likely to return products ethically than those who do not. Therefore, characteristics and motivations of consumers who frequently shop for used apparel may be examined in relation to their returning intention.

Finally, the next step to contribute to the research area of ethical consumer behavior in the context of apparel shopping may be the roles of intention in predicting actual behavior. One method suggested is to understand the roles of *implementation intention* in predicting socially responsible or ethical behavior (based on Carrington et al., 2010). Implementation intention is defined as “detailed action plans specifying when, where, and how one will act in order to achieve a goal” (De Vet et al., 2011, p. 443). According to De Vet et al. (2011), individuals who form more complete and precise implementation intention are more likely to act in a certain way. Measuring ethically-minded consumers’ implementation plans to purchase socially responsible apparel or to perform ethical returning behavior may have a strong, positive effect in explaining the gap between intention and actual behavior. This research may also provide information for better understanding of to what degree the intentions are translated into behavior.

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APPENDIX A
RESEARCH INSTRUMENT



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Spring 2012

Dear consumers:

Presently, we are conducting a research study entitled, "Understanding Ethical Consumers: Assessing the Moderating Effects of Price Sensitivity, Materialism, and Impulse Buying Tendency." The purpose of this study is to investigate consumers' shopping behavioral intentions in relation to socially responsible apparel products (e.g., clothing made from organic or recycled fabrics or sweatshop-free labor) and subsequent returning behavioral intentions of those products. More specifically, this study will examine the effects of consumer traits and attitudes toward social responsibility in the apparel and textiles industry on the purchase and post-purchase intention. Further, this study will examine the effects of consumer characteristics (e.g., price sensitivity) on their purchasing and post-purchasing processes.

We would like to invite you to participate in this research. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to respond to a questionnaire that includes socio-demographic items as well as items designed to examine your shopping behavioral intention related to socially responsible apparel along with your returning intention. It will take about 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. By participating in the survey, you will be eligible to enter into a drawing for a chance to win a \$20 dollar gift card to the Foothills Mall. If you would like to be included in the drawing, you will need to provide your name and email address or phone number at the end of survey for us to contact you regarding the drawing results.

Please be assured that any information or responses that you provide in connection with this research will remain confidential and anonymous. Your name and contact information will not be attached to the questionnaire; rather, a numeric code will be assigned to your survey. All questionnaires will be destroyed in the year of 2015. Also, if you decide to participate, you may decline to answer any questionnaire item(s) you choose and may stop participating at any time.

There are no known risks to participating in this research. Similarly, there are no known benefits to participating in this study, but we hope that participants will gain knowledge of the potential benefits to the environment and society when they shop clothes socially responsibly or ethically. If you have any questions about the study, please phone Dr. Yan at (970) 491-5331 or email her at Ruoh-Nan.Yan@Colostate.Edu. If you have questions about human research participants' rights, please contact Janell Barker at (970) 491-1655 or at Janell.Barker@Colostate.Edu.

Thank you for considering our request to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Su Yun Bae
Graduate Student

Ruoh-Nan Yan
Associate Professor

Consumer Survey

I. Please circle the number that best describes your characteristics as a consumer (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Questions	Strongly Disagree			Neutral			Strongly agree
1. I would help push a stranger's car out of the snow.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I would give money to a charity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I would give money to a stranger who needed it (or asked me for it).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I would donate goods or clothes to a charity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I would volunteer for a charity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I would point out a clerk's error (in a bank, at the supermarket) in undercharging me for an item.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I would let a neighbor whom I didn't know too well borrow an item of some value to me (e.g., a dish, tools, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

II. Please circle the number that best describes your characteristics as a consumer (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree				
1. I am concerned with the planet because disastrous consequences often occur when human interfere with nature.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I am not concerned with the environment because the earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I am not concerned with the environment because the balance of nature is strong enough to cope with the impacts of modern industrial nations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I am not concerned with the environment because humans will eventually learn enough about how nature works to be able to control it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I am concerned with the globe because I believe that if things continue on their present course, we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I am concerned with the impact of clothing production on the environment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Questions	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Neutral	Strongly agree
7. I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in U.S. clothing manufacturing businesses.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
8. I am concerned with issues related to working conditions affecting workers in foreign clothing manufacturing businesses.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

III. Please circle the number that best describes your characteristics as a consumer (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Questions	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Neutral	Strongly Agree
1. Because my personal contribution is very small, I do not feel responsible for water pollution.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
2. I do not feel responsible for the greenhouse effect.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
3. I feel co-responsible for environment problems occurring now.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
4. I feel that I am responsible for purchasing apparel goods that do not generate negative impacts on the environment during the production process.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

Questions	Strongly		Neutral			Strongly	
	Disagree					Agree	
5. I feel that I am responsible for purchasing apparel goods that do not generate negative impacts on workers during the production process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Because my personal contribution is very small, I do not feel responsible for purchasing environmentally friendly apparel goods.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Because my personal contribution is very small, I do not feel responsible for purchasing sweatshop-free apparel goods.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

IV. Please circle the number that best describes your attitudes (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Questions	Strongly		Neutral			Strongly	
	Disagree					Agree	
1. I wish that there was a label on clothing telling consumers if they were made by socially responsible manufacturers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I believe in the ideals of socially responsible clothing businesses.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Questions	Strongly		Neutral			Strongly	
	Disagree					Agree	
3. I would go several miles out of my way to buy from an apparel store that I knew to be extremely ethical.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I would pay considerably more money for a product from an apparel firm that I knew to be extremely ethical.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Apparel firms who are ethical should be allowed to earn greater profits than apparel firms normally do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I really care whether the apparel stores I patronize have a reputation for socially responsible behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Whether an apparel firm is socially responsible is not important to me in making my decision what to buy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. All apparel firms will be socially irresponsible sometimes; it is normal.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. It is no big deal if apparel firms are sometimes socially irresponsible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Apparel firms have a responsibility to always act with the highest of ethical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

V. Please circle the number that best describes your shopping behavior (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Neutral					Strongly agree
1. In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel made from recycled materials, such as polyester.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. In the near future, I would consider purchasing second-hand apparel to help the environment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. In the near future, I would select apparel that I can wear over a longer time compared to trendy apparel that goes out of style quickly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. In the near future, I would consider purchasing apparel made of organically grown natural fibers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. In the near future, I would not consider purchasing apparel with low impact on the environment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. In the near future, I would consider purchasing fair-trade apparel to support producers in developing countries.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. In the near future, I would consider purchasing sweatshop-free apparel to support improved working conditions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Questions	Strongly Disagree		Neutral				Strongly agree
8. In the near future, I would consider purchasing socially responsible apparel even if it costs more than conventional apparel.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. In the near future, I would consider purchasing socially responsible apparel even if it is not stylish or trendy compared to conventional apparel.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

VI. Please circle the number that best describes your post-shopping behavior (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Questions	Strongly Disagree		Neutral				Strongly agree
1. In the near future, I would not return clothes after wearing them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. In the near future, I would deliberately damage clothes to be considered as a defective item for a return.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. In the near future, I would buy clothes for a single event (e.g., wedding or job interview) with the intention of returning them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. In the near future, I would return worn clothes as new.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Neutral					Strongly agree
5. In the near future, I would return damaged clothes even though the damage is my own fault.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. In the near future, I might return clothes after trying them and not liking them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. In the near future, I would not return clothes with dishonest reasons in spite of the lenient return policies of apparel companies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

VII. Consumer Psychographics: Please circle the number that best describes your characteristics as a consumer (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Neutral					Strongly agree
1. I shop a lot for specials.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I usually watch the advertisements for announcements of sales.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I don't mind spending a lot of money to buy clothes that I really like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. In general, the price or cost of buying clothes is important to me even though I really like them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Questions	Strongly		Neutral			Strongly	
	Disagree					agree	
5. I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I like to own things that impress people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I usually buy only the things I need.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I like a lot of luxury in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I often buy things without thinking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. "Buy now, think about it later" describes my shopping habit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I carefully plan most of my purchases.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. When I go shopping, I buy things that I had not intended to purchase.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. It is fun to buy spontaneously.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Clothing is very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. For me, clothing does not matter.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Questions	Strongly		Neutral			Strongly	
	Disagree					agree	
22. Clothing is an important part of my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I have a strong interest in clothing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I choose clothing very carefully.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Which clothing I buy matters to me a lot.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. Choosing clothing is an important decision for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

VIII. Please read each statement carefully and decide if that statement describes you or not. If it describes you, check the word “true”; if not, check the word “false.”

Questions	True	False
1. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.	True	False
2. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.	True	False
3. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.	True	False
4. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.	True	False
5. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.	True	False

Questions	True	False
6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.	True	False
7. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.	True	False
8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.	True	False
9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.	True	False
10. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.	True	False
11. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.	True	False
12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.	True	False
13. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feeling.	True	False

IX. Demographics & Shopping Behavior: Please answer the following questions about yourself and your shopping behavior.

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender? Male Female

3. What is your ethnicity?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other

If you choose, "Other," please specify: _____

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Please check one response.)

- Less than high school graduate
- High school graduate (includes equivalency)
- Some college or associate's degree
- College degree
- Graduate or professional degree

5. What was your household income in the year of 2011?

- \$19,999 or less
- \$20,000 – \$34,999
- \$35,000 – \$49,999
- \$50,000 – \$64,999
- \$65,000 – \$79,999
- \$80,000 – \$99,999
- \$100,000 or above

6. How much did you spend on clothing purchases for yourself in the past six months?

- \$100 or less
- \$101 – \$250
- \$251 – \$400
- \$401 – \$550
- \$551 – \$700
- \$701 – \$850
- \$851 or 1,000

7. Do you presently own/wear any of the following types of apparel? (Please check all responses that apply.)

- Eco apparel (i.e., items produced using environmentally-friendly production practices)
- Organic apparel (i.e., items produced using organic cotton or other organic fibers)
- Recycled/reclaimed apparel (i.e., items constructed with fabric that has been recycled or reclaimed)
- Used apparel (i.e., items previously owned/worn or second-hand)
- Sweatshop-free apparel (i.e., items produced without worker exploitation or child labor)
- Fair-trade apparel (i.e., items are sold to support farmers or manufacturers in developing countries)

8. If you shop for socially responsible apparel mentioned above, how often do you shop for the products?

- a. Eco apparel (i.e., items produced using environmentally-friendly production practices)
 - Never
 - 1-3 times a year
 - 4-6 times a year
 - 7-9 times a year
 - 10 or more times a year
- b. Organic apparel (i.e., items produced using organic cotton or other organic fibers)
 - Never
 - 1-3 times a year
 - 4-6 times a year
 - 7-9 times a year
 - 10 or more times a year
- c. Recycled/reclaimed apparel (i.e., items constructed with fabric that has been recycled or reclaimed)
 - Never
 - 1-3 times a year
 - 4-6 times a year
 - 7-9 times a year
 - 10 or more times a year
- d. Used apparel (i.e., items previously owned/worn or second-hand)
 - Never
 - 1-3 times a year
 - 4-6 times a year
 - 7-9 times a year
 - 10 or more times a year
- e. Sweatshop-free apparel (i.e., items produced without worker exploitation or child labor)
 - Never
 - 1-3 times a year
 - 4-6 times a year
 - 7-9 times a year
 - 10 or more times a year
- f. Fair-trade apparel (i.e., items are sold to support farmers or manufacturers in developing countries)
 - Never
 - 1-3 times a year
 - 4-6 times a year
 - 7-9 times a year
 - 10 or more times a year

9. Have you ever purchased from any apparel companies that sell socially responsible or ethical products?

Yes No

a. If yes, what are those companies from which you have made purchases?

b. How many times have you purchased from the companies?

1-3 times a year 4-6 times a year 7-9 times a year
 10 or more times a year

c. How much money have you spent from the companies in the past six months?

\$ _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!