

Does Brazil Have conscious or Sustainable consumption?



Law

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Cláudia Ribeiro Pereira Nunes

Ph.D. Professor and Researcher at University Center of Barra Mansa
Rua Vereador Pinho Carvalho, 267, Barra Mansa Rio de Janeiro - Brazil, CEP 27330-550

ABSTRACT

Currently, consumption fulfills different functions and involves multiple references, such as social construction, but in current standards it presents as irresponsible or unsustainable, both in the environmental perspective and in the construction of citizenship. This thesis addresses the problem of environmental licensing and its real function in the regulated retail gas station market which few consumers are aware of. As a result, this research explores the need to create the following set of specific categories of consumption: conscious, and responsible or sustainable.

Introduction

The legal environmental order includes, beyond the principles, objectives and guidelines. The sustainability economic activity imposes regulations on the pollution and instruments for environmental management. There are two categories of consumers: the conscious, and the sustainable and, if any, to trace the basic parameters of distinction between them using environmental licensing as a categorical imperative to differentiate the design of consumer species.

Hypothesis

In the 21st century, Brazilian society began to show a growing concern for environmental protection. Within this context, this research seeks to understand the dimensions of environmental licensing and how it is perceived by consumers in the southern region of the State of Rio de Janeiro - Angra dos Reis, Barra do Pirai, Barra Mansa, Itatiaia, Paraty, Pinheiral, Pirai, Porto Real, Quatis, Resende, Rio Claro, Rio das Flores, Valença and Volta Redonda.

We analyzed a sample of 70 people at gas stations. All were licensed drivers, and were capable and literate. The survey checked whether consumers understand the meaning of a retail fuel venture in the regulated market of environmentally licensed oil.

The research subjects completed a survey with the help of eight student researchers who interviewed them while refueling their cars at gas stations licensed by Petrobrás - BR Distribuidora, between the years 2013 and 2014. The questionnaire was applied to investigate 70 consumers. The research included field interviews and the collection of information for database development for the categorization of consumers. The time frame of this field research took place between the dates of September 12, 2013 and September 12, 2014.

From the results obtained, it is concluded that environmental licensing can be understood as a differentiating factor in two consumer categories: the conscious, and responsible or sustainable.

Methodology

This research has an empirical approach due to the guidance of eight (8) researchers who are part of NUPED - Center for Research in Law of the University Center of Barra Mansa - UBM, with qualitative and quantitative research being the motto of NUPED/UBM.

The questionnaire used in the field research was structured with the guidance of and approved by the NUPED technical body, and is considered adequate to the needs of the members of the research group who needed to obtain answers to indicate the perception of consumers about environmental licensing. Since the student researchers expressed a desire to talk more about

the topic, it was agreed that the questionnaire would be transformed into an interview, which could be recorded on the back of the questionnaire (GIL, 2008, 34-37).

Finally, the researchers were able to give their opinions based on the printed report about whether or not environmental licensing is a differentiating element in the definition of conscious and responsible consumption according to the answers from the questionnaires and interviews.

The Survey

First Question:

What is environmental licensing? (more than one item may be checked)

- Is it a green seal or an ISO stamp?
- Does it organize the rational use of renewable or non-renewable resources?
- Is it a way for the government to control the exercise of economic activities?
- The respondent is in doubt about the idea of what environmental licensing is, and has difficulty defining it by the above hypothesis.
- The respondent is in doubt and indicates that he/she did not understand the idea of environmental licensing, or its purpose.

Second Question:

Does the consumer consider their responsibility to supervise whether or not there is environmental licensing for a gas station to conduct economic activity?

- The consumer is not bound by the responsibility of assisting in supervision regarding the idea of whether or not there is environmental licensing.
- The consumer is bound by the responsibility of assisting in supervision regarding the idea of environmental licensing.
- You are not sure.

Third Question:

If the respondent is interviewed, investigate how consumers perceive quality in the exercise of economic activity of a retail gas station which meets environmental standards?

Fourth Question:

Are you, as a consumer, concerned about the environmental requirements of location, operation and disposal of waste?

- I fully agree
- Partly agree
- Partly disagree
- Strongly disagree

Discussion

Environmental licensing is the instrument by which the relevant environmental agency licenses the location, installation, expansion and operation of user enterprises and activities of environmental resources, considered currently or potentially polluting or, those who, in any form, cause environmental damage, pertaining to the laws, regulations and technical standards applicable to the case?

The study involves the legal nature of an environmental administrative procedure aimed at prior appraisal of economic activities. This procedure is part of the activities of the executive branch. The exercises appear as Public Administration in order to control human activities that may cause environmental impact, as well as for the promotion of environmental quality.

The licensing function is for the purpose of controlling activities that enable environmental degradation, as well as establishing a series of actions to reduce environmental risks of environmentally ruinous activities and the demarcation of acceptable tolerance limits for these risks (MIRRA, 2008, 45).

In addition, environmental licensing is a basic tool for good practice in environmental management for companies that may cause environmental damage, since each license requires several mandatory conditions (FINK, 2002, 120).

The second discussion is based on the characterization of the differences between conscience, and responsible or sustainable consumption.

In short, understanding the responsibility or sustainability of consumers is perception, i.e., if they buy ethically correct products - whose production does not involve the exploitation of human beings or animals and does not cause damage to the environment, particularly with compliance to environmental licensing procedures (PASQUALETTO, MARQUES, PUGAS, SILVA, MACEDO, 2003, 74). In practice, the actions of responsible consumers are the following: (i) makes purchases that favor ethically correct products and conducts negotiations based on the principles of common good, and not only in the satisfaction of individual interests, allowing trading for their own interest only to perpetuate some common good beyond that interest; and (ii) moral boycotts by consumer advocates on social networks not to purchase, or negotiate, that which might go against a previous proposal (NUNES, 2013, 129-131).

On the other hand, a conscious consumer is considered one who takes into account only the impacts of their consumption. Thus, the consumer can, through their choices, seek to maximize the positive impacts and minimize the negative impacts of their acts of consumption. Conscious consumption can be practiced day-to-day, through simple gestures that take into account the impacts of a purchase. For example, the use or disposal of products or services.

Results and Analysis

First Question Result:

Does the consumer know what environmental licensing is or what this license serves?

Table 1

87.36%	of the respondents believe that the green seal and the ISO are the same or similar to environmental licensing
12.53%	of the respondents know that environmental licensing is important, but find it difficult to define
0.11%	did not know what licensing is or what it is for

Second Question Result:

Does the consumer consider their responsibility to supervise if there is environmental licensing at a gas station to allow it to conduct economic activity?

Table 2

99.94%	of respondents do not believe it is the responsibility of the consumer to assist in supervision of environmental licensing
0.06%	of respondents are not sure

Observations: No mark was made in the field binding consumer responsibility to assist in supervision regarding environmental licensing.

Third Question Result:

Does the consumer perceive the quality of economic activity of a retail gas station for environmental licensing?

Question designed to monitor a possible interview with 12 responses of the research subjects - quantitatively consolidated arguments:

Table 3

9.28%	of consumers consider the legal requirements absurd
14.15%	of consumers perceive the quality of the brand of a retail gas station if it distributes a product without a quality seal or ISO
68.40%	of consumers perceive the quality of the brand of a retail gas station in the distribution of a product with a quality seal or ISO
8.11%	of consumers perceive the quality when the property distributes a product marketed as "Environmental Product"
0.06%	prefer establishments that comply with all other marketing standards

Forth Question Result:

Is the consumer concerned about the environmental requirements of location, operation and disposal of waste?

Table 4

12.29%	fully agree
87.65%	somewhat agree
0.06%	somewhat disagree

Observation: There was no response for the strongly disagree field.

In general, and based on tallied responses on the forms and from the interviews, the South Fluminense consumers practice conscious consumption, but not responsible or sustainable consumption, as shown in the work of Elkington, Hailes and Mankower (1990) and ideas of Feldmann jobs and Crespo (2003).

Conclusion

1. Today, consumption fulfills different functions and involves multiple references such as social construction, but in current standards, it presents as irresponsible or unsustainable, both in the environmental perspective as well as the construction of citizenship.
2. Responsible or sustainable consumption could be configured as one of the treatment options of environmental impacts,

as it involves changes in attitude coupled with the need for transformation of the system and citizen's values.

3. However, the alternatives to promote sustainability as a new civilization model, which are able to overcome the dilemmas of a consumer society, seem incipient.
4. It was observed that the propaganda that presents "politically correct" as being practical for responsible or sustainable consumption, by research subjects, does not cover the complex relationship that involves the environment and the regulation of economic activities.
5. Audiovisual media - television - can be regarded in the southern region as the most efficient vehicle in disseminating necessary information to consumers, as it was the only one mentioned in the interviews.

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