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Understanding the purchase of pirated products - The influence of the strategies of denial and consumer ethics[i]

Entendendo a compra de produtos piratas - A influência das estratégias de negação e ética do consumidor

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ABSTRACT

In a time where ethical behavior has been so mentioned in the country, this article has the objective of investigate the influence of neutralization techniques, materialism and consumer ethics in the intention to purchase pirated products. The model proposed derives from scales and constructs validated from other authors but it characterizes as a new composition of a hypothetical model that aims to investigate pirated products consumption antecedents. A survey was realized resulting in 432 questionnaires collected. The data was analyzed utilizing structural equation modeling and, to reduce the social desirability bias a scale adapted to Brazil was added to the questionnaire. The experiment results indicate that the higher the schooling, income and age the lesser the intent to acquire pirated products. The higher the ethical level of the consumer, the lesser the intent to purchase pirated products. Results also confirm that denial strategies have positive influence in the intent to purchase pirated products, which can provide a foundation for mitigating actions. The study findings suggest that campaigns focused in the ethical behavior of the consumer and the reduction of the neutralization can minimize the intent to purchase pirated products.

KEYWORDS: Piracy; Ethical decision making; Consumer behavior; Materialism; Neutralization.

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RESUMO

Em um momento que o comportamento ético tem sido tão evocado no país, este artigo tem o objetivo de investigar a influência das estratégias de negação, do materialismo e da ética do consumidor no processo de intenção de compra de produtos piratas. O modelo proposto é derivado de escalas e construtos validados por outros autores, mas que se caracteriza como uma composição nova e inédita de modelo hipotético, buscando elucidar antecedentes do consumo de produtos piratas. Para tanto, foi realizada uma survey coletando 432 questionários. Os dados foram tratados com o Método de Modelagem de Equações Estruturais e, como forma de se reduzir o viés da desejabilidade social, uma escala adaptada à realidade brasileira foi incorporada ao questionário. Os resultados do experimento indicam que, quanto maior a escolaridade, a renda e a idade, menor a intenção de adquirir produtos piratas e, quanto mais elevado o nível ético do consumidor, menor tende a ser a intenção de compra de produtos piratas. Os resultados também confirmam que as estratégias de negação têm uma influência positiva na intenção de compra de produtos piratas, criando bases para geração de ações mitigatórias do fenômeno. As constatações do estudo sugerem que campanhas focadas no comportamento ético do consumidor e na redução da negação podem minimizar a intenção de compra de produtos piratas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Pirataria; Tomada de decisão ética; Comportamento do consumidor; Materialismo; Negação.

1   INTRODUCTION

Being the market regulated by laws, pirated products are considered an infraction of the law, since they violate the protection of intellectual rights, which may be applied to trademarks, copyrights or patents (Reyes, 2007). The consumer, however, also infringes the law when he decides to consume a product that violates it. When making this decision, he makes it based on a calculation based on ethical aspects that justify or ratify this decision. These ethical aspects are the subject of this research.

The research context is the relationship between the constructs: ethical consumer principle, represented by the Consumer Ethics Scale of Vitell and Muncy (2005); neutralization techniques represented by the construct "neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision-making" and the degree of materialism represented by the construct "materialism influence in the decision to consume pirated products, represented by the construct" intention to purchase counterfeit products".

Overlapping these relationships is the interest in verifying the reliability of the respondents through the scale of social desirability (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960), applied to the questionnaire and if social desirability influences the response patterns in the antecedent constructs. Because the theme is ethical principles, it is important to note that they are inherent to the unique social and historical characteristics of Brazilian society and that there may be similar principles among several countries, but none of them are the same. The capacity to use neutralization techniques (Morris & Higgins, 2008) refer to a psychological characteristic inherent in people, as well as the degree of materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992).

Being the study delimited in the field of marketing, in the discipline of Consumer Behavior, the unit of analysis is the consumer decision-making process, focusing on the ethical decision-making process when consuming pirated products, as shown in Figure 1.
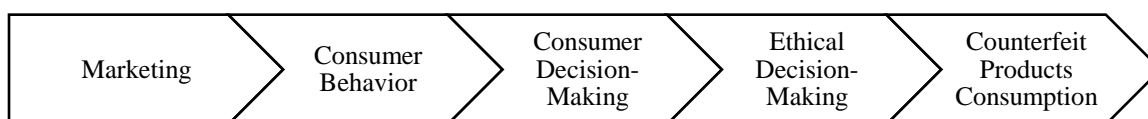
Figure 1 – Research delimitation
Source: Prepared by the authors.

Ethics is an area of philosophy that studies morals and values. Interest in ethics, value judgments and morals has existed for a considerable time. Aristotle linked ethics to virtue and identified elements of virtue such as justice, courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, liberality, gentleness, prudence, and wisdom. Emperor Justinian in ancient Rome was the first to incorporate ethics into the legal system, and Napoleon established a code with thirty-six statutes based on the concept that all citizens, regardless of their birth or social stature, should be treated in a fair way (Yücel, Elibol & Dagdelen, 2009). According to Haidt (2008: 65):

The very first writing in Mesopotamia appears to have been used to help merchants record who owed what to whom. If those first marks in clay do not strike you as moral texts then just skip ahead to the Code of Hammurabi, the Hindu Vedas, the Egyptian Instructions of Amenemope, and the Hebrew Bible. Or note that the Bible begins with a creation story in which the long, strange trip of human exile from Eden was launched by a moral transgression and that the transgression itself was obtaining knowledge of good and evil. Morality spans the entire history of Western philosophy. Two of the greatest works of ancient Greek philosophy—Plato's Republic and Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics—are extended inquiries into the nature and origins of good persons and good societies.

Ethics is the philosophical study of morality. Sometimes, this word is used in a more strict sense to express the moral principles of a particular tradition, group or individual (Vázquez, 1993, Audi,

2004). The term ethics also is used interchangeably with the term moral to indicate what the subject matter is or even as synonyms, by some authors (Audi, 2004, Finken, 2012). In defense of the separation of ethical and moral concepts, Vazquez (1993: 8, translation by the authors) states that:

> Deciding and acting in a concrete situation is a practical-moral problem, but to investigate how moral responsibility relates to freedom and to the determinism to which our actions are subject is a theoretical problem, the study of which is the competence of ethics.

Regarding the conceptual confusion of many authors with the concepts of ethics and morality, Patrus (2012: 13, translation by the authors) clarifies that:

> It is very common to use the terms ethics and moral as synonyms. However, the study of ethics is different from the study of morality. Morality is the set of norms or rules that regulate the relations of the individuals of a certain social group in a certain context, that is, their customs, their behavior patterns.

Ethics is part of the so-called canonical branches of ancient philosophy: Logic, Physics and Ethics (Kant, 2007; Hankinson, 2009). For Audi (2004), ethics is one of the basic fields of philosophy, along with Logic, Metaphysics, and Epistemology. Weber (2004: 132, translation by the authors) exemplifies the importance of ethics in shaping socioeconomic life when relating the rise of capitalism based on Protestantism:

> A specifically bourgeois economic ethic arose. With the consciousness of being in the fullness of God's grace and visibly blessed by him, the bourgeois entrepreneur, as long as he remained within the limits of formal correction, that his moral conduct was intact and that his use of wealth was not questionable, could pursue his pecuniary interests as much as he pleased and thereby feel that he was doing his duty. In addition, the power of religious asceticism provided him with sober, conscientious and extraordinarily active workers who clung to their work as a life-longed purpose of God.

One of the reflections about ethics in marketing lies in the field of consumer behavior. Yücel, Elibol and Dagdelen (2009) suggest that the marketing decision process can be influenced by different ethical approaches. Critics are concerned that consumer behavior studies may be used by unethical marketers to exploit human vulnerabilities when buying or consuming. In-depth knowledge of a consumer's behavior may give the company an unfair advantage (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000).

Although marketing performs an interface function with consumers and other stakeholders of the organization, very little attention is devoted to ethics in marketing. Consequently, very little research on ethics in marketing has been conducted in Brazil (Huertas & Urdan, 2002). The same happens in Brazilian companies, in which ethics is a secondary concern (Arruda, 2008).

In a later study, Vieira (2006) identified when conducting interviews focused on building relationships with leaders of micro, small and medium-sized technology organizations, that ethics and moral values are important in building a desirable image for potential business partners, thus having a positive influence on the intention of forming marketing relationships.

Vieira (2006) further states that it was not clear whether the executives interviewed in their study really understood the meaning of being ethical, and what acceptable business ethical behavior would be. This observation is in line with the statements of Huertas and Urdan (2002), who noted the absence of the insertion of ethical themes in the school curricula of the Marketing area. The picture that is formed in Brazil is the lack of discussion about ethics, from school education to the professional activity of the person.

Fonsêca and Souza (2007) analyzed how the principles of marketing ethics affect the construction and development of the relationship between brand and consumer. The qualitative study used in-

depth interviews with managers of a large fast food chain to identify the ethical principles of moral duty, utilitarianism, justice, happiness, equity, and equality as those that most influence the construction and establishment of norms and rules of moral conduct.

Kovacs, Barbosa, Kovacs, Durão and Silva (2004) sought to analyze the influence of morals in relation to the evaluation of genetically modified foods. The methodology chosen was a desk research on subjects related to the subject and in-depth interviews with eight Catholic and evangelical religious leaders. It was observed that the religious did not know the subject and the Church did not have a formal position with respect to transgenics. While perceiving benefits, the risks associated with this technology are linked to the so-called "Adam's Paradox". Kovacs et al. (2004) explain that based on the story of Adam and Eve where everything was allowed, but not try to be gods; the new morality linked to the genetic manipulation of food is called "Adam's Paradox".

In general, articles published in Brazil, when mentioning or investigating the theme "ethics", are not clear about the theoretical line of ethics they adopt and there is no specific research record regarding ethical consumer decision making, which can be characterized as a gap in national academic production.

Regarding the ethical individualization of consumption, Bauman (2008) considers that responsible choice that formerly was linked to an ethical duty awareness and moral concern related to other people was transferred to a more individual sense of self-realization and risk calculation.

This article is relevant given its research problem that aims to map and explore the domain of ethical influence in the decision to use pirated (or counterfeit) products, a relatively new field of consumer behavior. Specifically, the investigation focuses on the antecedents of the decision-making process and how they influence or not the intention to acquire pirated products, which is represented by a construct developed by Matos and Ituassu (2005). The prior use of a scale adapted by Gouveia, Guerra, Sousa, Santos and Costa (2009) to identify whether or not there is a bias of social desirability also represents a process that has not yet been developed in the Brazilian academy in ethical decision-making studies.

2   PIRACY

Auger and Devinney (2007: 1) stated that "(…) there appears to be a gap between what consumers say about the importance of ethical issues and what they do at the checkout counter" when they investigated controversial research results which indicated the importance of the ethical attributes of products or services in the purchasing decision while others indicated that opinions about ethical attributes did not imply changes in buying behavior. Belk, Devinney and Eckhardt (2005: 6) add that "Yet despite this interest, there is no definitive understanding of the extent to which consumer choice is affected by ethical positioning or how consumers deal with the ethical conflicts embedded within many of their fundamental purchasing decisions".

The understanding that piracy is a complex phenomenon with significant impact on the world economy is already established. The Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting and Piracy (BASCAP) (2010) reports that millions of counterfeit goods are being produced and transported throughout the world to markets, at increasingly alarming rates. Millions of consumers are putting themselves at risk by consuming products that are not effective or are unsafe and governments, businesses and society are losing hundreds of billions in taxes, revenue for businesses and jobs.

Governments and businesses are alert to the risks of counterfeiting. Massive counterfeiting can translate into job losses, trade deficits and the development of an informal economy that decreases governmental revenue. In the business field, there is a decrease in innovation capacity, dilution of brand value and consequent reduction of competitiveness (Viot, Roux, & Kremer, 2012).

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the annual amount lost in the US with piracy in the middle of the last decade was approximately $ 200 billion (OECD, 2007). Worldwide, the estimate was $ 500 billion, not counting digital piracy and so-called domestic piracy (Kim & Karpova, 2009). According to data from the Federation of Commerce of the

State of Rio de Janeiro (Fecomércio-RJ) and IPSOS (2010), Brazil has approximately 70.2 million declared consumers of pirated products. For the report run by Frontier Economics (2016) and commissioned by BASCAP, the volume of digital piracy of films, music and software was $ 231 billion (Frontier Economics, 2016).

In 2016 in Belo Horizonte, one of the largest Brazilian cities, 62.8% of the population consumed some type of pirated product, mainly CD/DVD, clothes, shoes, handbags, glasses, watches and electronics. These consumers profile is that 76.4% have completed secondary or higher education, 67% are male and 55% are in the 16-24 age group (Fecomércio-MG, 2016). In Santa Catarina, a Brazilian state, consumption of pirated products fell by 0.9% in 2016 in relation to the previous year. Regarding the profile of consumers of pirated products, 46.5% are in the age range of 18 to 24 years (Fecomércio-SC, 2016). The five categories of pirated products most consumed are the same as the Fecomércio-MG survey conducted in the same year, which indicates consistency in the results and suggests a possible national trend that, however, cannot be confirmed without further studies.

The reasons that lead a consumer to choose counterfeit products vary in price, access, social acceptance and the perception that the purchase of counterfeit products has no legal consequences (BASCAP, 2009). In order to extend this understanding, specifically in the antecedents of the decision process, this research presents itself.

There are unethical behaviors both on the part of the company and on the part of consumers (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000). Figure 2 summarizes some unethical behaviors that may be adopted by consumers.

Anti-Ethical Behaviors
Take advantage of warranty terms or privileges of unconditional warranty.
Buying counterfeit products.
Copy copyrighted material.
Return sales bought products and demand full reimburse.
Return partially used products and demand full reimburse.
Return used clothes.
Damage merchandise in store and demand a discount to buy it.
Damage bought products and return it as defective products.
Steal products from stores.
Remove clothes buttons in stores.
Swap expired discount coupons.
Swap discount coupons without the correct purchase.
Swap price tags.

Figure 2 - Anti-ethical Consumer Practices
Source: Adapted from Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000, p. 10.

Ethical decision-making is a cognitive process that considers various ethical principles and rules or the maintenance of relationships that guide, judge individual or collective decisions and intentional actions (Weber, 2007).

Every moral act implies the need to choose between several possible acts. This choice is usually guided by the preference criterion. Therefore, a choice is made over another as a result of a preference. The criterion of this preference is that of what is more or less valuable, in moral terms for the one who is making the choice. Since it has axiological content (Greek axes, value) it means that it can be either valued by the individual or by others as good (from diverse criteria such as social, cultural or personal) or bad (Vázquez, 1993).

It is important to differentiate values related to objects from values related to moral acts. The latter relate to human choices and conduct. Vazquez (1993: 121, translation by authors) states, "(...) value is not property of the objects themselves, but property acquired through their relationship with man as a social being. But in turn, objects can have value only when they are actually endowed with certain objective properties". Bagozzi, Sekerka, Hill and Sguera (2013) assume that values are fundamental

to human ethical behavior. However, people differ in the degree to which they can maintain their moral values and do not always act as the moral values they declare.

Forgeries are widely available and presented in a variety of ways. In some cases, consumers do not know that they are counterfeit at the time of purchase, which characterize as deceptive falsification. In others, consumers are fully aware that they are buying counterfeit goods, which characterize as non-deceptive counterfeiting. The quality of forgeries may also vary. While some are so sophisticated and perfect that only laboratory tests can distinguish them, others are produced in crude ways that may pose health risks (Bian & Veloutsou, 2007).

Although it causes losses of billions of dollars per year for companies, piracy still benefits from a high degree of social tolerance and is not perceived as an ethical issue (Zamoon, 2006). The production, marketing and consumption of pirated products is a challenge to the Brazilian economy, given the losses they cause due to tax evasion and job losses because its manufacturers, distributors and merchants do not pay labor charges, taxes and copyright, among other legal obligations (Fecomércio-RJ & IPSOS, 2010).

Considering the proposed research problem: How do the constructs of materialism, neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making, and consumer ethics evaluated from the Vitell and Muncy (2005) scale impact on the intention to buy counterfeit products? The proposed constructs and the hypotheses related thereto will be presented and discussed. Figure 3 presents a summary of the hypotheses proposed for the research.

N°	Hypothesis
1	There is a positive influence of the construct "neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making" on the construct "Intention to buy counterfeit products".
2	There is a positive influence of the construct "Materialism" on the construct "Intention to buy counterfeit products.
3	The is a negative influence of the Consumer Ethics Scale on the "Intention to buy counterfeit products".
4	The social desirability scale will have a significant influence on the model results, as well on the antecedent and consequent constructs.

Figure 3 – Research hypothesis
Source: Prepared by the authors.

The construct "intention to purchase pirated products" is based on the work of Matos and Ituassu (2005) and Gupta, Gould and Pola (2004). Matos and Ituassu (2005) conducted two surveys in Brazilian state capitals trying to investigate the attitudes and intentions of consumers regarding pirated products. Gupta et al. (2004) investigated, through a survey conducted on the Internet with 689 software consumers, the decision-making process comparing the ethical point of view with other salient points of view, such as economic and legal. The results indicated that ethics is a factor inserted in a multidimensional context that influences or not the consumption of pirated software.

The first hypothesis, based on the work of Zamoon (2006) and Morris and Higins (2008) focuses on a relationship based on the antecedent construct "neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making". Zamoon (2006) carried out his doctoral thesis focusing on neutralization techniques in decision making for copying or acquisition of pirated software. Neutralization techniques aim to neutralize guilt by performing a socially objectionable action (Sykes & Matza, 1957; Zamoon, 2006). Morris and Higgins (2008) conducted a study with undergraduate students at various universities investigating the intention to participate in digital piracy. A relationship between neutralization techniques and the intention to participate in digital piracy was identified. The first hypothesis therefore posits that there is a positive influence of the construct "neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making" on the construct "intention to purchase pirated products".

The second hypothesis, based on the work of Richins and Dawson (1992), focuses on the antecedent construct "materialism". There are two prevalent definitions in the theory about this construct. The definition adopted postulates that materialism refer to the relation of people to goods in psychological terms (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Belk's (1984) competing definition focuses on

personality traits. The second hypothesis therefore posits that there is a positive influence of "materialism" on the "intention to purchase pirated products ".

The third hypothesis, based on the work of Muncy and Vitell (2005), represents the construct of "consumer ethics" using a scale developed by the authors. Muncy and Vitell (1992) and Vitell and Muncy (1992) have created a Consumer Ethics Scale that examined the extent to which consumers believe that certain questionable behaviors are ethical or unethical.

Thirteen years later, Vitell and Muncy (2005) updated the original scale of Muncy and Vitell (1992), from a study comparing college students with other adults. At the end of their article, Vitell and Muncy (1992) recommend that the comparison of ethical beliefs with personality variables such as Machiavellianism or other types could advance knowledge in the field and assist in the development of a more comprehensive theory of consumer ethical behavior. The third hypothesis therefore posits that there is a negative influence of the Consumer Ethics Scale on the "intention to purchase counterfeit products".

The fourth hypothesis is based on the work of Crowne and Marlowe (1960) adapted to the Brazilian reality by Gouveia et al. (2009). The application of the scale tries to evaluate if respondents tend to respond in a more acceptable or socially appropriate way, denying, if there are opinions and behaviors that are not accepted or are socially condemned (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960; Ribas, Moura & Hutz, 2004, Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2006; Gouveia, Guerra, Sousa, Santos, & Costa, 2009). The fourth hypothesis is secondary and postulates, therefore, that the scale of social desirability will have a significant influence on the results of the model, both in the antecedent constructs and in the consequent construct.

3   PROPOSED MODEL

The model proposed in this article derives from the scales and constructs validated by other authors, but characterizes as a new and unprecedented composition of constructs. It seeks to investigate, as antecedent constructs: materialism, based on the work of Richins and Dawson (1992) and Jun, Liang, Qiong & Jian (2012); neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making, based on the work of Zamoon (2006) and Morris and Higins (2008) and the Consumer Ethics Scale, based on the work of Vitell and Muncy (1992, 2005), validated in Brazil by Souza and Santos (2010). Then it investigates how the proposed antecedent constructs influence the consequent construct "intention to purchase counterfeit products", based on the work of Matos and Ituassu (2005) and Gupta et al. (2004).

The proposed model is presented in Figure 4. Following each of the items of the scale is discussed and presented. The discussion begins with the construct of materialism and the items on its scale. Soon after the construct of neutralization techniques and the items of its scale are presented. Then the consumer ethics scale of Muncy-Vitell is presented, as well as the items used. Then the scale of social desirability and its items is presented. Finally, the scale items of the "Intention to Buy Counterfeit Products" construct are presented and discussed.

For Olivia, Tong and Wong (2012), both materialism and consumer ethics are consumption phenomena and there may be an association between the two constructs that should be investigated. The items used in the scale of the construct "Materialism" are presented in Figure 5, which shows all the statements that comprise the items of the scale and whether or not they were used in the research. The "Materialism" construct, in this experiment, is postulated as a construct antecedent to the "intention to buy counterfeit products" construct.
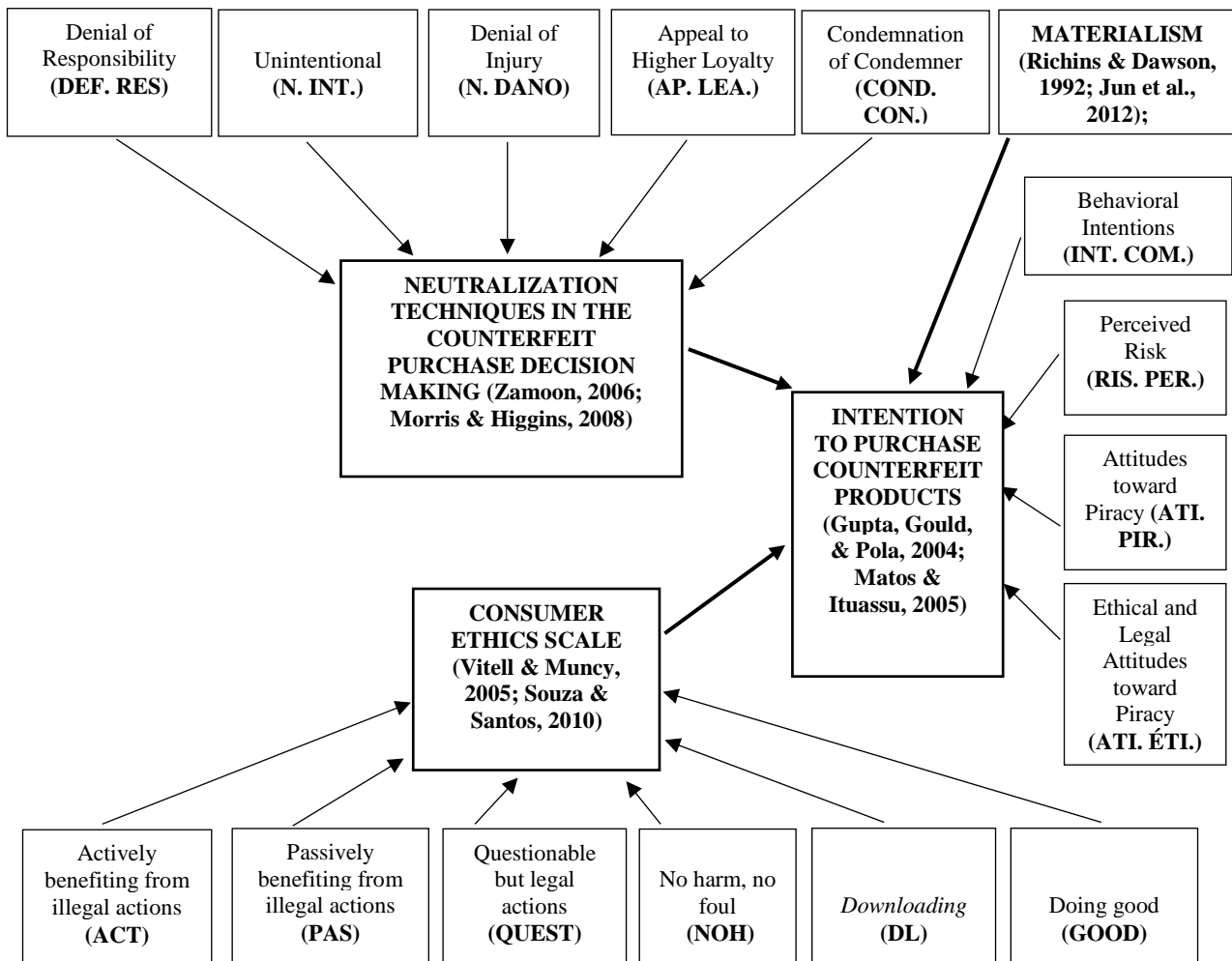
Figure 4 – Proposed Model
Source: Prepared by the authors.

Statement	Used in the Research
It is really true money can happiness.	Yes
My dream in life is to be able to own expensive things.	Yes
People judge others by what they own.	Yes
I buy some things that I secretly hope will impress others.	Yes
Owning the right things is the most important thing in life.	Yes
Others judge me by the kinds of things I own.	Yes
People will like me more if I own the right things.	Yes

Figure 5 – Materialism scale items present in the final research instrument.
Source: Adapted from Olivia et al., 2012, p. 67; Schaefer, Hermans and Parker, 2004, p. 402.

The neutralization technique can be used in any situation where a consumer has a desire to commit (or committed) a questionable activity, but has an ethical concern that requires neutralization (Chatzidakis, Hibbert & Smith, 2006). The items used in the construct "neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making" are presented in Figure 6, which shows all the statements of the items and the strategy to which they are associated.

Statement	Strategy
I don't think that buying counterfeit products is a violation of the Law.	Denial of Responsibility
I don't believe that there are Laws that apply to who buys counterfeit products.	
Nobody tried to stop me from buying counterfeit products.	
Music and software that most people can download for free shouldn't be paid.	
I don't buy counterfeit products intentionally, but by whim.	Unintentional
Acquire counterfeit products doesn't harm anyone.	Denial of Injury
Even if piracy is a crime, it doesn't generate victims.	
I acquired a counterfeit product, but I have intention of buying the original in the future.	
I buy counterfeit products to use in a short amount of time.	
These companies which are subject to counterfeit earn so much money that it doesn't matter.	
If I have always to buy original products instead of counterfeit ones, it is difficult to keep my life standard.	Appeal to Higher Loyalty
If I have to pay for the originals of all the products I have, I wouldn't be able to pay my bills.	
People that buy only from counterfeit products and don't have conditions to buy the originals shouldn't be considered guilty.	
These companies have profited for years with their products, so buying counterfeit products from them is justifiable.	Condemnation of Condemner

Figure 6 – Neutralization technique scale items in the decision making of purchase counterfeit products
Source: Adapted from Zamoon, 2006, p. 206; Morris and Higgins, 2008, p. 191.

The construct assesses the extent to which consumers are able to deny violations of social or business standards stemming from their actions, based on seven affirmations, measured from a Likert seven anchor scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to " fully agree ".

For Vitell and Muncy (1992), consumers are key participants in business transactions, and not considering them in business ethics research limits the potential knowledge obtained. Vitell, Sighapakdi and Thomas (2001) add that understanding why some consumers adopt unethical behavior can be a great help in unraveling such practices. The collection instrument elaborated by Vitell and Muncy (1992) was a questionnaire summarized in 27 statements of situations with ethical implications potentially encountered by consumers, divided into three parts: the first with 27 statements, the second with ten attitudinal questions and the third with six issues related to demography.

Thirteen years later, Vitell and Muncy (2005) updated the original scale of Muncy and Vitell (1992) by means of a study comparing college students with other adults. The updated Consumer Ethics Scale of Muncy and Vitell (1992) includes the addition of new items, grouped into three distinct categories: download programs / buy counterfeit items, environmental awareness / recycling, do the right thing/do good. The results indicate that the two groups studied have significant differences in ethical perceptions, except in the items related to recycling and doing good. Another important result is the attitudes towards companies, which does not explain differences in ethical perspectives.

The items used in the scale of Vitell and Muncy (1992, 2005) are presented in Figure 7, which contains all the affirmations of the scale, the dimension to which they were associated and whether they were used or not in the research of this research.

Statement	Dimension	Utilization
Returning damaged goods when the damage was your own fault.	ACT – Actively benefiting from illegal actions	Yes
Giving misleading price information to a clerk for an unpriced item.		Yes
Drinking a can of soda in a store without paying for it.		Yes
Reporting a lost item as ''stolen'' to an insurance company in order to collect the insurance money.		Yes
Using a long distance access code that does not belong to you.		No
Moving into a residence, finding that the cable TV is still hooked up, and using it without paying for it.		Yes

Lying about a child's age to get a lower price.	PAS – Passively Benefiting	Yes
Not saying anything when the waiter or waitress miscalculates a bill in your favor.		Yes
Getting too much change and not saying anything.		Yes
Observing someone shoplifting and ignoring it.		Yes
Joining a CD club just to get some free CD's with no intension of buying any.		No
Returning merchandise to a store by claiming that it was a gift when it was not.	QUEST – Questionable but legal actions	Yes
Not telling the truth when negotiating the price of a new automobile.		Yes
Using an expired coupon for merchandise.		No
Using a coupon for merchandise you did not buy.		No
Stretching the truth on an income tax return.		No
Installing software on your computer without buying it.	NOH – No harm, no foul	Yes
''Burning'' a CD rather than buying it.		Yes
Returning merchandise after buying it and not liking it.		Yes
Taping a movie off the television.		Yes
Spending over an hour trying on clothing and not buying anything.		Yes
Downloading music from the internet instead of buying it.	DL – *Downloading*	Yes
Buying counterfeit goods instead of buying the original manufacturers' brands.		Yes
Buying products labeled as ''environmentally friendly'' even if they don't work as well as competing products.	REC – Recycling	No
Purchasing something made of recycled materials even though it is more expensive.		No
Buying only from companies that have a strong record of protecting the environment.		No
Recycling materials such as cans, bottles, newspapers, etc.		No
Returning to the store and paying for an item that the cashier mistakenly did.	GOOD – Doing good	Yes
Correcting a bill that has been miscalculated in your favor.		Yes
Giving a larger than expected tip to a waiter or waitress.		Yes
Not purchasing products from companies that you believe don't treat their employees fairly.		Yes

Figure 7 – Items from Muncy-Vitell Consumer Ethics Scale (1992, 2005)
Source: Adapted from Vitell and Muncy, 2005, p. 207-272; Santos and Souza, 2010, p. 7-8.

The full scale of Vitell and Muncy (2005) comprises 31 separate statements in seven dimensions. In this research, 22 statements were used, which are presented in six dimensions. Of these questions, nine were eliminated from the questionnaire: "Using a long distance access code that does not belong to you"; "Joining a CD club just to get some free CD's with no intension of buying any"; "Using an expired coupon for merchandise"; "Using a coupon for merchandise you did not buy" because its context does not apply to the Brazilian reality, as well as "Stretching the truth on an income tax return"; "Buying products labeled as ''environmentally friendly'' even if they don't work as well as competing products"; "Purchasing something made of recycled materials even though it is more expensive"; "Buying only from companies that have a strong record of protecting the environment"; "Recycling materials such as cans, bottles, newspapers etc.". The context of the statements above does not apply to the focus of the ethical evaluation study of the consumption of counterfeit products.

The dimension "REC - Recycling" was withdrawn because its context does not apply to the focus of the study of the ethical evaluation of the consumption of pirated products. Other construct items were withdrawn because their context does not apply to the Brazilian reality, such as matters related to couponing which is a promotional practice little used in the country. In addition, the issue to the CD club, initiative that existed until the late 1990s but disappeared in Brazil due to the change in the business model of the music market, due to the advent of new technologies such as MP3 and streaming (Darbily, 2007; Barros, Sauerbronn, Darbilly, & Costa, 2008).

According to Crowne and Marlowe (1960), it has long been recognized that personality tests are influenced by determinants that may not be relevant to responses and can influence respondents, distorting responses. According to Baumgartner and Steenkamp (2006), several methods are available to prevent or reduce the occurrence of socially desirable responses. Ensuring respondent's anonymity is the most common method to prevent socially desirable responses, but may be ineffective in personal or telephone interviews. Even in mail-in questionnaires, their effectiveness is uncertain

because respondents may suspect that researchers will be able to identify them based on their responses. The bias of social desirability is more prevalent when the respondent perceives the social distance between the interviewees as small.

The Marlowe-Crowne scale consists of thirty-three items describing both desirable and undesirable behaviors. To these behaviors, related in affirmations, respondents respond "true" or "false." Eighteen items in the scale are marked as true, while fifteen are false. The reliability of the scale is good, ranging from .70 to .80. The internal consistency of the scale, using the Kuder-Richardson formula, is .88. There is also a short version of thirteen items developed by Reynolds in 1982 (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960; Ribas et al., 2004; Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2006; Gouveia et al., 2009).

Figure 8 presents the items used in the scale of social desirability, which shows all the statements that were used in the survey and if the item response key is true or false and additionally if it was used in the survey questionnaire.

Statement	Key	Utilization
Before voting I thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates.	True	No
I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.	True	No
There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things.	False	Yes
I like to gossip at times.	False	Yes
I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.	False	Yes
There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.	False	Yes
There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.	False	Yes
There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.	False	Yes
I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.	True	Yes
On occasion I have had doubts about my ability to succeed in life.	False	Yes
It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.	False	Yes
I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.	True	Yes
I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.	False	Yes
I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.	True	Yes
At times I have really insisted on having things my own way.	False	Yes
My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out in a restaurant.	True	Yes
If I could get into a movie without paying and be sure I was not seen I would probably do it.	False	Yes
I never resent being asked to return a favor.	True	Yes
I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.	False	Yes
I have never intensely disliked anyone.	True	Yes
I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.	False	Yes
I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.	True	Yes
No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.	True	No
I always try to practice what I preach.	True	No
I have never felt that I was punished without cause.	True	No
On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.	False	No
I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrong-doings.	True	No
I have almost never felt the urge to tell someone off.	True	No
I don't find it particularly difficult to get along with loud mouthed, obnoxious people.	True	No
I sometimes think when people have a misfortune they only got what they deserved.	False	No
I never make a long trip without checking the safety of my car.	True	No
I am always careful about my manner of dress.	True	No
When I don't know something I don't at all mind admitting it.	True	No

Figure 8 – Social Desirability Scale Items
Source: Adapted from Crowne and Marlowe, 1960, p. 351; Ribas, Moura and Hutz, 2004, p. 92; Gouveia et al., 2009, p. 93.

The scale evaluates the degree of social desirability from the score resulting from the sum of the questions, with values corresponding to 0 or 1 depending on the answer key, whether true or false. Therefore, for an item considered true, for the true response key, the response counts as 1 point in the scale score. When an item is considered false, for the false response key, the response is counted with the value of 1 point in the scale score (Ribas et al., 2004; Gouveia et al., 2009).

Matos and Ituassu (2005) conducted two surveys in two Brazilian state capitals, one in the South and the other in the Southeast, with a total sample of 400 consumers, in order to investigate consumer attitudes and intentions regarding pirated products. As a method of data treatment, they chose multiple regression. The results indicated that the variables "subjective norm", "perceived risk" and "having bought or not a counterfeit product" significantly influenced consumer attitudes as well as behavioral intentions.

Gupta, Gould and Pola (2004) conducted a discriminant analysis from the dependent variable "Have you pirated a software package during the last one year period?" identifying that many consumers who indicated positive attitudes towards piracy exhibited pirated product acquisition behavior. The scale items created from these authors were adapted from software piracy to product piracy. In each question only the term, "software" was changed to "product".

For this study the original scales was trimmed, because the first collection instrument was very time consuming in the pre-test, generating withdrawals. The selection of the items that would appear on the reduced scale was based on its reliability index. The reliability of the items for the selected constructs is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Reliability from "Intention to buy counterfeit products" construct items

Construct Items	Questions	Cronbach Alpha
Behavioral Intentions	Q1; Q2; Q3; Q4	0,885
Perceived Risk	Q5; Q6; Q7	0,703
Attitudes toward Piracy	Q8; Q9; Q10; Q11; Q12	0,723
Ethical and Legal Attitudes toward Piracy	Q13; Q14; Q15; Q16; Q17; Q18;	0,960

Source: Adapted from Gupta et al., 2004, p. 263; Matos and Ituassu, 2005, p. 9.

"Perceived risk" was the construct with fewer questions and with the smaller Alpha of Cronbach. However, for Farias and Kovacs (2006: 2, authors translation) "even if an individual perceives a high degree of risk for the acquisition of a type of product or means of purchase (inherent), he may perceive a low risk for certain brands or stores (manipulated) ". According to Matos and Ituassu (2005: 6, authors translation), "[...] there is an inverse relationship between attitude and perceived risk, indicating that the greater the risk perceived by the consumer in the purchase of pirated products, the less favorable is the attitude toward them". Matos, Ituassu and Rossi (2007) recommended future investigations on the influence of the perceived risk on the behavior of purchase of pirated products in a later study.

All items presented satisfactory validity and reliability to represent the final construct. Figure 9 shows the items that make up the questionnaire and the dimensions to which they belong.

Statement	Dimension
Qual a sua chance de considerar um produto pirata como uma de suas opções de compra? Qual a sua chance hoje de comprar um produto pirata? Qual a sua chance hoje de recomendar a amigos ou parentes que comprem produtos piratas? Qual a sua chance hoje de dizer coisas positivas sobre produtos piratas?	INT. COM.
O risco que corro ao tentar comprar um produto pirata é alto. A chance de que o produto pirata não funcione é alta. Gastar dinheiro com um produto pirata é um mau negócio.	RIS. PER.
Considerando o preço, eu prefiro um produto pirata. Eu gosto de comprar produtos piratas. O consumidor se beneficia com a compra de produtos piratas.	ATI. PIR.

Não há nada de errado em comprar produtos piratas. De forma geral, comprar produtos piratas é a melhor opção.	
I consider piracy of computer software as unethical. I consider software piracy to be the same as stealing. I consider software piracy to be acceptable behavior. It is unethical to share software with others. It is fair to prosecute software pirates. Pirating just a small software package is not so bad.	ATI. ÉTI.

Figure 9 – Answers that form the dimensions of "Intention to buy counterfeit products" construct
Source: Adapted and translated to Portuguese from Gupta et al., 2004, p. 264-265; and adapted from Matos and Ituassu, 2005, p. 16 (items in Portuguese).

The construct assesses the degree of consumer intent to purchase pirated products, based on eighteen claims, measured from a Likert five anchor scale, ranging from "totally disagree" to "strongly agree."

Being the final construct of the model, its questions are sometimes a confirmation of questions previously asked in other research items, seeking to confirm the opinions stated in previous moments of the survey.

3.1 Discussion of the Constructs

Because of the importance attached to the acquisition of goods, marketers have long wished to investigate the construct materialism (Ahuvia & Wong, 1995). Furnham and Valgeirsson (2007) argue that psychologists and marketers have been interested in materialism for a long time and contributed to the measurement of the concept.

There are two prevalent definitions in materialism theory. Materialism of value is typically considered from three characteristics: the tendency to judge one's success and that of others from possessions, a belief that ownership leads to happiness, and the centrality of acquisition in the life of the consumer (Richins & Dawson, 1992; Ahuvia & Wong, 1995). In the second definition, Belk (1984) posited the constructs possessiveness, meanness and envy as antecedents of the construct.

Continuing to investigate whether the relationship of the construct materialism is significant with the intent to purchase pirated products follows a recommendation by Furnham and Valgeirsson (2007), which recommend that researchers identify and focus on variables that have analytical significance to seek understanding of the reason why consumers buy pirated products.

Vitell and Grove (1987) postulated that the decision-maker is more likely to act unethically when incorporating one or more neutralization strategies into the decision-making process. According to Sykes and Matza (1957: 666-667), "disapproval flowing from internalized norms and conforming others in the social environment is neutralized, turned back or deflected in advance." Copes, Maruna, Sykes and Matza (2010) argue that by ignoring moral significance, the erosion of norms, the neutralization of what will be done and the emancipation of internalized norms are an important factor in breaking the behavioral limits imposed by social norms to the Self. For Zamoon (2006) the techniques of neutralization protect the Self from negative feelings by helping the individual deal with the situation by disconnecting from it or by reducing the moral intensity of the situation.

Neutralization techniques are related specifically to ethical decision-making processes in situations where reasons such as maintaining self-esteem and self-esteem may be of greater importance than arriving at a valid ethical judgment (Chatzidakis et al., 2006). For the same authors the neutralization techniques can both precede and succeed to unethical behavior.

The theory of neutralization offers a significant complement to existing knowledge of ethical consumer behavior by outlining ways in which consumers mitigate the negative impacts of their ethically questionable activities (Chatzidakis et al., 2006).

According to Vitell (2003), although consumer ethics already existed before 1990, much of the extant literature about the topic has emerged from this date. The author reports that among the first

studies of consumer ethics in the period after 1990 are the studies by Muncy and Vitell (1992) and Vitell and Muncy (1992), in which the authors created a scale of consumer ethics that examined the extent to which consumers believe that certain questionable behaviors are ethical or unethical. Vitell et al. (2001) add that understanding why some consumers adopt unethical behavior can be of great help in unraveling these practices.

As previously mentioned, the collection instrument prepared by Vitell and Muncy (1992) was a questionnaire summarized in 27 statements of situations with ethical implications potentially encountered by consumers, divided into three parts, the first with the 27 statements, the second with 10 attitudinal questions and the third with six issues related to demography.

In addition to the model presented, a scale of social desirability (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960; Ribas et al., 2004; Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2006; Gouveia et al., 2009) was adapted to the Brazilian reality. Ribas, Moura and Hutz (2004: 84, authors translation) affirm that "social desirability can be understood as a propensity on the part of participants in psychological research to respond biasedly to questions presented, for example on attitude scales or inventories of personality ".

According to Crowne and Marlowe (1960) it has long been recognized that personality tests are influenced by determinants that are not relevant to responses, which can influence respondents by distorting responses. As Baumgartner and Steenkamp (2006) argue, several methods are available to prevent or reduce the occurrence of socially desirable responses. Ensuring respondents of anonymity is the most common method for preventing socially desirable responses, but may be ineffective in personal or telephone interviews. Even in mail-in questionnaires, their effectiveness is uncertain because respondents may suspect that researchers will be able to identify respondents based on their responses. The bias of social desirability is more prevalent when the respondent perceives the social distance between the interviewees as minor.

The scale adopted was that validated by Gouveia et al. (2009) when carrying out two studies in the city of João Pessoa, Brazil, with university students thus gathering evidence of their factorial validity and internal consistency. They concluded according to what was previously identified by Ribas et al. (2004) that approximately one third of the items in the scale, thirteen items, were considered inadequate for the Brazilian cultural context. The items then were removed, resulting in a twenty-item scale, which achieved internal consistency, according to Kuder-Richardson's .76 formula. In the structure of the questionnaire, this scale was applied soon after filling the questions related to demography.

4   METHODOLOGY

The data collection method adopted was the questionnaire, elaborated and validated by specialists (Hair, Bush, & Ortinau, 2003). The questionnaire itself was formed of scales already validated in the literature. At first, a pre-test was carried out with 20 questionnaires, in a model that did not yet include the scale of social desirability, in September 2015. The first collection instrument was very time-consuming and there were several withdrawals among respondents. After the pre-test and corrections in the elaboration of some questions and in the translations, the final format of the questionnaire was applied.

The reduction of questionnaire items used in the pre-test was due to questions that presented statistical results more robust, in the sense of exceeding the criteria or standards established by the academy. The intention was to elaborate a final instrument that did not generate as many dropouts or fill-in gaps as unfilled questions on the part of the respondents. After the pre-test and corrections in the elaboration of some questions and in the translations, the final format of the questionnaire was applied (Hair et al., 2003). The final format of the questionnaire presented the following order:

- Scale of social desirability – Scale adapted by Gouveia et al. (2009) from the original Marlowe-Crowne (1960);
- Materialism Scale (Richins & Dawson, 1992; Jun et al., 2012);

- Vitell and Muncy (2005) Consumer Ethics Scale;
- Neutralization techniques scale (Zamoon, 2006; Morris & Higgins, 2008);
- Intention to purchase counterfeit products scale (Gupta et al., 2004; Matos & Ituassu, 2005);
- Verification of individual items (gender, age, social class, type of employment, educational level, marital status, income).

The sample collection strategy for the elaboration of a sampling plan was carried out at two universities in Vitória and Serra, cities of the state of Espírito Santo, Brazil at the end of October and beginning of November 2015. The study population had its data collected from of a database of the researched universities and the quotas of sex and age are in accordance with the standard for the city of Vitória-ES for University 1 and of Serra-ES of University 2, according to the IBGE sense of 2010.

The survey totaled 523 respondents, which generated 32,949 responses to the 63 questions used in the multivariate analysis. After an initial analysis, it was verified that 91 individuals returned more than 10% of absent data and they were excluded from the analysis. In the database of 432 remaining individuals, there were 31 missing observations (0.11%) out of 27,216 observations used for the multivariate analysis. These blank cells at the base were treated with the mean imputation of the variable, being one of the most appropriate and widely employed methods (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2009). The PLSPM function of the software package PLSPM (version 3.2.2) was used for the Modeling of Structural Equations via PLS.

After the structural equations model and the measurement model were adjusted for the whole sample, a multi-group analysis was carried out to control the results of the model by the Social Desirability scale. Thus, the multi-group analysis compared the group of individuals with a bias scale of lesser social desirability equal to 12 and the group with a scale greater than 12. Generally, in the multi-group comparisons, significant differences between structural coefficients are sought, while between the weights, the opposite is typically expected. The reason for this is that, the significant differences between the structural coefficients between two distinct groups may be artificially caused by the significant differences between the weights. A methodology proposed by Baumgartner and Steenkamp (2006) was also used to control the results of the model by the social desirability scale, which indicates that the scale of social desirability is included as a covariate in the model.

To treat the second-order constructs, a "Two-Step" approach was used (Sanchez, 2013). In this way, the scores of first-order latent variables were first computed using factorial analysis as a method of extracting the main components (Mingoti, 2007). The objective of using the exploratory factorial analysis is to validate and compute the indicators that will form the second order constructs "neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making", "Consumer Ethics Scale" and "Intention to purchase counterfeit products". Therefore, a factorial analysis was not done for the "Materialism" construct, which is only of the first order, nor for the indicators formed by a single item, such as "Non intentionality" and "Condemnation of Condemner".

According to Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2009) in exploratory factor analysis items with factor loads of less than 0.50 should be eliminated from the constructs, as they do not contribute significantly to the formation of the latent variable, the scope of the basic assumptions for validity and quality of the indicators created to represent the research interest. In this way, it can be verified that the items "EN_N.DANO.3" (Even if piracy is a crime, it doesn't generate victims) of "Denial of Injury", "EEC_NOH.5" (Spending over an hour trying on clothing and not buying anything) from "No harm, no foul", "IC_ATI.ETI.3_I" (I consider product piracy to be acceptable behavior) and "IC_ATI.ETI.7_I" (Buying only one pirated product is not as evil) of "Ethical and legal attitudes toward piracy" presented factor loads lesser than 0.5 and were eliminated from their respective constructs. However, the item "EN_DEF.RES.3" (Nobody tried to stop me from buying counterfeit products) was eliminated so that the "Denial of responsibility" indicator reached the requirement of unidimensionality.

After selecting the items of each construct that contribute to the formation of the indicator, the basic questions of construct validation were verified. In order to verify the internal consistency or the

reliability of the items within each indicator, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951) and a measure of Composed Reliability (CC) were used. According to Tenenhaus, Vinzi, Chatelin and Lauro (2005), the indicators AC and CC should be greater than 0.70 for an indication of reliability of the construct, and values of 0.60 are also accepted in exploratory research. Already to verify the convergent validity, the AVE (Average Extraction Variance) was verified, which is the average percentage of variation explained between the items. To achieve convergent validation, the AVE is expected to exceed 50% (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009) or 40% in the case of exploratory research (Nunnaly & Bernstein, 1994). The dimensionality of the constructs was verified from the criterion of the Parallel Analysis (Horn, 1965), being expected that the constructs are one-dimensional.

When using the factorial solution, it is important to check if it is suitable for the research data. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample adequacy measure was used because it indicates the proportion of the data variance and can be considered common to all variables. It is a measure that varies from 0.0 to 1.0, and the more it gets closer to 1.0 (unit) the more appropriate is the sample to the application of the factorial analysis. It is appropriate to apply the factor analysis to the set of variables when the KMO is greater than 0.50. In Table 2, it can be verified that:

- All the indicators reached the criterion of convergent validity, since they presented AVE greater than 0.40;
- All the indicators had AC or CC greater than 0.6, which shows a good index of reliability;
- All indicators were unidimensional (Dim. = 1);
- The application of the factorial solution was appropriate in all constructs (KMO>0,50).

Table 2 – Research Constructs Results

Constructs	Items	AVE	AC	CC	KMO	Dim.
Denial of Responsibility	3	0,541	0,564	0,698	0,588	1
Denial of Injury	4	0,470	0,594	0,708	0,635	1
Appeal to Higher Loyalty	3	0,689	0,771	0,801	0,634	1
Materialism	4	0,409	0,500	0,662	0,612	1
Actively benefiting from illegal actions	4	0,545	0,689	0,758	0,737	1
Passively Benefiting from Illegal Actions	5	0,520	0,728	0,782	0,736	1
Questionable but legal actions	2	0,712	0,595	0,743	0,500	1
No harm, no foul	4	0,531	0,693	0,749	0,656	1
Downloading	2	0,716	0,604	0,746	0,500	1
Doing Good	4	0,573	0,731	0,776	0,701	1
Behavioral Intentions	4	0,745	0,885	0,870	0,761	1
Perceived Risk	3	0,633	0,703	0,760	0,670	1
Attitudes toward Piracy	5	0,527	0,768	0,785	0,783	1
Ethical and Legal Attitudes toward Piracy	5	0,592	0,827	0,821	0,802	1

Source: Prepared by the authors.

5   DISCUSSION

Considering the sample method adopted, for convenience, generalizations regarding the schooling, age and income strata can not be translated into other studies.

Table 3 presents the analysis of the convergent validity, dimensionality, reliability and discriminant validation of the constructs of the measurement models. In this sense, it is observed that all the constructs presented the reliability indexes AC or CC above 0.70, evidencing, therefore, the reliability of the constructs; all constructs were one-dimensional in the AFE performed; all the

constructs presented the AVE values superior to 0,40, indicating convergent validation; there was no shared variance greater than their respective AVE, which evidences discriminant validation.

Table 3 – Convergent validity, discriminant validity, reliability and dimensionality of the mensuration model considering the entire sample

Constructs	Items	AC	CC	Dim.	AVE	Shared Variance		
						1	2	3
1. Neutralization Techniques in the Counterfeit Purchase Decision Making	4	0,756	0,845	1	0,577	1		
2. Consumer Ethics Scale	4	0,745	0,839	1	0,557	0,281	1	
3. Materialism	3	0,501	0,751	1	0,493	0,005	0,033	1
4. Intention to Purchase Counterfeit Products	3	0,713	0,841	1	0,641	0,351	0,272	0,017

Source: Research data.

Table 4 and Figure 10 present the structural model for the whole sample, so it can be highlighted that:

- There was a significant (p-value = 0.000) and positive (**β** = 0.441 [0.37, 0.53]) influence of the "neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making" on "intention to purchase counterfeit products" the greater the neutralization techniques in counterfeit purchase decision-making, the greater the tendency is to purchase pirated products;
- There was a significant (p-value = 0.000) and negative (**β** = -0.279 [-0.35, -0.19]) influence of the "Consumer Ethics Scale" on the "intention to purchase pirated products" the higher the ethical level of the consumer, the lower it tends to be the intention to purchase pirated products;
- There was no significant influence (p-value = 0.195) of "Materialism" on "Intention to purchase counterfeit products";
- "Neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making" and "Consumer Ethics Scale" were able to explain 41.4% of "Intention to purchase counterfeit products". "Neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making" presented greater importance in the model due to its higher coefficient **β** (in module);
- The GoF of the model was 48.4%, which indicates a good model.

Table 4 – Structural model considering the entire sample

Endogenous	Exogenous	β	I.C. - 95%	E.P. (β)	Valor-p	R2
Intention to Purchase Counterfeit Products	Neutralization Techniques in the Counterfeit Purchase Decision Making	0,441	[0,37; 0,53]	0,043	0,000	
	Consumer Ethics Scale	-0,279	[-0,35; -0,19]	0,044	0,000	41,4%
	Materialism	0,049	[-0,02; 0,14]	0,037	0,195	
GoF = 48,4%						

Source: Research data.

Figure 10 represents the structural model adjusted with the measurement model, considering only the representation of the second order constructs.
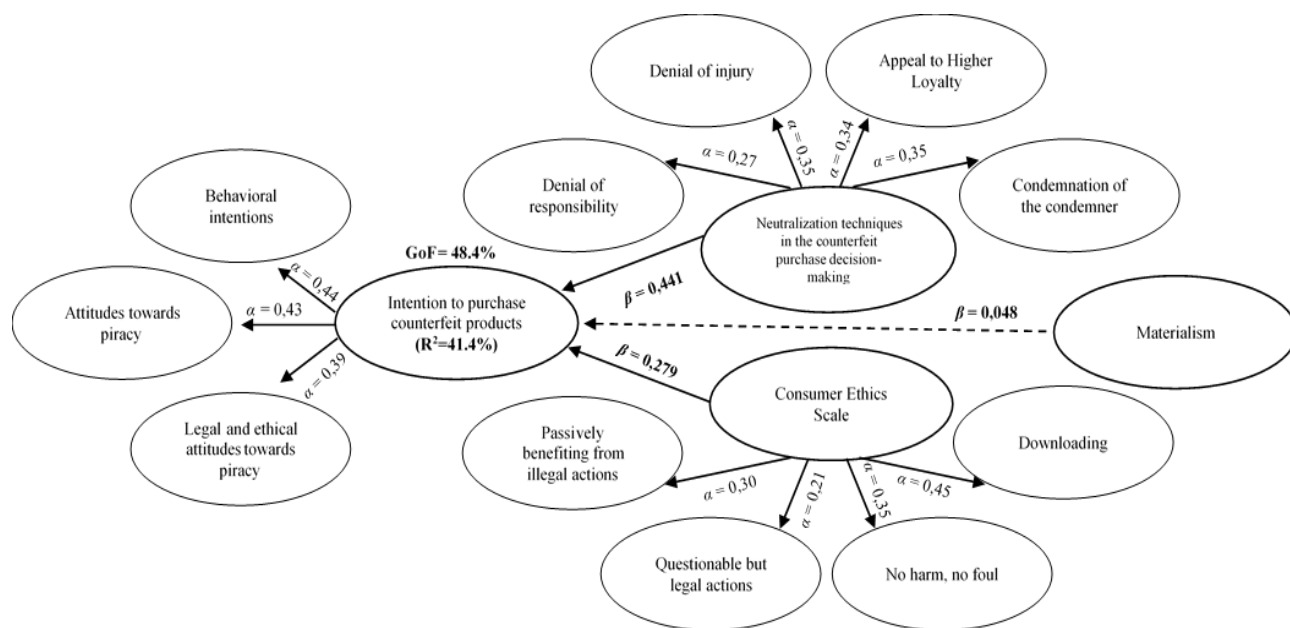
Figure 10 – Adjusted Structural Model
Source: Research data.

In Table 5, we can verify the Spearman correlation of the model indices with the variables age, educational level and income. The Spearman coefficient, denoted by *r*, is a statistical measure that measures the intensity of correlation between two variables. The correlation coefficient *r* varies between -1 and 1, and the closer to -1, the stronger the negative correlation, that is, if one variable increases, the other tends to decrease; if the value is close to 1, the stronger the positive correlation, that is, if one variable increases, the other also tends to increase. In this way, it can be emphasized that:

- A significant result was that the greater the age, the higher the index of the "Consumer Ethics Scale" tends to be, and the lower the indexes "Neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making ", "Materialism" and "Intention to buy counterfeit products";
- A significant result was that the higher the educational level, the lower are the indices "Neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making " and "Intention to purchase counterfeit products";
- A significant result was that the higher the income, the higher the index of the "Consumer Ethics Scale" tends to be, and the lower the indexes "Neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making " and "Intention to purchase counterfeit products".

Table 5 – Correlation of model indexes with sample characterization variables

Constructs	Age		Educational Level		Income	
	r	Valor-p	r	Valor-p	r	Valor-p
Neutralization Techniques in the Counterfeit Purchase Decision Making	-0,186	0,000	-0,219	0,000	-0,236	0,000
Consumer Ethics Scale	0,136	0,004	0,074	0,127	0,096	0,048
Materialism	-0,140	0,004	-0,024	0,625	0,058	0,225
Intention to Purchase Counterfeit Products	-0,165	0,001	-0,178	0,000	-0,188	0,000

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The GoF of the model was 48.4%, which indicates to be a good model. However, although the scale of social desirability has significant correlations with the indices "Materialism", "Intention to purchase pirated products" and "Consumer Ethics Scale", it was verified that it does not generate any type of considerable impact in the proposed theoretical model. Perhaps this is because respondents do not consider the purchase of pirated products a sensitive issue or have felt protected by the anonymity of the internet due to the method of data collection.

There was a significant (p-value = 0.000) and positive (β = 0.441 [0.37, 0.53]) influence of the ""Neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making "on the "Intention to purchase counterfeit products", as soon as the greater the neutralization in the decision making to purchase pirated products, the greater the tendency is to purchase pirated products. Therefore, the H1 hypothesis was confirmed. The confirmation of this hypothesis has implications for the generation of policies, identifying and acting on justifications that may lead to the activation of neutralization techniques in the process of decision making in the acquisition of pirated products.

There was no influence of gender on the indexes of the model, which is contrary to the results obtained by Fecomércio-RJ and IPSOS (2010). Bian and Veloutsou (2007) additionally indicate that the male gender is a little more prone to the acquisition of pirated products than the female gender. However, it is possible to observe the indices found among those who declared same gender sexual orientation, but since there were only five respondents, the data are not statistically relevant so that inferences can be made.

The results confirm other studies that indicate that the higher the educational level, income and age, the lower the intention to acquire pirated products. An interesting detail was the top score on the Consumer Ethics Scale of those who declared themselves to be without religion in relation to Catholics. However, it is important to consider in Brazil that although there are many people who declare themselves Catholic, they may not be practicing Catholics.

There was a significant (p-value = 0.000) and negative (β = -0.279 [-0.35; -0.19]) influence of the "Consumer Ethics Scale" on the "Intention to purchase counterfeit products" as soon as the higher the ethical level of the consumer, the lower it tends to be the intent to purchase pirated products. Therefore, the H_3 hypothesis was confirmed. The confirmation of this hypothesis has great implications for policies aimed at reducing the consumption of pirated products. Ethical consumer education may be a possibility to improve the level of recognition of ethical consumer issues, thus reducing its intent to acquire counterfeited products.

There was no significant influence (p-value = 0.195) of "Materialism" on "Intention to purchase counterfeit products". Therefore, the H_2 hypothesis was not confirmed. The non-confirmation of this hypothesis has several implications, but one of the factors may have been the scale adopted in this study, an alternative scale to that of Richins (2004) already validated in the national context by Ponchio, Aranha and Todd (2006). However, even its non-validation or non-confirmation of the hypothesis is also an interesting result, as it opens space for further investigations with the nationally validated scale or by the elaboration of a new scale. Additionally it opens up the possibility of substitution of this construct by other constructs in the model.

"Neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making" and "Consumer Ethics Scale" were able to explain 41.4% of "Intention to purchase counterfeit products", and "Neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making" presented greater importance in the model, due to its higher coefficient β (in module).

The non-confirmation of the hypothesis of the positive influence of materialism may represent a specific issue for the population studied. It may also represent that the scale adopted for the measurement of materialism was not the most adequate, or that the construct simply does not have a significant relationship with the intent to purchase pirated products. Figure 11 summarizes the validation of all the hypotheses.

	Hypothesis	Result
H_1	There is a positive influence of the construct "neutralization techniques in the counterfeit purchase decision making" on the construct "Intention to buy counterfeit products".	Confirmed
H_2	There is a positive influence of the construct "Materialism" on the construct "Intention to buy counterfeit products.	Not confirmed
H_3	The is a negative influence of the Consumer Ethics Scale on the "Intention to buy counterfeit products".	Confirmed
H_4	The social desirability scale will have a significant influence on the model results, as well on the antecedent and consequent constructs.	Not confirmed

Figure 11 – Conclusions about theoretical model hypothesis
Source: Prepared by the authors.

6   CONCLUSION

According to the results of the experiment, the strategies of neutralization used by consumers reached significance in the explanation of the intention to buy counterfeit products, which indicates that this is a robust variable and that can be applied in other models related to the investigation of the piracy phenomenon.

On the other hand, the Consumer Ethics Scale of Vitell and Muncy (2005), when applied in its validated version for Brazil by Souza and Santos (2010), proved to be negatively correlated with the intention to purchase counterfeit products. This fact indicates that consumers understand the ethical implications related to the consumption of pirated products. Although they understand, understanding does not always lead to action.

The results of the research confirm previous studies already published regarding variables such as age, income and educational level affect the intention to buy counterfeit products (Bian & Veloutsou, 2007; Bôas, 2010; Carvalhaes, 2010; Carvalho, 2016, Fecomércio-SC, 2016; Trindade, 2008) and suggest the question of religiosity as a moderator of the purchase of pirated products. In addition, a more detailed investigation with respondents who have declared themselves Catholic is pressing. The results of this research also find their parallel in the study of Boller, Fórleo, Agliardi and Rossi (2016) regarding the influence of the ethical intention in the purchase intention, with the difference that the authors carried out their research in the segment of fast fashion with products and brands classified as unethical.

The model explained 41.4% of the intention to buy pirated products with a fundamental basis in two constructs, which opens space for understanding the ethical consumption of consumers as well as for the construction of models with significant explanatory power of lesser complexity.

In addition to these findings, it was also verified that the scale of social desirability did not produce significant results to reduce the impact of this bias among the respondents. Perhaps this fact relates to the fact that the products mentioned are not luxury products that are generally related to hedonic and social benefits (Yoo & Lee, 2009; Ayres & Gonçalves, 2015). On the other hand, given the conditions in which many Brazilians consider that the consumption of pirated products does not affect their social image, nor their status in the group (Bôas, 2010), responses to this scale may have been influenced by this factor, as well as by the fact that the products cited were not luxury goods (Bian & Veloutsou, 2007).

Since materialism is a multi-faceted construct (Manchiraju & Krizan, 2015) and considering that it has not impacted the purchase of pirated products, it is observed, according to Ayres and Gonçalves (2015), that it has a greater impact on the intention of purchase of original products (not pirated products), since the buyer of a counterfeit product knows that the object is false. In this sense, the consumer of counterfeit products does not seek the real object and material itself, but its economic and hedonic benefits (Yoo & Lee, 2009).

On the other hand, the results also confirm other studies that indicate that the higher the educational level, income and age, the less the intention to acquire pirated products. Another point of interest is the indexes found for respondents who identified themselves as same gender sexual orientation, but

unfortunately, as there were only five respondents, their answers were not statistically significant to be studied in isolation.

The limitations of this research start with its sample method by quotas in two colleges of a city that does not have a population statistically representative of the Brazilian population, in what characterizes this study as an experiment that cannot have its results generalized. A structural equation modeling technique was adopted and, although the model presented a reasonable adequacy index, there is a gap in the integration of new constructs to it or the removal of constructs that were not significant, as was the case with materialism. It is also possible to add new constructs instead of constructs as materialism, to better adequate the model to the Brazilian reality.

With regard to commercial and business activity and tactics to deal with consumers' intent to purchase counterfeit products, this research has contributed to validating the hypothesis that neutralization techniques have a positive influence on the intent to purchase pirated products. These strategies can be studied in greater depth, thus allowing new strategies and tactics to reduce the consumption of counterfeit products in various sectors.

The finding that consumers who have a higher score on the Consumer Ethics Scale (Vitell & Muncy, 2005) are less likely to have an intention to buy counterfeit products, may suggest educational campaigns focused on self-congruence, aiming at a positive effect on the reduction of pirated products consumption.

It is recommended to extend research on the impact of materialism on the acquisition of counterfeit products in different product categories, as well as conduct investigations related to new constructs that may be inserted in the model, such as moral intensity, seeking to explore the relationships of ethics with consumption in nations.

It would also be possible to carry out an expanded experiment in the context of a funded research project, investigating constructs in search of a structural model more adjusted to Brazilian context.

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