

Impact of eco-friendly products on consumer behavior in the city of Guayaquil

Social media as a means of communication and marketing in neighborhood stores, Guayaquil

Gustavo La Mota Terranova*
Karla Borja Robles*
Mayra Aguirre Saavedra*

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a research conducted in the city of guayaquil on the impact of eco-friendly products on consumer behavior, with the objective of defining the impact, knowledge and acceptance of eco-friendly products by consumers in the city of guayaquil, for which we sought to identify the variables that influence the decision process and purchase of eco-friendly products, determine the current status of eco-friendly practices and their knowledge by consumers and analyze the willingness of consumers to change their consumption habits in favor of eco-friendly products, For this purpose, a survey of 385 people in the city of guayaquil was conducted to establish the degree of knowledge, preference and perception of the impact that consumers have of eco-friendly products. The results finally show an important preference of consumers towards this type of products, considering positive their impact on the market and the need to consider the environmental impact of the different products

* Master's Degree in Marketing, Mention in Digital Management, Instituto Superior Tecnológico Guayaquil
 gustavo.lamota@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2783-6644>

* University Master's Degree in Business Management, Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral
 kborjarobles@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-0005-6578>

* Banking and Finance Management Engineer, Instituto Superior Tecnológico Guayaquil
 maguirre@istg.edu.ec
<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-3725-7099>

JOURNAL OF BUSINESS
 and entrepreneurial
studies

ISSN: 2576-0971



Atribución/Reconocimiento-NoComercial- CompartirIgual 4.0 Licencia Pública Internacional — CC

BY-NC-SA 4.0

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/legalcode.es>

Journal of Business and entrepreneurial
 October - December Vol. 7 - 4 - 2023
<http://journalbusinesses.com/index.php/revista>
 e-ISSN: 2576-0971
journalbusinessentrepreneurial@gmail.com
 Receipt: September 1, 2023
 Approval: 19 September 2023
 Page 130-140

as a key value of the companies; consumers with greater environmental knowledge are those who had the intention to purchase products with eco-friendly characteristics.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Eco friendly, environmental practices, ecological products, Purchase Decision.

.

SUMMARY

Keywords: Consumer behavior, Social Media, neighborhood stores, Covid-19, Social Networks.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, most consumers have shown interest and concern for the environmental problems existing in the world, which has prompted them to consume products and services that are less harmful to both health and the environment, i.e. green consumption is part of their purchase decision, without leaving some aspects such as price, brand, place, and promotion, which facilitate differentiation from the competition. (Estrada Dominguez et al., 2020). In turn, these activities are included in green marketing, which is part of the added value of products and services offered to the market, the less environmental impact the products and services have, the greater competitive advantage they generate. (Maldonado Ordoñez and Villavicencio Rodas, 2022).

The ecological trend presented by companies has been in constant growth, which in turn generates strong relationships between the consumer and the company, this is also reflected in the increase of consumers who demand ecological products. (Lastra Bravo and Cabanilla V, 2020). The main objective of this study was to determine the impact, knowledge and acceptance of eco-friendly products by consumers in the city of Guayaquil, for which we sought to identify the variables that influence the decision process and purchase of eco-friendly products, determine the current status of eco-friendly practices and their knowledge by consumers and analyze the willingness of consumers to change their consumption habits in favor of eco-friendly products.

This research focuses on the use, acceptance and valuation of eco-friendly products, in order to determine the impact and degree of knowledge of consumers in Guayaquil towards this type of products, which from their conception seek to reduce the environmental impact, produced by various factors such as global warming or

environmental pollution, These have increasingly alarming results due to environmental factors such as pollution of rivers and oceans, melting glaciers, rising sea levels, increased natural disasters, damage to the ozone layer, overconsumption of non-renewable resources, etc.

Due to all these factors, many companies have created eco-friendly products, which are defined as all types of products that during the manufacturing or production process follow strict processes that mitigate the impact on the environment and living beings. Various practices can be considered eco-friendly such as using recycled materials, decreasing waste production, not using products that are toxic to the environment, that are biodegradable or recyclable among other effective strategies. (Royal Cartton, 2017)

There are many consumers who have preferences when choosing eco-friendly products, especially among young people, and due to this type of factors, many brands and large companies have incorporated eco-friendly strategies in their product development, generating great acceptance by consumers with respect to the products, even within the advertising and communication strategies this has become a fundamental pillar of the promotion of companies.

(Martinez Castillo, 2010) indicates that the preservation and care of the environment generally begins by making people aware of the environment and resources that it has, in recent years there has been a better relationship between the consumer and the company product of the ecological trends of the companies, so promoting a culture of care for the environment promotes and intensifies the relationship of purchase by consumers. (Cardona Bedoya, Riaño Cuevas, & Vaca Gonzalez, 2017).

The change that has been generated over the years in the environment is a fact that for governments and companies represents a problem, because around the world, climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, water scarcity, deforestation, bad waste disposal, global warming and considerable damage to the ozone layer are the type of problems that lead to the creation of eco-friendly products, this given the high levels of consumption and industrialization that began since the industrial revolution, (Mendoza Montesdeoca, Rivera Mateos, & Doumet Chilan, 2022). This is why several brands and companies are acting immediately, in order to create and promote eco-friendly products, and thus giving way to awareness campaigns, so that the population appreciates more the planet earth and improve their relationship with the environment.

Nowadays, more hotels are created with ecological trends, which have activities such as: offering ecological menus, use of solar panels, groundwater systems, generation of energy from pedaling exercise bikes in the gym, including the use of low consumption

appliances (Xavier, 2017) The purchase decision corresponds to the evaluation of consumer preferences, choice and purchase intention of the product or service offered, for which marketing stimuli that influence the purchase decision of green customers will be necessary (Garcia Granda and Gastulo Chuzon, 2018). Ecological marketing or also known as Green Marketing has become a necessary tool to improve ecological practices for a sustainable and sustainable tourism that influences the purchasing decisions (Salas Canales, 2018)

We are facing a growth of green companies, under the marketing of ecological, socially responsible products, awareness and commitment to cause the least possible impact on the environment. (Pedreschi Caballero & Nieto Lara, 2023)

Eco-friendly products and packaging respect the environment, and can be differentiated into biodegradable (under natural conditions), oxo-degradable (by chemical decomposition process) and compostable (it ends up not only degrading but also becoming compost) based on the way it decomposes. (Veliz et al., 2020) Friendly packaging is considered ecological if it is biodegradable (low CO₂ footprint), recyclable or reusable. The use of biodegradable and/or recyclable packaging for food packaging contributes to the construction of a circular economy (eco-design and recycling) (Ortiz Tinoco et al., 2020). (Ortiz Tinoco et al., 2021)

The simplest way to define what it means to be ecosystem friendly is summed up as the act of living with intention. The intention focuses on not causing harm to the environment, and preventing as much damage as possible to the environment through its interactions with the environment. (Arevalo Arevalo and Kaviedes Noriega, 2022). In addition, eco-friendly practices are those measures of correction or improvement that are implemented in each and every one of the areas of management and operation of the company's activities. The goal pursued is to ensure that there is the least possible impact on the environment favoring the compatibility of the hotel activity with the environment, improving the quality of the tourism product and therefore its image with the customer, this makes the socioeconomic endeavor of the company more efficient, for this it is necessary to implement eco-friendly policies that positively affect the management of the company and the service to visitors. (Medina Nuñez, 2017) considers that eco-friendly practices are related to actions aimed at reducing the negative environmental impact caused by production processes through changes in the organization of green practices to be assumed by companies, they are characterized by the perception of quick results, simplicity and simplicity when it comes to their application.

Eco-friendly practices seek to harmonize consumption with responsibility and sustainability. Their main objective is to mitigate damage to the environment and prevent impacts caused by misuse of natural resources. This idea extends to real practices that influence how communities, companies and individuals behave, it seeks to change the purpose of people's lives, strengthening the consumption of ecological products that promote health and in turn mitigate pollution and damage to the environment (Medina, 2017).

The objective sought by the use of these practices is eco-efficiency, which for (Torres Merlo & Carrera Cuesta, 2018) begins with the global conception of environmental impacts, since while human needs grow the resources to satisfy them tend to decrease. There are initiatives that highlight the importance of producing or doing more with less, such as eco-efficiency; which emphasizes the creation of long-term value through improvement, achieving a competitive advantage through higher productivity, economic efficiency and lower environmental impact.

When we talk about consumer behavior we refer to the processes associated with the purchase, use, possession and disposal of products and services by consumers, this is studied and analyzed from an internal and external approach of people, associating the purchase decision process to cultural, personal, social and psychological factors that influence consumer decisions. (Solomon, 2008) Human beings are constantly faced with purchasing decisions and analyzing the factors that influence it is a key part of the study of this branch of marketing. Although purchasing behavior is closely linked to the needs of each individual, environmental protection has become one of the main concerns for consumers (Laureti and Benedetti, 2008). (Laureti and Benedetti, 2018).

Based on all the information gathered, it is important to highlight how positive eco-friendly practices are becoming in companies, thanks to a globalized world with environmental awareness.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this study, descriptive research was used in which the events will be related in an orderly manner and its approach is mixed. This research seeks to determine the impact and degree of knowledge of consumers in Guayaquil towards this type of products, for which a questionnaire has been used as a data collection instrument to define consumer preferences towards eco-friendly products.

The type of study to be carried out will be transversal, taking into consideration the information gathered from the data collection instrument. The research approach is qualitative because through the analysis of the information obtained, we will proceed to analyze the results that will allow us to identify the impact of consumers towards eco-friendly products. (Hernandez and Mendoza Torres, 2018)

The population selected for the study is the city of Guayaquil, and as a sample, 385 people residing in the city were surveyed. This survey was elaborated and received through online forms, and to achieve the scope, various means were used to reach the population sample (social networks, mail, university classrooms, etc.).

Once all the consumer surveys have been received, the results obtained from the sample are analyzed descriptively in order to generate conclusions on the impact and knowledge that consumers have of eco-friendly products.

RESULTS

The main results of the research work are detailed below, presenting the main results of the consumer surveys:

Figure 1: Awareness of eco-friendly products



Source: Own elaboration

Respondents have a high degree of knowledge about what an eco-friendly product is, since they have seen, bought or used one of these, in the following table we can see the main factors why consumers prefer eco-friendly products.

Table 1 *Purchase of Eco Friendly Products*

	Price	Quality	Utility	Environmental value
Total	16.1%	21%	18.2%	44.7%

Source: Own elaboration

Among the main factors for the purchase of eco-friendly products is the environmental value they have, which refers to how much impact they have in reducing and mitigating the effects of the environment.

Table 2 *Preference for purchasing eco-friendly products*

	Yes	No
Total	91.7%	8%

Source: Own elaboration

91.7% of respondents prefer to buy an eco-friendly product rather than one that does not have these characteristics, these characteristics are also related to consumer preference for biodegradable packaging as detailed in the following table:

Table 3. *Consumer preference for biodegradable packaging.*

	Yes	No
Total	91.2%	8.8%

Source: Own elaboration

Figure 2: Impact Perception of Eco Friendly Products



Source: Own elaboration

As evidenced, it shows that consumers have a mostly positive perception of the impact of eco-friendly products, and a very similar percentage of respondents indicated that eco-friendly products are capable of supplanting already known products.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on this research, it was determined that consumers with greater environmental knowledge are those who had the intention to purchase products with eco-friendly characteristics. Nowadays, through different media, consumers in general have been able to notice the importance of using eco-friendly products, since this would reduce environmental pollution. Therefore, the immediate need for the use and presence of such products in more establishments has been measured.

The consumer has been able to measure the positive impact generated by the use of these products, for the same reason, after several market studies, industries have increased production and companies have considered highly necessary the positioning of eco-friendly packaging in the different distribution channels of products making themselves known with innovative designs and above all environmentally friendly, This is due to the awareness of human beings regarding the great negative impact that has been generated for decades, which is why through awareness campaigns, and the varieties of eco-friendly products, is generating a great impact on consumers, and their increasingly noticeable change with respect to their purchasing decisions and consumption of eco-friendly products.

REFERENCES

- Arevalo Arevalo, B., & Kavedes Noriega, V. (2022). Analysis of the economic and environmental efficiency of ecological bags in the production of the commerce sector of the department of cesar. *Revista Científica Profundidad Construyendo Futuro Vol. 17 No.17*, 35-42.
- Cardona Bedoya, J., Riaño Cuevas, D., & Vaca Gonzalez, Y. (2017). Marketing and green consumer. Application of the Mic Mac Matrix for trend analysis. *Luciernaga Revista Científica Vol 9 Num 17*.
- Escobar, C. M., Castaño, J. C., & Portilla de Arias, L. M. (2010). DESIGN OF A MODEL FOR FOREX INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO OPTIMIZATION, APPLYING DIVERSIFICATION THEORY AND FUZZY LOGIC. *Scientia et Technica, XVI(44)*, 146-149. <https://doi.org/https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=84917316026>.
<https://doi.org/https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=84917316026>
- Estrada Dominguez, J., Cantu Mata, J., Torres Castillo, F., & Barajas Avila, E. (2020). FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CONSUMER FOR THE ACQUISITION OF SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS. *Asociación Interciencia Vol 45*, 36-41.
- Garcia Granda, T., & Gastulo Chuzon, D. (2018). Factors influencing consumer purchase decision for the Metro - Chiclayo brand. *Universidad Católica Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo*.
- Hernandez, S., & Mendoza Torres, C. (2018). *Metodología de la investigación*. Mc Graw Hill.
- Lastra Bravo, X., & Cabanilla V, E. (2020). IMPACTO DEL TURISMO EN EL DESARROLLO DEL ECUADOR Reflexiones desde la academia - IV CONGRETUR. *Estudios y Perspectivas en Turismo, vol. 29, no. 4*, 1272-1289.
- Laureti, T., & Benedetti, I. (2018). Exploring pro-environmental food purchasing behaviour: An empirical analysis of Italian consumers. *Journal of Cleaner Production Vol 172*, 3367-3378.
- Maldonado Ordoñez, J., & Villavicencio Rodas, M. (2022). Green marketing, a look from the retail trade: Case of hypermarkets in Ecuador. *ECA Sinergia, vol. 13, no. 1*, 56-68.
- Martinez Castillo, R. (2010). The importance of environmental education in the face of current problems. *Revista Electrónica Educare, vol. XIV, no. 1*, 97-111.
- Medina Nuñez, E. (2017). ECO-FRIENDLY PRACTICES AND THEIR EFFECTS ON THE OPERATION, ACCORDING TO LODGING MANAGERS IN THE

TAMBOPATA NATIONAL RESERVE. FACULTY OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT,
TOURISM AND GASTRONOMY .

- Medina, E. (2017). Eco-friendly practices and their effects on the operation, according to lodge managers in the Tambopata National Reserve. *San Ignacio de Loyola University*.
- Mendoza Montesdeoca , I., Rivera Mateos, M., & Doumet Chilan, Y. (2022). Environmental public policies and sustainable tourism development in Ecuador's protected areas. *Journal of Andalusian Studies*, 43, 106-124.
- Ortiz Tinoco, Y., Espinoza Castillo, J., Gonzalez Illescas , M., & Carmenate Fuentes, L. (2021). The shift to sustainable packaging as a competitive strategy for exporting companies. A Circular Economy approach. *Innova Research Journal*.
- Pedreschi Caballero, R., & Nieto Lara, O. (2023). GREEN MARKETING, SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY IN THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF COMPANIES IN THE TOWN OF AGUADULCE. *Centers: Revista Científica Universitaria vol. 12, no. 1*.
- Royal Cartton.(2017). *Royal Cartton Eco-friendly Products*.
<https://www.royalcartton.com/es/ecologia-y-sustentabilidad/amigables-con-el-ecosistema#:~:text=%C2%BFWhat%C3%A9%20is%20an%20eco%20product%20eco,the%20living%20beings%20of%20it>.
- Salas Canales, H. (2018). Green marketing: The growing business concern for environmental protection. *Fides Et Ratio vol.15 no.15*.
- Solomon (2008). *Consumer Behavior*. Pearson.
- Torres Merlo, O., & Carrera Cuesta, P. (2018). Eco-efficient practices in hotel companies in the city of Ibarra - Ecuador. *Uniandes Episteme. Journal of Science, Technology and Innovation Vol 5 Num 2*.
- Veliz , T., Veliz Gonzalez, C., Silva , M., & Escobedo , R. (2020). Management of eco-friendly practices with the environment in supermarkets: a perception of university students and managers. *Innova Educación Magazine Vol 2 Num 3*.
- Xavier, L. B. (2017). Design of an environmental management system at Hotel Walther Quito Ecuador. *Repositorio Digital Universidad Central del Ecuador*.