

# Influence of Social Responsibility and Sustainable Marketing Strategies on the Behavior of the Plant-Based Food Consumer Market in Ecuador and Latin America

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## Abstracts

A documentary review was carried out on the production and publication of research papers related to the study of the variable Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing and Consumer Behavior. The purpose of the bibliometric analysis proposed in this document was to know the main characteristics of the volume of publications registered in the Scopus database during the period 2017-2022, achieving the identification of 57 publications. The information provided by this platform was organized through graphs and figures categorizing the information by Year of Publication, Country of Origin, Area of Knowledge and Type of Publication. Once these characteristics have been described, the position of different authors regarding the proposed theme is referenced through a qualitative analysis. Among the main findings made through this research, it is found that the United States, with 10 publications, was the country with the highest scientific production registered in the name of authors affiliated with institutions in that country. The Area of Knowledge that made the greatest contribution to the construction of bibliographic material regarding the scope of Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing and Consumer Behavior was Business, Administration and Accounting with 34 published documents, and the most used Type of Publication during the period indicated above were Journal Articles with 67% of the total scientific production.

**Keywords:** Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Latin America.

## Introduction

Social responsibility and sustainable marketing strategies play an important role in the behavior of the plant-based food consumer market in Ecuador and Latin America. As awareness of the environmental and social impacts of food production grows, consumers are adopting more sustainable lifestyles and looking for products that are aligned with their values. Social

responsibility refers to the obligation of companies to act ethically and contribute to the well-being of society at large. In the context of plant-based foods, this involves considering environmental impacts, animal welfare, human health, and social equity at all stages of the supply chain. Companies that commit to social responsibility in plant-based food production often implement sustainable practices, such as the efficient use of natural resources, minimizing waste, and adopting animal welfare standards.

Sustainable marketing strategies focus on communicating these sustainable values and practices to consumers. Consumers are increasingly interested in knowing how the food they eat is produced and are looking for products that are environmentally friendly and socially responsible. Companies that use sustainable marketing strategies can stand out in the marketplace by effectively communicating their sustainable practices, certifications, and commitment to social responsibility.

In Ecuador and Latin America, the plant-based food market has seen significant growth in recent years, driven by various factors. Concern for health and wellness, environmental awareness, and ethics are some of the reasons why consumers are opting for plant-based foods. In addition, there is an increase in the availability and variety of plant-based products on the market, making it easier to adopt more plant-based diets. Companies that want to succeed in this market must consider social responsibility and sustainable marketing strategies as an integral part of their business strategy. By clearly and transparently communicating their sustainable practices, the environmental and social benefits of their products, and building a brand committed to social responsibility, companies can attract and retain consumers who value these aspects.

It is important to note that each country in Latin America may have particularities in terms of the behavior of the plant-based food consumer market, so specific research is needed to better understand consumer preferences and needs in each national context. However, in general, social responsibility and sustainable marketing strategies are trends that are positively influencing the growth and development of the plant-based food market in Ecuador and Latin America. For this reason, this article seeks to describe the main characteristics of the compendium of publications indexed in the Scopus database related to the variables Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing and Consumer Behavior, as well. Such as the description of the position of certain authors affiliated with institutions, during the period between 2022 and 2023.

## **General Objective**

To analyze, from a bibliometric and bibliographic perspective, the elaboration of works on the variables Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing and Consumer Behavior published in high-impact journals, indexed in the Scopus database during the period 2017-2022.

## **Methodology**

This article is carried out through a mixed orientation research that combines the quantitative and qualitative method.

On the one hand, a quantitative analysis of the information selected in Scopus is carried out under a bibliometric approach of the scientific production corresponding to the study of Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing and Consumer Behavior. On the other hand, examples of

some research works published in the area of study indicated above are analyzed from a qualitative perspective. starting from a bibliographic approach that allows describing the position of different authors regarding the proposed topic. It is important to note that the entire search was carried out through Scopus, managing to establish the parameters referenced in Figure 1.

### 3.1. Methodological design

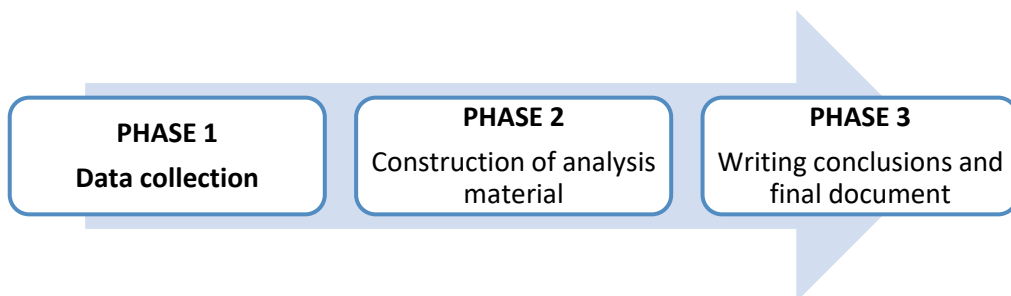


Figure 1. Methodological design

Source: Own elaboration

#### 3.1.1 Phase 1: Data Gathering

Data collection was carried out from the Search tool on the Scopus website, where 57 publications were obtained from the choice of the following filters:

- TITLE-ABS-KEY ( social AND responsibility, AND sustainable AND marketing, AND consumer AND behavior ) AND ( LIMIT-TO ( PUBYEAR , 2022 ) OR LIMIT-TO ( PUBYEAR , 2021 ) OR LIMIT-TO ( PUBYEAR , 2020 ) OR LIMIT-TO ( PUBYEAR , 2019 ) OR LIMIT-TO ( PUBYEAR , 2018 ) OR LIMIT-TO ( PUBYEAR , 2017 ) )
  - Published documents whose study variables are related to the study of Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing and Consumer Behavior.
  - Limited to the years 2017-2022.
  - Limited to studies published from Latin American countries.
  - No publication area limit.
  - Without distinction of type of publication.

#### 3.1.2 Phase 2: Construction of analysis material

The information collected in Scopus during the previous phase is organized and then classified by graphs, figures and tables as follows:

- Co-occurrence of words.
- Year of publication.
- Country of origin of the publication.
- Area of knowledge.
- Type of publication.

#### 3.1.3 Phase 3: Drafting of the conclusions and final document

In this phase, the analysis of the results previously yielded is carried out, resulting in the determination of conclusions and, consequently, the obtaining of the final document. 4. Results

3.2 Word co-occurrence

Figure 2 shows the co-occurrence of keywords found in the publications identified in the Scopus database.

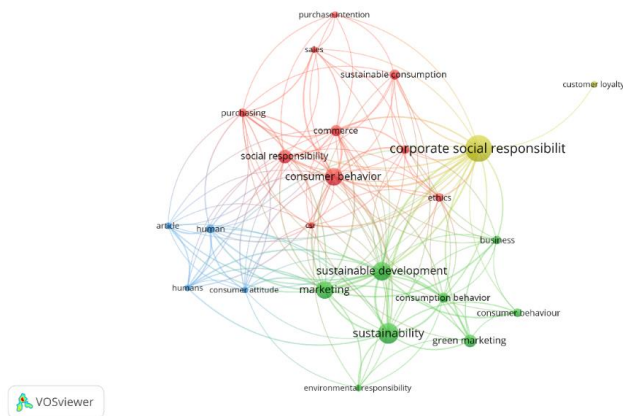


Figure 2. Word co-occurrence

Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data exported from Scopus.

Sustainable Development was the keyword most frequently used within the studies identified through the execution of Phase 1 of the Methodological Design proposed for the development of this article. Consumer Behavior is also among the most frequently used variables, associated with variables such as Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Commerce, Marketing. From the above, it is striking that companies that demonstrate social responsibility in the production of plant foods usually implement sustainable practices, such as the efficient use of natural resources, the adoption of ecological production methods, the minimization of waste and the promotion of fair work practices. These actions can have a positive impact on consumers' perception of companies and their products, building trust and loyalty to brands that align with their values. Second, sustainable marketing refers to the communication and promotion of companies' sustainable practices to consumers. Sustainable marketing strategies seek to effectively convey the environmental and social values, practices, and benefits of plant-based products. This can include using eco-labels, organic or animal welfare certifications, promoting sustainable production practices in advertising, and using communication channels that reach consumers interested in plant-based food.

3.3 Distribution of scientific production by year of publication

Figure 3 shows how scientific production is distributed according to the year of publication.

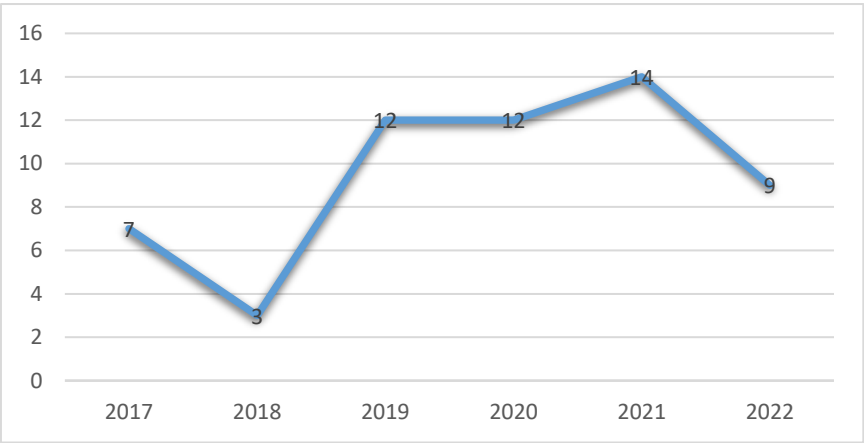


Figure 3. Distribution of scientific production by year of publication.

Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data exported from Scopus

Among the main characteristics evidenced by the distribution of scientific production by year of publication, it is noted that the year in which the highest number of publications were registered in Scopus was 2021, reaching a total of 14 documents published in journals indexed on this platform. This can be explained thanks to the interest on the part of the scientific community in identifying Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing and Consumer Behavior in Latin America. In Ecuador, this position is evident, thanks to articles such as the one entitled "The role of perceived corporate social responsibility in the nexus between marketing related to a perceived cause and repurchase intent in emerging markets" This study aims to evaluate the impact of marketing related to a perceived cause (perceived CRM) on repurchase intent (CRIN). In addition, brand image (BIMA) and customer satisfaction (CSAT) connect this relationship as mediating variables. Especially, the role of perceived corporate social responsibility (perceived CSR) contributed to this nexus between perceived CRM and BIMA, perceived CRM and CSAT in emerging economies. Design/methodology/approach: The document follows a quantitative approach. Based on a comprehensive review of the literature on perceived CSR, perceived CRM, BIMA, CSAT, and buyback intent, the authors assess the impact of those constructs on buyback intent in an emerging market. The study sample consisted of 395 responses covering consumer goods customers. The study uses Smart PLS-SEM version 3.3.2 to analyze the data. Findings: The findings revealed significant contributions to the existing CRM literature in some way. The results of this study contribute to expanding the existing literature on CRM and CSR. Specifically, the extension focuses on the mediating and moderating effects of BIMA, CSAT and perceived CSR, respectively, on the relationship between perceived CRM and CRIN. In addition, the novelty of this study lies in providing a new approach to the influence of perceived-CRM on CRIN, with the mediation of BIMA, CSAT and moderating effects of perceived-CSR integrated into a conceptual model. Practical implications: From a management perspective, the contribution of this study plays a very important role in strategic planning to improve competitive advantage and improve business performance in a sustainable way. This sustainability is based

on an understanding of how changes in contextual factors affect millennials' perception and consumer behavior in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) market, especially in a context of the global Covid-19 crisis(Le, 2022)

3.4 Distribution of scientific production by country of origin

Figure 4 shows how scientific production is distributed according to the nationality of the authors.

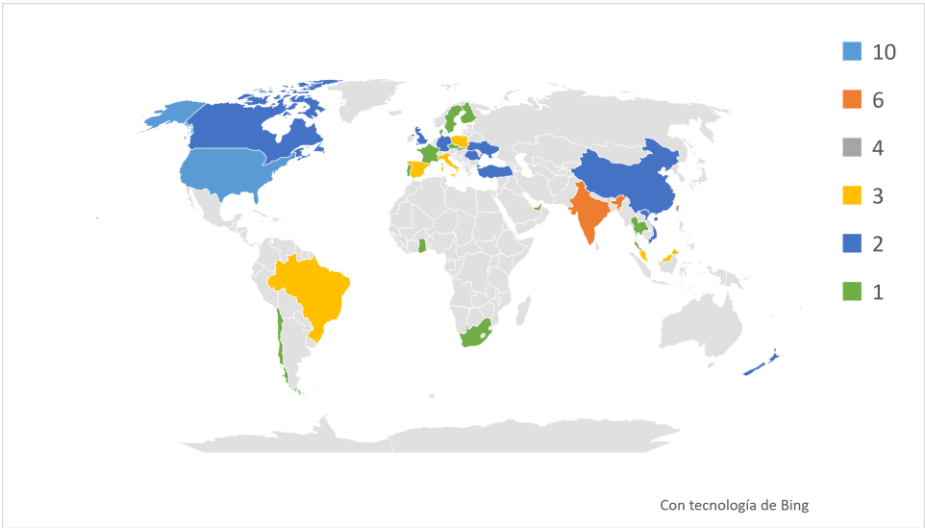


Figure 4. Distribution of scientific production by country of origin.

Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data provided by Scopus.

Within the distribution of scientific production by country of origin, records from Latin American institutions were taken into account, establishing the United States, as the country of that community, with the highest number of publications indexed in Scopus during the period 2017-2022, with a total of 10 publications in total. In second place, India with 6 scientific documents, and Taiwan with 4. Australia ranked fourth by presenting to the scientific community, a total of 15 papers among which is the article entitled "Game strategies within a green supply chain considering consumer concerns about green quality and product conformity" This paper incorporates both into a framework to address the problem. We analyze the optimal strategies of a manufacturer responsible for product quality compliance and greenness enhancement and a retailer responsible for product marketing in a supply chain under four contracts: full cooperation, single price contract, two-party fee, and marketing cost shares. . The results show that full cooperation and two-party tariffs lead to the same and higher product quality, ecology, overall benefit, and social welfare, but full cooperation is difficult to achieve in the supply chain. For the manufacturer and retailer who maximize profits, the manufacturer prefers two-party rate contracts, while the retailer prefers to share marketing costs because they both achieve the highest profit on the preferential contract. In addition, under the price-only

contract, the product conformity quality and greenness are the lowest, and the profit levels for manufacturers and retailers are the lowest. In all four cases, increased environmental and quality awareness contributes to improved product quality and environmental compliance, leading to higher profits for the manufacturer and retailer and increased social welfare. (Yi, 2022)

3.5 Distribution of scientific production by area of knowledge

Figure 5 shows the distribution of the preparation of scientific publications based on the area of knowledge through which the different research methodologies are implemented.

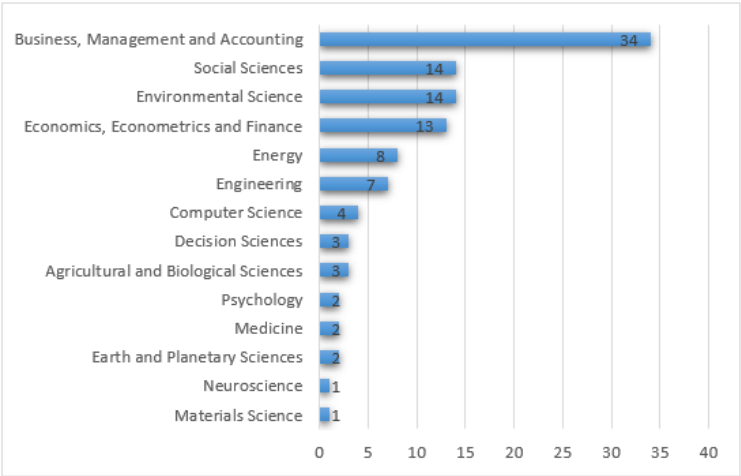


Figure 5. Distribution of scientific production by area of knowledge.

Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data provided by Scopus.

Business, Administration and Accounting was the area of knowledge with the highest number of publications registered in Scopus with a total of 34 documents that have based their methodologies on the study of Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing and Consumer Behavior. In second place, Social Sciences with 14 articles and Environmental Sciences in third place with 14. among which is the article entitled "An integrated framework examining sustainable green behaviour among young consumers" whose scope of study is based on promoting sustainable behaviour is an elusive task, as it is not an innate and natural response of individuals. While an enabling environment that promotes sustainability arguably plays a prominent role in influencing people's belief structure and norms, not much has been done to examine the interplay between the environmental, personal, and behavioral domains in sustainable consumption. Drawing on the theoretical perspectives of social cognitive theory (SCT) and value-beliefs-norms (VBN), this study aims to contribute to the literature by proposing an integrated framework that examines sustainable consumption. Design/methodology/approach: This study uses a partial least squares structural equation model based on the responses of 313 young consumers from an ecological institution in Malaysia. Findings: The findings of this study advance the sustainable literature by establishing the concept

of multidimensionality of the personal domain of SCT. Interestingly, an enabling environment that promotes sustainability was found to be more influential in determining the beliefs and norms of young consumers, as opposed to their competencies.(Jahari, 2022)

3.6 Type of publication

In the following graph, you will see the distribution of the bibliographic find according to the type of publication made by each of the authors found in Scopus.

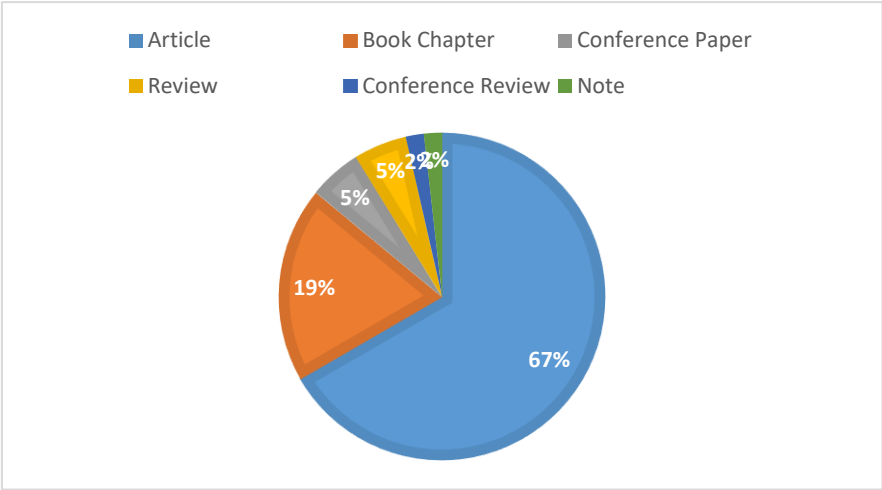


Figure 6. Type of publication.

Source: Own elaboration (2023); based on data provided by Scopus.

The type of publication most frequently used by the researchers referenced in the body of this document was Articles with 67% of the total production identified for analysis, followed by Articles of the book with 19% of the research papers published during the period 2017-2022 in journals indexed in Scopus. In this last category, the one entitled "To be or not to be sustainable in an emerging market? Joint analysis of customers' behavior in the purchase of jeans" This paper aims to investigate the extent to which sustainable and non-sustainable attributes can be used to characterize different groups of consumers in an emerging market, where economic conditions can increase the relevance of price. Consumers seem reluctant to frequently engage in pro-sustainable behavior, mainly for financial reasons. However, purchasing decisions can be understood as a multidimensional process. Design/methodology/approach: The authors conducted quantitative and descriptive research employing a choice-based conset/hierarchical Bayes experiment (CBC/HB) in shopping malls in a low-income city in northeastern Brazil with 1,287 potential buyers of jeans. Thus, the pooled analysis collected data on preferences in the course of actual decision-making. The authors then took each respondent's individual partial utility and performed a cluster analysis to identify similar groups in the sample. The classification



and regression tree (CART) method was used to determine the relationship between joint attributes and sociodemographic characteristics.(Abreu, 2022)

## Conclusions

Through the bibliometric analysis carried out in this research work, it was possible to establish that the United States was the country with the highest number of records published in the variables Social Responsibility, Sustainable Marketing and Consumer Behavior with a total of 10 publications in the Scopus database. In the same way, it was possible to establish that the application of theories framed in the area of Business, Administration and Accounting, were the most frequently used in the measurement of the impact generated by Social responsibility and sustainable marketing strategies play an important role in the behavior of the plant-based food consumer market in Ecuador and Latin America. Social responsibility and sustainable marketing play an increasingly important role in plant-based consumer behavior. These trends reflect a growing awareness of the environmental and social impacts of food production and consumption, as well as concerns about personal health and well-being. First, social responsibility refers to a company's obligation to act ethically and contribute to the sustainable development of society. In the case of plant-based foods, this means taking into account environmental aspects such as conserving natural resources and reducing the carbon footprint, as well as social aspects such as animal welfare and justice in the supply chain. Companies that demonstrate social responsibility in plant-based food production typically implement sustainable practices such as the efficient use of natural resources, organic production methods, waste reduction, and fair labor practices. These actions can positively influence the consumer's perception of the company and its products and generate trust and loyalty to the brand consistent with its values. Second, sustainable marketing refers to companies that communicate and promote sustainable practices to consumers. Sustainable marketing strategies seek to effectively communicate the values, practices, and environmental and social benefits of plant-based products. This could include using eco-labels, organic or animal welfare certifications, promoting sustainable production practices in advertising, and using communication channels to reach consumers interested in plant-based foods.

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