Consumer Behavior for Ecological products Among Gen Z In Cambodia

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Zásady pro vypracování

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ABSTRAKT

Tato studie zkoumá, jak generace Z v Kambodži vnímá trh s ekologickými produkty, jak s ním spolupracuje a jak jej ovlivňuje. Uprostřed celosvětového nárůstu povědomí o životním prostředí se tento výzkum snaží ponořit se do specifického spotřebitelského chování a motivace demografické skupiny, která je klíčová kvůli jejímu rostoucímu ekonomickému vlivu a jedinečným vzorcům spotřebitelů. Cíle byly strukturovány tak, aby vyhodnotily informovanost a nákupní chování Gen Z, identifikovaly faktory ovlivňující jejich spotřebitelské volby a vyhodnotily efektivitu stávajících tržních strategií. Zjištění naznačují, že mezi kambodžskými spotřebiteli generace Z je mírné povědomí o ekologických produktech s významným vlivem platforem digitálních médií a doporučení kolegů. Studie také zdůrazňuje několik překážek většího pronikání na trh, včetně cenové citlivosti a omezené dostupnosti produktů. Na základě těchto poznatků jsou marketérům navržena doporučení, jak zvýšit viditelnost a přitažlivost ekologických produktů. Tento výzkum nejen přispívá k akademické oblasti tím, že poskytuje cílenou analýzu Gen Z v Kambodži, ale také nabízí praktické strategie pro zúčastněné strany, jejichž cílem je těžit ze vzorců udržitelné spotřeby a podporovat je.

Klíčová slova: ekologický výrobek, ekologický výrobek

ABSTRACT

This study investigates how Generation Z in Cambodia perceives, interacts with, and influences the ecological products market. Amidst a global surge in environmental awareness, this research aims to delve into the specific consumer behaviors and motivations of a demographic that is pivotal due to its growing economic influence and unique consumer patterns. The objectives were structured to assess the awareness and purchasing behaviors of Gen Z, identify the influencing factors of their consumption choices, and evaluate the effectiveness of existing market strategies. The findings suggest a moderate awareness among Cambodian Gen Z consumers regarding ecological products, with significant influence from digital media platforms and peer recommendations. The study also highlights several barriers to greater market penetration, including price sensitivity and limited availability of products. Based on these insights, recommendations are proposed for marketers to enhance the visibility and appeal of ecological products. This research not only

contributes to the academic field by providing a focused analysis of Gen Z in Cambodia but also offers practical strategies for stakeholders aiming to capitalize on and foster sustainable consumption patterns.

Keywords: ecological product, eco-friendly product

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CONTENTS

BACKGROUND

In recent years, the global push towards sustainability has spotlighted the importance of ecological products, goods that are designed, sourced, and manufactured with minimal environmental impact. Among various demographic segments, Generation Z (individuals born from the mid-1990s to the early 2010s) has emerged as a particularly influential group due to their increasing buying power and distinct consumer behaviors. In Cambodia, a developing country with a young population, understanding this demographic's engagement with ecological products is crucial. This segment's attitudes and purchasing behaviors could play a significant role in shaping market trends and sustainability efforts in the region. Cambodia, with its unique cultural, economic, and social landscape, offers a distinctive context in which these dynamics can be explored.

This research aims to dive into how Generation Z in Cambodia perceives, interacts with, and influences the ecological products market. The study will explore various facets of consumer behavior within this demographic to uncover the underlying drivers of ecological product consumption. With environmental concerns gaining traction globally, and specifically in Southeast Asia, it is imperative to understand how younger consumers integrate ecological considerations into their purchasing decisions. The objectives of the research are strategically designed to assess awareness, analyze purchasing behaviors, identify influencing factors, and evaluate the effectiveness of current marketing strategies targeted at this demographic.

INTORDUCTION

In 1970s, global population rose to around 3 billion, leading to a significant rise in consumption among people in the industrialized world, primarily driven by products manufactured by corporations. This surge in consumption resulted in considerable environmental harm and numerous societal issues. Against this backdrop, the recognition of our planet's limitations led to a convergence of attention and emphasis on sustainable development (Ditlev-Simonsen 2021).

In recent years, there has been a growing global concern for environmental sustainability and the need to adopt greener practices in various aspects of life. Researchers have conducted extensive studies to understand consumer behavior towards ecological products, and businesses promoting green products have increased in number. Moreover, governments have implemented environmental regulations, and advancements in technology have raised consumer awareness and concern about environmental issues. As a result, consumers are increasingly considering the environment when making purchasing decisions, majority of them indicating that they at least sometimes take environmental factors into account when they shop (Jagodič et al., 2016)

 This shift in consumer behavior is particularly relevant among Gen Z, the generation that represents the future of consumption. This generation, often referred to as "digital natives," is known for being tech-savvy and making informed purchasing decisions (Akçayır et al., 2016). Their views on sustainability not only influence their own buying decisions but also have an impact on the purchasing behavior of other age groups.

This study aims to explore the consumer behavior of Gen Z in Cambodia regarding ecological products. The objective of this research is to understand the factors that influence Gen Z's decision-making process when it comes to purchasing ecological products in Cambodia. In order to achieve this objective, the study will examine various factors such as awareness of environmental issues, attitudes towards sustainability, perceived product benefits, and social influence. Through the analysis of cross-tabulation data, this research

will investigate the extent to which factors such as product features, price consciousness, family recommendations, and social influence.

In addition, the study will also explore the potential impact of demographic variables on Gen Z's consumer behavior, such as gender, education level, and income. Consumer behavior for ecological products among Gen Z in Cambodia has become an increasingly important area of study in response to the growing global concern for environmental sustainability. Furthermore, this research aims to contribute to the existing knowledge on consumer behavior for ecological products among Gen Z in Cambodia.

The findings of this study will provide valuable insights that can be utilized by marketers, policymakers, and businesses in Cambodia to better understand Gen Z's preferences and behavior towards ecological products.

I. THEORY

1   LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainable development

The idea of sustainable development, according to "Our Common Future" also known as the Brundtland Report, is to meet present-day demands without endangering future generations. Development can be made sustainable by humanity such that it satisfies current demands without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to satiate their own. Limits are implied by the idea of sustainable development; these limits are not absolute, but rather they are imposed on environmental resources by the current state of technology and social organization, as well as by the biosphere's capacity to absorb the impacts of human activity. However, achieving sustainable development means providing for everyone's fundamental necessities and giving them the chance to realize their dreams of a better life. One crucial aspect of sustainable development, involves the use of services and related products, which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations. (Our common future, 1987)

Purchase Intension

Purchasing intention refers to a customer's readiness to purchase a product or service (Wu et al., 2011). Consumers engage in an information search process, drawing on past experiences and considering alternative options, before confirming their intention to purchase a product (Lin & Lin 2007). Purchasing intention serves as a crucial indicator for understanding consumer buying behavior (Su et al., 2012).

 Moreover, when consumers perceive that their consumption of green products has a positive impact, their purchasing intention can translate into green purchasing behavior (Dodds et al., 1991). However, the adoption of green merchandise in stores may be hindered by factors such as availability and higher prices. Consumers' decisions to purchase green products are primarily influenced by their environmental concerns, values, and interests. This study suggests that consumers' purchasing intention towards green products is typically deliberate, rational, and follows a sequential decision-making process. (Wheeler et al., 2013).

Customers purchase decision is a complex process. Purchase intention usually is related to the behavior, perceptions and attitudes of consumers. Purchase behavior is a key point for consumers to access and evaluate the specific product. Chang and Wildt (1994) suggested that one useful instrument for predicting the buying process is purchase intention. Purchase intention may vary depending on perceived value and quality as well as price. (Chang, Wildt, 1994)

In addition, consumers are affected by internal or external motivations during the buying process (Gogoi, 2013). Researchers have proposed six stages before deciding to buy the product, which are: awareness, knowledge, interest, preference, persuasion and purchase (Armstrong et al., 2017). Customers always think that purchase with a low cost, simple packaging and little-known product is a high risk since they the quality of these products is not trustable (Gogoi, 2013).

Liljander et al (2009) developed a similar model to Jaafar et al (2013) in order to investigate the consumers' buying behavior in apparel category; the model took into account perceived value, perceived quality, perceived risk and store image and studied their effects on purchase intention. The study concluded that perceived quality and perceived value have direct impact on purchase intention and perceived risk negatively affects the purchase intention. Whereas store image has indirect impact on purchase intention through perceived risk and perceived quality. (Liljander et al (2009) and Jaafar et al (2013)

While individuals may display a positive disposition and vocal support for eco-friendly products, this often does not translate into monetary commitment. Research indicates a tenuous connection between pro-environmental attitudes and actual consumer behavior. There is a noticeable gap; people articulate their environmental concerns but this rarely reflects in their purchasing decisions, suggesting a complex relationship between ecological mindfulness and market choices (Martin & Simintiras, 1995).

Consumer behavior

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

According to Ajzen (1991) performance of a behavioris a joint function of intentions and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). The author coined Theroy of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explain human behavior. There are three main factors to predict human behavior, attitude toward behaivor, Subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. TPB posits that behavioral intentions are the most immediate determinants of behavior. Furthermore, this theory outlined how a person is presumed to carry out a specific behavior if he/she has full control over the behavior. Consequently, When an individual holds positive attitudes and subjective norms within the power of perceived behavioral control and intention, that specific individual will perform the actual behavior. In the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model, behavioral beliefs are predicted to shape attitude, while normative beliefs are expected to influence subjective norms, and control beliefs form the basis of behavioral control. However, the precise nature of the relationship between these variables has remained unclear (Ajzen, 1991).

Attitude toward behavior

Attitude toward behaivor is one of the main factors in TPB, it refers to an individual's overall evaluation or assessment of performing a specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991).. It encompasses the beliefs an individual holds about the outcomes or consequences associated with engaging in the behavior and the subjective value or importance attached to those outcomes (Ajzen, 1991). In simpler terms, attitude toward the behavior reflects how favorably or unfavorably an individual feels about performing a particular action. This evaluation is influenced by a variety of factors, including personal beliefs, past experiences, social influences, and cultural norms. For example, let's consider the behavior of recycling. An individual's attitude toward recycling might be positive if they believe that recycling contributes to environmental conservation, reduces waste, and helps protect natural resources (Ajzen, 1991). In this case, the individual values the positive outcomes associated with recycling and views the behavior favorably.

Subjective norms

Subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressures or expectations that individuals perceive from significant others regarding whether or not to engage in a specific behavior. In simpler terms, subjective norms capture the influence of social context on an individual's decision-making process (Ajzen, 1991).

There are two key components of subjective norms:

Normative Beliefs: These are the individual's beliefs about whether important others (such as family, friends, peers, or colleagues) think they should or should not perform a particular behavior. Normative beliefs reflect perceptions of social pressure or expectations regarding the behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Motivation to Comply: This represents the individual's motivation or willingness to conform to the perceived social expectations or pressures (Ajzen, 1991). It reflects the degree to which individuals value the opinions or approval of others and are influenced by them in their decision-making.

Subjective norms are shaped by various social factors, including cultural norms, social norms, socialization processes, and the influence of reference groups. These influences contribute to individuals' perceptions of what is considered socially acceptable, desirable, or appropriate behavior in a given situation (Ajzen, 1991).

Perceived behavioral control

Perceived behavioral control can be influenced by internal and external factors, including personal skills and abilities, resources, past experiences, culture norm and environmental constraints. Individuals with higher levels of perceived behavioral control are more likely to believe that they have the necessary skills, resources, and opportunities to engage in the behavior, leading to stronger intentions and a greater likelihood of performing the behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, past behavior is considered a positively validated factor in predicting human behavior. It is suggested that humans often purchase the same products over and over again if there is nothing to interfere with their behavior. Moreover, Social pressure can encourage or deter a person to perform or not perform a behavior. Furthermore, people tend to listen to recommendation from riends or relative before making a purchase decision. Similary, culture norms, values, and traditions can shape individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and subjective norms regarding specific behaviors (Ajzen, 1991).
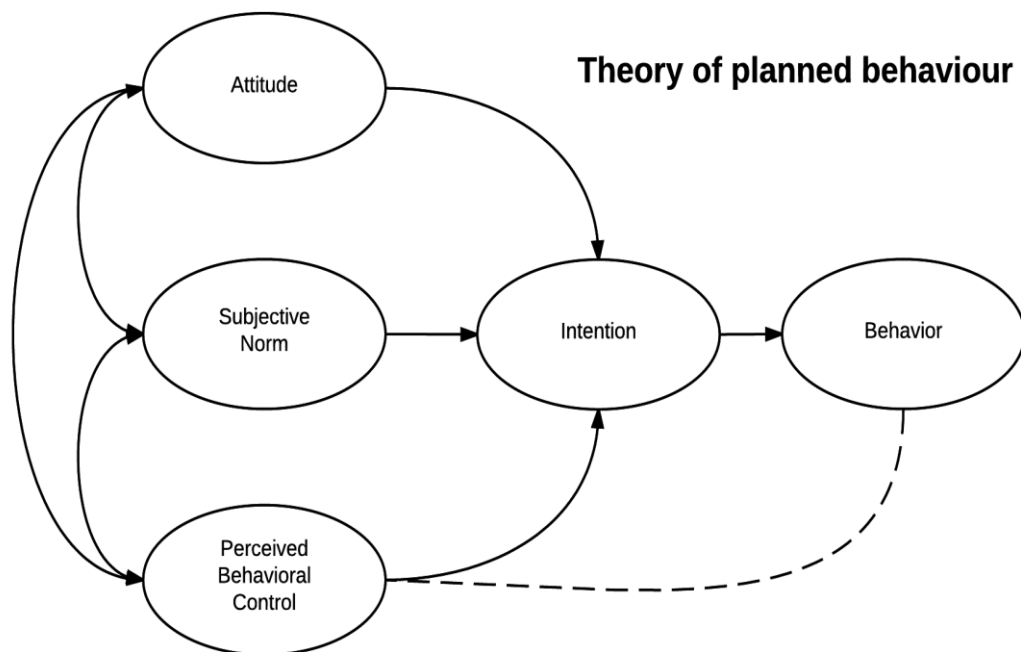
Figure 1 Theory of Planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991)

Brand

In general, consumers tend to purchase their favorable and familiar brand. The power and value of a brand depends on the brand knowledge that being formed and perceived in consumers' mind. (Yang, 2017). A brand transcends its own logo, name, or visual identity. It is an imprint on the consumer's psyche, shaping meaning and evoking emotions. It represents a promise and a perception; a narrative woven from reputations and experiences. A robust brand image is a powerful ally, as it is synonymous with trust and quality in the

minds of customers. This strength of character builds unwavering customer loyalty, fostering repeated interactions with the brand's offerings. In essence, a great brand does not just mark a product; it creates a bond with its audience, leading to a continuous cycle of engagement and purchase. (Bilal, Ali, 2022)

The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines a brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors" (Kottler, 2000).

Similarly, Aaker states that a brand is a name and/or symbol that distinguishes, in the form of a logo or symbol, stamp, or packaging, to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers (Aaker, 1996). Kottler (2000) emphasizes that a strong brand enhances the company's image. The brand serves as the forefront of a product, providing consumers with an initial impression to identify those products. Essentially, a brand is a promise made by sellers or producers, ensuring a consistent delivery of performance, benefits, and service to buyers. (Wijaya, 2013)

Moreover, Jiménez and San Martín (2010) noted that customers use the nation of origin as a key indicator when assessing new items. Previous research revealed that consumers' opinions of product quality and evaluation are influenced by the nation of origin. Customers' brand knowledge is influenced by various factors such as the design of the product, the country of manufacture, and other brand-related details. (San Martín Jiménez, 2010)

Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is an evaluative judgment by consumers about the overall excellence or superiority of a product. It encompasses assessments of a product's attributes such as durability, reliability, precision, and any other characteristics that consumers deem relevant to the product's performance. This perception is vital as it shapes consumer expectations, satisfaction levels, and overall brand loyalty. High perceived quality often justifies a higher price point and can significantly influence the market success of a product. Research

indicates that perceived quality directly affects purchase decisions and is a strong predictor of customer loyalty (Oude Ophuis, Van Trijp, 1995).

Perceived Usefulness

Perceived usefulness, as originally defined in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), refers to the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system or product will enhance their job performance or life. In consumer contexts, perceived usefulness is about the practical benefits and utility derived from using a product, focusing on how the product improves the efficiency or effectiveness of the user's activities. This concept is crucial for understanding consumer adoption of new technologies or products, as it relates to the functional advantages that the product provides. A high level of perceived usefulness can lead to increased adoption rates, repeated use, and positive word-of-mouth recommendations, which are critical factors for the success of technological innovations and environmentally friendly products (Chen, 2016)

2   Impact of Non-Ecological Product on Environment

The majority of wealthy nations have expressed considerable worry about the state of the environment and how it affects their economy and policies. This problem has also been made worse by the overabundance of solid waste generated as a result of rising consumption brought on by increased productivity, which raises income (Røpke 1999). The development and use of non-ecofriendly products have a significant impact on the environment, contributing to pollution, resource depletion, and harm to ecosystems (Adi Wicaksono et al., 2020). These products, which are often made from non-biodegradable materials and require extensive energy and resources to produce, contribute to the accumulation of waste in landfills and oceans. This waste not only takes up valuable space but also releases harmful toxins into the environment. This pollution can contaminate air, water, and soil, leading to a range of negative consequences for both wildlife and human health.

Despite many advance nations are converting to green or sustainable products, the impact of non-ecological product on the planet are still increasing. The majority of non-ecological product production are being transfer from developed nations to developing or under-developed countries instead as those countries have less constrain on being sustainable (Tseng et al., 2013). To grow their economy, developing nations have to push for industrialization regardless the negative impacts on the environment. Due to its economic function, the industrial sector has greatly aided in environmental exploitation and pollution. Concerns over the unsustainable nature of present growth patterns have been raised by the fast industrialization of several Asian countries and the resulting sharp rise in pollution levels in the air, water, and land (Tseng, Chiu, Tan, Siriban-Manalang 2013).

Human activity is the primary cause of environmental contamination worldwide, including mining, industrialization, urbanization, and exploration. Developed and underdeveloped countries are jointly responsible for this burden. Pollution has serious long-term effects, which is why its effects are still felt today despite its increased attention worldwide. (Ukaogo, Ewuzie, Onwuka 2020). It was estimated in 2015 that 9 million premature deaths, or more than three times the number of fatalities from malaria, AIDS, and tuberculosis combined, were attributable to ill health brought on by pollution (Landrigan et al, 2018).

Particularly the poor and vulnerable are killed by pollution. In low-income and middle-income nations, pollution-related mortality account for over 92% of all pollution-related deaths. In all countries, minorities and the marginalized are most likely to suffer from pollution-related diseases. Children are highly susceptible to diseases linked to pollution, and even very low levels of exposure to pollutants at vulnerable times in pregnancy and the first few years of life can cause illness, impairment, and death in children as well as throughout their lifetime (Landrigan et al, 2018).

Humans most likely encounter pollution on a daily basis without realizing it, or our fast-paced lifestyles may have made us immune to it (Muralikrishna, Manickam, 2017). Despite the seeming implausible, ignorance of the types of pollutants leads to people engaging in activities that produce harmful byproducts in amounts and kinds that the environment can no longer neutralize without completely altering the system. The following are a few examples of practices that lead to pollution of the air, land, and water: burning of bushes, dumping of household and agricultural wastes in water bodies, using chemicals to harvest aquatic species, and inappropriate disposal of electronic wastes. Furthermore, there is a direct correlation between the density of human population and the rise in human activities and the resulting environmental impact. In addition to humans, other aquatic and terrestrial creatures are also affected, including microbes, which are abundant and diverse and so have a tendency to maintain the biogeochemical function that is essential for maintaining the ecosystem (Luck, 2007).

In addition to mining, exploration, urbanization, and population growth, other factors that contribute to environmental pollution include the transboundary migration of pollutants from developed to developing nations and vice versa. One of the reasons why pollution is still a problem on a worldwide scale is transboundary contamination (Ukaogo, Ewuzie, Onwuka 2020). No nation can afford to remain indifferent toward pollution since it spreads through several channels, most notably the air and water. Pollution that originates in one nation can be discovered wreaking havoc in another. For example, in 2009, Singapore was effected by haze caused by forest fire in Indonesia. The haze effect the residents of Singaporean and part of Malaysia (THESTRAITSTIME 2019).

In addition, activities like mining, deforestation, landfills, and the unlawful dumping of waste that contaminates soil can also lead to environmental pollution. These activities can also result in the introduction of hazardous materials into the atmosphere, such as toxic metals, gaseous pollutants, and particulate matter (PM); sewage; industrial effluents; agricultural runoffs; and electronic wastes into water bodies (Ukaogo et al., 2020). Many physical and chemical methods have been used to remove pollution from the environment, but the majority of them are costly and cause new environmental issues. Microbial bioremediation is one of these methods that has drawn attention from all over the world, presumably because it is a practical and environmentally benign way to restore the environment. Pollution is categorized into 3 different kinds water, land, and air pollution. (Ukaogo et al., 2020)

3 . Understanding Ecological product

According to Hou, Guo, Kannan, and Govindan the concept of ecological product is similar to two notions which are eco-labels and ecosystem services. These concepts were originally found in China. Governmental bodies and other public service organizations introduced the eco-label, an environmental performance certification. (Hou et al., 2023). Eco-labels, which act as indicators and prompts, are a means of educating customers about more environmentally friendly product options and offering advice on how to utilize the product more sustainably.

Ecological products are made by humans as well as exclusively natural ecosystem services. In particular, eco-products are a continuous bundle of goods that include ecosystem services, eco-label products, and ecological design products (Ru-lian 2015; Shen, Xu, 2017). Consequently, ecological products are a group of goods and services that are either derived from nature or processed by humans and serve a variety of purposes such as providing materials for life, enhancing the environment, passing down cultural traditions, etc. (Xie, QR, 2022a).

Ecological products can be categorized using multiple categories according to a range of attributes. Ecological products are generally classified into three categories based on their function and manifestation: cultural service products, regulatory service products, and ecological material products (Chen et al., 2024). The material product value and functional service value that ecological products offer for human life and development make up the ecological product value.

The processes of converting ecological value of ecological goods to economic benefits through logical ecosystem product development and exploitation while preserving the stability and integrity of ecosystems are referred to as value realization of ecological products (Chen et al., 2024). Utilizing economic value to monetize the cost of protecting or the value of using ecological products is the crucial component. (HL, B, 2022b). The goals

of Ecological Product Value Realization (EPVR) are to preserve the natural world, encourage peaceful cohabitation between people and the environment, and address the disparity between societal and private expenses associated with environmental protection. The theoretical underpinnings, practical objectives, and material base of landscape sustainability science and EPVR coincide to allow for the merging of the two fields (Chen, Li, Xie, Wu, Pan, Luo 2024).

Similarly to ecological product, the term green product is a much broader term. Green products are those that "use fewer resources, have lower environmental impacts and risks, and prevent waste generation even at the conception stage. This concept has gained acknowledgement as a driver for a new growth paradigm and an improved standard of living through competition and wealth development. (Commission of the European Communities, 2001). Green product is becoming more and more relevant for policy makers, companies and society as a whole. Governments are pushing for sustainable product which make green product become the main topic for discussion in many levels for years.

II. PRACTICAL
PART

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is aim to understand how Gen Z in Cambodia perceives, interacts with, and influences the market for ecological products. The objectives of this research are strategically designed to delve into various dimensions of consumer behavior within this demographic. Collectively, these objectives aim to provide a comprehensive insight into the factors that drive ecological product consumption among Gen Z in Cambodia. Along with these data, discussion and recommendation will be make offering valuable data for stakeholders in crafting targeted strategies to enhance market penetration.

Sub-Objective 1:

To identify the key factors that influence Gen Z consumers in Cambodia to purchase ecological products. This includes understanding motivations such as environmental concerns, and health benefits that drive their purchasing decisions.

Sub-Objective 2:

To assess the level of awareness and knowledge that Gen Z consumers have regarding ecological products. This objective seeks to evaluate how well-informed these consumers are about the benefits and availability of such products, and their sources of information.

Sub-Objective 3:

To determine the willingness of Gen Z consumers in Cambodia to pay a premium for ecological products. This involves exploring their financial commitment to supporting environmentally friendly products despite potentially higher costs.

Sub-Objective 4:

To examine the role of digital media and social networks in influencing the purchasing decisions of Gen Z consumers towards ecological products in Cambodia. This includes

analyzing how digital platforms and social media impact their buying behaviors and how these channels can be effectively utilized for promoting eco-friendly products.

4.2. Research Design

This study uses a quantitative methodology to thoroughly examine how Gen Z consumers in Cambodia behave when it comes to buying eco-friendly goods. The choice to employ a quantitative approach is motivated by the requirement to collect organized, numerical data suitable to meticulous statistical examination. This methodology is highly appropriate for accomplishing the study's goals of providing a systematic and quantifiable understanding of Gen Z consumers' attitudes, preferences, and actions regarding ecological products. Through the use of quantitative techniques, this study seeks to identify trends, relationships, and critical elements influencing Gen Z's decisions about sustainable purchasing, offering important new information to the fields of sustainability and consumer behavior.

Choosing a quantitative approach makes sense because it provides solid data that required for analyze statistically. This surveys are designed to capture specific aspects like how much they know about ecological products, what they buy, and what they think about the environment. This method also lets us compare different groups within Gen Z, like looking at differences based on age, gender, education, and where they live. This way, a detailed picture of what influences their choices will appear. Overall, going with a quantitative approach helps us gather reliable information and insights that can guide efforts to promote sustainable habits among Gen Z in Cambodia.

4.3. Data Collection

The data collection process involved distributing a survey questionnaire to 260 respondents in Cambodia using Google Forms. The survey was active for a period of 33 days, from March 3rd to April 5th. Out of the total distributed questionnaires, only 248 responses were deemed valid and accepted for analysis. In this study investigating Gen Z's consumer behavior concerning ecological products in Cambodia. A strategic data collection approach

combining snowball sampling and random sampling techniques were employed. The snowball sampling method was initially used to identify and engage key informants within the Gen Z population who possess some understanding of sustainable consumption practices. we leveraged the snowball effect, asking them to refer other Gen Z individuals who share similar interests and behaviors related to sustainable choices. This approach allowed us to access a diverse network of participants with varied perspectives and experiences, enriching the depth of insights gathered.

In parallel, we also employed random sampling techniques to ensure a broader representation across different demographic segments within the Gen Z cohort. Random sampling involved selecting participants directly from the wider Gen Z population in Cambodia without relying solely on referrals or connections. By integrating random sampling alongside snowball sampling, we aimed to mitigate potential biases and ensure that the sample encompassed a diverse range of participants. This comprehensive data collection strategy was designed to capture a holistic view of Gen Z's attitudes, preferences, and behaviors towards ecological products, thus providing valuable insights into sustainable consumption patterns among this demographic in Cambodia.

4.4. Scope and Limitation

This thesis is delineated by a specific scope that defines the breadth of the study and certain limitations that might impact the research outcomes. The scope includes a focus on Gen Z individuals in Cambodia, particularly targeting urban areas where ecological products are more prevalent and accessible. The study concentrates on this demographic's behaviors concerning ecological products, assessing factors such as purchasing motivations, levels of awareness, willingness to pay a premium, and the influence of digital media and social networks.

Limitation

The study faces several limitations that could affect its findings. Geographically, the concentration on urban centers may not reflect the behaviors and attitudes of rural Gen Z consumers towards ecological products. Resource limitations could restrict the scale and

geographic diversity of the sample, potentially affecting the generalizability of the results. Cultural and social dynamics might not be captured fully, as the broad survey format could overlook nuanced community or family influences on consumer behavior. Additionally, the potential for response bias exists, with participants possibly providing socially desirable answers. The impact of digital media is also examined, but varying levels of technology access among Gen Z individuals could skew the data. Finally, being a time-constrained study, it might not capture long-term trends or evolving attitudes towards ecological products. Acknowledging these limitations is crucial for setting realistic expectations for the study's outcomes and framing the findings within the context of these challenges, thus enhancing the thesis's credibility.

4.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis plays a crucial role in interpreting the gathered information to derive meaningful insights. To handle and analyze the data collected from surveys and interviews, the study will employ SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software. This statistical tool is chosen for its capability to manage large datasets and perform complex analyses.

After collecting all required data through quantitative survey questionnaires, the data will be input into SPSS, where it will be cleaned and coded for accuracy before analysis. Descriptive statistics will provide an overview of the data, illustrating basic features like means and standard deviations. Inferential statistics will then be used to test the research hypotheses, determining the strength and significance of the relationships between variables.

4.6. Research Questions

To effectively explore the consumer behavior of Gen Z in Cambodia regarding ecological products, this study focuses on the relationship between various socioeconomic factors and their environmental purchasing decisions. The research questions and corresponding hypotheses are constructed to understand these dynamics thoroughly.

Research Questions

Relationship between Previous Purchase and Willingness to pay more for eco-friendly product

RQ1: Is there a relationship between individuals who have previously purchased eco-friendly products and their willingness to pay more for such products in the future?

Hypothesis (H1): Individuals who have previously purchased eco-friendly products are more likely to be willing to pay a higher price for eco-friendly products in the future.

Null Hypothesis (H0_1): There is no relationship between having previously purchased eco-friendly products and the willingness to pay more for such products in the future.

Influence of Income on Lifestyle Adjustments for Eco-Friendliness

RQ2: How does income influence the willingness of individuals to adjust their lifestyles to be eco-friendlier?

Hypothesis (H2): Individuals with higher incomes are more likely to adjust their lifestyles to be eco-friendlier.

Null Hypothesis (H0_2): There is no relationship between income levels and the willingness to adjust lifestyles to be more eco-friendly

Income and Willingness to Pay More for eco-friendly product

RQ3: Is there a correlation between the level of income and the willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products?

Hypothesis (H3): Individuals with higher incomes are more willing to pay a premium for eco-friendly products.

Null Hypothesis (H0_3): There is no correlation between income levels and the willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products.

Impact of Higher Education on Environmental Values

RQ4: Does a higher level of education correlate with the importance placed on adopting greener practices?

Hypothesis (H4): Individuals with higher education levels place greater importance on adopting greener practices.

Null Hypothesis (H0_4): There is no correlation between the level of education and the importance placed on being more green.

Personal benefits influence the likelihood of suggesting eco-friendly products to friends or relatives

RQ5: Does the perception of personal benefit from using eco-friendly products influence consumers' likelihood of recommending these products to friends and relatives?

Hypothesis (H5): Consumers who perceive a significant personal benefit from using eco-friendly products are more likely to recommend these products to their friends and relatives.

Null Hypothesis (H0_5): There is no significant relationship between the perception of personal benefit and the likelihood of recommending eco-friendly products to friends and relatives.

Perceived quality and the experience of purchasing eco-friendly products

RQ6: What is the relationship between the perceived quality of eco-friendly products and consumers' experience of purchasing these products?

Hypothesis (H1): There is a positive relationship between consumers' positive experiences of purchasing eco-friendly products and their perceptions of these products as high quality.

Null Hypothesis (H0_6): There is no significant relationship between the purchasing experiences of consumers and their perceptions of the quality of eco-friendly products.

4.7. Population

This study is solely focus on Cambodians 'consumer behavior. As of 2023, Cambodia has a total population of around 16 million. Majority of Cambodian population are Gen z. higher number of population would mean higher number of consumption as well. It is estimated that at least 34.8% of the population is Generation Z. Cambodia is also experiencing shifts in consumption patterns, which are impacting the country's economy. As the young population, particularly Generation Z, continues to grow, there has been a noticeable increase in consumer spending and demand for various goods and services. This trend is influencing the retail and hospitality sectors, as businesses adapt to cater to the preferences of the younger demographic (Gentina, Parry, 2020).
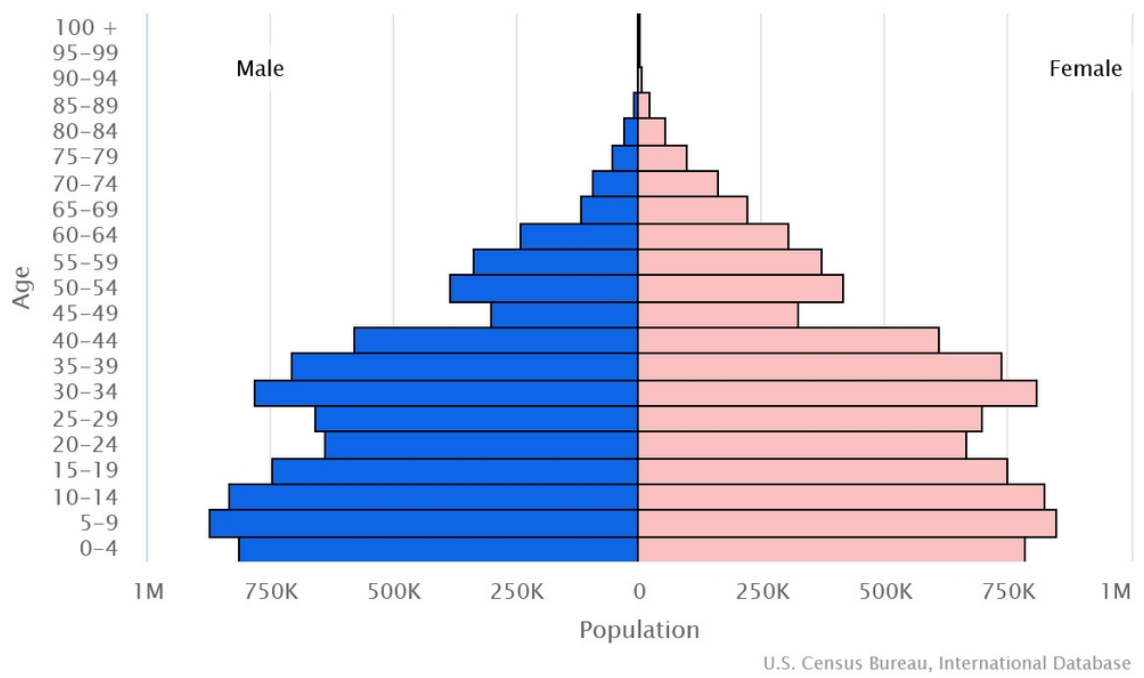
Figure 2 Cambodia population (U.S Census Buraeu, Inernational Database)

5 ANALYSIS OF IMPACT OF NON-ECOLOGICAL PRODUCT

Non-ecological products are affecting both developed and developing countries, yet the challenges each faces are distinct. In developed regions such as the European Union, a major issue is greenwashing, which involves giving a misleading impression of a product's environmental impact or benefits. This deceptive practice can lead consumers astray. According to the European Parliament, 86% of EU consumers are seeking better information on product durability. (European Parliament, 2024)

 In contrast, developing countries like Cambodia are grappling with more fundamental environmental management issues, including the lack of waste separation and inadequate waste disposal systems, which exacerbate the environmental challenges. In Cambodia, the majority of this waste is collected and disposed of at open dump sites, while the remaining is burned and disposed of on the streets or into local waterways. only material like metal are being recycled. Plastic consumption in Cambodia is synonymous with daily life. In Phnom Penh alone, around 10 million plastic bags are used on a daily basis. Small-to-medium enterprises are the driving force behind Cambodia's growing economy, but the densely populated service sector encourages large scale distribution and consumption of convenient and cheap plastic products. From food vendors to clothing retailers, most items we are consuming are wrapped, packaged or served using plastic (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2024).

The proliferation of such products can lead to significant environmental degradation, contributing to issues like pollution, resource depletion, and adverse health effects on communities. One poignant example of the negative impact of non-ecological products is visible in communities living near dumpsites in developing countries like Cambodia. The Scoot Neeson Foundation, an organization active in Cambodia, highlights this issue vividly. The foundation works with children who live on landfill sites, where the accumulation of non-ecological waste not only pollutes the environment but also poses severe health risks to the residents, particularly children. These children are often exposed to hazardous conditions due to the toxic substances released from decomposing waste materials (CAMBODIAN CHILDREN'S FUND, 2024). The presence of harmful chemicals, such as heavy metals and

volatile organic compounds in non-ecological products, can contaminate local soil and water sources, affecting food supplies and leading to health problems like respiratory issues, skin infections, and other more severe diseases.

The Scoot Neeson Foundation's efforts in Cambodia focus on providing education, healthcare, and nutritional support to these vulnerable children, aiming to lift them out of the dire conditions of the dumpsites. Their work sheds light on the broader social implications of consuming and disposing of non-ecological products, emphasizing the need for sustainable waste management and recycling programs (CAMBODIAN CHILDREN'S FUND, 2024).

6 ANALYSIS OF ECOLOGICAL PRODUCT

Ecological products have become a significant trend in the 21st century, particularly in developed countries. However, this is not a new concept in European nations, where promoting sustainable products has long been a strategy to encourage consumers and businesses to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. Being eco-friendly extends beyond the use of sustainable materials; it also encompasses the adoption of renewable energy sources, the recycling of materials, and efforts to raise environmental awareness.

In developed markets such as the European Union, ecological products are increasingly prevalent across various industries. For example, in the packaging sector, biodegradable materials and reusable packaging solutions are becoming popular alternatives to traditional plastics. In the automotive industry, the shift towards electric vehicles represents a significant move towards ecological product adoption.

Countries around the world are adopting various strategies to enhance their environmental sustainability, such as reducing carbon footprints, promoting green products, encouraging recycling, and utilizing renewable energy. One effective approach to fostering environmental responsibility is to curb plastic usage through measures like reducing plastic production or imposing taxes on plastic goods. For instance, Germany introduced the EWKFondsG in 2023, a law that imposes a tax on single-use plastics. The revenue from this tax is allocated to a fund designed to mitigate the environmental and health impacts of these products by financing activities that prevent or eliminate plastic waste ("Plastics tax" in Germany - the Single-Use Plastic Fund Act, 2024). Meanwhile, recycling remains a preferred strategy in other European countries. In 2019, approximately 41% of plastic packaging waste was recycled across the EU. Notably, nine EU member states recycled over half of the plastic packaging waste they generated: Lithuania (70%), Czechia (61%), Bulgaria (59% in 2018), the Netherlands (57%), Sweden and Slovakia (53% each), Spain (52%), Cyprus (51%), and Slovenia (50%). These efforts reflect a robust commitment to reducing plastic waste and promoting sustainability (Eurostat, 2021).

In Cambodia, the adopting of ecological products is slowly growing but faces different challenges. Notably, there is a growing interest in solar energy solutions and recycling

solution. A local recycled company has managed to recycled tonnes of waste into recyclables, and plan to expand its operation to different provinces. (THE PHNOM PENH POST, 2022)

Consumer awareness

It is widely recognized that a large proportion of non-sustainable product consumption originates from developing countries, particularly in Asia. However, this is no longer solely the case, as efforts to promote consumer awareness of sustainable products are intensifying globally. A study was conducted by PwC's June 2021 Global Consumer Insights Pulse Survey, half of all global consumers surveyed say they've become even more eco-friendly. The survey continue to reveal that consumers in the Asia-Pacific region are more eco-friendly than the global average, and a large majority of respondents report becoming more eco-friendly. In Indonesia, it's 86%, and in Vietnam and the Philippines, it's 74%. The trend is also prevalent in the Middle East. In Egypt, 68% say they're more eco-friendly, and in the United Arab Emirates, it's 67%. This suggests that sustainability messaging should have amplified resonance in those regions. (Pwc publication, 2021)

7 PESTEL ANALYSIS

Analyzing Generation Z's perspective on ecological products in Cambodia through a PESTEL lens reveals several critical factors shaping their attitudes and behaviors. Politically, while Cambodia has shown increasing interest in environmental issues, the implementation of policies promoting sustainability and eco-friendly practices may still be evolving, influencing Gen Z's access to such products. The government has been supportive of international environmental agreements and regional partnerships aimed at environmental conservation

Economically, the income levels and cost of living among Cambodian youth play a significant role in their ability to afford and prioritize ecological products, especially considering potential price premiums associated with sustainability. Cambodia is still developing, with a GDP largely dependent on agriculture, textiles, and tourism. These sectors are both opportunity-rich and vulnerable to shifts towards sustainability. As the global market increasingly demands sustainable products, Cambodia's textile industry, for instance, faces pressure to adapt to eco-friendly manufacturing processes. This shift could attract ethical investments and open new markets, but it also requires upfront investment in greener technologies and practices, which could be a hurdle for local businesses.

Socially, there is a growing consciousness among the younger Cambodian population about environmental issues, driven by global connectivity and education. Gen Z, in particular, is more likely to advocate for and support eco-friendly products compared to older generations. However, the actual consumption of such products is often constrained by higher costs and limited availability. Efforts to educate and promote environmental responsibility at a grassroots level could influence broader consumer behavior over time.

Technologically, Cambodia is experiencing rapid growth in digital connectivity, which could be leveraged to promote ecological products. E-commerce platforms and social media are powerful tools for raising awareness and facilitating the accessibility of sustainable goods. However, the technological infrastructure to support large-scale recycling or renewable energy initiatives is still underdeveloped.

Environmentally, Cambodia faces significant challenges such as deforestation, water pollution, and waste management, which directly affect the quality of life and public health. These issues highlight the urgent need for effective environmental governance and sustainable practices. The integration of environmental education into the national curriculum and public campaigns could play a crucial role in fostering a culture of sustainability.

Legally, while Cambodia has established laws aimed at protecting the environment, enforcement remains inconsistent. Strengthening the legal framework and ensuring its enforcement are crucial to encourage businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices. Additionally, introducing incentives for sustainable business practices could accelerate the adoption of green technologies and products. Although, there are regulatory frameworks in place, ensuring transparent labeling and consumer protection regarding ecological products remains an area of importance for this demographic

Overall, understanding these PESTEL factors reveals that Cambodia is supportive of environmentally friendly initiatives, yet there remain areas in need of improvement. This PESTEL analysis can serve as a valuable guide for businesses, policymakers, and advocacy groups. By aligning their strategies with the ecological preferences and needs of Cambodia's Generation Z, they can more effectively address these gaps and promote sustainable development within the country.

8 ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR TOWARD ECOLOGICAL PRODUCT

8.1. Demographic Analysis

Out of 260 responses collected, only 248 were accepted for analysis due to errors in the remaining 12 submissions. The demographic profile of the 248 survey respondents is largely composed of Generation Z individuals, accounting for 237 participants, with Millennials making up the remainder. The gender distribution is almost even, with 45% male, 50% female, and a small fraction, 5%, opting not to specify their gender.

In terms of income, the majority falls within the middle-income bracket, with 60% earning between $301 and $900, while 39% earn $901 or more, and a minimal 1% earn less than $300.

Education levels are high among respondents, with nearly half holding a bachelor's degree and the majority, 55%, having a master's degree. Employment status shows that 62.5% are employed, 35% are students, and a small portion is self-employed.

This suggests that the survey sample is predominantly young, educated, and has a reasonable representation across different income levels, which may influence their views on and consumption of eco-friendly products.

8.2. Data and Results from Qualitative survey

Question 1

Do you think it is important to understand about eco-friendly products?

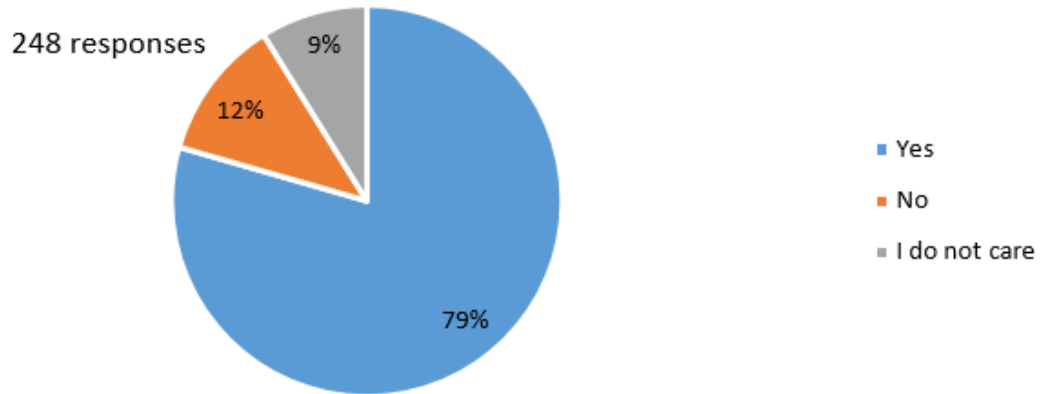248 responses

- Yes
- No
- I do not care

Figure 3 Important of understand eco-friendly product

Understanding consumer perspectives on eco-friendly products is crucial in today's market landscape, as it reflects evolving attitudes towards sustainability and environmental responsibility. From the survey data provided, it's evident that a majority of respondents, with 197 individuals (approximately 79%), believe that it is important to understand eco-friendly products. This finding underscores a growing awareness and concern among consumers regarding the ecological impact of their purchasing decisions. On the other hand, 29 respondents (about 12%) indicated that they do not consider it important, while 22 respondents (roughly 9%) expressed a neutral stance, stating that they do not care about eco-friendly products. These perspectives highlight diverse attitudes within the consumer base. For instance, there is an opportunity to educate and engage the segment that is less inclined towards eco-friendly products, potentially through highlighting the benefits of sustainability or addressing specific concerns that may be barriers to adoption. Overall, this data underscores the significance of environmental considerations in consumer behavior and the importance of eco-conscious initiatives in the marketplace.

Question 2

Do you think non-eco-friendly products have negative impacts on our lives?
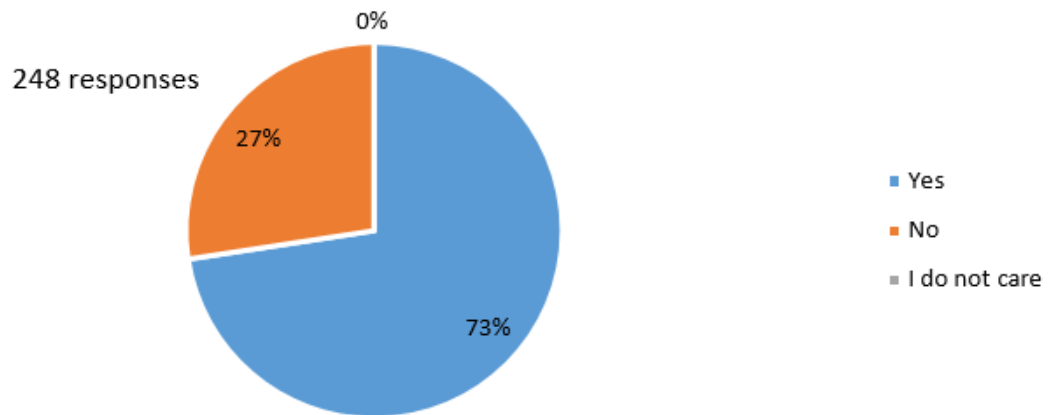

Figure 4 Negative impacts on non-eco-friendly product

The survey results overwhelmingly suggest that respondents believe non-eco-friendly products have negative impacts on our lives. With 180 respondents (approximately 73%) affirming this viewpoint, it reflects a widespread awareness and concern about the environmental consequences associated with such products. This perception likely stems from an understanding of issues like pollution, resource depletion, and climate change, which are often linked to unsustainable production and consumption practices. Interestingly, a notable minority of 68 respondents (about 27%) indicated that they do not perceive non-eco-friendly products to have negative impacts. While this perspective represents a minority opinion within the sample, it underscores the diversity of attitudes and beliefs regarding environmental sustainability. The absence of respondents expressing "I do not care" suggests a strong consensus among participants about the significance of considering environmental factors in product choices. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of promoting eco-friendly alternatives and implementing sustainable practices to mitigate the adverse effects of non-eco-friendly products on our lives and the environment.

Question 3

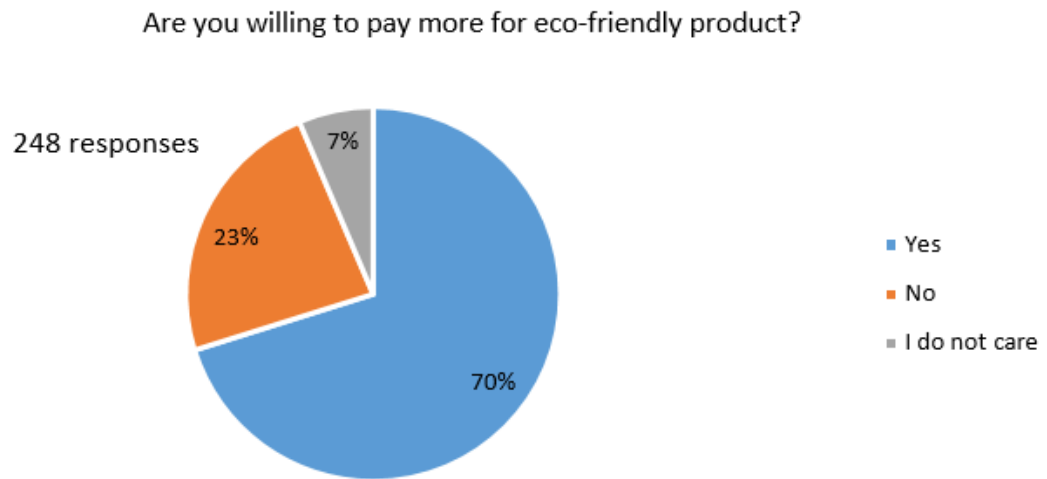Are you willing to pay more for eco-friendly product?

Figure 5 Willingness to pay more for eco-friendly product

The results shown in the pie chart indicate that out of 248 respondents, a substantial majority 70% are willing to pay more for eco-friendly products. This suggests a high level of environmental commitment or a belief in the value of sustainable goods among most participants. Conversely, 23% are not willing to pay a higher price for eco-friendly products, which could reflect budget constraints, differing priorities, or skepticism about the benefits of such products. The remaining 7% express indifference, as indicated by their choice of "I do not care," showing a small fraction of the respondents are neutral or unconcerned about the cost implications of purchasing eco-friendly products. Overall, the chart highlights that while a significant majority may prioritize environmental considerations in their purchasing decisions, there are still notable segments of the population that do not, whether due to differing values or other constraints.
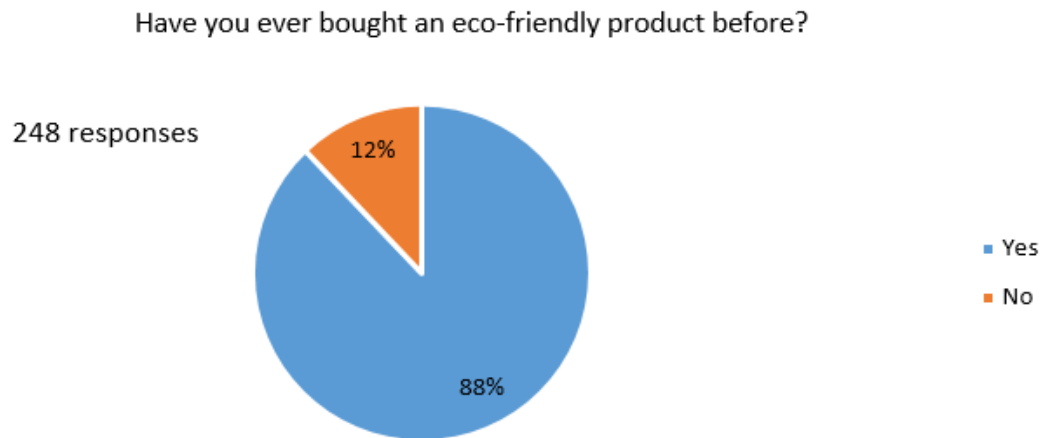
Question 4

Have you ever bought an eco-friendly product before?

248 responses

Figure 6 Experience of purchasing eco-friendly product

The purpose of this question is to understand respondents experience of purchasing eco-friendly product. The pie chart illustrates the responses to a survey question aimed at determining the prevalence of eco-friendly product purchases among 248 respondents. The vast majority, at 88%, affirm that they have previously bought an eco-friendly product, which indicates a significant engagement with environmentally conscious consumer behavior within this group. Meanwhile, the remaining 12% have not purchased an eco-friendly product, pointing to a segment of the population that may be untapped by the eco-friendly market, or that may have other priorities when making purchases. The data could be relevant for understanding market penetration of eco-friendly products and consumer trends, especially if the respondents are representative of a larger population.

Question 5

248 responses   Have you ever bought an eco-friendly product before?

Figure 7 Reason for purchasing eco-friendly product

The bar chart summarizes the main reasons why 248 respondents choose to buy eco-friendly products. The most common reason, with 55 responses, is the belief that eco-friendly products are healthier. The next most frequent reason, with 53 responses, is that purchasing eco-friendly products aligns with the respondents' values. Close behind, with 50 responses, is the care for the environment. Convenience is also a factor for 43 respondents, while the influence of family and friends accounts for 42 responses. A smaller number, 5 respondents, have other reasons for buying eco-friendly products. These results indicate that health, personal values, and environmental concerns are significant motivators for consumers when it comes to eco-friendly purchases.

Question 6

Do you think eco-friendly products has higher quality compare to non-eco-friendly product?
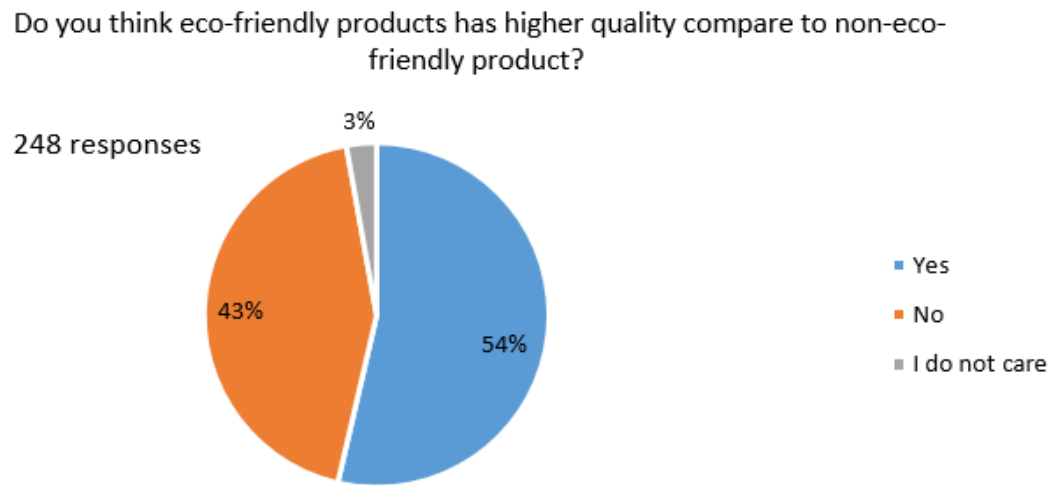
248 responses

Figure 8 Comparison of quality between eco and non-eco-friendly product

The pie chart presents responses to a question about the perceived quality of eco-friendly products compared to non-eco-friendly ones, based on feedback from 248 individuals. A slight majority of the respondents, 54%, believe that eco-friendly products have higher quality than their non-eco-friendly counterparts, suggesting a perception that eco-friendliness may be associated with superior product standards or benefits. Conversely, 43% do not think that eco-friendly products have higher quality, which could reflect skepticism about the actual benefits of such products or satisfaction with the quality of non-eco-friendly products they currently use. A very small segment, 3% of the respondents, express neutrality or indifference by choosing "I do not care," indicating that for these individuals, the eco-friendliness of a product is not a factor in their judgment of its quality. These results indicate a division in perception, with a narrow majority viewing eco-friendly products as higher quality, while a substantial minority do not share this view, highlighting the complexities in consumer attitudes toward eco-friendly products.

Question 7

Are you willing to adjust your lifestyle or habits to be more
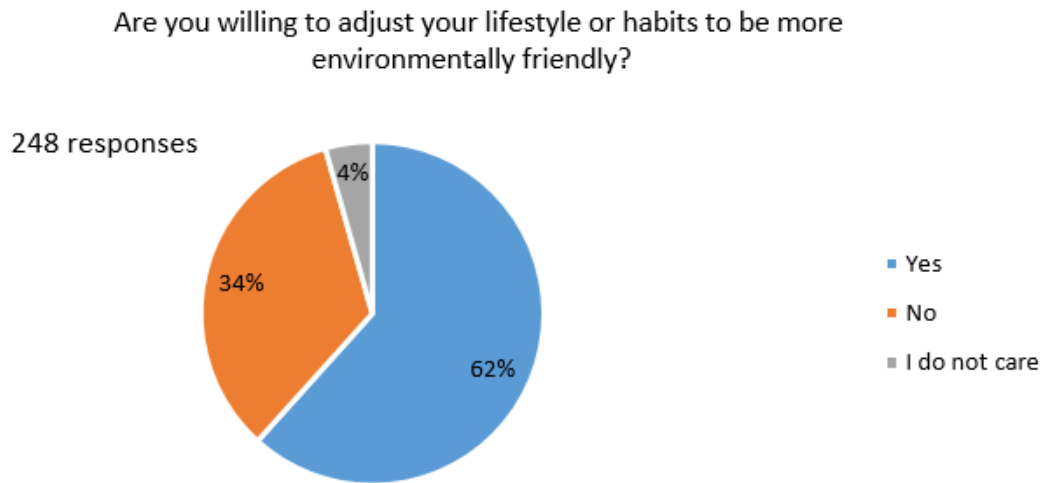environmentally friendly?

248 responses

Figure 9 Willingness of respondents to adjust their lifestyle to be more eco-friendly

The pie chart illustrates responses to the question "Are you willing to adjust your lifestyle or habits to be more environmentally friendly?" from 248 participants. The majority, with 62% of responses, affirmatively indicate a willingness to make adjustments to their lifestyle to be more environmentally friendly. This reflects a significant level of commitment to environmental issues among the surveyed individuals. In contrast, 34% of respondents are not willing to make such changes, which might suggest either contentment with their current lifestyle, perceived difficulty in making these changes, or a lack of concern for environmental issues. A small fraction, 4% of the participants, express indifference by selecting "I do not care." This suggests a minority of the respondents do not place a high priority on the environmental impact of their personal habits. Overall, these results suggest that while there is a substantial inclination towards adopting eco-friendlier lifestyles among the majority, there is also a notable portion of the population that is resistant to change or indifferent to environmental considerations.

Question 8

Would you switch from a well-known brand to a lesser-known one if it had more eco-friendly options?

248 responses

0%

30%

70%
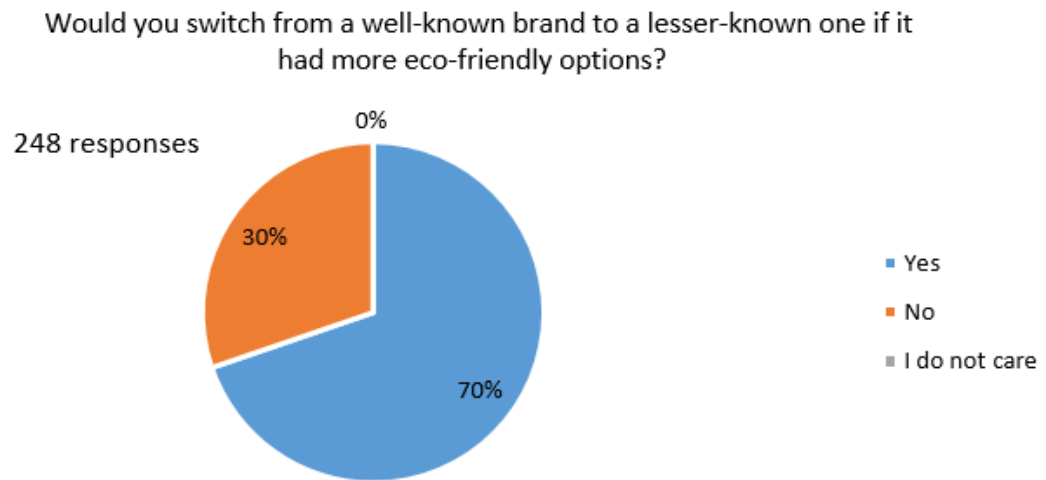
- Yes
- No
- I do not care

Figure 10 Respondent preferences between well-known and lesser well-known brand

The pie chart presents data from 248 respondents asked whether they would switch from a well-known brand to a lesser-known one if it offered eco-friendlier options. The majority, at 70%, indicate that they would make such a switch, suggesting a strong preference for eco-friendly products over brand loyalty. This could reflect a growing trend of environmental consciousness impacting consumer choices. On the other hand, 30% of the participants would not switch to a lesser-known brand for eco-friendlier options. This group may value brand reliability, quality assurance, or other factors more than the eco-friendliness of the product. Interestingly, the chart shows that none of the respondents are indifferent to this issue, as indicated by the 0% response for "I do not care." This could imply that when it comes to the decision-making process related to eco-friendly options, all the respondents have a clear stance, whether in favor of or against changing their purchasing habits based on the eco-friendliness of a product. In summary, the data suggests a strong inclination towards supporting eco-friendly products, even if it means departing from established brand preferences.
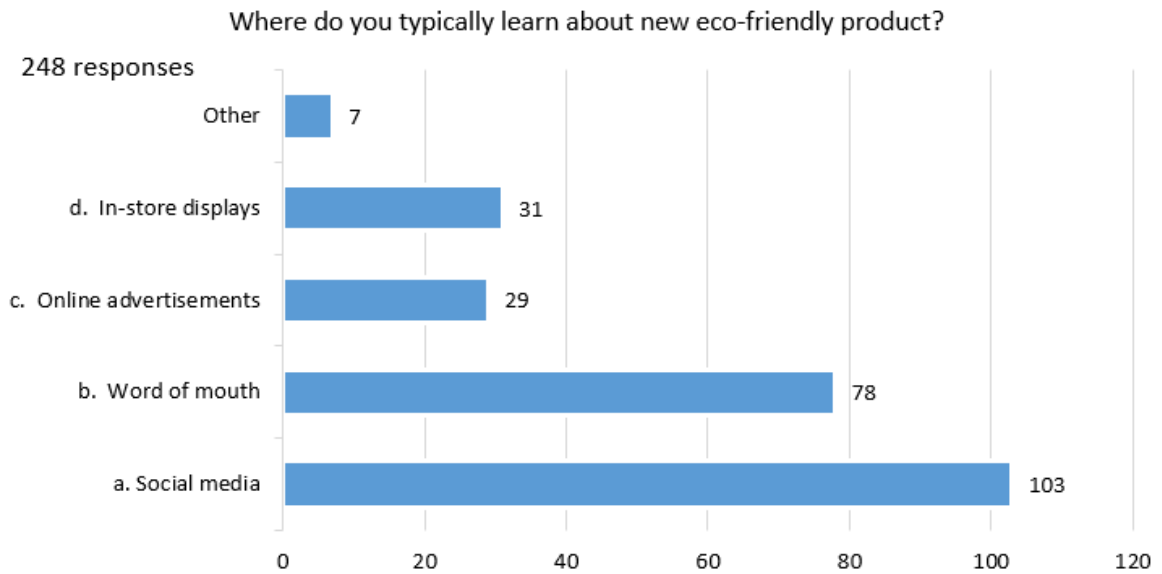
Question 9

Figure 11 Source of information about new eco-friendly product

The bar chart illustrates various sources from which people learn about new eco-friendly products. The most common source, as indicated by the longest bar, is social media, suggesting that platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter play a significant role in disseminating information about eco-friendly products. Word of mouth, represented by the second-longest bar, also appears to be a significant information channel, implying that personal recommendations and discussions are influential. In-store displays and online advertisements are less influential compared to social media and word of mouth, as seen by their shorter bars. However, they still contribute as sources of information for some consumers. Lastly, a small number represented by the shortest bar, indicate that they learn about eco-friendly products through other unspecified means, which could include various less common channels such as blogs, podcasts, magazines, or direct email marketing. The data suggests that digital and social mediums, along with personal networks, are primary ways that people are exposed to and educated about eco-friendly products. This could have implications for how companies market such products and the importance of having a strong online presence and encouraging customer advocacy.

Question 10

Please rate the personal benefits you see in using eco-friendly products
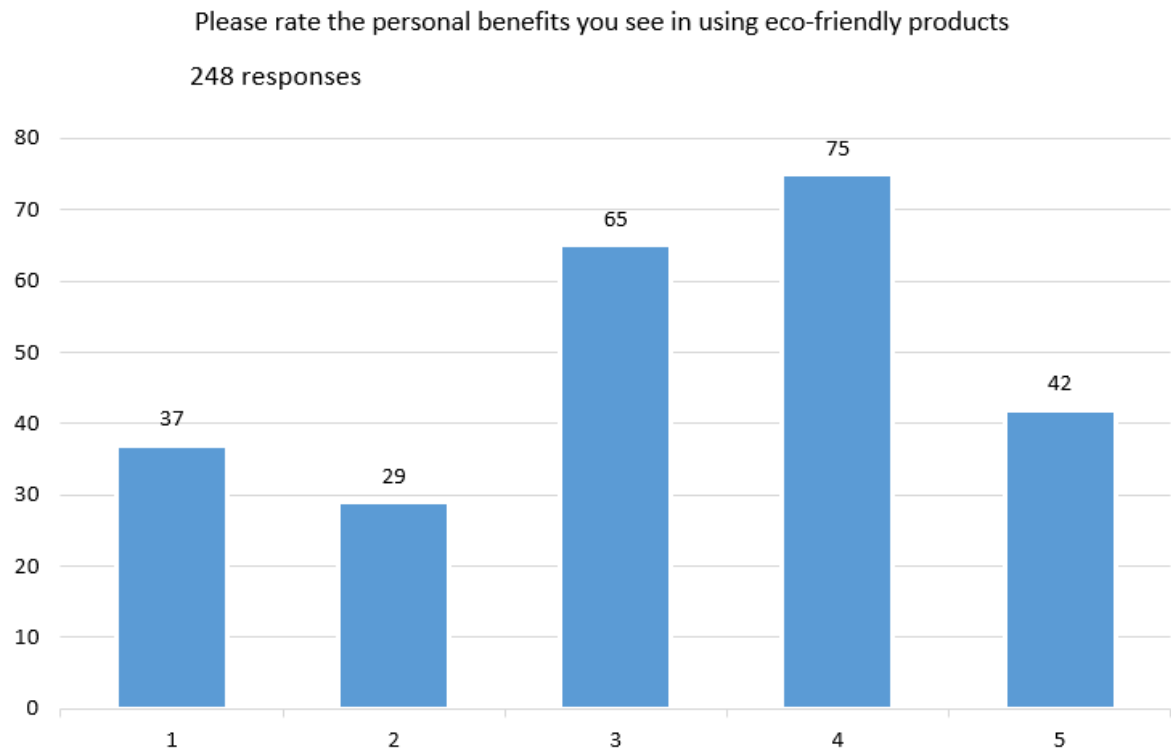
248 responses

Figure 12 Personal benefit of eco-friendly products

The bar chart depicts respondents' ratings of the personal benefits they perceive in using eco-friendly products, on a scale from 1 (no benefit) to 5 (very significant benefit). Looking at the bar chart, the most selected rating for the personal benefits of using eco-friendly products is 4 out of 5, with 75 responses. This indicates that a large number of respondents see high personal benefits in using these products, though they stop short of considering the benefits to be the most significant. The next highest number of responses is for the rating of 5 out of 5, with 42 responses, suggesting that a significant number of respondents view the benefits as very significant. The number of responses gradually decreases for the ratings of 3 and 2, which received 65 and 29 responses respectively, pointing to a smaller group of respondents who perceive the benefits as moderate or low. The least number of responses, 37, is for the rating of 1 out of 5, indicating that few respondents believe there are no personal benefits to using eco-friendly products. Overall, the chart shows a positive perception of eco-friendly products among the respondents, with most acknowledging high to very high personal benefits.

Question 11

How do you feel about the availability of eco-friendly products in your area?

248 responses

Figure 13 Availability of local eco-friendly product

The bar chart indicates respondents' perceptions of the availability of eco-friendly products in their area, on a scale from 1 (very difficult to find) to 5 (very easy to find). The most common response is a 3 out of 5, with 113 respondents feeling that eco-friendly products are moderately available in their area. This suggests that while these products can be found, there may be some effort or compromise involved in the process. The next most frequent response is 2 out of 5, with 96 respondents indicating that eco-friendly products are somewhat difficult to find. This implies that a significant number of people have to put in extra effort to locate such products, which may hinder their ability to purchase them regularly. fewer respondents rated the availability as very difficult to find (1 out of 5) and very easy to find (5 out of 5), with 11 and 16 responses respectively. These low numbers suggest that very few people find it extremely challenging or extremely easy to obtain eco-friendly products in their area. Lastly, a small number of respondents, 12, feel that the availability is leaning more towards the easy side, rating it 4 out of 5. Overall, these results

reflect a perception that eco-friendly products are neither very difficult nor very easy to find, with a tendency towards moderate to low availability in respondents' areas.

Question 12

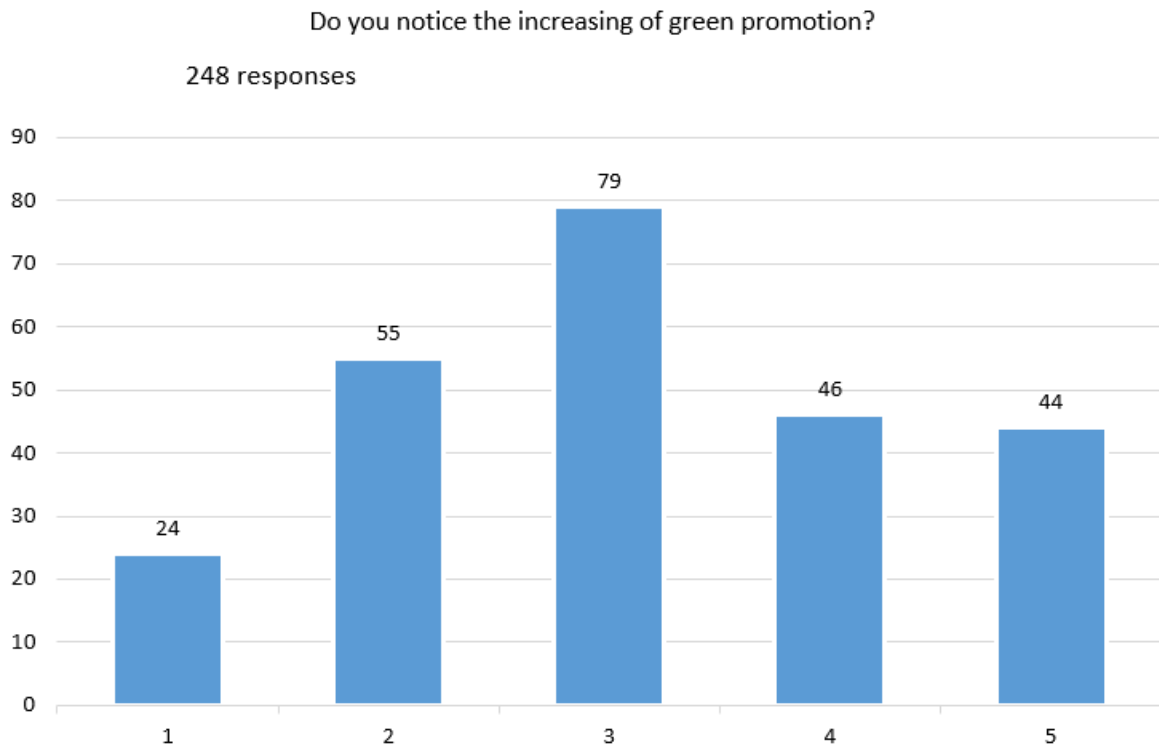Do you notice the increasing of green promotion?

248 responses

Figure 14 The increase of green promotion

The bar chart assesses respondents' awareness of the increase in green promotion, on a scale from 1 (not much) to 5 (a lot). The highest number of responses is for 3, indicating that the majority of respondents perceive a moderate level of increase in the promotion of eco-friendly or green initiatives. This suggests that while there is some noticeability in the uptick of green marketing, it has not reached a level of prominence for the largest group of respondents. The next highest response is 2, with a considerable number of individuals feeling that there has been only a slight increase in green promotion. Fewer respondents perceive a substantial increase in green promotion, as indicated by the responses for 4. Interestingly, the responses for the extremes (1 and 5) are the lowest, with very few respondents feeling that there is either very little or a lot of increase in green promotion. This spread of responses suggests a general awareness of green initiatives in marketing and promotions but indicates that a significant portion of the audience does not view it as highly prominent or overwhelmingly frequent.
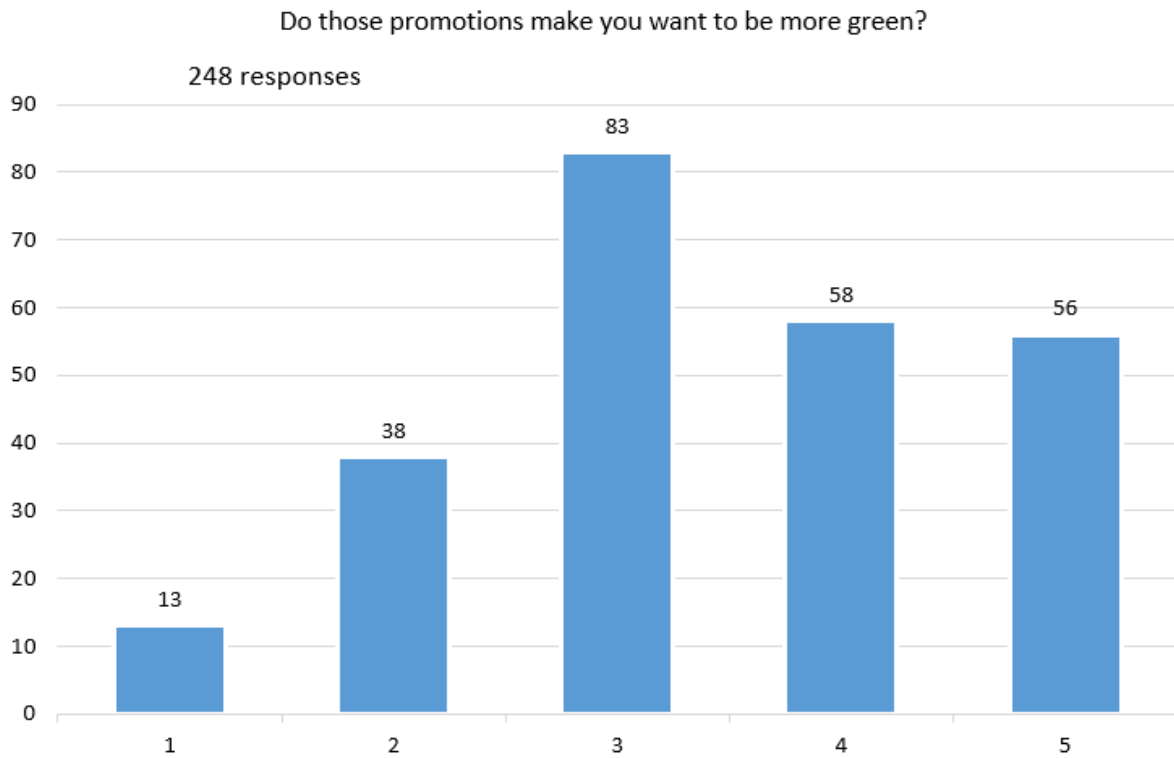
Question 13

Figure 15 Effectiveness of green promotion

The bar chart reflects respondents' reactions to green promotions and their influence on the desire to adopt eco-friendlier behaviors. The majority, with the highest number of responses, indicate a moderate response (3), suggesting that while these promotions have some impact, they aren't overwhelmingly persuasive for this group. The response for level 2 is the next highest, showing that a significant number of people feel only slightly influenced by green promotions. On the higher end of the scale, levels 4 and 5 have a combined total that exceeds the response for level 3, indicating that a substantial number of respondents feel more strongly influenced by these promotions. The fewest respondents feel not at all influenced by green promotions, as shown by the response level at 1. This indicates that while green promotions may not be the most compelling factor for this group, they do have some impact on the majority of the individuals surveyed. Overall, these results suggest that while green promotions do inspire a portion of the audience to be more eco-conscious, there is a range in the level of influence they exert, with a tendency towards a moderate to higher level of influence.

Question 14

Do you think there are enough local eco-friendly options that meet your needs?
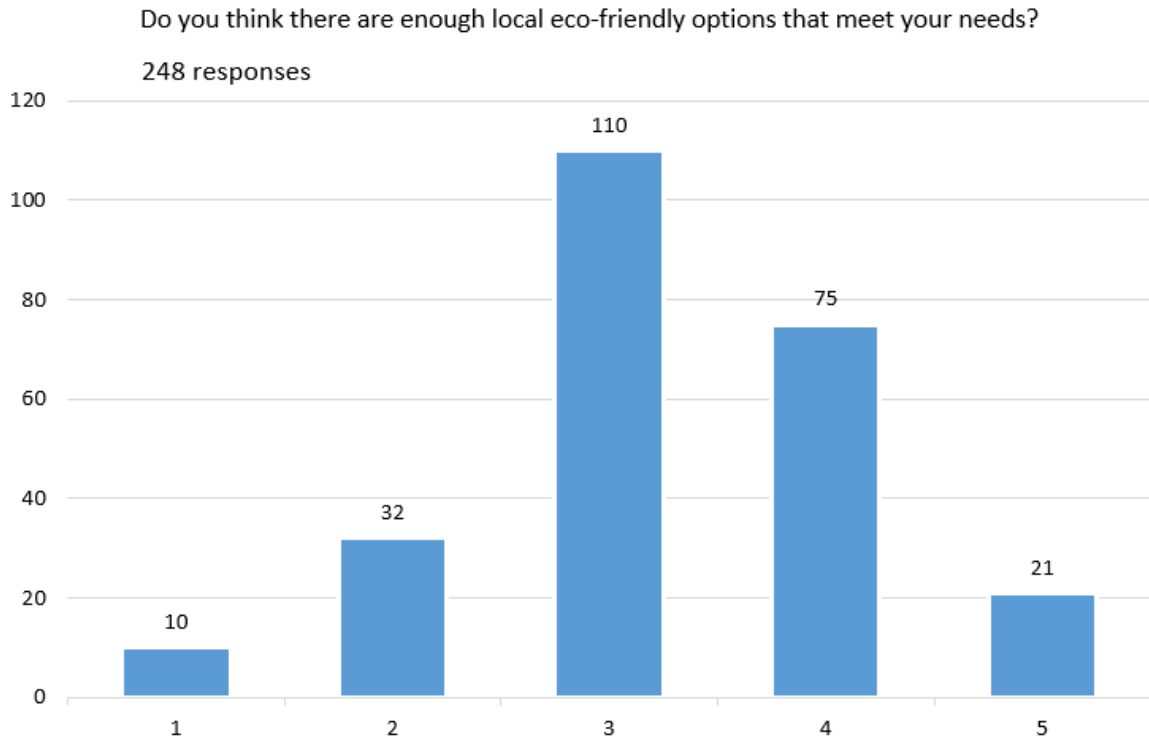
248 responses

Figure 16 Respondents feeling over the availability of eco-friendly product

The bar chart solicits responses from individuals on whether there are enough local eco-friendly options that meet their needs. A majority of the respondents, represented by the tallest bar at the rating of 3, feel that the availability of eco-friendly options is moderate not fully meeting their needs but also not entirely lacking. The second-largest group, as indicated by the bar for the rating of 4, feels that there are many eco-friendly options available that nearly meet their needs. While not completely satisfied, they lean more towards the belief that there is an adequate supply. On the other end of the spectrum, a smaller number of respondents feel that the eco-friendly options are insufficient, with the ratings of 1 and 2 having significantly fewer responses. This indicates that while there is some dissatisfaction with the availability, it is not the predominant sentiment. Finally, the fewest respondents, shown by the shortest bar at the rating of 5, believe that there are fully sufficient eco-friendly options available that meet their needs. In summary, the results depict a general sentiment that while there are some eco-friendly products available, there is room for improvement in terms of meeting consumer needs fully.

Question 15

Do you actively seek out information about the environmental impact of products before making a purchase?
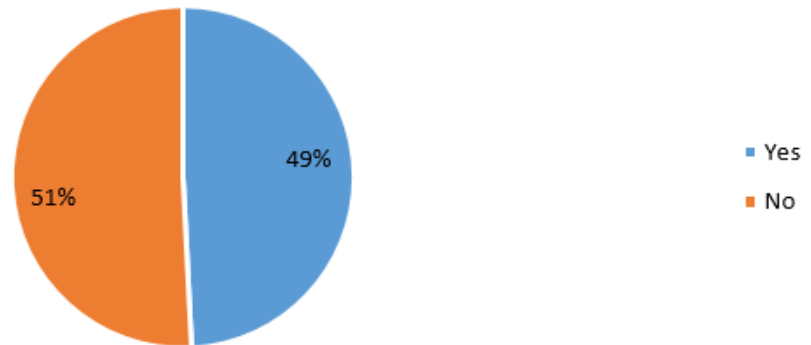
248 responses

49%

51%

- Yes
- No

Figure 17 Respondent frequency of seeking out information before making purchase decision

The pie chart shows a nearly even split in the responses to whether people actively seek out information about the environmental impact of products before making a purchase. Slightly more than half of the respondents do not seek out environmental impact information, which could indicate a range of possibilities, such as a lack of concern for environmental issues, a deficit of available information, or perhaps a belief that individual choices have minimal impact. Conversely, just under half of those surveyed do actively look for environmental impact information before buying products. This group is evidently environmentally conscious and considers the ecological footprint of their purchases significant. Their behavior suggests a proactive approach to consumer responsibility and a preference for products that align with their environmental values. This data points to a consumer base that is divided on the importance of environmental information in their purchasing decisions, highlighting the potential for increased consumer education and the marketability of environmentally friendly products to a receptive audience.

Question 16

Would you suggest or recommend friends/relatives to be more green?
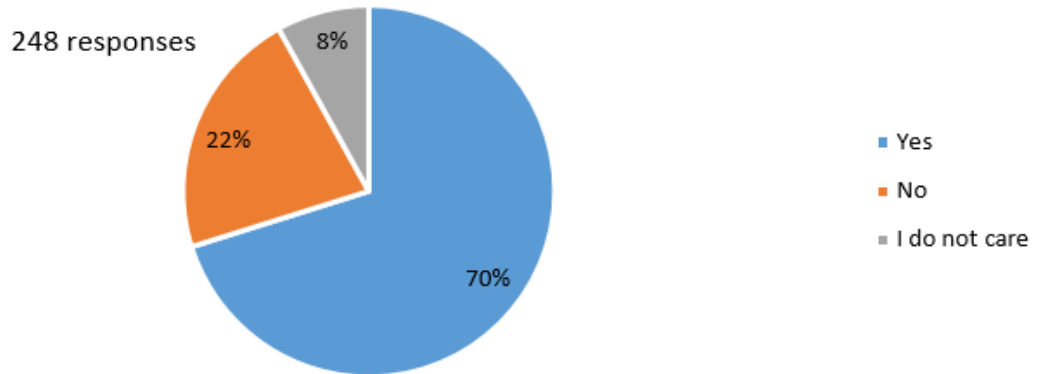

Figure 18 Respondents encourage their friends/relatives to be more green

The pie chart reflects responses to the question of whether individuals would suggest or recommend that friends and relatives be more environmentally conscious ("green"). A considerable majority would advocate for greener choices, indicating that these respondents not only value environmental friendliness but are also willing to encourage it within their social circles. A smaller segment would not make such suggestions, which might be due to a variety of reasons including but not limited to, respecting others' autonomy in decision-making, believing it's not their place to suggest such changes, or they might not prioritize environmental issues themselves. A minimal portion of the respondents are indifferent, choosing "I do not care," reflecting either a lack of commitment to environmental issues or a belief that their recommendations would not influence others' behaviors. Overall, the result suggests that the concept of being green has substantial support and that many individuals are not only willing to adopt such practices themselves but are also prepared to encourage others to do the same.

8.2.1. Concluding of Results

In conclusion, the collective data from the various charts suggest that there is a significant level of awareness and engagement with eco-friendly products and green practices among the survey's respondents. A substantial portion of participants not only acknowledges the importance of eco-friendly products for personal and environmental health but also expresses willingness to adjust their lifestyle choices accordingly. While there is a

recognition of the need for more accessible eco-friendly options, the majority are influenced by green marketing to some extent and have taken action by purchasing such products. The data also reveals that these attitudes and behaviors are consistent across a young, educated demographic with diverse income levels. Overall, the survey highlights a positive inclination towards eco-friendliness in consumer behavior within the represented group.

- Relationship between Previous Purchase and Willingness to pay more for eco-friendly product

RQ1: Is there a relationship between individuals who have previously purchased eco-friendly products and their willingness to pay more for such products in the future?

Hypothesis (H1): Individuals who have previously purchased eco-friendly products are more likely to be willing to pay a higher price for eco-friendly products in the future.

Null Hypothesis (H0_1): There is no relationship between having previously purchased eco-friendly products and the willingness to pay more for such products in the future.

The Pearson Correlation coefficient is very close to zero (-0.014), indicating no real relationship exists between the two variables. Moreover, the significance level is high (0.822), far above the commonly accepted thresholds (like 0.05 or 0.01), which means the findings are not statistically significant.

Based on this analysis, we would fail to reject the null hypothesis (H0) since the data suggests that there is no relationship between past purchases of eco-friendly products and the willingness to pay more for them in the future.

- Influence of Income on Lifestyle Adjustments for Eco-Friendliness

RQ2: How does income influence the willingness of individuals to adjust their lifestyles to be eco-friendlier?

Hypothesis (H2): Individuals with higher incomes are more likely to adjust their lifestyles to be eco-friendlier.

Null Hypothesis (H0_2): There is no relationship between income levels and the willingness to adjust lifestyles to be more eco-friendly

The correlation analysis results for RQ2 indicate a Pearson Correlation coefficient of 0.230 between income and the willingness to adjust lifestyles to be more environmentally friendly. This coefficient, though not close to 1, suggests a modest positive correlation, implying that as income increases, there is a tendency for the willingness to be eco-friendlier to also increase.

Furthermore, the significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.003, which is statistically significant as it is well below the common alpha levels of 0.05 or 0.01. This suggests that the observed correlation is unlikely to be due to random chance and may represent a real relationship between the variables.

Given these results, we reject the Null Hypothesis (H0_2). The evidence supports the alternative hypothesis that individuals with higher incomes may have a greater propensity to adopt eco-friendlier habits.

- Income and Willingness to Pay More for eco-friendly product

RQ3: Is there a correlation between the level of income and the willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products?

Hypothesis (H3): Individuals with higher incomes are more willing to pay a premium for eco-friendly products.

Null Hypothesis (H0_3): There is no correlation between income levels and the willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products.

The correlation analysis results indicate a Pearson Correlation coefficient of 0.170 between income and the willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products. This coefficient suggests a modest positive correlation, meaning that as income increases, there is some tendency for the willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products to increase as well.

The significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.002, which is well below the alpha levels of 0.05 or 0.01, making the correlation statistically significant. This significance indicates that the probability of the observed correlation occurring by chance is very low.

Based on these results, the Null Hypothesis (H0_3), which states that there is no correlation between income levels and the willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products, is rejected.

The evidence supports the alternative hypothesis (H3) that individuals with higher incomes may be more willing to pay a premium for eco-friendly products.

- Impact of Higher Education on Environmental Values

RQ4: Does a higher level of education correlate with the importance placed on adopting greener practices?

Hypothesis (H4): Individuals with higher education levels place greater importance on adopting greener practices.

Null Hypothesis (H0_4): There is no correlation between the level of education and the importance placed on being more green.

Pearson Correlation coefficient of 0.688 between the highest degree of education obtained and the perceived importance of understanding about eco-friendly products. This value suggests a very strong positive correlation, meaning that individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to consider it important to understand about eco-friendly products.

The significance level, or p-value, is 0.002, which is marginally above the standard threshold for statistical significance (usually set at 0.05). This means that while there is a statistically significant correlation between the level of education and the importance placed on understanding about eco-friendly products.

Therefore, based on the data, we reject the Null Hypothesis (H0) for RQ4. There is statistically significant evidence to support the hypothesis (H4) that individuals with higher education levels place more importance on understanding eco-friendly products or adopting greener practices.

- Personal benefits influence the likelihood of suggesting eco-friendly products to friends or relatives

RQ5: Does the perception of personal benefit from using eco-friendly products influence consumers' likelihood of recommending these products to friends and relatives?

Hypothesis (H5): Consumers who perceive a significant personal benefit from using eco-friendly products are more likely to recommend these products to their friends and relatives.

Null Hypothesis (H0_5): There is no significant relationship between the perception of personal benefit and the likelihood of recommending eco-friendly products to friends and relatives.

The correlation analysis shows a Pearson Correlation coefficient of 0.265 between the personal benefits perceived in using eco-friendly products and the likelihood of suggesting or recommending friends/relatives to be more green. This positive correlation suggests that individuals who recognize more personal benefits from using eco-friendly products are also more likely to recommend others to adopt greener practices.
The significance level is 0.003, indicating that this correlation is statistically significant and is not likely to have occurred by chance, given that it is well below the commonly used threshold of 0.05.

Based on this data analysis for RQ5, the conclusion is that we reject the Null Hypothesis (H0_5); in favor of alternative hypothesis (H5)

- Perceived quality and the experience of purchasing eco-friendly products

RQ6: What is the relationship between the perceived quality of eco-friendly products and consumers' experience of purchasing these products?
Hypothesis (H1): There is a positive relationship between consumers' positive experiences of purchasing eco-friendly products and their perceptions of these products as high quality.
Null Hypothesis (H0_6): There is no significant relationship between the purchasing experiences of consumers and their perceptions of the quality of eco-friendly products.

The correlation analysis results show a Pearson Correlation coefficient of -0.016, indicating a negligible negative correlation between the perceived quality of eco-friendly products and consumers' experience of purchasing these products. Essentially, this suggests no meaningful relationship exists between how consumers perceive the quality of eco-friendly products and whether they have previously purchased them.

The significance level (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.807, which is not statistically significant, as it is far above the standard alpha level of 0.05. This high p-value indicates that the correlation

is not statistically different from zero, meaning that it's likely to be the result of random variation rather than a true correlation.

Therefore, for RQ6, we fail to reject the Null Hypothesis (H0_6). There is no statistically significant evidence to support the alternative hypothesis (H1) that a consumer's positive purchasing experience of eco-friendly products is related to their perception of these products as high quality.

The series of SPSS correlation analyses examining consumer behaviors and attitudes towards eco-friendly products reveal a nuanced picture of the factors influencing eco-conscious consumerism. While certain relationships demonstrate a weak to moderate positive correlation with statistical significance, such as higher income levels correlating with an increased willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products and higher educational attainment correlating with a greater emphasis on understanding eco-friendly products, other factors do not show a significant association.

In conclusion, the data from the sample suggest that while certain socioeconomic factors like income and education do have a detectable relationship with eco-friendly attitudes and behaviors, they are not the sole determinants. Consumer attitudes and behaviors towards eco-friendly products are likely shaped by a broader array of factors, potentially including environmental awareness, social influence, and personal values, which were not all directly measured in this survey. This indicates that fostering eco-friendly consumerism may require multifaceted approaches that go beyond targeting demographic factors alone.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion of your thesis on "Consumer Behavior for Ecological Products Among Gen Z in Cambodia" emphasizes the significant awareness and engagement with eco-friendly products among the respondents. It notes that a substantial portion of participants acknowledge the importance of eco-friendly products for personal and environmental health and expresses a willingness to adjust their lifestyle choices accordingly. The study highlights the impact of green marketing, showing that many respondents have been influenced by it and have purchased eco-friendly products. The findings demonstrate that these attitudes and behaviors are prevalent across a young, educated demographic with diverse income levels, suggesting a positive inclination towards eco-friendliness in consumer behavior within the represented group.

The results from this study on "Consumer Behavior for Ecological Products Among Gen Z in Cambodia" are in alignment with the findings from the study "Choice of organic foods is related to perceived consequences for human health and to environmentally friendly behaviour." (Magnusson et al., 2003). Both studies underscore the significant role that health benefits and environmental considerations play in influencing consumer choices towards eco-friendly or organic products.

Given these insights, it is strongly advised that stakeholders intensify educational campaigns to elevate awareness of the advantages of ecological products. Marketing strategies should capitalize on digital platforms favored by Gen Z to optimize reach and engagement. Furthermore, pricing models ought to be revised to enhance the accessibility of eco-friendly products, taking into account the financial limitations of this demographic. A collaborative strategy among stakeholders in the ecological product market is crucial for crafting comprehensive strategies that tackle both market penetration and consumer education effectively. Implementing these measures could significantly boost the visibility and attractiveness of eco-friendly products to Gen Z consumers in Cambodia.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TPB   Theory of Planned Behavior

TAM   Technology Acceptance Model

PM   Particulate matter

EPVR Ecological Product Value Realization

LIST OF FIGURES

APPENDICES

Appendix P I: Survey Questionnaires

Survey

The purpose of this survey is to understand consumer preferences and attitudes towards eco-friendly products. Your responses will be analyzed for academic research purposes to contribute to the understanding of consumer behavior. Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymized to ensure your privacy and confidentiality.

* Indicates required question

1. Do you think it is important to understand about eco-friendly products? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

   ◯ I dont care

2. Do you think non-eco-friendly products have negative impacts on our lives? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

   ◯ I dont care

3. Are you willing to pay more for eco-friendly product? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

   ◯ I dont care

4. Have you ever bought an eco-friendly product before? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Yes
   ◯ No

5. What is the main reason that makes you want to buy an eco-friendly product? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ a. Because I care for the environment
   ◯ b. Because I think eco-friendly products are healthier
   ◯ c. Because it aligns with my value
   ◯ d. Because my family and friends are buying it
   ◯ e. Because it is more convenience
   ◯ Other: _____

6. Do you think eco-friendly products has higher quality compare to non-eco-friendly *
   product

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Yes
   ◯ No
   ◯ I dont care

7. Are you willing to adjust your lifestyle or habits to be more environmentally friendly? *

    Mark only one oval.

    ◯ Yes

    ◯ No

    ◯ I dont care

8. Would you switch from a well-known brand to a lesser-known one if it had more   *
    eco-friendly options?

    Mark only one oval.

    ◯ Yes

    ◯ No

    ◯ I dont care

9. Where do you typically learn about new eco-friendly product? *

    Check all that apply.

    ☐ a. Social media
    ☐ b. Word of mouth
    ☐ c. Online advertisements
    ☐ d. In-store displays

    ☐ Other: _____

10. Please rate the personal benefits you see in using eco-friendly products *

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No l	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very significant benefit

11. How do you feel about the availability of eco-friendly products in your area? *

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very	○	○	○	○	○	Very easy to find

12. Do you notice the increasing of green promotion? *

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not	○	○	○	○	○	A lot

13. Do those promotions make you want to be more green? *

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not	○	○	○	○	○	Very much

14. Do you think there are enough local eco-friendly options that meet your needs? *

    Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not	○	○	○	○	○	Enough

15. Do you actively seek out information about the environmental impact of products *
    before making a purchase?

    Mark only one oval.

    ◯ Yes

    ◯ No

16. What types of eco-friendly products are you most likely to purchase? *

    Check all that apply.

    ☐ a. Clothing and accessories
    ☐ b. Personal care and beauty products
    ☐ c. Food and beverages
    ☐ d. Household cleaning products
    ☐ e. Technology and gadgets

    ☐ Other: _____

17. Would you suggest or recommend friends/relatives to be more green?

    Mark only one oval.

    ◯ Yes

    ◯ No

    ◯ I dont care

Demographic

18. What is your age? *

    Mark only one oval.

    ◯ 12-27 (Gen Z)

    ◯ 28-43 (Millennia)

    ◯ 44-59 (Gen X)

19. Gender *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Male

◯ Female

◯ Prefer not to say

20. Income *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Less than $300

◯ $301-$600

◯ $601-$900

◯ $901 or more

21. Highest degree of education obtained *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Highschool or lower

◯ Bachelor's Degree

◯ Master's Degree

◯ PhD

Appendix P II: SPSS Results

Correlations

		Have you ever bought an eco-friendly product before?	Are you willing to pay more for eco-friendly product?
Have you ever bought an eco-friendly product before?	Pearson Correlation	1	-.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.822
	N	247	247
Are you willing to pay more for eco-friendly product?	Pearson Correlation	-.014	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.822	
	N	247	248

Correlations

		Are you willing to adjust your lifestyle or habits to be more environmentally friendly?	Income
Are you willing to adjust your lifestyle or habits to be more environmentally friendly?	Pearson Correlation	1	.230
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	248	248
Income	Pearson Correlation	.230	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	248	248

Correlations

		Income	Are you willing to pay more for eco-friendly product?
Income	Pearson Correlation	1	.170
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	248	248
Are you willing to pay more for eco-friendly product?	Pearson Correlation	.170	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	248	248

Correlations

		Do you think it is important to understand about eco-friendly products?	Highest degree of education obtained
Do you think it is important to understand about eco-friendly products?	Pearson Correlation	1	.688[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	248	248
Highest degree of education obtained	Pearson Correlation	.688[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	248	248

Correlations

		Please rate the personal benefits you see in using eco-friendly products	Would you suggest or recommend friends/relatives to be more green?
Please rate the personal benefits you see in using eco-friendly products	Pearson Correlation	1	.265
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	248	248
Would you suggest or recommend friends/relatives to be more green?	Pearson Correlation	.265	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	248	248

Correlations

		Do you think eco-friendly products has higher quality compare to 2n-eco-friendly product?	Have you ever bought an eco-friendly product before?
Do you think eco-friendly products has higher quality compare to 2n-eco-friendly product?	Pearson Correlation	1	-.016
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.807
	N	248	247
Have you ever bought an eco-friendly product before?	Pearson Correlation	-.016	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.807	
	N	247	247