

Article

# Consumers' Behavior Concerning Sustainable Packaging: An Exploratory Study on Romanian Consumers

Gheorghe Orzan <sup>1</sup>, Anca Francisca Cruceru <sup>1,\*</sup>, Cristina Teodora Bălăceanu <sup>2</sup>  
and Raluca-Giorgiana Chivu <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Marketing, The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest 010374, Romania; orzang@ase.ro (G.O.); raluca.chivu94@yahoo.com (R.-G.C.)

<sup>2</sup> Department of Economics and Economic Policies, Bucharest Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University, Splaiul Unirii, Bucharest 010271, Romania; movitea@yahoo.com

\* Correspondence: ancacruceru1@gmail.com; Tel.: +40-745-144-089

Received: 2 May 2018; Accepted: 28 May 2018; Published: 29 May 2018



**Abstract:** The paper analyzes the Romanian consumer's behavior concerning sustainable packaging through quantitative research among 268 consumers. The aim of the study is to determine the perception of the Romanian consumer regarding the role of eco-packaging in the formation of sustainable behavior. The research has as main objectives: assessing consumer preferences for the types of ecological packaging, knowing the reasons for purchasing green packaging, and the role of the information about eco-packaging in promoting sustainability. Most respondents are aware of the impact of packaging on the environment, the main reasons for purchasing are environmental protection, recycle and the feeling of being responsible. Packaging preferences include paper, glass and cardboard and, to a lesser extent, plastic and wood. The reasons why consumers are not willing to pay more for green packaging are the price of products correlated with the low consumer budget and the lack of information and these are the main barriers to adopting sustainable behavior.

**Keywords:** ecological packaging; type of packaging; sustainable consumer behavior; environmental protection

## 1. Introduction

Packaging is one of the most important constituents of the food product or non-food product because a well-packed product can be a guarantee of consumer protection. The package type is a communication instrument between businesses and final consumers and it is capable of attracting consumer's attention [1]. However, as a result of the new directions for environmental protection, it not only has to protect the products but must also be environmentally friendly. In today's society, packaging must meet both essential product requirements and specific environmental objectives. The packaging has four different marketing functions. First, it contains and protects the product; second, the packaging's role is to promote the product. It also helps consumers to use the product and, lastly, packaging facilitates recycling and decrease environmental damage [2].

Carlson [3] considers that eco-packaging must have benefits for the consumer, be safe and healthy for the individual and the community throughout its life cycle, be market-efficient and cost-effective; be obtained, produced, transported, and recycled via sources of renewable energy, as well as maximizing the use of renewable or recyclable materials; utilize clean production technologies and best practices; can be designed to optimize the materials and energy used, and can be effectively recovered and reused in numerous production cycles. Lately, governmental and nongovernmental concerns in Romania have increased in promoting the mass use of eco-packaging and in setting up

certain eco-labeling schemes to prevent environmental damage. As far as the producers, some of them have concerns in this area, but these are not conscious and standalone. These concerns are simply a reaction to market adaptation. In fact, efficient packaging solutions are being sought by companies in response to the need to reduce production, handling and transport costs, but also to improve the image of the organization among consumers.

Zadek [4] assumes that companies in the last decade have learned that realigning their strategy to address the responsible business activities can offer them with a competitive advantage and contribute to the organization's success in the long run. While many businesses have changed their practices to meet the needs of the modern "green consumer", some have exploited this "green market" for their own success. Thus, among the green trends, companies can also consider packaging that "encourages reuse" or creates social consciousness. Packaging that uses less material and is made of the reusable or biodegradable material is popular, as well. Scientists think this kind of eco-packaging is the future.

Consumers are continuously changing their attitudes, behavior, and approach in domains of consumption [5]. Consumers have become more aware of changes in the environment and the effect of their consumption behavior on it. Thus, the ecological consumer has given priority to protecting the environment and quality of life [6]. Consumers generally like to identify themselves with kind of companies that are environmental stewards. Even if environmental awareness is increasing, generally people do not make a connection between their micro consumption patterns and macro problems as, for example, environmental degradation. This "concern" many consumers have does not necessarily translate into real buying habits.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to determine the perception of the Romanian consumer regarding the role of eco-packaging in the formation of sustainable behavior and specific research objectives have been considered: assessing consumer preferences for the types of ecological packaging, knowing the reasons for purchasing green packaging and the role of the information about eco-packaging in promoting sustainability.

## 2. Eco-Packaging and Sustainable Consumer Behavior

Packaging is an indispensable aspect for sales [7]. In last few years, packaging has been announced to be a cause of high level of pollution; thus, the need for eco-friendly packaging is in a continuous growth [8].

Packaging has changed radically lately, especially as a result of unlimited consumer access to information [9]. In other words, consumers are well-informed about the impact of packaging on the environment, the waste of resources, and looking for packaging that suits their needs and needs.

In this sense, one of the primary requirements for consumers is ecological packaging; that is, they want packaging that uses less waste, incorporates recycled materials and can be recycled when empty.

There are studies [10] that consider that products packaged in eco-packaging are considered more valuable to the consumer. However, there are a number of organic products on the market, and few studies have been treated with the attitude of consumers towards such products. Therefore, more attention needs to be paid to consumer preference for environmentally-packaged products.

In order to become environmentally friendly, consumer needs to develop an ecological awareness by informing themselves of the ecological consequences of their behavior, understanding the consequences of their behavior, or as a result of their attitude towards ecological aspects and products, and modify consumer behavior towards sustainable consumption. Yaacob and Zakaria [11] conferred that consumers generally engage in eco-friendly products for the benefits of improving the environment. Many times, direct personal benefits, like the perceived benefits for organic food health or the energy saving of an environmentally friendly air conditioner, are mostly observed.

The behavior of the green consumer is influenced by a series of internal factors that relate to the individual's characteristics and personality as well as external factors, from the environment in which the consumer lives. The consumer attitude of what is green is generally maintained and consistent

with usual views on sustainability. This indicates that consumers already know what could be green or didn't could be green, but consumers are green in relation to some activities and not others [12].

### 2.1. Behavior and Attitudes

Sustainable consumer behavior can be explained using several models. Thus, a first model is based on the theory of planned behavior (TPB), which considers the cognitive and normative aspects behind consumer behavior [13]. It is used by various scholars to predict and explain recycling behavior [14], sustainable consumption [15], or the personal vision of sustainable development. Another model considers, besides the variables mentioned in the first model, values-beliefs-norms (VBN) [16] as important factors that influence the attitude, the determinant element of the consumer's behavior. Moral norms (among other variables) can play an important role in explaining sustainable behavior but moral norm influences the buyer decision in a certain limit [17]. Indeed, if another characteristic of the purchase of a typical product involves paying also more it will maybe create a perception of financial risk for the consumer. Thus, it means that if the price of the product is high, the consumer morality won't be as much influent as if the price was lower. The motivational instrument that could protect the natural environment is the human feeling about nature, but people who are environmentally sensible do not necessarily behave in an ecological way [18].

Some scientists consider that there is an 'attitude-behavior gap' so that although 30% of consumers demand to be very interested in the environment, this does not translate into green purchase behavior [19–21]. Studies in various countries report modest correlations through environmental attitudes and self-reported ecological behaviors [22–24]. It means that consumer positive attitude regarding green products does not always conclude into action. It is essential to inspect why environmental attitudes have a poor influence on consumer green purchase behavior [25]. Among the factors that can influence, can be mentioned price and availability of the eco-packaging, and social influences among others that lead to the discrepancy between consumer attitude and purchase behavior [26].

Other authors [27,28] argue that, despite the good intentions of consumers, actual purchasing behavior is often unaffected by ethical concerns, or, even if they are aware of ethics, consumers have dissonance and flexibility in their buying behavior. Considering the subjective directions, the social constraint or normative influence is defined as an individual's worry about the perception of others, such as family and/or neighbors, if they do not recycle [29]. Some scholars [30] appreciate that social influence is an important fact of recycling behavior, but others [29,31] in contrast, did not find social influence to be significant.

### 2.2. Price Perception and Knowledge

The consumer makes a packaging choice when his/her desired packaged product comes in an alternative package. Consumers' choice in term of packaging is a purely economic decision. Indeed, consumers make a balance between expected costs and benefits (convenience, aesthetics, and price). Consumers cannot buy responsibly all kind of products. Moreover, consuming responsibly is often seen as a time-consuming action, economically unfavorable, and stressful [5].

Consumers' reaction regarding the price of the sustainable products is really sensitive. However, the real fact is that green products are not extraordinarily expensive, but conventional products are extremely cheap [32]. Even if the perceived costs exceed the perceived benefits, the consumer will not act to conserve the environment even if they are sympathetic towards environment [33].

In today's market, the price point is such a powerful influence that environmental friendliness is something consumers may not consider when purchasing a product. Two obstacles to being a good ecological citizen can be defined [34]. The first is price-related, and the customers are aware of the responsible procurement costs. These costs may include the product price, the time spent on finding the product, and the distance traveled to purchase the product [32]. The second is the fact that consumers report having difficulties in finding information concerning the product packaging.

The consumers need to have the knowledge or be willing to seek knowledge and information in order to buy environmentally friendly products. Nordin and Selke [35] appreciate that consumers' perceptions are influenced by a lack of consumer knowledge about the concept of sustainability, terminology gaps and an inconsistent attitude towards sustainable packaging.

In Ottman's opinion, four universal green consumer's needs can be identified: the need for information, the need for control, the need to make a difference, and the need to remain current. If a sustainable product satisfies these needs, then the consumer will be more eager to buy the product [10].

### 2.3. Business Strategies

Regarding external factors that influence consumer behavior in the direction of sustainable consumption, legal and policy factors play a decisive role. Environmental protection legislation determines countries to use economic incentives (tax cuts, subsidies) for the use of green technologies or to stimulate environmental behavior. Following the trend, businesses have re-engineered their strategy by recognition sustainability opportunities [36] and inserting green elements into their product and packaging profiles in order to remain competitive. Also, companies' actions by promoting organic products and packaging can influence consumer behavior [37].

Since most consumers exhibit unsustainable behavior in most situations because they have not internalized sustainability in their thinking, it is imperative to develop new and effective tools for them to adopt sustainable consumption behavior. To modify these unsustainable directive consumer needs to recognize information and feel that their actions have a positive impact [38].

## 3. Materials and Methods

The quantitative research aimed to determine the familiarity of the Romanian consumer regarding the role of sustainable packaging in the formation of sustainable behavior. The research, through its major objectives, identifying consumer preferences for organic packaging, knowing the reasons for buying/not buying the environmental packaging and the role of information for the consumer, helps determine the major factors influencing the Romanian consumer's perception of ecological packaging and, implicitly, his/her sustainable behavior.

### 3.1. Sampling

The quantitative research was conducted on a sample of 300 respondents and yielded 268 valid questionnaires. Although it is an exploratory online research, following the analysis and interpretation of information collected from respondents, the results are valuable if they are corroborated by other studies previously conducted on the same subject. The sample structure was (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** The sample structure.

Characteristics	Share in the Sample	Results
Age groups	18–24 years	6.30%
	25–34	46.65%
	35–44	30.51%
	45–54	12.40%
	55–64	3.94%
	Over 64	0.2%
Education	ISCED 4 or less *	4.21%
	ISCED 5 and 6 *	69.26%
	ISCED 7 or more *	26.53%
Residence	Urban area	58.2%
	Rural area	41.8%

Table 1. Cont.

Characteristics	Share in the Sample	Results
Monthly income **	>1900 lei	4.53%
	1900–3000 lei	29.33%
	3001–4500 lei	22.05%
	4501–600 lei	17.52%
	<6000 lei	26.57%
Gender	Male	58%
	Female	42%

\* ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education. ISCED 4 or less is roughly equivalent up to post-secondary nontertiary education. ISCED 5 and 6 is equivalent to short-cycle tertiary education and bachelor or equivalent. ISCED 7 or more represent master or doctoral. \*\* Starting 1 January 2018, the minimum gross wage in the economy is 1900 lei, equivalent to 413 euros.

### 3.2. Data Collection

The study was conducted in early January 2018 through online survey method as a tool based on a questionnaire, developed according to the purpose of research. It consisted of a total of 16 questions, five of them were sociodemographic classifications (age, gender, income, level of studies and residence environment), two dichotomous closed questions (Q1 and Q10), two mixed questions (Q2 and Q5) whose tried to identify other reasons than those mentioned in the variants, an open question and seven closed questions (Q3, Q4, Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9, Q11). In order to analyze and interpret the results obtained in these questions, but also to produce bivariate correlations and analyses that lead to important data for the researched subject, a systematic model has been created that highlights how the analyzed variables lead to the fulfillment of the objectives and purpose of the research.

## 4. Results and Discussion

The results (Table 2) show that people want to buy products in organic packaging and want to get informed about this. Also noteworthy is that they pay attention first to the product label and the information on it. Most of the respondents mentioned that the first source of information on product packaging is the product label followed by producers and distributors' information campaigns and the internet.

Table 2. Survey results.

Questions in Our Survey	Measurement	Results
Buy products in ecological packaging?	Yes	88%
	No	12%
Source of information	Directly from the product label	88.4%
	From the information campaigns of producers and merchants	27.6%
	From the internet	19.3%
	Other sources	1.8%
The preferred eco-packaging	Glass	51.1%
	Paper	74.2%
	Cardboard	52.9%
	Wood	14.9%
	Biodegradable plastic	14.5%
Purchase frequency of products in green packaging	Daily	4.4%
	Weekly	42.5%
	2–3 times a month	19.0%
	Occasional	34.7%
	Never	1.4%
The reasons to prefer green packaging	Protect the environment	71.6%
	Can be recycled/reused	75.3%
	I feel responsible	47.0%
	Organic packaging is trendy	2.2%
	Other	5.6%

Table 2. Cont.

Questions in Our Survey	Measurement	Results
The advantages of using organic packaging by producers and traders	Greater product protection	19.0%
	Possibility of recycling	77.0%
	Reducing waste of resources	72.7%
	Environment protection	80.2%
	Higher product quality	14.9%
The disadvantages of using eco-packaging for consumers	Products packaged in organic packaging are more expensive	58.2%
	Requires more storage space	9.7%
	Greater recycling effort	15.3%
	There are no disadvantages	32.8%
The reasons why consumers are willing to pay more for green packaging	In the long run, the cost is lower due to reuse	36.9%
	They are resistant in time	10.8%
	They have a better quality	19.0%
	It does not contribute to the degradation of the environment	70.9%
	I feel involved in environmental protection	49.6%
	I'm not willing to pay more	11.5%
The reasons why consumers are not willing to pay more for ecological packaging	Low budget	48.1%
	Lack of information	50.0%
	Eco-packaging does not bring any benefit	6.3%
Sufficient information on the role of organic packaging	Yes	34.4%
	No	65.6%
The responsibility of informing consumers about the environmental packaging	Ministry of Environment, Water, and Forestry	36.0%
	Producers and traders	42.2%
	Nongovernmental organizations	16.4%
	Others	5.4%

The analysis of the data shows that Romanian consumers prefer the packaging of paper, glass, and cardboard in a fairly large proportion. The findings support a concern for environmental protection because paper and cardboard are the easiest to recycle and produce the least impact on the environment and glass is a reusable packaging. 14.5% of respondents prefer plastic, especially as there is no other product packaging for some products.

Even though a fairly high percentage of respondents prefer packaged products in organic packaging, data analysis reveals that less than half of the respondents—42.5%—said they bought products in organic packaging weekly, 34.7% buy these products occasionally and 19% buy products packaged in ecological packaging 2–3 times a month. The obtained results lead to the conclusion that, although there is a concern to protect the environment we cannot talk about sustainable behavior at present.

The main reasons behind the purchase of products in organic packaging resulting from data analysis are the possibility of recycling and reuse, environmental protection, feeling of being responsible towards the environment. Only a fairly low percentage considers that environmental packaging is fashionable and does not associate it with the protection of the environment or health.

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded there is a high awareness of the impact of packaging on the environment, which is also supported by the respondents' answers on the benefits of buying products in organic packaging. Thus, the question "What do you think are the benefits of introducing the environmental packaging into the market?", environmental protection is mentioned first followed by the possibility of recycling and reuse, the decrease in the waste of resources.

Other factors such as product protection and high quality are not considered as motivating factors in choosing products packaged in organic packaging.

Concerning the disadvantages of using green packaging, over half of the respondents (58.2%) mentioned that products packaged in ecological packaging are more expensive, 15.3% consider that they require a higher recycling effort, 9.7% of the respondents consider that the product may require a larger storage space, and only 32.8% consider that they have no disadvantages. The results lead to the conclusion that, although environmental packaging to a large extent to environmental protection, respondents being aware of this fact, its price is usually higher than conventional packaging so that the price becomes an important impediment into the adoption of sustainable consumer behavior.

The Romanian consumer is aware of the impact of packaging used on the environment and a large amount of waste generated, so that the main reasons mentioned for which they would be

willing to pay more is that they do not contribute to the degradation of the environment and that the consumer considers themselves responsible for protecting it. Other reasons have been that in the long run, cost is lower due to recycling and that environmental packaging is more resistant over time. The analysis also revealed 11.5% of those who are not willing to pay extra. Regarding the reasons why consumers are not willing to pay more for green packaging, the lack of information is the first, followed by the low budget and the fact that environmental packaging is perceived as not having any benefit for the consumer.

The lack of information on environmental packaging and its benefits to the consumer and the environment is an important factor preventing the consumer from adopting a sustainable behavior. Analyzing the research results, 65.6% of the respondents said they did not have enough information about ecological packaging. Asked who is responsible for informing consumers, most of the respondents mentioned the companies and the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests, and to a lesser extent, they considered the responsibility of nonprofit organizations.

Regarding the information that should be communicated to change the attitude and behavior of the consumer towards sustainability, the respondents considered it important to present the advantages of ecological packaging, ways of recycling different types of packaging, the duration of disintegration and the impact of packaging on the environment, the long-term impact of nonenvironmental packaging on the environment and human health.

To explain the consumer's behavior regarding organic packaging as clearly as possible, a series of correlations between income and age as independent variables and the reasons for and against choosing to purchase organic packaging as dependent variables have also been made. Regarding the age relationship and the reasons why respondents choose to compete with ambulatory products in organic packaging, we conducted a statistical test using Pearson's test (Tables 3 and 4). In both cases of analyses, we started from the hypothesis H1: that there is a correlation between the two analyzed variables and assuming the null hypothesis—H0—that there is no link between the variables analyzed. After we obtained the results on the Pearson coefficient, we validated or invalidated the proposed assumptions.

In Table 3, we chose to conduct an analysis that grouped the reasons for consumers' preferences in organic packaging in one variable to see if there were a strong link between the two variables. Using the SPSS program, we obtained the following results: Pearson correlation value is insignificantly statistically, as Sig = 0.987 value over the 0.05 threshold corresponding to 95% probability of guaranteeing results.

**Table 3.** Correlation between age and the reasons for choosing organic packaging.

Variables		Age Range	Reasons for Preferring Organic Packaging
Age range	Pearson Correlation	1	0.045
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.987
	N	268	267
Reasons for preferring organic packaging	Pearson Correlation	0.045	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.987	
	N	267	268

We can see there is no relationship between age and the reasons for purchasing products in organic packaging, so we consider that is necessary to deepen the analysis of all the reasons for why consumers prefer organic packaging.

**Table 4.** Individual correlations between age and the reasons for choosing organic packaging.

Variables		Protects the Environment	Can Be Recycled/Reused	I Feel Responsible	There Are on Trend	Others
Age range	Pearson Correlation	0.72	0.69	0.01	0.32	0.14
	Sig. (2-tailed) **	0.106	0.123	0.979	0.469	0.756
	N	268	268	268	268	268

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Individually analyzed, we can see that no reason to choose an organic packaging is correlated with age, or, in other words, the age variation does not in any way influence the preference for a particular type of packaging.

We can conclude by saying there is only one factor of influence regarding the choice of ecological packaging, namely the level of income, which determines the choice of environmentally packaging because they protect the environment.

Regarding the correlation between incomes and the reasons why respondents would not pay more to buy packaged products in organic packaging, we conducted statistical testing using the Pearson test (Tables 5 and 6). In Table 5, we grouped all the reasons why consumers are not willing to pay more for environmentally packaged products in a single variable to see if there is a globally link between these reasons and the income level of the respondents.

**Table 5.** Correlation between income and the reasons for nonpurchase of organic packaging.

Variables		Reasons of Nonpurchase	Income
Reasons of non-purchase	Pearson Correlation	1	0.231
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	268	267
Income	Pearson Correlation	0.231	1
	Sig. (2-tailed) **	0.000	
	N	267	268

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Analyzing the value of the Pearson correlation coefficient, which is equal to 0.231, in the case of 267 respondents, we can see that there is a link between the level of income of respondents and the reasons why they are not willing to pay more for ecological packaging—there is a significant correlation between those two variables. For that reason, we make a different analysis in case of each reason of non-purchasing eco-packaging (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Individual correlation between income and the reasons for nonpurchase of eco-packaging.

Variable		Low Budget	Lack of Information	The Environmental Packaging Does Not Bring Any Benefit
Incomes	Pearson Correlation	0.251	0.234	0.088
	Sig. (2-tailed) **	0.000	0.000	0.047
	N	268	268	268

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Separately analyzed, depending on the level of income, we can see that the main reasons why respondents are not willing to pay more for ecological packaging are: the low budget (with a Pearson correlation coefficient equal to 0.251, indicating a weak correlation between the two variables (the correlation is statistically significant and the alternative hypothesis should be accepted). Based on the correlation analysis between monthly average revenue and reasons why respondents do not want to pay more, we can see that for people with a low budget below 4500 lei, they do not want to pay more for ecological packaging due to their reduced budget. On the other hand, respondents with incomes higher than 4500 lei said they did not want to pay more for ecological packaging due to lack of information. For the last correlation, we can conclude that as revenue increases, consumers choose organic packaging even if they do not bring any other benefits to the user. However, this link is very weak: Pearson is 0.088.



## 5. Conclusions

### 5.1. Managerial Implication

This study has major managerial implications as it notifies decision makers and marketing managers about the factors that influence a consumer's sustainable behavior. Research results have shown there are two motivational factors—saving by recycling and protecting the environment—which can influence the decision to buy ecological packaging. The high costs of eco-packaging and lack of information on the benefits of their use is considered as reasons for not purchasing them. Therefore, a major implication of this study is the need to familiarize consumers with the long-term benefits of using eco-packaging.

Managers need to know what benefits and barriers are perceived by consumers in purchasing green packaging and to develop strategies for changing consumer habits in the direction of sustainability. In order to change the attitude and behavior of the Romanian consumer, companies must act in the following directions:

- Informing the population about the effects of ecological packaging on environmental through communication campaigns [39] that sensitize consumers and encourage eco-friendly consumption habits;
- Product information based on labeling schemes (“eco-labeling”) to help consumers by providing details on the environmental performance of products and packaging and to make them buy environmentally-friendly products [40].

The information consumers expect to find and would inspire their trust in recycling the packaging refers to the economical use of source materials in the manufacturing of the packaging, as well as the health and safety of the consumer [41].

Sharma [42] says that companies can act in their green communication campaigns in three directions: at the beginning of educational communication, the emphasis must be put on the content, then focus on environmental concern, after which the emphasis is on the fact that firms modified production procedures to promote a green lifestyle, and ultimately communication indicates the image of an environmentally responsible firm.

Increased use of durable packaging by consumers can be improved by an appropriate content and form of communication that will aim to change consumers' attitudes towards sustainability and will influence their purchasing decisions. Reception and understanding of this information also depends on the knowledge consumers possess, which is related to the maturity of the market, but also the cultural values that this study has not explored.

Another barrier highlighted by the study is low consumer income, which does not allow them to pay more for products in organic packaging. To motivate consumers, companies can offer economic incentives to buy products in organic packaging.

### 5.2. Theoretical Implications

The study identifies consumers' perceptions of ecological packaging, the reasons and barriers affecting the purchase of packaged products in organic packaging and provides possible explanations for the inconsistency observed in green purchasing behavior. Moreover, it offers a synthesis of existing literature, because it is based on the results of various studies previously conducted. Researchers can lay the foundation for more in-depth research into consumer sustainability behavior with respect to organic packaging based on our findings. From the point of view of limitations, studies involving product and packaging perceptions are difficult because each respondent can feel this difference, so their emotions can influence the answers. Finally, the small sample is also a limitation.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization and Software, G.O.; Writing Original Draft and Writing—Review & Editing, A.F.C.; Methodology and Formal Analysis, C.T.B.; Formal Analysis and Validation, R.-G.C. All authors wrote the paper and revised the manuscript for intellectual content, read and approved the final manuscript.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

## References

1. Draskovic, N.; Temperley, J.; Pavicic, J. Comparative perception of consumer goods packaging: Croatian consumers perspective. *Int. J. Manag. Cases* **2009**, *11*, 154–163. [[CrossRef](#)]
2. Lamb, C.W.; Hair, J.F.; McDaniel, C. *Essentials of Marketing: A Marketing Strategy Planning Approach*; McGraw-Hill/Irwin: New York, NY, USA, 2011.
3. Carlson, K. *Green Your Work*; Adam Business: Avon, MA, USA, 2009.
4. Zadek, S. The Path to Corporate Responsibility. *Harv. Bus. Rev.* **2004**, *82*, 125–132. [[PubMed](#)]
5. Biswas, A.; Roy, M. Green Products: An exploratory study on the consumer behaviour in emerging economies of the East. *J. Clean. Prod.* **2015**, *87*, 463–468. [[CrossRef](#)]
6. Ampuero, O.; Vila, N. Consumer perceptions of product packaging. *J. Consum. Mark.* **2006**, *23*, 100–112. [[CrossRef](#)]
7. Rokka, J.; Uusitalo, L. Preference for green packaging in consumer product choices—do consumers care? *Int. J. Consum. Stud.* **2008**, *32*, 516–525. [[CrossRef](#)]
8. Seo, S.; Ahn, H.-K.; Jeong, J.; Moon, J. Consumers' attitude toward sustainable food Products: Ingredients vs. packaging. *Sustainability* **2016**, *8*, 1073. [[CrossRef](#)]
9. Sandu, R.M. Green: Marketing, Products and Consumers SEA. *Pract. Appl. Sci.* **2014**, *2*, 555–561.
10. Ottman, J. *Green Marketing: Challenges and Opportunities New Marketing Age Lincolnwood*; NTC Business Books: Lincolnwood, IL, USA, 1993.
11. Yaacob, M.R.; Zakaria, A. Customers awareness, perception and future prospects of green products in Pahang, Malaysia. *J. Commer.* **2011**, *3*, 1.
12. Retti, R.; Burchell, K.; Riley, D. Normalising green Behaviours: A new approach to sustainability marketing. *J. Mark. Manag.* **2012**, *28*, 420–444. [[CrossRef](#)]
13. Ajzen, I. The theory of planned behaviour: Reactions and reflections. *Psychol. Health* **2011**, *26*, 1113–1127. [[CrossRef](#)] [[PubMed](#)]
14. Chan, L.; Bishop, B. A moral basis for Recycling: Extending the theory of planned behaviour. *J. Environ. Psychol.* **2013**, *36*, 96–102. [[CrossRef](#)]
15. Richetin, J.; Perugini, M.; Conner, M.; Adjali, I.; Hurling, R.; Sengupta, A.; Greetham, D. To reduce and not to reduce resource consumption? That is two questions. *J. Environ. Psychol.* **2012**, *32*, 112–122.
16. Aguilar-Luzón, M.D.C.; García-Martínez, J.M.Á.; Calvo-Salguero, A.; Salinas, J.M. Comparative study between the theory of planned behavior and the value-belief-norm model regarding the environment, on Spanish housewives' recycling behavior. *J. Appl. Soc. Psychol.* **2012**, *42*, 2797–2833.
17. Pickett-Baker, J.; Ozaki, R. Pro-environmental Products: Marketing influence on consumer purchase decision. *J. Consum. Mark.* **2008**, *25*, 281–293. [[CrossRef](#)]
18. Peattie, K. *Environmental Marketing Management: Meeting the Green Challenge*; Pitman: London, UK, 1995.
19. Young, W.; Hwang, K.; McDonald, S.; Oates, C.J. Sustainable consumption: Green consumer behavior when purchasing products. *Sustain. Dev.* **2010**, *18*, 21–31. [[CrossRef](#)]
20. Blake, J. Overcoming the 'value-action gap' in environmental policy: Tensions between national policy and local experience. *Local Environ.* **1999**, *4*, 257–278. [[CrossRef](#)]
21. Jackson, T. *Motivating Sustainable Consumption: A Review of Evidence on Consumer Behavior and Behavioral Change*; Policy Studies Institute: London, UK, 2005.
22. Fraj, E.; Martinez, E. Ecological consumer Behavior: An empirical analysis. *Int. J. Consum. Stud.* **2007**, *31*, 26–33. [[CrossRef](#)]
23. Finisterra do Paço, A.M.; Raposo, M.L.B. Green consumer market segmentation: Empirical findings from Portugal. *Int. J. Consum. Stud.* **2010**, *34*, 429–436. [[CrossRef](#)]
24. Follows, S.B.; Jobber, D. Environmentally responsible purchase Behavior: A test of a consumer model. *Eur. J. Mark.* **2000**, *34*, 723–746. [[CrossRef](#)]

25. Yatish, J.; Zillur, R. Factors Affecting Green Purchase Behaviour, and Future Research Directions. *Int. Strateg. Manag. Rev.* **2015**, *3*, 128–143.
26. Diamantopoulos, A.; Schlegelmilch, B.B.; Sinkovics, R.R.; Bohlen, G.M. Can socio-demographics still play a role in profiling green consumers? A review of the evidence and an empirical investigation. *J. Bus. Res.* **2003**, *56*, 465–480. [[CrossRef](#)]
27. Carrigan, M.; Attala, A. The myth of the ethical Consumer: Do ethics matter in purchase behavior? *J. Consum. Mark.* **2001**, *18*, 560–577. [[CrossRef](#)]
28. Szmigin, I.; Carrigan, M.; McEachern, M.G. The conscious Consumer: Taking a flexible approach to ethical behavior. *Int. Consum. Stud.* **2009**, *33*, 224–231. [[CrossRef](#)]
29. Vining, J.; Ebreo, A. Predicting recycling behavior from global and specific environmental attitudes and changes in recycling opportunities. *J. Appl. Soc. Psychol.* **1992**, *22*, 1580–1607. [[CrossRef](#)]
30. Do Valle, P.O.; Reis, E.; Menezes, J.; Rebelo, E. Behavioral determinants of household recycling participation. *Environ. Behav.* **2004**, *36*, 505–540. [[CrossRef](#)]
31. Hage, O.; Söderholm, P.; Berglund, C. Norms and economic motivation in household Recycling: Empirical evidence from Sweden. *Resour. Conserv. Recycl.* **2009**, *53*, 155–165. [[CrossRef](#)]
32. Thøgersen, J.; Olander, F. Spillover of environment-friendly consumer behavior. *J. Environ. Psychol.* **2001**, *23*, 225–236. [[CrossRef](#)]
33. Radulescu, D.M.; Radulescu, V. Ecological responsibility—Part of sustainable development. *Int. J. Acad. Res. Econ. Manag. Sci.* **2012**, *1*, 89–96.
34. Chitra, K. In search of the green consumers: A perceptual study. *J. Serv. Res.* **2007**, *7*, 173–191.
35. Nordin, N.; Selke, S. Social aspect of sustainable packaging. *Packag. Technol. Sci.* **2010**, *23*, 317–326. [[CrossRef](#)]
36. Thøgersen, J. The ethical consumer. Moral choice and packaging choice. *J. Consum. Policy* **1999**, *22*, 439–460. [[CrossRef](#)]
37. Ceptureanu, E.G.; Ceptureanu, S.I.; Orzan, M.C.; Bordean, O.N.; Radulescu, V. Empirical study on sustainable opportunities Recognition. A Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) Joinery Industry Analysis Using Augmented Sustainable Development Process Model. *Sustainability* **2017**, *9*, 1779. [[CrossRef](#)]
38. Dean, T.J.; Pacheco, D. Green Marketing: A strategic balancing act for creating value. *J. Bus. Strateg.* **2014**, *35*, 14–22. [[CrossRef](#)]
39. Grunert, G.K.; Hieke, S.; Wills, J. Sustainability labels on food Products: Consumer motivation, understanding, and use. *Food Policy* **2014**, *44*, 177–189. [[CrossRef](#)]
40. Radulescu, D.M.; Rădulescu, V. Educating the consumer about his right to a healthy environment. *Proc. Soc. Behav. Sci.* **2011**, *15*, 466–470. [[CrossRef](#)]
41. Jerzyk, E. Design and communication of ecological content on sustainable packaging in young consumers' opinions. *J. Food Prod. Mark.* **2016**, *22*, 707–716. [[CrossRef](#)]
42. Sharma, Y. Changing consumer behavior with respect to green Marketing—A case study of consumer durables and retailing. *Int. J. Multidiscip. Res.* **2011**, *1*, 152–162.

