

Green marketing strategies in Wayuu SMEs of handicraft marketing and distribution

Marketing verde en Pymes comercializadoras y distribuidoras de artesanía Wayúu

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Abstract

Objective: in this study, green marketing was analyzed in Wayuu handicraft small-and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), specifically marketers and distributors, to promote strategies that raise awareness about environmental care and preservation. **Method:** A positivist paradigm was used, with a quantitative, descriptive, nonexperimental, and cross-sectional design. Twenty managers and/or owners of small and medium-sized Wayuu handicraft companies, registered with the Chamber of Commerce of the special tourist and cultural district of Riohacha, participated in the study. A 12-item self-administered questionnaire with multiple response options was applied. **Results:** It was observed that green marketing strategies are being used in the studied SMEs, focusing on recycling and reuse, with an aim to preserve the environment through their management practices. **Discussions:** Although some green marketing strategies are applied, they are still in the early stages among these merchants, highlighting the need for greater awareness to foster an ecological culture based on the sustainability of the craft production process. **Conclusions:** Wayuu Handicraft SMEs, through the implementation of green marketing strategies, promote responsible consumption and encourage their collaborators and other entrepreneurs to adopt an ecological attitude, thereby generating a pattern of shared environmental behavior where they are located.

Keywords: environment, ecological culture, green marketing, responsible consumption, SMEs, sustainability.

JEL Classification: M31

Resumen

Objetivo: en este estudio se analizó el marketing verde en las Pymes comercializadoras y distribuidoras de artesanía Wayúu con el fin de propiciar la práctica de estrategias que conlleven a la sensibilización en el cuidado y preservación del ambiente. **Método:** para la realización de esta investigación se utilizó el paradigma positivista, enfoque cuantitativo, tipo descriptiva, diseño no experimental, transversal de campo en la cual participaron 20 encargados y/o propietarios de pequeñas y medianas empresas de artesanía Wayúu registradas en la Cámara de Comercio del distrito especial turístico y cultural de Riohacha, a quienes se aplicó un cuestionario auto administrado, de 12 ítems, con opciones de respuestas múltiples. **Resultados:** en los hallazgos se encontró que se están utilizando estrategias de marketing verde en las pymes comercializadoras estudiadas, orientadas al reciclaje y reutilización, procurando desde su gestión preservar el medio ambiente. **Discusiones:** a pesar de que se aplican algunas de las estrategias de marketing verde, estas aún son incipientes, en los comerciantes, por lo que demanda una sensibilización que propicie la cultura ecológica basada en la sostenibilidad del proceso de producción de la artesanía. **Conclusiones:** se concluye que las Pymes de artesanía Wayúu, con la implementación de estrategias de marketing verde, estimulan el consumo responsable y motivan a sus colaboradores y otros empresarios hacia una actitud ecológica, motivando un patrón de comportamiento compartido en el entorno donde están localizadas.

Palabras clave: ambiente, consumo responsable, cultura ecológica, marketing verde, pymes, sostenibilidad.

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Introduction

The globalization of markets has brought about transformations in business management, necessitating actions aligning work processes with business approaches linked to media trends, the use of new technologies, and social innovations. This evolution impacts human life by creating a fast-paced chain of dynamic events that affect not only the social being by its very nature but also the environment as a provider of life quality in the areas where we reside. This situation forces us to acknowledge that human beings depend on nature and are responsible for its preservation and conservation.

Given the serious ecological crisis facing the planet, corporate governance systems increasingly require measures to mitigate the environmental impact of their activities (Durán et al., 2015; Ojeda et al., 2019). This calls for the promotion of a responsible ecological culture through the conservation and preservation of a healthy environment, as human and corporate activities are among the primary factors endangering the environment. The evolution of these processes has led to the emergence of new models of production and marketing that rely on converting, using, overusing, and overconsuming nonrenewable natural resources to be processed as raw materials, satisfying the needs demanded by humans (López et al., 2014).

Business and consumer activities generate pollution that impacts environmental quality due to waste or solid waste that destroys the planet's biological diversity, affecting human well-being (Choi, 2018) and deteriorating the quality of life on earth. This situation has prompted several authors to investigate the behavior of companies concerning the environment and the environmental friendliness of the tools used in developing their goods and services. These studies have revealed that the primary culprits of environmental degradation are corporate management practices and a lack of human sensitivity (Cifuentes et al., 2018; Higuera et al., 2018). This degradation is linked to the deterioration of water quality, deforestation, the decline of biodiversity and climate change caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, which jeopardize the development, quality, and well-being of people in their environment.

Therefore, world leaders must take on the inescapable and laudable challenge of environmental sustainability (Álvarez & Torres, 2020), making environment protection a core goal within the corporate mission. The productivity indicators set as goals within the productive systems of companies and nations should ensure that actions contribute to a responsible ecological culture. This culture should be reflected in the decisions shared within the productive sector, whether related to business, consumption, services, development, fishing, or agriculture, ensuring that operations align with responsible environmental practices.

Other sectors of the world's productive system, including micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), have integrated effective competitive strategies. These strategies involve managing people who

demonstrate skills that promote a strategic management style focused on the care and preservation of the natural environment. These enterprises have formally established green planning processes, organization, management, and control in their business practices (García et al., 2019; Lasarte et al., 2018). The goal is to maintain the quality of human life through corporate practices that promote sustainable development in the short, medium, and long term. These practices aim to preserve the environment and avoid actions that could create uncontrollable problems affecting corporate governance.

Thus, this involves promoting environmentally responsible practices throughout the value chain and developing activities that modify products or services in line with green trends and contribute to the quality of life in the community. It also entails promoting significant changes in production processes to save resources, such as water and energy, and to minimize waste. Similarly, it includes green actions, such as changes in distribution, packaging innovations, promotional and advertising activities, and employee training.

According to Rodríguez (2011), ecological or sustainable marketing is a process used in business management for marketing products while reducing the impact on the environment or mitigating the effects of their production. This is achieved through an ecological culture aimed at protecting and preserving the natural environment, without causing harm to people. In the business field, including small and medium-sized Colombian Wayúu Craft companies, the focus is not on evaluating or judging the outcomes of their management, as management processes are windows that reflect efficiency and effectiveness indicators derived from productivity within the environment. For this reason, marketing serves as an associative element that enhances a company's image and reputation. This is particularly relevant as the primary purpose is to sell products and promote consumption of the products, goods, or services the company offers in the market.

In line with the foregoing, Kotler and Armstrong (2012) argued that marketing is a fundamental business philosophy essential to company management. Its execution allows for the observation of strategic actions, particularly in relation to competitors, to attract the target market. Similarly, these aspects align with the contributions of Castellano and Urdaneta (2015), who agreed that green marketing represents a set of activities integrated into business management processes to mitigate harmful environmental effects.

It is evident that global market trends are pushing companies, including small and medium enterprises, to incorporate green concepts, such as ecological marketing, into their management and organizational philosophy. This shift is leading to a new approach to develop both products and services, where it is imperative to consider consumer needs during preparation, marketing, and delivery. These efforts must be consistent with the present and future benefits of society, taking into account respect for the natural, social, and economic environment.

In light of these considerations, Ibarra et al. (2015) revealed that green marketing encompasses the production of sustainable goods and services based on criteria of environmental protection and conservation, utilizing friendly technologies that do not threaten nature and the ecosystem. This practice is emerging in business management, where it is recognized as part of business strategy measurement indicators for environmental sustainability. These indicators are designed to sustain and increase competitiveness and profitability while improving corporate image and encouraging communities to care for their environment. However, Cubillo and Blanco (2014) stated that green marketing should be integrated into the company as part of an ethical philosophy of social performance, not only by assuming or fulfilling responsibilities but by incorporating sustainable work systems, where actions contribute to the protection and care for the natural environment.

In addition, marketing as a management strategy contributes to company success by positioning the offer of products or services, leading to increased sales and consumption of the product (Kotler, 2009; Kotler & Keller, 2012; Lambin et al., 2009). Therefore, green marketing focuses on the sustainable development of products or services, aiming to improve economic growth, social equity, and environmental value as reflected in work management indicators.

This approach reflects a shift in interests, habits, and attitudes toward green trends, emphasizing the importance of preserving and conserving the natural environment. Consumer education and information are crucial for safeguarding a company's image and reputation in an increasingly demanding market. According to Hartman et al. (2004), green marketing encompasses actions that guide consumer behavior. These actions include informing or educating consumers on environmental issues, encouraging the practice of activities that guarantee a healthy environment, promoting changes toward society's values, and boosting and encouraging responsible purchasing and consumption.

Therefore, developing environmentally friendly products and packaging is becoming part of a responsible ecological culture, strengthening the practice of recycling and minimizing the damage caused in the use of raw materials and renewable resources (Ottman, 2012). Kotler and Keller (2012) documented that product development is based on different strategic factors. In the ecological field, different resources provided by nature should be considered for product development.

Moreover, the marketing of organic products involves economic factors and social and environmental considerations. These factors are valued in terms of protecting natural resources, benefiting communities, marketing products, and creating responsible markets, among other aspects. In this context, we adopt the criteria proposed by Salas (2018), which suggests that green marketing modifies the traditional marketing variables—product, price, place, and promotion (the 4P's)—by adding others such as satisfaction and loyalty. Labor is also considered a purpose-driven benefit for organizations and customers.

Within this framework, several companies have focused on the development of ecological products at a global and national levels. In recent years, the transformation of solid waste into profitable products has increased. Thus, in response to the ecological problems faced by the planet, companies in Colombia seek to incorporate green actions, in which efforts are encouraged to produce and market ecological products for the conservation of the environment. This helps mitigate the effects that put their stability in the market at risk. In addition, the environmental damage derived from their productive activities is reduced or eliminated.

In the department of La Guajira, located in northern Colombia and bordered by the Caribbean Sea, there are two organizations dedicated to environment preservation and care: the Guajira Autonomous Corporation (CORPOGUAJIRA) and the National Learning Service (SENA). One of their goals is to raise environmental awareness in society by providing education and guidance on the production and marketing of organic products that mitigate the negative impact on nature.

Despite the presence of institutions committed to environmental conservation and preservation, both within companies and in society in general, green marketing is a relatively new concept. Promoting green marketing through working systems aimed at developing ecological products as an environmentally friendly marketing strategy remains a challenge. This involves fostering a culture of consumption and identifying with the environmental problems at both the global level and within local communities, especially concerning the issue of excess waste.

In this respect, SMEs, as part of the production system of this sector, have shortcomings in terms of ecological marketing policies, particularly in environmental education. This is because they do not hold conferences or workshops to stimulate and facilitate the acceptance of ideas or social practices considered beneficial to society in relation to the production of their products, i.e., the dissemination of desirable environmental ideas and practices among citizens. The development of advertising campaigns emphasizing the importance of recycling, reusing, and reducing materials such as glass, plastic, paper, or cardboard is also overlooked, as these campaigns would entail modifying consumer purchasing behavior.

This lack of ecological marketing strategies puts their stability at risk, especially regarding compliance with pricing, placement, promotion, and distribution of products. Most SMEs do not implement strategies such as recycling or reusing and could potentially turn waste into ecological products that benefit the community, thus reducing waste and contributing to a healthy and sustainable environment.

In view of the above, this article seeks to promote the practice of green marketing strategies to create a responsible ecological culture in the management of the SMEs studied, leading to an awareness of caring for and preserving the environment. These dynamics of sustainable environmental performance are intended to be transferable to customers and stakeholders. Considering the importance of developing

environmentally friendly products through recycling, reusing, and reduction strategies, while addressing consumer needs and incorporating green product strategies as a framework for sustainable development, the purpose of this research was to analyze the green marketing strategies of SMEs in the department of La Guajira.

This document introduces the subject of ecological, green, or environmental marketing in SMEs at a general level, then provides a theoretical basis for green marketing with the corresponding dimensions, establishes the methodological process and the data collection in the observed population, and subsequently presents the results obtained, the discussion, and the conclusions reached in the research.

Theoretical Foundation

Green marketing

Green marketing has become increasingly important for companies management, especially for those that seek to offer environmentally friendly products. This can involve modifying the products they offer, using the most environmentally friendly products, or making changes in production processes. According to Larios et al. (2016), green marketing involves a way of perceiving and performing the interactive connection between society and environment. It seeks to satisfy stakeholders and create value without jeopardizing environment preservation and conservation. Through its business activities, green marketing can contribute to the sustainable development of the economy and society.

Cubillo and Cerviño (2008) identified two perspectives on ecological marketing or green marketing: the first is the social context, which involves activities undertaken by nonprofit institutions to raise awareness and create a responsible ecological culture within the community and among various interest groups. The second is the business scenario, where marketing strategies for green products are employed. In this context, companies engage in actions that not only meet consumer needs but also promote environmental preservation and protection.

According to Rodríguez (2011), ecological marketing is more than a process; it is a strategic business activity aimed at minimizing environmental impact or reducing potential damage from production, distribution, or consumption. This approach fosters community interest in the protection and preservation of the environment. In this regard, Lambin et al. (2009) argued that the primary goal of green marketing is to enhance both parts of the sales chain—developing and distributing healthy and clean products for the market. This approach aims to generate environmentally friendly behaviors that benefit both the environment and consumers.

Green marketing strategies

With regard to the term *strategies*, Stanton et al. (2007) indicated that it is a system of profit-generating activities, the central focus of which is action planning, pricing, product promotion and distribution, services, and ideas in favor of satisfying needs among target markets for attaining organizational goals. Accordingly, given that marketing strategies are factors capable of determining the direction of organizations, they require a careful and detailed analysis to ensure that the smallest detail is not omitted in the design and implementation. Moreover, in its execution process, permanent evaluations must be conducted to meet the goals set within the expected timeframe. In this regard, Pedraza et al. (2019) argued that, in all organizational processes, it is essential to design strategies that enable the company to achieve its goals and become a reference point for continuity in the market.

Schoell and Guiltinan (2003) considered marketing strategy as a strategic plan developed by the organization through the available resources to achieve marketing goals. This involves the selection and analysis of a target market as the focus of the marketing effort, as well as the creation and maintenance of a marketing mix to satisfy that market. Kotler (2009) considered marketing strategy as a set of techniques used in a company to reach the planned goals. These goals serve as inputs for diagnosing the company's problems, enabling the implementation of corrective measures that can influence sales, provided they align with the core mission of an organization.

According to Cubillo and Cerviño (2008), green marketing strategy refers to the plan developed by a company to achieve goals aimed at designing, promoting, and establishing pricing policies that guide the distribution of green products throughout the environment; creating and raising awareness of new consumer habits in the community; and offering products and services that suit the natural environment. The argumentative criteria of Calomarde (2000) establishes that the ecological strategy of a product, service, or brand must align with environmental considerations through organizational strategies. Therefore, its development should consider the company's sales policies and global ecological criteria aimed at generating sustainable development. This approach helps mitigate consequences that could jeopardize a healthy and balanced environment.

According to Calomarde (2000), green strategies must align with business goals to achieve performance excellence, enhance the company's image, and sustain competitiveness. To this end, the first requirement for creating a green marketing strategy is the design and development of green products, which involves the following:

- a) Restructuring production work systems to avoid disrupting environmental balance.
- b) Using biodegradable containers that do not endanger the quality of the environment.

- c) Minimizing the use of environmentally harmful fossil fuels and raw materials.
- d) Approving corporate costs generated in the production and consumption of products.

Finally, Calomarde (2000) explained that the aforementioned approach is reflected in product differentiation, for which a series of strategies are proposed:

- a) The redesign of existing products.
- b) The development of innovative products.
- c) The renewal of ecologically unacceptable products.

In this regard, Seoanez and Angulo (1999) stated that green marketing strategies must consider the company's sales policies, as ecological issues affect the consumers globally. The same applies to limiting natural resources and promoting sustainable development as a countermeasure to consumerism. It includes combating pollution and minimizing waste impact through reducing packaging, reusing, and recycling.

From the perspective of Cubillo and Cerviño (2008), green marketing strategy is an action plan for organizations to achieve their goals by designing, distributing, pricing, and communicating environmentally friendly products. Calomarde (2000) highlighted the coherence that must exist between the ecological strategy and the general goal; such strategies must contemplate issues that affect the consumer globally. Hernández and López (2012) stated that green marketing strategies should include factors that contribute to the preservation of the environment, such as reducing the use of natural resources, recycling, reusing, and promoting sustainable development.

Given these conditions, this research adopts Calomarde's (2000) approach, which aligns with defining green marketing strategies more precisely and addressing issues that most affect consumers. The first step in developing these strategies is for companies to design, distribute, price, and communicate environmentally friendly products. Moravcikova et al. (2017) suggested that implementing green marketing strategies can enhance an organization's image, reputation, credibility, and trust among stakeholders, including competitors. This is due to the growing public trend toward purchasing environmentally friendly products, which in turn fosters customer loyalty.

Recycling

According to Calomarde (2000), recycling is a physicochemical or mechanical process in which a material or a product already used is subject to a total or partial treatment cycle for extracting raw material or generating a new product. This process involves the creation of raw materials obtained from waste and their incorporation into a new life cycle to mitigate the impact of corporate production, which causes the exhaustion of natural resources, macroeconomic strain, and waste management.

This author affirmed various reasons for recycling: saving resources, reducing environmental pollution, extending the useful life of materials by expanding their various uses, conserving energy, preventing deforestation, reducing 80% of the space occupied by garbage, lowering taxes on garbage collection, and simultaneously creating both employment and wealth. However, the author acknowledged that while most waste can be reused and recycled, the problem lies in public culture—people do not know how to sort waste, leading to it becoming mixed and generating more waste.

In this regard, [Polo \(2017\)](#) revealed that one of the essential elements of the marketing of green products is attributed to recycling. This creates a synergy by establishing a link with the use of clean technologies, favoring the transformation for reusing recycled goods. It has been inferred that the recycling process should be an unavoidable activity in business management because its results promote environment conservation and protection. The aim of this is the transformation of waste into reusable material, promoting the generation of other useful products for society.

Reusing

According to [Calomarde \(2000\)](#), reusing involves extending the useful life of an object from its acquisition to the moment it is no longer used, allowing most products to have more than one useful life, either by repairing them or by applying creativity and wit to create another, similar use. Reusing includes buying second-hand products, which extends the product's life and reduces the consumption of new products, thereby decreasing waste and the polluting effects of the transformation processes of raw materials.

[Lara \(2008\)](#) mentioned that reusing can be a more complex process involving the use of creativity. This is because once the object-commodity has fulfilled its primary purpose, it must be given a second one, and generally a redesign or adaptation of the objects will be required. This process requires more information and training on the main forms, advantages, and complications of reusing objects and their packaging. This important task needs to be carried out to ensure that the new product will succeed. In short, by giving a second life and extending the life of each product, reusing has become a common process in companies committed to preserving and protecting the environment ([Amazonas et al., 2018](#)).

Reduction

[Calomarde \(2000\)](#) mentioned that reduction implies reducing and rationalizing the use of possible natural resources, considering the practice of the 3Rs as proposed by environmentalism to promote environmentally friendly consumption habits. These are organized according to priorities: reduce the use of resources, reuse products to extend their useful life, recycle it correctly when the product can no longer be used. Thus, the 3Rs are reduce, reuse, and recycle. The expansion of ecological culture within the management of

organizations is based on the criteria supporting the sustainability of their operations, as set out in the *4Rs* of ecological thinking: repair, refurbish, reuse, and recycle, supported by adherence to environmental indicators.

Consumer environmental education

Environmental education in organizations is an ongoing challenge when planning green marketing strategies, with a focus on a sustainable vision supported by a responsible environmental culture and reflected in action mechanisms designed to protect environmental quality and safeguarding life for the common good. According to Calomarde (2000), environmental education is an action aimed at practicing ethical values that contribute to creating a sustainable social fabric, generating changes in consumer behavior. Thus, it aims to educate citizens who are sensitive to environmental problems and equipped with the knowledge, attitude, motivation, commitment, and skills to work individually and collectively in solving current environmental problems, such as those generated by the relation between culture and nature and the search for alternatives for collective good.

Therefore, according to the author, consumers should be involved in issues related to developing sustainable societies. This can be done through strategies that raise awareness about responsible consumption to promote people's welfare. Environmental education has therefore become a challenge to change attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors toward environmental issues, not only for environmentalists but also for businesses, communities, and consumers.

Method

Design

In this research work, the results indicated by respondents were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics, representing a positivist paradigm and quantitative approach. Accordingly, the study is descriptive, compiling and interpreting facts characteristic of the green marketing variable, using indicators such as recycling, reusing, reducing, and environmental education. Data were extracted from respondents' opinions within the study setting, utilizing scientific techniques, methods, and instruments to achieve study goals.

Participants

For this case, a survey was used as a technique to obtain information on the green marketing variable within the dimension of green marketing strategies. This approach is common in field designs. The instrument used was a self-administered questionnaire, applied to the owners of Wayúu handicrafts businesses. The questionnaire comprised 12 items with multiple response alternatives and was validated by

five professionals in the field, who reviewed and assessed the relevance and wording of each item concerning the dimension and indicator.

Subsequently, the reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using a pilot test conducted on a similar population (handicraft SMEs not formally structured). The Cronbach alpha formula was used, yielding a reliability level of 93%, which is considered adequate for use with the study population. The collected data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, including the interpretation of absolute and relative frequencies and measures of central tendency, such as the arithmetic mean.

Instruments

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Procedures

The research process began by proposing a project that included the aspects alluding to the criteria of the scientific method, describing the problem scenario and formulating the study question, research goals, justification, and study limitations. Subsequently, a review of previous research and referential material from documentary sources was conducted as a preliminary step to understanding the state of the art in ecological marketing and the operationalization of the variables.

Next, the methodology was developed, arguing epistemologically based on quantitative-positivist criteria, with a descriptive focus on the characteristics of the phenomenon under study. A nonexperimental design was used, analyzing cross-sectional field data collected from the population using techniques and instruments appropriate to the type of study. Data were subsequently organized and tabulated, leading to the interpretation and discussion of results in contrast with the theoretical perspectives of the authors consulted.

The next step was to draw up strategic guidelines for the study of SMEs, conclusions, recommendations, and bibliographies to justify the conceptual path of the proposed research. The final step involved preparing a comprehensive report and this article, summarizing the research work carried out.

Results

This section presents the data obtained from applying the data collection instrument to assess the green marketing variable among a population of 20 small and medium-sized Wayúu handicraft companies. The selected companies were those legally registered with the Chamber of Commerce in the district of Riohacha, focusing on the sale and marketing of Wayúu handicraft products. The data were interpreted according to the range and category specified in the Average Data Interpretation Scale (Table 1). The results of the green marketing strategies are presented in Table 2.

Table 1. *Data interpretation scale (arithmetic averages)*

Range	Category
1,00 ≥ 1,80	Very low
1,81 ≥ 2,60	Download
2,61 ≥ 3,40	Moderate
3,41 ≥ 4,20	High
4,21 ≥ 5,00	Very high

Source: Prepared by the author (2020).

Table 2. *Green marketing strategies*

Indicators	Alternative to Response	Managers and/or Owners										Averages		
		S		CS		AV		CN		N		ITEM	IND.	DIM
	Items	FA	FR%	FA	FR%	FA	FR%	FA	FR%	FA	FR%	ITEM	IND.	DIM
Recycling	1	4	20%	10	50%	4	20%	2	10%	0	0%	3,80	3,7	
												3,60		
	2	6	30%	2	10%	10	50%	2	10%	0	0%	3,70		
Reusing	3	2	10%	12	60%	4	20%	2	10%	0	0%	3,70	3,7	
	4	2	10%	16	80%	2	10%	0	0%	0	0%	4,00		
	5	4	20%	4	20%	6	30%	6	30%	0	0%	3,30		
Reduction	6	0	0%	2	10%	10	50%	6	30%	2	10%	2,60	4,0	
	7	0	0%	10	50%	8	40%	0	0%	2	10%	3,30		
	8	8	40%	4	20%	8	40%	0	0%	0	0%	4,00		

	9	8	40%	10	50%	0	0%	2	10%	0	0%	4,20	
Environmental Education	10	12	60%	6	30%	2	10%	0	0%	0	0%	4,50	
	11	16	80%	0	0%	4	20%	0	0%	0	0%	4,60	3,9
	12	0	0%	2	10%	8	40%	10	50%	0	0%	2,60	

Source: Prepared by the author (2020).

Table 2 shows the results of the respondents' opinions on green marketing strategies in small and medium Wayuu handicrafts businesses. For Item 1 of recycling indicator, 70% of the respondents indicated that they always or almost always used recycling methods in product manufacturing, 20% answered they did so sometimes, and 10% almost never did so. This resulted in an item average of 3.8, corresponding to a high presence category according to the scale.

For Item 2, 40% of the respondents mentioned that they always and almost always transformed the waste from their products into reusable material to make other products useful for society, 50% stated that they did so sometimes, and 10% almost never did so. The average value of the item was 3.60, placing it in the high presence category according to the scale of interpretation of the average data. For Item 3, 70% of the respondents stated that they always and almost always saved material by using recycling techniques in their products, 20% answered that they did so sometimes, and 10% almost never did so. The average for the item was 3.7, placing it in the high presence category.

For Item 4 of the reuse indicator, 80% of the respondents stated that they always and almost always avoided pollution by extending the useful life of the materials used in their production, and 20% expressed that they did so sometimes. The average value of the item was 4.0, indicating a high presence condition. For Item 5, 40% of individuals stated that they always and almost always redesigned their products or gave them a second use when they were not purchased. Furthermore, 30% did so sometimes, and the other 30% never did so. The average percentage value in the question was recorded in the high presence category, with an average index of 3.30.

For Item 6, 10% of the people considered that they always and almost always acquired a second-hand product to contribute to the reduction of environmental pollution, the other 50% did so sometimes, 30% almost never did so, and 10% never did so. The average for this item was 2.60, placing it in the moderate category. The average value for the indicator was 3.3, indicating moderate presence.

For Item 7 of the reduction indicator, 50% of the individuals answered that they almost always reduced their consumption of natural resources in production, 40% did so sometimes, and 10% never did so. The average for the item was 3.30, placing it in the high presence category. Subsequently, for Item 8, 80% of people responded that they always and almost always reduced energy costs in their production, and 20% almost never performed this action. The average value for the item was 4.00, indicating a high presence category.

For Item 9, 90% of the respondents always and almost always used low-consumption equipment to manufacture their products, and 20% almost never used these. The average performance of the item was 4.20, placing it in the very high presence category. The indicator scored an average of 4.0, implying a high presence category.

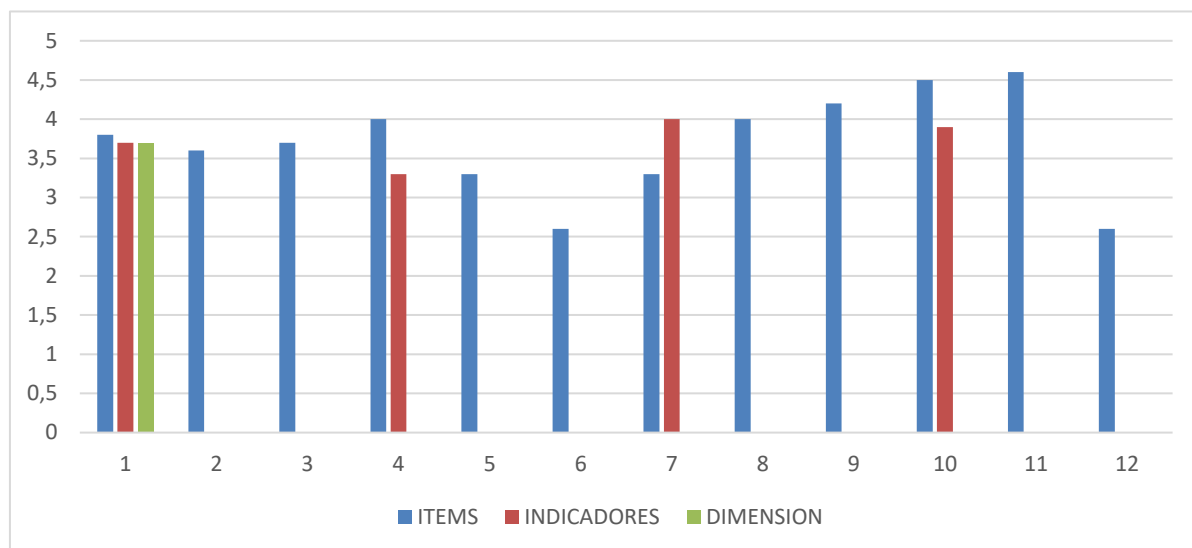
When analyzing the environmental training indicator, for Item 10, 90% of respondents always and almost always tried to provide environmental training for their employees. Finally, 10% answered that they did so sometimes. The average value of the item was 4.50, placing it in the very high presence category.

For Item 11, 80% of respondents always managed to motivate their employees to maintain a good attitude toward the environment, and the remaining 20% did so sometimes. The average behavioral value of the item was 4.60, constituting a very high presence category. Moreover, for Item 12, 50% of the respondents almost never involved their consumers in some type of environmental culture, 40% did so sometimes, 10% almost always did so. The average value for the item was 2.60, representing moderate presence. The average for the indicator was 3.9, implying a high level of presence.

Table 3. *Green marketing strategy dimension and indicators*

Indicators	Items	Indicators	Dimension
Recycling	1	3,7	3,7
	2		
	3		
Reusing	4	3,3	
	5		
	6		
	7		
Reduction	8	4,0	
	9		
	10		
Environmental education	11	3,9	
	12		

Source: Prepared by the author (2020).

Graph 1. *Green marketing strategy dimension and indicators*

Source: Prepared by the author (2020).

The data presented in Table 3 and Graph 1 reveal that the three items of the recycling indicator scored an average of 3.7, reflecting a high presence according to the interpretation scale. Meanwhile, the three items of the reuse indicator scored an average of 3.3, reflecting a moderate presence. Furthermore, the three items of the reduction indicator scored an average of 4.0, reflecting a high presence. The environmental education indicator had an average value of 3.9, thus constituting high presence. The green marketing strategy dimension had an average value of 3.7, reflecting a high presence.

The Wayúu handicraft SMEs, located in the specific tourist and cultural district of Riohacha, produced solid waste such as cardboard, paper, plastic, and glass in their work processes. This indicates a lack of commitment to environmental management, preservation, and care. Many of these businesses operate in open spaces, presenting risks to environmental sustainability and quality, possibly due to misinformation and a lack of understanding of Green Marketing and ecological product development.

It is evident that these companies rarely organize days or collections for organic products, an initiative that has been taken to encourage society to buy these products. However, these efforts have not yielded results. This is because, in most cases, they focus on traditional strategies, where products are the same, while those aimed at mitigating any effect on society, customers, or consumers are left behind. No agreements or alliances have been established with environmental institutions to promote the marketing and production of ecological products as a contribution to people's life quality.

Discussion

For the question *what are the green marketing strategies used by Wayúu Handicraft SMEs?*, it is worth explaining that the transformations of the global market are leading them to look within themselves and identify the way in which management processes are being carried out. This approach will help enhance their business performance and strengthen their position across economic, social, human, and environmental dimensions within their market. The environmental dimension, in particular, is crucial for protecting, preserving, and caring for the environment. This can be achieved through the development and marketing of environmentally friendly products or services. Thus, green marketing emerges as a critical approach, driving the implementation of strategies that contribute to sustainable development. By promoting responsible consumption and healthier consumer lifestyles, it ensures that economic and financial performance is not compromised but rather enhanced through environmentally conscious practices.

According to the results obtained in this research, the recycled indicator had an average value of 3.7, placing it in the high presence category. This value reaffirms what was stated by Calomarde (2000), who asserted that the recycling strategy is important because by subjecting an already used product or material to a total or partial treatment cycle, a raw material or a new product is obtained from waste. According to Moravcikova et al. (2017) and Salas (2018), through such an approach, a contribution is made to the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of companies and the country.

The reuse indicator was in the moderate range, with an average value of 3.3. This implies that SMEs did not always reuse the materials for manufacturing their handicraft products, indicating a weak strategy. This differs from Calomarde's (2000) theory, which considers that, by reusing, the applicability of a material or object is returned, giving it a second useful life and expanding the possibility of using it, thus generating a culture of environmental sustainability in companies (Ibarra et al., 2015; Lara, 2008). As for the reduction strategy, which had an average value of 4.0, it indicates high presence. This is consistent with the criteria of Calomarde (2000), highlighting that reduction helps rationalize the use of possible natural resources. It supports the practice of the 3Rs (Lara, 2008) and encourages environmentally friendly consumption habits based on business actions (Larios et al., 2016).

As for the environmental education indicator, the results showed an average of 3.9, indicating a high presence in the green marketing strategies developed in the companies studied. This is consistent with the findings of Hartmann et al. (2004), who claimed that environmental education can instill ethical values that positively influence consumer behavior. Through effective business performance, it can encourage individuals and communities to care for the environment. By providing knowledge and fostering awareness, environmental education helps address societal problems, enhancing overall well-being and quality of life for everyone.

Based on the above, the SMEs focus on creating products with the philosophy of preserving the environment, using green marketing strategies and strong recommendations to strengthen reuse in handicraft production. In addition, the study concludes that the analysis provided answers to the research question and suggested lines of research focusing on the practices of recycling, reusing, and reducing as strategies that enhance green marketing in companies.

Conclusions

When analyzing green marketing strategies, Wayúu handicraft SMEs in Riohacha use recycling methods to produce their products, which are sold in national and international markets. Thus, they contribute to the preservation of the environment and the culture of recycling for future generations by transforming waste materials to create indigenous handicrafts that meet customer needs.

Furthermore, in terms of reusing, a moderate behavior is observed, despite knowing the importance of promoting actions that mitigate the effects of environmental impact in the process of producing handicrafts by redesigning products, extending their useful life, and using second-hand products to transform them into materials, thereby reducing environmental pollution indicators under the configuration of alternative actions after their use.

Similarly, in the reduction strategy, the SMEs studied use biodegradable materials to guarantee their artisan production process, reduce the consumption of natural resources, facilitate the promotion of an ecological culture among their employees, reduce energy costs in the work process, and use environmentally friendly tools and techniques.

With regard to environmental education, there are indications that the companies have implemented actions to raise awareness and create an ecological culture within their production processes. These efforts aim to stimulate and motivate their workforce toward adopting ecological attitudes, grounded in environmental principles and values. This shared behavioral pattern extends to interactions with customers and consumers, thus creating competitive advantages in this market by aligning business practices with sustainability goals.

In general, green marketing in the SMEs refers to the practice of measures designed to contribute to the welfare and life quality of the community by reducing the impact on the environment. It includes the development and marketing of eco-friendly goods, the rationalization of the process, from the life cycle of the goods to the choice of raw materials, and the recovery of waste, with the aim of evaluating the sustainable criteria in favor of reuse, reduction, or recovery. Thus, the green marketing approach to business activities is not merely a modern trend but a sustainable work model that contributes to reducing negative

impacts on the natural environment. It involves engaging both internal and external stakeholders, including employees and customers, in promoting responsible consumption. Through education that raises awareness of environmental issues and solutions, green marketing fosters an ecological culture and a shared commitment.

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