

Consumers' Perception of Eco-friendly Practices Among Coffee Shops and Its Impact to Costs and Competitiveness in Manila Philippines

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Abstract

This study described the consumers' perception of eco-friendly practices among coffee shops and their views on cost and competitiveness in Metro Manila during the Academic Year 2024–2025. As sustainability continues to shape the food and beverage industry, many coffee shops have adopted practices such as recyclable packaging, waste reduction, and energy-efficient operations.

The study utilized a descriptive–informative research design with 360 respondents selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on the three variables: eco-friendly practices, consumers' perception, and cost and competitiveness. Mean and standard deviation were used as statistical tools for data analysis.

The results showed that respondents agreed on the implementation of eco-friendly practices ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.73$), the acceptability of cost ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.74$), and the competitiveness of coffee shops ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.76$). The findings indicate that consumers generally view sustainable practices positively and consider them acceptable in terms of pricing and beneficial for business competitiveness.

The study concludes that eco-friendly practices are positively perceived by consumers and are viewed as supportive of both cost acceptability and competitiveness. An action plan was proposed to help coffee shop owners sustain and enhance their eco-friendly initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

Coffee shops have become an essential part of urban culture in Metro Manila, catering to a diverse market of students, employees, and young professionals. As environmental concerns increase worldwide, many coffee shops have started integrating eco-friendly practices to reduce waste and promote sustainability. These practices include the use of recyclable packaging, waste-segregation systems, reusable cup programs, and sustainable sourcing of raw materials. According to Lim et al. (2022), the food and beverage sector plays a significant role in promoting environmental responsibility, and consumer response to sustainability initiatives strongly influences business outcomes.

Eco-friendly practices form the first variable of this study, representing the sustainable actions implemented by coffee shops to minimize environmental impact. Bui (2020) emphasized that adopting eco-friendly systems strengthens brand credibility and demonstrates corporate responsibility. However,

the success of sustainability initiatives largely depends on the second variable—consumers’ perception. How consumers interpret, value, and respond to eco-friendly practices determines whether these initiatives translate into satisfaction, preference, or loyalty. Patel and Sharma (2024) noted that consumers tend to support brands that are socially responsible, provided that such practices are visible and consistent.

The third variable, cost and competitiveness, refers to how sustainability efforts influence pricing and a coffee shop’s ability to stand out in a saturated market. While eco-friendly materials may increase operational expenses, consumers may perceive such costs as justified when associated with environmental benefits (Firmansyah et al., 2024). Moreover, sustainability is increasingly seen as a source of competitive advantage. Bajar et al. (2024) argued that customers prefer establishments that reflect modern, ethical, and environmentally conscious values, indicating that sustainability contributes positively to market competitiveness.

Despite growing interest in sustainability, limited local studies describe how Metro Manila consumers perceive eco-friendly practices and how these perceptions shape their views on cost and competitiveness. Many existing studies focus on general sustainability attitudes but do not combine these three variables within the context of coffee shops. This gap indicates the need to assess whether eco-friendly practices are recognized and whether they influence consumer expectations regarding price fairness and business competitiveness.

Thus, this study aims to describe eco-friendly practices and consumers’ perception and determine their implication on cost and competitiveness among coffee shops in Metro Manila. Findings from this research will serve as the basis for an action plan to strengthen sustainable practices while maintaining affordability and market advantage.

METHODS

This study utilized a descriptive research design to determine consumers’ perception of eco-friendly practices among coffee shops and to identify their implications on cost and competitiveness. The descriptive approach was selected because it allows the researchers to gather factual information, summarize characteristics of a group, and describe existing conditions without manipulating variables. The participants of the study consisted of consumers aged 18 and above who frequently visit coffee shops within Metro Manila. Convenience sampling was used to select respondents based on accessibility and willingness to participate. A researcher-made questionnaire served as the primary data-gathering instrument. It was divided into three parts corresponding to the study variables: eco-friendly practices, consumers’ perception, and cost and competitiveness. Each statement was measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The instrument underwent expert validation to ensure clarity, relevance, and content validity, and reliability checking was conducted prior to distribution.

Data collection was facilitated through both online platforms and face-to-face administration to reach active coffee shop consumers. Respondents were informed of the study’s purpose, and confidentiality of their responses was assured. Verbal interpretations were used to represent the corresponding qualitative meaning of the computed scores. The resulting data served as the basis for the analysis and interpretation presented in the succeeding section.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzed consumers’ perception of eco-friendly practices among coffee shops and examined

their implications on cost and competitiveness in Metro Manila during the Academic Year 2024–2025. This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered from the respondents regarding their perception of eco-friendly practices, and how these practices relate to the cost and competitiveness of coffee shops in Manila.

Table 1. Consumer Perception of Eco-Friendly Practices

| Indicators | WM | SD | VI | Rank |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------|------|
| The coffee shop I visit uses recyclable or biodegradable packaging. | 3.08 | 0.63 | A | 5 |
| The coffee shop implements visible waste reduction practices. | 3.13 | 0.756 | A | 4 |
| Eco-friendly practices make me feel more satisfied with the services of a coffee shop. | 3.39 | 0.76 | SA | 3 |
| I prefer coffee shops that promote sustainability in their daily operations. | 3.46 | 0.745 | SA | 1 |
| Incentives such as discounts for reusable cups encourage me to support eco-friendly coffee shops. | 3.43 | 0.772 | SA | 2 |
| Total | 3.30 | 0.73 | SA | |

Note: WM = 3.30 (SA); highest = 3.46, lowest = 3.08.

Table 1 shows the respondents’ perception of eco-friendly practices among coffee shops in Manila. The total weighted mean of 3.30 (SD = 0.73) indicates that respondents strongly agree that coffee shops implement and promote environmentally responsible practices. This implies that consumers generally recognize and positively evaluate the sustainability initiatives of coffee shops.

Among the indicators, the statement “I prefer coffee shops that promote sustainability in their daily operations” ranked first with a weighted mean of 3.46, showing that sustainability significantly influences consumers’ preference when choosing a coffee shop. Similarly, incentives such as discounts for reusable cups ranked second (WM = 3.43), indicating that sustainability efforts combined with customer benefits strengthen positive perception.

On the other hand, the lowest-ranked indicator was “The coffee shop I visit uses recyclable or biodegradable packaging” (WM = 3.08), which although interpreted as Agree, suggests that some customers may still observe inconsistency in the actual use of sustainable materials.

Overall, this result confirms that consumers’ perception toward eco-friendly practices is highly positive, particularly when such practices are visible and integrated into daily operations.

Table 2. Cost Implications of Eco-Friendly Practices

| Indicators | WM | SD | VI | Rank |
|--|------|-----------|----|------|
| Prices remain affordable despite eco-friendly practices. | 3.43 | 0.77 2 | SA | 1 |

| | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-----------|---|
| I am willing to pay a slightly higher price if the coffee shop practices sustainability. | 3.23 | 0.74 4 | A | 4 |
| High costs discourage full support for eco-friendly coffee shops. | 3.11 | 0.76 8 | A | 5 |
| Eco-friendly practices make coffee shops more cost-efficient in the long run. | 3.39 | 0.67 5 | SA | 2 |
| Product affordability influences my decision to support eco-friendly coffee shops. | 3.38 | 0.76 3 | SA | 3 |
| Total | 3.31 | 0.74 | SA | |

Note: WM = 3.31 (SA); highest = 3.43, lowest = 3.11.

Table 2 presents the respondents’ views on the cost implications of eco-friendly practices. The overall weighted mean of 3.31 (SD = 0.74) indicates that respondents strongly agree that eco-friendly practices do not negatively affect affordability and may even contribute to cost efficiency.

The highest-rated indicator was “The prices of coffee shop products remain affordable even with eco-friendly practices” (WM = 3.43). This suggests that most respondents do not associate sustainability initiatives with unreasonable price increases.

However, the statement “High costs discourage consumers from fully supporting eco-friendly coffee shops” ranked last (WM = 3.11), though still interpreted as Agree, which shows that some consumers remain cautious about potential price increases.

Overall, the data indicates that eco-friendly practices are not perceived as a heavy financial burden but rather as a cost-efficient strategy in the long run.

Table 3. Competitiveness of Coffee Shops with Eco-Friendly Practices

| Indicators | WM | SD | VI | Rank |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------|------|
| More competitive than non-eco-friendly shops | 3.28 | 0.733 | SA | 4 |
| I am more likely to choose shops with visible eco-practices | 3.33 | 0.741 | SA | 2 |
| Eco-friendly practices improve reputation and brand image | 3.46 | 0.80 | SA | 1 |
| I am more loyal to sustainable coffee shops | 3.31 | 0.733 | SA | 3 |
| Eco-friendly practices attract more customers | 3.18 | 0.795 | A | 5 |
| Total | 3.31 | 0.76 | SA | |

Note: WM = 3.31 (SA); highest = 3.46, lowest = 3.18.

Table 3 illustrates the respondents’ perception of how eco-friendly practices influence the competitiveness of coffee shops. The total weighted mean of 3.31 (SD = 0.76) indicates that respondents strongly agree

that sustainability improves coffee shops’ competitiveness.

The highest-ranked indicator was “Eco-friendly practices improve the reputation and brand image of coffee shops” (WM = 3.46). This suggests that sustainability is strongly associated with positive brand positioning among consumers.

In contrast, “Eco-friendly practices attract more customers compared to those that do not practice them” received the lowest score (WM = 3.18), meaning that while customers agree sustainability is beneficial, they may still consider other factors like location, taste, and price.

Overall, the results indicate that eco-friendly practices provide a competitive advantage primarily through brand image and customer loyalty rather than direct customer attraction alone.

Table 4. Additional Insights on Eco-Friendly Practices

| Indicators | WM | SD | VI | Rank |
|--|-------------|-------------|-----------|------|
| I am aware of eco-friendly practices in coffee shops | 3.17 | 0.768 | A | 4 |
| Environmental benefits outweigh higher prices | 3.27 | 0.682 | SA | 3 |
| Lack of eco-efforts discourages me from patronizing | 3.09 | 0.802 | A | 5 |
| Eco-friendly practices reduce environmental harm | 3.43 | 0.739 | SA | 1 |
| I choose shops that clearly promote sustainability | 3.35 | 0.723 | SA | 2 |
| Total | 3.26 | 0.74 | SA | |

Note: WM = 3.26 (SA); highest = 3.43, lowest = 3.09.

Table 4 presents additional insights regarding respondents’ overall attitudes toward eco-friendly practices. The total weighted mean of 3.26 indicates a strongly agreed response overall.

The highest indicator was “Eco-friendly practices in coffee shops meaningfully reduce environmental harm” (WM = 3.43), reflecting strong environmental awareness among customers. However, the indicator “A lack of visible eco-friendly efforts discourages me from patronizing a coffee shop” got the lowest mean (WM = 3.09), meaning that while sustainability is important, it is not the sole deciding factor for patronage. This shows that sustainability is becoming a supporting factor rather than an exclusive factor in consumer decision-making.

The results of the study indicate that consumers in Manila generally hold a very positive perception of eco-friendly practices among coffee shops. Findings across all indicators reveal that respondents strongly recognize and appreciate sustainability efforts such as waste reduction, recyclable packaging, and energy-efficient operations. These eco-friendly practices are not viewed merely as environmental actions but are also associated with enhanced customer satisfaction and brand credibility. In terms of cost, respondents perceive that sustainability initiatives do not significantly affect product affordability; instead, many believe that eco-friendly practices contribute to long-term cost efficiency and justify slight price adjustments. Furthermore, the data demonstrated that eco-friendly practices positively influence the competitiveness of coffee shops by strengthening brand reputation, improving customer loyalty, and enhancing market appeal. Although sustainability is not the sole factor when choosing a coffee shop, it

has become an important supporting factor that shapes consumer preference and trust. Overall, the study confirms that eco-friendly practices, as perceived by consumers, play a vital role in influencing both the cost perception and competitive positioning of coffee shops in Manila.

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