



The role of corporate social responsibility and corporate image in shaping responsible sports consumption intentions

El papel de la responsabilidad social corporativa y la imagen corporativa en las intenciones de consumo deportivo responsable

Authors

Jessica Müller-Pérez ¹
Jorge Suarez Campos ²
Rina Álvarez-Becerra ³
Elena Cachicatari-Vargas ⁴

¹ Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla (Puebla, México)

² Universidad Autónoma de Chile (Santiago, Chile)

³ Universidad Nacional Jorge Basadre Grohmann (Tacna, Perú)

⁴ Universidad Nacional Jorge Basadre Grohmann (Tacna, Perú)

Corresponding author:
Jessica Müller-Pérez
jessica.muller@upaep.mx

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Abstract

Introduction: The concept of social responsibility and sustainable corporate image has gained in-reasing relevance in recent years, particularly in the face of climate change and the growing demand for responsible consumption.

Objective: to examine the role of Corporate Social Responsibility and corporate image in shaping responsible Sports consumption intentions in Chile.

Methodology: An online survey was conducted with 465 consumers, and the data were analyzed using the structural equation modeling approach (PLS-SEM).

Results: The findings reveal that corporate image exerts a stronger influence on responsible purchase intention compared to Corporate Social Responsibility, while Corporate Social Responsibility significantly impacts the perception of corporate image.

Discussion: These results advance theoretical understanding by showing how Corporate Social Responsibility indirectly fosters responsible consumption through image building, particularly in emerging economies.

Conclusions: From a practical standpoint, the study provides actionable insights for organizations seeking to design effective sustainability strategies, strengthen consumer trust, and promote environmentally responsible behaviors. By addressing this gap, the research highlights the importance of integrating Corporate Social Responsibility and corporate image as key drivers for promoting sustainable practices and consumer behavior in underrepresented regions.

Keywords

Corporate social responsibility (CSR); corporate image; sustainable consumption; environmental awareness; emerging economies.

Resumen

Introducción: El concepto de responsabilidad social e imagen corporativa sostenible ha cobrado creciente relevancia en los últimos años, especialmente ante el cambio climático y la creciente demanda de consumo responsable.

Objetivo: Examinar el papel de la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial y la imagen corporativa en la conformación de intenciones de consumo deportivo responsable en Chile.

Metodología: Se realizó una encuesta en línea con 465 consumidores y los datos se analizaron utilizando el enfoque de modelado de ecuaciones estructurales (PLS-SEM).

Resultados: Los resultados revelan que la imagen corporativa ejerce una mayor influencia en la intención de compra responsable en comparación con la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial, mientras que la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial impacta significativamente en la percepción de la imagen corporativa.

Discusión: Estos resultados mejoran la comprensión teórica al mostrar cómo la RSE fomenta indirectamente el consumo responsable a través de la construcción de una imagen, particularmente en las economías.

Conclusiones: Desde una perspectiva práctica, el estudio proporciona información práctica para las organizaciones que buscan diseñar estrategias de sostenibilidad eficaces, fortalecer la confianza del consumidor y promover comportamientos ambientalmente responsables. Al abordar esta brecha, la investigación destaca la importancia de integrar la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial y la imagen corporativa como impulsores clave para promover prácticas sostenibles y el comportamiento del consumidor en regiones subrepresentadas.

Palabras clave

Responsabilidad social empresarial (RSE); imagen corporativa; consumo sostenible; conciencia ambiental; economías emergentes

Introduction

Nowadays, in the sport sectors (from clubs and fitness centers to clothing manufacturers companies) are increasingly interested in implementing responsible strategies driven by the desire of many consumers to purchase products with social and environmental appeal. This opportunity can be leveraged through sustainable marketing, which not only allows the offering of more sustainable goods and services but also helps develop strategies that enhance the company's image (Gleim et al., 2013). In fact, sustainable sports marketing not only offers eco-efficient services, in particular, has facilitated behavioral changes towards more responsible consumption. However, some gaps remain in understanding the impact of these changes on consumers and other stakeholders, opening the door to incorporating new technologies and marketing theories (Rubio, 2021).

Current trends indicate that consumer behaviors are increasingly oriented toward sustainable lifestyles and support for local benefits. This trend is reflected in a growing demand, as 66% of consumers plan to make more ethical and sustainable purchases in the next six months. Additionally, 74% of consumers consider ethical practices aligned with their values an important reason for choosing a brand (Accenture, 2021). Previous studies on sustainable marketing have focused on studying the relationship between green marketing and consumer loyalty, satisfaction and purchase intentions, both in luxury and fast fashion products (Gong et al., 2023), in the hotel industry (Chen et al., 2021), in the industrial and marine coatings sector (Nguyen-Viet & Thanh, 2024), in the service sector (Mohammadi et al., 2023), among others.

According to Bruno et al. (2020), communication between companies and their stakeholders must be encouraged to understand how the consumer perceives those companies that apply corporate responsibility activities in their operations. In addition, CSR practices can improve the image of the company, causing greater purchase intention and reliability in its customers, so its application is a critical tactic for it (Tao et al., 2022).

Although previous studies have demonstrated that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) positively influences corporate image and consumer purchase intentions in different industries and contexts, most of this evidence comes from developed economies, with limited research conducted in Latin America. What remains underexplored is the extent to which CSR exerts both direct and indirect effects on responsible consumption, particularly in metropolitan areas characterized by diverse socioeconomic and cultural dynamics such as Chile. To address this gap, the present study proposes and empirically tests a comprehensive model that integrates CSR, corporate image, green attitudes, and ecological awareness as predictors of responsible consumption intentions (Mohammadi et al., 2023). In doing so, this research not only enriches the theoretical discussion on the mediating role of corporate image but also provides context-specific evidence that can guide organizations in emerging economies to design strategies that effectively promote sustainable consumption practices.

In many parts of the world, the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is relatively new (Luo & Qu, 2023; Nguyen-Viet & Thanh, 2024). According to Luo & Qu (2023), CSR practices not only focus on social aspects but also on natural resource conservation. Tao et al. (2022) emphasize that CSR represents the management efforts that companies make to foster ecologically responsible growth without sacrificing their economic resources. Comparatively, in developed economies CSR has been institutionalized as a key component of corporate strategy, while in Latin America its adoption has been uneven and often influenced by social pressures, informal markets, and institutional weaknesses (Ogliastri & Flores, 2007). However, studies in the region show that consumers are increasingly rewarding companies with strong CSR commitments by perceiving them as more trustworthy and sustainable, which directly reinforces their purchase decisions. According to Lagoudaki, Tsitskari, Vernadakis and Paschalidou (2026), CSR in the sports industry has expanded considerably with initiatives ranging from community support and inclusive programming to environmentally responsible facility management; this means that an organization's ethical climate is a key factor in determining ethical behavior in sport, as it has been shown that a positive ethical climate fosters trust, cooperation, and prosocial behavior among its clients. Thus, CSR operates not only as a reputational mechanism but also as a driver of behavioral change in emerging markets, where consumers often demand higher transparency and alignment with local values. Indeed, sports services have undergone a significant transformation, establish-

ing themselves as an essential component of well-being and social cohesion and consequently, it is imperative that management strategies adapt to current demands, moving beyond outdated models and addressing challenges such as the need for sustainable public policies (Reyes-robles & Sánchez-félix, 2026).

Corporate image is defined as the set of ideas and feelings associated with a company by its stakeholders, based on organizational behavior, communication strategies, and both tangible and intangible values (Aledo-Ruiz et al., 2022). As an intangible asset, corporate image can shape consumer behavioral intentions by providing trust and symbolic meaning (Chen et al., 2021).

CSR plays a crucial causal role in corporate image formation. When companies actively communicate their social and environmental commitments, stakeholders interpret these actions as signals of credibility and responsibility, which translate into positive image evaluations (Nguyen-Viet & Thanh, 2024). This causal link has been validated in studies from Europe and Asia, where CSR consistently enhances consumer perceptions and strengthens brand equity (Martínez et al., 2019). In Latin America, however, evidence is still scarce. Research in countries such as Mexico, Brazil, and Chile suggests that CSR is even more influential in image building because consumers in emerging economies tend to be highly sensitive to companies' ethical behavior, given the prevalence of inequality and institutional gaps.

Purchase intention represents the immediate precursor of actual purchase behavior and reflects consumers' willingness to buy a product or service (Tonglet et al., 2004; Yzer, 2017). In the sustainability context, it refers to the choice of environmentally friendly products that satisfy consumer needs (Broccardo, Truant & Dana, 2023). In this context, the consumer of products for practicing a sport makes a holistic judgment about how ethical they consider a particular issue, such as a company, brand, product, or service (Lagoudaki, Tsitskari, Vernadakis, & Paschalidou, 2026). And who, furthermore, considers the benefits that the company itself contributes to the social system to be important in their purchasing decision (Ramos-Díaz, Mercado-Salgado & Farah-Simón, 2025).

Corporate image functions causally as a heuristic that influences purchase intention: when consumers perceive a company as socially and environmentally responsible, they are more likely to translate those perceptions into behavioral commitments (Thomas et al., 2022). The emotional and functional dimensions of image reinforce trust and reduce uncertainty, which facilitates the decision to purchase sustainable products (Gao et al., 2020). Empirical evidence from Europe and Asia confirms a strong link between corporate image and purchase intention across diverse sectors, such as hospitality (H.-C. Wu, 2013), video games (Wu, 2014), and electric vehicles (Gong et al., 2023).

In Latin America, studies highlight that this causal relationship may be even stronger due to cultural collectivism and the growing relevance of ethical considerations in consumer choices. For example, Chilean and Mexican consumers demonstrate higher loyalty and intention to purchase when companies communicate a "green image" that aligns with social and community concerns.

Attitudes toward environmentally friendly products are psychological predispositions through which individuals evaluate the benefits or disadvantages of sustainable consumption for themselves and the environment (Rusyani, Lavuri, Gunardi, et al., 2021). These attitudes act as causal antecedents of behavior, influencing both the intention and the actual adoption of sustainable practices (Passafaro, 2020).

Empirical studies in developed economies show that positive green attitudes strongly predict purchase intention (Ayoun & Schmitz, 2024), while similar findings have been observed in Eastern Europe and Asia (Dudziak & Kocira, 2022). In Latin America, however, evidence suggests that the strength of this causal relationship depends on consumers' level of information: Müller et al. (2021) found that when ecological knowledge is limited, attitudes alone are insufficient to generate purchase intentions. This highlights the need to reinforce ecological education and awareness campaigns in the region to maximize the effect of attitudes on consumption behavior.

Environmental awareness refers to individuals' recognition of environmental problems and their understanding of the consequences of unsustainable behavior (Müller et al., 2021). This awareness serves as a cognitive foundation that causally motivates pro-environmental behaviors, including responsible purchasing. Evidence from Asia and Europe shows that consumers with higher awareness levels are more likely to purchase green products (Ahn & Shamim, 2022). In Croatia, for instance, collective awareness translated into greater willingness to engage in environmental care (Dropulić & Krupka, 2020). In

Latin America, similar trends are observed: Müller-Pérez et al. (2022) found that Mexican consumers who recognized the seriousness of environmental issues exhibited stronger purchase intentions for eco-friendly products. In Chile, preliminary studies suggest that ecological awareness is becoming a central factor in urban consumer behavior, particularly among younger generations as athlete's. These findings support the causal proposition that environmental awareness functions as a direct and powerful predictor of sustainable purchase intentions.

For this reason, the objective of the present study is to examine the role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and corporate image in the intention of responsible sport consumption in the metropolitan region of Santiago, Chile considering both green attitude and ecological awareness. This research provides important data for decision makers on awareness campaigns for the population about environmental problems and how their products and services support said action; In addition, it is an important reference in highlighting the importance of corporate image in changes in consumption habits of products focused on sports.

Based on the theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1: Corporate Social Responsibility activities positively and significantly affect corporate image.

H2: Corporate image positively and significantly affects responsible purchase intention

H3: Green attitudes positively and significantly affect responsible purchase intention

H4: Environmental awareness positively and significantly affects responsible purchase intention

Method

This research follows a quantitative, cross-sectional, causal, and non-experimental approach. The population selection was based on the number of inhabitants in the metropolitan region of Santiago, Chile., specifically targeting men and women aged 18 and older residing in Santiago, totaling 18,480,432 people (INE, 2024).

Participants

The sample was selected using non-probability convenience sampling (Müller et al., 2021; Sun & Wang, 2019), which is the standard technique for defining specific consumer populations when a complete census of sports brand buyers is unavailable (Etikan, 2016). In the absence of a list of accessible sampling units for a probability design, the use of quantitative screening questions at the beginning of the questionnaire ensures that only subjects meeting the eligibility criteria (being of legal age and having recent purchasing experience) are included in the final analysis, thereby guaranteeing the study's internal validity (Hulland, Baumgartner & Smith, 2018). The following inclusion criteria were met: that participants were of legal age (>18 years old) at the time the instrument was administered—thereby ensuring the ethical validity of informed consent and autonomy in consumer goods purchasing behavior—and had actually purchased a sporting good within the last six months. The sample size was calculated using the formula for known populations with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, yielding 384 surveys; however, a total of 465 surveys were completed.

Procedure

For data collection, an online survey was designed using Google Forms, as this method enhances instrument applicability, improves sample coverage, minimizes costs, and provides better data control (Ramírez-Castillo et al., 2021). Furthermore, prior to final data collection, the instrument underwent content validation via expert judgment, involving three active researchers from the National System of Researchers (SNI) who specialize in sustainable marketing and consumer behavior. Feedback from the experts led to adjustments in the wording of two items to align them with local Chilean terminology (e.g., replacing the generic term "sports store" with "sports brands or centers"). Subsequently, in January 2024, a pilot study was conducted with an initial sample of 78 participants from the Metropolitan Region. After applying exclusion criteria (five participants reported not having made sports-related purchases during the reference period), an effective pilot sample of 73 subjects was analyzed; the results

demonstrated adequate preliminary internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.80$ across all scales), confirming the comprehensibility of the measurement instrument.

Instrument

To measure the theoretical constructs included in the predictive model, validated scales from the international scientific literature on green marketing and corporate sustainability were adapted. All items were translated from English into Chilean Spanish using the back-translation method to ensure semantic, conceptual, and linguistic equivalence. The initial translation was performed by a professional bilingual translator, while the back-translation into English was carried out independently by a native English-speaking academic unfamiliar with the study. Minor discrepancies were resolved through consensus by the project's editorial committee.

The final instrument consists of 18 items structured around five main variables, assessed using a 5-point Likert scale (where 1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly agree). None of the items are reverse-coded; therefore, higher scores reflect greater intensity in the measured variable. Regarding variable measurement, the items for each variable were adapted from previous studies directly related to the present research. For Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): operationalized using the multidimensional scale developed by Chen et al. (2021). The construct assesses consumer perceptions regarding the ethical, legal, and environmental preservation practices of brands and sports centers concerning their facilities and manufacturing processes. It consists of four items. Corporate Image (CI): measured using the scales of Chen et al. (2021) and Martínez et al. (2019). This four-item construct assesses intangible associations, overall reputation, and the perception of ethical trustworthiness regarding the sports company chosen by the consumer. Ecological Attitude (ATT): adapted from the proposal by Rusyani, Lavuri and Gunardi (2021). It consists of three items designed to capture the participant's psychological assessment regarding the relevance, benefit, and desirability of purchasing sports products that demonstrate low ecological impact. Environmental Awareness (EA): assessed using four items based on the scale by Müller-Pérez et al. (2022). It measures the sports consumer's concern regarding the severity of climate change and their level of personal responsibility for mitigating global environmental degradation. Intention for Responsible Sports Consumption (INT): a final endogenous variable adapted from Müller et al. (2021) and Tonglet et al. (2004). It consists of three items designed to predict the consumer's willingness to purchase sustainable sports products in the immediate future and to actively recommend these options to their social circle (See Appendix A1).

Data analysis

For descriptive data analysis, SPSS version 25 was used (Mat Roni & Djajadikerta, 2021; Sen & Yildirim, 2022). Additionally, partial least squares (PLS) regression was applied using SmartPLS version 4.0 to test the research model, as PLS has become a standard method for analyzing complex interrelationships between observed and latent variables (Sarstedt et al., 2022).

Results

Prior to the structural analysis, the sociodemographic profile of the final sample ($N = 465$) was verified to ensure alignment between the subjects and the research objectives. In this regard, it is essential to specify that the study models the behavior of the end sports consumer (individuals who purchase consumer goods or contract physical fitness services). Therefore, the distribution of participants was mainly concentrated in the 18-23 year (23.7%), 24-29 year (20.4%), 30-35 year (17.2%), 36-41 years (14%), and 42-47 years (10.8%). Regarding gender, 57.7% of respondents were women, and 42.3% were men. As for marital status, the data show that 76.1% of respondents are single, 16% are married, 3.1% are divorced, and 4.3% are in a domestic partnership. In terms of educational background, the majority of respondents (69.3%) hold a bachelor's or engineering degree. Additionally, 16.6% reported having completed high school (preparatory education), 12.9% indicated holding a postgraduate degree, and 1.2% reported having only secondary education. Regarding engagement in physical activity, 38.4% reported exercising recreationally or at an amateur level one to two times a week, and 41.2% did so three to five times a week, while the remaining 20.4% fell strictly into the category of passive consumers

or spectators who purchase sportswear and footwear exclusively for everyday use, comfort, or urban style.

Model Assessment

To assess the model, it is essential to evaluate reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Hair Jr. et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022). Starting with reliability, factor loadings should be above 0.70 (Sarstedt et al., 2022). As shown in Table 1, all model items have a factor loading above 0.70, indicating high reliability of the items in their respective constructs. However, CI5 and CSR2 did not meet this criterion and were subsequently removed, prompting a reanalysis.

Additionally, two criteria were used to examine construct reliability: Cronbach's Alpha and rho_A (ρ_A), both of which should be above 0.7 (Hair Jr. et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022). It is important to note that when considering all construct indicators simultaneously, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) must be analyzed. According to Hair Jr. et al. (2019), VIF values above 5 are considered critical. As shown in Table 1, all VIF values remain below this threshold (Akram et al., 2021).

Table 1. Reliability Assessment of the Study Model

Variable	items	Loadings >0.70	Cronbach's Alpha >0.70	VIF	Rho_a >0.70	AVE >.050
Corporate Social Responsibility	CSR1	0.739	0.883	1.804	.878	.618
	CSR3	0.818		2.069		
	CSR4	0.859		2.312		
	CSR5	0.863		2.415		
	CSR6	0.848		2.267		
Corporate Image	CI1	0.849	0.843	1.915	.849	.609
	CI2	0.849		2.037		
	CI3	0.810		1.800		
	CI4	0.788		1.751		
	ATT1	0.822		2.240		
Green Attitude	ATT2	0.707	0.859	1.645	.866	.644
	ATT3	0.864		2.520		
	ATT4	0.764		1.812		
	ATT5	0.841		2.238		
	EA1	0.792		1.929		
Ecological Awareness	EA2	0.824	0.873	2.607	.870	.606
	EA3	0.809		2.744		
	EA4	0.750		1.642		
	EA5	0.725		1.632		
	EA6	0.792		1.987		
Responsible Purchase Intention	INT1	0.872	0.931	2.876	.928	.776
	INT2	0.902		3.450		
	INT3	0.882		3.028		
	INT4	0.883		3.076		
	INT5	0.884		2.991		

Source: Own elaboration based on data analysis in SMART PLS4

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Convergent validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which ensures that the correlation of each variable with itself is higher than its correlation with other variables. For this, the AVE must have a value greater than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As shown in Table 1, the resulting values are above 0.5, confirming an adequate convergence of the items within each construct and ensuring they appropriately represent the construct.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity indicates the extent to which a construct is distinct from others. The first criterion used is the Fornell-Larcker criterion, where the square root of each construct's AVE (see Table 2) must be greater than the highest correlation it has with any other construct in the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Sarstedt et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2021)(See Table 2).

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	ATT	EA	CI	INT	CSR
Attitude	0.802				
Ecological Awareness	0.678	0.783			
Corporate Image	0.581	0.499	0.824		
Intention	0.740	0.747	0.550	0.885	
CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)	0.537	0.430	0.767	0.409	0.827

Source: Own elaboration based on data analysis in SMART PLS4

The second criterion is the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), where the value must be below 0.90 to establish discriminant validity between two reflective constructs (Hair Jr. et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2022). Table 3 shows that discriminant validity is confirmed, as the obtained values are below 0.90 (See Table 3).

Table 3. HTMT Criterion

	ATT	EA	CI	INT	CSR
Attitude					
Ecological Awareness	0.779				
Corporate Image	0.681	0.574			
Intention	0.824	0.821	0.620		
CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)	0.618	0.490	0.882	0.453	

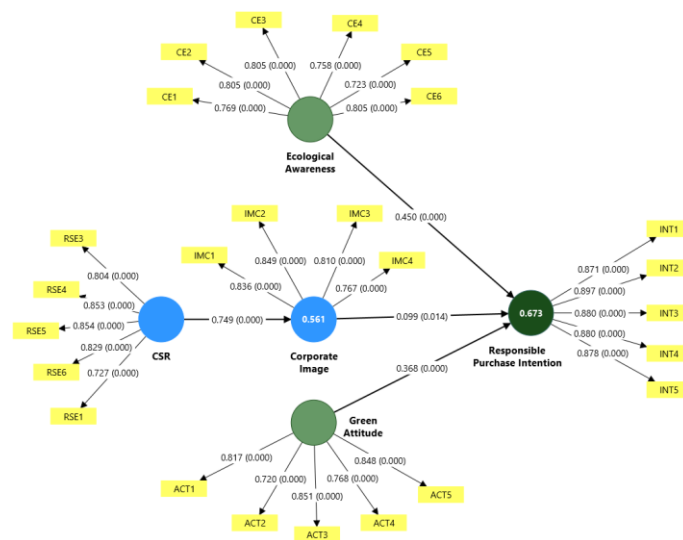
Source: Own elaboration based on data analysis in SMART PLS4

Structural Model Evaluation

Figure 1 shows the evaluation of the structural model with path coefficients, where the Bootstrap process was used without full sign change, with 5000 subsamples, BCa Bootstrap, one-tailed test, and a 5% significance level.

Table 4 shows the path coefficient values ($p < 0.05$) for construct significance, as well as the hypothesis test and its results (See figure 1).

Figure 1. Structural Model Results.



Source: Own elaboration based on data analyzed in SMART PLS4

The results show that the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) variable significantly affects positive and statistically significant effect on the image of the sports organization ($\beta = .749$), thus hypothesis 1 is accepted. Regarding, a favorable perception of corporate image significantly predicts the intention to consume sports responsibly ($\beta = .099$), so hypothesis 2 is accepted. The sports consumer's green attitude shows a direct and positive influence on their ethical purchase intention ($\beta = .368$), so hypothesis

3 is accepted. Finally, the environmental awareness of the end consumer has a positive and significant influence on the intention to engage in responsible sports consumption ($\beta = .450$), so hypothesis 4 is accepted (see Table 4).

Regarding the predictive power of corporate image, attitude, and environmental awareness on purchase intention, it is moderate (adjusted $R^2 = .670$). Additionally, the effect size of the corporate image construct is not significant ($f^2 = 0.018$) since this is below the threshold of 0.02 suggested by Cohen (1988) for small effects, while the effect sizes for the attitude and environmental awareness constructs are small and moderate respectively ($f^2 = 0.169, 0.303$). Regarding the coefficient of determination (R^2) of the variables corporate image and purchase intention, it was examined. The R^2 obtained was 0.553, being moderate to high to explain the variation in corporate image. And, the R^2 obtained to explain the variation in purchase intention was high (0.633). Finally, the Stone-Geiser Q^2 predictive relevance, which is an indicator of out-of-sample predictive power or predictive relevance, whose value greater than 0 for a specific endogenous variable indicates that the predictive relevance of the nomogram for a dependent construct must have a value greater than zero (Hair Jr. et al., 2019) and, in this case, the construct of corporate image construct has a $Q^2 = 0.549$ and the purchase intention construct has a $Q^2 = 0.648$, confirming a high predictive relevance according to Shmueli, et al. (2019).

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	<i>p</i> -valor	<i>t</i> -valor	Result
CSR → CI	.749	.000	26.855	It is accepted
CI → INT	.099	.014	2.093	It is accepted
ATT → INT	.368	.000	5.889	It is accepted
EA → INT	.450	.000	7.936	It is accepted

Source: Own elaboration based on data analyzed in SMART PLS4

Discussion

This research builds on Rausch & Kopplin (2021) and incorporates variables highlighted in sustainability-based studies (Müller-Pérez et al., 2022). The results applied to the sports sector confirm that CSR plays a significant role in shaping corporate image, aligning with Aledo-Ruiz et al. (2022) and Golob et al. (2019), who emphasize that CSR fosters effective communication with stakeholders, enhances corporate transparency, and strengthens stakeholder commitment. Moreover, our findings extend prior research by showing that a sustainable corporate image not only improves emotional and functional perceptions of sports consumers, as noted by Gao et al. (2020), but also directly increases sports consumers' intention to purchase environmentally friendly products, highlighting the mediating role of prior experiences. However, the direct effect of corporate image on sports consumer purchase intention, although significant, is of a practically small magnitude. Regarding sports consumer attitudes toward sustainable consumption, our results corroborate Ayoun & Schmitz (2024) and Dudziak & Kocira (2022), confirming that positive attitudes are significant predictors of purchase intention. Importantly, ecological awareness emerged as the most influential factor on sustainable purchase intention, supporting the work of Ahn and Shamim (2022) and Müller-Pérez et al. (2022), and emphasizing that environmental concern drives responsible sports consumer behavior. The originality of this research lies in its attention to an explicit knowledge gap in the sustainable management literature: the intersection between ethical business management and the niche of sports consumption in Latin American environments. While most previous predictive models on ecological consumption have been validated in countries with mature green markets and high regulatory institutionalization (such as Western Europe or East Asia). Furthermore, by integrating external constructs (CSR and image) with internal cognitive variables (attitudes and awareness) into a robust, unified model, the research strengthens the cross-cultural validity of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

However, the study presents certain limitations. First, the use of non-probability convenience sampling introduces self-selection bias, as citizens who voluntarily completed the online survey may possess a pre-existing pro-environmental inclination that is inherently stronger than that of the average citizen. Second, the study's geographical limitation—focusing exclusively on the Santiago Metropolitan Region in Chile—precludes the categorical generalization of the findings to the country's rural areas or to other economies in the region with lower penetration rates of formal sports consumption.



Future research could apply mixed methodological approaches incorporating qualitative tools—such as focus groups or in-depth interviews with sustainability managers and consumers—is recommended, as this would allow for an in-depth exploration of the underlying meanings behind perceptions of ethics in sports. Furthermore, the development of longitudinal studies is suggested to evaluate the temporal stability of the responsible purchasing intentions analyzed. And finally, to conduct comparative studies contrasting the urban dynamics of Santiago with those of metropolises in other Latin American countries (such as Mexico City or São Paulo), thereby making it possible to isolate specific institutional and cultural variables that moderate the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility.

Conclusions

The fundamental purpose of this research was to evaluate the causal interrelationships among Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), corporate image, pro-environmental attitudes, and ecological awareness regarding the formation of intentions for responsible sports consumption within the geographical context of the Santiago Metropolitan Region, Chile. While CSR exerts a statistically significant direct effect on perceived corporate image (validating hypothesis H1), its direct impact on responsible purchase intention is hierarchically surpassed by the influence of corporate image (H2). Furthermore, the multivariate analysis robustly confirms that both pro-environmental attitudes (H3) and ecological awareness (H4) stand as critical direct antecedents of behavioral intention, demonstrating that internal psychographic factors play a decisive role in guiding choices toward eco-efficient sports goods.

From a theoretical perspective, the data suggest that in emerging economies characterized by collectivism and high structural inequality—such as Latin America—consumers process CSR as a signal of legitimacy and social reciprocity. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that organizational investments in sustainability generate tangible brand value, challenging the neoclassical view that environmental costs undermine competitiveness. For society at large and for decision-makers, these findings imply that sportswear brands and fitness centers must move away from superficial or disjointed communication campaign (which carry a latent risk of greenwashing) and instead shift toward the co-design of experiences and infrastructure that educate users about the environment; ecological awareness has proven to be the internal driver with the greatest potential to bridge the gap between positive attitudes and actual purchasing behavior.

Author Affiliations

Jessica Müller Pérez. Facultad de Mercadotecnia, Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla (Puebla, México). Correo: Jessica.muller@upaep.mx. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3212-9357>

Jorge Suarez Campos. Facultad de Administración y Negocios, Universidad Autónoma de Chile (Santiago, Chile). Correo: jorge.suarez@uautonoma.cl Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7080-1423>

Rina Álvarez-Becerra. Graduate School, Universidad Nacional Jorge Basadre Grohmann (Tacna, Perú). Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5455-6632>

Elena Cachicatari-Vargas. Faculty of Health Sciences Universidad Nacional Jorge Basadre Grohmann (Tacna, Perú). Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9843-432X>

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Authors and translators' details:

Jessica Müller-Pérez	Jessica.muller@upaep.mx	Author
Jorge Suarez Campos	jorge.suarez@uautonoma.cl	Author
Rina Álvarez-Becerra	ralvarezb@unjbgu.edu.pe	Author
Elena Cachicatari-Vargas	Peruecachicatari@unjbgu.edu.pe	Translator

Appendix

Appendix A.1 Instrument

Variable	Items	References
Corporate Social Responsibility		
CSR1	Responsible sports organizations offer better conditions and treatment to their technical and operational staff.	
CSR2	Companies in the sports sector boost the local economy through events and regional supply chains.	Chen et al. (2021)
CSR3	Sports clubs or brands are committed to waste management and the environmental impact of their facilities.	Bruno et al. (2020)
CSR4	Sports organizations act in pursuit of the well-being and health of the community.	
CSR5	Sports brands communicate honestly and transparently about the origin of their materials and services.	
CSR6	Sports organizations strictly adhere to environmental protection regulations in their facilities.	
Corporate Image		
CI1	I believe that a sports organization with CSR guarantees respect for the rights of the user/athlete.	
CI2	I have a positive impression of clubs and brands that demonstrate social commitment.	
CI3	In my opinion, sports companies with responsible practices project a superior brand identity.	Chen et al. (2021), Ahmad (2021)
CI4	The staff at the responsible sports centers are more attentive and trained in values.	
CI5	Responsible sports organizations are preferable to those that only seek financial gain.	
Green Attitudes		
ATT1	Buying green or sustainable sports products is a good idea.	
ATT2	Buying green or sustainable sport products is more interesting.	Asif et al. (2017) Zhang et al. (2018)
ATT3	Buying green or sustainable sports products benefits the environment.	Ajzen (2020), Dangelico, Alvino, and Fraccascia (2022)
ATT4	Choosing sustainable sporting events allows me to actively contribute to caring for the planet.	
ATT5	I feel satisfied with myself for choosing sports practices with low environmental impact.	
Ecological Awareness		
EA1	I am aware of the long-term consequences of the pollution generated by the sports industry.	
EA2	I understand that the natural environments where I practice sports are being degraded by human activity.	Asif et al. (2017) Zhang et al. (2018)
EA3	I am aware that the balance of natural sports spaces is fragile and easy to destroy.	Ajzen (2020), Dangelico, Alvino, and Fraccascia (2022)
EA4	Whenever possible, I choose clothing or facilities that are less harmful to the environment.	
EA5	I believe it is my responsibility as an athlete to protect the spaces where I perform physical activity.	
EA6	I check that the sports equipment I buy is recyclable or long-lasting.	
Responsible purchase intention		
INT1	I am willing to pay for sustainable sports services if they are available in my area.	
INT2	I intend to buy green/sustainable sports products because of their low environmental impact.	
INT3	I will buy green/sustainable sport products because they are "friendly" to the environment	Raush and Kopplin (2021), Zhang et al. (2018), Asif et al. (2017), Bruno et al. (2020)
INT4	I would recommend other athletes (friends and family) consume brands with environmental commitment.	
INT5	It gives me satisfaction to know that my spending on sports supports socially responsible companies.	