

The Influence of Green Marketing Strategy on Customer Advocacy: A Mediation Analysis of Perceived Green Value

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Abstract: This study examined the role of perceived green value on the link between green marketing strategy and customer advocacy in supermarket retail stores in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The study was anchored on the Value-Belief-Norm theory. A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted and data were collected from 480 customers, of which 257 valid responses were used for statistical analysis. The hypotheses were tested using partial correlation and multiple regression techniques. The findings reveal that eco-branding and eco-claim transparency exert significant positive influences on customer advocacy, indicating that customers are more likely to support and recommend supermarkets that communicate clear and credible environmental practices. Conversely, eco-packaging shows a significant but negative effect on advocacy, suggesting possible skepticism or dissatisfaction regarding packaging quality or authenticity. Results further show that perceived green value does not mediate the relationship between green marketing strategies and customer advocacy, implying that advocacy in this context is driven by abstract perception of value. Based on the findings, the study concludes that green marketing strategies, specifically eco-branding, eco-packaging, and eco-claim transparency have a significant influence on customer advocacy in supermarket retail stores in Yenagoa metropolis. The study recommends that Supermarkets should invest in strong and authentic green brand communication that reflects genuine environmental practices and commitments.

Keywords: Green marketing strategy, perceived green-values and customer advocacy.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive business landscape, customer advocacy has emerged as a strategic asset for brands seeking long-term growth and market influence. Customer advocacy refers to the behavioural intention of customers to actively recommend, defend and promote a brand based on their experiences and values (Brown et al., 2005). It reflects a deeper level of engagement that goes beyond satisfaction and loyalty, positioning the customer not just as a buyer, but as a promoter and brand ambassador. In other words, customer advocacy is a stronger post-purchase behaviour that could drive viral marketing, enhance brand equity, and reduce acquisition costs.

In a competitive marketplace, especially in the retail and supermarket industry, customer advocacy has become a crucial performance indicator, as it directly influences brand reputation, market reach and profitability. Meanwhile, several antecedents have been theorized to influence advocacy behaviour, ranging from customer satisfaction, and trust to emotional connection and perceived authenticity. While customer satisfaction remains a foundational driver, recent research points to the role of value congruence, particularly in ethical or environmental concern as a more enduring influence (Morhart et al., 2015).

In the context of environmental concerns, one of the growing drivers of customer advocacy is a firm's commitment to sustainability, particularly through green marketing. Green marketing could be described as promoting of products that are designed, produced, and marketed with an emphasis on environmental sustainability (Govender & Govender, 2016). This approach involves highlighting the eco-friendly attributes of products, such as their recyclable materials, energy efficiency, reduced carbon foot print or sustainable sourcing (Ottman, 2017). Green marketing strategy aims to appeal to consumers who are environmentally conscious and seek to minimize their ecological impact through their purchasing decisions.

However, the effectiveness of green marketing strategy depends on consumer knowledge and trust in the environmental claims, which can as well diminish its influence (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). Companies that integrate green marketing into their marketing communications strategy and brand positioning tend to attract environmentally conscious consumers (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008). As such, green marketing strategy helps business organizations to create goodwill and loyalty amongst consumers and also enhance sales and profits as well as build the image of the organizations and help to attract new customers (Govender & Govender, 2016).

Given these antecedents, businesses globally, including supermarket brands in Nigeria, particularly Bayelsa State have recognized that traditional marketing strategies are ineffective in influencing environmentally conscious consumers. Thus, many have shifted towards green marketing by offering transparent information to promote sustainable consumption behaviour through environmental advertising, eco-branding, eco-pricing, eco-product quality, eco-packaging and eco-labeling (Ahmad et al., 2020; Cheng & Chang,

2013; Diggle & Yazdaniford, 2014; Leonidou et al., 2011) and so on. These dimensions serve as trust cues that influence consumer buying behaviour, advocacy, and shape perceptions of brand authenticity.

In spite of the importance of green marketing strategy, supermarkets in Nigeria, especially in Bayelsa State are reluctant to incorporate it in their marketing communication and brand positioning strategies. This is because they lack the awareness of its benefits. As such, the adoption of environmentally friendly products in Nigeria has remained low as compared to other developing nations like South-Africa, Kenya and Uganda (Ebhote & Izedonmi, 2017). For example, in South Africa, mainly cities like Cape Town, has been at the lead of green initiatives, employing sustainable energy solutions and encouraging the use of electric cars and biofuels in public transportation. This has been triggered by a combination of government policies, business practices and consumer demand for eco-friendly products.

Apparently, improving customer advocacy, particularly in relation to green marketing, demands more than consistent service delivery, customer satisfaction and loyalty (Fullerton, 2003), it requires the cultivation of a brand identity that resonates with the consumer's deeper values and environmental aspirations. Perhaps, supermarket brands in Nigeria, especially in Bayelsa State could achieve this by ensuring that their sustainability claims are credible, easily verifiable and embedded in the overall customer experience. In other words, current studies suggest that individual value orientation, such as environmental concern, might play a major role in influencing customer advocacy, especially when customer satisfaction is not strongly felt (Nguyen et al., 2022). In this regard, perceived green-values which is the personal importance consumer place on ecological sustainability could moderate how consumers respond to green marketing.

Customers with strong perceived green-values are more expected to advocate for brands that align with their environmental beliefs, even if the functional benefits of the product are modest. This is because environmentally conscious consumers tend to prioritize value congruence and moral satisfaction over purely utilitarian product attributes (Chen et al., 2014) On the contrary, consumers with weak perceived green-values might be less reactive to green messaging, irrespective of product quality or packaging innovations. As a result, perceived green-values might condition the strength of the link between green marketing strategy and customer advocacy, serving as a key psychological lens through which marketing cues are interpreted (Biswas & Roy, 2015; Rahman et al., 2017).

In spite of the growing interest in green marketing, studies on green marketing strategy and customer advocacy remains scanty, mainly within the Nigerian context. While scholars (Omoregie et al., 2020) have examined green consumption patterns in metropolitan areas such as Lagos and Abuja, there is sparse empirical evidence from Bayelsa State, a region with growing environmental consciousness, owing to its closeness to oil exploration activities.

Furthermore, there is limited empirical research that have been conducted to examine the mediating role of perceived green-values on the link between green marketing strategy and customer advocacy, particularly within supermarket retail stores, where branding, packaging and labeling are directly experienced by customers.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill these gaps by investigating how green marketing strategies such as eco-branding, eco-packaging and eco-claim transparency influence customer advocacy, and how perceived green-values mediate these relationships among supermarket customers in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. In other words, this study advances the "Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory (Stern et al., 1999) by incorporating perceived green-values as a mediating construct that shapes consumer reactions to environmentally driven marketing cues. In addition, the study provides valuable insights into how specific green marketing practices like eco-branding, eco-packaging and eco-claim transparency may translate into advocacy behaviour. Perhaps supermarket brands and retailers could use these findings to segment consumers by green-value orientation, tailor their green communication and foster a more loyal and vocal customer base.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the "Value-Belief-Norm Theory" (VBN) developed by Stern et al. (1999), which provides a socio-psychological explanation for why individuals engage in environmental responsible behaviours (Nusrat et al., 2023). According to VBN theory, pro-environmental behaviour arises from a sequential chain that begins with individual values, such as altruistic values, biospheric values, and openness to the new ecological paradigm and personal moral norms (Karimi, 2019). These values shape consumers' environmental beliefs, especially their awareness of environmental consequences and acknowledgement of personal responsibility for mitigating environmental harm. Perhaps when individuals internalize these beliefs, they develop personal moral norms which is a sense of moral obligation that motivates them to act in environmentally responsible ways (Canlas et al., 2022).

In the context of this study, the VBN theory helps to explain how perceived green values mediate the relationship between green marketing strategies and customer advocacy. The theory suggests that when green marketing cues such as eco-branding, eco-packaging, and eco-claim transparency activate a consumer's environmental beliefs and moral norms, they are more likely to respond with supportive behaviour, including recommending brands, defending them in social conversations, and advocating for their green practices.

Therefore, the VBN theory positions perceived green values not merely as attitudes but as psychologically grounded motivators that shape how consumers react to environmentally- oriented marketing strategies. Thus, green marketing strategies that align with consumers' environmental values strengthen their beliefs and moral norms, making advocacy behaviour a natural outcome.

Green Marketing Strategy

Green marketing has emerged as a pressing issue for both businesses and society due to the environmental impacts of hazardous products. Although the concept is not entirely new, its conceptualization in extant literature remains somewhat fragmented and underdeveloped. For example, the American Marketing Association (1975) attempted an early conceptualization of green marketing from three perspectives such as retailing, social marketing and environmental perspectives. From the retailing view, green marketing refers to the marketing of products that are environmentally safe. Under the social marketing perspective, it emphasizes the design and promotion of products that improve physical environmental conditions by preventing further damage. Meanwhile, the environmental perspective stresses about organizational efforts to develop, promote, package, and restore products in ways that support ecosystem sustainability.

Beyond the AMA's framework, several scholars (Govender & Govender, 2016; Rahman et al. 2017; Peattie and Charter, 2003) have attempted to define green marketing strategy. Rahman et al. (2017) describe it as an effort to lessen environmental harm by establishing green concepts in production, product design, labeling, and consumption as well as ensuring eco-friendliness throughout the process. Similarly, Peattie and Charter (2003) view green marketing strategy as promotional activity grounded in environmental ethics, capable of shaping consumer buying behaviour towards sustainable products. From these definitions, it is clear that green marketing is a strategic marketing practice that create consumer value while simultaneously protecting the ecosystem through the provision of environmentally friendly products.

Green marketing is considered a powerful strategy when properly implemented, as it seeks to achieve two critical objectives such as improving environmental quality and enhancing customer satisfaction (Govender & Govender, 2016; Ottman, 2017). Ebhote and Izedonmi (2017) further argued that its purpose is to ensure that consumers derive value for money by compelling organizations to produce high-quality, environmentally products that safeguard consumer health.

In recent time, studies (Chen et al., 2020; Testa et al., 2018) have stressed the business value and competitive advantage linked with green marketing strategies. For instance, Chen et al (2020) suggested that eco-marketing strategies can increase brand equity and improve customer trust, while Testa et al. (2018) discovered that eco-labeling and eco-packaging significantly influence customer purchase intention. In addition, Kaur et al., (2022) demonstrated that the adoption of green marketing is positively linked to corporate sustainability performance, making it not only an ethical responsibility but also a profitability driver.

However, the green marketing practices are diverse, which involves eco-branding, eco-labeling, eco-packaging, eco-pricing, eco-promotion, eco-quality, eco-claim transparency and eco-innovation (De Jong, Harkink & Barth, 2018; Nguyen et al., 2020; Yadav & Pathak, 2017). As such, for the purpose of this review, attention will be focused on three core strategies such as eco-branding, eco-packaging and eco-transparency claims. These dimensions capture the most visible aspects of how consumers perceive and interact with environmentally friendly products.

Conceptual Framework

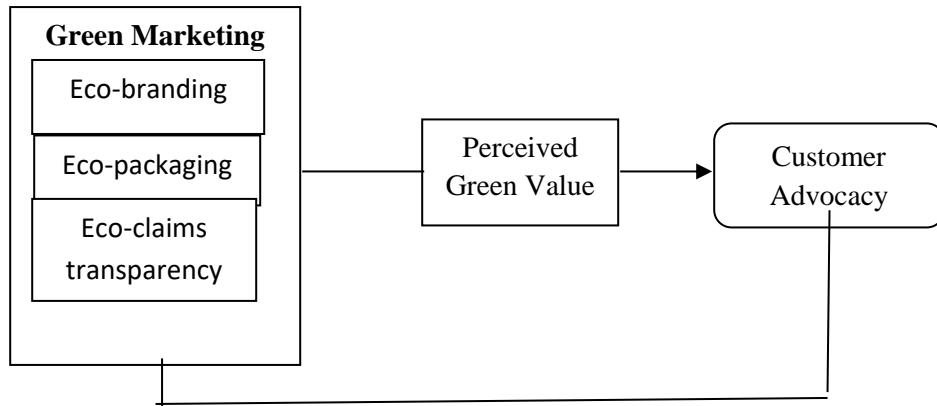


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework on the relationship between perceived green value, green marketing strategies and customer advocacy.

Source: Researcher's Model (2025).

Eco-Branding

Eco-branding refers to the process of producing and promoting brands that are strongly linked with environmental sustainability and ecological responsibility. A solid eco-brand conveys not only product quality but also the company's commitment to control environmental harm (Chen et al., 2020). For example, brands that emphasize their low-carbon footprint, recyclable materials, or renewable energy usage are inclined to achieve higher levels of consumer trust and loyalty.

Recent studies show that eco-branding enhances brand equity, customer advocacy, and differentiation in competitive markets. Nguyen et al. (2020) emphasized that eco-branding acts as a sign of authenticity, inspiring consumers to cultivate positive attitudes towards eco-friendly products. Similarly, Sharma and Foropon (2019) uncover that consumers are more likely to build long-term loyalty when they perceive brands as environmentally responsible.

Therefore, eco-branding is not solely assigning "green" labels to products but also entrenching sustainability into the brand's identity, values, and communication strategies. It empowers firms to improve credibility, build reputation, and attract premium pricing (Singh et al., 2022).

Eco-Packaging

Eco-packaging refers to the design and use of packaging materials that are environmentally friendly, recyclable, biodegradable, or reusable. Since packaging is often the first point of physical interaction between consumers and products, it plays a key role in shaping green purchase behaviour (Magnier & Crie, 2015). Eco-packaging not only reduces environmental waste but also serves as a marketing communication tool. Singh and Bansal (2020) emphasized that innovative eco-packaging can distinguish products in congested markets and sway environmentally conscious customers. Recently, Prakash and Pathak (2021) stressed that sustainable packaging increases customer trust and brand loyalty by indicating a company's commitment to sustainability.

Furthermore, progresses recorded in material science like plant-based plastics, compostable films have made eco-packaging a growing trend. Kautish et al. (2022) observed that consumers consistently consider packaging sustainability when assessing product quality, thereby connecting eco-packaging, brand image and competitive advantage.

Eco-Claims Transparency

Eco-claims transparency refers to the clearness, accurateness and verifiability of firm's environmental claims in respect to products, services or business practices. It ensures that the environmental benefits of a product are explicitly identified and proven with

verifiable evidence (De Jong, Harkink, & Barth, 2018). Perhaps, transparency in eco-claims is critical for developing consumer trust and averting greenwashing, where organizations make deceitful environmental claims to entice consumers without having authentic sustainable practices.

The concept of eco-claims transparency is more and more critical as eco-labels and sustainability claims become more protuberant in marketing practice (Nakaishi, 2024). It allows consumers, regulators, investors and other stakeholders evaluate whether a product's highlighted green benefits are trustworthy and supported by evidence. Poor transparency is a root cause of greenwashing which is the misrepresentation of environmental performance and undermines trust in sustainable markets (Lubloy, 2025).

However, transparent, verifiable eco-claims reduce information asymmetry and increase consumers' willingness to pay and purchase intention. When claims are vague or unsupported, consumers become skeptical and may discount all eco-claims. Meanwhile, several research (Riskos et al. 2021; Testa et al., 2018) discovered that evidently substantiated eco-labels and definite claims improves consumer's purchase intent, while ambiguous claims like "eco", "green", "carbon", "neutral" without perspective flop and trigger distrust. For instance, Delmas and Burbano (2011) stressed that ambiguous or deceptive environmental claims amplify consumer distrust and foster perceptions of greenwashing, thereby reducing trust in firm's sustainability communications. In addition, Chen, Lin and Chang (2014) suggested that unclear or misleading eco-claims erode perceived green quality and satisfaction, which in turn weakens consumer trust and advocacy behaviours.

Perceived Green Value

Perceived green value has progressively gained attention in marketing and consumer behaviour literature as businesses and scholars seek to comprehend how environmentally friendly practices stimulate consumer decision-making. Embedded in the wider concept of perceived value, which Zeithaml (1988) defined as the consumer's general assessment of a product's satisfaction based on what is received and what is given. Perceived green value extends this idea by embedding environmental considerations into the consumer's evaluative judgment. It reveals the extent to which consumers trust that purchasing and consuming green products creates benefits not only for themselves but also for society and the environment (Chen & Chang, 2012). Maichum et al., (2017) suggested that when consumers perceive high green value, they are more likely to build positive attitudes and intentions towards eco-friendly products.

Current studies (Kaur et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2020) suggested that perceived green value acts as a crucial mediator between firm's green marketing practices and consumer responses. Eco-labeling, eco-packaging and transparent green communication enhances consumer perceptions of value, which in turn increase purchase intentions and loyalty (Chen et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2020). Moreover, perceived green value influences not only buying behaviour but also advocacy behaviour, such as positive word-of-mouth and willingness to pay premium prices (Kaur et al., 2022).

However, the strength of this construct depends on the authenticity of green claims. Studies (Testa et al., 2018) have shown that greenwashing practices reduces perceived value and damage trust. Conversely, transparent and reliable eco-claims increases consumers' trust that green products deliver both individual and collective benefits. Younger consumers, especially millennials and Gen Z are mainly subtle to such value perceptions, making it a key factor in sustainable marketing practices (Prakash & Pathak, 2017). Generally, perceived green value remains an essential driver of green consumption and long-term business sustainability.

Customer Advocacy

Customer advocacy has appeared as a crucial concept in contemporary marketing, reflecting the dynamic role of consumers in promoting and protecting a brand beyond traditional loyalty. Unlike simple satisfaction or repeat purchase, advocacy encompasses customers recommending, endorsing, and even defending a brand within their social links, both online and offline (Kumar et al., 2022; Quaye et al., 2022). Advocacy is increasingly seen as a higher-order outcome of robust customer-brand relationship, as advocates not only create positive word of mouth but also sway the decisions of potential customers through trust-based referrals (Ananda et al., 2019).

Existing literature (Islam & Rahman, 2017) suggest that advocacy is triggered by several antecedents, which include trust, engagement, customer satisfaction, and perceived value. In this digital era, social media has intensified customer advocacy, allowing them to become influential brand ambassadors who nurture brand perceptions through user-generated content and reviews (Dessart, 2017).

Current studies like that of Kumar et al (2022) have emphasized the strategic importance of customer advocacy in supporting business growth, as it is more convincing than paid advertising and considerably reduce customer acquisition cost. Moreover, customer advocacy promotes resilience against negative publicity, as loyal advocates habitually defend brands during crises (Alalwan et al.,

2017). Generally, customer advocacy has migrated from being a by-product of satisfaction to a thoughtful strategic outcome that businesses nurture to ensure brand equity and long-term competitiveness.

3. METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research approach using cross-sectional survey design. The cross-sectional survey allowed data to be collected from respondents at a single point in time, which is suitable for examining patterns and relationships among variables without manipulating them. In line with the study objectives, the design is supported by correlational and regression analysis, which are appropriate for measuring the strength and direction of relationships between variables as well as predicting the influence of independent variables on the dependent variables.

Population and Sampling

The population of this study comprises Supermarket customers in Yenagoa who either have the intention to purchase, consistently buy, or attach perceived green value to eco-friendly products. Because the precise number of customers who meet these criteria is unidentified and the population is considered large, the study relied on Cochran's formula to ascertain an adequate sample size for analysis. Perhaps, using a 95% confidence level, with a 5% margin of error, and a conservative proportion estimate of 0.5, a minimum of 384 participants was required. In other words, to account for non-response and the likelihood that a large proportion of approached customers would not meet the eligibility criteria, the sample was raised by 25%, yielding a final target of approximately 480 participants. This approach provided a robust basis for ensuring statistical reliability despite the absence of a definite population frame.

Given the absence of a definite population size due to the vast and dynamic nature of supermarkets customers, the study adopts purposive sampling to ensure that only individuals who meet the stated criteria are included in the study. This method is suitable as it permits the researcher to consciously focus on customers with appropriate green product experience and attitudes. The sampling process approached customers within selected supermarkets and screened them using eligibility questions to ratify their intention to buy, habitual purchase, or perceived value for eco-friendly products before distributing the questionnaire. Only customers who meet at least one of these criteria were included in the study, while others were thanked and excluded without replacement. This purposive selection reduced the risk of bias, and ensured that only relevant customers were surveyed, and enriched the representativeness of the final sample.

Sources of Data

The data for this study was acquired from primary source through the administration of structured questionnaire to supermarket customers in Yenagoa who intend to buy, consistently purchase, or have perceived green value for eco-friendly products. This approach is appropriate because it allows for the collection of firsthand information directly related to the research objectives. In addition, secondary sources such as journal articles, books, and credible online publications were consulted to provide theoretical support and contextual background for the study. The adoption of primary and secondary sources ensures that the research findings are both empirically robust and reinforced by existing literature.

Instrumentation and Measurement

The research instrument was designed using validated scales improved from existing literature on green marketing, perceived green value and customer advocacy. The questionnaire comprised of two sections: Section A covers demographic data, while section B focused on the study variables. Eco-brand was measured using scale items adapted from Chen (2010), while eco-packaging was measured with scale items adapted from Magnier and Crie (2015). Eco-claim transparency was measured using item developed from Delmas and Burbano (2011). The moderating variable, perceived green value, was adapted from Chen and Chang (2012), and customer advocacy as the dependent variable was measured using scales from Kumar et al., (2010). All constructs were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the quality of the research instrument, both validity and reliability were established. Content validity was thoroughly checked by subjecting the questionnaire to expert review by academics in marketing with specialty in consumer behaviour, ensuring that the scale items adequately captured the constructs under study. In addition, construct validity was further established by adapting measurement scale items from past studies that have been extensively applied in green marketing research.

A pilot study was then conducted on a small sample of supermarket customers in Yenagoa to test the clarity and suitability of the items. The feedback from the pilot study were used to eliminate ambiguous statements from the instrument to enhance clarity and understanding.

However, the reliability of the instrument was confirmed using Cronbach alpha reliability test, with all the variables exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7 which is considered acceptable as suggested by Nunnally (1978). This ensured internal consistency of the measurement items for eco-brand, eco-packaging, eco-claims transparency, perceived green value, and customer advocacy.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

S/No.	Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha
1.	Eco-branding	4	0.735
2.	Eco-packaging	4	0.741
3.	Eco-claims Transparency	4	0.827
4.	Perceived Green value	4	0.750
5.	Customer Advocacy	4	0.793

Source: SPSS Output, 2025.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics summarized respondents' demographics and responses, while multiple regression was used to determine the predictive effect of eco-brand, eco-packaging and eco-claims transparency as well as perceived green value on customer advocacy. Moderation analysis was further examined to ascertain the role of perceived green value on green marketing and customer advocacy. All analyses were conducted using SPSS at a 5% significance level.

4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Analysis of Respondents Demographics

Table 2: Respondents' Demographics

Variables	Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	145	56.4
	Female	112	43.6
Age	18-27 years	35	13.6
	28-37 years	53	20.6
	38-47years	72	28
	48-57years	66	25.7
	58-above	31	12.1
Educational Qualification	PhD Degree	10	3.9
	M.Sc.	25	9.7
	B.Sc.	96	37.4
	HND	50	19.5
	OND	18	7.00
	WAEC/SSCE	45	17.5
	FSLC	13	5
Marital Status	Married	154	59.9
	Single	91	35.4
	Divorce	12	4.7
Profession	Civil servant	65	25.3
	Private employee	53	20.6

Business	47	18.3
Politician	41	16
Student	38	14.8
Others	13	5.1
Shopping pattern		
Intention to buy	86	33.5
Habitual buying	97	37.7
Perceived value	74	28.8

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The demographic distribution of respondents shows that males (56.4%) slightly outnumber females (43.6%). This suggests that male customers might be more dominated in supermarket retail shopping for eco-friendly products in Yenagoa, probably because of their role in household provisioning or personal preference for such products.

With respect to age, the highest proportion of respondents falls within the 38-47 years (28%) and 48-57 years (25.7%) groups. This dominance shows that middle-aged adults are more involved in buying eco-friendly supermarket products, probably due to higher disposable income and more awareness of environmental concerns compared to younger age groups.

Concerning educational qualifications, participants with a bachelor's degree (37.4%) constitute the largest group, followed by those with higher national diploma (19.5%) and secondary school certificate holders (17.5%). This distribution suggests that customers with higher education are more likely exposed to sustainability trends and are well positioned to like eco-friendly product offerings.

The marital status demographic depicts that married participants (59.9%) are dominant as compared to singles (35.4%) and divorced (4.75%). This reveals the tendency of married individuals, who frequently make household purchase decisions, to prioritize eco-friendly products that supports family health and environmental well-being.

In terms of profession, civil servants (25.3%) forms the largest group, followed by private employees (20.6%) and business owners (18.3%). This dominance of civil servants could be attributed to the fact that the state is a civil service state with less private investments. This class of participants have moderately stable income, which facilitates regular purchasing of eco-friendly products, while private employees and entrepreneurs also reveal growing consumer interest.

Finally, shopping patterns disclose that habitual buyers (37.7%) marginally outnumber those with intention to buy (33.5%) and those inspired by perceived green value (28.8%). This suggests that consistent and repeat purchases of eco-friendly products are becoming more common, possibly representing both customer satisfaction with product performance and a supporting culture of green consumption in Yenagoa.

Test of Hypotheses

A multiple regression analysis was performed to examine the collective influence and predictive power of the predictor variables such as eco-branding, eco-packaging, eco-claims transparency and perceived green value on customer advocacy.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.789 ^a	.622	.618	.59156

a. Predictors: (Constant),ECP, ECB, ECT

The model summary in table 3 indicates that the correlation coefficient ($R = 0.789$) reflects a very strong positive link between green marketing strategies (eco-branding, eco-packaging, and eco-claim transparency) and customer advocacy in Supermarket retail stores in Yenagoa City. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.622$) depict that 62.2% of the variations in customer advocacy are explained by the three green marketing practice variables, while the remaining 37.8% is owing to other factors not captured in this model.

The adjusted R^2 value of 0.618 suggests a marginal loss of explanatory power after adjusting for the number of predictors, verifying the robustness of the model. The standard error of the estimate (0.59156) indicates the average deviation of the observed values from the regression line.

Table 4: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	145.953	3	48.651	139.026	.000 ^b
	Residual	88.535	253	.350		
	Total	234.487	256			

a. Dependent Variable: CAD

b. Predictors: (Constant), ECT, ECB, ECP

The F-statistic ($F = 139.026$, $Sig. = 0.000$) depicts that the regression model is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This reflects that the collective effect of eco-branding, eco-packaging and eco-claim transparency significantly influence customer advocacy in Supermarket retail stores in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Therefore, green marketing strategy predict customer advocacy.

Table 5: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.617	.369	7.099	.000
	ECB	.122	.032	.149	3.845
	ECP	-.402	.063	-.298	-6.338
	ECT	.527	.043	.583	12.353

a. Dependent Variable: CAD

In table 5, the results indicated that eco-branding ($B = 0.122$, $\beta = 0.149$, $t = 3.845$, $p = 0.000$) has a positive and significant effect on customer advocacy, indicating that customers are more likely to recommend and support supermarkets that project a strong environmentally friendly brand image. This suggests that effective eco-branding increases customer trust, emotional bond, and loyalty towards the brand.

On the contrary, eco-packaging ($B = -0.402$, $\beta = -0.298$, $t = -6.338$, $p = 0.000$) has a negative and significant effect on customer advocacy. This may depict that although customers identify eco-friendly packaging as less convenient, less durable, or lower aesthetic value, thereby reducing their willingness to advocate for the brand.

Finally, eco-claim transparency ($B = 0.527$, $\beta = 0.583$, $t = 12.353$, $p = 0.000$) exerts the strongest positive effect on customer advocacy, highlighting that honest, clear, and verifiable environmental claims strengthen customer confidence and stimulate active support for the organization's green initiatives.

Partial Correlation

The partial correlation was conducted to ascertain the mediation effect of perceived green value on the relationship between green marketing strategy and customer advocacy in Supermarkets in Yenagoa. The results are shown in table 6.

Table 6: Correlations

Control Variables		GMS	CAD	PGV	
-none- ^a	GMS	Correlation	1.000	.605	-.086
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.169
		Df	0	255	255
	CAD	Correlation	.605	1.000	.267
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		Df	255	0	255
PGV	PGV	Correlation	-.086	.267	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.169	.000	.
		Df	255	255	0
PGV	GMS	Correlation	1.000	.654	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	

Df		0	254
CAD	Correlation	.654	1.000
	Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.
Df		254	0

a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.

The zero-order correlation results show that green marketing strategies have a strong positive and significant link with customer advocacy ($r= 0.605$, $p < 0.01$). This suggest that improvements in green marketing strategies are related with greater levels of customer advocacy, such as positive word-of-mouth and referrals or recommendations.

In addition, perceived green value is positively and significantly related to customer advocacy, though less strongly ($r=0.267$, $p < 0.01$), which implies that customers who perceive greater green value are more likely to advocate for supermarket retail stores.

On the contrary, the weak and negative association between green marketing strategy and perceived green value ($r= -0.086$, $p > 0.05$) suggests that perceived green value does not entirely depend on the strength of green marketing strategies. This means that the perceived value customers assign to green initiatives might not certainly increase in line with the intensity of green marketing strategies, possibly owing to skepticism, lack of awareness, or perceived insincerity of such efforts.

However, when perceived green value is controlled in the partial correlation analysis, the connection between green marketing strategy and customer advocacy remained statistically significant as well as increased ($r= 0.654$, $p < 0.01$). This increase reflects that perceived green value does not mediate the link between green marketing strategy and customer advocacy. Instead, perceived green value acts as a suppressor variable, which implies that its presence slightly covered the true strength of the relationship between green marketing and customer advocacy. Thus, this finding implies that the influence of green marketing initiatives on customer advocacy in the sampled supermarkets operates directly, rather than indirectly through perceived green value. This means that customers who are exposed to visible and credible green marketing actions such as eco-branding, eco-packaging and eco-claim transparency appears to advocate for those supermarkets based on the perceived authenticity of such practices, even when their general perception of green value is held constant.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study corroborate with several past research findings on green marketing and customer behavior. The significant positive association between green marketing strategies and customer advocacy supports the claim by Chen and Chang (2013) that effective green marketing initiatives nurture robust customer loyalty and advocacy. Their study found that when customers perceive genuine environmental responsibility in brands, they are more likely to recommend such brands to others.

The outcome of this study revealed that eco-branding has a positive and significant influence on customer advocacy in Supermarket retail stores in Yenagoa. This suggests that when supermarket stores promote strong eco-friendly brand identities through their messaging, logos, and general brand image, customer becomes more eager to recommend them to others and protect the brand reputation. In other words, customers interpret eco-branding as a sign of authenticity and social responsibility, which reinforces their attachment and enthusiasm to advocate for such brands. This finding is in agreement with the outcomes reported in existing green marketing literature, which stressed that credible eco-branding improves customer loyalty, brand equity, and advocacy when environmental claims are perceived as reliable and transparent. Delmas and Burbano (2011) clarify that consumers react favourably to eco-branding initiatives that are consistent with firms' actual environmental practices, as such consistency build trust and decreases perceptions of greenwashing. This supports the findings of the present study, suggesting that customers in Yenagoa supermarkets react positively to honest eco-branding efforts that matches with visible and verifiable environmental practices.

In contrast, the negative and significant relationship between eco-packaging and customer advocacy differs from findings by Magnier and Crié (2015), who reported that eco-friendly packaging generally has a positive effect on consumer attitudes. This inconsistency may emanates from contextual factors. For example, customers in Yenagoa might viewed eco-packaging as inconvenient, unappealing, or ineffective in conserving product quality. It reflects the need for more user-centered and attractive packaging designs in the local market.

However, the strong effect of eco-claim transparency (ECT) on customer advocacy in this study also aligns with findings of Delmas and Burbano (2011), who highlighted that transparent and verifiable environmental claims increase consumer trust and ease doubt toward green products. This suggests that supermarket retail stores in Yenagoa could build stronger customer relationships by providing clarity and honesty in their environmental communications.

The association between perceived green value (GPV), green marketing strategy and customer advocacy is statistically significant, but perceived green value does not mediate the link as the relationship between the two variables increased when perceived green value was controlled, depicting that it does not explain or reduce their direct association. This outcome corroborates with that of Chen and Chang (2013), who observed that green marketing effectiveness might function independently of perceived green value when consumers prioritize the firm's environmental reputation. However, this finding is in disagreement with studies such as Biswas and Roy (2015) and Chen, Lin and Chang (2014), which discovered that perceived green value is a significant mediator connecting green marketing practices to consumer behavioural intentions. Thus, the inconsistency detected in this present study could be linked to contextual factors, such as variations in consumer environmental consciousness, trust in eco-claims, and the development of green market practices within the Yenagoa retail environment. Therefore, in emerging markets like Yenagoa, customers may respond more directly to visible eco-actions and store-level green cues than to abstract perceptions of value, thereby reducing the mediating role of perceived green value.

Generally, the findings suggest that supermarket retailers in Yenagoa should focus on strengthening direct green marketing efforts, particularly eco-branding and eco-claim transparency, since these have a direct and independent impact on customer advocacy behaviour unless supported by clear, authentic, and credible marketing actions.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that green marketing strategies, specifically eco-branding, eco-packaging, and eco-claim transparency have a significant influence on customer advocacy in supermarkets within Yenagoa. Eco-branding and eco-claim transparency positively and significantly improve customer advocacy, suggesting that customers are keen to recommend supermarket retail stores that exhibit strong environmental responsibility and authentic green communication. However, eco-packaging depicts a negative but significant influence, reflecting possible customer distrust about packaging claims or displeasure with packaging quality. In addition, perceived green value does not mediate the link between green marketing strategies and customer advocacy, suggesting that customers' advocacy behavior is triggered more by the direct influence of observable green practices than by their general perception of green value.

Recommendations

With respect to the findings, the study provides the following recommendations:

1. Supermarket retail stores should invest in robust and authentic green brand communication that reflects honest environmental practices and commitments.
2. All environmental claims should be verifiable, consistent, and easy for customers to understand to boost credibility and advocacy.
3. Management should assess packaging designs and materials to ensure they meet customer expectations for functionality, aesthetics, and sustainability.
4. Educational campaigns should be launched to increase customers' understanding of green practices, which could boost their perceived green value and long-term advocacy behavior.

Implications of the Study

1. The outcomes contribute to the green marketing literature by demonstrating that not all green marketing strategies influence customer advocacy equally. The non-mediating role of perceived green value challenges prior assumptions that perception always reinforces green marketing effects.
2. Supermarkets should recognize that customers react more strongly to clear and reliable green branding efforts than to abstract views of environmental value.
3. Regulators and environmental agencies should ensure that businesses comply to verifiable eco-claims to sustain customer trust and avert "greenwashing."
4. Supermarket retail stores should prioritize strategies that directly engage customers such as clear eco-claims and noticeable environmental actions rather than depending only on perceived values.

Limitations of the Study

This study, while providing useful insights into the influence of perceived green value on green marketing strategies and customer advocacy, is not without limitations.

1. The research adopted a cross-sectional survey research design, which elicit responses from participants at a single point in time. This limits the ability to create causal relationships among variables, as changes in consumer perceptions and advocacy behavior over time were not observed.
2. The study was carried out in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, and focused mainly on supermarket retail stores. This region and sectorial restriction limits the generalizability of the outcomes to other regions or industries, where consumer environmental consciousness and marketing practices may vary.
3. Only three components of green marketing practices were investigated such as eco-branding, eco-packaging, and eco-claim transparency. Other prospective aspects of green marketing practices such as eco-pricing, green distribution, or green advertising, were not examined and might impact customer advocacy differently.
4. The study depend on self-reported data, which may be prone to social desirability bias, as participants might overemphasized their environmental concern or advocacy behaviours.

Suggestions for Further Studies

1. Future studies should explore a longitudinal research design to examine how the association between perceived green value, green marketing strategies and customer advocacy changes over time, providing deep causal insights.
2. Researchers are further encouraged to broaden the geographical scope beyond Yenagoa to include other regions across Nigeria, allowing for comparison and improving the generalizability of outcomes.
3. Successive studies should consider integrating other dimensions of green marketing practices such as green pricing, green promotion, and green logistics to provide deep insight of green marketing effectiveness.
4. Scholars can employ mixed method by linking quantitative and qualitative data to capture more nuanced views of consumer attitudes, motivations, and advocacy behaviors toward eco-friendly products in supermarket retail stores.

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