
Consumer Citizenship Attitudes Towards Organic Products: Exploring Green Marketing in Maiduguri, Nigeria

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Abstract

National growth and sustainability are functions of development, which encompasses political, economic, social, and environmental aspects. As a developing nation, Nigeria is in the early stages of adopting green concepts, with only 5% of green product purchases indicating low awareness among consumers. This study aims to assess the factors influencing customer attitudes towards organic products and their contributions to national development. A sample of 500 respondents was randomly selected from customers in Monday Market, Maiduguri. Primary data was collected through questionnaires and supplemented by interviews to enhance reliability. Simple regression was employed to test the hypotheses. The results revealed that consumers primarily purchase natural products for health and personal well-being, reflecting a low awareness of green culture. There is an insignificant relationship between consumer cognition about greening and their attitude towards organic products, but significant on behavioural intentions and positive emotions towards green offerings. The study recommends that governments and concerned citizens emphasize adopting healthy and green lifestyles through cognitive or value campaigns, as healthier human capital improves productivity and GNP. Additionally, manufacturers and marketers should enhance awareness through advertising appeals.

Keywords: green marketing; green product; green attitude; green environment; eco-friendly, sustainability, and national development.

1. Introduction

Development is pivotal to the sustenance and growth of any nation, significantly influenced by financial resources through industrialization and other factors. National development encompasses the general improvement of a nation to enhance the standard of living for its population, encompassing political, economic, social, and environmental dimensions (StudySmarter, n.d.; Byjus, n.d.). While governments play a crucial role in providing basic livelihood requirements and employment, collaboration with the private sector is indispensable. Modern manufacturing and other sectors face challenges from environmentalism and intense competition, prompting the need for innovative products that address environmental concerns and create new market opportunities.

Green marketing emerged in the 1980s as a response to changing consumer attitudes towards brands, emphasizing the marketing of ecologically and environmentally friendly products (Thoria, 2011). This marketing approach integrates environmental issues into marketing efforts, providing consumers with better information about the green properties of products,

thereby influencing their purchasing decisions. The increasing emphasis on better life and healthy living through social marketing has led to a growing consumer interest in organic products, which are perceived as safe and healthy. Consequently, it is essential to explore consumer attitudes towards green products.

The aspiration for a quality life, rich in health and vigor, is universal. Healthy living is crucial in modern societies, significantly impacting a nation's human capital. Green marketing, driven by consumerism and environmentalism, has led businesses to adopt sustainable practices and produce organic products that are environmentally beneficial. However, in Maiduguri, the green concept remains relatively unknown despite a general appreciation for herbal ingredients and natural products. Given that product consumption is linked to National Income (NI), understanding consumer attitudes towards organic products could contribute significantly to national development. This study, therefore, aims to investigate consumer citizenship behavior towards organic or green product consumption in Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria.

This research bridges the knowledge gap between customers' pro-environmental purchasing behavior and their green attitudinal components, highlighting the importance of ABC theory in green marketing research. The findings are relevant to stakeholders, demonstrating how environmental or green attitudes can predict environmental behavior and help businesses succeed in changing negative attitudes to positive ones. This, in turn, can boost and develop the green market, contributing significantly to Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and National Income (NI).

The study focuses on the relationship between customer green attitudes, using the tri-component model of attitude, and organic products, specifically environmentally friendly products. It utilizes the ABC measurements for the instrument and involves customers in Monday Market, the central market in Maiduguri metropolis. The study's limitations include challenges in generalizing the findings due to cultural differences and the prevailing security situation in the research environment. Moreover, the lack of awareness about green activities and government policies on the environment necessitated educating respondents about the green concept and the benefits of using organic products.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Organic Products

The term "organic" typically refers to natural or nature-related items, often implying healthfulness or minimal artificial interference. Organic foods, for instance, are grown without artificial pesticides or fertilizers, adhering instead to USDA organic standards which integrate cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that promote resource cycling, ecological balance, and biodiversity conservation (Vocabulary.com, n.d.). Organic products encompass food, clothing, cosmetics, shoes, furniture, and building materials, all produced without chemical fertilizers or pesticides, with an emphasis on environmental and social responsibility (APEDA, n.d.). Such products aim to minimize public health risks by reducing exposure to toxic chemicals in farming, food, soil, air, and water, particularly protecting vulnerable populations like children (OTA, n.d.).

2.2 Green Products

Green products are designed with health and environmental considerations in mind, incorporating recycled materials, reducing waste, conserving resources, and minimizing toxic substances. These products, which may also be termed eco-friendly or environmentally conscious, are produced through processes that are less harmful to the environment (Sri Rahaya et al., 2022). Green products are characterized by their content, structure, packaging, message, and positioning, focusing on sustainability and reduced environmental impact (Mathews, 1990;

Ghodeswar, 2015; Saraf & Thakur). Examples include dairy, fish, fruits, grains, meat, seafood, and vegetables produced without artificial additives, hormones, or antibiotics.

2.3 Consumer Green Attitude

Consumer green attitudes, or eco-attitudes, are shaped by beliefs, concerns, values, and intentions regarding environmental issues and behaviors. These attitudes reflect a person’s cognitive and emotional tendencies towards environmentally friendly actions (Schultz et al., 2004; Umma & Bintu, 2009). Attitudes, as defined by Hawkins et al. (1983), are enduring organizations of motivational, emotional, perceptual, and cognitive processes regarding environmental aspects, influencing consumer behaviors and preferences.

2.4 Components of Attitude

Cognitive Component: Involves beliefs and knowledge about specific attributes or overall objects, formed through direct experiences and information from various sources (Scholl, 2002).

Affective Component: Relates to feelings or emotions towards specific attributes or objects, driving emotional tendencies.

Conative Component: Pertains to behavioral intentions and predispositions to act favorably or unfavorably towards an object (Scholl, 2002).

These components are influenced by stimuli such as products, advertisements, sales representatives, and retail environments, leading to the manifestation of overall attitudes (Schlegelmilch et al., 1996).

2.5 Theoretical Background

The Attitude-Behavior-Context (ABC) Theory posits that context mediates the relationship between attitude and behavior, suggesting that attitudes towards specific environmental issues are the best predictors of corresponding behaviors (Peatti, 2010). This theory highlights the importance of specific attitudes in predicting pro-environmental behaviors, which vary across individuals and cultures (Fielding et al., 2008; Zhao et al., 2014; Johnson et al., 2004). This paper adopts the ABC theory to guide the measurement instruments and analysis focus.

3. Methodology

This study utilized primary data. A total of 435 structured questionnaires were distributed to the selected respondents, with 200 deemed suitable for analysis. The questionnaires were self-administered to ensure thorough coverage of the sample population. The administration of the questionnaires was done purposively, using simple random sampling, at the Monday Market, the central market in Maiduguri metropolis. Data collection spanned two weeks, with questionnaires administered every other day. The collected data was analyzed using simple regression techniques.

4. Data Analyses and Discussions

Bio – data of the respondents

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents according to Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid female	142	71.0	71.0	71.0
Valid Male	58	29	29.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Source: field work 2023

Table 1 shows that 142 female responded to the questionnaire and only 58 males responded. The highest response came from women with 71% which is more than 2/3 of the response rate. Therefore generalization of the results might prove abortive.

Table 2 Distribution of Respondents according to Age

Years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18 - 22years	29	14.5	14.5	14.5
23 - 27years	58	29.0	29.0	43.5
Valid 28 - 32years	57	28.5	28.5	72.0
33 years and above	56	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Source: field work 2023

Table 2 indicates that the age groups' response is fair because it shows 14.5%; 29%; 28.5%; and 28% respectively

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents according to Educational level

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Informal education				
Primary school	15	7.5	7.5	7.5
Secondary school				
Valid A/level college	58	29.0	29.0	36.5
First degree –Graduate	98	49.0	49.0	85.5
Post graduate	29	14.5	14.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Source: field work 2023

Table 3 presents the Educational level of the respondents as 7.5%; 29%; 49% and 14.5% respectively.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents according to Income

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<N5000	17	8.5	8.5	8.5
>N5000 – N20000	51	25.5	25.5	34.0
Valid >N20000 – N50000	50	25.0	25.0	64.0
>N50000 - N200000	62	31.0	31.0	90.0
>N200000	20	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Source: field work 2023

Table 4 represents the income earnings of the respondents as: 8.5%; 25.5%; 25%; 31%; and 10% for the various groups in descending order.

4.1 Test of Hypotheses

To determine the customers' cognitive sense (customers' knowledge/awareness and belief) on green product hypothesis was postulated thus:

H01: There is no significant effect of customer cognition on green product.

To test this hypothesis items from the independent variable – customer green product dimension and items on the customer green attitude variable (dimensions on customers' awareness / knowledge and belief) were measured and tested as indicated in table 5

Table 5: The effect of customers' cognitive sense towards green product

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.010 ^a	.000	-.002	4.15012	.000	.053	1	198	.818	1.991

Source: Field work, 2023

Result indicates that the strength of the association between customers' cognitive sense (customer cognition on greening attitude and green product is weak, but significant at 1% level with 99% level of confidence. There is no causal effect of customer green awareness on green product indicating that much efforts need to be made in creating environmental awareness and

to improve environmental consciousness and positive customer attitude likely to result in increase in product acceptance. The Durbin Watson (DW) Statistics presents the first order serial correlation B between customer green attitude and product acceptance

In order to determine the causal effect of customers’ affective sense in predicting environmental consciousness and customers’ feelings and emotions towards green product(s) hypothesis was formulated as:

Ho2: There is no significant effect of customers’ affective sense on green product.

To test this hypothesis items from the independent variable – customer green product dimension and items on the customer green attitude variable (dimensions on customers’ feelings and emotions) were assumed and results shown on table 6:

Table 6 Model Summary^b the effect of customer affective sense on green product

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.687 ^a	.471	.458	3.11211	.471	34,590	1	198	.818	2.061

Source: the author, field work 2023

Result indicates that the strength of the association between customers’ affective sense (customers’ feelings and / or emotions) on green product is 68.7% which is strong and highly significant at 1% level with 99% level of confidence. The causal effect of customer green attitude on green product is 47.1% indicating that any money spent in improving customer attitude is likely to result in 47.1% increase in product acceptance. The Durbin Watson (DW) Statistics presents the first order serial correlation B between customer green attitude and product acceptance.

R (multiple correlation coefficients) is the correlation between the observed values and the predicted values. It assesses the quality of the prediction of the response variable in terms of the explanatory variables. The higher the value of R, the better the predictive power of the regression model; the value of R for our data is 0.687. Implying that inclusion of the predictive variables into the model, the model has an appreciable predictive power of 68.7%.

R Square is the squared multiple correlation coefficient. It is also called the coefficient of determination. R² indicates what proportion of the variation in the response variable is explained by the explanatory variables.

The higher the value of the coefficient of determination, the better predictions can be obtained with the regression model. The R² value for our data is 0.471 which means that 47.1% of the variation in attitude is explained by the six explanatory (independent) variables. As such, this undermined the usefulness of the model.

Adjusted R Square is a modified measure of the coefficient of determination that takes into account the sample size and the number of explanatory variables in the model; which is 0.456 for the data.

The Standard Error of the Estimate is an estimate of the standard deviation of the ERROR term in the regression model. The standard error of the estimate is a measure of the accuracy of predictions made with the regression model; the smaller the standard error of estimate, the better the prediction. As such we could say it is appreciably fine.

In the above output, R change is the same as R because the variables were entered at the same time (not stepwise or in blocks); there is only one regression model to report, and R change is change from the intercept-only model, which is also what R² is. R change is tested by F test.

Durbin-Watson statistic measures serial correlation, 2.061 the results reveals that there is no serial order correlation.

Ho3: There is no significant effect of customers' conative sense (behavioural intentions) on green product.

To test this hypothesis items from the independent variable – customer green product dimension and items on the customer green attitude variable were assumed and results shown as:

Table 7: The effect of customer conative sense on green product Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.633 ^a	.396	.038	3.22	.000	.053	1	198	.988	2.20

Source: Field work, 2023

$\beta = .038$; $t = .988$ @ 1% significance; $R = .633$; $R^2 = .396$; $\text{std E} = 3.22$; $\text{DW} = 2.20$

Result indicates that the strength of the association between customers' conative sense (customers' behavioural intentions) on green product is 63.3% which is strong and highly significant at 1% level with 99% level of confidence. The causal effect of customer green attitude on green product is 39.6% indicating that any money spent in improving customer attitude is likely to result in 39.6% increase in product acceptance. The Durbin Watson (DW) Statistics presents the first order serial correlation B between customer green attitude and product acceptance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and we can conclude that there is significant effect of customers' conative element of environmental concern and green products in Maiduguri as customers' behavioural intentions to purchase the green product is high.

Table 8 residual statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	14.8552	30.1560	24.5000	2.90128	200
Residual	-9.95880	6.85505	.00000	3.07276	200
Std. Predicted Value	-3.324	1.949	.000	1.000	200
Std. Residual	-3.200	2.203	.000	.987	200

Source: computation by the authors

Table corroborates the findings in preceding table 4.7. the minimum value for the residual is -9.958 and the maximum is 6.85505 this indicates the ranges between the two variables. The mean value is 0.00 the distribution of the residual is normal and the variance is constant. For a sample of 200 observations the Independently Identical Distributed (IID) residual of the regression has been complied with.

5. Discussion of Results and Findings

Results indicated that majority of the respondents are female. The survey was carried out in the open market place where the customers are mostly women and girls. Women are more approachable in this aspect than men particularly in the market place. This could be part of the reasons why more females responded to the questionnaire than male. Educational level also has major role to play in green product acceptance. The more educated the respondents the better the understanding of the consumers towards going green. Income and age were no barriers to accepting green products. In Nigeria because of the massive Social Marketing campaigns on 'Nutrition' people are into more natural and organic products which are widely available and affordable. People are adopting the culture of healthy living in terms of medication and food substances but not too conscious about the environment. There is also indication of low level of customers' awareness on substantial greening activities in the area of study which could have adverse effect on green product acceptance in the area. The lower the environmental awareness and belief the lesser the acceptance of green product and greening activities. Consumers' propensity to consumer is subject to product acceptance. In terms of feelings and emotions towards the environment people in the area under study have good

response even though, their environmental culture is low but still have positive behavioural intentions towards going green in the area.

6. Summary and Conclusion

Green marketing is still in its infancy stage in Nigeria. People are still not aware about the green marketing and environmentalism activities in Nigeria. The publicity and advocacy is not sufficient as to trigger customer awareness of the whole scenario. This paper concludes that green attitude can be an excellent predictor of purchase behaviours and intentions. The attitude component of cognition has an insignificant relationship with the green marketing variables. But affective and conative components have strong influence on the green marketing. Customers' awareness level on greening is low and consumers are not certain about their consumption consequences on the environment. Consumers in Nigeria are fond of littering the environment using bio-degradable polyether as product packages. This attitude is having detrimental effect on the environment. But consumers are found to be aware of the green health issues for healthy living. It is worthy of noting that a population with healthy individuals will provide a healthy work force, thus, productivity will be improved for sustainable development. It can be concluded that marketers are not doing a good job of advocacy, public enlightenment and publicity campaigns to create awareness and educate the public about greening, the green symbols and labels.

7. Recommendations

Business modification and / or production processes usually sets the initial capital for start-up to be high for green businesses. They are characterised by having a financial bottom line and top line growth possibilities which could save money in the long run. and improve profitability, therefore, a lot of patience is required.

At the initial operation green outputs tend to be more expensive than the grey products because of the start-up cost and money saving in the long run. Organisations must bear in mind that the green product prices have to be made affordable for the customer in order to stimulate purchase. As Yazdanifard and Mercy (2011) suggested that industrial differentiation works only when products reduce clients' costs. In the same vain organisations must break even because of the returns in investment for the owners Naira.

Companies should highlight and emphasise on product performance in their campaign appeals so as to positively influence consumer patronage and then improve their environmental awareness.

Products packages must carry signs and labels for recycling and disposal in consideration of the partners that deal with the destination of the waste. Display of the products can be both physical and/or virtual in order to minimise pollution through transportation and location

Government should lay more emphases and advocate enlightenment campaign through social marketing for the growing concern about environmental issues. Governments in Nigeria should promote green culture among its citizens and the local populace in general, in order to establish sound relationships between green culture and the environment that may lead to positive attitude change towards green lifestyle. Manufacturers and marketers must be forced to comply with the government policies and regulations on safety and environmental concerns. Penalty must be enforced for failure to comply.

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