

## GREEN BRAND AWARENESS AND CUSTOMER PREFERENCE OF ORGANIC BODY CREAM IN SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper explored green brand awareness and customer preference of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. The population of this study consisted of customers (organic cream users) in South-South Nigeria. The exact number of organic cream users in South-South Nigeria is unknown, hence the Cochran's formula was used to determine the sample size for the study. A sample size of 384 was used for the study. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument was validated through face and content analysis while its reliability was determined using the Cronbach Alpha method. The data collected were analyzed statistically while the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient ( $\rho$ ) was used to test the hypotheses. The bivariate analysis was performed with the aid of SPSS software program version 23.0. The findings revealed that benefit awareness has the significant relationship with customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The study also found a significant relationship between benefit awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream. A significant relationship was also reported between price awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The study equally discovered a significant relationship between price awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream. Based on these findings, it is therefore concluded that green brand awareness is a significant predictor of customer preference of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The study therefore recommended that green cosmetics companies in South-South Nigeria should advertise their green products such as their organic body cream in newspapers, radio, television and social media platforms as it would create more public awareness that will positively influence customer preference for their brand.*

**Keywords: Green brand awareness, customer preference, benefit awareness, price awareness, customer choice, customer buying decision, organic body cream.**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The global market share of organic products has grown in the last five years. In 2019, the global market value of organic products stood at \$100 billion and it is projected to increase to the value of \$250.11 billion by the year 2025 (Kumar, 2019; Ling, 2019). This market growth of organic products is gradually outweighing the non-organic alternatives (Kumar, 2019). Many consumers especially the female folks have become more conscious of their skin than ever before as they now prefer to use organic body cream that are made from natural ingredients such as shea butter, herbs, essential oil, vegetable oil, coconut oil, avocado oil and liquorice extracts (Ghazali et al, 2017). The preference for organic body cream such as body cream and body lotions has increased the search for the best organic product (Ling, 2019). Many young girls and women who are highly conscious of their skin and the environment are beginning to replace their synthetic chemical body cream with different brands of organic body cream, thereby moving towards the direction of green consumerism (Omenka & Adeyi, 2016). This increasing preference for organic body cream could be attributed to the growing awareness of green brand (World Bank Group, 2021).

Green brand awareness is the degree of information or knowledge which a consumer has acquired regarding a brand (Cox, 2008). Suki (2016) described green brand awareness as the amount of knowledge which consumers have about a green product or brand (Suki, 2016). Such knowledge revolves around the environmental attributes of the brand, the price attached to the product as well as the functional benefits of the brand (Suki, 2016). Green brand awareness is created through promotional activities such as advertising, publicity, public relations, sales promotion and personal selling (Alamsyah & Muhammed, 2018). When a green company advertises its brand on radio and television for instance, it will create public awareness of the brand. People will get to know about the existence of the product including its functional benefits, environmental benefits and price. Creating brand awareness is crucial to the success of a brand. As Ansu-Mensah (2021) rightly stated, if you don't say here I am, nobody will know that there you are. This implies that if a company does not engage in promotional activities its target customers will not get to know about its product. Consumers need to be aware of the existence of a brand in order for them to patronize it.

The level of awareness which consumers have towards a brand will influence their preference and buying decision (Keelson & Johnson, 2021). When consumers have a sound knowledge about a green brand, they are more likely to prefer the brand over other alternatives in the market (Razak, et al, 2019). Indeed, knowledge is essential when making choice regarding products of similar functions. Without a good knowledge about a green brand, it will be difficult for consumers to make choice regarding what to buy. Behaviourally, consumers prefer those products that they have a good knowledge about and ignore those brands that are unknown to them (Yesmin & Akter, 2018). In the cosmetic market for instance, there are different brands of organic body cream. Some of these creams are well-known to consumers while others are not. In most cases, consumers go for those organic body cream that are well-known to them and ignore those creams that they have no knowledge about. Pandey (2021) believed that brand awareness is the most crucial factor that influence consumer preference for a brand. According to him, consumers are not always willing to take the risk of buying a brand that is unknown to them. To increase consumer preference for a green brand, the brand owner must create public awareness. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the relationship between green brand awareness and customer preference of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

### **Statement of Problem**

The cosmetic industry is one of the most competitive industries in Nigeria. This competition is triggered by the different brands of organic body cream in the market - all competing for the consumer income. The different cosmetics products include skincare, toiletries, hair care, fragrances & perfumes, and decorative cosmetics. The skincare comprised body cream and facial cream which body cream being the focus of this study. The body cream is made up of organic and non-organic cream with organic cream being the issue under investigation. These organic body creams are produced to give consumers smooth, fresh and healthy skin. These products comes in different brands – all seeking for customer preference. Given the different brands of organic cream in the market, consumers are faced with a problem of choice. Customers especially those that want to replace their chemical body cream with organic body cream may prefer to buy the cream that is cheaper with environmental benefits while others may prefer to buy the cream that will deliver the best possible performance. Whichever angle one views it from, there is no doubt that brand awareness is likely to influence customer preference of organic body cream. However, there is no empirical evidence that support this claim as empirical studies that examined green brand awareness and customer preference of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. There is need to fill this gap in literature in order to provide proper understanding of the relationship between brand awareness and customer preference of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The desire to fill this gap in literature is the problem that motivated this study.

### Conceptual framework

The operational conceptual framework of green brand awareness and customer preference of organic body cream is shown in figure 1 below:

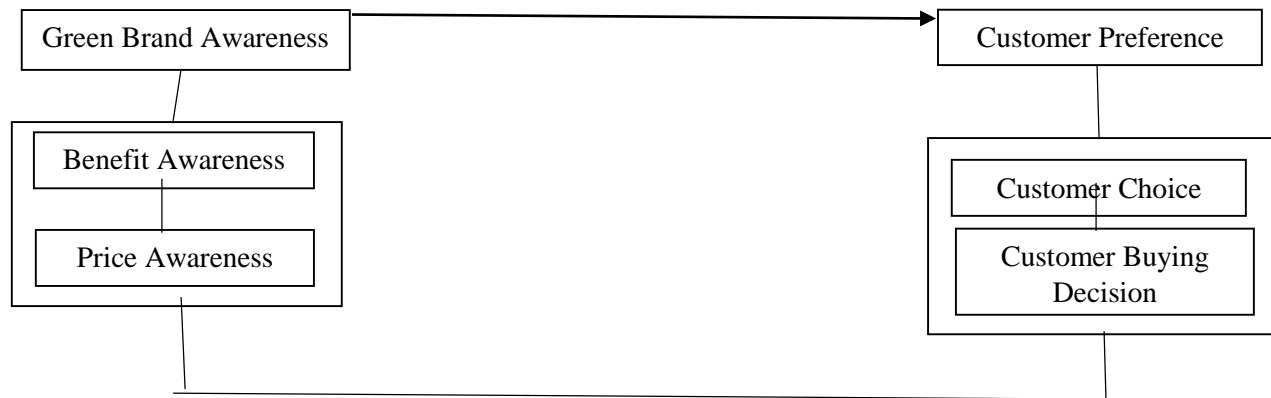


Fig 1: Conceptual framework of green brand awareness and customer preference of organic body cream

Sources: Alamsyah & Muhammed (2018); Pandey (2021); Ansu-Mensah (2021).

### Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between green brand awareness and customer preference of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. Specifically, the study intends to accomplish the following specific objectives:

1. To ascertain the relationship between benefit awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.
2. To find out the relationship between benefit awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.
3. To determine the relationship between price awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.
4. To ascertain the relationship between price awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

### Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to address the objectives of the study:

1. To what extent does benefit awareness relate to customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria?
2. To what extent does benefit awareness relate to customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria?
3. To what extent does price awareness relate to customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria?
4. To what extent does price awareness relate to customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria?

### Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated to guide this study:

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between benefit awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between benefit awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between price awareness relate to customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

Ho<sub>4</sub>: There is no significant relationship between price awareness relate to customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

## **Review of Related Literature**

### **Concept of Green Brand Awareness**

Green brand awareness is a state whereby consumers have a sound knowledge on the existence of products that have the capacity of meeting their needs and also preserving the environment (Huang, Yang, & Wang, 2014). Cox (2008) defined green brand awareness as the amount of information or knowledge which a consumer has acquired regarding a green product. Haytko and Matulich (2008) described green brand awareness as a situation whereby consumers are well informed of the environmental attributes, price and benefits of green products or brand. Cox (2008) stated that when consumers have a sound knowledge about a green brand, he or she is likely to patronize the brand and do away with other substitute products. D'Souza and Taghian (2005) argued that brand experience and information about a brand influence consumer preference and buying behaviour. Such information enables consumers to decide whether to buy a green brand or go for other conventional substitutes. If a consumer is aware of a product produced with natural ingredients (e.g. body cream, facial cream, or body lotion, etc.) and a cream produced with chemical (toxic) substance (e.g. harsh cream), she may decide to purchase the body cream produced from organic or natural ingredients because she is aware of benefits of using the cream (Cox, 2008). Also, if a consumer knows that consuming organic food will give him more nutritional benefits and the production process of such food do not release synthetic pesticides or herbicides into the environment, he is likely to purchase the food brand and maintain a sustainable consumption pattern (Chandera & Muthukrishnan, 2015).

There are several means through which green companies can create awareness about their green brand. According to Haytko and Matulich (2008), green brand awareness can be created through social media platforms or advertising, public relations, sales promotion or publicity. Creating public awareness of green brands will help to increase sustainable consumption (Chandera & Muthukrishnan, 2015). Hussain et al (2014) argued that knowledge is essential for green purchasing; without sound knowledge of a green brand, it will be difficult for consumer to make a purchase of the product. Altaf et al (2016) agree with this view when they stated that consumers will buy only those brands that they have sound knowledge about and forgo those products that are unknown to them. This implies that green brand awareness influences consumer buying behaviour e.g. lessening energy consumption, increase the consumption of organic foods, as well as the purchase of reusable, recyclable and biodegradable products.

### **Dimensions of Green Brand Awareness**

The dimensions of green brand awareness used in this study were benefits awareness and price awareness. These dimensions of green brand awareness are discussed below:

#### **Benefits Awareness**

Benefits awareness refers to the information or knowledge which consumers have regarding the benefits of buying and using a green brand (Haytko & Matulich, 2008). Benefits awareness is a key driver of customer preference. Benefit is very crucial to consumers when making buying decision. Oliver and Lee (2010) noted that consumers are more interested in the benefits they stand to derive from buying a green brand. For instance, people who buy organic cream do not just buy the cream to own a good looking cream from natural ingredients rather they buy the cream because they want to have a smooth and good looking skin without any side effect. If female customers are aware of the benefits of using green product like organic body cream, they

will be motivated to buy the cream (Oliver & Lee, 2010). McDonald et al (2009) argued that green customers buy products in a sustainable manner because they are aware of green product benefits. For instance, most female folks buy organic cream (a green product) instead of chemical cream because they are aware of the benefits of the cream.

### **Price Awareness**

Price is an essential factor that influence customer preference for a green product or brand. Usually, most green products come with premium price (higher price) when compared to their conventional alternatives (Laroche et al, 2001). The premium price that usually come with green products is as a result of the extra efforts and costs it take to produce the product (Oliver & Lee, 2010). Some consumers (green consumers) are aware of the premium price attached to green products while others are not aware of it. Consumers who are not aware of the premium prices are those who are not conversant with the products (Haytko & Matulich, 2008). The level of awareness of green pricing influence customer preference for green products. According to Rios et al (2006), consumers who are awareness of the premium price of green products still patronize green products while those who are not aware of green pricing shy away from green products and stick to the conventional products. Aulina and Yuliati (2017) noted that in developing countries where there is large number of low-income earners who are price sensitive, consumers are often discourage from buying green products because of their premium price. Laroche et al (2001) posited that premium (high) price has become a major obstacle to customer preference for green products.

### **Concept of Customer Preference**

Customer preference is defined as the subjective tastes of individual consumers, measured by their satisfaction with those items after they have purchased them (Weedmark, 2018). Spacey in Vikraman and Ganesan (2011) defined customer preference as the expectations, likes, dislikes, motivations and inclinations that drive customer needs in explaining customer behaviour. Customer preference for a particular brand would increase if the product satisfy his or her needs (Vikraman & Ganesan, 2011). Han et al (2011) stated that brand attributes would induce consumers to prefer the store over others. If brand gives the consumer's satisfaction, he is likely to prefer the brand over others that could not give him a pleasant shopping experience. When a consumer have preference for a particular brand, he or she is more likely to patronize the brand on a regular basis. However, customer preference changes from time to time alongside with their spending pattern. The changing customer preference and spending patterns will influence consumer's behaviour. For example, customer preference changes because of lifestyle changes, such as marriage or moving house (Oyenyi & Abiodun, 2008). Therefore, marketers must understand the changing preference of consumers as well as their spending pattern which influence their purchasing behaviour.

### **Measures of Customer Preference**

Customer preference can be measured using various indicators. However, in this study, customer preference can be measured using customer choice and consumer buying behaviour.

### **Customer Choice**

Choice refers to the most preferred product among the different brands available in the market (Smith, 2016). Customers usually make choice among products that are offered by companies for sale. Paradoxically, people choosing from larger variety enjoyed the decision-making process more, but they also felt greater frustration and difficulty with choice and were less likely to make a purchase (Iyengar & Lepper 2000). In many situations, however, the relevant question is not whether a choice will be made, but which brand consumers will select. When customers go a store to buy a body cream for the first time, they will have to make a choice regarding which particular brand of body cream to buy. Basically, their choice will be influenced by a number of factors

including the amount of knowledge they have about the cream, the features and benefits of the cream as well as its price (Borle et al, 2005). Thus, if a customer holds a positive perception about a particular brand of body cream, he or she is more likely to make the brand his or her most preferred choice in the means of other available alternatives and purchase the product (Draganska & Jain 2005).

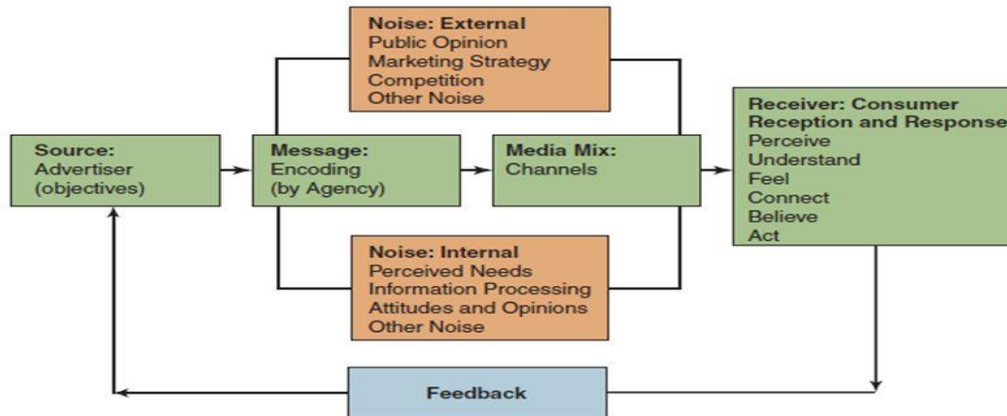
### **Consumer Buying Decision**

Consumer buying decision involves the psychological process of selecting the most attractive and pleasing substitute from a set of options that a consumer has created (Kotler & Keller, 2003). When people do their shopping they exercise their right of choice in picking the store to the product or service they are willing to pay for (Moyo et al, 2014). The consumer decision to pick a store to buy from is based on the result of his evaluation of various alternatives. The most appropriate choice is the one that is closest to the evaluation criteria formulated by the consumer. The correct and most suitable decision is dependent on sufficient information (Nell, 2013). Organizations can do research on consumer buying decisions and their actual purchases in order to answer questions about what consumers buy, where they buy, when they buy, how and how much they buy, as well as why they buy (Cant et al, in Nell, 2013). However, learning about the why's of consumer buying decision is not so easy – the answers to these questions are often kept deep within the consumer's head (Zainbooks, in Nell, 2013).

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the advertising communication model which was developed by Rossiter and Percy in 1985. This model explains how public awareness of goods and services can be created through advertising communication. The advertising communication model describes the process and procedures by which advertising communicates with consumers and persuades them to take action (Rossiter & Percy, 1985). In order for advertising communication to be successful, the target consumers must be exposed to an ad or series of ads in a campaign via media so that they can be connected to the brand and take action such as buying of the brand. If a buyer or consumer is re-exposed to further advertising, he or she would get connected to the modified brand again based on a modified state of mind and take action like purchasing the product or brand (Ehrenberg, in Rossiter & Percy, 1985). The advertising communication model clearly explains how corporate advertising bring new brand to the notice of consumers through a sequence process. The theory believes that consumers will be informed on the existence of a new brand, the attributes of the brand, price and the benefits of using the brand through advertising communication.

## Advertising Communication Model



**Fig. 1: Advertising Communication Model**  
**Source: Rossiter and Percy (1985)**

The advertising communication model is very useful in explaining the relationship between green brand awareness and customer preference. The model explains that green companies need to engage in advertising communication in order to create green brand awareness for increased customer preference of the brand. The model shows how advertising communication can help green companies in the cosmetic industry to create public awareness of their organic body cream. With appropriate application of advertising communication model, green cosmetic companies can create public awareness of their green brand which will go a long way in influencing customer preference for their products. The theory believes consumers will buy green products if they are aware of the existence of green brand, the environmental attributes of the brand, the premium price that comes with the product as well as the benefits of using the brand. Once consumers are aware of green brand, they will be forced to take action like purchasing the brand and maintaining a sustainable consumption pattern.

### Empirical Review

Some empirical studies have been conducted on green brand awareness and customer preference. For instance, Moeliono et al (2020) examined the factors that build green brand awareness on the products of The Body Shop. The researchers focused on three products of The Body Shop in Indonesia namely; Green Peace, Earth Hour and Go Green. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and quantitative research approach. The data were collected from 100 customers of The Body Shop who live in Bandung, Indonesia. The researchers used questionnaire as their main instrument for collecting data from the customers. After analyzing the data collected using factor analysis, the researchers discovered that among ten (10) factors studied namely; content composition, company's perception, meaning of the environmental slogans, packaging label, notice an environmental label, product perception, environmental efforts and environmental label's and slogans; two factors (product perception and company's perception) greatly build green brand awareness on the products of The Body Shop.

Alamsyah and Muhammed (2018) carried out a study to determine the antecedents of green awareness for eco-friendly products in Indonesia. Their study focused on the factors that encourage the cultivation of green awareness among customers for the improved consumption of eco-friendly products. The study adopted the survey research design where data were collected

from 500 customers of Supermarket Retail in West Java Province, Bandung City. The researchers used a structured questionnaire to collect data from the 500 customers which were selected using accidental sampling technique. The data collected were analyzed using percentage and frequency tables, multiple linear regression and the SPSS analytical tool. The findings showed that green advertising has the strongly support for the development of green awareness, followed by perceived value of green initiatives, green brand image, and finally green brand attributes.

Ansu-Mensah (2021) explored the effect of green product awareness on green purchase intentions of university students in an emerging market perspective. The study adopted survey research design and quantitative research approach. The researcher used a structured questionnaire to collect data from 478 students through online survey. The data collected were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and the results showed that green perceived quality has significant positive impact on green purchase intentions of university students. The study also revealed that green perceived availability had the slightest impact on green purchase intention of university students. The study concluded that green product awareness has significant impact on green purchase intentions of university students.

Braimah and Tweneboah-Koduah (2011) carried out a study to determine the impact of green brand awareness on consumer purchase decisions in Ghana. The researchers adopted the cross-sectional survey research design where a structured questionnaire and interview were used to collect data from 200 customers in four (4) satellite markets in Accra. The data collected were analyzed statistically using frequency distribution, ranking and cross-tabulation procedures. The findings revealed that Ghanaian consumers have a low level of awareness of green brand and this has affected their purchase decision. The study also revealed that price has a higher influence on purchase decision than green concerns. The study equally revealed that green issues are likely to influence purchase decision of younger consumers.

Hussain et al (2014) examined the effect on green awareness on consumers' purchasing decision in Pakistan. The researchers adopted a survey research design and quantitative research approach and used a structured questionnaire to gather data from 250 consumers in Pakistan. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using percentage and frequency counts, mean and standard deviation. The findings showed that green product awareness significantly influence on consumers' purchasing decision.

Pandey (2021) explored the effect of green marketing awareness on consumer buying behaviour. Their study adopted the descriptive survey research and utilized the positivism research philosophy. The data for the study were collected from 120 women between the ages of 21-45years who were responsive customers of ecologically driven appeals and who are inspired to ensure the future of the children. The methods of data analysis applied in the study include the descriptive statistics such as mean, variance and standard deviation, and regression analysis. The findings revealed that there is a huge interest gap, a disparity between market value and green practices, which implies that consumers are not adequately open to information on green product marketing.

Razak et al (2019) examined the level of customer awareness of environmental-friendly products and green marketing practices in UAE. The researchers adopted the descriptive survey research design and used a structured questionnaire to elicit data from customers of Choithram Store in Abu Shagar in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequency tables, bar chart while ANOVA and MS-Excel were used to test the hypotheses. The findings showed that female consumers between the ages of 20-40 years with minimal income consumed environmental friendly products while those between 61 and above had the least environmental-friendly products. The study also revealed that

consumers are aware of environmental friendly products but majority of them were not aware of organic marine product" although they were able to identify organic fruit and vegetables, and organic house cleaning products.

Yesmin and Akter (2018) explored consumer awareness and purchase attitude towards green products in Bangladesh. The researchers adopted the survey research design and used a structured questionnaire to collect data from 192 consumers in Dhaka city. The data collected were analyzed statistically using percentage and frequency tables, mean and standard deviation while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses. The result revealed that consumers in Bangladesh have adequate knowledge about green products as most of them considered green products a safe and healthy products with environmental benefits. Consumers also believed that green products are of high quality when compared to their conventional alternatives.

### **Gap in Literature**

From the literature reviewed, it is obvious that a good number of studies have been conducted on green brand awareness but none of these studies relate green brand awareness to customer preference of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. Even the dimensions of green brand awareness (benefits awareness and price awareness) were not related to customer preference as measured by customer choice and customer buying behaviour. This has created a gap in literature which this study attempts to fill and contribute to the existing knowledge on the subject matter.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. The population of this study consisted of all the customers using organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. However, the exact number of organic body cream users is unknown, hence Cochran's formula for determining sample size from unknown population was applied. Using the formula,  $n = \frac{Z^2Pq}{e^2}$ , the sample size of 384 customers were used. The 384 customers were drawn from the six states that make up the south-south geopolitical zone namely; Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers State. The 384 customers was intercepted at different shopping centres in the major cities in the South-South zone. Here, the purposive sampling and accidental sampling technique were used to select the 384 respondents for the study. A structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from the respondents. The questionnaire was structured on a four (4) point Likert-type scale which range from Strong Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. The validity of the instrument was determined through face and content analysis while its reliability was determined using the Cronbach Alpha method. A total copy of three hundred and eight-four (384) questionnaires was administered to the respondents and 315 copies were collected. The data collected were analyzed statistically while the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient ( $\rho$ ) was used to test the hypotheses. The bivariate analysis was performed with the aid of SPSS software program 23.0 version.

### **Empirical Results and Discussion**

The results of the bivariate analysis carried out were presented in this section. Here, the data collected on green brand awareness (benefit awareness and price awareness) were correlated with those obtained on customer preference (customer choice and customer buying decision) using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient ( $\rho$ ). This was done with the aid of the SPSS software program version 23.0. The results of the bivariate analysis are presented in the tables below:

**Table 1: Result of bivariate analysis between benefit awareness and customer choice of organic body cream**

			Benefit Awareness	Customer Choice
Spearman (rho)	Benefit Awareness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.643**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	315	315
	Customer Choice	Correlation Coefficient	.643**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	315	315

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

\*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output, 2023

Table 1 presents the result of the bivariate analysis carried out between benefit awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The result indicates that benefit awareness has a strong positive correlation with customer choice of organic body cream ( $\rho = .643^{**}$ ) and the symbol \*\* signifies that this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Based on this result, the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is strong positive and significant relationship between benefit awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

**Table 2: Result of bivariate analysis between benefit awareness and customer choice of organic body cream**

			Benefit Awareness	Customer Buying Decision
Spearman (rho)	Benefit Awareness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.718**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	315	315
	Customer Buying Decision	Correlation Coefficient	.718**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	315	315

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

\*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output, 2023

Table 2 contains the result of the bivariate analysis carried out between benefit awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The result indicates that benefit awareness is strongly and positively correlated to customer buying decision ( $\rho = .718^{**}$ ) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level as indicated by the symbol \*\*. Consequently, the null hypothesis ( $H_{02}$ ) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that we then accept that there is strong positive and significant relationship between benefit awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

**Table 3: Result of bivariate analysis between price awareness and customer choice of organic body cream**

			Price Awareness	Customer Choice
Spearman (rho)	Price Awareness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.833**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	315	315
	Customer Choice	Correlation Coefficient	.833**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	315	315

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

\*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output, 2023

Table 3 shows the result of the bivariate analysis carried out between price awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The result indicates that price awareness has a very strong positive correlation with customer choice of organic body cream ( $\rho = .833^{**}$ ) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level as signified by the symbol \*\*. As a result of this, the null hypothesis ( $H_{03}$ ) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that we then accept that there is a very strong positive and significant relationship between price awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

**Table 4: Result of bivariate analysis between price awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream**

			Price Awareness	Customer Buying Decision
Spearman n (rho)	Price Awareness	Correlation	1.000	.877**
		Coefficient	.	.001
		Sig. (2 tailed)	315	315
	Customer Buying Decision	Correlation	.877**	1.000
		Coefficient	.001	.
		Sig. (2 tailed)	315	315
		N		

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

\*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output, 2023

Table 4 presents the result of the bivariate analysis carried out between price awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The result shows that price awareness is strongly and positively correlated to customer buying decision of organic body cream ( $\rho = .877^{**}$ ) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level as indicated by the symbol \*\*. Based on this result, the null hypothesis ( $H_{04}$ ) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that we then accept that there is a very strong positive and significant relationship between price awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

### Discussion of Findings

It was reported that benefit awareness has a strong positive and significant relationship with customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. This finding was derived from the result of the bivariate analysis carried out on the two variables in the first hypothesis. The result revealed that benefit awareness has a strong positive correlation with customer choice of organic body cream ( $\rho = .643^{**}$ ) and that this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Based on this result, the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is strong positive and significant relationship between benefit awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. This finding is supported by Maheswari and Revathi (2020) and Alamsyah & Muhammed (2018) as both studies reported that green brand awareness enable consumer to make the right choice of organic cream.

This study also found a strong positive and significant relationship between benefit awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. This finding was deduced from the result of the bivariate analysis carried out on the two variables in the second hypothesis. The result revealed that benefit awareness was strongly and positively correlated to customer buying decision ( $\rho = .718^{**}$ ) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Consequently, the null hypothesis ( $H_{02}$ ) was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This means that

we then accepted that there is strong positive and significant relationship between benefit awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. This finding is supported by Keelson and Johnson (2021) and Pandey (2021) as both studies revealed that consumers' awareness of the features and benefits of green products has significant influence on their buying decision.

This study discovered a very strong positive and significant relationship between price awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. This finding was obtained from the result of the bivariate analysis carried out on the two variables in the third hypothesis. The result revealed that price awareness has a very strong positive correlation with customer choice of organic body cream ( $\rho = .833^{**}$ ) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level as signified by the symbol  $^{**}$ . As a result of this, the null hypothesis ( $H_{03}$ ) was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This implies that we then accept that there is a very strong positive and significant relationship between price awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. This finding is supported by Vazirani (2020) and Moeliono et al (2020) as their studies revealed that price awareness has significant influence on their customer choice.

Finally, it was discovered that price awareness has a very strong positive and significant relationship with consumer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. This finding emerged the result of the bivariate analysis carried out on the two variables in the fourth hypothesis. The result revealed that price awareness is strongly and positively correlated to customer buying decision of organic body cream ( $\rho = .877^{**}$ ) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Based on this result, the null hypothesis ( $H_{04}$ ) was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This implies that we then accepted that there is a very strong positive and significant relationship between price awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. This finding is supported by Braimah and Tweneboah-Koduah (2011) and Altaf et al (2016) as both studies confirmed that consumer awareness of green product price significantly their buying decision.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study examined green brand awareness and customer preference of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. It critically analyzed the components of green brand awareness and relate them to measures of customer preference. From the result of the analysis carried out, it was confirmed that benefit awareness has the significant relationship with customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The study also found a significant relationship between benefit awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream. A significant relationship was also reported between price awareness and customer choice of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria. The study equally discovered a significant relationship between price awareness and customer buying decision of organic body cream. Based on these findings, it is therefore concluded that green brand awareness is a significant predictor of customer preference of organic body cream in South-South Nigeria.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are provided for the study:

1. That, green cosmetics companies in South-South Nigeria should create more public awareness of their green products especially their organic products as it would positively influence customer preference for their brand.
2. That, green companies in South-South Nigeria should advertising their organic body cream in the newspapers, television, radio as it would create more public awareness of their green products and influence their choice of body cream.

3. That, green cosmetics companies in South-South Nigeria should advertise their organic body cream on social media platforms such as facebook, twitter, instagram, Myspace and YouTube as it would enable them reach out to large audiences within few seconds and create public awareness across the globe.
4. That, green companies in South-South Nigeria should hire celebrities as social media influencer as it would help to create more public awareness of green products.
5. Finally, it is recommended that green cosmetics companies in South-South Nigeria should ensure that their organic body cream is of high quality in terms of satisfying customers as satisfied customers will become advocates of the brand and this will go a long way in creating more public awareness about the brand.

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