

# The Non-Moderating Influence Of Regulatory Frameworks On The Relationship Between Green Marketing Strategies And Customer Loyalty In Selected Manufacturing Firms In Nairobi City County Of Kenya

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## Abstract

**Background:** Green marketing (GM) strategies are increasingly adopted by manufacturing firms in Kenya in response to sustainability demands and shifting consumer expectations. Although regulatory frameworks are presumed to enhance the effectiveness of GM strategies in the manufacturing firms, their moderating role in influencing customer loyalty remains underexplored. This study investigated the moderating role of regulatory frameworks on the relationship between GM strategies and customer loyalty in a Business-to-Business (B2B) context among selected manufacturing firms in Nairobi City County of Kenya.

**Materials and Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was employed targeting 725 manufacturing firms. Data were collected from a representative sample of 258 respondents using structured questionnaires. Ordinal logistic regression was applied to test the moderating effect of regulatory frameworks on the GM–loyalty relationship at a 5% significance level.

**Results:** Regulatory frameworks had a strong independent and significant influence on customer loyalty ( $\beta = 1.652$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). However, the frameworks did not significantly moderate the relationship between GM strategies and customer loyalty ( $\beta = -0.147$ ,  $p = 0.445$ ).

**Conclusion:** Regulatory frameworks directly shaped customer loyalty in the selected firms but did not alter the impact of the GM strategies. The firms should therefore align GM initiatives with customer expectations independently of implementation and reinforcement of regulatory frameworks, while policymakers should prioritize enforcement and awareness to strengthen direct regulatory framework influence.

**Key Words:** Green Marketing (GM) Strategies, Regulatory Frameworks, Sustainable Manufacturing, Customer Loyalty, Business-to-Business

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## I. Introduction

Green marketing (GM) strategies have become essential tools for promoting sustainability and cultivating customer loyalty in today's environmentally conscious business landscape. Globally, these strategies are increasingly adopted to address pressing ecological challenges such as global warming that leads to climate change, deforestation, and pollution (1). In Kenya, manufacturing firms play a vital role in economic development but also contribute significantly to environmental degradation due to their resource-intensive operations (2). In response, various regulatory frameworks such as Vision 2030, the Climate Change Act of 2016, and the Green Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan (GESIP), among others have been initiated and implemented to guide the firms toward sustainable manufacturing operations and practices (3,4). These frameworks aim to foster compliance, transparency, and accountability, positioning the firms as key drivers of environmental sustainability and competitive advantage (5,6).

Despite the emergence of green policies and other regulatory frameworks, the effectiveness of these mechanisms in enhancing the impact of green marketing strategies remains largely unexplored. While global studies have linked the GM strategies to improved customer satisfaction and loyalty (7,8), most of the studies have mainly focused on the Business-to-Consumer (B2C) contexts, leaving a gap in understanding their influence and relevance in a Business-to-Business (B2B) context particularly within Kenyan manufacturing firms (9–11). Moreover, although regulatory frameworks are presumed to reinforce the relationship between the GM strategies and customer loyalty, emerging evidence suggests that their moderating role may be limited (12,13). For instance, while regulations may influence customer perceptions independently, they may not necessarily strengthen or alter the effectiveness of the GM strategies in driving customer loyalty. This raises important questions about the actual

interplay between enforcement of the regulatory frameworks and marketing practices in sustainability-driven markets.

This study examined the non-moderating influence of regulatory frameworks on the relationship between green marketing strategies and customer loyalty among manufacturing firms in Nairobi City County operating in a B2B context. By focusing on the Kenyan manufacturing sector, where environmental challenges are acute and appropriate regulatory interventions are evolving (14,15), the study contributes to the global discourse on sustainable industrialization. It offers empirical insights into whether regulatory frameworks amplify, diminish, or remain neutral in shaping the effectiveness of the GM strategies (16–18). The findings are expected to inform both policymakers and practitioners, guiding the development of integrated approaches that align marketing efforts with environmental compliance and customer expectations, while supporting Kenya's broader sustainability goals under Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (19,20).

## **II. Materials And Methods**

This study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey design to examine the moderating role of Regulatory Frameworks on the relationship between Green Marketing strategies and customer loyalty among manufacturing firms in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The research was conducted between January and May, 2025.

### ***Study design***

The choice of a descriptive cross-sectional design was guided by the need to collect data from a sizeable sample population and to identify patterns and relationships among the study variables without inferring causality. This design enabled the generalization of findings and facilitated the identification of linkages between the variables. It was particularly suitable given the time and resource constraints, offering a snapshot of the phenomena under investigation.

### ***Study Location and Duration***

The study was conducted in Nairobi City County, Kenya, targeting a representative sample of the manufacturing firms listed in the Kenya Manufacturers and Exporters Directory (2021–2022 Edition). Data collection spanned five months, from January to May, 2025.

### ***Target Population***

The target population comprised all the 725 manufacturing firms listed in the Kenya Manufacturers and Exporters Directory (2021–2022 Edition) in Nairobi City County of Kenya. These firms were selected based on the diversity of their operations, practices and activities besides their known and perceived contribution to environmental degradation. The unit of analysis was the firm, and data were collected from designated officers, typically marketing, procurement, quality assurance, and production managers, who provided insights on behalf of their manufacturing firms and organizations.

### ***Sampling Frame and Technique***

The sampling frame was drawn from the Kenya Manufacturers and Exporters Directory (2021–2022 Edition), which lists the 725 manufacturing firms across 14 different sub-sectors. Stratified random sampling technique was used to divide the population into strata based on sub-sector classification. Within each stratum, systematic sampling was applied to select every third manufacturing firm, yielding a representative sample size of 258 firms. This approach ensured proportional representation and accounted for sectoral differences in green marketing practices (21).

### ***Sample size determination***

Using Taro Yamane's formula (Taro, 1967), the sample size was calculated at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. The sampling interval was computed as  $725 \div 258 = 2.81$ , rounded to 3. The formula used is as shown below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

$n$  = Sample Size

$N$  = Population size

$e$  = level of precision desired  $\implies e = 1 - \text{Confidence level}$

Hence,

$$n = \frac{725}{1 + 725(0.05)^2} = 257.82361$$

$n = 258$

### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

#### **Inclusion criteria**

1. Registered manufacturing firms in Nairobi City County
2. Firms engaged in the B2B marketing and implementing green strategies
3. Respondents in managerial roles overseeing marketing and sustainability aspects
4. Willingness to participate and provide informed consent

#### **Exclusion criteria**

1. B2C-only firms
2. Firms without sustainability initiatives
3. Respondents not involved in relevant and specific functions
4. Firms outside Nairobi City County

### **Data collection instruments**

Primary data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire adapted from prior empirical studies. Structured *Likert-scale* items were used to quantify attitudes and perceptions about the variables. Green Marketing strategies were measured on a *5-point scale* from 1 = Not at all to 5 = Very Large Extent. Regulatory Frameworks and Customer Loyalty constructs used a scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. Open-ended questions and an interview guide supplemented the questionnaire to enrich insights and responses from the respondents.

### **Data collection procedure**

Questionnaires and interview guides were self-administered to key informants identified by the management of the various manufacturing firms. Data collection methods included use of Emails, drop-and-pick, and follow-up telephone calls. Two trained research assistants supported the data collection process, and quality checks were conducted throughout the study period and during the data collection exercise. Confidentiality was maintained by excluding firm and respondent names (22). Authorization letters, research permit from Kenya's National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) permits, and an introduction letter from Machakos University were presented to participating firms.

### **Data analysis techniques**

After fieldwork, data were cleaned to remove any incomplete responses. Descriptive statistics (that is, frequencies, averages, standard deviation, skewness and percentages) were used to profile both the firms and the respondents. Ordinal Regression Analysis (ORA) was used to test the null hypothesis at a 5% significance level. Wald *Chi-Square* statistics was used to assess the predictor significance, with *p-values*  $< 0.05$  indicating rejection of the null hypothesis.

To test the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), a path analysis model proposed by (23) was employed to assess the moderating effect of regulatory frameworks on the relationship between green marketing strategies and customer loyalty. A two-step regression analysis was conducted as described below.

**Step 1:** Customer Loyalty ( $CL$ ) was regressed on Green Marketing Strategies ( $GM$ ) and Regulatory Frameworks ( $RF$ ) as indicated in equation 1:

$$CL = \varphi_0 + \varphi_1 GM + \varphi_2 RF + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots 1$$

**Step 2:** An interaction term ( $GM \times RF$ ) was introduced to test the moderation as shown in equation 2:

$$CL = \varphi_0 + \varphi_1 GM + \varphi_2 RF + \varphi_3 GM * RF + \varepsilon \dots \dots \dots 2$$

If the interaction term ( $\varphi_3$ ) explained a statistically significant amount of variance in  $CL$ , the moderation effect was confirmed.

## **III. Results**

### **Response rate**

Out of the 258 questionnaires distributed to the manufacturing firms across Nairobi City County, 185 were returned fully completed, yielding a response rate of 71.7%. A response rate above 70% is considered very good; the rates above 60% are considered acceptable while those above 70% are highly satisfactory (24,25). This strong response rate provided a robust foundation for credible and reliable analysis and generalization of the research findings.

### Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

The study examined perceptions of green marketing strategies, regulatory frameworks and customer loyalty among manufacturing firms. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for each variable, including mean scores, standard deviations, and skewness values.

**Table 1: Responses on the Study Variables**

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
							Std. Error
Green Product Quality	185	2.00	5.00	3.9351	.71938	-.700	.179
Green Product Price	185	2.00	5.00	3.9351	.54783	-.642	.179
Green Promotion	185	2.00	5.00	4.0216	.63380	-.665	.179
Green Corporate Image	185	3.00	5.00	4.3162	.59322	-.221	.179
Regulatory Frameworks	185	2.00	5.00	4.0378	.47052	-.192	.179
Customer Loyalty	185	3.00	5.00	4.5351	.53172	-.470	.179

The results in Table 1 reveal favorable perceptions of green marketing strategies among manufacturing firms in Nairobi City County. All four independent variables namely green product quality, price, promotion, and corporate image, recorded mean scores above 3.9, indicating strong organizational alignment with sustainable practices. Notably, green corporate image had the highest mean ( $M = 4.32$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ ), suggesting that the manufacturing firms are viewed as credible and environmentally responsible.

Customer loyalty recorded the highest mean values ( $M = 4.54$ ), reflecting strong customer commitment to environmentally aligned firms. These findings underscore the strategic role of sustainability in driving loyalty behaviors such as repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth. The mean score for regulatory frameworks was moderately high ( $M = 4.04$ ,  $SD = 0.47$ ), suggesting that while compliance structures are present, their perceived effectiveness varies across the manufacturing firms. This supports the hypothesis that sustainability efforts, when reinforced by credible regulatory frameworks, can enhance brand loyalty, though the moderation effect may not be uniformly perceived across the firms.

### Regression analysis

To examine whether regulatory frameworks significantly moderated the relationship between green marketing strategies and customer loyalty, a two-step ordinal regression analysis was conducted based on the path analysis model proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986).

#### Step 1: Direct Effects Analysis (Model 1)

Model 1 tested the direct influence of Green Marketing strategies and Regulatory Frameworks on customer loyalty. The results are presented in **Table 2**.

**Table 2: Parameter Estimates for Model 1**

Variables	Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Customer loyalty = 3.00	3.828	1.873	4.177	1	0.041	0.157	7.500
Customer loyalty = 4.00	8.020	1.941	17.069	1	0.000	4.215	11.824
Green marketing strategies	0.384	0.321	1.426	1	0.232	-0.246	1.014
Regulatory Frameworks	1.652	.437	14.274	1	0.000	0.795	2.509

Green marketing strategies had a positive but statistically insignificant effect on customer loyalty ( $\beta = 0.384$ ,  $p = 0.232$ ). In contrast, regulatory frameworks exhibited a strong and statistically significant positive effect ( $\beta = 1.652$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), indicating their independent influence on customer loyalty.

#### Step 2: Moderation Analysis (Model 2)

Model 2 introduced an interaction term (that is, Green Marketing Strategies  $\times$  Regulatory Frameworks) to test for moderation. The results are presented in **Table 3**.

**Table 3: Parameter Estimates for Model 2**

Variables	Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Customer loyalty = 3.00	3.744	1.829	4.188	1	0.041	0.158	7.329
Customer loyalty = 4.00	8.044	1.922	17.511	1	0.000	4.277	11.812
Green marketing strategies	0.378	.322	1.372	1	0.241	-0.254	1.010
Regulatory Frameworks	1.670	.438	14.503	1	0.000	0.810	2.529

Moderating Variable	-0.147	0.192	0.583	1	0.445	-0.524	0.230
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The interaction term had a negative coefficient ( $\beta = -0.147$ ), suggesting a potential dampening effect, but was statistically insignificant ( $p = 0.445$ ). Thus, there was insufficient evidence to support a moderating effect. The analysis revealed that regulatory frameworks had a direct and significant influence on customer loyalty, while green marketing strategies alone did not significantly predict customer loyalty. The interaction term was not statistically significant, indicating that regulatory frameworks do not moderate the relationship between green marketing strategies and customer loyalty. The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was not rejected. This means that Regulatory frameworks function as independent drivers of customer loyalty rather than conditional amplifiers or cushions. While they shape consumer attitudes and behaviors, they do not alter the strength or direction of the green marketing–loyalty relationship.

#### Content analysis

The researcher familiarized with the various responses and noted initial observations from the respondents. Generation of initial codes was done and meaningful phrases and expressions were extracted and labeled to capture their essence and significance. After coding, themes were generated by clustering related codes into broader thematic categories that aligned with the study’s specific objectives. These themes were then reviewed, refined, and interpreted in light of the study’s conceptual framework. The qualitative findings revealed that regulatory frameworks play a critical role in reinforcing and legitimizing green marketing strategies within organizations. Respondents described regulatory compliance not merely as a legal obligation but as a structural and cultural mechanism that supports the successful implementation of green product quality and pricing strategies. A respondent from the Metal & Allied sector stated, “*Our operations structure was changed to incorporate the environmental aspect of the regulation,*” indicating strategic-level institutionalization of compliance. A participant from the Textile & Apparel sector noted, “*Every department has a blueprint to be followed in the day-to-day activities to ensure compliance,*” highlighting operational integration. In the Pharmaceutical sector, a respondent shared, “*The company has implemented an EMS and conducts regular internal audits,*” demonstrating a systematic approach to environmental governance.

These insights suggest that Regulatory Frameworks serve as both enablers and informal moderators of green marketing strategies. When firms align their operations with environmental regulations, such as those set by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), they enhance the credibility and effectiveness of their green initiatives. This alignment strengthens customer trust and loyalty, particularly when customers perceive that green product quality and pricing are backed by formal compliance mechanisms. However, the quantitative regression analysis results (see Table 3) revealed a negative but statistically insignificant moderating effect of regulatory frameworks on the relationship between green marketing strategies and customer loyalty ( $\beta = -0.147$ ,  $p = 0.445$ ). This suggests that, statistically, there is insufficient evidence to support a moderating role. Nonetheless, the qualitative findings indicate that regulatory frameworks may influence this relationship in practice by shaping firm and organizational culture, operational structures, and customer perceptions. **Table 4** indicates the identified themes and their descriptions.

**Table 4: Emerging Themes on Role of Regulatory Frameworks and Loyalty**

Theme	Description
Structural Integration	Compliance is embedded into organizational structures, such as EMS and blueprints
Employee sensitization	Staff are trained and empowered to uphold environmental standards in daily operations
Supplier Alignment	Firms ensure that their suppliers also comply with NEMA and other environmental guidelines

These themes reinforce the strategic relevance of regulatory frameworks in shaping both internal practices and external perceptions. While not statistically significant as moderators, they remain influential in the broader ecosystem of green marketing and customer loyalty contexts.

#### IV. Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that Green marketing strategies, such as green product quality, pricing, and corporate image, were widely adopted by firms, reflecting a growing commitment to environmental responsiveness and social responsibility. However, regression analysis revealed that green marketing strategies alone did not significantly predict customer loyalty ( $\beta = 0.384$ ,  $p = 0.232$ ). This finding suggests that while firms may be implementing green initiatives, these efforts may not be sufficient to drive loyalty unless reinforced by other factors such as regulatory credibility and customer satisfaction. The findings agree with (26), who argued that Green Marketing must be perceived as authentic and value-driven to influence customer behavior meaningfully. The study also established that the regulatory frameworks exerted a strong and statistically significant direct effect on customer loyalty ( $\beta = 1.652$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This is in agreement with (27), who emphasized the role of transparency and compliance in building trust among institutional buyers. These findings

position regulatory frameworks not as passive background conditions but as active enablers of customer loyalty. Customers appear to value those firms that demonstrate environmental compliance, particularly when such compliance is embedded in operational structures and supported by formal systems.

To test the moderating effect, the study employed (23) path analysis model. The interaction term ( $GM \times RF$ ) yielded a negative but statistically insignificant coefficient ( $\beta = -0.147, p = 0.445$ ), indicating that regulatory frameworks did not significantly moderate the relationship between green marketing strategies and customer loyalty. This finding challenges and contradicts assumptions in the literature that regulations amplify the effectiveness of green marketing. While (2) found a negative moderating effect of regulatory frameworks on green innovation and sustainability performance, their study focused on different constructs and outcomes. The current study, therefore, contributes uniquely by demonstrating that in the context of green marketing and customer loyalty, regulatory frameworks function more as independent drivers than interactive moderators.

In the qualitative findings, respondents described regulatory compliance not merely as a legal obligation but as a structural and cultural mechanism that legitimizes the GM strategies. Firms reported entrenching environmental compliance into their organizational design through the incorporation of Environmental Management Systems (EMSs), departmental blueprints, and continuous employee sensitization exercises and efforts. The various insights from the respondents suggest that regulatory frameworks serve as enablers and reinforcers of the GM strategies. When the manufacturing firms align their operations with environmental regulations, such as those set by NEMA, they enhance the credibility and effectiveness of their green initiatives. This, in turn, strengthens customer trust and loyalty, particularly when customers perceive that green product quality and pricing are backed by formal compliance mechanisms. The study fills a critical gap in customer loyalty literature. As (28) observed, most studies have focused on moderators such as green knowledge, consciousness, gender, and inter-generational differences. Regulatory frameworks have rarely been examined and tested in this role. By demonstrating that regulatory frameworks do not moderate, but do directly influence customer loyalty, the findings of the study offer a fresh perspective and invites future research to explore alternative pathways of influence.

## V. Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between green marketing strategies and customer loyalty, with a focus on the role of regulatory frameworks among manufacturing firms in Nairobi City County. The findings revealed that while green marketing strategies are positively perceived, they do not significantly influence customer loyalty. Regulatory frameworks, on the other hand, exert a strong and independent effect on customer loyalty but do not moderate the relationship between Green Marketing and loyalty. These findings show the parallel rather than interactive role of various regulations in shaping customer perceptions, offering practical insights for the manufacturing firms and policymakers committed to sustainable business operations and practices.

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