

How does consumer moral identity influence green consumption through self-enhancement/self-verification? An empirical investigation in Sierra Leone

Mahmoud Sulaiman Sesay & Xiaoling Guo

Abstract

Green consumption awareness and environmental concerns have increased the demand for green products. This study will look into how the moral identity of consumers influences their green consumption through self-enhancement/self-verification. This research examines Sierra Leonean consumption patterns and intentions for green products, intending to analyze consumers' morality toward green purchase intention through self-enhancement and self-verification. According to studies, there has been a dearth of empirical studies aimed at such consumers, and this aims to fill that gap. In this study, the basic theoretical models are the theory of moral identity and the Optimal Distinctive Theory (ODT). Based on survey data from 390 consumers, this study discovers that consumers' morality (internalization and symbolization) has a significant and positive effect on their intention to purchase convenient green products. Additionally, the study discovers that consumers' self-verification and self-enhancement mediate the relationship between consumers' moral identity internalization and moral identity symbolization and their purchase intentions for convenient green products. while the need for uniqueness has no significant moderating effect on consumer purchase intention. The results of the study will make a big difference in the development of environmental laws, persuasive communication techniques, and green marketing strategies for BOP customers, which will make them more likely to buy green products and encourage them to do so in a sustainable way.



IJSB

Accepted 3 September 2022
Published 8 September 2022
DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.7061776

Keywords: *Green purchase intention, Moral Identity, self-enhancement, self-verification, convenient goods, Sierra Leone.*

About Author (s)

Mahmoud Sulaiman Sesay (corresponding author), PhD Research Scholar, School of Business, University of International Business and Economics, Beijing, 100029, China.

Xiaoling Guo, Professor, School of Business, University of International Business and Economics, Beijing, 100029, China.

Introduction

While fulfilling personal needs is fundamental to consumer buying behavior, environmental preservation has also emerged as a top priority for consumers (De Moura et al., 2012). It is seen that environmental protection dawdles in the minds of consumers now as they engage in more purchasing activities than before, as consumption patterns have led to some environmental problems around the globe. For example, global warming, rising pollution, and natural resource depletion are some of the significant consequences of environmental harm (Chen and Chai, 2010). Environmental technology, industrial systems, economic regulations, and social efforts will all play essential roles in the pursuit of sustainability, but without changes in our consumption habits and behaviors, their contributions will be undercut (Peattie, 2010). Peattie (2010) refers to green consumption as a hard concept to grasp in her study, not least because it is an apparent contradiction. She also points out again that green implies the conservation of environmental resources, whereas consumption often involves their destruction. The above arguments clearly amplify the importance of more research to be undertaken in a way to analyze consumers' purchasing behavior concerning environmental concerns. Environmental concerns and the world's sustainability have grown in importance, and addressing the gap between customers' morality, identity, and desire to purchase green products can no longer be ignored. To learn more about how purchase decisions are influenced by sustainability, Nielsen (2015) conducted an online poll of 30,000 customers in 60 countries for its Global Report on New Product Innovation. Consumers are concerned about the environment, according to the findings, and want more affordable, nutritious, convenient, and ecologically friendly items on the market. The main focus of this thesis is to investigate how morality influences Sierra Leoneans' purchasing intentions for green products. Concerns about environmental degradation have grown in recent decades, and people from all over the world have been looking for answers to what they see as humanity's bleak future. As public awareness of environmental deterioration grows, consumers are increasingly considering environmentally friendly items when making purchasing decisions (Tsay, 2009). This study will be the first to test not only the relationship between moral identity and green purchase intention but also the mediating effect of self-enhancement and self-verification in the model, as well as the moderating role that the need for uniqueness plays in understanding consumer green purchasing behavior in the bottom-of-the-pyramid market. In summary, the primary goal of this study would be to see how moral identity influences green purchase intention through self-enhancement and self-verification. According to Mancha and Yoder (2015), they propose that consumers' intentions to conserve and preserve the environment are significantly influenced by how they describe themselves. They also discovered that people with strong environmental self-identities will try to raise societal awareness about green consumption. It will therefore supply marketers, governments, and private investors with insight into customers at the bottom of the pyramid. Despite the surge in environmental consciousness, the majority of Sierra Leoneans are still in the shadows concerning green production. Partly due to a lack of information on the subject, however, facts remain unclear as little or no research has been conducted to ascertain such information. This research will serve as a foundation for raising awareness and will assist marketers in focusing on green marketing strategies for clients at the bottom of the pyramid. Most importantly, as the idea and thought of "green consumption" is a rising phenomenon, this research will shed light on consumers at the bottom of the pyramid in recent times and their consumption patterns. However, in Africa and the rest of the world, environmental protection is a critical issue among peers, societies, and communities. It will be an unraveling discovery in trying to understand these consumers from the Third World. Because of this, analyzing consumers' plans to buy green products has become a field of study. The goal is to find out what makes customers from different cultures different and what important factors may affect consumers' plans to buy green products (Chen, 2013).

Literature Review

Convenience Green Goods

The American Marketing Association's definitions Committee defined convenience goods in 1948 as "those consumers' goods which the consumer usually purchases frequently, immediately, and with a minimum of effort." (American Marketing Association, 1948). Convenience goods are those that are often consumed and widely supplied in the most accessible and convenient locations (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016). Consumers buy these items more frequently since they are less priced and take less effort. During a pretest carried out, 30 respondents were asked to list the first three (3) product category that comes to their mind when they hear the word "green products". The questionnaire was designed with this open-ended question, and the majority of the participants made a list of products that match the description of convenience products, with only 8 respondents mentioning specialty goods like electronic cars, solar panels, and eco-friendly dishwashers. When respondents were asked how much they are willing to pay for these goods, 9 respondents are willing to pay \$1-\$7, 9 respondents willing to pay between \$8-\$14, 6 respondents were willing to pay between \$15-\$29 and lastly 6 respondents were willing to pay \$30 and above.

Green product

Although green products are becoming more popular, many controversies surround their market acceptance, particularly given the high number of greenwashing cases. (Durif, Boivi, & Julien, 2010). In their research, they tried to develop a universal definition of the term "green product," and their main aim was to define the term from three perspectives: (1) the academic, (2) the industrial, and (3) the consumer. For the purpose of this research, we will keep our focus on the definition of green products from an academic perspective. From the academic viewpoint, they codified 35 different definitions of the term and formulated that: "A green product is a product whose design and/or attributes (and/or production and/or strategy) use recycling (renewable/toxic-free/biodegradable) resources and which improves environmental impact or reduces environmental toxic damage throughout its entire life cycle" (Durif, Boivin, & Julien, 2010 p. 25-33).

Green consumption

The United Nations 1998 Report examines the spike in consumption during the 20th century, and according to the "Human Development Report" of 1998, it was observed that humans should reduce the use of resources and discharge of pollutants to form a sustainable consumption pattern that will not affect the development of future generations on the basis of gratifying human needs and pursuing a higher quality of life. Because of such reports, going forward, researchers now refer to green consumption popularly as 5R consumption: reduce, reevaluate, reuse, recycle, and rescue (Jonge et al., 2008). Green consumption is a type of consumption that allows people to participate in environmental protection and consumption levels as well as environmental deterioration as it has risen dramatically over the years (Sun, Liu, & Zhao, 2019). According to their research, human consumption patterns have changed significantly, mostly as a result of rapid population growth and the acceleration of economic and industrial structures. Some of these transformations have had a negative impact on the environment, as businesses seek to increase natural resource supply at the cost of human life. In 2019, Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old climate activist, condemned world leaders at the United Nations Climate Action Summit in New York City in 2019 for their inaction on climate change issues (Milman, 2019). Many people were moved by her speech, which quickly went viral and garnered worldwide attention. In her speech, she explained that we live in a world where people are suffering from the effects of climate change to the point of mass extinction due to the collapse of the entire ecosystem, but world leaders are not paying attention to it.

The dependent Variable role of Green Purchase Intention

Sun, Liu, and Zhao (2019), in their study about the factors and mechanisms affecting green consumption in China, explained that the emphasis on incorporating environmental consciousness into the purchasing process has gained a lot of traction for the concept of green consumption. Also, they highlighted that green consumption can greatly help maintain the balance between meeting demand and conserving the environment in terms of sustainable development by affecting the entire consumption process, which includes commodity selection, usage, and treatment. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the central factor is the individual's intention to purchase green products, with the preceding independent variables Intention is the function of those three conceptually independent variables (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control). Purchase intention for green products will be measured below according to Armitage & Conner (1999), as it gives a clear path to the analysis of green purchase intention.

Theoretical foundation and hypotheses development

Moral Identity Theory

Moral identity is described as a type of self-regulatory system that encourages moral behavior (Blasi, 1984; Damon & Hart, 1992; Erikson, 1964; Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998). Erikson (1964) argued that an identity is anchored in the very heart of one's being, including being true to oneself in behavior, and is correlated with respect for one's perception of reality. Hart et al. (1998) define moral identity as "a commitment to one's sense of self to lines of action that promote or protect the welfare of others," which is similar to Erikson's (1964) definition of identity as "being true to oneself in action." Moral identity is defined as a self-concept based on a collection of moral characteristics (Aquino and Reed, 2002). According to their given definition, moral identity is trait-specific and relies on contemporary social-cognition-oriented conceptions of the self. As a result, while moral identity is considered as linked to specific moral attributes in this study, it may also be receptive to a different mental image of what a moral person is likely to think, feel, and do (Kihlstrom & Klein, 1994). Damon and Hart (1992) highlighted more forcefully the centrality of moral identity in inspiring moral behavior by stating that "there are both theoretical and empirical reasons to believe that the centrality of morality to self may be the single most powerful determiner of concordance between moral judgment and conduct. "People whose self-concept is organized around their moral beliefs are highly likely to translate those beliefs into action consistently throughout their lives" (p. 455). Recently, there has been growing evidence that moral identity, in particular, plays an important role in moral functioning by influencing how people interpret and respond to various situations involving moral choice and judgment (Cui et al., 2021). To summarize, preceding theory and research on moral identity have unequivocally linked this construct to moral action (Aquino and Reed, 2002). There has been little effort to assess the self-importance of moral identity and empirically evaluate its relationship to moral cognition and behavior, owing to a lack of valid measures in the existing research (Aquino and Reed, 2002). Hart et al. (1998), for example, operationalized moral identity as a propensity to volunteer for community service. By so doing, they admitted that this metric falls short of capturing the extent to which a commitment to helping others is linked to a sense of self and identity. While the phrase "moral identity" has been used in the past, previous conversations have not adequately addressed the notion that people's moral identities could be made up of collectively shared moral characteristics (Lapsley & Lasky, 2001; Walker & Pitts, 1998). When and why people engage in the service of human wellbeing is a perennial subject in the study of moral behavior (Aquino and Reed, 2002). The cognitive-developmental model, first presented by Piaget (1942) and later expanded by Kohlberg (1973) and others (Rest, 1990), is one of the most significant theoretical models for answering this question. The central tenet of this model is that a person's moral reasoning

sophistication predicts his or her moral behavior (Haan, Smith, & Block, 1968; Kohlberg, 1969; Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977; Kohlberg, & Kramer, 1969), and there is evidence supporting this hypothesis (Gibbs, Basinger, & Fuller, 1995; Rest & Navarez, 1994). In their review of the available research on moral identity, according to Hardy and Carlo (2005), the concept has a lot of promise for furthering academics' current understanding of moral functioning, but there are still a lot of unanswered questions. For example, there is a lack of empirical studies addressing potential mediating and moderating elements, and little is known about the mechanisms via which moral identity influences moral action (Hardy & Carlo, 2005). This study uses moral identity to explain consumers' green product consumption intention, with self-verification and self-enhancement performing a mediating role in this relationship, moderated by the need for within-group distinctiveness. Explained by Aquino & Reed (2002) in their study of the self-importance of moral identity, they categorized moral identity into two categories: Symbolization refers to the degree at which moral traits are represented in public choices and/or acts in recognized social circumstances, whereas internalization refers to the degree to which moral traits are important to one's self-concept. Internalizations and symbolization of morality will be tested as independent variables to test their relationship with green consumption intention.

Moral identity internalization and green purchase intention

Aquino and Reed (2002) believe that moral identity has two dimensions: internalization (a private, "having" side) and symbolization (a public, "doing" side), which is consistent with researchers who believe the self has both public and private aspects (Erikson 1964; Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975). These two conceptions have significant theoretical distinctions, as their description demonstrates, with the internalization dimension having to do with importance to one's self-moral personality. Individuals that possess such traits act morally, and such individuals have intentions to donate to both in-groups and out-groups (Winterich, Mittal, & Ross, 2009). Barriage et al. (2001), in their work, find a link between moral self-concept and antisocial behavior in a group of late teens. Their analysis shows that although people with high moral identity internalization have consistent access to moral knowledge, this does not mean that people with low moral identity internalization do not have access to moral knowledge. This study will examine the relationship between individual internalization and green consumption in terms of customers' intentions to consume green. A person with a high internalized moral identity, according to their model, is one for whom this network of ethically relevant knowledge constructs is chronically available, both in terms of quantity and speed, within the working self-concept (Aquino et al., 2009). This statement was further explained by Winterish et al. (2013) in their analysis of the two dimensions of moral identity to mean that the description of someone with a high level of moral identity internalization does not imply that someone with a low level of internalization does not have any cognitively accessible moral trait associations in working memory; rather, these associations are not brought to mind as frequently, quickly, or easily as someone with a high level of internalization. According to Gotowiec (2019), the internalization dimension refers to how central moral traits are to one's self-concept, whereas the symbolization dimension refers to how such moral traits are reflected on public choices and actions in socially identifiable situations (Hannah et al., 2020). But there are strong reasons to think that people with high moral identity internalization are more likely to be motivated to do good things than people with low moral identity internalization. This leads to the hypothesis that:

H1. Consumer moral identity internalization positively influences green purchase intention.

Moral identity symbolization and green purchase intention

As opposed to the internationalization construct, according to Mead (1934), in his book "Mind, Self, and Society," it was believed that the dimension of symbolization comes from a symbolic perspective. The symbolization dimension is substantially associated with the impression management measurement in Aquino and Reed's (2002) research, which may reflect its susceptibility to self-presentational concerns. The construct was explained as follows: people with a high level of moral identity symbolization obtain their identity as a moral person through the recognition of others, and these people are more likely to engage in activities that can demonstrate to others their commitments to moral values and beliefs, and they will do so when the action can be observed by others (Grant, 2012). People who have internalized their moral identity, on the other hand, normally undertake moral actions to satisfy themselves rather than for societal validation, and such activities include environmental protection. As a support for this, Winterich et al. (2013) explain that a person with a high level of moral identity symbolization engages in visible activities that can communicate his or her commitment to specific moral aims and values to others, while a person with a low level of moral identity symbolization is just less likely to engage in such public demonstrations. This research is geared towards investigating the moderating effects of the need for distinctiveness and gender on green consumption. If the preceding reasons are correct, people with strong moral identity symbolization are more likely to engage in prosocial behavior if their actions can be observed by others. However, for those who have a high level of moral identity internalization and have consistent access to moral schemas in working memory, their prosocial activities will be consistent whether they are in a public or private setting. Hence, it was hypothesized that:

H2. Consumer moral identity symbolization positively influences green purchase intention.

The mediating role of self-verification

People frequently have desires for self-knowledge, including self-verification, in addition to self-enhancement and impression control. People, on the whole, seek out and perceive situations that are compatible with their pre-existing self-concepts, and they employ behavioral strategies that are consistent with those pre-existing self-concepts (Escalas & Bettman, 2003). People who are high in self-verification prefer others to see them for their true selves, as they see themselves, even if their own views are negative. It's the direct opposite for those that possess high self enhancement character. For green product purchase intention, people who buy or plan to buy green products do so because they want their peers to see them as caring about the environment and because they want to stand out in their group. According to self-verification theory, people want others to see them as they see themselves and will take active steps to ensure that others perceive them in a way that confirms their stable self-perceptions. Based on the theory, people work to ensure that their experiences confirm and reinforce their self-perceptions in order to satisfy their desire for self-validating evaluations. (Talaifar & Swann, 2020). A clear example of self-verification is that those who regard themselves as likable seek out and embrace those who think positively of them, whereas those who think negatively of themselves seek out and embrace those who think negatively of them (Talaifar & Swann, 2020). The self-verification theory and its origins assume that people have a strong desire to confirm and thus stabilize their strongly held self-views. Prescott Lecky (1945) initially proposed that chronic self-views provide people with a strong sense of coherence. As a result, people are motivated to maintain their self-perceptions. Swann (1982) in his book titled "The Self" expanded Lecky's idea that stable self-views organize people's efforts to maximize coherence in his self-verification theory, and he emphasized the critical role of chronic self-views in organizing efforts to achieve coherence, which differentiates self-verification theory from consistency theories such as cognitive dissonance. If stable self-views

are necessary for human functioning, those who lack them should suffer greatly. This assertion is supported by evidence (Talaifar & Swann, 2020). The famous neurologist Oliver Sacks (1985) published "The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat," a book that had a huge impact. One of the most enthralling stories in it is about a patient named William Thompson who suffered from profound memory loss as a result of chronic alcohol abuse. In trying to reclaim his former identity, Thompson would sometimes form hypotheses about who he was and then test them on those who happened to be present, and he was doomed to repeat such tests for the rest of his life. His case demonstrates not only the importance of stable self-views to psychological well-being but also the importance of self-views in guiding action. Thompson didn't know how to interact with others because he was plagued by a vanishing sense of self. In a very real sense, his inability to obtain self-verification deprived him of the ability to interact meaningfully with those around him. The author focuses on self-verification in this study, as a case where people attempt to maintain their self-conception as consumers by making green purchases in exchange for self-verifying feedback from their peers. Hence, it was hypothesized as:

H3. Self-verification mediates the relationship between moral identity internationalization and green purchase intention.

The mediating role of self-enhancement

Self-enhancement is seen as a universal human motive in the social psychology literature, which is mostly based on Western samples (e.g., Greenwald, 1980; Sedikides & Strube, 1997; Taylor & Brown, 1988). This discussion on universal self-enhancement has culminated in the release of multiple meta-analyses, according to Dalsky, Gohm, Noguchi, and Shiomura (2008). Over the year, it has been seen that people globally try to intermingle in certain groups as members, but in doing that, the thoughts of individuals' perceptions of themselves are skewed toward the positive, as the desire to maintain and improve one's self-esteem has a powerful influence on people (Greenwald, Bellezza, & Banaji, 1988). Also, according to research on attribution, people are more prone to attribute happy results to elements of themselves and unfavorable ones to situations unrelated to themselves (Miller & Ross, 1975), hence the importance of green consumption to oneself. As green purchases can sometimes lead to self-improvement and a sense of uniqueness, they also regulate their presentations of themselves in a variety of other settings in order to optimize favorable feedback (Schlenker, 1980). With the following review of literature, it is hypothesized that:

H4. Self-enhancement mediates the relationship between moral identity symbolization and green purchase intention.

Optimal Distinctive Theory (ODT)

According to Brewer (1991; 2003), there are competing identity requirements for assimilation (similarity to others) and contrast (distinctiveness from others). According to his explanation, he noted that conceiving of oneself as a distinct individual is unpleasant and unsettling, yet conceiving of oneself as a member of a large-scale social category is insufficiently self-defining and limiting to serve as a guide for behavior. Brewer argues that people desire a level of distinctiveness that blends a degree of assimilation into a category with a degree of uniqueness for that category in comparison to other categories. As a result, identification with social groups is more likely to be pronounced and meaningful if those groups are sub-categories of broader categories, but not so small that members risk becoming individuated (Abrams, 2009). Because it is more difficult to obtain evidence that people actively choose among real social groups that differ on a scale of distinctiveness, the wider generality of ODT remained unclear (Abrams, 2009), and that's a call for more use of this theory so it can be tested in different regions to validate its efficiency as a base to study green consumption. One reason, according

to Abram (2009), is because it is uncommon to be able to establish a setting in which there are a variety of social categories with a sufficiently broad range of distinctiveness and a sufficient number of individual members within each category to examine the implications of their distinctiveness. (Brewer, 1991) highlighted that the idea that humans require a certain level of similarity to and differentiation from others is not new, as it serves as the basis of Snyder and Fromkin's uniqueness theory (1980). The OTD theory, which is supported by other models that try to explain uniqueness, says that a person will meet these demands by keeping some similarities between themselves and people who are important to them (Brewer, 1991).

The Moderating role of Need for Uniqueness

Individuals with a distinctive motivation are more drawn to products that are distinguished (i.e., products that are different or advertised to be different) because of their satisfaction with the consumer distinctiveness drive compared to products that are not distinguished (Tian et al., 2001; White and Argo, 2011). For this reason, individuals tend to make purchases by consuming goods and/or services that can satisfy their need to distinguish themselves among others. Prior work describes the motive for distinctiveness as the desire to distinguish oneself in appearance, attributes, characteristics, and capabilities from others (Vignoles et al., 2006; White and Argo, 2011). Conformity is a long-standing topic in psychology and consumer research (Asch 1955; Burnkrant and Cousineau 1975; Sherif 1936), because doing the same thing as other in-group members helps communicate desired social identities (Berger and Heath 2007; Escalas and Bettman 2005). People tend to form in-groups, but they also attempt to distinguish themselves from the rest of the group in order to demonstrate uniqueness. Green consumption is distinct in that it includes not just customers' ethical decisions at the purchasing stage but also their consuming experience (Tezer and Bodur 2020). Snyder and Fromkin's (1977) theory of uniqueness inspired the concept of customers' need for uniqueness. According to the theory of uniqueness proposed by (Snyder and Fromkin, 1980), People are motivated to maintain a sense of uniqueness as they identify themselves in relation to others on a variety of essential self-related aspects. Material manifestations of one's individuality that one receives from others are especially valued since they satisfy the urge for uniqueness without exposing one to harsh social sanctions (Snyder 1992). The need for distinctiveness is used as a moderating factor rather than social class because it is more visible in the Sierra Leone context as members of society compete within their class level (ingroup) rather than how a member of a medium social class competes with those of a high social class. The author believes the use of a need for uniqueness among in-group members will serve more efficiently than the use of social class. Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H5. The influence of moral identity internalization on green purchase intention through self-verification is moderated by need for uniqueness; for consumers with high need for uniqueness, the influence holds whereas for consumers with low need of uniqueness, the influence disappears.

H6. The influence of moral identity symbolization on green purchase intention through self-enhancement is moderated by need for uniqueness; for consumers with high need for uniqueness, the influence holds whereas for consumers with low need of uniqueness, the influence disappears.

The following demographic variables will be controlled during this research: age, gender, income, education, social class and religious identity.

The research framework was shown in Figure 1.

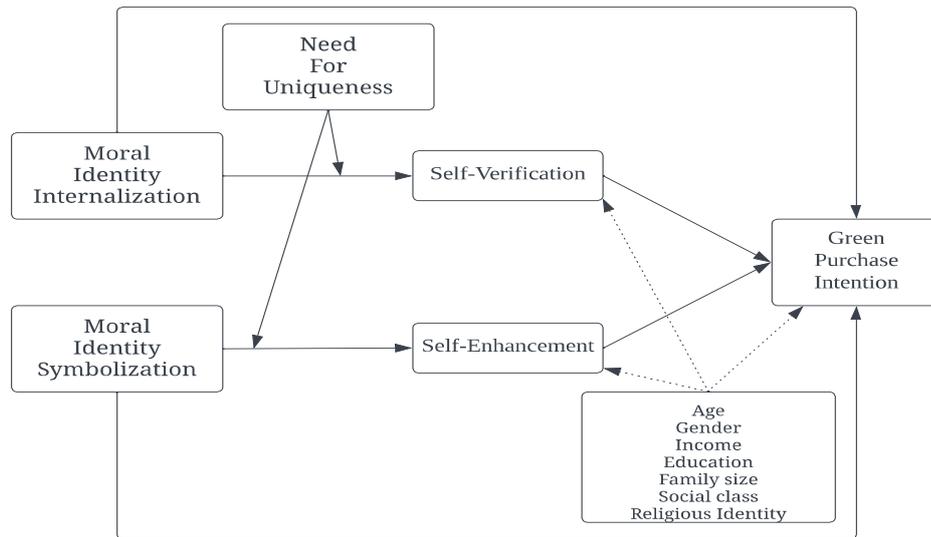


Fig. 1. Research framework.

Data and Methodology

Data collection

A questionnaire survey was conducted to obtain data and the survey's target population was potential customers of convenient green goods in Freetown (the capital City of Sierra Leone).

Table 1. demographic profile of participants.

Variables (N=390)	Category	Frequency (N=390)	Percentage (%) (N=390)
Gender:		-	-
	Male	232	59.5 %
	Female	158	40.5 %
Age:		-	-
	18-24	82	21 %
	25-34	210	53.8 %
	35-44	59	15.1 %
	45-54	20	5.1 %
	55-64	9	2.3 %
	65 and above	10	2.6 %
Education:		-	-
	High School	45	11.5 %
	Technical Vocational Institute	75	19.2 %
	Bachelor Degree (Undergraduate)	184	47.2 %
	Post Graduate	86	22.1 %
Monthly Income:		-	-
	Below Le 800,000 (\$784)	158	40.5 %
	Le 800,001-Le 15,000,000 (\$785-\$1470)	211	54.1 %
	Above Le 15,000,000 (\$1471)	21	5.4 %
Employment:		-	-
	Student	144	36.9 %
	Self-employed	71	18.2 %
	Public Sector Worker	82	21 %
	Private Sector Worker	70	17.9 %
	Unemployed	23	5.9%
Social Class:		-	-
	Lower Class	34	8.7 %
	Lower Middle	57	14.6 %
	Middle	137	35.1 %
	Upper-middle	95	24.4 %
	Upper class	67	17.2 %

The questionnaire was distributed in person, and respondents were asked questions, and their responses were recorded on Google. A total of 390 valid surveys were gathered. Table 1 represents demographic information. As seen in Table 1, 232 male respondents accounting for 59.5 % and 158 female respondents accounting for 40.5 % respondents. According to the age of the respondents, the age group 18–24 has 82 (21.0 %), while the age group 25–34 has the greatest number of respondents, resulting in a total of 210 respondents (53.8%). The age bracket of 35-44 years old had 59 respondents (15.1%), followed by the age category of 45-54 years old, which had 20 respondents (5.1%). Age 55-64 provided 9 respondents (2.3 %), and those 65 and older provided 10 respondents (2.6%) of the total number of respondents. In the survey, I further recorded the respondents' educational backgrounds, and the table below provides a clear picture of the outcomes. The education variable was divided into 3 categories, with 45 respondents (11.5%) accounting for those respondents that are either current high school students or that's their highest school level; 75 respondents (19.2%) are graduates of technical vocational institute students; 184 respondents (47.2%) are bachelor's degree students or graduates; and the remaining 86 respondents (22.1%) account for those who have attained a postgraduate degree or are postgraduate students.

Measures

This study used measurement scales that had previously been verified (Armitage & Conner, 1999; Chan, 2001; Aquino & Reed's, 2002; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Wallace et al., 2014; Ruvio, Shoham, & Breni, 2008; and Minton, 2015). All of the scales, with the exception of social class, were evaluated on a seven-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Social class (Dietze and Knowles, 2016) was measured on a five-point scale, from lower to upper class. Each construct's specific measurement guidelines and its sources are listed in Appendix A.

Data analysis and results

This research employed SPSS 20.0 and Hayes (2013) PROCESS SPSS Macro 4.0 to perform the data analysis. The data analysis section is divided into two sections. First, we checked the survey's reliability and validity. Second, the hypothesis was evaluated using linear regression modeling. Exploratory Factor Analysis is the primary approach used in measurement purification (EFA). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) will be used to discover the dimensions of the components using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 25.

Reliability and validity analysis

The procedure for determining whether the instruments can accurately reflect the perceived status of the investigated respondents for the studied variables necessitates the assessment of reliability and validity. The scales used in this study have been used in a number of academic research studies. With cross-cultural variances and diversities, however, all scales were sorely tested based on research-based precautions. SPSS Version 25 was used to test the validity and reliability of the instruments. The Cronbach α coefficient was used in this study to measure the consistency level of the scales. The test results are shown below in Table 2, showing the Cronbach (α) values of green purchases. Intention, moral identity (internalization), moral identity (symbolization), self-enhancement, self-verification, the need for uniqueness, and religiosity involved in the study have all now exceeded the critical value of 0.7, and the combination reliability CR has all exceeded the critical value of 0.8. Average Variance Extract (AVE) values exceed the critical value of 0.5. The results show that the scales used in this study all have good reliability. The original data for the moral identity (internalization) variable, on the other hand, were below the critical value for AVE and CR. Following the identification and exploration of the causes behind that outcome, and as a rule of thumb for screening and

purifying constructs in confirmatory factor analysis supported by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), they explained that when a model fails to attain a satisfactory fit, the preferable strategy is to delete faulty indicators. In doing so, we removed items with low factor loadings as they were deemed unsatisfactory. The scale's items 3 and 4 ("*I would be ashamed to be a person who had these characteristics. (Internalization/Reverse coded)*" And "*Having these characteristics is not really important to me*" (*internalization/reverse coding*) were removed to assist purifying the remaining items, and the final results provided the recognized critical value for both CR and AVE. In short, the total factor loading shows that the factor structure of the research model is correct. Lastly, based on Fornell and Larcker's measure of average variance extracted (AVE), this study evaluates the discriminant validity of the measurement (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) by comparing the AVE of each construct to its squared correlations with all other constructs, and the results in Table 3 show the mean values, standard deviations, squares, and correlations. The AVE compares the amount of variance captured by the construct through its items to the amount of variance caused by measurement error. According to the general principle, if the AVE of a construct is greater than 0.5, the construct has convergent validity. In this research, the AVEs of all constructs are greater than 0.5, as shown in Table 3 It indicates that the measurement's convergent validity is acceptable. Based on the results, the study's reliability and validity are accepted.

Table 2. Reliability Test of Scales

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
Green purchase Intention	7	0.906	0.932	0.661
Moral Identity internalization	3	0.770	0.880	0.710
Moral Identity Symbolization	5	0.860	0.884	0.605
Self-enhancement	4	0.893	0.926	0.758
Self-verification	4	0.935	0.954	0.838
uniqueness	4	0.896	0.928	0.763
Religiosity	4	0.838	0.905	0.707

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables	Mean	SD	Green purchase Intention	Moral Identity (INT)	Moral Identity (SYM)	Self-enhancement	Self-verification	uniqueness	Religiosity
Green purchase Intention	6.01	1.079	0.813						
Moral Identity (INT)	5.97	1.141	.578**	0.842					
Moral Identity (SYM)	5.87	1.369	.644**	.589**	0.778				
Self-enhancement	5.8	1.471	.577**	.589**	.860**	0.871			
Self-verification	5.96	1.228	.647**	.629**	.732**	.758**	0.916		
uniqueness	6.66	0.741	.317**	.400**	.310**	.347**	.421**	0.873	
Religiosity	5.41	0.893	.235**	.121*	0.017	-0.022	.104*	.266**	0.841

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

SD = standard deviation

All bold figures are the square root of AVE

Hypothesis testing analysis

Results of direct effects of structural relationships

This study used IBM SPSS Version 25 to conduct hypothesis testing on the research variables based on the results of the correlation analysis and the reliability test above to examine the direct relationship between variables and test the hypotheses proposed in this study. We used bootstrapped confidence intervals (CI) to test the direct effects of hypothesized relationships (H1 and H2), and Table 4 shows the results. The findings of H1 indicated that moral identity internalization positively influences green purchase intention ($b = 0.597$, $t = 14.664$, [CI: 0.615, 0.806], $p < 0.001$). Thus, the results supported the hypothesis. The findings of H2 also indicated that moral identity symbolization positively and significantly influenced green purchase intention ($b = 0.578$, $t = 13.945$, [CI: 0.470, 0.624], $p < 0.001$). H2 was also supported.

Table 4. Results of direct effects

Paths	Standardized	T - statistics	Bias-corrected	Relationship
	Coefficient (β)		CI. 95%	
H1MII \rightarrow GPI	0.597***	14.664	[0.615, 0.806]	Supported
H2MIS \rightarrow GPI	0.578***	13.945	[0.470, 0.624]	Supported

*** $P < 0.001$; ** $P < 0.01$; * $P < 0.05$

Results of Indirect effects of structural relationships

The study will progress with the assessment of the hypotheses using the IBM SPSS program and SPSS PROCESS macro to further examine the indirect relationships between the variables within the research model. Hypotheses 3 and 4 propose the mediating effects of self-verification and self-enhancement, respectively, on the relationship between moral identity internalization and moral identity symbolization, respectively. Hypotheses 5 proposed the moderating effect of the need for uniqueness on the influence of moral identity internalization on green purchase intention through self-verification. Hypotheses 6 proposed the moderating effect of the need for uniqueness on the influence of moral identity symbolization on green purchase intention through self-enhancement.

Mediation effect of Self Verification

The mediation effect of self-verification on the relationship between moral identity internalization and green purchase intention was carried out using Hayes (2013) PROCESS SPSS macro 4.0 (Model 4) with 5000 bootstrapped samples and notably a 95% confidence interval (CI) level, and the detailed results are summarized in table 5. The overall model fit for the mediation effect of self-verification on moral identity internalization shows a P value to be significant ($p < 0.001$) R2 result of 0.184 and a standardized coefficient (moral identity internalization) of 0.429. The model that predicts the function of the DV (green purchase intention) on moral identity internalization and self-verification also resulted in a sig. value ($p < 0.001$) with a standardized coefficient ($b = 0.429$) for moral identity internalization and ($b = 0.393$ for self-verification. The interaction of green purchase intention on moral identity internalization and self-verification proved that there is a significant interaction between X and Y (internalization and green purchase intention), with both $P < 0.001$. The bootstrap range (BootLLCI = 0.129 and BootULCI = 0.286) shows that there is no zero figure between BootLLCI = 0.129 and BootULCI = 0.286 for the indirect effect of self-verification on moral identity internalization and the intention to buy green products. This is statistically significant and supports Hypothesis 3.

Table 5. Results of mediation of self-verification

	β	SE	Bootstrap 95% CI (BootLLCI - BootULCI)	Relationship
H3. Indirect effect	0.200	0.040	(0.129 - 0.287)	supported
Direct Effect	0.510	0.048	(0.415 - 0.605)	-
Total effect	0.711	0.048	(0.615 - 0.806)	-

Note: B=unstandardized regression, SE=standard error, CI=Confidence interval

Mediation effect of Self-Enhancement

The mediation effect of self-improvement on the relationship between moral identity symbolization and green purchase intention was carried out using Hayes (2013) PROCESS SPSS macro 4.0 (Model 4) with 5000 bootstrapped samples and with notably 95% confidence interval (CI) level, and the detailed results are summarized in table 6. The overall model fit for the mediator effect of self-enhancement on moral identity symbolization shows a P value to be significant at ($p < 0.001$) $R^2 = 0.347$, and a standardized coefficient ($b = 0.589$). The model that predicts the function of green purchase intention on moral identity symbolization and self-enhancement also show a significant value of $p < 0.000$ with a standardized coefficient $b = 0.303$ for moral identity symbolization and $b = 0.466$ for self-enhancement. The interaction of green purchase intention on symbolization and self-enhancement proved to be significant, while there is also a significant interaction between X and Y (moral identity symbolization and green purchase intention) ($p < 0.001$). Finally, there is no zero figure between the bootstrap ranges for the indirect effect on mediation of moral identity symbolization and green purchase intention through self-enhancement (BootLLCI 0.172 and BootULCI 0.362), indicating that this was statistically significant, and thus hypothesis 4 is supported.

Table 6. Results of mediation of self-enhancement

	β	SE	Bootstrap 95% CI (BootLLCI - BootULCI)	Relationship
H4. Indirect effect	0.260	0.048	(0.172 - 0.362)	supported
Direct Effect	0.287	0.043	(0.202 - 0.372)	-
Total effect	0.547	0.039	(0.470 - 0.624)	-

Note: B=unstandardized regression, SE=standard error, CI=Confidence interval

Moderating effects of Uniqueness on Moral Identity Internalization (MII) and Green Purchase Intention (GPI) through self-verification

To test the moderating effect of uniqueness on the indirect relationship between moral identity internalization and green purchase intention, the following tests were run using SPSS PROCESS Macro (Model 7) by Andrew Hayes (2013). To begin, the impact of moral identity internalization on self-verification is not significant ($b = 0.037$, $t = 0.484$, $p = 0.629$), and there is a zero between the LLCI and the ULCI (-0.114 - 0.188), with an R-square of 0.578. Next, the interaction effect (moral identity internalization * uniqueness) shows a non-significant impact on self-verification ($b = -0.029$, $t = -0.888$, $p = 0.375$). When uniqueness was tested against self-verification, results suggest a positive and significant impact ($b = 0.877$, $t = 18.878$, $p = 0.000$). The model summary of green purchase intention results shows that moral identity internalization has a positive and significant direct effect on green purchase intention ($b = 0.510$, $t = 10.590$, $p = 0.000$), with no zero in-between the LLCI and the ULCI (0.415 - 0.605). Also, results reveal that self-verification has a significant effect on green purchase intention ($b = 0.288$, $t = 9.70$, $p < 0.000$), whereas the indirect effect of moral identity internalization on green purchase intention through self-verification at lower level uniqueness ($b = 0.021$) and at high level uniqueness ($b = 0.002$) is not significant among all the levels. It also shows that the effect is stronger at the lower level and continuously decreases as the level increases (see Table 7). All this is done within the bootstraps CI of $p < .05$. Finally, to check the moderated mediation

effect of uniqueness on moral identity internalization and self-verification, the uniqueness construct is tested to see if it moderates the indirect effect. By doing so, the index of moderated mediation was assessed, and the output results show that uniqueness has an index effect of -0.008, SE = 0.012, and there was zero in between the LLCI and the ULCI (-0.036 to -0.013), showing that there is no moderated mediation of uniqueness on the indirect effect of moral identity internalization on green purchase intention through self-verification (see figure 3). In summary, thus, it was concluded that the indirect effect is not moderated by uniqueness. Hence, hypothesis 5 is not supported.

Table 7. Results of moderated mediation

Direct Relationships			Unstandardized Coefficient	T- value	
Moral Identity Internalization->Self Verification			0.037	0.484	
Self-Verification -> Green Purchase Intention			0.288	9.702	
Moral identity Internalization * Uniqueness -> Self-Verification			-0.029	-0.888	

Indirect Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect (SE)	CI (LOW/HIGH)	T-Value	Relationship
Moral Identity Internalization -> Self Verification-> Green Purchase Intention	0.510	0.011(0.027)	-0.041/0.065	0.407	-

Probing Moderated Indirect relationship	Effect	SE	CI (LOW/HIGH)	T-Statistics	
Low level Uniqueness	0.021	0.025	-0.024/0.074	0.840	-
High level Uniqueness	0.002	0.033	-0.041/0.066	0.060	-
H5. Index of moderated mediation	-0.008	0.012	-0.036/0.013	-0.666	Not supported

Moderating effects of Uniqueness on Moral Identity Symbolization (MIS) and Green Purchase Intention (GPI) through Self-Enhancement (SE)

To test the moderating effect on the indirect relationship between moral identity symbolization and green purchase intention through self-enhancement, using SPSS PROCESS Macro (Model 7) by Andrew Hayes, the results are summarized in Table 8. First, results show that there is a significant relationship between the two (2) variables (b = 0.283, T = 4.866, P = 0.000), and there was no zero between the LLCI and the ULCI (0.169 - 0.397). Following that, the interaction effect (moral identity symbolization * uniqueness) has no effect on self-enhancement (b = -0.028, T = 1.043, P = 0.297). When uniqueness was tested against self-enhancement, results suggest a positive and significant effect on the relationship (b = 0.673, T = 13.882, P = 0.000). The model summary of green purchase intention results show that moral identity symbolization has a significant direct effect on green purchase intention (b = 0.287, T = 6.659, P = 0.000; no zero in-between the LLCI and the ULCI [0.202 - 0.372]), as does self-enhancement (b = 0.367, T = 10.218; P 0.001). Whereas the indirect effect of moral identity symbolization on green purchase intention via self-enhancement is significant at both low level uniqueness (b = 0.091) and high level uniqueness (b = 0.15) across all three (3) levels. It also shows that the effect is stronger at the lower level and continuously decreases as the level increases. All of this is accomplished within the bootstraps CI of P.05. Finally, to check the moderated mediation effect of uniqueness on moral identity symbolization and self-enhancement, the construct of uniqueness is tested to show if it moderates the indirect effect. The index of moderated mediation was assessed as a result, and the output results show that uniqueness has a positive index effect of 0.010, SE = 0.013, but this is not significant because there is a zero between the LLCI and the ULCI (-0.011 - 0.43), indicating that there is no moderated mediation of uniqueness on the indirect effect of moral identity symbolization on green purchase intention.

through self-enhancement (see figure 5). In summary, thus, it was concluded that the indirect effect is not moderated by uniqueness. Hence, hypothesis 6 is not supported.

Table 8. Results of moderated mediation

Direct Relationships		Unstandardized Coefficient	T- value
Moral Identity Symbolization->Self - Enhancement		0.283	4.866
Self- Enhancement -> Green Purchase Intention		0.367	10.218
Moral identity Symbolization * Uniqueness -> Self-Enhancement		0.028	1.043

Indirect Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect (SE)	CI (LOW/HIGH)	T-Value	Relationship
Moral Identity Symbolization -> Self Enhancement-> Green Purchase Intention	0.287	0.104(0.029)	0.054/0.169	3.586	-
Probing Moderated Indirect relationship	Effect	SE	CI (LOW/HIGH)	T-Statistics	-
Low level Uniqueness	0.091	0.034	0.032/0.163	2.676	-
High level Uniqueness	0.115	0.032	0.061/0.187	3.594	-
H6. Index of moderated mediation	0.010	0.013	-0.011/0.043	0.769	Not supported

General Discussion Findings

The primary purpose of this research was to take a gander at the relationship between moral identity and consumers' intention to purchase green products in Sierra Leone. This paper evaluates the influence of moral identity (internalization and symbolization) on green purchase intention. Also, it does evaluate the mediating effect of self-verification on the relationship between moral identity internalization and green purchase intention. This study also evaluates the mediating effect of self-enhancement on the relationship between moral identity symbolization and green purchase intention. Lastly, it does evaluate the moderating effect of the need for uniqueness on the two relationships. The results of this study's research support those of earlier studies on green consumption. It helped prove that moral identity internalization and moral identity symbolization have a positive impact on consumers' intentions to make green purchases. particularly, as both directly affect consumers' intentions to make green purchases, confirming our first and second hypotheses (H1 and H2). This was thought to back up the findings of past researchers, who discovered that customers who reflect their moral and ethical identities are more likely to engage in moral behavior that demonstrates social responsiveness to others' needs (Kohlberg, 1969; Rest, 1980; Gilligan, 1982). This article advanced present knowledge and contributed to the study of how moral identity (internalization and symbolization) influences moral outcomes (green purchase intention). In summary, these findings are consistent with existing literature and research in the West, where customers' moral self-identity is a powerful motivator of their buying habits and guides their intentions for environmentally friendly products and services (Blasi, 1993; Aquino & Reed, 2002; Reed et al., 2007). This implies that in order for consumers to achieve a healthier environment, their morality, which includes green purchasing, will allow them to use more eco-friendly products in their daily lives as opposed to regular products. The findings of these studies now establish that the same is true for African (Sierra Leone) customers, and that this can be a powerful motivation for developing a purchase intention ad for green products, as has been done in the West. Secondly, a few customers want to boost their self-esteem, while others prefer peer review. It has been shown that the generated self-enhancement and self-verification cause consumers to pay attention to their own morality and promote green purchasing. This is consistent with the conclusion that how a person perceives themselves, as well as how external factors or activities influence their attention to environmental issues and

thus promote their consumption patterns, can influence their consumption patterns. Hence, our finding supports H3 and H4. However, since consumers' enthusiasm to stop environmental degradation is influenced by other factors, this study tested the moderating effects of the need for uniqueness and discovered that it has a negative moderating effect on Sierra Leoneans' green consumption, so hypotheses H5 and H6 were rejected.

Conclusion

This research was conducted to study the effect of moral identity on customer purchasing intention for green products in Sierra Leone. The studies looked especially at consumers' moral identity internalization, moral identity symbolization, self-verification, self-enhancement, and need for uniqueness as predictors of purchase intention for green products in general. The existing studies revealed a number of key areas that had either not previously been studied or had been studied in a limited capacity. There is a distinct paucity of studies that explore the purchasing behavior of consumers at the bottom of the pyramid. As a result, this study was carried out to fill this gap. Also, it does answer the research questions that were outlined at the initial stage of this research. As predicted, results show that moral identity internalization and moral identity symbolization both have a significant positive influence on green purchase intention. The study demonstrates that self-verification has a mediating effect on the relationship between moral identity internalization and green purchase intention. It also shows that self-enhancement has a mediating effect on the relationship between moral identity symbolization and green purchase intention. Lastly, the moderating role or effect of the need for uniqueness was not supported for any of the relationships within the model. Additionally, this research has advanced the literature on consumer moral identity and their purchasing behavior for green products, especially for consumers at the bottom of the pyramid. To sum up, this study gives a way to find out what consumers plan to do when it comes to buying green products. It also gives an example of how moral identity affects the decision to buy green products through self-verification and self-enhancement.

Theoretical Contributions

This research has tended to have some significant contributions. From a theoretical standpoint, the current study adds to the existing literature in the following ways. This paper extends the research on consumer morality into the field of green marketing using Moral Identity Theory, as the main purpose of this paper was to demonstrate the relationships between green purchase intentions and the two antecedents of moral identity (internalization and symbolization). Hardy and Carlo (2005) in their review of the related literature on moral identity noted that the concept holds great promise for advancing researchers' current understanding of moral functioning, but many fundamental questions remain unanswered. They also do believe that identity as a source of motivation for moral behavior and commitment has received little empirical attention, as evidence suggests that people who are deeply dedicated to moral causes have a sense of oneness between themselves and their moral goals (Colby & Damon, 1992) and use moral terms to describe themselves more frequently than others (Hart & Fegley, 1995; Reimer & Wade-Stein, 2004). As a result, this study contributes to answering some of those questions and does serve as a good predictor of green purchase intention. In response to the literature's mixed findings regarding moral identity and purchase intention for green products, this study also investigates the mediation effects of self-verification and self-enhancement, to see how **these influences** the likelihood that morally aware consumers will make purchase decisions in Sierra Leone. Our findings add to the literature on green marketing by demonstrating how to combine individual moral values in different national cultures to refine green marketing theories. This study tested the moderating role of the need for uniqueness, and results proved that it has no significant influence on the relationship between moral identity (internalization and symbolization) and green purchase intentions. So, this study gives green product marketers important information about how to design and structure their marketing strategies to reach their goals without being fooled by the idea that people who care most about being unique will drive or change their buying behavior.

Managerial Implications

This research has indispensable practical implications, and they are explained below. As the respondents in this survey are students, graduates (both employed and unemployed), and workers from both the public and private sectors, with an age bracket of 18 years and above. It is correct to assert that the surveyed population was from Freetown City for this study. This research will assist governments, stakeholders, and marketers in shedding light on how these customers' morality proved to be an important and influential component in predicting their purchasing intentions for green products. Hence, marketers should be able to take advantage of Sierra Leoneans' collective nature and willingness to conform to the norm's politeness, helpfulness, and giving attention to others' needs. As a result, consumers are more likely to accept the majority's view regarding the environmental effects of their purchasing behaviors. In summary, with the help of this research, practitioners in Sierra Leone may gain a clear image of how to market green products to their customers or potential customers, as their purchasing intentions have been examined using multiple variables. Multinational investors planning to commercialize green products in developing countries that include those at the bottom of the pyramid can also consider the conclusions of this study when formulating their marketing strategies. Inconsistent with the findings of Ramayah, Lee, & Mohamed (2010), this research confirms that self-enhancement is positively related to purchase intention, and it does suggest that consumers who desire social recognition and hedonism will tend to act environmentally responsible by making green purchase intentions. Our findings, however, are consistent with those of Follows and Jobber (2000). On a larger scale, this study is meant to help the government's efforts to protect the environment. Policies and actions must be taken into account when trying to figure out what drives people to buy green products. Finally, when consumers' need for uniqueness was examined to test its moderated mediation effects on the relationship within the model, results showed no moderation; this will help marketers understand that, while consumers want to be different within their ingroup, it does not influence purchasing behavior for green products in our sample. So, marketing campaigns that try to get people to buy green products wouldn't put a lot of emphasis on the need for being unique.

Limitations and directions for Future Research

This study, while providing a useful and intriguing insight into the technique for investigating consumer intentions for green product purchases and their behavior, is not without limitations. Below is a list of limitations found with this research, and significant research opportunities can also be identified within the constraints being addressed. To begin, the study focuses on a specific product category (convenient green products) when examining the morality, self-enhancement, self-verification, and need for uniqueness of the intention for green purchase in Sierra Leone; this suggests that findings cannot be easily generalized to all green products. Secondly, this research only used one moderator (need for uniqueness) to test its effects on the relationships within the model, and results show that its moderating effect is not supported in Sierra Leone. However, other moderators such as age, gender, price, and brand image could be introduced to test the study's model in the future. Lastly, this study can serve as a foundation for future cross-sectional research between two or more countries. Such research can help practitioners recognize cultural variations with clarity and great certainty, and it will also suggest distinct ways to achieve success in different geographical areas.

References

1. Adler, N. E., Boyce, T., Chesney, M. A., Cohen, S., Folkman, S., Kahn, R., & Syme, L. (1994). Socioeconomic status and health: The challenge of the gradient. *American Psychologist*, 49, 15–24.
2. Akehurst G, Afonso C and Goncalves HM (2012) Re-examining green purchase behavior and the green consumer profile: new evidences. *Management Decision* 50(5): 972–988.

3. American Marketing Association. (1948). Report of the definitions committee. *Journal of Marketing*, 13(2), 202-217.
4. Armitage, C.J., Conner, M.T., 1999. Distinguishing perceptions of control from self-efficacy: predicting consumption of a low-fat diet using the theory of planned behavior. *J. Appl. Social. Psychol.* 29 (1), 72–90.
5. Ball, A. Dwayne, & Tasaki, Lori H. (1992). The role and measurement of attachment in consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 2, 155–172.
6. Banaji M R, Prentice D A. The Self in Social Contexts[J]. *Annual Review of Psychology*,1994,45.
7. Baumeister RF. 1998. The self. See Gilbert et al. 1998, pp. 680–740
8. Blasi, A. (1984). Moral identity: Its role in moral functioning. *Morality, moral behavior, and moral development*, 128, 39.
9. Bourdieu, P. (1985). The social space and the genesis of groups. *Theory and Society*, 14, 723–744.
10. Burnkrant, R. E., & Cousineau, A. (1975). Informational and normative social influence in buyer behavior. *Journal of Consumer research*, 2(3), 206-215.
11. Carroll, B. A., & Ahuvia, A. C. (2006). Some antecedents and outcomes of brand love. *Marketing Letters*, 17(2), 79–89. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-006-4219-2>.
12. Chan, R. Y. (2001). Determinants of Chinese Consumers Green Purchase Behavior. *Psychology and Marketing*, 18(4), 389-413.
13. Chen, L. (2013). A study of green purchase intention comparing with collectivistic (Chinese) and individualistic (American) consumers in Shanghai, China. *Information Management and Business Review*, 5(7), 342-346.
14. Chen, T. B., & Chai, L. T. (2010). Attitude towards the environment and green products: Consumers' perspective. *Management science and engineering*, 4(2), 27-39.
15. Colby, A. 8: Damon, W. (1992). Some do care: Contemporary lives of moral commitment.
16. Cui, P., Mao, Y., Shen, Y., & Ma, J. (2021). Moral identity and subjective well-being: The mediating role of identity commitment quality. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(18), 9795.
17. De Jonge, J., Van Trijp, H., Goddard, E., & Frewer, L. (2008). Consumer confidence in the safety of food in Canada and the Netherlands: The validation of a generic framework. *Food Quality and Preference*, 19(5), 439-451.
18. de Moura, A. P., Cunha, L. M., Castro-Cunha, M., & Lima, R. C. (2012). A comparative evaluation of women's perceptions and importance of sustainability in fish consumption: An exploratory study among light consumers with different education levels. *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*.
19. Dietze, P., & Knowles, E. D. (2016). Social class and the motivational relevance of other human beings: Evidence from visual attention. *Psychological Science*, 27(11), 1517–1527.
20. Domhoff, G.W. (1998). *Who rules America*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing
21. Dubois, D., Rucker, D. D., & Galinsky, A. D. (2015). Social class, power, and selfishness: When and why upper and lower class individuals behave unethically. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 108(3), 436
22. Durif, F., Boivin, C., & Julien, C. (2010). In search of a green product definition. *Innovative Marketing*, 6(1), 25-33.
23. Escalas, J. E., & Bettman, J. R. (2003). You are what they eat: The influence of reference groups on consumers' connections to brands. *Journal of consumer psychology*, 13(3), 339-348.
24. Follows, S. B., & Jobber, D. (2000). Environmentally responsible purchase behavior: a test of a consumer model. *European journal of Marketing*.
25. Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of marketing research*, 18(1), 39-50.
26. Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a Different Voice* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA).
27. Gotowiec, S., & van Mastrigt, S. (2019). Having versus doing: The roles of moral identity internalization and symbolization for prosocial behaviors. *The Journal of social psychology*, 159(1), 75-91.
28. Hannah, S. T., Thompson, R. L., & Herbst, K. C. (2020). Moral identity complexity: Situated morality within and across work and social roles. *Journal of Management*, 46(5), 726-757.
29. Hardy, S. A., & Carlo, G. (2005). Identity as a source of moral motivation. *Human development*, 48(4), 232-256.
30. Hardy, S. A., & Carlo, G. (2005). Identity as a source of moral motivation. *Human development*, 48(4), 232-256.
31. Hart, D., & Fegley, S. (1995). Prosocial behavior and caring in adolescence: Relations to self-understanding and social judgment. *Child development*, 66(5), 1346-1359.
32. Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
33. Holt, Douglas B. (1998), "Does Cultural Capital Structure American Consumption?" *Journal of Consumer Research*, 25 (1), 1-25.

34. Horberg, E. J., Oveis, C., & Keltner, D. (2011). Emotions as moral amplifiers: An appraisal tendency approach to the influences of distinct emotions upon moral judgment. *Emotion Review*, 3, 237–244. doi: 10.1177/1754073911402384
35. Kleine, Robert E., III, Kleine, Susan S., & Kernan, Jerome B. (1993). Mundane consumption and the self: A social-identity perspective. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 2, 209–236.
36. Kohlberg, L., & Kramer, R. (1969). Continuities and discontinuities in childhood and adult moral development. *Human development*, 12(2), 93-120.
37. Kohn, M. L. (1969). *Class and conformity: A study in values*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey.
38. Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2016). *Principles of marketing* (16th ed.). Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson education
39. Kraus, M. W., Piff, P. K., & Keltner, D. (2011). Social class as culture: The convergence of resources and rank in the social realm. *Current directions in psychological science*, 20(4), 246-250.
40. Kraus, M. W., Piff, P. K., Mendoza-Denton, R., Rheinschmidt, M. L., & Keltner, D. (2012). Social class, solipsism, and contextualism: how the rich are different from the poor. *Psychological review*, 119(3), 546.
41. Link, B. G., Lennon, M. C., & Dohrenwend, B. P. (1993). Sociometric status and depression: The role of occupations involving direction, control, and planning. *American Journal of Sociology*, 98, 1351 – 1387.
42. Mancha, R. M., & Yoder, C. Y. (2015). Cultural antecedents of green behavioral intent: An environmental theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 43, 145–154.
43. Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1973). Manifesto of the Communist Party. In *Karl*
44. *Marx, The revolutions of 1848: Political writings* (Vol. 1, pp. 62–98). Harmondsworth, United Kingdom: Penguin. (Original work published 1848)
45. Milman, O. (2019). Greta Thunberg condemns world leaders in emotional speech at UN. *The Guardian*, 24.
46. Nicole M. Stephens, Jessica S. Cameron, Sarah S. M. Townsend. Lower Social Class Does Not (Always) Mean Greater Interdependence[J]. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 2014, 45(7).
47. Niels J. Van Doesum, Joshua M. Tybur, Paul A.M. Van Lange. Class impressions: Higher social class elicits lower prosociality[J]. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 2017, 68
48. Nielsen, N. V. (2015). The Nielsen Global Survey of Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability. The Nielsen Company.
49. Oakes, J. M., & Rossi, P. H. (2003). The measurement of SES in health research: current practice and steps toward a new approach. *Social science & medicine*, 56(4), 769-784
50. Olson, J. G., McFerran, B., Morales, A. C., & Dahl, D. W. (2016). Wealth and welfare: Divergent moral reactions to ethical consumer choices. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 42(6), 879-896.
51. Peattie, K. (2010). Green consumption: behavior and norms. *Annual review of environment and resources*, 35, 195-228.
52. Piff, P. K., & Robinson, A. R. (2017). Social class and prosocial behavior: Current evidence, caveats, and questions. *Current opinion in psychology*, 18, 6-10.
53. Ramayah, T., Lee, J. W. C., & Mohamad, O. (2010). Green product purchase intention: Some insights from a developing country. *Resources, conservation and recycling*, 54(12), 1419-1427.
54. Reed, A., Aquino, K., & Levy, E. (2007). Moral identity and judgments of charitable behaviors. *Journal of marketing*, 71(1), 178-193.
55. Reimer, K., & Wade-Stein, D. (2004). Moral identity in adolescence: Self and other in semantic space. *Identity*, 4, 229–249.
56. Rest, J. R. (1980). Development in moral judgment research.
57. Richins, Marsha L. (1994). Valuing things: The public and private meanings of possessions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 21, 504–521.
58. Schlenker, B. R. (1980). Impression management. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole, 79-80.
59. Sinnappan P and Rahman AA (2011) Antecedents of green purchasing behavior among Malaysian consumers. *International Business Management* 5(3): 129–139.
60. Snibbe Alana Conner, Markus Hazel Rose. You can't always get what you want: educational attainment, agency, and choice.[J]. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 2005, 88(4).
61. Snyder, C. R., & Fromkin, H. L. (1977). Abnormality as a positive characteristic: The development and validation of a scale measuring need for uniqueness. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 86(5), 518.
62. Stephens, N. M., Cameron, J. S., & Townsend, S. S. (2014). Lower social class does not (always) mean greater interdependence: Women in poverty have fewer social resources than working-class women. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 45(7), 1061-1073.
63. Stephens, N. M., Fryberg, S. A., & Markus, H. R. (2011). When choice does not equal freedom: A sociocultural analysis of agency in working-class American contexts. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 2(1), 33-41.
64. Sun, Y., Liu, N., & Zhao, M. (2019). Factors and mechanisms affecting green consumption in China: A multilevel analysis. *Journal of cleaner production*, 209, 481-493.

65. Talaifar, S., & Swann, W. B. (2020). Self-verification theory. *Encyclopedia of personality and individual differences*, 4813-4821
66. Tezer, A., & Bodur, H. O. (2020). The green consumption effect: how using green products improves consumption experience. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 47(1), 25-39.
67. Trautmann, S. T., Van De Kuilen, G., & Zeckhauser, R. J. (2013). Social class and (un) ethical behavior: A framework, with evidence from a large population sample. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 8(5), 487-497.
68. Trautmann, Stefan T., Gijs van de Kuilen, and Richard J. Zeckhauser (2013), "Social Class and (Un)ethical Behavior: A Framework, with Evidence from a Large Population Sample," *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 8 (5), 487-97.
69. Tsay, Y. Y. (2009, August). The impacts of economic crisis on green consumption in Taiwan. In *PICMET'09-2009 Portland International Conference on Management of Engineering & Technology* (pp. 2367-2374). IEEE.
70. Van Doesum, Niels J., Joshua M. Tybur, and Paul A.M. Van Lange (2017), "Class Impressions: Higher Social Class Elicits Lower Prosociality," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 68 (1), 11-20
71. Wallace, E., Buil, I., & Chernatony, L. D. (2014). Consumer engagement with self- expressive brands: Brand love and WOM outcomes. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 23(1), 33-42. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-06-2013-0326>.

Appendix.

Measurement scale

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
Green purchase Intention Measurement for Green purchase intention were adopted from (Armitage & Conner, 1999 and Chan, 2001)	1. I intend to buy green products 2. I plan to purchase green products 3. I will purchase green products in my next purchase 4. I prefer to buy a green product even if its price is 5% higher than a common one 5. I intend to buy green product because of my environmental concern 6. I expect to purchase green product in the future because of its environmental benefits 7. Overall, I am glad to purchase green product because it is environmentally friendly
Moral Identity internalization Aquino and Reed's (2002) Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale and Instructions	1. It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics. (Internalization) 2. Being someone who has these characteristics is an important part of who I am. (Internalization) 3. I would be ashamed to be a person who had these characteristics. (Internalization/Reverse coded) 4. Having these characteristics is not really important to me. (Internalization/Reverse coded) 5. I strongly desire to have these characteristics. (Internalization)
Moral Identity Symbolization Aquino and Reed's (2002) Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale and Instructions	1. I often wear clothes that identify me as having these characteristics. (Symbolization) 2. The types of things I do in my spare time (e.g., hobbies) clearly identify me as having these characteristics. (Symbolization) 3. The kinds of books and magazines that I read identify me as having these characteristics. (Symbolization) 4. The fact that I have these characteristics is communicated to others by my membership in certain organization. (Symbolization) 5. I am actively involved in activities that communicate to others that I have these characteristics. (Symbolization)
Self-enhancement Self-enhancement Adapted from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) and Wallace et al. (2014)	1. Buying Green product contributes to my image 2. Buying Green product" adds to the social "role" I play 3. Buying Green product has a positive impact on what others think of me. 4. Buying Green product improves the way society views me.

Self-verification Self-verification Adapted from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) and Wallace et al. (2014)	1. Buying green product symbolizes the kind of person I really am inside 2. Buying Green product reflects my personality 3. Buying Green product is an extension of my inner self 4. Buying Green product mirrors the real me
Uniqueness Consumer Need for Uniqueness (Ruvio, Shoham, & Brenčič,2008).	1. I often combine possessions in such a way that I create a personal image that cannot be duplicated 2. I often try to find a more interesting version of run-of-the-mill products because I enjoy being original 3. I actively seek to develop my personal uniqueness by buying special products or brands 4. Having an eye for products that are interesting and unusual assists me in establishing a distinctive image
Religiosity (Minton, 2015)	1. I believe in God 2. I have no doubts that God lives and is real 3. There is life after death 4. The scripture for my religious affiliation is the word of God

Cite this article:

Mahmoud Sulaiman Sesay & Xiaoling Guo (2022). How does consumer moral identity influence green consumption through self-enhancement/self-verification? An empirical investigation in Sierra Leone. *International Journal of Science and Business*, 16(1), 211-231. doi: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7061776>

Retrieved from <http://ijsab.com/wp-content/uploads/984.pdf>

Published by

