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Unlocking the Green Customer: A Conditional Process Model of How Image and Reputation Foster Citizenship Behaviors in Tourism

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ABSTRACT: Tourism organizations increasingly ask visitors to do more than purchase a service. They invite guests to conserve water, sort waste, respect local ecosystems, help other visitors, provide constructive environmental feedback, recommend responsible providers, and tolerate modest inconveniences associated with greener operations. These acts can be understood as green customer citizenship behaviors: voluntary, extra-role contributions that support the environmental and service goals of a tourism brand. Yet the route from a provider's green positioning to such behavior remains insufficiently specified. This conceptual research article develops a conditional process model in which green tourism brand image shapes green customer citizenship behavior directly and indirectly through green tourism brand reputation, while green self-identity strengthens the reputation-to-behavior link. The model separates image, a relatively immediate set of associations, from reputation, a more cumulative and socially validated judgment of credibility and consistency. Drawing on signaling theory, social exchange theory, and identity-based reasoning, the article argues that image makes an environmental promise visible, reputation makes that promise believable, and green self-identity determines how strongly credible environmental standing is converted into voluntary customer action. Six hypotheses are developed, followed by a transparent empirical protocol based on temporally separated measurement, confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling, and a formal test of moderated mediation. The article also refines the domain of green citizenship behavior in tourism by distinguishing advocacy, feedback, helping, stewardship participation, and constructive tolerance from required compliance and private household behavior. The resulting framework provides a theoretically economical explanation of when green branding becomes shared environmental action rather than favorable perception alone.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism depends partly on infrastructure, regulation, technology, and organizational investment. It also depends on what visitors do in moments that no employee can fully monitor. A guest decides whether to report a leaking tap, explain a recycling system to another traveler, accept a linen-reuse schedule, join a habitat-restoration activity, post a balanced review of a hotel's environmental program, or recommend a responsible tour operator. None of these actions is equivalent to buying a room, entering an attraction, or following a safety rule. They are voluntary contributions that extend beyond the minimum role required of the customer. When directed toward the environmental aims of a tourism provider or destination, they represent a form of green customer citizenship behavior.

Research on customer citizenship has established that customers may provide feedback, advocate for a service organization, help other customers, and show tolerance during service difficulties (Bettencourt, 1997; Groth, 2005; Yi & Gong, 2013). Tourism studies have likewise linked citizenship behavior to service quality, emotional experience, brand relationships, destination responsibility, engagement, and reputation (Liu et al., 2021; Rather et al., 2023; Tang et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2022). In green hospitality, environmentally sustainable practices and green hotel image have been associated with customers' extra-role contributions (Abdou et al., 2022; Thai & Nguyen, 2022; Wang et al., 2024). These findings are valuable, but the conceptual sequence connecting a green image to citizenship behavior remains blurred. Image and reputation are frequently placed close together in explanatory models, and sometimes used almost interchangeably, even though they describe different judgments and operate over different time horizons.

That distinction matters. A tourism brand can acquire a green image quickly through visual identity, sustainability messages, eco-design, staff communication, and salient practices. Reputation is harder to obtain. It develops as audiences compare the brand's claims with repeated performance, independent information, public discussion, and remembered conduct. Image can be vivid without being trusted. Reputation is slower, more comparative, and more dependent on evidence that survives scrutiny. Treating the two as synonyms conceals a practical problem at the center of sustainable tourism marketing: favorable environmental associations do not necessarily become a durable belief that the organization deserves support.

A second problem concerns customer heterogeneity. The same reputable environmental performance will not have equal motivational force for every visitor. For some customers, acting in an environmentally responsible way is part of who they believe they are. For others, environmental concern is positive but peripheral, or competes with convenience, price, comfort, and the desire to suspend everyday obligations while traveling. Research on pro-environmental self-identity shows that environmentally relevant choices become more consistent when ecological action is incorporated into the self-concept (van der Werff et al., 2013; Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010). Green self-identity should therefore influence whether a credible tourism reputation remains an external evaluation or becomes a reason for personal contribution.

This article addresses both problems through a conditional process model. Green tourism brand image is proposed as the initiating perception, green tourism brand reputation as the mediating credibility mechanism, green self-identity as the moderator of the reputation-to-behavior path, and green customer citizenship behavior in tourism as the outcome. The model integrates signaling theory, social exchange theory, and identity-based reasoning. In plain terms, image makes a promise noticeable, reputation makes it credible, and identity makes acting on that credible promise personally meaningful.

2. GREEN CUSTOMER CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR IN TOURISM

2.1 From customer participation to citizenship

The service literature separates customer participation from customer citizenship. Participation refers to in-role contributions required for successful service delivery, such as providing accurate booking information, observing safety instructions, or placing waste in a clearly designated bin when the service contract or site rules require it. Citizenship refers to discretionary conduct that is not essential to completing the transaction but benefits the provider, employees, other customers, or the wider service system (Bettencourt, 1997; Groth, 2005). Yi and Gong (2013) clarified this distinction in their scale of customer value co-creation behavior, identifying feedback, advocacy, helping, and tolerance as core citizenship dimensions. A systematic review later confirmed both the strategic importance of the construct and the need for clearer domain boundaries across settings (Mitrega et al., 2022).

This article defines green customer citizenship behavior in tourism (GCCB-T) as voluntary customer behavior, beyond the minimum requirements of service consumption, that supports the environmental effectiveness, credibility, or collective functioning of a tourism organization, destination, or visitor community. The behavior must be discretionary, directed toward a tourism-related context, and plausibly beneficial to environmental performance or environmentally responsible service delivery. This definition prevents the construct from absorbing every green action performed during travel.

2.2 Dimensions of GCCB-T

Five dimensions capture the construct without turning it into an unlimited list. Green advocacy includes recommending a demonstrably responsible provider, sharing accurate information about its environmental practices, and defending credible initiatives when discussion is distorted. Green feedback includes reporting waste, suggesting feasible improvements, or providing specific information that helps the organization correct an environmental problem. Green helping involves assisting

other customers with environmental procedures or norms, provided that such assistance is respectful rather than policing. Stewardship participation includes voluntarily joining provider-facilitated activities such as clean-ups, conservation briefings, biodiversity monitoring, or low-impact visitor programs. Constructive tolerance refers to reasonable patience with minor inconvenience caused by authentic green practices, such as a short delay while refill systems are restored, but not acceptance of poor service, unsafe conditions, or environmental claims used to excuse cost cutting.

Table 1. Dimensions and boundaries of green customer citizenship behavior in tourism

Dimension	Working definition	Tourism examples	Boundary or caution
Green advocacy	Voluntary and truthful endorsement of a credible environmental provider.	Recommend a verified eco-hotel; share an accurate account of a conservation program.	Not paid promotion, incentivized testimony, or uncritical praise.
Green feedback	Constructive information that helps improve environmental performance.	Report a leak; identify confusing waste signage; suggest a feasible refill point.	Not a generic complaint unrelated to environmental or service improvement.
Green helping	Respectful assistance that enables other visitors to use green systems.	Explain a refill station, recycling process, or low-impact visitor route.	Should not become intrusive peer policing or public shaming.
Stewardship participation	Optional action that contributes directly to a provider- or destination-linked environmental activity.	Join a clean-up, conservation briefing, biodiversity count, or habitat-restoration activity.	Must be meaningful, safe, voluntary, and transparent about outcomes.
Constructive tolerance	Reasonable patience with minor inconvenience caused by authentic environmental practices.	Accept a brief refill delay or an explained linen schedule.	Does not require accepting unsafe, inaccessible, deceptive, or plainly poor service.

Several exclusions are essential. First, purchase intention and revisit intention are not citizenship behaviors; they are marketplace responses. Second, complying with mandatory rules is not citizenship because it is not extra-role. Third, private environmental behavior performed independently of the tourism provider, such as using a reusable bottle brought from home, is not automatically customer citizenship. It enters the construct only when it supports the focal tourism system, for example by participating in a provider's refill network and helping others use it. Fourth, positive word of mouth is citizenship only when it is voluntary, truthful, and directed toward supporting the service or environmental mission. Paid promotion and incentivized testimonials require separate treatment.

2.3 Citizenship as shared environmental capacity

The environmental value of citizenship lies in distributed capacity. Tourism organizations cannot see every source of waste, interpret every visitor-to-visitor interaction, or provide individualized assistance at all times. Customers can extend the sensing, communication, and social reach of the organization. Research has shown that tourism resource uniqueness and service quality can stimulate citizenship through emotion (Liu et al., 2021), while brand relationship quality and commitment can translate destination experience into tourist citizenship (Tang et al., 2023). Green hotel studies similarly indicate that sustainable practices can prompt extra-role behaviors through mechanisms such as perceived value and psychological safety (Abdou et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2024).

However, the phrase shared capacity should not become an excuse for managerial withdrawal. Customers are not unpaid environmental employees. Citizenship is most defensible when the organization has already invested in effective systems, communicates honestly, responds visibly to feedback, and creates opportunities for contribution without coercion. The model developed here therefore begins with organizational meaning and credibility, not with pressure on the customer.

3. GREEN TOURISM BRAND IMAGE AND GREEN TOURISM BRAND REPUTATION

3.1 Green tourism brand image

Destination image research describes image as a configuration of cognitive and affective perceptions formed through information sources and personal characteristics (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). In services, image can guide behavior because customers cannot fully evaluate an intangible offering before consumption. Green brand research narrows this idea to associations connected with environmental commitments and concerns (Chen, 2010). In tourism, such associations may arise from low-impact design, renewable energy, local sourcing, biodiversity protection, waste systems, transport options, employee explanations, certification marks, websites, photographs, and stories told by other visitors. Hotel research demonstrates that cognitive, affective, and overall green image can influence behavioral intentions (Lee et al., 2010), while experimental work shows that image can alter responses to green tourism appeals (Line et al., 2018).

Green tourism brand image is defined here as the customer's current set of cognitive and affective associations linking a focal tourism brand with environmental responsibility. It is current because it can change relatively quickly. It is associative because it reflects what comes to mind and how the customer feels, not a fully audited judgment of performance. A brand can therefore possess a favorable image before the customer has accumulated enough evidence to assess its long-term reliability.

3.2 Green tourism brand reputation

Reputation is an accumulated evaluation of an organization's standing relative to expectations and alternatives. In service research, image and reputation are related but distinct influences on customer retention (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2001). Customer-based reputation includes judgments of reliability, social and environmental responsibility, customer orientation, and the quality of the organization as an employer and service provider (Walsh & Beatty, 2007). Tourism research similarly treats destination reputation as a socially informed assessment shaped by cognitive and affective evaluations, familiarity, and repeated information (Marinao Artigas et al., 2015). Reputation can influence attachment and behavioral outcomes because it reduces uncertainty about whether the destination or provider will continue to perform as expected (Su et al., 2018).

Green tourism brand reputation is defined here as the customer's cumulative, socially validated judgment that a tourism brand is consistently credible and comparatively responsible in its environmental conduct. Three elements distinguish it from image. The first is temporal accumulation. Reputation is based on conduct and information observed across occasions, not only on the present impression. The second is social validation. Reviews, certifications, media coverage, community relationships, employee conduct, and third-party assessments contribute to reputation. The third is comparative credibility. Reputation implies that the brand is judged against competitors, norms, and prior promises.

These distinctions mean that image can precede reputation. A visitor may first encounter an appealing green identity, then test it against the service experience, external information, and evidence of consistency. When the signals cohere, image is consolidated into reputation. When they conflict, the image may remain a promotional surface or become a source of suspicion. Research on greenwashing shows why this transition cannot be assumed: exaggerated or ambiguous environmental claims increase confusion, perceived risk, and distrust (Chen & Chang, 2013; de Freitas Netto et al., 2020; Nyilasy et al., 2014).

3.3 Why image and reputation should not be collapsed

Image and reputation should therefore be understood as connected stages of meaning. Image answers, "What environmental associations does this brand evoke for me now?" Reputation answers, "On the basis of accumulated and socially supported evidence, how credible and dependable is this brand's environmental standing?" Image is more sensitive to the latest campaign and encounter. Reputation is more resistant to change, although a serious failure can damage it quickly. Image can be designed directly; reputation can only be influenced indirectly through sustained performance and credible communication.

Table 2. Conceptual distinction between green tourism brand image and green tourism brand reputation

Basis of comparison	Green tourism brand image	Green tourism brand reputation
Core meaning	Current cognitive and affective associations linked to environmental responsibility.	Cumulative, socially validated judgment of consistent environmental credibility.
Temporal character	Relatively immediate and responsive to recent messages or encounters.	Built over time, more durable, but vulnerable to serious contradiction.
Primary evidence	Visual identity, communications, visible practices, staff explanations, and salient experiences.	Repeated performance, independent reviews, certifications, community conduct, and comparison with alternatives.
Managerial control	Can be shaped comparatively directly through design and communication.	Can only be influenced indirectly through sustained conduct and credible reporting.
Customer question	“What environmental associations does this brand evoke now?”	“Does accumulated evidence show that this brand deserves confidence and support?”
Main vulnerability	Attractive symbolism without substantive evidence.	Damage from inconsistency, greenwashing, or failure to honor prior commitments.

This temporal distinction also clarifies the proposed mediation. Green image is not expected to cause citizenship simply because it looks attractive. It should foster citizenship partly because a coherent image becomes evidence for a favorable reputation. Reputation then reduces the risk that the customer's extra effort will support an unworthy or opportunistic organization. The mediating mechanism is therefore credibility, not cosmetic appeal.

4. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND CONDITIONAL PROCESS MODEL

4.1 Signaling theory

Tourism customers face information asymmetry. Environmental quality is difficult to inspect, outcomes may occur far from the visitor, and many claims concern processes the customer cannot observe. Signaling theory explains how observable cues convey otherwise hidden qualities when senders and receivers possess unequal information (Connelly et al., 2011). A green image comprises a bundle of signals: language, design, certification, staff behavior, visible practices, and public commitments. Signals are persuasive when they are coherent, costly to imitate, and supported by evidence. Reputation records how those signals have performed over time. In the proposed model, image initiates an inference and reputation stabilizes it.

4.2 Social exchange theory

Customer citizenship is a discretionary return rather than a purchased output. Social exchange theory holds that parties often reciprocate valued, trustworthy treatment with contributions not fully specified in a formal contract (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). When a tourism provider demonstrates credible environmental care, customers may interpret the relationship as worthy of support. Feedback, advocacy, helping, and stewardship become ways of reciprocating value and sustaining a shared project. Reputation is central because reciprocity requires confidence that the partner is not exploiting the exchange. A favorable image without credibility may attract attention, but it provides a weak basis for voluntary effort.

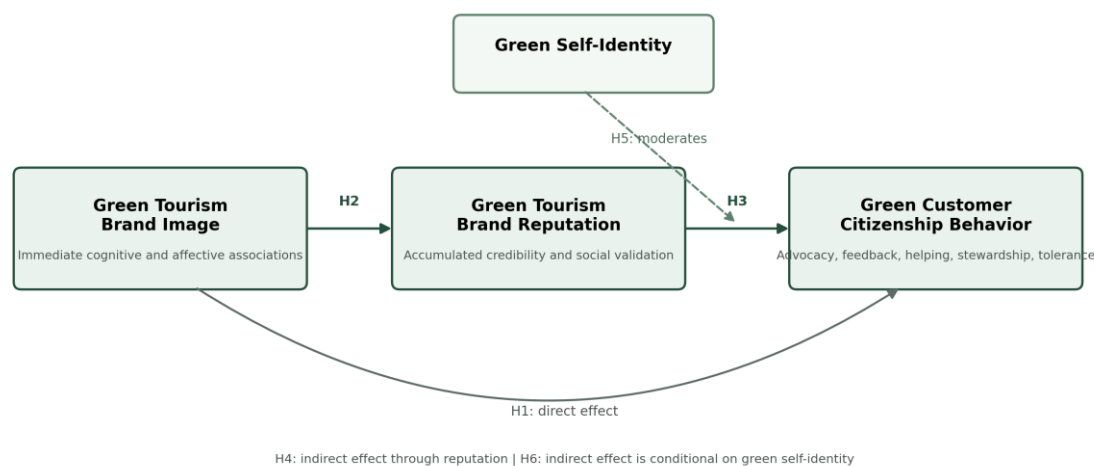
4.3 Green self-identity

Identity-based reasoning explains why credible reputation will not produce identical behavior across customers. Green self-identity refers to the extent to which a person sees environmentally responsible action as part of who they are. Studies show that pro-environmental self-identity is associated with more consistent environmental preferences, intentions, and behavior

(van der Werff et al., 2013; Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010). Earlier work on identification with green consumerism likewise demonstrates that self-definition adds explanatory force beyond general attitudes (Sparks & Shepherd, 1992).

A reputable green tourism brand offers identity-relevant customers an opportunity for self-expression and identity maintenance. Helping the brand, offering environmental feedback, or joining a stewardship activity allows the customer to act in accordance with a valued self-standard. For customers with weak green self-identity, the same reputation may still generate respect, but it is less likely to create a personal obligation to contribute. Green self-identity is therefore positioned as a moderator of the reputation-to-citizenship path rather than merely another antecedent.

Figure 1. Proposed conditional process model



Note. GCCB-T = green customer citizenship behavior in tourism. Green self-identity moderates the second stage of the indirect effect.

5. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Green image and green customer citizenship behavior

A favorable green image can make environmentally supportive behavior easier to understand and more socially meaningful. When a hotel, attraction, destination, or tour operator is associated with credible-looking environmental concern, customers can interpret voluntary action as congruent with the service experience rather than as an isolated sacrifice. Image also provides a target for advocacy: customers cannot recommend a green provider unless they can identify what makes it environmentally distinctive. Research in tourism shows that destination image influences post-visit intentions (Chen & Tsai, 2007), and green hotel image can shape environmentally relevant behavioral responses (Lee et al., 2010; Line et al., 2018). Studies of green hotels further suggest that image can help translate sustainable practices into customer citizenship (Thai & Nguyen, 2022).

H1. Green tourism brand image is positively associated with green customer citizenship behavior in tourism.

5.2 Green image and green reputation

Destination reputation research indicates that cognitive and affective evaluations contribute to reputation, often through familiarity (Marinao Artigas et al., 2015). Corporate service research likewise shows that image and reputation are related but not identical customer judgments (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2001). The proposed causal direction is from image to reputation because customers commonly encounter associations before they possess enough evidence for an accumulated judgment. This direction is not irreversible; an established reputation also shapes future image. For a single post-visit model, however, image is the more immediate perception and reputation the more sedimented assessment.

H2. Green tourism brand image is positively associated with green tourism brand reputation.

5.3 Green reputation and green customer citizenship behavior

Reputation can stimulate citizenship through at least three routes. First, it supports reciprocity: customers return credible environmental value with constructive extra-role behavior. Second, it supports efficacy: customers believe their contribution will connect with functioning systems rather than disappear into symbolic gestures. Third, it supports social legitimacy: advocacy

and helping are safer when others recognize the brand as responsible. Tourism evidence links destination reputation with engagement and citizenship behavior (Rather et al., 2023), and destination responsibility can affect citizenship through reputation and identification (Zhang et al., 2022). Green hotel practices also generate citizenship when customers perceive meaningful value and psychological safety (Abdou et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2024), both of which are easier to sustain under a credible reputation.

H3. Green tourism brand reputation is positively associated with green customer citizenship behavior in tourism.

5.4 The mediating role of green reputation

The central mediation proposition is that green image becomes behaviorally consequential when it is converted into a credible reputation. Image gives environmental meaning to the brand, but reputation tells the customer whether that meaning is dependable. In signaling terms, reputation summarizes the history and validation of the signal. In social exchange terms, it identifies the organization as a trustworthy partner. The indirect path therefore explains why two brands with similarly attractive green imagery may receive different levels of customer support: one has accumulated evidence behind the promise, while the other has not.

H4. Green tourism brand reputation mediates the positive relationship between green tourism brand image and green customer citizenship behavior in tourism.

5.5 The moderating role of green self-identity

A strong reputation creates an opportunity, not a uniform response. Green self-identity determines how closely that opportunity is tied to the customer's self-concept. Individuals with strong green self-identity seek behavioral consistency across settings and are more likely to interpret environmental action as self-expressive (van der Werff et al., 2013; Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010). A reputable tourism brand gives them a legitimate platform on which to enact that identity. Citizenship behavior can then serve two aims at once: supporting the tourism system and maintaining a coherent sense of self.

A critical qualification is needed. Strong green identity can also increase scrutiny. Environmentally committed customers may react more negatively than others when claims are inconsistent or vague. The present hypothesis concerns a favorable reputation, not mere promotional image. Under conditions of credible reputation, identity is expected to amplify citizenship; under suspected greenwashing, the same identity may amplify criticism or boycott. That asymmetry is a valuable extension for future research.

H5. Green self-identity positively moderates the relationship between green tourism brand reputation and green customer citizenship behavior, such that the relationship is stronger when green self-identity is high.

5.6 Conditional indirect effect

Combining the mediation and moderation arguments yields a conditional indirect effect. Green image should foster reputation across customers, but the behavioral value of that reputation should depend on identity. At high levels of green self-identity, a favorable image that matures into credible reputation becomes a powerful invitation to self-consistent action. At low levels, the same reputational gain may remain primarily evaluative.

H6. The indirect effect of green tourism brand image on green customer citizenship behavior through green tourism brand reputation is stronger at higher levels of green self-identity.

Table 3. Hypotheses and their roles in the conditional process model

Hypothesis	Expected relationship	Analytical role
H1	Green tourism brand image is positively associated with GCCB-T.	Direct effect of image on citizenship.
H2	Green tourism brand image is positively associated with green tourism brand reputation.	First stage of the mediation process.

Hypothesis	Expected relationship	Analytical role
H3	Green tourism brand reputation is positively associated with GCCB-T.	Second stage and credibility-to-action path.
H4	Green tourism brand reputation mediates the positive image-to-citizenship relationship.	Indirect effect through accumulated credibility.
H5	Green self-identity strengthens the positive reputation-to-citizenship relationship.	Second-stage moderation.
H6	The indirect effect of image on citizenship through reputation is stronger when green self-identity is higher.	Conditional indirect effect, tested through the index of moderated mediation.

6. PROPOSED EMPIRICAL DESIGN

6.1 Research setting and level of analysis

The model can be tested in hotels, attractions, tour operators, transport services, or destinations, but a single study should not mix these levels indiscriminately. A hotel's image refers to one service organization, whereas a destination reputation aggregates government, businesses, residents, infrastructure, and media. Combining them in one measure creates ambiguity about who receives the customer's citizenship. The initial empirical test should therefore select one focal level. Green-positioned hotels provide a practical setting because customers encounter visible practices, can identify a specific beneficiary, and have opportunities for feedback, helping, advocacy, and constructive tolerance. A destination-level replication could then assess generalizability.

Participants should be recent customers who have completed a stay or visit and were exposed to at least one environmental practice. Screening should verify actual experience rather than asking respondents to imagine a generic green brand. The sample should include variation in perceived image and reputation; recruiting only from certified flagship properties may restrict the range and inflate favorable responses. Sample size should be determined through an a priori Monte Carlo power analysis based on the smallest focal interaction or indirect effect, not through a mechanical rule of cases per item.

6.2 Temporally separated data collection

A three-wave design would reduce same-occasion consistency bias and better match the proposed sequence. At Time 1, shortly after checkout, participants would report green tourism brand image, green self-identity, prior familiarity, and theoretically justified controls. At Time 2, approximately two weeks later, they would assess green reputation after having had time to integrate the experience with external information and memory. At Time 3, they would report citizenship behaviors performed since the visit, such as submitting feedback, sharing accurate recommendations, helping others, or joining a provider-linked environmental activity.

6.3 Measurement

Green tourism brand image can be adapted from green brand and green hotel image scales (Chen, 2010; Lee et al., 2010), with cognitive items covering perceived environmental commitment and competence and affective items covering the feeling that the brand is caring and responsible. Green reputation can be adapted from customer-based corporate and destination reputation research (Marinao Artigas et al., 2015; Walsh & Beatty, 2007). Items should stress consistency, credibility, comparative standing, and social recognition, thereby avoiding overlap with immediate image.

GCCB-T should be measured as a second-order construct or as related first-order dimensions: advocacy, feedback, helping, stewardship participation, and constructive tolerance. Items can be adapted from Bettencourt (1997), Groth (2005), and Yi and Gong (2013), with environmental beneficiaries made explicit. The wording must preserve voluntariness. For example, "I offered useful suggestions about how this provider could reduce environmental impact" is citizenship; "I followed the provider's environmental rules" is compliance and should not be included. Green self-identity can be measured using established scales

that ask whether environmentally responsible action is an important part of the respondent's self-description (van der Werff et al., 2013; Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010).

Table 4. Measurement sources and design safeguards for the proposed empirical test

Construct or issue	Suggested basis	Measurement emphasis	Key safeguard
Green tourism brand image	Chen (2010); Lee et al. (2010)	Current cognitive and affective associations concerning environmental commitment and competence.	Avoid items that already ask about long-term credibility or public standing.
Green tourism brand reputation	Marinao Artigas et al. (2015); Walsh and Beatty (2007)	Consistency, credibility, comparative standing, and social validation.	Keep the referent at one level: hotel, attraction, operator, or destination.
GCCB-T	Bettencourt (1997); Groth (2005); Yi and Gong (2013)	Advocacy, feedback, helping, stewardship participation, and constructive tolerance.	Preserve voluntariness and exclude mandatory compliance, purchase, or private household behavior.
Green self-identity	van der Werff et al. (2013); Whitmarsh and O'Neill (2010)	Environmental action as part of the respondent's self-description.	Measure as a personal identity, not as a favorable evaluation of the focal brand.
Temporal ordering	Three-wave post-visit design	Image and identity at Time 1; reputation at Time 2; citizenship behavior at Time 3.	Use matching codes, retention procedures, and a prespecified attrition analysis.
Conditional process test	Hayes (2015); Preacher et al. (2007)	Second-stage moderated mediation and index of moderated mediation.	Use bootstrap intervals, report conditional effects, and plot the interaction.

6.4 Analytical strategy

The analysis should begin with a measurement model rather than moving directly to the conditional paths. Confirmatory factor analysis should test whether image and reputation remain empirically distinguishable and whether the five GCCB-T dimensions load on an interpretable higher-order factor. Reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, residuals, and global fit should be reported. The structural model should then estimate the image-to-citizenship, image-to-reputation, and reputation-to-citizenship paths before the interaction is introduced. Bias-corrected bootstrap intervals should be used for the indirect effect.

Moderated mediation can be tested through latent interaction structural equation modeling or a regression-based conditional process analysis corresponding to a second-stage moderated mediation model. The formal target is the index of moderated mediation described by Hayes (2015), with bootstrap inference rather than a sequence of separate significance tests. Conditional indirect effects should be reported at substantively interpretable levels of green self-identity, accompanied by a plot of the reputation-by-identity interaction. Preacher et al. (2007) provide additional guidance for distinguishing moderated mediation from simple moderation or mediation.

6.5 Bias control, invariance, and robustness

Procedural remedies are preferable to relying on one post hoc test for common method bias. Temporal separation, different scale anchors, confidential responses, source-separated behavior, and neutral wording can reduce consistency motives and evaluation apprehension (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Statistical robustness checks can compare self-reported and recorded behavior, exclude customers who noticed no green practices, and examine whether results hold when citizenship dimensions are modeled separately.

The design should be preregistered with hypotheses, exclusions, measurement decisions, and the planned conditional process test. Materials, anonymized data where permitted, and analysis code should be archived. Such transparency is especially important for a model that distinguishes closely related intangible constructs.

6.6 Ethical and contextual safeguards

Measuring green citizenship can unintentionally reward compliance theatre or shift responsibility from organizations to customers. Recruitment and survey instructions should state that participants are not being judged as ethical or unethical tourists. Measures should not treat refusal of optional housekeeping reduction, accessibility accommodations, dietary needs, family responsibilities, or safety concerns as evidence of weak citizenship. Constructive tolerance items must refer only to minor, explained inconvenience and must never normalize inferior service.

Cross-cultural replication also requires careful adaptation. Translation should combine forward translation, independent back translation, and cognitive interviews, because concepts such as reputation, stewardship, and responsibility may not map neatly across languages or tourism cultures. Before comparing countries or visitor segments, researchers should establish measurement invariance. Qualitative follow-up interviews could test whether respondents understand "helping" as supportive cooperation or unwanted surveillance. These safeguards keep the model focused on voluntary contribution while preserving customer dignity, choice, and legitimate criticism.

7. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The first contribution is a temporal and epistemic separation of image from reputation. Much green tourism research correctly recognizes both constructs but does not always explain why one should precede the other. The present model treats image as an accessible association and reputation as the outcome of accumulated validation. This sequence changes the theoretical question from whether favorable perceptions matter to how an environmental promise becomes credible enough to deserve voluntary support.

The second contribution is to customer citizenship theory. GCCB-T is not defined as all responsible tourist behavior. It is a relational construct tied to a focal service or destination system. This restriction preserves the service-theoretical meaning of citizenship while recognizing that environmental beneficiaries extend beyond the firm. The five-dimension framework also reveals that citizenship can improve operations through feedback and helping, strengthen legitimacy through advocacy, and contribute directly through stewardship participation.

The third contribution is a boundary condition that is closer to the behavior than broad environmental concern. Green self-identity is not simply a favorable opinion. It represents a self-standard that can turn reputable organizational conduct into personally meaningful action. Positioning identity on the reputation-to-behavior path explains why strong branding effects may appear in one segment and weak effects in another, even when both segments recognize the same reputation.

The fourth contribution is theoretical integration without unnecessary complexity. Signaling theory explains the image-to-reputation transition, social exchange theory explains the reputational basis of voluntary reciprocation, and identity-based reasoning explains heterogeneity in the final conversion to behavior. Each theory performs a distinct task. The model does not add mediators and moderators merely to increase statistical novelty; it assigns each construct a clear role in the process.

8. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The model's first managerial lesson is that tourism providers should earn citizenship before requesting it. Appeals asking guests to save water or support conservation are more likely to produce voluntary effort when customers believe the organization has made its own credible investment. Operational proof should precede moral pressure. A linen-reuse card is weak evidence if the property ignores visible leaks, uses disposable serveware unnecessarily, or provides no account of what savings achieve.

Second, managers should treat image as the opening chapter of reputation, not as its substitute. The same environmental proposition should appear coherently in booking information, on-site systems, employee explanations, supplier choices, and post-visit reporting. Third-party certification can help, but a logo alone does not create credibility. Customers need intelligible evidence: what was changed, how performance is measured, what trade-offs remain, and how feedback has altered practice. Admitting limitations can strengthen reputation when the admission is specific and accompanied by a plan.

Third, organizations should design clear citizenship opportunities. Feedback channels should allow guests to identify environmental problems without navigating a generic complaints system. Advocacy should be invited after evidence has been experienced, not immediately after purchase. Helping can be supported through simple peer-readable instructions rather than by turning guests into monitors. Stewardship participation should be meaningful, locally grounded, and transparent about outcomes. Constructive tolerance should never be demanded; customers should understand why a modest inconvenience exists and have reasonable alternatives when accessibility, safety, or personal circumstances require them.

Fourth, green self-identity can guide differentiated communication, but segmentation should avoid caricature. High-identity customers may value detailed evidence, traceable impact, opportunities for stewardship, and candid discussion of shortcomings. Lower-identity customers may respond better when green systems are convenient, comfortable, and connected to co-benefits such as local quality, health, quietness, or cultural authenticity. The aim is not to hide environmental purpose from one group, but to remove unnecessary friction while preserving choice.

Finally, reputation management must include restraint. Greenwashing research shows that unsupported claims can create confusion and distrust (Chen & Chang, 2013; Nyilasy et al., 2014). Environmentally committed customers are often the most capable of detecting inconsistency. Promotional teams should therefore be accountable to operations, and environmental claims should be specific enough to verify. A smaller claim supported by evidence is more valuable to the conditional process than an ambitious image that collapses under scrutiny.

9. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This article develops a conceptual model and empirical protocol; it does not report a completed dataset. The hypotheses therefore remain open to disconfirmation. The proposed direction from image to reputation is theoretically defensible for customers forming a post-visit judgment, but reciprocal and longitudinal effects are likely. Cross-lagged designs could examine whether established reputation later reshapes image.

Future work should examine negative and nonlinear conditions. Strong green self-identity may amplify citizenship under credible reputation but amplify criticism under perceived greenwashing. Green skepticism, perceived sacrifice, cultural norms, and the visibility of other customers may alter the model. Citizenship can also have dark sides: inaccurate advocacy, intrusive peer policing, or tolerance that allows poor management to continue. A mature research program should study the quality and ethical boundaries of citizenship, not only its quantity.

10. CONCLUSION

Green tourism branding creates environmental meaning, but meaning alone does not mobilize customers. The proposed model explains a more demanding sequence. A favorable green image must become a credible reputation, and that reputation becomes most behaviorally powerful when it connects with the customer's green self-identity. Image makes the promise visible; reputation demonstrates that the promise deserves support; identity turns support into self-consistent action.

By separating image from reputation and citizenship from compliance, the model clarifies what tourism organizations can reasonably seek from customers. The goal is not to transfer environmental responsibility to visitors. It is to build credible systems in which voluntary feedback, advocacy, helping, stewardship, and reasonable patience can extend organizational capacity. When environmental performance, communication, and customer identity align, the green customer is not merely persuaded. The customer becomes a willing participant in the tourism system's ability to care for the places on which it depends.

Declarations

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