

ATTITUDES OF NIGERIAN CONSUMERS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION IN THE SOUTH-SOUTH REGION

Anucha, Victor Chima

**Department of Marketing, Faculty of Business Studies,
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

Email: anucha.victor@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This paper examined the attitudes of Nigerian consumers towards sustainable consumption. Data were collected from 400 consumers visiting selected supermarkets in the six states in the south-south region of Nigeria. The intercept survey procedure was used in this study where the respondents (consumers) were intercepted in the course of making purchases at the twelve supermarkets visited. A structured questionnaire was used to elicit data from the respondents with respect to their attitudes towards sustainable consumption while an interview schedule was conducted among some marketers and retailers who stocked both sustainable and unsustainable products. The data collected from the respondents were correlated using the SPSS window 19.0 version. The results indicated that attitudes of Nigerian consumers (cognitive, affective and conative attitudes) are positively and significantly correlated to sustainable consumption while the results of the interview conducted among marketers and retailers revealed that such attitudes do not reflect in their buying behaviour judging by the sluggish sales of sustainable products when compared to unsustainable products, hence, an attitude-behaviour gap was established. Based on the empirical results, it was concluded that Nigerian consumers have a negative behavioural attitude towards sustainable consumption considering the fact the sales of sustainable products is very small when compared to unsustainable products. Hence, it was recommended that Nigerian consumers who claimed to have high cognitive, affective and conative attitudes should translate such attitudes into their buying behaviour as it would enhance sustainable consumption in Nigeria. It was also recommended that Nigerian consumers should patronize only sustainable products such as organic food, plastic products and energy saving bulbs, use less paper and avoid aerosols as it would help to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Consumer attitudes, cognitive attitude, affective attitude, conative attitude, sustainable consumption, sustainable products, sustainable development.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of sustainable consumption has attracted much attention in recent times in view of the increasing environmental degradation brought about by the activities of individuals and business organizations. Research has shown that 30 to 40 percent of environmental degradation occurred as a result of the consumption activities of private households (Chan & Lau, in Noor et al, 2012). Hence, the international community has taken interest in addressing the issue of environmental degradation such as pollution, wastes, global warming, and other man-made dangers. Several conferences have been held to address these environmental challenges. For instance, in 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was held in Rio de Janeiro where the issue of sustainable consumption was brought forward. Agenda 21, specifically its fourth chapter, called for the adoption of sustainable consumption patterns (Fuchs & Lorek, 2004). Also, in 2002, the Johannesburg Summit was organized to support the initiatives of nations and regions to facilitate the move towards sustainable consumption by calling for a ten-year framework of programmes (United Nations, 2007). Since then there have been a growing interest in studying the attitudes of consumers towards sustainable consumption across the globe.

Sustainable consumption is defined as a consumption pattern where the present generation is encouraged to purchase goods that are less harmful to the environment so that the future generations can enjoy the same environment to meet their needs. The National Consumer Council

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in Evans & Jackson (2008) described sustainable consumption as a balancing act that takes into account the 'quality of life' of consumers in the present time period alongside resource use and environmental impact such that future consumers can enjoy the same quality of life that is enjoyed today. Promoting sustainable consumption is necessary to preserve the environment for future generation. Sustainable consumption targets everyone, from the individual to governments and multinational companies. It demands a multidisciplinary approach where everyone is expected to put the environment into consideration while purchasing products that meets their current needs and enhance the quality of life. However, if sustainable consumption is to be achieved, then everyone including the government must develop a positive attitude towards sustainable products and embrace sustainable consumption pattern.

Embracing sustainable consumption pattern involves buying sustainable products such as recycling products, energy saving bulbs, organic food, avoiding the use of cellophane bags, and using of less paper. The consumption processes of sustainable products contributes to energy saving, reduction of green houses gases emission as well as reduction of farmland erosion (Wang, 2009). A consumer who cultivates the habit of buying only sustainable products have a positive attitude towards sustainable consumption, while those who do not exhibit the behaviour of buying sustainable products have a negative attitudes towards sustainable consumption. Thus, the consumption pattern of consumers is motivated by the costs-benefit analysis. Consumers like to evaluate the cost-benefits of purchasing a product. Usually sustainable products are very expensive when compared to unsustainable products; hence most consumers prefer to buy unsustainable products provided that they meet their needs without considering its negative effect on the environment. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) as reported in Saxena & Khandelwal (2010) revealed that "the current global consumption patterns are unsustainable." This signifies that a large number of consumers still engage in unsustainable lifestyles despite the continuous calls for sustainable consumption pattern.

In many cases, consumers claim to engage in sustainable consumption but in the actual fact, the sales of sustainable products are very low when compared to the sales volume of unsustainable products. Peattie in Kirmani (2016) observed that marketers lamented that consumers' concern for environment and sustainable products did not translate into purchasing behaviour, hence there seems to be a gap between consumer claims and their actual buying behaviour. A study conducted by Ongisa (2013) indicated that 72% of the average consumers in Kenya exhibit unsustainable consumption behaviour despite the fact that they show concern for sustainable products. However, the display of unsustainable consumption behaviour is not only peculiar to African countries alone as research in European countries has revealed that an average 46% of European consumers claims to be willing to pay a higher price for sustainable products, but available records show that the market share of organic food, energy saving bulbs, legally logged wood, fair trade and recycling products are less than 1% (Dimitrova, 2010). Although studies have shown that consumers in African and European countries exhibit a negative attitudes towards sustainable consumption considering the small market share for sustainable products, the attitudes of Nigerian consumers towards sustainable consumption is yet to be investigated. Hence this study is an attempt to fill this gap in literature by empirically investigating the attitudes of Nigerian consumers towards sustainable consumption in the south-south region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The functional theory of attitudes developed by Daniel Katz was adopted in this paper. This theory explains consumer attitudes along four function motives namely utilitarian, value-expressive, ego-defensive, and knowledge functions (Solomon in Marketography, 2010). The utilitarian function denotes that a consumer's attitude is based on the utility function where the consumer's decision

revolves around the amount of pain or pleasure it brings. The value-expressive function explains that whatever attitude a consumer exhibit towards an object (sustainable product in this case) is based on his or her self-concept. The ego-defensive function explains how consumer's personality influences their attitude towards a particular product. For instance, a person may feel that purchasing a particular type of product might compromise his personality or self-image. The knowledge function explains how consumer knowledge and experience influence their attitude towards a product (Solomon, in Marketography, 2010). Each of these functions explains the source of consumer's attitude.

The functional theory of attitudes is relevant in explaining the attitudes of Nigerian consumers toward sustainable consumption. This is because the theory attempts to understand the sources of an attitude and what such attitude intends to achieve. In this case, green marketers need to understand the sources of consumer attitudes as well as the aim of such attitude. When green marketers are able to understand the sources and purpose of a consumer's attitude, they will be in a better position to influence such attitudes in favour of their green products. Kasten & Pank (2017) stated that understanding the attitude of consumer helps a business understand customers better and how they might influence or respond to those attitudes. Therefore, green companies in Nigeria must carefully study the sources of consumers' attitudes and influence those attitudes in favour of their products to boost sustainable consumption pattern.

Concept of Consumer Attitude

Consumer attitude is a popular concept in marketing and has been defined in different ways by marketing scholars. For instance, Kasten & Pank (2017) defined attitude as a combination of beliefs, feelings and intentions related to a particular object. Grimsley (2015) stated that attitude consists of thoughts or beliefs, feelings, and behaviour or intentions towards a particular thing, which in this case is green product. For example, when a person has a strong belief that a product would perform better than others, he or she would feel good about it and intend to buy the product. In this regards, consumer attitude is seen as a person's enduring favourable or unfavourable evaluations of a product. The attitude of a consumer puts him or her into a frame of mind of liking or disliking an object, moving toward or away from it (Kotler, in Asiegbu, Powei & Iruka, 2012). Attitude leads a consumer to behave in certain way whether to like or dislike the product. Such attitude can be affected or motivated by our values and belief. Values are shared beliefs regarding what is right or important and these values are usually transmitted to an individual through the agents of socialization such as the family, the school, the church and social group. Beliefs are thoughts which a person holds about a thing.

A consumer can develop a positive or negative attitude towards a product (Kasten & Pank, 2017). If a consumer develops a positive attitude towards a product, it is a plus to the marketer of that product. According to Hennon (2015), a consumer with a positive or favourable attitude towards a product, will probably develop the intention to purchase the product but where a consumer has a negative or unfavourable attitude towards a product, he or she will move away from that product. This means that consumer's attitude is the product of his psychological and emotional feelings. It is the psychological and emotional state-of-mind which the consumer expresses in attitude and behaves the way he did. Hence the attitude of a consumer can only be determined by asking questions or drawing conclusion from behaviour. This is why Baron & Bryne in Asiegbu, Powei & Iruka (2012) described attitude as a lasting, general evaluation of people (including oneself) object, advertisement, or issues. Grimsley (2015) stated that a consumer with a favourable evaluation and feeling about a product will buy the product consistently; but when the consumer has an unfavourable evaluation of the product, he or she will definitely move away from the product.

Attitudes can be used to predict the pro-environmental behaviour of consumers (Thompson, 2015). According to Ajzens Theory of Planned Behaviour, consumers' belief form attitudes which

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are translated into intention and behaviour (Anvar & Venter, 2014). They further stated that consumers' feelings influence their behaviour. Consumers need to change their attitudes in order to turn behaviour towards sustainable consumption. In a country where companies are not practicing sustainable marketing, consumers can use their attitude and sustainable behaviour to change the production processes of companies towards sustainable marketing. Ongisa (2013) stated that attitudes and sustainable behaviours are the key to achieve sustainable marketing practices because consumers drive the direction of production. When consumers exhibit the attitude and behaviour of purchasing only sustainable products, it will force companies to engage in sustainable marketing. This consumption process contributes to energy saving, reduce green houses gases emission and farmland erosion (Wang, 2009).

Concept of Sustainable Consumption

Sustainable consumption is a consumption pattern that takes the consumer's environmental responsibility into account while purchasing goods that meet their needs and enhance the quality of life. It entails the purchasing of products that meet consumer's basic and materials needs and at the same time protecting the environment from degradation and other man-made danger such that future generations can be able to enjoy the same quality of life (Seyfang, 2007). Saxena & Khandelwal (2010) defined sustainable consumption as using resources in a way that minimizes harm to the environment while supporting the well-being of people. Yates in Wang (2009) stated that sustainable consumption is a balancing act and is about consuming in a way as to preserve the environment, use natural resources wisely and promote quality of life without spoiling the lives of future consumers.

Sustainable consumption is quickly becoming popular because the unsustainable consumption pattern and levels are considered as the main cause of environmental pollution (Fuchs & Lorek, in Wang, 2009). Michaelidou & Hassan, in Wang (2009) stated that sustainable consumption becomes popular in the developed countries with the introduction of sustainable products such as organic food. Others include the consumption of domestically cultivated or supporting fair trade principles, consumer technology white and brown goods, appliances and cars (Dimitrova, 2010). Promoting sustainable consumption is very important for achieving sustainable growth and development. According to Wang (2009), the consumption processes of sustainable food products contributes to energy saving, reduce green houses gases emission as well as farmland erosion.

Sustainable consumption demands that consumers change their lifestyles as well as their social and economic systems to seek improvement in quality of life rather than emphasizing material consumption (Jackson & Seyfang, 2007). It requires a deep commitment on the part of consumers to protect the environment by switching from unsustainable consumption lifestyle to sustainable consumption lifestyle (Jeger, Ham & Leko, 2014). Sustainable consumption lifestyles are necessary to ensure that products are purchased with the intention of preserving the environment for future generations (Terlau & Hirsch, 2015). However, shifting towards sustainable consumption requires two adjustments: substantial increase in the efficiency of consumption and changes in consumption patterns (Daly in Fuchs & Lorek, 2004). According to Daly, it is important to reduce resource consumed by per consumption unit as a result of improvement in technology. For instance, instead of buying a car that consumed 10 litres of petrol per 100 kilometers, one can buy a car that consumed only 3 litres of petrol per 100 kilometers. However, in the second instance which has to do with changes in consumption pattern, it requires a complete change in individual behaviour and this has nothing to do with technological improvements. Fundamentally change in consumption patterns can be for instance, making journey by train instead of using car (Daly in Fuchs & Lorek, 2004).

Attitudes of Consumers Toward Sustainable Consumption

Consumer attitudes play an important role in understanding sustainable consumption pattern. According to Terlau & Hirsch (2015), consumers exhibit two forms of attitudes when it comes to

sustainable consumption. They could either exhibit a positive (favourable) or negative (unfavourable) attitude towards sustainable product. According to Terlau & Hirsch, a consumer who has a positive or favourable attitude towards sustainable products engages in sustainable consumption irrespective of the high price of sustainable products. Jeger, Ham & Leko (2014) agreed with this opinion as they maintained that consumer with a positive or favourable attitude towards sustainable products develops a strong desire and intention to buy only sustainable products and do away with other products (unsustainable products). Balderjahn in Noor et al. (2012) also agreed with the view of Jeger and his colleagues as he stated that individuals who had a strong concern for the environment participated more in the buying and consumption of green products. However, consumers with negative attitudes towards sustainable products engage in unsustainable consumption pattern as they are not conscious of the environment when making purchasing decisions (Terlau & Hirsch, 2015). Kumar, Philip & Sharma, (2014) argued that consumers who are extremely conscious about the environment take their time to look for sustainable products irrespective of the high price tag attached to such products. Roberts in Ferguson (2014) agreed with views of Kumar and Colleagues as they believed that consumers who are show concern for environmental protection make adequate effort to buy sustainable products. Ecological consumer took time to read product labels to ensure the product was environmentally safe and sought products with reduced packaging (Ferguson, 2014). Park and Ha, in Ongisa (2013) believed that sustainable product purchasers exhibited significantly higher levels of cognitive attitude, affective attitude, social norm, personal norm, and recycling intention. Keles & Bekimbetova (2013) agreed with Park and Ha point of view stating that, a consumer who exhibits the behaviour of buying only recycling plastics, cans bottles, newspapers etc, have a higher cognitive and affective attitudes towards the environment. By purchasing sustainable products such as recycling products, technology products, organic food, and energy saving bulbs, consumers help to reduce green houses gases emission as well as farmland erosion (Wang, 2009). The study carried out by Kirmani (2016) revealed that purchasers of sustainable products were reported to high a high cognitive and affective attitudes towards the environmental protection. The study also reported that cognitive and affective attitudes were positively correlated to sustainable consumption behaviour (Kirmani, 2016). This explains the fact that consumers with high cognitive and affective attitudes are more prone to purchase only sustainable products for the sake of the environment.

However some researchers are not convinced that consumers who have high cognitive and affective attitudes towards sustainable products actually purchase the products. Marques & Almeida (2013) argued that the existence of high cognitive and affective attitudes towards environmental protection alone does not necessarily accelerate sustainable purchasing. Pickett-Baker and Ozaki in Ongisa (2013) posited that people who are environmentally conscious do not necessarily purchase green products and services. Young et al., in Anvar & Venter (2014) agreed with the opinion of Pickett-Baker and Ozaki as they noticed that consumers express their concern towards the environment, but this does not necessarily translate into green purchases. Peattie in Kirmani (2016) shared the same thought with Young and Colleagues when they reported that marketers lamented that consumers' concern for environment and green products did not translate into purchasing behaviour. Hughner, et al in Anvar & Venter (2014) stated that even though consumers have a favourable attitude towards green purchases; it does not guarantee the purchase of green products. Wheale and Hinton in Ongisa (2013) stated that consumers could exhibit a friendly attitude towards sustainable products and the environment at large but still engage in unsustainable pattern of consumption. Obviously, environmental concern is more valuable when consumers translate their attitudes into sustainable purchasing behaviour (Cherian & Jacob, 2012).

Several empirical studies have indicated a gap between consumer attitudes and their actual behaviour with regards to sustainable consumption (Dimitrova, 2010; Kirmani, 2016; Ongisa, 2013; Anvar & Venter, 2014). According to the research conducted by Attalla, as reported in

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Dimitrova (2010), it was revealed that consumer practices do not always correspond to expressed attitudes and concern. The study conducted by Dimitrova (2010) revealed that an average 46% of European consumers says that they are willing to pay a higher price for sustainable products but available records showed that the market share of sustainable products such as energy saving products, technology products, recycling product and organic products are less than 1%. A research conducted by Nameghi (2013) revealed that 72% of consumers who have the desire to do things right especially as it concerns environmental protection do not end up doing the right thing as their pro-environmental attitude are not always followed by their actions. The research conducted by Bartels and Hoogendam, as reported in Anvar & Venter (2014) indicated that the market share of sustainable products is still significantly small; only 4% of consumers buy into green products, although 40% of consumers say that they will buy green products. Bonini *et al.* in Ongisa (2013) discovered that 53% of consumers in European countries such UK, France, Germany and Canada showed great concern for environmental protection but do not translate their attitude into buying behaviour.

In another study conducted in Kenya, it was reported that Kenyan consumers claim to have a policy of protecting the environment from pollution and waste degradation but available statistics showed that they do not translate their environmental concern into their buying behaviour as the sales of sustainable products is still very low compared to that of unsustainable products in the country (Ongisa, 2013). Similarly, Tang and Chan as reported in Kirmani (2016) found a negative relationship between consumer environmental concern and their actual behaviour towards green products. Meanwhile, Akehurst et al in Kirmani (2016) found no relationship between consumer attitude and their actual behaviour towards sustainable consumption. Thus, the attitude-behaviour gap implies that marketers face a challenging task to develop segmentation and targeting strategies for sustainable products (D'Souza, Taghian and Khosla, in Anvar & Venter, 2014). Ongisa (2013) argued that many consumers might not choose sustainable products because of the high price tag. They feel that sustainable products are too expensive and that they do not want to invest their hard earned money buying such an expensive product when they can get other alternatives that can meet their needs at a cheapest rate. However, consumers who are emotionally and extremely conscious of the environment might be willing to make sacrifice and pay the price for sustainable products (Kumar, Philip & Sharma, 2014). Han et al., in Anvar & Venter (2014) agreed with the opinion of Kumar and his colleagues as they believe that consumers who are extremely conscious ("true-blue" greens) might even sacrifice good quality preferences and accept lower levels of performance to save the environment.

Cognitive Attitude and Sustainable Consumption

Cognitive attitude is an individual's belief or knowledge about an object (Solomon, in Marketograpy, 2010). Consumers with a high cognitive attitude base their buying decision on what they know as opposed to what they feel (Thompson, 2015). This knowledge comes from the strong belief which the individual has regarding the ability of the product or object to deliver its expected performance. Normally, a consumer develops feeling about a product after purchase (Marketograpy, 2010). The Psychologists argued that consumers with high cognitive attitude rely on their beliefs and information gathered about a product before developing the intention to buy the product. In the context of green behaviour, beliefs and knowledge play a key role in understanding the types of decisions consumers make. Consumers, who have a sound knowledge about the environment and believe that environmental protection is important, change their consumption pattern and patronize products that are safe for the environment. These categories of consumers cultivate the habits of buying organic foods, technology cars which uses less petrol, bottled water which can be recycled, use less papers and cellophane bags, as well as buying emerging saving bulbs, home heating & cooling systems) (Samarasinghe, 2012).

Most studies on consumer attitudes focused on cognitive attitude because they believe that consumer belief and knowledge are crucial factors that greatly influence sustainable consumption lifestyle (Jeger, Ham & Leko, 2014). Early research assumes that knowledge affects attitudes and attitudes affect behaviour (Jeger, Ham & Leko, 2014). According to the research conducted by Keles & Bekimbetova (2013), it was reported that consumers with adequate knowledge about the environment (cognitive attitude) promote sustainable lifestyle. Nameghi (2013) reported that environmental emotion and environmental cognition significantly related to consumer's attitude, while attitude had a positive impact on consumers practicing green behaviour elements like recycling. In another study by Ferguson (2014), it was reported that 34% of consumers with a strong belief and sound knowledge of the environment purchase only sustainable products such as recycling products, organic food, green technology and use renewable energy. These consumers make special efforts to read product labels to ensure that the products they intend to buy are safe for the environment. Thompson (2015) also reported that 43% of consumers with cognitive attitude engage in sustainable consumption pattern. Based on these reports, we developed our first hypothesis:

Ho₁: There is no positive and significant relationship between cognitive attitude and sustainable consumption in the south-south region of Nigeria.

Affective Attitude and Sustainable Consumption

Affective attitude represents the emotion or feeling which a consumer has about a particular product. Such feeling may be favourable or unfavourable depending on how the consumer evaluates the product. If the feeling is favourable it meant that the consumer *likes* the product. In other words, the consumer has a positive feeling that the product will deliver the expected outcome. On the other hand, if the consumer's feeling towards the product is unfavourable, it meant that the consumer *dislikes* the product or that the consumer has an negative feeling towards the product (Jeger, Ham & Leko, 2014). In a nut shell, affective component of consumer attitude denotes how a consumer feels about a product. This feeling is followed by the individual behaviour (Marketograpgy, 2010). Samarasinghe (2012) stated that consumers usually develop certain feelings or emotion towards a product before taken action towards it. For instance, a consumer who is extremely conscious of his environment may show affection towards sustainable products and purchase the products consistently to protect the environment from degradation. But when the consumer is not conscious of his environment, he may develop negative feeling towards sustainable products and engage in unsustainable consumption pattern (Samarasinghe, 2012).

Some empirical studies have exposed the type of relationship that exists between consumer affective attitude and sustainable consumption. For instance, Thompson (2015) examined how sustainability and sustainable business are influenced by consumer attitudes. Using data from New Zealand, the researcher reported that consumers who have a positive feeling and emotion for the environment purchase sustainable products that are safe for the environment. Terlau & Hirsch (2015) also reported that about 65% of consumers with affective attitude endorsed sustainable lifestyle, but the sales volume of sustainable products is very low compared to unsustainable products. In another study, it was reported that consumers with strong feeling for the environment (affective attitude) make special effort to purchase sustainable products that are safe for the environment (Jeger et al, 2014). In line with these reports, we develop our second hypothesis:

Ho₂: There is no positive and significant relationship between affective attitude and sustainable consumption in the south-south region of Nigeria.

Conative (Behavioural) Attitude and Sustainable Consumption

Conative attitude is the likelihood that a person will behave in a certain way towards a product. Conative component is also known as behaviour intention in some marketing literature (Fraj,

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2007). According to Fraj, in Jeger et al (2014), conative represents the intention to act in a certain way and is sometimes called the behavioral component. It denotes what a person intends to do, whether to buy a product or not. This attitude is considered as the consequences of beliefs (or feelings). This is why Solomon, in Marketograpy (2010) described behavioural attitude as the response of a consumer resulting from his cognitive and affective attitudes. Stone, Barnes, & Montgomery in Jeger et al (2014) agreed with the opinion of Solomon as they argued that cognitive and affective components form and direct the third (behavioral) component. However, there are circumstances where cognitive and affective attitudes cannot direct behavioural component. For instance, a consumer may not like a product (green product in this case) but decides to buy it for environmental reasons, or because their friends buy them. In this case, there is no feeling (affective attitude) or belief (cognitive attitude) behind the purchase of such product but just because of environmental purpose and social influence (Terlau & Hirsch, 2015).

Some empirical studies have showed the nature of relationship that exists conative attitude and sustainable consumption. For instance, Keles & Bekimbetova (2013) measure consumer attitudes towards green purchases using University Students in Kyrgyzstan as their sample. They found out that most consumers in Kyrgyzstan do not have a sustainable lifestyle yet they claimed to support the idea of environmental protection. Peattie in Kirmani (2016) also noted that marketers lamented that consumers' concern for environmental protection did not reflect on their buying behaviour judging by their low sales of sustainable products. According to Peattie, most consumers do not take their time to read product labels to ensure the product they intend to buy are environmentally safe. The study carried out by Noor et al. (2012) also revealed that the conative attitude of most Malaysian consumers towards purchasing green products was not encouraging as green marketers continue to lament over the sluggish sales of their products in the market. In another study in New Zealand, it was reported that most consumers in New Zealand do not make special efforts to buy sustainable products. Based on these studies, we formulate our third hypothesis:

H₀₃: There is no positive and significant relationship between conative (behavioural) attitude and sustainable consumption in the south-south region of Nigeria.

Based on the formulated hypotheses, we developed the research model as shown in figure 1 below:

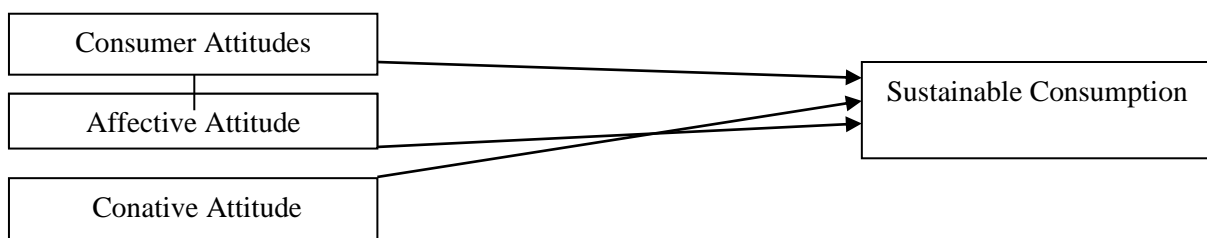


Figure 1: Research Model

METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive survey which involves gathering data from the field on topical issue (consumer attitudes in this case) and describing the nature of relationship between their attitudes (cognitive, affective and conative attitudes) and sustainable consumption. The study population consisted of consumers doing shopping at various supermarkets in the six states in the south-south region of Nigeria. The sampling procedure adopted in this study was the intercept survey sampling where the consumers (respondents) were intercepted during shopping at the supermarkets. This method of sampling is not new as it was also adopted in the studies of

Thompson (2015), and Jin & Kang (2011). However, a sample of 400 consumers was intercepted while making their purchases at twelve (12) supermarkets visited. The consumers were given structured questionnaires to fill with respect to their cognitive, affective and conative attitudes towards sustainable consumption. All the 400 questionnaires administered to the consumers were completed and collected on the spot. Meanwhile, an interview schedule was conducted among some supermarket operators and retailers who stocked both sustainable and unsustainable products in their stores to determine the level of sales of sustainable products and unsustainable products. The data collected from respondents were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Because of the large volume of data collected, a computer program was used to correlate the data to ensure accurately and speedy processing. Specifically, the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) windows 19.0 version was used to correlate the data and the results were interpreted accordingly.

EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results generated from the SPSS analysis are presented in tables and interpreted accordingly. The descriptive analysis shows the mean, standard deviation, as well as the values of skewness and kurtosis, while the correlation analysis indicates the nature of relationship that exists between the various dimensions of attitudes and sustainable consumption.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Mean	Std Dev.	Skewness		Kurtosis	
				Ratio	Std Error	Ratio	Std Error
Cognitive Attitude	400	3.10	1.25	.144	.136	.434	.268
Affective Attitude	400	3.17	1.11	.315	.136	.326	.268
Conative Attitude	400	3.04	1.18	-.219	.136	-.281	.268
Sustainable Consumption	400	3.16	1.16	-.213	.136	-.311	.268

Source: SPSS-generated Output

The descriptive statistics as shown in table 1 indicated that the data exhibit relatively high values in all variables measured since their mean values are greater than 3.00. However, the analysis of kurtosis and skewness indicated that the variables are close to normal distribution since all the values of skewness and kurtosis were between ± 1.0 . The skewness and kurtosis ratios to their respective error were between ± 2.68 which indicates that the data showed a reasonable approximation to normality.

Correlation Result

The results that emanated from SPSS correlation analysis are presented below:

Table 2: Correlation between Cognitive Attitude and Sustainable Consumption

			Cognitive Attitude	Sustainable Consumption
Pearson (r)	Cognitive Attitude	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.518**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	400	400
	Sustainable Consumption	Correlation Coefficient	.518**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	400	400

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

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-generated Output

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Table 2 presents the result of correlation analysis between cognitive attitude and sustainable consumption. The result indicated that cognitive attitude is positively correlated to sustainable consumption ($r = .518^{**}$) and significant at 0.01 and 0.05 levels. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. This signifies that there is significant positive relationship between cognitive attitude and sustainable consumption in the south-south region of Nigeria.

Table 3: Correlation between Affective Attitude and Sustainable Consumption

			Affective Attitude	Sustainable Consumption
Pearson (r)	Affective Attitude	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.753**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.002
		N	400	400
	Sustainable Consumption	Correlation Coefficient	.753**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.002	.
		N	400	400

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

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-generated Output

Table 3 shows the result of correlation analysis between affective attitude and sustainable consumption. The result indicates that affective attitude is positively correlated to sustainable consumption ($r = .753^{**}$) and significant at 0.01 and 0.05 level. Consequently, the null hypothesis is ignored and the alternate hypothesis which states that there is positive and significant relationship between affective attitude and sustainable consumption in the south-south region of Nigeria is accepted.

Table 4: Correlation between Conative (Behavioural) Attitude and Sustainable Consumption

			Conative Attitude	Sustainable Consumption
Pearson (r)	Conative Attitude	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.449**
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.001
		N	400	400
	Sustainable Consumption	Correlation Coefficient	.449**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.001	.
		N	400	400

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

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-generated Output

Table 4 presents the result of correlation analysis between conative attitude and sustainable consumption. The result indicates that conative attitude is positively related to sustainable consumption ($r = .449^{**}$) and significant at 95% confidence level. As a result of this, we ignore the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which states that there is positive and significant relationship between conative attitude and sustainable consumption in the south-south region of Nigeria.

Interview Results

The result of the interview schedule conducted among some supermarket operators who stocked both sustainable and unsustainable products revealed that there is significant growth in the sales of unsustainable products when compared to sustainable products. The supermarket operators disclosed that they sold more of unsustainable products than sustainable products despite the

numerous calls for sustainable consumption pattern. According to them, the sales turnover rate of unsustainable products is very high when compared to sustainable products and this has made them to order for more unsustainable products. In an interview with some green marketers who deal on organic food, plastic products, and energy saving bulbs, it was confirmed that Nigerian consumers do not translate their environmental concern into their buying behaviour. They however lamented that the market share of their green products is less than 3% when compared to unsustainable products. In another interview with the distributors of sustainable and unsustainable products, it was revealed that unsustainable products have a high demand among Nigerian consumers when compared to sustainable products. The reason being that sustainable products are too expensive and consumers do not want to make sacrifice to spend their hard earned money buying sustainable products when they can get other alternatives (unsustainable products) that can meet their needs at a cheaper rate. Marketers of sustainable products during the interview section disclosed that although there is increasing awareness for environmentally friendly products, but the demand for such products is still very low. They concluded by saying that Nigerians consumers have a negative attitude towards sustainable consumption despite the fact that they claim to be environmental conscious.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the correlation result, it was discovered that there is positive and significant relationship between cognitive attitude and sustainable consumption. This finding was derived from the result of the SPSS-generated output on the first hypothesis. The result indicated that cognitive attitude is positively correlated to sustainable consumption ($\rho = .518^{**}$) and significant at 95% confidence level. Consequently, the null hypothesis was ignored and alternate hypothesis was accepted. This implies that cognitive attitude is positively and significantly related to sustainable consumption in the south-south region of Nigeria. The finding implies that Nigerian consumers in the south-south region have a high cognitive attitude towards sustainable products and this attitude is reflected on their sustainable consumption lifestyle. This finding is supported by Park and Ha, in Ongisa (2013) who reported that green product purchasers exhibited significantly higher level of cognitive attitude. Ferguson (2014) also supported this finding as his study reported that consumers with a strong belief and sound knowledge of the environment purchase only sustainable products such as recycling products, organic food, green technology and use renewable energy. Thompson (2015) also agreed with this finding stating that consumers with cognitive attitude engage in sustainable consumption pattern.

This study also found a significant positive relationship between affective attitude and sustainable consumption. This finding was deduced from the result of the SPSS analysis carried out on the second hypothesis. The result indicated that affective attitude is positively correlated to sustainable consumption ($\rho = .753^{**}$) and significant at 95% confidence level. Consequently, the null hypothesis was ignored and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This signifies that there is positive and significant relationship between affective attitude and sustainable consumption in the south-south region of Nigeria. This finding implies that Nigerian consumers in the south-south region have a high affective attitude towards sustainable products, and this attitude is reflected on their sustainable consumption pattern. This finding is consistent with the research of Park and Ha, in Ongisa (2013) which reported that sustainable product purchasers exhibited significantly higher level of affective attitude. Jeger et al (2014) also confirmed this finding as it revealed that consumers with strong feeling for the environment (affective attitude) make adequate effort to purchase sustainable products that are environmentally safe.

A positive and significant relationship was also found between conative (behavioural) attitude and sustainable consumption. This finding was obtained from the result of the SPSS analysis carried out on the third hypothesis. The result revealed that conative attitude is positively correlated to sustainable consumption ($\rho = .449^{**}$) and significant at 95% confidence level. Hence, the null hypothesis was ignored and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is positive

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and significant relationship between conative (behavioural) attitude and sustainable consumption in the south-south region of Nigeria. This finding implies that Nigerian consumers in the south-south region have a high level of conative attitude towards sustainable products and this attitude is reflected on their sustainable consumption lifestyle. This finding differs from the result of Noor et al. (2012)'s study which revealed that most consumers claimed to high conative attitude towards environmental protection but such attitude do not reflect on their actual buying behaviour. Peattie as reported in Kirmani (2016) also disagreed with our finding stating that consumers' who claimed to have a high conative attitude do not cultivate the habit of buying sustainable products, hence they complaint of the high price tag attached to sustainable products.

From the above, it is obvious that Nigerian consumers in the south-south region claimed to have a high cognitive, affective and conative attitude towards sustainable products but in reality this attitude does not reflect on their buying behaviour judging by the low sales of sustainable products when compared to unsustainable products in the market. According to the interview conducted among some supermarket operators who stocked both sustainable and unsustainable products in their stores, it was revealed that the sales turnover of sustainable products is very low when compared to unsustainable products. These retailers went as far as presented their sales records to support their claim. The retailers revealed that consumers often complaint that the prices of sustainable products are too high and as such they prefer to buy unsustainable substitutes which are sold at a cheaper rate. Some of the supermarket operators disclosed that consumers in this region (south-south region) cannot make sacrifice to purchase sustainable products for the sake of the environment and this has prompted them to keep ordering for more unsustainable products since they are in high demand in the market. The information gathered from the interview indicates that the claim by many Nigerian consumers in the south-south region that they have high cognitive, affective and conative attitude towards sustainable products are deceitful as it does not reflect on the sales turnover of the products. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Peattie as reported in Kirmani (2016) which revealed that marketers lamented that consumers' concern for sustainable products did not commensurate with their purchasing behaviour. Hughner, et al in Anvar & Venter (2014) also agreed with the claim of green marketers as they revealed that even though consumers have a favourable attitude towards green purchases; it does not guarantee the purchase of green products.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings, it is obvious that there was a mix reaction regarding the attitudes of Nigerian consumers towards sustainable consumption. While consumers claimed to have a high cognitive, affective and conative attitudes towards sustainable products, marketers lamented that their attitudes do not reflect on their buying behaviour judging by the low sales of sustainable products when compared to unsustainable products. Although, the empirical results succinctly demonstrate that, cognitive, affective and conative attitudes were positively and significantly correlated to sustainable consumption, evidence from the large number of green marketers and retailers indicated that consumers' favourable attitudes towards sustainable products do not commensurate with their buying behaviour, hence, an attitude-behaviour gap was established. Based on the empirical results, it was concluded that Nigerian consumers in the south-south region claimed to have high cognitive, affective and conative attitudes towards sustainable products but such attitudes do not reflect on the sales turnover of sustainable products in the country. In line with the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

- That, Nigerian consumers who claimed to have high cognitive and affective attitudes towards sustainable products should translate such attitudes into their buying behaviour as it would enhance sustainable consumption in Nigeria.

- That, Nigerian consumers should patronize only sustainable products (e.g. organic food, plastic products, energy saving bulbs, use less paper and avoid aerosols) as it would help to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria.
- That, Nigerian consumers should change their consumption pattern in favour of sustainable products as it would help to save energy, reduce green houses gases emission and pollution to a large extent.
- Finally, it is recommended that consumers should patronize only sustainable products as it would help to reduce environmental degradation such as wastes, global warming and other man-made dangers.

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