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IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOURS OF YOUTHS IN OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Over the last decade, consumption of goods and services has significantly increased globally, resulting in the depletion of natural resources and environmental deterioration. As consumers significantly influence environmental damage, they may also mitigate it by opting for products that are sustainable. As such, more customers are becoming aware of the importance of environmental protection, recognising the harmful effects of everyday products and consumption habits on the environment. Examining the sustainable buying behaviour of the younger generation is crucial, since they embody the future customers, employees, and entrepreneurs of the present time. In Nigeria, 45.46% of the total population constitute the youth making them the most important demographic group in the country. This study which aims at assessing the impact of environmental knowledge and attitude on sustainable consumption behaviours of youth in Ogbomoso sampled 240 youths in the city using random sampling. The study made use of both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse the quantitative data and test the research hypothesis for the study. A growing positive attitude for environmental protection was discovered as the majority believes their actions can make a difference in addressing environmental issues. This reality has altered the youth consumption patterns as they often purchase goods/products labeled as environmentally friendly, sustainable or green. On the contrary, this study found that the relationship between environmental knowledge and attitudes and sustainable consumption behaviour of youth in Ogbomoso is weak and does not significantly predict sustainable consumption behaviour. This study recommends policy intervention and provision of practical incentives for production and consumption of sustainable products.*

KEYWORDS: Consumers, Environmental Attitude, Environmental Knowledge, Sustainable Consumption Behaviour, Sustainability

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Sustainable consumption (otherwise known as green consumption) is a modern discourse addressing consumer behaviour and environmental issues stemming from conventional trends of unsustainable consumption and production, which are primary contributors to environmental deterioration (Mont, Lehner & Dalhammar, 2022). The environment is a collective resource continually endangered by human activities. This reality has significantly heightened anxiety over the ongoing environmental degradation since the mid-twentieth century (Fraj-Andrés & Martínez-Salinas, 2014). Over the last decade, consumer consumption of goods and services has significantly increased globally, resulting in the depletion of natural resources and serious environmental deterioration (Chen & Chai, 2010). Significant environmental challenges resulting from extensive human intervention, including pollution, global warming, land degradation, and biodiversity loss, directly affect the sustainability and quality of the environment and ecosystem (Xue *et al*., 2021). The destructive lifestyle and consumption patterns were seen as the primary causes of environmental damage (Wahid *et al*., 2011). In addition to overpopulation, people are depleting resources by consuming services at a pace that exceeds the natural ecosystem's capacity to replenish, manage, or recycle (Rees, 2020). Thus, sustainable consumption is seen as a crucial component in the worldwide initiative for a fairer development model to mitigate the adverse effects of human activities on the natural environment (Marigold *et al*., 2015). Particularly, Goal 12 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is on promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, which are essential for preserving the lives of both current and future generations. Therefore, sustainable consumption emphasises the efficient use of products and services to fulfil fundamental human needs and preserve life while minimising environmental damage (OECD, 2008).

The pervasive unsustainable consumption resulting in considerable environmental challenges has inspired a transformation in societal consumption behaviours and purchasing behaviours towards environmental sustainability (Jaiswal & Kant, 2018). Given the acceleration rate of environmental degradation, climate change, and associated problems, it is imperative that individuals alter their consumption habits to adopt more sustainable practices, therefore safeguarding safe and healthy living circumstances for both present and future generations (IPCC, 2018). Consumers significantly influence environmental damage and may mitigate it by opting for products that are sustainable (Wijekoon & Sabri, 2021). Owing to this, an increasing number of consumers are becoming cognisant of the significance of environmental protection (Noor *et al*., 2017) as they are becoming more aware of the adverse impacts inflicted by the substances used in everyday items and their consumption behaviours on the environment (Sukresna & Mikina, 2024; Kumar *et al*., 2021).

Responsible consumers consistently assess the impacts of their consumption behaviour on the environment and society (Suki, 2013); however, some consumers disregard the impact of their irresponsible consumption behaviour on economic and social growth (Noor *et al*., 2017). As consumers get more knowledgeable and socially conscious, they prioritise sustainability and ethical standards in their purchase decisions (Anjorin *et al*., 2024). Therefore, nowadays, sustainable consumption has emerged as a vital element for environmental sustainability (Kong *et al*., 2014). Sustainable consumption entails the choice to acquire things that are less detrimental to humans, animals, and the environment (Kong *et al*., 2014; Luzio & Lemke, 2013). Here, customers' willingness to buy and the supply of sustainable products are the two primary concerns (Noor *et al*., 2017).

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Ukenna & Nkamnebe (2016) noted that waste management/reduction and sustainable purchasing decisions are both the main ways that sustainability tendencies emerge in Nigeria. Sustainable goods, organic foods, and companies that prioritise sustainability have become increasingly popular in Nigeria as a result of consumers' growing awareness of these issues and their demands for businesses to use more sustainable processes and products (Anjorin *et al*., 2024; Adama & Okeke, 2024, Emeka-Okoli, *et al*., 2024, Igbinenikaro, Adekoya & Etukudoh, 2024; Oke *et al*., 2023). Although, Nigeria currently ranked 146 out of 167 countries with an SDG score of 54.6 for the year 2024; however, the 2024 SDG dashboards showed that SDG 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production) is the only SDG achieved so far in Nigeria while other SDGs remain major challenges (Sachs, Lafortune & Fuller, 2024). Sustainable consumption and production is being achieved in Nigeria because of the increasingly popularity of sustainable products (Akerele-Popoola, Adegboyega & Binuyo, 2024) and increasing preference for specific sustainable products and prioritisation of the companies producing them (Abiodun *et al*., 2024). For instance, Chinda & Umeh (2023) found out that because of their superior quality and health advantages, 50.5% of Nigerian consumers are prepared to pay for sustainable products including cleaning supplies and personal care items.

Despite the fact that more people are eager to buy sustainable products now than they were a few years ago, there isn't much data to support this claim. Sustainable products still only account for 7–8% of the worldwide market, even with consumers' favourable dispositions towards environmental sustainability and sustainable products (Sukresna & Mikina, 2024; Wijekoon & Sabri, 2021). Environmentally conscious consumers only sometimes buy sustainable goods, despite their desire to do so (Chao & Uhagile, 2022). Thus, awareness does not ensure that consumers would buy sustainable products (Kanchanapibul *et al*., 2014). Research in Nigeria has ascribed this phenomenon to sustainable poor marketing, price affordability, little environmental awareness, restricted access to environmental information, insufficient knowledge on sustainability, absence of governmental regulations and oversight, distrust in the company's products, and social networks (Akekue-Alex *et al*., 2023; Abiodun *et al*., 2024; Mande & Taofeek 2023; Ebhote & Izedonmi, 2021; Okonkwo, Eneh & Mbah, 2020; Karatu *et al*., 2015).

Examining the sustainable buying behaviour of the younger generation is crucial, since they embody the future consumers, employees, and entrepreneurs of the present time (Hume, 2010; Heaney, 2006). In Nigeria, 45.46% of the total population constitute the youth making them the most important demographic group in Nigeria. Also, 14.6% of Nigerian youth said that they encountered various environmental issues throughout the country's six geopolitical zones (Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development and National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Studies found out that young people are more amenable to embracing fresh ideas, exhibit heightened social, environmental, and cultural awareness and a cautious attitude than older generations (Hume, 2010; Sullivan & Heitmeyer, 2008). They are the most influential consumer demographic (Chau & Ngai, 2010; Frank & Chong, 2002) because they represent 32% of global population (Stylos *et al*., 2021), 21% of the world’s workforce (Hughes, 2020), 40% of global consumers (Andruszkiewicz *et al*., 2023) and have a rising purchasing power (Tata, Sharrock & Westerlaken, 2023). They are flexible, collaborative, and innovative, which makes them socially conscious. They want more information before buying, they care about the future effects of their acts and want to be lifelong sustainable market consumers (Kanchanapibul *et al*., 2013). Thus, because they are characterised by their dedication to moral and ethical ideals, accompanied by a profound feeling of duty for a globalised world and the

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environment (Vieira *et al*., 2020), they are advocating for the adoption of sustainable products and practices (Anjorin *et al*., 2024). This study assessed the impact of environmental knowledge and attitude on sustainable consumer behaviours of youth in Ogbomoso with a view to make recommendations on enhancing consumer consciousness of the environmental and social impacts associated with product use and promoting the penetration and market share of sustainable products.

Hypothesis Development

The primary factors affecting a consumer's sustainable behaviour are their knowledge and attitudes (Andruszkiewicz *et al*., 2023; Zhao *et al*., 2014). Environmental knowledge pertains to individuals' understanding of the environment, climate change, ecological viewpoints, and the ecological consequences of production and consumption (Pagiaslis & Krontalis, 2014). Attitude is the synthesis of an individual's views, actions, and beliefs around environmental activities, frequently reflecting the factors that influence environmental quality (Milfont, 2007). Thus, pro-environmental behaviour is significantly impacted by attitudes (Khan, Chongcharoen & Ulhaq, 2020; Arslan, Yilmaz, and Aksoy, 2012) which are believed to be affected by acquired knowledge (Barber *et al*., 2009; Flamm, 2009). Knowledge may be used to project environmental behaviour and behavioural intention (Cong Doanh, Gadomska-Lila and Thi Loan, 2021; Gkargkavouzi *et al*., 2019; Otto & Pensini, 2017; Barber *et al*., 2009; Flamm, 2009). Similarly, studies also identified that enhancing consumer awareness and understanding of sustainability's demand will promote sustainable consumption (Anjorin *et al*., 2024; Pradeep & Pradeep, 2023; Ukenna, Idoko & Ogbari, 2018). On the contrary, other studies found that knowledge of these issues does not always lead to more sustainable purchase practices (Vainio & Paloniemi, 2014; Wilsdon *et al*., 2005). Similarly, increasing awareness of the environment may not always result in sustainable consumption behaviour (Sukresna & Mikina, 2024; Xu *et al*., 2022; Auf *et al*., 2018; Wang, 2017; Vainio & Paloniemi, 2014; Chan & Wong, 2012). This is because Individuals may be reluctant to make sacrifices for the good of the environment; thus, knowledge and attitudes influence behaviour just when all other relevant factors, including price, social peers, and environmental conditions, are favourable (Kiba-Janjak *et al*., 2022; Suki, 2016; Maniatis, 2016; Zsóka *et al*., 2013; Ozaki, 2011).

Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is given as:

Impact of environmental knowledge and attitudes on sustainable consumption behaviour of youths in Ogbomoso

H_0: Environmental knowledge and attitudes does not significantly impact sustainable consumption behaviour of youths in Ogbomoso

H_1: Environmental knowledge and attitudes significantly impact sustainable consumption behaviour of youths in Ogbomoso

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a quantitative research method and made use of a deductive research approach. Primary data were collected through the use of questionnaire. To calculate the sample size, the population of Ogbomoso was projected from 299,535 (National Population Commission, 2006) to 528,059 in 2024 using Nigeria's annual growth rate of 3.2%. The African Youth Charter defines youth as anyone aged 15 to 35 years. In Nigeria, the percentage of youth (15-35 years) is 45.46% of the total population (Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development and National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). In Ogbomoso, 45.46% of the total population is 240,056. The study made use of 0.1% of the total population, as such, the sample size was calculated to be 240 youths in Ogbomoso.

This study adopted random sampling. By using random sampling, there is the possibility of selecting any sample from the entire population of youths in Ogbomoso. This helps to reduce bias and ensure generalisation, however, due to limited samples, the samples may not be entirely generalisable and replicable (Kothari, 2004). Ogbomoso town is made up of two Local Governments. They are Ogbomoso North and Ogbomoso South Local Governments Area and they both have 10 wards each. In each of the 20 wards that make up the two local governments, 12 respondents were sampled at random in all the 20 wards.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. These are: demographic characteristics, environmental knowledge, environmental attitudes, sustainable consumptions behaviours and barriers hindering engagement in sustainable consumption practices. Through the use of IBM SPSS, the questionnaire data were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics contain frequency and percentage counts. Also, the mean values of the sustainable consumption practices and barriers hindering their engagement were calculated in order to be able to rate them. The research hypothesis for this study was tested using linear regression on SPSS. Also, through bivariate correlation, the relationship between demographic characteristics and sustainable consumption behaviour was investigated. By making use of p-value (>0.05) at 95% confidence level, the results were considered to be statistically significant.

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RESULTS

Environmental Knowledge Assessment

Environmental issues most familiar with by youth in Ogbomoso are presented in figure 1. Pollution (air, water and land) ranked the highest with 95% responses. This was followed by poor waste management; climate change, deforestation and flooding with 91.7%, 90.8%, 83.8% and 81.3% responses respectively. The least environmental issue the people are aware of are biodiversity loss (73.3%), global warming (50.8%), desertification (38.8%) and natural resource depletion (32.9%).

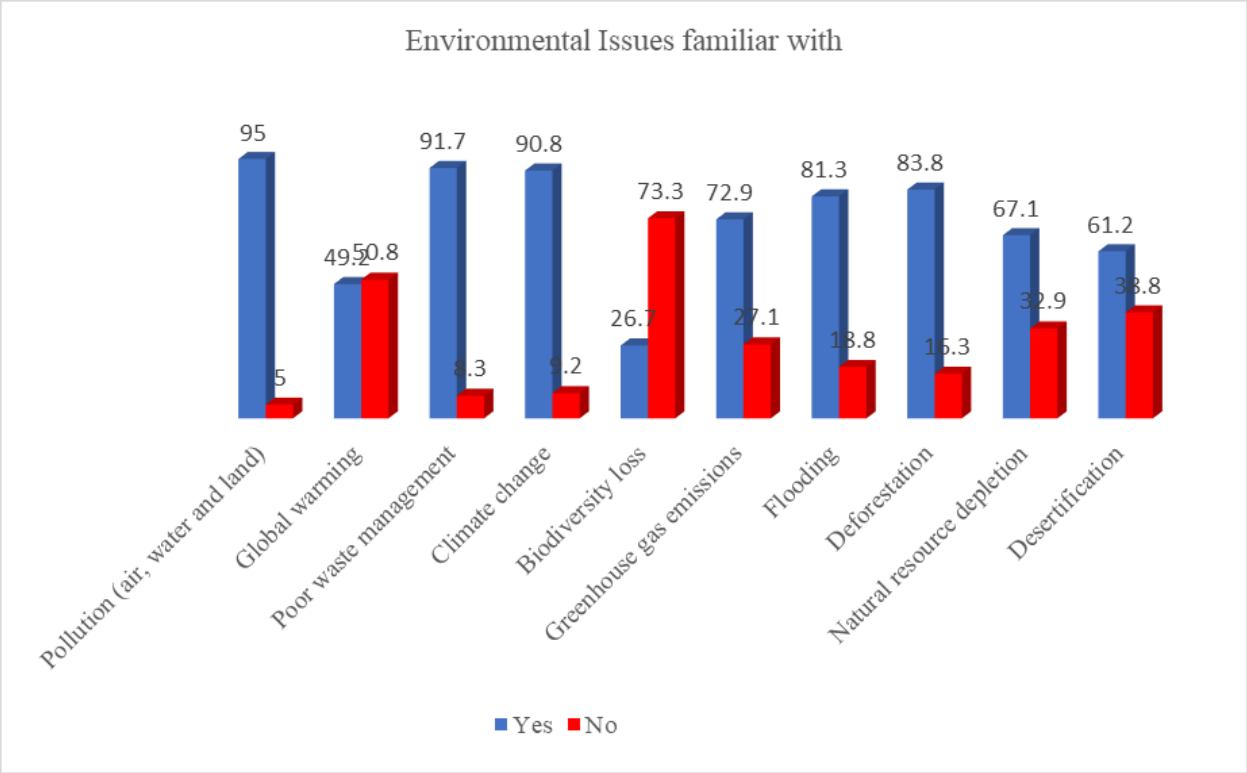

Figure 1: Environmental issues familiar with

Source: *Authors' work, 2025*

Table 1 shows the environmental knowledge assessment of youths in Ogbomoso. Findings on environmental knowledge assessment revealed that 38% of respondents have moderate knowledge on environmental issues, 24% have very high environmental knowledge, 5% have low knowledge while 2% have very low environmental knowledge. These show that more than 90% of youth in the study area possess environmental knowledge which can positively inform sustainable consumption in the study area. More so, only 53.3% of the respondents have formal education or training on environmental issues. Social media represents the dominant source of information as accounted for by 65.0%. Others are: mass media (15.8%), schools (10.0%), friends/peers (6.7%) and other sources (2.5%).

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Table 1: Environmental Knowledge Assessment

Assessment		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Knowledge of environmental issues	Very High	57	23.8
	High	76	31.7
	Moderate	91	37.9
	Low	12	5.0
	Very Low	4	1.7
Education or training on environmental issues	Yes	128	53.3
	No	76	31.7
Seeking out information on environmental issues	Always	10	4.2
	Often	66	27.5
	Sometimes	108	45.0
	Rarely	52	21.7
	Never	4	1.7
Source of environmental information	Social Media	156	65.0
	Mass media	38	15.8
	Schools	24	10.0
	Friends/Peers	16	6.7
	Others	6	2.5
Total		240	100.0

Source: *Authors' work, 2025*

Environmental Attitude Assessment

Environmental attitude assessment of the youths in Ogbomoso is given in table 2. The study revealed that 44.6% of respondents are extremely concerned about the environment, 49.6% are concerned while 5.8% are somewhat concerned about the environment. Data on the importance of protecting the environment revealed that 73.3% and 25% of the respondents stated that it is extremely important and important respectively to protect the environment to ensure sustainability. Only 2% claimed it is somewhat important to protect the environment. In addition, 54.6% of the respondents agreed strongly and 37.1% agreed that their actions can make a different in the environment. 8% of the respondents are indecisive about this notion.

Table 2: Environmental Attitude Assessment

Assessment		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Concern about the environment	Extremely concerned	107	44.6
	Concerned	119	49.6
	Somewhat concerned	14	5.8
	Not concerned	-	-
	Not concerned at all	-	-
How important it is to protect the environment	Extremely important	176	73.3
	Very important	60	25.0
	Somewhat important	4	1.7
	Not very important	-	-

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	Not important at all	-	-
Do you believe your actions can make a difference in addressing environmental issues	Strongly Agree	131	54.6
	Agree	89	37.1
	Undecided	20	8.3
	Disagree	-	-
	Strongly disagree	-	-
Total			

Source: *Authors' work, 2025*

Sustainable Consumption Behaviours

From figure 2 showing the engagement in sustainable consumption behaviour of youths in Ogbomoso, 32.1% and 35.4% stated respectively that they always and often purchase goods/products labelled as environmentally friendly, sustainable or green. 26.7% sometimes do this while 5.8% rarely purchase this kind of goods/products. More so, while 8.8% and 28.3% respectively always and often take into consideration the environmental impact of their daily activities, 14.2% and 26.7% rarely and never does. The respondents who sometimes do this accounted for 22.1%.

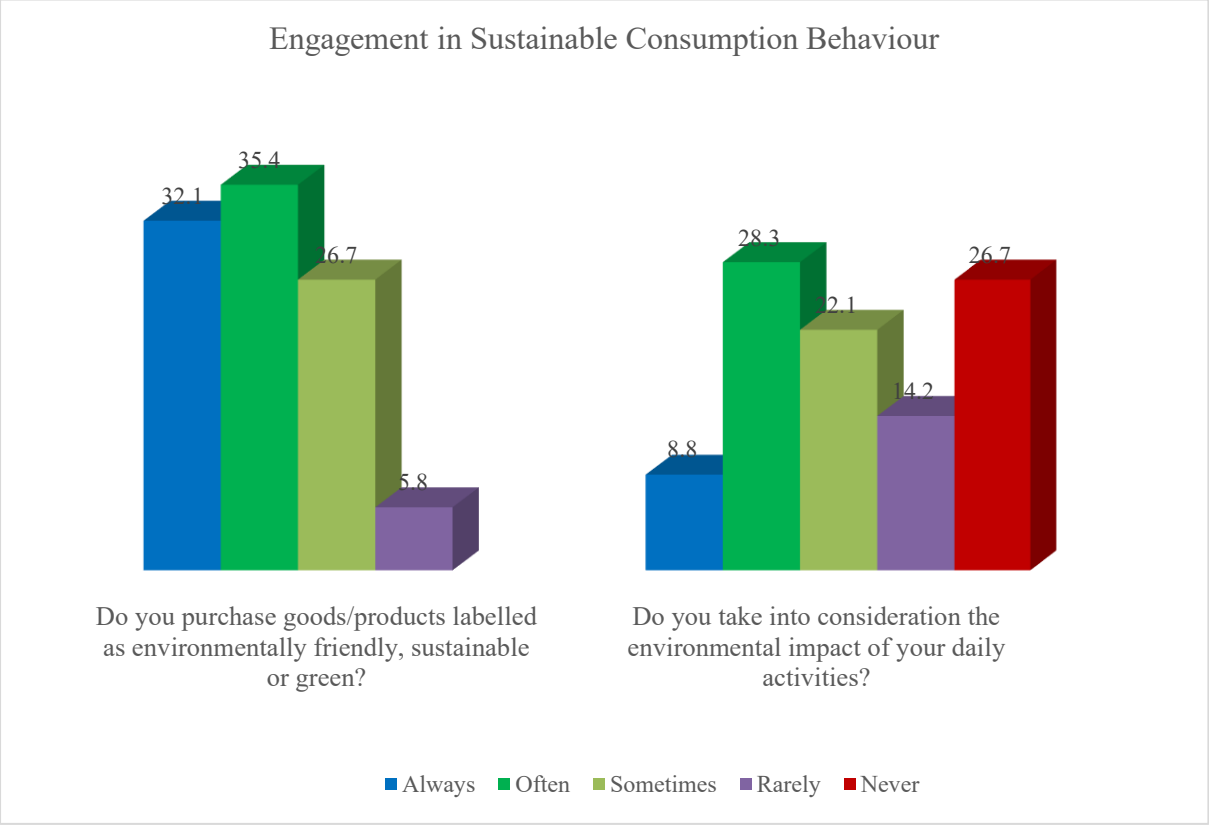

Figure 2: Engagement in Sustainable Consumption Behaviour

Source: *Authors' work, 2025*

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Looking at the behavioural practices as related to consumption behaviour (table 3), no food wastage has the highest mean value of 4.51. This was closely followed by making informed purchases such as buying only what is needed (4.35), reduced energy consumption such as switching off bulbs during the day (4.35) and walking or using public transportation (4.33). Others are: buying locally made products (4.14), buying product labeled as organic, eco-friendly, sustainable or environmentally-friendly (3.95) and recycling such as reusing plastic bottles, plates, nylons etc. (3.77). Composting of organic waste ranked the least with a mean value of 3.53.

Table 3: Sustainable Consumption Behavioural Practices

S/N	Sustainable consumption behaviours	Always F/%	Often F/%	Sometimes F/%	Rarely F/%	Never F/%	Mean
1.	No food wastage	152/63.3	58/24.4	30/12.5	-	-	4.51
2.	Making informed purchases such as buying only what I need	128/53.3	72/30.0	36/15.0	4/1.7	-	4.35
3.	Buying product labeled as organic, eco-friendly, sustainable or environmentally-friendly	87/36.3	73/30.4	62/25.8	18/7.5	-	3.95
4.	Recycling such as reusing plastic bottles, plates, nylons etc.	84/35.0	64/26.7	63/26.3	11/4.6	18/7.5	3.77
5.	Walking or using public transportation	141/58.8	50/20.8	37/15.4	12/5.0	-	4.33
6.	Reduced energy consumption such as switching off bulbs during the day	144/60.0	39/16.3	53/22.1	4/1.7	-	4.35
7.	Buying locally made products	98/40.8	78/32.5	64/26.7	-	-	4.14
8.	Composting of organic waste	44/18.3	84/35.0	79/32.9	21/8.8	12/5.0	3.53

Source: *Authors' work, 2025.*

Relationship between Environmental Knowledge and Attitudes and Sustainable Consumption Behaviour

In order to ascertain the relationship between environmental knowledge and attitudes and sustainable consumption behaviour among youths in Ogbomoso, linear regression model was used. The dependent variable is: purchase of goods/products labelled as environmentally friendly, sustainable or green. The independent variables are: knowledge of environmental issues and concern about the environment. The model summary, ANOVA and Coefficients of the linear regression are presented in tables 4, 5 and 6.

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Table 4: Model summary for environmental knowledge and attitudes and sustainable consumption behaviour

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.125[a]	.016	.007	.902

Source: *Authors' work, 2025.*

The model summary as shown in table 4 gives a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.125. This indicates that there is a weak correlation between environmental knowledge and environmental attitudes and sustainable consumption behaviour. The correlation coefficient of determination (R^2) with the 0.016 indicates that only 1.6% of the variation in sustainable consumption behaviour are attributable to environmental knowledge and attitude.

Table 5: ANOVA for Environmental knowledge and attitudes and sustainable consumption behaviour

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.062	2	1.531	1.880	.155[b]
	Residual	193.001	237	.814		
	Total	196.062	239			

Source: *Authors' work, 2025.*

From the ANOVA (table 5), the relationship between environmental knowledge and attitude and sustainable consumption behaviour is not statistically significant (F = 1.531, p = 1.880). This indicates that the combination of environmental knowledge and environmental attitude does not significantly predict sustainable consumption behaviour.

Table 6: Coefficient for Environmental knowledge and attitudes and sustainable consumption behaviour

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.240	.534		6.069	.000
	Knowledge of environmental issues	-.024	.063	-.025	-.382	.703
	How concerned are you about environmental issues?	.179	.099	.118	1.803	.073

Source: *Authors' work, 2025.*

From the coefficients of the regression analysis shown in table 6, environmental knowledge has a negative but significant impact on sustainable consumption behaviour (B = -0.024, p < 0.05). This indicates that possessing higher environmental knowledge of environmental issues does not necessarily translate to sustainable consumption behaviour. Environmental attitude has a positive but weak significant impact on sustainable consumption behaviour (B = 0.179,

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p > 0.05) which indicates that environmental attitude can translate to sustainable consumption behaviour, only if other factors that influence sustainable consumption behaviour are favourable.

Relationship between Demographic Characteristics and Sustainable Consumption Behaviour

The relationship between demographic characteristics and sustainable consumption behaviour was examined using bivariate correlation. The result is shown in table 7. The correlation analysis revealed that a significant negative relationship exists between age and sustainable consumption behaviour ($r = -0.267$, $p < 0.05$, $N = 240$). This means that as age increases, the possibility of engaging in sustainable consumption behaviour decreases. Invariably, younger individuals are more inclined to engage in sustainable consumption behaviour than older individuals.

Gender has a positive correlation with sustainable consumption behaviour ($r = 0.178$, $p < 0.05$, $N = 240$). This suggests that one gender (females) is more inclined to engage in sustainable consumption behaviour more than the other gender (male). This is further substantiated with the 29 (48.3%) of the 60 female respondents who always engages in sustainable consumption behaviour. Only 48(26.7%) of the 180 male respondents always engage in sustainable consumption behaviour.

Occupation has a positive correlation with sustainable consumption behaviour ($r = 0.162$, $p < 0.05$, $N = 240$). This indicates that as employment status increases, the possibility of engaging in sustainable consumption behaviour also increases. This is due to financial freedom which can be attributed to an increase in employment status. Marital status has an insignificant negative correlation with consumption behaviour ($r = -0.024$, $p < 0.05$, $N = 240$). This means that marital status does not have any relationship with sustainable consumption behaviour. Similarly, educational level has a positive but insignificant correlation with sustainable consumption behaviour ($r = 0.109$, $p < 0.05$, $N = 240$). This implies that higher educational level does not indicate engagement in sustainable consumption behaviour.

Table 7: Relationship between Demographic Characteristics and Sustainable Consumption Behaviour

Demographic Variables	Pearson Correlation	Significance (2-tailed)	N
Age	-0.267	0.000	240
Gender	0.178	0.006	240
Occupation	0.162	0.012	240
Marital Status	-0.024	0.712	240
Educational Level	0.109	0.092	240

Source: *Authors' work, 2025*.

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DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings on environmental knowledge revealed that a little more than half (53.3%) of the respondents have some form of education or training on environmental issues, hence, 55.5% of them stated they possess significant knowledge about environmental issues while 37.9% of them only have basic environmental knowledge. This is reflected in the environmental issues they are most familiar with. Majority of them are conversant with: pollution (land, water and air), poor management of wastes and climate change. This finding is consistent with the findings of the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development and National Bureau of Statistics (2021) where erosion was the predominant environmental concern reported, followed by pollution (air and water) and inadequate waste management as the second and third concerns, respectively. The spatial disparity in environmental issues indicates that in South West Nigeria, where this study is situated, air pollution is more prevalent, which this study also corroborated. This finding is also consistent with Morakinyo *et al.,* (2025) who found out that pollution and waste management are the two dominant environmental issues familiar with by students. Pollution and waste management contributes to greenhouse gas emissions which fuels climate change.

Research has shown that young individuals, especially those belonging to Generation Z are history's most climate-concerned generation (Pradeep & Pradeep, 2023; Polie, 2021; Wang, 2021). Despite that young people are considered environmentally aware, environmental knowledge among youths in Ogbomoso is not widespread. Therefore, more than half of the respondents are not familiar with deep environmental issues such as global warming and biodiversity loss. Morakinyo *et al.,* (2025) attributed the inability to recognise complex environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss and depletion of ecosystem resources to insufficient environmental knowledge. Moreover, the majority of the respondents only sometimes seek out information on environmental issues while only about one-third of them are truly invested in knowing more about the environment. For these people, social media is often their source of environmental information. This is because today's youth grew up with smartphones and social media at their fingertips (European Commission, 2020). Thus, most of the environmental information they have is not from formal education but from the media (United Nations, 2003).

The findings on the environmental attitudes of the young people showed that all of them are concerned about the environment, although their level of concern varies. Studies have identified that understanding the existence of environmental issues is necessary to be concerned about the environment (Marquart-Pyatt, 2018; Franzen & Vogl, 2013; Franzen & Meyer, 2010). Thus, Sukresna & Mikina (2024) observed that individual consumers are now more worried of the environmental consequences of their spending patterns as they become more cognisant of the environmental harm inflicted by the materials used in everyday items (Kumar *et al.,* 2021). The implication of this is that young people are more capable at choosing goods that are sustainable (Kanchanapibul *et al.,* 2013). All of the respondents also indicated that protecting the environment is important to them. Because of this, the majority of them believe their actions can make a difference in addressing environmental issues. These findings revealed a positive environmental attitude by the youths in Ogbomoso and further emphasised awareness of the growing impact of unsustainable consumption on the environment. This further agrees with Noor *et al.,* (2017) who identified that a growing number of consumers are realising how important environmental sustainability is.

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The positive environmental attitudes of the respondents are the reason why the majority often purchase goods/products labeled as environmentally friendly, sustainable or green. Consumer demand for sustainable products has increased as a result of environmental concerns (Kanchanapibul *et al.,* 2013). Jang *et al.,* (2011) noted that the emergence of new environmental ethics as a result of this circumstance has raised people's awareness and profoundly altered their consumption patterns. Studies have identified the popularity of sustainable products in Nigeria as a result of consumers' growing environmental awareness and concerns and their demands for businesses to use more sustainable processes and products (Anjorin *et al.,* 2024; Adama & Okeke, 2024; Emeka-Okoli, *et al.,* 2024; Igbinenikaro, Adekoya & Etukudoh, 2024; Oke *et al.,* 2023). However, the majority reported they do not often take into consideration the environmental impacts of their daily activities. This agrees with Noor *et al.,* (2017) who identified that some consumers disregard the impact of their irresponsible consumption behaviour on economic and social growth

An attempt was made to look at sustainable consumption behaviour practices of the youths in Ogbomoso in regard to their ethical environmental commitment, consideration and promotion of sustainable goods and activities (Anjorin *et al.,* 2024; Vieira *et al.,* 2020; Kanchanapibul *et al.,* 2013; Jang *et al.,* 2011). More so, sustainable consumption is more than just buying and using sustainable items; it also refers to a shift in lifestyle (e.g., avoiding excessive consumption), focus on the coming years, and duty to future generations (Dimitrova, Ilieva & Angelova, 2022). The dominant practices are ensuring no food wastage, making informed purchases such as buying only what is needed and reducing energy consumption such as switching off bulbs during the day. These practices are described in Wang *et al.,* (2014) where sustainable consumption" encompasses a number of important topics, including addressing needs, improving quality of life, enhancing the adoption of renewable energy sources, raising resource efficiency, minimising waste, adopting a life-cycle approach, and accounting for the social dimensions.

More so, looking at these sustainable practices revealed that the activities are closely related to the environmental issues identified by the respondents. These are pollution, poor management of wastes and climate change. Understanding the existence of environmental issues is necessary to be concerned about the environment (Marquart-Pyatt, 2018; Franzen & Vogl, 2013; Franzen & Meyer, 2010). Thus, this finding is consistent with Ukenna & Nkamnebe (2017) who identified that waste management/reduction and sustainable purchasing decisions are both the main ways that sustainability tendencies emerge in Nigeria.

Findings on the relationship between environmental knowledge and attitudes and sustainable consumption behaviour of youth in Ogbomoso showed that the relationship is weak indicating that only 1.6% of the variation in sustainable consumption behaviour are attributable to environmental knowledge and attitude. More so, the relationship between environmental knowledge and attitude and sustainable consumption behaviour is not statistically significant which indicates that the combination of environmental knowledge and environmental attitude does not significantly predict sustainable consumption behaviour of youths in Ogbomoso. This finding is contrary to past studies that identified a buyer's knowledge and attitudes are the main elements influencing their sustainable behaviours (Andruszkiewicz *et al.,* 2023; Zhao *et al.,* 2014).

Independently, studies have shown that environmental knowledge (Cong-Doanh, Gadomska-Lila and Thi Loan, 2021; Gkargkavouzi *et al.,* 2019; Otto & Pensini, 2017; Barber *et al.,* 2009;

Article DOI: 10.52589/AJESD-ECESUGVS
DOI URL: https://doi.org/10.52589/AJESD-ECESUGVS

Flamm, 2009) and environmental attitudes (Anjorin *et al.,* 2024; Pradeep & Pradeep, 2023; Ukenna, Idoko & Ogbari, 2018) influences sustainable consumption behaviour. However, findings from this study showed that possessing high environmental knowledge of environmental issues does not necessarily translate to sustainable consumption behaviour ($B = 0.179$, $p > 0.05$). While environmental attitudes have a positive impact on sustainable consumption behaviour, the influence is weak and not statistically strong ($B = 0.179$, $p > 0.05$). The findings of this study are therefore consistent with studies that found out that knowledge of environmental issues does not always lead to more sustainable purchase practices (Vainio & Paloniemi, 2014; Wilsdon *et al.,* 2005). On the contrary, similar to Sukresna & Mikina (2024), environmental awareness stands out as a particularly prominent single predictor of sustainable consumption behaviour among young people. This is with the provision that other relevant factors, including price, social peers, and environmental conditions, are favourable (Kiba-Janjak *et al.,* 2022; Suki, 2016; Maniatis, 2016; Zsóka *et al.,* 2013; Ozaki, 2011).

Studies have examined the relationship between demographic characteristics and sustainable consumption behaviour. Research has shown that demographic factors, such as age, gender, income, education level, and so on, influence sustainable consumer intention and/or sustainable consumption behaviour (Bhutto *et al*., 2021; Sheoran & Kumar, 2022). In this study, gender and occupation both show a positive correlation with sustainable consumption behaviour ($r = -0.267$ and $r = 0.162$ respectively). The study found out that being female and being employed are significant determinants of sustainable consumption behaviour. While this finding is contrary to Arthur *et al.,* (2020) who found less engagement in sustainable consumption behaviour among females in UAE, it is consistent with (Hedlund, 2011) who established that financial capability is a reason for engaging in consumption behaviour. Being employed gives young people the disposable income (Frank & Chong, 2002) and the financial freedom to purchase sustainable products

More so, the significant negative correlation ($r = -0.267$) that exists between age and sustainable consumption behaviour indicates that younger individuals are more inclined to engage in sustainable consumption behaviour. This further agrees with past studies that have identified sustainable consumption behaviour with younger people, particularly Generation Z (Sukresna & Mikina, 2024; Andruszkiewicz *et al*., 2023; Pradeep & Pradeep, 2023; Polie, 2021; Wang, 2021). Education showed a positive but insignificant correlation with sustainable consumption behaviour ($r = 0.109$) while marital status has an insignificant negative correlation with consumption behaviour ($r = -0.024$).

CONCLUSIONS

This study has investigated the impact of environmental knowledge and attitude on sustainable consumption behaviours of youth in Ogbomoso, Nigeria. Studies have shown that the youth have the capacity to drive the achievement of sustainability goals because they do not only have the dedication to moral and ethical environmental ideals, they also have the demography and the resources to pull this through. This study has discovered that environmental knowledge among youths in the study area is not widespread as most of them are only conversant with popular environmental issues such as pollution, poor management of wastes and climate change. While this is so, only one-third of the respondents are truly invested in environmental subjects and usually rely on social media for their environmental information. This study

Article DOI: 10.52589/AJESD-ECESUGVS
DOI URL: https://doi.org/10.52589/AJESD-ECESUGVS

further identified a growing positive attitude for environmental protection as the majority believes their actions can make a difference in addressing environmental issues. This reality has altered their consumption patterns as they often purchase goods/products labeled as environmentally friendly, sustainable or green. This situation has led to an increase in demands for businesses to use more sustainable processes and products (Anjorin *et al.,* 2024; Adama & Okeke, 2024, Emeka-Okoli, *et al.,* 2024, Igbinenikaro, Adekoya & Etukudoh, 2024; Oke *et al.,* 2023).

However, sustainable consumption is more than just buying and using sustainable items but also refers to a major shift in lifestyle and a moral duty to future generations (Dimitrova, Ilieva & Angelova, 2022). The majority of the youths do not often take into consideration the environmental impacts of their daily activities. Although people most times ensure no food wastage, make informed purchases such as buying only what is needed and reduce energy consumption such as switching off bulbs during the day; however, the study found out that sustainable consumption in the study area is not optimum. The relationship between environmental knowledge and attitudes and sustainable consumption behaviour of youth in Ogbomoso is weak. The combination of environmental knowledge and environmental attitude do not significantly predict sustainable consumption behaviour of youths in Ogbomoso. This finding contrasts past studies that identified buyer's knowledge and attitudes are the main elements influencing their sustainable behaviours (Andruszkiewicz *et al.,* 2023; Zhao *et al.,* 2014).

Independently, this study discovered that possessing high environmental knowledge of environmental issues does not necessarily translate to sustainable consumption behaviour. This is consistent with past research (Vainio & Paloniemi, 2014; Wilsdon *et al.,* 2005). Although, environmental attitude has a positive impact on sustainable consumption behaviour in the study area, the influence is weak and not statistically strong to predict sustainable consumption behaviour unless other factors such as price, social peers, and environmental conditions, are favourable (Kiba-Janjak *et al.,* 2022; Suki, 2016; Maniatis, 2016; Zsóka *et al.,* 2013; Ozaki, 2011). Lastly, the study found that only gender (female) and occupation showed a positive association with sustainable consumption behaviour. The study also confirms the inverse relationship between age and sustainable consumption behaviour by revealing that younger people, particularly, Generation Z are more predisposed to engage in sustainable consumption behaviour (Sukresna & Mikina, 2024; Andruszkiewicz *et al.,* 2023; Pradeep & Pradeep, 2023; POLIE, 2021; WANG, 2021).

This study recommends policy intervention including the delivery of education for sustainable development (ESD) while offering industries incentives to manufacture sustainable products and consumers favourable atmosphere to purchase and consumer sustainable products.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First, there is a need for policy intervention. Government need to revise existing environmental laws to reinforce environmentally responsible behaviour, especially to deter unsustainable practices and encourage adopting a more environmentally friendly alternative (Khan, Chongcharoen & Ulhaq, 2020; Afroz *et al.,* 2016). This policy redress should incorporate ESD and incentivise the production and consumption of sustainable products. There is a need to implement a well-structured education for sustainable development programmes both formally

Article DOI: 10.52589/AJESD-ECESUGVS
DOI URL: https://doi.org/10.52589/AJESD-ECESUGVS

and informally to further enlighten the people about the environment and consequences of unsustainable practices (Saari *et al.,* 2021; Wijekoon & Sabri, 2021; Khan, Chongcharoen & Ulhaq, 2020). UNESCO (2022) noted that ESD is a vital enabler to realise the 17 SDGs. Thus, to influence more positive concern and attitude for environment and achievement of the SDGs, community projects which include local environmental impacts should be part of the ESD initiatives. Young people should be encouraged to volunteer for sustainability NGOs to gain practical experience on sustainability issues. Moreover, since young people mostly receive environmental information on social media, sustainability campaigns and practices including the promotion of sustainability lifestyles and behaviours should be launched on social media using influencers and celebrities. These sustainability narratives should be tailored to local culture, values and practices in order to foster acceptability (Pradeep & Pradeep, 2023).

As identified in this study, there is a need to ensure the circumstances that surround sustainable products are favourable to the manufacturers and consumers, thus, practical incentives should be used to promote them. The government should incentivise companies to adopt sustainable practices and produce more sustainable goods. This may include subsidies, tax incentives and preferential loans and financing, carbon pricing and credits among others. Companies should also engage in vigorous digital marketing using a combination of paid, earned and owned media to promote these products. This may include offering discounts, providing reward systems for sustainable purchases and subsidising prices of sustainable products. Buying sustainable products also depends on the availability of such products, thus, companies should invest heavily in their production.

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