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Sustainable Consumption in the Nigerian Economy

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable consumption involves using goods and services to minimize environmental harm while fostering social and economic responsibility. This research explored awareness, adoption drivers, barriers, and strategies for sustainable consumption among 133 participants through structured questionnaires (primary data) and secondary sources such as books, journals, newspapers, and online materials. Data were analyzed using frequency tables, simple percentages, and chi-square tests to test hypotheses. Key findings reveal 72% awareness of eco-friendly products, 65% considering environmental impacts in purchases, and 48% facing access challenges to sustainable options. Additionally, 70% endorsed green consumption policies. While awareness and attitudes are positive, practical obstacles hinder consistent behaviors. The study concludes that collaborative actions from consumers, policymakers, and businesses are essential to improve accessibility and decision-making. Recommendations include providing clear product environmental information to consumers and encouraging businesses to ensure transparent, affordable, sustainable alternatives.

Keywords: Sustainable Consumption, Environmental Impact, Adoption Factors, Challenges, Interventions, Eco-Friendly Products, Consumer Awareness, Nigeria, etc.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable consumption refers to the use of goods and services in ways that meet present needs while minimizing the depletion of natural resources, reducing pollution, and ensuring that future generations can also meet their needs (UNEP, 2010). It involves responsible decision-making by consumers, businesses, and governments to balance environmental, social, and economic considerations. Sustainable consumption goes beyond individual behavior, encompassing production processes, marketing strategies, and policy frameworks that encourage environmentally friendly and socially responsible practices (Jackson, 2019).

In recent years, global attention to sustainable consumption has increased due to the rising threats of climate change, environmental degradation, and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. Consumers are now being encouraged to adopt eco-friendly products, reduce waste, and make informed choices that minimize environmental impact (Peattie & Crane, 2005).

In the Nigerian context, sustainable consumption is gradually gaining attention, particularly in urban centers such as Lagos State. Researchers contend that rapid population growth, urbanization, and industrialization have increased the strain on natural resources, creating an urgent need for responsible consumption practices (Jackson, 2019; UNEP, 2010). Studies reported that while awareness of eco-friendly products and environmentally responsible behaviors is growing, practical implementation remains low due to economic, infrastructural, and informational constraints (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006).

Sustainable consumption (SC) is widely considered the driver of sustainable development (Abdulrazak & Quoquab, 2018; Barth et al., 2014; Bulut et al., 2017; Quoquab et al., 2019). The notion of SC is in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12, which envisages the attainment of sustainable consumption and production patterns (UN, 2016). It is argued that unless consumers adopt sustainable consumption, nations' sustainable development will be hindered (Farr, 2018; Hess, 2013). Different authors have defined sustainable consumption differently. However, it generally suggests a consideration of basic human needs and an avoidance of excessive consumption. It also focuses on caring for environmental welfare and fulfilling the needs of future generations. In addition, it also considers quality of life over material standards of living (UNEP, 2010). Apart from the government or policymakers, consumers also play a major role in enhancing the sustainable development motto (Chekima et al., 2016; Kapoor & Dwivedi, 2020).

Consumption is central to all production so that individuals and households can have a quality of life (Haron et al., 2005). However, in the process of meeting the ever-growing consumer demand, the earth's vital resources are shrinking at an alarming rate (Alisat & Reimer, 2015; Bogueva et al., 2017). It is therefore incumbent on individuals to adopt "sustainable consumption behavior (SCB)" and to make a conscious effort to avoid overconsumption and care-free consumption, which can exert harmful effects on the environment. While the need for sustainable consumption is widely recognized by scholars, policymakers, and practitioners around the world, research in this area is still in its infancy, and many aspects remain to be covered.

The study aims to determine sustainable consumption in the Nigerian economy. In achieving this aim, the following specific objectives were laid out: [1] To promote the reuse and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste. [2] To encourage companies to incorporate social, cultural, and environmental dimensions in their production and management processes and better manage the whole life cycle of products. [3] To ensure the right to information and promotion of environmental labeling and certification.

The study came up with research questions so as to be able to ascertain the above-stated objectives. The specific research questions for the study are stated: [1] Has the Sustainable Consumption concept emerged? [2] Is the notion of sustainable consumption to be conceptualized in a holistic manner? [3] What are the major facets of sustainable consumption? [4] What theories are being considered in relation to this phenomenon? [5] What are the predictors of sustainable consumption? [6] What are the outcomes of sustainable consumption? [7] What are the mediators/moderators that are being considered in relation to this concept?

In order to pursue the objective of this study, the following generalized statements have been designed to guide and aid in obtaining the results for the experiment to be conducted. For this work, the null hypothesis will be represented with H0, while the alternative hypothesis will be represented with H1.

H0: Sustainable Consumption does not promote the reuse and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste.

H1: Sustainable Consumption promotes the reuse of and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste.

The results of this study will inform policymakers in crafting robust policies and regulations to advance sustainable consumption, including incentives for eco-friendly goods and structures for environmental education. It will also aid businesses and organizations by highlighting the value of green marketing, sustainable manufacturing, and openness in corporate sustainability initiatives.

2. METHODOLOGY

The variables were analyzed using percentages and simple tables. This method facilitates inferences from observations and is suitable for testing research propositions to support generalization. The propositions were assessed via descriptive statistical techniques, with detailed percentages utilized for clear interpretation and presentation.

2.1. Population of Study

The population of a study is a group of persons or aggregate items, things the researcher is interested in getting information about, to determine the sustainable consumption in the Nigerian economy. A total of two hundred (200) respondents formed the population of the study.

A sample is the set of people or items that constitute part of a given population sampling. Due to the large size of the target population, the researcher used the Taro Yamani formula to arrive at the sample population of the study.

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

n: describes the sample size.

N: describes the total number of populations in the area.

e: describes maximum variability or margin of error = 0.09.

1: describes the probability of the event occurring.

$$n = \frac{200}{1+200(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{200}{1+200(0.0025)}$$

n= 200 / (1+0.5) = 200 / 1.5 = 133.

2.2. Validation of Research Instrument

The major research instrument used is the questionnaire. This was appropriately moderated. The respondents were administered the questionnaires to complete, with or without disclosing their identities. The questionnaire was designed to obtain sufficient and relevant information from the respondents.

The primary data contained information extracted from the questionnaires in which the respondents were required to give a specific answer to a question by ticking in front of the appropriate answer. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents; however, some respondents were asked the questions orally, and their responses were noted in the questionnaire. The questionnaires contained about 15 structured questions, which were divided into sections A and B.

2.3. Method of Data Collection

Data were collected from two main sources: primary and secondary.

Primary sources consist of materials gathered specifically for this study's purpose through statistical investigation. These can be obtained via surveys, observations, questionnaires, or experiments; the researcher employed the questionnaire method for this investigation.

Secondary sources, which include data from textbooks, journals, handbooks, and similar materials. These arise as byproducts of other purposes, such as administrative records, various unpublished works, and write-ups, which were also utilized.

2.4. Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was not an end in itself, but it served as a means to an end. The end being the use of the required data to understand the various situations it is with a view to making valuable recommendations and contributions. To this end, the data collected has to be analyzed for any meaningful interpretation to come out with some results. It is for this reason that the following methods were adopted in the research project for the analysis of the data collected.

For a comprehensive analysis of data collected, emphasis was laid on the use of absolute numbers, frequencies of responses, and percentages. Answers to the research questions were provided through the comparison of the percentage of workers' responses to each statement in the questionnaire related to any specified question being considered.

Frequency in this study refers to the arrangement of responses in order of magnitude or occurrence, while percentage refers to the arrangement of the responses in order of their proportion.

The simple percentage method is believed to be a straightforward, easy to interpret, and understandable method. The researcher, therefore, chooses the simple percentage as the method to use.

The percentage formula is shown as

% = f/N x 100/1

Where f = frequency of respondents' responses

N = Total Number of responses of the sample, 100 = Consistency in the percentage of respondents for each item contained in the questions.

2.5. Questionnaire Administration

Due to resource and time constraints, the research could not entertain a large number of people in case studies, in-depth interviews, and wider focus group discussions. Therefore, questionnaires were used to fill the gap and support the representative sample to address as many individuals as possible to help gather relevant firsthand information. Two different sets of questions were prepared: closed-ended and open-ended questions (Appendix A).

For those respondents who could not understand English, the questionnaire was prepared and translated into Amharic while asking them, so that the respondents could easily understand. The items of the questionnaires were classified based on the objectives of the study.

2.6. Statistical Analysis

Demographic study of the Sustainable Consumption in the Nigerian Economy was described using descriptive statistics, including percentages and frequencies. All analysis was conducted using SPSS version 11 software.

3. DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the data gathered from the field survey will be presented, analyzed, and interpreted based on responses from the completed questionnaires. The results will be summarized in tabular format for easy reference and analysis, while also addressing the study's research questions. Simple percentages were employed for the analysis.

3.1. Presentation and Analysis of Data

The data gathered from the respondents were analyzed in tabular format using simple percentages to facilitate a clear understanding. A total of 133 questionnaires were distributed, and all 133 were successfully returned, yielding a 100% response rate. This high return rate ensures robust representation of the sample's views on sustainable consumption awareness, adoption factors, challenges, and interventions.

3.2. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section describes the socio-demographic profile of the 133 respondents selected randomly from the study area. The characteristics examined include age, gender, and educational status.

QUESTION 1: What is your name?

Table 1. Response of the Respondent.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Filled	69	51.88	51.88
	Unfilled	64	48.12	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	

From the above table, it shows that 51.88% of the respondents filled the section, while 48.12% of the respondents didn't respond.

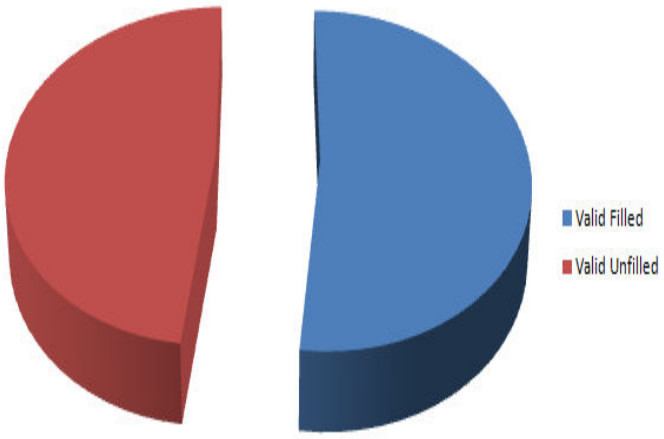

Figure 3.1. Response of the Respondent.

QUESTION 2: What is the gender distribution of the respondent?

Table 2. Gender Distribution of the Respondent.

Response		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	77	57.9	57.9
	Male	56	42.1	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	

From the above table, it shows that 57.9% of the respondents were female, while 42.1% of the respondents were male.

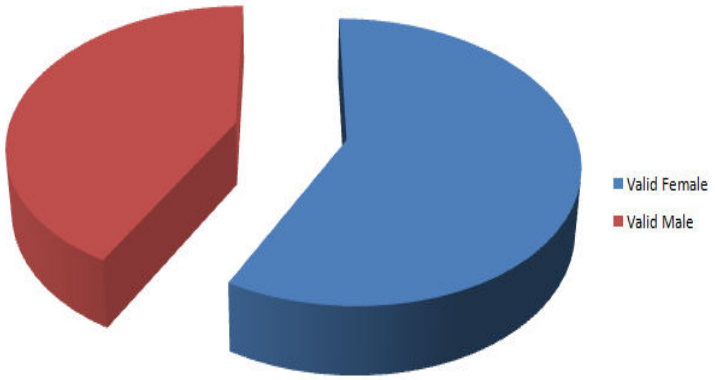

Figure 3.2. Gender Distribution of the Respondent.

QUESTION 3: What is the age of the Respondent?

Table 3. Age of Respondent.

Response		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	21-30	67	50.38%	50.38%
	31-40	41	30.83%	81.20%
	41-50	25	18.80%	100.00%
	Total	133	100.00%	

From the above table, it shows that 50.38% of the respondents were 21-30years, 30.83% of the respondents were 31-40years and 18.80% of the respondents were 41-50years.

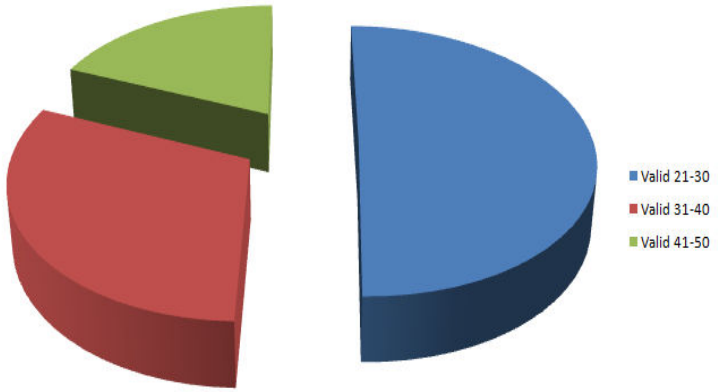

Figure 3.3. Age of Respondent.

QUESTION 4: What is the Marital Status?

Table 4. Marital Status.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Single	47	35.34%	35.34%
	Engaged	51	38.35%	73.68%
	Married	23	17.29%	90.98%
	Divorced	12	9.02%	100.00%
	Total	133	100.00%	

From the above table, it shows that 35.34% of the respondents were single, 38.35% of the respondents were engaged, 17.29% of the respondents were married, and 9.02% of the respondents were divorced.

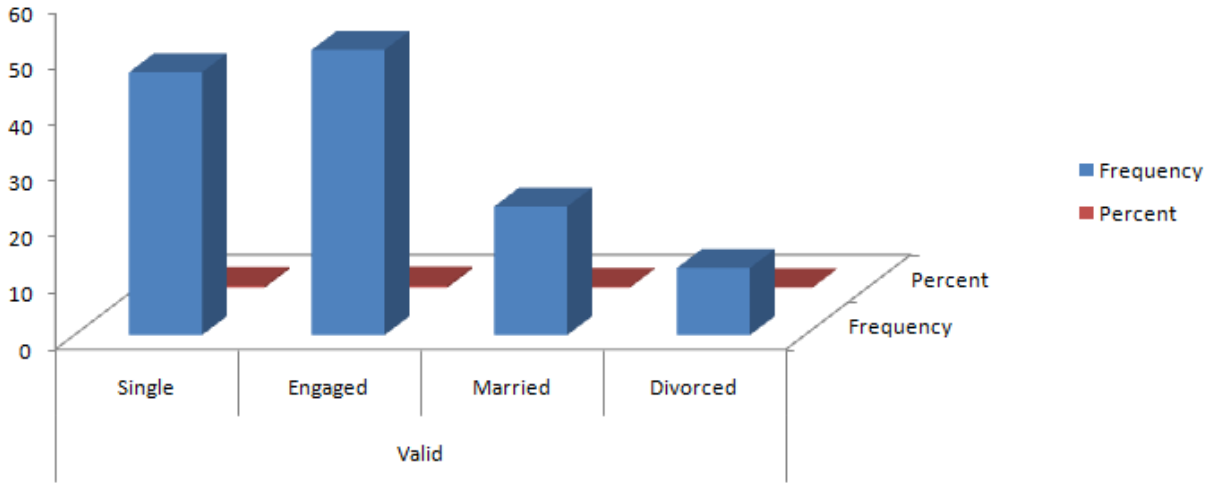

Figure 3.4. Marital Status.

QUESTION 5: What is the Religious Identity?

Table 5. Religious Identity.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Christian	79	59.40%	59.40%
	Muslim	31	23.31%	82.71%
	Others	23	17.29%	100.00%
	Total	133	100.00%	

From the above table, it shows that 59.40% of the respondents were Christian, 23.31% of the respondents were Muslim, 17.29% of the respondents didn't respond.

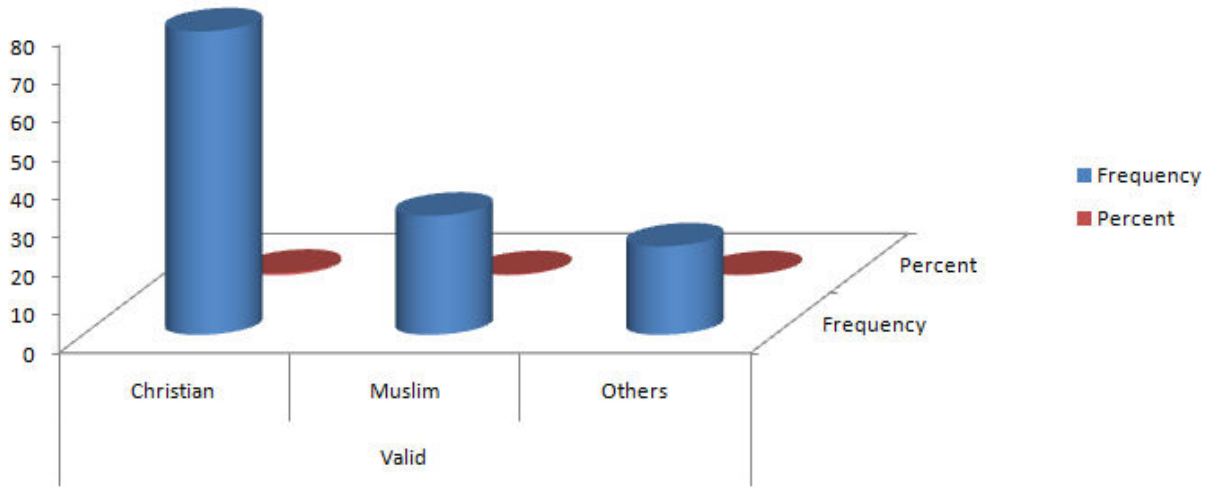

Figure 3.5. Religious Identity.

QUESTION 6: What is the Ethnicity (Ethnic Group)?

Table 6. Ethnicity.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Yoruba	37	27.82%	27.82%
	Hausa	31	23.31%	51.13%
	Igbo	45	33.83%	84.96%
	Others	20	15.04%	100.00%
	Total	133	100.00%	

From the above table, it shows that 27.82% of the respondents were from the Yoruba ethnicity, 23.31% of the respondents were from the Hausa ethnicity, 33.83% of the respondents were from the Igbo ethnicity, and 15.04% of other ethnic group respondents didn't respond to the question.

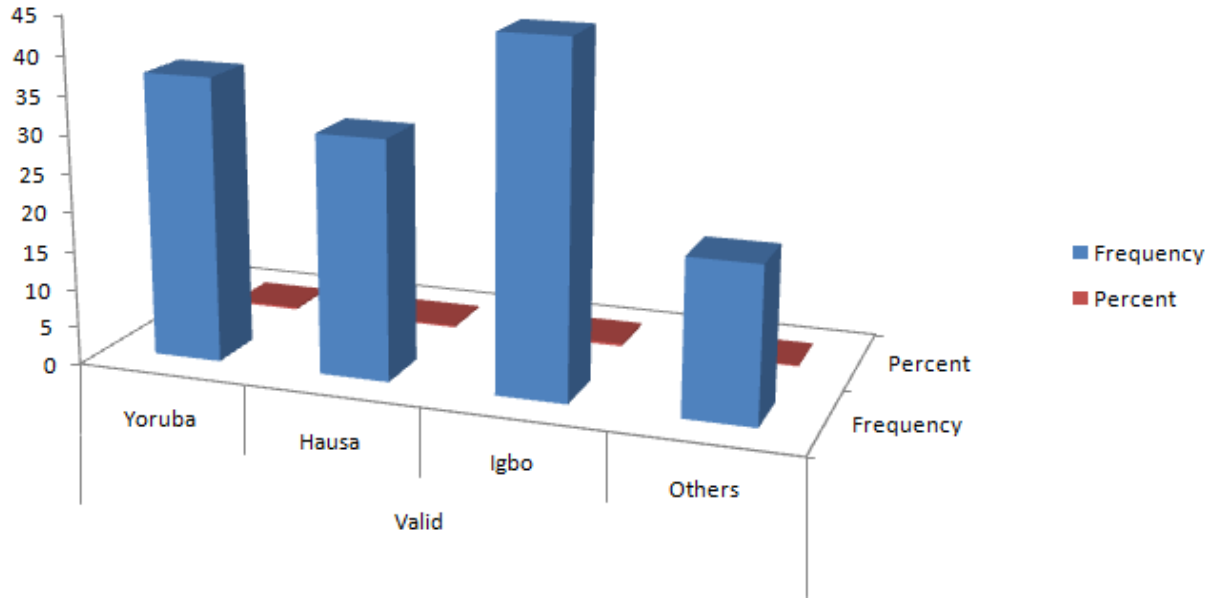

Figure 3.6. Ethnicity.

QUESTION 7: What is the Educational Status?

Table 7. Educational Status.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	BSC	21	15.79%	15.79%
	MSC	31	23.31%	39.10%
	PHD	23	17.29%	56.39%
	HND	20	15.04%	71.43%
	ND	26	19.55%	90.98%
	Others	12	9.02%	100.00%
	Total	133	100.00%	

From the above table, it shows that 15.79% of the respondents were BSC, 23.31% of the respondents were MSC, 17.29% of the respondents were PHD, 15.04% of the respondents were HND, 19.55% of the respondents were ND, and 9.02% of the respondents were others.

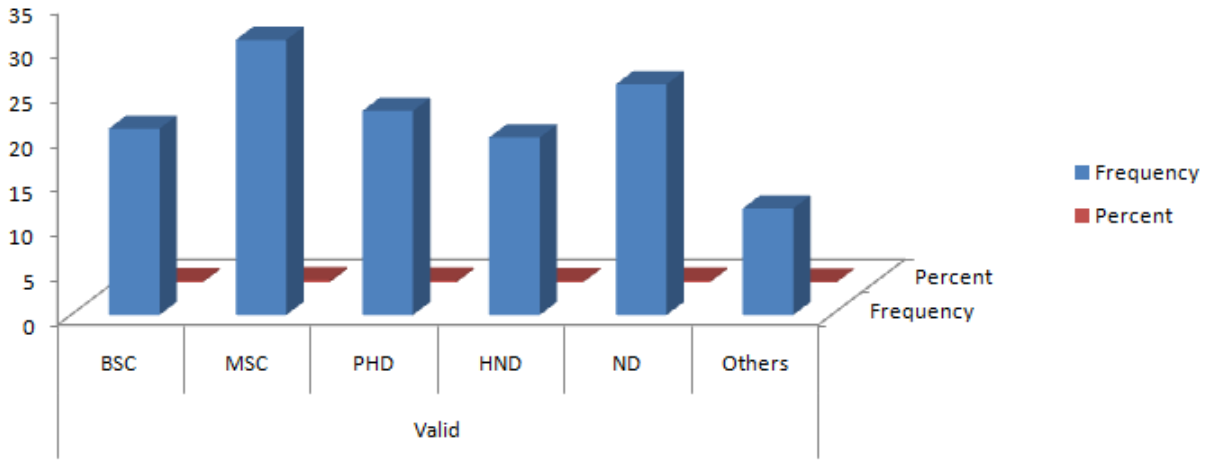

Figure 3.7. Educational Status.

3.3. Analysis of Research Questions

QUESTION 8: Has the Sustainable Consumption concept emerged?

Table 8. Response Of The Respondent.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Yes	90	67.7	67.7
	No	43	32.3	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	

From the above table, it shows that 67.7% of the respondents responded yes, while 32.3% of the respondents marked no.

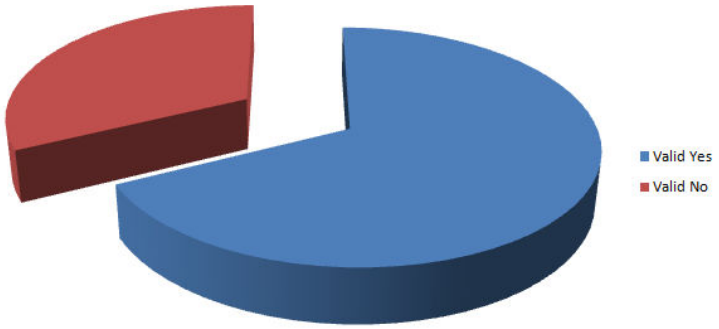

Figure 3.8. Response of the Respondent.

QUESTION 9: Is the notion of sustainable consumption to be conceptualized holistically?

Table 9. Response Of The Respondent.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Yes	59	44.4	44.4
	No	74	55.6	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	

From the above table, it shows that 44.4% of the respondents responded yes, while 55.6% of the respondents marked no.

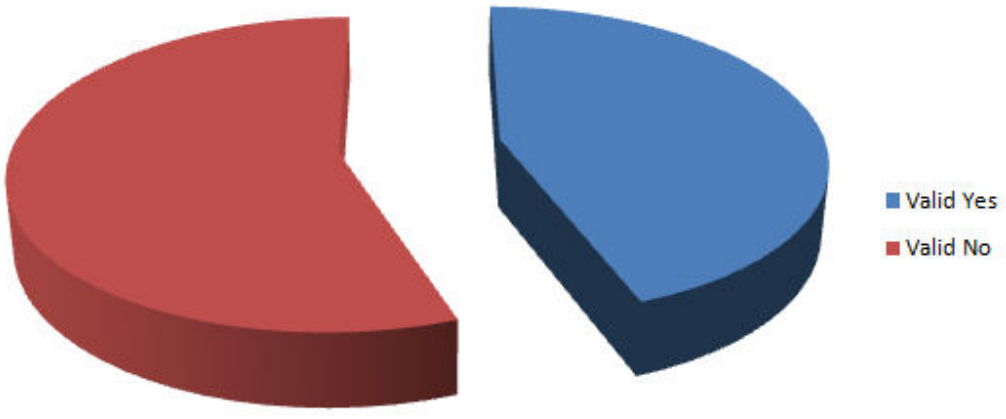

Figure 3.9. Response of the Respondent.

QUESTION 10: What are the major facets of sustainable consumption?

Table 10. Response of the Respondent.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Filled	90	67.7	67.7
	Unfilled	43	32.3	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	

From the above table, it shows that 67.7% of the respondents filled the section, while 32.3% of the respondents didn't respond.

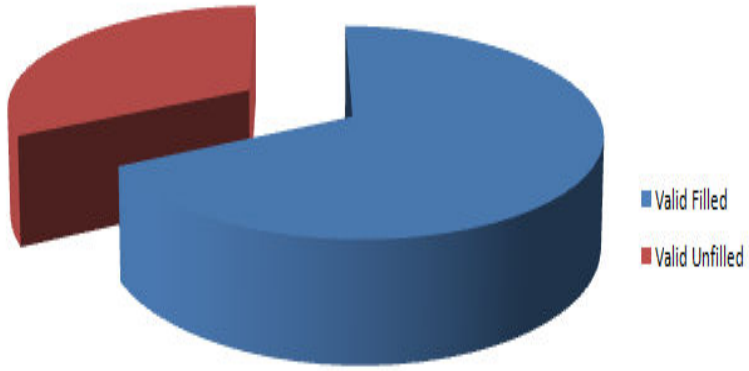

Figure 3.10. Response of the Respondent.

QUESTION 11: What theories are being considered in relation to this phenomenon?

Table 11. Response of the Respondent.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Filled	59	44.4	44.4
	Unfilled	74	55.6	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	

From the above table, it shows that 44.4% of the respondents filled the section, while 55.6% of the respondents didn't respond.

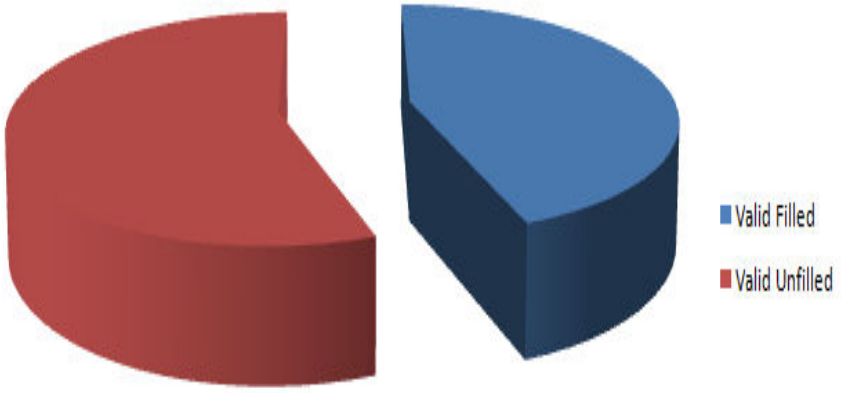

Figure 3.11. Response of the Respondent.

QUESTION 12: What are the predictors of sustainable consumption?

Table 12. Response of the Respondent.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Filled	63	47.4	47.4
	Unfilled	70	52.6	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	

From the above table, it shows that 47.4% of the respondents filled the section, while 52.6% of the respondents didn't respond.

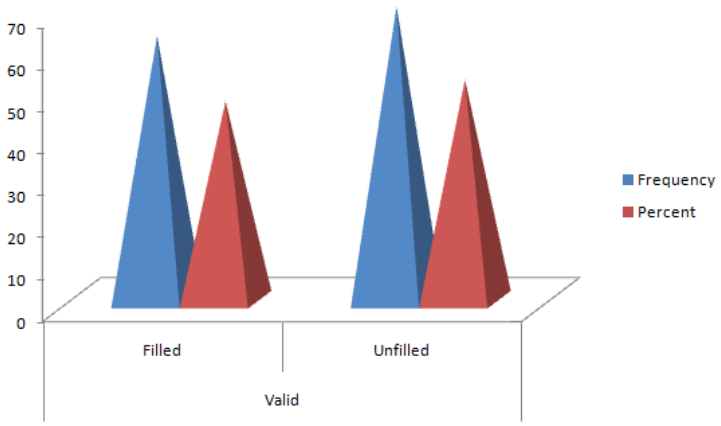

Figure 3.12. Response of the Respondent.

QUESTION 13: What are the outcomes of sustainable consumption?

Table 13. Response Of The Respondent.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Filled	80	60.2	60.2
	Unfilled	53	39.8	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	

From the above table, it shows that 60.2% of the respondents filled the section, while 39.8% of the respondents didn't respond.

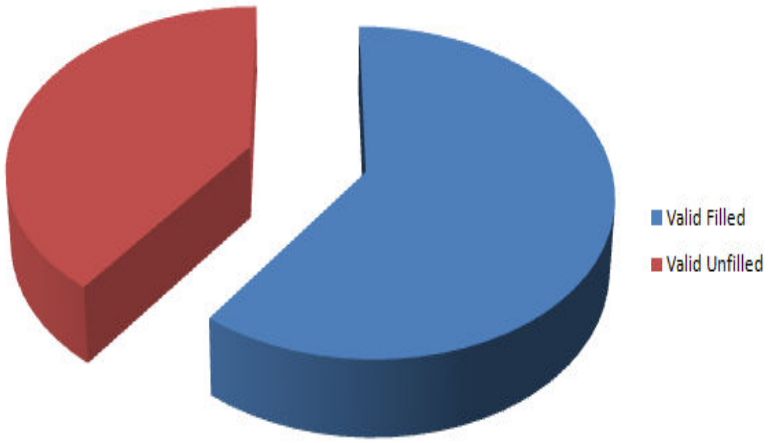

Figure 3.13. Response of the Respondent.

QUESTION 14: What are the mediators/moderators that are being considered in relation to this concept?

Table 14. Response Of The Respondent.

Response		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Filled	69	51.88	51.88
	Unfilled	64	48.12	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	

From the above table, it shows that 51.88% of the respondents filled the section, while 48.12% of the respondents didn't respond.

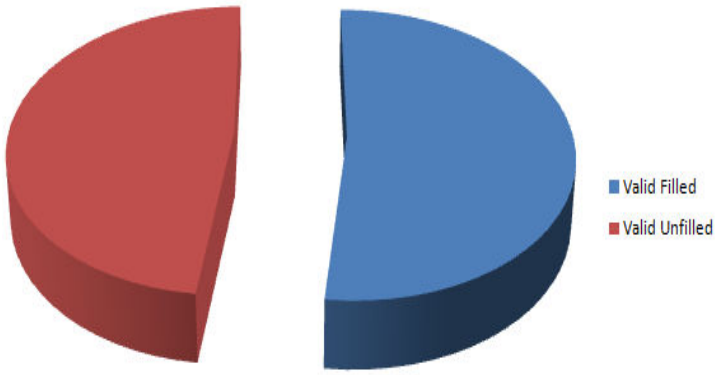

Figure 3.14. Response of the Respondent.

3.4. Test of Hypothesis

H0: Sustainable Consumption does not promote the reuse and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste.

H1: Sustainable Consumption promotes the reuse and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste.

Table 15. Sustainable Consumption does not promote the reuse and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste.

Response	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Agreed	40	33.3	6.8
strongly agreed	50	33.3	16.8
Disagreed	26	33.3	-7.3
strongly disagreed	17	33.3	-16.3
Total	**133**		

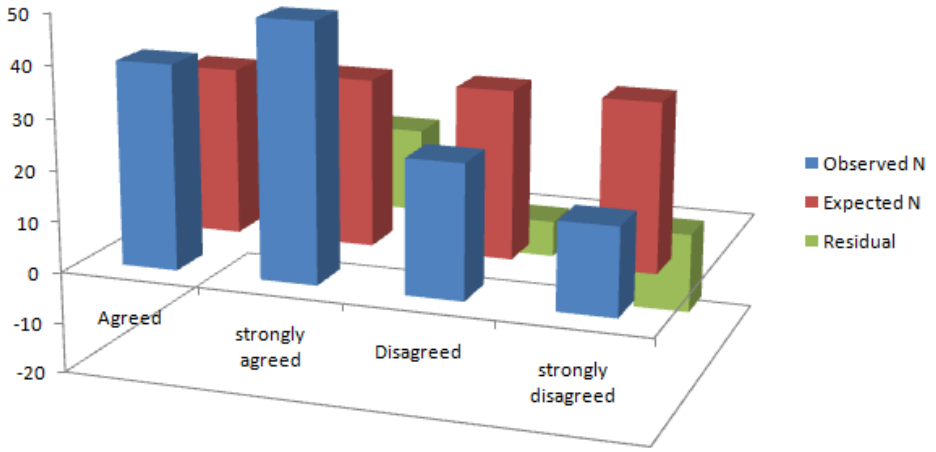

Figure 3.15. Sustainable Consumption does not promote the reuse and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste.

Table 16. Test Statistics.

	Sustainable Consumption does not promote the reuse and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste.
Chi-Square	19.331[a]
Df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 33.3.

Decision rule: The null hypothesis was accepted, which states that Sustainable Consumption does not promote the reuse of and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste, as the calculated value of 19.331 is greater than the critical value of 7.82.

Therefore, the alternate hypothesis is rejected, which states that Sustainable Consumption promotes the reuse of and recycling of packaging and products to reduce solid waste and hazardous waste.

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this study of Sustainable Consumption in the Nigerian Economy, findings from this study have demonstrated that there are significant relationships between these variables. The questionnaire administered to 133 respondents shows that 57.9% of the respondents were female while 42.1% of the respondents were male for gender distribution of the respondents. Age of Respondent from Table 4.2 shows that 50.38% of the respondents were 21-30years, 30.83% of the respondents were 31-40years and 18.80% of the respondents were 41-50years and Table 4.7 shows that 15.79% of the respondents were BSC, 23.31% of the respondents were MSC, 17.29% of the respondents were PHD, 15.04% of the respondents were HND, 19.55% of the respondents were ND, and 9.02% of the respondents were others. The study has succeeded in achieving all the stated objectives with reference to the administered questionnaire data received from respondents.

The outcome of this research reveals important insights into sustainable consumption patterns. The first research question examined the level of awareness and understanding of sustainable consumption practices. The data indicate that a significant proportion of participants demonstrated moderate to high awareness of core principles, frequently highlighting the importance of choosing environmentally friendly products, reducing waste, and supporting ethical businesses. This finding aligns with previous studies positing awareness as a crucial driver for sustainable behavior (Jackson, 2019; Thøgersen & Crompton, 2009). However, qualitative responses suggested this awareness was often broad rather than detailed, with fewer participants able to articulate specific certification labels or complex trade-offs. Despite this nuance, the prevalent awareness establishes a necessary precondition for exploring the more pronounced gap between intention and action, which is addressed by the second research question.

Building on the finding that awareness is generally high, the second research question focused on the factors influencing the adoption of sustainable consumption practices. The results indicate that personal values, environmental consciousness, and economic considerations are primary influencers. A key manifestation of this is the expressed willingness of many respondents to pay a premium for eco-friendly products, reflecting a conscious effort to balance cost with sustainability. This supports earlier findings by Vermeir and Verbeke (2006) on the role of ethical concerns and perceived quality. The data, however, illuminate a nuanced tension within the value-action gap. While economic constraints were cited as a limiting factor by some, the overarching trend suggests that consumers are increasingly prioritizing environmental impact, even when it involves a trade-off with convenience or marginal cost.

The third research question investigated the challenges hindering sustainable consumption practices. The survey data revealed that while awareness is high, practical implementation remains inconsistent due to limited availability of sustainable alternatives, lack of adequate information on product lifecycle impacts, and ingrained consumer habits.

Respondents often pointed to difficulties in verifying the authenticity of eco-labels or sustainable certifications, which complicate informed decision-making. These challenges are consistent with the broader literature that identifies gaps between environmental knowledge and actual behavior, often referred to as the "attitude-behavior gap" in sustainable consumption (Guagnano et al., 1995; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006).

The final research question examined the potential interventions that could enhance sustainable consumption among the population. According to the collected data, participants suggested improved labeling systems, awareness campaigns, and policy-driven incentives such as subsidies for eco-friendly products. Additionally, many respondents emphasized the importance of corporate responsibility and transparency in promoting sustainable practices. This resonates with findings from studies that highlight the role of regulatory frameworks and social marketing in facilitating consumer adoption of sustainable behaviors (Peattie & Crane, 2005).

Collectively, the findings from this research construct a holistic model of sustainable consumption, moving from individual cognition to systemic action. The study confirms that while individual awareness and ethical motivation provide a necessary starting point, they are insufficient on their own. The persistent intention-behavior gap is sustained by tangible market and informational failures. Consequently, participants intuitively point toward systemic, multi-level interventions as the necessary catalyst for change. This underscores a critical implication: advancing sustainable consumption requires an integrated strategy. Policymakers must create enabling environments through incentives and clear standards; businesses must prioritize genuine transparency and accessible, sustainable options; and educators/campaigners must design initiatives that bridge information gaps and promote new social norms. Future research should focus on testing the efficacy of these proposed interventions, particularly how policy, corporate, and social initiatives can be synergistically combined to effectively close the attitude-behavior gap and translate widespread environmental concern into consistent, mainstream sustainable practice.

5. CONCLUSION

The study on sustainable consumption concludes that fostering environmentally responsible consumer behavior is both necessary and achievable when awareness, accessibility, and supportive policies converge. The research aimed to examine the level of awareness, identify factors influencing adoption, assess challenges, and explore potential interventions for sustainable consumption. The findings indicate that while consumers generally possess a moderate to high awareness of sustainable practices and express a willingness to adopt eco-friendly behaviors, practical barriers such as limited availability of sustainable alternatives, economic constraints, and inadequate information continue to impede consistent adoption.

The study also demonstrates that personal values, environmental consciousness, and ethical considerations strongly shape consumption patterns, highlighting the role of intrinsic motivation in promoting sustainable behavior. Additionally, the research emphasizes that interventions such as improved labeling, awareness campaigns, policy incentives, and corporate transparency are critical in bridging the gap between knowledge and action.

APPENDIX A

"QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTRATION"

Survey Questionnaire

Research Title:	Sustainable Consumption in the Nigerian Economy
Objective:	To examine the Sustainable Consumption in the Nigerian economy
Target:	Nigeria

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