

# Analysis of the Complexities of the Attitude-Behaviour Relations: A Guide for Sustainable Consumption in Emerging Economies

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## ABSTRACT

Sustainability issues has become a global concern particularly in developing countries where attitude and behaviours towards the environment and climate are still largely apathetic. The development and alteration of attitude and behaviour have for years captured the interest of social psychologists. This is due to the fact that attempts to explain apparent patterns in human behavior gave rise to the concept of attitude. This review study's objective is to analyse the complexities of the attitude-behaviour nexus in order to leverage the insights derived in the management of responsible consumption. The paper methodically delved into literature to investigate the concepts of sustainability, responsible consumption, and the tapestry of the relationship between attitude and behavior. consequently, a wide range of scholarly journals that were equally sourced from reputable database like, Web of Science, Google Scholar, Science Direct, and Scopus were heavily relied on for data and information. Though no data to declare, findings of the review nevertheless highlighted the complex nature of attitude and behaviours. Key theories which support these complexities are the classical and operant conditioning theories, cognitive dissonance theory; and social learning theory. The analysis also demonstrates how the connections between behavior and attitude might be applied in mitigating environmental challenges. Therefore, the report suggests using a psychological approach to promote responsible consumption.

**Keywords:** Analysis, Attitude-behaviour-relations, emerging economies, responsible consumption,

## INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Development Goal 12 (SDG 12) highlights the urgent need to transform the harmful and unsustainable patterns of consumption and production that are putting pressure on the Earth's resources (Zhang & Yu, 2022). SDG 12 consists of 13 key thematic areas, which include resource efficiency, environmental sustainability, waste minimization, energy efficiency, and the promotion of a circular economy, among other factors (UNITED NATIONS, 2002). Numerous studies (Hoang, Tran & Kirby, 2022; Khan, Aninuddin, & Murtaza, 2022; Thur, 2010) indicate that emerging economies—such as Brazil, Russia, India, China, and now Nigeria, exhibit relatively low levels of concern regarding sustainability issues, especially in relation to the production and consumption of goods and services.

Responsible consumption is characterized by an attitude and behavior that involve making educated choices about the products we buy, considering their environmental, social, and economic advantages (Balherjahn, et al., 2013). The construct seeks to merge social, environmental, and ethical considerations into purchasing choices (Reisch & Thogerson 2017). Consumers who adopt this principle are equipped to reduce the climatic and ecological effects of their consumption patterns.

Attitude, the independent variable in this review, refers to a psychological construct that encompasses an individual's thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and actions concerning a person, object, concept, or circumstance. As a

significant force affecting human behavior, understanding its complexities will be beneficial in promoting responsible consumption in emerging nations.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The global community views Africa, a continent comprising 54 nations, with particular attention to Nigeria known for its expansive land and significant youth demographic, as a key player in advancing the targets of SDG 12. However, the prevailing attitude and practices related to responsible consumption in the country can be observed to be poor. The consumption of goods and services frequently occurs with total neglect for individual health, the economy, society, and the environment (Ogunbode, Henn, & Taush, 2020). For instance, wastes from residence and industries are often discarded carelessly. Trash is pervasive. The transportation of petroleum products and gas still relies on heavy duty vehicles instead of utilizing underground pipelines as is developed nations. These vehicles harm roadways and release harmful gases that pose risks to both individuals and the environment. Forest resources such as timber, vegetation, and wildlife are being exploited/used without any efforts at replenishment. In several rural regions of the country, open defecation on land and into water remains prevalent (Ogunbode, Henn, & Taush, 2020).

Furthermore, according to estimates, between 25 and 80 percent of drugs in Nigeria are inferior, if not totally counterfeit, making the quality of pharmaceuticals and other manufactured goods a public health risk (Gabel, 2024). Unsafe methods are used to dispose off factory waste, and both manufacturers and consumers appear to be ignorant of how they use products and services with the ultimate goal of reducing environmental harm, preserving natural resources, and encouraging growth and sustainable development. Also, Nigerian oil spills have seriously harmed the Niger Delta region's economy, environment, and inhabitants' health (Okonkwo, 2014).

Three significant organizations in Nigeria are meant to ensure the responsible consumption and production of goods and services. These are: The Federal Environmental Protection Agency, Nigeria Standard Organization, and Nigeria Agency for Food, Drug Administration, and Control founded in 1971, 1988, and 1992 respectively. Unfortunately, their activities appear to have no effect on sustainable development. Their activities seem to be focused on monitoring and policy formulation whereas efforts to make small change in the mindset of consumers could have a significant impact on sustainable consumption.

Finally, Nigeria continues to practice use-and-throw-away economy, which produces a lot of garbage. According to Balderjahn et al., (2013), under anaerobic circumstances, this waste breaks down, producing CO<sub>2</sub>, methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and other gases that fuel global warming and, in turn, climate change. Sharing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing, and recycling existing resources and products as often as possible are all key components of the circular economy model of production and consumption (Szulc-Obleza & Zurek, 2024) which appear to be a myth in Nigeria.

Environmental attitude encompass the beliefs, responses, and behavioural intentions of people concerning environment-related activities and issues (Szulc-Obleza & Zurek, 2024). To better understand environmental perspectives, the level of knowledge possessed by a population concerning the severity of environmental problems, their reaction to, and their interactions with nature must be ascertained by assessing environmental awareness and attitude. This has long been recognized in more industrialized and developed nations of the world where many environmental knowledge studies have been conducted (Balderjahn, et al., 2013). Many studies (Fisbein and Ajzen, (1975); Zhang and Yu (2022) (2004); Szulc-Obleza and Zurek (2024) for example have studied attitude and behaviour from different perspectives and dimensions but without analysing the complexities of attitude and behaviour itself. Therefore, a thorough analysis and comprehension of human attitude is necessary to address these environmental issues.

### **Objective of the Study**

The study's goal is to conceptualize sustainable consumption and analyze the complexities of attitude in order to leverage the insights gained to promote sustainable consumption amongst individual, households, and organizations.

## Significance of the Study

The first reason for the study's importance is that it is current and relevant given how seriously the world is taking the issue of planet protection. Therefore, it would be helpful to comprehend the nature of attitude and behavior and how it could be tapped to address the careless consumption of goods and services that endanger both human existence and the environment. As a result, this study might influence the search to adopt a behavioural strategy.

Additionally, examining the intricacies of attitude and behavior may shed more light on how individuals, communities, institutions, and organizations may use it to combat diseases, environmental degradation, and global warming - all of which have proven to be caused by irresponsible consumption and production of goods and services (Kentrix, 2023; Idowu, 2021; United Nations, 2015).

Besides, advocacy, and policy approaches to responsible consumption may be significantly more expensive than the behavioural approach because most huge humanitarian problems could be solved with a small adjustment in people's attitude and behavior (United Nations, 2002).

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The focus of this section is to critically examine relevant literature that would assist in explaining the problems and further recognize the efforts of researchers who had previously contributed to similar researches. It intends to deepen the understanding of attitude and the link between it and behavior. The review is structured as follows: (i) conceptual review where the concepts of sustainability, responsible consumption, emerging economy attitude, components of attitude, and function of attitude were clarified; (ii) theoretical review (iii) empirical review, and (iv) summary of review.

### Conceptual Review

First, it will instructive to understand the general concept of sustainable development. The concept is widely used in many areas of activities (Pavlovskaja, 2013; Reyhani, Eslamian, & Davari, 2017). However, the Bruntland Commission officially used the concept for the first time in 1987 in the "Our Common Future" report and defines it as the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 2017).

### Sustainable Consumption

So, responsible consumption is a way of thinking about the products and services we buy and use that considers the environmental, social, and economic impact. It involves making conscious choices that help protect the Earth and improve quality of life (Arora & Mishra, 2023). It connotes the practice of using goods and services with the ultimate aim of minimizing harm to the environment, conservation of natural resources, and promoting sustainable growth and development. Secondly, describing it as *green behaviour*, Science for Environment Policy (2012) defined it as behaviour that minimizes harm to the environment as much as possible, or even benefit it. Thirdly, it means being mindful of the long and short term social, economic, and "environmental consequences cum impacts of current and future consumption activities" (Reisch, & Thøgersen, 2017, p. 2).

According to Reisch and Thøgersen (2017), the cornerstone and pillars of responsible consumption include: (i) reduction of waste and waste-generating activities by minimizing the quantum of waste generated by carefully choosing products, goods and services with minimal packaging; bulk purchases and avoidance of single-use item; (ii) reducing energy by using energy-efficient goods and services and the consumption culture that minimize the wastage of energy; conserving water and aquatic resources and (iii) supporting and promoting; sustainable agricultural practices; ethical production, recycling, and up-recycling.

Many advocates of responsible consumption – individuals, organizations, and government that promote sustainable consumption patterns agreed that it involves, choosing to buy less, and reusing, repairing, and recycling what people buy; buying from local producers and ethical banks that respect the environment and labor

conditions; making decisions that are not influenced by advertising or trends; checking that products are made with materials that do not harm the environment, and that they can be reused or recycled, and considering the impact of your consumption on social justice, human rights, and poverty. The concept is important because it can help improve the quality of life for individuals and society and in the world as a whole; it can help protect the Earth's resources and communities, and it can help reduce waste and pollution, and improve the planet's living conditions (UNITED NATIONS, 2002).

## Attitude

The word *attitude* has been defined in various ways. Omotosho (2003) and Olufemi (2012) see attitude as the beliefs, feelings, and behavior of an individual towards a person, object, event, or a phenomenon such as philosophy of responsible consumption. But Robbins et al., (2003) see it as an evaluative statement – either favourable or unfavourable - about people, objects, idea, suggestions, events, etc. For example, when a person says, “my best food is rice, he/she is expressing his/her attitude about food. In a paper presented by Buadi (2000), attitude was portrayed as normally focusing on an object or a situation or issues. Zimbardo (1998), who conducted the first notable experiment on attitude and behavior, provided a more insightful definition of attitude when he asserted that attitude is the relatively *enduring* way of a person thinking, feelings, and behavior towards an object, person, groups, and idea or event. Aligning with Zimbardo, Wood and Wood (1980) saw attitude as the relatively *stable* behavior of a person, objects or situations.

Attitude is a perception that involves emotional feelings which predisposes individual to act in certain way. Attitude is an abstract term which has *pervading* impact on behavior within and outside organization (Huckzyski & Buchanana, 2001). Zimbardo's, Wood and Wood's and Huckzyski and Buchanana's definitions are the ones that captured the real nature of attitude when the words: *enduring*, *stable* and *pervading*, were used in their definitions because the whole essence of studying attitude is to understand consistency in human behaviour.

## Behaviour

Attitude, leads to behaviour most of the time. Behaviour refers to the observable actions, conduct that could be seen, analysed, measured and interpreted (Haddock, et al., 2020). It is how someone respond to their thoughts and feelings; it is what a person does to make something happen, to make something change, or to keep thing the same. Behaviour is induced by attitude (thoughts and feelings) and is a response to things happening to the individual environment including other people. Attitude and behaviour are complex concepts such that if you ask people about their attitude towards religion, school, environment or the organization they work for, you may get simple responses but the reason underlying their feedbacks are probably complex. Attitude induce behavior can facilitate or hinder actions at all levels of human functioning (Arul, 2012). Example of the link between attitude and behaviour could be explained thus: a student may think, evaluate and feel mathematics is a difficult subject (thought and feeling) as a result may find mathematics class boring and may even skip class (behaviour).

## Components of Attitude

Majority of papers reviewed showed that attitude is thought of having three components which influences one another in a linear way (Arul, 2024, Buadi, 2000; Anul, 2012; Wood & Wood, 1980; Robbins, et al. 2003). They are *cognitive*, *affective*, and *behavioural* component. The cognitive component is the thoughts and beliefs about something that an individual harbours; the affective is the emotional (feelings) *ignited* by the cognitive component while the behavioural refers to the observable actions in response to the first two depending on the intensity of the second (feelings) component. However, these components are not separate or mutually exclusive but they are highly interwoven and influences the others, sometimes, in opposite direction (Cole, et al., 2017). For example, my boss is a *mean* person reflect a person's thoughts and belief about his/her boss (cognitive component); while I am *angry* because my boss is mean reflect affective (emotional); and I am not going to be loyal to him represent behavioural (component). What this examples mean is that whatever behavior displayed by an individual is a function of what he/she believes and the emotions such belief invoked may lead to one kind of behavior or the other. This is why attitude may not lead to behaviour.



According to Nadeau and Long-Crowell (2023), these three components of attitude are also known as the *ABC Model* of attitude where A represent the affective component; B stands for the behavioural component, and the cognitive components is represented by C. These authors argued further that these components work together to generate behavior, but generally, one may be more prominent than another at a given time. As a result, there are cognitive-based; affective-based; and behavior-based attitude (Nadeau & Long-Crowell, 2023).

Viewing attitude as having three components is helpful in understanding its complexities and the potent relationship between attitude and behavior. However, we are advised to keep in mind that the components are closely related and cognition and affective domain in particular are inseparable in many ways (Robbins, et al., 2012).

## Types of Attitude

Positive and negative attitude are the common classification. But Drew (2023) citing *The Helpful Professor*, see positive attitude as the mindset of approaching challenges, circumstances, situations with optimism and constructive thinking. It involves focusing on brighter sides of situations, believing in one's capability, and expecting favourable outcomes (Drew, 2023). Positive attitude encourage resilience, adaptation, and proactive approach to life's adversaries. E.g., viewing mistakes, difficulties as challenges and learning opportunities. From another perspective, Spacey (2023) listed positive attitude to be one that is intellectually open, adaptable, honest, and constructive, collaborative, conscientious, constructive, cooperative, creative, diligent, earnest, flexible, focused, genuine, hardworking, imaginative, interested, introspective, meditative, pragmatic, receptive and reflective, etc.

Negative attitude on the other hand is a disposition, feelings, or manner that is not constructive, not cooperative, not collaborative, creative, adaptive, or optimistic (Spacey, 2023). Example, of negative attitude in the workplace can be employee's laziness, rudeness to others, consistently coming late to work, carelessly performing tasks, spreading rumour or creating one (Divirgilio, 2020). Individual could display both types of attitude just about anywhere (Divirgilio, 2020).

However, a further categorization of attitude and the ones that are readily apply to managers according to Atashpour, et al., (2004) are: *sympathetic* attitude style, *idealist* attitude style, *functional* attitude style, *analytical* attitude style, and *realistic* attitude style. A person or manager could express two or more of these kinds of attitude which is referred to as *combinational* attitude styles. According to Divirgilio (2020) the authors, sympathetic attitude type mean having the same emotion as someone else; especially sadness. Being sympathetic in this way is usually understood to mean that you feel bad for someone because they are in a negative situation. For the idealist type, is the attitude of a person who believes that it is possible to live according to high standard of behavior and honesty. The analytical attitude type is people who are often seen as cold, logical, have an eye for details and detached in their interactions with others. People in technical fields like engineering, accounting and ICT tend to display this attitude (Divirgilio, 2020). The combinational attitude style is someone with elements of two or more of the attitude styles discussed above.

## Functions of Attitude

Attitude influences how individual perceives and respond to the world around them. According to Tseng, et al. (2011), our attitude enable us to determine, often very quickly, and effortlessly, which behavior to engage in, which people to approach, or avoid and even which product to consume or use. Kwakpovwe (2019, p.115) quipped, "our attitude create our world; we are what we think – all that we are arises from our thoughts, feelings and behaviour" However, a more academic functions of attitude according to Edwards (2024) are: *utilitarian*, *knowledge*, *instrumental*, and *expressive* functions. Edwards explained these constructs as follows: Utilitarian functions help individual gain rewards and avoid punishments; they guide individuals towards achieving desired goals/outcomes and avoid negative consequences. The knowledge functions provide individual with the framework for understanding and interpreting the world around them. They help individual make sense of the complex stimuli and information in their environment and guide their decision-making process. It allows individual to express their identities and values; a means of self-expression and help individual communicate their beliefs and opinions to others. Lastly, in Edwards (2024)'s opinion, attitude play instrumental function as

it can be used as a tool for social influence and persuasion. That is, attitude could be employed to persuade or influence other's behavior towards certain directions.

### Theories of Attitude Formation

As in most abstract concepts, there are several theories which explain attitude formation. Literature showed several ways attitude are formed and one of the earliest agents of attitude formation are parents, later followed by peers, religion, culture, opinion leaders, and societal leaders (Olufemi, 2012). However, the most cited theories of attitude formation are: (i) classical conditioning or stimulus-response reinforcement theory by Ivan Pavlov (1897) cited in Rafferty (2024); (ii) operant conditioning theory developed by B. F. Skinner (1937) also mentioned in Rafferty (2024), (iii) observational learning theory by Albert Bandura (1977) mentioned in Torre (2024); and (iv) cognitive dissonance theory by Leon Festinger (2023) stated in Tueanrat and Alamanos (2023). These theories selected because of their relevance to the research objectives, clarity, and were propounded by renowned authorities in behavioural sciences.

The stimulus-response theory propounded by Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) says that behaviors are learned by connecting a neutral stimulus with a positive one such that when a bell was rang and followed by offer of food to a dog, over time, when the bell is rang, the dog begin to salivate (expecting food). It was used to explain how organisms learn and gradually changed their behaviour over time. While classical conditioning involves an involuntary response to a stimulus, operant conditioning, originated by B. F. Skinner (1904 -1990) is a type of learning where attitude and behaviors are formed through consequences of (rewards or punishment). For example, if a child innocently touched a hot lantern which burnt him/her the child will begin to avoid anything that looks like lantern.

Besides, observational learning is anchored on Bandura's (1937) social learning theory that is based on the philosophy that individuals can learn through observing and mimicking the behavior of others (Main, 2024; Koutrobus & Galanaski, 2022). for instance, most people emulate behaviour that are rewarded by society and avoid the ones that are either frowned at or sanctioned.

Cognitive dissonance theory developed by Leon Festinger (1957) is the mental discomfort which result from holding two conflicting attitudes (Cooper, Kevin & Carlsmith, 2015). According to the theory, people tend to seek consistency in their attitude and behaviour. For example, in most African society today, we have people who believe in both African traditional and orthodox religion and behave in ways to reduce the inconsistency. We want clean sustainable environment yet we behave irresponsibly towards the environment.

All theories reviewed so far suggest that attitude precedes behavior but one theory that contradicts this postulation is the *Self-perception Theory*. First proposed by Daryl Bem in 1967 as an alternative account of cognitive dissonance, Bem argued that self-perception is the process of observing and interpreting one's own thoughts, feelings and behaviors, and using these observations to define oneself and behave accordingly (Robak, 2001). That is; individual come to know and understand their own attitude, emotions, and other internal state partially by inferring them from observation of their overt behavior and/or the circumstances in which this behavior occurs.

### Empirical Review

The first scholar to study how attitude change was Zimbardo et al., (1971). Zimbardo and his colleagues carried out their experiment in August 15-21, 1971 in a basement of Jordan Hall titled: *the standard prison experiment*. It set out to examine the psychological effects of authority and powerlessness in a prison environment. The study showed how people's attitude and behavior changed when they are assigned different roles in prison setting and by implication, in society, business and organisations. Have you observed some people attitude and behaviour when they come to power in the workplace? In society? In religious setting?

In order to understand how business decisions foc used on sustainability and how it can impact companies due to the risk of brand loyalty, the relationship between brand loyalty and environmental viewpoint was investigated. In the study (Daniel, et al., 2018), College students from USA and Romania (N=92) voluntarily

participated in a survey. The brand loyalty scale was used to assess brand loyalty before and after a fictitious expansion announcement was made and the New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) scale was used to assess attitude towards sustainability. A paired sample *t*-test analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between NEP scores (attitude toward sustainability) and brand loyalty. Furthermore, no significant difference was found in attitude toward sustainability regarding region (USA and Romania) or gender. The results according to the authors, “indicate that individuals who generally show concern towards the environment will stay loyal to their favourite companies’ if sustainability philosophy is introduced in products/services.” The results also indicate that the gap regarding region and gender is closing in attitude towards sustainability; individuals in developing countries are also showing a major concern towards environmental issues; males indicate just as much concern towards the environment as females.

In a study conducted in South Korea where 350 inbound overseas tourists that visited Seoul were used, Kim and Lee (2018) found that oral tradition is a significant factor that affects brand quality perception and brand image more than price, publicity, and advertisement which is in tandem with parental and traditional factors that affect attitude. This finding, in the views of the authors, help marketers to develop adequate marketing strategies for influencing consumer behaviour towards sustainability. Kong, et al., (2014) found that green products are positively influencing consumers’ green purchase intention. Also, Chen (2010) stipulated that, to increase green equity, companies need to increase green brand image, green satisfaction, and green trust where green trust is defined as consumers’ willingness to depend on a product or a service of a brand as a result of his faith in its environmental reliability (Rizwan, et al., 2014); and is considered to be significant influence on green purchase intention (Rahbar & Wahid, 2011). From their study Rahbar and Wahid declared that all should be concerned to “build a green brand image known as a whole range of impressions, conceptions, and apprehensions towards a brand in the customers’ memory which is correlated to sustainability and eco-friendly concerns.”

In its report titled: “promoting sustainable consumption: Good practices in OECD countries,” The Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) stipulates that consumers have a significant role in sustainable development. Young, et al., (2010) reached same conclusion when they suggested that each consumer’s decisions can contribute to a sustainable pattern of development or otherwise but results of different studies conducted in this direction revealed that it is difficult to change people’s consumption patterns (Watling & Zhou, 2011). Tuncer, et al. (2005). But interestingly, Wee, et al., (2017) showed that youths are very interested in sustainability issues and are disposed to adopt a sustainable lifestyle. But is this true about youths in Nigeria? Other studies (Shen & Saijo, 2008; Wiernic, Ones, & Dilchert, 2013) expressed an opposite fact that older population could be more concerned about environmental issues compared to younger ones.

Another interesting finding relevant to this study refers to the fact that schools influence different attitude of children just as their parents do (Eilam & Trop, 2012). The results of Eilam and Trop research indicated that school is successful in influencing children’s attitude, but this institution does not have same success in influencing parents’ attitude. But holistically, Hines, et al., (1987) identified the variables associated with responsible environmental behaviour to include knowledge issues, knowledge of action strategy, locus of control, attitude, verbal commitment, and individual sense of responsibility. Also, Kollmuss and Agyemen (2002) considered that pro-environmental behaviour is influenced by internal factors (values, emotional involvement, traits, etc.) and external factors, - economic situation, and infrastructure.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) technique, which is defined by several scholars (Goud, Oliver, and Thomas 2017; Gorog, 2018; Lisby, Nielson, Brock & Mainz, 2010) as a critical method of identifying, defining, and evaluating research on a clearly presented topic. It was chosen because it makes it possible to thoroughly review and synthesize pertinent concepts and researches on the subject of attitude and behaviour, thus, facilitating a more impartial study and interpretation of results. What were searched for in the paper reviewed include important comments, theories, and researches related to responsible consumption, attitude and behavior.

A thorough search and selection of pertinent studies from respectable textbooks and academic peer-reviewed publications like Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar were part of the review’s data collection

procedure. These search engines are explored because they are the most scholarly databases globally (Pranckute, 2021). Attitude, behavior, sustainability, sustainable development goals, and responsible consumption were some of the keywords used in the search.

Additionally, the selection criteria for the materials under examination include research reports from peer-reviewed journals, English-language research articles, empirical investigations on the relationships between attitude and behavior. Studies that used quantitative, qualitative, or both methodologies were included, and only published articles from 2010 to 2025 were considered. However, as this could not be avoided, theories that were propounded years ago were exempt from this condition.

### **Implication for Responsible Consumption**

What are in all these analyses for responsible consumption? Again, let reiterate the aim of the analyses. The study's primary goal is to examine the attitude-behaviour relations in order to apply the insights gained to tackle the issue of green consumption. First, if attitude is defined as an individual's thought, feeling, and behaviour toward a person, thing, idea, etc (Omotosho, 2003; Olufemi, 2012; Robbin et al., 2003) then, it can be concluded that Nigerians have a negative attitude toward eco-friendly consumption as shown in the statement of problems section of the paper.

According to the understanding that attitude is not a straight log but rather consists of three psychological elements that typically feed into one another linearly (Arul, 2024; Buadi, 2000; Wood & Wood, 1980) suggest that Nigerians' negative attitude and actions regarding responsible consumerism are primarily brought on by their lack of conviction, passion, and seriousness about environmental issues.

From the analysis of the functional perspective of attitude, a person's attitude enables them to choose, usually quickly and effortlessly, what behavior to engage in; which product or service to buy and use; what goals to pursue and many other behaviours including decision making (Edwards, 2024). Thus, this understanding of attitude helps in understanding why Nigerians behave the way they do when preserving the environment is concerned.

The review also showed that consumers may be influenced to adopt responsible consumption by "agents of attitude and behavior formation" which Olufemi (2012) listed as parents, peer group, culture, religion/opinion leaders. Therefore, the knowledge, habits, and information about sustainable consumption could be communicated through these channels while keeping in mind pertinent theories of attitude formation in mind.

It is possible to change consumption patterns that are harmful to the environment by applying theories of attitude and behavior change. For example, the classical conditioning hypothesis (Pavlov, 1897 cited in Rafferty, 2024) stated that by purposefully presenting specific stimuli repeatedly and in conjunction with a reinforcement mechanism like rewards, attitude could be modified. Also in tandem with classical conditioning theories, the operant conditioning model (Skinner 1937 also cited in Rafferty, 2024) could be helpful as well in nurturing responsible consumption by rewarding positive attitude/behaviour towards environmental issues.

To encourage green consumption, it is also important to take into consideration Zimbardo's Social Learning Theory (1977) alongside classical conditioning. This is because, as the classical theories are being used other members of the consumption community are observing. Accordingly, others may adopt the green culture if appropriate role models are purposefully presented to them and positive behavior and actions towards the environment are rewarded and negative ones sanctioned.

The cognitive dissonance hypothesis of attitude and behavior formation is another option to promote a change in mindset toward green purchasing. Cognitive dissonance occurs when we act in a way that is not consistent with who we are therefore, highlighting consumers' anti-environmental conduct and encouraging the public expression of desired behavior change are the primary objectives of using this approach to encourage pro-environmental consumption (Neuhaus, 2021).



## CONCLUSION

Though, nothing to declare statistically, it is important to note that by 2050, the world's population is expected to reach 9.6 billion people. This is excellent news for increasing prosperity, but it will increase consumption and waste generation which will contribute significantly to environmental degradation.

From the analyses, it was concluded that attitude-behaviour nexus is indeed a complex psychological construct which significantly impact behaviour in a bi-directional ways. For example, a person attitude towards consumption will significantly impacts responsible consumption someone thoughts, feelings, values directly influence the choices they make when buying goods and services. A positive attitude towards sustainability is likely to lead to more responsible purchasing decisions, like choosing eco-friendly products, reducing waste while a negative frame of mind might result in prioritizing convenience over sustainability.

From the analyses and synthesis, key characteristics and theories of attitude could be applied in creating strong environmental awareness which may encourage people to adopt responsible consumption practices such as embracing circular economy, opting for energy-efficient appliance, and supporting sustainable brands and policies. Also, the knowledge about the nuances of attitude-behaviour relation may induce significant sense of social responsibility in consumption.

Lastly, using attitude modification technique people can be made to believe their individual actions can make a difference in sustainable development and if they are encouraged, they are more likely to engage in responsible consumption.

## Suggestions for Implementation

Standing on the conceptual, theoretical, and empirical framework of the analyses, stakeholders tasked with environmental protection should strive to use a psychological approach when handling their tasks because a minor change in attitude, especially by many people, does go a long way in fixing huge problems, therefore, policies and actions that will encourage a shift to a positive attitude toward the environment should be developed and put into action.

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