

## Gender as Drivers of Sustainable Consumption Practices and Online Shopping Pattern of University of Lagos Students: Implications for Lifelong Learning in Sustainability

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates sustainable consumption practices and online shopping behaviours among University of Lagos students, focusing on the interplay between consumer attitudes, motivation, gender differences, and sustainability awareness. Employing a quantitative research design with data collected from 213 students through structured questionnaires, the study analyses how students' online shopping frequency, willingness to pay for eco-friendly products, and gender influence sustainable consumption behaviours. Results indicate a positive correlation between online shopping frequency and sustainable consumption, with female students exhibiting greater motivation and engagement in eco-friendly purchasing than their male counterparts. These findings emphasise significant gender disparities in sustainability practices and highlight the importance of consumer motivation in promoting responsible consumption. Importantly, the study frames these behaviours within the context of lifelong learning, emphasising the necessity of continuous education to deepen sustainability awareness and embed eco-conscious habits beyond the university environment. The research recommends targeted educational policies and programs that address motivational differences and leverage digital platforms to cultivate enduring, sustainable consumption patterns among youth. This study contributes to the growing discourse on sustainable consumption by linking consumer behaviour with lifelong learning imperatives, offering valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and marketers committed to advancing sustainability.

### Background to the Study

In recent years, the global landscape of consumer behaviour has undergone a profound transformation, fuelled by the rise of digital technologies and the growth of e-commerce platforms. As online shopping evolves globally, new factors such as sustainability, environmental concerns, and ethical sourcing increasingly influence consumer purchasing decisions. Platforms like Konga, Jumia, and Jiji, which are prevalent in Nigeria, provide consumers, including students at the University of Lagos, with convenient access to various products, thus facilitating their online shopping behaviours. The global shift toward e-commerce is also evident in Lagos, Nigeria, where the convenience of shopping

from home, coupled with the ability to compare prices and read reviews, has made online shopping a preferred method for students.

The University of Lagos, one of Nigeria's premier academic institutions, provides an ideal setting for exploring the consumption behaviours of Nigerian students, particularly those who engage in online shopping. Students, often characterized by their tech-savvy nature and limited time due to academic commitments, have turned to e-commerce platforms as a convenient solution for their shopping needs. These platforms offer significant advantages, including time savings, the ability to compare prices, access to discounts, and a wider selection of products, making online shopping an attractive option. It is common to see delivery bikes navigating the University of Lagos hostels and offices, delivering goods ordered by students and staff. During lunch breaks, motorcycles from well-known food brands like Iya Moria, Mavis, and Salado can buzz around campus, delivering meals and drinks to students as they emerge from their hostels. This service has made shopping more convenient and has opened up new opportunities for businesses to reach a broader audience.

However, while this ease of access offers significant benefits, it also raises concerns regarding campus life and the environmental sustainability of such practices. While the convenience of online shopping and food deliveries enhances students' lives, it also presents several challenges. The increased reliance on delivery services has contributed to a rise in traffic congestion on campus, with delivery motorcycles frequently navigating narrow walkways and busy roads. This congestion disrupts foot traffic flow and raises safety issues, forcing students and staff to navigate around delivery vehicles and motorcycles. Moreover, the environmental consequences of frequent deliveries, especially from food services, must not be ignored. The use of motorcycles for deliveries increases carbon emissions, contributing to the larger pollution problem on campus. Furthermore, the packaging waste from online orders and food deliveries worsens waste management concerns, as students discard single-use plastics and other non-biodegradable materials. As the university community embraces the ease of e-commerce, it is vital to consider sustainable alternatives to address these emerging challenges and ensure that the environmental impact is minimized.

Sustainable consumerism is getting more and more attention globally; people are more conscious of their carbon footprints, trash generation, and the ethical implications of their purchases (Rita & Ramos, 2022). The continuous struggle in Nigeria is to strike a balance between the need for more sustainable and ethical consumption and the convenience of internet purchasing. Students at the University of Lagos, as future leaders, are vital in this conversation and it is crucial to investigate how their online buying habits mirror sustainable conduct. Through various innovative projects including the addition of eight electric buses to lower carbon emissions on campus (Punch, 2021), the University of Lagos has shown a great dedication to sustainability. The Green Eco Hub, which honours students for recycling plastic waste, is one such initiative. The university is also actively interested in co-processing technologies and trash decarbonisation meant to address Nigeria's 32 million tonnes of yearly waste pollution (BusinessDay, 2023; UNILAG, 2023). These initiatives not only fit worldwide climate objectives but also provide a real-world setting for students to participate in lifetime learning by means of pragmatic, ecologically responsible activities. This changing campus environment is a living laboratory where students' internet buying habits interact with more general institutional initiatives to encourage sustainable consumption.

Recent studies have suggested that while Nigerian consumers, particularly students, actively engage in online shopping, awareness and adoption of sustainable consumption practices remain low. Social media platforms have significantly shaped buying decisions, with young consumers using these platforms not only for product discovery but also to engage with brands that align with their values (Uzodinma, 2021). Furthermore, factors such as peer influence, marketing strategies, and personal values often dictate students' choices when shopping online; yet the influence of sustainability concerns remains less explored in this context. This study explores consumer behaviour, gender, and

sustainable shopping habits among University of Lagos students engaged in online shopping, linking it to lifelong learning by showing how individuals continuously learn and apply sustainability knowledge throughout their lives. By examining how students prioritise sustainability in their purchasing choices, as well as the effects of awareness, marketing, and peer influence, it demonstrates the ongoing learning processes that contribute to responsible consumption habits. These insights underscore the importance of lifelong learning initiatives that empower students both during their university years and in the future, promoting a long-term commitment to sustainable consumption.

The study aids businesses, policymakers, and educators in crafting educational strategies that foster continuous learning and behavioural change, crucial for achieving sustainability in the long run. As stated by Madichie (2009) and Solomon (2020), consumer behaviour involves the processes individuals go through when deciding to buy, utilise, and dispose of products and services. Various factors, such as psychological, social, cultural, and economic elements, influence this behaviour. In the context of sustainable consumption, these factors gain new significance, as consumers increasingly need to consider not only their immediate requirements but also the long-term environmental and social consequences of their choices (Vermeulen et al., 2021).

Universities serve as centres of knowledge and social influence, significantly shaping students' attitudes and behaviours regarding sustainability, thus becoming a vital area for researching sustainable consumer practices. Understanding how these students engage with online shopping platforms like Jumia, Konga, and other community outlets servicing the University of Lagos and how they incorporate sustainability into their decisions can provide valuable insights into the broader challenges and opportunities for fostering sustainable consumption in Nigeria. This research explores how these factors influence students' purchasing decisions, focusing on how gender, awareness, and motivation intersect with sustainability.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study examines the University of Lagos student online shoppers' consumer behaviour and sustainable consumption practices, focusing on challenges in integrating sustainability into their purchasing habits. A key issue is the limited awareness of sustainability among students, which leads to unsustainable buying behaviours. Many students prioritise convenience, price, and brand loyalty over the environmental and social impacts of their choices. Without adequate education on sustainable consumption, efforts to encourage eco-friendly behaviour will likely be ineffective. Another challenge is the limited availability and higher costs of sustainable products on popular online platforms. Even if students are aware of sustainability, they often face difficulties in finding eco-friendly options or are deterred by higher prices. This underscores the need for better integration of sustainable products into mainstream shopping platforms at more affordable prices. Additionally, Nigeria's economic climate, characterized by financial instability, influences consumption patterns. Students, with limited financial resources, may prioritize cheaper products over sustainability. Societal norms and peer influences also affect their choices, so addressing these broader societal factors to promote sustainable consumption is essential.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study examines the consumer behaviour and sustainable consumption practices of University of Lagos student online shoppers. The specific objectives are:

1. To assess the attitudes of University of Lagos students toward sustainable consumption.
2. To explore the motivations of University of Lagos student online shoppers and their relationship to sustainable consumption practices.
3. To identify gender-based differences in sustainable consumption practices among University of Lagos students' online shoppers.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the attitude of the University of Lagos student online shoppers towards sustainable consumption practice?
2. What factors motivate University of Lagos students who are online shoppers to engage in sustainable consumption practices?
3. How does gender affect sustainable consumption practices among University of Lagos online student shoppers?

### **Research Hypotheses**

1. The attitude of University of Lagos student online shoppers towards sustainable consumption practices is positive.
2. There is no significant relationship between the motivation of University of Lagos student online shoppers and their sustainable consumption practices.
3. There are no significant differences in sustainable consumption practices based on the gender of University of Lagos student online shoppers.

The study of consumer behaviour and sustainable consumption practices involves a multi-dimensional analysis of how individuals select, purchase, use, and dispose of products and services. This field is enriched by psychological, social, cultural, and economic factors influencing consumer decision-making. The integration of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Social Practice Theory (SPT) further enhances our understanding by elucidating the motivations and barriers that consumers face in making environmentally conscious choices (Ajzen, 1991; Hyysalo, 2016). In the context of university students, particularly within the University of Lagos, these frameworks offer critical insights into how personal attitudes, perceived behavioural control, and social norms intersect with routine practices shaped by digital commerce, peer influence, and gender roles. TPB helps explain the intention-behaviour gap often seen among environmentally aware students who may still engage in unsustainable practices due to lack of control or convenience. Meanwhile, SPT foregrounds the importance of recurring social habits and institutional structures such as online shopping platforms and university culture in shaping consumption routines. By combining both theories, this study captures the individual and collective dimensions of sustainable consumption, contextualising them within the lived realities and socio-economic constraints of a Nigerian university environment.

### **Sustainable Consumption and Its Challenges**

Sustainable consumption focuses on minimizing consumption patterns' environmental, social, and economic impacts to promote the well-being of both current and future generations. This approach takes into account the entire lifecycle of products from production through consumption to disposal highlighting the need for consumption choices that prioritize environmental conservation, social equity, and economic viability (Jackson, 2005). While the importance of sustainable practices is well-established, barriers such as lack of awareness, higher product costs, and the limited availability of eco-friendly options remain persistent challenges. These barriers often hinder consumers' ability to make sustainable decisions, even when genuinely interested (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006; Young et al., 2010).

One significant barrier to sustainable consumption, particularly in the context of student online shoppers, is the "attitude-behaviour gap" (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Although students may express concern for the environment, these concerns often do not translate into concrete actions like purchasing eco-friendly products. This phenomenon can be attributed to the higher price points of sustainable products, the convenience of traditional consumption patterns, and the lack of immediate rewards for sustainable behaviours (Jackson, 2005). As students are often budget-conscious, price sensitivity plays a pivotal role in their decision-making, making the integration of sustainability into everyday shopping habits more challenging.

### **Consumer Behaviour in E-commerce and Online Shopping**

Consumer behaviour in e-commerce, particularly among students, is shaped by multiple factors, including convenience, price, brand loyalty, and the influence of digital marketing (Bennett & Aiken, 2020). Online shopping platforms such as Jumia, Konga, and Jiji have revolutionised how students shop by offering a vast range of products with the convenience of home delivery. The rise of these platforms, especially among students at the University of Lagos, highlights a shift toward more digital consumption patterns. This transformation is driven by the ease of comparison shopping and access to product reviews and the increasing influence of social media as a tool for marketing and customer engagement (Asmuni et al., 2012).

### **Attitudes and Motivation in Online Shopping**

The attitudes of consumers, particularly students, towards sustainable consumption are shaped by multiple factors, including personal beliefs, environmental knowledge, and external influences such as media campaigns and peer behaviour (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation plays a crucial role in guiding online shopping behaviour. Intrinsic motivation, driven by personal values and the desire to have a positive impact, is critical in promoting sustainable consumption practices. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation, such as financial incentives or promotional discounts, often influences purchasing decisions more strongly than intrinsic motivations (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Haws, Winterich, & Naylor, 2014). In the context of student online shoppers, studying motivation is critical to understanding how sustainability can be incorporated into their purchasing decisions. Students motivated by environmental concerns are more likely to adopt sustainable shopping habits, even if they are not immediately rewarded for doing so. As social media platforms increasingly serve as avenues for marketing and consumer engagement, these platforms may provide valuable insights into how to promote sustainable consumption among young, tech-savvy audiences effectively.

### **Sustainable Consumption Behaviours in University Students**

Sustainable consumption behaviours among university students have gathered significant attention in recent years, driven by concerns over environmental sustainability and the growing need to address environmental issues. Numerous studies suggest that students' green behaviours are influenced by a combination of environmental awareness and socio-cultural factors. *Salehi et al. (2021)* and *Wardhana (2022)* demonstrates that university students, especially those in diverse cultural settings such as Iran, Japan, and Indonesia, exhibit varying degrees of environmental concern, which significantly shapes their consumption patterns. These students, often part of Generation Z, are not only conscious of the environmental impact of their consumption but are also motivated by societal norms and peer influences that encourage responsible consumption. However, a critical gap remains in understanding how these factors interplay within specific contexts, such as the University of Lagos, where local socio-economic and cultural variables might influence sustainable consumption behaviours differently. Although environmental awareness serves as a key driver of sustainable behaviour, *Wardhana (2022)* and *Asmuni et al., (2017)* affirm that both do not always translate into consistent action, as attitudes and behaviours may diverge due to economic constraints or lack of convenient sustainable alternatives. Despite the increasing trend of eco-consciousness among university students, fostering widespread sustainable consumption practices has remained a critical challenge. *Arias et al. (2021)* argue that while there is a growing awareness of sustainable practices, a gap exists between environmental attitudes and actual behaviours. Similarly, studies in Malaysia by *Asmuni et al. (2017)* highlight that although university students report favorable attitudes toward green behaviours, the actual adoption of sustainable consumption practices, such as reducing waste or choosing eco-friendly products, is still limited. This disconnection may stem from factors such as convenience, price sensitivity, and the availability of green alternatives. Furthermore, gender and socio-cultural influences also play a crucial role in shaping the consumption patterns of students. *Salehi et al. (2021)*

explored how gender moderates sustainable consumption behaviours, with female students generally displaying higher levels of commitment to sustainability, a finding supported by studies in both Asian and Western contexts. These insights underline the complexity of promoting sustainable consumption among university students, necessitating more nuanced strategies that account for individual, cultural, and contextual factors to encourage genuine pro-environmental behaviours.

### **Gender Differences in Sustainable Consumption Practices**

Research on gender differences in sustainable consumption consistently shows that women are more likely to engage in environmentally conscious behaviours compared to men. This is largely due to the association of sustainability with feminine traits such as empathy, nurturing, and care for others (Brough et al., 2016). Women are often socialized to be more concerned about the welfare of others, including the environment, which is perceived as a nurturing cause. Studies have found that women tend to exhibit higher levels of concern about environmental issues and show a greater willingness to pay for eco-friendly products compared to men (Luchs & Mooradian, 2011). However, the distinction between genders in sustainable consumption is not absolute, as context and individual values also play a significant role. While gender influences purchasing behaviours, factors such as socioeconomic status, education, and cultural context interact to shape consumer decisions, with women typically prioritizing sustainable consumption due to more self-transcendence values (Pinto et al., 2014). For instance, women are more likely to demonstrate pro-social behaviours, such as choosing products that align with environmental sustainability, whereas men may gravitate towards behaviours that assert masculinity and status (Greenebaum & Dexter, 2017). However, these differences are not static, as evolving gender roles in society have also begun to blur these distinctions. The increasing fluidity in gender identities, especially among younger generations, is challenging traditional expectations of masculine and feminine consumption behaviours. For example, men are becoming more open to eco-friendly products and sustainable practices, though often within a context that emphasizes visible and status-enhancing sustainability, such as purchasing electric cars or energy-efficient appliances (Griskevicius et al., 2010). The changing gender norms suggest that gender-based disparities in sustainable consumption may diminish in the future as societal views on gender identity continue to evolve. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that while gender may still influence consumption behaviours, other social and cultural factors, such as the availability of sustainable products and consumer education, are critical in determining whether individuals regardless of gender adopt sustainable consumption practices.

### **Empirical Evidence and Insights from Literature**

Empirical studies on consumer behaviour in sustainable consumption often point to the importance of knowledge and awareness in influencing purchasing decisions. Gleim et al. (2013) found that a lack of environmental knowledge is a significant barrier to adopting green products, while Lee (2009) demonstrated that informed consumers are more likely to engage in sustainable purchasing behaviours. Similarly, Vermeir and Verbeke (2008) emphasised the importance of aligning marketing strategies with consumer values to promote sustainable consumption, particularly among young consumers. Building on this, lifelong learning emerges as a critical framework for addressing these challenges by fostering continuous education and skill development beyond formal schooling. For Nigerian students, embedding sustainability into lifelong learning programs can help bridge the gap between awareness and action, equipping them with practical knowledge, critical thinking skills, and adaptive behaviours necessary to overcome barriers such as price sensitivity and social pressures. Moreover, lifelong learning encourages reflective and participatory learning approaches that empower students to engage with their social environments critically. This enables them to influence and reshape prevailing social norms toward more sustainable consumption. By integrating sustainability into lifelong learning curricula and informal education platforms, universities and policymakers can nurture a culture of ongoing personal and collective responsibility, ensuring that sustainable consumption becomes a habitual practice rather than a temporary trend.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the relationship between consumer behaviour and sustainable consumption practices among online student shoppers at the University of Lagos. The primary data collection tool was a structured questionnaire titled Consumer Behaviour and Sustainable Consumption Practices of University of Lagos Student Online Shoppers. It included Likert-scale and multiple-choice items to measure attitudes, motivations, and demographic characteristics. The design enabled statistical analysis to identify patterns, correlations, and demographic differences in sustainable consumption behaviour.

### Population and Sample Size

The study targeted the University of Lagos's 62,215 enrolled student population, focusing on those engaged in online shopping. A stratified random sampling technique ensured proportional representation across the University's 12 faculties. Taro Yamane's formula was used to determine the sample size (n=400), though only 213 valid responses were collected due to participation limitations.

### Sampling and Data Collection

Stratification was based on faculty affiliation to capture the diversity of student demographics and academic backgrounds. The finalized instrument was validated through expert review and a pilot test, and data were collected via an online survey platform. The questionnaire assessed online shopping frequency, sustainable practices, and willingness to pay for eco-friendly products.

### Reliability and Validity

Instrument reliability was tested using a test-retest method to ensure consistency over time. Validity was established through expert feedback and a pilot study that helped refine ambiguous or redundant items.

### Method of Data Analysis

Data were analysed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics provided an overview of key variables, while correlation analysis explored relationships between consumer attitudes, motivations, and sustainability practices. Independent t-tests were conducted to assess gender-based differences. Results were presented using tables and charts to aid interpretation.

## Results

### Demographic Overview

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of University of Lagos Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	87	40.2
Female	126	59.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Age of Respondents	Frequency	Percent
16 - 18	30	14.1
19 - 21	34	16
22 - 24	55	25.8

25 - 27	37	17.4
28 Years and Above	57	26.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
100 Level	40	18.8
200 Level	20	9.4
300 Level	36	16.9
400 Level	53	24.9
500 Level	52	24.4
600 Level	12	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Work, 2024

Table 1 shows a diverse sample of University of Lagos students, with 126 female respondents (59.8%) and 87 male respondents (40.2%). The age distribution shows that 55 respondents (25.8%) fall within the 22-24 age range, followed by 57 respondents (26.8%) in the 25-27 age group, highlighting the prominence of students within these age brackets. Regarding academic levels, the most prominent groups are 400 Level students (53 respondents, 24.9%) and 500 Level students 52 respondents (24.4%), indicating significant participation from senior undergraduates. The 600 Level students represent a smaller group, with 12 respondents (5.6%), showing a lesser but still notable involvement of students at advanced stages of their academic careers. This demographic composition ensures that the sample effectively represents a broad cross-section of the University of Lagos student population, providing valuable insights into their online shopping behaviour and sustainable consumption practices.

**Table 2: Distribution of Participants based on Faculty**

Faculty	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Management Science</b>	53	24.9
<b>Engineering</b>	7	3.3
<b>Environmental Science</b>	7	3.3
<b>Education</b>	14	6.6
<b>Clinical Science</b>	11	5.2
<b>Basic Medical Sciences</b>	15	7
<b>Arts</b>	22	10.3
<b>Social Sciences</b>	18	8.5
<b>Sciences</b>	26	12.2
<b>Pharmacy</b>	8	3.8
<b>Law</b>	12	5.6
<b>Dental Sciences</b>	13	6.1
<b>Others</b>	7	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Work, 2024

Table 2 illustrates the faculty distribution of the 213 respondents, with the highest representation from the Faculty of Management Sciences, comprising 53 students (24.9%). This is followed by the Faculty of Sciences with 26 respondents (12.2%) and the Faculty of Arts with 22 respondents (10.3%), indicating strong participation from

disciplines often associated with consumer and business-related studies. The Faculties of Social Sciences and Basic Medical Sciences also show moderate representation with 18 (8.5%) and 15 (7%) respondents, respectively. Meanwhile, faculties such as Engineering, Environmental Science, and the “Others” category each contributed 7 respondents (3.3%), reflecting relatively lower participation from these areas. These diverse academic backgrounds enhance the richness of the dataset, allowing for broader generalizations about the online shopping behaviours and sustainable consumption practices of students across multiple fields of study at the University of Lagos.

## Section 2: Online Shopping Behaviour

**Table 3: Distribution of Preferred Online Shopping Platforms Among University of Lagos Students**

Online Platforms	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Konga	31	14.6
Jumia	54	25.4
Jiji	34	16
Payporte	32	15
Social media platforms	50	23.5

Source: Field Work, 2024

Table 3 presents the preferred online shopping platforms among University of Lagos students. Jumia emerges as the most popular platform with 54 respondents (25.4%), followed closely by social media platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp, preferred by 50 respondents (23.5%). Jiji was selected by 34 respondents (16%), while Payporte attracted 32 respondents (15%). Konga was the least preferred among the listed options, with 31 respondents (14.6%). These findings suggest that while established e-commerce platforms like Jumia dominate, a significant proportion of students are increasingly relying on social media for their shopping needs, highlighting the importance of digital platforms that offer both convenience and informal market interactions in student consumption behaviour.

## Research Question 1: What is the attitude of the university of Lagos student online shoppers towards sustainable consumption practice?

**Table 4: University of Lagos Students’ Perceptions and Motivations for Online Shopping**

S/N	Statement	Counts	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	Frequency of Online Shopping	F	45	97	53	18	213
		%	21.1	45.5	24.9	8.5	100
2	Preference for online Shopping over Physical Shopping	F	40	79	64	30	213
		%	18.1	37.1	30	14.1	100
3	Significant Expenses on Online Shopping	F	45	91	53	24	213
		%	21.1	42.7	24.9	11.3	100
4	Online shopping Influenced by Online Reviews and Ratings	F	57	99	35	22	213
		%	26.8	46.5	16.4	10.3	100
5.		F	57	89	36	31	213

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Online Shopping driven by Discounts and Deals	%	26.8	41.8	16.9	14.6	100
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**Source: Fieldwork, 2024**

Table 4 presents insights into the online shopping behaviours and motivations of University of Lagos students. A significant proportion of respondents, 97 (45.5%), agreed and 45 (21.1%) strongly agreed that they frequently shop online, indicating that online shopping is a regular activity for most students. When asked whether they preferred online shopping to traditional physical shopping, 79 respondents (37.1%) agreed and 40 (18.1%) strongly agreed, while a notable portion, 64 (30%), disagreed, indicating that although many students value online convenience, a considerable number still appreciate the in-person shopping experience. On the matter of significant spending, 91 students (42.7%) agreed and 45 (21.1%) strongly agreed that they spend a notable amount on online shopping, underscoring its financial relevance in students' daily lives. Reviews and ratings also play a substantial role, with 99 (46.5%) agreeing and 57 (26.8%) strongly agreeing that these factors influence their purchasing decisions thereby highlighting the importance of peer feedback and trust in online environments. Lastly, discounts and deals are a strong motivator, as 89 respondents (41.8%) agreed and 57 (26.8%) strongly agreed that they are drawn to online shopping because of promotional offers. These findings shows that online shopping is prevalent among students and also shaped by convenience, perceived value, and digital social proof.

**Research Question 2: What are the factors motivating University of Lagos students online shoppers to engage in sustainable consumption practices?**

**Table 5: Indicators of Motivation Toward Sustainable Consumption Practices Among University of Lagos Students**

S/N	Statement	Counts	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	The will to pay for more Sustainable Products	F	51	92	40	30	213
		%	23.1	43.2	18.8	14.1	100
2	Eco-Friendly Product Preference	F	51	98	35	29	213
		%	23.9	46	16	13.6	100
3	Environmental Impact Consideration	F	51	93	37	32	213
		%	23.9	43.7	17.4	15	100
4.	Shopping Preference due to the Brand's known sustainability Efforts	F	60	87	39	27	213
		%	28.2	40.8	18.3	12.7	100
5	Product Preference due to its Minimal Packaging	F	40	84	52	33	213
		%	20.7	39.4	24.4	15.5	100

**Source: Field Work, 2024**

Table 5 shows important insights into the sustainability consumption practices among University of Lagos students. A majority of respondents demonstrated a willingness to pay more for sustainable products, with 51 students (23.1%) strongly agreeing and 92 students (43.2%) agreeing to this practice. This suggests that while cost is a consideration, many students value sustainability enough to bear additional expenses. However, 30 students (14.1%) disagreed, indicating that price remains a barrier for some. Preference for eco-friendly products was also notably high, with 98 students (46%) agreeing and 51 (23.9%) strongly agreeing that they favor such products. This further emphasizes a

positive attitude toward environmentally conscious consumption, though 35 students (16%) disagreed, pointing to a portion of the population that may be less aware or less committed to eco-friendly purchasing. Consideration of the environmental impact when shopping was reported by 93 students (43.7%) agreeing and 51 (23.9%) strongly agreeing. This demonstrates that many students actively factor in the consequences of their consumption choices, yet 32 students (15%) disagreed, indicating room for greater awareness. Brand sustainability efforts significantly influence buying behaviour, as evidenced by 60 students (28.2%) strongly agreeing and 87 (40.8%) agreeing that they prefer brands known for their commitment to sustainability. This highlights the role of corporate social responsibility and brand reputation in shaping consumer decisions. Lastly, product preference due to minimal packaging was supported by 84 students (39.4%) agreeing and 40 (20.7%) strongly agreeing, showing an awareness of packaging waste issues. Nonetheless, 33 students (15.5%) disagreed, which suggests that while packaging is important to many, other factors like price or quality may override this consideration for some. Overall, these findings indicate that a majority of University of Lagos students exhibit positive attitudes and behaviours towards sustainable consumption. However, there remains a notable minority for whom sustainability is less of a priority, underscoring the need for continued education and promotion of sustainable practices. Additionally, brands can leverage these insights to enhance their sustainability initiatives and better engage with this environmentally conscious demographic.

**Research Question 3: How does gender affect sustainable consumption practices among University of Lagos online student shoppers?**

**Table 6: Perceived Gender Influence on Online Shopping Patterns among University of Lagos Students**

S/N	Statement	Counts	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	Gender Influence on Online Shopping Preferences.	F	63	92	37	21	213
		%	29.6	43.2	17.4	9.9	100
2	Gender Habits towards Online Shopping	F	51	91	41	30	213
		%	23.9	42.7	19.2	14.1	100
3	Gender Influence of the Type of Products	F	47	87	45	34	213
		%	22.1	40.8	21.1	16	100

**Source: Field Work, 2024**

Table 6 presents the influence of gender on consumer behaviour among University of Lagos students engaged in online shopping. A substantial proportion of respondents recognize gender as influencing online shopping preferences, with 63 students (29.6%) strongly agreeing and 92 students (43.2%) agreeing. This indicates that most students perceive gender as shaping their choice of shopping platforms or products. However, 37 students (17.4%) disagreed, suggesting some believe gender does not play a significant role. Regarding shopping habits, 51 students (23.9%) strongly agreed, and 91 students (42.7%) agreed that gender influences the way they shop online. This finding highlights potential differences between male and female students in purchasing frequency, decision-making processes, or shopping motivations. Yet, 41 students (19.2%) disagreed, showing that not all respondents associate shopping habits with gender. The perception that gender affects the types of products purchased online was also notable, with 47 students (22.1%) strongly agreeing and 87 students (40.8%) agreeing. This suggests that gender may guide preferences for certain product categories, reflecting traditional gender roles or interests. However, 45 students (21.1%) disagreed, indicating that a significant number of students do not consider gender a defining factor in product choice. Overall, the data suggest that gender plays a meaningful role in shaping online shopping preferences, habits, and product selection for many, University of Lagos students. Nonetheless, the presence of dissenting opinions points

to evolving consumer behaviours where gender distinctions may be diminishing in certain contexts. These insights emphasize the importance of considering gender dynamics in marketing strategies and the design of online shopping experiences to better cater to diverse consumer needs.

**Table 7: Perceived gender influence on sustainable consumption practices among University of Lagos students**

S/N	Statement	Counts	SA	A	D	SD	Total
1	Gender Influence on Interest in Sustainable Products.	F	50	100	33	30	213
		%	23.5	46.9	15.5	14.1	100
2	Gender Prioritization on Sustainability when shopping Online	F	46	89	44	34	213
		%	21.6	41.8	20.7	16	100
3	Gender Influence to pay for more Eco-Friendly Products	F	34	78	43	58	213
		%	16	36.6	20.2	27.2	100

**Source: Fieldwork 2024**

Table 7 examines the impact of gender on sustainable consumption practices among University of Lagos students engaged in online shopping. The data indicate that most respondents believe gender influences interest in sustainable products, with 50 students (23.5%) strongly agreeing and 100 students (46.9%) agreeing. This suggests that many students perceive gender as shaping enthusiasm for eco-friendly products. However, 33 students (15.5%) disagreed, and 30 students (14.1%) strongly disagreed, showing some variation in this perception. When considering the prioritisation of sustainability during online shopping, 46 students (21.6%) strongly agreed, and 89 students (41.8%) agreed that gender plays a role in this decision-making process. This points to a significant view that gender affects how seriously sustainability is considered in purchasing decisions. Still, 44 students (20.7%) disagreed, and 34 students (16%) strongly disagreed, indicating that not all students see gender as an influence on sustainable shopping priorities.

Regarding the willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products, fewer students expressed strong agreement, with 34 (16%) strongly agreeing and 78 (36.6%) agreeing that gender impacts this behaviour. Notably, 43 students (20.2%) disagreed, and a substantial portion, 58 students (27.2%), strongly disagreed, suggesting that the willingness to pay a premium for sustainable goods may be less influenced by gender compared to other sustainable consumption behaviours. Overall, the findings indicate that while gender is perceived as a significant factor in shaping interest and prioritisation of sustainable products among many students, its impact on the willingness to pay more for eco-friendly items is less pronounced. These insights highlight the nuanced role of gender in sustainable consumption and emphasise the need for targeted strategies that account for gender differences when promoting eco-friendly purchasing behaviours.

### Test of Hypothesis

**Hypothesis 1:** The attitude of University of Lagos student online shoppers towards sustainable consumption practice is positive.

**Table 7: Correlation Consumer Behaviour and Sustainable Consumption Practices Among University Of Lagos Students**

Variables	Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)	P-value
Consumer behaviour	+0.35	< 0.001

Sustainable Consumption Practice +0.45 0.002

**\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)**

**Source: SPSS, Version 20**

Table 7 shows a moderate positive correlation between consumer behaviour and sustainable consumption practices ( $r = +0.35$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that students who exhibit more responsible consumer behaviour tend to engage more in sustainable consumption. Additionally, there is a stronger positive correlation between attitudes toward sustainable consumption and actual sustainable consumption practices ( $r = +0.45$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), suggesting that students with more positive attitudes are more likely to practice sustainability in their online shopping. These significant correlations support the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming that consumer behaviour and attitudes significantly influence sustainable consumption practices among University of Lagos student online shoppers.

### Hypothesis 2

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in motivation towards sustainable consumption practices between male and female University of Lagos student online shoppers.

**Table 8: Table 8: Gender Differences in Motivation and Sustainable Consumption Practices Among University of Lagos Students**

Consumer Behaviour Variable	Male (Mean Score)	Female (Mean Score)	T Statistic	P-Value
Online Shopping Frequency	2.5	3.0	2.75	0.007
Willingness to Pay for Eco-Friendly Products	0.35	0.55	3.10	0.001

**Source: SPSS, Version 20**

Table 8 presents a comparison of motivation-related consumer behaviour variables between male and female University of Lagos student online shoppers. Female students demonstrate a significantly higher frequency of online shopping (mean = 3.0) than their male counterparts (mean = 2.5), with this difference being statistically significant ( $t = 2.75$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ). Additionally, females exhibit a significantly greater willingness to pay for eco-friendly products (mean = 0.55) compared to males (mean = 0.35), with this difference also statistically significant ( $t = 3.10$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). These results indicate that motivation, as reflected in shopping frequency and willingness to invest in sustainable products, differs significantly by gender and positively relates to sustainable consumption practices. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) and conclude that motivation significantly influences sustainable consumption behaviours among University of Lagos student online shoppers.

### Hypothesis 3

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant difference in sustainable consumption practices between male and female University of Lagos online shoppers,

**Table 9: Gender Impact on Sustainable Consumption Behaviour Among Students**

Variables	Male (Mean Score)	Female (Mean Score)	Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)	P-value
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Sustainable Consumption Behaviour Score	0.45	0.55	+0.40	< 0.001
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*Source: SPSS, Version 20*

Table 9 shows the relationship between gender and sustainable consumption practices among University of Lagos online shoppers. Female students have a higher mean sustainable consumption behaviour score (0.55) than male students (0.45). The positive and significant correlation ( $r = +0.40$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) indicates that gender significantly influences sustainable consumption, with females demonstrating greater engagement in sustainable practices. This finding aligns with earlier results showing females' higher awareness and willingness to pay for eco-friendly products. Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected, confirming that there is a significant gender difference in sustainable consumption behaviours among the students.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings from this study on University of Lagos student online shoppers resonate with broader scholarly insights while also highlighting context-specific nuances. The positive attitude towards sustainable consumption practices, evidenced by the moderate correlation between online shopping frequency and sustainability engagement, aligns with Agu et al., (2022) findings within Nigeria, as well as international studies emphasizing the importance of environmental awareness in shaping consumer behaviour (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006; Lee, 2009). This consistency reinforces the notion that fostering positive attitudes is foundational for encouraging sustainable consumption among young consumers globally. The substantial influence of motivation, particularly the heightened eco-consciousness among female students, is corroborated by studies from Nigeria (Olufemi, Adebayo, & Ojo, 2018) and international literature (Haws, Winterich, & Naylor, 2014; Thøgersen, 2006). These studies illustrate the interaction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators and gender, revealing that women frequently display better environmental awareness with tendency to pay premiums for eco-friendly products. Nevertheless, many research also indicates that motivation alone may not lead to sustainable behaviour due to obstacles such as price sensitivity and accessibility (Young et al., 2010; Gleim et al., 2013), a tension that may be particularly prominent in developing environments like Nigeria.

The gender difference in sustainable consumption practices reflects a cross-cultural pattern. While Nigerian studies (Vicente-Molina, Fernández-Sainz & Izagirre-Olaizola, 2018) point to social and cultural norms influencing female environmental engagement, international research also highlights how gendered socialization shapes eco-friendly behaviours (Lee, 2009; White & Simpson, 2013). Yet, critical perspectives caution against overgeneralizing gender effects, noting that socio-economic status, education, and cultural context mediate these differences (Prothero et al., 2011). This suggests that while gender is a significant factor, it interacts with broader structural and contextual elements making consumption practices a multidimensional construct.

Additionally, digital and social media platforms emerge as critical factors that motivating sustainable consumption, corroborated by Adetayo (2022) within Nigeria and Kaplan and Haenlein's (2010) global analysis of social media's transformative role. These platforms facilitate awareness and peer influence, critical drivers of sustainability among digitally savvy youth. However, critical views urge caution, as digital engagement may also foster superficial 'green' behaviours or reinforce consumption patterns rather than radically alter them (Gladwell, 2010). These dual potential warrants nuanced strategies to leverage digital tools for genuine behaviour change.

Summarily, this study's findings affirm established theories while emphasizing the complexity and contextual specificity of sustainable consumption among Nigerian university students. Integrating localized insights with global perspectives allows for a richer understanding that can inform culturally sensitive and gender-responsive policies and

interventions. It also highlights areas for further research, particularly the socio-economic and infrastructural constraints that may limit the translation of attitudes and motivation into consistent sustainable practices.

This study provides important insights into the consumer behaviour and sustainable consumption practices of University of Lagos student online shoppers. First, it confirms a positive attitude towards sustainable consumption, with frequent online shoppers demonstrating higher engagement in eco-friendly purchasing behaviours. Second, motivation, particularly among female students, plays a significant role in driving sustainable consumption practices, as females showed greater willingness to pay for eco-friendly products and higher online shopping frequency. Third, gender differences are evident, with female students consistently exhibiting stronger sustainable consumption behaviours than their male counterparts. These findings highlight the critical influence of attitude, motivation, and gender in shaping sustainable consumption among university students. Together, they underscore the need for targeted educational programs and marketing strategies that address these factors to promote environmentally responsible consumer behaviour within the university context.

### **Implications for Policy and Practice**

The findings from this study highlight the importance of embedding sustainability as a lifelong learning strategy within educational policies at the University of Lagos to nurture eco-conscious behaviours among students. The university's ongoing sustainability initiatives provide a strong foundation for this. For example, introducing eight electric buses as part of the university's fleet demonstrates a commitment to reducing campus carbon emissions. It is a practical example of adoption of clean energy (Punch, 2021). Additionally, the university's pioneering work on waste decarbonisation and co-processing technologies addresses Nigeria's significant waste management challenges, offering innovative solutions that students can learn from and participate in (University of Lagos, 2023). The Green Eco Hub initiative further incentivizes plastic waste recycling by rewarding participation, thus actively engaging the student community in combating plastic pollution (The Cable, 2023). These efforts present unique opportunities for educational policy to integrate experiential learning with sustainability principles, thereby enhancing student motivation and fostering sustainable consumption habits. Policies should prioritise sustainability education across disciplines, encourage student involvement in campus sustainability projects, and support partnerships with environmental organisations to amplify impact. Such comprehensive approaches can bridge the gap between awareness and action, empowering students to contribute meaningfully to environmental sustainability both on campus and beyond.

### **Recommendations**

1. **Integrate Sustainability into University Curricula:** The University of Lagos should embed sustainability education across all faculties to foster lifelong awareness and responsible consumption habits among students.
2. **Design Gender-Sensitive Awareness Campaigns:** Campus-based organisations and gender studies units need to implement tailored campaigns that address the distinct motivations of male and female students to promote inclusive, sustainable behaviours.
3. **Facilitate Access to Eco-Friendly Products:** The university should partner with e-commerce platforms and local vendors to make sustainable products more available and affordable for students and promote lasting green consumption habits.
4. **Promote Peer Learning through Digital Platforms:** The university communications unit, student-led organisations, influencers, and media teams should harness peer networks and social media to normalise sustainable choices and raise awareness of environmental impacts.

5. **Expand Student Participation in Sustainability Projects:** Students should be actively involved in campus sustainability initiatives and clubs, such as UNILAG's electric bus rollout and waste decarbonisation programs, to reinforce practical, lifelong engagement with sustainability.

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