

Effect of Sustainability-Themed Advertising on Consumer Purchase Intention for Guinness Nigeria Plc in Benin City, Edo State

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of sustainability-themed advertising on consumer purchase intention for Guinness Nigeria Plc in Benin City, Edo State. The study assessed four dimensions of sustainability communication: eco-friendly packaging communication, green advertising creativity, green brand image, and perceived sustainability value. An analytical survey design was adopted. From a population of 154 staff of Guinness Nigeria Plc in Benin City, a sample of 111 was drawn using the Taro Yamane formula and selected through stratified random sampling; 103 valid responses (92.79%) were retained for analysis. Data were gathered with a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale; whose internal consistency was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.812 to 0.883. We used descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses. The results show that all four dimensions exert a significant positive effect on consumer purchase intention: green advertising creativity emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.512$; $p = 0.000$), followed by green brand image ($\beta = 0.269$; $p = 0.009$), eco-friendly packaging communication ($\beta = 0.231$; $p = 0.010$), and perceived sustainability value ($\beta = 0.204$; $p = 0.004$). The study concludes that sustainability-themed advertising is a meaningful driver of purchase intention in the Nigerian beverage sector, and recommends that Guinness Nigeria Plc sustain and expand credible sustainability messaging across its packaging, advertising, and community engagement platforms in order to strengthen brand trust, loyalty, and patronage.

Keywords: Sustainability-themed advertising; green advertising creativity; eco-friendly packaging communication; green brand image; perceived sustainability value; consumer purchase intention; Guinness Nigeria Plc.

Introduction

Sustainability has shifted over the past decade from a peripheral corporate activity to a strategic business priority. Rising concern about climate change, environmental degradation, waste management, and the wider social responsibilities of firms has pushed consumers, regulators, and civil society groups to demand more responsible business conduct. In response, many companies now embed sustainability principles in their operations, branding, and marketing communications. One of the marketing approaches that has gained prominence in this shift is sustainability-themed advertising, which foregrounds a firm's commitment to environmental protection, responsible sourcing, community development, and ethical practice as a means of shaping consumer attitudes

and purchase decisions (Kwon, 2021). In Nigeria, the movement towards sustainability is increasingly visible within the manufacturing and fast-moving consumer goods sectors. Breweries and beverage companies in particular face pressure to reduce carbon emissions, promote recycling, manage water use responsibly, and support host communities. Guinness Nigeria Plc, one of the leading breweries in the country, has integrated a range of sustainability initiatives into its corporate strategy, including responsible drinking campaigns, water stewardship projects, plastic waste reduction, renewable energy adoption, and community empowerment programmes, and communicates these initiatives to the public largely through advertising (Ateke & Nwulu, 2021). As competition intensifies, such advertising has become an important tool for differentiation, corporate image building, and customer loyalty (Kankam-Kwarteng, Sarpong, Amofah, & Acheampong, 2021). Despite the growth of sustainability-focused campaigns, questions remain about how effectively they translate into actual consumer behaviour. Some consumers regard sustainability messages as genuine; others treat them as greenwashing, a tactic in which firms exaggerate or misrepresent their environmental efforts. Nigerian consumers also weigh price, availability, taste, and brand familiarity heavily when making purchase decisions, which raises the question of whether sustainability messaging plays a meaningful role in their choices at all. Empirical evidence on this question is thin in the Nigerian context and thinner still for Benin City, Edo State, where no study appears to have tested whether consumers are aware of these messages or whether awareness translates into intention to purchase. A further gap concerns how the evidence has been generated. Most Nigerian studies have concentrated on the larger urban centres of Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Abuja, and have tended to examine isolated aspects of green marketing, such as eco-packaging or corporate social responsibility, rather than integrating several sustainability communication elements into a single model. The present study addresses both gaps by examining four dimensions of sustainability-themed advertising simultaneously within one organisational and geographical setting. The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of sustainability-themed advertising on consumer purchase intention for Guinness Nigeria Plc in Benin City, Edo State. Specifically, the study seeks to determine the extent to which eco-friendly packaging communication influences consumer purchase intention; examine the effect of green advertising creativity on consumer purchase intention; assess the influence of green brand image on consumer purchase intention; and evaluate how perceived sustainability value affects consumer purchase intention. The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the investigation:

H0₁: Eco-friendly packaging communication has no significant influence on consumer purchase intention for Guinness products in Benin City, Edo State.

H0₂: Green advertising creativity has no significant effect on consumer purchase intention for Guinness products in Benin City, Edo State.

H0₃: Green brand image has no significant influence on consumer purchase intention for Guinness products in Benin City, Edo State.

H0₄: Perceived sustainability value has no significant effect on consumer purchase intention for Guinness products in Benin City, Edo State.

Conceptual and Theoretical Background

Sustainability-themed or green advertising refers to marketing communications that emphasise a brand's environmentally responsible practices, including eco-friendly production, packaging, ecolabels, and resource management, and that seek to align brand identity with environmentally conscious consumer values (Ali, Hussin, Haddad, Alkhodary, & Marei, 2021). It goes beyond conventional advertising by folding corporate social responsibility into the marketing message.

Evidence from Nigeria suggests that firms adopting and promoting green practices enjoy an improved corporate image among consumers (Folasayo, 2019), and a systematic review of the green marketing mix between 2020 and 2024 found that green promotion, green products, and green packaging significantly influence purchase behaviour in developing markets (Usman, Butali, & Bello, 2024). Eco-friendly packaging communication is the deliberate presentation of information about a brand's sustainable packaging materials, highlighting attributes such as recyclability, biodegradability, reduced plastic content, or sustainable sourcing. Oluwasanmi, Adebayo, and Asaju (2024) report that packaging material and ecolabelling bear a positive and significant relationship with consumers' buying decisions, indicating that consumers respond to concrete, visible cues rather than to abstract environmental appeals. Ateke and Nwulu (2021) similarly find that packaging communication significantly affects purchase intention among urban Nigerian consumers. Green advertising creativity refers to the innovation, originality, and appeal with which environmental messages are crafted and delivered, through emotional appeals, visuals, storytelling, and symbolism. Creative execution increases message recall, emotional engagement, and perceptions of brand authenticity (Kwon, 2021; Ali et al., 2021). Green brand image is the overall perception consumers hold of a brand's commitment to environmental sustainability, and is a recognised determinant of loyalty, satisfaction, and purchase intention (Kankam-Kwarteng et al., 2021; Mashingaidze, Phiri, & Nyatsambo, 2022). Perceived sustainability value refers to consumers' evaluation of the benefits of a product's environmental attributes relative to its cost, including personal satisfaction, alignment with personal values, brand trust, and long-term environmental wellbeing (Leemann, Kanbach, & Stubner, 2021).

The study is anchored on two theories. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) holds that behaviour is driven by attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Applied here, sustainability-themed advertising may shape consumers' attitudes by highlighting eco-friendly packaging, responsible production, and ethical brand values; where consumers also perceive that society values environmental responsibility and feel able to act on that value, their intention to purchase should rise. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) explains how persuasive messages are processed through a central route, involving deliberate evaluation of message content, and a peripheral route, which relies on cues such as visuals, creativity, and brand appeal. Highly involved consumers are expected to process Guinness's sustainability claims centrally, producing durable attitude change, while less involved consumers may be influenced peripherally by creative execution and attractive packaging. Together, the two theories account for both the substance and the styling of sustainability advertising. Empirical work in Nigeria supports these expectations. Akekue-Alex, Gladson-Nwokah, and Wordu (2024), surveying 323 university lecturers and analysing the data with PLS-SEM, found that consumer-oriented green advertising has a moderate positive relationship with purchase intention and that perceived corporate reputation significantly strengthens that effect. Atuo (2023) reported that sustainability-themed advertising, eco-friendly packaging, and corporate social responsibility initiatives significantly affect buying behaviour among beverage firms in Port Harcourt. Ilesanmi (2022) found that green advertising raised awareness, attitudes, and purchase intention for Coca-Cola products in Lagos State. Mande and Taofeek (2023), using Spearman rank correlation on 70 respondents, found a significant positive relationship between green marketing practices and consumer buying behaviour at the Nigerian Bottling Company. Nwankwo, Ogbodo, Ogbunuju, and Alex (2025), sampling 300 urban consumers in Enugu, found that ecolabelled and recycled-label products and environmental advertising all positively influenced preference for green packaging.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted an analytical survey design. Survey research was considered appropriate because of its capacity to gather quantitative data from a relatively large sample, permitting generalisation to the wider population, and because the analytical variant is suited to testing hypotheses and examining relationships between variables.

Population, Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The population of the study comprised the staff of Guinness Nigeria Plc in Benin City, Edo State, totaling 154 persons, as shown in Table 1. Although the conceptual population is the consumer market within Benin City, time and financial constraints led the study to focus on employees of the firm, who are both knowledgeable about the products and exposed to the company's sustainability communications.

Table 1: Population of the Study

Name of Firm	Staff	Location
Guinness Nigeria Plc	154	Benin City, Edo State
Total	154	

Source: Guinness Nigeria Plc Personnel Records, 2025.

The sample size was determined at the 5% level of significance using the Taro Yamane formula, $n = N / [1 + N(e^2)]$, where n is the sample size sought, N is the population, and e is the level of significance. Substituting the values gives $n = 154 / [1 + 154(0.0025)] = 154 / 1.385 = 111.2$, rounded to 111. The sample therefore consisted of 111 core and contract staff of Guinness Nigeria Plc in Benin City. A stratified random sampling technique was used. The population was divided into distinct strata and a representative sample drawn from each, a probability-based approach that Olannye (2017) notes ensures the sample reflects the characteristics of the entire population. The technique was chosen to account for differences within the staff population while maintaining precision in selection.

Research Instrument and Data Collection

Data were collected primarily through a structured questionnaire administered to the 111 sampled staff, supplemented by secondary sources including journals and business publications. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A captured the demographic profile of respondents, covering gender, age, religion, marital status, and educational qualification. Section B contained structured items measuring the five study constructs: eco-friendly packaging communication, green advertising creativity, green brand image, perceived sustainability value, and consumer purchase intention. Section B items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), producing standardised, quantifiable data suitable for statistical analysis.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Content validity was established by subjecting the questionnaire to review by the research supervisor, who assessed the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of the items and measuring scales. Items were additionally cross-checked against the relevant marketing and consumer behaviour literature to ensure that all constructs were adequately covered.

Reliability was assessed using the Cronbach alpha test of internal consistency, with a coefficient of 0.7 or above taken as acceptable and a value below 0.6 regarded as weak (Malhotra, 2015). As Table 2 shows, all five constructs returned coefficients well above the threshold, ranging from 0.812 to 0.883, confirming that the instrument was reliable.

Table 2: Cronbach Alpha Coefficients

Dimension of the Study	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Eco-Friendly Packaging Communication	5	0.841
Green Advertising Creativity	5	0.867
Green Brand Image	5	0.812
Perceived Sustainability Value	5	0.829
Consumer Purchase Intention	5	0.883

Source: Researcher's Compilation, 2025.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis. Multiple regression was selected as the principal technique because it permits examination of the effect of several independent variables on a single dependent variable and measures both the strength and the direction of those effects. The estimated model is specified as:

$$CPI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EPC + \beta_2 GAC + \beta_3 GBI + \beta_4 PSV + e$$

where CPI is consumer purchase intention (dependent variable), EPC is eco-friendly packaging communication, GAC is green advertising creativity, GBI is green brand image, PSV is perceived sustainability value, β_0 is the intercept, β_1 to β_4 are the coefficients of the independent variables measuring the unit change in the dependent variable arising from a change in each independent variable, and e is the error term. Analysis was conducted using SPSS.

Results

Response Rate and Respondent Profile

Of the 111 questionnaires administered, 103 (92.79%) were properly completed and returned, while 8 (7.21%) were incomplete or improperly filled and were discarded. Following Cooper and Schindler (2014), who regard a response rate of 50% as adequate, 60% as good, and 70% or above as excellent, the achieved rate is excellent and provides a reliable basis for analysis. The 103 valid responses were used throughout.

Table 3: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 103)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender: Male	69	66.99
Gender: Female	34	33.01
Age: 18–29 years	32	31.07
Age: 30–39 years	45	43.69
Age: 40–49 years	21	20.39
Age: 50–60 years	5	4.85
Religion: Christian	58	56.31
Religion: Muslim	29	28.16
Religion: Others	16	15.53
Marital status: Married	43	41.75
Marital status: Single	60	58.25
Education: WAEC/GCE/NECO	24	23.30
Education: OND/NCE	31	30.10
Education: HND/B.Sc	35	33.98
Education: M.Sc/MBA	8	7.77
Education: Others	5	4.85

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2025.

Table 3 shows that the majority of respondents were male (66.99%), reflecting the gender composition of the workforce. Most respondents fell within the economically active age brackets, with 43.69% aged 30–39 years and 31.07% aged 18–29 years. Christians formed the largest religious group (56.31%), and single respondents (58.25%) slightly outnumbered married ones. Educationally, the majority held tertiary qualifications, with 33.98% holding an HND or B.Sc and a further 7.77% holding an M.Sc or MBA, which strengthens confidence in the quality of the responses obtained.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4 summarises the distribution of responses across the five constructs.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
EPC	103	12.00	20.00	16.8996	2.02055
GAC	103	12.00	20.00	16.0643	2.12604
GBI	103	12.00	20.00	16.3133	1.90454
PSV	103	11.00	20.00	16.1807	2.00490

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CPI	103	13.00	20.00	16.4578	2.02186
Valid N (listwise)	103				

Source: SPSS Output, 2025.

Eco-friendly packaging communication recorded the highest mean score (16.90, SD = 2.02), indicating broad agreement among respondents about the clarity and effectiveness of Guinness's packaging messages. Green advertising creativity returned a mean of 16.06 (SD = 2.13), green brand image 16.31 (SD = 1.90), and perceived sustainability value 16.18 (SD = 2.00). Consumer purchase intention recorded a mean of 16.46 (SD = 2.02). In every case, the mean substantially exceeds the standard deviation, indicating relative consistency in responses and limited dispersion around the central value. Taken together, the descriptive results point to positive perceptions across all study variables.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson product-moment correlation was used to establish the nature and strength of the relationships between the independent variables and consumer purchase intention. The coefficient ranges between -1 and $+1$, where $+1$ denotes a perfect positive linear relationship, -1 a perfect negative linear relationship, and 0 no linear relationship.

Table 5: Correlations with Consumer Purchase Intention (CPI)

Variable	r with CPI	Interpretation
Eco-friendly packaging communication (EPC)	0.298	Weak positive
Green advertising creativity (GAC)	0.561	Strong positive
Green brand image (GBI)	0.447	Moderate positive
Perceived sustainability value (PSV)	0.332	Weak to moderate positive

Source: SPSS Output, 2025.

All four dimensions of sustainability-themed advertising are positively correlated with consumer purchase intention. Green advertising creativity shows the strongest association ($r = 0.561$), followed by green brand image ($r = 0.447$), perceived sustainability value ($r = 0.332$), and eco-friendly packaging communication ($r = 0.298$). No coefficient is negative, confirming the relevance of all four constructs to the model.

Test of Hypotheses

Multiple regression analysis was used to test the four null hypotheses. The results are summarised in Table 6.

Table 6: Multiple Regression Results (Dependent Variable: CPI)

Independent Variable	β	p-value	Decision on H_0
Eco-friendly packaging communication	0.231	0.010	Rejected

Independent Variable	β	p-value	Decision on H_0
Green advertising creativity	0.512	0.000	Rejected
Green brand image	0.269	0.009	Rejected
Perceived sustainability value	0.204	0.004	Rejected

Source: SPSS Output, 2025.

Hypothesis one stated that eco-friendly packaging communication has no significant effect on consumer purchase intention. The regression result shows a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.231$; $p = 0.010 < 0.05$); the null hypothesis is rejected. Hypothesis two stated that green advertising creativity has no significant effect. The result shows a strong and significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.512$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$); the null hypothesis is rejected. Hypothesis three stated that green brand image has no significant effect. The analysis reveals a significant positive influence ($\beta = 0.269$; $p = 0.009 < 0.05$); the null hypothesis is rejected. Hypothesis four stated that perceived sustainability value has no significant effect. The result shows a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.204$; $p = 0.004 < 0.05$); the null hypothesis is rejected. Green advertising creativity emerged as the strongest predictor of consumer purchase intention among the four dimensions.

Discussion

The findings are interpreted below within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the Elaboration Likelihood Model, and compared with earlier empirical work.

Eco-Friendly Packaging Communication and Purchase Intention

Eco-friendly packaging communication exerts a significant positive effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.231$), meaning that as the company informs and educates consumers about recyclable bottles, biodegradable labels, and minimalist packaging design, willingness to purchase rises. This is consistent with the Theory of Planned Behaviour, under which communication emphasising environmentally responsible practice shapes attitudes and perceived behavioural control. The result aligns with Ali et al. (2021), Kwon (2021), and Mashingaidze et al. (2022) on the role of sustainability communication in shaping purchase intention, and with Oluwasanmi et al. (2024), whose Nigerian evidence suggests that consumers respond to concrete packaging cues such as clear ecolabels even where general environmental concern is weak. That eco-friendly packaging communication recorded the highest descriptive mean but the second-weakest regression coefficient suggests that awareness of packaging messages is widespread but does not, on its own, carry decisive weight in the purchase decision.

Green Advertising Creativity and Purchase Intention

Green advertising creativity is the strongest predictor in the model ($\beta = 0.512$). Imaginative and appealing promotional messages capture attention, foster emotional engagement, and strengthen the association between the brand and environmental responsibility. The Elaboration Likelihood Model offers a direct explanation: for consumers who are not deeply involved in sustainability issues, creative execution operates as a peripheral cue that shifts attitudes without requiring effortful processing of environmental claims, while for highly involved consumers creative storytelling supplies the vivid content that the central route rewards. The finding corroborates Leemann et al. (2021), Ateke and Nwulu (2021), and Kankam-Kwarteng et al. (2021) on the effectiveness of innovative advertising in driving sustainable consumption.

Green Brand Image and Purchase Intention

Green brand image significantly and positively influences purchase intention ($\beta = 0.269$), indicating that consumers are more inclined to buy Guinness products when the brand is perceived as environmentally responsible. This supports the Theory of Planned Behaviour prediction that favourable perceptions of a brand's environmental commitment feed into attitudes and intentions, and is consistent with Andrew and Chima (2021) and Mashingaidze et al. (2022). It also echoes Akekue-Alex et al. (2024), who found perceived corporate reputation to be a strong moderator of the relationship between green advertising and purchase intention, implying that credibility is a precondition for sustainability messages to persuade rather than to invite suspicion of greenwashing.

Perceived Sustainability Value and Purchase Intention

Perceived sustainability value also significantly influences purchase intention ($\beta = 0.204$), the smallest of the four effects but statistically robust. Consumers who see real worth in Guinness's recycling programmes, water stewardship initiatives, and community development projects are more disposed to buy its products. This accords with the view that perceived value feeds directly into decision-making and willingness to purchase, and supports Ali et al. (2021) and Kwon (2021). The relatively modest coefficient suggests that the abstract, value-based case for sustainability persuades less readily than creative execution does, which may reflect a market in which price, taste, and availability remain primary.

Implications

Read together, the four results indicate that execution matters at least as much as substance. The dimension that turns on how sustainability is communicated, namely creativity, outperformed the dimensions that turn on what is communicated. For Guinness Nigeria Plc and comparable firms, this suggests that investment in sustainability initiatives will not yield commercial returns unless matched by investment in the craft of communicating them credibly. The findings also extend the Nigerian evidence base beyond Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Abuja to Benin City, and demonstrate the value of modelling several sustainability communications dimensions jointly rather than in isolation.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations qualify these findings. The study is restricted to Benin City, so results cannot be generalised to the entire Nigerian population, where cultural, economic, and environmental-awareness differences may produce different patterns. The sample consists of staff of Guinness Nigeria Plc rather than a general consumer population; employees may hold more favourable views of their employer's sustainability efforts than ordinary consumers would, which is a plausible source of upward bias. The study relies on self-reported questionnaire data and is therefore exposed to social desirability bias, and it measures intention rather than actual purchase. Only four sustainability-related variables were examined, leaving out pricing, brand loyalty, peer influence, and cultural norms, which may also shape purchase intention. Finally, some sustainability terminology may have been unfamiliar to a portion of respondents, producing variation in how items were interpreted.

Conclusion

The study set out to examine the effect of sustainability-themed advertising on consumer purchase intention for Guinness Nigeria Plc in Benin City, Edo State. All four dimensions examined eco-friendly packaging communication, green advertising creativity, green brand image, and perceived sustainability value were found to exert a significant positive effect on purchase intention, with green advertising creativity the strongest predictor. Sustainability-themed advertising is therefore not merely an ethical obligation but a strategic marketing instrument capable of shaping consumer behaviour in the Nigerian beverage sector. On the strength of these findings, the study recommends that Guinness Nigeria Plc make its eco-friendly packaging innovations more visible through consistent messaging on product labels, social media, billboards, and community awareness programmes, with recycling symbols and sustainability badges given greater prominence. Given the weight of the creativity coefficient, the company should invest in storytelling, experiential advertising, and digital content that documents real environmental impact, and consider collaborations with local influencers and environmental advocates to extend reach. Transparency should be maintained through frequent public updates on waste reduction, clean energy use, and environmental projects, supported by corporate social responsibility events within Benin City that build trust and loyalty. Educational campaigns, workshops, and school outreach programmes can strengthen perceived sustainability value, which registered the weakest effect in the model. Feedback channels such as online surveys, QR-code response systems, and customer engagement platforms would allow the company to track consumer expectations on sustainability and tailor its communication accordingly. The study contributes empirical evidence on sustainability-themed advertising and purchase intention in the Nigerian beverage sector, addressing a gap in the local literature with respect to Benin City, and validates the explanatory relevance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the Elaboration Likelihood Model in this setting. Future research should extend the enquiry to other regions of Nigeria to permit wider generalisation, sample general consumers rather than employees, and examine additional variables such as corporate environmental responsibility, carbon footprint disclosure, and sustainable supply chain practices. Comparative studies of local and multinational beverage brands, qualitative work using interviews or focus groups, and investigation of the moderating role of demographic factors such as age, income, and education would further deepen understanding of how sustainability communication shapes consumer behaviour.

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