

The Effect of Branding on Consumer Buying Behaviour among Textile Ghana Fabric Users in the Ho Municipality of Ghana

Pearl Fafa Bansah Michael Dabi Sheena Anita Edem Dzorvakpor Hilda Nwodo
Evangelical Presbyterian University College, PO box HP 678, Ho, Ghana

Abstract

The study examined the effect of branding on consumer buying behaviour among Textile Ghana Fabric (formally known as Ghana Textile Prints) users in the Ho municipality. Three aspects of brand equity, notably brand awareness, brand loyalty and brand image were all addressed with other factors that affect the buying behaviour of consumers. The study employed a descriptive research design focusing on case study. The population of the study was 140 and the sample size was 103, 95 being customers of Textile Ghana fabric brand and 8 being retailers of textile fabrics. The method of selection was by purposive and convenience sampling. In collecting data about the phenomena, open and close ended questionnaires were used to collect data from respondents i.e. customers and structured interview guide was used for retailers. Data was analyzed using SPSS employing frequency analysis and one-way chi-square to determine the number and percentage of respondents agreeing to particular assertions and to test the significance of those responses. Findings revealed that branding (brand equity) accompanied with other factors of price, status, self-concept and lifestyle are key components in influencing a customer's purchase decision in the fabric industry. Also the findings showed that focusing on brand features, the most important element in building a successful brand in the textile industry was design. Basing on the research findings, recommendations for intensifying promotional programs (advertisements) for other brands of Textile Ghana, constantly improving the product offering and providing a product line of the same brands to cater for price sensitive customers were made.

Keywords: Branding, Textile Ghana, brand awareness, brand awareness, brand image.

1. Introduction

Branding is acknowledged to be one of the most fascinating marketing strategies used for the purpose of winning or overcoming competition (Ogbuji, Anyanwu and Onah, 2011). It is known to have accounted for one-third to half of all consumers' expressions of intent to purchase (Joshi, 2013).

According to Kerin, Hartley and Rudelius (2009), branding is a basic decision in marketing in which an organisation uses a name, phrase, design, symbols or combination of these to identify its product and distinguish them from those of competitors. It represents consumer's perception and feeling about a product and its performance and it is everything that the product means to the consumer (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006). Branding has been used extensively in all facets of business all over the world.

The textile and clothing industry is known to be one of the oldest, largest and most global industries in the world and forms a major part of manufacturing, production, employment and trade in many developing countries. It plays a major role in the economic development of many countries as it absorbs large numbers of unskilled labour. Continents like Asia, South and Central America derive great benefits from this industry (Keane and Veide, 2008). In South Africa, it has always been a major source of employment, particularly for women (Stiftung, 2006).

In Ghana, African textiles is becoming more and more popular as most people are now using them in making clothes. As a result, the market is becoming more competitive as various companies strive to get the attention of customers. In the last decade, at least from the early 2000s, the use of African textiles has been on the rise. Nowadays, it has been observed that Ghanaians are adopting the use of African textiles for casual wear when formally, it was mainly for ceremonies (Dogoe, 2013). Once a lot of people are adopting the use of African prints in almost all their garments, the questions that may possibly arise will bother on whether branding is a factor that influences consumers in making a purchase.

In Ghana, the use of African textiles is now on the rise and consumers are now faced with a plethora of fabrics to choose from which sometimes become a problem to them. This growing need has attracted the influx of imported textile fabrics into the country. According to recent reports, Ghana's economy is declining as a result of the unstable exchange rates, trade liberalization policies and programmes and the key factors usually noted as being responsible for aggravating the situation have included the inflow of un-customed goods through unfair trade practices, infringement on intellectual property rights and the importation of imitation products that may usually carry lower prices. This is said to have greatly affected the Ghana textile industry which was once Ghana's leading industrial sector and have increased the difficulty in competing with pirated and cheap versions of locally manufactured textiles fabrics from Asia and other countries. A recent survey of the textile and garment firms in Accra and Tema indicated that firms have significantly cut down on output (Quartey and Abor, 2011). There is also the problem of the influx of foreign textiles from Asia into the Ghanaian market. These textile

fabrics do not only carry the designs of Ghanaian clothes, but are imitated to appear as if they were produced in Ghana. These textile fabrics are not durable, compared to those made-in-Ghana, and are sold far below the prices of locally made Ghanaian textiles and this makes them very attractive to some consumers. Also the sale of locally manufactured textile fabrics by retailers have reduced significantly and they have turned to the sale of cheap imported textiles fabrics as consumers are now patronizing more of such fabrics. Consumers who are still interested in purchasing the original Ghanaian textiles are faced with an inability to differentiate between these pirated fabrics and their original. This has led to low patronage of these textiles resulting in the shutdown of most of Ghana's textiles companies.

Though stakeholders in the country have made frantic efforts to revitalize the textile and garment industry, this seems to have hit the rocks since the economy is recording a rapid surge in the sale of fake logos and designs of Chinese textile firms on the market. This has pushed producers to adopt appropriate branding measures in order to differentiate and identify their products from that of foreign competitors. In the face of the above mentioned challenges facing the industry, Textile Ghana (formally known as GTP) is said to have survived the calamity befalling the textile industry and have been shown to be the leading textile company in the Ghanaian textile industry.

The main problem driving this study is the decline in the sale of locally manufactured textile fabrics and the difficulty consumers have in differentiating these fabrics from imitated ones. It can be clearly seen that the consumers are the people who are affected by the problem most, finding it difficult in differentiating the fake textile fabrics from the original ones, thus imitated products from overseas. Literature collected from numerous researchers suggests that branded clothing and fashion clothing is the prime focus in the modern world since the last decade. Lots of work has been done in this regard in the developed countries, but in the third world countries like Ghana, the field is yet to be explored and results are to be formalized. It is in this light that the study seeks to investigate the various factors that affect consumer buying behaviour in the textile industry in Ghana. The specific objectives of the study are:

- To investigate the effect of brand awareness, loyalty and image on consumer buying behavior
- Find out other factors that affect the consumer buying behaviour.

2. Methodology

The study area for the research was the Ho municipality which is the capital of the Volta Region of Ghana. In the Volta Region, there are twenty-five (25) Districts and Municipal Assemblies including the Ho Municipal Assembly, in which the customers who use and patronize textile fabrics are located. The Ho municipality has many business institutions which includes retail shops, hotels, restaurants, governmental set-ups, banks, schools, hospitals, micro-finance establishments, sole-proprietorship businesses, mobile telecommunication companies, etc. that also patronize textile fabrics due to the "Friday Wear" policy instituted by the government several years ago. A sample size of 95 fabric textile users were randomly selected via visits to shops and retail centres where questionnaires were administered.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Consumers Most Preferred Textile Ghana Brand

Respondents were asked which Textile Ghana brand they preferred the most. The results are displayed in Figure 1 below.

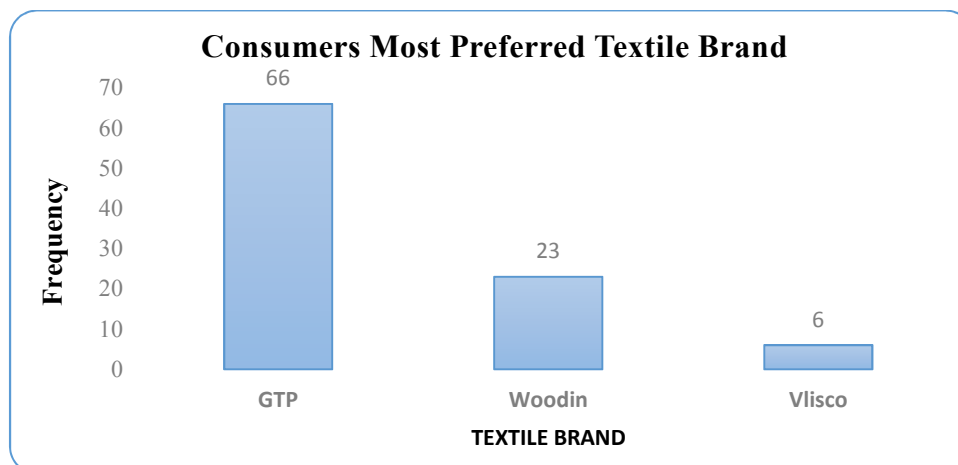


Figure 1: Textile Ghana fabrics consumers prefer most

In relation to the fabric brands from Textile Ghana consumers preferred, the *GTP* brand was the most

preferred (70 %), with *Woodin* (24%) and *Vlisco* (6%) following in that order.

3.2 The effect of Brand Awareness on Consumer Buying Behaviour

After knowing their favourite brands, respondents' views on how brand awareness affects their buying behavior. The results are shown in Figure 2 (consumers' means of exposure to a brand) and Table 1 (consumer's ability to differentiate their favourite brands from similar ones).

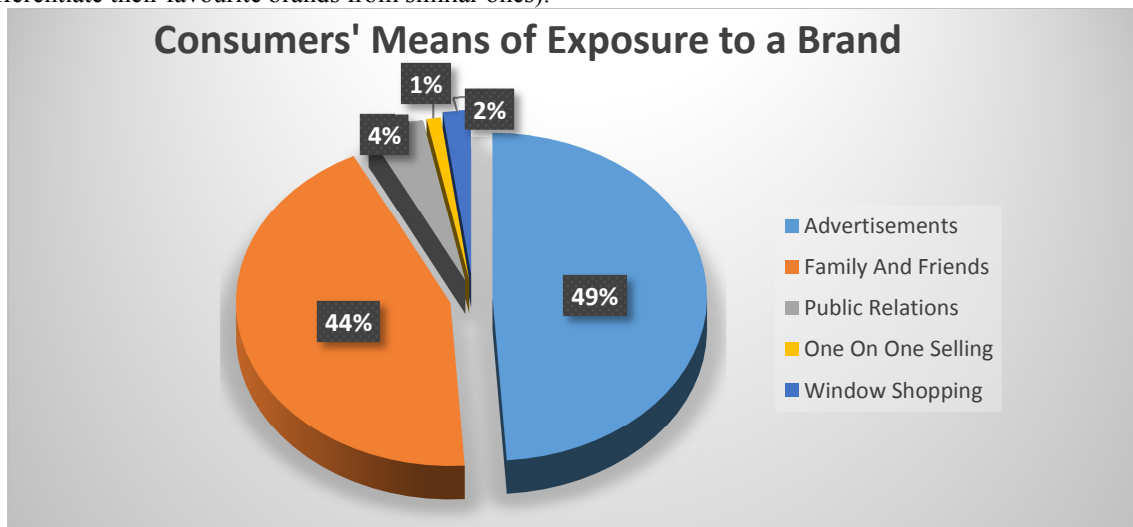


Figure 2: How respondents got to know about their favourite textile brand (frequencies are in percentages)

As to how respondents became aware of their favourite textile brands, advertisement (49%) and recommendations from family and friends (44%) ranked highest with public relations (4%), window shopping (2%), and one-on-one selling (1%) having the lowest rankings in that order. The above results are consistent with the views of Khan (2012), who stated that a brand's awareness could be created by promotional tools of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and public relation with advertising normally observed to be the most dominant. The reason behind this response may be because the company runs more advertisements for the GTP brand as compared to *Woodin* and *Vlisco*.

Table 1 Results showing respondents' ability to differentiate between brands

Ho: Observed frequencies are equal to the expected frequencies

Question	Frequency		χ^2 df (1)	Interpretation	Decision
	Yes	No			
Can you differentiate your favourite brand from an imitated one?	73 (79%)	19 (21%)	30.8	Significant	Reject <i>Ho</i>
Can you recognise the slogan or label of your favourite textile brand?	72 (77%)	21 (23%)	27.7	Significant	Reject <i>Ho</i>

p < 0.05

A one-way χ^2 test was used to analyze these data. We expected 50% of the sample of respondents to respond "yes" and the other 50% to respond "no" to both questions posed. However, observed frequencies were significantly different for both questions (*respondents' ability to detect imitation of their favourite brand*, χ^2 (1, $N = 92$) = 30.8, $p < 0.05$; and *ability to recognise brand label or slogan*, χ^2 (1, $N = 93$) = 27.7, $p < 0.05$). Seventy nine percent (79%) of respondents could detect imitations of their favourite brand while twenty one percent (21%) could not differentiate between their favourite brand and imitated ones. As to whether respondents could recognise the slogan or logo of their favourite textile brand, seventy nine percent (79%) of the sample said they were able, while twenty one percent could not recognise the logo or slogan of their favourite brand. These findings are consistent with the views of Wyer (2008) in Laran, Dalton and Andrade (2011), who stated that awareness creation through advertisements and other promotional tools expose consumers to the brand names, slogans, endorsers, pricing and sales people.

The trend of the results may be due to promotional programs being undertaken by the company to sensitize customers about special features to look out for when purchasing their preferred textile brand. These may include the unique features the product or brand may possess, therefore making differentiation very easy may also be reason for the observation. These factors exert their influence automatically in elusive ways that consumers are either not aware of or cannot control.

3.3 The Effect of Brand Loyalty on Consumer Buying Behaviour

Table 2 below shows results from the one-way χ^2 test which was used to analyze these data from respondents.

Table 2: Results showing the effects of brand loyalty on consumer buying behaviour.

Ho: Observed frequencies are equal to the expected frequencies

Statement	Frequency			χ^2 df (2)	Interpretation	Decision
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree			
I will recommend my preferred textile brand to family and friends.	79 (83.2%)	13	3(3.2 %)	107.00	Significant	Reject H_0
I will repurchase the same textile brand when given another opportunity.	66 (69.5%)	25	4(4.3 %)	64.57	Significant	Reject H_0
A slight change in price will change my purchase decision.	11 (11.6%)	22	62(65.3%)	45.5	Significant	Reject H_0
I will switch to another brand if they have a better offer.	30 (31.6%)	19	46(48.4%)	11.62	Significant	Reject H_0
I will always buy a brand I'm loyal to	52(53.7%)	24	19(20.0%)	19.97	Significant	Reject H_0

P < 0.05

We expected equal numbers of respondents (33.33%) to respond to each category (agree, neutral, disagree). However observed frequencies were significantly different from expectations for all questions assessed (*respondents recommendations to family and friends recommendations*, χ^2 (2, N = 95) = 107, $p < 0.05$; *respondents repurchasing the same brand* χ^2 (2, N = 95) = 64.57, $p < 0.05$; *slight change in price affecting respondent's decision*, χ^2 (2, N = 95) = 45.5, $p < 0.05$; *respondents switching to another brand with a better offer*, χ^2 (2, N = 95) = 11.3, $p < 0.05$; *respondents always buying a brand they are loyal to*, χ^2 (2, N = 95) = 19.97, $p < 0.05$).

Using descriptive statistics, the study found that 79% of the sample would recommend their favourite textile brand to family and friends whereas 3 % said they would not. This trend of results is consistent with the views of Aaker (1991), Banerjee (n.d.) and Schultz (2005), who indicated that loyal and satisfied customers will give positive comments to social groups they belong to through word of mouth. Banerjee (n.d.) also stated that consumers who are loyal to a certain brand also impact their circle through word of mouth as they recommend the same brand to others based on their experience. This observation may be as a result of the company providing the needed benefits customers expect from fabrics they purchase and therefore meeting their expectations which may have led to customer satisfaction. A satisfied customer usually recommends his or her favourite brand to family and friends.

As to whether respondents would repurchase the same textile brand given another opportunity, 70% indicated intentions to repurchase with only 4% saying the otherwise. This view expressed by participants is in tandem with the view of Schultz (2005), who stated that a customer demonstrates loyalty to a brand in a way that shows the willingness to repeat the purchase of the same brand. The reason behind this response may be as a result of the satisfaction the customer derives from the product being offered by the company.

As to whether a slight change in price will affect consumer's behaviour, 12% of the respondents said they will change their purchase decision if there was a slight change in price, 22% were neutral to changing their purchase decision if there was a slight change in price and 62% said they will not change their purchase decision if there was a slight change in price. This view expressed by the participants is consistent with the view of Keller (2003), who stated that consumers with high brand loyalty are said to be willing to pay a premium price for their favored brand, and as such, their purchase intention is not easily affected by price. According to Yoon and Kim (2000), loyal customers are willing to pay a premium even if the price has increased because the perceived risk is very high and they prefer to pay a higher price to avoid the risk of any change. They also emphasised that long-term relationships of service loyalty make loyal customers more price tolerant, since loyalty discourages customers from making price comparison with other products by shopping around. The trend of the results may be due to the fact that customers are satisfied with the product offering and as such, will not mind the price they pay for it.

Results from analyzing the switching behaviour of respondents showed that 32% of the respondents said they will switch to other brands if they had a better offer with the majority, 49% saying they would not switch to a better brand even if they had a better offer. This view expressed by the respondents is supported by

Aaker (1991), who stated that loyal consumers tend to continue purchasing the same brand despite demonstrated benefits (including better features, lower price or convenience) by competitors' products. The trend of the results may be due to the fact that customers are satisfied with the product offering of their favourite brand and may have also contracted specific habits which do not change. It could also be because of the fabrics being used by their social class or family and friends and also the status or self – image of the customers.

In relation to respondents always buying a brand they are loyal to, 54% of respondents said they would always buy brands they are loyal to with only 20% saying otherwise. This view expressed by the majority of participants agrees with the view of Schultz (2005), who stated that customers demonstrate loyalty to a brand in a way that shows the willingness to repeat the purchase of the same brand. The trend of results could be as a result of the quality perceptions customers have about the products and are therefore satisfied with the product offering. This view expressed by respondents is consistent with the views of Williams (2006), who asserts that customers usually have some sort of brand preferences with companies as their friends may have had a reliable history with one. The trend of the results may be due to the fact that they belong to a social group that has an influence on their buying behaviour and may want to fit in or be appreciated.

Closely related to brand loyalty are brand features that tend to determine customer loyalty. Results from respondents are captured in Figure 3 below.

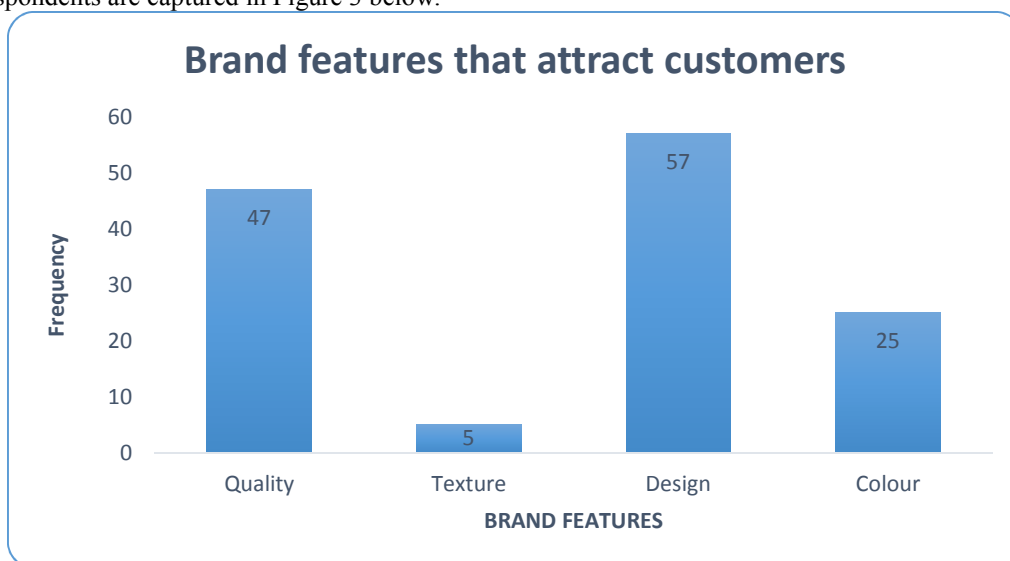


Figure 3. Brand features that attract consumers most to their preferred textile brand

The results on the brand features that attracts respondents most to their preferred textile showed that design, quality, colour, and texture were the important factors that affect the buying behaviour of respondents except for price and country of origin which did not contribute to the behaviour of consumers. The following percentages were derived from the frequencies: Design (57%), Quality (40%), colour (25%), and texture (5%). These observations are similar with those of Ahmed, Parmar and Anim (2014), who stated that colour, design and other features of a brand play an important role in potential customer's decision making process. He further stated that colour helps set different moods and can help draw attention.

3.4 The Effect of Brand Image on Consumer Buying Behaviour

The study sort to investigate how brand image affected the buying behaviour of consumers. Table 3 below shows results from the one-way χ^2 test which was used to analyze these data from respondents.

Table 3: Results from the respondents showing the effects of brand image on consumer buying behaviour.
Ho: Observed frequencies are equal to the expected frequencies

Statements	Response in frequency			X ²	Interpretation
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Df (2)	
People's opinion about a brand affects my buying behavior	44 (46.3 %)	22 (23.2 %)	29 (30.5 %)	8.0	Significant
Corporate Social Responsibility programs affect my buying behavior	27 (28.4 %)	32 (33.7 %)	36 (37.9 %)	4.7	Not significant
I buy a brand that matches my personal values.	76 (70.6 %)	13 (13.7 %)	15 (15.8 %)	81.9	Significant

p < 0.05

We expected equal numbers of respondents (31.6) to respond to each category (Agree, Neutral, disagree). However observed frequencies were significantly different from expectations for all questions assessed (*people's opinion about a brand affecting respondents behaviour*, $\chi^2 (2, N = 95) = 8.0, p < 0.05$; and respondents buying a brand that matches their personal values, $\chi^2 (2, N = 95) = 81.9, p < 0.05$) except for *CSR programs affecting buying behavior*, $\chi^2 (2, N = 95) = 4.7, p < 0.05$.

Descriptively, this result showed that 46% of respondents agreed that other people's opinion affects their buying behaviour, twenty three percent (23%) were neutral to being affected by people's opinion about a brand and thirty one percent (31%) said their buying behaviour was not affected by people's opinion about a textile brand. This view expressed by respondents agrees with the view of Williams (2006), who asserts that customers usually have some sort of brand preferences that is related to that of close friends or relatives. The trend of the results may be as a result of the personality of the respondent as personality can determine a person's susceptibility to external influences.

As to whether respondents purchase brands that match their personal values, 71% were in agreement with 16% in disagreement. The views of the majority of respondents is reflected in the works of Khare and Handa (2009), who stated that the more a brand fits with a customer's beliefs, the more loyal he/she would be to the brand. The trend of the results may be due to the fact that the brands personify the characteristics that the customer possesses and as such, customers may seek to enhance their self-concept in social settings. From these results, the personal values of respondents was found to be the main determinant of customer buying behaviour.

3.5 Other Factors Affecting Consumer Buying Behaviour

This section of the results relate to the other factors that affect the buying behaviour of consumers. To achieve this objective, the researchers proposed simple formulae to help determine whether the factors of personality, price and culture contribute to the buying behaviour of consumers in the textile industry using defined underlying variables.

The formulae are stated as follows:

Based on the responses of respondents,

Let SA= **strongly agree**, A= **agree**, SD= **strongly disagree** and D= **disagree**.

Then, SA + A = X and SD+D = Y.

The difference of (X-Y) would yield the level of importance, L. We set the conditions that, if the value of L is positive, then the factor in question is a contributing factor to the buying behaviour of consumers. Negative values indicate the factor does not contribute to consumers' buying behaviour according to respondents. Higher values (positive or negative) indicate the strength of the contribution.

Solving For the Effect of Personal Factors on Consumer Buyer Behaviour.

$L = X - Y$, therefore, $X = SA + A = 66 + 98 = 164$ and $Y = SD+D = 61+68 = 129$

Therefore Personality = $X - Y = 164 - 129 = (+) 35$.

The positive value implies, per the set criteria, that personality is an important factor affecting a consumer's buying behaviour in the textile industry via variables such as self-image, lifestyle, people's perception and status.

This view of respondents is supported by Pandey and Pandey (2013) and Bhasin (2006). They were of notion that consumers today tend to prefer and buy products according to their lifestyle and that the status of a person is projected through various symbols like the dress, accessories and possessions (Bhasin, 2006). According to them, people are very concerned about their image and their status in society and that a person's profession or occupation may have an impact on the products they purchase. These results may be because, personal factors of an individual define who a person is. People normally react outwardly based on what they perceive themselves to be. An individual's status in society can affect behaviour based on the expectations of the society in which he lives in. Also, the way of life of a consumer may determine his purchase patterns or define

his needs. However, a change in any of these factors may easily affect the behaviour of consumers.

Solving For the Effect of Price on Consumer Buyer Behaviour

$L = X - Y$, therefore, $X = SA + A = 39 + 70 = 109$ and $Y = SD + D = 41 + 65 = 106$

Therefore Personality = $X - Y = 109 - 106 = (+) 3$

The calculated value showed a positive result though weak in comparison with the personality factor of + (36). Price, per the criteria, is an important factor affecting a consumer's buying behaviour in the textile industry via variables such as price discount, price increase and price as an important factor.

This is supported by the views of Cadogan and Foster (2000), who said that price is probably the most important consideration for the average consumer. According to Asamoah and Chovancová (2011), price is not only about numbers, it is a play on perception. To a large degree, it is the customers' perception of price that makes them buy a product and not the actual money price. Verma and Gupta (2004) also revealed that people view brand name products or higher prices as signs of higher quality and lower price fixation for durable products could adversely affect the quality perceptions. These results may be due to the quality perceptions respondents' attach to the price of the brands they purchase. For those who buy brands with premium prices, they may consider buying brands with higher quality as people view highly priced products as being of good quality and lower priced brands of being of a lower quality.

Solving For The Effect Of Culture On Buyer Behaviour

$L = X - Y$, therefore, $X = SA + A = 33 + 40 = 73$ and $Y = SD + D = 78 + 56 = 134$

Therefore Culture = $x - y = 73 - 134 = (-) 61$

The calculated value showed a negative result. Therefore, culture, per the criteria is not an important factor affecting a consumer's buying behaviour in the textile industry. The above results show that culture, through variables like historical backgrounds, religion and festive seasons does not have an effect on consumer buying behaviour. These results may be due to the fact that consumers are becoming more sophisticated and as such are shying away from their culture.

In summary, the study found personality and price to be important factors that contribute to consumers' buying behaviour.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

First of all, the study found that brand awareness, brand loyalty and brand image through various means do affect the buying behaviour of consumers. For example, advertisements (medium for brand awareness) was discovered as the best medium that helps consumers to become aware of a product brand. As consumers are frequently exposed to all forms of advertisements, they are constantly reminded about the product features i.e. name, logos and slogans and other product offerings of the company. As exposure to a brand increases, customer's knowledge about the brand also increases making it easier to recall the brand and also have the ability to detect imitations. Also, it was found out that brand loyalty contributes significantly to the behaviour of consumers since loyal customers do not only recommend their favourite textile brand to family and friends but are also ready to make repeated purchases of the same product brand and still purchase the same textile even if other companies have a better offer. With brand image, it was recognised that, other people's opinions and perceptions about a brand affects the buying behaviour of other customers.

Finally, the study found variables such as personal factors and price as other important factors that affect consumers' buying behaviour. Under personal factors, self-image, status and lifestyle were identified as some of the main influences on consumer buying behaviour. It was also discovered that price was one of the factors that prevents non-users of Textile Ghana brands from purchasing the brand. Culture did not have a significant effect on the brand of textile fabric consumer's purchase.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on the study, the following recommendations are worth noting.

First of all, attention must be should be given to advertisements when it comes to other brands of Textile Ghana, i.e. Woodin and Vlisco. The company should also undertake integrated marketing communication programs. This way, customers can be exposed more frequently to these brands, thereby increases brand awareness which has an effect on consumer buying behaviour. Also, the company should intensify the advertisements for the other existing brands like GTP brand as the market will become increasingly competitive.

In communicating to customers, advertising messages must not only be centered on marriage but should also include other activities like birthdays, parties, etc.

Secondly, the company must constantly improve upon the quality, design and other features of the products to ensure customer satisfaction or delight which has a strong effect on customer loyalty. Even though

it's been shown in the study that loyal textile brand consumers will buy the same brand given another opportunity and will recommend the brands to family and friends or the social group they belonged to, the needs of consumers are constantly changing and what satisfies a consumer today, may not have the same effects tomorrow. Therefore, the company should continually improve upon the quality and designs in of the textile brand.

Finally, the company should also provide a product line that could caters for price sensitive customers who cannot afford Textile Ghana brands. This could help reduce the rate at which imitations are being bought over original textile brands. Also, the products should be tailored to match the self-concept of various customers and the company should also undertake research to identify various groups of customers with similar needs and tailor products for each of these groups of people as each of them may vary in terms of status, lifestyle, life-cycle, and self-concept.

Further studies can be conducted throughout the whole of Ghana to investigate how the influx of cheap imported textile Ghana brands can be combated so as to improve the local textile industry.

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