

The Marketing Mix Element as Determinants of Consumer's Choice of Made-In-Nigeria Shoes in Cross River State.

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines factors influencing consumer's choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes in Cross River State. The paper examines the relationship between product quality, price, distribution channel, advertising and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes in Cross River State. A survey design was used in gathering information needed for the work. The findings based on data analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between product quality, price, distribution channel, advertising and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes. It is recommended that good quality shoes should be produced and sold at suitable prices. It is also of our opinion that made-in-Nigeria shoes should be intensively distributed and frequent advertising programmes should be carried out in order to create awareness, capture interest of consumers, as this will help boost the economy of the country.

Keyword: Product quality, price, advertisement, distribution intensity and consumer choice

Introduction

Consumer behaviour is the behaviour that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using and evaluating products and ideas which they expect will satisfy their needs. Consumer decision making process is defined by Kotler and Armstrong (2007), as need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternative, purchase decision and post purchase behaviour. Most businesses research buying decisions in great detail to answer questions about what consumers buy, why they buy and how much they buy, when and from whom they buy. Learning about the why's of consumers buying behaviour is not so easy. Made-in-Nigeria shoes are shoes produced within Nigeria, while factors are those variables influencing consumer's decision on shoe purchase. All activities in any business unable to provide goods and services that fulfill the needs and want of consumers have lost their prime reasons for existence and will not survive in a competitive environment.

Many indigenous business persons who are into foot wear business established either through a government micro credit scheme or founded by the themselves, their products are being looked down upon and contemptuously regarded as low quality or inferior relative to imported shoes. If this misconception is not corrected, it will in no small measure stifle all efforts geared towards self reliance, economic growth and development. According to Etuk (2009), one material factor that affect the economic wellbeing of a nation besides natural resources, is population, through which can turn its natural resources into a variety of usable products. With a population of over 140 million (Nigeria Population Commission, 2006), Nigeria has the largest population and possibly the largest potential market in Africa. It is in the light of this, that the federal government often urges its citizens to patronize made-in-Nigeria products.

However, to make Nigerian made shoes more attractive, the factor influencing consumer choice of shoes need to be examined or investigated. The starting point is stimulus response model of buyer behaviour. The marketing stimuli and other stimuli enters the consumer's "black box" and produce certain responses. The marketing stimuli according to Kotler and Armstrong(2007) are associated with the four Ps: product, price, place and promotion. That is why this paper seeks to examine influence of product quality, price, distribution channel and advertising on consumer's choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Poor mass consumption of made-in-Nigeria shoes is a major problem inherent in the ostentatious life-style of the average Nigerian, particularly those in the elite class whose sharp taste for imported goods serve as instrument of class discrimination has diffused into the psyche of the rest of the populace, particularly the youths. The lack of preference for made-in-Nigeria shoes has over run the desired spirit of loyalty, patriotism and support for the nation.

It is based on this background that this paper seeks to determine the relationship between product quality, price, distribution integrity exposure to advertising manage and consumer's choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes. On the whole, the objective of this study include the examination of the factors that influence the purchase behaviour for made-in-made-in-Nigeria shoes.

2. Literature Review

Consumer behaviour is described as all purchases related activities, thought and influences that occur before, during and after the purchase itself as performance by buyers and consumers of products and services and those who influence the purchase. Achumba (2000), defined consumer behaviour as the activities people engage in actual or potential use of market items whether product, or service information or ideas. Ekerete (2001), sees consumer behaviour as the process whereby individuals decide whether, what, when, where, how and from whom to purchase goods and services. Consumer behaviour include both the mental and physical activities necessary for making decision in the market place.

Consumer research takes place at every phase of consumption process, before the purchase, during the purchase and after the purchase. The criteria for a successful marketing of locally produced shoes include sound and comprehensive knowledge of marketing concept by producers and marketers of such products.

Consumer decision making process is the stages buyers or consumers pass through to reach a buying decision. Marketers need to focus on the entire buying process rather than on just the purchase decision. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2007), a consumer passes through five stages which are: need recognition information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and post-purchase behaviour. Palmer (2000), in his contribution to the widely acclaimed buyer decision-making model, identifies inputs as psychological and social influence, perceptual reaction, process determinant, inhibitors and output as important processes in buyer's decision-making process. The marketing manager must understand source of inputs of the consumer to enable him source for consumers.

The input (information) can be obtained from personal or published sources. A customer is predisposition determines why he behaves in a particular way. The culture that they live in, family, and personality factors amongst others can influence this. There is need to understand the stages involved in decision making process as this would help local shoe dealers depict consumers source of information and they can go through this sources in passing information about the product. Managers should always try to find out the things that trigger a consumers patronage behaviour.

For a marketing plan to be successful, it is essential that all elements of the marketing mix should support each other. Marketing mixes will change between products, services and market situation and indeed this is what makes marketing dynamic. It is the skill of the marketing person in manipulating mixes that can take a product or service a success or a failure. The product or service is particularly important in this calculation, for this is a tangible element that will appeal to consumers and it is upon this that consumer's purchases and repeat purchases are based. Lancaster and Reynolds (1998), defined product as a bundle of satisfactions; this include physical product and less tangible service offering. Jobber (1995), defined product as anything which is capable of satisfying consumer's needs. He added that building quality into the core product is important. The core product must achieve the basic functional requirement expected of it.

Price is the value or sum money at which supplier of a product or services and buyer agrees to carry out an exchange transaction. Busch and Houston (1985), states that price is the value assigned to product one received from goods or services. Price is the amount of money that is given up to acquire a given quantity of goods and services. Kotler and Armstrong (1996), defined price as the amount of money charged for a product or services or the sum of the values that consumers exchange for the benefits having or using the product or service. He says historically, price has been the major factor affecting buyer choice in recent decades, non-priced factors have gained increasing importance. However, price still remains the most important element determining a firm's market share and profitability. Price is the only element in the marketing mix that produces revenue, all other elements represent costs. Price is also one of the most flexible marketing mix elements.

Place which is referred to as distribution is defined by American Marketing Association (1980), as the structure of intra company agent and dealers, wholesale or retail, through which a commodity, product or service is marketed.

Nwokoye (2000), defined marketing channel as the combination of institutions through which a seller markets his product to the ultimate buyer. Ebitu(2000), said goods and services that are properly manufactured, price and promoted will be of no business use if they are not made available to the right place and right time for consumers. Therefore, distribution closes the gap that exists between the producer and the consumer. Distribution ensures that the utilities of time, form, possession and place are created and maintained. In order to make goods and services available for consumption, the marketing mix variable place must be considered otherwise, the aim of production will be defeated.

Advertising is a non-personal communication, which is openly paid for and meant to affect a company and individual's target audience and/or market positively in order to elicit acceptance of ideas, goods and services, individual or institutions. Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong (1999), defines advertising as any form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods and services by an identified sponsor. The degree of awareness created by the advertiser and his ability to persuade and convince consumers to buy a product or accept an idea depends on the product availability, reasonably moderate price, and a combination of all marketing and promotional effort. Advertising effort is therefore geared towards persuading customers to take passive action favourable to the company, its product or service. According to Ekerete (2001), advertising is being carried out by three separate entities the government, registered advertising agencies, and concern individuals. Manufacturing companies in Nigeria however, do not differ from those found in other part of the world. Many manufacturing companies attempt to explain sales during the company's life time for viability or continued existence. Kotler, Armstrong Saunders and Wong (1999), identified four qualities of advertising that can influence behavior and make them better and more powerful than personal selling, sales promotion and publicity. Among these characteristics are its public preservation, persuasiveness, amplified expressiveness and impersonality.

3. Materials and Methods

The study adopted cross-sectional survey design. The descriptive design was used to produce or present accurate description of variables relevant to the study, demonstrating the relationship that exists between the variables. The survey design was adopted in order to elicit responses from the respondents on the subject matter. The questionnaire administered was made up of questions with open ended, closed-ended structured with Likert scale ranging from: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), Strong Disagree (1), which asked consumer to indicate a degree of agreement and disagreement with each of the attitude object as seen in the questionnaire. The five point likert scale used was measuring instrument for the independent variables while the dependent variable choice, was measured quantitatively. The study was undertaken in Cross River State, which is located within the South-South geo-political region of Nigeria. The population of the study was made up of youths and adults selected from within three towns of the three senatorial districts of Cross River State, namely Ogoja, Ikom and Calabar. A total of three hundred and seventy five respondents were randomly selected from the three towns. The study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique.

In determining the sample size for unknown population, the Topman formula was adopted. It is given as:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}{e^2} \text{ where } n = \text{required sample size, } Z = \text{the value of } Z\text{-score associated with degree of confidence}$$

selected, p = probability of positive response, q = probability of negative response, e = the tolerable error margin.

A "pilot survey" was carried out by interviewing a random sample of 90 consumers. Of the 90 consumers, 50 of them agreed that the variables generated for this study product quality, price, intensive distribution, and advertising influenced their choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes, while 40 said that they were not influenced by the variables. To determine the sample size, the Topman's formular was applied as follows:

$$Z = 1.96 \text{ (this value can be found using the } Z\text{-score table)}$$

$$P = 0.56$$

$$Q = (1 - p) = 0.44$$

$$e = 0.05$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times (0.56 \times 0.44)}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = 375 \quad \therefore \quad \frac{375}{3} = 125 \text{ for each senatorial district}$$

Finally, the Pearson product moment of correlation coefficient test static was employed in carrying out the data analysis.

4. Results and Discussions

The first hypothesis concerned the degree of relationship between product quality and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes. Table 1 shows the result of correlation test between the independent variable (product quality) and dependent variable (consumer choice).

Table 1: Presents the summary of data analysis and correlation test to determine the significance of the relationship between product quality and consumer choice of made - in - Nigeria shoes.

Variable	Σx^2	Σxy	r _{cal}	r _{crit}
Quality of the product (shoes) (x)				
	Σx	63,118		
	346			
Consumer choice of made in Nigeria shoes (Y)				
	Σy	Σy^2	16,118	0.380
	346	27,351		0.088

Source: Data analysis, 2010

Note: Correlation is significant at 0.05 level.

Statistical analysis shows that there is significant relationship between product quality and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes, since the calculated r value (0.380) is greater than critical r value (0.088) at 0.05 level of significance, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. In essence, a shoe dealer or manufacturer should have in mind that product quality is one of the determinant factor or variable that influence consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes. According to Jobber (1995) product is anything which is capable of satisfying consumer's needs and that building quality into the product is important.

Table 2: Presents the summary of data analysis and correlation test to determine the significance of the relationship between price and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes.

Variable	Σx^2	Σxy	r _{cal}	r _{crit}
Price of the products (shoes) (x)	Σx 346	32.182		
Consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes (Y)	Σy 346	Σy^2 27,351	21,950	0.736
			0.088	

Source: Data analysis, 2010

Note: Correlation is significant at 0.05 level.

Statistical analysis shows that there is significant relationship between price and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes, since the calculated r value (0.736) is greater than the critical r value (0.088) at 0.05 level of significance.

Kotler and Armstrong (1996), confirmed that despite the increased role of non-price factors in modern marketing, price remains a critical element of the market mix. This means that price is very important as long as marketing is concern. Manufacturers and shoe dealers should fix price with great care in order not to scare away consumers.

Table 3: Presents the summary of data analysis and correlation test to determine the significance of the relationship between distribution (place) and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes.

Variable	Σx^2	Σxy	r _{cal}	r _{crit}
Advertising of product (shoes) (x)	Σx 346	29,710		
Consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes (Y)	Σy 346	Σy^2 27,351	21,488	0.750
			0.088	

Source: Data analysis, 2010

Note: Correlation is significant at 0.05 level.

Result from analysis of hypothesis three shows that the calculated r value (0.750) is greater than the critical r value (0.088) at 0.05 level of significance which means, there is a significant relationship between distribution and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes. Ebitu (2002), said that good and services that are properly manufactured, priced and promoted will be no business use if there are not made available at the right place and right

time for consumers. Therefore, shoe dealers and manufacturers should always make made-in-Nigeria shoes available as at when needed.

Table 4: Presents summary of data analysis and correlation test to determine the significance of the relationship between advertising and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes

Variable	Σx^2	Σxy	rcal	rcrit
Advertising of product (shoes)				
(x)	Σx			
	346	43,138		
			18,368	0.530
Consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes				0.088
(Y)	Σy	Σy^2		
	346	27,351		

Source: Data analysis, 2010

Note: correlation is significant at 0.05 level

Result from analysis of hypothesis four shows that the calculated r value (0.530) is greater than the critical r value (0.088) at 0.05 level of significance. This means that, there is a significant relationship between advertising and consumer choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes. This result is in consonance with that of Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong (1999), they identified four qualities of advertising that can influence consumer buying behavior and make better and more powerful influence than personal selling, sales promotion and publicity. These qualities or characteristics includes: public presentation, persuasiveness, amplifies expressiveness and impersonality. Therefore, every shoe dealer and manufacturer should employ advertising in order to create awareness, persuade, inform and captivate consumers to choosing made-in-Nigeria shoes.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Instead of our capital to keep going outside and serving foreign economy, since the research findings showed that product quality, price, distribution and advertising are variables that influence consumer's choice of made-in-Nigeria shoes, our manufacturers and dealers of made-in-Nigeria shoes should endeavour to produce good quality shoes at commensurate prices.

Manufacturer and dealer should ensure that adequate advertising a being done to create awareness and persuade potential and actual consumers of made-in-Nigeria shoes. These shoes must be made available as at when needed and where it is needed. This means that made-in-Nigeria shoes should be effectively distributed to different places, so that the capital stays here and circulates, growing our economy.

Federal government should strengthen her policies on restriction or stoppage of importation of certain foreign materials and products in order to encourage production/improvement of locally produced products, thereby encouraging the consumption of these products.

Federal government should endeavour to put regular check on the production of made-in-Nigeria shoes as this will help improve the standard of such products and compete with foreign brands.

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