

Factors Influencing Brand Preference of Beer Consumption In Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to identify the factors influencing preference for a brand of beer in Port-Harcourt metropolis and determine their relationship with brand preference of beer consumption. The variables included in this study are advertisement, peer group influence, situational variation as independent variables and brand preference of beer as dependent variable. A sample of 354 beer consumers was systematically selected for this study. A structured questionnaire based on likert type scale was used to elicit information from the sampled respondents in three zones for which Port-Harcourt metropolis was divided. The instruments were validated and their reliability established through a test – retest method. Our hypotheses were supported. Result of the data analysis revealed significant positive relationship between advertisement ($r = 1.0$), peer group influence ($r = 0.96$), situational variation ($r = 0.98$) and brand preference of beer consumers. The implication of this finding is that beer producing firms who wants to be on the cutting edge of competition should develop a more effective advertising campaign program to increase consumer's preference for their brand. Advertisement for beer brands should convey information about the advantages which the brand being advertise would offer over the others. The advert should encourage group purchasing and the positive effect of such purchase (security, acceptability of choice, championship etc) and depict friendship situation. Producers should in their advertisement emphasize social groups; they should exploit this further through segmenting their markets into distinctive social classes

Keywords, Advertisement, Peer group influence, situational variation, Brand preference and Beer consumption

INTRODUCTION

Beer has been widely consumed from time immemorial by the consumers around Nigeria and portharcourt metropolis in particular for several reasons like relaxants and euphoric effect, recreational purposes, for artistic inspiration as aphrodisiac and so forth of beer consumers.

In Nigeria and Port Harcourt metropolis in particular, the brewing industry has grown tremendously. A report by Vetiva capital, an investment and research firm predicts that the volume of beer produced in Nigeria per year would grow from 15 million hector liters (1.5 billion liters) in 2009 to 23 million hector liters (2.3 billion liters) in 2015 and puts beer per capital consumption at 10 liters. In another development, Mitchel and Tomo (2005) observed that years ago, there were handful of beer brands in Nigeria, but today, there are several breweries brewing millions of hector liters of beer under different brand names including Guinness Stout, Star beer, Harp beer, Gordon Spark, Heineken beer, Becks beer, Champion beer and many more. Such large volume of production and availability of such different brands in the market has led to the cut-throat competition for increased market share being witnessed among the operators in the industry. When competition is keen and the manufacturers are faced with brand choices, it becomes imperative for the manufacturers to understand the major factors that can attract the attention of buyers to his own brand. Variables such as advertisement have been utilized by marketers at the point of purchase displays and happy hours, offering discounts on drinks in bars during certain allocated period of time (Kuo, et al 2003, Christie et al 2001).

The purpose of this paper is to determine the factors influencing preference for a brand of beer and determine their relationship with brand preference of beer consumption.

Beer Market in Nigeria

Beer is the most popular alcoholic drink in Nigeria, making up about 96% of all alcoholic sales according to Vetiva report, 2011. That, the country has the second largest beer market in Africa, after South Africa.

Analyst project growth in value sales of 16.8% in 2010 and annual growth of 23.45% between 2011 and 2014.

The competitive landscape in Nigeria beer market is shaped by the following players: Nigeria Breweries Plc., Guinness Nigeria Plc., Consolidated Breweries limited, Jos International Breweries Limited, Golden Breweries and Premium Breweries respectively. Nigeria Breweries is the market leader and has a grip of 60% market share in the sales of larger beer according to Vetiva report of 2011. The company's leading products are Star beer, Gulder, Heineken beer and Extra Smooth. Guinness Nigeria Plc. is the second largest in the market and leads

the country in the sale of Stout beer by 91% among other brands of Stout, such as Extra Smooth, Legend Stout. Guinness Nigeria Plc. operates under Diageo Group, a multinational beer and Spirits Company. The company produces five major brands: Guinness Stout, Gordon Spark, Harp Larger beer and Smirn-off ice. International breweries is the third largest quoted brewer with a market capitalization of N14 billion (US \$93mm). The company larger beer includes Trophy Larger beer. Champion brewery is the fourth largest brewer with market capitalization of N2.3 billion (US \$16m) market value. Becks beer is the company's major beer.

The import of beer in bottles or cans for trade is prohibited in order to support domestic production. Companies engaged in brewing hop for beer productions are legible for pioneer status entitling them to a tax holiday of up to seven years.

Islamic Sharia Law which bans the sale and consumption of alcohol in some of the Northern states of Nigeria is still in force (Bauchi, Sokoto, Borno, Zamfara, Katsina, Jigawa etc). Consumers can only consume alcohol in these states in the military facilities where they are sold. Military facilities are Federal territory and thus not subject to state law. As a result of this restriction, plants are relatively concentrated in the Western and Southern Nigeria where consumers market are freely accessible and less restricted by religions considerations.

Supply chain has been through key distributors. Key channel have traditionally being through kiosks, provision stores, beer palours, in that order. Aggressive innovations have been made to enhance beer availability to customers and deepen penetration. Breweries are now activating retail outlets and providing warehouse to distributors who enjoy preferential trade terms. While these, in addition to in-bar promotion, provision of chillers and cool boxes in strategic locations.

Statement of the Problem

Brand preference research has been investigated over the years and has intensified as products with similar attributes become more proliferated in the market place.

Unfortunately however, among previous brand preference literature, there have been very few studies involving the product category of beer (woodside and flect jr. 1979, Charlton and Enhrenburg, 1973, Orth et al 2004). Much of the brand preference research has been through probability models to test the impact of marketing mix variables as a predictor of brand preference of beer consumers (Chib et al, 2004, Bentz and Merunka, 2000, Wagner and Taudes, 1986). These variables (Referred in most of the research studies as the 4P's) are element such as Product features, displays (advertising, sales promotion), availability (stock inventory) and price.

According to Wagner and Taudes (1986), when used in probability modeling, marketing mix variables are non-stationary and heterogeneous among the population.

It is against this backdrop that we set out to discover the influence on consumers of such factors as advertisement, peer group influence and the influence of situational variation in making a particular brand choice in the beer category.

Significance of the Study

There is a growing interest in understanding how and why brand preference and choice vary in the product category of beer. This study provides an in-depth understanding for such choice dynamics and how it can help marketing managers and practitioners design marketing programmes that will evolve with their customers' overtime.

The result of the study will contribute to the awareness of the relationship between the identified factors (Advertisement, peer group influence and situational variation of the consumers) and brand preference in the beer category

This study will form a basis of reference for marketing academics and practitioners in the subject of brand preference.

Theoretical Framework

Advertising

Advertising is a non personal paid form where ideas, concept, products or services and information are promoted through media (visual, verbal and text) by an identified sponsor (Ayanwale et al, 2005, Bovee et al, 1995). Of all marketing weapons, advertising is renowned for its lasting impact on viewers mind and its exposure is much broader (Katke, 2007)

Mackenzie (2004) stated that advertisements inform consumers about the existence and benefits of products and services, and to persuade consumers to buy them. Moreover, Kotler et al (2005) claim that advertising aim at attaining target consumers to either think or react to the product or brand. As a method of achieving advertisement goals, advertisements as well as their content play a vital role in the process of commercial communication.

More specifically, it is the advertised product and brand as well as the content of the advertisement that determine greater or lesser memory retention among the consumers (Royo-vela, 2005). Homer (2001) further stated that liking advertising message and content increases the tendency to like the product. That many firms use celebrity as the source of their marketing communication because celebrity source may attract more attention to the advertisement than non-celebrity. That consumer may associate characteristics of the celebrity with attributes of the product which coincide with their needs or desire. Panchayat (2001) states that advertising tends to use psychological tactics which makes people buy the product. They project images and brand consciousness, create new ideas, exploit insecurities of consumers, fulfill their secret needs, use famous personalities and run lotteries. Stuart, Shimp and Egle (1990) stated that one way of directly influencing the effective component of attitude is through classical conditioning. In this approach, a stimulus the audience likes such as music is consistently paired with the brand name. Over time, some of the positive effect associated with the music will transfer to the brand. Other liked stimuli such as pictures are frequently used for this reason.

Reference Group Influence

An average consumer belongs to one group or the other and to a reasonable extent, the group one belongs to or wishes to belong has one purchasing and consumption influence on him or her. Supporting this view is Engel, Kollart and Blackwell (1978) who opine that each consumer is a member of many groups, but those that influence behaviour are called reference group. Though related in many aspects, different authors have given different definition of the term reference group. Accordingly, reference groups are groups with which an individual identifies Mordern (1991), groups whose presumed perspective or values are being used by individual as the basis for his or her current behavior (Hawkins, et al, 2001), persons or groups that serves as point of comparison for an individual in forming either general or specific values, attitudes or behavior (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2009), group of people who influence persons attitude, values and behavior (Stanton, 1981) and or groups used by individual to evaluate self and whose standards are used as basis of comparison for the individual's behaviour (Bearden and Etzel, 1982).

It is therefore a group real or imaginary that one looks for guidance in structuring his or her behavior pattern (Iyanga, 1998). The differences in opinion notwithstanding, what is important are that reference groups standards of behavior serves as guide or frames of reference for the individual.

Reference group concept has been used by advertisers in their effort to persuade consumers to purchase product and brands, portraying products being consumed in socially pleasant situations. The use of prominent/attractive people endorsing products, and the use of obvious group members as spokes person in advertisement (Kotler, 2004) are all evidence that marketers and advertiser make substantial use of potential reference group to influence consumers brand preference in the development of their communications. Alluding to reference groups in persuasive attempts to market products and brands demonstrates the belief that reference group exposes people to behavior and life styles, influence self concept development, contribute to the formation of values and attitudes, and generate pressure for conformity and attitudes to group norms.

Situational Variation of the Consumer

People consume products by themselves, with friends, on the beach, at carnivals, at parties and while having dinners with their boss or other relatives. Within these situations an individual may prefer a brand over the other because benefits sought out by consumers can differ by situation the consumer is in (Yang et al, 2002). According to Belk (1974), situations may be defined as those factors particular to a time and place of observation which have demonstrable and systematic effects on behavior. Consumers evaluate brands on the situation (Vazquez et al, 2002). It is suggested from previous research that situational factors are a better predictor for consumer behavior than measures involving attitudes. Research has indicated that consumer preferences change according to the environment in which the consumers find themselves (Quester and Smart, 1998, Lai, 1991, Belk, 1974). Consumer might choose a brand based on being in different situations and will therefore be motivated to drink a certain brand (Yang et al, 2002). That consumer may face similar environments but there are several motivating conditions that play a role on brand choice depending on the consumer.

Brand preference

Brand preference is a measure of brand loyalty in which a consumer will choose a particular brand in presence of competing brands, but will accept substitutes if that brand is not available. Selective demand for a company's brand rather than product, the degree to which consumers prefer one brand over another. The percentage of people who claim that a particular brand is their choice. It represents which brands are preferred under the assumption of equality of price and availability.

In every product category, consumers have more choices, more information and higher expectations than ever before. To move consumer from trial to preference, brands need to deliver on their value proposition, as well as dislodge someone else from the consumer's existing preference set. Preference is a scale, and brands move up, down and even off that scale with and without a vigilant management strategy.

Theories of adoption have often been used to explain how consumers form preference for various goods and services (Rogers, 1995, Tornasky and Klein, 1982; Mason, 1990; Charlotte, 1999). Generally, those theories emphasize on the importance of triability, relative advantage, risk, loss, social approval, product characteristics. Equally, several studies have long speculated that brand preference could be a function of past consumption which could enter expected utility directly (Becker and Murphy, 1988). Through switching cost (Klemperer, 1987) or through beliefs about quality (Schmalensee, 1982). It could depend on past exposure to advertising (Schmalensee, 1983, Doraszelski and Mankovich 2007), or past observations of the behaviour of others as in Ellison and Fudenberg (1995). At the extreme, brand preference could be entirely determined by experience in childhood (Berkman, Lindquist and Sirgy, 1997). All have tremendous impact on the position of our brand in the consumers preference set, but the relative importance of each factor depends on the nature of industry under consideration, location and social characteristics of the consumer of different brands.

There are at least three classes of methodologies to measure brand preference directly. Survey questions, brand choice measure, and constant sum measure. Our study of brand preference in the beer category adopted the survey question measurement of brand preference.

Relationship between advertisement, peer group influence, situational variation as independent variables and brand preference of beer as dependent variable

Advertisement tends to be highly informative and present the customer with a number of important product attributes or features that will lead to favorable attitudes and can be used as the basis for rational brand preference. People get information from advertisement through attractiveness it holds, the attention it creates and the awareness it keeps (Arens, 2002). Effective communication through advertisement leads the consumer toward purchasing the brand (Belch and Belch 2005).

One key concern for the advertiser is whether the advertisement or commercial conveys the meaning intended. If the consumer or audience gets the message and understand it as the advertiser has it in mind, it is a great success for the advertiser. That understanding according to Clow and Back (2002) lead the person to preference and purchase the brand of beer so advertised

Based on the regularity of contact and importance given to subsequent interactions, the reference group exercises influence on the manner in which a consumer select and consume a brand of beer. Depending on the strength of identification with reference group, an individual may conform to the standard, norms and values of the group. Consequently, purchase behaviour for a brand will alter so as to come in line with the group preference for a brand of beer. Witt and Bruce (1985) concluded in their study of influence of small, informal social group on brand choices showed that the power of group cohesiveness in predicting brand choice was greater in products with high social involvement such as beer than in low involvement product like brands of deodorants. Perkins (2000) revealed in his study that peer influence was much stronger predictor of beer consumption than other background factors including parents' attitudes, gender and religion.

Brand preference has been found to be influenced significantly by situational variation of the consumer. According to Vazquez et al (2002), consumers evaluate brands in different manner based on the situation. Research has indicated that consumer preferences change according to their environment. A consumer might

choose a brand on being in different situations and will therefore, be motivated to drink a certain brand (Yang et al 2002). That preferences change across environments because the benefit sought by consumers changes. The effect of this may not be homogenous even though consumers face the same objective environment, different motivating conditions and brand preferences may arise.

Hypotheses of the Study

- H1: The advertisement of beer brand does influence consumer preference for that brand.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between peer group influence and brand preference of beer consumption.
- H3: There is a significant positive relationship between consumers' situational variation and his brand preference of consumption.

Methodology

The sample size was determined with the use of Topman formula as presented below (Hair et al, 2005).

$$n = \frac{Z^2 P \times Q}{E^2}$$

Where:

n	=	required sample size
Z	=	Degree of confidence (i.e. 1.96) ²
P	=	Probability of positive response
Q	=	Probability of negative response
E	=	Tolerable error (0.05) ²

In a pilot study of fifteen (15) beer consumers by the researcher, nine (9) persons interviewed indicated that the variables outlined in the pilot survey instrument are strongly considered in their brand preference of beer, while six (6) of them indicated that the variables outline were not strongly considered. Therefore, the sample size was determined thus:

$$\begin{aligned} Z &= (1.96)^2 & n &= \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.6 \times 0.4}{(0.05)^2} \\ P &= 9/15 & & \\ Q &= 6/15 & & = \frac{3.8 \times 0.6 \times 0.4}{0.0025} \\ E &= (0.05)^2 & n &= 369 \end{aligned}$$

The sample was drawn from three different zones of Port Harcourt metropolis: Ogbunabali-Trans-Amadi industrial layout – Elekahia housing estate,
(2) D-line – Diobu, Rumueme – Agip Estate
(3) Aggrey road and Boriki zones respectively. One hundred and twenty-three beer consumers were systematically selected from each zone. Every third person in each of the sampling frame (beer palour) was skipped before a selection was made.

The study is cross-sectional in design and was conducted using questionnaires partly administered by the researcher himself and a team of university students. Out of the 369 questionnaire distributed to respondents, only 354 of the returned copies were properly filled out and used for this study. This represents a response rate of 96.63%.

A structured questionnaire based likert type scale was used as a major instrument of data collection. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first section elicited information on the demographic

characteristics of the respondents, the second section was made-up of items that sought information on the independent variables of the study (i.e., advertisement, peer group influence, and situation variable of the consumer). While the third section measured the dependent variables of the study (i.e. brand preference).

Validity and Reliability

To determine the validity of the research instrument, face and content validity was logically determined for the item. The initial item that constituted the scale of measurement was presented to some Ph.D. students and lecturers in the department of marketing, University of Calabar for scrutiny. They were required to identify items that were not related to the constructing being measured, determine if the items in the scale provided comprehensive data that will be used to test the hypotheses and finally identify those items that are considered vague and ambiguous. Comments thereof were used as a basis of correction in the final copies of the questionnaire.

To measure the reliability of the instrument, the test- retest method was adopted. The first and second test was administered within an interval of two weeks. This exercise was intended to determine the consistency of responses to the questions designed to measure the construct of the study. The first and second data collected was analyzed using spearman rank correlation (rho) analysis. This was to ensure that the first and second result was consistent to make for reliability of the measuring instrument.

The computation gave an r value of 0.99. A correlation value of 0.99 was considered a high reliability and therefore fit for the purpose of collecting data for this study.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data from the field. Descriptively, data were analyzed using tables and percentage to group the reaction of respondents to the questions asked. The inferential statistical tool used to analyze the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is the Pearson Product moment Correlation analysis, whose formula is denoted as follows:

$$\frac{\sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2)(n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

Result and discussion

This study examined the factors influencing brand preference of beer consumption in Port-Harcourt, Nigeria. The respondents were asked to indicate the brand of beer they preferred most. Their responses are as indicated in table I.

Table I: RESPONDENTS MOST PREFERERED BRAND OF BEER

Option	No of Respondent	Percentage
Guinness Stout	36	10.17
Harp	28	7.91
Star beer	94	26.55
Gulder	71	20.06
Gordorn Spark	50	14.12
Heineken	52	14.69
Becks Beer	23	6.50
Total	354	100

Source: Survey data of the author.

Table I shows that 36 respondents or 10.17 percent of the respondents preferred Guinness stout, 28 respondent (7.91%) preferred Harp beer, 94 respondent (26.55%) preferred star beer, 71 respondent (20.06%) preferred Gulder, 50 respondents (14.12%) preferred Goldon Spark, 52 respondents (14.69%) preferred Heineken beer, while 23 respondents (6.50%) preferred Becks beer.

Table II: Summary presentation of scores of the respondents on the factors influencing brand preference of beer consumption (x_1 x_2 x_3 & y).

Variables/ Factors	Five point likert scores					Total
	5	4	3	2	1	
Advertisement (X_1)	400	420	60	140	79	1099
Peer Group Influence (X_2)	440	372	66	148	76	1106
Situation Variation (X_3)	605	625	69	104	45	1275
Brand Preference (Y)	440	372	111	156	58	1137

Source: Analysis of field survey data, 2012

Table 2 presents summary of scores of the three hundred and fifty four sampled respondents (x_1 , x_2 , x_3 & y) on their factors influencing brand preference of beer consumption. Each respondent was to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement with some statements related to the independent variables (i.e Advertisement, x_1 , peer group influence, x_2 , situation variation, x_3), and the scoring was based on likert summated scale in which the maximum score for each independent factor is 1770, only if the total respondent of 354 indicated strongly agree (5), and a minimum score of 354 only if the total respondent of 354 had indicated strongly disagreed (1). The table further revealed that the sum of scores for factor x_1 , (influence of advertisement) stood at 1099, factor x_2 , (peer group influence) is 1106, x_3 (situational variation) is 1275, while the scores for the dependent variable (Y) is 1137. The various scores as indicated was used to represent X and Y on the correlation analysis for each of the variables tested for this study.

The first hypothesis stated the nature of relationship between advertisement of a brand of beer and consumers preference for that brand. Table III shows the result of correlation test between advertisement and brand preference of beer consumption.

Table III: Person Product Moment Correlation result between advertisement and brand preference of beer.

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	r	rcrit
Advertisement (x)	1099	365841	372882	1.0	0.76
Brand Preference Of beer consumption (Y)	1137	372005			

$P > 0.05$; $df = 5$ Critical r value 0.76

Statistical analysis shows that there is a positive relationship between advertisement and brand preference of beer consumers. The high coefficient ($r = 1.0$) indicates that the co-variation between advertisement and brand preference could be explained. This explains that advertisement is a sufficient factor in predicting consumers brand preference of beer. The influence of advertisement in consumers preference of beer according to Homer (2001) can be seen in the fact that liking advertising message and content increases the tendency to prefer the brand so advertised. That many firms use celebrity as the source of their marketing communication because celebrity source may attract more attention to the advertisement than non celebrity, and they can associate characteristics of the celebrity with attributes of the brand which coincide with their needs or desire. Penchayat (2001) captures the influence of advertising on consumers brand preference and states that advertising tends to use psychological tactics which makes people buy the brand, by projecting images and brand consciousness, create ideas, exploit insecurity of consumers, fulfill their secret needs, use famous personalities and run lotteries. The result also supports Sturt, Shimp and Egle (1990), when they pointed out that one way of influencing brand preference is through classical condition. In this approach, a stimulus the audience like such as music is consistently paired with the brand name. overtime, some of the positive effects associated with the music will transfer to the brand. Moreso, the work of Modelson and Bolls (2002) shows that in the traditional hierarchy of effect model, advertising exposure leads to cognition such as memory about the advertisement, the brand which in turn leads to liking and attitude toward purchase, which in the end lead to buying the brand.

Table four presents the summary of data analysis and correlation test to determine the significance of the relationship between peer group influence and brand preference of beer consumption

Table 4: Person Product Moment Correlation result between peer group influence and brand preference of beer

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	r	rcrit
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$			
Peer group influence(x) II06		392212			
Brand preference (y) II37		372005	374094	0.96	0.76

$P > 0.05$; $df = 5$, critical r value 0.76

Correlation coefficient of 0.96 lend credence to the hypothesis that there is a direct positive relationship between peer group influence and brand preference of beer consumers. The high coefficient ($r = 0.96$) of determination also indicates that the correlation between peer group influence and brand preference of beer could be attributed to the former. This finding is supported by many studies in extant literature about the relationship of peer group influence and brand preference of beer consumers. Bearden and Etzel (1982) has indicated that consumers' preference is significantly influenced by one's peer. That peer pressure is a strong factor that determine a consumers' purchasing choice. They stated that every one belongs to a group of some sort, friends to neighbors and co-workers. Rather than get left out, people purchase products and all brands that make them fit in. agreeing with this view is Iyanga (2008), who opine that in the decision to buy, what, when, how and where to buy, the consumer is influenced to a reasonable extent by the group he belongs or aspires to belong, as it has one purchasing and consumption influence on him/her. Kotler (2004) has indicated that the use of prominent/attractive people endorsing product and or brand and the use of obvious group members and spokesperson in the development of marketing communication are all evidence in the fact of reference groups influence on consumers' brand preference of beer.

Table five Presents the summary of data analysis and correlation test to determine consumers' situational variation and brand preference of beer.

Table 5: Person Product Moment Correlation result between situational variation of the consumer and brand preference of beer.

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	r	rcrit
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$			
Situational variation (x) 1275		587931	460837	0.98	0.76
Brand preference Of beer (y) 1137		37200			

$P > 0.05$, $df = 5$, crit r value, 0.76

Statistical analysis shows that situational variation of the consumer is a predicetory variable in a consumers' preference of beer consumption. This is consistent with the works of (Vazquez et al, 2002) which revealed that brand preference changes across environment, because the benefit sought by the consumer changes. Those consumers may want to have a refine taste while in different environment. Supporting this view is Yang et al (2002) when they opine that consumer might choose a brand based on being in a different situation and will therefore be motivated to drink a certain brand. That the consumer may face a similar environments but there are several motivating conditions that a play a role in brand choice depending on the consumers' environment

Implication of the study

A Beer producer, who wants to be on the cutting edge of competition, should develop a more effective advertising campaign programme to increase the consumers' preference for their brands of beer. It is therefore advised that any advertisement for beer brands should convey information about the advantages which the brand being advertised would offer over other brands. Since peer group influence was found to be significantly relevant to brand preference of beer, producers should in their advertisement emphasis social groups. They should exploit this further through segmenting the market into distinctive social classes. The advertisement should encourage group purchasing and the positive effect of such purchase (security, acceptability of choice, championship etc.) and depict friendship situation. The advertisement should emphasize the situation in which the consumer may find his/herself such as beach, carnivals, parties and dinning out.

Conclusion and limitation of the study.

This paper has investigated and presented the factors influencing brand preference of beer consumption portharcourt metropolis. In this sense advertisement, peer group influence and situational variation of the consumer were underlined as predictor variables in consumers' brand preference of beer.

Advertisement as an influential factor of beer consumers is based on the fact of creativity of the advertising message, the contents and the use of stimulus (music, celebrity, pictures) in the development of commercial communications. The pairing of stimulus the audience like brings about attention, interest, desire, and action. Peer group influence is a strong variable in the consumers' preference for a brand of beer. No man is an island but belongs to one social group or the other (either directly or indirectly) and it is this social interaction that influences most of his purchasing or consumption behaviour.

Situational variation is significant in the influence of consumers brand preference of beer. Consumers may face similar environment but several motivating conditions may play a role on brand choice of beer. The consumer may want to have a refine test based on situational motivation.

Limitation of the study

Owing to slim financial resources, this study was limited to only Port-Harcourt metropolis, the capital city of Rivers state. The specific product selected for investigation in this study is beer.

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