

ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTION OF LOCALLY MANUFACTURED WEARS BY STUDENTS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NORTH-EASTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

"Many people agree that buying made-in-Nigeria products helps to create jobs and grow the economy. This can boost the manufacturing industry and make the economy vibrant. The number of students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria forms large considerable size of the country's population. As such, a patronage of this group on a particular product means a boost in the market of such product. This study analyses the Perception of Locally Manufactured Wears by Students of Tertiary Institutions in Northern-Eastern Nigeria. The study used both primary and secondary data, the former was obtained from a sample size of 460 students and analysed using simple percentage table. Chi-square was the tool of analysis used to test the hypothesis. The study found out that students' perception of locally manufactured wears with regards to both quality and style have significant influence on their purchase decisions. The study recommended among other things that government should embark on an enlightenment campaign to educate Nigerians, particularly students of tertiary institution in the North-East that not all of the products locally produced are poor in quality; some are in fact competitive if not better than the foreign ones.

Keywords: *Perception Wears Tertiary Institutions Purchase Decision*

INTRODUCTION

In April 2012, President Goodluck Jonathan ordered all Federal Ministries, Departments, and Agencies to make deliberate effort to patronize locally manufactured products while implementing the 2012 budget, this step is a follow-up to similar initiatives taken by the Nigerian government in the past to encourage favourable attitudes towards made-in-Nigeria goods. In a bid to stem the tide of foreign domination of the nation's economy, the government promulgated the Nigerian Enterprises Promotion Decree. The basis of this decree was to reduce foreign dominance on the economy, encourage the manufacturing sector, encourage local retention of profits, and create employment opportunities amidst other objectives.

Despite these efforts, locally Manufactured Products popularly referred to as Made- in-Nigeria goods had from inception suffered set back, from government and Nigerian citizens. Though the country aspires to be among the economically developed nations in the world, Nigerian consumers hardly acknowledge the significant role played by this unpatronized sector in developing the economy. These can be attributed to lack of good management and leadership in the country as well as lack of vision and foresight. Over the years, the country has been plagued with large scale under utilization of production capacity, erratic power supply that cannot be used for any meaningful planning purposes

and a whole economy that cannot be forecasted (Akeredolu – Ale, 1975; Asaolu, Oladoyin and Oladele, 2005).

Marketing implications of the above scenario are; irregular supply of products, supply of lower quality product fluctuating prices due to product shortages, low reputation of manufactured goods, low motivation towards advertising, low marketing orientation and a general consumer discontent with home made goods (Aire, 1973; Kalegha, Okechukwu & Soyeye, 1983).

Nigerian manufacturing sector is beset by powerful forces, which have been threatening its existence. Factors internal and external imperil its survival. Indeed, it is no exaggeration that most of Nigerian manufacturing capacity may cease to exist by the middle of the decade unless urgent steps are taken to reverse the visible progressive decline, in absolute and relative terms of the manufacturing mix (Sobowale, 1997).

Increasing globalization of world trade or the ease with which manufacturers around the world can communicate their marketing mix to customers and potential customers across the world today, had presented Nigerian consumers with a wide variety of affordable goods and services, which according to Akomolede and Oladele, (2008) have over the last decade, enmeshed Nigerian manufacturers in a dilemma, borne out of ensuring long-term survival in an atmosphere of ever increasing product cost, and ever-decreasing consumer purchasing power. This situation may also not be unconnected with the fact that a population that has majority of her inhabitants living below poverty level as in the case of Nigeria has to develop rigorous tactic to ensure that the products they buy gives them the maximum satisfaction they desire.

There is a popular belief that the qualities of local products are lower than those of their imported counterparts. In spite of the widespread belief that locally manufactured products are inferior in quality to the foreign ones; complaints of the high prices of locally-made items are also rampant. Consumers want to take advantage of the affluent and latest services that technology and business can offer (Achumba, 1996). They make a rational choice by comparing and contrasting product features and performance.

Perceptions are influenced by such factors as brand familiarity, the level of involvement in the purchase decision, the level of involvement evoked by the product class, the familiarity with countries and preference for domestic products (Steenkamp et al, 2003; Batra et al 2002). Consumers are personalities whose behaviour is governed by different and varied influences such as: their society beliefs, attitude, past learning, experience, perception and expectations. These form their taste choice and product preference.

Not only that, economic factors which tend to favour consumer preference for foreign products centre around product quality, price, and availability (Leon and Kanuk, 2007) The abundance of foreign brands of many kinds of products in Nigerian markets makes it easy for consumers to satisfy their yearnings for these imported items. A number of psychological forces also operate in the consumer to influence his perception towards local and foreign products.

Firstly, there are individuals who, in the search for distinctiveness, exclusiveness and egotism, seek out those products which can confer these qualities. For many Nigerians, foreign products probably have images that bestow these qualities on the buyer or owner.

Secondly, for many people, overseas countries are Places they would cherish to visit either for sightseeing or for image-boosting purposes; as a result they buy their products as a way of identifying themselves with those countries (Ogunnaike, 2010). In general, made-in- Nigeria goods are perceived as inferior, even when the foreign products were not really better in value or physically different from the domestic alternatives, except for the labels describing them as imported or made-in- Nigeria. No wonder some goods made-in-Nigeria are sometimes labelled made-in-England, Paris, London, etc, as to facilitate acceptance.

In view of the aforementioned, this study mainly examines Nigerian students' perception of locally manufactured goods particularly wears. The study specifically examines;

1. Position of locally manufactured wears in students' mind
2. Students' readiness to purchase a locally manufactured wears
3. The relationship between products' quality, image/style and consumers 'purchase decision

This study will contribute to knowledge by reviewing existing literatures on marketing and economic development issues, and come up with additional up-to-date information on the perception of Nigerian students towards locally manufactured wears. The study will also serve as a veritable source of information for local business manufacturers, government and financial institutions, on the potential marketing problems and prospects associated with establishment of a local manufacturing firm in developing nation which, of course could aid policy development or review.

Research Hypothesis

Ho: Students' perception of locally manufactured wears: quality, image and style do not significantly influence purchase decisions

Literature Review

According to Schiffman (1997), Perception is defined as the process of by which individual selects, organize, and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world. Achumba (2000) suggested that, 'the study of individuals, group, or organizations and processes they use to select, secure and dispose of product, services, experience, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impact that these processes have on the consumer and society is borne out of different perspectives'. To understand what motivates the consumer, there is need to consider several perspectives on behaviour. Each of these perspectives suggests different things on what the marketer should do and what can (or cannot) be controlled. Each perspective tends to contain a "grain" of truth and that one should not be too dogmatic in emphasizing one over the others. The Hard Core Behavioural perspective is based on learning theory such as classical conditioning. This theory suggests that consumers must learn from their own experiences. The Social Learning perspective in contrast, allows for vicarious learning i.e., learning obtained by watching others getting good or bad consequences for behaviour. The models that

may be observed and imitated include peers and family members. From the study of social influences, it is known that certain people are more likely to be imitated than others, example, those that are more similar to us based on relevant factors such as age, social status, or ethnic group. Generally, observations are made of overt behaviour, but some room is made for individual reasoning in learning from others. This perspective is clearly more realistic than that of the "hard core" view, but it should be noted that the strength of learning tends to be greater for that gained from own experience. The Cognitive approach emphasizes consumer thinking rather than mere behaviour. The emphasis here is on how people reason about the consequences of their behaviour. It should be noted that it is often somewhat more difficult to attempt to "get into" a consumer's head than it is to merely observe his or her behaviour, and what is "observed" is somewhat more subjective. The Biological approach suggests that genetics or other biological bases determine most behaviours. By this perspective, it is suggested that people wear the clothe they wear principally because the body crave for these clothes. Clearly, this perspective is very misleading when one takes it as the only explanation of behaviour for example; people in different cultures learn to enjoy various kinds of foods.

The main implication of biological determinism is that the marketer must adapt--for example, food advertisements are more likely to be effective when people are hungry, and thus they might better be run late afternoon rather than in the morning. The Rational Expectations perspective is based on an economic way of looking at the world. Economists assume that people think rationally and have perfect information, even though they know very well that these assumptions are often unrealistic. However, despite the unrealistic assumptions made, economists often make relatively accurate predictions of human behaviour. The Cognitive perspective, however, is able to identify certain significant exceptions to rational behaviour, however. The Psychoanalytic perspective is based on the work of historical psychologists such as Sigmund Freud who suggest that much behaviour has a biological basis which is often sexual in nature, and that early experiences in childhood will have a profound, but unconscious effect on later life. Because of societal injunctions against explicit discussion of sexuality in Western society at Freud's time (late 1800s to mid 1900s), many objects were thought to take on seemingly unrelated symbolic meanings, example, a tie might become a symbol of a male reproductive organ. Although modern psychologists certainly recognize that early experiences may influence later psychological well being, the psychoanalytic view has largely been discredited today as being much too centred on the issue of sex. However, this perspective enjoys a great deal of popularity among many advertising executives. It should be noted that Sigmund Freudian psychology tends to violate the cherished scientific ideal of parsimony, where a scientist is expected to propose the simplest theory that will account for observed phenomena. Studies in Nigeria and other developing countries revealed that consumers mostly prefer foreign made goods. For instance, a study of perception of consumers in Kano Metropolis towards locally manufactured goods, Agbonifoh (1995) found that 93 percent of the respondents considered locally-produced textiles inferior to the imported ones. Although imported goods are superior in quality to home-made ones, Shobowale (1997), in his study on textiles claimed that they are much cheaper. Iwok (1986) opined that most Nigerians prefer foreign goods to made-in-Nigeria

goods, even when the Nigerian products have the same quality or even possess better quality than the foreign goods.

In his study Cordell (1992) found that preference for domestic products tends to be weaker in economically underdeveloped countries. However, Almonte et al (1995); Bailey and Gutierrez (1997) discovered that upper-income earners in the same country prefer foreign products. Opoku and Akorli (2009) in their assessment of Ghanaians' attitudes towards made in Ghana products and goods with foreign origin discovered that country of origin is more important than price and that other product attributes are at least as important as brand name, in their consumer choice. In addition, Ghanaians hold the 'Made in Ghana' label in low regard relative to foreign labels; also superior quality and consumer taste are the two most important reasons for their preference for foreign products. Similarly, Fianu and Harrison (2007) in their study on Ghanaian workers, reported that 83% of their respondents look out for labels when selecting ready-made clothing to determine the quality, though more than half of the respondents reported incomes below the country's poverty datum line, most Ghanaians buy second-hand clothes because they are relatively cheaper than new ones, country-of- origin could be an issue other than price. Ohene-Frempong (2004) observed that fewer and fewer Ghanaians dress traditionally and much of what they wear is imported from foreign non-African countries. Clothing is also seen as an enhancement of social status in Ghana (Batra et al., 2000; Zhou and Belk, 2004 and De- Witte, 2001) therefore some Ghanaian women make it a point to show up in a new funeral cloth every Saturday although very expensive. He added that the preferred choice is the Dutch wax which is deemed as the best quality, and highly desirable cloth.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Participants were chosen on the basis of wears purchasing behaviours. Wears occupy a sizeable proportion of monthly expenditure for both male and female students in tertiary institutions in Maiduguri. It was, therefore, inferred that male and female students of tertiary institution represented a suitable population group to sample from. Thus, 92 respondents each were recruited from University of Maiduguri, Ramat Polytechnic Maiduguri, Gombe State University, Federal polytechnic Damaturu and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Bauchi using random sampling technique. Completed questionnaires were obtained from 46 respondents.

The Survey Instrument was a questionnaire comprised of scales measuring students' perception of locally manufactured Wears. The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert scale coded from Agree strongly (4) to disagree strongly (1).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristics	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	240	52
	Female	220	48
	Total	460	100
Age	20 – 24	120	26
	25 – 29	200	44
	30 – 34	140	30
	Total	460	100
Marital Status	Married	120	26
	Single	340	74
	Total	460	100
Monthly Income (₦)	10,000 - 20,000	90	20
	20,000 - 30,000	140	30
	30,000 - 50,000	120	26
	50,000 above	110	24
	Total	460	100

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. It reveals that more than half of the respondents (52%) were male, although this sample was randomly selected, the percentage depict the real population distribution among male and female in these institutions. The table also revealed that about 44% of the respondents are young people between the ages of 25 and 29 years and that most of them (74%) are not married. About 30% of the respondents earns a monthly income ranging between ₦20, 000 to ₦30, 000 with the least percentage earning above ₦50, 000 per month.

Table 2: Respondents' Perception of Locally Manufactured Wears

S/N	Responses	AS	%	A	%	D	%	DS	%
1	Poor quality is what first comes to my mind any time I see or locally made wears is mentioned	180	39	120	26	90	20	70	15
2	I prefer imported to locally manufactured wears.	140	30	160	35	100	22	60	13
3	I prefer second handed foreign wears to newly made in Nigeria	130	28	120	26	140	30	170	37
4	I believe there are locally made wears that offer superior value than foreign ones	180	39	120	26	90	20	70	15
5	I would patronize locally made wears if they are	190	41	210	26	40	9	20	4

	qualitative and competitive								
6	Quality is the major factor I consider while buying wears	150	33	130	28	80	17	100	22
7	My lifestyle determine the kind of clothes I buy irrespective of country of origin	170	37	120	26	100	22	70	15
8	The wears I buy are determined by my social affiliations	100	22	60	13	130	28.3	170	37.0
9	Price is a major factor influencing the wears I buy	130	28	100	22	120	26.1	110	23.9

Source; Field Survey, 20120

Table 2 comprised of scales measuring the perception of respondents towards locally manufactured wears; on quality, most of the respondents agreed strongly (39%) that poor quality is what first comes to their mind any time they see or made in Nigeria wears is mentioned. This is followed those who merely agreed (26%) with this view. Although about 20% and 15% disagreed strongly and disagreed respectively with the statement, it can be concluded that most students in the institutions studied perceive locally made wears as poor in quality. This concurs with a similar study in Kano by Agbonifoh (1995) who found locally-produced textiles are inferior relative to imported ones.

This study also shows that most students of tertiary institutions in Borno State prefer imported to locally manufactured wears as attested by the percentage response of 39% and 26% for those who strongly agreed and agreed respectively. This finding corroborates with Ohene-Frempong (2004) who observed in similar study that fewer and fewer Ghanaians dress traditionally and much of what they wear is imported from foreign non-African countries.

In their responses to readiness to patronize locally made wears, over 65% agreed that they would patronize locally made wears if they are qualitative and competitive in the market place; similarly, a total of 61% and 50% of the respondents agreed that quality and price respectively, are the major evaluative criteria while buying wears. While 37% and 22% strongly agreed that they are mostly influenced by their lifestyle and social affiliations respectively, in wears buying behaviour. About 65% of the respondents believe that there are locally manufactured wears that offer superior value than foreign ones, yet most of the same respondents prefer foreign made products anytime they go shopping; this may not be unconnected with the general perception that made in Nigeria goods are poor in quality. In concurrence, Iwok (1986) opined that most Nigerians prefer foreign goods to made-in-Nigeria goods, even when the Nigerian products have the same quality or even possess better quality than the foreign goods. On the contrary, when respondents were presented with a statement measuring their extent of agreement or disagreement to preference for second handed foreign wears to the locally made ones, most respondents disagreed strongly (37%).

Testing of Hypotheses

Responses to questions 1, 5 and 6 in Table 2 were used to test the hypotheses earlier formulated and the result is presented in the following tables.

Table 3.1: Observed Frequency

S/N	Statements	AS	A	D	DS	Total
1	Poor quality is what first comes to my mind any time I see or locally made wears is mentioned	50	60	30	20	160
5	I would patronize locally made wears if they are qualitative and competitive	40	70	20	20	150
6	Quality is the major factor I consider while buying wears	40	50	30	30	150
Total		130	180	80	70	460

Table 3.2: Expected Frequency

S/N	Statements	AS	E	A	E	D	E	DS	E	Total
1	Poor quality is what first comes to my mind any time I see or locally made wears is mentioned	50	45.22	60	62.61	30	27.83	20	24.35	160
5	I would patronize locally made wears if they are qualitative and competitive	40	42.39	70	58.70	20	26.09	20	22.83	150
6	Quality is the major factor I consider while buying wears	40	42.39	50	58.70	30	26.09	30	22.83	150
Total		130		180		80		70		460

Table 3.3: Chi – square Summary Table

S/No	O	E	O – E	(O - E) ²	(O - E) ² /E
1	50	45.22	4.78	22.87	0.51
2	40	42.39	-2.39	5.72	0.13
3	40	42.39	-2.39	5.72	0.13
4	60	62.61	-2.61	6.81	0.11
5	70	58.70	11.30	127.79	2.18
6	50	58.70	-8.70	75.61	1.29
7	30	27.83	2.17	4.73	0.17
8	20	26.09	-6.09	37.05	1.42
9	30	26.09	3.91	15.31	0.59
10	20	24.35	-4.35	18.90	0.78
11	20	22.83	-2.83	7.99	0.35
12	30	22.83	7.17	51.47	2.25
				χ²	9.91

$$df = (R - 1) (C - 1)$$

$$df = (3 - 1) (4 - 1)$$

df = (2) (3)

df = 6

Level of Significance = 0.05

Therefore at $\alpha = 0.05$ and $df = 6$, the table value is 12.59

DECISION

Since the calculated value of the chi – square is less than the table value ($9.91 > 12.59$) the null hypothesis which says that “students’ perception of locally manufactured wears and products’ quality does not significantly influence purchase decisions” is rejected.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that there is general perception by students of tertiary institution in North-Eastern Nigeria that locally made wears or Made-in-Nigeria wears as it is popularly known are poor in terms of quality and aesthetic. Although there are some who perceived otherwise. It is also the conclusion of this study that quality tops students’ choice criteria followed by price and aesthetic. Thus the surveyed sample prefers foreign made or imported wears.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. Government should embark upon an enlightenment campaign to educate Nigerians that not all of the products locally produced are poor in quality; that some of them are in fact competitive if not better than the foreign ones.
2. Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON) and other related agencies should be strengthened to ensure that at least 80% of goods produced in Nigeria pass their quality and aesthetic test before they are commercialised.
3. Government should create the enabling environment for the Nigerian manufacturing sector to produce qualitative goods at the least cost possible. This will allow them to sell at competitive or cheaper prices and still make adequate profit.
4. Deliberate effort should be made by Government, non-governmental organisations and corporate bodies to enlighten and encourage Nigerians to patronize made-in-Nigeria goods.

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