

Influence of Marketing Strategies on Consumer Behaviour: A Study of Consumers of Paterson Zochonis (Pz) Cussons Nigeria Plc Kano

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Abstract

This paper seeks to determine the influence of marketing strategies on consumers' behaviour. The study determines whether marketing strategies of PZ Cussons Nigeria PLC (Kano) have an influence on their consumers' behaviour. This should make situational marketing strategies more clear which can lead to sustainable development through market segmentations. One way Analysis of Variance was used on the primary data that was collected by using questionnaires. The result shows that there is a positive and significant influence of marketing strategies of PZ Cussons Nigeria PLC (Kano) on their consumers' behaviour; also pricing, packaging followed by advertisement is the order of importance of marketing strategies towards influencing consumers' behaviours. It is recommended that the firm should not hesitate at its attempts on ensuring rewarding and efficient marketing strategy. A favourable environment should be designed, by marketing regulatory agencies, for manufacturing organizations to implement whatever strategic means they hope to adopt.

Keywords: marketing, marketing strategies, consumers, consumer behaviour

Introduction

The marketing function of business organisations links two basic aspects of societal life; production and consumption. Marketing is an activity directed at satisfying needs and wants of customers through the effective exchange process (Kotler, 2001). Marketing strategies have the fundamental goal of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage through reorienting the behaviours of consumers towards certain products (Baker, 2008). Marketing strategies include all basic, short-term, and long-term activities that deal with the analysis of the strategic initial situation of a company and the formulation, evaluation and selection of market-oriented strategies that contribute to the goals of the company and its marketing objectives (Homburg, Sabine and Harley, 2009). In other words, marketing strategies are processes through which companies determine where to place effort and in which market and market segments they choose to sell. A customer's behaviour is influenced by cultural, social, personal and psychological factors most of which are very dynamic in nature. The most competition is in how to determine these influences and of applying one strategy or the other to gain sustainable competitive advantage in the market (Kotler, 2003). The marketing function help business organizations to develop products, price, promote and distribute them. This marketing activity is grounded in the analysis of how purchase behaviour is affected by people's beliefs, attitudes, lifestyles, consumption pattern, income, etc. (Bennettle, 1992). The importance of marketing can therefore be felt by the extent to which it affects consumer behaviour.

To the nation the importance of marketing cannot be over emphasised. The strength of any economy is measured in terms of its ability to generate its required income within a given fiscal year or period. Available data showed that advanced countries accounted for 69.1% of world output while developing countries accounted 30.9%. Nigeria's trade was estimated at U.S. \$47,346 million, representing 0.8% of the emerging market share. Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN 2005). To survive and wax stronger the country's Gross National Product (GNP) must appreciate over time. Marketing is the pivot element of any economy, because all other activities of an organization generate costs and only marketing activities bring in the much needed revenue (Ani, 1993).

For companies to attain commercial success, it is important that managers understand the linkage between marketing and consumer behaviour. This relationship is more emphasised during recession periods (Kotler and Caslione, 2009). Manufacturers attempt to fashion out different strategies to stimulate demand for their goods and services. The recent decline in the international price of crude oil has led to a sharp decline in government revenue resulting in a significant reduction in foreign currency reserves and the devaluation of the Naira. Consumer buying decisions indicate how well the company's marketing strategy fits market demand.

There are a variety of studies conducted in this area which include that of Mohammad and Shams (2013), Bundit (2013), Nguyen, Phan & Phuong (2015) and Ismail and Safrana (2015). Mohammad and Shams (2013) analysed the effect of marketing strategies on consumer behaviour as a key success factor in e-marketing in Kuwait. Bundit (2013) studied the influences of marketing mix on customer purchasing behaviour at Chatuchak Plaza Market, Bangkok. On their part, Nguyen et al. (2015), conducted a research on the influence of marketing mix elements on food buying behaviour, in super markets of

Vietnam. Ismail and Safrana (2015) is based in Sri Lanka. It studied the influence of marketing strategy on customer retention in the handloom industry of that country. Careful search has not turned up similar studies in Nigeria, not necessarily from lack thereof. This is despite the fact that there are known marketing companies that have existed, through thick and thin, in this country. One of such is Paterson Zochonis Cussons (Nig) PLC. It is a consumer products distributor with a long history perhaps from application of adequate marketing strategies. This paper, therefore, aims to determine the influence of its marketing strategies on their consumers' behaviour. This should make situational marketing strategies more clear which can lead to sustainable development through market segmentations.

Literature Review

There are numerous definitions of marketing strategies in the literature and such definitions reflect different perspectives (Li, Kinman, Duan, & Edwards, 2000). However, the consensus is that marketing strategies provides the avenue for utilising the resources of an organization in order to achieve its set goals and objectives. Generally, marketing strategies deal with the adaptation of marketing mix elements to environmental forces. It evolves from the interplay of the marketing mix elements and the environmental factors (Li et al., 2000). According to Allison and Kaye (2005), marketing strategy means making choices. It is a process designed to support leaders in being intentional about their goals and methods. Bryson (2004) observes that marketing strategies is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future. Woodward (2004) argues that marketing strategies is a process by which one can envision the future and develop the necessary procedures and operations to influence and achieve the future

Marketing mix is a business tool used by the management of organizations which enable them to remain in global competitive environment. Marketing mix refers to the four major areas of decision making in the marketing process that are blended and mixed to obtain the results desired by the organization to satisfy the needs and wants of customers. It is the set of controllable, tactical marketing tools of product, price, place and promotion (4Ps) which are the variables that marketing managers can control in order to best satisfy customers' needs (Shankar and Chin, 2011). According to McCarthy (2009), Marketing decisions generally fall into the following four controllable categories.

- i. Product
- ii. Price
- iii. Place (distribution)
- iv. Promotion

The term "marketing mix" became popularized after Neil H. Borden published his 1964 article, "the concept of the marketing mix". Borden began using the term in his teachings in the late 1940's after James Cullition had described the marketing manager as a "Mixer of Ingredients". The ingredients in Borden's Marketing Mix included product planning, branding, pricing, distribution channels, personal selling, advertising, promotions, packaging, display, servicing, physical branding, and fact finding and analysis. E. Jerome McCarthy later grouped these ingredients into the four categories that are today known as the 4P's of marketing. These four P's are the parameter that the marketer can control, subject to the internal and external constraints of the marketing environment. According to Kotler (2001), Product refers to both tangible and intangible attributes of a company's offering used to provide customer satisfaction. Examples include a pair of shoes- a goods, a taxi ride between two points -a service and a plate of food taken in a restaurant for lunch; combine features of both goods and service. However, the customer's definition of a product as bundles of satisfaction is more important to marketers in their planning efforts. Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders, & Wong (1999) see Pricing as the process of placing a monetary value on a product and administering it through established policies to achieve a pre-determined objectives or set of objectives. Pricing Objectives: pricing objectives are many and varied but typically include achieving growth in sales volume, improving or maintaining market share, achieving a pre-determined target return or to stabilize prices in the market. Distribution involves the marketing activities of making products available from production centre (factory) in the right quantities, at the right time to locations where customers want them. The means through which the product gets to the customer is called 'Channel' (Kotler 2001). There are as many channels of distribution objectives as there are business organizations. These objectives of each channel are usually derived from marketing or corporate objectives. Few examples of channel objectives include achieving growth in sales, improvement on market shares or maintenance of market leadership position. They could also be to reduce marketing costs or the creation of an efficient channel system.

The fourth (4th) element of the marketing mix, promotion, refers to a very important marketing effort designed to influence attitudes and behaviour of consumers to react in a particular way. It does this through effective communication which is convincing to consumers. Kotler and Gray (2003) wrote that Promotion mix otherwise known as “promotion tools” refers to the following methods through which marketers achieve their promotional objectives.

i. Personal Selling: This is a face-to-face presentation of marketing offerings by a firm’s salesman to prospective customers. It is the most effective method of influencing buyers. It is commonly used by industrial goods seller. It is however very expensive.

ii. Advertising: Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation of a product by an identified sponsor through a media. The media often used in advertising include newspapers, magazines, television, radio, catalogues, bill boards, handbills or Signboards. It is an effective method of communicating simultaneously with large number of customers spread over a wide area.

iii. Publicity is any form of non-personal presentation of a product to prospective consumer. The main difference between advertising and publicity is that while the former is paid for, the latter is free. It is free because media costs are not paid for. Publicity aims at attracting attention to the organization and its products.

iv. Sales promotion: This refers to all other supplementary promotional activities which stimulate interest, trial or purchase by customers or the middlemen. Examples of sales promotional efforts are trade shows, exhibitions, gift items, sample, displays, contests, calendars, catalogues, etc.

Traditionally, management arrives at a fair understanding of its buyers through the daily experience of selling to them. But the growth in size and complexity of modern firm and market has removed many decision makers from the direct contact with buyers. The awakened interest is the result of dramatic change that has taken place in demand and supply relationship that are now placing the consumer to the position of a king; fortunate and free enough to make choices. Thus businesses are compelled to design and sell products that confirm to buyer desires. Companies are now becoming more and more consumer oriented because of this. A firm does not leave its influence to chance, information about the business, its image, products or service must be communicated to prospective consumers. This is where promotion comes into the ‘picture’. Information provision through promotional activities, therefore, is a factor of market influence that stimulates buyers to act in favourable manner (Peter and Philip 2006).

Consumer Behaviour

According to McCarthy (2003), a consumer buying decision is influenced by culture, social and personal factor. Some culture of social class are created on consumer buying agent, culture is the fundamental determinant of a person’s want and behaviour. For instance, a child acquires a set of values, perception, influences and behaviour through his or her family and other institution within the cultural and smaller super cultural that include religion, special group or tribe. Social classes also determine consumer behaviour. Consumer behaviours are influenced by preference groups, family and social status. Preference group refers to all groups that have a direct or indirect influence on a person attitude or behaviour. Preference group affect people in three different ways; they expose an individual to new behaviour and lifestyle, they influence attitude and self-concept and they create pressure for comfort that may affect actual product or brand choice. People are also influenced by the group to which they do not belong such as inspirational group like a group a person hopes to join and those whose value behaviour which individual rejects. A buyer’s decision is also influenced by personal characteristic. These include age of the buyer and stage in life, occupation and economy circumstance, personality and self-concept, life style and values. People buy different goods and services over a life time. Occupation and economy circumstance also influence consumption pattern. For instance, Bank manager buy expensive shoes. Psychological processes also affect consumer behaviour: To understand consumer behaviour, one needs to understand the set of psychological processes which combined with certain characteristics to bring about decision process and purchase decision. Michael, Bruce and William (2001), posit that the four psychological processes are: Motivation, Perception, Learning and Memory.

Motivation: A person has many needs at any given time. Some arise from psychological state of tension such as hunger, thirst or discomfort. Such needs are said to be biogenic. Psychological needs are needs that arise from psychological state of tension such as the needs for recognition or esteem or belonging. Some of the theory of human motivation that has different implication for consumer analysis and marketing strategies are those of Abraham Maslow and Fredrick Herzberg. Abraham Maslow’s theory of motivation explains why needs are driven by particular needs at a particular time, why does a person spend considerable time and energy on personal safety and another pursuing high opinion of others?

Maslow theory states that human needs are arranged in hierarchical order from the most pressing to the least pressing. They are arranged in order of importance. They are from psychological needs to self-actualization needs. Herzberg developed two factor theories. This theory came into existence as a result of an investigation into the sources of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of accountants and engineers. The motivation can also be called satisfiers or dual theory while hygiene factor can also be called dissatisfies or maintenance factors theory.

Perception: This is the second of the four psychological processes by Michael, Bruce and William (2001) that affect consumer behaviour. A motivated person is ready to act and the motivated person's action is influenced by his or her own view or perception of the situation. Perception is the process by which an individual selects, organizes or interprets information inputs to create meaningful picture of the world. Perception depends not only on the physical stimuli but also on the condition within the individuals.

Learning: This is yet another psychological process, which affects consumer behaviour (Michael, Bruce and William 2001). When people act, they learn. Learning involves changes in individual behaviour arising from experience. Many theorists believe that learning is produced through the interplay of drives, stimuli, cues, responses and reinforcement. Marketers build demand for their product by associating such product with strong drives using motivating cues and providing positive reinforcement.

Memory: All the information and experiences the individual encounter as they go through life can end up in their long term memories. Memories processing go through encoding (how and where information gets into memory and memory retrieval (how information gets out of memory).

Marketing Strategies and Consumer Behaviours

The marketing process is both social and managerial: social because it involves an interaction between a company and its (potential) customer, and managerial because it is a way for a company to manage this interaction and to achieve sales target and/or market share objectives (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). More than just a communication, a relationship is created between the customer and the company to develop a right market offering, which is "some combination of products, services, information or experiences offered to a market to satisfy a need or a want" (Kotler & Armstrong 2008). To be able to create the right market offering, marketers have to understand the needs, wants and demands of the consumers. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2008), the needs are "states of felt deprivation" the wants are "the form that human needs take as shaped by culture and individual personality" and the demands are the "human want that are backed by buying power" In other words, we can say that the need is the first element of a buying act, when a consumer recognizes a need, he/she wants something in particular to fulfil it, and then he/she rationalises it and has a demand, which fit with his/her budget. It is this final behaviour that marketers seek for and in the opinion of Jones (2006) follow a number of steps to influence customer behaviour in their favour. These steps include; market analysis, market segmentation, strategy development and implementation which should influence behaviour so as to obtain favourable results. Marketing is more than just a process; it also studies concretely the behaviour and all of the customer's psychological and environmental drivers in order to offer him/her the right products. It can be an analysis of the customer's personality, religion, culture, his/her way of life, place of living (urban or rural), marital status, age; everything that has an influence on the buying act. With those elements, marketers understand better their (potential) customer and provide him/her a customized offer. Even if marketing is supposed to understand the customer in a better way in order to bring him/her some added value, Kotler and Armstrong (2008) point out that marketing has been accused of creating "false wants and too much materialism" Indeed, people from various backgrounds notice that, and make a strong social criticism.

Past efforts of researchers have shown an existing relationship between marketing strategies and their influence on consumer behaviour in Vietnam, Kuwait, Sri Lanka and other countries. Such researchers include Ismail and Safrana (2015) who found that there is strong positive relationship between people and customer satisfaction. It can also be recognized that there is strong positive relationship between product and customer retention. Bundit's (2013) findings revealed that consumers with difference in age had different purchasing behaviour during a period of three months with the 0.05 level of significance. The customers who had the age of 24 years old or below purchased less frequently than the customers who had the age of 25-34 years old. Mohammad and Shams (2013) showed that consumers of household appliance market can be categorized into three categories: sentimental, rational, and intelligent consumers. Institutes to respond to behavioural differences between groups of consumers should use

different marketing strategies. These strategies, according to consumer behaviours, should be cooperative, trade-oriented, and intelligent respectively.

Methodology

This study utilises survey design through the administration of questionnaires to a sampled number of respondents. The target population consists of all the customers of PZ Cussons (Nig) Plc. Kano, which is assumed to be above 1,000,000 customers. This is reasonable considering the age of the company, the diversity of its products and the size of the population of the geographical zone of the study. We adopted random sampling technique to ensure balanced representativeness of the customers of PZ Cussons Kano. The sample consists of 348 customers, as suggested by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), selected by randomly issuing a questionnaire to a customer who has purchased more than one item of the case study from a randomly selected number of outlets in and around Kano metropolis. Collection duration spanned a three-month period. The questionnaire, adopted from Muhammad and Shams (2013), consisted of two main sections. The first section was for acquiring personal details of customers (gender, age, marital status and qualification). Second section of questionnaire consisted of questions regarding marketing strategies and customer behaviour using a five point Likert scale, the completed questionnaires were sorted, checked and edited for completeness and consistency. Testing for normality via both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilks statistics in the SPSS application package version 16.0., produced no significance. Nor did Levene's test for equal variances. These being the most important requirements for the conduct of One way Analysis of variance (One way Anova), the test was conducted to determine the influence on customership as the dependent variable from advertisement, branding and pricing as the independent variables. We recorded a number of findings which are set out below.

Findings

Table 1 ANOVA F-test result of between and within group comparison

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Advertisement	Between Groups	1.273	2	.637	.475	.623
	Within Groups	438.618	327	1.341		
	Total	439.891	329			
Branding	Between Groups	1.371	2	.685	.909	.404
	Within Groups	246.693	327	.754		
	Total	248.064	329			
Pricing	Between Groups	5.687	2	2.843	6.968	.001
	Within Groups	133.431	327	.408		
	Total	139.118	329			

Source: Field survey Jan - March, 2017

From table1, the F value of advertisement is lesser than its significant value i.e. ($F < F_{critical}$). This means that advertising does not have significant influence on consumer behaviour in Kano. The F value of Branding is greater than its Significant value i.e. ($F > F_{critical}$); indicating that Branding have significant influence on consumer behaviour. Also, the F value of Pricing is greater than its significant value, therefore, Pricing have significant influence on consumer behaviour.

Table 2: Multiple Comparisons of relationships between Advertisement, Branding and Pricing on Customership as the dependent variable

Dependent Variable	(I) Customer-ship	(J) Customer-ship	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Advertisement	Less than 5 years	6-10 years	.034	.177	.980	-.38	.45
		11-15 years	.146	.174	.681	-.26	.56
	6-10 years	Less than 5 years	-.034	.177	.980	-.45	.38
		11-15 years	.112	.142	.712	-.22	.45
	11-15 years	Less than 5 years	-.146	.174	.681	-.56	.26
		6-10 years	-.112	.142	.712	-.45	.22
Branding	Less than 5 years	6-10 years	.078	.133	.826	-.23	.39
		11-15 years	-.066	.131	.869	-.37	.24
	6-10 years	Less than 5 years	-.078	.133	.826	-.39	.23
		11-15 years	-.144	.107	.370	-.40	.11
	11-15 years	Less than 5 years	.066	.131	.869	-.24	.37
		6-10 years	.144	.107	.370	-.11	.40
Pricing	Less than 5 years	6-10 years	-.349*	.098	.001	-.58	-.12
		11-15 years	-.306*	.096	.004	-.53	-.08
	6-10 years	Less than 5 years	.349*	.098	.001	.12	.58
		11-15 years	.043	.079	.850	-.14	.23
	11-15 years	Less than 5 years	.306*	.096	.004	.08	.53
		6-10 years	-.043	.079	.850	-.23	.14

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

From the comparison table (table 2), Pricing have more influence to consumer behaviours than Advertisement and Branding. From the table, most of the Significance values of Pricing tend to approach zero hence the mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The elements of communication mix is one of the major issues which a marketer cannot ignore for preference and as well as profitability of company's product, Effective combination of the elements of promotion mix must be ensured. The marketing strategies of PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc Kano has a great effect and influence on consumer behaviour. In today's competitive world, companies have a customer the main centre attention and their satisfaction is main competitive advantage of organizations. Company's products must be consistent with the expected benefits to customers. In this regard understanding various dimensions of buyer tendency and determine the relationship between them with the marketing mix elements is necessary. The marketing strategies used by PZ Cussons Plc Kano, are effective and has significant influence on their consumers. This means a form of relationship does exist between the marketing strategies used by PZ Cussons Plc. Kano and the behaviour of its customers.

Based on the findings during the course of the research work, recommendations are being made which can be of great benefit to PZ Cussons plc. Kano and other organizations if strictly adhered to. The recommendations however include the following:

Companies should produce superior products; charge competitive prices, position appropriately, promote widely, and provide other distinctive functional benefits to consumers. They also need to pay more attention to their customers in order to understand their needs and expectations as well and to keep in touch with them. Customer's satisfaction surveys should be conducted in a systematic and continues way. To PZ Cussons Plc. Kano, the firm should not hesitate it attempts at ensuring that rewarding and efficient marketing strategies are formulated and duly implemented as at when due. Hence, the need for a strong forecasting to be done about the trend of things with respect to its product as at when required.

To the Government, a favourable environment should be designed and put in place for manufacturing organization to have the chance to implementing whatever strategy they hope to adopt.

Finally, to prospective researchers on this topic, they should endeavour to carry out further in-depth analysis of this topic in order to have a clearer view on marketing strategy as a concept and a further inquiry should be conducted with same variables to establish the degree of relationship between them via regression analyses.

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