Product Packaging and its Impact on Sales Volume of Consumer Shopping Goods

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ABSTRACT: Traditionally, the primary function of a product's package was to contain and protect a product but recent packaging trend and emergence has seen increased competition and clutter on retail store shelves make packaging an important marketing tool. This, by implication, means that packages must now perform many sales tasks ranging from attracting attention, describing the product, to making the sale. This study examined two product packaging variables (colour and design) and their impacts on sales volume of consumer shopping goods. The study adopted survey research design and the population comprised of the retail stores selling consumer shopping goods in Bida from which 25 were selected using convenience sampling. Well-structured questionnaire was carefully designed to elicit information from the selected retail outlets and they were analysed using SPSS and path analysis with two models. The results of the study indicated that packaging colour has a positive and significant impact on sales volume of consumer shopping goods; it also showed that packaging design has a positive and significant impact on sales volume of consumer shopping goods. It was therefore concluded that all the established relationships between product packaging and sales volume of consumer shopping goods were positive and significant thereby leading to the rejection of the claimed hypotheses (H1 and H2) and acceptance of alternative ones. It was therefore recommended that marketers and producers should ensure they design attractive and cost-effective packages to serve as a selling point for their products. Also, management of firms should make sure that their product packages are not deceptive to customers.
Keywords: Consumers; Product packaging, Impact, Sales volume, Consumer, Shopping goods

INTRODUCTION

In a simple sense, consumer products can be divided into convenience, specialty, uninvited and shopping products. Consumer buying behaviour is an important determinant to classify a particular product in the market. Marketers classify a product on the basis of the behavioural differences of the consumers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2019). It should be borne in mind that this arrangement is not premised on product but on consumer buying behaviour. Shopping products denote goods that the consumers buy less constantly and compare with available substitutes in the market. Consumers need time, planning and effort to take the final decision as to whether to buy the product or not. Consumers do not buy these products frequently but whenever buy, they keep in mind different consideration like cost, time and effort to take the final decision. A good example

of shopping goods is Air Conditioner. Shopping product is a consumer product that the customer, in the process of selection and purchase, characteristically compares with others on similar bases as felicity, quality, price and style (Kotler, 2020).

Shopping goods, when compared to other types of consumer products, are fairly more precious than convenience products and available in smaller stores. Principally, there are two types of shopping products specifically homogenous products and heterogenous products. Traditionally, the primary function of the package was to contain and cover the product. In recent times still, a lot of factors have made packaging an important marketing tool. Increased competition and clutter on retail store shelves means that packages must now perform numerous selling tasks, (from attracting attention, describing the product, to making the trade). Companies are realizing the power of good packaging to produce instant consumer recognition of the company or brand. In this largely competitive terrain, the package may be the marketer's last chance to impact buyers and it can also support the product's positioning. Innovative packaging can give a company an advantage over challengers while inadequately designed ones can give rise to headaches for consumers and loss of sales for the company. Consumers make purchase choices for products or services on the basis of their intent of satisfying their requirements that they have identified. The intention to buy the product to satisfy their separate requirements is occasionally told by the package that houses the product which the consumers frequently believe speaks volume of the quality of the product and its capability to satisfy their requirements. Consumers perceive packages from the standpoint of product quality and the satisfaction it provides for consumers. Consumers' product purchase decision is orchestrated by the aesthetics of packaging which the successful marketer can give, advance or portray through the announcement, manufacturer and country of origin and other promotional ways that determine product quality to a large extent (Grewal & Levy, 2019).

Berkowitz (2018) defined packaging as the general group of activities in product planning that involves designing and producing the wrapper or container for a product. Package may include the product's primary protection (the tube holding Oral B toothpaste); a secondary package that is thrown down when the product is about to be used (the cardboard box containing the tube of Oral B) and the shipping package necessary to store, identify, and transport the product (a corrugated box carrying six or further dozen tubes of Oral B toothpaste). Labelling, published information appearing on or with the package, is also part of packaging (Kotler, 2020). Studies have concluded that the same element, manipulated in the same fashion, might not always produce the same results or convey the same

information. Different age groups or societies might perceive or anticipate different issues from, for instance, red multicoloured products. In this sense, this study will endeavour to uncover the impact that a product's package has on the sales volume of consumer shopping goods with respect to perfume products. To do this, quantitative and qualitative data were gathered on consumers' understanding of packages when they are buying consumer shopping goods. The environment of consumer shopping goods buying was chosen due to its particularity. The most intriguing specific is that, when buying consumer shopping goods, the person buying the product and the person consuming the product does not lap. Research work on this area is little to non-existent and in this sense, this paper will help fill the exploration gap on the issue.

Statement of the Problem

Packaging itself has turned a silent sales promotional tool for the business associations. consumer's patronage also is stimulated by the packaging quality, colour, wrapper, and other characteristics of packaging. Packaging is a whole lot that becomes the ultimate selling proposition which stimulates impulse buying behaviour in consumers. Packaging increases product sales and its market share and also reduces marketing and promotional costs. According to Rundh (2013), package attracts consumers' alertness towards a certain brand, increases its image and stimulates consumers' views about product brands. Past researches show that there is no agreement on overall grouping of packaging materials and packaging essentials. There is also disagreement regarding the styles of packaging and whether product packaging impacts on the sales volume of consumer shopping goods and their patronage. In order to increase sales and ameliorate competitive advantage, these companies have been using varieties of product packaging strategies (Pickton& Broderick, 2019). Still, a number of factors have been linked in literature to contribute to the frequent review of products packaging so as to be in tune with the changing societal preferences (Rundh, 2013). Again, each packaging tool has advantages and disadvantages, it is thus advisable for every firm to continue to review their packaging policies and choices (Smith, 2019).

Objectives of the Study

This study examined two product packaging variables (colour and design) and their impacts on sales volume of consumer shopping goods. The main objective of this study is to know how product packaging impacts on the sales volume of shopping goods with particular focus on cosmetic products which will be used as the benchmark to draw conclusion in the study. Specifically, the study will:

1. Examine how packaging cooler impacts on the sales volume of consumer shopping goods.

2. Know the impact of package design on the sales volume of consumer shopping goods.

Research Questions

1. How does packaging colour impact on the sales volume of consumer shopping goods?
2. Does package design impact on the sales volume of consumer shopping goods?

Research Hypotheses

H_1: There is no positive and significant relationship between packaging colour and sales volume of consumer shopping goods.

H_2: There is no positive and significant relationship between package design and sales volume of consumer shopping goods.

Contribution to Knowledge

Expectedly, the findings of this study will benefit the following stakeholders:

The government: This may aid in formulation of policies and regulations that can help improve product safety, protect consumers, increase profitability and market share and by extension, increase job creation for the teaming Nigerian youth graduates. Companies will benefit from the study as they could better understand the underlying product packaging activities (packaging design, colour, style and shape), better product protection and they may be better placed to deal with hurdles that impede successful packaging performance. Based on the above, this study perhaps will propose to directors and management of firms in order to make Made-in-Nigeria products competitive with imported goods and in line with world class best practices. The study will also be beneficial to the academic community as it will contribute to the increasing body of literature on product packaging and its impact on sales volume of consumer shopping goods.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer Products

Consumer products are products and services bought by final consumers for particular consumption. Marketers generally classify these products and services further on how consumers go about buying them. Consumer products include convenience products, shopping products, specialty products, and unsought products. These products are different in the way consumers buy them and thus, in how they are retailed. In order to keep in tune with the objectives of this study, the writers will concentrate only on consumer shopping goods (Armstrong, 2019).

Consumer Shopping Products

Shopping products are less constantly bought consumer products and services that consumers compare precisely on appropriateness, quality, price, and style. When buying shopping products and services, consumers spend important time and energy in gathering information and making comparisons. Examples of products in this category are apparel, fairly used cars, major appliances, furniture and hotel and airline services. Shopping products marketers generally distribute their products through smaller outlets but give deeper sales support to help their customers in their comparison effort (Armstrong, 2019). Companies are realizing the power of good product packaging in the creation of instant consumer recognition of the company or its brand. Therefore, in this largely competitive terrain, the package may be the seller's last chance to impact buyers and it can also support the product's positioning strategy. Packaging has been defined by numerous authors in the literature and the divergent definitions are given in this study. According to Keller (2019), packaging involves the activity of designing and producing containers or wrappers for a product. He concludes that packaging like other tools, must achieve a number of objectives from the perspective of both the establishment and consumers such as identity of brand; convey descriptive and persuasive information; enable product transportation and protection; help at-home storehouse and aid product consumption. "To achieve the marketing objective for the brand and satisfy the yearnings of consumer, the aesthetic and functional factors of packaging must be chosen rightly" (Keller, 2019). According to Berkowitz (2018), packaging is part of the product which encloses and protects. Packaging is the final stage of product and it helps consumers to choose from a wide range of parallel products and that it also stimulates consumer buying behaviour (Wells, Farley & Armstrong, 2007). Product packaging is an essential aspect of projecting an establishment's brand image which is occasionally designed to convey images of high quality while at other times, motioning affordable price (Smith, 2019). In the world of self-service nowadays, packaging has come to be a major communication medium from manufacturer or retailers to consumers (Berkowitz, 2018). It communicates certain quality image to consumers. Packaging is an important part of the process of a product branding as it plays a significant part in delivering the image and identity of a business firm. Packaging is the wrapper or container for a product which involves the physical presence of the wrapper and includes the design, colour, shape, label and resources used for it (Keller, 2019).

Types of Consumer Shopping Products

In the view of Lamb (2019), there are principally two types of shopping products by the name homogenous shopping products and heterogenous shopping products. Each of them is explained below:

1. Homogeneous shopping products are those shopping products that are alike in quality. These types of products are alike and they fall under the same product class. There are some attributes like brand image, price, style, quality and appropriateness which can distinguish two or further homogenous shopping products and these attributes affect the consumer buying behaviour. Those products that offer unique selling plan can develop more competitive advantage than the ones that do not offer any selling plan at all. Good examples of products in this order are car tires and electrical appliances like washing machines and refrigerators, ceiling and pedestal fans and microwaves. Each of these products has some elementary qualities. A company's blend of marketing strategy can play important part in distinguishing its consumer products from those of its challengers.

2. When it comes to heterogenous shopping products, product features play an important part to affect the consumer buying behaviour than product price. Furniture, apparel and other major appliances are good examples of heterogenous shopping products. To present a more understand of heterogenous shopping goods, products like shirt, jeans and coat must be needed in a certain size, style, quality and colour. Severally, the sellers have expansive variety to meet the requirements and tastes of different orders of consumers. These types of shopping products do not matter and are non-standardized.

Functions of Packaging

According to Lee & Lye (2003), there are principally five functional duties that are performed by packaging.

1. Protection and Preservation: Lee and Lye (2003) assert that protection and preservation are functions of packaging. These involve protection from environmental, mechanical and chemical poisoning and also from impurity. Delisa & Parmar (2010) highlight that packaging provides physical protection of the objects from shock, vibration, contraction and temperature.

2. Market Appeal: Lee & Lye (2003) linked market appeal as another part of packaging. This is to say that packaging helps in perfecting people's perception about the product. Packaging is used to get the consumer's attention, promote and convey information about the product's attributes whilst still on the shelf.

3. Convenience: Another part of packaging is to add convenience in distribution, running, display, trade, opening, reclosing, use, and reuse (Delisa & Parmar,

2010). Lee & Lye (2003) describe the convenience offered by packaging as reclosability, openability, carrying and assigning facilities. Packaging enables firms to carry out groupage where fractured objects can be transported from one place to the other in one package therefore guaranteeing handling effectiveness. According to Armstrong (2019), Packaging reduces theft as once a package is opened, it cannot be re-closed as it gets physically damaged meaning that it shows signs of opening. This is helpful in the forestalling theft and in this case, packaging provides openings to include anti-theft plans.

4. Helps in Identification: Packaging helps in identification and provision of information to consumers. Therefore, a good packaging must contain precious product information that consumer may need to know. Information on how to transport, use, reclaim, or dispose of the package or product is frequently contained as a marker on the package.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopted survey design with the objective of knowing how product packaging impacts on the sales volume of consumer shopping goods. The population of the study is all the retail stores for consumer shopping goods in Bida. Using convenience sampling method, a sample size of 25 retail stores in Bida was selected. Well- structured questionnaire was precisely designed to obtain data from the chosen retail outlets; pilot study was conducted to test the dependability of the instrument and data were analysed and validated using SPSS and path analysis with two models. Both primary data in questionnaire and secondary data in published accoutrements like books, internet installation and journals were the sources of data for the study.

DISCUSSION OF RESULT

In the case of hypothesis one, the level of significance is 0.011 which is less than 0.05. The stated null hypothesis (H_1) is thus rejected. This consequently shows that there is positive and significant relationship between packaging colour and sales volume of consumer shopping goods. In the case of hypothesis two, the level of significance is 0.000 which is remotely less than 0.05, the stated hypothesis (H_2) that there is no positive and significant relationship between package design and sales volume of consumer shopping goods is rejected. Therefore, the rejection shows that there is positive and significant relationship between package design and sales volume of consumer shopping goods.

CONCLUSION

It was therefore concluded that all the established relationships between product packaging and sales volume of consumer shopping goods were positive and

significant thereby leading to the rejection of the claimed hypotheses (H_1 and H_2) and acceptance of alternative ones. This showed the presence of positive and significant relationship between product packaging and the sales volume of consumer shopping goods. All the two stated research objectives were thus achieved in with this research.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended therefore that marketers and producers should ensure they design attractive and cost-effective packages to serve as a selling point for their products. Also, management of firms should make sure that their product packages are not deceptive to customers. Firms producing cosmetic products such as perfumes should always maintain that their packages are designed such that they contain adequate information about the safety, use and disposal of their products after use in order to provide adequate guide to consumers.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Literature, still not being exhausted on the subject of product packaging and its impact on sales volume of consumer shopping goods, has room for improvement and growth. Notwithstanding the existing several product packaging fundamentals, each with extensive documented investigations on them, this paper endeavour to contain the essentials. This has given rise to a larger, all-purpose study that can work as a kickoff for upcoming investigations to be carried out on the impact of packaging on sales volume generation in products. Nonetheless the result of this study having indicated success in the cosmetic industry, the same may not be said of the same study if conducted on other classes of consumer goods or business-to-business product classes. Also, this study was carried out in Bida, Niger State Nigeria; it is not known if similar result can be obtained by the time same is carried out in other cities or regions in Nigeria and abroad. Being one of the first papers to study product packaging and its impact on sales volume of consumer shopping goods, it would also be crucial to replicate these results in the studied environment. Finally, the writers studied the impact that product packaging can have on the sales volume of consumers shopping goods in Nigeria. Similar studies should also be conducted in several other bases to discover what changes happen mostly and what are reliant on a specific setting.

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