



MANAGING THE FAMILY AND MARKETING/SALES JOBS IN NIGERIA A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF NIGERIAN WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

This seminar paper will evaluate the role of women/females in the field sales/marketing jobs, identify their problems and setbacks, and proffer solutions that will enable organizations to have a second thought on the positive role women in the marketing/business environment. NB: The term "Salesman" and He" are not intended to be exclusive, but are used for simplicity's sake, to avoid the reiteration of salesman or woman and he or she, each time a practitioner of the profession is mentioned, unless where it is necessary the gender differentiation is made, and the appropriate word 'She' or saleswoman is used, since the paper is on women/females.

***Keywords:** female, marketing, selling, attitudes, culture*

INTRODUCTION

The marketing/sales force was, and is still comprised mostly of only men/males, and little or no involvement of females/ women. In the recent past, there have been changes in this system. A visit to different tertiary institutions in Nigeria (polytechnics and universities) where Business Administration and Marketing courses are being taught will reveal that a greater percentage of candidates being admitted are females/ladies, but still there in low involvement of females in sales jobs in Nigeria.

The importance of an efficient sales force in performing both the inside and field/outside selling/marketing functions of any organisation/manufacturing outfit cannot be over-emphasized. Sales force can consist of both males and females, provided they meet the necessary

educational and professional qualifications required for the job, by the respective companies.

In Nigeria today, there has been increasing discrimination between a field salesman or a field saleswoman all referred to as sales representative. So many reasons have been posed for this discrimination, ranging from physiological reasons, family engagements and responsibilities, societal customs, norms, values, and religious beliefs.

Ideally evaluating the role of Nigerian females in marketing should not be substantively different from that of their male counterparts, although emphasis and impact may vary from one establishment to another. In business, their role is unique and multi-dimensional that they permeate every economic activity, one way or the other to leave indelible marks on the nation's path to economic growth, and the company survival and profitability.

The term females and women in this article mean the same thing as people of the feminine gender, who are involved in the marketing/sales jobs

TRADITIONAL ROLE OF NIGERIAN WOMEN/FEMALES: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

Traditionally, Nigerian women/females and their counterparts in other parts of Africa and the world, were mainly seen as home workers, nurturing the family and in some cases assisting their men folk on the farms, in fishing activities in trading, and female dominated jobs.

Their role was mainly supportive in nature from early childhood, the males was encouraged to be aggressive and assertive. Except in matrilineal societies (e.g. Ghana) the females traditionally were usually less assertive than the male. Even where she occupied leadership role in her community/village, her role was largely seen as supportive. She is supposed to be feminine and soft in approach to issues

Early educational opportunities discriminated against the females as parents, especially fathers preferred to educate the male. In the PAST DECADE however, the women have broken down educational barriers, parents' attitudes have since changed and enormous opportunities have been taken up by the females to develop themselves mentally, to broaden their perspectives and where possible to develop their skill and expertise

even in fields traditionally thought to be the exclusive preserves of the men folk. There abound now women directors, managing directors of banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions, women professors, pilots, sports people, footballers, commissioners, medical doctors, engineers, pharmacists, accountants and other skilled labour.

The Direct involvement of females in the MBA/Post graduate programme, considering its tight academic schedules, rigors and intensive classroom work, is enough testimony, that women places are no longer reserved in the KITCHEN. The Dictum now is “what a man can do, a woman can equally do it, and even do it better.”

Women’s role in business and nation building tends to broaden as the Nigeria economy develops. In other words, there is a strong positive correlation between the extent and nature of women participation in economic/business activities and the level of the country’s development. Other socio-cultural and demographic factors like societal norms, attitudes, age distribution of the labour force, level and rate of female education, religion(s), etc, also influence female participatory roles in the marketing activities.

One of most dramatic development in the 20th century was the entry of Women into economic and political spheres previously occupied almost exclusively by men.

Although women are making progress in eliminating gender disparities they still lag behind men in the work place especially in the marketing and sales jobs in Nigeria. These gaps are found more in Nigeria and throughout the world, but are particularly pronounced in developing economics. So far the greatest success has been in reducing education (marketing education) and health disparities and increasing women’s economic and political influence in the world (Stotsty 2013). Renowned Scholars and global businesses stress the benefits of further reducing gender inequality to allow women to realize their full potential on economic activities in Civil rule.

Two recent world bank studies focusing on women’s economic opportunities in sub-Saharan Africa examined when women and men work, how women’s businesses perform, compared with men’s and the economic and legal obstacles women must overcome if they are expend

their economic and entrepreneurial activity (Hallward-Driemeier 2013, Black Den and Hallward-Driemeier 2013).

These studies find that general gaps in economic opportunity in the region less from whether or not women work than differences in the types of activities women and men pursue. Women are much more likely to work in the informal sector of an smaller enterprises and untraditional industries such as garment making and food preparation all of which tend to pay lower returns especially in the marketing/sales jobs. These requires addressing the constraint on women's access to funds and assets, cultural and family limitations work challenges expanding women's financial and managerial training and involving more women in policy making environment (Blackden and Hallward – Driemeier 2013, Ayozie 2016).

Women in sub-Saharan Africa work, few can afford not to Nationally representative of labour force and house hold survey data from over 100 low and middle more countries show that women's labour force participation rates are higher in sub-Saharan Africa than in any other region. In sub-Saharan Africa, women are active as entrepreneurs. However they are disproportionately self-employed. Women make up 40 percent of the region's nonagricultural labour force, but account for nearly fifty percent of the self-employed. In contrast women represent only one-fourth of the regions employers, a share that does not change much with a country level of development and is mirrored in all other regions except the middle East and North African area, where they are even fewer women employers, about 12 percent (Dr. Iemeier, 2013).

In general as a country' income increases, women's share in salary/wage employment rises dramatically.

In low income countries in sub-Saharan Africa, when men are three times more likely to in wage employ men than women, women' opportunities are enumerated in entrepreneurship. So to understand women's economic opportunities it is useful to compare how women and men entrepreneurs and workers perform (Dr. Iemeier, 2013).

A family is defined as a group of people who are related to each other, either as mother, father and their child or children. (Ezeigbo 2010,)Ayozie (2006), Defined a family as a group consisting of the father, mother and or children, who were brought together on the bases of marriage either by

Birth or Adoption. The close relationship is also known as nuclear family, while the extended family includes the Aunties, uncles, cousins, nephews, grandparents etc. Marriage is one of the oldest social institutions in the history of human race and in Nigerian and the world over and is a serious prerequisite to the emergence of a family. Children can be by nature, birth or via adoption. A family is a legal, cultural or religious contract entered into by a man and women, to live together as husband and wife and in the western world of America and Europe can be between a man and man or a woman and woman with or without natural or adopted children (Ezeigbo 2010,)Ayozie (2006). Ideally both parties on the marriage union have cultural, religious or legal obligations expected of them to make sure that the union works out well. Anything outside that resorts either dissolution of the marriage legally or culturally which is referred to as divorce in Nigeria the focal point of this write up and in Nigeria, marriage can be between one man and one woman (monogamy) or two or more women (in a polygamous set up) (Ezeigbo 2010,)Ayozie (2006).

In Nigeria, marriage involves also the men's family and that of the woman or women families. These are called in-laws who form a unit cemented together by the coming together of their son and their daughter or daughters (the married couple(s). in Nigeria and African, the assumption is that a man or woman belong to each other. The meaning in Nigeria is that a person alone does not marry a man, or a woman.

Presently in Nigeria, because of the Economic and Societal changes and expectation, more women are eager to work for living either in a professions as in this case sake or marketing job. The mothers/women of the past lives as homemakers. In the highly skilled marketing/sales job, few females would just want to limit their selling activities and confine themselves to only caring for their husbands and children, but they want to be actively involved in their sales/marketing job, and a lot of travelling and prospecting for customers which entails longer hours on the road. Today's women want to continue their selling/marketing jobs and also start and manage a family. Some do that because of career advancement but with the support and cooperation of their husband, and the entire family.

A career is an individual's work and life roles over their life span. It is a job or profession that one has been trained for which he/she intends to do for several years (Ezeigbo 2010) usually a career is considered to relate to remuneration work, one is expected to earn money or salary from it, either on full time or part time basis.

A lot of females in Nigeria have now taken up sales/marketing jobs and not limit themselves to nursing teaching, catering, tailoring or fashion designing jobs which in the past is considered as female or feminine jobs. There are varied opportunities for females/women to make their marks in field sales/marketing jobs just like no another than career/profession.

Presently, Nigerian females have made substantial strides combining their home making role with their professional role to maximize societal return in many cases.

This topic is, it would be divided into four headings, with simple explanations of what selling and marketing is the problems that militate against female involvements in marketing jobs, types of selling jobs a female can perform and how these problems can be tackled.

LITERATURE REVIEW

AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE FUNCTIONS AND QUALITIES OF A SALESWOMAN WITHIN THE MARKETING/SELLING ENVIRONMENT IN NIGERIA

Marketing encompasses many things and the people performing it, must possess some qualities which will enable them perform the numerous functions. It encompasses many more activities that most people think. It is a comprehensive term, involving selling, merchandise, promotion and distribution. It involves finding out what the consumers want, planning and developing a product or service that will satisfy those want and determining the best way to PRICE, PROMOTE and DISTRIBUTE that product or services. And this must be done at a profit.

It is also encompasses activities like environmental scanning, marketing, distribution pricing promotion planning and international marketing.

Aptly it is defined by the America Marketing Association (AMA) in Adeyanju (2008) and the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) United Kingdom in Ayozie (2009) as thus

“Marketing consists of the performance of business activities that directs the flow of goods and services from the producer to consumer or users” Ayozie (2014)

It is also:

[“A management process responsible for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying customers requirements profitably” (C.I.M. U.k) in Adeyanju (2008)

While selling is simply defined as:

“The personal or impersonal process of persuading a prospective customer to buy a commodity or service or to act favorably upon an idea that has commercial significance to the seller

The selling concept as a management philosophy and orientation assumes that company products are not bought but sold. Those consumers tend to be induced to buy more of a product through sales stimulating devices. Selling starts with the firms existing products, and the task is to organize a strong sales oriented department, aggressively search out potential customers and selling the products to achieve profitable volume of sales. It focuses on field sales work, individual customers and sales transaction and it tries to convert company's product(s) into cash.

Marketing on its own stresses on consumer need analysis and satisfaction and directs company resources towards making products and services that consumer want. It makes change in product design or quantity to match and adapt to changing consumer taste and characteristics.

The presentation of goods or salesmanship is a highly skilled art, but it is not one of those arts which are born in people. Proficiency in salesmanship, like most skills can be acquired by the industry, and by application of the individual. Anyone of average intelligence and ability can learn the skills which are necessary to become proficient, but as in all that professions above average intelligence ability will produce a far better saleswoman. The person who wishes to become an outstanding good saleswoman/marketer must be prepared to make sacrifices of leisure time and other interests, and he/she must be prepared to study and to work hard. Success in the field of selling depends upon the degree of favorably

responses which the saleswoman gets from her customers. Progress in salesmanship develops from practice and the intelligent application of experience. Unlike scientists the saleswoman is making decisions based on her own judgment at every call on everyday. Each interview which a saleswoman conducts provides her with opportunities to exercise her skills and to develop her capacity.

At present, the salesman/woman has become increasingly important as the vital link between the manufacturer and the distributor and user. The selling process is an essential part of the marketing mix. A well-organized company will have made a thorough marketing research, evolved a product policy and taken decisions on advertising, pricing, packaging, distribution channels and the caliber and size of the sales force. Each of these is an important ingredient.

However, the final link in the marketing chain is that of the saleswomen who makes the personal presentation of her company's goods or services. Buyers can buy without a salesman being present but they tend to buy minimum/minimal quantities, and to confine their orders to know lines. An interesting analysis of the sales records of a company revealed a sudden drop in sales when the sales-force went on holiday during the first two weeks of a particular month, to coincide with the annual factory shutdown. There was a significant loss of sales solely through the absence of the salesman. An example of the old saying that, "OUT OF SIGHT IS OUT OF MIND"

There has been a growing awareness of the increasing importance of the saleswoman as the key link in the process of selling. More and more companies are spending bigger amounts on recruiting and training the saleswoman and they have been described as the vital link. The part she plays in the economy of the country is also vital. Even though, the economy may expand, unless the saleswoman ensures that her firm's goods and services are well presented and persuasively sold to buyers, these goods will not reach the consumer.

When examined in greater detail, the saleswomen's function covers a wide range of activities which can dependent upon individual company policy, these includes the following:

- The presentation, demonstration and sale of his/her company's goods, negotiation on quality, price and delivery. Explanation and presentation of company policy.
- The continuous examination of the market and reporting on shortages, oversupply and exchanges in trading conditions.

The relaying to his company of any information of general commercial value

- The maintenance of adequate stocks of his company's goods by distributors and users. Care is ensuring that customers keep the goods under suitable storage conditions.
- The advice and instruction of dealers and their staff in the sale and display of his company's products.
- The continuous acquisition of knowledge of her company's products and their applications, selling points and the benefits to the user.
- Prospecting for new outlets and business and the extension of his/her company's influence on her territory.
- The obtaining and maintenance of satisfactory displays for his company's goods.
- The maintenance of good customer relations.
- Recommendation of credit for customers, assessment of their premises, organisation, standing and influence in the trade, and the acquisition of satisfactory trade references.
- The collection of outstanding accounts and avoidance of bad debts.
- The handling of complaints from distributors and users.
- Implementation of sales promotion schemes.
- The maintenance of satisfactory records of customers' business with his company and the expeditious handling of correspondence.
- The proper cares and maintenance of any of the company's property which has been entrusted to his charge.

THE QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF A SALESWOMAN

In carrying out her functions, the saleswoman/female has tools and techniques, which can be developed and learnt. The tools are the saleswoman's personality, her knowledge and judgment and the power of

persuasion. The techniques are his/her preparation and planning, her approach to the buyer, the demonstration and presentation of her products, her method of negotiations and finally the method she uses to close the sales.

PERSONALITY: Very often it is said that “X” is a born sales man/woman because she has the right sort of personality, Gillian (1992) Examined more critically, it is nearer to the truth to say that “X” is a likeable chap and people like to do things for her. To say that a person has to have the right sort of personality to be successful as a saleswoman needs only a moment’s examination to be disapproved. Anyone who knows only a few successful saleswomen will know that their personality to be successful as a saleswoman needs only a moment’s examination to be disproved. Anyone who knows only a few successful saleswomen will know that their personalities are completely different; in fact no two people (with the possible exception of identical twins) have the same personality. A particular kind of personality can guarantee success. Most successful saleswomen are very much aware of the personality characteristics and have consciously developed them. The personality characteristics which are most likely to help in building success as a salesman are: enthusiasm, integrity, intelligence, courage, initiative, reliability, determination, confidence, industry, self control, courtesy, determination, confidence, industry, self control, courtesy, friendliness, modesty, being jovial, love, empathy and understanding. Gillian (1992) ayozie (2014)

A saleswoman needs knowledge of her own company, (i.e. history policies and methods of implementing them), the product or services (i.e. raw materials, quality standards, prices, delivery arrangements, current publicity programme, the competition, general trade information, Human relations (i.e. an understanding of herself, her strengths and weaknesses, ability to interpret mood and idiosyncrasies of buyers, an appreciation of her own personality, qualities and those of other people) and a knowledge about her territory.

POWER OF PERSUASION: The prime object of the salesman’s vocation is to persuade people to buy. Buyers are constantly approached by salesman, many of them offering similar goods at similar prices, and it is the saleswoman with the greatest power of persuasion, who is likely to book

the order. Persuasion is the art of convincing people that the offer of goods or services which is made meets their industrial or personal requirements satisfactorily. For persuasion to be successful, it is firstly essential to establish the true needs of the buyer and to be convinced oneself that the goods or services on offer will meet those needs satisfactorily.

The natural stability of women to project their and stabilize homes could be a substantial asset in seeing to a successful sales job. Other functions of the saleswomen long associated with women to varying but limited scale in their home running duties. The cliché is “behind a successful man is a woman”. The implication is that the sterling qualities of a woman as a more flexible and natural marketer of goods and services are being used in the background to promote domestic and home attainments. There is little wonder than that a few of the women folk when given the opportunity to play dominant roles on the forefront of marketing are almost never found wanting, they are always successful.

TYPES OF SALES JOBS PERFORMED BY SALESWOMEN

There are tremendous numbers and varieties of selling positions, both in business and non-business organizations and each has certain duties and responsibilities and requires particular characteristics on the part of the sales person. Few of these kinds are

- Selling to retail stores
- Missionary selling
- Selling to ultimate consumer
- Van delivery selling
- Tangible sales
- Intangible/service selling
- Industrial goods selling
- Real estate selling

Selling to Retail Stores: Numerous saleswomen are involved in selling to retailers. The retailers are firms that purchase consumer goods and sell them to ultimate consumer. Representatives who sell to retailers usually are heavily involved in making regularly scheduled calls upon assigned customers in a territory. A great amount of time is spent in order taking,

than order getting. Order taking consists of making routine calls on customers, checking their needs, taking their orders, and providing various non-selling activities. Order getting involves calling upon prospects who are not customers and converting them into customers.

Missionary Selling: They go on routine selling activities and help to build goodwill for the organisation, and interest in their product line. They are especially useful when the order taking representation carry a wide line and cannot devote sufficient attention to individual product or when they do not have the time or expertise needed to accomplish missionary task.

INDUSTRIAL SELLING: This salesperson handles industrial goods – those are buyers who purchase goods and services in order to satisfy the needs of their respective organizations, or to be used in the production of other goods and services which will be sold to ultimate users.

SELLING TO ULTIMATE CONSUMER: The saleswoman sells consumer goods and services to ultimate consumers. Various manufacturers employ saleswomen to reach the ultimate consumer, based upon the belief that employees of the manufacturer can do better selling job than the retails. This selling is usually common among companies producing perishable goods.

REAL ESTATE SELLING: A special types of selling is found in real estate industry. Those who occupy such positions are actively involved in order getting and in creatively attempting to solve problems of their prospective customers. Many salesperson in this field enjoy large incomes, although it usually requires period of apprenticeship and had work.

There are great opportunities for women to create a huge mark in all careers especially in field sales/marketing jobs. However, females and women has to contend with the conflict and challenges between being a very competent sales/marketing career women and discharging their responsibilities effectively as a wife, mother, girlfriend, spouse, single parent or both in both the nuclear family and extended family and also be expected to achieve excellent career performance and progress.

PROBLEMS OF FEMALE INVOLVEMENT IN FIELD SALES/MARKETING JOB

Seeking and working towards a sales/marketing career required TIME, COMMITMENT and HARDWORK. This is a difficult task for women because

of the dual nature of their career. They are mothers, sisters and wives, raising children and managing the home front. The work of sales woman, especially field saleswoman involves much prospective and travelling, as well as getting involved in critical mental judgment. The greatest challenge for women therefore is how they can maintain a balance of their time between family and job in such a way as to avoid incompetency and in their professional sales job.

CULTURAL CONSTRAINTS: The traditional Nigerian society expects a woman to play the second fiddle behind her husband irrespective of her personal qualifications and competence. Majority of women who achieve success in their sales jobs are usually spinsters, divorces and widows.

Those who achieve remarkable progress in spite of their marriage have been lucky to enjoy the supportive role of UNDERSTANDING husbands and partners. Another cultural prejudice against women is in the area of women education which have been accorded low priority and this has limited the areas of economic activities in which women could be gainfully employed. "as such, in 1980" three out of four women over 25 years of age in Africa were illiterates Orseter (1980). In 1985, there were only about 60 girls evolved in secondary schools per 100 boys in sub-Sahara Africa, the lowest in any region of the world except for southern Asia, with first about 40 girls per 100 boys. The level of illiteracy is twice as high in the rural area, as compared with the urban areas, Iyanda (1990)

Philips (1983) of the Securities and Exchange Commission Lagos summarized within her paper – The Role of women in Banking and Nation Building.

"Statutory, the working age is 15-55 years, Statistics extracted from the Federal Office of Statistics (1978-1983) and from manpower study, National planning power Board brings out glaringly the following facts:

- That more men are educated and trained in Nigeria than women as indicated by 16 percent female literacy compared with 31 percent male literacy in 1980 out of total people on the statutory working age.
- That there is subsequently a much lower participation rate in the labour force by women then by men.

- That within the group of professionals (marketing included) women comprises only 3 out of every 30 professionals.

Ezeigbo (2010) opined that career experts' advice on the choice of a career especially in male careers. She further stated that the constraints that many women has to contend with, especially between being a competent career women in sales/marketing and discharging her responsibilities effectively as a wife or a mother in the nuclear family or as a wife and mother and many more in the extended family.

Females sales representatives and managers who wishes to achieve tremendous success in their career will strike a balance, between work and family. Every female wants to have a perfect job and to perform optimally on a job but of even takes the time to ensure that they have the ability and the disposition to do the job.

Sales marketing jobs pays well and are satisfying but very stressful, especially with the constant driving around towns and cities to prospect for customers. It is more strenuous and stressful, but requires innovativeness and understanding before one can be successful. It is more mechanical especially where the females will drive over long distances. It is not women friendly, as jobs in teaching, laws, nursing, dentistry, accountancy, banking, where they use their natural skills in building relationships. Women in the above careers are in a good position to manage their caretaking responsibilities in the family and their schedules in the office or work place (Ezeigbo 2010).

These are women friendly careers for women who plan to effectively raise their families or those who already have families to care for.

Occupationally, the odds against the women folk include pregnancy, maternity leave, confirming that chores are done in the house-hold, in addition to occupational responsibilities. However, careful planning and, having an understanding partners/spouse have made the triple role of mother-wife professional a pleasant reality for many women and a positive contribution to the economic growth of Nigeria.

However, in the Nigerian environment, women are tied down by various problems, some of which can be cultural, economic and psychological in nature. Ayozie (1999) enumerated them as follows

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS: Women find themselves preserving in a culture where traditional rules and implicit codes are devised by men, and oriented towards benefiting the men. The extent to which a woman “bull dozes” her way through the complex labyrinth of these men – made intricacies will determine her degree of career advancement, Shinn (1982) The psychological constraint faced by women/female sales people can also come in the form of harassment (sexually by both her bosses and very rich customers) and name calling derogatively, describing her as masculine, hard and tough. This will make her feel insecure to endure and survive in activities and roles formally regarded as masculine monopolies. Remember a Nigerian women/female has her home to protect. Furthermore, women are yet to build sufficient confidence about their innate competence and capability to perform and to sell as the males, and even better. Remember the cliché “what a man can do, a woman can equally do it, and even better”. This they need to do by escaping from a sense of passivity and difference. If the experiment with woman High court judge and law enforcement officers is anything to go by, then the laudable part women can play in the sphere of marketing activities is to be encouraged.

STRESS

More recently, research has found those unmarried women, making a career in the male dominated field like sales, marketing, banking, engineering, etc. experience stress, as a hazard. Stress can result not only from long working hours, role overload, inadequate communications, and long hour of driving and traveling. Stress can have psychological effects on employees and can also affect their health and contribution to the effectiveness of the organisation, especially in the area of selling and marketing.

Iyanda (1992) on his paper women in management summed it as thus:

“women competing in a male dominated environment like most organizations are under constant stress and that professional women experience more stress than housewives”

EDUCATIONAL/ACADEMIC RESTRICTIONS/BARRIERS

Due to past limitations by Nigerians Traditional fore fathers which restricted women/females education, courses in the arts and the soft sciences (especially teaching) were just left for women/females to engage in. Few of them are really not prepared for the selling/marketing task, which is becoming a highly skilled art. The person who wishes to become outstandingly good saleswomen must be prepared to make sacrifices of leisure, time, and other interests. She must be prepared to study and work hard. For years now, the myth/notion is that if you are not qualified or trained for any specific job/profession. Then you can make in selling, most especially in rural Agricultural Selling. People say often that it required just common sense”, while you require common sense as an asset in selling, common sense is not enough to survive in the competitive world of marketing/selling. Now the marketing business requires greater skill for survival, which combines the creative aspects of arts, with the rigid requirements of science. There are now encouraging changes for the better as more and more females embrace the profession selling jobs, and make remarkable successes both in their theory and practice.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT/RESPONSIBILITY

The most problematic snag for women is the conflict between household responsibilities and their career in sales. There used to be a feeling of guilt by women over having a career while being a perfect wife and mother simultaneously.

This is usually due to their inability to work out a realistic strategy; with clear definitions of and solution to emotional task and time commitment.

CHILD REARING challenges and striking a balance between family and Career

Child bearing and child rearing tend to disrupt women’s career especially in marketing and sales, where career progression is based on commission on sales and constant in increase in customer base. But a disruption caused by marriage and raising a family, cause a serious interference for the females. Ezeigbo (2010) opened that a woman/female success in career especially in marketing/sales in Nigeria and her sense of fulfillment of home depends on here ability to balance the two contending

responsibilities harmoniously. Experience has shown that those who succeed in sales/marketing in business careers are not necessarily those who put in the most number of hours into the profession, or business, but rather those who are able to balance time spent working and time spent at home with the family, the children and all things being equal with grow up healthier, better adjusted, happier and more responsible citizens, than when the children that are left alone, without care by their mothers. So parents will hand a relatively problem free old age and a higher relationship with their children in their adult life (Ezeigbo 2010). One of the consequences of not striking a balance between family and career is stress and frustration, which is responsible for peoples inability to manage their families and sale career. Stress is everywhere and affects everyone. Psychologist even opine that stress can be good and or bad. The females' need to maintain a balance. Stress is everywhere and affects everybody rich or poor. There is positive and negative stress, and it can motivate some and can also ruin a person's life. So a female may learn how to control stress. So that can help the female to accomplish work at home and in the office. Many female/marketing people spend all their waking hours, working. Obviously work does not stop when the female leaves duty post or work place, as females continue working at home, doing housework and taking care of the children and men (husbands). So female's needs strategies to fight with work place and home place stress. So a females' needs the family, friends and relatives support the sales manage the stress and time effectively.

Disenchantment, lack of Peace, or Conflict in the Family

Sickness or Chronic sickness can bring stress and disruption to a working marketing/sales career woman, as she cannot go to office or drive round town to expand the customer base. A peaceful and stress free home can grant a successful career.

The mountains on the women's back

(Ogundipe 1994) described that females/women in Nigeria are living under stress. They are overwhelmed by the society, herself, her family and by the work place. She is expected to perform tradition roles efficiently, run

her home, be a good wife, super mother, supernatural member of the extended family, a competent worker, an excellent professional professional if she is gainfully employed. She is expected to contribute to family income. And finally she is expected to perform creditably at her work (marketing, sales or business). All these tasks the woman has to accomplish in a culture where she is made to behave that she is inferior to her male-counterpart.

ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE TRADITIONAL NIGERIAN SETTING

All types of policies and change regarding the position of women in social production, and in the society are subject to the limits imposed on them by their respective reproductive role.

ILLITERACY AND IGNORANCE

Many girls of school age drop out of school because of parental un-negligence and unplanned pregnancies, and when this happens, the girls are hardly ever able to get back to school. This has effected the employment of females in field sales, marketing jobs in the long and short run

A through study of illiteracy found out that

“Many illiterate parents do not feel seriously disturbed when children (girls) drop out of school so long as they receive domestic or commercial assistance from the girls when they are home, Iyanda (1992

PURDAH

This is a situation where women in the Islamic religion do not come out of their confinement. This kind of condition is detrimental to the effective development of women in the society. A lot of Girls/females cannot work in commercial areas because of religious restrictions. Many wear viels when confines them to other matrimonial homes alone.

It is traditionally suggested by culture that men should make their education more serious than women.

That they should do something tangible with their lives, and that they expected to compete and advance.

According to irene and sylvia (1980) in their book “women in Management”;

“It is expected that men are qualified them to govern the country, lead business and industry and fill professional role, and women are to stay at home to attend to households chores. Time and tide is changing that orientation in Nigeria

DEMOGRAPHICAL FACTOR

At the stage of employing people for vacant positions, it has been found that employers generally prefer to employ the males then females. In circumstances where women are employed for sales job, usually preference is given to middle aged woman. One of the excuses given by the employers is that women are not as strong as men, they cannot stay outside for a longer period. They always ask for maternity leave and are frivolous in their approach to professional work. Research has proved it to be a fallacy.

RELIGION

The religious restriction is the area of greatest discrimination against women. Professional jobs some Christian denomination does not ordain women priests, bishops or pastors. Thus restriction extended to females at the point of employment and career advancement. Similarly in the Islamic religion, a woman is regarded as lesser being than a man, and she cannot even enter the mosque to pray in the same enclosure as men. These religious limitations limit the career advancement of females in the selling jobs.

LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN WOMEN, BY MEN AND OTHER WOMEN

Most women also believe that their purpose of working is to maintain the family, hence they are satisfied with such jobs as tailoring, petty trading, teaching and do not wish to advance professionally..

Men tend to be jealous, and this can develop into an inferiority complex. Hence they accuse their spouses having time intimate/illicit affairs with chief executives of a company to enable them to get certain juicy jobs.

Many woman undoubtedly lack confidence in what they do and the male folk perceive the selling job to be a world of marketing and management. A woman officer said that the major factor which has impeded her career the

most was always a man is assumed to be able. The fear of not being competent enough, has brought about men not approving of woman in sales jobs and business jobs. For these reasons woman who feel that their family comes first, give up the career for the sake of peace in their homes and further children's sake. This is affecting their interest and urge to aim higher or compete with the men on the same sales job.

Also in sales job, there is need for a lot of courage, endurance, perseverance. these factors are lacking by most woman. A good sales person must be aggressive. But most women are less assertive and aggressive; they have more empathy, than ego drive, thus these enable men to have edge over them in sales jobs.

The need for commitment is another thing in sales jobs. Most salespersons are not stationary. They are always on the move driving to prospect and sell to their customers. The rigors that are borne by the salespeople are very strenuous. For example, driving for almost 12 hours to their destination, meeting different types of new prospects. Some hostile and other aggressive, all these things frustrate woman away from sales jobs.

The need for proximity is an important factor. It means that the sales territory to be covered by a sales person might not be far from where the sales representative resides. Woman likes to stay within the area of their family residence to do their jobs than travelling to long distances to do their jobs. This hinders their involvement in sales jobs.

An important new dimension in Nigeria is that most prospects/customers tend to molest or sexually harass female's sales representative who comes to them. Some even tend to be emotionally involved with them, despite the fact that the saleswoman is married person. This can be disgusting, and limits their interest and involvement in selling jobs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a literature review of the role of female in the developing and developed countries of the world. It relied upon already published work by the author and other authors (Literature review). Practical expenses as a lecturer in the undergraduate marketing class also used.

THE WAY FORWARD (PROSPECTS)

Support from the SPOUSE, HUSBAND, PARTNER, FAMILY AND CLOSE FRIENDS

If a female/woman gets the family, husband, friend or spousal support, they tend to be able to cope better with stress and challenges in the marketing work place

Ability to cope with life and balancing family and career

A female/women ability and inability to cope with life and balancing family and career and the consequences of the dichotomy and coupled with lifestyle and stress in the urban cities, brings up four categories of women (1) those who are coping with relative ease, because they have access to wealth and have many servants to relieve them of back breaking chores at home, (b) the women who are coping but with difficulty, they may have some help, but are left with many responsibilities that stress then (c) women who are on the brink of collapse and (d) women who can no longer be able to cope, in that responsibilities and are suffering from mental breakdown and depression, who may end up bed ridden in psychiatric homes or disabled. So women/females should develop the ability to able to manage with family and career and find a way of balancing the two issues. This comes with cooperation, women has to learn how to manage the responsibilities as mother, wife, income earner, home maker and career women, especially in a culture where she is meant to believe that she is inferior to her male counterpart. The woman/females must learn how to manage the responsibilities effectively and realistically for her to survive and achieve her ambition to be successful at home and at work. Women has to tackle the challenges/problems that stress them so as to ameliorate their adverse efforts (Ogundipe 1984)

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

A woman's mental health, physical well-being and excellent performance in marketing career and on even area of their lives, depends in her positive approach to life.

Assistance by the Family: Even family member should assist in doing chores at home with a paid domestic help. This would relieve the female marketing person of her back breaking tasks and give her enough time to

rest when she returns from work. She must strike a balance between family and work. If career must grow, the family must be in order keeping diary of places to visit.

TIME MANAGEMENT

No human being has an unflagging memory or the memory of a computer. Women should keep diaries off sales routes to follow, customers to meet sales calls to be made, commitments and dates of scheduled events, and note books to jot important facts. Since women are very busy, time management is crucial for them to perform important duties in the family and the work place. Career experts like Randall Hansen (2018) advised that women should learn to better manage their time and avoid procrastination, for most of all stress they feel comes from simply been disorganized and procrastination. They should learn to set more realistic deadlines and stick to them. They will be less stressed and their work/career will better off. **BETTER MANAGEMENT OF CHILD REARING-** it is advisable that a woman/female should avoid having a baby in middle age except in special circumstances where she has not yet been blessed with a child. Medical and career experts advises against late child bearing because of the attendant risks and complications. At middle age a woman's marketing or sales career is supposed to be blooming she is likely to have risen on the ladder of responsibility in her work place and therefore cannot afford to be pregnant at that stage in her life.

FAMILY OR SELF VACATION

Women/females should take time off occasionally to relax or go on vacation herself or with the family. The women should once in a while strike out time to go out on her own and away for a few days from her work place, either to relax with relations to visit new people or places of interest to get new experiences. When she returns she will feel appreciated and can take up her official and family responsibilities. She has to be cheerful optimistic and enthusiastic about life.

Seeking and working towards a selling career requires time, commitment and hard work. This is a difficult task for woman because of the dual nature of their life. They must sell at home and at work. The greatest challenge for

women here is how they maintain a balance of their time between family and their jobs, in such a way as to avoid stress and incompetence at work. The growth of women as a proportion of the nation's sales force is a significant positive sign.

Equal job opportunity legislation will spark a steady growth. Equal opportunity should also be made mandatory for them in tertiary institutions to study marketing or business administration, so as to provide the necessary education needed to perform in the field sales job.

The proposed all female university, notwithstanding its demerits, will increase the number of female enrollment in tertiary institutions.

Husbands, spouses and friends and boyfriend should be mentally educated on the task involved in sales job. The selling career is just like any other professional work. Longer hours at work and travelling are also obtainable in other jobs, not just selling. The woman on their own should justify the confidence of their spouse by not having what affairs outside their home. This will bring about the much desired confidence, and encouragement needed in career advancement.

The society, family, church, home, community should equally appreciate that women are traditionally created as natural salesperson. The qualities expected of a sales person are more possessed by women than men. Females possess the qualities to painstakingly explain issues to people and to convince customer to take a course of action and that is what selling entails.

Women increasing desire for financial independence can be gained through sales jobs.

From a resources allocation point of view, the increasing interest of females in sales positions is encouraging. Women have demonstrated their sales abilities. Ignoring this fact produces a waste of human resources that cannot be tolerated in the productivity conscious environment of today and in the future in Nigeria.

Government should go further to straighten the national commission for women and the ministry of women affairs.

There has justified the government subsequent establishment of ministry of women affairs in 1995.

All these and other incentives have given women the needed power and confidence to go into many professions of their choice.

The question now is whether firms have employs more women for sales position? Have the old concern about the possible shortcoming of women been supported or disproved? Have sales manager attitudes changed as more women have been added to their sales force? Does the gender role of sex have anything to do with a person's sales aptitude and ultimate performance? The result of a research although neither conclusive nor extensive shows that sex is largely irrelevant for explaining differences in performance across sales people. There is no evidence of consistent differences in the productivity of women and men in industrial sales. The attitude of sales managers and industrial buyer towards women sales representatives has also become more positive over the years.

While both men and women are seen as sharing the potential for sales success, however, both group are perceive to have unique strengths and perform better on different aspect of the sales job.

CONCLUSION

In evaluating the role of women in salesmanship, it must be realized that marketing has been a service industry and the women folk are service oriented by nature to some extent.

Education and training environments the female professional marketer has to adapt to a bewildering pace of structural re-organisations and will find herself ever in the front keen competition to win customers. By being self disciplined herself, she will provide moral guidance to children, the men folk, and to upcoming female counterparts, to boast the process of nation building through the optimal use of human and materials resources. The female should be adequately represented in private and government owned enterprises, to ensure that femine interest is adequately represented, especially on matters affecting the homes and children. Private and government initiatives So far in this regards is appreciated, but should be encouraged to extend further. Rephrasing the popular Nigerian proverb "the words of our mothers are words of wisdom".

It is not an easy matter for a woman being a good manage of family and marketing career in a society like Nigeria where the woman is expected to

do more of the chores at home and also work to augment the family income. Women cannot escape many of the responsibilities thrust upon them by culture and tradition, and also by modern life in the internet communication technology age. However they can control their destiny by being organized, creative and resilient in their sales/marketing career. The answer to this is to find the Right balance between work and family which will work for the women.

Not minding the peculiar nature of the marketing career women have to be optimistic focused and organized. This will give them achievement and success in managing family and career successfully.

LAST LINE: The sky is the limit for women who hope to achieve optimum success in selling job. They must work professionally, and exhibit strengths of character, accept feminity and its traditional objectives of marriage and motherhood on their terms and set themselves on ideal of relative independence and achievement.

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