



ANALYSIS OF SUPERMARKET SHOPPING HABIT AS A YARDSTICK FOR DETERMINING CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR FOR CONFECTIONERY GOODS

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Abstract

This study is predicated on analysis of supermarket shopping habit as a yardstick for determining consumer buying behaviour for confectionery goods referencing New City and Bida Home Needs Supermarkets. The problem that necessitated this study is the unsatisfactory customer services and checkout experience. The study determines to achieve satisfactory consumer supermarket shopping behaviour. The methodology used for this work is descriptive research design. A total of 50 customers were considered for this study. Primary and secondary data were used; primary data were obtained from questionnaires administered to customers of the two supermarkets. The findings revealed among others that availability of products at sales points influences decisions of customers to purchase them. Also, it was revealed that the visibility of products at the supermarkets influences decisions to purchase such items and brand satisfaction of the products displayed influence consumers' decision to purchase. It was concluded that the visibility of products at the supermarkets influences decision to purchase such items. As part of the writers' recommendations, good layout of supermarkets is an important consideration for consumer satisfaction. The manufacturers' warranties must be honoured to build customers' trusts and retain them. Customers should be encouraged to give their feedback on products and about the supermarket offerings.

Keywords: *Analysis; Supermarket; Shopping habit; Yardstick; Determining; Consumer; Buying behaviour; Confectionery Goods.*

Background to the Study

Every marketing activity starts with the consumer and ends with the consumer. It is very much necessary to know the people that consume products or services or play a role in buying decision and why they do so (Comer and Wikle, 2016). Consumers are seen as having goals, wants and beliefs that dispose them to buy. However, consumers may be disposed towards buying a product without actually doing so. A human being by nature is very complex. It is very difficult to understand the human

behaviour. It is the human brain, which directs all the activities of a human being. It is said that human brain is like a black box (Malasi, 2016).

Growing consumer consciousness has made consumers choose to purchase their familiar and favorable brand. Therefore, if businesses want to defeat their competitors, they have to make consumers love to buy their products and brands. McDonald and Sharp (2019) mentioned that even though consumers familiarize and are willing to purchase a product, brand awareness is still an important factor to influence purchase decision. When consumers want to buy a product, and a brand name can come to their minds at once, it reflects that product has higher brand awareness. Consumers' purchase decision can be influenced if a product has higher brand awareness (Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal, 2018).

Consumer behaviour has been always of great interest to marketers. The knowledge of consumer behavior helps the marketer to understand how consumers think, feel and select from alternatives like products, brands and how the consumers are influenced by their environment, the reference groups, family, and salespersons (Zhang, 2018). A consumer's buying behavior is influenced by cultural, social, personal and psychological factors. Most of these factors are uncontrollable and beyond the hands of marketers but they have to be considered while trying to understand the complex behavior of the consumers.

Consumer buying behaviour is the sum total of a consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer's behaviour in the market place when purchasing a product or service. The study of consumer behaviour draws upon social science disciplines of anthropology, psychology, sociology, and economics (Kotler, 2019).

Consumer behaviour is broadly studied field. It allows the companies understand how consumer decides about buying their product or acquiring services (Mullins, 2017). Marketing managers are always interested to know more about consumers' behaviour so they can prepare better communication and advertising campaigns and messages about their products and services. Consumer makes buying decision every day and many people don't even know the factors which derive them to this decision. The evaluation of marketing concept from mere selling concept to consumer-oriented marketing has resulted in buyer behaviour becoming an independent discipline (Bloomberg, 2019). The growth of consumerism and consumer legislation emphasizes the importance that is given to the consumer. The heterogeneity among people makes understanding consumer behaviour a challenging task to marketers (Evans and Berman, 2016). Hence, marketers felt the need to obtain an in-depth knowledge of consumers buying behaviour. It is against this background that the researcher seeks to determine consumer buying behavior through supermarket shopping.

Statement of the Problem

The evolving marketplace of supermarket shopping has started recognizing the importance of understanding consumers' behavior, attitudes, beliefs, and values of today's customers for a more profitable, satisfactory, and higher quality of service opportunities. Business owners are eager to know consumer's response towards their own brand and products of its availability, acceptance and affordability. Supermarket shopping in Nigeria faces so many challenges such as price, ability of customer to purchase, quality and selection of products, location, long lines or queues, incorrect labeling of products, lack of packing space, unsatisfactory of customers' services, stealing by customers, length of lines and checkout experience. Shoppers today have less time than ever to get their supermarket shopping done and they want it fast and easy experience. The risk to retailers goes beyond a one-time loss due to abandonment. Three quarters of shoppers do not exclusively shop at any single supermarket store, indicating that shoppers will not hesitate to bring their business to a competitor for a better checkout experience. Shoppers place a high level of importance on fast checkout, making improvements in speed, an important opportunity for retailers ready to invest. Retailers that prioritize checkout efficiency are not only positioned to satisfy customers, but also attract new shoppers who are not willing to wait on long lines. The aforementioned presented a knowledge gap which this research project sought to address. Given the importance of consumer buying behavior, this study sought to determine consumer buying behaviour through supermarket shopping.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to determine consumer buying behaviour through supermarket shopping, a comparative study of New City Supermarket and Bida Home Needs. The specific objectives are:

- i. To know what determines consumers' supermarket shopping behaviour.
- ii. To know the factors that influence consumers' supermarket shopping behaviour.

Research Questions

With reference to the stated objectives above, the study seeks to find answers to the following questions:

- i. What determines consumers' supermarket shopping behaviour?
- ii. What factor(s) influence consumers' supermarket shopping behaviour?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses would be tested in this study:

H₁: There is a significant relationship between the determinants of consumer supermarket shopping behaviour.

H₂: Certain factors influence consumers' supermarket shopping behaviour.

Contribution to Knowledge

Increasing consumer awareness has made consumers choice to purchase their familiar and favorable brand. In this work, attempt has been made to identify its significance to: business, organizations, sales men and marketing managers and to researchers.

- (a) **Businesses:** If businesses want to defeat their competitors, they have to make consumers love to buy their products and brands. There is therefore the need to provide a superior understanding of how purchase decisions affect several variables to enable businesses to make consumers love to buy their products and brands. By so doing businesses who stick to this study will be able to increase their market share. In the attempt by businesses to ensure that consumers love and buy their products and brands, consumers will be better served.
- (b) **Organizations:** Organizations are spending lot of money on consumer purchase decisions and designing the package of their product. This study will reveal whether it is worth spending this much amount on these two decisions. Purchase decisions describe and determine the consumer response to purchase the offering. The higher the decision leads to elevated purchase of that offering. Consumers purchase Decision can be determine through their responses, feedback and their involvement.
- (c) **Marketing Managers and Sales men:** This study will as well serve as the basis for sales men and marketing managers to do effective sales forecasting to prevent excess stock and thereby avoiding high cost of capital as a result of excessive cost of holding inventory.
- (d) **Researchers:** The researcher believes this study will serve as a basis to further develop the existing literature in this area.
In this research work, the terms defined reflect how the researcher wants them to be understood in the context of this work.

Literature Review

Meaning of Consumer Buying Behaviour

The term "Consumer Buying Behaviour" has been used widely in business circles and has been defined by various authors. Prominent among the definitions put forth are those discussed in the following section. Before defining consumer behavior, it is of importance to also provide a definition of the consumer itself. Several definitions of consumers are provided (Khan, 2016). A recent definition which is well supported by the literature, and therefore will be used here, is given by Gaur and Vaheed (2016). According to him, a consumer is generally thought of as 'a person who identifies a need or desire, makes a purchase and then disposes of the product during the three stages in the consumption process' (Gaur and Vaheed, 2016). The three stages are pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase stages.

Consumer behavior is a very broad studied topic in the literature (Khan, 2016). Gaur and Vaheed's (2016) definition will be used in this study as it is both recent and

widely supported by the literature. He defines consumer behavior as ‘the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires’ (Gaur and Vaheed, 2016). In this definition consumer behavior is viewed as a process that includes the issues that influence the consumer behavior before, during and after a purchase.

In many cases, different people may be involved in the process. The purchaser and the user of the product may not be the same person. In other cases, another person may act as an influencer, providing recommendations for (or against) certain products without actually buying or using them (Gaur and Vaheed, 2016).

As consumer behavior is a very broad concept, it can be divided in numerous domains. Examples of such domains are product acquisition, ownership and usage, buying behavior and complaining behavior (De Mooij, 2019). This thesis will focus on the buying behavior domain because it is most in line with the problem statement. Their buying behavior has a direct influence on the sales promotions of a retailer. The terms buying and purchasing behavior are interchangeably mentioned in the literature referring to the same. Here, the term buying behavior will be adopted as the main term.

Buying behavior is as well defined by numerous researchers (Triandis, 2019; Kotler and Armstrong, 2019). The latter definition will be used in this thesis as it is recent as well as broadly supported in the literature. Consumer buying behavior is defined as ‘the buying behavior of final consumers - individuals and households that buy goods and services for personal consumption’ (Kotler and Armstrong, 2019).

The Concept of Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumers are individuals and households that buy the firms product for personal consumption (Kotler, 2019). It often used to describe two different kinds of consuming entities: the personal consumers and the organizational consumers (Krishna, 2018). The activities these consumers undertake when obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and a service is known as consumer behavior. Consumer behavior involves studying how people buy, what they buy, when they buy and why they buy. When a consumer wanted to make the purchase decision, they will pass through the process through recognition, search information, evaluation, purchase, feedback (Blackwell, Miniard, and Engel, 2019). At last, the consumer will choose a product or brand to consume from various choices in the market.

However, these factors affecting the buying behavior of consumers vary due to diverse environmental and individual determinants. Consumer buying behavior is influenced by two major factors. These factors are individual and environmental. The major categories of individual factors affecting consumer behavior are demographics, consumer Knowledge, perception, learning, motivation, personality, beliefs, attitudes and life styles. The second category of factors is environmental factors. Environmental factors represent those items outside of the individual that affect individual consumer’s decision-making process. These factors include culture, social class, reference group, family and household. The above-mentioned factors are

the major determinants behind the decision of consumers to opt a given good or service (Blackwell, Miniard, and Engel, 2019).

Subramanyam and Venkateswarlu (2018) conducted a study on factors influencing buyer behavior of a product in Kadapa district in India. The researchers studied the various types of marketing strategies adopted by market to acquire the attention and cognition of both existing and potential customers, and to study what role these marketing strategies play in consumer buying process. According to the results, income, advertising and level of education in a family are the determining factors of owning a product. Malasi (2016) examined the influence of product attributes on product preference among undergraduate university students in Kenya. The study indicated that varying the product attributes has an influence on the undergraduate students' preferences on a particular product.

Based on previous research studies and literatures reviewed the following conceptual framework and research hypothesis were developed for this research project. Accordingly, five independent variables (i.e. price, social factors, durability, brand name and product features) thought to influence the dependent variable (i.e. decision to buy) are identified.

Factors influencing Consumer Choice

Bhavani and Sitakumari (2019) while evaluating the impact of advertising on consumer durables market observed that 'friends' is the main influence followed by relatives and hence they should be given more emphasis while planning promotion strategies Advertisement is the next major influencing factor for the consumer durables.

Subramanyam and Venketesharlu (2018) in their study on factors influencing consumer's decision-making process towards biscuits found that sample consumers mostly purchased biscuits at least once in a week. Consumers preferred packed biscuits to loose ones and small packets to big ones Parents and children were more or less equally involved in decision making. Consumer's perceived quality and taste were important influencing variables that determined brand loyalty.

Rout (2018) in his study on consumer's attitudes towards advertising pointed out, 89 percent of the respondents believed advertising is useful to the consumers, for giving convenient information about the products and to increase consumer awareness. It also provides an opportunity to the consumers to make comparison and make shopping easier to the consumers.

Nabi and Paul (2016) made a study to examine the influence of various media in the consumer decision making process particularly of television buyers opined that television and newspaper are the two effective media used for advertising television. Income-wise analysis also showed that television is considered as the most effective media by all the respondents irrespective of income differences.

Kumar (2017) revealed that, the majority of consumers are highly enlightened and are concerned of quality of the products. He also revealed that, the consumers uniformly both in urban and rural areas, desire to have quality of the products at reasonable price and trust more the advice of the retailers.

Methodology

The writers used descriptive research design for this study. Our estimated population for this study is fifty-eight (58) customers for both New City and Bida Home Needs Supermarkets that the writers will use to find out consumer supermarket shopping behaviour. Both primary and secondary data were explored to obtain information used for this research with questionnaires basically for primary data being administered to elicit responses from the respondents. Data from secondary sources were sourced from internet and books. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance or ANOVA. Respondents were selected by simple random sampling method in order to give every customer of the said supermarkets the equal opportunity of being included in the survey while Taro Yamani formula was adopted to arrive at the sample size of the study as shown below:

The formula thus is:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

n = Sample
 N = Population
 e = Limit of tolerance error (0.05)

$$n = \frac{58}{1+58 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{58}{1+58 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{58}{1+0.145}$$

$$n = \frac{58}{1.145}$$

$$n = 50.65$$

Therefore, the Sample size used for this research work is 50.

Test of the Hypotheses

Decision Rule:

Accept the formulated hypothesis (H₁) if the calculated Chi-square value (Z_{cal}) is less than the critical value of the Chi-square. Otherwise, reject the stated hypothesis. That is, accept H₁ if P value ≤ 0.05, otherwise do not accept.

Hypothesis 1

H₁: There is no significant relationship between the determinants of consumer supermarket shopping behaviour.

In testing for hypothesis 1, the response to question 4 on the distributed questionnaire was used and the test result shows:

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	-.011	.024		-.214	.543
	Availability of products at their sales point such as supermarkets influences decision to purchase them	.178	.000	1.001	342.021	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Respondents						

The significant level of 0.543, while P value = 0.05. From the result of the test of the hypothesis, we reject the stated hypothesis and accept the alternative ones and therefore conclude that there is a significant relationship between the determinants of consumer supermarket shopping behaviour. This is because the level of significance is less than < 0.05.

Hypothesis 2

H₂: Certain factors do not influence consumers’ supermarket shopping behaviour. In testing for hypothesis 2, the response to question 5 in the administered questionnaire was used and the test result shown below:

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.022	.123		.224	.543
	Visibility of products at the supermarkets influences decision to purchase them.	.165	.001	1.000	148.934	.001
a. Dependent Variable: Respondents						

The significant level of 0.543, while P value = 0.05. From the result of the test of hypothesis, we reject the stated hypothesis and accept the alternative one and therefore conclude that certain factors do not influence consumers’ supermarket shopping behaviour. This is because the significance level is less than < 0.05.

Findings

Attempts were further made at presenting the views of various authors and researchers on consumer buying behavior through supermarket shopping. To be able to achieve the objectives of this study, some research questions were formulated. The questions in the questionnaires were based on the research questions, which were distributed to fifty (50) respondents, for the purpose of data collection. The following are the findings:

The availability of products at their sales point such as supermarkets influences decision for consumers to purchase them. Also, it was revealed that the visibility of products at the supermarkets influences decision to purchase such items.

Brand satisfaction of the products displayed above influence consumers' decision to purchase. Past experience of buying products from the supermarket influences consumers' decision to purchase such items. Consumers' trust in the products brands displayed in the supermarket influence their decision to purchase such item.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to give an insight to consumer buying behaviour through supermarket shopping, and the objectives were achieved to some extent. The research results of this study provide new information as to which areas more effort should be put into. The research could have been more extensive to get a deeper view of the customers' opinion on the product itself, even though the research provided a general picture of the market preferences. It was concluded that products at their sales point such as supermarkets influences decision for consumers to purchase them. The study also concludes that the visibility of products at the supermarkets influences decision to purchase such items and finally the study conclude that past experience of buying products from the supermarket influences consumers' decision to purchase such items.

Recommendations

On the basis of the foregoing, the researcher recommends the following towards consumer buying behaviour through supermarket shopping:

Supermarket owners should benchmark the decision-making factors which affects the consumer buying and decision making for increased business, growth and sustainability. Whereas, the owners of the supermarket should focus on improving customer satisfaction. Good layout for supermarket is an important consideration for consumer. To make search easy, complimentary products or products belonging to related categories (such as dairy products, candies, biscuits and cakes etc.) should be kept together and signs and directions should be displayed at appropriate places. This particular factor attains more significance in light of the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) format of modern stores.

The manufacturers' warranties/guarantees must be honoured to build trust. Customers should be encouraged to give their feedback on products and about the supermarket. Reliability of billing systems in stores, and hygiene & sanitation at supermarkets are the foremost shortcomings observed by consumers visiting organized retail store. So, forthcoming retailers must focus on these areas of improvement.

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