

Assessing Product Differentiation and its Influence on Consumer Purchase Brand Preference for Selected Brands of Detergents in South Eastern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The research was aimed at assessing product differentiation and its influence on consumer purchase brand preference for selected brands of detergent in South Eastern Nigeria. Marketers are very much aware that consumers prefer products based on their individual and group assessment of the benefits expected or anticipated to be delivered by the offer. The specific objectives of the study are to determine the extent of the relationship between fair price and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents, to also discover the extent of the relationship between quality product and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents and finally, to investigate the extent of the relationship between deluxe package and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents. The population of the study is 20,084,750; representing a projected 2015 population of consumers in Enugu, Abia, Imo, Anambra, and Ebonyi state of South Eastern Nigeria based on 2006 National Population Commission (NPC) data. The sample size is 400 using Taro Yamani sample size determination method where 325 were correctly filled and returned. For the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was examined by marketing experts based on face validity in terms of relevance to the subject matter, objective of the study, coverage of the content areas, appropriateness of language usage and clarity of purpose. The value of the test of reliability is 0.930 which was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha. Primary data was adopted for the study and data was analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment correlation coefficient. Findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between fair price and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents ($r = 0.937, p < 0.05$). Secondly, it was also revealed that there is a significant relationship between quality product and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents ($r = 0.957, p < 0.05$). And

finally, it was revealed that there is a significant relationship between deluxe package and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents ($r = 0.925, p < 0.05$). The researcher recommends that prices of detergents should be reduced, that marketers should be innovative enough to produce higher quality detergents and also, to produce and promote detergents in attractive packages that will be durable, biodegradable, and convenient to carry or move about.

Keywords: Differentiation, Branding, Brand Preference, Economic theory, Neo-classical theory, Revealed Preference theory.

Introduction

Differentiation is regarded as one of the major principles of marketing theory and practice. The objective of differentiation is to develop an offer that potential customers see as unique and distinct from competitors. Differentiation breeds competition among consumers as they will definitely demand what is different from their peers, family members, classmates, and colleagues, to prove their uniqueness. Ironically also, differentiation might reduce direct competition, based on the fact that as products become more different, copying it becomes more difficult and hence draws fewer comparisons from competitors.

“Product differentiation was coined by economist Edward Chamberlin over fifty years ago. Since that time economists, marketers, consumerists, and public policy makers have interpreted product differentiation in a variety of ways. Economists have narrowed Chamberlin's view of the concept and currently express doubts about its usefulness. Marketing scholars and practitioners generally perceive product differentiation as a fact of the real world market place and

claim that it improves consumer choice. Consumerists, on the other hand, argue that it often confuses consumers and raises prices. Public policy makers have debated its pros and cons and have weighed regulatory initiatives to deal with it". (Murphy et al, 1987)

Product differentiation will guaranty competitive advantage based on price, physical product characteristics, promotional variables, psychological variables, distribution strategies, and sundry services offered in a bid to satisfy customers (Adeosun and Ganiyu 2012). According to them, "the competition among business organizations grows quickly, resulting into loss of market share, and in order to gain new markets and remain competitive, and companies are trying to create superiority over their rivals through differentiation strategy aimed at influencing consumer behavior and perception". Companies earn good image by offering better product/service than their competitors and this goes a long way in ensuring repeat purchase and customer loyalty and retention.

"Product differentiation is, in fact, necessary for competitive firms to survive and should be an integral part of the theory of competitive markets, which also has important implications for the aggregate economy. A differentiation strategy involves the firm creating a product/service, which is considered unique in some aspect that the customer values because the customer's needs are satisfied" (Dirisu et al., 2011). According to them, companies achieve significant competitive advantage through differentiation (Dirisu et al., 2013). There is proliferation in every product category. Across industries there are different forms and versions of products. Even within the same product class many items and versions exist. During barter era, products were almost homogeneous and there were little or no direct substitutes as at then. Marketers or sellers could not compete effectively and this lead to strategic innovation of products in this modern marketing era whereby different sizes, colours, designs, brand names, labels, and shapes of products are introduced to increase consumer preferences and choices. As a consequence to product differentiation, varieties of product proliferate the market and this heterogeneity gave consumer a wider choice to prefer one product over another. Companies offer television sets with different screen sizes, shoes with varying sizes, air conditioners with varying capacity, and stadium seats based on class of spectators. But these differences nevertheless, match separate price ranges based on how these products are positioned. Bhargava and Choudhary (2001) opined that "consumers buy different versions based on their utility functions, with consumers who have greater valuations choosing higher priced product". In the automotive industry for instance, Mercedes, Toyota, Volkswagen, Honda, Jaguar, Chevrolet, Volvo etc compete against one another for consumers' income. A particular brand of product; say a Toyota Camry have many models competing against each other as marketers differentiate them by engine capacity, speed, interior, size, design, and technology. The essence is to position these models to have slight difference in the mind of the consumers to engender their preference.

Consumer brand preferences for a product over another depends on his believe (psychological) on the anticipated satisfaction he behoves on that particular product. Consumers seek for product attributes that will be capable of

delivering the required benefits (functional and psychological) to them. The attribute might be affordability, quality, reparability, warranty, portability, and availability of the product. Brumfiel et al. (1993) posit that consumer preferences and tastes are the outstanding influence affecting consumer purchase behaviour. The physical appearance of a product goes a long way to affecting consumer likeness, adoption and preference to purchasing the product. The brand name, shape, design, colour, size, style, and the entire packaging determines how a consumer will surrender and sanction his preference for one brand against another and this will ultimately guide purchase decision. Ultimately, a differentiated product must be an original and superior product.

Statement of Problem

In a bid to ensure customer satisfaction, companies tend to create a boundary between them and their competitors in the market. The reason for this is that consumers want something different from the status quo and owe allegiance to companies that stand out in terms of quality, availability, accessibility, and price. Adrika and Nnolim (1996) submit that product differentiation is the deduction that individuals are different and therefore must demand different and unique products and services at a particular time as a result of their uniqueness in tastes. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) suggest that a marketer must possess adequate acquaintanceship with customer's entire experience with the company's product or service. They opine that companies can differentiate in assorted conduits such as product, services, channels, people, or image.

"To be branded, products must be differentiated. Physical products vary in their potential for differentiation. At one extreme, we find products that allow little variation: chicken, aspirin, and steel. Yet even here, some differentiation is possible: Perdue chicken, Bayer aspirin, and India's Tata Steel have carved out distinct identities in their categories. Procter and Gamble makes Tide, Cheer, and Gain laundry detergents, each with a separate brand identity. At the other extreme are products capable of high differentiation, such as automobile, commercial building form, and furniture. Here the seller faces an abundance of design parameters including form, features, performance quality, conformance quality, durability, reliability, reparability, and style" (Kotler and Keller, 2006).

"Consumer goods are virtually available in a variety of styles and labels. Indeed, different brands of cigarettes, toothpaste, shower gel, cosmetics and breakfast foods are on sale in every retail store. Those variations within a product class, referred to as "product differentiation", are designed to spice up the lives of consumers and fulfill the hidden nooks and crannies of their wants. Product differentiation in advertising, packaging, design, color, style and location of outlet (horizontal differentiation) or in product quality (vertical differentiation) makes consumer goods imperfect substitutes to each other, thus offering firms market power" (Daher et al, 2012).

Azar (2011), concludes that making a choice among alternatively differentiated products based on price and quality is a jig saw puzzle. Consumer products are so uncountable that making purchase decision requires a lot of rationality and caution. Marketers differentiate their offerings (brands) based

on many attributes and features (price, quality, size, colour, design, availability, location, and package), such that making a choice of a particular brand from a myriad of others would definitely pose a challenge.

Ironically, marketers differentiate their products for the sake of making it look different in physical terms rather than applying a high level of ingenuity to make innovations based on the core improved benefit derivable from such products. Perhaps the major issues consumers face is not just the problem of making choice relating to price, quality product and package, but rather issue concerning genuine fair price, higher quality product and deluxe product.

Objectives of the Study

In view of the above research problem statement, the main objective of the study is to assess product differentiation and its influence on consumer purchase brand preferences of detergents in the South Eastern Nigeria. While the specific objectives will include:

1. To determine the extent of the relationship between fair price and consumer purchase brand preferences for detergents.
2. To discover the extent of the relationship between quality product and consumer purchase brand preferences for detergents.
3. To investigate the extent of the relationship between deluxe package and consumer purchase brand preferences for detergents.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the above objectives, the following hypotheses will ensue:

1. There is no significant relationship between fair price and consumer purchase brand preferences for detergents.
2. The relationship between quality product and consumer purchase brand preferences for detergents is not significant.
3. There is no significant relationship between deluxe package and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature will cover areas such as differentiation, differentiation strategies: product differentiation, service differentiation, channel differentiation, personnel differentiation, image differentiation, branding, brand preference, and theoretical underpinnings.

Differentiation

Adrika et al. (1996) define differentiation as introducing several versions of products to the target audience. Differentiation is a company's positioning strategy of creating something of value that must possess a different image from other companies' products and services. It means distinguishing oneself from others by showcasing an

exceptional attribute or characteristics capable of serving as bait that will lure most customers to a company's camp.

Differentiation can take place in two dimensions. It can occur within the same product item where there is no clear distinction between brands in terms of quality (horizontal differentiation) as well as across a competing or substitute product where a brand is highly differentiated from others because of higher quality and price perceptions (vertical differentiation) (Azar, 2011). For instance, producers of Omo detergent make them available in various prices, qualities and package allowing them the chance to compete among themselves to suite the desire of their numerous customers. In the same vein, the same producer of Omo differentiates equally from producers of Klin detergent. Omo could be differentiated from Klin by quality, price, shape, advertising, sales promotions etc. On the other, producers of Klin may differentiate among its product item by size, shape, and prices. Differentiation strategies are based on providing buyers with something that is different or unique, that makes the company's product or service distinct from that of its rivals. Differentiation means offering a superior and unique product at a premium price to consumers (Zyglidopoulos et al, 2006). The key inertia behind differentiation is that customers are willing to pay a higher price for a product that is distinct in some important ways. Superior value is created because the product is of higher quality, superior technically, possess exceptional services, or have wonderful seductive capabilities. In effect, differentiation guarantees competitive edge by making customers more loyal and less price sensitive to a given firm's product. Additionally, consumers are less likely to search for other alternative products the moment their expectations are met. Differentiation may be achieved in a number of ways. The product may possess a more innovative design, may be produced using a more advanced and sophisticated technology, or may be distributed through a value chain that advocates environmental responsibility. Customers will pay a higher price if the product or service offers a distinctive or superior value. Allan (2004) shows the five ways differentiation was applied and students were taught differently according to their learning needs rather than the more typical pattern of teaching them in the same way using same approach. Spenser et al (2009) in their study found out an "empirical support for the importance of using both non-financial and financial performance measures for firms pursuing differentiation strategies, such as product flexibility or customer service focus". Below are the different type of differentiation:

Product Differentiation

In product differentiation, Gerstner et al (1993) conducted a study on 'demarketing' as a differentiation strategy. It is a marketing process that streamlines the differences between products. Differentiation looks to make a product more attractive by contrasting its unique qualities with other competing products. Product differentiation creates a competitive advantage for the seller, because consumers perceive these products as deluxe and outstanding. Cohen and Mazzo (2004) note the "importance of product differentiation, as competition from multimarket banks is associated with denser branch networks for all types of firm while the

opposite correlation holds when competitors are single-market banks or thrifts". In the agricultural sector, product differentiation has also come to life. "The global agricultural commodity system is being revolutionized as an increasing number of cereals and oilseeds are being differentiated to ensure that their value or uniqueness is captured and maintained throughout the supply chain" (Smyth and Phillips, 2002). According to them, "the examination of product differentiation systems has shown that the use of these systems is rising in agriculture. Essentially, a more vertically integrated supply chain for produced and marketed products is developing. As an increasing variety of commodities are produced using product differentiation systems, producers will face a wide array of options that may complicate their farming operations".

Product differentiation can be achieved in many ways. It might be packaging the goods in an innovative way, or even adding new functional attributes. Differentiation sometimes may not lead to new innovation, but rather creating a new communication slogan or other sales promotional messages to paint a different picture in the minds of consumers about the product and its deliverability. Crespi and Marette (2002) discuss generic advertising and product differentiation. The inherent thing in differentiation is the marketing communication means or approach being adopted by the marketer to make his offering appear to be of premium or superior value to the consumer. The product attributes or features are the salient points that the consumer is looking for, to propel him into the action of choice and purchase. The consumer first of all considers buying based on the physical or generic nature and the core benefits.

Assuming he wants to buy Omo or Klin detergents the consumer considers the physical nature such as company name, brand name, form, size, colour, label and the entire packaging. The consumer does this to know whether the product is attractive, protective, and portable. On the other hand the consumer considers the core benefits such as cheap to buy, the ability of the detergent to wash clothes cleaner, leathering capability, scent emission, gentle or soft on clothes, and the health aspect of not being capable of peeling the users skin.

Service Differentiation

Service means deeds, processes and performance (Zeithaml et al, 2006). Robinson et al. (2002) highlighted on some of the characteristics of services such as intangibility, inseparability, and less standardized in nature. In the parlance of differentiation, companies offer a range of customer services to differentiate it from competitors. Hotels recruit personnel who render exceptional services such as room service, internet, gymnasium, swimming pool, convention hall to their customers in the hospitality sector. Hotels have a toll free line through which customers contact service employees when they need food, or wine in the restaurant or bar. Their orders do not waste time to be served. In the same vein, supermarkets help customer push their purchased item in trolleys to the outside where their cars are parked and get it loaded on board their cars. Some supermarket salespeople also assist their customers to locate and pick items on the shelves. Some auto engineers offer home services to certain customers who don't

need to visit the workshop. "Potential strategic avenues for service differentiation capture customer support services, business consulting, integrated services, operational service" (Gebauer, et al.2011).

Personnel Differentiation

In differentiating personnel, companies can gain strong competitive advantage by training their salespersons better than their competitors. Bokhari and Chowdhury (2014) comment that banks gain competitive advantage by differentiating their personnel through adequate training and motivation to retain their customers. They motivate them handsomely knowing the fact that when employees are happy, they ultimately transfer their happiness to their customers as well by being the need identifier and solution provider for them. Singapore Airline flight attendants for instance are wonderful in making their passengers have good and breathtaking flight experience. Most personnel who work in Nigerian firms are ill equipped with the training on how to make customer gain a memorable experience when they interact with them. Roban Stores is a typical example of a large supermarket in Enugu-Nigeria that recruits salespeople or checkout attendants without proper training on how to deal and create rapport with customers.

Channel Differentiation

Companies can differentiate through offering direct or express services of their products to customers. Some companies now distribute their products online for the convenience and comfort of their customers. In channel differentiation a company can also differentiate their products by making it more readily available than competitors. ABC Transport in Nigeria offers their passengers online booking services. Companies that conduct transaction online capitalize on the power of the internet to serve as the distribution hose (Zulkeflee and Azleen, 2011). With a customer's cell phone, a seat can be booked at the convenient of the passenger. Wholesalers and manufacturers of consumer goods can now supply directly to upscale and large families or households that have high product usage tendency.

Image Differentiation

Both national and international companies are now very conscious of what their public(s); especially the media will say or perceive about them. They tend to project themselves as good corporate citizens which must consistently be in harmony with the public. The must always be in the good book of those they supply goods and services. An image is the impression or the attitude customers form about a company's goods and services, ideas, identity, relationships, and policies based on their overall assessment and perception about the company and its undertakings (Nwosu, 1996). It may be a favourable or unfavourable. Reputable companies tend to differentiate themselves as a good corporate entity by being genuinely socially responsible.

Price Differentiation

In differentiating price companies can differentiate by offering quality products at premium prices. Others differentiate by offering lower quality products at lower prices. Lavoie and

Liu (2007) state that “movements in exchange rates can have an important influence on an imperfectly competitive exporter's pricing behavior. Exchange rates create a wedge between the price set by the exporter and the price paid by the importer, and can be used as an instrument of price discrimination”. In launching a new product, while some companies tend to differentiate through penetrating pricing strategy, others will embark on skimming to emphasize high product quality. Some grant discount as well to attract potential customers to try a product.

Packaging Differentiation

Ehikwe (2004) defined packaging as an “embodiment and epitome of product presentation that could be used for maximum effects in promotion sales”. Kotler and Keller (2006) define packaging as all the activities of designing and producing the container for a product. Marketers use different sizes, designs, colours, shapes, and texture to provide a potent differentiation strategy against their competitors. While some consumers may go for a bigger detergent package depending on the price and whether they are single or married with children, others may go for smaller sizes. The way a package is designed can go extra miles in presenting the image of a company in positive mood.

Branding

A brand is an added value to an unbranded product (Wood, 2000). Kotler and Keller (2006) state that “a brand is a product or service that adds dimensions that differentiate it in some way from other products or services designed to satisfy the same need. According to them, brand is a perceptual entity that is rooted in reality but reflects the perceptions and perhaps even the idiosyncrasies of consumers”. A brand becomes an antidote when it delivers the promises it made (Blackett, 2004). Brands tend to deliver the expectation of customers by delivering on the core values and benefits it advocated. A brand represents customer expectations, customer promise, customer benefits, customer value, customer experience, customer touch points, and relationships. Branding is a competitive weapon that stimulates people to forego a particular product for the most preferred one (Gelder, 2002).

Branding according to Kotler and Keller (2006) is “endowing products and services with the power of a brand. For them, branding is all about creating differences”. In branding it is expedient that consumers are adequately acquainted with the core benefits they would derive from the purchase of the product and make them to purchase the product over and over again. The benefits a particular company offers must be quite different from competitors to make it worthwhile to be preferred over and above competitors. These differences could be functional, rational, or tangible and must deliver the anticipated performance required of them. For the branding manager, it must present a win-win situation scenario to engender a double edged benefit. Branding can be applied on services, physical goods, places, stores, personality, organization and institutions, persons, and even ideas. To succeed in branding, companies must understand the needs and wants of current and prospective customers which can be

achieved by bringing synergy in a company's strategic customer touch points.

Brand Preference

Many brands are chosen by consumers over others because of the brand's perceived efficacy. The preferred brand makes the consumer brand loyal and brand switching can only be experienced if the current brand fails to deliver the essential benefits it promised to deliver. Brand attributes such as personality, attitudes, emotions, image, reputation, satisfaction and trust influences consumer preference. A consumer naturally has expectation for any product (good and services) he wishes to buy. This expectation is emotionally attached to the functional performance of the product say detergent in this case. The consumer may be interested in the ability of the detergent to wash away dirt with ease. It may be the detergent's ability to produce or diffuse good fragrance after washing, or even make the clothes appear stronger after each wash. Sometimes, a consumer may prefer a particular brand to the other based on the price, package, size, colour, availability, or the nature of marketing communication adopted in positioning the brand to the target audience.

“To be able to understand why and how consumers evaluate brands, researchers and practitioners need a deeper understanding of the brand association consumers develop when they use or come into contact with the brands; because brand preference is greatly influenced by the associations consumers develop” (Njite, 2005). Bass and Tarlazky (1972) in their work reported that “brand preference is related to attitude measurements based upon beliefs about and relative importance of product-specific attributes”. Effective branding promotes a product or organization and makes it stand out from competition by presenting it as a unique character. A particular brand of product is preferred over the other because of the consumer's perceived differences in value or quality. In the auto industry, differentiation and brand preference is highly preponderant. As Toyota positions its cars as the most reliable, Mercedes is known for performance, and Volvo is known for its safety. The marketer does well by applying strategic marketing strategies such as advertising, public relations, sales promotions and others aimed at delineating these latent differences between and among different categories or brand of products.

Theoretical Underpinning

Consumers face different alternatives of products to choose from each time they make purchase decisions. That is because there are different qualities, sizes, prices and other attributive benefits derivable from the consumption or use of that product. So, consumers ascribe certain values to the product they buy. “When a consumer wants to buy one unit of a good and he has to choose between two differentiated goods, **economic theory** suggests that the absolute price difference matters while the relative price difference does not” (Azar, 2011). What it means is that consumers relate higher prices to higher quality products and services. They perceive and attach higher value to products that cost them higher than products with lower prices.

“In **neoclassical theory**, product differentiation provides consumers with a variety of different products within a

particular industry, rather than a homogeneous product that characterizes purely competitive markets. The welfare-enhancing benefit of product differentiation is the greater variety of products available to consumers, which comes at the cost of a higher average total cost of production. In reality, firms do not differentiate their products to make them different, or to give consumers variety, but to make them better, so consumers would rather buy that firm's product rather than the product of a competitor. When product differentiation is seen as a strategy to improve products rather than just to make them different, product differentiation emerges as the engine of economic progress. In contrast to the neoclassical framework, where product differentiation imposes a cost on the economy in exchange for more product variety, in reality product differentiation lowers costs, creates better products for consumers, and generates economic progress" (Holcombe, 2009)

Their submission in the neoclassical theory of product differentiation is that the core and prime need for product differentiation is that it initiates inventiveness, creativity and innovation with respect to product development. This is because consumers are more interested in a product that deliver their expectations.

Furthermore, theories relating to preference such as **revealed preference theory** states that consumer behaviour is composed of a network of choice decisions in which preferences are formed through the juxtaposition of observed influences and choices among alternative products and services (Abley, 2000). **The rational choice theory** (Dietrich and List 2012) supports the revealed preference theory as it asserts that an agent can critically make a personal decision or be guided to make decision through the influence of others in certain buying situations. According to them, "an agent has beliefs and preferences, now usually modeled as subjective probabilities and utilities, and acts so as to satisfy his or her preferences in accordance with his or her beliefs" (Dietrich and List, 2012). These authors submit that preferences can change as the agent is motivated by some salient attributes which the most preferred products possess. Levin and Milgrom (2004) refer to the choice theory and state that consumers can choose from the most preferred brand depending on the alternative options that subsist.

RESEACH METHODOLOGY

The researcher employed survey method by administering structured questionnaire to gather primary data from consumers of Omo and Klin in South Eastern Nigeria. The scope of the study covered product differentiation and consumer purchase brand preferences of detergents in South Eastern Nigeria. The population of the study is 20,084,750. A sample size of 400 was determined using Taro Yamane's sample size determination method. Content validity was used to determine the validity of the instrument by giving questionnaire to marketing experts who modified and made the necessary corrections so that the instrument can be justifiable. The value of the test of reliability is 0.962 which was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha which indicated that there is internal consistency of the instrument. Three hundred and twenty five (325) were correctly filled and returned out of

the four hundred distributed. Analysis of data was done using Pearson's Product Moment correlation coefficient using Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained from the field were presented and analyzed with descriptive statistics to provide answers for the research hypotheses that were tested with Pearson's Correlation and Linear regression at 0.05 alpha levels.

Table 1 Coded Responses on the extent of the relationship between fair price and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents.

/no	Questionnaire items	S.Agree /Agree Freq	Disagree /S.Disagree Freq	Undecided Freq	Total (Freq)
1	Fair price relates directly with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents	285	23	17	325
2	Consumer purchase brand preference will be related with the fair price for detergents	295	14	16	325
	TOTAL	580	37	33	650

Source: fieldwork 2015

According to table (1) above, based on aggregate response 580 indicated agreements, 37 indicated disagreements while 33 indicated undecided. This implies that there is significant relationship between fair price and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Fair Price	1.8123	.96153	325
Brand Preference	1.6646	.78654	325

Table 3 Correlations

		Fair rice	Brand reference
Fair Price	Pearson Correlation	1	.937**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	325	325
Brand Preference	Pearson Correlation	.937**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	325	325

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table (2) shows descriptive statistics of the extent to which fair price is related with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents. The mean value of fair price is 1.8123, while the standard deviation is 0.96153. Also, the mean value of consumer purchase brand preference is 1.6646 while the standard deviation is 0.78654. By careful observation of standard deviation value, it can be said that there is about the same variability of data points amongst dependent and independent variables. This implies that fair price has a significant relationship with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents.

Also, table (3) above shows Pearson correlation coefficient for fair price and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents. The correlation value is 0.937. This value indicates that correlation coefficient is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed) and implies that there is a significant relationship between fair price and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents ($r = 0.937$). The computed correlation coefficient is greater than the table value of $r = 0.195$ with 323 degree of freedom (df n-2) at alpha level or a two tailed test ($r = 0.937, p < 0.05$). We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate.

Table 4 Coded Responses on the extent of the relationship between quality product and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents.

/no	Questionnaire items	S. Agree /Agree Freq	Disagree /S.Disagree Freq	Undecided Freq	Total (Freq)
1	Quality product relates directly with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents	280	25	20	325
2	Consumer purchase brand preference for detergents will be related with quality product.	282	21	22	325
TOTAL		562	46	42	650

Source: fieldwork 2015

According to table (4) above, based on aggregate response 562 indicated agreements, 46 indicated disagreements while 42 indicated undecided. This implies that there is significant relationship between quality product and consumer purchase brand preference of detergents.

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Quality Product	1.7446	.95226	325
Brand Preference	1.6615	.92758	325

Table 6 Correlations

		Quality Product	Brand Preference
Quality Product	Pearson Correlation	1	.957
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	325	325
Brand Preference	Pearson Correlation	.957	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	325	325

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table (5) shows descriptive statistics of the extent to which quality product is related with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents. The mean value of quality product is 1.7446, while the standard deviation is 0.95226. Also, the mean value of consumer purchase brand preference is 1.6615 while the standard deviation is 0.92758. By careful observation of standard deviation value, it can be said that there is about the same variability of data points amongst dependent and independent variables. This implies that quality product has a significant relationship with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents.

Also, table (6) above shows Pearson correlation coefficient for quality product and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents. The correlation value is 0.957. This value indicates that correlation coefficient is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed) and implies that there is a significant relationship between quality product and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents ($r = 0.957$). The computed correlation coefficient is greater than the table value of $r = 0.195$ with 323 degree of freedom (df n-2) at alpha level for a two tailed test ($r = 0.957, p < 0.05$). We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate

Table 7 Coded Responses on the extent of the relationship between deluxe package and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents.

/no	Questionnaire items	S. Agree /Agree Freq	Disagree /S.Disagree Freq	Undecided Freq	Total (Freq)
1	Deluxe package relates directly with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents	280	15	30	325
2	Consumer purchase brand preference will have a relationship with deluxe package.	290	25	10	325
TOTAL		570	40	40	650

Source: fieldwork 2015

According to table (7) above, based on aggregate response 570 indicated agreements, 40 indicated disagreements while 40 indicated undecided. This implies that there is significant relationship between deluxe package and consumer purchase brand preference of detergents

Table 8 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Deluxe Package	1.6923	.92834	325
Brand Preference	1.6185	.93408	325

Table 9 Correlations

		Deluxe Package	Brand Preference
Deluxe Package	Pearson Correlation	1	.925**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	325	325
Brand Preference	Pearson Correlation	.925**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	325	325

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table (8) shows descriptive statistics of the extent to which deluxe package is related with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents. The mean value of deluxe package is 1.6923, while the standard deviation is 0.92834. Also, the mean value of consumer purchase brand preference is 1.6185 while the standard deviation is 0.93408. By careful observation of standard deviation value, it can be said that there is about the same variability of data points amongst dependent and independent variables. This implies that deluxe package has a significant relationship with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents.

Also, table (9) above shows Pearson correlation coefficient for deluxe package and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents. The correlation value is 0.925. This value indicates that correlation coefficient is significant at 0.05 level (2 tailed) and implies that there is a significant relationship between deluxe package and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents ($r = 0.925$). The computed correlation coefficient is greater than the table value of $r = 0.195$ with 323 degree of freedom (df n-2) at alpha level for a two tailed test ($r = 0.925$, $p < 0.05$). We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Revelation of hypothesis one is that there is a significant relationship between fair price and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents ($r = 0.937$, $p < 0.05$). Aberdeen Group (2008) supports this by stating that consumers consider fair price whenever they purchase products.

It was also revealed that quality product has a significant relationship with consumer purchase brand preference for detergents ($r = 0.957$, $p < 0.05$). This finding relates to

(adeosun and Ganiyu, 2012) who note that differentiation improves quality of products through competition.

Finally, there is equally a strong relationship between deluxe package and consumer purchase brand preference for detergents ($r = 0.925$, $p < 0.05$).

CONCLUSION

Consumers are naturally rational thinkers and are very decisive in making purchase decisions. They make accurate choices of every commodity they buy. In their purchase action they consider the benefits/satisfaction they would derive from the consumption/use of a particular product before they buy. They will consider how much to pay for a particular size of detergent as they normally want to buy a sizable package at a lower price. The same is applicable to how consumers consider quality of detergent. The attractive design, colour, labeling of packaged detergent are now highly considered by consumers before they purchase detergents. But more interesting is consumers' consideration of the quality of detergent in terms of being able to wash clothes whither and brighter. Finally, the package is also considered in the sense that some packages are more attractive, durable, bigger and more environmental friendly. Also worthy to be noted is that some packages possess a flat base that can stand and consumers need not worry about where to keep the detergent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Marketers are advised to be price sensitive enough to know how to fix the prices of their products to be affordable to consumers. They should compare what their key competitors are doing to help them make attractive offers to consumers.

They should carry out research to produce high quality detergents that require very little quantity to wash away the toughest dirt.

Finally, for different categories of consumer products, consumer demand different package of products. Marketing managers should be innovative enough to come up with attractive design that will be biodegradable, portable and convenience to move or hold freely when using them.

Detergents that are very fragrant possess lathering capability and ability to wash clothes brighter is preferred far and above those that do not possess those attributes.

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