

Effect of Product Package on Brand Involvement in Consumer Goods Markets of Lagos State Nigeria

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between package design and customer involvement in brand using the Food and Beverages Industry of Lagos State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. 2374 consumers of packaged food products were proportionally sampled across the 20 local government areas of Lagos State. Questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection rated on a 6 – point Likert scale. Data were analysed using the descriptive statistical techniques of Pearson Product moment correlation (r) and Simple Regression Analysis. The results of the study revealed that package design significantly influence customer involvement in a brand ($p < 0.05$, $R = 0.501$; $R^2 = 0.251$) and this can be achieved through effective choice of label information, logo, brand size and shape which are all ingredients and attributes of good package design for a brand. It was recommended that aesthetic components of the product package should be soothing for the eyes of the consumers to enhance good point – of – purchase appearance.

Keywords

Product, Packaging, Package Design, Brand Involvement

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1. Introduction

In order to understand consumer's behaviour, knowing structure of consumer's involvement is highly important; and the word consumer involvement is often used to perceive customer behaviour in correlation with a specific subject. Many researches consider this variable as the most important variable in marketing literature especially in marketing research due to its high value on predicting the consumer's purchase behaviour (McFatter, 2005). It is accepted in the market that acquisition of new customers is more costly than retaining the current customers; it is why losing the customers should be the companies concern hence understanding two factors, product purchase involvement and consumer product knowledge, is useful in creating

appropriate and effective communication messages and to help the consumers recall these messages during purchasing. These messages guide the consumers to the intended brand in the intended brand in the course of purchasing process.

Consumer involvement makes sense when the consumer is aware of the product or the brand and has received some information in this field. Then this information is processed in the consumer's mind and is used when necessary. Nowadays companies utilize various strategies in order to attract new customers, retain current customers and differentiate their products from their competitors. Perhaps, the most important and effective strategy to create consumer involvement in the product selection is using the brand for the products. Having effect on conception and perception of the consumers, the brand increases consumer involvement and alters consumer

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preferences and attitudes. The more involvement increases, the more information is processed deeply. Sweeny and Swait (2008) investigated the effects of brand credibility on customer loyalty. Bridges et al. (2006) studied effects of prior brand usage and promotion on consumers' responses. Godey et al. (2013) conducted a research investigating the effects of brand and the origin country on consumer purchase decision-making of the luxury goods.

Bezencon and Blili (2010) investigated ethical products and consumer involvement. Boisvert and Ashili (2011) assessed the impact of brand innovativeness and quality on attitude towards new service line extension and the moderating role of consumer involvement. Parkvithee and Miranda (2012) studied the interaction effect of country of origin, brand equity and purchase involvement on consumer purchase intentions of clothing labels. Bian and Moutinho (2011) investigated the role which brand image, product involvement, and knowledge play in explaining consumer purchase behaviour. The research conducted by Zeb et al. (2011) investigated influence of brands on buying behaviour of female consumers in Pakistan.

Nevertheless, several empirical studies have been reported in various marketing literature to establish relationship between consumer involvement with products and brand loyalty (Quester and Lim, 2003; Douglas 2006; Sridharan 2008). The findings of their studies in general postulate that consumers who are more involved with a product category exhibit greater loyalty towards the brand. A few researchers in the field of consumer behaviour view that loyalty is a process of repurchasing which happens due to situational restrictions, lack of feasible alternatives, or out of expediency (Sadasivan K. et al, 2011). The researchers' interest to study the consumer involvement behaviours and brand loyalty has gained momentum in recent years after the publication of two articles by Quester and Lim (2003 and 2005).

In marketing terminology the phenomenon can be explained by the concept of risk importance which signifies that consumers in general are risk averse and try to avoid the psychological stress due to mis-purchase of the desired brand. It is quite normal for consumers to favour a user friendly cell phone due to the fact that they do not have to pass through new learning and adoption process. Quester and Lim (2003) explain that the link between product involvement and brand loyalty and conclude that brand loyalty is positively associated with product involvement. Cataluña et al (2006) investigates the influence of price on the purchase decision process of store brands vs. national brands, the results confirm that brand loyalty is the main variable which influences the purchase decision process of both national and store brands. Sritharan, Jyothi & Rajakumar (2008) examine that involvement influences brand loyalty. Mohammad (2012)

examines the role of brand trust for assuring the brand loyalty and also investigates how involvement plays an important role to predict brand trust. Lovelock (2010) explains how consumer's image towards products and brands affect the purchase behaviour. Sadasivan, Rajakumar and Rajjikanth (2011) examine how involvement plays a significant role in decision making for apparels and influence the brand loyalty. Bhattacharya, Saha & Dey (2012) explain how Brand Loyalty and Product Involvement influence the purchase behaviour of Teenagers.

1.1. Statement of Problem

The problem in the foods and beverages industry in a developing economy like Nigeria is that, most manufacturing companies have down-played the importance and relevance of product package design (Ladipo & Olufayo, 2011). Worst still, most marketing practitioners emphasize and eulogize only the product quality, but show little or no consideration for the package appearance. The belief among most Nigerian manufacturers is that, a good product sells itself. Furthermore, a review of marketing literature reveals relatively less efforts examining packaging impact on consumer attention; but if brands gain attention and consideration on the basis of point-of-purchase appearance, then an understanding of the impact of package design elements is crucial to enhance point-of-purchase communication (Underwood, Klein & Burke, 2001).

With package appearance, it is generally accepted that the visual aspects of a product or its package have important effects on consumer choice at the point-of-purchase (Garber, 2000). And yet as important as package appearance is, there is no comprehensive empirical work available to account for its influence on consideration at the point-of-purchase. While research examining advertising and its influence on products and consumers is common only a limited number of studies have examined the communicative effects of product packaging (Underwood et al., 2001).

1.2. Objective of the Study

To investigate the relationship between package design and customer involvement.

1.3. Research Question

How does package design influence customer involvement in a brand?

1.4. Research Hypothesis

H₀: Package design does not significantly influence customer involvement.

H₁: Package design significantly influences customer involvement.

2. Literature Review

Involvement is a motivational state that can be used to understand consumer attitudes towards products or brands (Guthrie & Kim, 2009). To understand consumers, it's important to understand the perceived personal relevance of a product, service, or brand from the consumers' perspective. According to Srivastava & Kamdar (2009) the understanding of the cognitive structures that underlie consumers' feelings of involvement are particularly important. As consumers learn about brands and acquire new knowledge, they combine it with existing knowledge in their memory and form new cognitive structures in their minds. These structures represent the interpreted meanings of a product, service or a brand. In consumer behaviour literature this construct is referred to as involvement.

However, consumers can be classified according to their degree of involvement into either low involvement or high-involvement consumers (Srivastava & Kamdar, 2009). Low involvement purchases are less important and have very little relevance to the consumer.

There is little perceived risk associated with them and these are characterized by little motivation to expend effort and time on processing information associated with the purchase. They hypothesized that consumer involvement with brands and products affects the extent of their information search, the size of the evoked set, and the nature of brand loyalty. They introduce the idea that involvement can affect the entire nature of decision processing undertaken in product or service selection. This led to the understanding that involvement is basically multidimensional in nature and any attempt to measure it as one-dimensional may result in a misconceived idea.

Choubtarash, Mahdieh and Marnani (2013) investigated the relationships between consumer involvement and purchase decision for cell phone. The result of the study indicates a significant statistical relationship between consumers' involvement and purchase decision. As a result, consumer's involvement must be taken into account by marketers who want to increase their profit by boosting consumers' purchasing tendency and purchasing behaviour as well. Naveed (2012) in his study focused on the role of social media on public relation, brand involvement and brand commitment. It is found that social media has a strong impact on public relation, brand involvement, buying behaviour and brand commitment.

Furthermore, Bhattacharya and Dipaksaha (2013) in consumer involvement profile incorporating the moderating effects of brand loyalty and brand trust found that for durable products like cell phone, sneakers, laptops and two-wheelers,

the involvement scores are on the higher side indicating that the products are perceived as very important by the customers. In view of this, marketers should adopt informative advertising strategy to develop the proper image of the brand in the minds of the customers. Marketers should adopt aggressive sales promotional strategy to hire buyers to switch their brands in an attempt to make them brand loyal for products having low score on the facet. A bandwagon of loyal customer is needed to keep the market share stable.

Aghdaie and Honari (2014) investigated brand role in forming consumer involvement. In this study, effects of brand reputation, brand loyalty, willing to pay higher, awareness of brand, brand popularity, brand name and brand quality on consumer's involvement are hypothesized. The results however, showed that awareness of brand; willing to pay higher and brand popularity affect consumer involvement.

Rizvi, Sami and Gull (2012) attempted to evaluate and understand the relationship between consumer involvement (CI) and consumer scepticism towards advertising (CSA). The research focused on the ever-growing concern for marketers in the form of consumer scepticism towards advertising. The results help in concluding that CSA is a variable that is of tremendous importance to marketing and consumer involvement is a factor that moderates the influence of CSA. As the involvement increases, a consumer tends to be more skeptic, but the increase is not large. But when the involvement is really high, consumers prefer searching and verifying the claims instead of being sceptical about them. So the advertiser/marketers should get the understanding from this that CSA can be reduced when consumers find it easy to verify the claims and most importantly, when the claims are verified, it develop a sense of trust in the consumer's mind for the brand/company/advertiser.

Marketers can get the understanding from the results that promotion of corporate social responsibility is of considerable importance for the consumers and it might help reducing CSA to a considerable degree, depending upon the fact that, it is considered truthful by the target audience. Consumer encourages the fact that companies should be associated with welfare activities. Therefore, the insight for marketers is that, the corporate social responsibility campaigns must be promoting the real efforts conducted instead of fake claims regarding welfare and if presented with vague corporate social responsibility campaigns, this will backfire and the company will suffer.

Teeni-Harari and Hornik (2010) examined variables that influence product involvement among young consumers. The findings among the entire sample imply that young people's product involvement is explained by all of the variables

examined (age, subjective product knowledge, influence of parents, influence of peers and product category). It was however revealed that young children’s product-involvement level was influenced by parents and peers. The product-involvement level for children was influenced by peers and product category; adolescents’ product-involvement relies on subjective product knowledge and product category.

Nevertheless, the above findings have practical implications. The product—involvement constructs is an important dimension for further understanding of the behaviour of young consumers; as such, the product-involvement variable must be seen as a basis for market segmentation of the younger populations. Ghafelehbash et al. (2011) analysed acquaintance with all types of involvement in consumer behaviour. The study however revealed that involvement is a determinant of decision-maker behaviour in purchase process; that involvement in information process and other related matter to consumers is vital.

3. Methodology

The current study adopted a descriptive survey design to enhance a comprehensive review of the active variables: Packaging (Independent Variable) and Brand Involvement (Dependent Variable).

The target population comprised 17,552,940 individuals and different consumers of packaged products resident in Lagos State (Lagos State Bureau of Statistics, 2005) which is one of the biggest economic and commercial nerve centres in Nigeria. The sample frame for this current study is the forty-two (42) Food and Beverages companies registered in Lagos State.

The stratified sampling method was used to select sample from the target population while its variant, proportionate sampling technique was used to reflect the proportions of the people in each of the twenty (20) Local Government Areas of Lagos State. Questionnaire instrument was used to gather information from the respondents.

This main research instrument was a structured questionnaire with two parts A and B. Part A shall cover respondents demographic data while Part B contained instruments for the measurement of the independent variable (packaging), the dependent variable (brand involvement).

The major constructs of the questionnaire had two major constructs namely Packaging (Ulrich et al., 2004) measured on five attributes – package label, logo, shape, size colour and brand involvement (Erden & Swait, 2004). The questionnaire items were rated on a 6- Point Scales as follows: Very Low (VL) = 1, Low (L) = 2, Medium (M) = 3, High (H) = 4, Very High (VH)= 5, Extremely High (EH) = 6.

A total of 2500 questionnaires were painstakingly administered with the support of four trained research assistants to guarantee high response rate of 95% (2374) from the respondents that are consumers of packaged food and beverages products or items from the 42 target companies in Lagos State.

4. Results and Analysis

Table 1. Model summary of the relationship between package design and customer involvement.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.501 ^a	.251	.244	1.382

Table 2. Summary showing the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the relationship between package design and customer involvement.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1501.177	22	68.235	35.725	.000 ^b
1 Residual	4471.335	2341	1.910		
Total	5972.512	2363			

a. Dependent Variable: value means low price

Table 3. Summary of the relationship between package design and customer involvement.

Variable constant	R	R ²	Unstandardized Coefficients	Sig
X ₁			-0.013	0.615
X ₂			-0.085	0.014
X ₃	0.501	0.251	0.149	0.000
X ₄			0.068	0.051
X ₅			-0.142	0.000
X ₆			-0.080	0.003
X ₇			0.215	0.000
X ₈			0.138	0.000
X ₉			0.011	0.686
X ₁₀			0.012	0.681
X ₁₁			0.034	0.211
X ₁₂			0.081	0.002
X ₁₃			-0.054	0.086
X ₁₄			0.014	0.609
X ₁₅			0.131	0.000
X ₁₆			0.079	0.008
X ₁₇			0.079	0.013
X ₁₈			0.219	0.000
X ₁₉			0.112	0.000
X ₂₀			-0.027	0.354
X ₂₁			0.140	0.000
X ₂₂			-0.249	0.000

Table 3 shows R and R-Square to be 0.501 and 0.251 respectively, indicating there is a weak positive relationship between “value means low price” with other twenty two independent variables that crossed across; product label, product logo, product size, product shape and product colour. Also, only 50.1% variation in customers opinion about value to mean low price is influenced by joint effect of the independent variables considered.

The model is significant as can be seen in the table above.

The regression sum of square is 1501.177 with p – value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. It implies the model is adequate and can be used to relate all the variables considered. Hence, the alternative hypothesis will be accepted we then conclude that package design significantly influence customer involvement. Also, only fifteen of the variables under product label, product logo,

product size, product shape and product colour are significant. However, only significant factors were used to model hypothesis two. The following variables contribute negative to the variable “value means low price”; X_2 , X_5 , X_6 , X_{13} , X_{20} and X_{22} while other variables contribute positively.

The model is:

$$y_2 = 0.023 - 0.085X_2 + 0.149X_3 + 0.068X_4 - 0.142X_5 - 0.080X_6 + 0.215X_7 + 0.138X_8 + 0.081X_{12} - 0.054X_{13} + 0.131X_{15} + 0.079X_{16} + 0.079X_{17} + 0.219X_{18} + 0.112X_{19} + 0.140X_{20} - 0.249X_{21}$$

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This finding did not contradict the position of Silayoi and Speece (2004) in their exploratory study on the impact of involvement level and time pressure where it was revealed that participants in the focus groups identified packaging elements as the main factors in their assessment and decisions on household purchases. The packaging elements identified most often were graphics and colour, shape and size and product information. It was indicated that visual elements play a big role in decisions under pressure, which reduces ability to evaluate carefully, in other words, it lowers involvement. Most participants had experienced the mistake of purchasing a product look-alike when they were in a hurry and one common emotional response on discovering the mistake was disappointment and they frequently desire to be more careful next time.

In conclusion, the findings of this research have empirically proved that the package design has significant influence on customer brand involvement and this can be achieved through effective choice of label information, logo, brand size and shape which are all ingredients and attributes of good package design for a brand. We therefore recommend that the aesthetic components of the product package should be soothing for the eyes of the consumers to enhance good point – of – purchase appearance that effectively and adequately gains brand attention and purchase considerations by consumers during purchase situations.

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