

Influence of Packaging Dimensions on the Patronage of Cosmetic Products among Female Students of the University of Uyo, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study was focused on the influence of packaging dimensions on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo, Nigeria. The researchers investigated the influence of packaging colour, labelling, and packaging materials, on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo, Nigeria. The survey research design was adopted for the study and a simple random sampling of 250 respondents were used for the study. The researchers adopted the primary data collection method. The primary data were sourced through a well-structured questionnaire. Three hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that there is a positive influence of packaging dimensions (colour, labelling, and packaging materials) on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that manufacturing firms consider packaging and its dimensions as the ideal method of marketing communication, to enhance consumer patronage of the organisation's products.

Keywords: Packaging Dimensions, Colours, Labelling, Packaging Material, Customer Patronage

Introduction

The concept of packaging as it relates to customer patronage has been an issue of essentiality in marketing literature. Scholars and marketing practitioners have tried to study the dimensions that impact directly or indirectly on customer patronage. Studies into packaging dimensions employed by firms have shown the attempts made by marketers in an effort to increase customer satisfaction,

patronage, and long lasting relationship. The concept of packaging must be based on accepted theoretical and empirical framework (Etuk, 2018). Packaging plays a vital role both for the firms and the consumers, as it serves as a differentiator, positioning the firm's products in a way that is visible and appealing to the consumers, from that of competitors' (Winnie, 2015; Ebitu, 2002).

Ezekiel and Anyadighibe (2014) assert that the customers' first contact with a product is the package itself. This implies that the package has the ability to market the products or ruin the purchase decision. Packaging is a promotional technique used by cosmetic industries to attract prospective or actual consumers to make purchase decisions. Marketers consider packaging as a fundamental part of the total marketing process, as well as an important factor in product development (Ohazulike, 2018).

Therefore, cosmetic industries should understand those dimensions of packaging that appeal to consumers when making purchase decisions. Packaging involves various considerable dimensions that must be taken into account by manufacturers and product engineers when creating packaging to include colour, material, label, and all the information that could enhance consumer patronage (Ezekiel & Anyadighibe, 2014; Ebitu, 2015).

Seemingly, marketers are now using packaging as one of their key promotional tools to arouse interest of consumers towards purchasing products. However, most times, packaging dimensions are often underestimated by cosmetics firms, marketing practitioners and even consumers. Most firms consider other promotional strategies as the only way to make consumers patronise their products, while some firms feel the quality of the products is just not enough to make them sell, neglecting the essentiality of packaging on a product.

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Critically, it has been observed by the researcher that the female students at the University of Uyo ignore the dimensions of packaging on cosmetic products when making purchase decisions. This study seeks to examine the impact of packaging dimensions, such as colour, labelling and packaging material, on the patronage of cosmetic products. Hence, the statement of problem for this study in explicit terms is: The influence of packaging dimensions on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the influence of packaging colours on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo.
- To determine the influence of labelling on the patronage of cosmetic products.
- To evaluate the influence of package materials on the patronage of cosmetic products.

Research Hypotheses

The research hypothesis for the study includes:

- H_{01} : Packaging colour has no influence on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo.
- H_{02} : Labelling has no influence on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo.
- H_{03} : Packaging materials do not influence the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo.

Literature Review

Overview of Packaging

Packaging is the process of creating and manufacturing the container or wrapper for a product, to include the physical form, the design, shape, label, and material used (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010; Anyanwu, 2000; Arens, 2007). Packaging of products has a long-standing history, dating back to more than 500 years today. In the olden days, leaves were used to package products. After the leaves era, in 1823, an Englishman named Peter Durand was the first to use metal packaging made out of sheet metal “canister”.

After World War II, plastic and polyethylene packages replaced the initial forms of packaging (Adeola, 2017). Taiye, Ogunnaike, Dirisu and Onochie (2015) defined packaging as the container for a product, to include the physical appearance of the container, the design, colour, shape, labelling, and material used. Packaging involves designing and producing a container or wrapper for a product (Ebitu, 2015). Packaging is the act of containing, protecting, and presenting the contents through the long chain of production, handling, and transportation, to the destination, in as good a state as they were at the time of production (Gaafar & Raid, 2013).

Importance of Packaging/Functions of Packaging

Packaging is an important part of the branding process, as it plays a vital role in communicating the products and identity of the company to the consumers. Packaging attracts attention, describes the products’ features, gives the consumer confidence, makes a favourable overall impression, and finally acts as the product’s salesperson on the spot (Ebitu, 2002:202; Gaafar & Raid, 2013). Gaafar and Raid (2013), in their study, concluded that the functions of packaging are: protection of products, promotion of products, facilitation of storage, use and convenience of products, and finally, facilitation of recycling and reducing environmental damage.

Dimensions of Packaging

Colour

Oaya, Newman and Ezie (2017) mentioned that colour is an essential component of the visual elements of packaging. Packaging colour has a high intensity to elicit purchase behaviour in consumers. Colours on packaging are used by companies to differentiate their products from that of competitors (Wai Leng, 2010). Ezekiel and Anyadighibe (2014) opined that colour must be chosen carefully. They further described some colours as: blue is cool and serene, red is active and lively, yellow medicinal and weak, and pastel colours are masculine. The right choice of colours is an important factor in creating the impression needed to influence brand and product selection. Zekiri and Hasani (2015) conducted a research on the role and impact of packaging effect on consumer buying behaviour. The aim was to check the

effect of the packaging elements on the buying behaviour of consumers. Findings from the study reveal that colour has an impact on buying behaviour.

Packaging Materials

The materials used to package a cosmetic product reflects how much the firm understands and values its market. Packaging has an amazing influence over what consumers buy. Consumers buy products not just for their immediate needs, but more importantly because the product promises to fulfill desires and yearnings. The packaging design needs to attract attention, stimulate curiosity, and ultimately, lead the buyers into thinking that the product is the best one offered by the firm (Ezekiel & Anyadighibe, 2014). Nonetheless, packaging material has a strong impact on consumer patronage. Opara and Molitshwa (2013) listed some types of packaging material, which includes plastic, metal, glass, and cardboard, which are used to produce packaging containers; the material used depends on the nature of the product, because different packaging materials possess a range of performance characteristics that exerts significant impact on shelf-life.

A study was conducted by Okeke and Amobi (2020) on the influence of packaging on consumer buying decision of cosmetics (A study of consumers of beauty care cosmetics in Awka). The objective of the study was to determine the influence of packaging on consumer buying decision. The study also examines the relationships that exist between packaging material and packaging colour, and consumer buying decision. The methodology adopted was the survey design. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypotheses. Findings from the study showed that colour of packaging and packaging material had significant positive relationships with consumer buying decision.

Labelling

Kotler and Armstrong (2010) observed that labels range from simple tags attached to products to complex graphics that are part of the package. They perform several functions; the label identifies the product or brand, such as the name. The label might also describe several things about the product – who made it, where it was made, when it was made, its contents, how it is to be used, and how to use it safely, which also helps promote the product and support its positioning. According to Khan, Rehman, Sultan and Rashid (2016), labelling of the product has a

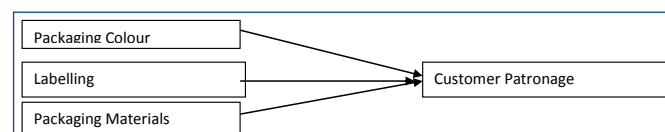
significant influence on the consumer choice. It provides details about the name, feature, quality, price, utility, nature, ingredients, and so on of the product, and also the manufacturing date, place, and producer's identification. Through labelling printed information on products, consumers can easily compare the products with that of competitors before making purchase decisions (Khan et al., 2016).

A study was conducted by Ezekiel and Anyadighibe (2014) on the effects of packaging on consumer choice of cosmetic products at the University of Calabar Community. They examined the relationship between labelling and consumer choice of cosmetic products. Findings reveal that labels not only distinguish the brand from other competing brands, but also increase the likelihood of purchase. Appropriately delivered information on packaging generates strong impact on consumer purchase decision.

Concepts of Customer Patronage

Customer patronage is defined as a deeply held commitment to purchase a firm's products at the expense of a competitor's offering (Patrick, Afolabi, Emmanuel & Monsurat 2019; Etuk, 2018). Customer patronage refers to consumers who buy products for personal consumption or use. Customer patronage is a need to be loyal to a firm's products or service quality. Customer patronage means the act of being a regular customer at a particular shop or organisation (Jaja, 2019). However, the extent to which a customer will patronise the services of a firm depends on how the customer perceives the firm's offerings and how the customer also thinks and feels if the state of the service delivered is consistent with his/her personality (Adiele, Grend & Chinedu, 2015).

Conceptual Framework of Packaging Dimensions



Researcher's model, 2021.

Fig. 1

Methodology

Research Design

The researcher adopted survey research design which allows the collection of data from the population through the use of a structured questionnaire. Survey research design is efficient, quicker, and comparatively a more precise method of assessing the characteristics of a large population from its sample.

Sampling Design and Size

The simple random sampling technique was adopted by the researcher for the study. The technique was adopted because it gives all elements of the population an equal chance of participation in the study. Hence, all the female students aged 18 and above in the University of Uyo were given an equal opportunity of participation. The Taro Yamani formula was adopted to determine the sample size. The sample size of 250 students was drawn from the 12 Faculties of the University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Source of Data and Information Collection Method

The researcher adopted the primary data collection method. The primary data were sourced through a well-structured questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The SPSS version 23.1 was used to capture the data. Personal data of respondents were analysed using simple frequency percentages, while simple linear regression analysis was used to analyse the data collected for the study. All three hypotheses were tested at 0.05% level of significance.

Results and Discussion of Findings

This discussion was premised on the test of hypothesis results presented below.

H₀₁: Packaging colour has no influence on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students in the University of Uyo.

Findings of regression analysis carried out to test H_{01} shows that packaging colour has an influence on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students ($\beta = 0.539$, $P < 0.05$). H_{01} was therefore rejected. Tables 1, 2, and 3 report a significant F and t statistic, indicating the model's strong prediction strength ($F = 21.418$, $t = 4.628$, $R^2 = 70.2\%$, $p = .005$). This research finding is in support of the works of Zekiri and Hasani (2015) and Ashaduzzaman and Mahbub (2016). This study further explained that carefully blended colours or good combination of colours on cosmetics packages enhances female patronage.

H₀₂: Labelling has no impact on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo.

Findings of regression analysis carried out to test H_{02} show that labelling influences the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo ($\beta = 0.685$, $p < 0.05$). H_{02} was therefore rejected. Tables 4, 5, and 6 report a significant F and t statistic, indicating the model's strong predictive strength ($F = 14.916$, $t = 3.862$, $R^2 = 63.6\%$, $p = 0.05$). Findings from the results of the second hypothesis tested reveals that labelling has an influence on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students. The implication here is that labelling carries the written part of the package, which performs both a promotional and an information function. This information increases their knowledge of the products and makes them ready to purchase. This research finding is in tandem with the results of the study conducted by Ezekiel and Anyadighibe (2014); the study reveals that label not only distinguishes the brand from other competing brands, but also increases the likelihood of purchase.

H₀₃: Packaging materials do not influence the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students.

Findings of regression analysis carried out to test H_{03} show that packaging materials significantly affect the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students ($\beta = 0.516$, $P < 0.05$). H_{03} was therefore rejected. Tables 7, 8, and 9 report a significant F and t statistic, indicating the model's strong prediction strength ($F = 14.786$, $t = 3.845$, $R^2 = 63.4\%$, $p = .005$). This finding is in agreement with the views of Vyas and Bhuvanesh (2015), that is, packaging material has a functional implication on the user's mind.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis One

H_{01} : Packaging colour has no influence on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo.

Table 1: Model Summary Showing the Influence of Packaging Colour on the Patronage of Cosmetic Products among the Female Students of the University of Uyo

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Squarer	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.493	.702	.470	.817

a. Predictors: (Constant), packaging colour.

Table 2: ANOVA Showing the Influence of Packaging Colour on the Patronage of Cosmetic Products among the Female Students of the University of Uyo

Model	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sign
1 regression	14.285	1	14.285	21.418	0.000
Residual	14.673	22	.667		
Total	28.958	23			

a. Dependent variable: patronage of cosmetic products.

b. Predictor: (constant), packaging colour.

Table 3: Coefficients Showing the Influence of Packaging Colour on the Patronage of Cosmetic Products among the Female Students of the University of Uyo

Model	Unstand-ardised Coefficient	Standardi-sed Coefficient	Mean Square	F	Sign
1 (constant)	B	Std. Err	Beta	T	sig
Packaging has effect on consum-er choice	2.013	.452		4.453	0.000
	537	.116	.702	4.628	.000

a. Dependent variable: patronage of cosmetic products.

Hypothesis Two

H_{02} : Labelling has no influence on the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo.

Table 4: Model Summary Showing the Significant Influence of Labelling on the Patronage of Cosmetic Products among the Female Students of the University of Uyo

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.404	.636	.377	.987

b. Predictors: (Constant), Labelling.

Table 5: ANOVA Showing the Significant Influence of Labelling on the Patronage of Cosmetic Products among the Female Students of the University of Uyo

Model	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sign
1 regression	14.529	1	14.529	14.916	0.000
Residual	21.429	22	.974		
Total	35.958	23			

c. Dependent variable: Patronage of cosmetic products.

d. Predictor: (constant), labelling has a strong influence on patronage of cosmetic products.

Table 6: Coefficients Showing the Significant Influence of Labelling on the Patronage of Cosmetic Products among the Female Students of the University of Uyo

Model	Unstand-ardised Coefficient	Standar-dised Coefficient	Mean Square	F	Sign
1 (constant)	B	Std err	Beta	T	sig
Labelling has an effect on consumer choice of a product	1.023	.745		1.374	.183
	.685	.177		3.862	.001

a. Dependent variable: Patronage of cosmetic products.

Hypothesis Three

H_{03} : Packaging material has no influence on patronage of cosmetic products among the female students of the University of Uyo.

Table 7: Model Summary Showing Packaging Materials have an Influence on Patronage of Cosmetic Products among the Female Students of the University of Uyo

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.402	.634	.375	.790

a. Predictors: (Constant), Packaging materials.

Table 8: ANOVA Showing Packaging Materials have an Influence on Patronage of Cosmetic Products among the Female Students of the University of Uyo

Model	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sign
1 regression	9.228	1	9.228	14.786	0.001
Residual	13.730	22	.624		
Total	22.958	23			

a. Dependent variable: Patronage of cosmetic products.

b. Predictor: (constant), Packaging material.

Table 9: Coefficients Showing Packaging Materials have an Influence on Patronage of Cosmetic Products among the Female Students of the University of Uyo

Model	Unstand-ardised Coefficient	Standar-dised Coefficient	Mean Square	F	Sign
1 (constant)	B	Std err	Beta	T	Sig
Packaging material has influence on consumer choice	2.291	.545		4.207	.000
	.516	.1134		3.845	.001

a. Dependent variable: Patronage of cosmetic products.

Conclusion

On the basis of the research findings, it can be concluded that packaging has a lot of advantages that could bring about a long-term purchase decision. Packaging dimensions (colour, labelling, and packaging material), to a large extent, influence the patronage of cosmetic products among the female students in the University of Uyo. Packaging is an essential marketing tool in achieving consumer patronage, satisfaction, increase in sales volume, and building a long lasting relationship.

Recommendation/Implications

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proffered:

- Manufacturing firms should consider packaging and its dimensions as the ideal method of marketing communication. This is because no other promotional tools allows consumer choice preference.
- Firms should employ packaging in their operations/ activities, in building and improving their image. The reason is that packaging enhances customer-firm relationship and creates awareness of organisation offers.
- Packaging dimensions such as colour, packaging material, and labelling should be improved to enhance customer patronage.

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