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BRAND RECOGNITION AND IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF AUTOMOTIVE LUBRICANTS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Brand recognition is an awareness level that reveals consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to a brand when given a cue. This study addressed the challenges of brand recognition as a determinant of customer impulse buying behaviour in the automotive lubricants markets of Lagos State, Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design to examine 2, 824, 047 vehicle owners registered with the Lagos State Motor Vehicle Administration Agency (MVAA) between 2003- 2013. The sample size determination for a finite population as expressed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and used by Research Advisors (2006) was used to draw a sample of 1,890auto- technicians through the proportionate sample technique (a variant of stratified sampling method) to reflect the proportions of auto-technicians in each of the 20 local government areas of the state. A research questionnaire was constructed, validated and administered to obtain the primary data. The Factor Analysis, Simple Regression Analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) statistical techniques were used to test the hypothesis. The findings of the study revealed that there is significant relationship between brand recognition and impulse buying behaviour ($p < 0.05$, $R= 0.786$, $R^2= 0.618$). It was concluded that high levels of awareness positively influence the choice of lubricants by consumers. The study therefore recommends that marketers of lubricants should develop innovative packaging strategies that will appeal to and attract consumers in an exceptional way to trigger impulse buying.

Keywords: Brand Recognition, Brand Awareness, Packaging, Impulse Buying.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, Lagos State in particular, there has been recent yet consistent complaints, notably by the Lubricant Producers Association of Nigerian, LUPAN, over the influx of fake lubricants into the Nigerian market. The association had also asked the Federal Government through its agencies to find a solution to the problem considering the level of revenue loss they were recording as the adulterators controlled a portion of the market. Apart from the uncontrolled importation of adulterated lubricants, it has also been established that locally (and largely in Lagos) some dubious people refill lubricant containers with lubricant-substances and subsequently sell same to unsuspecting (unaware) citizens for almost the same price as the original products. This development which has persisted for a long while now had been generally described as the bane of the industry as many of the local manufacturers are not almost out of the market. Consequent upon this, both the manufacturers as well as lubricant consumers are currently beckoning on the regulatory authorities to check the menace and instill sanity into the industry.

The downstream sector of the petroleum industry is arguably, the most vibrant and sensitive, area of the nation's economy as a result of its over-the-counter (OTC) and consumer-related products in the open market as the daily source of energy for life. In addition, it is a sector susceptible to the vagaries of the techno-economic dynamics and socio-political imperatives of the local and international politics of petroleum (Sote, 2014). The downstream sector is indeed a barometer to measure the operating efficiency of the nation's four (4) refineries, availability of locally refined petroleum products and indeed, a peaceful and safe business environment in the country.

However, the lubricants sub-sector is the salient and core area of the downstream industry that is complementary to the fuel business. They are technology-driven products with value-addition to one of the refined by products called base oil. Lubricants are necessary products required to guarantee energy-saving, cost-effective and maintenance of plant and machinery in industry in order to sustain the nation industrial growth (Lubeservices Associates, 2014). Currently, statistics available indicate that the total world demand for lubricating oil is about 50 Billion liters per annum. 60% is automotive and the remaining 40% is industrial.

In Africa, Nigeria is the 2nd largest consumer of lubricating oil amounting to about 600 Million liters (1% of world total demand) and with a gross earnings of ₦150 billion in 2013 (Sote, 2014). There are 32 registered blending plants with a total installed capacity of about 965 Million liters per annum and currently producing at a cumulative average of 45% of their total installed capacity. The cumulative assets base of the blending plant is about ₦20 Billion, generating about ₦45 Billion profit margins in 2013, employing over 5000 Nigerian workers and with a potential to generate over 50,000 additional workforce if the plants are working at full-installed capacities (DPR, 2013). It is pertinent to note that Nigeria's lube plants have the requisite technology and potential to blend an estimated 75% of the total need of lubricating oils while the remaining 25% are specialized products manufactured in developed countries with more advanced technology-driven process usually imported into the country by various marketing companies.

Table 1: Lubricants consumption per class in Nigeria

Product class	**%**	**Quantity (million litres)**
Crankcase oils	55	330
Hydraulic oils	25	150
Process oils	7.5	45
Gear oils	0.5	30
Metal working oil	3.5	21
Specialties	2.5	15
Other greases	1.5	9
Total	**100**	**600.00**

Source: Lubeservices Associates Study (2014)

However, despite the obvious potential contribution to the nation's economy, Nigerian lubes market is saddled with about 720,000 metric tonnes of base oil, different grades and types of products both locally blended by the majors independent, illegal and mostly fake manufacturers. (Sote, 2014). Quite worrisome is the fact that the market is also a dumping ground for sub-standard, fake and off-specification imported lubes of questionable quality. All these infractions are indeed a threat to the survival of the lube manufacturers in Nigeria on one hand and value of vehicular assets plus general environmental protection on the other.

Lube market status in Nigeria

Total installed capacity	965,000 mt/year
Market demand	580,000 mt/year
Annual growth rate	25%
Number of blending plants (major 10) (independent 22)	32
New plants under construction/awaiting DPR approval	12
Base oil market	720,000 mt/year

Source: Lubeservices Associates Study (2013)

Statement of the problem

In Lagos State and by extension Nigeria, there had been consistent loss of revenue in the lubricant business occasioned by unregulated adulteration and influx of fake lubricants into the Nigerian Market (LUPAN, 2014). In 2013 alone, revenue from lubricant sales dropped from 12.5 billion to 5 billion (LUPAN, 2013). On a year to year analysis, the nation's economy loses over N250 billion annually due to the influx of adulterated lubricants (DPR Downstream report, 2014). This development which has persisted for a long while, poses huge problems not only to manufacturers and other industry players most of who are almost out of the market but indeed to consumers who could encounter irreparable damage to their engines through wearing out and knocking, and thereby not getting value for money on their vehicular assets on one hand and to protect our environment on the other.

But the question is why are these stakeholders, especially the consumers of automotive lubricants so vulnerable to the multiplicity of problems within the lubricants market? The answer is not far-fetched: lack of (or at best, low) consumer awareness to serve as a guide and basis for rational purchase decisions on the part of consumers is a serious problem in Nigeria (SON). A truism of marketing is that brand awareness is a critical pre-condition for choice (Dhrup, Mafini: & Dumasi, 2014).

Therefore, the main objective of the study is to determine the relationship between brand recognition and customer impulse buying behaviour which in turn helped to have insight into the research question of how brand recognition influence customer impulse buying behaviour in the automotive lubricants markets in Lagos State of Nigeria.

Hypothesis of the study

There is no significant relationship between brand recognition and customer impulse buying behaviour.

Significance/Scope of the study

The scope of this study covered vehicle owners that patronize registered Nigerian Automative Technicians Association – NATA – mechanic villages as well as such registered members of NATA in Lagos State. This study is principally interested in finding out if brand awareness levels at individual (owners) and professional (Auto-Technicians) levels have any effect on their choice of lubricants, and if so, to what extent? A sample choice that will guarantee representation from the local governments in Lagos State was selected for the study with a view to generating robust primary data from these obvious stakeholders. It is pertinent to state that in the lubricant family, automotive accounts for over 84% of the aggregate market share as at December, 2013 (NNPC, 2013). Consequent upon this, the study did not involve consumers of industrial lubes and greases. This exclusion of lubes and greases is justified due to the widely prevalent and common use of automotive lubricants compared with the limited, restricted and more specialized use of lubes (Marine, Power, Transformer) and greases.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Recognition is an awareness level that reveals consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to a brand when given a cue. Simply, it requires that consumers can correctly discriminate the brand as one that is seen or heard about previously (Moisescu, 2014). Hoyer and Brown (1990) investigated the effects of brand awareness on choice for a common, repeat-purchase product, and concluded that recognition should be premised as the process of perceiving a brand as previously encountered. Furthermore, consumers in the study by Thomas and Williams (2013) demonstrated and isolated this basic fact of brand knowledge.

In another study by Macdonald and Sharp (2000), they examined the situation whereby the consumer is aware of a number of brands which fit the relevant criteria, he or she is not likely to expand much effort in seeking out information on unfamiliar/unknown brands. Suffice to say here that in many cases consumers try to minimize the costs of decision making in terms of time spent, and cognitive effort by employing simple rule of the thumb, such as 'I buy the brand I have seen or heard of before'. This is particularly likely to occur in low involvement and low consequences situation where a minimum level of awareness may be sufficient for choice (Hoyer and Brown, 1990).

Dhrup, Mafini and Dumasi (2014) in their study: 'The Impact of Packaging, Price and Brand Awareness on Brand Loyalty - Evidence from the paint retailing industry", observed that if consumers know a certain brand, they tend to include the name in their personal consideration set. Thus it aids a consumer to understand which product or service category a particular brand belongs to and what products and services are sold under the brand name. This confirms that a well-known brand is likely to perform better in the market-place than a lesser-known brand (Yoo, Donthu and Lee, 2000). According to Hasher and Zacks (2004), an automatic frequency-counting mechanism records relative frequency information regarding the instantiation of various phenomena. The study times concluded that the relative frequency information can be used as the basis for taking decisions based on product quality. In other words, if the automatic frequency-counting mechanism counts substantially more instances of communication about Brand 'A' than about Brand 'B', then an inference could be drawn to the effect that Brand 'A' is better known than 'B', so it must be popular and probably better (Baker, et al, 1986).

Further research by Zajonc (1980) on the mere exposure effect also indicated that familiar stimuli tend to be better liked than unfamiliar ones. This result was further confirmed by study conducted by Janiszewski (1989) where it was suggested that familiarity leads to greater liking even without the mediation of conscious awareness. Relatedly, it might be argued that the effects of awareness on choice cannot be separated from those of affect. People like the familiar and are prepared to ascribe all sorts of good attributes to those items that are familiar to them (Aaker, 2000). This effectively corroborates the assertion that awareness plays an important role in consumer decision making for three major reasons. Firstly, it is important that consumers think of the brand when they think about the product category. Secondly, brand awareness levels can affect decisions about brands in the

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consideration set, even if there are essentially no other brand associations. For instance, consumers have been shown to adopt a decision rule to buy only familiar well established brands (Jacoby, Syzebillo and Busto-Schach, 1977). Thirdly, brand awareness affects consumer decision-making by influencing the formation and strength of brand associations in the brand image. Suffice it to add that a necessary condition for the creation of brand image is that a brand node has been established in memory and the nature of that brand node should affect how easily different kinds of information can become attached to the brand in memory (Stokes, 1985). Brand awareness is therefore about the ability of a consumer to recognize (and recall) a brand in different situations (Aaker, 1996).

Fitzsimons and Morwitz (1996) investigated the effect of measuring purchase intention on which brands consumers purchase, making a slight departure from previous studies which examined the effect of measuring intentions on category-level purchasing. The study claimed that the focus on purchasing at the brand level is important for two reasons. Firstly, in practice, marketing researchers are usually more interested in the effect of a particular marketing action on their specific brand than on the entire product category. Secondly, current examination will extend the theoretical literature beyond mere-measurement to brand-level behavioural impact. In another similar study, Morrison (1979) analyzed purchase behaviour along with other attitude measures used for predicting actual buying behaviour. He presented a valuable work on the use of purchase intentions in evaluating the effectiveness of automobile advertising. In very similar veins, Alreck and Settle (2011) had purchase behaviour as one key input for a new product model. Bass, Pessemier and Thangam (2013) used purchase intention in their well-known soft drink study while Sewall (1978) used purchase behaviour to segment market for proposed newly designed products.

In the contribution of Brosekhan and Velayntham (2013) to literature review on consumer buying behaviour, they investigated more dimensions that can be used to characterize competitive perspectives on consumer research. Marketing environment and competitive thrusts are rapidly changing and its only organizations that move and react appropriately to these changes that stay ahead and remain profitable. Hence, consumer research is desirable to enable marketers understand changing consumer needs, wants and motivations and at the end of the day devise the most appropriate mix and communication for his market. Moreover, in empirical review of customer impulse-buying behavioural patterns, Cobb and Hoyer (1986) claimed that retailers have long found out the power of impulse buying, which had contributed a significant amount of revenue to their coffers. In the study he examined the role of customer service, store environment, sales promotion and store communication as well as consumer mood in influencing impulse buying. The result of this study confirmed that customer service, store environment and consumer mood have significant positive relationship with impulse buying among the consumers who shop at the shopping mall.

However, Wood (2005) explained that retailers should not only care about the purchasing behaviour in retail environment but also understand the consumer's society more. Impulse buying for instance, would be influenced from discretionary income positively. In a bid to satisfy individual's social needs, consumers would make more impulse buying which make them feel excited and happy. Consumers' society includes consumers' purchasing experience and characteristics of shopping environment. The study conducted by Tinne (2010) revealed that consumers are stimulated to impulse buying after they came into the store, hence Stern (1962) suggested four district types of impulse purchase namely – pure, reminder, suggestion and planned impulse buying. Over the years, impulse buying has also been made easier by innovations such as credit cards, telemarketing and home shopping networks (Rook, 1987).

However, Thomas (1997) pointed to two emotional shifts that affect buying habits – (a) an increase in stress level because consumers are out of their daily routine and (b) an increase in levels of anticipation and excitement.

In another study, Hausman (2000) stated the negative estimation of impulsive purchasing behaviour that rise from negative definition of impulsiveness in psychology such as immaturity and lack of behaviour control or irrationality, risk and waste. He went on to explain that consumers buy goods for non-economic reasons, such as firm fantasy, social and of course emotional satisfaction which help them to ignore the negative consequences of impulse purchasing. Retailers have come to realize the importance of this phenomenon and through store layouts, product packaging and in-store promotions put together have influenced consumers to be impulsive in stores (Dholakia, 2000). It must be noted that in the last decade, there have been ample evidence that impulse buying is rampant in an online context (Bettman, 1970; Li et al, 2000). With the internet, consumers' buying opportunities have indeed expanded and in consequence, internet shoppers can be more impulsive than traditional shoppers (Donthu and Garcia, 2000).

Childers and Peck (2006) in their study made efforts to address the place of time spent with people by people in making more impulse buying. They found out that when consumers touch more with salesmen it increases the possibility of impulse buying. This finding also found a place in the study of Wu (2006) where he presented a comparison between excessive, compulsive and impulsive buying and concluded that impulsive buying differs from them. In case of impulsive buying, a consumer feels positive effect, and to satisfy hedonistic demands and psychologically, the consumer concentrates attention on good proximity and loses self-control (Wu, 2006). On this note, it can be stated that the key characteristic of impulsive purchasing is that the behaviour appears as a consumer's response to a stimulus, experienced in a purchase environment leading to an immediate decision and after the purchase a consumer feels/experiences emotional or cognitive reactions (Virvilaite, Saladiene and Bagdonaite, 2009).

In an exploratory study by Thi-Tuyet, Kwm-Jung and Lantz (2002), they accommodated both qualitative and quantitative elements. Focus groups and personal interviews were carried out first to develop a general understanding of impulse buying behaviour regarding types of impulsive products, motivation behind impulsive buying (for personal-use against collective-use), the trend of shopping enjoyment and its potential influence on impulse purchase and the impact of some demographic variables. The result of the study supported individualism and income as having positive relationships with impulse buying while age has negative relationship with the behaviour. Lim and Rashid (2002) also found it significant to extend the finding by introducing two pricing variables; the cash discount rate and the product price, into the credit policy framework. With thus integration, an increase in the cash discount rate is no longer a general subsidy to all customers to promote sales but rather a differential subsidy. A general subsidy is now represented by a reduction in the product price which is available to all customers.

Clearly, the impulse buying process has a beginning in product awareness. Impulse buyers, more often than not, begin browsing without having an intention to purchase a certain item or physically visiting a certain store. But as consumers browse, they are exposed to the stimuli which in turn trigger the consumers' urge to buy on impulse. When impulse buyers feel the desire to buy, they make a purchase decision without searching for information or evaluating alternatives. Beyond this, consumers may experience positive or negative consequences by the post-purchase evaluation following the purchase on impulse. In this situation, consumers are influenced by internal (i.e mood/need/desire, hedonic pleasure, cognitive, affective evaluation) as well as external factors (i.e visual merchandising, window display, in-store form display, and promotional signage) that will trigger their impulse purchase behaviour. (Churchill and Peter, 1998).

It is equally interesting that some recent studies considered impulse buying as a form of unethical appeal to consumers. A conclusion is hard to draw because in the perspective of marketers, it brings revenue to their coffers rather than blame. On the other hand, in the perspective of consumers, it should also not be of negative aspect because whoever has the purchasing power can spend his/her money according to his wish. In all of these post-purchase dissonance should not occur due to impulse purchase, because the fact is that consumers sometimes just love to purchase impulsively (Shahan, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design while the target population comprised 2,824,047 registered vehicle owners in Lagos between January 2003 and December, 2013 and the 975,000 Auto Technicians found in NATA register (2013) in Lagos State. The sample frame for the study is owners of serviceable vehicles with service history of between 4-12 weeks as well as auto technicians in registered mechanic villages in Lagos. Lagos accounts for an estimated 74% of vehicles in Nigeria (ECMR, FRSC, 2011), in addition to the following key factors:

- Daily Human Traffic : 7 Million
- Vehicular Population : Over 1.5 Million
- Vehicular Density : Over 150 per Km (National = 11 per Km)
- 50% of National Petroleum products consumption

Source: Lagos Economic Profile (2014).

Nevertheless, the stratified sampling method was used to select sample1890 from the target population comprising vehicle owners and auto-technicians using the formula for sample size determination for finite population as expressed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and Research Advisors (2006) while its variant, proportionate sampling technique was used to reflect the proportions of people in each of the twenty (20) constitutionally recognized Local Government Areas of Lagos State.

Questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection measured on a 6-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA) – 6; Agree (A) – 5; Fairly Agree (FA) – 4; Fairly Disagree (FD) – 3; Disagree (D) – 2; Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1. The factor analysis, Karl Pearson's product moment correlation (r) and simple regression analysis were used to analyse the data with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 .

Results and Analysis

A total of 1,890 copies of questionnaire were administered with the assistance of ten trained research assistance and were closely monitored resulting in all questionnaires retrieved from the respondents giving a response rate of 100%.

Table 2: Model Summary of the relationship between Brand Recognition and Impulse Buying Behaviour

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of the Estimate
1	.786[a]	.618	.616	.779

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 3: Summary Showing the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the relationship between Brand Recognition and Impulse Buying Behaviour

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	1842.593	8	230.324	379.156	.000[b]
Residual	1138.997	1875	.607		
Total	2981.590	1883			

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 4: Coefficients of Brand Recognition and Impulse Buying Behaviour

Model	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficient**	**T**	**Sig.**
	B	**STD. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	.729	.054		13.430	.000
I will need to see the logo before I can recognize the lubricant (x1)	-.077	.021	-.093	-3.607	.000
I can only recognize the lubricant if the features are described (x2)	-.052	.021	-.069	-2.487	.013
I can't remember the lubricant easily; I will need to see a poster of it (x3)	.008	.029	.010	.272	.786
Because of the presence of so many lubricant I will need assistance to identify them individually (x4)	.135	.032	.157	4.212	.000
All lubricant seems to be the same there is no difference between them (x5)	-.007	.031	-.008	-.227	.820
The is not much difference in price, packaging, volume of one lubricant from another (x6)	.590	.018	.670	32.021	.000
I can only recognize the lubricant when shown to me (x7)	-.106	.024	-.131	-4.444	.000
Only a few people use this lubricant (x8)	.257	.028	.298	9.296	.000

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

The model for the hypothesis is:

$$Y = \beta_o + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 \chi_2 + \beta_3 \chi_3 + \beta_4 \chi_4 + \beta_5 \chi_5 + \beta_6 \chi_6 + \beta_7 \chi_7 + \beta_8 \chi_8 + ei$$

Where:

Y = I usually make purchase out of impulsive needs.

χ_1 = I will need to see the logo before I can recognize the lubricant.

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χ_2 = I can only recognize the lubricant if the features are described.

χ_3 = I can't remember the lubricant easily. I will need to see a poster of it.

χ_4 = Because of the presence of so many lubricants, I will need assistance to identify them individually

χ_5 = All lubricants seems to be the same there's no difference between them.

χ_6 = There is not much difference in price, packaging, volume of the lubricant from another.

χ_7 = I can only recognize this lubricant when shown to me.

χ_8 = Only a few people use this lubricant

The model summary table 2 shows that there is a strong positive relationship between brand recognition and impulse buying behaviour (R = + 0.786) and R-square of 0.618 (61.8%). This is an indication that 61.6% of variation in impulse buying behaviour is caused by brand recognition. The adjusted R-square is 0.616, with standard error of the estimate of 0.779. Generally, the model gives F-value of 379.156 and sig. value of 0.000. This implies that the model is adequate in showing the relationship between brand recognition and impulse buying behaviour. It was concluded that brand recognition does affect impulse buying behaviour.
In addition, the coefficient table 4 shows the contribution of brand recognition factors to impulse buying behaviour. It was observed that variables, "I will need to see the logo before I can recognize the lubricant"; "I can only recognize the lubricant if the features are described"; "All lubricant seem to be same"; "there's no difference between them"; and "I can only recognize this lubricant when shown to me" contributed negatively to impulse buying behaviour but that of all lubricants seem to be the same is not significant while others are significant.

Factors like "I need to sight the poster before the lubricant can be recognized" contributed positively but not significant. The need for assistance to recognize them individually, differences in price, packaging, volume of the lubricant from another, and only few people use this lubricant are significant and also contributed positively. (Sig. value = 0-000<0.05). Thus, differences in price, packaging, volume of one lubricant from another influenced impulse buying the most. The model is:
$Y = 0.729 - 0.077_{x1} - 0.052_{x2} + 0.008_{x3} + 0.135_{x4} - 0.007_{x5} + 0.590_{x6} - 0.106_{x7} + 0.257_{x8}$

DISCUSSION

This result implies that there is a significant relationship between brand recognition and customer impulse buying behaviour. It is therefore in tandem with the previous works of (Dhrup, Mafini & Dumasi, (2014); Moisescu, (2014), Thomas and Williams, (2013), Gigerenzer and Goblstein, (2011), Shahan, (2010); Virvilante et al, (2009); Zajoric, (1980); Hoyer & Brown, (1990); Macdonald and Sharp, (2000); Aaker, (2000); Childers & Perks, (2006); Churchill and Peter, (1998); Hoyer, (1984) etc, all of which, first and foremost confirm that recognition is an awareness level that reveals consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to a brand. According to Hoyer, 1984, it requires that consumers can correctly discriminate the brand as one that is seen or heard about previously.

This finding is in agreement with the work of Dhrup, Mafini and Dumasi, (2014) which investigated the impact of Packaging, Price and Brand Awareness on Brand Loyalty in the paint industry. They found out when and if consumers know (recognize) a certain brand;

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they tend to include the name in their personal consideration set. In the process, consumers get to understand which product or service category a particular brand belongs to and what products and services are sold under the brand name. According to Hoyer and Brown, (1990) investigated the effects of brand awareness on choice of a common, repeat-purchase product, and concluded that recognition should be premised as the process of perceiving a brand as previously encountered. In addition and in the same vein, consumers in the study by Allison and Uhi (2009) accepted it and isolated recognition as a basic fact of brand knowledge.

The findings by MacDonald and Sharp, (2000), underscored this finding also. They examined the situation whereby the consumer is aware of a number of brands which fit the relevant criteria; he or she is not likely to waste much time and effort in seeking out information on unfamiliar/unknown brands. They argued that consumers try to minimize the cost of decision making in terms of time spent and effort by employing a simple rule of the thumb, such as: 'I buy the brand I have seen or heard of before'. Suffice it to add, however, that this is very likely to occur in low involvement and low consequences situations where only a minimum level of awareness may be sufficient for choice.

The research work of Zajoric, (1980), also confirms the result of this research work as it indicates that familiar stimuli tend to be better liked than unfamiliar ones. This result was further confirmed by the study conducted by Janiszwski, (1989) where it was found that familiarity leads to greater liking even without the mediation of conscious awareness. In the study conducted by Tinne, (2010) it revealed that consumers are stimulated to impulse buying after they came into store, and then come in contact with diverse stimuli, hence Stern, 1962 suggested four distinct types of impulse purchase namely – pure, reminder, suggestion and planned impulse buying.

However, Wood, (2005) in his work anchored on retail environment, explained that retailers should not only care about the purchasing behaviour in retail environment but stressed the need to understand the consumer's society more. He argued that impulse buying, for instance, would be influenced by discretionary income positively. Thus in a bid to satisfy individual's social needs, consumers would make more impulse buying which make them feel excited and happy because the consumer society includes consumers' past purchasing experience (familiarity) and characteristics of shopping environment. This finding supported the work of Dholakia, (2000) that retailers have come to realize the importance of this phenomenon and through store layout, product packaging and in-store promotions put together have influenced consumers to be impulsive in stores.

Clearly, impulse buying behaviour has a beginning in product awareness. When impulse buyers feel the desire to buy, they make a purchase decision without searching for information or evaluating alternatives. In this situation, consumers are influenced by both internal as well as external factors that will trigger their impulse purchase behaviour as discovered by Churchill and Peter, (1998). People like the familiar and are prepared to ascribe all sorts of good attributes to those items that are familiar to them. (Aaker, 2000). This lent credence to the assertion that awareness plays an important role in consumer decision-making for three major reasons to wit.

Firstly, it is important that consumers think of the brand when they think about the product category. Secondly, brand awareness levels, beginning from recognition, can affect decisions about brands in the consideration set, even if there are essentially no other brand associations. To this end, previous work of Jacoby, Syzebillo and Busto-Schach, (1999) concluded that consumers have been shown to adopt a decision rule to buy only familiar well established brands. Lastly, brand awareness affects consumer decision-making by influencing the formation and strength of brand associations in the brand image. Similar works by Stokes (1985) and Aaker, (1996) highlighted that brand awareness is nothing but the ability of a consumer to recognize a brand in different situations.

It is however interesting and apt to add that some recent studies – (Shahan, (2010); Tinne, (2011); Beatty & Ferell, (1998), Mowen & Minor, (1998) considered impulse buying as a form of unethical appeal to consumers. There is no attempt here to draw a conclusion, because in the perspective of marketers it brings revenue to their coffers and not blame. With consumers too, it is a matter of whoever has the purchasing power to spend his/her money as deem necessary because it is a well-known fact that consumers sometimes just love to purchase impulsively. Shahan, (2010).

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