

THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF COSMETICS PRODUCTS PACKAGING ON CUSTOMERS PATRONAGE IN A COMPETITIVE MARKET

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ABSTRACT

This paper systematically analyzed the impact of packaging and the patronage of cosmetics products among female students in Enugu State in a cross-sectional design conducted by recruiting 202 female students. Primary data were gathered through administration of a 12-item questionnaire measuring the effects of packaging and patronage of cosmetic products. Post data gathering, resulted to the statistical analysis via linear regressions and descriptive statistics. Four hypotheses were tested and results revealed that the way a product is packaged influenced the patronage of cosmetic products. More findings showed that packaging colour of a product influenced patronage. Additionally, product labeling played a major role in patronage of cosmetic products and packaging materials which was analysed at the same time, influenced patronage. To this end, the study came to the conclusion that the decision of customers to purchase a product can be stimulated through a well-designed packaging; while recommendations tilted towards the informed rationale that products' attributes should be of good quality in order to guarantee turnover and for companies concerned to continuously enjoy patronage with its attendant economic gains and goodwill.

Keywords: Cosmetics products packaging, customer patronage, education, female students, impacts.

Introduction

Packaging has become an important marketing tool used in influencing consumers' choice, especially among young impressionable minds. People in the consumables marketing field consider packaging style or pattern as a very important part of the whole marketing

process and in the production process (Ohazulike, 2018). Customer patronage implies the act of being a consistent customer at a particular business outlet or organisation (Jaja, 2019). However, the extent of patronage depends on some packaging skills that leave an impression on human feelings and psyche in order to



stimulate positive buying behaviour. Packaging may be regarded as the fifth element of the marketing mix, in that no matter the quality and benefits that can be derived from a product, no matter its price, promotion and delivery, if the packaging is in bad shape, it may amount to complete rejection of the total marketing effort (Ebitu, 2002). How well a product is packaged, has the capacity to determine the buyer's first decision to buy or not to buy a product (Anyadighibe, 2014). Anyanwu (2000) conceived packaging as a container or wrapper for a product, while Esu (2005) maintained that it comprises all the activities involved in the operation of products for carriage, storage and delivery. From the standpoint of Arens (2007), packaging entails the outward appearance of any product such as the colour, texture (material), design and shape. Packaging therefore serves as a differentiator, positioning the product in a manner that is visible to the consumer. The material employed in packaging products is therefore an agency of preservation. Attempts are made at ensuring that the package meets the preference of consumers, how they use the product, when they use it, and why they use it (Winnie, 2015). Hence, the role of packaging for any institution includes provision of information to consumers when the product is purchased, reduction of promotional cost, increasing market share, and stimulation of impulse buying behaviour. Schlossbery (2008) suggested for an impactful patronage of any product, by appropriate branding and then creating more awareness. In fact, Nawaz and

Mohib (2012) surmised that packaging like honey attracts bees (consumers) to a particular product which in turn gives more credibility and more acceptability. Silayoi and Speece (2007) was of the opinion that packaging has a significant effect on buyer's behaviour; while design/style adopted for any product is seen as an important strategy for several industries and making a huge difference (Kotler *et al.*, 2005; Kotler & Armstrong, 2009). Packaging design tends to stimulate the buying behaviour of the populace in a competitive milieu, thereby causing some manufacturers to pay rapid attention to the package design given to their products. The implication of this is that a product can be overrated. However, when a product is not properly packaged it may bruise buyers' expectations with resultant loss of sales.

Cosmetics known as care substances are meant to enhance individual appearance. Ontogenetically, the word cosmetic originated from the Greek word 'kosmetike (tekhne)' which means the art or strategy of dress and ornament. Cosmetics are aesthetic products, and women folk are more apt to use cosmetics than men; hence, the reason for recruiting female students as the target population for the study. When one's feelings are aesthetically oriented, the outcome or decision that will stem from that product is perception based and more critical in assessing the value of these products. Essentially as the beauty industry has become a vital aspect of people's lives, particularly due to the role

of cosmetic products ability to improve people's appearance.

Since cosmetics are necessary for women's self-esteem, the tendency for them to purchase any of such products depend largely on the manner of packaging. Consumer buying decisions are usually based on price, quality and function of the product. Unique packaging stimulates women's buying which invariably serve as advertisement, leaving a good impression behind. In some cases, a product may be well packaged to the extent that customers' predominant concern becomes the packaging and not even the content or product being sold. Oftentimes, female students are drawn to purchase cosmetics products based on how the product appears and, at the end of the day, the product may not be as good as the packaging. This has led to dissatisfaction, depression, buyer remorse syndrome, loss of scarce resource and imbalance in the buying and selling industry. Despite the fact that studies have been conducted on packaging and patronage in various countries, including Nigeria (e.g., Adebisi & Akinruwa, 2019; Silayoi & Speece, 2004), it has been found that little or no research work has been undertaken to understand the effect and influence of packaging of cosmetics products on patronage among female population in Enugu state and her institutions of higher learning, in which the zone is adjudged to be a major market for the sale of cosmetic products. It has also been recorded that the female folks patronise a whole lot of cosmetics products (Taiye *et al.*, 2015).

Having considered the background of the study, this researcher's primary interest is hinged on examining the influence of packaging patterns on patronage of cosmetic products among select female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical), Enugu, Nigeria. Hence, the general objective of this study is to assess impacts of packaging patterns and the patronage of cosmetics products in Enugu state, while the specific objectives are:

1. To confirm the link between packaging patterns and purchase of cosmetic products among students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical);
2. To assess the effects of colour on buying behaviour of cosmetic products among students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical);
3. To determine the effects of labelling on buying behaviour among female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical); and
4. To evaluate the effects of package materials on buying behaviour among female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical).

Literature Review

Clearly, product packaging plays a very important role in the marketing industry. As opined by Gaafar and Raid (2013), the four (4) features of packaging that makes it relevant include promoting products, facilitating storage, protecting of products, and convenient use of products.



Ebitu (2002), and Onah and Thomas (1993) asserted that the main functions of packaging include protection function, utility/convenience function, motivation function, profitability function, identification/product and differentiation function. Studies reveal that preserving and protecting are two key roles of packaging which inextricably involves protection from all forms of contamination (Khan *et al.*, 2016; Kareelza & Sikwila, 2017). Packaging ensures that the content or product is held in place and protected against evaporation, pilfering, contamination by dust or dirt, chemical change, product loss or insect attack (Ebitu, 2002). In addition, the usefulness of packaging involves bringing class, encouraging good handling, ensuring proper display, and drastically improving sales, amongst others (Karedza & Sikwila, 2017). The convenient dimension of packaging is becoming increasingly important (Odofo, 2014), while the motivation function encourages middlemen to carry the product because of their beliefs that the products will be easily distributed and sold (Ebitu, 2002). Next is profitability function as a result of adequate turnover (Ebitu, 2022; Onah & Thomas, 1993). Another function of packaging is that it enables customers to identify the product, which goes a long way in promoting such product (Okwandu & Ekerete, 2001). It has been proven that packaging creates a favourable product and company image, helping position a product, establishes corporate image, and encourage middlemen to carry and display the products (Opara & Molitshwa, 2013).

Another important function of packaging is to pass a message about the product without any spokesperson being there at the material time to make such sales talk.

In recent times, due to the competitive way the marketing industry is going, packaging pattern has transformed due to an ever evolving consumers' lifestyle; especially as packaging is posing serious challenges to many business organisations and society. Ebitu (2015) advanced packaging strategies which are recommended to check pollution, meet competition and create satisfaction. Examples include re-use package, product time packaging, multiple packaging, and packaging innovation. Aside from these, for an effective and efficient packaging of product to occur, six variables must be considered by manufacturers when designing and making their products. They include, form, size, colour, graphics, material and flavour (Vyas & Bhuvanesh, 2015). Thus, consumer's buying behaviour is among other things dependent on the elements of packaging colour, material, labeling and innovations (Stechova, 2017). Packaging colour, according to Oaya *et al.* (2017), has a high intensity to elicit purchase behaviour in consumers. Colour of packaging is important due to the fact that companies use it to distinguish its products from products of other organisations. Colour plays a vital role in a potential customer's decision-making process (Zekiri & Hasani, 2015).

Stechova (2017) explained that a brand colour packaging does not only carry a

message about the product; but also relays the attributes that are unique to the brand, which is first observed by potential clients. Therefore, colour is not just making a product more presentable, but serves as a means of conveying information that affects how consumer feels on conscious and subconscious levels. For instance, blue represents being cool and serene, red connotes being active and lively, yellow medicinal and so on (Deliya & Parmar, 2012; Ezekiel & Anyadighibe (2014). Therefore, packaging colour is one of the different nonverbal elements that induce consumers to make buying decisions (Ashaduzzaman & Mahbub, 2016). A study conducted by Okeke and Amobi (2020) revealed that packaging materials showed positive connections with decisions of consumer's buying decision.

Colour, as an essential component embodies the capacity of eliciting purchase behaviour among customers (Oaya *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, labelling of any product has an influence on the customer's choice, because it has a way of providing details about the product, as well as other salient manufacturers' information that will be helpful (Khan *et al.*, 2016). **In a related study, Etuk *et al.* (2021)** in recruiting 250 female students, found that packaging dimensions (colour, labelling, and packaging materials) directly influenced patronage. Other scholars in their empirical research, found that colour has an impact on buying behaviour. This finding coincided with that of Ashaduzzaman and Mahbub

(2016), who in their study, revealed that colour of a package showed positive impact on buying behaviour. Adebisi and Akinruwa (2019) while sampling 322 respondents, found size, colour, quality of packaging, and shape of product significantly influencing patronage of Bournvita. It is clear from the reviews that several studies have been conducted on the subject matter, but paucity of research in Nigeria particularly in the South-East motivated the decision of the researchers to examine the effects of packaging patterns on patronage of cosmetic products among female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical). This gap in literature is long overdue and thus needs to be investigated empirically to further guide policy frameworks. This gap was pointed out in the hypotheses of the study.

Hypotheses

1. There will be a relationship between packaging patterns and buying behaviour among female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical).
2. Packaging colour will have an effect on buying behaviour among female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical).
3. Labelling will have an effect on buying behaviour among female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical).
4. Packaging materials will have an effect on buying behaviour among female students of Enugu



State College of Education
(Technical).

Methodology

Research Design

A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted in this study. A cross-sectional survey enables a researcher to examine or investigate a phenomenon of large section of people at a particular point in time.

Study Area

The study was conducted at Enugu State College of Education (Technical), Enugu, Nigeria. The college is one of the major colleges of education located in Enugu State, South-East of Nigeria.

Study Population

The target population for this study is female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

To obtain the sample size, the researcher employed the purposive sampling technique and administered a total of 210 copies of questionnaire to students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical). At the end of the questionnaire administration, only 202 copies were usable because eight were not correctly filled representing a response rate of 96.2%.

Instruments for Data Collection

The questionnaire method for collecting data was employed in gathering information (data) for the study. The questionnaire was divided into two categories, with the first category focused on the personal details of the respondents such as age, marital status and year of study; while the second category is made up of 12-items required to test aspects of colour, label, packaging materials and innovation, and to what extent they influence purchasing decisions of cosmetics products. Items were scored on a 5-point scoring format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Method of Data Analysis

The collected and collated data were subjected to editing, coding, classification and tabulation. Thereafter, the data was analysed using multiple linear regressions and descriptive statistics of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, version 20.

Ethical Considerations

Institutional consent and ethical approval was obtained from the Ethical Board of Enugu State College of Education (Technical). Thereafter, the researchers ensured that signed informed consent of participants was retrieved before fully embarking on the study.

Results

Table 1: Table of frequencies and percentages of variables showing an on-spot demographic characteristics view of study participants (N = 202)

Demographic Variables	N	%
Age		
17-19 Years	158	78.2
20-29 Years	34	16.8
30-39 Years	10	5.0
Total	202	100.0
Year of Study		
Year 1	95	47.0
Year 2	92	45.5
Year 3	10	5.0
Year 4	5	2.5
Total	202	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	192	95.0
Married	7	3.5
No Response	3	1.5
Total	202	100.0

From the descriptive statistics, results indicate that a total number of two hundred and two (202) female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical) participated in this study. Descriptive results indicated that greater percentage were within the age bracket of 17-19 years, 158 (78.2%), those between 20-29 years were 34 (16.8%), and those between 30-39 were 10 (5.0%); while participants' marital status showed that that 192 (95.0%) were single, and 7

(1.7%) were married. Further results indicated that majority were single – 192 (95.0%) while only 7 (3.5%) were married and 3 (1.5%) did not indicate their marital status. With regards to participant's year of study, year one and year two students topped the table, 95 (47.0%) and 92 (45.5%) respectively; whereas female students in year three and four were 10 (5.0%) and 5 (2.5%) respectively.



Table 2: Table of linear regression showing the relationship between packaging and patronage of cosmetic products among female students

Predictor Sig.	Outcome	β	t	Sig.	R	R ²	F	df
PA <0.05	POC	0.52	6.29	<0.05	.300	.090	39.53	1

Note: PA = Packaging; POC= Patronage of Cosmetics.

The result presented in Table 2 shows that packaging as a variable produced a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.300 and multiple correlation square (R²) of 0.090. This shows that 9% of the variance in patronage of cosmetic products was accounted for by the influence of packaging. More

specifically, the result indicates that packaging pattern significantly related with patronage of cosmetic products ($\beta = 0.52$; $t = 6.29$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the first hypothesis which states that there will be a relationship between packaging and patronage of cosmetic products among female students was sustained.

Table 3: Table of linear regression showing the effect of product colour on buying behaviour among female students

Predictor Sig.	Outcome	β	t	Sig.	R	R ²	F	df
PC <0.05	POC	0.94	3.14	<0.05	.155	.024	9.83	1

Note: PC = Packaging Colour; POC= Patronage of Cosmetics.

Second, the results displayed in the Table 3 indicates that packaging colour produced coefficient of multiple correlation (R) of 0.155 and multiple correlation square (R²) of 0.024. In other words, 2.4% of the variance in patronage of cosmetic products was accounted for by the effects of packaging colour. More

results showed that colour of products significantly influenced patronage of cosmetic products ($\beta = 0.94$; $t = 3.14$; $p < 0.05$). Hence, the second hypothesis which states that colour of product will have an effect on patronage of cosmetic products among female students was confirmed.

Table 4: Table of linear regression showing the effect of labelling on patronage of cosmetic products among female students

Predictor	Outcome	β	t	Sig.	R	R ²	F	df	Sig.
LA	POC	0.93	5.53	<0.05	.267	.071	30.62	1	<0.05

Note: LA = Labelling; POC= Patronage of Cosmetics.

Furthermore, the regression results in Table 4 revealed that labelling produced multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.267 and multiple correlation square (R²) of 0.071. That is, 7.1% of the variance in patronage of cosmetic products was accounted for by the effects of labelling alone. In addition, results

showed that labelling of products significantly influenced patronage of cosmetic products ($\beta = 0.93$; $t = 5.53$; $p < 0.05$). Hence, the third hypothesis which states that labelling will have a significant effect on patronage of cosmetic products among female students was accepted.

Table 5: Table of linear regression showing the effect of product materials on buying behaviour among female students

Predictor	Outcome	β	t	Sig.	R	R ²	F	df	Sig.
PM	POC	0.83	5.03	<0.05	.244	.060	25.33	1	<0.05

Note: PM = Packaging Materials; POC= Patronage of Cosmetics.

Lastly, the regression results in the Table 5 showed that packaging materials yielded a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.244 and multiple correlation square (R²) of 0.060. This connotes that 6.0% of the variance in patronage of cosmetic products was accounted for by the effects of packaging materials. Moreover, linear regression results showed that packaging materials significantly influenced patronage of cosmetic products ($\beta = 0.83$; $t = 5.03$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the fourth hypothesis which states that packaging materials

will significantly contribute to patronage of cosmetic products among female students was confirmed.

Discussion

The study's objective was to explore the effect of packaging on the buying behaviour or patronage of cosmetic products among female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical). In order to achieve this, four hypotheses were measured. The first hypothesis which states that there will be a relationship between packaging



patterns and patronage of cosmetic products among female students was confirmed. This finding was in consonance with a study conducted by Vyas and Bhuvanesh (2015) on packaging design elements and user's perception and they found that packaging and different elements of packaging had functional implication on the buyer's mind. A possible explanation of this finding can be seen on the fact that people are attracted to flashy, neat and well-presented products which has a link to their self-esteem and self-worth. So, when presented with a well packaged product, the tendency to patronize the product increases.

The second hypothesis which stated that colour of a product will have an effect on patronage of cosmetic products was also accepted. This finding was in line with the study of Okeke and Amobi (2020) who showed that colour of packaging had significant positive relationships with consumer buying decision. Again, the findings was in consonance with Zekiri & Hasani (2015) who found that colour has an impact on buying behaviour. This finding also agrees with the findings of Ashaduzzaman and Mahbub (2016) who in their study revealed that, packaging colour has a positive impact on detergent buying behaviour. A plausible explanation of this finding can be attributed to the meaning students or young people attach to colours. There is a saying that the eyes is the window to the soul; that being the case, the eyes feeds itself with colours and that includes cosmetic products.

The third hypothesis which stated that labeling will have an effect on patronage of cosmetic products was also retained. This finding tallied with the study of Ezekiel & Anyadighibe (2014) and found that label not only distinguished the brand from other competing brand but also improved the likelihood of buying behaviour. The finding of this study also correlated with the outcome in the finding of Lifu (2012) who revealed that majority of consumer's decision to buy a particular product was as a result of the packaging style. This finding can be explained better in the natural tendency for people to have preference and choice of one item over another.

Lastly, the fourth hypothesis which states that packaging materials will have an effect on patronage of cosmetic products was accepted. This finding was in line with the study conducted by **Etuk *et al.* (2021)** who found an influence of packaging materials on buying behaviour. The findings also agreed with the study of Vyas & Bhuvanesh (2015) who found that packaging material and different elements of packaging had functional implication on the buyer's mind. This finding also was in consonance with Adebisi and Akinruwa (2019) who empirically revealed that tested variables had significant effects on buying behaviour of customers.

Summarily, the study found that the four alternate hypotheses were all confirmed. This implies that packaging is a major contributor to the concept of patronage in the commerce industry. In strategic

marketing, packaging has drastically improved beyond its original function and now delves into marketing thereby providing relevant product information and laying good foundation for brand awareness and positive organization image making. More so, these roles have plummeted due to the advent of social media and changing consumers' lifestyle. Therefore, packaging transforms into a selling and buying phenomena that increases market share and decreases costs of public awareness – making it be as one of the important factors influencing consumer's purchase decision.

Conclusion and policy implications

The current study investigated the effect of packaging and the buying behaviour of cosmetics products among female respondents sampled from Enugu State College of Education (Technical). A survey design was employed and conducted among 202 female students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical) using a 12-item questionnaire measuring the effects of packaging on the buying behaviour of cosmetic products. After gathering the data from students, they were analyzed via linear regressions and descriptive statistics. To this end, it was concluded that the decision of customers or clients to buy a product can be sustained via a well-planned products packaging. In other words, a well organised packaging appears to be a very effective instrument that can be deployed in improving female students' buying behaviour especially of cosmetic products. The importance of

this study cannot be overstressed, as it stands to benefit the manufacturers by providing them with technical information that could assist in redesigning containers or wrappers for cosmetic products. In addition, the research poses significant interest among female students with respect to making decision on the patronage of cosmetic products. It will guide them in making an informed choice prior to purchasing cosmetics products which, if not done properly, may affect their body image and appearance and invariably affect their cognitive state that may result in poor social and academic activities. Further, the academic community will not be left out because the findings of this study will add to the body of literature for future researchers.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Cosmetic industries should not be in haste when selecting the colour for any product that they intend to produce; which should attract rather than attack the visual senses of customers upon sighting.
- ii. Cosmetic manufacturers should ensure that the material of their products are of high quality which can allow for refilling, reusing and to get lasting value for the money spent.
- iii. Manufacturers of cosmetic products should adhere to standard procedure during production and give more attention to quality of products that will not have any



short or long term effect on the consumers especially as female students are major buyers of the product in order for them to look good in the campus.

- iv. Further, care should be given to product labeling for the sake of proper identification of the components of the product so that consumers will not be misled in buying a cosmetic product that will be harmful to the later on.
- v. Manufacturers of cosmetic products should also consider the ergonomic dimension of their products to be sure that the products are in the best interest of the users.
- vi. Above all, products' attributes should yield good quality so as to guarantee effectiveness to customers (students), and companies concerned can enjoy continuous patronage with its attendant economic gains.

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