

Marketing Strategies Adopted by Periodical Street Vendors for Sale of Periodical Publications in Zaria Metropolis, Kaduna State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Marketing strategy has become an essential tool globally for any organisation to remain robust and relevant in a competitive market environment. The paper examined marketing strategies adopted for the sale of periodical publications by the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis, Kaduna State, Nigeria. Two research objectives were formulated for the study. They are to find out the types of periodicals the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis market and to identify the marketing strategies Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis adopt for the sale of periodicals. The population of the study comprised of 21 Periodical Street Vendors in 14 locations in Zaria Metropolis. The whole population was used as the sample size because the population was manageable. In order to gather data for the study, a self-developed questionnaire was used for the data collection on the types of periodicals being sold and the marketing strategies adopted by the Periodical Street Vendors to sell their periodical publications. The research objectives were analysed descriptively using frequency distribution tables, percentages. Findings from the study revealed that newspapers and magazines (42.9%) are the major types of periodicals being sold by the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis. The findings also revealed that the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis adopt different strategies to sell different periodicals. No single marketing strategy works for the sale of all the identified periodicals. It can be concluded that Periodical Street Vendors adopt all the eight (8) identified marketing strategies for the sale of the periodical publications. They commonly sell in Zaria metropolis and also the adoption of a variety of marketing strategies impact a lot on the sale of periodical publications which in turn keep the Periodicals. It has been recommended for Periodical Street Vendors to continue in business publishers should organise seminars, workshops or sensitisation campaigns for periodical street vendors on the need to put together different strategies that would boost their business as well as keeping them in the business. The government should, as a matter of urgency give periodical street vendors license to make them gain recognition in the society as they contribute to a large extent to the growth and development of the informal economy.

Keywords: Marketing Strategies, Periodical Publications, Periodical Street Vendors

Introduction

The success of any business much depends on the marketing strategy adopted by the manager of the business. Marketing promotes the sale of goods and services, including information resources such as periodicals. It attracts the interest of the customers. The concept of marketing means different things to different people, as many researchers have different

definitions of the concept. Marketing has been defined by the American Marketing Association (2013) as the activity by institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have the value for customers, partners and society at large. Marketing plays a significant role in ensuring that products are sold out to the right customers at the right time and affordable price with the sole aim of satisfying customers' needs and maximisation profit.

Goi (2005) referred to marketing strategy as the set of marketing tools that firms or business owners use to pursue their marketing objectives in the target market. The function of marketing strategy is to determine the nature, strength, direction, and interaction between the marketing mix- elements (product, promotion, place, and price and after-sales service) and the environmental factors in a particular situation. According to Owomoyela, Oyeniyi, and Ola (2013), an organisation's marketing strategy development aims to establish, build, defend and maintain its competitive advantage. Managerial judgment is vital in coping with environmental ambiguity and uncertainty in strategic marketing. Conceptually street vendors are persons engaged in vending of periodicals, goods, wares, food items or merchandise of everyday use or offering services to the general public in a street, lane, sidewalk, footpath, pavement and public places. They also offer sales of goods and services from temporary built-up structures or by moving from place to place. Bromley (2000) stated that street vendors (also referred to as street traders or hawkers) are a part of a prominent category of workers that have always existed despite frequent efforts to repress them. Street vending is selling of goods and services in the street without using a permanent built-up structure (Bhowmik, 2005). It is observed that the number of street vendors is continuously increasing perhaps due to the rural exodus of low skilled workers to cities and urban centres, the global economic crisis and lack of employment opportunities.

Street vending is an integral component of urban economies around the world. It has become a common phenomenon in most of the developing countries. It has existed for hundreds of years and is considered a cornerstone of many cities' historical and cultural heritage (Skinner, 2011).

Concept and Philosophy of Marketing

The underlying context of marketing, whether in the prehistoric or contemporary sense, is the promotion of whatever product to attract and arouse the interest and likeness of the target customers' for a product or service. Marketing is about an exchange between two parties, where values such as goods, services, ideas, places are at the centre of the exchange process (Kuar& Rani, 2007). Marketing concept and philosophy is one of the most straightforward ideas in marketing. At the same time, it is one of the most important marketing philosophies. At its very core are the customer and his or her satisfaction. Marketing concept and philosophy stressed that an organisation should strive to satisfy its customers' wants and needs while meeting its goals. In simple terms, a customer is a king". From top management to the lowest levels and across all departments of an organisation, it is a philosophy and a way of doing business. The customers' needs, wants, and satisfaction should always be foremost in every manager's and employee's mind.

Historical anecdotes of business indicate that marketing has always been present (Mohammad &Mahsa, 2017). The concept is the main statement of an organisation concerning the harmony of all organisational departments to maximise the long-term profits of the organisation. Some authors like Tosan, Okumus, and Fyall (2008) believed that the marketing concept is the existential philosophy of an organisation's attempts toward identifying and meeting customers' needs and expectations.

Problem Statement

Marketing is a vital tool that promotes the fast and quick sale of goods and services to customers for maximum satisfaction, profit and interest. Marketing also offers a solution for the improvement of a business. To improve the sale of periodicals, vendors or small scale business enterprises must adopt and utilise certain tenets of marketing. According to Waithaka, Muturi and Nyabuto (2014), small scale businesses (vendors) form the backbone of economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa including Nigeria where Small Scale Businesses/vendors provide livelihood and employment of the bulk of the people. Marketing strategy in any organisation determines in the long-term whether a business will succeed or not. From the negative perception, Anetor (2015) found out that street vendors contribute to traffic congestion as well as pollution. Some street vendors are perceived to be involved in criminal activities ranging from theft to the sale of illicit goods and services. Despite all these ills, it is estimated that street vending accounts for 15 to 25% of total informal employment in African cities, Nigeria inclusive (Skinner, 2011).

Walking on the streets in Zaria metropolis, one notice the vast number of business transactions that take place on the streets especially around busy areas, junctions, markets, around the hospitals as well as school gates every day. Street vendors within the Zaria metropolis market different products ranging from snacks, perfumes, rechargeable lanterns, snazzy electronic gadgets, shirts, fruits, and periodicals. One can find almost everything for sale on the streets of Zaria metropolis. The vendors are street-smart and know how to make their money from customers. Consciously or unconsciously, the researchers took an interest in a street vendor who has been in the business of selling periodicals since 1990 without necessarily going into other business ventures. This is an indication that the business is flourishing. Else, he would have long abandoned the business. This prompted the need for the researchers to find out the marketing strategies the vendor has been using that kept the business going.

It is within this context that a study on the marketing strategies adopted for sale of periodicals by the Street Vendors in Zaria metropolis, Kaduna State, Nigeria was carried out.

Objectives

This study is aimed at finding out the marketing strategies adopted for sale of periodicals by the Street Vendors in Zaria metropolis Kaduna State Nigeria. The study aimed to achieve through the following objectives:

1. Uncover the type of periodicals the Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis market.

2. Identify the marketing strategies adopted by the Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis for sale of periodicals.

Literature review there are numerous strategies, according to Nasibu (2015), employed by vendors to market their products. These strategies include; word of mouth, personal selling, points of sale display, price reduction, free product technique, and place location as the most common promotion strategies used by street vendors. Street vendors position themselves in strategic marketing areas. They do business in the specialised location, where there is the existence of the potential customers, for example, Stationary vendors put their business near colleges/ university gates, and holy book (Bible & Quran) vendors position themselves near churches/mosque. In contrast, soft drinks, fruits, and phone chargers position their business in the main bus terminals.

By going to strategic areas, vendors get access to potential customers hence make a sale. Nasibu (2015) noted that street vendors' business location strategy is highly inspired by customer access and the availability of a high population. There is a possibility of making more sales, and poor business location could be a cause of small business failure in small businesses. Word of mouth (WOM) is becoming increasingly recognised as an important form of promotion, particularly within professional services environments, where credence qualities play a critical role in consumers' choices. Word of mouth is when one person talks to another person, he or she knows about a product, service, event or issue with which one or the other has had some experience (Harris, 2004). Some customers buy products from street vendors after getting information from their fellows who bought the products from them.

Jillian, Geoffrey, and Tim (2008) suggest that the potential for the WOM marketing strategy to power perceptions or actions depends on the nature of the sender-receiver relationship, the richness and strength of the message and its delivery, and various personal and situational factors. Burton and Khamash (2010) found that customers acquired from WOM not only have a higher contribution margin but also have a higher retention rate than those acquired from traditional media. Their study suggested that a WOM-acquired, customer contributed at least 16 per cent higher value than a customer with similar demographics but did not receive WOM information. Another method used by street vendors to communicate their offerings is personal selling. Personal selling is a technique that involves direct contact between buyer and seller (Boone & Kurtz, 2014). Street vendors go direct to buyers to convince them to buy. They knock the doors of their potential customers to show them the stock of a particular day. Other vendors enter the bus, offices, or go directly to the working place of the potential customers to induce the sale. Street vendors use personal selling as a means of persuading, informing, educating, collecting orders and feedbacks from the customers. When the street vendors interact with customers, they inform, educate, and answer the key questions about product usage, storage, and repair. Personal selling is an individualistic approach that is designed to meet the specific need of prospects, and it is usually directed to specific market segments (Arijit, 2013). It goes beyond the fundamental role of marketing communication; it plays a significant role in the entire exchange process. This is a marketing communication tool used by almost all street vendors. Street vendors make sure that their products are visible to customers either by moving in front of

the eyes of potential customers or going near to the doors of the cars/bus. Street vendors believe that if the customers see their products, possibly they will be attracted to buy. Nasibu (2015) noted that street vendors use the slogan "looking and asking is free" believing that one cannot buy until she looks and become interested. Despite the popularity of point of sale/ purchase display among small and micro businesses in Tanzania, the experiment by (Valdimar, Halldor, & Gordon, 2010) shows that the effects of point of purchase/sale display on unit sales did not change relative sales of the target brand. Some studies have shown that the point of purchase/sale encourages sales volume and profitability; however, the level of increase differs (Areni, Duhan, & Kiecker, 1999). Other scholars argue that what makes people buy is not display but the price of the product (Wakefield, Germain, Durkin, & Henrikse, 2006). To persuade people to buy the majority of their products, the street vendors use price reduction as a promotion tool. Nasibu (2015) found that street vendor's price is lower than that charged by the formal business. Nasibu (2015) also found out that street vendors are in the view that the price reduction is the best promo tool that can attract a tenth of customers per minute. They emphasised if you can reduce price, then you can make a high sales volume. However, they contended that it is difficult for them to use this technique occasionally since the costs of doing business keep increasing. The basic advantages that price discounts offer include the flexibility and convenience of the implementation (Kazmi & Batra, 2009). They can be used to retain present customers as well, though; they cannot be used throughout the life of a business. Another technique used by street vendors to promote products, is the use of free products, whereas when a customer buys one product, the customer will be given another product free. To get a free item, a customer must buy one first. The free product can be the same product line or different; usually, its price is the same or less than that price. Nasibu (2015) found out that street vendors sell used clothes under this arrangement, whereby customers were given free cloth after buying one and pay for the cash. In some arrangements, free products were more inferior compared to the original one.

A free product technique has the potential to raise sales in the short term but may upset long term sales as customers build additional inventory to qualify for a discount (Pestorius, 2006). Street vendors engage in networking; that is, a relationship that involves co-operation and collaboration between and among the vendors. This usually takes the form of information sharing on prices of items, especially those whose prices are relatively low, or fast-moving items (with a high rate of sales turnover) (Willemse, 2011). Not only do they share information about items, but they also share information about wholesalers and retailers who have flexible terms of trading concerning repayments and returning defective goods that may have been bought as well as those who have credibility for selling quality goods. This suggests that street vendors have in-depth knowledge about prevailing conditions in the market. The networking strategy also assists them to reduce cost. Networking also offers opportunities for new relationships, links or markets and access to new or complementary competencies, (Reddy, 2015). One major marketing strategy vendors adopt the exploitation of flexible operating hours. Thus, they do not have specific working hours. Rather, they decide to work long or short hours, depending on the circumstances in which they find themselves (Golden & Powell, 2000). In most cases, their working hours depending on the target customers, the season, social, religious and economic conditions and

their general health. Periodicals are types of publications that appear at regular, predictable, short intervals. They include such items as magazines, scholarly or professional journals, industry/trade journals, newspapers, and newsletters. There are three types of periodicals, namely; popular/general interest magazines, scholarly/professional journals, and industry/trade journals (McGee, 2004). Nwalo (2003) described serials as publications issued in successive parts, at regular or irregular intervals and intended to be continued indefinitely. Therein, serials include; newspapers, magazines, newsletters, journals, indexes, abstracts, reports proceedings and transactions of societies. A periodical is a serial published indefinitely at regular or stated intervals, generally more frequently than once a year. Each issue is numbered or dated consecutively and contains articles, stories or other writings. Newspapers, according to Eaman (2009), are print publications issued at regular intervals over time. Historically, newspapers were usually issued daily or weekly, but sometimes semi-weekly (twice a week), bi-weekly (every two weeks), or monthly. Newspapers could be purchased by subscription (an arrangement whereby the reader pays in advance for a year of issues), or individually, often at news-stands, grocery stores, book stores, train stations, and other places (Hall, 2008). In general, the purpose of a newspaper is to convey, as efficiently as possible, current information, or "news", to a particular audience. What constitutes "news" depends in part on the intended audience. Newspapers aimed at a general audience will carry news about politics, crime, wars, and economics just about anything that could interest a general reader. Babalola (2002) noted that Newspapers generally are published to disseminate diverse kinds of information that are of interest to the reading public, both young and old. A typical Nigerian newspaper contains varied topics of interest to a broad spectrum of the audience among who are school children, youths in their impressionable years, elites and educated adults, semi-illiterates and stark illiterates. A magazine is a publication that is issued periodically. It generally contains essays, stories, poems, articles, fiction, recipes, and images. Magazines are directed at a general and special audience, often published on a weekly or monthly basis (Summer and Miller, 2006). Dick (2004) considered magazine as a cabinet of curiosities; that is, a display case in which interesting, unusual and occasionally objects are collected and displayed as a conversation piece or an expression of the writer's wide-ranging interests or tastes. The readers are treated with a fascinating, mind-expanding and unique set of wonders they had never dreamt of it.

Benson and Charles (2014) stated that while popular magazines provide broad overviews of topics, scholarly journals provide in-depth analysis of topics and report the findings of the research, and trade magazines report on industry trends, new products or techniques. Journals contain articles, reviews and editorial content from particular discipline or subject area and are regularly published (weekly, monthly, and quarterly). Scholarly, academic and scientific journals contain articles that report on new research McGee (2004). The articles are written by researchers with academic qualifications or expert knowledge which are evidence-based, includes references and are aimed at a scholarly audience. McGee (2004) noted that there are many types of journals, including peer-reviewed journals, scholarly, academic and scientific journals, trade journals or magazines, professional journals, and current affairs journals results. They should supply enough information so that an independent researcher could repeat the

experiment or calculation to verify the results. Nwalo (2003) noted that journals are important to researchers because much of its articles are products of research, and it may never appear in any other publications. Newsletters are regular communications from an organisation aimed at a specific audience using a mailing list. The content must be timely, useful, and important to specific users who subscribe to the newsletter (McKay, 2000). Some newsletters are unsolicited and offer little more than sales information. Unlike brochures, press releases, and other sales or marketing materials, newsletters for technical communication can offer specific information to a well-defined group of product users, company employees, or organisation members. Along with good content, the layout and medium of the newsletter will also affect how likely users are to read it.

Methodology

The quantitative research method was adopted for the study. This is in line with Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007). They stated that surveys gather data at a particular point in time to describe the nature of existing conditions, identify standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determine the relationships that exist between specific events. The population of the study comprised of all the twenty-one (21) static Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis. The whole population from the fourteen locations was used for the study because the size of the population was manageable. Umar (2015) posited that if the entire population is sufficiently small, the researcher can include the entire population in the study. Questionnaire on marketing strategies adopted by Periodical Street Vendors was used as the instrument for data collection for the study. A benchmark response of 50% and above was used as adopted strategies while response less than 50% was used as Not Adopted. This was based on Gordon (2016), who opined that 50% and above is the acceptable response rate in the social sciences surveys.

Result and Discussion

Types of Periodical Publications the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis Market

The Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis market different types of periodicals ranging from Newspapers, Magazines to Newsletters. Table 1 showed the types of periodicals the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis market.

Table1: Types of Periodical Publications the Periodical Street Vendors Market

S/N	Types	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Newspapers	21	42.9
2.	Magazines	21	42.9
3.	Journals	2	4.1
4.	Newsletters	5	10.2
	Total	49	100.0

Table 1 showed the types of periodical publications being marketed by the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis. The table revealed that Newspapers and Magazines are the major periodicals the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis market. They both accounted for 42.9% score each. Journal publications are the least periodicals being marketed by the Periodical Street Vendors with (4.1%) response score. From the result in table 1, Newspapers and Magazines are the essential periodicals being marketed by the Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis, Kaduna State, Nigeria. This implies that the Periodical Street Vendors market Newspapers and Magazines more than the other two identified periodicals (journals and newsletters). This might not be unconnected with the fact that newspapers convey current information, or "news". This keeps the readers/customers up-to-date with recent happenings within and outside Nigeria from different perspectives ranging from politics, economy, foreign relations, sports, and entertainments.

The marketing strategies adopted by the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis range from trade location to different dimensions. The different marketing strategies adopted and the like are presented in Table 2

Table 2: Marketing Strategies Adopted by the Periodical Street Vendors for Sale of Periodical Publications in Zaria Metropolis

S/No	Types of Periodical Publications									
	Marketing Strategy Adopted	Frequency	Newspaper		Magazines		Journal		Newsletter	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Trade Location	21	100.0	20	95.2	9	42.9	15	71.4	
2	Word of mouth	20	95.2	21	100.0	10	47.6	18	85.7	
3	Personal selling	21	100.0	21	100.0	21	100.0	20	95.2	
4	Point of sale	20	95.2	21	100.0	7	33.3	16	76.2	
5	Price discount	18	85.7	16	76.2	20	95.2	20	95.2	
6	Free products promotion	21	100.0	21	100.0	21	100.0	21	100.0	
7	Networking	20	95.2	19	90.5	15	71.4	20	95.2	
8	Flexible Operating or Working Hours	19	90.5	18	85.7	19	90.5	17	81.0	

Benchmark: 50% and above = Adopted; < 50% Not Adopted

Key: - F- Frequency; %- Percentage

Different marketing strategies are adopted by the Periodical Street Vendors in the sale of periodicals in Zaria Metropolis, as indicated in table 2. Table 2 showed the respondents' responses on the marketing strategies adopted by the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis in marketing their periodicals. Based on the benchmark of 50% average response scores, it has been discovered that the Periodical Street Vendors in Zaria Metropolis successfully

employed all the marketing strategies for the sale of Newspapers, Magazine, and Newsletters with are stone percentage score of 42.9%, 47.6%, and 33.3% respectively. By and large, it can be said all the seven (7) marketing strategies identified are being employed for sale of periodical publications except that of point of sale strategy which is usually employed for sale of journal publication with 33.3% response scores 70-100% response scores respectively. However, in the case of Journal publications, strategies 1, 2 and 4 were generally not fully employed.

The findings of this study are in line with that of Nasibu (2015), who found out that numerous marketing strategies are being employed by vendors to market their products. The strategies include; word of mouth, personal selling, points of sale display, price reduction, free product technique, and place location as the most common promotion strategies used by the street vendors. From this finding, it is evident that all the identified marketing strategies are being used by street vendors, as seen in their responses in table 2.

Conclusion

It has been discovered that the Periodical Street Vendors adopt all the eight (8) identified marketing strategies for the sale of the periodical publications they commonly sell in Zaria metropolis. It can thus be concluded that adoption of a variety of marketing strategies impact a lot on the sale of periodical publications which in turn keep the Periodical Street Vendors in business continually.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Periodical publishers should organise seminars, workshops or sensitisation campaigns for periodical street vendors on the need to put together different strategies that would boost their business as well as keeping them in the business.
2. The government should, as a matter of urgency give periodical Street Vendor's license to make them gain recognition in the society as they contribute to a large extent to the growth and development of the informal economy.

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