**THE EXTENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKETING CONCEPT PHILOSOPHY BY THE NIGERIAN MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN ANAMBRA AND ENUGU STATES**

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**Abstract**

*The major purpose of this study was to determine the extent of implementation of marketing concept by the Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States of Nigeria. The population consisted of 360 respondents made up of 180 general managers and 180 marketing managers of 180 registered Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States of Nigeria. The entire population was studied. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated for study. A structured questionnaire was the main data-gathering instrument. The computation of data collected was done with Statistical Packaging for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 10.0. The reliability of the instrument after face validation was established using Cronbach Alpha (∞) formula. The reliability coefficient of the entire instrument is 0.85. The data were analyzed using mean with standard deviation. The t-test statistics was used in testing the two null hypotheses formulated. The findings to the study revealed that the companies studied determined consumer wants needs and preferences prior to product development. Their products were acceptable to consumers but not highly acceptable. It was recommended* that Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States, which are not yet fully committed to the practice of marketing concept, should do so as this will enable them to meet the needs and wants of the consumers and also achieve and maintain long-term profitability.

**Introduction**

Marketing concept is generally known as a business philosophy, which states that the surest way to be successful in any business is to be consumer-oriented (Oliver, 1990). This means that a business should determine the wants, needs and preferences of potential consumers and develop appropriate products or services that will give them maximum satisfaction. Kotler and Keller (2009) noted that there are five competing business philosophies under which organizations and other businesses conduct their marketing activities. These philosophies include the production concept, the product concept, the selling concept, the marketing concept and the holistic marketing concept. Onah and Thomas (1993) defined marketing concept as a philosophy of business management, which states that activities of a company are directed towards the satisfaction of the consumers at a profit. Edoga (1995), Nwokoye (2000) and Akanya (2005) observed that most Nigerian consumers do not derive maximum satisfaction from the goods supplied and services rendered to them by most Nigerian manufacturing companies. Akanya (2005) observed that the Nigerian market has not been providing the goods and services that actually fulfill the expectations of customers.

The primary measure of any business success is on how well it serves its customers. If a business venture does not serve the interest of its customers satisfactorily, such business cannot justify the purpose for its existence (Jolson, 1978). Practice of marketing concept implies that firms respond to customer’s wants and needs. Bovee and Thrill (1992) noted that a conscious dedication to meeting customer needs and wants require understanding what customers expect and meeting those expectations.

The objective of this paper is to find out the extent of implementation of marketing concept by Nigerian Manufacturing Companies in Anambra and Enugu States.

 The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent do Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu states determine consumers’ needs, wants and preferences before embarking on product development?

2. To what extent are the qualities of the products of Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu states acceptable to consumers?

3. What is the extent to which the Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu states modify their products qualities to adjust to improve consumer satisfaction? The following hypotheses guided the study.

1.There is no significance difference between the opinions of the general managers and the marketing managers on the extent to which Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu states determine the consumers’ needs ,wants and preferences prior to product development.

2 There is no significance difference between general managers and marketing managers opinions on the extent to which the Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States of Nigeria modified their products to adjust to improve consumer satisfaction.

**Theoretical Framework**

Adoption of marketing concept demands that organizations should highly perform all the marketing activities that characterize marketing oriented businesses based on the four components of marketing concepts. (Kotler,2005). Various authors, Jolson (1978), McCarthy and Williams (1990), Bovee and Thrill (1992) and Osuala (2005) identified three components of marketing concept. These components include: Customer orientation, integration of functions of marketing and profitability. These authors have consensus of opinion that marketing concept demands that companies meet the expectations of consumers while making reasonable profit with the corporation of the functional areas within the organization. Kotler (2005) insists that strict adherence to the philosophy behind marketing concept implies that organizations must do the following, define their target market carefully, meet the customers wants and needs, integrate marketing with other functions in the company, achieve and maintain long term profitability.

**Methodology**

Three hundred and sixty respondents consisting 180 general managers and 180 marketing managers drown from 180 registered Nigerian Manufacturing Companies operating in Anambra and Enugu States Nigeria (Manufacturers Association of Nigeria) constituted the population and were used for the study.A structured five-point questionnaire with assigned values ranging from 1 = Never Performed (NP) to 5 = Highly Performed (HP) and another ranging from 1 = Not acceptable (NA) to 5 = Highly acceptable were used for the study. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while t-test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. A mean score that has up to 3.00 and above was accepted while a mean score that is less than 3.00 was reject. The null hypothesis was accepted where t-calculated at 0.05 alpha level was less than the t- table value for the given degree of freedom.

**Results**

**Consider Analysis for Research Question 1**

Table 1 below shows the model summary which sought to establish the respondents extent of determining the consumers’ needs, wants and preferences before embarking on product development. practice of marketing concept by Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States.

**Table 1: Mean ratings with standard deviations of respondents on extent of determination of consumers’ wants, needs and preferences**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** |  **G.M****N1 – 143** |  **M.M****N2 – 156** |  |
|   | The Companies | X1 SD1 | Remark | X2  SD2 | Remark  |
| 1. | Conduct concept testing prior to product development. | 4.10 1.09 | P | 4.17 1.07 | P |
| 2. | Determine if the product concept has strong consumer appeal | 4.00 0.92 | P | 4.08 .93 | P |
| 3. | Determine consumer attitude prior to product development. | 3.85 89 | P | 4.03 .86 | P |
| 4. | Determine consumer initial buying intention prior to product  | 3.80 .85 | P | 3.85 .93 | P |
| 5. | Conduct test marketing. | 4.54 65 | HP | 4.54 .70 | HP |
| 6. | Determine the functionality of the prototype. | 4.12 79 | P | 4.10 .90  | P |
| 7. | Tests product prototypes design. | 4.28 78 | P | 4.31 .76 | P |
| 8. | Measures the potential demand for its new product. | 3.06 71 | P | 4.15 .71 | P |
| 9. | Determine the services consumers require to support product purchases. | 3.68 80 | P | 3.71 .78 | P |
| 10. | Determine product and purchases preferences of consumers prior development | 3.94 82 | P | 3.84 .87 | P |
| 11. | Determine consumer purchase behaviour prior to product development | 3.59 87 | P | 3.58 .85 | P |

**Note:** GM – General Managers. MM – Marketing Managers.

The data presented in Table 1 showed that out of the 11 marketing activities for determining the consumers’ wants, needs and preferences prior to product development both the general and marketing managers rated item 5 as “highly performed” with mean scores of 4.54 and the standard deviation (SD) of 0.65. The remaining 10 items were rated “performed” with means ranging from 3.59 to 4.28. However, item 11 was the least rated item by both the general and the marketing managers with means scores of 3.59 and 3.58.

Analysis for research question 2

Tab[e 2 below shows the summary of the rating of the respondents on the extent of acceptability of the Nigerian manufacturing companies’products

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviations of the respondents on product acceptability.

 G.M M.M

 Items N1 = 143 N2 = 156 S/N X1 X1 SD1 Rem X2 SD2 R

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 12 | 12 Product performance quality  | 4.65  | .55 | HA  | 4.70  | .51  | HA |
| 13 | Product conformance quality  | 4.38  | .60  |  A  | 4.39  | .63 | A |
| 14 | Product form | 4.20  | .74  | A | 4.22 | .78 | A |
| 15 | Product features | 4.46  | .61 |  HA  | 4.47 | 58  | HA |
| 16  | Product durability  | 4.41  | .70  | A |  4.43  | .75 | A |
| 17 | Product reliability | 4.06  | .96 | A | 4.19 | .91 | A |
| 18 | Product reparability | 2.91 | 1.30  | SWA | 2.97 | 1.31  | SWA |
| 19 | Product style | 3.83  | 1.07  | A | 3.81 | 1.04 | A |
| 20 | Product design | 4.05  | .85 | A | 4.01  | .92 | A |
| 21 | Product distribution activities  | 4.00  | 69  | A | 4.04  | 70 | A |
| 22 | Product prices  | 3.90  | .73 | A | 3.95  | .71 | A |
| 23 | Product promotion activities  | 4.04  | .76 | A | 4.03 | 76 | A |

The data presented in Table 2 revealed that out of the 12 products attributes for determining the extent of acceptability of the company’s product, both groups of respondents rated items 12 (product performance) with the mean score of 4.46 and SD of .55, and 15 (product features) as “highly acceptable” 9 items were ‘acceptable’. The least rated product’s attribute by them was item 18 (product reparability) with the mean scores of 2.91 and 2.97 and SD of 1.30 and 1.31 as rated by the both the general and marketing managers respectively It was therefore somewhat acceptable by consumers.

**Analysis for Research Question 3:**

Table 3 below shows the summary of the ratings of the respondents on the extent the Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu states modify their products qualities to adjust to improve consumers satisfaction.

**Table 3**: **Mean ratings and standard deviation of the respondents on the extent of modification of products qualities by Nigerian manufacturing companies.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** |  **G.M M.M****N2 – 143 N2 – 15** |  |
|   | The companies products undergo laboratory analysis for - | X1 SD1 | X2  SD2 | Remark  |
| 1. | Quality control.  | 4.04 1.03 | 4.103 1.02  | P |
| 2. | Improvement exercise aiming at up-grading the products performance quality.  | 4.52 .53 | 4.56 .58 | HP |
| 3. | Improving the product durability | 4.39 .71 | 4.41 .74 | P |
| 4. | Improving the product reliability  | 4.39 . 78 | 4.41 .69 | P |
| 5. | Improving the product texture | 3.71 2.68 | 3.53 | P |
| 6. | Improving the product taste  | 2.91 1.16 | 2.83 1.53  | AP |
| 7. | Feature improvement exercise aiming atchanging the size of the products  | 3.08 1.00 | 3.01 1.05 | AP |
| 8. | Changing the weight of the products | 2.92 .88 | 2.92 .89 | AP |
| 9. | Improving the appearance of the products  | 3.67 .96 | 3.60 .99 | P |
| 10. | Improving the safety of the product | 4.36 .71 | 4.36 .69 | P |
| 11. | Improving the ease of use of the products | 4.18 .66 | 4.20 . 65 | P |

**Note:** G.M – general Managers. MM – Marketing Managers.

The data presented in table 3 revealed that out of the marketing activities on the extent of modification of products qualities by the Nigerian manufacturing companies both groups of respondents rated items 2 as “highly performed, and 7 of the items as ‘performed while 3 others were rated as averagely performed. The most performed activity of all is item 2 (the company undertakes quality improvement aiming at up-grading the product performance quality) followed by items 3.

**Analysis for Ho1**

Having established the extent of practice of marketing concept by Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States, we proceed to determine the relationship between the opinions of general managers and marketing managers on the extent of practice of marketing concept by the companies. We use t-test statistics to determine the equality of means of the variables (see tables 3, 4 & 5 below)

**Table 4: T-test analysis of the mean ratings of the general managers and marketing managers on the extent of determination of consumers wants, needs and preferences prior to product development by the Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu states.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** |  **G.M M.M** **N2 – 143 N2 – 15** |  |  |
|   | The Companies | X1 SD1 | X2  SD2 | t-cal | Remark  |
| 1. | Conduct concept testing prior to product development. | 4.10 1.80 | 4.17 1.07 | -.52 | NS |
| 2. | Determine if the product concept has strong consumer appeal | 4.00 0.92 | 4.08 .93 | -.651 | NS |
| 3. | Determine consumer attitude prior to product development. | 3.85 .89 | 4.03 .86 | -.1.75 | NS |
| 4. | Determine consumer initial buying intention prior to product  | 3.80 .85 | 3.85 .93 | -.47 | NS |
| 5. | Conduct test marketing. | 4.11 .79 | 4.10 .90 | .00 | NS |
| 6. | Determine the functionality of the prototype. | 4.28 .78 | 4.31 .76 | .17 | NS |
| 7. | Tests product prototypes design. | 4.06 .71 | 4.51 .71 | .24 | NS |
| 8. | Measures the potential demand for its new product. | 3.67 .80 | 3.71 .78 | -.29 | NS |
| 9. | Determine the services consumers require to support product purchases. | 3.94 .82 | 3.84 .87 | 1.07 | NS |
| 10. | Determine product and purchases preferences of consumers prior development | 3,59 .87 | 3.58 .85 | .85 | NS |

**Note:** G.M – General Managers. MM – Marketing Managers:Degree of freedom (df) = 297, p = 0.05, NS = Non significant. t-test = 1.97

The t-test results presented in table 4 revealed non significant differences between the mean ratings of the two groups of respondents for the 11 marketing activities listed by the researchers. The calculated t-value for each of the 11 items is less than the table t-value of 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance and 297 degree of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis (Ho1) was accepted for all the 11 marketing activities at the same level of significance and degree of freedom.

**Analysis for Ho2**

Table 5:Ho2

T–test analysis on the mean ratings of general and marketing managers on the extent of acceptability of company’s products.

 G.M. M.M

 N1 = 143 N2 = 156

S/N Items X1 SD1 X2 SD2 t –cal Remark

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Product performance quality | 4.65 | .56 | 4.70 | .51 | -.78 | NS |
| 2 | Product conformance quality | 4.38 | .60 | 4.30 | .63 | -.19 | NS |
| 3 | Product form | 4.20 | 74 | 4.22 | .78 | -.25 | NS |
| 4 | Product features | 4.46 | .61 | 4.47 | .58 | -.19 | NS |
| 5 | Product durability | 4.41 | .70 | 4.43 | .75 | -.29 | NS |
| 6 | Product reliability | 4.06 | .96 | 4.19 | .98 | 1.22 | NS |
| 7 | Product reparability | 2.91 | 1.30 | 2.97 | 1.31 | -.43 | NS |
| 8 | Product style | 3.83 | 1.07 | 3.81 | 1.04 | -.09 | NS |
| 9 | Product design | 4.05 | .85 | 4.01 | .92 | .41 | NS |
| 10 | Product distribution | 4.00 | .69 | 4.04 | .70 | -.47 | NS |
| 11 | Product prices | 3.90 | .73 | 3.95 | .71 | -.56 | NS |
| 12 | Product promotion activities | 4.04 | .76 | 4.03 | .76 | .19 | NS |

The t – test results presented in table 3 reveal that no significant difference exists in the mean ratings of the general and marketing managers on all the 12 product attributes listed. There is no item with t-cal value more than table t – value of 1.97 accepted for all the items at 0.05 level of significance and 297 degree of freedom.

**Table 6: T-test analysis on the mean ratings of general and marketing managers on the extent of modification of company’s products to adjust to improve consumers satisfaction.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** |  **G.M M.M****N2 – 143 N2 – 15** |  |  |
|   | The companies products undergo laboratory analysis for - | X1 SD1 | X2  SD2 | t-cal | Remark  |
| 1. | Quality control.  | 4.04 1.03 | 4.103 1.02  | .65 | NS |
| 2. | Improvement exercise aiming at up-grading the products performance quality.  | 4.52 .53 | 4.56 .58 | .72 | NS |
| 3. | Improving the product durability | 4.39 .71 | 4.41 .74 | .22 | NS |
| 4. | Improving the product reliability  | 4.39 . 78 | 4.41 .69 | .63 | NS |
| 5. | Improving the product texture | 3.71 2.68 | 3.53 | 1.43 | NS |
| 6. | Improving the product taste  | 2.91 1.16 | 2.83 1.53  | .45 | NS |
| 7. | Feature improvement exercise aiming atchanging the size of the products  | 3.08 1.00 | 3.01 1.05 | .60 | NS |
| 8. | Changing the weight of the products | 2.92 .88 | 2.92 .89 | 0.1 | NS |
| 9. | Improving the appearance of the products  | 3.67 .96 | 3.60 .99 | .67 | NS |
| 10. | Improving the safety of the product | 4.36 .71 | 4.36 .69 | .06 | NS |
| 11. | Improving the ease of use of the products | 4.18 .66 | 4.20 . 65 | .32 | NS |

**Note:** G.M – general Managers. MM – Marketing Managers.

**Notation:** Degree of freedom (df) = 297, P = 0.05, NS = Non significant. t-table = 1.97

The t-test result in table 5 revealed no significant difference between the mean ratings of the two groups of respondents on the extent the products of the Nigerian manufacturing companies are modified to improve consumer satisfaction.

**Discussion**

The result of this study provided some useful insight and information on the manufacturers marketing practices.

Research question 1 sought to find the extent of determination of consumers wants, needs and preferences before embarking on products development by the Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States. Findings revealed that out of 11 marketing activities for determining the extent of determination of consumers wants needs and preferences before embarking on product development both general managers and marketing managers rated “item 5” as highly performed (HP) while the 10 others are performed. The present finding refutes that of Ezeli (1992) and Eze and Lambert (1989) that a good number of Nigerian indigenous manufacturing companies are least equipped for marketing research. The finding is in consonance with the postulation made by Jobber (1978) that companies need to understand their customer’s needs before developing their marketing mix. There is no doubt that the competitive nature of market in recent times must have forced companied to engage seriously in marketing research activities.

Finding pertaining to research question 2 revealed that out of the 12 products attributes for determining the extent of acceptability of the Nigerian manufacturing companies’ products, both groups of respondents rated items 12 (product performance) and item 15 (product features) as highly acceptable, 9 items were ‘acceptable’, while item 18 (product reparability) was the least rated by them as ‘somewhat acceptable’ by consumers. This is contrary to the finding made by Nwokoye (2000) that the quality of the typical products of the Nigerian manufacturing companies was sadly lacking. According to her made in Nigerian goods had long disillusioned the average Nigerian consumers. However her findings might be correct because it has been along time since she made her own findings. The competitive nature of the market and improvement in technology since after her findings must have contributed to the improvement in quality of products of the Nigerian manufacturing companies as was revealed by the present study.

Findings to the research question 3 also revealed that out of the eleven marketing activities for determining the extent of modification of companies products to adjust to improve consumer satisfaction both groups of respondents rated item 2 as highly performed while 7 others were performed 3 items were averagely performed.

The findings pertaining to the hypothesis one revealed the extent of determination of consumer wants, needs and preferences through marketing research by the Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States. The result showed that no significant differences existed between the mean responses of the general and marketing.

managers in all the marketing activities listed by the researchers. The null hypothesis was therefore up-held for all the items. This means that the companies conduct marketing research to determine the needs, wants and preferences of consumers and insist on customer satisfaction before embarking on product development. This finding is contrary to the finding of Ezeli (1992) that there was generally a gross inadequate market research prior to the development of new products in Nigeria.

The result of the second hypothesis shows the extent of modification of companies’ products to adjust to improve consumers’ satisfaction. It revealed that the companies studied modify their products to improve the satisfaction of consumers. This finding agreed with the postulation made by Schewe and Smith (1990) that consumers’ tastes are always in a state of flux. Products preferred today may not be wanted tomorrow, that marketers must monitor changes in consumers’ tastes and develop products to meet their latest wants and needs. The result of hypothesis three also revealed that both the general and the marketing managers of the Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu states agreed that their products are acceptable to consumers but not highly acceptable to them

**Conclusion**

Findings of this study revealed that Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States practice marketing concept to a reasonable extent. They determine the needs, wants and preferences of consumers prior to product development through marketing research; The qualities of their products are acceptable but not highly acceptable. Determination of the needs, wants and preferences of consumers prior to product development is not enough guarantee that the consumers must be provided with the identified goods and services that will give them maximum satisfaction. This is because the quality of companies’ products can be affected by many other factors. The value of this study lies in the fact that it reveals the importance of the practice of marketing concept by Nigerian manufacturing companies.

**Recommendation**

Based on the findings and conclusion the following recommendations are hereby made.

1. Those Nigerian manufacturing companies in Anambra and Enugu States, which are not yet fully committed to the performance of the marketing activities that characterized the marketing oriented companies, should so do. This will enable them to meet the needs and wants of their target market in order to attract and retain their customer, while making reasonable returns on investment. Several scholars have found that companies that embraced the marketing concept achieve superior performance.
2. The marketing department should also continuously gather and evaluate ideas on new products and services improvement, to meet customers’ changing needs.
3. The manufacturing staff should ensure that their products are of acceptable quality to consumers by meeting the Nigerian Industrial Standards Organization of Nigerian (SON).This will encourage the patronage of locally produced goods by Nigerians and also leads to the growth of the Nigeria economy

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