



CULTURAL FACTORS AND CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF MALE CLOTHES IN CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE. NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study explored how cultural influences impact consumer purchasing decisions regarding men's apparel in Calabar. Culture is fluid and evolves alongside the values embedded in a given environment. The consumption of men's clothing, among other products, may be shaped by cultural norms and beliefs. To gather data from participants, the research employed a cross-sectional survey design. A total of 50 respondents were selected using a simple random sampling technique. The study utilised a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale to assess key variables, which was distributed to male participants, including students and civil servants. A multiple regression analysis evaluated the significance of religious beliefs, occupational patterns, and traditional customs. The result showed that religion significantly impacted the consumer buying behaviour of male clothes in Calabar. Work pattern and tradition remained insignificant. Thus, it was recommended that male manufacturing firms and sales outlets of Clothing should ensure that the religious values of various market segments are considered before targeting their product to a particular market segment. This recommendation should serve as a basis for marketing planning for the male fashion industry.

Keywords: consumer buying behavior, culture, religion, tradition, and work pattern

JEL: M3, M30, M31, M39

INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic business environment where economic crises deepens and competition becomes fiercer, consumers are becoming more and more important because they are regarded as kings in the modern marketing era which every organization or production firm must strive to maximally satisfy if such a firm or organization must accomplish its organizational objectives (Mufudza, 2018).

Hence, for firms to maximally satisfy the insatiable objective and want of the consumers and also survive in such an intense competitive business environment, it becomes very important to influence the behaviour of these consumers since it cannot be controlled according to Yakup et al (2011), and as such in order to influence the behaviour of consumers it becomes imperative to consider their cultural status quo because every individual is a product of the culture of his or her own society which in a way considerably affects the decisions and actions they take on daily basis as regard their purchases. Supporting the above viewpoint, Yakup (2014) asserts that culture plays

a pivotal role as the primary factor shaping an individual's desires and actions. Culture plays significant role in impacting on what people wear in this modern days. The changing value of the society is accounted for by the happenings in the society which expresses cultural dynamics on how old fashioned dress are fast fading to the new mode of dressing. As noted by Etuk, Anyadighibe, James and Uma (2022); Aydin and Kaya (2018), Woldegiorgis & Akalu, (2018); Agyeman & Pee, (2019), Sadek & El-Gohary (2019), culture significantly affects consumer buying behaviour towards fashion clothing.

The analysis of consumer behaviour investigates the ways in which individuals, groups, or organisations select, obtain, use, and dispose of goods, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy their requirements. Additionally, it examines how these behaviours impact both consumers and society, along with the significance of repeat purchases in ensuring the long-term viability of businesses (Schivinski, 2019; Yakup & Sabastian, 2012). In the Nigerian marketing environment, culture is believed to be a potent determinant of consumer purchase behaviour (Igwe & Onuekwusi, 2022; Onourah, 2022; Oyewunmi & Iweka, 2020). The behaviour of male consumers is also a function of cultural indices that determine the pattern of their clothes buying behaviour. The society is perceived to have moved from old fashioned pattern of dressing to a more modern way, this position has led the researcher to inquire if this perceived behavioural change in clothes consumption is influenced by the dynamic nature culture.

Dawson et al (2006) and Recker and Salem (2014) positioned that attitudes characterizes the pattern of consumer's choices which may be defined by what a particular group of people see as consistent with their values. As such, in the course of this study the operational components of culture such as religion, work pattern and tradition would form the basis for measuring their impact on the consumer buying behaviour of male clothes in Calabar.

Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) assert that culture remains a powerful force in shaping human behaviour. Consequently, numerous scholars, including Ahkong and Kwon (2004), Yakup, Celik, and Oruc (2011), as well as Bashir, Muhammed, Sabbar, Itussain, and Sarku (2013), have investigated the impact of culture on consumer behaviour. Their research has consistently concluded that culture is the most fundamental factor influencing an individual's desires and purchasing patterns. However, Ahkong and Kwon (2004) argue that most studies on the relationship between culture and consumer behaviour have been conducted in fragmented ways, lacking a comprehensive framework for understanding cultural influences. This limitation has left a research gap, which this study aims to address. Specifically, the cultural dimensions influencing men's clothing consumption—such as religious beliefs, occupational patterns, and traditional customs—have not been widely explored as distinct variables. Therefore, this research seeks to fill the existing gap by examining the impact of culture on male clothing purchase decisions in Calabar through the lenses of religion, work patterns, and tradition.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical framework

This research is grounded in the cultural determinism theory, which, as Hofstede (1997) explains, asserts that the concepts, beliefs, values, and meanings individuals acquire as members of a society shape their identity. Consequently, this theory suggests that the culture in which one is nurtured fundamentally influences their emotions and behaviour.

This theory is further divided into the optimistic and pessimistic view in which the optimistic view places no limit on the abilities of humans to decide their actions while the pessimistic view opines that people are what they are conditioned to be and as such human's remain passive creatures and do whatever their culture demands of them to do thereby leading to behaviourism which in a way explains the courses of human behaviour. Supporting the above postulation, Wallace (1965) argued that culture serves as the overarching force that shapes personality, which in turn acts as the primary driver of consumer behaviour. The cultural determinism theory further opines that we are essentially what we learn to be and this is achieved through the interaction with the society.

An overview on the impact of culture on consumer buying behaviour

Culture has immensely been considered in several ways by various scholars but such considerations according to Ahkang and Kwon (2004) were on a piecemeal basis. Supporting the above viewpoint, Allison (1948), in his discussion on the influence of social class on learning, defines culture as encompassing all behaviours exhibited by individuals in alignment with their family, religious beliefs, and various social groups. Similarly, Howard and Sheth (1969) describe culture as a selectively constructed human response to experiences, manifesting as a pattern of behaviour that incorporates essential traditional values and ideas. These, in turn, shape consumer motivations, brand perceptions, and purchasing intentions. Given its profound influence on consumer behaviour, culture has been extensively examined by scholars such as Lawan et al. (2013), Kotler (2009), Schiffman and Kanuk (1997), Yakup (2014), Nwagbara (2006), Hofstede (1985), Yakup et al. (2011), and Sahid et al. (2013). This scholarly attention is attributed to culture's distinct attributes, which make it a crucial factor in shaping marketing strategies. Reinforcing this perspective, Fatt et al. (2010) assert that culture remains a powerful societal force, significantly shaping individual lifestyles and values, which in turn have a substantial impact on consumers' emotional and cognitive decision-making regarding consumption and expenditure.

Consumer purchasing choices, as Wagar (2014) explains, vary among individuals and are influenced by both behavioural and socio-cultural elements. Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) further categorise the consumer decision-making process into three core components: input, process, and output. The input phase encompasses external stimuli that serve as sources of product information and influence socio-cultural variables, which, once internalised, affect purchasing decisions. To provide a comprehensive framework for understanding culture's impact on consumer buying behaviour, Hofstede (1980) introduced a cultural dimension model. Nokata and Silva (2009) regard this model as one of the most influential cultural theories in social science research, as it conceptualises culture as a collective set of characteristics that shapes how a group interacts with and responds to its environment.

Conclusively, empirical research conducted by Lawan and Ramat (2013) to access the cultural factors that influence the consumer buying behaviour of clothes in Borno State Nigeria showed

that societal norms which remains a cultural component has a major influence or impact on the consumer buying behaviour of clothes. The current work will however focus on examining the influence of cultural factors such as religion, work pattern and tradition on consumer buying behavior of male clothes.

The concept of consumer behaviour

Jacoby et al. (1998) describe consumer behaviour as the process by which decision-making entities select, use, and ultimately dispose of goods, services, or ideas. Similarly, Yakup and Sabastian (2012) define consumer behaviour as the study of how individuals, groups, or organisations make decisions regarding the selection, acquisition, usage, and disposal of products, services, experiences, or ideas to meet their needs, while also considering the wider societal effects of these actions. Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) emphasize that this process is a crucial component of the purchasing or decision-making journey, which involves five essential stages: identifying a need or problem, gathering relevant information, assessing available alternatives, making a purchase decision, and reflecting on the post-purchase experience. These stage, make up the decision making or buying process and as such they are diagrammatically shown thus:

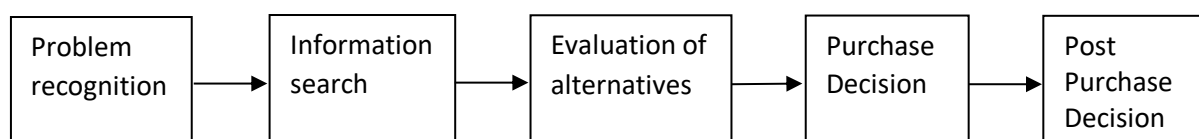


Figure 1: Showing the decision/making process

Source: Extracts from Yakup and Sabastian (2012).

From the above figure, the problem recognition stage often times referred to as the need recognition stage is the first stage in the decision making process of the consumer and it requires the consumer to acknowledge the existence of a particular need which must be satisfied, and when such need is acknowledged the consumer moves to the next stage of the decision process which is the information search stage, in this stage the consumer begins to seek for information on how to satisfy the acknowledged need. In this stage, information is sourced from family members, friends, neighbours etc who must have had contact with the needed product. Having obtained all needed information, such information is now evaluated and comparisons now made between each received an obtained brand or product information. In the evaluation stage, decisions regarding what colour, style fashion or brand should be purchased is made after much comparison based on product features like colour, brand name, durability and affordability. In the purchase decision stage, the consumer actually purchases the product based on her previous evaluation in order to satisfy his/her acknowledged need or problem and after the product is been purchased the consumer goes into the post purchase stage in which the consumer/buyer re-evaluates the purchased item to ascertain if such a product truly satisfies the acknowledged need and when such a product maximally satisfies the consumer a repeat purchase or brand loyalty is encouraged but if otherwise it results into cognitive dissonance.

Religion and consumer buying behaviour

Clarke and Brynee (1993) emphasise the considerable difficulty in formulating a universally agreed-upon definition of religion. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, the

conceptualisation provided by Koenig, McCallough, and Larson (2000) will be utilised. These scholars characterise religion as an organised framework of doctrines, ceremonies, customs, and symbols designed to establish a bond with the divine or transcendent—whether understood as God, a supreme force, or an ultimate existence. Furthermore, religion plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's perception of their social connections within a collective environment. As an integral aspect of culture, religion significantly affects people's principles, perspectives, and routines, which in turn influence their way of life and ultimately impact consumer behaviour (Nejdot, 1994). In the same vein, Terpstra and David (1991) describe religion as a shared framework of convictions, concepts, and behaviours that, despite lacking empirical validation, are believed to shape both natural occurrences and human affairs. Similarly, Hirschman (1983) contends that religious identity, akin to ethnicity and nationality, is a fundamental aspect of an individual's existence, exerting an influence on elements such as reproductive patterns, household size, educational pursuits, financial ambitions, and pivotal life decisions.

Delener (1990) asserts that an individual's level of religiosity is among the most influential cultural forces affecting purchasing behaviour, as consumer decisions are often guided by adherence to specific religious beliefs. Supporting this viewpoint, Sood and Nasu (1999) argue that the influence of religion on an individual's mindset and actions is primarily determined by the significance they attribute to their faith. In an effort to explore the connection between religious beliefs and consumer behaviour more thoroughly, Wilkes et al. (1986) carried out research involving a sample of 602 Protestant consumers. Their study revealed that the level of religiosity impacts multiple facets of consumer lifestyle, which subsequently shape purchasing choices. Supporting this notion, Mahesh (2003) conducted an exploratory study on how religion shapes consumer shopping habits. The results revealed that religious beliefs, values, attitudes, and lifestyle choices significantly influence how individuals acquire information and make purchasing decisions. Thus, this study hypothesizes that:

H₁: Religion has no significant influence on consumer buying behaviour

Work pattern and consumer buying behaviour

The buying behaviour of individuals differ from individual to individual and this is because the buying considerations and decisions of consumers are diversely influenced with several factors of which work pattern (occupation) remains a vital personal cum economical factor capable of exerting some influence on consumers' behaviour. Supporting the above view point scholars like Enis (1974) Dibb et al (1988), Zikmond and Amico (1993), Sotlow (1996), Kotler and Armstrong (2007) in Fatimah et al (2012) all considered work pattern (occupation) as a major personal or economic factor that influences the buying behaviour of consumers.

Thus, the term work pattern is operationally defined as the nature of an individual's job or means of livelihood and as such Jain (2010) opined that an individual's nature of job has a direct influence on the product or brand he/she wishes to buy. For instance, irrespective of the fact that all consumers pass through the decision making process before making a purchase the fact remains that most consumers make purchase decisions to reflect their status that is the buying of a lawyer would easily be differentiated from that of a businessman or teacher and as such, it is believed that consumers tend to buy products or brands that match up with their personality and according to Kim (2000) consumers personality tend to identify the purchase of certain brands as a means of self-expression.



Moreso, the term work pattern (occupation) as an economic factor influencing consumer behaviour is viewed from the income earned aspect since the income earned remains the end product of every occupation and as such Shah (2010) maintained that the higher the income and savings of a consumer the more the consumer would be influenced to favour expensive products but a consumer with a low income and saving would be influenced to purchase inexpensive products. Hence, the impact of work pattern on the consumer buying behaviour is shown in the words of Jain (2010) who maintained that an individual's nature of job has direct influence on the product a brand he/she wishes to buy. Thus, this study conjectures that:

H₂: Work pattern has no significant effect on consumer buying behaviour

Tradition and consumer buying behaviour

The word "Tradition" is originated from the Latin word "Traditio" the noun form of the word "Tradere" which means to transmit or hand over for safe keeping. Traditional beliefs are customs, methods, or beliefs that have remained unchanged for a long time (Ndemanu, 2018). Tradition as an element of culture according to Yakup et al (2012) is a set of belief, objects, behaviour, customs that are transmitted from one generation to another. Belief as an aspect of tradition is defined by Kotler (n.d) as a descriptive thought that a person holds about something and as such Kotler further stresses on the importance of belief in consumer behaviour because the people (consumers) formulate their beliefs about specific products and services which in turn constitutes the product and brand images which facilitates the buying behaviour of consumers. Hence, the societal norms and values guiding the society in which a man belongs to majorly constitutes the determining factors as to the behaviour an individual displays when searching for goods and services to purchase. Supporting the above viewpoint, Lawan and Ramat (2013) opined that societal norms as a cultural component has a major influence on the consumer buying behaviour of clothes. Thus, this study hypothesizes that:

H₃: Tradition has no significant effect on consumer buying behaviour

Conceptual framework and model showing the impact of culture on consumer buying behaviour
Culture being the antecedent of consumer behaviour remains a potent force in any society and as such having a profound effect on an individual's lifestyle and values. Wallace (1965) asserts that culture serves as a dominant force that shapes personality and continues to be the primary factor influencing consumer behaviour. The buying behaviour shown by individuals when searching for, acquiring and disposing products are mostly influenced by the pervasive nature of culture which according to Lawan and Zanna (2013) encompasses all aspects of a society such as religion, work pattern, tradition, technology, language etc.

Thus, to further appreciate the effect of culture and its components such as religion, work pattern and tradition on the consumer buying behaviour the model below would be considered.

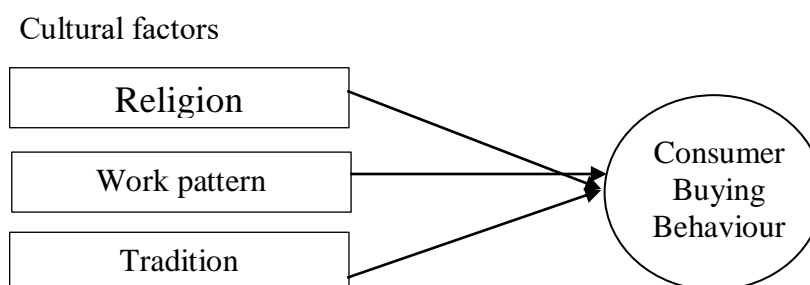


Figure 2: Showing the Impact of Cultural components on the consumer buying behavior of male clothes in Calabar.

Source: Author (2024)

From the above model, the interaction of cultural components such as religion, work pattern and tradition holding all other elements constant all function in unison in order to influence the consumers buying behaviour of male clothes in Calabar.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopted a cross-sectional survey design, using a structured questionnaire to gather data from participants—male civil servants and male students at the University of Calabar—within a single timeframe to generate insights. A purposive sampling technique was applied, aiming to target specific population characteristics, such as religion, work patterns, and traditions, that are most relevant to addressing the research questions. A total of 50 respondents, comprising male students and civil servants, were selected as the sample size for the study. Data obtained from the respondents were analysed using multiple regression as a statistical tool.

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

Table 1: Regression Model Summary^b showing the impact of religion, work pattern and tradition on the consumer buying behavior of male clothes in Calabar.

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.544 ^a	.296	.250	3.03258

Predictors: (Constant), religion, work pattern, tradition

Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour.

Table 2: ANOVA^a showing the impact of religion, work pattern and tradition on the consumer buying behavior of male clothes in Calabar

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	177.779	3	59.260	6.444	.001 ^b
	Residual	423.041	46	9.197		
	Total	600.820	49			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour

Table 3: Coefficients showing the impact of religion, work pattern and tradition on the consumer buying behavior of male clothes in Calabar

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.017	1.539		1.960	.056
	Religion	.713	.217	.441	3.286	.002
	Work Pattern	.079	.058	.174	1.379	.174
	Tradition	.165	.193	.113	.855	.397

Dependent Variable: Consumer buying behaviour.

The summaries of the descriptive statistics and analysis outcomes are displayed in Tables 1, 2, and 3 above. The multiple regression model, which includes all three independent variables, produced an R-square value of 0.296, $F = 6.444$, $P < 0.005$, with a correlation coefficient of 0.544. This correlation coefficient signifies a connection between the predictor variables and the dependent variable, indicating that religion, work patterns, and cultural traditions influence male clothing purchasing behaviour in Calabar. The R-square value of 0.296 implies that approximately 29.6% of cultural elements affecting consumer behaviour are explained by the predictor variables. However, the t-test values for the predictors—religion (0.002), work pattern (0.174), and tradition (0.397)—indicate that religion exerts the most significant influence on male clothing purchase behaviour in Calabar, whereas work pattern and tradition appear to have a less substantial effect.

Discussion of findings

The multiple regression analysis revealed that religion, as a cultural factor, significantly impacts consumer purchasing behaviour regarding male clothing in Calabar. This aligns with the argument of Hirschman (1983), who asserted that an individual's religious affiliation often plays a crucial role in shaping major life choices. Further reinforcing this perspective, Delner (1990) posited that religiosity is one of the most influential cultural forces affecting consumer buying behaviour, as purchasing decisions are largely determined by the extent to which individuals adhere to their faith. The failure of certain male clothing brands in the market may be attributed to their disregard for the religious values of their target consumers. The study also found that work patterns and traditions had an insignificant effect on the consumer purchasing behaviour of male clothing in Calabar. This finding contradicts the study by Durmaz, Celik, and Oruc (2011), which examined the influence of cultural factors on consumer behaviour through an empirical study conducted in Turkey. The study, which involved a sample of 1,286 respondents, employed quantitative data analysis and revealed that 86.8% of participants' purchasing choices were shaped by traditions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study reveals the impact of culture on the consumer buying behavior of male clothes in Calabar. In many Christian churches, there is an expectation of how a male member should be dressed. The mode of a male dressing pattern sends a serious signal to a person level of commitment to his religious faith and denomination as well. This has an implication for religious /social identity status of consumers. This finding should have also an implication for marketing promotional planning, implementation and control. There have been no conscious effort by male



dress maker to factor or promote their products with Christian Religious advertisement values, whereas they can take advantage of Bible teaching to make serious impact on their marketing communication in targeting the church segment. This will also assist in impacting on the future generation of our youth on morality of dressing, thereby making a social marketing impact on dressing manners of the society.

Recommendations

The study recommended that clothing manufacturing firms for males should ensure that the religious affiliations of various market segments should be considered before targeting their products into a particular market segment. It is important because some of the dresses of male clothing met strong criticism in church and schools that are morally incline. In planning for various target markets in the male fashion industry, it is important that fashion makers of male clothes consider religious values which have shown to significantly influenced consumption.

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