Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org) FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMERS BUYING BEHAVIOUR WITHIN THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY

Sunday C. Eze¹ and Bello Adenike O. Bello²

^{1&2} Landmark University, PMB 1001, Omu-Aran, Kwara State, Nigeria,

ABSTRACT: The paper aims at exploring the sociological factors influencing consumers purchasing behaviour in the clothing industry. This study deployed a qualitative approach to exploring key factors influencing consumers purchasing behaviour. More specifically, the study adopted semi-structured interviews with 16 employees of TR COUTURE. The finding revealed that age, quality, income and fund shapes consumers purchasing behaviour. The implication of this finding is that marketers should constantly study the behavioural patterns of their clients before making plans to buy goods or services sold to consumers as factors explored in this study indicate that they strongly shapes consumers buying pattern.

KEYWORDS: Consumers, Buying bahviour, clothing industry, Sociological factors

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, considerable attempt has been made on the current competitive market. This is based on customer orientation which has forced producers to produce goods services based on customer needs (Tafler, 2004). For companies to attain commercial success, it is important that managers understand consumer behavior. An understanding of consumer behavior is essential in planning and programming the marketing system. An organization will continue to survive if it can supply consumer needs and wants with a comprehensive understanding of them. This shows the importance of studying consumer behavior. Consumer behavior indicates how consumer decisions are made, how the goods or services are used (McDaniel, 2003). A company that is aware of consumers' reaction to different characteristics of goods, prices and advertisement tricks has advantage over its competitors (Kotler, 2009). The study of consumer purchase behavior provides information about consumer and its consumption patterns (Nesai, 2009). Different processes involved in the consumer behavior include finding what

<u>Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org)</u> commodities the consumers would like to buy (Solomon, 2004). Marketers study consumers buying patterns in order to decide where they buy, and what they buy and why they buy.

It is worth noting that consumer buying behaviour is studied as a part of marketing and its main objective is to learn the way individuals, groups or organizations choose, buy, use and dispose the goods and the factors such as their previous experience, taste, price and branding on which the consumers base their purchasing decisions (Kotler and Keller, 2012). The buying behavior of individuals or consumers is often unconsciously affected by some factors, and this research will be focusing mainly on age and income and how it affects consumer behaviour in the marketing of consumer goods in Nigeria. Age is considered as one of the important demographic variables which can have a deep influence on purchase pattern on an individual (Srinivasan 2014). Also, a person's economic situation affects the product choice. Marketers of income-sensitive goods should monitor trends in personal income, savings and interest rates. Hence, it is critical to consider these factors in consumer behavior, as they greatly influence how people respond to marketing messages and make purchasing decisions. This paper seeks to explore the sociological factors influencing customers' behaviour within the clothing industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer is the study "of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires" (Solomon 1995) The term 'consumer behavior' refers to the behavior of both the personal consumer and the organizational consumer. Studying consumer behavior includes the study of what to buy, how to buy, where to buy and why people are buying (Dadfor. 2009, Chen, 2013). The present study has made an attempt to study the behavior of personal consumers. The personal consumer buys goods and services for his or her own use, or the household or as a gift for a friend. Consumer behavior refers to the act of individuals who are directly involved in obtaining and using goods and services. It also includes the decision-making process, which leads to the act of purchase. Consumer behavior is not only the study of what people consume but also here how often, and under what conditions.

Consumer behavior has no history or body of research of its own. It is a new discipline that borrows and combines factors from psychology (study of the individual), sociology (study of groups), social psychology (study of how an individual operates in groups), anthropology (the

<u>Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org)</u> influence of society on the individual), and economics which attempts to understand the buyer decision-making process individually and in groups (Dodoo, 2007). Several early theories related to consumer behavior were based on the economic theory, on the notion that individuals act rationally to maximize their benefits in the purchase of goods and services. Consumer behavior research attempts to understand the buyer decision-making process, both individually and collectively. It studies individual consumer characteristics behavioral variables in an attempt to understand people's wants. Consumer is that foundation of every business. What consumer sees, thinks, prefers, and buys is of great importance to marketers to fine tune their marketing offers and achieve high level of consumer acceptance and satisfaction. Therefore, making a decision, the buyer considers many factors such as cultural factors, social, personal and psychological categories. It is essential for marketers to understand consumers to survive and succeed in the competitive marketing environment.

A number of researchers have identified and analyzed factors affecting the consumers' buying behaviour which affect consumer behavior individually or collectively. The age of a consumer can have a significant impact on his behaviour. How old a consumer is generally indicates what products he or she may be interested in purchasing. Consumer tastes in food, clothing, cars, furniture and recreation are often age related. Judith Waldrop found marketers are interested in understanding what products will sell well in the youth market. Rani (2014) in her study note that personality is an important factor for purchase behavior. Again it has been observed that personality at different age group varies considerably and it is an important determinant of buying decision. A person do not consume same product from the age 20 to 70, in every stage. With age, the consumers purchase options, the motive of purchase, and the decisions to buy the products changes. *Therefore, age may significantly influence consumers purchasing behaviour*.

Also, a household's income level combined with its accumulated wealth determines its purchasing power. Income certainly influences purchasing decisions because it determines how much people can afford. For example, families with incomes below Rs.10, 000 find it very difficult to buy a home. On the other hand, families in the higher income categories buy luxury automobiles and vacation homes. The income decides the purchasing power of an individual and thus, the more the personal income, the more will be the expenditure on other items and vice-versa. Everything can be bought and sold with the help of money. If the economic situation of a consumer is not good or stable it will affect his purchase power, in fact if the consumers

<u>Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org)</u> or the economy of a nation is suffering a loss it defiantly affects the consumers purchase or spending decisions. *The income of the person influences his buying patterns*.

Furthermore, quality serves as one of the attributions to high prices. It is the aim of every company to provide the best product for the consumer and it is believe that if the products have quality, consumers will pay the price. Dubois et al. (2001) found that the relationship between quality and luxury is very strong and that there is a strong mental association between luxuries and high price which is indirectly connecting high price to perception of quality. Therefore, quality impacts on consumers buying decisions.

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

This research adopt the Theory of Reasoned Action as the theoretical underpinning of the study. The theory centers its analysis on the importance of pre-existing attitudes in the decisionmaking process. The core of the theory is that consumers act on a behavior based on their intention to create or receive a particular outcome. In this analysis, created by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in the late 1960s, the consumers are rational actors who choose to act in their best interests. According to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), behavior can largely be predicted by the individual's attitudes towards performing the behavior in question, through the intervening effect of behavioral intention. The important attitudes in this process are those that are specific to the specific behavior being studied, it is not sufficient to consider the individual's attitudes more generally (Ajzen 1988; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). The theory also postulates that a person's intentions about performing a behavior (which ultimately determine whether they will do so) are influenced by social pressures or "subjective norms", which arise from their individual's perceptions of what others will think about them performing the behavior in question (Vallerand, Deshaies, Cuerrier, Pelletier, & Mongeau, 1991).

In this theoretical model, both personal attitudes and social or "normative" factors exert a direct influence on behavioral intentions, which are the strongest predictor of actual behavior. All other factors in the external environment influence behavior only indirectly, through their influence on attitudes and subjective norms (Tsai, Chen, & Chien, 2012) A notable change in TRA is that attitude toward the behaviour (the act of buying) is measured rather than simply the attitude toward the object. This was a necessary amendment once behaviour was being measured, as a consumer may have a very favorable attitude toward a product, but not toward the act of purchasing it (Solomon, Bamossy et al. 2006).

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According to the theory, specificity is critical in the decision-making process. A consumer only takes a specific action when there is an equally specific result expected. From the time the consumer decides to act to the time the action is completed, the consumer retains the ability to change his or her mind and decide on a different course of action. Marketers can learn several lessons from the Theory of Reasoned Action.

First, when marketing a product to consumers, marketers must associate a purchase with a positive result, and that result must be specific. The theory highlights the importance of moving consumers through the sales pipeline. Marketers must understand that long lags between initial intention and the completion of the action allows consumers plenty of time to talk themselves out of a purchase or question the outcome of the purchase.

The Engel, Kollet, Blackwell (EKB) Model expands on the Theory of Reasoned Action, and lays out a five-step process that consumers use when making a purchase. The first step, input, is where consumers absorb most of the marketing materials they see on television, newspapers or online. Then, he or she moves into information processing, where the consumer compares the input to past experiences and expectations.

Consumers then move to the decision-making stage after a period of thought, choosing to make a purchase based on rational insight. Consumers are affected in the decision-making phase by process variables and external influences, including how the consumer envisions his or herself after making the purchase.

Under the EKB Model, marketers have two periods where their input is the most valuable. During the initial information stage, marketers must provide consumers with enough information about the product to drive the consumer to keep the company's products under consideration for purchase. Marketing becomes a factor again in the phase of external influences. Lifestyle brands are very good at instilling desire in the consumer to look or feel a certain way with the product, even if the brand's product is not fundamentally different from the competition.

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This study is aimed at examining the factors that affect consumers' behaviour in marketing consumer goods by gathering necessary and relevant data from the proposed case study (TR COUTURE). The research design adopted in this study is case study design. It is an intensive study by qualitative interviewing of a single case which may be an organization, life, family or community.

The population of this study is both male and female customers and marketers of TR COUTURE, Magodo Phase 2, and Lagos State. The sampling technique adopted in this study is purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, which reflects a group of sampling techniques that rely on the judgment of the researcher when it comes to selecting the units (e.g., people, cases/organizations, events, pieces of data) that are to be studied. Therefore, eight (8) marketers and eight (8) customers in TR COUTURE were chosen. Semi-structured interview questions consisted of nine (9) questions which the respondents were asked to proffer answers to. Semi-structured interviews were conducted.

Before the interviews, a letter was sent to the company requesting their permission for the interview. After receiving approval, the company and interviewees were appreciated and the purpose of the study was stated before commencing the interview proper. The interviewees were reassured of their confidentiality since the information provided would not be disclosed to a third party. Their permission to record the conversation using audio tape recorder was sought. The interview was scheduled for 10 minutes per interviewee.

Finally, the responses from the participants were transcribed i.e. the information in the recorder were listened to and written in paper.

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Table 1: Interviewee Profile

| INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS | GENDER | STATUS |
|------------------------|--------|---------------|
| A1 | MALE | CUSTOMER I |
| AI | MALE | COSTOMERT |
| A2 | MALE | CUSTOMER II |
| A3 | FEMALE | CUSTOMER III |
| A4 | FEMALE | CUSTOMER IV |
| A5 | FEMALE | CUSTOMER V |
| A6 | MALE | CUSTOMER VI |
| A7 | MALE | CUSTOMER VII |
| A8 | FEMALE | CUSTOMER VIII |
| B1 | MALE | MARKETER I |
| B2 | MALE | MARKETER II |
| B3 | MALE | MARKETER III |
| B4 | FEMALE | MARKETER IV |
| B5 | FEMALE | MARKETER V |
| Вб | FEMALE | MARKETER VI |
| B7 | MALE | MARKETER VII |
| B8 | MALE | MARKETER VIII |
| | | |

Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org) Data analysis procedure

Thematic method of data analysis was adopted in order to ensure effective analysis of the data collected. Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of analysis in qualitative research. It emphasizes pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns (or "themes") within data. The data analysis process, which is consistent with thematic analysis, involve the stages described in Figure 1. Data driven thematic analysis approach was adopted since the codes was generated from raw data. It involves the creation of codes by the researcher based on data generated from the interviews.

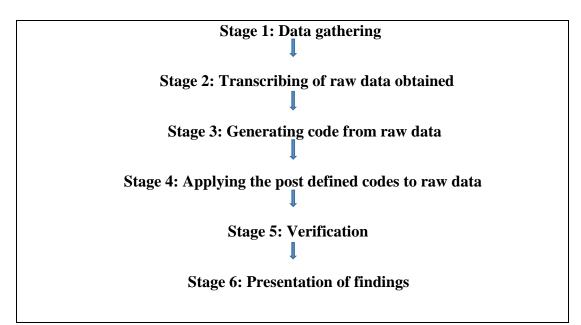


Figure 1: Data analysis Process

The first stage in the data analysis procedure is the data gathering were responses were gotten from the respondents using the interview questions. The data collected was listened to and transcribed carefully. The stage three involves generating of codes from raw data. Here, similar statements which are known as the supporting evidence were grouped together and codes were generated based on the characteristics of the supporting evidence. The fourth stage involves general guide for generating codes. The codes were defined with supporting description and

<u>Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org)</u> they were used for further analysis and verification (See table 2). In the fifth stage, the reliability and validity of the data were obtained. The sixth stage entails the presentation of the summary of the findings.

| CODES | DEFINITION | DESCRIPTION |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Age as a deciding | This means age is a factor | This is indicated when |
| factor | which influences the clothes | respondents mention that |
| | people buy | their age influences the |
| | | clothes they purchase |
| | | |
| 2. Preference of quality | This means most people | This is indicated when |
| to quantity | prefer to buy quality rather | correspondents mention that |
| | than quantity | they would rather purchase |
| | | quality than quantity |
| | | |
| 3. Income as a deciding | This means income is a | This is indicated when |
| factor | factor which influences the | correspondents mention that |
| | clothes people purchase | their income determines |
| | | what clothes they purchase |
| | | |

Table 2: Definition and Description of codes

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Inter-rater reliability using percentage agreement was used in this study. The table below shows the result of the reliability analysis percentage agreements (Boyatzis, 1998) gotten from two judges that rated the codes if they corresponded with the definition of codes and their associated supporting evidences. The analysis reveals that the percentage agreement for the scope of the study was above the 70% benchmark as recommended by (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This study employed face validity which is an aspect of content validity. It was validated by presenting the data to the supervisor to crosscheck the correspondence between the definitions of codes and their associated supporting evidences and for scrunity which were all obtained.

| Areas of study | Reliability | |
|---|---------------|---------------------|
| | Judge 1 | Judge 2 |
| To establish whether age, quality and income influences customers' behavior | Age as a s | ignificant factor |
| whilst purchasing consumer goods | (1.0) 100% | (0.80) 80% |
| | Preference of | quality to quantity |
| | (0.875) 87.5% | (1.0) 100% |
| | Income as a | significant factor |
| | (1.0)100% | (1.0) 100% |

Table 3: Reliability analysis

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FINDING

This section present the findings. Tables 4, and 5, shows the codes, supporting cases and supporting evidences.

Table 4: codes and supporting cases

| Codes | Supporting cases | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| Age as a deciding factor | A1,A3,A4,A5,A7 | 5/8 |
| Preference of quality to quantity | A1,A3,A4,A5,A6,A7,A8 | 7/8 |
| Income as a deciding factor | A1,A2,A3,A4,A5,A6,A7,A8 | 8/8 |
| Availability of fund | B2,B4,B5,B7,B8 | 5/8 |

Table 5: codes and supporting evidence

| Codes | Supporting evidence |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Age as a significant factor | "I go according to trend. What I wear now would not be what I'll wear in future". (A1) |
| | "I feel at a particular point in time, I have to change. The way I dress now is different from the way I dressed three years ago". (A3) |
| | "At a certain age, like when I start getting older, there are some things I can no longer wear that I used to wear because when I get older I'll want to dress my age and I'm young now, I love to dress my age as well". (A4) |
| | "Yes it is". (A5) |
| | "Yes my age is a deciding factor". (A7) |
| Preference of quality to quantity | "I don't think quality is the same as quantity. If you buy something of quality, it is going to las you a log while and on the long-run, you're going to enjoy what you buy". (A1) |

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| | "Quality is obviously better than quantity". (A3) |
|--------------------------------|---|
| | "I would rather buy one shirt that costs #5,000 and it is worth it compare to buying five shirts that cost maybe #1,000 and the materials are just anyhow". (A4) |
| | "Buying quantity, if it has low quality, what's the point of having it when it will end up depreciating". (A5) |
| | "I would rather buy quality because quality lasts". (A6) |
| | "Quality lasts longer and if I buy quantity it might not last long". (A7) |
| | 'Quality because you can have quantity and they are rubbish and shady". (A8) |
| Income as a significant factor | 'As far as my money will be able to afford it and so long it looks good on me". (A1) |
| | 'I actually love luxury. As long as I can afford it without having to save for one month for it". (A2) |
| | "As long as my income goes with it". (A3) |
| | "Depends on how much I like and if it's probably limited". (A4) |
| | "So far I have the money". (A5) |
| | "Yes, why not". (A6) |
| | "If I have the money I'll surely get it". (A7) |
| | "Yes, I like good stuffs". (A8) |
| Availability of funds | "Through their patronage, I'll have to think of the way forward on how to make them more satisfied". (B2) |
| | "For a customer that earns high do spend high and so people like that we have to make products available to them at their |

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| place of work, on the internet because people like that won't be available on weekdays". (B4) |
|---|
| "Those that feel the clothes are too expensive, they tend to not want to buy the product but when we put our goods online, they see that the quality is different". (B5) |
| "Yes it does". (B7) "Yeah". (B8) |

DISCUSSION

Age

Age is one of the significant personal factors that affect customers' response whilst purchasing clothes. From the findings, it was discovered that people feel at some particular age, their dress sense needs to change. Most respondents see age as a significant factor to what they buy because they feel as they keep growing, they need to always dress their age. For example: (A1) "I feel at a particular point in time, I have to change. The way I dress now is different from the way I dressed three years ago". (A3) "At a certain age, like when I start getting older, there are some things I can no longer wear that I used to wear because when I get older I'll want to dress my age and I'm young now, I love to dress my age as well". (A4) "Yes my age is a deciding factor". (A7). Therefore, the responses from the consumers show that age is a deciding factor to what they buy. From the findings, it was discovered that people feel at some particular age, their dress sense needs to change. Most respondents see age as a significant factor to what they buy because they feel as they keep growing, they need to always dress their age. You have probably noticed that the things you buy have changed as you age. When you were a child, the last thing you probably wanted as a gift was clothing. As you became a teen, however, cool clothes probably became a bigger priority. This may probably be due to our tendencies to learn and adapt to ways of the society as we pass through our lifecycle stages, and particularly because of physical development, which affect the kind clothes we buy. This agrees with Rocha et al (2005) and Dilworth-Anderson and Boswell, (2007) who all experienced different

Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org) requirements for clothing and fashion products based upon age or stages in the lifecycle and sizes.

Quantity

From the findings, it was discovered that most respondents would rather buy quality than settle for quantity because quality cannot obviously be compared with quantity. "I don't think quality is the same as quantity. According to the consumers, buying quality gives you peace of mind because quality lasts a long while. "If you buy something of quality, it is going to last you a long while and on the long-run, you're going to enjoy what you buy". (A1) "Quality is obviously better than quantity". (A3) "I would rather buy one shirt that costs #5,000 and it is worth it compared to buying five shirts that cost maybe #1,000 and the materials are just anyhow". (A4) "Buying quantity, if it has low quality, what's the point of having it when it will end up depreciating". (A5) "Quality lasts longer and if I buy quantity it might not last long". (A7) "Quality because you can have quantity and they are rubbish and shady". (A8). It therefore suffice to say that no matter your age or your purchasing power, quality still remains quality. People will always pick quality over quantity. It is okay to say that no matter your age or your purchasing power, quality still remains quality. People will always pick quality over quantity. Fatima and Ejaz (2005) observed that, in Pakistan, quality is important factor for the success of readymade garment industry. It is most important factor while purchasing garments. Kanuk (1997) that consumers, especially low income earners are always economical in their purchase decision and always consider functional (quality) aspect of a product in order to make a purchase that is not just satisfactory but a perfect one (maximum value for money).

Income

The income of a consumer determines what he/she is able to purchase. represents the change in an individual's or economy's income and shows how that change impacts the quantity demanded of a good or service. From the findings, it was seen that most people love good things and so long their income will make I possible for them to have it then they go for it. As indicated by some customers: 'As far as my money will be able to afford it and so long it looks good on me". (A1) "I actually love luxury. As long as I can afford it without having to save for one month for it". (A2) "As long as my income goes with it". (A3) "Depends on how much I like and if it's probably limited". (A4) "So far I have the money". (A5) "Yes, why not". (A6) "If I have the money I'll surely get it". (A7) "Yes, I like good stuffs". (A8). Although the

Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org) income might have a negative effect due to the whole economy crunch, but that doesn't still stop people from loving good things. In line with the finding, Paul Aduba (2009) note that price plays a significant role in the buying decisions of industrial customers or product users. Furthermore it also revealed that a significant number of people put trade name into consideration as a motivating factor in their purchase of industrial products. This concurs with a study conducted by Myers, Stanton, and Haug (1971) who found income to be a major factor determining consumers' propensity to spend and the lower it is the higher the need to carefully share it among basic needs.

Availability of funds

This is used to describe the quantity of goods money can buy. Purchasing power measures the value of goods that can be bought with a specific amount of a currency. The purchasing power of every consumer needs to be studied by every marketer in order to know what to do to satisfy their everyday needs which are one of the main aims of every marketer. "Through their patronage, I'll have to think of the way forward on how to make them more satisfied". (B2) The purchasing power of every consumer differs "For a customer that earns high does spend high and so people like that we have to make products available to them at their place of work, on the internet because people like that won't be available on weekdays". (B4) "Those that feel the clothes are too expensive, they tend to not want to buy the product but when we put our goods online, they see that the quality is different". (B5). The purchasing power of a consumer plays an important role in influencing the consumer behavior. The finding suggests that consumers generally analyze their purchasing capacity before making a decision to buy and products or services. The purchasing power of every consumer needs to be studied by every marketer in order to know what to do to satisfy their everyday needs which are one of the main aims of every marketer. The finding is consistent with Kervenoael, De et al (2011) that observed that the decisions for buying apparel are affected by functional values (i.e cost, guarantee & warranty etc)

Conclusion and Implication

This study examined the study of factors affecting customers' behaviour in marketing consumer goods in Nigeria with the aim to examine age and income and how it affects customers' behaviour in marketing of consumer goods in TR COUTURE, Nigeria. This study discovered that there age and income has significant influence on customers' behaviour in

Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK (www.eajournals.org) marketing consumer goods in TR COUTURE. Consumers will always go for quality goods rather than quantity when purchasing goods even with the influence of their age and income. Most marketers make use of online marketing because it is vast and can get to so many people at the same time. Also, it was discovered that consumer's current purchase most times are determined by their previous purchase owing to the fact that most of them do not like having the same things in their wardrobe. By keeping in mind affecting factors things can be made favorable and goal of consumer satisfaction can be achieved. Study of consumer buying behaviour is gate way to success in market. Also, understanding, analyzing and keeping track of consumer behavior is very critical for a marketing department to retain their position successfully in the market place. Based on the findings, the following below are the recommendations which have been found useful: As part of their efforts to convince customers to purchase the kinds of clothes they sell, marketing managers are recommended to adopt market segmentation strategy and segment their clothes markets on the bases of demographic variables such as age, income, and gender since they were all found to have great degree of influences on clothes buying decisions. It is recommended for marketers of clothes to emphasize demographic representation in the market segment they are serving or intend to serve in order to give their customers a sense of belonging and comfort with their chosen clothes

This study has made significant contributions to knowledge in the area of factors that affect customers' behaviour in marketing consumer goods in Nigeria. This study linked together the customers' behaviour towards goods and its possible influence on marketing. This is to broaden the scope of the study and to ensure quality and robust research work. Thus, this is a point of departure from previous studies. This study adopted qualitative analysis, with the use of thematic analysis specifically, data-driven thematic analysis was employed to analyze the raw data gathered from the respondents unlike most research work that either adopt theory-driven approach or prior-research-driven approach. However, further studies should endeavor to expand the scope of this study by replicating the study in other clothing industries in Nigeria. This would enable comprehensive comparison with this study and sub-segment ones. Also, mixed method which means use of quantitative and qualitative analysis should be employed and the number of interviewees should increase when carrying out further studies.

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