

Marketing Concept and Consumer Satisfaction in the Pharmaceutical Firms in Lagos State, Nigeria

By

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Abstract

This study examined the practice and implementation of marketing concept and consumer satisfaction among pharmaceutical firms in Lagos State, Nigeria. To achieve this objective, four hypotheses were formulated to establish whether or not a relationship exists between the two variables i.e. marketing concept and consumer satisfaction. The study adopted a survey research design; while data were obtained from structured questionnaire and analyzed using chi-square statistic. Results from the analysis revealed that a significant relationship existed between marketing concept and consumer satisfaction in pharmaceutical firms. Based on the findings, it was concluded that a company implementing and practicing marketing concept is better equipped to anticipate customer needs, wants and expectations and also offer goods and services to satisfy those needs and wants. Among others, the study recommended that firms should treat their customers as kings and queens by offering satisfying products and services for them to remain loyal and committed to the organization.

Keywords: Coordinated marketing efforts, customer satisfaction, marketing concept, market orientation, product characteristics.

Introduction

Nowadays, organizations are struggling to survive in today's competitive world. The need for these firms to become and remain creative, innovative and competitive in such dynamic circumstances is imperative. This is so because in today's business world, the modern business environment has become increasingly dynamic and constantly changing in character and in nature arising from the uncertainties and unprecedented happenings occasioned by fierce competition and dynamic requirement of customers in terms of price, specification, quality and better service delivery. Therefore, the survival of the organization depends to a larger extent on their levels of customer satisfaction.

The whole idea behind the practice of marketing is centred on marketing concept, that is, the effective satisfaction of customer needs and wants at a profit. This connotes that producers of goods and services must place special premium on this phenomenon with the view to understanding the needs and wants of customers before designing and producing combination of products and services to satisfy them. By incorporating the needs and wants of customers, the sales and profit objectives of the organization can be realised early. Most organizations are beginning to recognize that to be successful in the market, it requires customer focused, customer driven, customer centred and customer oriented. And to be in consonance with customer expectation and aspiration it demands that greater innovation and improvement must be in place to keep pace with the customers changing expectations and aspirations. By extension, it implies that appropriate implementation of customer satisfaction; proper identification of the customers' needs, wants, expectation, aspiration and measuring their perception must be uppermost in their minds. More so, implementing marketing concept becomes easier when customer needs, wants and expectation are known while product and service characteristics that are capable of satisfying them to enhance customer retention are

anticipated. Thus, if all marketing activities are directed towards satisfying the customer which is what marketing concept is all about, it will, on the long-run suppress the agitation for better quality, products and by extension consumer satisfaction (Ijewere, 2009).

The primary motive behind the idea of marketing concept is to protect the consumer against the poor quality of goods and services, adulteration of goods and artificial scarcity by encouraging firms to direct all their marketing activities towards the production of goods and services that can satisfy consumers' needs and wants.

Statement of the Research Problem

The idea behind the implementation of marketing concept is centred on the effective and efficient satisfaction of consumer wants, needs and expectations. These are constantly changing at an alarming rate such that firms that are not proactive in marketing practice find it extremely difficult to understand. Alas, it has been noticed that consumers' needs and wants are numerous and cannot be easily satisfied. Hence, the purpose of this study is to find out the influence of marketing concept on human needs, wants and expectations, and in what ways can the marketing concept be applied in order to solve the divergent human needs and want, and finding out at the same time the consumers perception of marketing concept towards meeting these issues.

The broad objective of the study is to find out the impact of marketing concept on satisfaction of consumer needs and wants; other specific objectives are:

1. To determine if marketing concept influences consumer satisfaction of needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms.
2. To ascertain if there is any relationship existing between marketing concept and satisfaction of consumers needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms.
3. To examine the extent to which marketing concept has enhanced productivity in pharmaceutical firms.

Arising from the objectives of the study, these research questions were raised in an attempt to achieve the stated objectives.

1. How does marketing concept influence satisfaction of consumers' needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms?
2. Is there any relationship existing between marketing concept and the satisfaction of consumer needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms?
3. To what extent does marketing concept enhanced productivity of pharmaceutical firms?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study:

Ho₁: - Marketing concept does not significantly influence satisfaction of consumers needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms.

Ho₂: - There is no significant relationship existing between marketing concept and satisfaction of consumer's needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms.

Ho₃: - Marketing concept does not enhance the productivity of pharmaceutical firms.

Conceptual Clarification

Marketing Concept

According to Ijewere (2009), marketing concept is basically the underlying principles behind the practice of marketing. The author supported this assertion by stating that the whole idea of the marketing concept is basically the satisfaction of customer needs and expectations. Ibidunmi (2012) described marketing concept as a business philosophy that challenges the

concepts of products, production, selling and society. Ibidunmi has gone further to define marketing concept as management orientation that holds the key to achieving organization determining the needs and wants of target markets and adapting itself to delivering, the desired satisfaction more than its competitors.

This concept assumes that the needs, wants and expectation of the consumers must first be categorised into different segment of the market in accordance with their peculiar needs and wants so that consumers in each of the segments will support the product offerings of any company which tend to be closer in terms of satisfying their various needs and expectations. To realise this goal, the organization is expected to carefully choose its target markets and formulate effective and efficient marketing strategies so that the customers can be attracted and retained in view of enduring profit earnings. The whole idea behind this is not only limited to selling the products but also on selling satisfaction. The major reason why companies are in business is for profit maximisation through satisfaction of the consumers needs, wants and expectations. And to further buttress on the marketing concept as a philosophy of doing business, Ijewere (2009) stressed that marketing concept must rest on three main pillars such as customers' orientation, marketing organization and profit motive. The customer is at the centre and all other activities of marketing revolve around it. Kotler (2006) defined marketing concept as the integration of marketing activities towards determining and satisfying the needs and wants of target market.

Marketing Concept and Customer Satisfaction

According to Olannye (2013), customer satisfaction is the degree to which the product perceived performance matches the customer's expectation. This means to say that if performance exceeds expectations the buyer tends to be delighted. Proactive organization that want to delight customer by promising only what they can deliver, then make effort to deliver in excess of what they promise. In another development, customer satisfaction occurs when perception of product performance matches expectations that are at, or above the minimum desired performance level (Osuagwu and Obaji, 2009). As stated by Coney, Hawking and Roger (2001), satisfaction reduces the level of decision-making the next time the problem is recognized. The satisfied customer at the first trial tend to be encourage by the performance of the products and are likely to repeat the same purchase behaviour in the future. Satisfied customers tend to engage in positive word-of-mouth communication by telling others about the company and its products.

According to Oliver (2013 and 2014), (Westbrook and Oliver (2011) customer satisfaction can be conceptualized as mental state which results from the customer's comparison of (a) expectation prior to purchase and (b) performance perceptions after purchase. After purchase of the product and upon consumption customers makes comparison for each part of a product offer, at this point it is referred to as domain-specific satisfaction and it is called global satisfaction if the level of comparison by customer makes for the offer is total. Customers seeking for satisfaction do not only look for the end product but also draw satisfaction from the completeness of the service interaction and transaction (Osuagwu and Obaji 2009). By extension, the need to produce satisfied customer has a far reaching implication for product performance and proper positioning of the promotional campaigns.

When customer experiences dissonances arising from failure of the product performance to match with perceived expectations, this is a state of customer dissatisfactions which is a direct opposite of customer satisfaction. Sometimes unrealistic consumer expectations created by exaggeration in promotional campaigns can contribute to consumer dissatisfaction and dissonances and as such creating a disparity between customers' expectations and perceived product performance.

Any organization adopting and implementing marketing concept should do everything possible to satisfy, the needs, wants and expectations of its customers, because there is a link between marketing concept and customer satisfaction. To buttress this point, Kohli and Jaworski (1990) supported the statement by arguing that market orientation leads to satisfied customer who spread the good word to other potential customers and who keep coming back to the organization. In furtherance to the above, Kotler (1998) also supported by asserting that market orientation is likely to lead to greater customer satisfaction and repeat purchase. In the opinion of Kotler (2002), a highly satisfied customer stays loyal longer, buys more as the company introduces new products and upgrades existing products, talks favourably about the company and its products, pays less attention to competing product brands and is less sensitive to price, offers product ideas to the company, and cost less to serve. According to Doyle (1995) customers who are satisfied with the value being provided repurchase the product and this result in better economic performance, market share and profitability for an organization. The author further stated that, the most appropriate measure of performance is customer satisfaction. Proactive organization should endeavour to formulate strategies focusing on the satisfaction of customer's remote and immediate needs, wants and expectation by showing commitments, creating value in products, encouraging customers comment and handling complains, engage in information gathering and sharing among the functional departments in the organization and taking steps leading to actionable intelligence based on the information available. Any organization that engages itself in these activities is sure to be at advantage over its competitors.

Empirical Review

Empirically studies have shown that the key aspect of innovation is new product development and management involving designing and launching of new product and services. This activity is termed to be "one of the most important issues in business research" (Hauser, Tellis and Griffin, 2006). According to Cooper and Edgett (2008) the development of new products creates revenue and Griffin, Tellis and Hauser (2009) stated that the development of new product creates growth as well, and it is also a vital driver of profit (Veryzer Jr, 2010). The author further stressed that market with infrequent or unsuccessful new product development may experience declining profitability as competing products feature and benefits become undistinguishable over time and the resulting reliance on price based differentiation creates a downward sloping pressure on retail prices, ultimately helping it to reduce profit margins.

In the studies carried out by Griffin *et al* (2009), Leonard and Ray port (2013) it was found that successful new products and services are those which meet a specific consumer needs and a robust understanding of the needs of target consumer is therefore required to ensure that newly developed product would accurately reflect key consumer requirements. Mitchell (2009) found out that market research methods of surveys and focus groups are commonly employed in investigations of consumer needs which aim to generate insights, stressing further that these research techniques are believed to be unrecognized by the consumer or ineffective in the identification of more subtle and unconscious needs, which may be unrecognized by consumers or articulate (Deszca, Munro and Noori 2009). Goffin and Lemke (2004) and Goffin and Mitchell (2005) pointed out in their studies that these can result in series of hidden consumer's needs which remain unidentified by traditional market research methods.

According to Deszca *et al* (2009), Leonard and Ray port (2015) the identification of consumers hidden needs has the potential to stimulate the discovery of new opportunities for the development of a product by high-lighting newly recognized and previously unfulfilled needs for products to meet through tailored functional specifications and user benefits.

Furthermore, the potential therefore exists to drive more frequent and successful new product development through the identification of these hidden needs, thereby protecting markets against the detriment of dynamics which result from its absence or failure. However, there exists within the literature a lack of clarity surrounding the most effective research techniques for identifying hidden consumer needs.

According to Matthing, Sanden and Edvardsson (2004), Rosenthal and Capper (2006), Leonard and Ray port (2015) the innovation and market research domains describe previous investigations into consumers' needs in support of new product development, in which the need is described using alternative technology such as "latent, tacit" and "unarticulated" rather than "hidden" meet the criteria for this study such as they represent subconscious consumer requirements.

In the opinion of Matthing *et al* (2004), Rosenthal and Capper (2006), Goffin and Lemke (2004) and Von Hippel (1982) studies of this nature have employed ethnographic research techniques, reporting grid interviewing and lead usher methods, and these research methods may therefore be included in this research work.

Methodology

The design of this study was based on survey research. This research design seems the best for this study since the intent is to establish whether or not a relationship existed between two variables i.e. marketing concept and consumer satisfaction.

Population of the Study

There are fifty-six (56) Pharmaceutical Companies in Lagos State (Pharmaapproach.com 2017). So the population of the study consists of all the pharmaceutical companies in the state.

Table 1.1: Location of Pharmaceutical companies in Lagos State

S/N	Area	Number of Pharmaceutical Companies
1	Ikeja	25
2	Isole	8
3	Yaba	2
4	Ikorodu	1
5	Mushin	2
6	Agege	3
7	Okota	1
8	Oshodi	3
9	Ijesha	1
10	Igando	1
11	Victoria Island	3
12	Badagry	3
13	Ojoka/Ketu	3
	Total	56

Source: Pharmaapproach.com 2017 and Researcher's Compilation 2019

Sampling and Sampling Techniques

The researcher adopted combination of disproportionate stratified and random sampling techniques. The disproportionate stratified technique was chosen because of the different areas and uneven distribution of the firms. So in order to make every part of Lagos State be part of the study, the stratified technique was adopted and because the companies are not evenly distributed, the researcher was disproportionate in choosing the companies. Also, the random technique was adopted in selecting the companies and the respondents for the study.

Sampling Size Determination

According to Ezejelue and Ogwo (2011) there is no satisfactory generalization on what the appropriate sample size should be. But for the purpose of this study, the sample size is one hundred and fifty-six (156) respondents. First, because of the uneven distribution of the companies in the thirteen areas where the companies are located, and locations of the firms, Lagos State is stratified into thirteen strata (table 1.2) and the researcher disproportionately selected one (1) company each from each of the thirteen strata (area) where the companies are located. This makes it a total of thirteen (13) pharmaceutical companies selected for the study. Where the company (ies) are more than one the researcher used the random sampling technique to choose one. Secondly, from each company selected for the study, twelve (12) staff (respondents) was randomly selected (four management staff, four senior staff and four junior staff). Multiplying the thirteen areas where the companies are located by twelve randomly selected from each company makes it a total of one hundred and fifty six (156) respondents for the study (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2: List of Pharmaceutical companies in Lagos State

S/N	Area	Number of Pharmaceutical Companies	Number of Firms Selected (Randomly)	Company Selected	Staff/respondents Selected (Randomly)
1	Ikeja	25	1	BCN plc	12
2	Isolo	8	1	Afrab-Chem. Limited	12
3	Yaba	2	1	Mopson Pharmaceuticals Limited	12
4	Ikorodu	1	1	Biopharma Nigeria Ltd	12
5	Mushin	2	1	Bond Chemical Industries ltd	12
6	Agege	3	1	Orfema Pharmaceuticals Industries Limited	12
7	Okota	1	1	Clatess Limited	12
8	Oshodi	3	1	Daily-Need Industries Limited	12
9	Ijesha	1	1	Dana Drugs Limited	12
10	Igando	1	1	Divine Essential Formulations	12
11	VI/AmuwoOdo fin	3	1	Geneith Pharmaceuticals limited	12
12	Badagry	3	1	New HealthwayPharmaceutic als limited	12
13	Ojoka/Ketu	3	1	Oak-Faith Pharmaceuticals Resource limited	12
Total		56	13		156

Source: Author's Compilation 2019

Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Results

A total of one hundred and fifty six (156) copies of the questionnaire were distributed and after careful monitoring and supervision, one hundred and thirty nine was retrieved back. This shows 89% response rate or 89% interest in the study by the respondents. In analyzing the personal data, simple percentage was used while in the research questions and hypotheses, the chi-square (X^2) was used.

Table 1.3 Respondents view on the influence of marketing concept on satisfaction of consumer needs and wants

S/N	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	60	43.2
2	Agree	40	28.7
3	Disagree	20	14.4
4	Strongly Disagree	19	13.7
	Total	139	100.0

Source: Researcher's Field Survey 2019

Results in Table 1.3 reveals that 43.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that marketing concept has a great influence on consumers' needs and wants, 28.7% equally agreed, 14.4% disagreed, while 13.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed.

Table 1.4 Respondents view on the relationship between marketing concept on satisfaction of consumer needs and wants

S/N	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	65	46.8
2	Agree	35	25.2
3	Disagree	24	17.2
4	Strongly Disagree	15	10.8
	Total	139	100.0

Source: Researcher's Field Survey 2019

Results in Table 1.4 show that 46.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that there is a significant relationship existing between marketing concept and consumer satisfaction, 25.2% also agreed, 17.2% disagreed, while 10.8% strongly disagreed.

Table 1.5 Respondents view on the enhancement of marketing concept on the productivity of Pharmaceutical Firms

S/N	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	70	50.4
2	Agree	30	21.6
3	Disagree	24	17.2
4	Strongly Disagree	15	10.8
	Total	139	100.0

Source: Researcher's Field Survey 2019

Results in Table 1.5 indicate that 50.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that implementation of marketing concept enhances the productivity of Pharmaceutical firms, 21.6% also agreed, 17.2% disagreed while 10.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed.

Test of Hypotheses

To add more validity and reliability to the research outcome from the Table 1.2, the null hypotheses are therefore tested using the chi-square X^2 methods.

Test of Hypotheses one:

H_{01} = Marketing concept does not significantly influence satisfaction of consumers needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms

Data Analysis Table

Table 1.6: Expected and observed frequencies applying the X² distribution

Observed frequency O _i	Expected frequency E _i	Deviations (O _i -E _i)	Deviation squared (O _i -E _i) ²	Weighted Deviation squared (O _i -E _i) ² / E _i
60	35	25	625	17.85
40	35	15	225	6.42
20	35	-15	225	6.42
19	35	-16	256	7.31
139			X²0	38

At (level of significant) 0.05 and n-1, df = 4-1 = 3

X²Critical from table = 7.81

Decision Rule

Since the calculated t-value (X²0) 38 is greater than the critical t-value 7.81, we therefore reject the null hypotheses Ho₁ and accept the alternative hypotheses. We therefore conclude that marketing concept does influence satisfaction of customers needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms.

Test of Hypotheses Two:

Ho₂ = There is no significant relationship existing between marketing concept and satisfaction of consumers needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms.

Data Analysis Table

Table 1.7: Expected and observed frequencies applying the X² distribution

Observed frequency O _i	Expected frequency E _i	Deviations (O _i -E _i)	Deviation squared (O _i -E _i) ²	Weighted Deviation squared (O _i -E _i) ² / E _i
65	35	30	900	25.7
35	35	0	0	0
24	35	-11	121	3.4
15	35	-20	400	11.4
139			X²0	40.5

At (level of significant) 0.05 and n-1, df = 4-1 = 3

X² Critical from table = 7.81

Decision Rule

Since the calculated t-value (X² 0) 40.5 is greater than the critical t-value from table, we therefore reject the null hypotheses H0₂ and accept the alternative hypotheses.

We therefore conclude that there are significant relationship existing between marketing concept and satisfaction of consumer needs and wants in pharmaceutical firms.

Test of Hypotheses Three:

Ho₃ = Marketing concept does not enhance the productivity of pharmaceutical firms.

Data Analysis Table

Table 1.8: Expected and observed frequencies applying the X² distribution

Observed frequency O _i	Expected frequency E _i	Deviations (O _i -E _i)	Deviation squared (O _i -E _i) ²	Weighted Deviation squared (O _i -E _i) ² / E _i
70	35	35	1225	35
30	35	-5	25	0.71
24	35	-11	121	3.45
15	35	-20	400	11.24
139			X² 0	50.4

At (level of significant) 0.05 and n-1, df = 4-1 = 3

X² Critical from table = 7.81

Decision Rule

Since the calculated t-value (X² 0) 50.4 is greater than the critical t-value from table, we therefore reject the null hypotheses H₀₃ and accept the alternative hypotheses. We therefore conclude that implementation of marketing concept does enhance productivity of pharmaceutical firms.

Results of the Findings

This study has analyzed marketing concept and consumer satisfaction in pharmaceutical firms. From the data obtained it was discovered that marketing concept is positively influencing satisfaction of consumer needs, wants and expectation and that organization employing marketing concept would first of all attempt to determine the needs and wants of consumers in their target segments, design product or services to fill the needs and want of the target segments. This is in line with Peter and Olson (1990) who stated that the logic of segmentation is based on the idea that one product will usually not satisfy all customers at a go. Also Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2010) note that the need for segmentation arise from the differences in individual behaviour, such as their various motivations, desires, decision making process and buying pattern. According to Foxall and Goldsmith (1994), once a market has been categorised into smaller segments, allowing a firm to farm a better idea of how to sell its product becomes easier because it will be able to select one or more segments on which to focus and sell its products. The study concluded that upon identification of consumer’s needs and wants, marketers will then proceed to formulate the various marketing strategies such as pricing, advertising, and distribution patterns to appeal to the target consumers.

Another finding of the study is that to achieve the overall goals of satisfying the consumers, it is necessary to involve everybody in the entire organization. This is in line with Kehinde, and Adegbuyi (2016) who stated that integrated marketing comprises of the functional unit in an organization such as production, finance, human resource marketing etc. All should be integrated to satisfy the needs, and desire of the customers.

Thirdly, it was also found that in implementing marketing concept organization should as well be profit oriented. Marketing is tagged successful if only it is able to maximise profit in sales volume and a long term customer satisfaction. This is supported by the idea of Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) who stated that identifying the key elements of a successful marketing concept is by first determining the needs, wants and expectation of specific target market then delivering the desired products to target markets to meet their needs and also doing this far more than the competitors. The study concluded that marketers should try to produce what can be sold, instead of trying to sell what has been produced.

The study also revealed that there was a significant relationship existing between marketing concept and consumer satisfaction. This is in line with the views of Ijewere (2009) who stated

that if all marketing activities are directed towards satisfying the customer, it will on the long-run, suppress the agitation for better quality products and by extension consumer behaviour. The study concluded that the marketing concept protects the consumer against poor quality of goods, adulteration of goods and artificial scarcity by encouraging firms to direct all their marketing activities towards the production of goods and services that can satisfy consumers' needs and wants.

Again, this study also found that marketing concept enhances productivity in pharmaceutical firms, by revealing that marketing concept encourages innovation and new products development which involves designing and launching of new products and services through business research. This is supported by the views of Hauser *et al* (2006), Cooper and Edgett, (2008) and Griffin *et al* (2009) that the development of new products creates revenue, growth and is also a vital driver of profit.

Lastly, the study found that the essence of implementing marketing concept is not to fight competition but to avoid it. This is supported by the view of Dickson (in Warner2011) that the philosophy of marketing concept is that the purpose of marketing is not to ensure consumer sovereignty, but to avoid competition and to Percy (in Warner 2010) the key issues in marketing are how to implement the marketing concept, how to manage it and how to effect organizations change based upon its premises.

Conclusion

This study examined the practice and implementation of marketing concept among pharmaceutical companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. The finding of the study indicated that for any company to implement the marketing concept it must begin its exploit with finding out the needs, wants and expectation of consumers through careful business research activities, formulating and developing products to match those needs and want.

The results of the analysis indicated that marketing concept and consumer satisfaction are related significantly. Therefore, the conclusion of the study is that any company that want to implement and practice marketing concept must be consumer satisfaction friendly and well positioned to anticipate other needs and want and put strategies in place to produce and offer goods and services to match those needs and want. This study also found out that companies must constantly scan their environment and understand the dynamics of the environmental variables.

Recommendations

Arising from the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. The needs, wants and expectations of the consumers should be based on the outcome of business research.
2. Customer complaints and dissonance should be handled promptly since most dissatisfied consumers usually tell others about their regrets.
3. Close customer relationship be establish and maintain to enable long term retention and satisfaction.
4. Treating customers to feel very important like Kings and Queens would make them remain loyal and committed to the organization. Therefore, organization must strive to be customer satisfaction conscious.
5. All employees' effort must be integrated and coordinated into a whole towards satisfying customer needs, wants and expectations.

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