The Role of Small Scale Industry in Vocational and Technical Education: The Impact of Marketing Management

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Abstract

This study was carried out to determine the role of small scale industry in vocational and technical education: the impact of marketing management. Specifically, this study determined the:- the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students in school of Technical Education in Niger State College of Education, Nigeria as well as the solutions to the marketing problems faced. Two research questions were answered and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significant to guide the study. The descriptive survey approach was used and the target population for this study was made up of the students in school of technical. Fifteen (15) item-questionnaires were used as instruments for data collection which were analyzed according to research questions. The data collected from the respondents was analyzed using mean and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings among others include: Poor marketing Management, lack of marketing orientation. It was recommended that the Government should formulate policies and programmes to encourage small-scale entrepreneurs sail smooth in their private investment. Such encouragement should include, tax holiday, interest free loan and low tariff.

Keywords: *Vocational and Technical Education, Marketing Management, Small Scale Industry*

1.0 Introduction

Every human person existing under the earth is endowed with some natural potential. That is, the ability and capacity to exercise God-given talents for the purpose of self development and social transformation for better living. These skills when identified and developed then put into use become an enterprise. Business in Nigeria has been classified as small, medium and large. However, a small scale industry is distinct by the criteria of project costs, capital and cost turnover by the employee. Isaac and Abimbola, (2008) explain that SME sub-sector are seen to be characterized by dynamism, sharp innovations, efficiency and their small size allows for faster decision-making process. This makes the development of this industry an important task and therefore an essential element in the growth strategy for most economy. Improved marketing to the small and medium scale enterprises will lead to fortunes of economic development. Ayozie (2011) explains that the adoption and application of marketing concept is one sure way by which small business enterprises can grow and fill the niche in the 21st century commerce and industry.

The need for acquisition of productive skills for the operation of any business venture cannot be overemphasized. The marketing method and information processing knowledge adopted by a small scale business can uplift the image of a business outfit before the public and customers. Small and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria are known for their contributions to employment, production, investing export to mention but a few. This makes the development of this sub sectors a vital task and a key strategy in achieving economic prosperity. It creates opportunity for self employment; encourages rural development and entrepreneurship; and move importantly, it is the shock absorber in times of economic meltdown. Large companies are shedding jobs faster and more than small Scale enterprise (SMEs).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

A 2004 survey conducted by the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) revealed that only about ten percent (10%) of industries run by its members are fully operational. Essentially, this means that 90 percent of the industries are either ailing or have closed down. Given the fact that manufacturing industries are well-known catalysts for real growth and development of any nation, this reality clearly portends a great danger for the Nigerian economy (Patrick, 2009). Unfortunately, rather than increased access to marketing, finance among others. Small Scale industries have faced constrained access to finance, owing to a number of reasons some of which are; difficulty in accessing funds from banks because they are seen as high risk enterprises with low capital base in the case of bank loans and a host of others. No matter how sound a business idea is, without money, the possibility of success of such a business is bleak.

For these reasons the Federal Government, individuals, group of individuals, community development associations and private corporate entities (or by foreign investors) have introduced positive effort to address these issues either directly or indirectly; this includes the establishment of the Microfinance Banks (MFBs), SMEs promotion institutions or agencies (such as technological development institutions, credit lending institutions, technical and management training institutions, extension services institutions, regulatory institutions among others); and encouraging savings and reinvestment respectively.

1.2 Research Questions

  i. What are the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria?

  ii. What are the solutions to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.?

1.3 Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

HO_1:   There is no significant difference between the mean responses of the respondents on the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.

HO_2:   There is no significant difference between the mean responses of the respondents on the solutions to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.

1.4 Methodology

In carrying out this study, the descriptive survey approach was used, where questionnaires are used to determine the opinion of the respondents on the issue under investigation. Yalams and Ndomi (1999) define survey research as the gathering of information about a large number of people or objects by studying a representative sample of the entire group through the use of questionnaires. In support of this, Nworgu, (1991) stated that research design is a plan or blue print which specifies how data relating to a given problem should be collected and analyze. Therefore, the survey research was considered suitable since the study will seek information from a sample that was drawn from a population using a questionnaire.

1.5 Population of the study

The target population for this study was made up of one hundred and fifty (150) students in five (5) departments of school of Technical Education in Niger State College of Education Minna. Since, the population is small, no sampling was used. Hence the whole population was used.

These include:

1. Automobile Technology department
2. Building Technology department
3. Electrical/ electronic Technology department
4. Metalwork Technology department
5. Woodwork Technology department

1.6 Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher for this study. It consisted of two (2) parts in which the first indicate the introductory part of the respondents and the second part is divided into two sections A and B. All items are to be responded to by indicating the appropriate respondent's best perception using five point rating scales which include strongly agreed (5 point), agreed (4 point), undecided (3 point), strongly disagreed (2 point) and disagreed (1 point). Section A contains (7) items which deals with the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five department in School of Technical Niger

State College of Education Minna, Nigeria and section B also contains (8) items which deals with the solutions to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five department in School of Technical Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.

$$\frac{5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{5} = \frac{15}{5} = 3.00$$

1.7 Method of Data Analysis

The analysis of data for the research questions and hypothesis were analyzed using the mean and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The mean was used to determine the degree of acceptance or rejection in research questions, while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses.

1.8 Decision Rule

The mean of 3.00 was used as decision point for every questionnaire item. Consequently, any item with mean responses of 3.00 and above was considered to be agreed and any item with a mean response of 2.99 and below was equally considered not agreed in Section A and B respectively. Also the ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant to compare the mean response of the respondents. A F-ratio of 5.7459 and 2.6414 were selected based on the degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significant. Therefore, any item with analysis of variance (ANOVA) calculated value less than the critical was regarded as not significant. While any item with calculated value equal or greater than the critical was regarded as significant.

1.9 Results

1.9.1 Research Question 1

What are the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean responses of the Respondents on the Problems Faced by Vocational and Technical Students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria

		N_1= 30, N_2=30, N_3=30, N_4=30 N_5=30							
S/N	Items	$\bar{X}_1$	$\bar{X}_2$	$\bar{X}_3$	$\bar{X}_4$	$\bar{X}_5$	$\bar{X}_t$	Remarks	Ranks
1	Financial constraints	3.56	3.52	3.47	3.45	3.33	3.47	Agreed	5th
2	lack of understanding and the application of marketing concept	3.98	3.87	3.93	3.67	3.55	3.80	Agreed	1st
3	lack good quality control in	3.50	3.70	3.60	3.40	3.87	3.61	Agreed	3rd

	their operations							
4	Lack the knowledge and skills of basic marketing ingredients such as marketing research, market segmentation, and marketing planning and control	3.75	3.82	3.73	3.88	3.56	3.75	Agreed	2nd
5	Poor marketing Management	3.45	3.15	3.30	3.45	3.15	3.30	Agreed	6th
6	lack of marketing orientation	3.17	3.21	3.00	3.31	3.12	3.16	Agreed	7th
7	High costs of vehicles and poor roads	3.62	3.49	3.61	3.56	3.23	3.50	Agreed	4th
	$\bar{X}_g$						3.51	Agreed

N_1= Automobile Technology, N_2= Building Technology, N_3= Electrical/electronic Technology, N_4=Metalwork Technology, N_5= Woodwork Technology, $\bar{X}_1$= Mean responses of Automobile Technology, $\bar{X}_2$= Mean responses of Building Technology, $\bar{X}_3$= Mean responses of Electrical/electronic Technology, $\bar{X}_4$= Mean responses of Metalwork Technology, $\bar{X}_5$= Mean responses of Woodwork Technology and $\bar{X}_g$ = Grand Average Mean

The data presented on table 1 revealed that the Grand Mean ($\bar{X}_g$) value (3.51) of the items is above the

cut-off point (3.00). Therefore, all the respondents agreed on the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students

1.9.2 Research Question II

What are the solutions to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.?

Table 2: Mean responses of the Respondents on the solutions to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.

N$_1$= 30, N$_2$=30, N$_3$=30, N$_4$=30 N$_5$=30

S/N	Items	$\bar{X}_1$	$\bar{X}_2$	$\bar{X}_3$	$\bar{X}_4$	$\bar{X}_5$	$\bar{X}_t$	Remarks	Ranks
1	Planning the marketing activity	3.33	3.21	3.34	3.43	3.12	3.29	Agreed	6th
2	Identifying marketing opportunities and its needs.	3.87	3.43	3.51	3.76	3.55	3.62	Agreed	3rd
3	Absence of strategic management skills and attitudes	3.67	3.48	3.94	3.87	3.74	3.74	Agreed	1st
4	Advertising and promoting the products	3.50	3.47	3.46	3.39	3.23	3.41	Agreed	4th
5	Obtaining sales for the products	3.21	3.11	3.18	3.20	3.17	3.17	Agreed	7th
6	Choosing and motivating the channels of distribution such as retail outlets	3.01	3.14	3.19	3.09	3.19	3.12	Agreed	8th
7	Government-Intervention Strategies	3.67	3.74	3.64	3.58	3.65	3.66	Agreed	2nd
8	Setting prices and terms of supply	3.21	3.32	3.30	3.37	3.39	3.32	Agreed	5th
	$\bar{X}_g$						3.41	Agreed	

N$_1$= Automobile Technology, N$_2$= Building Technology, N$_3$= Electrical/electronic Technology, N$_4$=Metalwork Technology, N$_5$= Woodwork Technology, $\bar{X}_1$= Mean responses of Automobile Technology, $\bar{X}_2$= Mean responses of Building Technology, $\bar{X}_3$= Mean responses of Electrical/electronic Technology, $\bar{X}_4$= Mean responses of Metalwork Technology, $\bar{X}_5$= Mean responses of Woodwork Technology and $\bar{X}_g$ = Grand Average Mean

The data presented on table 2 revealed that the Grand Mean ($\bar{X}_g$) value (3.41) of the items is above the

cut-off point (3.00). Therefore, all the respondents agreed on the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students.

1.9.3 Hypothesis 1

HO$_1$:   There is no significant difference between the mean responses of the respondents on the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.

Table 3: One- way Analysis of Variance of the mean responses of the respondents on the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.

Sources of variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Sum of Squares	f- cal	f- critical	Significance	Decision
Between groups	4	0.1218	0.0305	0.4414	5.7459	NS	Accepted
Within groups	30	2.0716	0.0691				
Total	34	2.1934					

From the f- ratio distribution statistical table, the critical value of F with 4 and 30 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is 5.7459 with f- calculated value of 0.4414. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted, which states "There is no significant difference between the mean responses of the respondents on the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.

1.9.4 Hypothesis 1I

HO$_2$:   There is no significant difference between the mean responses of the respondents on the solutions to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria"

Table 4: One- way Analysis of Variance of the mean responses of the respondents on the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria.

Sources of variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Sum of Squares	f- cal	f- critical	Significance	Decision
Between groups	4	0.0593	0.0148	0.2298	2.6414	NS	Accepted
Within groups	35	2.2550	0.0644				
Total	39	2.3143					

From the f- ratio distribution statistical table, the critical value of F with 4 and 30 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is 2.6414 with f- calculated value of 0.2298. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted, which states "There is no significant difference between the mean responses of the respondents on the solutions to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria"

1.10 Findings

The following are the findings of the study, based on the data collected and analysed; they are highlighted based on the research questions posed on the study by the hypothesis.

Findings related to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria ranked from 1st to 3rd are:

1. Lack of understanding and the application of marketing concept
2. Technical and vocational students are not marketing oriented and focused
3. Lack good quality control in their operations

Findings related to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria ranked from 6th to 7th are:

1. Poor marketing Management
2. lack of marketing orientation

Findings related to the solutions to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria ranked from 1st to 2nd are:

1. Absence of strategic management skills and attitudes.
2. Government-Intervention Strategies

Findings related to the solutions to the marketing problems faced by Vocational and Technical Education students across the five departments in School of Technical Education, Niger State College of Education Minna, Nigeria ranked from 8th is:

1. Choosing and motivating the channels of distribution such as retail outlets

1.10.1 Discussion of Findings

The research findings also revealed that if SMEs businesses are not well managed some problems as opined by Tijani (2004) includes the absence of strategic management skills and attitudes. The inability to respond to threatening environmental conditions, lack of clearly defined objectives, lack of delegation, inability to select appropriate equipments and resources, and the faulty design, implementation and evaluation by small scale businesses will therefore affects its future profitability and success. These activities are not properly handled in many Nigerian small business enterprises as Ogwo (1991) has rightly pointed out.

The result revealed that one of the major marketing problems facing small business enterprises in Nigerian is lack of understanding and the application of marketing concept. Most Nigerian small business owners equate 'marketing' to 'selling' and this is reflected in their various dysfunctional business behaviours against customer satisfaction and good business orientation. They lack the knowledge and skills of basic marketing ingredients such as marketing research, market segmentation, and marketing planning and control.

The findings also revealed that technical and vocational students are not marketing oriented and focused; if a marketer is defined as someone who understands and applies marketing in order to create, build, and maintain beneficial relationships with target markets. Baker (1979) and Doyle (1985) identify lack of marketing orientation as the major factor for business failure. Most Nigerian small manufacturers, in a higher degree, depends on imported equipment and raw materials for their operations.

Ayozie (2011) points out that high quality raw material are important to producing high quality products. Besides, small-scale producers lack good quality control in their operations. In this respect, they rely mainly on replacing faulty products instead of developing good quality control system (Onwuchuruba, 2001).

Government-Intervention Strategies (GIS) approach to entrepreneurship promotion may be direct or indirect. Direct public policy consists of direct investment (government participation in business), establishment of SMEs (Small and Medium Scale Enterprises) promotion institutions or agencies (e.g. technological development institutions, credit lending institutions, technical and management training institutions, extension services institutions, regulatory institutions among others) provision of infrastructural facilities such as industrial estates (parks), nationalisation of foreign firms and facilitating the ability of entrepreneur via enabling policies, incentives subsidies, programmes and open campaign

for the promotion of cottage, small and medium scale entrepreneurship. Indirect public policy relating to entrepreneurship promotion consists of regulatory provision, encouraging savings and reinvestment, McCarthy (1960), distilled twelve elements developed by Prof. Borden into the 4P's of Product, Price, Place, promotions now commonly called the 4P's of Marketing. These confirm the 4P's as the key determinants of the nature of marketing operations and they lead to the major functions of marketing viz;

1. Identifying marketing opportunities and its needs.
2. Managing products
3. Choosing and motivating the channels of distribution such as retail outlets
4. Advertising and promoting the products
5. Obtaining sales for the products
6. Setting prices and terms of supply and
7. Planning the marketing activity

Bert (2013) identified five functions that illustrate the importance of marketing, these include;

Product: Marketing managers identify markets they can access at reasonable cost and segment the markets to group together potential customers with similar needs. Different market segments may value design, functionality or low price, and you have to design corresponding products, or have different versions for different market segments.

Promotion: is a key marketing function that helps sell a company's products, but also influences the image of the company.

Price: The price set by the marketing manager determines how well the company performs and whether it can meet its profit targets. If the marketing manager sets the price incorrectly, the company can lose money and fail.

Channel: Deciding how the product reaches the market is an important marketing function. You can choose a convenient retail location to sell products, organize direct sales with sales reps, include an online sales or mail order strategy or choose a wholesale channel. Ensuring that the channel you have chosen is convenient for your targeted customers affect sales and overall company performance.

Presentation: The packaging of each product, including sizes, type of packaging and package design, is critical for the success of the product. How marketing decides to present the product and the resulting consumer perception of the company affects company image and reputation. If your package doesn't catch the eye, consumers won't see it and sales will be low; if it catches the eye with inappropriate designs, the company's reputation will suffer. You have to ensure that marketing chooses the right presentation for the product.

The research findings also revealed that if SMEs business are not well managed some problems as opined by Tijani (2004) includes the absence of strategic management skills and attitudes, the inability to respond to threatening environmental conditions, lack of clearly defined objectives, lack of delegation, inability to select appropriate equipments and resources, and the faulty design, implementation and evaluation by small scale businesses will therefore affects its future profitability

and success. These activities are not properly handled in many Nigerian small business enterprises as Ogwo (1991) have rightly pointed out. The managerial activity of modern SMEs covers marketing research, market segmentation, marketing information systems, marketing planning and control, and other issues relating to product, price, promotion, and distribution (Ayozie, 2011).

1.11 Conclusion

Based on the finding of the study, it was analyzed that the best marketing strategy to the growth of SMEs in Vocational and Technical education include the following viz;

1. Media advert
2. One-to-one marketing
3. Consultation with customers that need the product
4. Suggestive selling
5. And snow balling method (referrer)

1.12 Recommendations

Based on the findings the following recommendations were proffered viz:

1. Government should formulate policies and programmes to encourage small-scale entrepreneurs sail smooth in their private investment. Such encouragement should include:
    i.   Tax holiday.
    ii.   Interest free loan.
    iii.   Low tariff.
2. Government should serve as the central role in facilitating and providing enabling environment as well as intervention measures for SMEs.

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