

An Empirical Investigation of Cultural Factors and Consumption Patterns Correlates in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria

Hart O. Awa (Corresponding author), M.Sc.; MBA

Department Of Marketing, University Of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

E-mail: sundayeze@yahoo.com

Sylva E. Kalu, DBA

Department Of Marketing, University Of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Nsobiari F. Awara, Ph.D.

Department Of Marketing, University Of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

Abstract

This study investigated the influence of cultural factors such as customs, beliefs and values on the consumption patterns of chewing sticks, traditional wears, marriage apparels and burial rites in the South-South Geopolitical zone of Nigeria. 480 copies of questionnaire were developed and administered amongst adults of 4 randomly selected riverine Local Government Areas (LGAs) of each state of Cross River, Rivers, and Akwa Ibom. Specifically, each state surveyed was rated equal as well as the LGAs and so, 160 and 40 respondents were respectively surveyed from each state and each LGA. The data were analyzed based on 436 returns rate using simple percentages and Chi-square test statistic. However the findings showed that the interaction between cultural factors and consumption patterns in the zone, though with differing values, is statistically significant. Therefore, we conclude that a fair grasp of the strength of interaction between these variables and consumption requires studying them separately and not holistically. Finally, the study implied among others that since culture strongly correlates with a firm's financial performance, market orientation, and market positioning, its variables must not be taken for granted, rather they should be studied, identified, monitored, manipulated (where possible), and adapted to, in order to avoid threats they pose, and take advantage of opportunities they offer since strategic marketing decisions in our ever turbulent environments are often based on them.

Keywords: Customs, Beliefs, Values, Consumption pattern, Individual difference factors, People, Cognition

1. Introduction

Most consumer behaviour theories allude to the influence of situational, environmental and individual difference factors (Engel et al, 1978; Ukoh, 1996; Hansen, 1972) on consumer behaviour though Belk (1975) emphasizes more on situational variables. Cultural variables are perhaps located under environment though they often explain individual difference factors. So every economy, state, political province, work organization, community, and family/household exhibits some measure of uniqueness and perhaps similarities in norms, taboos, belief systems, folklores, etc; which inescapably reflect on the people's general ways of life, especially their consumption behaviour. The postulate of the famous English Philosopher and Political Economist, Adam Smith, that consumption is the antithesis of production holds firmly lucrative if the marketing strategist rolls out marketing programmes that recognize the cultural differences, however minor, of the target audiences, perhaps in terms of their thought about, and use of, his employer's products. Rashid et al (2003) observe that certain key values, beliefs, and norms of a people give much impetus to the success and superior performance of an organization. For instance, Cateora and Graham (2002) record that the Radio Shack Company suffered predicaments when it disregarded the host community customs by erroneously assuming no differences exist between people of United States and Europe, perhaps because both are westernized. Also in Holland, the company lost Christmas sales owing to its focus of marketing efforts on December 25 whereas holiday gifts are exchanged on 6th December.

An average Frenchman uses almost twice as many cosmetics and other beauty aids as does his wife, which means launching marketing appeals to the female and male segments of the market. Tanzania women would not give eggs to their children for fear of being bald or impotent. To an American, punctuality and setting of deadlines for action are normal business procedures, indicating the degree of emergency or relative importance of the action; but to a Latin American or Arabs, deadlines may be viewed discourteous and uncivilized way of life. Even in organizations, decisions often reflect the cultural backgrounds of the makers (Awa, 2003) and culture itself has strong relationship with a firm's financial performance (Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Van de Post et al, 1998), market orientation, and competitive edge (Sadri and Lees, 2001). Predominantly, focus on Japanese culture and tradition, which are uniquely engulfed and expressed in management personnel, explains Japan's success stories in business (Abegglen, 1973; Hazama, 1978; Hanami, 1979). Hambrick and Mason (1984) report that each decision maker comes to the administrative setting with his/her idiosyncratic givens, which often reflect his/her cognitive base about assumptions concerning future, alternatives, and consequences attached to each alternative. Thus, a fair investigation of any organizations must encompass the cultural structure of the target publics as well as those of the decision-makers perhaps through inventory of values.

The South-South Geo-Political zone of Nigeria is a significant area of the Niger Delta region; it is made up of six states- Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Bayelsa, Rivers, Delta, and Edo. The zone contributes immensely to Nigeria's economy through oil and gas without a commiserate government attention, which perhaps informs why it seems the home of militant activities, kidnapping, and hostage taking. The South-South Geo-Political zone possesses distinct cultural attributes that distinguish it from other geo-political zones in Nigeria and it accommodates several major and minor ethnic nationalities with cultural differences, which are often expressed in their consumption patterns. Specifically, their unique cultural heritage largely relates to mode of dressing, entertainment, education, sex roles, language, occupation, burial rites, aesthetics, norms, value systems, bride price, etc. For instance, their consumption of traditional attires and marriage apparels is so peculiar and valued by the people as they give them the opportunity to showcase in festivals and ceremonies, their rich and perhaps undiluted cultural identities. Also, burial rites are very important to the people of South-South as they reference and give respects to dead members of their societies. They are ceremonies and rituals conducted to honour and/or bury dead persons, which may be similar but out-rightly different in some instances depending on the state and the people.

The purpose of this paper is in two folds. First, to empirically examine the influence of cultural factors such as customs, beliefs, and values on consumption patterns of such consumer goods as chewing stick, traditional attires, marriage apparels, and burial rites in the South-South Geo-political zone of Nigeria. Second, to examine the consequences of culturally controlled behaviour on the manipulation of marketing variables with a view to making possible recommendations. The two hypotheses below bear on these.

H01 The consumption pattern of chewing sticks in the South-South is not dependent upon cultural variables (customs, beliefs, and values).

H02 There is no relationship between consumption pattern of traditional attires and cultural factors.

H03 Cultural factors do not impact on the consumption pattern of marriage apparels.

H04 Burial rites of deceased are not determined by the cultural factors.

2. Review of Literature

The building of the theoretical framework for study takes eclectic approach, reflecting on conceptual and empirical viewpoints. The conceptual viewpoint examines key constructs and frameworks that provide for the study a resounding theoretical backing, whereas the empirical viewpoint deals with the specific findings of empirical enquiries that may be used to structure managerial decision-making bearing in mind the cultural differences of the people.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Everybody is a product of culture and society and perhaps, culture is everything and everything is culture. Conceptually, the culture of a people represents the broadest environmental variable (Lancaster and Massingham, 2001), which, though less conspicuous but provides consciously or sub-consciously common intrinsic, implicit, and informal meanings and directions (Rashid et al, 2003) that ultimately shape all facets of individual behaviour perhaps in less suspected manners. It often defines norms, beliefs, and customs that are learned from society and shapes core identity and/or common patterns of behaviour (Assael, 1996; Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Kotter and Heskett, 1992). Culture is a cognitively based identity map (Jones, 1983); a peoples' personality (Van de Post, 1998); a software of the mind that provides guidance to how a people thinks and behaves (Hofstede, 1991;

Douglas, 2001); and a thicket (Hodgson et al, 2000) for thickets are tough to get through, but efforts often lead to success. Further, culture is a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed by a people to deal with external adaptation and internal integration (Schein, 1992); a pattern of beliefs, symbols, rituals, myths, and practices that evolved overtime (Pheyse, 1993), and a significant determinant and regulator of a peoples' way of life, especially their consumption related behaviours (Lancaster and Massingham, 2001).

The culture of a people represents the structure and control system to generate behavioural standards (Rashid et al, 2003), and is often viewed as a sum total of all the shared, taken for granted assumptions that a people has learnt through history (Schein, 1999). Cateora (1996) describes it as the man-made part of human environment- a complexity of knowledge, arts, morals, laws, customs, beliefs, and other capabilities and habits acquired by humans as members of a society. Culture may be the chief characteristic of a more or less permanent situation. The consumption patterns, judgment of what is good or bad, and other patterns of life speak on the body of values by which a culture defines, reflects, and perpetuates what is held out to be the dignity, the values, and the ideals of human life (Scott, 1990; Karanaugh and Huntington, 2000). An anthropologist and a business consultant, Edward Hall describes culture even further when he notes that:

*the people we were advising kept bumping their heads against an invisible barrier.....
We knew that what they were up against was a completely different way of organizing life of thinking, and of conceiving the underlying assumptions about the family and the state, the economic systems, and even man himself (Hall, 1959).*

Cateora and Graham (2002) express it as the accumulation of a series of best solutions to problems faced in common by members of a society. It serves as an instrument used to adjust to the biological, environmental, psychological, and historical components of human existence. Implicit from these descriptions is that culture is pervasive, learned, cognitively based, and satisfies needs; it determines and regulates behaviours; it is more persistent, less apt to change overtime, and it is made up of sub-cultures and often forms the bedrock that nurtures social change (Kotler, 1984; Nnedu, 1996).

Cultures related to businesses are grouped into imperatives, adiaphora, and exclusive. Cultural imperatives are business customs and expectations one must adhere and conform to or avoided, even if they are bad to one's liking, provided relationships are to be successful. Successful cross-country businessmen are familiar with the Latin American word *compadre* or trust, the Chinese *guanxi* or friendship, and the Japanese *ningen kankei* or human relations and their natural roles in stimulating long-run relationships with the dealers, end-users, suppliers, financial community, and the governments. Informal discussions, entertainments, mutual relationships and contacts, and spending quality time with others are ways of stimulating *quanxi*, *ningen*, *kankei*, and other trust relationships (Pearce and Robinson, 2000) in those cultures, where competitive edge is built based on friendships, trust, and acceptance (Mei Yi and Ellis, 2000). Perhaps, the significance of friendship is more dominating in those countries where family relationship is a close one. Tangled Web (2000) observes that in China, for instance, the outsider is, at best, in fifth position in order of importance when deciding on who to transact business with. The family is first, then the extended family, then neighbours from one's home town, then classmates, and only reluctantly, strangers, subject, however, to nature of relationship established. Further in Asia, it is culturally imperative to avoid causing your counterpart to lose face; and in China, to raise your voice, to shout at a Chinese in public, or to correct them in front of their peers will cause them to lose face (Champy, 1999).

Cultural adiaphora relates to areas of behaviour or custom, which a cultural alien is not bound to adapt and/or identify with. Such alien may imitate or respect the customs but is not dutifully bound to participate in them. For instance, one does need to squat and eat (as an Muslim religion); consume foods and/or drinks that contradict the digestive system, religion, and personal belief; and exchange greetings with kisses (as Russians) or bow down to greet elders (as in Yoruba tribe of Nigeria). Modern marketing practitioners have realized that symbolic attempt to participate in adiaphora is not only acceptable but also helps to establish enabling rapport that transcends into building a long term trusted relationships that would spur business transactions. The Japanese do not expect a Westerner to bow and to understand the ritual of bowing amongst Japanese, yet a symbolic bow signifies interest and some sensitivity to their culture that is acknowledged as a gesture of goodwill and perhaps pave ways for strong and trusted relationship (Cateora and Graham, 2002). Finally, cultural exclusives relate to those customs or behavioural patterns that are exclusively reserved for the local or natives. For instance, a Christian acting like a Muslim would be repugnant to a follower of Mohammed. In sum, a marketer must appreciate the nuances of cultural imperatives, adiaphora, and exclusives of the target audiences if he really wants to make success.

2.2 Empirical Framework

Several scholarly enquiries had been undertaken on the underlying cultural diversity amongst nations, continents, states, communities, corporate organizations and others. Significant amongst such studies are those of Aaker and Williams (1998), Skeenkamp et al (1999), Kotter and Heskett (1992), Van der Post et al (1998), and the classic work of Geert Hofstede and his associates on how cultural values influence various types of businesses and market behaviours. While some of these studies centre more on the relationship between corporate culture and financial performance, such studies still find their application to the present work since good understanding of the culture of a peoples reflects on a firm's competitive positioning and ultimately financial performance. Hofstede (1991) surveyed over 90,000 people drawn from 66 countries and found cultural differences among nations to follow four primary dimensional approaches. They are individualism/collectivism index (IDV), which centres on self-orientation or group cohesiveness; the power distance index (PDI) emphasizing on authority orientation or the power of egalitarianism; the uncertainty avoidance index (UAI), which focuses on risk orientation or level of tolerance of ambiguities; and the masculinity/femininity index (MFS), which focuses on assertiveness and achievement. The last index has proven to exert the least usefulness, whereas individualism/collectivism, according to Hofstede's survey, has proven the most useful, especially in United States, where individualism/capitalism reigns supreme and in Japan and France, where values are placed on group or face-to-face conversation.

Aaker and Williams (1998) conducted experiments on how cultural values influence consumer behaviour using students drawn from China and America, where both groups were exposed to print advertising using other focused and self-focused emotional appeals. They used their findings to predict that individualistic Americans and the collectivistic Chinese to be favourably disposed to self-focused and other-focused appeals respectively. Further, both Japan and France rated quite high in uncertainty avoidance index, and United States low. The explanation, therefore, is that cultural values suggest that diffusion of innovation will be slower in Japan and France than in United States. These predictions are quite consistent with findings of Skeenkamp et al (1999) that cultures scoring higher on individualism and lower on uncertainty avoidance tend to be more innovative.

However, cautions need be exercised in the application of Hofstede's categorization because similar-but-different aspects of culture create illusion of similarity that rarely existed. A people, for instance, may share common language, race, heritage, and historical experience but significantly differ in habits, tastes, style behaviour, and values, which undoubtedly reflect on their rates of acceptance and adoption of a product or promotion messages. Cateora and Graham (2002) observe that English-speaking American and British exhibit sufficient cultural differences, especially in terms of interpretation of words or phrases such as bathrooms as used in terms of toilet in America and rub baths in England. Linguistic distance has proved useful to marketing strategists and conforms to family trees based on similarity of their forms and development (Aaker and Williams, 1998). While distance can be measured on the linguistic trees, West and Graham (2000) posit that measure of distance from English predicts other important aspects of culture, namely Hofstede's cultural values and perceptions of corruption of nations. As linguistic distance from English increases, Hofstede's individualism decreases, and power distance and corruptness increase (Cateora and Graham, 2002). The relationship between language spoken and cultural values holds deeper implications. As English language diffuses around the world through school system and Internet, cultural values of individualism and egalitarianism spread with it (Cateora and Graham, 2002).

Further, religion, superstitions, aesthetics, social institutions, materialism, and others have cultural undertone as they affect people's habits, their outlooks on life, products they buy, the way they buy them, and even the media they are exposed to. Authorities have written on how easily a marketer can fail if he did not excellently familiarize himself with the religion of the target audiences. Customers respond to images, myths, and metaphors that help them define their personal and national identities and relationships within a context of culture and product benefits (Cateora and Graham, 2002). The uniqueness of cultures can be spotted out quickly in symbols having distinct meanings in terms of colours, artistic expressions, standard of beauty, music, drama, dance, etc. Noor (2000) reports on French Fashion House of chanel, whose most important customers embraced Islam, unintentionally desecrated the Koran by embroidering its verses on dresses shown in its Summer Collections. The designer claimed he got the seemingly aesthetic and pleasing designs from a book on India's Taj Mahal Place and was ignorant of its meaning, especially to the Muslim community. Ultimately, chanel destroyed the dress and the negatives of photographs taken of the garments. Also, Nike in 1997 used a logo on its athletic shoes that inadvertently resembled the Arabic script for the word Alla and quickly recalled the shoes following complaints from Muslim leaders (Nike, 1997). The Egyptians national colour, Green, chosen because religious leaders once wore it, is frowned at as a product package. Similarly, black and white are the Japanese colours for

mourning and should be avoided in product package just as the producer of Singer Sewing Machine halted an outdoor advertising campaign in Hong Kong for using Prussian blue when it was found that the colour signified death and red and gold were found to represent goodness.

Hodge and Ogawa (1991) emphasize on the integrative and pervasive nature of superstition on certain cultural behaviours. In their book, they opine that the 1966 decline in birth-rate of about 20% in Japan followed the belief that women born in the year of the Horse Fire, which occurs every 60 years, will lead to unhappy lives and perhaps murder their husbands. Undoubtedly, this superstition leads to substantial decline in fertility rates every 60 years, stigmatization of women born in 1966, and unfavourable impacts on market potentials for many consumer products in Japan.

Often the dynamic characteristic of culture proves significant in assessing new markets though changes may face resistance. While the degree of resistance varies, reasons abound why it exists. In some situations, the diffusion and adoption of new products or new patterns is rapid; and in some others, resistance is so strong that acceptance seems almost impossible (Skeenkamp et al, 1999; Cateora and Graham, 2002). The most important factors in determining what kind and how much of an innovation will be accepted is the degree of interest in the particular subject as well as its extent of disruption on established behaviour patterns (Cateora and Graham, 2002). Studies show that innovations that enjoy rapid acceptance are those holding the greatest interest within the society and those with the least disruptiveness on established value networks and behaviour pattern (Hofstede, 1991; Aaker and Walliams, 1998; and Cateora and Graham, 2002) and thus are incremental (extensions or improvements upon existing products). Incremental/semi-skimmed innovations attract less complexity in corporate challenges because they create cultural congruence by offering products similar to existing ones thereby avoiding the enormous costs of launching an entirely new product as well as ensuring that established behaviour pattern is not wholly disrupted or that resistance is minimized.

Radical/glamorous/full fat innovations attract further complexities expressed in terms of users not knowing exactly what their requirements are for innovations that demand changes in established behaviour patterns or open up new applications (O'Connor, 1998); and in terms of its costly nature, resulting to aggressive search for information as well as information processing itself competing for scarce resources. Users are not always the primary customers of disruptive innovations (Heiskanen and Repo, 2007) as they often resist to totally novel concepts that challenge or disrupt value networks, established behaviour pattern, and industry practices. Often new-to-the-world innovations are discarded because users never appreciated their benefits (O'Connor, 1998), yet many of such disruptive concepts have attracted the least competition and potentially transform the value networks to the designer's advantage (Tushman and Anderson, 1986; Tornatzky and Fleischer, 1990). This suggests that many age-long values, attitudes, and beliefs in some societies have changed, singly or collectively as a result of rapid industrialization and civilization, war experience (e.g.; the changes in Japan after World War II), and natural disaster (e.g.; earthquakes and other natural calamities). Nevertheless, resistance to innovations pervades in some cultures even when the innovations appear appealing and pervasive to reasonable number of the target group members. For instance, the intensive population-control programmes of India failed because the Indians believe in early marriage, the Hindu religion's emphasis on bearing sons, dependence on children for security at old age, a low level of education among the rural masses, and other cultural concepts (Cateora and Graham, 2002). Marketers of innovations that conflict with the cultural factors have two options. First, to wait for eventual cultural change that perhaps modifies the important values, customs, and/or beliefs in favour of the innovations (unplanned change); and second, to deliberately introduce the innovation and plans to overcome resistance and to cause changes that will accelerate acceptance (planned change). The latter often requires making known the perceived need for the innovation within the culture, causing the local environmental conditions to change favourably, watering down the complexity of the innovation to aid effective comprehension and use, or other things deemed necessary by the strategists.

In sum, culture is a large scoped environmental variable that influences all facets of human behaviours, including the consumption related ones. The diffusion and adoption of an innovation, to a very great extent, depends on building cultural congruence. In its entirety, culture is dynamic (e.g.; sex role) and, to a reasonable extent, can be influenced through though novel manipulation of the marketing programmes irrespective of the fact that certain aspects of culture are relatively rigid. Thus marketing strategists are judged by the extent, to which they build cultural acceptability of, and/or minimization or elimination of resistance to, or rejection of, innovations.

3. Data Collection Methods and Measurements

This work used exploratory research design in three specific organized stages to enjoy empiricism. Hair, Bush, and Ortinau (2000) explain exploratory design in terms of focus on collecting secondary or primary data and

using an unstructured format or informal procedures to interpret them. First, relevant literature was extensively reviewed from textbooks, journals, periodicals, and perhaps newspapers. Second, questionnaire embodying structured disguise and structured undisguised questions was developed and administered among adults of the randomly selected riverine Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Rivers States. The choice of three states and four LGAs from each state for survey was deliberate on accounts of convenience expressed in optimization of resources. Specifically, the LGAs were chosen based more on whether they are riverine. Each riverine LGAs was listed in a separate piece of paper, folded and mixed thoroughly in a container, and selection was progressively done from one through four, in order to give all subjects equal chance of being selected. The process netted Oron, Itu, Ikot Abasi, and Oruk Anam LGAs (from Akwa Ibom State); Akpabuyo, Bakassi, Odukpani, and Biase LGAs (from Cross River State); and Bonny, Okrika, Opobo/Nkoro, and Degema LGAs (from Rivers States). Cluster sampling technique was employed for the selection of sample for the study because of cultural similarities existing amongst the riverine people in their consumption patterns for chewing sticks, traditional wears, marriage apparels and burial rites. Third, was a revisit and reformulation of the working hypotheses and objectives to reflect literature review and responses to questionnaire.

A total of 480 respondents were sampled using questionnaire and because the study rates all LGAs as well as all states equal, discrimination does not prevail in the administration of the questionnaire. Thus, 160 respondents from each state and 40 respondents from each LGA were surveyed with an impressive response rate of 90.8% (i.e. 436 returned and 44 not returned or improperly completed, hence discarded). A 4 point Likert scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) was utilized for the operational measurement of responses to determine consumer attitudes and opinions as well as general consumption patterns for chewing sticks, traditional wears, marriage apparels and burial rites in the zone.

Data instrument was tested for validity and reliability. The Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient (ρ) estimate was 0.98 indicating a high degree of reliability.

4. Data Analysis

The study used both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to analyze data collected to investigate the strength of associations between the independent variables (customs, beliefs and values) and the dependent variables (the consumption patterns) in the South-South Geo-political zone of Nigeria. The chi-square χ^2 test statistic was employed because of the categorical nature of data collected, using the SAS system software in the analyses. Chi-square statistic determines whether evidence exists that the two variables (cultural factors) and consumption pattern are independent or associated.

Table 1 is a summated record of responses, which shows that 1089 responses representing 20.8% strongly agreed that cultural factors are associated with the consumption of patterns of the selected consumer goods in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria, 2229 responses or 42.6% agreed that cultural factors are associated with consumer goods consumption patterns in the zone; 1193 responses representing 22.8% disagreed that cultural factors are associated with consumer goods consumption patterns in the zone; 650 responses representing 12.4% strongly disagreed that cultural factors are associated with consumer goods consumption patterns in the zone, whereas non response was 71 responses representing 1.4%. Tables 2 and 3 dealt with hypotheses testing. Specifically table 3 shows H_0 is rejected because @ 5% level of significance, χ^2 critical value=12.592 and χ^2 chi square=105.4167.

4.1 Result of Hypotheses Test

The data for testing the hypothesis was drawn from Table 1. The result shows a strong association between cultural factors such as customs, beliefs and values and consumption patterns of consumer goods like chewing sticks, traditional wears, marriage apparels and burial rites in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. The independent variables (cultural factors) for the study are qualitative variables and the data for hypotheses testing were categorical in nature. Statistical evidence based on result data from hypothesis testing revealed that there exists a strong association between cultural factors and the consumption patterns in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria.

Thus since $\chi^2_{cal} = 105.4167 > \chi^2_{tab} = 12.592$, H_0 is rejected and H_1 accepted, indicating that consumption patterns in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria are dependent upon cultural factors. There is enough statistical evidence to conclude that the two variables (cultural factors and consumer goods) are not independent but are strongly associated i.e. cultural factors and consumer goods are dependent at 5% level of significance.

5. Discussion and Implications

5.1 Cultural Factors and Chewing Sticks

Data for cultural factors and chewing sticks as shown in Table 4 indicate that cultural factors such as customs, beliefs and values have significant association with the consumption patterns of chewing sticks in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. Hypotheses testing indicates that X^{2cal} for customs = 20.2196; beliefs = 26.4101; and values = 28.8736, all greater than X^{2tab} of 12.592 at 5% level of significance. Chewing sticks though convenience consumer good, are customary and some tribes within South-South Geopolitical zone, especially the Kalabaris in Rivers State have special value for their particular chewing stick, and prefer it to other types, but they could use other types if that is not found. The people believe they need to use them despite modern substitutes like toothpastes and mouth washes, and they value chewing sticks so much. That is why chewing sticks are offered to visitors in the morning in most parts of the zone. Chewing stick is a low involvement product and for that it is inexpensive, frequently purchased and customer loyalty less deep and, often the decision-maker exhibits less aggressiveness in his search efforts.

5.2 Cultural Factors and Traditional Wears

Data for testing the association of cultural factors and traditional wears are found in Table 4. These data show that cultural factors such as customs, beliefs and values are significantly associated with the consumption patterns of traditional wears in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. This is supported by X^{2cal} for customs = 20.5640; beliefs = 12.9639, and values = 25.1078 with $X^{2tab} = 12.592$ at 5% level of significance. However, the strength of association between beliefs and consumption patterns of traditional wears was confirmed not very strong as shown in test result of 12.9639, against X^{2tab} of 12.952.

Traditional wears are shopping goods, which consumers purchase after some shopping around to compare products on styling, quality, suitability, and price. The type of traditional wears used by members of a given society is controlled by their culture. Traditional wears are material aspects that showcase culture of a people, for people acquire the particular knowledge, customs, beliefs and even values for traditional wears from their culture. A people's culture is composed of common habits and patterns of living of people in daily activities and of the common interest in entertainment, sports, news, and even advertising. Perhaps, this confirms why traditional wears are commonly used by majority of the people of the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria for public, religious, traditional and other ceremonies and functions. And there exists differences and similarities amongst the traditional wear used or consumed by the people of the zone.

5.3 Cultural Factors and Marriage Apparels

The data revealed that cultural factors such as customs and beliefs impact on the consumption patterns of marriage apparels in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria (indicating a rejection of H_0) whereas values do not (indicating acceptance of H_1). Table 4 showed that X^{2cal} for cultural elements- customs = 20.8213; beliefs = 15.5812; and values = 7.1749. Marriage apparels are specialty goods (products) with characteristics or features which make them unique and of special value to some people and consequently, demand considerable time and money to acquire them. Specialty goods such as marriage apparels are determined by the culture of the people. Etuk (1985) notes that the culture of a particular society can be described as a "living fabric of tools, materials, structures, species of plants and animals, skills, attitudes, ideas, symbols", social relationships and purposes, all intricately related to human organisms, to geographic environments, and to each other. He further contended that culture is an embodiment of the social heritage of a people; it is something learned as well as something taught. In other words, culture can only be transmitted through the process of socialization, through which we acquire the physical, mental, and social skills needed to survive as members of society, including marriages and marriage apparels. Marriage apparels are material culture in which we show case our cultural heritage.

Culture frequently is viewed as group customs that link together the members of a society. Charles (2005) asserts that generally marriage is an alliance between groups of kin, not only to the parents of both parties but a wider circle of friends and relatives based on the peoples' customs. Marriages create affinity relationships which extend beyond the relationship between husband and wife, and engulf the relatives of both of them.

These assertions testify to the fact that culture and cultural factors such as customs, beliefs, etc greatly are associated with the use of marriage apparels, as marriages are often more of relationship between groups (kins and kinships) than one between individuals. Therefore, marriage apparels are used with group or society in mind, and culture (customs, beliefs, etc) of the people.

Beliefs are cognitive components of culture. They are convictions of truths held by people about the social, physical, religious, and economic aspects of existence. Many cultural beliefs cannot be practically proved. All

the same, behaviour and action of people are gingered by them. Social actions including consumption patterns of consumer (speciality) goods are usually defended by the beliefs behind such actions (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004; Kottack, 1991; Ekerete, 2000; Charles, 2005).

Marriages, marriage apparels and marriage rituals are dictated by a given society. Every state, ethnic group, religion, etc. have unique characteristics concerning marriage and marriage apparels that distinguish it from others based on the customs and beliefs of the people. There exists unique marriage apparels for traditional and religious marriages in the zone. In fact the religious beliefs of spouses, the family and societies sometimes determine the type of marriage apparels used even during traditional marriage ceremonies. However, values have no strong association with marriage apparels consumption patterns as values themselves are products of people's beliefs and customs.

5.4 Cultural factors and burial rites

Finally Table 4 indicates that cultural factors have significant association with the consumption of burial rites in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria.

This is revealed by $X1^{2cal}$, $X11^{2cal}$, $X111^{2cal} > X^{2tab}$ at 95% (df), which means rejecting H_0 . Burial rites are unsought consumer goods which people consume due to exigencies occasioned by the death of loved ones. They include- coffins, burial ceremonies, tombstones, graveyards, etc. And, the type of burial rites accorded members of a given society is determined by the customs, beliefs and values.

According to Amadi (1982), many societies give their members elaborate and expensive burials, since in Nigeria, burials are highly celebrated affairs, and account in no small measure for the popularity of the society or members. Most people spend so much on burial rites such as expensive coffins, uniforms, assorted drinks, and foods, etc. he further asserts that foreigners wonder at this apparent folly and deplore the colossal waste of money. But, he explained that, Nigerians are very religious, and burials form part of the terminal religious rituals for the dead. And, in highly emotional matters, such as religion, it is futile to think in terms of material value. In such rituals man becomes blind, deaf and dumb, consciousness dissolves and that other insubstantial, illogical and elusive part of him takes over. Burial rites or ceremonies are universe and their consumption depends upon the given society, which is influenced by the people's customs, beliefs and values. Among many tribes in Nigeria, suicide was considered an abomination. The usual punishment was to deny the corpse a proper burial or good burial. Usually it would be thrown into an 'evil' forest reserved for people and objects rejected by the earth.

To most Nigerians and those of South-South Geopolitical Zone in particular, a good burial is not only a matter of a fine coffin, a decent church service, a decorated grave and/or an expensive tombstone; rather the performance of full traditional rites by the age-group and other societies to which the deceased belonged. Some of these rites cannot be performed if the deceased lived a notably evil life. Superstitiously, an improper burial means that the spirit of the deceased rarely rests happily. For instance, in some Kalabari communities of Rivers State, traditional religion worshippers are not buried with modern caskets but with locally made coffins produced with sticks and bamboos from the mangroves. Also, a dead pregnant woman is not buried in the common cemetery. Among many riverine areas in Nigeria, especially in the South-South Geopolitical Zone, people drown in the river are buried outside the town, because it is believed that it is a curse on the land and thus, entails serious repercussions. Even burial rites for traditional rulers are quite different from those for others in the same society. This custom is common to almost all people of the Zone.

Burials and burial rites are of utmost importance in our society, and a good burial is a great incentive for upright behaviour in Nigeria, especially in non-Muslim homes. In essence, customs, beliefs and values (mostly religious) affect the burial rites accorded people of a given society.

6. Summary of Major Findings

1. Statistical evidence showed that there is strong association between the customs of a people and their consumption patterns for chewing sticks, traditional wears, marriage apparels and burial rites in the zone. All alternative hypotheses were accepted indicating statistically significant relationships between the dependent and independent variables.
2. Statistical analysis showed that the consumption patterns for chewing sticks, traditional wears, marriage apparels and burial rites in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria, are dependent on the beliefs of the people. These results indicate various strengths of associations between beliefs and consumer goods studied.
3. Statistical evidence indicated that there exists association between cultural values and the consumption patterns for chewing sticks, traditional wears and ostentations behaviour in burial rites. Nonetheless, cultural values and marriage apparels and some aspects of burial rites decisions are independent. That is no associations exist in the latter.

7. Conclusions

A holistic study of all cultural factors and their associations with consumption patterns will rather be difficult and attempts on it or on a few variables as our present endeavour shows a strong correlation between the dependent and the independent variables. Specifically separate analyses revealed that not all cultural factors are associated with, or have equal statistical relationship with, consumption patterns in the zone. Their strengths of associations depend upon the cultural variables and consumer goods studied. The customs of the people the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria have statistically significant association with their consumption patterns for chewing sticks, traditional wears, and marriage apparels as well as burial rites. People's customs usually determine what consumer good or service they buy and/or consume. The beliefs system of the people of the zone equally shows statistically significant association with their consumption patterns for chewing sticks, traditional wears, marriage apparels and burial rites. For instance, religious beliefs determine the type of traditional wears, burial rites and marriage apparels consumed by people of the zone. Finally, the consumption patterns for consumer goods such as chewing sticks, traditional wears and burial rites are dependent upon cultural values of the people of the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. However, values do not have statistically significant association with marriage apparels and sometimes burial rites. Marriage apparels and burial rites are often determined by the customs and beliefs of people.

8. Managerial Implications

1. Cultural factors exert great influences on marketing strategies and specifically on the financial performance, competitive positioning, and market orientation of a firm. And as such marketing strategists should be culturally bound; they should investigate thoroughly the target publics' way of life, and strategically time adaptation to changes by adjusting marketing programmes.
2. Marketers should take cognizance of, and appreciate the symbolic associations of cultural variables and marketing strategies and try to understand their implications on business operations.
3. The evolutionary nature of cultural factors, no matter how minor, must be constantly studied and monitored and reasonably reflected on marketing efforts. Even home markets can change suddenly and become problematic.
4. Marketers should attempt to take control of markets by creating situations that attract changes (purchase behaviours) to their own advantage and exploit same early enough before likely rivals venture in.

References

- Aaker, F., & Williams, P. (1998). Empathy Versus Pride: The Influence of Emotional Appeals across Cultures. *Journal of Consumer Research*. Dec; 25, 241-261.
- Abegglen, J. (1973). *Management and Worker: The Japanese Solution*. Sophia University in Co-operation with Kodansha International Ltd; Tokyo.
- Amadi, E. (1982). *Ethics in Nigerian culture*. Heinemann, London
- Assael, H. (1996). *Consumer Behaviour and Marketing Action*. 5th ed. Kent Publishing Co; Boston, Mass.
- Awa, H. (2003) *Modern Marketing Theory: An Integrated Approach to Managerial Decisions*. Kolley Publishers, Owerri.
- Belk, R. (1975). Situational Variables and Consumer Behaviour. *Journal of Consumer Research*. Dec; 2, 157-164.
- Cateora, P. (1996). *International Marketing*, 9th ed. Irwin, Chicago.
- Cateora, P., & Graham, J. (2002). *International Marketing*. 11th ed. The McGraw-Hall Companies, Inc; New York.
- Champy, J. (1999). The Ugly American Lives on. *Sales and Marketing Management*, Sept 1, 22.
- Charles, J. O. (2005). *Social Anthropology: Concept, Theory and Ethnography*. Serenity Ventures, Lagos.
- Deal, T., & Kennedy, A. (1982) *Corporate Cultures*. Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.
- Douglas, S. (2001). Exploring New Worlds: The Challenge of Global Marketing. *Journal of Marketing*. January, 103-109.
- Ekerete, P. (2000). *Consumer behaviour: Theory and Practice*. Springfield Publishers, Owerri.
- Engel, J, Kollat, D & Blackwell, D. (1978). *Consumer behaviour* 3rd ed. The Dryden Press, Hinsdale, Illinois.
- Etuk, E. (1985). *The Nigerian Business Environment*. Macmillan, London.

- Hair, J, Bush, R & Ortinau, D. (2000). *Marketing Research: A Practical Approach for the New Millennium*. Irwin McGraw-Hill, Boston
- Hall, E. (1959). *The Silent Language*. Doubleday, New York.
- Hambrick, O., & Mason, P. (1984). Upper Echelons: The Organization as a Reflection of its Top Managers. *Academy of management Review*. 9(2), 193-205.
- Hanami, T. (1979). *Labour Relations in Japan Today*. Kodansha International Ltd; Tokyo and New York.
- Hansen, F. (1972). *Consumer Choice Behaviour*. The Free Press, New York.
- Harrison, L., & Huntington, S. (2000) *Culture Matters*. Harrison, L. & Huntington, S. (eds.).Basic Books, New York.
- Hazama, H. (1978). Characteristics of Japanese Style Management. *Japanese Economic Studies*, 6, 3-4, Spring/Summer, 116-174.
- Heiskanen, E., & Repo, P. (2007). User Involvement and Entrepreneurial Action. *Human Technology*, 3(2). May, 167-187.
- Hodge, R., & Ogawa, N. (1991). *Fertility Change in Contemporary Japan*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Hodgson, J, Sano, Y & Graham, J. (2000). *Doing Business with the New Japan*, Rowman & Littlefield, Boulder, Co.
- Hofstede, G. (1991) *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. McGraw-Hill, Berkshire, U.K.
- Jones, G. (1983). Transaction Costs, Poverty Rights, and Organizational Culture: An Exchange Perspective. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 28, 454-467.
- Kavanaugh, P. (1999). An Ethic of Free Association: Questioning a Uniform and Coercive Code of Ethics. *The Psychoanalytic Review*. 86(4), August, 1-13.
- Kotler P. (1984). *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning and Control* 5th ed Prentice-Hall, New Jersey.
- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2001). *Principles of Marketing* 9th ed. Pearson, Delhi.
- Kottak, C. (1991). *Cultural Anthropology* 5th ed. McGraw Hill, New York
- Kotter, J., & Heskett, J. (1992). *Corporate Culture and Performance*. Free Press, New York.
- Lancaster, G., & Massingham, L. (2001) *Marketing Management*. 3rd ed; McGraw-Hill Publishing Co; New York.
- Mei Yi, L., & Ellis, P. (2000). Insider-Outsider Perspectives of Guanxi. *Business Horizons*. Jan/Feb. 25.
- Nicosia, F. (1966). *Consumer Decision Process*. Prentice Hall Englewood, Cliffs.
- Nike, Recalls Shoes Bearing Logo that Muslims found Offensive (1997) Associated Press, June 25. In Cateora, P., & Graham, J. (2002). *International Marketing*. 11th ed. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc; New York.
- Nnedu, E. (1996). *Business Policy and Strategic Management Theory and Practice*. paragraphs, Port Harcourt
- Noor, F. (2000). Break away from Dogmatic Leaders. *New Straits Times*. March 4-12.
- Nwokoye, N. (1996). *Modern Marketing for Nigeria: Principles and Practice* 2nd ed. Africana-Fep, Onitsha.
- O'Connor, G. (1998) Market Learning and Radical Innovation: A Cross Case Comparison of eight Radical Innovation Projects. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 15, 151-166.
- Peter, J., & Donnelly, J. (Jnr). (1998). *Marketing Management: Knowledge and Skill* 5th ed. McGraw Hill, Boston
- Peter, J., & Olson, J. (1999). *Consumer Behaviour and Marketing Strategy* 5th ed. Irwin/McGraw Hill, New York.
- Pheysey, D. (1993). *Organizational Culture: Types and Transformation*. Routledge, London.
- Rashid, M, Sambasivan, M & Johari, J. (2003). The Influence of Corporate Culture and Organizational Commitment on Performance. *Journal of Management Development*, 22(8), 708-728.
- Sadri, G., & Lees, B. (2001). Developing Corporate Culture as a Competitive Advantage. *Journal of Management Development*, 20(10), 853-859.
- Scheenkamp, J, Hofstede, F & Wedel, M. (1999). A Cross-National Investigation into the Individual and National Cultural Antecedents of Consumer Innovativeness. *Journal of Marketing*. April 55-69.
- Schein, E. (1999). *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.
- Schein, E. (1999). *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.
- Schiffman, L., & Kanuk, L. (2004). *Consumer Behaviour* 8th ed. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey.

Scott, C. (1990). *The Question of Ethics, Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.

Tangled Web. (2000). *Economists*. April 8. In Caterora, P. & Graham, J. (2002). *International Marketing* 11th ed. The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc; New York.

Tornatzky, L., & Fleischer, M. (1990). *The Process of Technology Innovation*. Lexington Books, Lexington, M.A.

Tushman, M., & Anderson, P. (1986). Technological Discontinuities and Organizational Environments. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 31, 439-465.

Udeagha, A., & Okeke, C. (1993). *Principles of Marketing*. New Generation Books, Enugu.

Van der Post, de Coning, T., & Smit, E. (1998). The Relationship between Organizational Culture and Financial Performance: Some South African Evidence. *South African Journal of Business Management*, 29(1), 30-41.

West, J., & Graham, J. (2001). *A Linguistics Based Measure of Cultural Distance and its Relationship to Managerial Values*. Graduate School of Management University of California, Irvine, Working Paper.

Table 1. Distribution of responses of association between cultural factors and consumer goods consumption patterns

Factors	SA	A	D	SD	NR	Total
Customs	407	764	341	217	15	1744
Beliefs	302	642	512	259	29	1744
Values	380	823	340	174	27	1744
Total	1089	2229	1193	650	71	5232
Percentage	20.8%	42.6%	22.8%	12.4%	1.4%	100%

Table 2. Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis testing of association between cultural factors and consumer goods consumption patterns

Frequency Expected Deviation Cell Chi-Square Percent Row Pct	Table of cultural factors by responses on consumer goods consumption patterns in the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria					
	Cultural factors	Responses				Total
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Customs	407	764	341	217	1729	
	364.83	746.74	399.67	217.76		
	42.171	17.257	-58.67	-0.758		
	4.8747	0.3988	8.6125	0.0026		
	7.89	14.80	6.61	4.20		
Beliefs	302	642	512	259	1715	
	361.87	740.7	396.43	215.99		
	-59.87	-98.7	115.57	43.005		
	9.9067	13.151	33.689	8.5624		
	5.85	12.44	9.92	5.02		
Values	380	823	340	174	1717	
	362.3	741.56	396.9	216.25		
	17.703	81.44	-56.9	-42.25		
	0.8651	8.9439	8.1562	8.2535		
	7.36	15.95	6.59	3.37		
Total	1089	2229	1193	650	5161	
	21.10	43.19	23.12	12.59		

Table 3. Statistics for table of cultural factors by responses on consumer goods consumption patterns

Statistic	DF	Value	Prob
Chi-Square	6	105.4167	<.0001
Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square	6	104.2234	<.0001
Mantel-Haenszel Chi-Square	1	1.0711	0.3007

Table 4. Summary of tests of hypothesis (factor analyses) of association between cultural factors and consumer goods

Cultural Factors	Products	X ² - tab	X ² cal	Null Hypothesis	Alternative Hypothesis	Significance of Associations
I						
Customs	Chewing Sticks	12.592	20.2196	Reject	Accept	Yes
	Trad. Wears	12.592	20.5640	Reject	Accept	Yes
	Marr. Appls	12.592	20.8213	Reject	Accept	Yes
	Burial Rites	12.592	15.8208	Reject	Accept	Yes
	Burial Rites	12.592	35.1712	Reject	Accept	Yes
II						
Beliefs	Chewing Sticks	12.592	26.4101	Reject	Accept	Yes
	Trad. Wears	12.592	12.9639	Reject	Accept	Yes
	Marr. Appls.	12.592	15.5812	Reject	Accept	Yes
	Burial rites	12.592	25.3316	Reject	Accept	Yes
III						
Values	Chewing Sticks	12.592	28.8736	Reject	Accept	Yes
	Trad. Wears	12.592	25.1078	Reject	Accept	Yes
	Marr. Appls	12.592	7.1749	Accept	Reject	No
	Burial Rites	12.592	10.1080	Accept	Reject	No
	Burial Rites	12.592	14.4693	Reject	Accept	Yes