IMPLICATIONS OF GREEN MARKETING FOR A DEVELOPING ECONOMY

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Abstract
The research focused on a critical appraisal of the implications of green marketing for a developing economy. The study sought to investigate the extent green marketing is practiced by producers and consumers in developing countries as well as their challenges. Also, to educate producers and consumers on ways of increasing green marketing behaviour and the role of government to encourage it. Related literature were reviewed, primary and secondary data were used to elicit needed information. The study showed that only 30% of Nigerian organizations are environmentally friendly and consumers are not adequately informed on green marketing principles. The paper recommends improved environmental campaign among producers and consumers through seminars, conferences and workshops, adequate management of waste, also producers must be forced by law to undertake Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) before commencing certain operations among others.

Over the years, man has exploited nature and his environment to his advantage paying little attention to sustainability of the environment upon which his very existence depends (Nwosu and Uffoh, 2005). It was on this note that some environmentalists maintained that world leaders, albeit without intending to, have created a civilization that is headed for destruction. They went further to warn that, we either learn to control our growth in economic activity and population towards environmental sustainability or nature will use death to control it for us. Nkamnebe (2009) reported that environmental/green marketing is a business practice that takes into consideration consumer concerns about promoting, preservation and conservation of the natural environment. Green marketing campaigns highlight the superior environmental protection characteristics of a company's product and services, whether those benefits take the form of reduced waste in packaging, increased energy efficiency in product use, or decreased release of toxic emissions and other pollutants in production. As the Encyclopedia of Environment noted, marketers have responded to growing consumer
demand for environmental friendly products in several ways, by introducing new products and by redesigning existing products.

Most observers agree that while some businesses engage in green marketing solely because such an emphasis will enable them to make a profit, other businesses conduct their operations in an environmentally sensitive manner because their owners and managers feel a responsibility to pressure the integrity of the natural environment even as they satisfy consumer needs and desires. Indeed, true green marketing emphasizes environmental stewardship. According to Coddington (2007), environmental marketing refers to those activities that recognize environmental stewardship as a business development responsibility and business growth responsibility. Another analyst of green marketing, Aliede (2004) defined the practice as "a holistic and responsible strategic management process that identifies, anticipates, satisfies and fulfills stakeholders needs for a reasonable reward that does not adversely affect human or natural environmental well-being, such interpretations expand on the traditional understanding of business responsibilities and goals.

Times International Magazine (1991) reported that “if the fate of human depends on nature, the fate of nature irrevocably rests in human hand”. Hence the key to man’s survival on earth is sustainable development which relates to green marketing.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework for Green Marketing

United Nations Development Programme (2008) reported that one of the greatest tragedies facing environmental management especially in the developing countries is ignorance of the issues and problems of the environment. Nigeria faces’ significant environmental problems top most of which are inadequate sanitation facilities, air and water pollution, deforestation, desertification, desertification and others. Jacob (2001) posited that environmental considerations should be integrated into all aspects of marketing such as new product development and communications. The holistic nature of green also suggests that besides suppliers and retailers, new stakeholders, be enlisted, including educators, members of the community, regulators and non-governmental organizations. Environmental issues should be balanced with primary customers needs.

The "green consumer" movements in the United States of America and other countries have struggled to reach equilibrium and to remain in the forefront of shoppers minds about sustainability issues. While public opinion pools taken since the late 1980's have shown consistently that a significant percentage of consumers in the U.S.A and elsewhere profess a strong willingness to favour environmentally conscious products and companies, consumers efforts to do so in real life have remained very low. One of
the green marketing's challenges is the lack of standard or public consensus about what constitutes "green". This lack of consensus by consumers, marketers, activists, regulators as to what constitutes ‘green’ has slowed the growth of green products because companies are often reluctant to promote their attributes and consumers are often skeptical about claims. Despite these challenges, green marketing has continued to gain adherents, particularly in the light of growing global concern about climate change. This concern has led more companies to advertise their commitment to reduce their climate impacts and the effect this is having on their products and services.

According to the American Marketing Association in Nwosu and Ufforh (2005), green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production processes, packaging changes as well as modifying advertising. Defining green marketing is not a simple task where several meanings intersect and contradict each other, an example of this will be the existence of varying social, environmental and retail definitions attached to these terms, other similar terms used are environmental marketing and ecological marketing. Mba (2010) posited that green marketing is integrating business practices and products that are friendly to their environment while also meeting the needs of the consumers.

Environmental Waste Disposal and Management in Nigeria

Ogbonna (2005) reported that over twenty years, Nigeria has witnessed rapid economic growth. Certain states of the nation became better favoured than others so that as a consequence there is tremendous urban growth with a shift in development from rural to urban areas. This growth in population has given rise to the rising mountains of garbage, which now characterize most of our towns and cities.

In the case of refuse, its collection and disposal have become the most glaring problem in our urban areas which has defied solutions by various government administrations in Nigeria. This problem with its impacts on human life and property value in Nigeria has become increasingly worse and to the critical observer, not much would seem to have been achieved in spite of huge investment of financial resources. Again, the volume of waste generated by the populace in any city, town or village is directly related to the population density (Ojikutu, 2004). Lagos is a case in point where two-thirds of her gutters are not functional. Many gutters in Mushin, Agegunle and Idi-araba to mention only notorious cases are not cleared for years (Osuji, 2006). The gutter system of drainage is ineffective, while the use of pit-toilets and private septic tanks still holds sway in some areas. Municipal waste treatment plants he added should be constructed in all urban cities and state capitals in Nigeria.
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Ukpong (2005) and Iweama (2008) catalogued the options for solving Nigeria's environmental problems as follows:

1. Modification of the organizational structure of environmental organizations set up at the Federal level. Here apart from placing Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) under the presidency, its CEO should be made a Director General with at least five directors, one of which must be for enforcement of environmental protection guidelines nationwide.

2. Additions and modifications to the Federal and State environmental responsibilities shall be carried out periodically.

3. Organize effective staffing of all state and the Abuja environmental protection agencies to ensure monitoring for all environmental standards, status and enforcement of compliance.

4. Appropriate credit and trade policies as well as public investment should be worked out with relevant United Nations Agencies.

5. Energy policy initiatives with regards to oil industry operators and ensuring enforcement of set standards with monitoring, be made compulsory.

6. Establishing a baseline Data Network on our environment.

7. Local initiatives to be encouraged like the Tree of Life scheme for reforestation nationwide.

8. Education and public awareness programmes on environment and their protection be initiated by NGOs and implementation effected.

9. There must be sartorial priority projects and areas for policy review in environmentally sensitive areas like soil degradation and loss, water contamination, air pollution, industrial discharge, deforestation, gully erosion water hyacinths and gas flaring now plaguing the nation as problems.

Conceptual Discourse of Economic Development

Ojo in Iweama (2010), posited that the United Nations definition of underdeveloped countries embraces all countries and territories in Africa (West Africa inclusive) except South Africa, all countries of America except U.S.A and Canada, all countries of Asia except Japan and Turkey, all countries of Oceania except Australia and Newzealand. West African countries are therefore under developed countries by world standard.

One derivative of development is economic development. We cannot understand economic development without first of all understanding the concept or meaning of development. Nwosu and Nkamnebe (2006) aptly captured the eclectic nature of development in the following words:
"Development is so many things to so many people."
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This is because it is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. It is a process-based as well as a behavioural phenomenon. It is multidisciplinary, dialectical and co-relational. It is at the same time consumatory or utilitarian as well as philosophically didactic, emotional, sentimental and value loaded, Development is at the same time economic, social, cultural, political ... that is why for example, we can talk about human development, infrastructural development, economic development. Ugonwenyi (1995) defined development as "the improvement of the quality of life of any group of people". It sees development as "a widely participatory process that involves directed economic, social and political technological and other positive changes in any community or society. Mbeki (2005) posited that "development is intended to bring about such valued results as human advancement, aspirations, achievement, equality, freedom, healthy environment, choices, opportunities, justice, employment and life that is worth living". Nevertheless, our focus is on economic derivative of development. According to Meier and Baldwin in Nkamnebe (2006), economic development is the process whereby the real capita income of a country increases over a long period of time.

Economic development is developing the real income potentials of the under developed areas by using investment to effect those changes and to augment those productive resources which promise to raise real income per person. Economic development must be environmentally friendly to achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development is the development strategy that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development in Nwosu and Ufforh, 2005). Judging from the economic indicators in our integrative definitions, Nigeria is in terrible need of economic development.

Attitude and Green Consumption Behaviour

Martins and Siminatiras (1995) reported that 30 to 40% of environmental degradation is brought about by the consumption activities of private households. As a result of the public realization that consumption activities lead to environmental problems, some consumers are translating their environmental concern into actively purchasing green products. In response companies are beginning to adopt marketing strategies that respect the environmental concerns of the consumers. This adoption of green marketing strategies attempts to differentiate products, increase sales and market share and finally create a sustainable competitive advantage (Nicolaidis and Kapogianni, 2007). Green marketing has been defined as the adoption of environmentally friendly strategies that promote resource conservation in every stage of the value chain. Alternatively, green marketing has been defined as the marketing response to the design, production, packaging, use and disposal of product (Oyewole, 2011, Lampe and Gazda, 1995).
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Attitude is an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive process with respect to some aspects of our environment. It is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object. Thus, an attitude is the way we think, feel and act toward some aspect of our environment. Kotter and Keller (2006) defined attitude as a person’s enduring favourable or unfavourable evaluation, emotional feeling and action tendencies towards some object or idea. Allport, cited in Iweama (2008) also defined attitude as "a mental or neutral state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individuals response to all object and situations with which it is related.

The term consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the process that it uses to select, secure, use and dispose of product, services, experiences or ideas to satisfy needs and the immediate antecedents and consequences of the purchasing process. The argument with consumption includes what is consumed and the disposal of waste by the consumer as well as the circulation of choice of what is consumed. Belz (2005) reported that consumer behaviour includes the purchase, use and post-use of products. The main body of marketing literature is primarily concerned with the first stage, the process and act of buying (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). In the context of sustainability, all the three stages of consumer behaviour are important. Many significant contributions that consumers can make towards environmental and social quality come in product uses, maintenance and disposal, or in delaying a purchase, or avoiding it altogether (Peattie, 1999). Sustainable consumption considers ecological and social criteria during all three stages. It responsibly balances ecological, social and economic criteria.

**Socio-Ecological Orientation in Nigerian Organizations**

The socio-ecological beliefs in the mission and vision statements of organizations should be a guide in the operations of such organizations. However, when it comes to implementation an organization should start by developing the right corporate culture for achieving this. Nkamnebe (2006) reported that virtually all the firms in the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSC) have as much as possible included the environmental consciousness into the mission and vision statements. How far they have gone ahead to achieve this is not satisfactory. It is common knowledge that the laws are not followed in Nigeria, judging from the environmental abuse by some impact analysis report.

Nigerian market is moving towards what is obtainable in the highly industrial markets of the world, particularly in the area of offering products that are socio-ecologically unfriendly. (Nkamnebe, 2002). The market for green products in Nigeria is affected by a lot of factors; firstly general ignorance concerning sustainable products and
consumption due to low literacy level. Secondly, as a result of scarcity of products, consumers may find it difficult to find products that satisfy socio-ecological requirement. Finally, given the general poverty in developing economies, consumers hardly encourage environmental friendly firms through purchasing such goods even at high prices. Government should appoint strict monitoring team to ensure that environmental abuse in Nigerian organizations is minimized.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

World leaders were warned as early as the 1990s of the impending environmental catastrophe. The warning came from the United States of American based World Watch Institute. According to the institute’s, now widely known research report, among other things, “between 1972 and 1992, the world had lost 500 million acres of land, 200 million hectares of trees; that tens of thousands of plant and animal species had disappeared by 1972; that 500 million tones of top soil have been lost within the same period; that rivers, lakes and even seas have been turned into sewages and industrial swamps. Unless these trends were halted within 20 years the world’s biodiversity would be drastically and dangerously damaged. (Essaghah and Adibe, 2001).

Environmental Impact Assessment according to Onyealor and Ikwuegbu (2003) is an operational instrument that seeks to initiate, identify, collect, assess, establish, document and store the current and future interactions, interrelationship and systems between economic development and ecological well-being. More still, the United Nations Environmental Programme defines EIA as a process that identifies, predicts and describes in appropriate terms the pros and cons (penalties and benefits) of a proposed development project. It is man's effort to avert or at least seriously minimize the hazards caused by his unsustainable exploitation of the environment that led to the emergence of the concept of Environmental Impact Assessment (Nwosu and Ufforh, 2005).

Analysis of Discussion

For the purpose of this paper, green marketing will be analyzed from the environmental perspectives of both the consumers and firms. Ukaite (2009), reported that Nigeria Breweries Plc is one of the most environmental friendly companies in Nigeria. At a recent energy round table organized by the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), the Chairman Nigeria Breweries Plc stressed that over reliance on fossil fuel for manufacturing operations in Nigeria might in the long run, prove unsustainable due to other external factors, over which humans have no control. He emphasized that Nigeria Breweries is maintaining green marketing principles and as part of the companies concern for the environment, it provided an ultra-modern waste water treatment plant designed to world class standards. It is a pointer to the fact that the company’s green marketing policy is providing direction for its growth agenda especially in the imperative of befriending the environment.
Agboku (2009) reported that over 70% of business organizations in Nigeria are small scale, however most of these organizations do not take green marketing policies seriously in the management of their firms. Discussions the author had with some of these organizations revealed that poor capital outlay and lack of proper awareness are some of the reasons against ecological marketing in Nigeria. Eze (2010) reported that only 30% of Nigerian organizations are environmental friendly and consumers are not adequately informed on green marketing principles.

Emenari (2008) reported that as a result of the ever-increasing population, Nigerians consume variety of products. Manufacturers and service providers are highly patronized by consumers. Due to population and over-congestion of the cities, a lot of wastes are being generated by some households and industrial organizations more than the waste disposal authorities could cope with. Nigerian organizations and consumers are not adequately informed on ways of preserving the green marketing behaviour.

Owolabi and Amosa (2010) reported that used water sachets have become uncontrolled nuisance in Nigeria. Most places are littered with the polymer made materials which are continuously dumped indiscriminately. In fact a considerable portion of the Nigerian land mass has been occupied by variety of wastes. Ogwuru (2007) reported that disposal of water sachets have become the most glaring problem in our urban areas which has defied solution. Accordingly, Grunert (2006) reported thus; to secure a worthy environmental legacy both for ourselves and for future generations, we must find ways to reconcile humanity more satisfactorily with the natural systems and the environment upon which all human life and civilization depend. This is based on the understanding that the natural system of which we are a part has an intrinsic worth, transcending narrow utilitarian values.

Conclusion

Knowledge is power and environmental knowledge is environmental power. Consumers, producers, government and all other stakeholders of the Nigerian environment will do well to keep expanding and updating their knowledge base on green marketing issues and problems in the country. Everyone, it must be noted has a role to play. This is because the green marketing problems call for multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and multifaceted approaches to problem solving before results can be achieved.

Recommendations

1. Although some organizations such as the Nigeria Breweries Plc, to some extent adhere to green marketing behaviour, there is great need for them to do more. Eze (2010) reported that only 30% of organizations in Nigeria are environmentally friendly and respond to green marketing principles. Therefore organizations should
be encouraged to adopt more green marketing policies to protect the environment for future generations.

2. Proper disposal and management of waste should be encouraged among consumers, producers and government. Conversion of used water sachets (polyethylene) to super wax/gloss like material is recommended. This will encourage effective management of polythene waste through conversion from littered surrounding to an environment friendly one by preventing out-spread of diseases and simultaneously creating employment for both skilled and unskilled labour and promoting green behaviour.

3. National Environmental Standard Regulation Agency (NESRA) official gazette No 92 Vol. 94 of 2007 must be alive to its responsibilities to evacuate the heaps of waste in most Nigerian towns and cities. They must prosecute both producers and consumers who violate the green marketing principles as stipulated by the law.

4. Government shall ensure that any public servant involved in any corrupt practices should be severely death with. This will enhance strict implementation of environmental laws and green marketing policies. Also government shall levy higher taxes on un-sustainable products. This will encourage manufacturers to produce environmental friendly products and increase patronage by consumers.

5. Increased marketing principles shall be encouraged among the consumers and producers. This can be achieved through enough green marketing workshops, seminars and conferences to increase positive awareness.

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