

Extended abstract

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, the whole idea of labeling products began with affixing regulators' approval either in form of a number or other means like a logo on the product or by informing the consumers about the condition of certain products. In this regard, several efforts have been made over the years to ensure that the consumers have access to information on the condition of products they consume in the country. Thus, agencies like the Consumer Protection Council (CPC), Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) among others have been established to ensure that a high standard is maintained in relation to products (CPC, 2004, p.1 and SON, 2004, p.1 Omotosho, 2008, pp. 643-645).

In 1999, the Nigerian government intensified its campaign against fake and adulterated drugs and products by carving out the National Agency for Food Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) from the Federal Ministry of Health as a parastatal under the ministry (Omotosho, 2008, p. 648). The aim was to ensure that standards are maintained. This is based on the proliferation of market for the consumers due to the importation of so many fake products and also the establishment of cottage industries by the citizens as a result of economic hardship and the need for entrepreneurial development in the country. Several bakeries, packaged water and other industries that have sprung up in recent times need to be monitored especially in the interest of the consumers. For instance, one of the selected products for this study (bread) became a matter of concern when the whole scenario of the abolition of potassium bromate in bread and other baked products began in 1982. This was as a result of laboratory research conducted on potassium which showed that it could lead to tumors and kidney problems (Uzokwe, 2003, p. 2).

Consumption of impure water can cause all manners of sicknesses such as typhoid fever and other intestinal discomforts (Aderibigbe, Awoyemi and Osagbemi, 2008; Shenge and Babalola, 2003), addition of potassium bromate on bread can cause diseases like cough, sore throat, abdominal pain, diarrhea, hearing loss and so on (Magomya, Yebpella, Udiba Amos and Latayo, 2013; pp. 232-234; Kurokwa, 1982; NAFDAC, 1993; Medical Nigeria, 2005, p. 1; Ferlay, 2001, p.1). Studies have showed that in most instances labels alone cannot determine consumer behaviour, rather the interplay of factors like beliefs, peer groups, family among others are also the determinants (Etzel, Walker and Stanton, 2004). Huge amount of money spent on advertisement, billboards and public awareness in this country cannot be ignored. Private and public organisations spend huge sums of money to sensitize the public yearly. Investigating the interplay of these factors on the attitudes of the respondents therefore becomes crucial. This becomes important considering the spate at which the consumers often get afflicted with diseases that affect productivity and healthy living (Olaniyi, 2002). The implication of this on the health of the nation's workforce cannot be ignored as most consumers of these products are often found more within the productive age group than other age groups. The assertion of Mead (1934) and Parsons (1937) that actions of individuals in the society are products of interaction further makes the work interesting. To him, people are able to make decisions based on their ability to interact, which allows them to examine possible courses of action, considers their relative advantages and disadvantages and then makes choices (Blumer, 1969; Manis and Meltzer, 1978; Rose, 1962). Consequently, these questions became important: How do consumers

perceive NAFDAC information labels on the selected products? What is the attitude of consumers regarding NAFDAC information labels on the selected products? And finally what are the factors that can affect the consumers' attitude regarding the information labels in selected products. Against this background, this study sought to ascertain empirically the levels of attitude of the consumers regarding the information labels on two selected products for this study namely; bread and packaged water, as well as factors influencing their attitude regarding the products at the point of purchases using Ado-Ekiti southwest Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

1. Assess how the consumers perceive NAFDAC labels on the selected products
2. Establish the attitude of the consumers as regards NAFDAC information labels on selected products for the study.
3. Identify the factors that may affect consumers' disposition as regards NAFDAC information labels on selected products.

Methods

The study population consisted of 424 males and 339 females with ages above 16 years old. A multi-stage sampling approach was used to select households and individuals to be included in the study sample. This was based on the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) wards enumeration. This brought the sample size to 763. The study used in-depth interviews to elicit information from a total of 48 people including young ones, adult males and females. Further, 14 key informants comprising the bakers, sachet water producers and NAFDAC agents were selected.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative data was used. As regards the quantitative data, it was analyzed using SPSS software. Frequency distribution tables were plotted to analyze all the questions. Respondents' responses on Likert scale were scored and grouped into these categories: *Indifferent* and *Positive* (These concepts were used to describe the levels of attitude of the respondents as regards NAFDAC information labels on the selected products). Several variables were also cross-tabulated to understand the relationships existing between them. The hypotheses formulated for the study were also tested using chi square statistical methods. As regards the in-depth interviews (IDI), they were analyzed through content analysis and quoted verbatim where necessary to support the quantitative data.