

EFFECTS OF INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC PRODUCT CUES ON CONSUMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION: A STUDY OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONSUMERS IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY METROPOLITAN CITY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of intrinsic and extrinsic product cues on purchase intention of alcoholic beverages in a typical developing country metropolitan city. 300 consumers of alcoholic beverage were surveyed. Descriptive statistics and multiple regressions were used to analyze the data. This study found that seal of approval, alcoholic content, company name, advertisement, and price have significant effect on the purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands, while packaging, brand name, and quality were found to have lesser effect. Based on the results, conclusions were made and management and firm implications highlighted. Possible areas for further research were suggested.

Keywords: alcoholic beverage, intrinsic cue, extrinsic cue, Nigeria, purchase intention.

INTRODUCTION:

The discourse on rational decision making in a consumer purchase situations has been argued extensively in the literature (See for example: Shugan, 2006; Kirmani & Rao, 2000). However, the reality of globalization, which is manifesting in the global integration of culture and consumption, and forces in the global economy are combining to making consumer rational decision making more compelling even in previously isolated markets of developing economies (Nkamnebe, Idoko, & Kalu, 2009). Additionally, increasing sophistication in technology makes it even more challenging for consumers to rationally take decisions regarding product quality (Olson, 1972). The combined effect of all these being that products and in particular alcoholic beverages that are available in most developing country markets are increasing and they possess converging array of cues. The consumers' task of evaluating these increasingly homogenous cues in evaluating product quality in a buying situation is becoming rather difficult and challenging. In Enugu metropolitan city Nigeria that forms the context of this study, increase in population, improving economic environment among other factors have given rise to increasing number of imported and locally produced alcoholic brands. The resulting brands proliferation is heightening competition in a market that is offering virtually common product cues. On the part of consumers, they are becoming more discerning and savvy due to increasing education and income, thereby making it more difficult for firms to grow loyal consumers over time (Duncan, 2002). All these developments are making it increasingly difficult for managers to identify particular product cues that influence consumers buying decisions in the increasing undifferentiated Nigerian alcoholic beverage market. Previous studies on other contexts have documented the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic product cues on consumers' purchase intention of alcoholic beverages (See: Miyazaki, Grewal, & Goodstain 2005; Lockshin & Hall 2003); but till date, such studies are very limited in the isolated markets of most developing countries including Nigeria that provide the context for the present study. This obvious knowledge gap has brand management and firm implications. Accordingly, the present study seeks to investigate the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic product cues on consumers' purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands in such developing country metropolitan city as Enugu metropolis in Nigeria. Arguably, marketers could leverage on the insights provided by this study, which is consistent with previous argument that such study could help managers to develop a hierarchy of product attributes that consumers use to evaluate quality (Veale, 2007).

LITERATURE REVIEW

CUE THEORY: INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC PRODUCT CUES

Plethora of studies have established that consumers employ intrinsic and extrinsic product cues when forming their overall evaluation of product quality; although consumers' opinions and perceptions of quality levels are not totally objective as there appears to be traces of subjectivity (Bredahl, 2003). Cue theory posits that products comprise intrinsic and extrinsic cues that serve as surrogate indicators of quality (Olson & Jacoby, 1972); which consumers appear to utilise simultaneously when evaluating product quality (Osmud, 2011).

Extrinsic product cues bear relation with the physical product but they do not form part of the product. Extrinsic cue such as price or packaging provide quality, emotional appeal and/or value signals to information-deficient consumers across brands (Kardes, Cronley, Kellaris, & Posavac, (2004). Previous studies have associated extrinsic product cues to dominate consumer consideration more than intrinsic cues in initial purchase situations when intrinsic cues are not available or when evaluation of intrinsic attributes requires more efforts and time than the consumer perceives is worthwhile (See: Zeithaml, 1988).

Intrinsic cues such as alcohol content represent product-related attributes that forms part of the product and cannot be altered in any way without tampering with properties of the product. Besides, they are consumed alongside the product. Though a number of studies posit that intrinsic product cues dominate consumer evaluative criteria, Srinivasan & Jain (2004) maintain that this will not be the case when intrinsic cues are insufficiently predictive in the minds of consumers or when they have low confidence in their ability to evaluate and assess those. There is higher reliance on intrinsic cues instead of extrinsic cues in pre-purchase situations when intrinsic attributes serve as search attributes rather than experience attributes and/or when the intrinsic attributes have high predictive value (Zeithaml et al., 1988). Also, most studies have demonstrated and gave credence to intrinsic cues as better indicators to consumers in judging quality because they have higher predictive value than extrinsic cues (See: Aqueveque, 2006). This seemingly hasty conclusion seems to neglect the obvious fact that many assessments about quality are made with limited information about intrinsic cues. Perhaps, this could largely explain why Sawyer, Worthing, and Sendak (1979) argue that extrinsic cues are more important to consumers than intrinsic cues.

EXTRINSIC PRODUCT CUES: PACKAGING:

Jahre and Hatteland (2004) defined packaging as the technology and art of preparing a commodity for convenient transport, storage and sale. Packaging provides many pertinent marketing and managerial functions such as protection, promotion and user convenience. Packaging may be viewed as an integral part of the product and is the first point of contact with the brand especially consumer product (Rundh, 2005). Packaging may likely influence and smoothly lead consumers to form associations on the first sight of a package which may trigger favourable or unfavourable purchase intention about a brand of alcoholic beverage at the point of sale and/or consumption. Viewed through this lense, the package's overall characteristics can underline the uniqueness and overall originality of the product. Estiri, Hasangholipour, Yazdani, Nejad and Rayej (2010) argue that product quality judgements are largely influenced by product characteristics reflected by packaging between different stages of decision making process. If it communicates high, consumers tend to assume that the product is of high quality. If the package represents low quality, consumers associate this low perception to the product itself. Indeed, the critical importance of packaging design is growing in such competitive market conditions as package becomes a primary vehicle for communication and branding (Rettie & Brewer, 2000). Packaging in the context of alcoholic beverage marketing comprises the plastic case, the bottle and bottle shape, size, label (front, back and neck), and cork standing on the distributor/retailer shop or on the shelf in the alcoholic beverage parlour, affects the consumer decision process. Packaging design must therefore ensure that consumer response is favourable since consumers seem to view packaging holistically to ensure that it conforms to his social identity before he purchases a brand of alcoholic beverage.

PRICE:

Price is one of the most investigated elements of the traditional marketing mix largely because it generates revenue to organizations (Keller, 2003); represents what is sacrificed by consumers to obtain a product (Zeithaml, 1988). Dodds and Monroe (1985) found that price is an important cue to quality when other cues available are limited, when the product cannot be evaluated before purchase, and when there is some degree of risk inherent in making wrong choice; a key variable that influences consumers' purchase intention (Zeinab & Seyedeh, 2012). Jacoby and Olson (1977) dichotomized price into two: objective price (actual price of a product) and perceived price (the price as encoded by the consumer). In Nigeria as in similar settings where poverty appears to be prevalent, alcoholic beverages consumers tend to group brands of alcoholic beverage into two major categories: low or high in terms of quality on the basis of perceived price. In other words, consumers often rank alcoholic beverage brands quality according to price tiers in a category. On the basis of this categorization, consumers seem to gravitate towards brands of alcoholic beverage that appear to match their assumed social class and at the same time provide good value for the price.

BRAND NAME:

According to Kotler and Keller (2006) a brand is defined as a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of these intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers, and to differentiate them from those of competitors. Basically, brand name constitutes an important brand element largely because of its ability to succinctly capture major brand associations in a clear and brief manner especially in consumer goods category (Keller, 2006).

Brand name may possibly be an extremely effective shorthand means of communication (Keller, 2003). Brand name being a compact form of communication may connote both explicit and implicit meanings such as brand image that consumers may consider critical in the choice of brand of alcoholic beverage. Keller sees brand image as the perception that is held in consumer memory. For instance, in Nigeria and perhaps as in other economies, a mere mention of some brands of alcoholic beverage quickly evokes some images in the consumers' memory which may encourage or frustrate purchase behaviour towards a particular brand of alcoholic beverage. Krutulyte, Coasta and Grunert (2009) in his study found that extrinsic cues such as brand name are generally more influential than intrinsic product cues. This position is equally corroborated by Varela, Ares, Gimenez, and Gambaro (2010) who maintain that the liking and purchase of a product depends on more than just the sensory details as non-physical details such as brand name influence consumers' purchase decision. Perhaps, this may possibly explain why Richardson, Dick and Jain (as cited in Murad et al., 2011) posit that brand name represents the combined information about the product.

Indeed, strong brand name assists to stabilize the branded product even when the price is low (Della, Kent,

Monroe & McGinnis, 1981); favourably influence on consumer quality perception (Kirmani & Rao, 2000); develop associations (Escalas & Bettman, 2005), and reduce risk and shopping efforts (Gardner & Levy, 1995). In other words, a strong brand name may be the key to sustaining an enduring competitive advantage in a volatile and shifting market segment such as alcoholic beverage market segment.

ADVERTISING:

Traditionally, advertising appears to be one of the veritable tools of marketing communications employed by firms to connect seamlessly with its various target consumers including alcoholic beverage consumers. The use of advertising to create perhaps positive brand association may be gaining increased attention due to decreasing levels of brand differentiation, proliferation, consumer education (Kotler & Keller, 2006); and the need to enhance customer traffic towards a brand (Clark, Ulrich, & Draganska, 2009). According to Shimp (2000), there is a positive correlation between a brand's share of voice (SOV) and share of market (SOM). A share of voice may be described as a firm's advertising expenditure expressed as a percentage of the total expenditure in a product category over a given period of time in a given locality. Perhaps, brands that dominate or has higher SOV may most likely control higher SOM.

This heavy advertisement on some brands of alcoholic beverage may most likely lead some consumer towards choosing a particular brand in preference to the others. Schrorer (as cited in Fill, 2009) argues that firms can use advertising spend to maintain or destabilize demand equilibrium in a market; influence brand awareness and consumer traffic towards a brand (Clark, Ulrich & Draganska, 2009).

A SEAL OF APPROVAL:

A seal of approval is a crucial extrinsic product cue which demonstrates that the quality of a product has met a minimum acceptable standard set preferably by a regulatory body in a given locality or international organizations (Osmud et al., 2011). In Nigeria for instance, the use of mandatory seal of approval on brands seems to have triggered a new level of alertness and consciousness among consumers of various brands including alcoholic beverage. This development is increasingly changing consumers' purchase patterns as brands without evidence of certification by authorized regulatory agencies receive limited patronage from consumers. This is consistent with Bamforth (2008) argues that purchase decisions are made based on perceived quality and judgements are made which reflect the consumers' interest in matters of health.

CORPORATE NAME:

Saunders and Fu (1997) posit that corporate names do not add the same value to a product. The more highly advertised corporate names add more value than others. This seems to suggest that when the company name is less well known and means little to consumers, it is unlikely that it would influence positive purchase intention since consumers may most likely have mixed perceptions of the company's products (Nelson, 2002).

INTRINSIC PRODUCT CUES:

ALCOHOL CONTENT:

Alcohol content may be described as a measure of the amount of alcohol (ethanol) contained in a beverage expressed as a percentage of the total volume of the beverage. The alcohol strength of alcoholic beverage is usually 4% to 6% alcohol by volume (ABV), but it may be less than 2% or as much as 12%. The amount of alcohol contained in a bottle of alcoholic beverage may be a critical and often ignored dimension of alcohol consumption assessment (William, Deidre Patterson, Mary Albert Koenen, & Thomas, 2009).

Alcohol content seems to be a key determinant of alcoholic beverage brand preference, especially among the youth in their effort to achieve the desired inebriated state. According to Smith (2009), low alcoholic beverages are predominantly consumed by consumers who have low level of alcohol consumption.

PRODUCT QUALITY:

A product quality has a significant impact towards the product or service performance, thus it is linked to a customers' value and satisfaction (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Product quality is derived from the difference between actual products and the alternative products that could be made available or provided by the particular industry (Hardie & Walsh, 1994). It can also be determined by the way customers perceive product quality in the market (Wankhade & Dabade, 2006). In the context of alcoholic beverage marketing, a consumer may view

quality of alcoholic beverage in terms of its foam, colour, clarity and “sharpness” when consumed. Each of these parameters is important in its own right, and can influence a consumers’ choice of brand of alcoholic beverage. Product quality can be dichotomized into two perspectives: objective and perceived quality (Brunso, Bredahl, Grunert, & Scholderer, 2005). Perceived quality can be described as the consumers’ judgement about a product’s overall excellence or superiority. The interpretation may be consumption situation-dependent. Conversely, objective quality is a term widely used in the literature to describe the actual technical superiority or excellence of the products that is measurable or verifiable according to some pre-determined standards as judged from intrinsic cues (Monroe & Krishnan, 1985).

Empirical studies in the literature have documented the impact of perceived product quality on consumer purchase intentions, although contradictory research findings have been reported in the literature. Some scholars support a positive direct effect of perceived quality on purchase intentions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1996), others report only an indirect effect through satisfaction (Sweeney, Soutar & Johnson, 1999), and yet others maintain that both relationship exist (Tsiotsou, 2006).

Bauer and Herrmann (as cited in Shaharudin et al., 2011) argue that subject perceptions are in a better position to determine the consumers’ purchasing choices as compared to the objective determinants themselves. Perceived quality is a major factor by which consumers make distinction in the market place as quality arguably lies in the eye of the beholder. Positive quality perception may most likely influence a consumer to purchase a brand of alcoholic beverage instead a competing brand. On the other hand, consumers are not likely to form a strong intention to purchase if they hold an inferior perception towards product quality of a brand in the market place especially where there are available alternatives. From the review of literature, the independent variables are represented by the major product attributes such as: price, packaging, advertising, seal of approval, alcohol content, quality, brand name, and corporate name whereas dependent variable is the purchase intention.

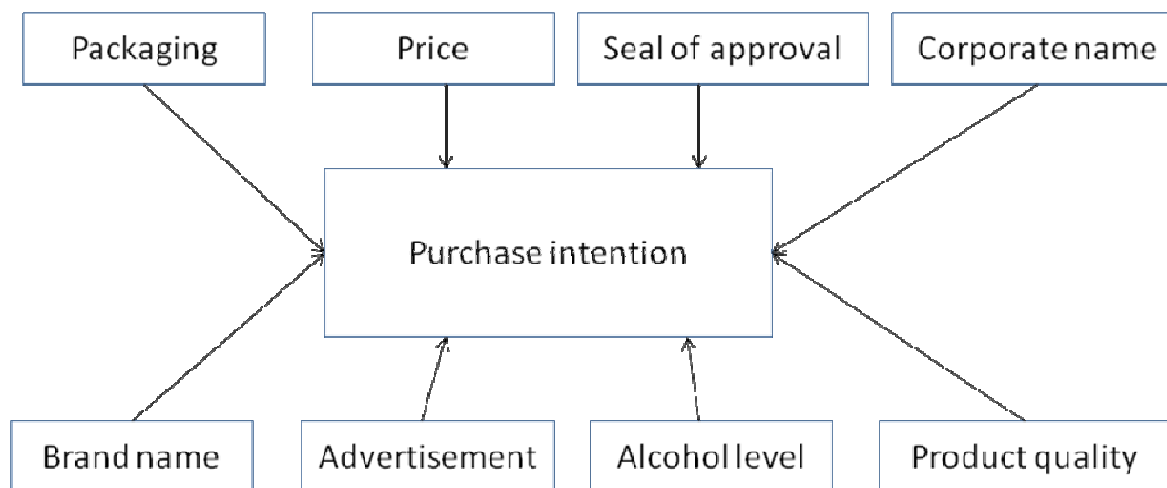


Figure i: Proposed Conceptual Framework. The Conceptual Framework of the Study Derived from the above Literature Review.

METHODOLOGY:

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT:

Following the preceding discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H₁:** There is significant influence of brand name towards consumers’ purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands.
- H₂:** There is significant influence of advertisement towards consumers’ purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands.
- H₃:** There is significant influence of a seal of approval towards consumers’ purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands.
- H₄:** There is significant influence of price towards consumers’ purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands.
- H₅:** There is significant influence of corporate name towards consumers’ purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands.
- H₆:** There is a significant influence of alcohol content towards consumers’ purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands.
- H₇:** There is a significant influence of packaging towards consumers’ purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands.
- H₈:** There is a significant influence of product quality towards consumers’ purchase intention of alcoholic beverage brands.

A total of 300 questionnaires were self-administered to alcoholic beverage consumers of at least 18 years of age found in public drinking locations in Enugu metropolis. To ensure content validity, the study instrument was pre-tested on a cohort of 30 male respondents. The respondents in the pilot study were excluded from

participating in the final survey. Furthermore, two marketing experts evaluated the items in the questionnaire to ascertain their relevance in the context of this study. Based on the observations and comments made by the experts and the result of the pre-test, the content and design were modified. The final version of the questionnaire was developed and organized into two fields. In the first field, questions were asked to collect respondents' baseline data on socio-demographics such as: age, sex among others. Most of these data were structured in a range of response option, rather than seeking exact figure. In the second field, a four point Likert scale statements varying from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1) were used to measure the relative influence of six (6) extrinsic cues and two (2) intrinsic cues on purchase intention towards brands of alcoholic beverage. Brand name, packaging, and price were constructed in three measurement items; seal of approval, alcohol content, company name, advertising and purchase intention were constructed in two measurement items; quality was constructed in four measurement items. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was utilized by this study to measure the reliability and internal consistencies of the measurement items contained in the questionnaire. Cronbach (2004) maintains that it is appropriate to undertake cronbach's alpha tests on the reliability and internal consistencies of the measurement items whenever there is a need to measure the difference. The analysis indicates that both independent and dependent variables have Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.60. Sekaran (2003) posits that the result of reliability tests below 0.60 is considered to be poor, whereas if it is greater than 0.60 it can be acceptable and if the results of reliability show range between 0.80, it is considered a good result.

Table 1: Reliability analysis result

Factor	Type of variable	Cronbach's alpha result
Packaging	Independent	0.725
Price	Independent	0.725
Company name	Independent	0.662
Seal of approval	Independent	0.788
Quality	Independent	0.773
Alcohol content	Independent	0.667
Advertising	Independent	0.841
Brand name	Independent	0.760
Purchase Intention	Dependent	0.714

ANALYSES:

Multiple regressions were performed to determine the influence of independent variables on dependent variable.

RESULTS:

RESPONSE RATE AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:

Though a total of 300 sets of questionnaire were self-administered to respondents, 289 (96%) were returned whereas 11 (4%) were not returned by the respondents. Out of the 289 questionnaires returned, 24 (8%) were rejected due inconsistency with the criteria set for participants in the survey among other reasons leaving 265 (88%) usable. The age range of most respondents were between 26-33 (38%); male accounted for 86% of the total number of participants and the highest education attained by most respondents is the tertiary education (66%). Most participants in this study are self-employed (38%) while most of the respondents are not married (55%). The result of the survey also reveals that 54% of the respondents have stayed in Enugu for more than seven (7) years.

The result obtained from the questionnaire were evaluated according to mean (x) and standard deviation (S.D) in order to determine the respondents' score level of influence of intrinsic and extrinsic product cues on consumers' purchase intention towards alcoholic beverage brands. On the basis of 4-point Likert scale, the study took a position that any score of 2.5 and above indicates an acceptance of the influence of intrinsic and extrinsic cue on consumers' purchase intention towards brands of alcoholic beverage. Based on the result of this study, the mean values vary between 2.85 and 2.50 and the grand (mean of means) mean is 2.63. This means that in overall, respondents agreed that intrinsic and extrinsic product cues influence their purchase intention towards alcoholic beverage brands.

Table 2: The distribution of respondents' opinions about influence of product cues

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation (S.D)
Brand name	2.51	1.09
Advertisement	2.50	0.94
Seal of approval	2.64	0.90
Price	2.72	0.90
Company name	2.85	0.94
Alcohol content	2.53	1.03
Packaging	2.51	0.95
Quality	2.75	1.19
Grand mean	2.63	0.99

The analysis in table 3 shows a regression coefficient (R) of 0.856, which suggests a relation between independent variables and dependent variable. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.733 indicates that 73.3% of the observed variability in purchase intention is explained by the eight independent variables. The Durbin-Watson value of 0.863 suggests absence of multicollinearity problem.

Table 3: Regression analysis

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.856 ^a	.733	.724	.13864	.863
a. Predictors: (Constant), Seal of Approval, Packaging, Quality, Alcohol Content, Company Name, brand Name, Price, Advertising					
b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention					

Table 4: ANOVA

ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.490	8	1.686	87.731	.000 ^a
	Residual	4.920	256	.019		
	Total	18.410	264			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Seal of Approval, Packaging, Quality, Alcohol Content, Company Name, Advertising, Brand Name, Price						

The ANOVA test in table 4 shows an F value of 87.731, and strong significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) indicates that the regression model is statistically significant, valid and fit; and could be used to predict the dependent variable-purchase intention.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) of 5-10 and above indicates the multicollinearity problem (O'Brien, 2007). The VIF value of less than 5 for all the variables show that the problem of multicollinearity have not existed and all the data are mutually exclusive. The tolerance value of less than 0.20 or 0.10 suggests a multicollinearity problem (O'Brien et al., 2007). In table 5, all the independent variables have tolerance value greater than 0.20 which shows that the tolerance is moderate and good. Furthermore, as shown in the same table, advertising, price, company name, alcohol content, and seal of approval have significant influence towards purchase intention ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that the alternative hypotheses (H_2 , H_3 , H_4 , H_5 , and H_6) are appropriate and can be accepted. However, packaging, quality and brand name have less significance impact on consumers' purchase intention towards brands of alcoholic beverage ($p > 0.05$). This shows that null hypotheses (H_1 , H_2 and H_8) are inappropriate and can be rejected.

Table 5: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	β			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.318	.128		-2.493	.013	
	Advertising	-.032	.012	-.113	-2.605	.010	.553
	Price	-.038	.013	-.140	-2.826	.005	.426
	Company Name	.097	.012	.346	8.096	.000	.572
	Alcohol Content	.015	.006	.079	2.370	.019	.929
	Packaging	.003	.006	.015	.461	.645	.951
	Quality	-.004	.004	-.029	-.890	.374	.959
	Brand Name	.004	.007	.029	.598	.550	.458
	Seal of Approval	.041	.007	.361	5.798	.000	.269

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS:

This study demonstrates that advertising messages have significant negative ($\beta = -0.113$; $p < 0.05$) influence on consumers' purchase intention towards brands of alcoholic beverage in Enugu metropolis. This shows an inverse relationship between advertising messages and consumers' purchase intention. The interpretation is that the more consumers are exposed to advertising messages, the less their purchase intention towards alcoholic beverage brands. Could this be a new data? This is an invaluable business intelligence which brand managers can leverage on in blending and choosing communications tools perhaps for market development purposes. This finding departs markedly from Clark et al. (2009) who maintain that advertising is a key determiner of customer traffic towards a brand. The difference in this finding may most likely be explained by the fact that in Nigeria, there is a "drink responsibly" caveat associated with most advertising messages. This caveat, obviously, has serious potential of discouraging alcoholic beverage consumption as it seems to remind consumers of alcoholic beverage the likely negative consequences of excessive consumption. Besides, the power of advertisement to trigger increasing customer traffic may be product-dependent. In this context, the advertising message may not likely achieve the increased purchase intention which may probably be the major objective of the advertising campaign. It seems to de-market alcohol consumption.

Price as an extrinsic cue has significant negative ($B = -0.140$; $p < 0.05$) influence on consumers' purchase intention. This again demonstrates an inverse relationship between price and consumers' purchase intention. This may imply that an unreasonably high and consistent price increase may trigger a corresponding decrease in consumers' purchase intention towards various brands of alcoholic beverage. Put differently, if the price of a particular brand of alcoholic beverage is relatively on increase relative to competing brands, the tendency to choose it as a preferred brand among consumers decreases. This result is similar to Zeinab and Seyedeh (2012) who found that consumers view price to be a major factor in their purchase intentions. There is a price threshold above which consumers will resist the brand and probably switch to alternative product that may likely provide similar satisfaction.

A possible reason for this result may be the rising cost of living in Enugu metropolis which seems to weaken the limited disposable income in the hand of most consumers thereby heightening consumers' sensitivity to price increases. Perhaps, this significant negative influence on consumers' purchase intention which price shows may also be explained by the fact that alcoholic beverage is a "social product" and consumers in Enugu metropolis tend to skew their 'daily products' purchases in favour of immediate basic need-satisfying products such as food at the expense of products that are not likely to sustain family existence.

A mark indicating a seal of approval like Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) or National Agency for Foods and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in Nigeria, are one of the means of signaling quality and product differentiation. It serves as a guarantee of safety and wholesomeness and also provides consumers with positive utility. This finding corroborate Nomisma (2003) and Bamforth (2008) who found that consumers are increasingly sensitive to safety, and judgements are made which reflect the consumers' interest in matters of health.

The significant influence of seal of approval may most likely result from the increasing product safety campaign by regulatory agencies such as Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) or NAFDAC which seem to

have created a new level of safety alertness and consciousness among Nigerian consumers. Again, the inclusion of product safety in the school's curriculum has increasingly provoked consumers' consciousness of the need to search for a mark showing a seal of approval before product purchase. Indeed, it is not surprising that consumers placed higher concern on a seal of approval.

This study also revealed that company name has significant positive ($B=-0.346$; $P<0.05$) influence on consumers' purchase intention among alcoholic beverage consumers in Enugu metropolis. This result is consistent with Souiden, Kassim, and Hong (2006), and Saunders and Fu (1997) who found that corporate name had a direct positive effect on consumer product evaluations and that consumers gave more weight to corporate name's reputation in their purchase preferences. More often, consumers in Enugu metropolis tend to indirectly define their social class through closer association with known company name in alcoholic beverage sector through consumption and recommendation of its brands as official drinks in meetings and ceremonies. Indeed, consumers appear to leverage on consumption of products from known companies to project their social class. Consumers of alcoholic beverage from less known companies sometimes remove the label in order to cover up the company name and avoid being looked at with disdain in presence of other alcoholic beverage consumers.

Alcohol content has an overwhelming significant positive ($B=0.079$; $p<0.05$) influence on consumers' purchase intention towards alcoholic beverage brands in Enugu metropolis. This indicates that there is a direct relationship between the alcohol content and purchase intention. This means that alcoholic beverage consumers in Enugu metropolis may most likely favour a alcoholic beverage brand with higher alcohol content. Perhaps, consumers aim to achieve desired level of intoxication through the consumption of fewer bottles of alcoholic beverage thereby saving a good percentage of their budget. This result may be explained by the current economic hardship which appears to have put much pressure on the available disposable income of alcoholic beverage consumers.

This study shows that quality is not a major basis for purchase intention among consumers of alcoholic beverage in Enugu metropolis ($B=-0.029$; $P>0.05$). There is an inverse relationship between consumers' purchase intention and alcoholic beverage quality. Arguably, this less emphasis on alcoholic beverage quality could result from the fact that most consumers are experiencing increasing pressure on their limited disposable income emanating from rising cost of living occasioned by the economic downturn in Nigeria and Enugu in particular. Consumers of alcoholic beverage being challenged by economic difficulty may likely buy alcoholic beverage without attaching much premium on quality provided there is an evidence of certification by appropriate regulatory body in order to achieve desired level of intoxication. Another possible explanation is that where consumers have limited cues regarding a product, they seem to depend largely on extrinsic cue. Perhaps, there is an overlap between quality and seal of approval in the consumers' mind with seal of approval dominating their evaluative criteria.

Literature is replete with studies which have implicated packaging in performance of both communications and transportation functions. However, this study found packaging less significant in influencing consumers' purchase intention towards brands of alcoholic beverage ($B=0.015$; $p>0.05$). This finding is in line with Coulson (2000) who maintains that some consumers pay more attention to label information as they become more concerned about health and nutrition issues. Perhaps, the nature of a product determines to a great extent the influence consumers attach to the packaging. Alcoholic beverage is a peculiar product and most Enugu alcoholic beverage consumers seem to patiently search for a mark of seal of approval or date of manufacture and likely expiring date and not how the package of the alcoholic beverage looks like. Alcoholic beverage consumption appears to be associated with risks and consumers are increasingly cautious about making wrong purchase decision.

Again, brand name was found to be less significant in influencing consumers' purchase intention towards alcoholic beverage brands with $B=0.029$; $P>0.05$.

This result is dissimilar with Varela et al., (2010), who maintain that the liking and purchase of a product depends on more than just the sensory details. Non-physical details such as brand name influence consumers' purchase decision. Krutulyte, Coasta, and Grunert (2009) assert that extrinsic cues such as brand name are generally more influential than intrinsic product cues. This contrast in finding could be largely explained by the nature of the product investigated and the setting where the study was conducted.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

This study determined the relative influence of intrinsic and extrinsic product cue on consumers' purchase intention towards alcoholic beverage. Interestingly, the findings revealed that most alcoholic beverage consumers in Enugu metropolis are largely influenced by extrinsic product cues represented by price, company

name, seal of approval and advertising. Alcohol content as an intrinsic cue was also found to be significant. However, the results show that quality, packaging and brand name were not the major factors which shape consumers' purchase intention. It has also been revealed that the concern for product safety is not restricted to developed nations. This finding has serious implications for brand manager particularly in developing countries as well as academics. It will guide brand manager on key areas to focus marketing efforts, what should be emphasized and how in order to have a competitive advantage in a resources-constrained business environment. This study adds a new knowledge to intrinsic and extrinsic product cue literature as determinants of consumers' purchase intention towards alcoholic beverage brands.

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