IMPACT OF GENDER ON CUSTOMER PATRONAGE OF FASHION DESIGNERS IN OSUN STATE

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Abstract
In line with the observation by several researchers, Nigeria is a creative hub of talented designers. Male and Female are rushing into the fashion business, thereby bringing about continuous growth and investment in the world of fashion. It is therefore necessary to investigate the impact of gender on customer patronage of fashion designers in Nigeria. This is why this study attempts to uncover the factors that influence the patronage of male and female designers. The study adopted the descriptive research design. Respondents were randomly selected from two local government areas in Osun State. A sample size of 97 respondents was used for the purpose of this study. The hypothesis formulated was tested using the multiple regression analysis in SPSS version 20.0 version. The result shows the value of co-efficient R of female fashion designers as 0.891 while that of male as 0.610. Therefore, the study found that Female designers are more patronised than their male counterparts in the study area. Following the findings of the study, it is recommended among others, that both male and female designers should be more empowered to boost their morale and business to serve customers better.
Keywords: Gender, Fashion Designer, Patronage, Consumer Behaviour

Introduction

Fashion industry is a fast growing in Nigeria and the customers are getting increased day by day. The industry as employed millions of people around the world with the net worth running to billions of dollar. Fashion encompasses the design, making, marketing, buying, wearing, caring, and end of life of clothing—garments and other items worn on the body. This study focused on clothing aspects of fashion. The variegates in fashion industry into western fashion due to the quick change in the Technology, ideas and lifestyles). In the mid 1980's, the fashion industry was based on mass production of standardized styles that did not change frequently due to the design restrictions of the factories and consumers were less sensitive toward style. Nigerian designers grew the industry into a force to reckon with. Fashion designers have broadened their knowledge and have kicked off the idea of just being called 'dressmakers'. The transformations in the industry have made fashion designers to multiply their product ranges and new appealing styles, shapes and form in order to satisfy the continuous change in customers' preference. Fashion design has moved from the era of

uneducated people trade to the highly educated are involved in the fashion business. The local designers have the skill to reproduce at better and reduced prices, expensive designs of internationally known design makers (Agu and Onuoha, 2016). Pettinger (2005) said that the gender embedded in the fashion industry where the majority of customer service is feminized. There is also an increasing level of both scholarly and industry interest in fashion in the context of changes to natural ecologies (Dilys, 2018).

Statement of problem

With the increased rate at which both male and female fashion designers are flocking the fashion industry in Nigeria, there is increased competition. Retention of consumers remains a great challenge to unmask for fashion designers due to the biological difference between women and men. This differences between them defines their fashion taste. Extent literature review suggests very limited research related to impact of gender on customer patronage of fashion designers in local areas has been carried out. This research endeavors to enhance knowledge on role of gender in Patronage of Fashion Designer and factors that induce the patronage.

Research Objective

Ascertain the rate of patronage male and female fashion designers enjoys.

Literature Review
Clothing

Today, the purpose of clothing as gone beyond items to protect and comfort the body while doing various activities. Cloths are viewed as a basic need of man and as an items of decoration, fashionable products that are used to enhance self-image. According to Haruna (2016),the word

encompasses not only such familiar garments as shirts, skirts, trousers, jackets, and coats but also footwear, caps and hats, sleepwear, sport clothes, corsets and gloves. The design of cloths, material selection, pricing, sale person, and designers have become important factors that underpin the buying decision of customers. The international cultural system as accepted the dynamic nature of consumers worldwide while the continual change in fashion taste is dictated by the social values and lifestyles (Hartley & Montgomery, 2009).

Clothing is generally accepted as one of the fundamental needs of individuals and families all over the world owing to its functional and aesthetic roles which include protection from environmental hazards, enhancement and decoration to mention but a few (Nchekwube, 2009).Clothing is very essential to man and plays various roles like social status, sex, career, opinion, personality etc. The importance of Clothing necessitates the decision of what to wear, how to obtain and the fashion designer to make the clothes for the various occasions (Nchekwube, 2009). For a cloth to perform it functions for the occasion it been selected, it is necessary to select the appropriate designer.

Nigeria consumers have become more adaptable and demanding to fashion change, thus, it has become challenging for fashion designers to cater the buyers with constant changing preferences. Fashion designers usually associate with apparel manufactures, creating designs of men, women, and children for mass distribution in markets (Ogunduyile et al, 2017). Designers are tastemakers and spotters; they capture opportunities to present the zeitgeist. Roles of men and women have influenced clothing and garment and vice versa. Clothing as a

product of fashion is inherently gender because fashion business is no longer deal with mainly women, but it is extended its service to men due to the increase in fashion consciousness of men, (Sondhi and Singhvi 2006).

Patronage

According to Lakshmi,et al (2017)both men and women resolve or approach problems on what they want to purchase with similar goals and objectives but different considerations on whom to purchase It was further said by Lakshmi,et al (2017) that Women are concerned about how problem is solved- they share and discuss the problem. For men solving a problem demonstrates their competency and commitment to a relationship.

Gray and Markiza (2014) in Iyiola et al 2018) asserted that, not all patronage is equivalent to customer loyalty as there is an attitudinal and emotional aspect to loyalty and not just a behavioural aspect. A continuous patronage occurs when a customer makes consistent decision on the consumption of a particular product or service. The decision making style on this consumption can be referred to as mental orientation describing how a consumer makes choices. Babin and Darden (1996) in Miebaka et al (2017) Studies of customer patronage suggest that terminal values, lifestyles, social class, media habits and values are antecedents of patronage.

Consumer Behaviour

Behaviour is individualistic. Nwachukwu (1992) defined behaviour as the response of an organism to the surrounding. Behaviour is used here to express the feeling or emotions associated with the local fashion Designers which in this study is referred to as the consumer behaviour. Ngahu (2002) in

Andrew et.al (2015), asserts that, behind every successful enterprise are unswayedpatrons. Decision making is one of the most complex mechanisms of the human thinking. Men and women varies in their attitude and behaviour, which leads to differences in expectations, taste, demands, needs and life styles (Bakashi, 2012). The studies carried out on the women buying behavior dimensions by Zelezny et al., 2000 suggested that Females are more pro-environmental while shopping than their male counterparts. These variations invariable affect their buying goods and services decisions. The disparity in the patronage of male and female fashion designers is based on many factors. These innumerous factors induce the patronage behaviour of a consumer. Many researchers such as Agu and Onuoha (2016), Deepali Saluja (2016),Gundala and Singh (2014), Wahida Shahan Tinne (2011),Zhany and Kim (2013) and Preez (2003) have identified factors influencing the purchase decision of customers as cultural, social, personal, psychological and demographic factors. In other to understand and explain the patronage decision of a customer. This study identifies Quality, Social, Cultural and Demographic factors as the major variables influencing patronage of fashion designers.

Quality is the excellence and superiority of product bestowed consumer (Zeithaml, 1988). Syduzzaman, Rahman, Islam, Habib, & Ahmed (2014) in quality encompass "conformance to specifications", "fitness for use", "value for price paid", "support services", and "psychological criteria". According to Richard (1996), Quality is the consumer evaluation of a product and judgment that based on some attributes. Customers look out for designers that can create cloths that are top line which

communicates reliability and value in the quality of their work. In the study of Thakur and Lamba (2013); Vikkraman and Sumathi (2012); Guha (2013); Helgesen and Nesset, 2010, quality was perceived as a major influencer of consumer's decision on whom to procure from in his next visit and whether to maintain loyal relationship with such designer or not

Social Factors

Schiffman and Kanuk (2010) define social class as the division of members of a society into hierarchy of distinct status classes, so that members of each class have either higher or lower status than members of other classes.

Turley and Milliman (2000) have mentioned that there is a influence of customer's affective state on repatronage behavioural intention in the service environment. When the patronage of a store or the consumption of a service becomes more visible, this may result in the higher tendency for the referential others to influence decision (Arora and Stoner, 1995; Day and Stafford, 1997). In a group setting, the relationship ties with the others will affect the degree of engagement with someone in the word of mouth behavior (Lee, Cotte and Noseworthy, 2010). Similarly, in Buunk and Gibbons's (2007) evaluation of consumer behavior with regard to fashion products, it was revealed that social interaction and the reliance on peers' opinions are as important as the individual's self-perception. Based on the arguments above, it was proposed that interpersonal influence susceptibility to be positively related to the repatronage behavioural intention.

Culture is the beliefs, values, customs and traditions of people in a society. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2013), human in a

particular society hold certain beliefs, values and tradition that tend to resist change. Nigeria as a country is made up of different ethnic groups with different cultural, beliefs and societal norms which influence the choice of fashion and it designer. Speaking in the same vein, In Northern apart of Nigeria, the tradition of the people their majorly permit men to work and also promote the patronage of same gender. Rajgopal (2010) made an attempt to study about 'Consumer culture and purchase intentions towards fashion apparel' in Mexico. The results revealed that, socio-cultural and personality related factors induce the purchase intentions among consumers. The results also showed a positive effect of store and brand preferences on developing purchase intentions for fashion apparel among consumers.

Demographic factors refer to the measurable statistics of a population (customers) in terms of age, marital status, occupation, education and income. The older people have more purchasing experience than the younger ones. The features younger consumers would look for in clothes may not be the same with older consumers. Income is a significant variable (Dorota, 2013). A person with high income might patronise a designer irrespective of the amount charge while a person with low income might patronise a designer that will refer design at lower price. Marital status has traditionally been use as a measure of responsibility of people. Some married people would prefer a married designer of the same gender while the singles customers might not consider the marital status. Education and Occupation also influences how decisions are made. Educated consumers might prefer a designer that is educated enough to understand their

needs while Occupation of a customer influences the consumption pattern in terms of; the type of cloth and designs made on it.

Research Hypothesis

Base on the present study, the hypothesis is formulated as follow:

Ho: there is no high Patronage for Female fashion designers over male fashion designers.

Methodology

The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected via questionnaire administration. The questionnaire was designed to reflect the opinions of the respondents on patronage of Fashion Designers. The questionnaire was developed utilizing the 5-point Likert scale, which required the respondents to respond to the questions using Strongly Agree (5), Agree(4), Undecided(3), Disagree(2) and Strongly Disagree(1). Secondary data were obtained from textbooks, journals and internet. This research was based on Descriptive Research Design since the study was carried out in two of the thirty local government areas in Osun state. The two areas selected were; Osogbo and Olorunda Local Government. These areas were selected because of their population size. The population of the study consist of both male and female consumers of local fashion designer cloths because they could give us a clear picture on the impact of gender on customer patronage of fashion designers in Osun State.The sample size for this study was 100 and convenience sampling method was employed. The rationale behind employing this approach was that it allowed the researchers the opportunity to use their discretion to select respondents deemed to be true representatives of the targeted population. The tools adapted to study were frequency, and percentage. The hypothesis formulated was tested using the multiple regression analysis in SPSS version 20.0 version.

Results Analysis and Discussion

Descriptive Analysis of Respondents

Among those participants, 51.5% were female while 48.5% were male. 37.1% of the respondents are between 21 to 30 years old while 32% of the respondent are between 31 to 40 years. This shows that the age group involved in the fashion apparel are well represented in the study. The result of the study indicated that both gender and age groups are well represented in the study. Majority of our respondents are currently working in as civil servants in the state, which contributed around 39.2% of all respondents. There were only 29% who are running their own business, 8.2% who work for private company, 16% are students and the remaining 6.2% are under other category (Table 1).

Demographic Description of the Sample
Table-1: Frequency distribution of respondent's demographics

Demographic Variables	Frequency (F)	%		Demographic Variables	Frequency (F)	%
Age				**Gender**		
Below 20	9	9.3		Male	47	48.5
21 – 30	36	37.1		Female	50	51.5
31 – 40	31	32				
Above 50	17	17.5				

Others	4	4.1				
Total	**97**	**100**		**Total**	**97**	**100**
Marital Status				**Education**		
Single	8	8.2		WASC/GCE	14	14.4
Married	85	87.6		OND/'A'	53	54.6
Divorced	4	4.1		Level	10	10.3
				HND/B.SC	4	4.1
				MSC/MBA	16	16.5
				Others		
Total	**97**	**100**		**Total**	**97**	**100**
Occupation						
Civil servant	38	39.2				
Self-employed	29	29.9				
Private	8	8.2				
Company	16	16.5				
Student	6	6.2				
Others						
Total	**97**	**100**				

Source: Field Survey by Researchers, May 2018

Table 2: Location of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
	Olorunda Local Government	49	50.5
Valid	Osogbo Local Government	48	49.5
	Total	97	100.0

Source: Field Survey by Researchers, May 2018

Table 2 indicates the location where the questionnaires were distributed. 50.5% of the respondents were from Olorunda Local Government while 49.5% of the respondents were from Osogbo Local Government. The questions where shared evenly in other not to be bias in the research report.

Table 3: Which fashion designer do you patronise most?

		Frequency	Percent
	Male	29	29.9
	Female	65	67.0
Valid	Both	3	3.1
	Total	97	100.0

Source: Field Survey by Researchers May 2018

Table 3 above shows which fashion designer the respondents patronise most. 67.0% of the respondents patronise Male, 29.9% of the respondents patronise Female fashion

designers while 3.1% of the respondents patronised both genders. The results above show that the male fashion designers are more patronised.

Table 4: Factors influencing patronage of fashion designs

S/N	Factors	SA	A	UN	D	SD	Total Respondent
1	Quality of Work Done	38(39.2%)	39(40.2%)	15(15.5%)	5(5.2%)	0	97
2	Educational Qualification	13(13.4%)	15(15.5%)	14(14.4%)	46(47.4%)	9(9.3%)	97
3	Occupation	11(11.3%)	9(9.3%)	50(51.5%)	9(9.3%)	19(19.6%)	97
4	Age of The Designer	14(14.4%)	18(18.6%)	20(20.3%)	26(26.8%)	19(19.6%)	97
5	Family and Friends	43(44.3%)	11(11.3%)	14(14.4%)	11(11.3%)	1818.6%)	97
6	Marital Status	7(7.2%)	9(9.3%)	5(5.2%)	34(35.1%)	42(43.3%)	97
7	Culture	13(13.4%)	5(5.2%)	32(33%)	30(30.9%)	17(17.5%)	97
8	Social Class	30(31%)	26(26.8%)	13(13.4%)	17(17.5%)	11(11.3%)	97
9	Income	35(36.1%)	25(25.8%)	15(15.5%)	12(12.4%)6	10(10.3%)	97

Source: Field Survey by Researchers, May 2018
Key: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, UN= Undecided, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree

Table 4 represents a summary of the findings regarding the factors that influence consumers' patronage decisions of fashion designer. As indicated, 38% and 40.2% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that Quality of work of fashion designer influence their patronage. 15.5% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, while 5% of the respondents disagreed that Quality of work of fashion designer influence their patronage. It is evident that indeed Quality of work strongly influence customer patronage. Further, 13.4% and 15.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that the educational status of the designer influence their patronage. 14.4% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, while 46% and 19.6% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that educational qualification of the designers is not important in making their decision. This implies that education

qualification plays little role in influencing the decision of customers in this study.

From table 4 11.3% of the respondents strongly agreed and 9.3% of the agreed that Occupation influence their patronage. 51.5% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, while 9.3% and 19.6% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. This implies that either way, customers will make their decision with or without considering their occupation. Considering the age of the designers, 14.4% of the respondents strongly agreed with 18.6% agreed that the age of the designer is important in influencing their decision. 20.3% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed while 26.8% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and 22% strongly disagreed with the statement. This implies that either way, customers will patronise

irrespective of the age of the fashion designer.

Respondents were asked whether their decision is been influenced by family and friends. 44.3% strongly agreed and 11.3% agreed that price influences the purchase of a beauty product. 14.4% of the respondents were uncertain. On the other hand, 11.3% disagreed, while 18.6% strongly disagreed that family and friends are important when considering which of the fashion designer to patronize. This implies that family and friends is a major factor when it comes to patronage of fashion designers.

The study further sought respondent's opinions on the influence of marital status of fashion designers. From table 4 majority of the respondents strongly disagreed (43%.3) and disagreed (35.1%). Specifically, 7.2% of the respondents strongly agreed, 9.3% agreed, 5.2% were undecided. This implies that marital status of the designer is not considered by the respondents before patronage. Respondents were asked to state their thoughts on whether culture of the designer affects their decisions on who to patronage. 13.4% agreed and 5.2% strongly agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 30.9% disagreed as 17.5% strongly disagreed. 33% neither agreed nor disagreed that culture has impacts on their decisions on whom to patronise. This implies that culture of the designer does not influence their patronage decision.

Respondents were asked to state their thoughts on whether their social class their patronage decision. 30% agreed and 19.6% strongly agreed that social class have impacts on their choice of fashion designer. On the other hand, 17.5% disagreed as 11.3% strongly disagreed. Only 20.6% neither agreed nor disagreed that social class have impacts on their patronage decisions. This implies that social class influences the patronage of fashion designer of their choice.

Finally, Respondents were also to state if they patronized their fashion designer based on their income. From the table 10.3% strongly disagreed with 12.4% disagreeing that their income does not influence their purchase decisions. Majority of the respondents 36.1% strongly agreed, 25.8% agreed, while 15.5% were neutral on whether their income determines the fashion designer they patronized. This implies that indeed income have major role to play in the customers' choice of fashion designer.

The result of the study is at variance with the findings of Akekue-Alex et al (2016). In their study investigated the relationship between positioning strategies and customer patronage of fast food firms in Port Harcourt Metropolis in Nigeria. A descriptive research design was applied using cross sectional survey. 123copies of a structured questionnaire were conveniently administered on a five (5) point Likert scale and only 110 copies retrieved from the respondents were found useable. The findings showed an insignificant relationship between all positioning strategies and customer patronage. Although our estimated relationship of interest was not spurious but only 2.5% of the variation in Customer patronage was explained by the joint influence of customer expectation, location, service quality and assortment.

Testing of hypotheses
H_o: there is no patronage for female fashion designers over male fashion designers

Regression analysis

To establish the impact of gender of fashion designers on customer patronage, the researchers run a regression analysis which is summarized in three tables labeled as Table 5 - Model Summary; Table 6 - Anova and Table 7 - Coefficients. The model gives the summary of the general regression model whiles the analysis of variance (Anova) tests the hypothesis of the study and the coefficients determine the impact of gender of fashion designers and customer patronage.

From Table 5, the model suggests that the independent variable which is female and male fashion designers could predict or explain the dependent variable which Customer Patronage is by 80.6% (Reading from R square column). This means that 92.8% of changes or influence of customer patronage are caused by the gender of fashion designers. This model is therefore very good in predicting the level of influence the independent variable has on the dependent variable.

Table 5: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	Df1
1	.963[a]	.928	.926	.389	.928	621.932	2

Model Summary[b]

Model	Change Statistics		Durbin- Watson
	Df2	Sig. F Change	
1	97[a]	.000	.535

   a. Predictors (Constant): Male fashion designers, Female fashion designers
   b. Dependent Variable: High Patronage

The variance analysis (ANOVA) of the regression model found in Table 6 was used to determine whether there is significant effect of gender of fashion designers and customer patronage. At 5% confidence interval, the model indicated that the significant value was 0.000, showing that the model is very comprehensive in predicting

the impact of gender on the customer patronage fashion designers in the selected areas. The ANOVA results suggested that there is significant relationship between the gender of fashion designers and customer patronage' should be accepted. This means that, the null hypothesis should be rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Table 6: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression 1 Residual Total	188.602 14.708 203.310	2 97 99	94.301 .152	621.932	.000[b]

   a. Dependent Variable: High Patronage
   b. Predictors (Constant): Male fashion designers, Female fashion designers

The table of coefficients found in Table 7 shows the independent variable was significant in explaining the change in the dependent variable. It again shows the correlation between the dependent and independent variables. It could be read from the beta value 0.891 and 0.610 for both female and male fashion designers respectively under the unstandardized coefficients column that, there is positive perfect relationship between the gender of fashion designer and customer patronage. Data analysis also shows that in presence of male fashion designers, value of β_2 = 0.610 coefficient is less than those of female fashion designers where of β_1 = 0.891, which is Significant. Hence H_0 is rejected. Therefore, the study found that Female designers are highly patronised than their male counterparts in the study area.

Table 7: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.961	.133		-	.000
1 Female fashion designers	.891	.062	.531	7.221	.000
Male fashion designers	.610	.610	.522	14.349	.000
				14.115	

a. Dependent Variable: High Patronage

Summary of Findings

The present study investigated impact of gender on customer patronage of fashion designers in Osun State. Findings revealed 67% of the respondents patronise female fashion designers against the 29.9% that patronised male fashion designers. The findings of the study suggested that the patronage of the female fashion designers is majorly due to the quality of work and reference from family and friends. While other important factors that influenced their patronage are age of the designer, Income and the social class of the consumer. The study equally establishes that the respondents are indifferent with their occupation and the culture of the fashion designer. It was also discovered that the marital status and the educational qualification of the fashion designer does not influence their patronage.

The study further revealed that the in presence of male fashion designers, value of β_2 = 0.610 coefficient is less than those of female fashion designers where of β_1 = 0.891, which is Significant. Hence H_0 was rejected. Therefore, the study found that Female designers are more or highly patronised than their male counterparts in the study area.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The limitations of the study is due to constraints of time and resources, hence the study has some certain limitations based on convenient sampling method employed. Firstly, the study was conducted in two local government areas which cannot be considered representative of the total population of consumers in Osun State. Secondly, some of the respondent may not be interested in the study; hence their

information might be biased. The conclusions cannot be representative for the general population. A future suggestion for present study is to replicate study's procedures in a larger national scale.

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