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# **THE USE OF LIBRARY IN THE PROMOTION OF PACKAGING OF AFRICAN SALAD THROUGH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGIES IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA**

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## **Abstract**

This study examined the extent to which the use of the library has contributed to the promotion of the packaging of African Salad through vocational education strategies in Enugu State. Two research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with a population of 505 producers of African Salad. The sample size of the study was 152, drawn using the purposive sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was the researchers' structured questionnaire, titled 'Promoting the Packaging of African Salad and Vocational Education Strategies (PPASVE), which three experts validated. The mean and standard deviation were statistical tools employed for the analysis. The findings of the study revealed that the extent to which the use of the library has contributed to the promotion of the packaging of African Salad using innovative strategies of vocational education was great. More so, the extent to which it has aided in promoting packaging through marketing strategies was great. Based on these findings, some recommendations were made that producers of African salad be exposed to other marketing strategies of vocational education for enhanced patronage and sustainability.

*Keywords: library, promoting, packaging, African salad, vocational education, strategies, Enugu state*

## **Introduction**

The library occupies a strategic place in every learning environment. A library is a cardinal unit that strengthens the development of individuals, groups and society through its rich and resourceful information generation and management. Suffice it to say that the survival of every organisation lies in the extent to which information is managed. While it is acknowledged that information could be obtained outside the library, its processes are usually not very easy, and the cost is quite overwhelming. This situation explains the library's pivotal role in retrieving information of whatever type, form, and size. It is an organised collection of resources accessible

to a defined community of users for reference or borrowing purposes (Ndagana, 2007). This view presupposes that the library is not just a house or room where books are kept for use by those who wish to consult them. Still, a designated building where information in prints and other formats is acquired, organised, carefully arranged according to some specific order, and accessible for reading, research, and consultation by all ages and interests. Drawing from this statement underscores the importance of information management which is one of the objectives of the library.

Information is the raw material for developing, interpreting, applying, and implementing research and policy directives that facilitate organisational growth, survival, decision-making, and service delivery (Mabawonku, 2004). Information could be seen as multifaceted, consisting of all types of organised facts, data, policies, procedures and other details needed to extend activities. The importance of information is seen in the liberation of people from the shackles of ignorance, misconceptions, economic stagnation, social unrest and political instability (Sokari as cited by Anasi, 2010). This implies that good and effective decisions can only be made when the correct information is made available at the right time to the right recipient. This also accounts for record management. The record consists of any information recorded on any physical medium, generated or recorded by a business enterprise. It is an essential tool for effective school planning and administration and implementing an appropriate course of action (Durosaro (2002). Record management entails facilitating the free flow of records through an organisation to ensure that information is available rapidly where and when it is needed (Tagbolor, Adzido & Agbanu, 2015). Consequently, in recognition of the use of the library, exposing individuals to the use of vocational educational strategies for promoting the packaging of African Salad in Enugu State becomes a need for profitability and sustainability.

Vocational education has a vital role to play in the technological and economic advancement of any country. Vocational education constitutes a part of the individual's total experience whereby they learn successfully how to carry on a gainful occupation which involves the development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for success in the field (Okoh, 2000). This education could also be seen as those aspects of education which involves general education; the study of technologies and related science; and the acquisition of practical knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills relating to occupations in various sections of economic and social life (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, 2008). This view establishes the use of multiple strategies of vocational education towards the attainment of these occupational areas. It also underscores the place of vocational education in national education. Thus, vocational education is acknowledged as the people's training, acquisition, and utilisation of relevant skills for economic growth and national development (Usman, 2012). This education prepares one for gainful living by acquiring practical skills irrespective of the level of the training (Olori, Oyigbo, Ozurumba, Olori, Ugwueke, Anigbogu & Onah, 2021).

Vocational education is one of the components of non-formal education most concerned with acquiring the knowledge and skills required by the workplace, which is mainly made up of adults (Tileston, 2007). It entails the preparation of learners mainly for occupations that require manipulative skills. This involves understanding the practical application of the basic principles of mathematics and science's basic principles as part of its aim (Hoover, Buttram & Hord, 2012). Interestingly, one of the objectives of adult education is to provide in-service and vocational and professional training for different categories of adults and professionals to improve their skills. However, in the area of promotion and packaging of African salad through the use of the library,

the acquisition of knowledge on vocational education strategies is at the lowest ebb by producers of the locally produced meal especially in Enugu State, hence, the need for the study.

Innovative strategies involve the creation of new ideas or procedures helpful in accomplishing objectives (Redmond, 2008). The author further stated that innovation is the capacity to have new thoughts and ideas. Innovation ordinarily introduces and adopts new ideas to change the existing relationships between an organisation and its internal and external environments (Osborne & Brown, 2005). Furthermore, four types of innovation for measuring innovation were identified: product, process, marketing, and organisational. In whichever form it could be viewed, innovation is seen as a process in which valuable ideas are transformed into new forms of added value for the organisation, customers, employees and stakeholders (Merx-Chermin & Nijhof, 2005). In this instance, innovative strategies related to this study become the styles for which the providers make new concepts on the packaging of African Salad. These new concepts are translated into the society for increased patronage through the application of marketing strategies.

Marketing strategies are processes by which a product or service originates and is then priced, promoted, and distributed to consumers (Robbs, 2008). As an aspect of business, marketing contributes significantly to the organisation's success (UNESCO, 2008). It consists of advertising, promotions, public relations, and sales (Unachukwu, 2009). Thus, marketing introduces and promotes the product or service while encouraging sales from the buying public. Sales refer to the act of buying or the actual transaction of customers purchasing the product or service. Since marketing aims to make the product or service widely known and recognised, various marketing strategies become a need.

Marketing strategy is a long term and forward-looking approach to planning with the fundamental goal of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage (Vazquez, 2012). A section provides an overall business plan on how the business owners find and attract clients or customers to their business. This marketing strategy probably may have drawn the meaning of marketing to include planning, organising, directing, and controlling the decision-making regarding product lines, pricing, promotion, and servicing (Bretner, 2014). This definition implies that the various measures taken for a product or service to get to the end-users are marketing strategies. One of these strategies is an advertisement. It is often used to make consumers aware of a product's special price or its benefits. In this instance, creating awareness on the African Salad packaging requires a particular skill to reach out to the people which could be sort through the use of library.

The acquisition of the skills becomes imperative considering the rudiments in the preparation of the salad. African salad is widely accessed for its composition of food ingredients rich in protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals. Though it can be as filling as any other main course meal, African salad is usually eaten as an in-between meal or a side dish to the various Nigerian rice recipes. It is also regarded as a particular delicacy during traditional festivals (Eze, 2015). Hence, African Salad is a delicious Nigerian meal traditionally prepared and served as food or dessert. It is a highly nutritional diet. It contains rich minerals like potassium, sodium, calcium, magnesium, iron, phosphorous and zinc; it serves as economic empowerment for most women in Enugu State.

However, over the years, the preparation of this local meal referred to as African Salad had been associated with poor hygiene emanating from the processing, preparation, packaging, and display based on its traditional method, thus debilitating the nutritional values. This situation clearly

explains the poor handling of the product which the researchers are worried that in the 21st century, products considered to have high nutritional values, such as African Salad be given special attention in its processing, preparation, packaging and display to attract more patronage for economic empowerment through the incorporation of vocational education strategies. Of interest, the study serves as a source of information to the library on the use of vocational education strategies for the promotion of packaging of this locally enriched nutritional food in Enugu State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which the use of library has contributed to the promotion and packaging of African Salad using vocational educational strategies in Enugu State. Specifically, the objectives were to:

1. determine the extent to which the use of library has contributed to the promotion and packaging of African Salad using the innovative strategies of vocational education in Enugu State
2. ascertain the extent to which the use of library has contributed to the promotion and packaging of African Salad using the marketing strategies of vocational education in Enugu State

### **Research Questions**

The following questions guided the study:

1. To what extent has the use of library contributed to the promotion and packaging of African Salad using the innovative strategies of vocational education in Enugu State?

2. To what extent has the use of library contributed to the promotion and packaging of African Salad using the marketing strategies of vocational education in Enugu State?

### **Review of Empirical Studies**

Some studies have been conducted to demonstrate the contributions of vocational education to improved livelihoods. Kayode and Okolocha (2016) revealed that farm youths needed entrepreneurial skills in agricultural production: personal characteristics, interpersonal skills, critical and creative thinking skills. A similar study by Abanyam (2014) revealed that business education students of the College of Education in Cross River State slightly possessed creative skills, information and communication skills, marketing skills and accounting skills for self-employment and sustainable development. More still, Agada (2014) study revealed that 23 technical skills, 18 managerial skills, 22 financial skills, 25 marketing skills, and 21 communication skills were needed by radio and television students to establish small and medium scale enterprises.

From these studies, it is clear that several entrepreneurial skills were required for profit maximisation of individuals engaged in any economic activity; however, in terms of upscaling the packaging of African Salad through vocational education, there is a lack of literature. This study, therefore, attempts to provide empirical evidence on the potency of the library in the dissemination information on vocational education strategies for the promotion and packaging of African Salad.

### **Research Method**

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. This design aims to collect data on and systematically describe the characteristics, features, or facts about a given population (Nworgu,

2015). The design was considered appropriate for the study since data were obtained from respondents on promoting the packaging of African Salad through vocational education strategies in Enugu State. The study was carried out in Enugu State, one of the 36 states in Nigeria located in South East. The state is notable for its hospitality and interest in education. However, most inhabitants, especially the rural women, are predominantly traders engaged in petty trading such as African Salad. This further lay credence to their quest to improve the preparation and packaging of locally produced food such as African Salad.

The population of the study was 505 producers of African Salad. The sample size used for the study was 152 producers, which is 30 per cent of the entire population. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select the respondents from the various strategies the product is sold.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Promoting the Packaging of African Salad and Vocational Educational Strategies (PPASVE)". The instrument consisted of sections: A and B. Section A elicited information on the personal data of the respondents. Section B was arranged in two clusters of five items each. Cluster A elicited information on the innovative strategies of vocational education used to promote the packaging of African Salad. Cluster B stimulated information on the marketing strategies of vocational education used to promote the packaging of African Salad. The instrument was designed on a four-point rating scale of great extent, moderate extent, low extent and very low extent with numerical values weighted 4-1.

Three experts validated the instrument; each from these departments; Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies and Business Education. One was from the Measurement and Evaluation Unit in the Department of Science Education, both from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The

reliability of the PPASVE instrument was determined using trial testing. Twenty-five copies of the questionnaire were administered to 25 producers of African Salad in Ebonyi State, which was not used in the study. The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The result of the analysis gave an overall coefficient value of 0.66. The data collected from the respondents were analysed using the mean and standard deviation. Meanwhile, a criterion mean of 2.50 was used for decision making. The implication is that the mean score of 2.50 and above was termed great extent, while below was low extent.

## Results

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the extent to which the use of library has contributed to the promotion and packaging of African Salad using the Innovative Strategies of Vocational Education (n=147)**

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1.	Exposing the producers of African salad to new ways of packaging the product	3.33	.63	Great extent
2.	Providing decent environment for packaging of African salad	3.62	.51	Great extent
3	Providing information on problems associated with the production of African Salad	3.19	.79	Great extent
4	Providing packaging skills of African salad in aluminum foil	2.55	.92	Great extent
5	Providing packaging skills of African salad in plastics	1.79	.95	Low extent
	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>.76</b>	<b>Great extent</b>

Table 1 shows that item statements 1,2,3,4 were regarded as great extent by the respondents on the regarding the use of library in the promotion and packaging of African salad using the innovative strategies of vocational education. These statements include; exposing the producers

of African salad to new ways of packaging the product ( $\bar{x} = 3.33$  and  $SD = .63$ ), providing a decent environment for packaging of African salad ( $\bar{x} = 3.62$  and  $SD = .51$ ), providing information on problems associated with the production of African Salad ( $\bar{x} = 3.19$  and  $SD = .79$ ), providing packaging skills of African salad in aluminium foil ( $\bar{x} = 2.55$  and  $SD = .92$ ) while providing packaging skills of African salad in plastics ( $\bar{x} = 1.79$  and  $SD = .95$ ) was reported as low extent. The Table equally shows that providing a decent environment for packaging of African salad was rated as the highest mean score. The overall mean score of the respondents was ( $\bar{x} = 2.89$  and  $SD = .76$ ). This implied that the extent to which the library is used in the promotion and packaging of African salad using the innovative strategies of vocational education in Enugu State was great.

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the to which the use of library has contributed to the Promotion of Packaging of African Salad using Marketing Strategies of Vocational Education (n= 147)**

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1.	Identifying strategic places for the distribution of African salad	3.58	.58	Great extent
2.	Providing free gifts to attract customers buying African salad	3.14	.82	Great extent
3	Understanding the best time for the distribution of African salad	2.86	.93	Great extent
4	Launching African salad with improved tastes	2.56	.90	Great extent
5	Building a channel of distribution of Africa salad	3.40	.71	Great extent
	<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.11</b>	<b>.79</b>	<b>Great extent</b>

Table 2 shows that all the item statements were regarded as great extent by the respondents on the use of the library in the promotion and packaging of African salad using marketing strategies of vocational education. These statements include; identifying strategic places for the distribution of African salad ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.58 and SD = .58), providing free gifts to attract customers buying African salad ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.14 and SD = .82), understanding the best time for the distribution of African salad ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.86 and SD = .93), launching African salad with improved tastes ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.56 and SD = .90), building a channel of distribution of Africa salad ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.40 and SD = .71). The Table equally shows that identifying strategic places for the distribution of African salad had the highest mean score. The overall mean score of the respondents was ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.11 and SD = .79). This implied that the extent to which the use of library has contributed to the promotion and packaging of African Salad using marketing strategies of vocational education was great in Enugu State.

### **Discussion of Results**

The findings of the study show that the extent to which the was used in the promotion and packaging of African Salad using innovative strategies of vocational education in Enugu State was great. The recognition of the may strategies may not have been unconnected with the fact that introducing a new idea to an existing product is more likely to attract the greater attention of people where the information is disclosed. The emergence of this new idea is necessitated by the curiosity and the creativity of the individual involved. Studies also affirmed this innovation in terms of higher proceeds and sustainability of the business (Kayode & Okolocha, 2016; Abanyam, 2014). Furthermore, with the acceptability of the item statements by respondents, it is believed that the introduction and adoption of new ideas that produce a change in the existing relationships between an organisation and its internal and external environments can promote the packaging of the product for improved livelihoods. Thus, innovative strategies entail changing

the business models – the template on how businesses or organisations will succeed to be more competitive (Merx-Chermin & Nijhof, 2005). This strategy requires changing or bringing new value propositions, services and production processes which is the essence of repackaging the African Salad for broader coverage and patronage.

Findings show that the use of library has greatly contributed to the promotion and packaging African Salad in Enugu State using marketing strategies of vocational education. The recognition of the multiple strategies stems from the fact that marketing involves the planning, organising, directing, and controlling the decision-making regarding product lines, pricing, promotion, and servicing (Bretner, 2014). This view by the author suggests that adequate attention is given to preparing a given product before it gets to the end-users. This action is made possible with the exposition of the information to the people through the use of the library. Thus, marketing strategy is a long-term, forward-looking approach to planning with the fundamental goal of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage (Vazquez, 2012)). Therefore, a business plan section outlines the overall game plan for how business owners find and attract clients or customers. Mapping out of the various business strategies, among other reasons, is to enhance productivity, which invariably results in profit maximisation. A similar finding revealed that the provision of 25 marketing skills was required for the establishment of small and medium scale enterprises (Agada, 2014).

## **Conclusion**

The library has been acknowledged as a veritable tool for disseminating and retrieving information to equip people with various needs in a stress-free mode. One such knowledge is the application of vocational education strategies to the promotion and packaging of Africa Salad for a gainful living of its recipients in Enugu State. In a changing society where the preparation and

packaging of African Salad have been dominated by the traditional method notable for some inadequacies, the exposition of its producers to vocational education strategies through the use of the library was found to have significantly aided in the promotion and packaging of the locally produced meal for profit maximisation and broader coverage. The study, therefore, saw the provision of new ways of packaging the African salad, healthy environment and addressing problems associated with the production as some of the innovative strategies of vocational education producers are exposed to through the use of the library. In a similar vein, the use of the library has further aided in identifying strategic places for product's distribution and building of channels of distribution as marketing strategies of vocational education.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made based on the findings:

1. Producers of locally made goods intensify efforts to acquire more innovative strategies of vocational education for enhanced patronage.
2. Producers should imbibe the use of various marketing strategies capable of enhancing product distribution for its sustainability.

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