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**Influence of Publisher’s Sales Representatives Demographic Factors on their
Perception on Book as Product for Branding and Marketing in Ibadan,
Oyo State, Nigeria**

By

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&

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between publishers’ sales representatives’ demographic characteristics and perception on book as a product for branding and marketing in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study is a survey research of correlational type. Total enumeration sampling technique was adopted using thirty sales representatives each from thirty publishing companies at a national training workshop in Ibadan. The data gathered were analysed using descriptive statistics and ANOVA. The findings show that there was no significant influence of sales representatives’ demographic characteristics on perception of book as a product worthy of branding for marketing. The findings are a collective prognosis of unhealthy future for book marketing in Nigeria. It was recommended that sales representatives should be trained for cognitive, technical and socio-economic skills needed for effective book marketing; otherwise book marketing will remain the “Archilles heels” of the book publishing industry in Nigeria.

Keywords: Publishers’, sales representative, demographic factors, perception, book, product, branding, marketing, Oyo State, Nigeria

I. Introduction

The activities that result in the publishing of a book should be leveraged on a high level of sensitivity and creativity that could lead to successful marketing in the complex, social, economic and political environment in Nigeria. The process of book publishing is not complete until the book is presented and sold in the market to enable the publisher earn a profit. However, book marketing has become a difficult experience, not only for Nigerian but the entire continent of African Publishers.

One of Africa’s leading publishers, Henry Chakwa was reported by Zell, (2001) to have observed that marketing is the ‘Archilles heel’ of African publishing and that most publishers consider their work complete when, after months of sweating, their books come off the press. In reality, for effective marketing, it is when the book comes off the press that greater attention should be given in handling it as a commercial product in terms of publicity and promotion.

Research indicates that it is not always the case in Africa. Zell (2001) quoting Chakava (1996) revealed this rather tenuous situation in the African publishing industry as follows:

As far as I am aware, there is no African publisher who produces advance publicity on new and forthcoming titles. Few bother to print promotional leaflets. Only a handful produce annual catalogues. Most catalogues have incomplete and outdated information. Blurbs could do with little editorial intervention. Essential bibliographic information, such as ISBN, year of publication, price and marketing restrictions may be missing.

Although, books are a common but unique entity in the print media world and serve the common functions of informing, educating and entertaining the readers, there are unique differences among books. The differences serve as index of characterization and identification as unique individual products. Books are essentially differentiated on the basis of their contents, organization of internal text elements, design, physical appearance and the audience orientation of the book. This is why each book has to be marketed and promoted on its own merit and in a special way that benefits it. Except this is given adequate attention, the market potentials would not be maximally expounded by the publisher and the publicity due to the author would be curtailed to a good extent. It is in this light that Zell (2001) pointed out that:

The absence of adequate promotion has serious repercussions: not only are sales opportunities not fully exploited, but authors are unhappy because their books will not receive the promotion and visibility they believe they deserve; and information about arts and culture, creative writing, or important academic research, is not adequately disseminated.

In this era of Information and Communication Technology, books are faced with serious competition from other similar or related media of information dissemination. Therefore, books do not constitute the only items in the retail outlets. Langer (1982) noted that there are other products finding their ways into the retail market. The most evident of this today are computer programmes which are at present receiving great attention as products for sale along through bookstores. This implies great change in the marketing of books and as noted by Doebler (1983) "The most important fact of life to understand in book marketing today is change - fundamental, evolutionary change that is permanently altering the way the book trade works".

The marketing of books which are the products of the publishing industry is crucial to the existence of the industry and without which the industry will not exist. In this respect, Montagnes (1998) noted that:

Printing books is not the same as publishing them. A book that has been printed and bound has not been published until it has been made available to the public and until the people who are its intended readership have been told that it is available. A book has not been published successfully until the people who are its intended audience have also been encouraged to obtain it and do so. This is

crucial step in marketing. On it depends not only the successful publication of the individual title but the financial health of the publishing organization.

Indeed, “The crucial step is marketing”; the depth, dynamism of the market and the capacity of a publisher to effectively function within the environment of the market are other important and serious factors to consider. In his regard, the views of Bgoya, Billany, Luganew, Paajanew and Syrganen (1997) are relevant, as they posited that:

Publishers have to understand the needs and the logic of the business in order to satisfy those needs and achieve their own business target successfully.

The market structure in a particular country gives a framework for the publisher’s opportunities and possibilities. This structure determines the rules of demand and freedom of action in supply as well as the role of publishers. In addition, education policies give general guidelines for the publishers’ work. Along this line, publishers have to set objectives and choose their strategies.

In the book publishing process, the task of book marketing devolves on the sales representatives. The sales representatives are responsible for selling publishers’ books to various customers such as wholesalers, bookstores, school, libraries and businesses. They are involved in the promotion of titles in all ramifications to the publisher’s varied customers within a given budget. In short, the sales representative discovers and contacts new sales points, keeps functional records of sales activities, establishes sales programmes, studies and established familiarity with the publisher’s titles and informs the publisher about developments in the market place.

The publishers’ sales representatives are the core staff in book marketing and are responsible for the inflow of funds from the market to the publishing houses. The sales representatives play important role in the sustainenance of a publishing house. Zell (2001) noted that:

The publisher’s sales representative, the ‘rep’, is the link between the publisher’s sales department and the booksellers, and he or she is the publisher’s ambassador in the field. One of the rep’s principal objectives is to get advance orders for forthcoming books, as well as getting some of the publisher’s active backlist to the bookseller’s shelves and encouraging records at regular intervals.

The book as an industrial product has its characteristics as different from other products. There are no two books that are exactly the same in all ramifications as media of communication for education, information and entertainment. It behooves a sales representative to develop adequate knowledge of the products (books) of his publishing house so as to be able to market them. As noted by Gregrio (n.d), “selling books is fantastic. Selling books means talking to people about great books. It means getting excited about a new list every season, making an impact on the people who, in turn, impact your average reader just by shelving a book in their store”. The book is a product that needs to be sold progressively and aggressively. For a sales representative to effectively market a book, he must necessarily develop the correct perspectives on the product as a brand. In this regard, “A brand is a product which needs other dimensions that differentiates it

in some way from other products designed to satisfy the same need” Gregrio (nd). Therefore, the sales representative should be able to convince his customers that there are meaningful differences among brands in the product category by ensuring that his consumer do not think that all brands in the category are the same. In effect, he must strive to ensure that consumers have the correct perception of his brand - product. This function has become necessary because of the rapidly changing environment of the book publishing industry. It has become characterized with very serious and perspective consumers, increased competition, decreased effectiveness of traditional marketing tools, emergence of new marketing tools, and complex brand and product portfolios.

In this setting, the sales representative must not only have accurate perception on his product as a brand but also, know the prevailing marketing forces and the factors and circumstances of the demand and supply of his product. He must have a good grasp of the main selling points of his product and must be able to convey these easily and quickly to the consumers.

A well informed and perspective sales representative should know and apply the following information to his sales activities (Zell, 2001):

- What the book as a product is about.
- Why it is being published and whom it is addressed, and if it is a new book that fills a particular need.
- What its main market is, and who is likely to buy and read it (and whether this is likely to include the customers of the bookshop visited). And, if the book is competing with other similar titles, what makes the book better than the others.
- The author’s standing and reputation, and previous books by the author.
- What sort of publicity is planned for the book (or a range or series of books), and what kind of media publicity it is likely to enjoy.
- How much it costs, and what terms are being offered.
- Whether the publishers will offer any special point-of-sale material, such as posters or dump bins.
- If a new tertiary-text or new range of school titles is being sold, and what the competition is publishing in the field.

The pertinent concern of a sales representative should be to develop knowledge of his product as a unique entity-brand that meets the customers’ needs and from which they derive expected satisfaction. The sales representative’s perception of his product would enable him to achieve the objective of brand or product management which includes delivery messages about the brand clearly, confirmation of sales, representative, credibility, connecting the target prospects emotionally, motivating the buyer and concretising users’ loyalty. Unless the sales representative has the right perception on his company’s titles, he may not be able to help to create a distinction among other titles that may be relevant and satisfy customer’s needs. This primary distinction constitutes the primary origin of a series of benefits derivable from the title for both the buyer

and the sales representative. The sales representative should have appropriate cognitive skills both about the product and the marketing environment to enable him to contribute to the promotion of the product in various ways. Relevant to this situation, Zell (2001) noted that: There are a variety of ways in which a publisher's book can be brought to the attention of its main target markets. Some methods are more expensive than others and some methods that might be effective for a general trade publisher may not cut across to an academic publisher. Different types of books will require different methods of promotion.

A perspective publisher's sales representative should be able to develop a marketing programme to enable him to effectively sell his company's titles. This is because he would be able to identify the potentials of his books and establish books in the market by placing the right values on them. The sales representatives are saddled with the objective of selling a product to the consumers. In the first instance, they deal with a product and in the second instance, they deal with consumers who have need for their (sales representative) company's product with which they could establish physical and emotional contact through the activities of the sales representative. It is through selling activities that the sales representative can build a brand. According to Gregorio (nd): It is through the process of "making an impact on the people..." that a brand emerges. This point is explained by Gunelius' (nd) definition of a product as follows:

A product is made by a company and can be purchased by a consumer in exchange for money while brands are built through consumer perceptions, expectations, and experiences with all products or services under a brand umbrella.

A brand can only emerge through effective and persistent sale of a product by the sales representative. This is where the issues of strong and right perception and presentation of the product to the consumers are pertinent. Products are instantly meaningful to consumers but brand become meaningful overtime with some experience with the product. Gunelius (n.d) gives an explanation as follows:

When you launch a new product, it's easy to make that product instantly meaningful and useful to the consumers because it serves a specific function for them. However, a brand is meaningful until consumers have a chance to experience it, build trust with it, and believe in it. That is why the 3 steps to brand building include consistency, persistence, and restraint. It takes time and effort to convince customers to believe in your brand.

Thus, building a brand depends on the ability of the sales representative to do so. He must have the right perception of the product and has the communicative and social mobility skills to present and convince the consumers to believe. Lake (n.d) opined that to succeed in branding, a sales representative must understand the product and how it meets the needs and wants of his customers by integrating the brand strategies through his company at every point of public contact. According to him, the brand resides within the hearts and minds of customers, clients,

and prospects. It is the sum total of their experiences and perception; some of which the sales representative can influence and some that he cannot.

A sales representative's right perception of his product could result in benefits for the consumers and also for the sales representative. The intelligent and professional presentation of a product as a brand could help the customers to correctly identify specific products in a relatively good time, thereby reducing search costs and gaining assurance of a level of quality that subsequently may extend to new products. In addition, the buyer gets certain psychological rewards by purchasing brands that symbolize status and prestige thereby reducing the social and psychological risks associated with owing and using the "wrong" product.

For the book representative who is the seller of the brand, he achieves the role and function of facilitation because the effective handling of the brand would (Keller, 2003):

- Ease some of the sellers tasks
- Helps the customer to identify and re-identify the product
- May lead to repeat purchases to the seller's delight
- Facilitate the introduction of new products
- Promotes promotional efforts by giving the firm something to identify with and a name on which to focus.
- Promote premium pricing by creating a basic level of differentiation that should prevent the product from becoming a commodity.
- Facilitate segmentation by enabling the marketer to communicate a coherent message to a target customer group; and
- Facilitate brand loyalty.

The role of the publishers' sales representative has been discussed as essential to marketing of books and in the process of making a product a brand for effective marketing communication and persistent sales.

II. Statement of the Problem

The marketing of books is effected through the process of communication. Communication can only be possible and effective when timely and relevant information is available. The sales representative would, of necessity, gather and use relevant information about his product which he would communicate to the consumers in an effort to get them to buy the product and subsequently have a chance to experience it, build trust with it, and believe in it. This is an enormous task for the sales representative and it calls for the development of perspective, technical and socio-economic skills to do this successfully. Literature has revealed that marketing is the "Achilles heal of African publishing" because no adequate preparation is often made before a book is launched into the market by the publisher's sales force.

Perhaps, if the book is considered as a product whose sale needs careful planning and a budget of funds, time and material resources, adequate preparation would be made to bring it to the consumers in a most effective way. Any failure in this regard could be attributed to no or low conceptualization of the book as a product whose sales must be professionally handled by sales representative. The failure in “the process of creating a relationship or a connection between a company’s product and emotional perception of the customer for the purpose of generating segregation among competition and building loyalty among customers” would be attributed to the level of perception of the sales representative on the book as a product that needs branding for effective marketing. This study sets out to determine whether relationship exists between sales representatives’ demographic characteristics and their perception on book as a product for branding and marketing in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

III. Objectives of Study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. find out if sales representatives demographic characteristics have influence on their perception of book as a product worthy of branding and marketing.
2. find out which of the demographic characteristics has significant influence on sales representatives perception on the book as a product.

IV. Hypotheses

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following seven hypotheses guided the conduct of the study and were tested at $P < 0.05$ level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the perception of sales representatives (Reps) of different age range on book as a product.
2. There is no significant difference between the perception of Reps with different qualifications on book as a product.
3. There is no significant difference between the perception of Reps according to different positions held on book as a product.
4. There is no significant difference between the perception of Reps according to different years of experience on book as product.
5. There is no significant relationship between the perception and year of professional practice of Reps on book as a product.
6. There is no significant relationship between the perception and position in professional trade cadre held by the Reps on book as a product.
7. There is no significant relationship between the perception of Reps and professional trade qualifications on book as a product.

V. Research Methodology

This study adopted survey research design of correlation type. This allowed for the scientific investigation into the nature and extent of the relationship between the variables in the study. This study established relationship between publishers' sales representatives' demographic factors and perception on book as a product for branding and marketing in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Total enumeration sampling technique was adopted using thirty sales representatives from thirty publishing companies in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The reliability coefficient for the instruments was tested to be $r = 0.71$ using Cronbach-Alpha method. The questionnaire was pre tested on sales representatives' that was not included in the study. The data collected for this study were analysed using descriptive statistics and ANOVA.

VI. Results and Discussion

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the perception of sales representative of different age range on book as a product. This hypothesis was tested using Analysis of variance (ANOVA). The table below presents the ANOVA of sales representatives' perception according to various age range on book as a product.

Table 1(a) ANOVA of Sales Representatives' Perception according to Different Age Range on Book as a Product

Source of variation	Sum of square	DF	Mean square	F.ratio	Sig. F	Remark
Age	5.533	2	2.766	0.325	0.725	NS
Residual	221.157	26	8.506			
Total	226.690	28	8.096			

NS = Not significant at $P < 0.05$

The table above shows that there is no significant difference between sales representatives' perception according to various age range on book as a product ($F(2, 26) = 0.325$; $P > 0.05$). Hence, the hypothesis is not rejected. Table 1(b) reveals the magnitude of perception across different age cohort.

Table 1(b) MCA of Sales Representatives' Perception According to Different Age Range on Book as a Product

Grant Mean 38.897

Age	N	Adjusted Deviation	Eta	Adjusted for Independent Deviation	Beta

20-30yrs	7	-0.75		-0.75	
31-40yrs	20	0.20		0.20	
41-50yrs	2	0.60	0.16	0.60	0.16
Multiple R. Squared = 0.024					
Multiple R = 0.156					

The perception of sales representatives (Reps) from different age range differ (although not significantly). Those who are between 41 and 50 years have a mean perception of 39.50 whereas those who are between 20 and 30 years have a mean perception of 38.15. So it is concluded that those between 41 and 50 years of age have higher perception mean score on book as a product than each of the other groups. The coefficient of determination (R^2) shows that only 2.4 percent of Reps' age account for their perception on book as a product. This difference is shown not to be statistically significant.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the perception of Reps with different qualifications on book as a product. This hypothesis is tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The table below presents the ANOVA of Reps' perception according to various qualifications on book as a product.

Table 2(a) ANOVA of Reps' Perception According to Different Academic Qualification on Book as a Product

Source of variation	Sum of Square	DF	Mean square	F.ratio	Sig. F	Remark
Qualification	54.725	4	13.681	1.909	0.142	NS
Residual	171.964	24	7.165			
Total	226.690	28	8.096			

NS = Not Significant at $P < 0.05$

Table 2(a) above shows that there is no significant difference between Reps' perception according to various academic qualifications on book as a product ($F(4,24) = 1.909; P > 0.05$)

Hence, the hypothesis is not rejected. Table 2(b) reveals the magnitude of perception among various qualifications.

Table 2(b) MCA of Reps' Perception According to Various Academic Qualifications on Book as a Product

Grand Mean = 38.897

Qualification	N	Adjusted Deviation	Eta	Adjusted for Independent Deviation	Beta
OND	3	-1.90		-1.90	
HND	7	1.67		1.67	
NCE	1	-4.90		-4.90	
B.A/B.Ed/B.Sc.	16	-0.02		-0.02	
M.A./M.Ed/M.Sc	2	-0.40	0.49	-0.40	049
Multiple R. Squared = 0.241					
Multiple R = 0.491					

The perception of Reps with different qualifications differ on book as a product. Those who are holders of HND have a mean perception of 40.7, whereas, those who are holders of NCE have a mean perception of 34.00. In effect, we conclude that holders of HND have higher perception on book as a product than each of the other four groups. Though, the difference is shown not to be statistically significant.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the perception of Reps according to different official positions held on book as a product. The hypothesis was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The table 3(a) presents the ANOVA of Reps' perception according to various positions held on book as a product.

Table 3(a) ANOVA of Reps' Perception According to Different Positions Held on Book as a Product

Source of variation	Sum of square	DF	Mean Square	F.ratio	Sig.	Remark
Position Held	5.369	3	1.790	0.198	0.897	NS
Residual	226.493	25	9.060			

Total	231.862	28	8.281	
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NS= Not Significant at P<0.05

Table 3(a) above shows that there is no significant difference between Reps' perception according to various positions held on book as a product ($F(3,25) = 0.198; P>0.05$). Hence, the hypothesis is not rejected. The magnitude of performance among different positions is presented in Table 3(b).

Table 3(b) MCA of Reps' Perception According to Different Positions Held on Book as a product

Grand Mean = 39.069

Qualification	N	Adjusted Deviation	Eta	Adjusted for Independent Deviation	Beta
Sales Manager	5	-0.87		-0.87	
Sales Rep.	19	0.09		0.09	
Marketing Executive	2	0.43		0.43	
Supervisor	3	0.60	0.15	0.60	0.15
Multiple R. Squared = 0.023 Multiple R = 0.152					

NS = Not Significant at P< 0.05

Table 3(b) shows the perception of Reps from different positions held differs (although not significant). Those who hold the position of sales manager have a mean of perception of 38.20, whereas, those holding position of supervisors have a mean perception of 39.67. In effect, it is concluded that those holding the position of supervisors have higher perception on book as a product than each of the other three groups. The difference is shown not to be significant.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference between the perception of Reps' according to different years of experience on book as a product. The hypothesis is tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Table 4(a) presents the ANOVA of Reps' perception according the various years of experience on book as a product.

Table 4(a) ANOVA of Rep's Perception according to Different Years of Experience on Book as a Product

Source of variation	Sum of square	DF	Mean square	F.ratio	Sig.	Remark
Experience	0.473	2	0.237	0.027	0.974	NS

Residual	231.398	26	8.900	
Total	231.862	28	8.281	

NS = Not Significant at P < 0.05

Table 4(a) shows that there is no significant difference between the perception of Reps according to various years of experience on book as a product ($F(2,26) = 0.027$; $P > 0.05$). Hence, the hypothesis is not rejected. The magnitude of performance across different years of experience is presented in table 4(b).

Table 4(b) MCA of Reps' Perception according to Various Years of Experience on Book as a Product

Grand Mean 39.069

Years of Experience	N	Unadjusted Deviation	Eta	Adjusted for Independent Deviation	Beta
0-5 years	2	-0.07		-0.07	
6-10 years	9	-0.18		-0.18	
11-20 years	9	-0.10	0.05	0.10	0.05
Multiple R. Squared = 0.002 Multiple R = 0.045					

Table 4(b) shows that the perception of Reps according to various years of experience differ. Reps belonging to the 6 to 10 years bracket of experience have a mean perception of 38.89, while their counterparts in the 11 to 20 years bracket have a mean perception of 39.17. In effect, we conclude that Reps belonging to 11 to 20 years bracket experience have a higher perception on book as a product than each of their other two groups. The difference among them has been shown not to be significant.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant relationship between the perception and years of professional practice of sales representatives on book as a product.

The hypothesis stated above is tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The table below presents the relationship between book as a product and age.

Table 5: Relationship between Book as a Product and Years of Professional Practice

Years of Professional practice	Book as a Product			
	N	r	Sig.	Remark
	30	0.0193	0.919	NS

NS = Not Significant at P < 0.05

Table 5 shows that a correlation coefficient of 0.0193 is observed. This observed that correlation coefficient is not significant at P < 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between book as a product and year of professional practice is not rejected.

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant relationship between the perception and position in professional trade cadre held by the Sales Representatives on the book as a product.

The hypothesis stated above is tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The table below presents the relationship between book as a product and in professional trade cadre held.

Table 6: Relationship between the Perception and in Professional Trade Cadre held by the Sales Representatives on the Book as a Product

Position held	Book as a Product			
	N	r	Sig.	Remark
	30	0.1766	0.351	NS

NS = Not Significant at P < 0.05

Table 6 shows that a correlation coefficient of 0.1766 is observed. This observed correlation coefficient is not significant at P < 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between book as a product and in professional trade cadre held is not rejected.

Hypothesis 7: There is no significant relationship between the perception of sales representatives and professional trade qualification on book as a product.

The hypothesis stated above is tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The table 7 presents the relationship between book as a product and qualification.

Table 7: Relationship between Book as a Product and Qualification

Qualification	Book as a Product			
	N	r	Sig.	Remark
	30	0.0193	0.919	NS

NS = Not Significant at P < 0.05

Table 7 shows that a correlation coefficient of 0.0193 is observed. This observed correlation coefficient is not significant at P < 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the perception of sales representatives and qualification on book as a product and qualification is not rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Marketing considerations are part of the important concerns of every publishing house. This is because of the fact that it is through marketing activities that a publishing house is able to reach and sell its products to the consumers. The sales representatives (Reps) make up part of the publishing house sales force and are charged with the responsibility to maximize sales. It is the duty of sales representatives to ensure that their company titles are put within the reach of booksellers either through electronic databases or by physically getting the books to the book stores. This entails, in most cases, interpersonal contacts and discussion with book store operators. A good Rep should be a well-organised individual, with a pleasant personality, have affection for books and reading, must have a high level of self-motivation and discipline, and should be ready to work long hours even outside his station.

Far and beyond having interest in marketing, a rep must have adequate knowledge of his titles and should be able to discuss them with prospective buyers (Zell, 2001). Forrest and Herbst (2012) illustrated that the profile of the ideal sales representative consists age, gender, race, language, area of residence, religion and education. He opined that the constituents of this profile has implications for Relationship Marketing (RM), Customer Relationship Marketing (CRM) and Trust, mutual satisfaction and commitment. Zell (2001) warned against ‘hard’ selling as rarely being appropriate. He opined that a great deal will depend on the personal relationship, or even friendship a rep has been able to establish with a buyer, and when there is a common understanding with regard to the titles that can be, and cannot, be sold to a particular shop. Book

buyers will tend to identify with particular publishers, the quality and range of their book, their specialties, and what they sell from a particular publisher.

Forrest and Herbst (2009) noted that matching a sales representative with the profile of customer can positively support a strategy of relationship marketing. He stated that strong relationship will impact positively on in-store drivers. They contend that; a strong relationship makes it easier to get a new product listed, similarly, a strong relationship makes it easier to get a display built in a particular retail outlet, and while a strong relationship makes it easier to get price compliance in a store, the influence is not as strong as in the case of the other two in-store drivers. Relating to demographic factors that influence the performance of sales representatives, Martin (2011) pointed out seven personality traits of top sales people as; modesty, consciousness, achievement orientation, curiosity, lack of gregariousness, lack of discouragement, and lack of self-consciousness. They have respectively, the following selling styles impact; team orientation, account control, political orientation, inquisitiveness, dominance, competitiveness, and aggressiveness. These personality traits have implications for the disposition of a sales representative in gaining the buyers confidence and trust over a period of time. Also they have implications for the major objectives of sales promotion, which is organizational effectiveness as defined by higher sales volume and profitability (William, Babatunde and Jelee, 2012).

Understanding the product and the target market is critical for success in sales representation. Research has established that demographic information is tangible, measurable information about individuals or group of individuals. Business Owners TOOLKIT, (2012). This current study has established, to a great extent that some demographic variables influence publisher's sales representatives' perception on book as a product for branding and effective marketing in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. This study has revealed that there is no significant difference between reps perception according to various age range on book as a product. This implies that books being the main stock in trade, the respondents are conversant with them but do not relate to them as commercial products that should be prepared for effective sales through branding. Also, by implication, age range may not be a very serious factor in considering applicants for the position of sales reps; level of education does not influence the perception of a good book as a product and would not prevent the determination to brand it for sale. However, the respondents

with Higher National Diploma qualification do have better perception on book as a product than other respondents with either lower or higher qualifications.

This research has revealed that sales reps holding various positions in their companies have varied perceptions on book as a product with the supervisors having better perception than other categories of reps. The explanation is that the supervisor may have gathered cognitive skills through years of service and experience on the job. The reps with 11 to 12 years of service and experience have a better perception on book as a product than each of their other two groups. This result indicates that experience counts in effective book sale for some individual reps, age as different from education and years of experience does not have significant relationship with perception on the nature and form of the book as a commercial product. However, the relationship is positive, suggesting that the two variables vary directly; as age increases, response on book as product increases also. Generally, the research findings do not indicate significant relationship between reps demographic characteristics and their perception on book as a product worthy of branding for marketing.

VII. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined publishers' sales representatives' demographic factors and perception on book as a product for branding and marketing. From the analysis of data it was revealed that reps demographic factors to some extent influence the perception of and acceptance of book as a product that is worth the commercial value that it should be branded. Age, education, experience and positions held have been revealed to influence, very low extent, reps' perception on the book as a product that can be branded for effective sale.

The research findings are collectively a poor commentary on the book marketing situation in Nigeria. It is prognostic of unhealthy future for book marketing in Nigeria. However, unless effort is made to train a crop of sales representatives and endow them with cognitive and technical skills for book marketing, and make them capable of coping with book marketing in the global Information Communication Technology environment, the book marketing sub-sector will continue to remain what Zell (2001) called the "Achilles heel" of the publishing industry. The industry could move beyond primary and secondary schools book marketing into the more sophisticated tertiary market with the presence of more perspective sales representatives.

Furthermore, recommendations are made to the effect that sales representatives play a key role in book marketing therefore, recruitment should carefully be done by appointing candidates with the right briefs to join publishing houses' sales force. For example, interview and written examination should be conducted for them to enable the management of the publishing houses to gain and develop appropriate insight into the extent to which their reps' demographic characteristics could affect their perception and behaviour in marketing of books.

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