

# **Assessing the Relevance of Trade Fair in the Marketing of Industrial products in Nigeria (The Enugu Experience)**

**Okolo, Victor O.**

Department of Marketing, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu Campus ☐ Nigeria  
Email: victor.okolo@unn.edu.ng

**Okolo, Joachin U.**

Department of Marketing, Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu - Nigeria

**Mmamel Zita U.**

Department of Marketing, Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu - Nigeria

**Okonkwo Raphael V.**

Department of Marketing, College of Management Sciences, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike - Nigeria

**Obikeze, Chinedum O.**

Department of Marketing, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Uli - Nigeria

DOI: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v7-i11/3456 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v7-i11/3456>

## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this research work was to assess the relevance of trade fair in the marketing of industrial products in Nigeria (The Enugu Experience). The objectives of the study were to determine the effect of trade fair on a company's market shares, to investigate whether firms participating in trade fair affect customers' awareness of their product, also to assess the extent the firms participating in trade fair has contributed to promoting made-in-Nigeria goods, and finally to evaluate the extent to which the image of the companies participating in trade fair improved in Enugu. Survey research method was chosen for the study. The study population comprised participants of 2016 Enugu International Trade Fair which totaled population of 700. A sample size of 255 was determined by adopting Taro Yamane's sample size determination formula. The questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Chi-square statistical tool was used to test the formulated hypotheses. The hypotheses revealed that trade fair has contributed immensely to the total company's market shares and profits, secondly, awareness of customers to the products of participating companies has been heightened through trade fair. Also, it was revealed that firms participating in trade fair exhibition have contributed to promoting made-in-Nigeria goods. And finally, trade fair has

contributed significantly in bolstering the image of participating companies in Enugu. The researchers recommend that trade fairs should be properly planned and organized to improve customer satisfaction, market share and profit. Also, organisers of the trade fair should generate high publicity for the trade fair to allow manufacturers to attend. In the same vein, made in Nigeria products are expected to be the major reason for organizing the trade fair to equally encourage Nigerians in purchasing home or locally manufactured products. And finally, those locally manufactured products must be certified to be deluxe products. This will definitely boost companies' image.

**Keywords:** Trade fair, Enugu International Trade Fair, Promotional tools, Trade allowance and Trade contest and Industrial marketing

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background of the Study**

Trade fair is one of the most effective and efficient atmospheres and avenues for increasing brand awareness and also the introduction of a new product in the market (AUMA, 2013). It is a very relevant asset for generating international trade through the exchange of goods and services. It increase employment opportunities and encourages manufacturers to compete fervently for market shares. In fact, the impact of trade fair to a nation's economy is colossal.

Other objectives of trade fair participations include improving the image of companies and products, opening up new markets, market research as well as concluding business deals. Aims that reach beyond those of day-to-day business are becoming increasingly important, such as establishing new sales channels, looking for venture partners and securing new employees. (AUMA, 2013).

Organizing trade fair to expose goods and services offered by manufacturers and members of the intermediaries otherwise known as the middlemen has become very germane (Omowunmi, 1999). Trade fair is a form of promotional device (Omowunmi, 1999) that enables companies to showcase and demonstrate their products to both middlemen and ultimate consumers. According to Ebue, (2002) trade fair is an excellent means of surmounting communication barriers through demonstrations. Trade fairs are method of bringing buyers and sellers together under mutually (equal) benefit, while exhibition and books are featured at trade fairs which are designed to attract immediate prospect and to create awareness. A trade fair (trade show, trade exhibition) is an exhibition organized so that companies in a specific industry can showcase and demonstrate their latest products, service, study activities of rivals and examine recent market trends and opportunities. In contrast to consumer fairs, only some trade fairs are open to the public, while others can only be attended by company representatives (members of the trade, e.g. professionals) and members of the press (Nwielaghi and Ogwo, 2013).

People participation in trade fairs have the privilege to physically examine, make comparison and learn about new products, market movement, competition and new source. This trade fair

is usually designed for special groups in a particular geographical area (as made in Nigeria trade fair), Enugu Chamber of Commerce Industry, Mines and Agriculture (ECCIMA, 2006). Individuals who participate in this fair are always interested and inquisitive about the new trend in a particular field and probably may want to know whether there is any slight change in product. Then when the trade fair/exhibitions are well publicized, managed, staffed the result is an increased sales volume for exhibitors. Exhibitions staff staffing is considered to be the most essential factors, because it is these staff who will attend to the customers, by informing, educating and persuading them to try or use their newly introduced products.

According to Ralph (2006) trade fairs aid attending companies and enterprises get in touch with their customers and getting many inquiries from serious minded enterprises and company executives. Trade fair is a good venue for sales promotion and sales. The role of trade fair in marketing of goods is to increase marketing performance and also to create a forum for physical interaction between manufacturers and their potential customers (Edoga 2002). Manufacturers use these medium to know how much interest the consumers show in their products; both new and existing products.

In modern times, trade fairs have become a specialized activity promoted by the chamber of commerce, government, trade groups and large multi-national companies even international and intergovernmental organizations. These organizations sponsors and supports the fair creating a means of promoting business concerns and the needs they serve. Ifeanyi (2001) states that trade fairs in Nigeria have been castigated as the exhibition grounds for foreign businessmen. It has even been asserted that Nigerian trade fairs have largely served to increase the appetite of Nigerians for foreign made goods and have contributed practically little to the growth of domestic production capacity. Even the 6th Enugu International Trade Fair was said to be a victim of this retrogressive malaise. Some visitors there claimed that it was largely import-oriented, a parade of imported and assembled products with little local content.

Nigerian trade fairs must reflect indigenous products, technology, culture and commercial aspirations, in spite of their international character. This is the lacuna this research intends to fill as most authors had had an oversight regarding the emphasis on local content participation. It is against this backdrop that the researchers assess the relevance of trade fair in the marketing of industrial products in Enugu state.

### **Statement of Problem**

Trade fair is an instrument for increasing marketing performance and its role in the promotion of locally manufactured goods to the consumer and the companies need not be over emphasized. The goals of trade fairs are not usually achieved. This starts from the fact that it takes a lot of time searching out the stand of these producer of goods because these stands are not strategically located. The place is highly overcrowded and most often, consumers cannot stand for a long time struggling to get to a stand of a seller or producer.

Often times, the attitude of the participants is nothing to write home about. In fact, they lack good customer relationships. One finds the prices of goods in the trade fairs very high compared with what is obtainable in the open market and also modern shops. Most of these stands are not attractive. It is not clean and tidy, and therefore discourages visitors. These problems no doubt have affected the visitors negatively and thus impacting negatively on the sales of participants. Business development involves a lot of factors such as, growth in the number of products and services produced by new and existing business, introduction of new and improved ways of doing things, increased and improved standard of training of human resources (employees) and improvement in productivity, advance technology in business organizations, increased and easier access to business finance (Nwielaghi and Ogwo, 2003).

Companies exhibit their product at a higher price in order to cover the cost of advertising their goods and services in the trade fair and at the same time to maximize profit at the expenses of their potential customers. Participants are more concerned with making sales instead of establishing good customer relationships through awareness creation by educating customer about the efficacy of their products in providing lasting solution to their manufacturing and selling problems. Paradoxically, most participants have foreign manufactured products to display instead of the locally manufactured ones. All these have in one way or the other nibbled away at the image of companies participating in the trade fairs. This study intends to surmount these issues permanently and not palliatively.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this research work is to critically assess the relevance of trade fair in the marketing of goods of a company's product. The specific objectives are as follows:-

1. To determine the effect of trade fair on a company's market shares.
2. To investigate whether firms participating in trade fair affect customers' awareness of their product.
3. To assess the extent the firms participating in trade fair has contributed to promoting made-in-Nigeria goods.
4. To evaluate the extent to which the image of the companies participating in trade fair improved in Enugu.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were designed to guide the study:

1. To what extent does trade fair help in determining company's market shares and profits?
2. Do firms participating in trade fair affect customers' awareness of their product?
3. To what extent do firms participating in trade fair contribute to promoting made-in-Nigeria goods?
4. To what extent did the image of the companies participating in trade fair improve in Enugu?

## **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. Trade fair does not help in determining company's market shares and profits.
2. Firms participating in trade fair do not affect customers' awareness of their product.
3. Firms participating in trade fair exhibition have not contributed to promoting made-in-Nigeria goods.
4. Image of companies participating in trade fair have not improved in Enugu.

## **Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study is limited to the relevance of trade fair in the marketing of industrial products in Enugu and its environs, participants and consumers within Enugu metropolis.

## **Significant of the Study**

A whole lot of stakeholders will benefit from this study.

- ❖ **Manufacturing industries:** It will help to orientate manufacturing industries on how, when and where to use promotion and the type of promotional mix to apply as personal selling which is mostly used in trade fairs to enlighten customers on how to use products and the benefits involved in using such product.
- ❖ **Chambers of Commerce:** The different Chambers of Commerce which organize and run the trade fairs may not have the time to evaluate the contributions of the fairs to the attainment of the declared objectives. This study should be able to make contribution in that direction. It will also contribute to the body knowledge on business promotion.
- ❖ **Management:** Business decision based on information obtained from trade fairs needs to be evaluated for adequacy and correctness successful prosecution of this study will contribute to knowledge in the area of business (management) information system.
- ❖ **Researcher:** It will significantly aid researchers studying on the related topics through the provision of resourceful materials.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Brief History of Enugu State International Trade Fair**

Trade fair origin could be traced to the Bible in the Book of Ezekiel around 600 BC. It could also be traced to the ancient bazaars in the Middle East (International Trade Centre, 2012). Modern trade fairs follow in the tradition of trade fairs established in late medieval Europe, in the era of merchant capitalism. In this era, produce and craft producers visited towns for trading fairs, to sell and showcase products. From the late eighteenth century, Industrial Exhibitions in Europe and North America became more common reflecting the technological dynamism of the industrial revolution.

In Enugu state, The ECCIMA came in to being in the year 1963 (The Enugu Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mine and Agriculture) has been the sole organizer of both national and international trade fairs in Enugu State (Nwosu, 2001). The state or national trade fair stated in March 1973, while the Enugu International Trade Fair emerged in March 1990 with the last

concluded trade fair held between the 16th to 26th April 2004. The Chambers of Commerce covered areas now served by such very well known chambers in Port-Harcourt, Uyo, Calabar, Aba, Owerri, Nnewi, Umuahia, Onitsha, Akwa and of course Enugu Chamber of Commerce. These were the areas covered by Enugu Chamber of Commerce before the division of state and local government. Enugu International Trade Fair no doubt has already carried for itself a niche in the annals of trade fairs worldwide. The Enugu International Trade Fair has continued to earn the confidence of visitors.

Moreso, since the inception of Enugu International Trade Fair, it has been organising trade fair annually with painstaking, planning and organizing efforts. The fair is a fast growing exhibition in population with an ever increasing number of exhibitors and visitors each year. It is staged annually between March and April of every year in Enugu, when it enjoys a favourable weather condition.

### **Overview of Trade Fairs (Exhibition)**

Trade fair had provided a significant opportunity for companies to market their products globally. It had been a conduit for countries to export their products, services and technology (UFI, n.d). According to them, trade fairs are business-to-business shows that are accessible to numerous visitors. Trade fairs are considered a most efficient means to obtain visibility in the global market and attract business partners, foreign investments and transfer of know-how for sectoral development. (International Trade Centre, 2012). Nevertheless trade fair is organised purely for commercial purposes, it enhances technological innovation in terms of introduction of new products, services as well as new production processes (Omowunmi, 1999). Trade fairs are the oldest trade promotion instruments known to man. The main features responsible for the success of trade fair throughout the centuries have remained more or less the same regardless of whether the fair took place a hundred years ago. Trade fair is a form of promotional tool. It is an aspect of marketing communications strategy. Situma (2012) believes this and states thus: "trade shows at their most effective could be important marketing tools for business. They were vital parts of the marketing mix as they combined the mass reach of advertising, the targeting of direct mail, direct selling and the networking benefits of the internet." Kellezi (2013) assents to this when he noted that many companies have integrated trade fair into their marketing communications mix.

AUMA (2013) highlights the function of trade fair to include the **economic functions**- presentation of new products and services, platform for founders of new business, improvement of a company's image and media exposition, benchmarking, recruitment of employees and motivation, personal communications, and emotional approach. The **macro-economic functions** include- economic promotion, market formation and cultivation, creation of transparent markets and platform for export. The **social functions** are- knowledge transfer, integrating business and politics and international understanding and relations. Trade fair is an integral part of sales promotion and one of the promotional mixes which has been employed by companies and business to create awareness of their goods and services. According to Kotler

and Keller (2007), promotion is one of the elements of the marketing mix and a term used frequently in marketing. The marketing mix includes the four Ps: price, product, promotion, and place. Promotion refers to raising customer awareness of a product or brand, generating sales, and creating brand loyalty.

Hindu and Ahmed (2014) note that sales promotion consists of "a diverse collection of intensive tools; mostly short-term designed to stimulate quicker and or greater purchase of a particular product by their consumer or the trade". Promotion is defined as communication by marketers that informs, persuades, and reminds potential buyers of a product to influence an opinion or elicit a response. Promotional strategy on the other hand is "a plan for the optimal use of the elements of promotion: advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations" (Banabo and Koroye 2011). The main function of a marketer's promotional strategy is to convince target customers that the goods and services offered provide a differential advantage over the competition. Trade fair according to CBBS (2012) is a marketing communications weapon for promoting products, transfer of knowledge and technology, innovation and information exchange. According to CBBS, trade supports the growth and development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). It is a conduit for communication and research and organization utilize it to advertise and display their wares (UFI, n.d).

Jefkins (1991) opines that trade fairs is a part of sales promotion. Trade fair/exhibition is a very important part of the marketing promotional mix. According to him, trade associations, professional bodies, special interests societies, government departments, example, commerce and industry and other organization may use exhibition as a means of telling people their story, offering their services and creating understanding and goodwill.

Trade fair as a form of exhibition use the various strategies of sales promotions. They also share similar characteristics. Most of our trade fair complexes have acquired permanent status. For instance, the Enugu State Trade Fair Complex along Golf Estate y in Enugu, the Lagos International Trade Fair Complex at Kilometer 15 Badagry Express way and the Kaduna international Trade Fair complex at the Murtala Muhammed Square in Kaduna.

Kellezi (2013; Kirchgeorg, Springer and Kastner, 2010) defines trade fair as "as events that are held at specific days, where a large number of companies present their new products and sell them to already existent customers and / or to potential ones." According to him, a whole industry is needed to organize a fruitful and successful event; it is a complex project indeed. Ughamadu (2001) describes trade fairs as periodic rituals without any aim of achieving the objectives of trade fairs.

He also criticized the poor organization of trade fairs in the country blaming it on the organizers. He was of the opinion that a national body should be coordinating the activities of the organizers of many of the international trade fairs. Ughamadu went further to proving the reason why alcohol, especially beer stand at the trade fair always registers the highest number

of patronage. He maintains that the unfortunate trend was because little attempts were usually made by the organizers of the fairs, the co-coordinating body and the supervisory ministries, to educate participants and visitors on the importance of fairs. That is, instead of partaking in other relevant aspects of the fair, it seems that the fair has become a drinking spree for the youths.

Nnaji (1996) remark that trade fairs have got a vital role to play in the economic development of Nigeria. Jurgen (2015) concurs with the above statement and submits that it the mainstream of a nation's economy. He remarks that it is a "palour" where businessmen assemble to discuss issue of latest economic and technological development. Santos and Mendonca (2014) assert that it is a window through which companies penetrate international markets. He stresses that small scale industries are the only factors that will rescue Nigeria from its present economic imbroglio. Elido (1985) advices that Nigerian should resort to coping technology, instead of transfer of technology. He really opposes the idea of transfer of technology because technology is not a piece of machinery that could be transferred from one area to another.

Ibekwe (2006), while reflecting on trade fairs says that the calls by successive past governments for Nigerians to patronize goods made in Nigeria has been accentuated by the mounting of frequent trade fairs. Trade fairs are necessary instruments for reorientating Nigerians to develop pride in locally manufactured goods. He also states that a change in the tastes of Nigerians who generally cherish foreign goods is necessary if we must wriggle ourselves out of our current economic crisis. Trade fairs have the potentials of promoting the economic, cultural and technological potentials of a nation.

He also opines that the principal beneficiaries of most trade fairs in this country have been foreign firms. Thus, it appears as often pointed out that trade fairs organized in Nigeria have tended towards the provision of exhibition ground for foreign businessmen who would want to consolidate the foreign taste mentality among Nigerian elites. He is of the view that our trade fairs do not make a show of our domestic productive capacity. This is because of this ugly development that trade fairs have perhaps tended towards increasing the appetite of Nigerians for foreign made goods.

### **Objectives of Trade Fair**

According to International Institute for Environment and Development (2000) the goals of trade fair are:

- i. To improve the livelihoods and well-being of producers by improving market access, strengthening producer organizations, paying a better price and providing continuity in the trading relationship.
- ii. To promote development opportunities for disadvantaged producers, especially women and indigenous people and to protect children from exploitation in the production process.
- iii. To raise awareness among consumers of the negative effects on producers of international trade so that they exercise their purchasing power positively.

- iv. To set an example of partnership in trade through dialogue, transparency and respect.
- v. To campaign for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.
- vi. To protect human rights by providing social justice, sound environmental practices and economic security.

**Today**, trade fairs often involve a considerable **marketing** investment by participating companies. Costs include space rental, design and construction of **trade show displays**, telecommunications and networking, travel, accommodations, and promotional literature and items to give to attendees. In addition, costs are incurred at the show for services such as electrical, booth cleaning, internet services, and drayage (also known as material handling). Consequently, cities often promote trade shows as a means of economic development. Exhibitors attending the event are required to use an exhibitor manual or online exhibitor manual to order their required services and complete any necessary paperwork such as health and safety declarations. An increasing number of trade fairs are happening online, and these events are called **virtual tradeshow**s. They are increasing in popularity due to their relatively low cost. In spite of these, fresh concerns regarding the efficacy of trade fair as a promotional strategies remain sparsely researched. Experts have been wondering whether a trade fair still serves its purpose (Ikem, 2011).

CBBS (2012) state the reasons why trade fairs are an important to SMEs:

- ☐ Conquering and entering new, especially foreign markets, establishing of international business cooperation - joint ventures, partnerships and other ways of cooperation. Establishing new business networks and contacts.
- ☐ Increasing innovation and research development of the company through following the trends in the branch, testing and launching of new products, strengthening of own brands and images.
- ☐ Benchmarking through meetings with the competition and measuring of own competitiveness.
- ☐ Trade fairs can increase the competitiveness of SMEs helping with creating neutral business start-up places where SMEs can be equal to other starters, also they can be easily able to sum up the market situation.

### **Management of Trade Fairs and Exhibitions**

Trade fair is one of the most important promotional techniques that is used in promoting a company's product and image. It is an avenue for formal exhibition of a marketer's product for the purpose of demonstration, dramatization, promotion and sometime selling. In another sense, it is an effective channel for delivering messages and making personal contacts with a large number of current and prospective customers at one location (Onyeke, 2009). Ebue (2002) states that where manufacturer's salesperson meets with tops executives of various middlemen to introduce a product, demonstrate it, field questions, gather information and establish future contacts. It shows an avenue for expositing and displaying company's products and offering the dealers and customers the opportunity to negotiate a deal and on such

products. Edoga and Ani (2002) view it as a show organized by an industrial trade association, where vendors serving the industry are not limited to the show display and demonstrate their products for the association membership. In Nigeria trade shows are organized by the Nigeria Association of Chamber of Commerce Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA).

There are two types of trade fairs in Nigeria. They are the domestic and international trade fairs. Domestic trade fairs are organized in almost every state of the federation year in, year out, while the international trade fair is organized in three different zones annually. The zones include Enugu, Kaduna and Lagos State (Ebue 2002). Kotler and Armstrong (2008) say that because marketers spend as much as 35 percent of their annual promotional budget on trade shows, more than 4300 trade shows take place in the United States every year, drawing as many as 85 million people.

### **Trade Contest**

A trade contest is used to encourage and motivate salespeople to boost their sales activities and performance (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). It is used to vivaciously enliven the spirit of the sales personnel who have performed exceptionally far and above their counterparts. Those with such exceptional deeds are offered travels, cash prizes and other gift items. Onyeke (2009) states that the salespeople compete for the volume of sales or amount of money realized. They may also compete for the number of territories covered. It enhances overall job satisfaction. It also increases corporate profit and can be very successful. Contest is generally used to support the brand's sales force performance; because effective selling and sales management are often critical to marketing success (Zebobipi 2007). Trade contests could be directed at sales managers, generality of staff, agents and brokers, accredited dealers or retailers.

### **Trade Fair**

Trade fair is a marketing communication tool that allows competitors and potential industrial customers to meet one-on-one to initiate transaction and relationship (Kellezi, 2013). Trade fair is a powerful marketing communication strategy (Nwosu, 2001). It is an encapsulated market place that enables the trade show exhibitor accomplish both selling and non selling functions, servicing present customers, identifying prospects, introducing new and modified products, gathering information about competitor's new products, taking product orders and enhancing the company's image. In Nigeria total expenditures on trade fair shows, rank third with only advertising and sales promotion receiving greater funding (Nwielaghi and Ogwo, 2013).

### **Trade Allowance**

When a retailer or a wholesaler accepts to promote the wares of a manufacturer, he attracts an amount of money; it is a form of contractual agreement to display and promote the product in some way (Kotler and Keller, 2006). Trade allowance strategy is used by manufacturers to reward wholesalers and retailers for performing activities in support of the manufacturer's brand. Also called trade deals, it encourages retailers to stock, discount the brand's price to consumers, feature it in advertising, or provide special display or other point-of-purchase

support. Manufacturers can use it to compensate retailers for real costs of taking a new stock of merchandise (Nwielaghi and Ogwo, 2013). Retailer are given specialty advertising materials such as cap, T-shirts, pen, notebooks, calendar, torch light etc. the company's logo is usually engraved or written on them (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008).

#### Marketing of Industrial Products in Enugu International Trade Fair

Trade fair helps industries to expose or display their available products and offer dealers and other industrial customers the opportunity to negotiate a deal on such products (Ifeanyi, 2001). Their contributions are shows and exhibition and the marketing of goods and services (Okeke 1996). A case study of Enugu International Trade Fairs shows that trade fair increases awareness of products. That trade fair helps a company to gain more customers, and have more sales leads.

Okeke (1996) states that the international trade fair in Enugu has created an avenue for the growth and development of market both locally and internationally. Furthermore, he expresses that trade fair increases consumers' awareness of a firm and its product. Also, he emphasises that trade fair gives a firm's opportunity of marketing its products and its ability to compete with other competitions in the market. Nnadozie (1996) states that a trade fair is an essential aspect of a firm's promotional activity because it helps the firm to attract more customers as well as retaining existing ones.

#### **Industrial Marketing**

Industrial marketing has to do with the marketing of goods and services required for the furtherance of the production of other products (Kuada, 2002) It is the exchange process that takes place between an industrial customer and the manufacturer otherwise known as the industrial seller for the purpose of transformation of raw materials, manufactured materials and parts, installations, accessory equipment, supplies and services into finished products (Achison, 2000; Oko, 2014). Industrial marketing is simply the marketing of industrial products to industrial customers. It is the performance of marketing tasks and the furnishing of marketing perspective within the area of business and industry for business purpose (Onyeke, 2009). It is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promoting and distributing of all requirements needed for equitable exchange that benefit the manufacturer and the industrial customer (Okolo, Nebo, Okafor, Farayola, Obikeze and Nwodo, 2016).

Similar principles and concepts behoove industrial and consumer markets. What make them disparate are the characteristics of industrial market (Achison, 2000; Oko, 2014). One of the major characteristics of industrial market is the derived demand nature it possesses. The demand of industrial product is a function of the demand of consumer products. Price of industrial products fluctuates (Reza, Nastran, Saeede, and Reza 2013). Also, the products demanded by industrial marketers are needed the production of finished products that is needed by the final consumer. The industrial customers are not numerous like the consumer market. They are very few are dispersed and concentrated geographically.

Buying in industrial market is more technical, complex, professional, and might require stages of negotiations from buying professionals (Gunay, 1999). The volume of transaction in industrial market is huge and may run into billions of naira. Distribution channels are direct. Complex and technical products are mainly involved and buyers normally require more major clarification certification about product before purchase.

In addition, personal selling is a dominant marketing communication tools with minor advertising placed in professional journals and trade magazines (Okolo et al., 2016).

### **Empirical Studies**

Omowunmi (1999) in his reaearch "Trade Fair and Exhibition as a Promotional Tool for Business Organisations in Nigeria (A Case Study of Kaduna Chamber Of Commerce, Industry And Agriculture)", in which questionnaires was applied as an instrument for generating data from respondents and Chi-Square was used to analyse data, discovered that trade fair help in exposing the products of participating companies. It was also revealed that trade fair aids in promoting both domestic and international companies. Trade fair was also revealed to generate increased revenue for the companies. It was also revealed that local invention and patronage of local raw materials were positively influenced. Awareness creation of products, improvement in market share, and engagement in bilateral agreements were equally revealed in the study.

Ralph (2006) conducted a study on "the role of trade fair on economic development". The area of the study is Enugu. The objective of the study is to determine how trade fair can help a company to increase their market shares and profits. The population of the study included relevant staff/management and customers of Emily Millionaire in Enugu state. The population of the study totally 700 respondents included staff/management. The researcher used bowlegs formula for participants; Enugu chamber of Commerce Industries, mines and agriculture (ECCIMA) Enugu, with a sample size of 255 participants. The study adopted the unstructured non distinguished types of questionnaire comprising mainly close-ended questions. The reasons for using this method lie in the fact that it reduces the chances of respondents influencing results and produces more reliable results. The study found that the trade fair is effective in the promotion of products in Nigeria; it increases the awareness of home made products like Elephant detergents, Stella pomade, Emily Millionaire in Nigeria etc. It recommended that efforts should be made towards making trade fairs to reflect the exhibition of local goods and services. The study concluded that trade fairs are marketing tools and it also plays a role for creating awareness and exhibition of companies' products to the target customers.

Santos and Mendonca (2014) in their study "Motivations to Participate in International Trade Fairs: The Portuguese Experience", revealed thus: "a strong motive to exhibit at a trade fair is to reinforce the market presence of the firm, the possibility of finding new ideas and test new products, establish relationships with present and future customers, and enhance the brand image and reputation of the firm. The main barriers to non exhibitors firms were costs, bad previous experiences and lack of resources (financial, personnel and time)."

Situma (2012) in his study "The Effectiveness of Trade Shows and Exhibitions as Organizational Marketing Tool (Analysis of Selected Companies in Mombasa)", revealed "the effectiveness of trade shows had an average mean response of 1.84, which implied a fairly important level of agreement given the scale range from 1 to 5, 1 being very important while 5 being not important at all. The factors that influenced the participation of organizations in trade show showed that availability of funds was ranked lowest with a mean of 2.04 and standard deviation of 0.194. The effect of product type, product life cycle and target customers, was ranked the highest with a mean of 3.00 indicating that they determine the choice of trade show as a promotional tool to a great extent. The factors that influenced the participation of organizations in the trade shows indicated that public relations purposes/publicity, re-establish links with clients whom the organization does not see often and giving feedback on a new range of products was ranked highest with individual means of 10.40, 4.69 and 4.15 respectively. Launching new product and selling product/increase were ranked the lowest with means of 0.48 and 0.31 respectively. The organizations achieved marketing objectives by participating in trade shows and that the average mean response was 2.73, which implied a level of agreement given the scale range from 1 to 5, 1 being strongly agree while 5 being strongly disagree. Regression analysis supported the causal relationship of the number of participation and the chances of participating in the future on achieving organization promotional objectives. From the analysis, the standardized coefficient beta in the coefficient analysis table revealed that the weights of the independent variables are 0.484 for the chances of participating in the future shows and 0.607 for number of times the organization had participated in trade shows. However, the direct and indirect effects among variables could not be assessed using this statistical procedure."

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Survey method was deployed by administering structured questionnaire to gather primary data from participants of Enugu International Trade Fair. The scope of the study borders on the assessment of the relevance of trade fair in the marketing of industrial products in Nigeria (The Enugu Experience). The population of the study includes participants of Enugu International Trade Fair which totaled 700. Taro Yamane's formula was used to determine a sample size of 255. A total of 200 were returned and properly filled. Content validity was used to determine the validity of the instrument by allowing marketing research consultants and lecturers of marketing department to modify and make the necessary corrections so that the instrument can measure what it ought to measure. The value of the test of reliability is 0.889 which was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha which indicated that there is internal consistency of the instrument. Tables and percentages were used in analyzing data.

## **Presentation and Analyses of Data**

The presentation and data analyses were gotten through face to face distribution of copies of questionnaire to the respondents. Out of 255 copies, 200 were returned, representing a

response rate of 80%. Analyses were based on responses to the questions in the questionnaire which were important in answering the research questions.

**Data Presentation**

**Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution and Returns Rate**

S/NO.	NO. OF DISTRIBUTED QUESTIONNAIRES	NO. RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRES	PERCENTAGE %
1	Completed and returned	200	80
2	Not returned	55	20
TOTAL		255	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

From the above table 200 out of 255 respondents representing 80% completed and returned their questionnaire while 55 representing 20% did not return their questions. The analysis for the study is based on returned questionnaires. The researcher presented data in both textual and tabular forms for easy reading and understanding of the presentation.

**Analysis of Data from Survey**

**Table 2: Response of whether trade fair has effects on a company’s market shares.**

Response	Number	Percentage
Agreed	200	100
Disagreed	-	-
Total	200	100

Source: field Survey 2017

Table 2 above indicates that all the 200 participants agree that trade fair has effects on their company’s market shares, representing 100%.

**Table 3: Response of the manufacturers it whether the trade fair has contributed to the increase in consumer awareness of their product.**

Response	Number	Percentage
Agreed	188	94%
Disagreed	12	6%
Total	200	100

Source: Field Survey data 2017

Table 3 above shows that 188 respondents were of the view that trade fair has contributed in creating consumer awareness of their product, representing 94% while 12 participants representing 6% stated otherwise.

**Table 4: Manufacturers response on whether the fair has contributed to promoting made-in-Nigeria goods.**

Response	Number	Percentage
Agreed	128	64
Disagreed	72	36
Total	200	100

Source: Field Survey data 2017

The table 4 above shows that 128 respondents representing 64% agree that the fair has contributed to promoting made-in-Nigeria goods. While 72 representing 36 stated otherwise.

**Table 5: Manufacturers responses on whether the trade fair bolstered their company image in Enugu.**

Response	Number	Percentage
Agreed	110	55
Disagreed	90	45
Total	200	100

Source: Field Survey data 2017

Table 5 above shows that 110 respondents represent 55%, agrees that the trade fair bolstered their company image, while 90 representing 45% stated otherwise.

### Summary of Finding

The study having examined the relevance of trade fair in the marketing of industrial products in Enugu state came out with the following findings:

1. Trade fair has contributed immensely to the total company's market shares and profits.
2. Awareness of customers to the products of participating companies has been heightened through trade fair.
3. Firms participating in trade fair exhibition have contributed to promoting made-in-Nigeria goods.
4. Trade fair has contributed significantly in bolstering the image of participating companies in Enugu. Izabela (2012) support this finding when she asserts that trade fair is a marketing tool that is geared towards boosting a company's image.

### Conclusion

Trade fair is a veritable marketing communications strategy for exposing the prospective and current products of a manufacturing company to their industrial customers. It establishes an avenue for the varied industrial customers to meet one-on-one with their manufacturers in order to interact and exchange ideas, knowledge, money and industrial/consumer goods and services.

It was revealed that trade fair has contributed to a company's market share despite the higher prices of the companies' products, poorly designed and located stands, poor customer relationships as well as domination of the fair with foreign made products. It is therefore

suggested that all these should be properly managed to engender higher market share as well as customer satisfaction.

Trade fair has contributed to the establishment of the various brands of the manufacturers through display. The stands need to be conspicuously spacious to showcase the companies' products. A customer could easily identify or locate his brand from the offering.

Made in Nigerian products has really been packaged for customers in the trade fair but not to a very large extent. More encouragement has to be made to motivate the advertising of home-made-goods in subsequent ones.

Finally, the images of the participating companies have been boosted through the trade fair as customers were able to meet with the company managers one-on-one thereby encouraging good customer relationships.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the foregoing findings, we make the following recommendations aimed at promoting trade fairs and its participating companies.

1. Trade fairs should be properly planned to help manufacturers exhibit their products to their various customers who might be meeting them face to face (Kellezi, 2013) for the first time. This will generate more sales for the manufacturers and therefore increase their market shares.
2. Organisers of the trade fair should generate high publicity for the trade fair to allow manufacturers to attend. When many manufacturers are in attendance, more products will be exhibited and more industrial customers, wholesalers, agents and retailers will be interested in gaining more accurate knowledge about some products and establish sound relationships.
3. Made in Nigeria products are expected to be the major reason for organizing the trade fair to equally encourage Nigerians in purchasing home or locally manufactured products.
4. Those locally manufactured products must be certified to be deluxe products. When the emphasis on home made products is followed to the letter, and proven to be superior products, the image of the participating companies will be bolstered.

### **References**

Achison, C.B. (2000). *Industrial marketing (analysis, strategy and practice)*, Enugu: Precision Printers and Publishers.

- AUMA (2013). The German trade fair industry: facts, function, outlook Retrieved from <https://www.auma.de/en/DownloadsPublications/>.
- Banabo, E. & Koroye B.H. (2011). Sales promotion strategies of financial institutions in bayelsa state *Asian Journal of Business Management* 3(3), 203-209.
- CBBS (2012). Trade fairs and internationalization of smes Retrieved from [https://www.cbbs.hr/dokumenti/Market\\_Survey](https://www.cbbs.hr/dokumenti/Market_Survey).
- Ebue, B.C. (2002). *Marketing communication*, Enugu: Prine Post Publisher.
- ECCIMA (2006). 9th Enugu international trade fair brochure, Nigeria's political economy.
- Edoga, P.N. & Ani J. O. (2002) *Marketing, 6th Edition* New Delhi: McGraw Hall Inc.
- Elido, S. (1985). Lessons of the trade fair *New Globe Vol. 1 No. 1*.
- Gunay, G.N. (1999). The nature of industrial marketing Retrieved from <https://www.dergipark.gov.tr/download/article-file/55139>.
- Hindu J. A. & Ahmed L. A. (2014). The role of advertisement and sales promotion in student's choice of service providers *International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR) Vol. 15 (1)*.
- Ibekwe, O. (2006). Reflections on made-in-Nigeria fairs *Punch, August 16, 1986, p. 2*.
- Ifeanyi, A. (2001). The role of trade fair promotion of customer goods *Journal of Marketing, Vol. 1(2)*.
- Ikem, V. (2011). Nigeria is becoming one hell of a casino TMKG Publishing Limited.
- International Institute for Environment and Development, (2000). Trade fair: overview, impact, and challenges a study to inform dfid's support to fair trade, *Oxford Policy Management*.
- International Trade Centre (2012). Basics for organizing trade fairs a guide for developing countries Retrieved from <https://www.ntracen.org.246fishz/zxc/38577>.
- Izabela, K. (2012). Influence of trade fairs on a host city brand *Vieoži Politika Ir Administravimas Public Policy and Administration T. 11, Nr. 4*.
- Jefkins, F. (1991). *Marketing and public relations planning* New York: Pergamon Press.

- Jurgen, A. (2015). The importance of trade fair, exhibition and convention organisers for Berlin as a centre for business Retrieved from [https://www.businesslocationcenter.de/imperia/md/blc/.../messe-studie\\_ibb\\_2015\\_en](https://www.businesslocationcenter.de/imperia/md/blc/.../messe-studie_ibb_2015_en).
- Kellezi, J. (2013). The effectiveness of trade shows in global competition *European Academic Research, Vol. 1, Issue 3, 265-274*.
- Kirchgeorg, M., Springer, C. & Kastner, E. (2010). Objectives for successfully participating in trade shows *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing* 25(1): 63-72.
- Kuada, J. (2002). International industrial marketing: lecture notes on concepts, theories and models Retrieved from <https://www.citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download>.
- Kotler, P. & Armstrong, G. (2008). *Principles of marketing 10th Edition* New York: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Kotler, P. & Armstrong, G. (2012). *Principles of marketing 14th Edition* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Inc.
- Kotler, P. & Keller, K. (2007) *Marketing management* Delhi: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Nnaji, C. (1996). Trade fairs and Nigeria's economic recovery *Statesman Oct. 19, 1996, p. 3*.
- Nwielaghi, B. M. (2003). Trade sales promotion strategies and marketing performance in the soft drink industries in Nigeria A Ph.D Thesis, University of Port-Harcourt.
- Nwielaghi, B. M. & Ogwo, E. (2013). Trade sales promotion strategies and marketing performance in the soft drink industries in Nigeria *International Journal of Marketing Studies; Vol. 5, No. 4*.
- Nwosu, I.E. (2001). *Marketing communication management and media: an integrated approach*, Lagos: Dominican Publishers.
- Okeke, N. E. (1996). The role of the chambers of commerce in Nigeria's economic development Paper presented on the fundamental problem of Production in the Nigeria Economy UNN.
- Oko, A.E.N. (2014). *Industrial marketing: contending with environmental challenges*, Lagos: God's Image Communication (Nig) Ltd.
- Okolo, V.O., Nebo, G.N., Okafor, J.N., Farayola, S.O., Obikeze, C.O. and Nwodo, S.I. (2016). Implications of sales force recruitment and selection for successful operations of sales

force structures in industrial marketing: a study of Innoson Vehicle Manufacturing Company Nigeria limited *IOSR Journal of Business and Management Volume 18, Issue 1, 54-67.*

Omowunmi, D.O. (1999). Trade fairs and exhibitions as promotional tools for business organizations in Nigeria. (a case study of kaduna chamber of commerce, industry and agriculture) A Master of Business Administration (Mba) Thesis in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. Retrieved from <https://www.kubanni.abu.edu.ng:8080/jspui/.../DADA%20LUBUKONLA%20MOWUNMI>

Onyeke, J.K. (2009). *Industrial marketing: an integrated approach, second edition* Enugu: Al Tim Ventures (Printers and Publishers).

Ralph, N. (2006). ECCIMA, 9th Enugu international trade fair brochure, Nigeria's political economy.

Reza, Y., Nastran, K., Saeede, M. & Reza, P. (2013). Pricing strategies and goals in industrial marketing *Universal Journal of Management and Social Sciences Vol. 3, No.5.*

Santos, J.F. & Mendonca, P.B. (2014). Motivations to participate in international trade fairs: the portuguese experience *British Journal of Economics, Management & Trade 4(12), 1957-1972.*

Situma, S.P. (2012). The effectiveness of trade shows and exhibitions as organizational marketing tool (analysis of selected companies in Mombasa) *International Journal of Business and Social Science Vol. 3 No. 22, 219-230.*

UFI (n.d). The role of exhibition in the marketing mix Retrieved from [https://www.ufi.org/archive/ufi-online-course/UFI\\_education](https://www.ufi.org/archive/ufi-online-course/UFI_education).

Ughamadu, N. (2001). Trade fairs and Nigeria's investment climate *Business Times, Monday, Feb. 18, p. 7.*

Zebobipi, I. (2007). Worker competence management and corporate productivity performance A PhD Dissertation Rivers state University of Science and Technology, Port-Harcourt.