



## MARKETING OF MADE-IN-GHANA SHOES INTERNATIONALLY

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### Abstract

Manufacturing of shoes locally and marketing them internationally is an important aspect of the business. Most of the manufacturers of shoes in Ghana are small scale in nature and this makes it difficult for them to compete with other countries internationally. The sample for the research was 399 and questionnaires were given to the respondents and 85% were retrieved. The researcher used the survey method and both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed. Non-probability sampling method was used and the researcher used both purposive and accidental sampling methods.

The research revealed that respondents have doubt about the quality of the shoes made in the country and the shoes are not durable. It is recommended that the natives should be educated on the quality and durability of the shoes made in Ghana and also marketing consultants could be employed to help create awareness of the Ghana made shoes internationally.

**Keywords:** durability, Ghana, perception, pricing, quality.

### Introduction

Marketing of goods and services in the world is very important for the business operators and should be done well. If an organization produces a product without letting the world to know of it then the products will be on the shelf and at the warehouse. Due to this and other reasons marketing of goods and service should be done in an organized manner and not haphazardly. The marketing/service mix are strategies used to market products or services and marketing executives as well as other executives should understand the importance of the mixes in competing on the market they found their businesses. If an organization gets its marketing mix wrong in the market it will definitely affect their sales and profit.

Shoe making is an important venture in Ghana as well as the world. In Ghana, shoe making is concentrated in the Asante region, Eastern region and greater Accra region. It is more prominent in the Asante region, where even the country has a factory. Those in this business are producing on a small scale as a result of lack of governmental support and initial capital. Apart from these factors the domestic firms are competing with shoes producers in the entire world and from many leading international brands (Zou and Fu, 2011) and these producers are changing the face of competition in the country. As competition intensifies in the country, the domestic producers of shoes will lose their market position (Budzinski, 2008) to the foreign producers. These producers are well resourced and equipped to compete with any producer and the market leader in the domestic market become small competitor on a worldwide scale (Budzinski, 2008). Most of the shoe manufacturing firms in Ghana are small in nature as compared to the foreign firms; as a result, the size will hinder competition in the world market.

The Ghana Export Promotion Authority is the National Trade Support Institution of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) responsible for the facilitation, development and promotion of Ghanaian exports. GEPA was established by Act 396 in 1969 as an agency of the Ministry of Trade and Industry with the mandate to develop and promote Ghanaian exports. Export trade in services is a new and recent addition to the non-traditional export portfolio ([www.ghana-export.com](http://www.ghana-export.com)). In Ghana the government has established the Ghana Export Promotions Authority (GEPA) to help promote and market Ghanaian made products throughout the entire world. Before any product will be exported from the country to its destination the Authority must see to it that it conforms to the standard established for products by the world standard board.

Consumers of shoes in Ghana prefer buying the foreign shoes thus rendering the domestic firms uncompetitive. A part from lack of preference and taste for the domestic shoes by consumers' resource constraints is a major disadvantage for the small and domestic firms going internationally to market their goods and services and the profit margins of the firms will fall and this in the long-run make the domestic firm vulnerable to their foreign competitors (Zou and Fu, 2011). Consumers hold a perception that the made in Ghana shoes are "ma tre kew" (I have deceived you) and which is inferior to the foreign ones. Opera (2010) found that lack of adequate research on product especially in the areas of quality, diligence, aesthetic, design, packaging, low perception, poor marketing systems, unstable political atmosphere, inconsistent government policies and poor implementation of laudable export programmes that remain largely mere document are hindrances to made in Nigeria products in the face of competition. This research seeks to assess whether quality, design, durability, perception and price would influence the marketing of Ghana made shoes.

### Objectives of the study

- To determine whether quality of the shoes influence the demand of it;

- To assess whether consumers of the shoes are satisfied with the price;
- To determine the shoes preference of the consumers.

***Based on the objectives, the following research questions were set;***

- Does quality of the shoes influence the purchase decision of the consumer?
- Are consumers of the shoes satisfied with the price quoted?
- What is the perception of consumers of shoes, about made in Ghana shoes?

## **Literature review**

The researcher reviewed literature relating to quality, design, durability, perception and price. The selection and buying of products in the world is very important for the customer and due to this one should be meticulous when buying and selecting products. Customers need to know what the supplier is willing to do for them-not just to show dedication but to further the actual relationship (Yip and Bink, 2007). A supplier/producer who is ready to meet the expectations of the customer and satisfied it will have a competitive edge over their competitors (Evans and Lindsay, 2011). Before this advantage could be attained the organization should assess the quality and other determinants the customers use to purchase products.

### *Quality, design and durability*

There are many authors who have done work on quality and due to this there are many definitions. This work will use one of the many definitions propounded by various authors. Quality is defined as fitness for intended use, or how well the product performs its intended function (Evans and Lindsay, 2011). Based on the above definition quality is any product that is fitness for use and can perform its intended function. This also means that any product that cannot perform its function is inferior and should not be accepted by the consumer. Quality is determined by the consumer of the shoes and not the firm. Customers would even recommend others to the firm provided their products (shoes) are of high quality and also become loyal to the firm. If the customers are not happy with the quality of the products they would spread bad information to their friends, relatives and colleagues and this in the long run will affect the image of the firm.

The designing of a shoe is an essential aspect of consumer buying behaviour. Poor design result in poor quality or higher costs and good design can help to prevent defects and service errors and to reduce the need for the non-value-added items on a product (Evans and Lindsay, 2011). Before the manufacturers will come out with any design they should conduct research to find out from the customers what they want and need and produce to suit the requirements of the customers.

Durability is the useful life of a product or the amount of use one gets from a product before it physically deteriorates (Evans and Lindsay, 2011). Consumers do not buy products for the fun of it but what it can do for them and how long it can last. The firm should produce a product that can last for long for the consumers. The firm should create value for the consumer for producing a durable product for them.

### *Perception*

Perception is the way in which motivated individuals perceive a given situation that determines precisely how they will behave (Gilligan and Wilson, 2007). Individuals may perceive the same product in different ways. Ghanaian perceived the shoes made in other foreign countries as superior to the ones made in the country. As a result, the native will find it difficult to buy the shoes made in the country and if the people in the country also perceive the shoes to be good and of high quality they will buy the shoes and ignore the foreign ones. Our beliefs and attitudes emerge from both experience and from others we come in contact with (Gilligan and Wilson, 2007). If our experience with the shoes made in Ghana were positive then it will influence our buying decision and vice versa. Our relatives, friends and colleagues' exposure and experience could also influence our buying decision of the shoes and if they were happy with the shoes they will recommend it to others and vice versa.

### *Pricing*

Price help customers search for products that fall within certain price ranges (Bondari, 2010) and those that are not within the range are ignored. Product pricing in a highly-competitive world has assumed unprecedented importance in the management of markets for firms' profitability, especially in the international markets where it is easy to get out-priced by a competitive company (Mathur, 2008). Consumers are increasingly mobile and are looking for value for money and time beyond the accepted benefits as it adds to prestige value of its buyers as well (Cook, 2008; Mathur, 2008). When consumers do not like the price quoted for the shoes then the shoes would not be purchased and this will affect the market share and the profitability of the firm and in the long long-run it will make the firm vulnerable to the competition. Competition demands that firms seek to satisfy consumers' needs at lower prices and this will enable the firm to achieve market superiority (Evans and Lindsay, 2011). This could then give the firm a competitive edge over the competitors. Apart from price, the firm could also use non-price variables such as guarantee, brand image and easy usability to be ahead of the competition (Mathur, 2008). Price has a connotation with quality in Ghana, where high price means high quality and this is a perception held by most of Ghanaian.

## Methodology

The population for this research is 183,727 that is the total population for the New Juaben Municipality ([www.statsghana.gov.gh](http://www.statsghana.gov.gh)). Out of this 399 people were sampled for the study. The total sample was arrived by using the formula  $\frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$ , where N is the number of the population; e is tolerable error of 0.05.

$$n = \frac{183,727}{1+183,727 (0.05)^2} = \frac{183,727}{1+459.3175} = \frac{183,727}{460.3175} = 399.13$$

For the research to be successful, the researcher searched through books and journals to find out whether there is a questionnaire that could be used for the work. The search was not successful and due to that the researcher designed a questionnaire to be used for work and this comprises of personal information and information on quality, design, durability, perception and price. Before the questionnaires were rolled out, the researcher tested the questionnaire on friends and colleagues at the work place who fall within the population for the research. After, the initial test some of the questions were amended to suit the respondents. The survey method of data collection was used. The questionnaires were distributed to the target population on Koforidua Polytechnic campus and surroundings with the assistance of two research assistants. They distributed and collected the questionnaires, but before that they were given training on how, where and when to distribute and collect the questionnaires. The researcher with the help of the two assistants distributed the questionnaires to both staff and students of Koforidua Polytechnic and some residence residing around the campus.

Out of the sample taken, 85% of the targeted population responded to the questionnaires. Non probability sampling method was used which include purposive and accidental sampling methods. The purposive method was used because the targeted respondents use and wear shoes and they will be able to give their opinions and views about made in Ghana shoes and that of the foreign ones. Also, the accidental method was used to select the respondents and this was done by selecting the respondents who fall within the sample frame in and around the Koforidua community, Koforidua Polytechnic campus and surroundings. The accidental method was used to select the staff, students and residence of Koforidua. The research was descriptive in nature and the mix research method was used. Here, the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative methods for collecting and analyzing of the data gathered.

The data was analyzed and frequency tables were generated for the study through the questionnaires retrieved and this was done by the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 17.

## Discussion of Results

To enable the work to be completed, the data generated were analyzed and meanings were incorporated for easy understandable and interpretation.

**Table 1: Gender of Respondents**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	189	55.8	55.8	55.8
	Female	150	44.2	44.2	100.0
	Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table 55.8% of the respondents were males and 44.2% were females. This is as a result of the population of the geographical area where the data were gathered. From the analysis a greater number of males responded to the questionnaires than their female counterparts.

**Table 2: Age of Respondents**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 – 25	264	77.9	77.9	77.9
	26 – 33	59	17.4	17.4	95.3
	34 – 41	7	2.1	2.1	97.3
	42 – 49	6	1.8	1.8	99.1
	50 & above	3	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table 77.9% of the respondents were between the age range of 18-25years, 17.4% were between 26-33years, 2.1% were 34-41years, 1.8% were also between 42-49years and 0.9% were 50years and above. This means that most of the respondents were the young, vibrant and upward mobile.

**Table 3: Educational Background of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Basic level	4	1.2	1.2	1.2
Tertiary	335	98.8	98.8	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table above, 98.8% of the respondents are tertiary students or completed tertiary education and 1.2% of the respondents were basic level of education. This clearly shows that majority of the respondents are well educated and able to maintain what is good or bad.

**Table 4: Do you use Ghana made shoes?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Definitely yes	186	54.9	54.9	54.9
Definitely no	113	33.3	33.3	88.2
Not sure	40	11.8	11.8	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the above table, 54.9% of the respondents said they use made in Ghana shoes, 33.3% said they do not use the shoes and 11.8% of the respondents were not sure whether they use made in Ghana shoes or not. It shows that most of the respondents purchase and use made in Ghana shoes.

**Research question 1: Does quality, design and durability of shoes influence the purchase decision of the consumers?**

**Table 5: Ghana made shoes are of high quality**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	48	14.2	14.2	14.2
Agree	85	25.1	25.1	39.2
Neither agree nor disagree	79	23.3	23.3	62.5
Disagree	81	23.9	23.9	86.4
Strongly disagree	46	13.6	13.6	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table, 14.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that shoes made in Ghana are of high quality, 25.1% agreed that the shoes are of high quality, 23.3% were indifference, 23.9% and 13.6% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that the shoes are of high quality. This means that most of the respondents have doubt about the quality of the made in Ghana shoes and this will have a negative effect on the image of the shoes. This affirms what Opera (2010) found that is there is lack of product quality in some Africa countries like Nigeria as well as Ghana.

**Table 6: Ghana made shoes lasts for long**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	40	11.8	11.8	11.8
Agree	84	24.8	24.8	36.6
Neither agree nor disagree	77	22.7	22.7	59.3
Disagree	83	24.5	24.5	83.8
Strongly disagree	55	16.2	16.2	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the above, 11.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that made in Ghana shoes lasts for long, 24.8% agreed, 22.7% were not certain about the durability of the shoes, 24.5% disagreed that the shoes lasts for long, and 16.2% strongly disagreed that the shoes can last for long. In conclusion, the respondents are of the opinion that the shoes are not durable and do not last. This assertion also confirms Opera (2010) opinion, where there is poor design of products in some part of Africa.

**Table 7: The shoes are of good designs**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	50	14.7	14.7	14.7
Agree	154	45.4	45.4	60.2
Neither agree nor disagree	62	18.3	18.3	78.5
Disagree	61	18.0	18.0	96.5
Strongly disagree	12	3.5	3.5	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table, 14.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that the shoes are of good designs, 45.4% agreed that the shoes are of good designs, 18.3% were uncertain, 18% and 3.5% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that the shoes are not of good designs. In a nutshell, most of the respondents are of the opinion that the shoes have good designs.

**Table 8: The shoes are of good weight and comfortable to use**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	45	13.3	13.3	13.3
Agree	131	38.6	38.6	51.9
Neither agree nor disagree	63	18.6	18.6	70.5
Disagree	81	23.9	23.9	94.4
Strongly disagree	19	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table above, 13.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the shoes are of good weight and comfortable to use, 38.6% agreed, 18.6% were uncertain, 23.9% and 5.6% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that the shoes are of good weight and comfortable to use. This simply means that most of the respondents are of the view that the shoes are of good weight and comfortable to use.

**Table 9: The leather used is of high quality**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	64	18.9	18.9	18.9
Agree	84	24.8	24.8	43.7
Neither agree nor disagree	57	16.8	16.8	60.5
Disagree	92	27.1	27.1	87.6
Strongly disagree	42	12.4	12.4	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the above table, 18.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that the leather used for the shoes is of high quality, 24.8% agreed that the leather is of high quality, 16.8% were neutral, 27.1% and 12.4% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively to the question that the leather used is of high quality. In conclusion, most of the respondents are of the opinion that the leather used is of high quality but some of them are not happy with the leather used for the shoes.

**Table 10: The soles are durable and of quality**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	35	10.3	10.3	10.3
Agree	102	30.1	30.1	40.4
Neither agree nor disagree	74	21.8	21.8	62.2
Disagree	94	27.7	27.7	90.0
Strongly disagree	34	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table, 10.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the soles are durable and of quality, 30.1% agreed, 21.8% were uncertain, 27.7% and 10% of the respondents disagreed and strongly agreed respectively that the soles are durable and of quality. This means that not all the respondents are satisfied with the durability and quality of the soles of the shoes.

**Research question 2: Are consumers of the shoes satisfied with the price quoted?**

**Table 11: The prices quoted for the shoes**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Very high	55	16.2	16.2	16.2
High	90	26.5	26.5	42.8
Moderate	180	53.1	53.1	95.9
Very low	5	1.5	1.5	97.3
Low	9	2.7	2.7	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table above, 16.2% of the respondents rated the shoes to be of very high price, 26.5% are of the view that the price is high, 53.1% of the respondents are of the opinion that the price is moderate, 1.5% said is very low and 2.7% of the respondents are also of the view that the price is low. It can be deduced from the above that most of the respondents are of the view that the price quoted on the shoes are moderate.

**Table 12: You are satisfied with the price quoted for the shoes on the market**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	21	6.2	6.2	6.2
Agree	158	46.6	46.6	52.8
Neither agree nor disagree	56	16.5	16.5	69.3
Disagree	67	19.8	19.8	89.1
Strongly disagree	37	10.9	10.9	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table, 6.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the prices quoted for the shoes, 46.6% agreed to the price, 16.5% were uncertain about the price, 19.8% and 10.9% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that they are satisfied with the prices quoted on the shoes. This clearly shows that most of the respondents are satisfied with of the prices quoted for the shoes on the market.

**Table 13: The price commensurate with the quality**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	45	13.3	13.3	13.3
Agree	124	36.6	36.6	49.9
Neither agree nor disagree	60	17.7	17.7	67.6
Disagree	79	23.3	23.3	90.9
Strongly disagree	31	9.1	9.1	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table, 13.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the price of the shoes commensurate with the quality, 36.6% agreed to the question, 17.7% were uncertain, 23.3% and 9.1% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that the quality of the shoes commensurate with the price. This means that most of the respondents are of the opinion that the price of the shoes commensurate with its quality. This assertion confirms the opinions of (Cook, 2008; Mathur, 2008) that consumers should have value for their money and time from the shoes that they purchase from the market.

**Research question 3: What is the perception of consumers of shoes, about made in Ghana shoes?**

**Table 14: You will recommend made - in - Ghana shoes to others**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	68	20.1	20.1	20.1
Agree	114	33.6	33.6	53.7
Neither agree nor disagree	71	20.9	20.9	74.6
Disagree	60	17.7	17.7	92.3
Strongly disagree	26	7.7	7.7	100.0
Total	339	100.0	100.0	

Source: field survey, 2012

From the table above, 20.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that they will recommend made in Ghana shoes to others, 33.6% agreed that they will recommend the shoes to others, 20.9% were neutral, 17.7% and 7.7% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that they will recommend Ghana made shoes to others. In conclusion, most of the respondents said they will recommend made in Ghana shoes to others.

The respondents were also asked whether they will buy any shoe apart from the made in Ghana ones. It came out that most of the respondents said they will buy shoes made in Italy than the Ghana made ones. This affirms the perception held by consumers of shoes in the country. Because of this the shoes produced in the country (Ghana) have Italy soles and liner to convince the consumers to purchase the shoes. This assertion affirms the opinion of Opera (2010) that Africa made products have low or diffused image which lead to low perception among consumers in the world.

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

Competition is redefining the way firms do business internationally and firms which are not able to compete are folding up and giving way to others. Marketing of shoes in the international market improves the image, competitiveness and sales of the firms involved. From the analysis of the data, it came to light that more males and young people responded to the questionnaire administered. Apart from that the respondents are well educated and they can easily make decisions pertaining to what they need and want. The youth are more fashionable and are ready to wear and try new products or services. Again, most of the respondents used Ghana made shoes and were in the position to comment about it. Consumers have doubt about the quality of the shoes they buy and use in the country and this affect the image of the shoes and people also questioned the durability of the products. The respondents are of the view that the shoes do not last for long because they are inferior as compared to the foreign made ones.

Also, it came to light that the designs are good for the consumers and of good weight as well as comfortable to use. That is respondents are satisfied with the designs because mostly they just imitate the foreign made shoes and the weight of the shoes is accepted by the consumers and the shoes are comfortable to use. The leather and soles used for the shoes are of good quality. Most of the consumers are satisfied with the leather and soles used to make the shoes in the country. It was revealed that the prices quoted for the shoes are moderate and the respondents are satisfied with that. As they are of the opinion that

the quality is inferior then the prices quoted for it are accepted. As the respondents are somehow satisfied with the product, most of them said they prefer the foreign made shoes to the Ghana made shoes and precisely shoes made in Italy. Due to this shoes made in the country have made in Italy under the sole and this is done to convince the people to buy and use the shoes.

For the made in Ghana shoes to be competitive and market internationally the researcher recommend the following to the producers and investors in the industry;

As the industry is at its infant stage, the government of the country should be ready to support and assist the producers of the shoes and this will enable the producers to be competitive in the world. The government should be able to make some financial facilities available for these small firms and also the consulate (embassy) in foreign countries should also help them to create and find viable markets for these producers. For the firm to compete well internationally, the shoes produced in the country should be of good quality. The shoes should meet quality standards set for products that could be sold in other countries. The shoes produced should meet international standards like the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) requirements so that the shoes could be marketed internationally.

Again, the customers in the country should be encouraged to patronize the shoes made in the country and if the natives purchase the shoes made in the country then they will intend recommend it to others. For this to be achieved by the producers, the image and durability of the shoes should be improved. The producers should improve on the image and durability so that the customers will have confidence in the shoes and this will improve the sales made by the firm locally and internationally. Also, the producers should create the awareness of the shoes to the people in the country. That is the natives should be educated about the shoes produced in the country. These awareness and education could erase the perception people hold that the made in Ghana shoes are “ma tre kew” that is I have deceived you. Marketing consultants could be employed to assist the firms to change the perception people have about the made in Ghana shoes.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

The research was completed with some hindrance and the main one was the unwillingness of the respondents to provide the required information needed for the work. The research assistants and the researcher struggled be getting the respondents to contribute to the success of the research. The research was centred on shoes made in Ghana and only five factors were assessed for the study. In the future factors could be increased to cover more areas pertaining to marketing of goods and services internationally. Again, a comparative study could be done between Ghana and other countries to ascertain why people prefer one product to the other. Also, apart from shoes, sandals manufactured in the country could be assessed and identify the choice of consumers in the country and those of other countries.

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