



FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMERS PREFERENCE OF WOOD FOR FURNITURE IN JAMA'A LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KADUNA STATE.

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ABSTRACT

The factors influencing consumers preference of wood for furniture was conducted in Jama'a Local Government Area, Kaduna State. A total of sixty (60) questionnaires were randomly distributed among the respondents via Simple Random Sampling. Simple descriptive statistics was employed in data analysis. Result shows that majority of the respondents (70) were male and were married (55%) were married, and they were ages between 31 and 40 years. Sixty percent (60%) of the respondents have household size of between 1-5, and (68.3%) having secondary education. Majority of the respondents (19.60%) identified availability as a major factor responsible for the choice of preferred wood species for furniture making. Over thirty percent (34.29%) of the respondents identified price as one of the major factor militating against the choice of preferred wood species. Some identified species of wood used in this study includes; *Eucalyptus* sp 12.05% \geq *Khaya senegalensis* 7.95%, *Gmelina arborea* 6.41% \geq *Terminalia superba* 5.90% \geq , *Milicia excelsa* 5.13%. In conclusion, this findings evidence that: availability, durability, appearance, wood price, etc have significance influence on consumers' choice of wood for furniture making. Therefore, the massive regeneration of the user's choice species must be considered paramount in afforestation programme.

Keywords: Consumers, preference, choice, wood and furniture

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has considerable wealth in tropical wood or timber resources and has been noted for the supply of forest timber and wood to the rest of the world, this is because of the significant of wood to man in term of building materials, energy, cook food, constructs arms and tools (Rowell, 2005). The wood furniture business has surely not been exempted from increased rivalry and rising consumer expectations of quality. Schuler and Buehlmann, (2003) stated that world over, the growth in consumer populations and incomes has raised the demand for household furniture. He stated further that the boom in the modern housing and cottage industry has been and will continue to drive the demand for quality furniture.

Changes in the composition and value of wood resources, as well as changing market demands, consumer tastes, species availability and the design of the manufacturers are having far reaching effects on the wood industry (Bumgardner *et al.*, 2007).

Most timbers in Nigeria are not being used to their full potentials due to lack of information on the many promising characteristics, thus, affecting consumer's preference for choice of wood species in furniture making. Consequently, leading to decline in Nigeria timber resource making timber very expensive in the local timber market. In the light of this, this paper seeks to assess consumers' preference to choice of wood for furniture in Jama'a Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study was conducted in Jema'a Local government of Kaduna State, Nigeria. The Local Government population projection is about 278, 202 and it is about 3,923km² in line with 2006 census, and lies between latitude 9° 10'-9° 30'N and longitude 8° 00' E-8° 30'E. The area is situated in low savannah plains and it has 190.5cm of rainfall annually which makes the area arable.

Method of Data Collection

Primary data were used for this study and it was generated through the use of structured questionnaire. Information was also sourced from journals and book of proceedings to support the research.

Sampling Techniques

Simple random sampling was employed in this study. Sixty (60) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents where wood products marketing and industries such as carpentry, wood plants or sawmills, lumber sheds are mostly common.

Method of Data Analysis

Simple descriptive statistic was used for the data analysis.

Results

Social factors play a vital role in the decision of buying certain products such as home furnishing. The table below shows the socio-economic variables examined.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

S/N	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender		
	Male	18	70.0
	Female	24	30.0
2	Marital Status		
	Single	21	35.0
	Married	33	55.0
	Divorced	3	5.0
	Widow	3	5.0
3	Age		
	11-20	2	3.3
	21-30	18	30.3
	31-40	23	28.3
	41-50	13	38.3
	50-above	05	6.7
4	House-Hold size		
	1-5	36	60.0
	0-10	17	28.3
	11-15	7	11.7
5	Education Status		
	Primary	9	15.0
	Secondary	41	68.3
	Tertiary	9	15.0
	Non Formal Education	1	1.7
6	Occupational Status		
	Furniture/Artisan	34	56.7
	Trading	16	26.7
	Farming	3	5.0
	Tailoring	1	1.7
	Civil Servant	5	8.3
	Total	60	100

Table 2: Identified Tree Species Used for Furniture Making in the Study Area.

S/N	BOTANICAL NAME	FAMILY NAME	COMMON NAME	FREQ.	%
1.	<i>Milicia excels</i>	Moraceae	Iroko	20	5.15
2.	<i>Terminalia superb</i>	Combretaceae	Afara	23	5.90
3.	<i>Triplochyton sahceroxylon</i>	Malvadeare	Obeche	14	3.59
4.	<i>Nuclea diderrchii</i>	Rubiaceae	Aloma	10	2.56
5.	<i>Tectonia grandis</i>	Verbenaceae	Teak	14	3.59
6.	<i>Khaya senegalensis</i>	Meliaceae	Mahogany	31	7.95
7.	<i>Parkia biglobosa</i>	Mimosoicaceae	Locust beans	9	2.31
8.	<i>Vitex do doniaana</i>	Lamiaceae	Dinya	17	4.56
9.	<i>Pinus caribea</i>	Pinaceae	Caribbean pine	11	2.82
10.	<i>Ceiba pentandra</i>	Bombacaceae	Java cottin	19	4.87
11.	<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	Verbenaceae	Gmelina	25	6.41
12.	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	Myrtaceae	River red gum	47	12.05
13.	<i>Isobertlinia doka</i>	Caesafinoioleae	Doka	13	3.3
14.	<i>Ficus glumous</i>	Moraceae	African Rock/ Kwari	7	1.79
15.	<i>Terminalia ivorensis</i>	Combretaceae	Black afara	3	0.77
16.	<i>Adansonia dogitata</i>	Bombacaceae	Baoba	10	2.56
17.	<i>Anthocleina vogelii</i>	Moraceae	Murderer	10	2.56
18.	<i>Antiaris Africana</i>	Moraceae	Sacking tree	5.	1.28

19.	<i>Vitellaria paradoxa</i>	Sapotaceae	Shea- butter	8	2.05
20.	<i>Cola acuminata</i>	Malvaceae	Cola-nut tree	14	3.59
21.	<i>Cola gigantean</i>	Sterculiaceae	Giant Cola	3	0.77
22.	<i>Diospyros mesliiformis</i>	Ebanaceae	African ebony	6	1.54
23.	<i>Entanda Africana</i>	Mimosoideae	Tawatsa	10	2-56
24.	<i>Prosopis Africana</i>	Mimosodeae	iron tree or Malinke	12	3.08
25.	<i>Ficus congoensis</i>	Moraceae	Clusterfig	14	3.59
26.	<i>Erythrophylum spp</i>	Combretaceae	Sasswood	9	2.31
27.	<i>Terminalia avicennioides</i>	Combretaceae	Bambara	7	1.79
28.	<i>Lophira alata</i>	Ochnaceae	Red iron wood	5	1.28
29.	<i>Anogeisus leiocarpus</i>	Combritaceae	Marke	4	1.03
30.	<i>Anona senegalensis</i>	Annonaceae	Gwandar daajii	2	0.51
Total				390	100

Table 3: Factor that support and against the choice of the preferred species

S/N	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Supporting Factor		
	Durability	40	13.51
	Appearance	52	17.57
	Availability	58	19.60
	Taste	40	13.51
	Colour	20	6.76
	Suitability/Usability	28	9.46
	Income	36	12.16
	Product	22	7.53
	Total	296	100%
2	Militating Factors		
	Cost/Price	60	34.29
	Non sustainability of Usage	19	10.86
	Lack of Expert Advice	38	21.71
	Income	46	26.29
	Product	12	6.86
	Total	175	100%

Table 4: Factors Militating Against the Choice of Less Use Species

S/N	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Expert Advice	48	19.67
	Types of Product	19	7.79
	Customer Preference	42	17.21
	Cost of Treatment	17	6.97
	Appearance	18	7.38
	Defects	7	2.87
	Quality	42	17.21
	Durability/Perish ability	51	20.90
	Total	128	100%

Discussions

Table.1 above shows that male respondents represented 70% of the population while female respondents represented 30% of the studied population. This result revealed that we have higher number of male respondents in the study area. This could be due to the custom of the respondents (Nigeria) where men determine the choice of house equipment/material especially the household furniture.

Maritally, 55% of the respondents were married, 35% of them were single while Widows and Divorced respondents were 5.0% each. This could be attributed to the fact that the married individuals have settled down and hence the need to keep their homes habitable for their families as well as making it presentable for their visitors as the case may be.

On the basis of age distribution, 3.3% of the respondents were between the ages of 11-20, 30.0% of them 21-30, 38.3% of them were between the ages of 31-40, 21.7% of the studied population was between the ages of 41-50, while 6.7% of them were between 50 years of age and above. From this analysis, the ages of 31 and 40 had the highest population with respect to woody furniture utilization. This is the age range where many people strive to marry and have families of their own hence, house furniture becomes one of the basic necessity required of a good and responsible home, this concur with Belk, (1988) Furniture's are also used to convey a person's identity, or a "family personality".

Household size of the respondents was examined as an indicator of socio- economic characteristics with regards to furniture wood utilization; result revealed that 60% of the respondents had household size of 1-5, 28.3% of them 6-10 while, and 11.7% of them 11-15. From this result, it could be deduced that the use of wood furniture reduces with household size. This implies that, the higher the household size, the greater the responsibility and the lesser the individual interest in furniture except for the few financially buoyant families.

Educationally, 15% of the respondents had primary education, 68.3% of them had secondary education, 15.0% of them were educated at tertiary education level while only 1.7% of the respondents had non-formal education. From the result, it could be observed that the highest percentage of the respondents were educated at secondary school level, hence they could communicate and make enquiry on the type and quality of wood to be used for different purpose, and whether wood durability could be enhanced or not. We can therefore infer from this study that education status have positive impact in the use of wood and the choice of wood for furniture in the study area. This result agrees with Kotler, (2009); Solomon, (2009) who reported that buying behavior of individuals is frequently unconsciously affected by some factors. One of these factors is social factors which are determined by their level of awareness and educational status.

Occupationally, results reveals that majority of the respondents 56.7% were furniture makers, 26.7% of them were traders, 8.3% of the respondents were civil servants 5.0% were farmers while tailors were least 1.7% of the respondents identified with respect to furniture wood utilization. From the results analyzed, it could be observed that furniture makers were the highest categories of respondents making choice of wood for furniture. This could be linked to their experience on wood utilization over the years or because they are the easily identified respondents with regards to wooden furniture. This result agrees with Belk, (1988) reported that variety of factors may persuade the buyer and customer to make the choice of wood for furniture.

Identified Tree Species Used for Furniture in Jama'a LGA, Kaduna State

That table 2 above, revealed total numbers of 30 tree species use for furniture in the study area, the identified plants were classified into twenty (20) families with their common names, frequency of utilization by the individual respondent and their percentages were also calculated. Results from table2 showed multiple responses, the percentage of individual responses to the use of the identified species are arranged in decreasing order as; *Eucalyptus* 12.05% \geq *khaya senegalensis* 7.95%, *Gmelina arborea* 6.41% \geq *Terminalia superb* 5.90% \geq , *Milicia excel sa* 5.13%, \geq *Ceiba petendra* 4.87% \geq *Vitex doniana* 4.36% \geq *Triplochyton seleroxylong*, *Tectona grandis*, *Vitellaria paradoxa* and *Ficus congensis* respectively 3.59% \geq *Isoblerlinia doka* 3.33% \geq *Prosopis Africana* 3.08% \geq *Pinus caribea* 2.82% \geq *Nuclea diderrichii*, *Terminulia ivorensis*, *Adansonia digitata* and *Entanda Africana* represent 2.56% respectively \geq *Parkia biglobosa* and *Erythrophylum spp* 2.31% \geq *Antiaris africana* and *Cola gigantia* 2.05% \geq *Terminalia irvecinvidea* and *Ficus glumous* \geq *Anogeisus leocarpus* 1.03% \geq *Cola acuminata* 0.77% \geq *Anona senegalensis* which represented 0.51% of the choice wood in furniture making in the study area. The reason for the selection or choice of one species over the other may be due to one of these factors; durability, workability, strength properties, availability, appearance etc. This is consistence with Arowosoge *et al.* (2009) who submitted that the high preference for *Mansonia* among end users is the high value attached to its beautiful grains which are of varied colours.

Factors Responsible for the Choice of Wood Species for Furniture

Table 3 above shows the factors responsible for the choice of wood for furniture in the study area. The criteria for the choice of wood species for furniture were classified into two categories: Supporting factors and Militating factors:

The factors that support the choice of preferred wood species for furniture were identified. Multiple responses were given for these factors, majority of the respondents 19.60% identified availability as a major supporting factor responsible for the choice of wood species for furniture, 17.57% of them recognized appearance as a factor supporting choice of species. 13.51% identified durability and taste of such wood species by 9.46% of them; income was identified by 12.16% while 7.33% identified the type of products to be produced as a determinant of the choice of wood for achieving such production. From this result, majority (19.60%) of the responses favors availability; hence, we deduced that choice of wood for furniture is subject to availability. This result opposes previous studies in Jordan furniture who found that the most vital factors touching consumer's purchase of wood furniture are: quality, price, reference group, color, and family (Farah, 2013). Yoon and Cho (2009) also found that; type of wood, properties of wood, moisture content of the wood, purpose of utilization, colour, grains and rays arrangement, price and wood quality are potential factors influencing the consideration of wood for furniture.

Factors Militating against the Choice of preferred Wood Species for Furniture

Various factors militating against the choice of preferred wood species for furniture were identified in table3 above. Majority of the respondents (34.29%) acknowledged that price is a major factor militating against the choice of preferred species. More than ten percent (10.86%) identified inconsistent usage which could be due to scarcity of the preferred species coupled with high demand

and its high cost (price) in the market. Over twenty-one percent (21.71%) stated that lack of expert advice militate against the choice of some species of wood for furniture, (26.29%) attributed income as one of the factors militating against the choice of preferred wood for furniture making. Higher income enhances the choice of preferred species and vice versa, since most of the preferred species are known to be more expensive. We deduce from this result that price is one of the major factors militating against the choice of preferred wood species for furniture in the study Area. This is in consonance with Ganz, (2000) who said that increasing price of good quality timber species has led to increase in the demand for less quality timber species. Adeyoju and Enabor (1995), reported that price of wood species kept rising geometrically over the years both within producing and consuming areas.

Factors Militating against the Choice of Lesser used Species

Table 4 above shows the eight (8) factors militating against the choice of lesser used species of wood for furniture. From the table, (19.67%) of the respondents specified that expert advice does not favor lesser used species. Over seventeen percent (17.21%) specified poor quality. Close to thirty percent (20.90%) of identified less durability, 7.79% were of the opinion that quality of the furniture desired by individual consumers and high quality furniture is a function of good quality wood. While 7.38% of them stated poor appearance of LUS limit its use for furniture. More than six percent (6.97%) identified high cost of treatment especially in a situation where cost differences of using the preferred species is not significant. 2.87% of specified presence of defect on lesser wood species. From the analysis, majority of the specified that the major militating factor against the use of LUS is the less durable nature of these categories of wood. previous study have found that the most important factors affecting consumer's purchase in Jordan furniture consists of quality, price, color, appearance and most important wood durability (Farah, 2013).

Conclusion

This finding make available evidences that; availability, durability, appearance, wood price, wood grain and rays arrangement play vital role influencing consumers' choice of wood for furniture. Most consumers depend on furniture manufacturers their choices of furniture wood and that wooden furniture manufacturers understand the tree species that have suitable properties and appealing appearance which are major determinants of customer's choice of wooden furniture.

Recommendations

Scientist should intensify efforts towards enhancing the utilization potentials of lesser used species using inexpensive locally made preservatives. Also, massive afforestation of the users' choice species should be considered paramount in the study area.

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