



## **Influence of Macro-Environmental Forces on Marketing Activities of Small Scale Business Operators in Oyo Town and Its Environs**

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### **Abstract**

*The study was carried out to assess the level of awareness of small scale business operators on the macro-environment forces on marketing activities in Oyo town and its environs. To achieve the objectives of the study two research questions were developed and answered while two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted survey design that made use of 25 items structured questionnaire developed from the literature. The sample for study comprised of 119 small scale business operators in Oyo town and its environs. The questionnaire was face validated by three experts from Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo. Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire was administered to 119 respondents. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while t-test statistic and ANOVA were used to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that small scale business operators in Oyo and its environs are somewhat aware of the influence of macro-environmental forces that influence marketing activities. However, recommendations such as organization of small scale business operators, availability of relevant business administrators and familiarity to the relevant business materials like newspapers, magazine and internet materials by the small scale business operators were made based on the findings from the study.*

**Keywords:** Small scale business, Macro-environmental forces, Operators, Marketing activities



## Introduction

Business is the activity of making a living or making money by producing or buying and selling products (such as goods and services). Simply put, it is “any activity or enterprise entered into for profit. A business is defined as an organization or enterprising entity engaged in commercial, industrial or professional activities. Businesses can be for profit making or non-profit making organizations that operate to fulfill a charitable mission or further a social cause. The term business also refers to the organized efforts and activities of individuals to produce and sell goods and services for profit. Businesses range in scale from a sole proprietorship to an international corporation.

Obi (2002) defined business as an organized effort to produce products or supply services demanded by people for the purpose of making profit. Also, Aina and Salako (2007) affirmed that business can be regarded as a system which is better described as a linkage of input flows (energy, materials and information) from a source in uncontrollable environment otherwise called external environment. In the same vein, business could be viewed as an enterprise that involves buying and selling on the basis of satisfying consumers' wants and needs for profit making purpose. Business enterprises are in various forms which include small scale business, medium and large business enterprises.

A small-scale enterprise is generally stated as the business which is independently owned and operated and

not dominant in its field of operation. Osuala (2000) expressed that the small scale business is any business that is owned, managed and controlled by a sole proprietor, or partner of about two persons, has total assets of less than four million naira and a relatively small share of the market and does not have more than fifty employees. In this study, a small scale business is an enterprise with an initial capital of between N50,000 to N500,000 owned, managed and controlled by one or two persons including a workforce of between 5 to 20 employees. Small scale business activities can only be successful when consideration is given to the prevalent forces in the business environment.

Ogungbemi (2001) in Ojetunde and Mafikuyomi (2018) defined a small-scale business enterprise as a type of industry being owned and managed by private or group of individuals. It is a type of industry for profit making. Examples of small scale businesses that are available in Nigeria are itinerant traders, hawkers, kiosk and shop owners.

Davidson (2013) also viewed small scale business enterprise as a company or business owned, financed and controlled by an individual or a private sector and is so classified according to ownership, capital available and constitutional right. Business does not operate in a vacuum but in a complex and changing environment. The type of environment in which business operates determines to a great extent on how sound the business should be in



carrying out its marketing activities for the organizational goals to be achieved. According to Ross (2001), marketing is the process used to determine what products or services may be of interest to customers, and the strategy to use in sales, communications and business development. Agbonifoh, Ogwo and Nnolin (2004) indicated that marketing consists of individual and organizational activities designed to serve the consumers' needs and facilitate exchanges with a view to achieving the goals of the individual or organization through the satisfaction of the consumers' needs. Also, it involves efforts made to provide goods and services to the target people at the appropriate time, aiming to maximizing profits. Osuala (1998) expressed marketing as the performance of those business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to consumers or users. Osuala (1998) further stated that the activity includes: production, managing, forecasting, conducting research, pricing, transporting, storing, advertising, buying and selling.

Marketing activities are the business strategies adopted in making products available for the satisfaction of consumers. Edna and Eboh (2011) viewed marketing activity as the totality of all the activities done by the firm before any product exists. Also, it can be viewed as everything needed to get a product off the business premises and pass it to the final consumer for profitable exchange. William and

Ferrel (2007) stated that marketing consists of individual and organizational activities aimed at facilitating and expediting exchanges within a set of dynamic environmental forces. Environmental forces are the totality of forces and institutions that are external and potentially relevant to the firm. Baker (2002) referred to environmental forces as the ultimate constraints upon the firm's strategy. Also, Odigbo (2011) expressed that business environment means forces that influence business objectives, functioning, strategies and the entire performance of organization in an area. However, environmental forces could be termed as those elements that are beyond the control of the business and which must be reckoned with in their marketing planning activities. These elements could be classified as controlled and uncontrollable forces.

The controllable forces of marketing environment are product, price, promotion and place and they are referred to as micro environmental forces. Whereas, demographic forces, economic conditions, technological change, social/cultural change, legal/political forces and competition constitute the uncontrollable elements of marketing environment which could be regarded as macro environmental forces (Osuala, 1998). According to Ogidefa in Odigbo (2011), macro environment refers to factors that are largely outside the control and influence of a business and that can potentially have positive and/or negative impact on the



business. In view of this, the uncontrollable forces are those factors that require proper and adequate monitoring by the business for better and efficient maintenance of the business activities.

Moreso, societal reaction to a new product could be instrumental to its success and at the same time could be fatal. Consequently, businesses monitor social changes and try to adapt to change by keeping in touch with the business environment. Kolter and Armstrong (2004) opined that the purchasing power is directed towards certain goods and services and away from others according to people's tastes and preferences. Society shapes the beliefs, values, and norms that largely define these tastes and preferences. This indicates that for business to thrive well, efforts must be made to critically analyze the current trends in the societal and cultural beliefs of the society in which business enterprises operate.

Changes in technology constitute a great challenge to the survival of business marketing activities. Ade (2000) stated that technological changes and innovations and discoveries affect people's lives and consumption patterns dramatically. As new products are introduced, old ones are withdrawn. It is by virtue of these changes in technology that cause a shift in the consumers' tastes and preferences. This implies that changes in technology constitute challenges in the business to have a better control of their activities by shifting their

resources towards the technological advancement as to meet up with the modern way of production and distribution of goods and services.

Government also regulates business activities by enacting laws that influence the conduct of business in any economy. Osuala (1998) stated that in the civilized world political action sets the legal boundaries for business and other forms of activity. In addition, another form of forces that influence marketing activities of business is the force of competition among the business operators. Agbonifoh, Ogwo and Nnolin (2004) indicated that a marketer's marketing mix is a reflection of the perceived degree of competition which lead to product modifications and improvement, reduction in prices of goods and increase in promotional outlays. This occurs as a result of struggle to gain consumer acceptance and favourable market share by individual business enterprise for their products. Therefore, the marketers must be constantly aware of the macro environmental forces that are prevalent in the society in which he is operating for the attainment of business objectives.

Awareness is the state or ability to perceive, to feel, to be conscious of events, objects or sensory. According to Heath (2002) awareness is an automatic response to our environment. Moreover, knowledge of macro environmental forces are essential to the business existence because marketing environment is



constantly presenting new opportunities and threats upon which business must act for better performance. Business performance can be determined by the level of its awareness of the macro-environmental forces prevalent in a particular area.

In Oyo State, Nigeria, Oyo is one of the largest towns with four local government areas which include Oyo East, Oyo West, Atiba and Afijio Local Governments. It is a town where businesses of various forms are in existence ranging from local textiles, poultry farming, manufacturing of soap and detergents, manufacture of leather foot ware, pure water firms, dyeing of cloth, to manufacture of cosmetics. In Oyo and its environs, business activities are predominantly the major occupation of the people. Both in the rural and urban areas of the local governments, one form of business or the other are established by the people of the local government. Oyo and its environs is regarded as the urban area of Oyo State because it is an area where 'aso-oke,' weaving, farm products, fisheries, poultry, many tertiary institutions are located and small scale businesses in the area produce majorly goods like cosmetics, foot ware, soap, detergent, leather bags and calabash carvings.

In addition, as regards the year of experience of small scale business operators in the local government, many of them have been in the business for more than eleven years. Also, some of the operators are graduates while some are non-

graduates. The graduates among them are those who have possessed HND, Degree and Ph.D, Certificates while non-graduate operators possess NCE and OND certificates. These small scale business operators irrespective of their area of operation, experience and academic background need to be aware of the changes that constantly occur in the business environment because the success or survival of any business enterprise can be determined by how knowledgeable and conversant the operators are, on marketing environmental forces which are regarded as a pivot upon which profitable marketing activities rotate. It is against this background that this researcher is investigating the influence of macro environmental forces in marketing activities in Oyo town and its environs.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The major responsibility of small scale business operators is to plan, implement and evaluate their organizations' marketing system by anticipating environmental changes, remaining flexible and acting progressively for maximal actualization of organizational goals (Osuala, 1998). This implies that the key to organizational survival and growth is the firm's ability to adapt its strategies to a rapidly changing environment; failure to adapt may lead to goal unattainment and even that fall of business activities. Furthermore, the development of small scale enterprises is a core government policy concern purposely to raise economic growth, providing employment



opportunities and provision of essential goods and services (Shaw, 2004; Baron & Share, 2005). It is obvious that small scale businesses especially in Oyo and its environs and Oyo State generally have contributed immensely to the economic growth of the State in the creation of employment as a source of livelihood.

However, despite the above contribution, small scale businesses are still performing below expectations due to lack of awareness of the small scale business operators to adopt marketing skills needed for proper and adequate monitoring of business environmental forces like demographic, economic, societal and cultural forces, technological changes, legal and political forces and competitive forces, by the small scale business operators for better and effective business activities. People are the market and understanding of the size, structure and composition trends is of fundamental importance to the marketing planner.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The major purpose of the study is to determine the level of awareness of small scale business operators on the macro environmental forces that influence marketing activities in Oyo and its Environs. Specifically, the study examined the level of awareness of small scale business operators on:

1. The demographic forces that influence marketing activities in Oyo and its environs
2. The economic forces that influence

marketing activities in Oyo and its environs

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the level of awareness of small scale business operators on the demographic forces that influence marketing activities in Oyo and its environs?
2. What is the level of awareness of small scale business operators on the economic forces that influence marketing activities in Oyo and its environs?

### **Hypotheses**

The following two null hypotheses were formulated for the study:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of urban and rural small scale business operators on the level of awareness of economic forces that influence marketing activities in Oyo State.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of the small scale business operators on the level of awareness of technological forces that influence marketing activities with respect to their years of experience.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted descriptive survey design. According to Gall, Gall and Borg (2007) survey is a method of data collection using questionnaires or interview to collect data from sample that has been selected to represent a population to which the findings of the



data analysis can be generalized. Through survey design, vital facts about people, their beliefs, opinion, attitudes and behaviour can be obtained. This research design is considered appropriate and suitable for this study to solicit information on the awareness of small scale business operators on the influence of macro environmental forces in marketing activities.

The population of the study consists of 119 registered small scale business operators in the four local government areas that form Oyo and its environs. No sampling was taken as the entire population was studied because of the manageable size of the population.

Instrument for data collection for this study was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled: awareness on the influence of macro environmental forces in the marketing activities of small scale business enterprises in Oyo and its Environs. (IAMEF). The questionnaire items generated were based on the literature reviewed. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part 1 of the instrument contains personal information of the respondents comprising: location, experience and academic qualification of the respondents. Part 2 contains 25 items divided into two sections; (A-B). Section A covered research question one which consists of 13 items and was used to determine the level of awareness of small scale business operators on the influence of demographic forces on the marketing

activities. Section B consists of 12 items used to determine the level of awareness of small scale business operators on the influence of economic forces on the marketing activities. The items are structured on a five-point scale using response options of Very Highly Aware (5) Highly Aware (4) Aware (3) Somewhat Aware (2) Not Aware (1).

The instrument was face-validated by three experts from Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo, Oyo State. The experts were requested to assess the items of the instrument in terms of clarity and appropriateness in addressing the problem of the study and research questions under investigation. Their comments and corrections were used to restructure and reframe the final draft of the instrument for this study.

To establish the reliability of the instrument, the validated instrument was trial tested on 20 small scale business operators from Akinyele Local Government of Oyo State which is a neighbouring town to the study area. The data obtained from the trial testing was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha to establish internal consistency of the instrument for the study and a reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained. To this effect the instrument is reliable for the study.

A total of 119 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and administered to the respondents in all the four local government areas located in Oyo and its environs, Oyo



State by the researcher with the help of two research assistants.

The data generated from the instrument were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation to answer each of the two research questions while t-test statistic was used to test the hypothesis number one and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis two at 0.05

level of significance. The instrument contained 25 items on a five point rating scale namely: Very Highly Aware (5) Highly Aware (4) Aware (3) Somewhat Aware (2) Not Aware (1). The class boundary for interpreting the results include. Very Highly Aware (4.50 – 5.00), Highly Aware (3.50 – 4.49), Aware (2.50 – 3.49), Somewhat Aware (1.50 – 2.49), Not Aware (1.00 – 1.49).



## Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of awareness of small scale business operations on the demographic forces that influence marketing activities in Oyo and its Environs of Oyo State.

To answer this research question, the data generated in section A of the questionnaire were analyzed and presented as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Mean responses of the Respondents on the Level of Awareness of Demographic Forces that Influence Marketing Activities

S/N	Items	X	SD	Decision
1.	Size of the target market has influence on the volume of goods to be produced by the business.	1.78	0.62	Somewhat Aware
2.	Population density has influence on the volume of goods to be produced by the business for immediate use.	1.68	0.63	Somewhat Aware
3.	Population has influence on the future production of goods for the society.	1.50	0.68	Somewhat Aware
4.	Age of the target market has influence on the types of goods to be produced.	1.67	0.67	Somewhat Aware
5.	Gender has influence on the production decision.	1.80	0.76	Somewhat Aware
6.	Occupation of the consumer has influence on the quality of the goods and services rendered by the business.	1.82	0.69	Somewhat Aware
7.	Educational background has influence on the tastes and preference of the consumer.	1.77	0.71	Somewhat Aware
8.	Birthrate has influence on the production of baby materials.	1.83	0.62	Somewhat Aware
9.	Religious structure have influence on the business to be selective in their production for different people religious group in the society.	1.72	0.68	Somewhat Aware
10.	Increase in population has influence on the business to increase its volume of production to meet up with human needs.	3.04	0.65	Aware
11.	Rural-urban shifts have influence on the distribution of goods to the consumers.	1.83	0.72	Somewhat Aware
12.	Location of the target market the influence on the business in determining the choice of distribution channel.	1.86	0.66	Somewhat Aware
13.	Lifestyles of the people have influence on the business modes of selling.	1.63	0.59	Somewhat Aware



The data presented in Table 1 shows that the degree of awareness of small scale business operators on Demographic forces that influence marketing activities were rated somewhat aware except item 10 which was rated aware. The means of the

items ranged from 1.50 to 1.86 with standard deviation values which ranged from 0.59 to 0.76 showed that the opinions of the respondents were not too far from the mean or from one another in their responses.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of awareness of small scale business operations on the economic forces that influence marketing activities in Oyo and Environ of Oyo State?

To answer this research question, the data generated in section B of the questionnaire were analyzed and presented as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Mean responses of the Respondents on the Level of Awareness of Economic Forces that Influence Marketing Activities

S/N	Items	X	SD	Decision
1.	Level of consumers income has influence on the marketing activities of small business	1.87	0.65	Somewhat Aware
2.	Inflation has influence on the marketing program of small scale business enterprise	2.00	0.80	Somewhat Aware
3.	Bank interest rates have influence on the marketing activities of small sale business.	2.08	0.70	Somewhat Aware
4.	Economic prosper ity influences small scale business to expand their product offering to take advantage of increased buying power.	2.06	0.72	Somewhat Aware
5.	During the economic recession businesses are influenced to direct their promotional activities towards value and utility.	2.02	0.76	Somewhat Aware
6.	Economic recession has influence on planning marketing budgets for small scale business.	1.95	0.65	Somewhat Aware
7.	Small scale businesses are positively influenced during the economic recovery to expand their marketing activities	2.00	0.68	Somewhat Aware
8.	Savings of a consumer has influence on the business turnover of small scale business	2.05	0.78	Somewhat Aware
9.	Size of a disposable income of consumers has influence on small scale business activities	2.00	0.72	Somewhat Aware
10.	Unemployment has influence on the marketing activities of small scale business enterprise	1.98	0.65	Somewhat Aware
11.	Rate of tax payment has influence on the business activities.	1.91	0.65	Somewhat Aware
12.	Economic forces have influence on small scale business to forecast future demand	1.90	0.65	Somewhat Aware



In table 2, all the items on economic forces that influence marketing activities were rated somewhat aware by the respondents. The means of the all the items ranged from 1.87 to 2.08. the table also revealed that the standard deviation (SD) of the items are within the range of 0.65 to 0.80 which indicated that the opinions of the respondents were not very far from the mean or from one another in their responses.

### Hypotheses Testing

**H<sub>01</sub>** There is no significant difference between the mean responses of urban and rural small scale business operators on the level of awareness of economics forces that influence marketing activities in Oyo and its environs.

To test this hypothesis, data extracted from Appendix C were used and the results presented in table 3.

**Table 3:** Two-tailed z-test of the mean responses of urban and rural small scale business operators on the level of awareness of economics forces that influence marketing activities.

Location	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	z-cal	z-table
Rural	58	3.59	1.39	0.32	1.96
Urban	61	3.48	2.37		

Table 3 shows that the z-calculated value of 0.32 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 117 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance which shows that there is no significant difference between the mean response of rural and urban small scale business operators on level of awareness on economic force that influence market activities in Oyo and its environs. Therefore, it can be inferred that rural and urban business operators share identical opinion.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of small scale business operators on the level of awareness of technological forces the influence marketing activities with respect to their year of experience.

**Table 4:** z-test on the mean responses of small scale business operators on the technological forces that influence marketing activities.

Location	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	z-cal	z-table
Rural	58	3.65	1.02	-3.5	1.96
Urban	61	3.79	1.01		



Table 4 shows that z-calculated value of -3.5 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 117 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance which shows that there is no significant difference between the mean response of rural and urban small scale business operators on the technological forces that influence marketing activities in Oyo and its environs. Therefore, it can be inferred that rural and urban small scale business operators share identical opinion.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study in Table 1 showed that small scale business operators were somewhat aware on the influence of the following demographic forces on the marketing activities in Oyo State; size of the market, population density, age of target market, gender, occupation, educational background, birth rate, religious structures, rural and urban drifts, location and lifestyles. Demography is the study of human population in terms of size, density, location, age, sex, race, occupation and other statistics. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2006), a detailed understanding of the size of the market and location structures, and trends of the population is a fundamental importance to the marketing planner. In view of this, marketers must understand the diversity with the nature of the market with respect to geographical location, income, marital status, mobility and self-care. In the same vein, Agbonifoh, Ogwo and Nnolin (2004) indicated that apart from the numerical strength of a country's population, its distribution by geography, age, income, occupation, ethnic groups and educational qualification is important groups and educational qualification is important.

The result of the findings in Table 2 revealed that small scale business operators in Oyo town and its environs were somewhat aware on how following economic forces influence marketing activities: consumer's income, inflation, interest rates, economic forces prosperous, economic recession, economic recovery, savings, disposable income, unemployment and rate of tax. The study of economic environment is essential for business performance. Osunkeye (1998) expressed that economic environment is the mother of all categorizations of the environment. It includes the nature of the prevailing economic system and the general state of the economy consisting of some set of variables such as real income, inflationary rate, savings, credit availability, interest, consumer disposable income and expenditure pattern, monetary and fiscal policies, and infrastructures. In order to ensure business viability, the business should be acquainted with the economic forces and be able to make intelligent use of these variables in identifying the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats and possible strategies to adopt in order to achieve the business goals and objectives.

William and McCarthy (2002) stressed that marketing manager must watch



the economic environment carefully because economy influences total amount of money available to consumers and businesses to make purchases. It affects the level of income consumers retain to spend on themselves and has an impact on the amount of profit and cash that business generate, thereby influencing the ability and willingness of individuals and organizations to perform transaction to acquire the goods and services they want. Those are some of issues that marketers should watch closely if they are to make relevant and timely decision about their products and services and the markets that they should serve. According to Elizabeth and Terry (2011) economic environment is a significant force that affects the marketing activities of just about any organization, the authors also claimed that inflation as economic forces is a rise in price of goods and services when prices rise at a faster rate than personal incomes, consumer's buying declines. It also affects government policies, consumer psychology and marketing programmes.

The findings in table 3 shows that there is no significant difference between the mean response of rural and urban small scale business operators on level of awareness on economic force that influence market activities in Oyo and its environs. This is in agreement with the findings of Salami (2014) which revealed that a significant different does not exists in the response of urban and rural small scale business

operators on the level of awareness of economic forces that influence marketing activities. It implies that the present study indicates that small scale business operators do not have appropriate awareness on the competitive forces that influence marketing activities.

The findings in Table 4 also shows there is no significant difference between in the mean responses of small scale business operators on the level of awareness of technological forces the influence marketing activities with respect in their year of experience. The findings agreed with the study conducted by Binuomote (2011) that small scale business operators do not have enough knowledge required in technology for better business activities. However, from the study, the level of awareness of small scale business operators on the technological forces do not have influence on marketing activities with respect to their years of experience.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. The small scale business operators in Oyo Environs are somewhat aware of the influence of the following macro-environmental forces on the marketing activities: demographic forces, economic forces, social and cultural forces, technological forces, political and legal forces and competitiveness forces. Therefore, small scale business operators require proper and adequate awareness on macro-



environmental forces in order to adopt marketing skills which include marketing research, environmental scanning and analysis, forecasting, market segmentation, marketing planning and control for better an affective market environmental analysis in order to adopt marketing skills required for better and effective business operations. It is hoped that if small scale business operators are well aware of the influence of these macro-environmental forces and proper steps are taken while planning, it will go a long way in helping business to be effective in achieving the objectives for which it is being established most especially in the area of product maximization and job creation.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations were made:

1. Seminars and workshops should be organized annually by the small scale business operators for improving and updating their knowledge about the significance of macro environmental forces.
2. Relevant information should be given by the government through relevant agencies to the small business operators the changes in the business laws which may have significant effect on the business activities.
3. Qualified and well-grounded business administrators who can handle successfully the risk involved in the business

environment should be employed by the small scale business operators.

4. Small scale operators should familiarize themselves with the relevant materials like newspaper, magazine, business books and internet facilities.

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