CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS PURCHASING LOCAL AND FOREIGN MADE LEATHER PRODUCTS IN DODOMA REGION, TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the factors influencing the consumers' attitudes and preference toward purchasing local and foreign made leather products in Dodoma region. A cross sectional design was employed during the survey. The sample of 120 respondents was randomly selected from the five wards in Dodoma city namely Viwandani, Makole, Majengosokoni, Hombolo and Mbalawala were interviewed. Study results indicate that attitudes of consumers toward purchasing local and foreign leather products in Dodoma region were influenced positively by durability, fashionableness and attractiveness. Contrary, price of product displayed a negative relationship with the decision of leather consumers to purchase local or foreign products. The study concluded that durability, attractiveness and fashionableness influenced the decision of consumers to purchase leather products in Dodoma city. It is therefore, recommended that the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries Development in the collaboration with Ministry Industry and Trade and Local government authorizes to provide production and marketing education to producers and manufacturers of the leather product to improve quality and the attractiveness of the product to meet consumer preference.

Keywords: *Consumer Attitude, Leather Products, Dodoma, Tanzania*

1. INTRODUCTION

The consumers' attitude and preference toward purchasing either local or foreign made products has been recognized in many parts of the world as a key economic issue in the international business and consumer behavior researchers for decades. This is because attitudes play a fundamental role in the consumer behaviour field as it determines his disposition and decision behaviour to respond positively or negatively to product, institution, person or event (Azjen and Fishbein, 1980; Al-Suqri and Al-Kharusi, 2015). Also, the change in consumer attitudes on purchasing decisions were associated with the current trend of many business companies shifting their business strategies from the marketing concept to customers oriented. According to Azjen and Fishbein (2002) consumer's purchasing behaviour, perception and attitude on the given products either being from within or outside the country of origin is highly influenced with their intentions. Consumer purchasing behaviour which indicate how individuals, or groups of people decide to select, purchase, use and disposal of products, services, ideas or experience to meet the consumers' demand can be influenced by purchasing intention, price and quality of the product or service (Kotler,2001). The change in purchasing intention according to Kotler (2001) and Ghosh (1990) will determine the process of selection and evaluating the product attributes (perception) by the consumer. Moreover, Chaniotakis*et al.* (2010) argued that, the way of thinking (attitude) influences consumers' purchase intention as well as perceived economic situation and product attributes. This implies that, when a consumer evaluate a product alternatives that may satisfy the same need or want, he integrate the perceptions of the alternatives into an overall judgments, or attitude, about the attractiveness or quality of each product alternative (Steenkamp and Trijp, 1989). In such situation consumers would try to save more money by purchasing product of low price during economic downturn and once the condition turns better, they will shift back to their familiar foreign products (Conroy *et al.,* 2010). Studies on consumer behaviour in the context of purchasing foreign or local products had shown that consumer behaviour intentions are determined by several attributes including subjective norms, country of origin, brand name, quality, style and prices (Aschale, 2018). Chaniotakis*et al.* (2010) and Jaafar *et al.* (2016) reported that consumers' attitude is an important factor in influencing consumers' purchase intention of industrial products including leather products from both developed and developing countries. Importantly, the

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consumer behavior influences the perception and attitude of the consumer in the selection of the locally or foreign made products (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Chaniotakis, Conroy, 2010).

Globally leather is among the most widely traded animal products and used commodities. Already, the leather and leather products industry plays a significant role in the worlds today economy, with an estimated global trade value of approximately USD 100 billion per year (UNIDO, 2010). The growth in demand is driven by the fashion industry, especially footwear, clothing, furniture and the automotive industry, among others. The leather industry market in terms of overall turnover for all types of leather is dominated by China, Italy, India, and Brazil. Despite being a large business in itself, the leather industry functions entirely is dependent on the global agriculture industry from which hides and skins are obtained as a by-product, over 95% from the world's meat and dairy industry (Kyle & Bomsel, 2016).

In Africa, some studies have been conducted to explain the concept of consumer attitude and preference toward the consumption of foreign or domestically made products including leather products. For example study by Ferguson *et al.* (2008) indicated that, products from the technologically more advanced countries were viewed more positively by nationals of developing countries than those from the technologically less advanced countries. They also found that personal characteristics like motivation and ability to process information may influence use of the country of origin attributes in evaluating a service. Similarly, Kotler (2001) found that demographic factors such as age, gender, income, occupation, education, family size and religion influenced consumer's buying behavior in developing countries.

Based on the fact that, most leather is a byproduct of the meat industry, therefore hides are said to be essential raw materials for production of leather products such as shoes, belts, wallets and bags. In this regard, Tanzania is blessed on such raw materials as the country is ranked the second country in Africa after Ethiopia with livestock worth of population reaching 22 million cattle, 15.2 million goats and 6.4 million sheep (Majaliwa and Nkwame, 2016). On the other hand, Dodoma is among of the regions with largest livestock population in Tanzania with the total of 1.19 million cattle, 915,356 goats and 270,299 sheep (China and Ndaro, 2016). Other leading regions include Shinyaga, Tabora, Arusha, Manyara and Mara to mention a few. Together with such a large number of livestock, Dodoma is the least region in terms of leather processing industries number as compare to Arusha and Shinyanga.

To tape the available opportunities, the government of Tanzania had heavily invested in meat and tanneries industries which have led to increased meat and its products production and consumption in the major livestock keeping regions including Dodoma. This creates a potential investment and business opportunities for the country in leather industry. Having realized the present potentials in investing in leather and leather products production, the government of Tanzania has started carrying out different initiatives that include adopting of skin and leather trade Act No 18 of 2008. The implementation of the Act has been revealed in the process of producing leather and leather products such as bags and shoes through its industries in Arusha, Mwaza and Dodoma. This has increased availability of local leather made products in Tanzania market places.

Despite the increase in local made leather products, Majority of consumers in Dodoma prefer more imported leather products. This argument has been affirmed by findings from the study by Florent*et al*. (2014) who reported that most of Tanzanians prefer more imported products than the locally made products including leather and leather products. Furthermore, Opoku and Patrick (2009) reported that in Tanzania, products from other members of the East Africa Community (EAC) tend to be more preferred by consumer than those made within Tanzania. There could be several reasons for differences in consumer's attitudes towards purchasing of foreign and local products including leather and leather products. Thus, there is a need to uncover the reasons for differences in consumer's preference for global products over local products. Basing on the foresaid background, the current study was conducted to examine consumer attitudes towards consumption of foreign and locally made leather products such as shoes, belts, wallets and bags in Dodoma region. Specifically the study determined the attributes that consumers consider in choosing (purchasing) between local and imported leather products in Dodoma. Thus, the study on consumer attributes and preference on foreign and local made products have substantial implications in marketing and industrial development in Tanzania and specifically in Dodoma City. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the adopted research methodology; Section 3 presents the findings and discussion while Section 4 presents policy recommendation based on the key finding from this study.

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2. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the City of Dodoma, the capital city of Tanzania. The selection of Dodoma city among the seven districts of Dodoma region is due to the fact that the city has high number of interaction of people from different areas following the shift of the government offices and economic activities from Dar es Salaam city to Dodoma capital city. The coming of the government activities to Dodoma city have increases the population and social interactions among different groups of people which include officials, politicians, students, and business men and women. Also, Dodoma city is the hub of business centre and leather industries which are considered as market for skin and leather products from other districts. Also, the City is privileged with the modern abattoir (slaughterhouse) and two industries that process livestock products in the region. Demographically, Dodoma has a general population of 2 million (NBS, 2012) of which about 20% (456,035) people come from the city (DRC, 2018). Secondly, Dodoma is among of the regions with large livestock population in Tanzania with the total of 1.19 million cattle, 915,356 goats and 270,299 sheep (China and Ndaro, 2016). Such large population of livestock is expected to influence production and consumption of leather products in the region particularly the Dodoma city which highly populated.

2.1 Research Design and Sampling Procedures

The study used cross-sectional research design in the collection of data from the field. The cross-sectional design was selected because the study intended to collect data on consumer attitudes, preferences and perceptions toward purchasing foreign and locally made products in Dodoma region at one point in time specifically in the City of Dodoma.The selection of the City of Dodoma was purposely because the City is privileged with the modern abattoir (slaughterhouse). Also, the City is located near to the big national ranches (NARCO-Kongwa), with more than 4,000 cattle which give the study added advantage for encouraging investor to invest in the leather industry. For the selection of the wards, the study has selected randomly five wards (Makole,Viwandani, Majengo sokoni, Hombolo, and Mbalawala). The five wards according to NBS (2012) have the total population of 50,883 people of which Makole have (11,416), Viwandan (6,883), Majengo sokoni (9,006),Hombolo (14,748) and Mbalawala (8,830). The study selected proportionally 120 respondents from the five selected wards. The sample of 120 was considered sufficient based on Cochran (1977) rule of thumb that minimum sample size of 30 respondents is sufficient for statistical analysis. The data collection tools used in this study included self-administered questionnaires for gathering data from leather products consumers and interview for the owner of the small industries of the leather products.

The collected data were coded and entered in SPSS computer software whereby both descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted to generate the usable findings. To present the qualitative information, descriptive statistics measures and figures were used which included means, frequency, tables, histogram and pie charts. All these helped much in the presentation of meaningful results from the collected information.

The Binary Logistic regression model were used in analyzing the factors influencing the consumer's attitudes and preference on purchasing local or foreign made leather products. The model was selected because the dependent variable (Consumer preference) was in binary response of Y =1 if consumer prefer to purchase leather product and Y = 0 if consumer does not prefer to purchase leather product. The Binary Logistic Regression Model was presented in the following equation:

$$\mathbf{Pr}(Y_i = 1/X) = \beta_o + \beta_1 Fs_i + \beta_2 Du_i + \beta_3 Att_i + \beta_4 P_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Whereby:
- Y = Consumer preference
- Fs = Fashion of the product
- Du= Durability of leather product
- Att = Attractiveness of the leather product
- P = Price of the leather product
- B = coefficients to be determined from the equation
- E = Error term

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3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Demographic Information

The demographic information was computed based on the gender of respondents, age of respondents and the income of respondents using frequency and percentage tables. The findings as presented in Table 1 depict that 51.7% of respondents were male and 48.3% of them being females. This signifies that the study findings were not gender biased rather all the respondents were randomly represented thus enhancing the validity of the findings. Likewise, the age of the respondents was computed using frequency and percentage in a range of four scale age group. The findings show that, the age groups of 20-30 who are mainly youth were the majority group (31.7%) compared to other groups, followed by 31-40 1nd 41-50 groups which constituted 51.7 percent. Age group above 50 years was the least who mainly adults are constituted only 20 (16.7%). This over representation of youth in the study is consistent with Tanzania Population Census report 2012 where the youth population is higher 15,587,621 (34.7%) persons as compared to the adults population of 2,507,568 persons (URT, 2013). Using frequency and percentages, the income of the respondents who are mainly the consumer of the leather products was established as important dimensions in determine the consumer purchasing ability and preference. The income of the respondents was ranked in the category of five groups.

Table 1: Demographic Information

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	62	51.7
	Female	58	48.3
Age	20-30yrs	38	31.7
	31-40 Years	32	26.7
	41-50 Years	30	25.0
	51-60 years	20	16.7
Income Range	0-100,000	45	37.5
	101,000-200,000	26	21.7
	201,000-300,000	22	18.3
	301,00-400,000	13	10.8
	501,000+Above	14	11.7

Source: Research Findings (2018)

3.2 Consumers' Responses on Attributes used in the Selection of the Products

The study determine the attributes that consumers use in choosing from the foreign or locally made leather products that entails shoes, bags, wallets, belts and seat covers. The findings in Table 2 show that, consumer behavior on the selection of the leather product is determined by several attribute namely durability, good fit, fashionables and price among others. The attributes of durability is among the highly considered in the purchase of leather product as compared to the fashionables attributes. These findings are similar to those of Sukdeo and Masho (2018) which emphasis the need for durability dimension in order to attain industrial success.

Table 2: Attributes for Selected Leather products

Attributes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Durability	99	82.5
Good fit	91	75.8
Quality	90	75.0
Fashionableness	86	71.7
Attractiveness	85	70.8
Comfort	79	65.8
Brand name	79	65.8
Colour	57	47.5
Price	54	45.0
Easy of car	46	38.3

Research Findings (2018)

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3.3 Consumer's Country of Preference for Leather Products

The findings in Table 3 depict the country of preference of leather products among the Tanzanians' consumers. According to the preference scaled by the respondents on the leather products, it has been revealed that, the leather products from Turkey, United Kingdom and Italy were highly preferred as compared to the Tanzanians and Chinese leather products in the Tanzanian markets. The major reasons scaled out by respondents for the high preference of the leather products from Turkey, Italy and UK are brand name, quality and durability. An informant from a Key informant from Makole area added that

"…Do *you see my shoes Clarks, I have bought them two years ago… yet my shoes look as if were bought yesterday*". It was similarly echoed by the resident of Mbalawala ward that "*Turkish handbag are strong and attractive to the eyes but are highly priced*". These findings concurs with those of Florent *et al*. (2014) who reported that, most of Tanzanians prefer more imported products than the locally made products including leather and leather products.

Table 3: Country of Preference Rank on Leather Products (n=120)

Country	Level of Preference
Turkey	80.8
UK	80.0
Italy	72.5
German	50.0
Japan	25.8
China	13.3
Korea	10.8
Kenya	6.7
Tanzania	3.3

Source: Research Findings (2018)

3.4 Comparison on the Opinion between Male and Female on the Fashionableness Attributes

To compare perception and opinions among respondents by gender, the study employed an independent t-test using the two tailed level of significant. Results as presented in Table 4 indicate that, there is significant statistical difference between male and female consumers' attitudes toward the fashion attribute as the determinant of their decisions on consuming local or foreign leather product. Female were found to be more sensitive on fashionableness attribute when deciding to purchase local or foreign leather products as compared to male in the Dodoma city. This implies that, male are sensitive to other attributes when deciding to purchase leather products such as durability and prices which were not most determinants for female. The finding supports those of Kotler (2001) who found that female were attracted more for fashionable products which influenced more their buying behaviour in the beverage products.

Table 4: T- test Results Between Male and Female Opinions on the Fashionableness Attributes

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed
Opinions on the fashionableness	Male	62	3.36	1.027	.130	4.877	.000
	Female	58	4.27	1.021	.134		

Field Computed Data (2018)

3.5 Factors which influence consumer's Preference on local and foreign made leather products

Table 5 present results on the factors influencing consumer's preference on purchasing leather products. The study employed the Binary Logistic Model in estimating the influence of factors effecting consumers' preference on local and foreign made leather products. The dependent variable (consumer's preference) was computed as a binary variable such that Y =1 if consumer prefer to purchase leather product and Y = 0 if consumer does not prefer to purchase leather product.The results indicate that, all the computed variables were statistically significant at 1% implying that, they have effects on the preference of the consumer toward buying a particular leather product.

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Findings from Table 5 indicate that, the fashion of the product has a positive (0.93) effect on the preference of consumers toward purchasing the local and foreign made leather products in Dodoma. The positive coefficient implies that, the probability of the consumer to prefer and choosing to buy leather products could increase by 9% for the unit change in the fashion of the leather products. This also was implied in the odd ratio of 2.53 implying that the preference of consumer toward purchasing leather products being local or foreign made could increase 3 times due to change in fashion. This due to the fact that, the fashion attribute was ranked highly by female respondents as they were considered to be sensitive on fashion and style. This finding is consistent to those of Herzog and Pittman (1991) and Lee (2014) who reported that, women tend to be more concerned about fashion of the product. Also the findings are consistence to those of Mmari *et al.* (2015) who found that, product attributes such as fashion and packages were found to the determinant to consumer decision on purchasing food products in Dodoma city.

Table 5: Regression Results on Factors influencing Consumer's Preference on Purchasing Leather Products

Variable	Coefficient	S.E.	Sig.	Exp(B)
Fashionably	.929***	.244	.000	2.532
Durability	1.429***	.332	.000	4.175
Attractiveness of the product	1.375***	.410	.001	3.954
Price of the product	-1.173***	.379	.002	.309
Constant	-2.126***	.399	.000	.119
Chi- Square		53.199	.000	
Cox & Snell R^2		.358		
Nagelkerke R^2		.552		
-2 Log likelihood		72.238[a]		

Dependent Variable: Consumer Preferences; **and *** denote significant level at 5% and 1% respectively.

Furthermore, durability of the product has a positive relationship with the consumer preference on purchasing local and foreign leather products indicated by the coefficient of 1.43 and significant at 1%. This indicates that, a unit change in durability of the product could increase the likelihood of consumer to buy more leather products by 14%. The effect is symbolized by high odd ration of 4.18 which implies that, the likelihood of consumer to prefer and purchase leather products could increase by 4 times. The possible explanation is due to fact that, most of interviewed consumers were lower income earners, therefore they have no extra income to enable them to buy more frequently. These findings concur with those of Ying, Zhang and Zhao (2016) who found that, the quality and after-sale service are the two major determinants on the purchasing furniture online decision of the consumers.

Similarly, attractiveness of a product to consumers was positively influencing their decision to buy a particular leather product and was significant at 1% level. The positive coefficient of attractiveness implies that, preference of consumer toward purchasing local or foreign leather product could increase by 14% for every 10 unit increase in the style and attractiveness of the product. This was explained by the descriptive results which indicated that, majority of consumers for leather products were youth. On the other hand, price of the leather product showed a depressive effect on the consumers' preferences toward purchasing leather products and was significant at 1% level. The negative coefficient implies that, preference of consumers on foreign and local made leather products could decrease by 12% with the increase in market prices. This is due to fact that, high prices will imply high costs and less ability of consumers to purchase the product. These findings are in line with that of Chaniotakiset *et al.* (2010) who argued that, the price of the commodity could influence consumer's intention to purchase the particular product. Furthermore, the similar findings was found in the study by Jaafar *et al.* (2013) that, product of low prices becomes an alternative for product choice for most of consumers.

4. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In reference to the findings from this study, it can be concluded that attitudes and preferences of consumers toward purchasing leather products (local or foreign) in Dodoma region were influenced positively by durability, fashionableness and attractiveness. Moreover, consumers in Tanzania prefer mainly foreign made leather products predominantly from Turkey. In contrast, the price attribute dimension on preferences has indicated depressive relationship. It is therefore, recommended that Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries Development in the collaboration with Ministry Industry and Trade and Local government authorizes to provide production and marketing education to

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producers and manufacturers of the leather product to improve quality and the brand names of the product to meet consumer preference. Also, sensitisation of the citizens on consumption of Tanzanian made leather product starting with government institutions to be the first consumer of the home made leather product

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