



Research Article

Curbing Counterfeiting and Piracy with Public Relations Tools: The Case of Nigeria's Beauty and Cosmetics Industry

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Abstract

Counterfeiting and piracy have become global twin problems of immense magnitude. They jeopardize the image-building efforts of corporate organisations, governments and businesses. Universally, they pose a serious threat to the public perception, growth and smooth running of the beauty and cosmetics industry. Therefore, the study examined the application of public relations (PR) in the beauty and cosmetics industry and how usable it is to curb counterfeiting and piracy in Nigeria. Cultivation theory serves as the foundation of the study. Respondents were purposively selected and the survey research design was adopted for data collection. The result revealed that product launches and makeup fairs are the main public relations activities with which beauty and cosmetics companies deal with the challenges of counterfeiting and piracy. It also showed that billboards, Instagram and Twitter, are the dominant media used for creating public awareness and pushing brands out to various publics. The study concluded that public relations is a useful tool in influencing the thoughts of the public and curbing piracy in Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics industry. Accordingly, the study recommends that the government should establish regulatory bodies to monitor and reprimand perpetrators of piracy in the beauty and cosmetics industry. Also, beauty and cosmetics companies need to trademark their brands and sensitize their publics to the side effects of using fake beauty products.

Keywords: Beauty, Cosmetics, Piracy, Public Relations

Introduction

Counterfeiting and piracy are chronic universal problems (Hamelin, Nwankwo, & El Hadouchi, 2012). Both are widespread trends that have long perplexed people and scholars all over the world. Fake and illegally produced goods are

compromising public health and safety, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria. It is robbing tax revenues, incomes and legal jobs from governments, businesses and communities (Nwosu *et al.*, 2019; Olabanjo *et al.*, 2019). The adverse effects of counterfeiting and piracy could sap US\$ 4.2 trillion from the world economy and

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threaten 5.4 million legal jobs shortly (Bascap, 2017). The ease of copying and sharing electronic data over the Internet has contributed to an outbreak of piracy. As a result, counterfeiting and piracy have drawn tremendous interest from academics, while causing great fear for entrepreneurs (Bush *et al.* 1989; Yang, Sonmez & Bosworth, 2004; Berman, 2008; Wilcock & Boys 2014; Cesareo, 2016).

Counterfeiting and piracy have long been enticing for organized criminals, with a particular focus on lucrative fields such as consumer goods, clothing, pharmaceuticals, digital media, and luxury items such as handbags and perfumes. Over the past two decades, however, the illegal practices of counterfeiting and piracy have stretched to cover nearly every public commodity. Examples are fake food and beverages, books, electrical appliances, additives, mobile phone batteries, spare parts and toys (Adelua *et al.*, 2020a; Adelua *et al.*, 2020b; James *et al.*, 2020d; Nwosu *et al.*, 2019; Adelua *et al.*, 2020c; Adelua *et al.*, 2020d; Aiyende *et al.*, 2020a). The worth of this underground economy has exploded exponentially (Bascap, 2017). These illegal practices have also penetrated the beauty and cosmetics industry, causing loss of money, image and integrity; thereby endangering the industry and consumers alike. Generally, the situation is negatively impacting the profit of genuine businesses and eroding public trust. Counterfeit goods are rapidly entering the supply chain and placing producers' uprightness at risk. The prevalence of counterfeits is a concern for almost any organization, supply chain, government and industry; and the problem is aggravating (Basu, Basu & Lee, 2015). Potential investment in research and technology is at stake because of the unfair competition arising from counterfeits (Maldonado & Hume, 2005; Olabanjo *et al.*, 2019).

From the above premises, it is easy to understand that counterfeiting and piracy impede the growth of the beauty and cosmetics industry and the role of public relations in the matter cannot be overemphasized. Hence, public relations in this study becomes very important (Miller & Dinan, 2007; Sriramesh, & Vercic, 2003). The current research makes an industrious attempt to examine the efficacy of public relations tools in curtailing the menace of counterfeiting and piracy in the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria.

Image quality exposes many factors which influence public awareness and perception of corporate organizations. Negative image, for instance, is poor image quality (Aiyende *et al.*, 2020b; Fayemi *et al.*, 2020a; Fayemi *et al.*, 2020b;

Fayemi *et al.*, 2020c; Fayemi *et al.*, 2020d; Olabanjo *et al.*, 2020b; Omokiti *et al.*, 2020a). That is why proper image management through positive public relations actions is needed to control the public perception of organizations and their industries.

Statement of the Problem

The beauty and cosmetics industry has grown but is still faced with many challenges. One of the significant challenges encountered by the industry is the twin problem of counterfeiting and piracy. Undoubtedly, it has posed many threats to the continuous growth of the industry. This problem has affected both the industry and its publics such as cosmetologists, beauticians, make-up artists and women generally. Counterfeiting and piracy damage the free market economy significantly, and it also injures intellectual property rights such as trademark laws, copyrights and patents (International Chamber of Commerce, 2016).

The efforts of companies' management and employees to build a brand is an arduous but continuous task. However, counterfeiters and pirates destroy such brand-building efforts and achievements by creating a negative image and undermining the built-up integrity of the companies and their brands. Although counterfeiting cannot be removed totally from piracy, the major problem that the research seeks to address is piracy. The importance of public relations cannot be underrated as it remains an essential tool in curtailing the impending threat of piracy in the industry. Hence, the survey will examine the effectiveness of public relations in addressing the corporate threats of piracy. It will also provide public relations solutions to the identified problems.

Study Objectives and Research Questions

This study investigates public awareness and perception of the menace of piracy in Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics industry. It examines public awareness and perception of the PR practices of selected companies in Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics industry. Also, this survey scrutinises public opinions on the effectiveness of PR activities in curtailing the menace of piracy by selected beauty and cosmetics companies in Nigeria. It unearths public recommendations on PR's positive effect in curtailing piracy in Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics industry. Based on these objectives, the following research questions suffice:

1. To what extent are members of the public aware and perceive the menace of piracy in Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics industry?
2. How does the general public perceive the PR practices of selected companies in Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics industry?
3. What are the public opinions on the effectiveness of PR activities in curtailing the menace of piracy by selected beauty and cosmetics companies in Nigeria?
4. What are the public recommendations on PR's positive effect in curtailing piracy in Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics industry?

Review of Related Literature

For ages, the term "cosmetics" has been known to the human race because it is human nature to desire beauty (Sartwell, 2004). Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and many other early philosophers averred that beauty is a principal thing for all human beings. They maintained that whatever is beautiful remains so, irrespective of what we feel or think. At the same time, the need to appear presentable, attractive and desirable to one another may also be regarded as a psychological *cosmetising* of beauty. Nevertheless, knowing the precise meaning of the term "cosmetic" from multiple sources would be important (European Economic Council, 1993).

Cosmetics are products to be rubbed, painted, powdered, sprayed, added or otherwise applied to some portion of the human body to convey attractiveness. European Regulation 93/35/EEC describes cosmetic products as any material or treatment meant to be placed in contact with the different external sections of the human body (Aziz, Taher, Muda & Aziz, 2017; Kumar, 2005). They are meant to scrub, cover, embellish, encourage, appeal or change appearance, especially facial appearance (Vance, 1999; Ali, 2018; Odiboh, Ezenagu, & Okuobeya, 2019). Cosmetics are substances used to improve or protect the human body's appearance (Ramshida & Manikandan, 2014). Vance (1999) particularly warned against *cosmetising* beauty; and argued that the consequences could be grievous for the human body. These definitions are quite comparable in that they all classify cosmetics as products that enhance appearance but have no therapeutic advantages in contrast to drugs.

The fast rise in online makeup purchases can be convincing. In 2010, Internet sales were worth more than 11 billion US Dollars. As technologies

grow, the cosmetics industry is also seeking to take advantage of the new developments and engage more effectively with customers. Organic beauty products are becoming ever more visible on the global market (Odiboh *et al.*, 2020a; Odiboh *et al.*, 2020b; Odiboh and Oladunjoye, 2019; Odiboh and Ajayi, 2019; Odiboh, Ezenagu and Okuobeya, 2019). They arose from a niche that a small number of companies had previously occupied and integrated into the mainstream market. Cosmetics have regular outlets, such as department stores and supermarkets (Vance, 1999).

As pointed out by Vance (1999), colour cosmetics (makeup) are the world's third-largest beauty market, measured by sales. Their share remains steady at 12-13% and is aligned with the competitive growth of the market. This segment is fueled mostly by developments to which it managed to achieve market growth of 8% in 2008, even in the competitive and developed industry of Western Europe. It may also be that this traditional market is the only position where the lipstick hypothesis can be affirmed - even a 3% growth was reported in the recession year of 2009. The cosmetics industry further boosts sales by introducing items that meet the needs and preferences of diverse people with specific ethnic backgrounds, skin and hair types, and genetic features (James *et al.*, 2020a).

Sub-Saharan Africa, dubbed the next business hotspot, is witnessing the world's second-fastest economic growth. As a result, there are about 821 million customers in the African economy scrambling to purchase a wide variety of cosmetics and beauty products (Heyam, 2018). Due to its high birth rates and rising middle class, Africa could be the next significant growth region for cosmetics and beauty products. The market leaders - South Africa and Nigeria - will be followed by five key frontier markets: Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana and Cameroon (Beauty Africa, 2016).

Counterfeiting and Piracy in the Beauty and Cosmetics Industry: The Big Issue

Growing markets tend to attract fake and adulterated products says Cesareo (2016). The beauty and cosmetics market is no exception. It cannot be overemphasised that counterfeiting and the beauty and cosmetics industry have evolved hand in hand (Bank of Industry, 2018; Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting and Piracy, 2015). Counterfeiting is an act of making

a product by copying or imitating an actual product's physical appearance in an attempt to mislead consumers that it is the product of another company. Items that violate patents, violations of copyright and advertising, and naming and brand laws are accused of counterfeiting (Cesareo, 2016). Cosmetics counterfeiting represents a loss in income for the original owners of the counterfeited products and therefore decreases their share of genuine investments. This includes job losses, economic downturn and a rise in emotional stress, not to mention the serious damage to public well-being (OECD, 2016).

Counterfeit products range from twisted brand names, look-alikes and unconvincing imitations (Harvey, 1987). Thus, counterfeiting can be either deceptive or non-deceptive based on the quality of the replica (Grossman & Shapiro 1988; Nwosu *et al.*, 2019). In the former, when the products sold are falsified, the forged ones deceive the buyer, and in the latter, the deception spreads to customers who intend to make a transaction. Consumers willingly choose the false alternative and become the counterfeiters' accomplices (Cesareo, 2016). The issue of piracy is an intellectual property crime that is infiltrating the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria. A transitional approach is needed to address the transitional problem of intellectual property crime, locally and internationally.

While counterfeiting is about faking a product, piracy refers to the act of reproducing a product without the approval of the copyright and trademark owner according to Cesareo (2016). Counterfeiting is a simple imitation and piracy is an unauthorised production of the real product, but both are criminal acts that are punishable by law in most countries of the world. Piracy is duplicitous and intentional in denying organisations their rights to appropriate returns on investments (Harbaugh & Khemka, 2000). According to Safranski (2022), piracy is problematic for any industry that sells niche products. It comes with a negative economic impact that filters down from the management to the employees of affected organisations. It is even worse where there is no quality control. It weakens customer experience and contentment. Along with an overwhelming loss of revenue, piracy brings down individual brands in the public eye while diminishing the status of the brand owners. Whereas big organisations' reputations are tarnished, the image of small enterprises is not spared.

Public Relations as a Tool for Limiting the Problem of Piracy

Public relations is the practice that looks after the image of an organization and seeks to gain public understanding, respect, controlled sentiment and favourable action in its favour (James *et al.*, 2020a; Ndubueze *et al.*, 2019; James *et al.*, 2020b; James *et al.*, 2020c; Ndubueze *et al.*, 2020; Nejo *et al.*, 2020; Olabanjo *et al.*, 2019). Many scholars have a good understanding of public relations and are often in agreement about what it is. In all, it is a discipline that deals with an organization's interaction with its publics. That is, what the organization is communicating to its publics and what they are reacting to (Odiboh & Ajayi, 2019). Public relations creates a better perspective and transforms negative perceptions into beneficial ones (Samson, 2018). Nwosu *et al.*, (2020a) emphasize that, for public relations to be valued, it must be carefully applied through beneficial activities. It must deliver real value to the organization and help it to attain its corporate objectives (Nwosu *et al.*, 2020a; Nejo *et al.*, 2020b; Olabanjo *et al.*, 2020a; Omokiti *et al.*, 2020b; Salau *et al.*, 2020a; Salau *et al.*, 2020b; Nwosu *et al.*, 2020b). Public relations is a veritable tool for building an organizational image. Its application in the beauty and cosmetics industry will address the issue of piracy.

Theoretical Framework

The cultivation theory forms the fundamental basis for this study. Cultivation theory was proposed by George Gerbner, who tried to determine the influence of media advocacy on viewers' understanding of the environment they live in (Littlejohn, 2002). Gerbner realized that the dominance of television created a standard view of the world and made all cultures have conventional thinking (Ndonye, 2014). Cultivation theory contends that persuasive content over time imbues symbols, messages, images and meanings that dominate and are eventually absorbed as truth. Also, public relations practitioners must keep their message consistent until the target publics achieve behavioural change.

Research Design and Methodology

This study applied the survey method of data collection. A survey is the compilation of information from several people through responses to questions (Olabanjo *et al.*, 2019). This type of research method allows the use of various approaches for recruiting participants, collecting data and using different information

methods. Survey research may either be quantitative (using numerically graded questionnaires), qualitative (using open-ended questions) study approaches, or using both techniques. A questionnaire is the data collection instrument used in this survey method.

The questionnaire was drawn from the research questions to deduce the respondents' awareness and perception of piracy and public relations activities in Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics industry. The survey instrument provided both open and close-ended questions about how piracy in the industry can be combated with public relations. The researcher self-administered the questionnaires to the sample size representing the population using the google form. The researcher used the google form because that is

the easiest way of getting across to our study subjects. This study was conducted among 200 randomly selected people through purposive sampling. The study subjects included career women, distributors, makeup artists, and personal makeup shoppers.

Data Presentation and Discussion

Data obtained from the fieldwork are analysed and presented in tables of frequencies and percentages. The tables show how exposed the publics are to the public relations activities of the beauty and cosmetics industry, their level of awareness of these public relations activities, and opinions about piracy in the beauty and cosmetics industry. Also, what do they suggest to curtail the threats piracy has on the industry?

Table 1: How often the respondents shop for cosmetics

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very often	104	52.3	52.3	52.3
Often	76	38.2	38.2	90.5
Rarely	19	9.5	9.5	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 shows that out of 199 respondents, 104, (52.3%) said they shop for beauty and cosmetics very often; and 76, which represents 38.2% of the respondents affirmed that they often shop. In contrast, 19, which represents 9.5%, affirmed that they rarely shop for beauty and cosmetics

products. The data above shows that the respondents shop for beauty and cosmetics at one point or the other, hence, only a few of the respondents affirm shopping rarely, while none affirmed never shopping.

Table 2: Periods of respondents' shopping for cosmetics

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Monthly	65	32.7	32.7	52.8
Twice a year	49	24.6	24.6	92.5
Quarterly	30	15.1	15.1	67.8
Bi-monthly	27	13.6	13.6	20.1
Yearly	15	7.5	7.5	100.0
Weekly	11	5.5	5.5	6.5
Daily	1	.5	.5	.5
Bi-weekly	1	.5	.5	1.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 shows that the majority (32.7%) of the respondents stated that they shop monthly for

beauty and cosmetics products. On the other hand, 24.6% of the respondents said they shop

for beauty and cosmetics products twice a year. However, 15.1% of the respondents stated that

they shop quarterly. In comparison, 13.6% affirm that they shop bi-monthly.

Table 3: Awareness of the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	195	98.0	98.0	98.0
No	3	1.5	1.5	99.5
Not sure	1	.5	.5	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

As noted in Table 3, 195 which represents 98.0% of the respondents are aware of Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics sector, and three which represents 1.5% of the respondents are

not aware of Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics sector. This result shows that almost all respondents are aware of Nigeria's beauty and cosmetics sector.

Table 4: The beauty and cosmetics industry respondents are familiar with

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
House of Tara	93	46.7	46.7	46.7
Zaron cosmetics	70	35.2	35.2	81.9
BM pro	13	6.5	6.5	88.4
Kuddy cosmetics	12	6.0	6.0	94.5
Others	11	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 reveals that 46.7% of the respondents agree that they are familiar with the House of Tara as a beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria. On the other hand, 35.2% of the respondents are aware of Zaron cosmetics as a beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria. In

comparison, 6.5% are aware of BM Pro as a beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria. From this outcome, it is obvious that the respondents are more aware of House of Tara and Zaron cosmetics as beauty and cosmetics brands in Nigeria.

Table 5: Awareness of public relations activities

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	180	90.5	90.5	90.5
No	14	7.0	7.0	97.5
Not sure	5	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 shows that 90.5% of the respondents agree that they are aware of the beauty and cosmetics industry's public relations activities in Nigeria; 7.0 % responded negatively. By contrast, 2.5% said they were

not certain. Based on this finding, it is clear that the respondents are aware of the beauty and cosmetics industry's public relations activities.

Table 6: Respondents' familiarity with public relations activities

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Product launch	98	49.2	49.2	96.0
Makeup fair	74	37.2	37.2	37.2
Press conferences	19	9.5	9.5	46.7
Others	8	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 6, 49.2% of the respondents agreed that they are aware of a product launch as a public relations activity in the beauty and cosmetics industry. Meanwhile, 37.2% of the respondents mentioned that they are aware of the makeup fair as a public relations activity

they carry out. Only 9.5% of the respondents mentioned press conferences. In comparison, 4.0% of the respondents mentioned others which means makeup fairs and product launches as the significant public relations activities they know.

Table 7: How respondents became aware of public relations activities of beauty and cosmetics companies

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Billboards	36	18.1	18.1	78.9
Instagram	35	17.6	17.6	37.7
Twitter	23	11.6	11.6	49.2
Seminars	18	9.0	9.0	60.8
Friends	18	9.0	9.0	95.0
Relatives	14	7.0	7.0	85.9
Word of mouth	13	6.5	6.5	16.6
Newspaper	8	4.0	4.0	10.1
Facebook	7	3.5	3.5	20.1
Radio	7	3.5	3.5	6.0
Press conferences	5	2.5	2.5	51.8
Television	5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Others	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 7, 18.1% of the respondents listed billboards as a means by which they became aware of the beauty and cosmetics industry's PR practices. On the other hand, 17.6% mentioned Instagram, 11.2% said through Twitter, 9.0% said they became aware through

friends, 9.0% also mentioned seminars, 7.0% through relatives, and 6.5% mentioned word of mouth. This means the primary tools through which people become aware are billboards and Instagram predominantly.

Table 8: Exposure to public relations actions of beauty and cosmetics companies

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1-3 times a year	86	43.2	43.2	43.2
4-6 times a year	62	31.2	31.2	74.4
7-9 times a year	35	17.6	17.6	92.0
More than ten times a year	16	8.0	8.0	100.0

Total	199	100.0	100.0	
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From Table 8, 43.2% of the respondents mentioned that they are only exposed to these actions 1-3 times a year. Meanwhile, 31.2% mentioned 4 - 6 times a year; 17.6%

mentioned 7 - 9 times a year, while only 8.0% only mentioned that they are exposed to these actions more than ten times a year.

Table 9: How respondents rate the success of public relations activities in fighting piracy in the industry

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Excellent	92	46.2	46.2	46.2
Above average	75	37.7	37.7	83.9
Average	18	9.0	9.0	93.0
Below average	8	4.0	4.0	97.0
Very poor	6	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

Table 9 shows how the respondents rate the success of public relations in fighting piracy. A simple majority (46.2%) stated that the activities are excellent, 37.7 % stated that it

is above average, and 9.0% stated that it is average. In comparison, 4.0% and 3.0%, respectively, stated that it is inadequate.

Table 10: To know if quality public relations activations changed respondents' perception of the beauty and cosmetics industry

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	163	81.9	81.9	81.9
No	24	12.1	12.1	94.0
Not sure	12	6.0	6.0	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

Table 10 indicates that 81.9 % of the respondents believe that high-quality public relations efforts have improved their view of the beauty and cosmetics industries; 12.1 % responded negatively. By comparison, 6.0 % said they were not certain. From this result, it

is clear that the beauty and cosmetics industry's public relations efforts go a long way toward improving consumer image.

Table 11: Respondents' satisfaction with the PR activities carried out in the beauty and cosmetics industry

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	141	70.9	70.9	70.9
No	44	22.1	22.1	93.0
Not sure	14	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

As shown in Table 11, 70.9% answered in the affirmative that they were satisfied with the beauty and cosmetics industry's

public relations activities, and 22.1% answered in the negative. In comparison, 7.0% stated that they are not sure if they are satisfied or not.

Table 12: Whether the respondents want improvement in the delivery of public relations activities

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	108	54.3	54.3	54.3
No	80	40.2	40.2	94.5
Not sure	11	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 12, 54.3% agreed that they would want beauty and cosmetics to improve in the deliveries of their activities, and 40.2%

said no. In comparison, 5.5% of the respondents said they are not sure.

Table 13: Respondents' area of improvement in the delivery of the public relations actions

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Publicity/adverts	23	11.6	11.6	39.2
Use of social media	18	9.0	9.0	20.1
Use of traditional media	15	7.5	7.5	27.6
Use fliers	14	7.0	7.0	7.0
Invest in PR	12	6.0	6.0	95.0
Every area	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
Use bloggers/influencers	8	4.0	4.0	46.7
Promotional sales	8	4.0	4.0	11.1
Use of registered suppliers/distributors	7	3.5	3.5	42.7
Not sure/nil	84	42.2	42.2	88.9
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

The respondents listed some of the areas they would want the beauty and cosmetics industry to improve in the delivery of their public relations activities. In Table 13, 42.2% mentioned that they are not sure. However,

11.6% mentioned publicity/adverts, 9.0% mentioned social media, 7.5% traditional media, 7.0% mentioned the use of fliers, and 6.0% mentioned that they should invest in more public relations.

Table 14: How respondents identify fake beauty and cosmetics products

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Packaging	56	28.1	28.1	28.1
Quality of the content	35	17.6	17.6	100.0
Relatively cheap	25	12.6	12.6	49.7
Ease of access	18	9.0	9.0	37.2
Black marketing	14	7.0	7.0	64.3
Does not last on the skin	12	6.0	6.0	57.3
Sometimes difficult to identify	6	3.0	3.0	67.3
Gives skin reaction	3	1.5	1.5	51.3
Not sure/nil	30	15.1	15.1	82.4
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

Table 14 shows how the respondents can identify fake beauty and cosmetics companies. A majority, 28.1%, said through the packaging. However, 17.6% said through the quality of the content, 15.1% are not sure, 12.6% mentioned price, 9.0% ease of access, 7.0% mentioned black

marketeering, 6.0% indicated that it doesn't last on skin, 3.0% said sometimes it is difficult to identify while only 1.5 said it gives skin reaction. This table shows that the principal way through which the respondents identify counterfeit products is through the packaging.

Table 15: Measures respondents think can be taken to curtail Piracy threats

Variable	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Re-branding	32	16.1	16.1	34.2
Create awareness/customer sensitization	30	15.1	15.1	74.9
Authentication code	28	14.1	14.1	18.1
Government intervention	27	13.6	13.6	47.7
Regulatory bodies formulation	24	12.1	12.1	59.8
Refer customers to their website	17	8.5	8.5	88.9
Punish offenders	11	5.5	5.5	80.4
Trademarking	8	4.0	4.0	4.0
Not sure/nil	22	11.1	11.1	100.0
Total	199	100.0	100.0	

Table 15 shows the measures that the respondents suggested in curtailing the threats of piracy in the beauty and cosmetics industry. A majority (16.1%) of the respondents suggested re-branding; 15.1% mentioned that companies should create awareness and sensitize consumers, and 14.1% suggested the use of an authentication code. Meanwhile, 13.6% suggested government intervention. Furthermore, 12.1% suggested regulatory bodies; 11.1% said they are not sure, or they do not know; 8.5% said to refer customers to their official website. Lastly, 5.5% said to punish offenders, while 4.0% suggested trademarking.

The use of the authentication code remains the leading measure suggested by the respondents in curtailing the menace.

Discussion of Findings

Data obtained from the study serve as the basis for interrogating the questions guiding this research. The analysis would generally cover the respondent's awareness of the public relations tools used to reduce the rate of piracy in the beauty and cosmetics industry.

Public Awareness of selected beauty and cosmetics companies' PR activities

This research investigated respondents' awareness of the beauty and cosmetics industry's public Relations' practices in Nigeria. Based on the survey results, the analysis showed that the respondents are well aware of the beauty and cosmetics industry's public relations practices. The public relations activities that the respondents are cognizant of include product launches and makeup fairs, which were identified by the majority. Deduced from this is that the respondents are aware of cosmetics and beauty public relations activities, and they can specifically identify these events.

Public relations tools used by selected beauty and cosmetics companies

This study brought to the fore the public relations tools through which the respondents became aware of the public relations activities of the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria. From the data generated from Table 7, essential tools through which the respondents became primarily aware of the PR activities are billboards, followed by Instagram and Twitter. Two of these tools are social media which means social media and one is Out of Home. The three are vital tools for creating awareness for PR activations in the industry under focus.

Public awareness and perception of PR practices in the beauty and cosmetics companies in Nigeria

Tables 10 and 11 show how the respondents perceive the PR practices of the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria. The beauty and cosmetics industry's public relations efforts are well-known to the respondents. Also, the industry's target groups have a positive opinion about the companies under focus. They were satisfied with the beauty and cosmetic industry's public relations activities. This result denotes that the PR activities of the beauty and cosmetics industry are effective in influencing the thoughts of the public. If PR does not warn and affect public actions and decisions, then the primary goal of establishing a mutual relationship would not be achieved.

Effectiveness of PR activities in curtailing piracy in the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria

Based on the data generated from the survey, the respondents' rating of the success of public relations in fighting piracy is fairly high if 46.2% "excellent" is added to the 37.7% "above average". This is an approval of the public relations fight against piracy. The importance of public relations in fighting piracy is further emphasized by this result. Therefore, public relations tools are necessary for the war against piracy in the beauty and cosmetics industry, with the belief that positive results will help to fine-tune the industry's image.

Maintaining and enhancing PR and its positive effect on the industry

Based on the data from the survey, the respondents gave insights into the areas of improvement in the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria. That is the area of improving the delivery of their activities. Findings show the suggested areas of improvement. They are the use of publicity, advertising and social media. Also, the use of authentication codes and government intervention are significant measures for winning the battle against piracy. Also, customer sensitization advocacies about how to tackle piracy in the industry are suggested. All these suggestions are significant outcomes that would be useful for the anti-piracy endeavours of the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study affirms that PR is necessary for creating awareness for the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria and is also a veritable tool in fighting piracy in the industry. In building a strong relationship between an industry and target groups of people, public relations remains useful as proven by this study. Therefore, the importance of public relations in the beauty and cosmetics industry can never be overemphasized. Thus, to curtail piracy in the beauty and cosmetics industry, the use of public relations tools must be used continuously until piracy is curtailed to the barest minimum.

Based on the aims, findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations should be considered by all stakeholders in the beauty and cosmetics industry in Nigeria and other countries with similar experiences:

1. The beauty and cosmetics industry needs to avail itself the social media for public engagement and interaction. It will bring them closer to their consumer-publics.

That way, they can continuously sensitize users about the side effects of patronizing fake products on their skin as well as the danger to their health in general.

2. Governments at all levels need to create regulatory bodies that will watch the activities of the beauty and cosmetics industry and enforce laws that can decimate piracy. Through these bodies, the government can always execute market raids and destroy any shop that sells pirated cosmetics and beauty products.
3. Companies need to rethink their product packaging and ensure constant rebranding to outsmart pirates. They also need to trademark their brand and create Units in the PR department which would use the trademark benchmark to identify pirated versions of their products and bring the perpetrators before the law.

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