

The Effect of Gender Role Socialization on Marketing of Gendered Products: The Case of Cultural Ghana

Authors : Priscilla Adoley Moffat

Abstract : One common element of African cultures is gender role socialization. This is a significant component of African cultures because gender roles are considered in these cultures, to define males and females and distinguish males from females. Various studies have established the impact of gender role socialization on individuals, on activities of individuals, including business activities, and on society, in general. This study further examined the effect of gender role socialization on the marketing of gendered products. The study sought to establish whether gender role socialization affects marketing, particularly word-of-mouth marketing, of gender-specific products. For a comprehensive examination of the influence of gender role socialization on word-of-mouth marketing of gendered products, 2150 respondents (1075 males and 1075 females), comprising 550 students of Marketing from various Ghanaian universities/colleges and 1600 other individuals (100 from each of the 16 regions of Ghana, representing the various cultures) were randomly sampled and interviewed. The study found that females are more willing to market male products than males when tasked to market female products. Also, females are more efficient in marketing male products than males in marketing female products. Again, most female audiences feel uncomfortable or embarrassed and are less receptive when approached by a male marketer of female products. Then, the study found that the fear of stigmatization is a major influencer of males' negative attitude towards marketing of female products and that female marketers of male products, however, suffer less or no stigma. Aside from its addition to the literature on the impact of gender role socialization on marketing and, for that matter, the influence of socialization on marketing, the findings of the study are useful to multinational companies, which become better informed in their strategy when assigning marketing roles, especially in Africa.

Keywords : gender, socialization, marketing, gendered, role, Ghana

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