

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR DETERMINANTS: EVIDENCE FROM MBA STUDENTS

DETERMINANTES DEL COMPORTAMIENTO DEL CONSUMIDOR: EVIDENCIA DE LOS ESTUDIANTES DE MBA

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ABSTRACT

The Masters in Business Administration (MBA) programme is a global educational qualification with different forms of values for individuals and organisations and varying degrees of attractions from persons and companies in developed and developing countries. Therefore, many factors motivate individuals and organizations to choose MBA programmes. This research utilised a survey research method, with a research instrument developed from relevant extant literature, to isolate the major factors determining students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes in the Nigerian university system. The research reports that the major factors determining students' choice behavior towards MBA programs include quality-related, information-related, and convenience-related factors. The limitations associated with the research relate to its cross-sectional nature, in addition to the usual limitations associated with the survey research method used in this research. In addition, the combination of MBA students from both private and government-owned universities is likely to pose some limitations. Also, focusing on students from only one country (Nigeria) presents external validity limitations. The research has practical implications for

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administrators and regulators of business programs in the Nigerian university system, in addition to organizational decision-makers interested in sponsoring their relevant staff for MBA programs in the Nigerian university system. The research has social implications about the different cohorts of students interested in MBA programmes in the Nigerian university system.

KEYWORDS

consumer behaviour, MBA, business and management education, students, Nigeria.

RESUMEN

El programa de Maestría en Administración de Empresas (MBA) es una calificación educativa global con diferentes formas de valores para individuos y organizaciones, así como diversos grados de atracción de personas y empresas en países desarrollados y en desarrollo. Por lo tanto, muchos factores motivan a las personas y organizaciones a elegir programas de MBA. Esta investigación utilizó un método de investigación de encuestas, con un instrumento de investigación desarrollado a partir de la literatura existente, para aislar los principales factores que determinan el comportamiento de elección de los estudiantes hacia los programas de MBA en el sistema universitario de Nigeria. La investigación señala que los principales factores que determinan el comportamiento de elección de los estudiantes hacia los programas de MBA incluyen factores relacionados con la calidad, la información y la conveniencia. Las limitaciones asociadas con la investigación se relacionan con su naturaleza transversal, además de las limitaciones habituales asociadas con el método de investigación de encuesta. Además, es probable que la combinación de estudiantes de maestría en administración de empresas de universidades públicas y privadas presente algunas limitaciones. Centrarse en estudiantes de un solo país (Nigeria) presenta limitaciones de validez externa. La investigación tiene implicaciones prácticas para los administradores y reguladores de los programas de negocios en el sistema universitario de Nigeria. La investigación tiene implicaciones sociales sobre las diferentes cohortes de estudiantes interesados en programas de MBA en el sistema universitario de Nigeria.

PALABRAS CLAVE

comportamiento del consumidor, MBA, educación empresarial y gerencial, estudiantes, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

In most countries (both developed and developing), demand for advanced education is guided by the need to raise the psychological, social and economic status of graduates (Stevens et al., 2021). Generally, there is shifting emphasis within education from public product to a marketable product. In addition, universities, both in developed and developing countries have been evaluated not only on the basis of value or pedagogical outputs, but on the basis of some

efficiency and effectiveness indices, including economic viability of courses and programmes in universities. As a result, the marketing strategy activities of institutions of higher learning have changed and increased (Judson & Taylor, 2014). In this vein, higher education (especially business education) has been seen as another product industry in a competitive environment requiring relevant strategic marketing tendencies to cope with the prevailing competition. Business schools, generally, are concerned with enhancing societal and ethical values, in addition to striving to optimize their set goals, including students-centered goals, via their managerial conducts. However, the managerial conducts of business schools may be challenged with regard to proper balancing of societal/ethical values and optimization of organizational goals and (Jeong, Sun, & Fu, 2020).

For some time, education as a professional service has tended to minimize the use of marketing theories, principles and strategies. Despite this relative indifference to marketing theories and frameworks, education should be seen as a service offering which is capable of being treated as any other intangible product using relevant conceptual frameworks and theories in the marketing literature. One of such conceptual frameworks in marketing is consumer behaviour. Consumer behaviour, as a field of study, may be conceptualised as systematic investigation of the behaviour of consumers, customers or clients towards products (goods, services and ideas). There are many approaches to the study of consumers' behaviours towards goods, services and ideas are many, and buyer psychology analysis is a salient aspect of marketing. Institutions of higher learning can utilise marketing frameworks in their operations, and such frameworks can, for example, provide indications regarding the perceptions of students, among others, towards higher institutions' programmes, products and staff (Shank, Walker, & Hayes, 1995; Beenen, Pichler, & Davoudpour, 2017). Specifically, for some institutions of higher learning, a major managerial issue of marketing relevance is to determine the salient determinants or factors which will make actual and prospective students show positive behaviour towards their programmes, products, institutions and people.

The MBA (Masters in Business Administration) Programme is seen in most countries of the world as a pathway to the executive class of organisational decision-makers (Kelan & Jones, 2010; Dakduk et al, 2016). It is a world-wide recognised qualification for new and experienced organisational decision-makers (Walsh & Powell, 2020). In Nigeria, there are about 212 (two hundred and twelve) universities, with Federal (49 universities), State (54 universities), and private (99 universities) forms of ownership (<https://www.nuc.edu.ng>). Some of the universities in Nigeria have business programmes, including the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) programmes. Generally, both soft skills and non-soft skills are considered in the admission of students into MBA programmes, with soft skills being seen as very important with regard to managerial success (Beenen, Pichler, & Davoudpour, 2017). Some students in the Nigerian university system are interested in business programmes, generally, and the MBA programmes, specifically, for various reasons. This research sought to determine the major determinants of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes in the Nigerian university system. Such an understanding will assist choice behaviours of relevant students, stimulate further studies in cognate areas, in addition to guiding administrative and policy decisions of university administrators and regulators in the Nigerian university system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Education has been seen as a vital element for a country's growth and development (Mustapha & Bolaji, 2015), in addition to enhancing ethical development of students (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). In most countries/economies of the world, when their economies entered the stage of global competition during the last decade/century, organisational executives realised that there was a limitation to the effectiveness of in-house management education/training and development programmes. Generally, in-house organisational management development programmes suffer from narrowness of vision and a lack of breadth in managerial talent which is necessary for managing complex contemporary organisations.

As organisational business operations become complex, managers trained via in-house management development programmes seem to lack the theoretical sophistication, skills, competencies, depth and breadth of knowledge and experience necessary for efficient and effective management of contemporary organisations. Hence, the need for organisational executives to be exposed to MBA programmes run in university business schools. MBA programmes may be established as joint academia-industry projects which will involve organisational executives and academics in running (teaching, research, etc.) the programmes. MBA programmes in Universities may, also, have the philosophy of emphasising analysis and projects based on specific issues of managerial relevance facing business organisations. Therefore, in designing and running MBA programmes, communication between industry and the academia is required and expected. With regard to the type of students to be admitted into MBA programs, Koys (2010) posits that considerations for admission into MBA programs should comprise such factors as cognitive abilities, numeracy skills, prior academic performance, staff success and personality characteristics. Generally, an MBA program is expected to broaden students' international perspectives, enhance leadership competencies and skills, promote teamwork, and comprehend organisational culture, in addition to critical thinking abilities and knowledge of relevant market segments (Xie & Chen, 2019).

Gurol, Doruk, & Cemek (2016) argue that students' motivation for MBA programmes may be a function of instructional foundations (i.e., whether private or public). Along this line of thought, Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012) have compared private and public universities with regard to students' expectations, concluding that students in private universities give value to university reputation, personal interaction between staff and students, facilities and financial cost of programmes, while students in public universities give value to programmes offered by universities, facilities for athletics/sports, university reputation, financial cost of programmes, accommodation facilities, and locations of universities. Generally, students in both private and public universities give value to innovative technologies, involvement in community development activities, and good facilities on university campuses (Joseph, Mullen, & Spake (2012). According to Gurol, Doruk, & Cemek (2016), the major determinants of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes include content of programme lectures, tuition fee, career plan outcomes, physical facilities and conditions, and service performance levels of student affairs departments, in addition to students' challenging experiences in their professional career paths (Han & Liang, 2015).

According to Okazaki-Ward (2001), some of the issues which MBA students are satisfied with relate to such things as expanding their horizons; formation of contact networks outside their own companies; learning the skills of research methodology; learning to think logically; acquisition of communication skills; number of course credits associated with MBA degrees; quality of fellow students; quality of academic and non-academic staff; time for lectures; location of the university for the MBA programmes, among others. GMAC (2012) reported students' increased prospects for job opportunities as a major determinant of students' choice of MBA programmes. However, predicting students' programme choice determinants is likely to be difficult as a result of the multifaceted and dynamic nature of the determining variables (Sojkin, Bartkowiak, & Skuza, 2012; Sojkin, Bartkowiak, & Skuza, 2015). Therefore, students' decisions regarding the higher education programme to undertake can be complex and long-term decision-making processes (Vulperhorst, van der Rijst, & Akkerman, 2020).

MBA students, generally, want their education to have relevance to their work. In addition, MBA students want teaching methods used in business schools to use such methods as case study, simulation, debate, and fieldwork exercises. In addition, MBA students would want a substantial proportion of their lecturers to have practical working experience. Also, MBA programmes should involve a hybrid of theoretical and practical courses, where theory informs practice by defining managerial problems and offering solutions. It can then be argued that there are many issues that determine students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes. Generally, consumers, customers and clients are frequently faced with choices with regard to goods, services and ideas (Penz, Hartl & Hofmann, 2019). Relevant extant literature submits that some aspects of consumers', customers' or clients' behaviours correlate with the values they hold or emphasise (Brown et al., 2016; Flynn, Goldsmith, & Pollitte, 2016; Lim, Phang, & Lim, 2020), and these values will determine, to some extent, their buying behaviours. The present research sought to determine, empirically, the major factors that determine Nigerian university students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes.

METHODOLOGY

This research attempted to explore major determinants of Nigerian university students' choice of MBA programmes. A descriptive research design was adopted for the present research in line with the major aim of the research. This research design involved, among others, the design and administration of relevant research instrument to collect the opinions of relevant subjects/respondents on the issue of research interest. The research instrument (questionnaire) for this research was developed from relevant extant literature, and validated by subject matter experts. Specifically, the research instrument benefited from the works of Mazzarol, Soutan, & Thein, (2000), Kelan & Jones (2010), Koys (2010), Han & Liang (2015), and Dakduk et al (2016). These previous works were chosen for this research because of their conceptual, contextual and psychometric relevance with regard to reliability and construct validity issues.

A questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents (students) who were undergoing various offline (face-to-face) MBA programmes in universities in Northeastern part of Nigeria, and students' participation in the research was

optional. The questionnaire was structured into three sections (A, B and C). Section A of the questionnaire consisted of Likert scale questions on eighteen (18) items dealing with the extent to which the 18 issues determined students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes. Section B asked questions in relation to the extent of satisfaction of the students in their MBA programme, while Section C dealt with data on relevant demographic variables of the respondents (students). The cover letter of the research instrument assured the respondents/students of confidentiality of their responses (Bashir et al, 2019).

A convenience sampling approach was employed in the present research. Generally, convenience sampling research approach is associated with some advantages, which include relative ease in accessing respondents, high response rate, and cost efficiency (Eze et al., 2011; Ritchie et al, 2014; Yadav and Pathak, 2017; and Rahman et al., 2018). Also, research indicates that students, when used as respondents in any research, can provide reliable and valid assessment of their educational experiences (Marsh, 1987; Wachtel, 1998; Houston & Bettencourt, 1999; Sweeney & Ingram, 2001; Pelter, Schibrowsky, & Drago, 2007). In addition, university students are, generally, educated persons with relatively appreciable levels of intellectual sophistication in relation to some of the issues of research interest (Petrenko, Mitina, & Papovyan, 2020). Five hundred (500) copies of the questionnaire were administered to university students undergoing MBA programmes in Northeastern part of Nigeria using the convenience sampling method. Three hundred and thirteen (313) copies of the administered research instrument were completed, giving an effective response rate of about 63%.

Relevant statistical tools in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20.0) were used to analyze the collected data. Specific data-analysis techniques, such as descriptive analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), were used to analyze the collected data. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used in this research to test the validity of the measurement model result gotten from the exploratory factor analysis (Long & Vinh, 2017). According to Sajidan & Gunarhadi (2020), EFA is concerned with identifying underlying groups of research variables, while CFA is concerned with determining the validity of the factor results from EFA. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to test the relevant scale's construct validity, and the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of Sphericity values showed that the research data were suitable for factor analysis (Sojkin, Bartkowiak, & Skuza, 2015). Also, data normality was established in this research via skewness and kurtosis values which were below threshold values recommended in relevant extant literature. Byrne (2010) posits that if the skewness value is between -2 and $+2$, and the kurtosis value is between -7 and $+7$, data normality is assumed.

The present research met the sample size requirements reported by Sajidan & Gunarhadi (2020). In addition, the questionnaire's measurement properties were assessed by conducting reliability and validity tests. According to O'Rourke & Hatcher (2013), CFA can be used to determine construct validity (which is concerned with ensuring that a set of research variables represents the theoretical construct being measured) and reliability of a research instrument. Also, CFA can also be used to determine convergent validity (which is concerned with ensuring that the research variables belong to the theoretical/latent construct being measured) and discriminant validity (which means that the two constructs

being measured are highly different from each other) (Hill & Hughes, 2007). According to Hair et al. (2019), discriminant validity can be determined by correlating one construct with another, and if the correlation value of both constructs is lower than 0.85, it means there is presence of discriminant validity. The reliability, which is concerned with consistency of results from the research measure or scale (Brown, 2015), of the research measure was assessed via Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951).

Table 1. Reliability statistic of MBA programme choice

Cronbach's Alpha Value	No. of Items
.751	18

From Table 1, it can be seen that the questionnaire used in this research has a relatively appreciable reliability value of 0.75 (Walsh (1995; Hair et al, 2017; Ofori and Appiah-Nimo, 2019).

In order to find out the underlying factors or dimensions concerning determinants of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes, data on the relevant statements in the questionnaire were subjected to exploratory factor analysis (EFA). To determine relevant indices or dimensions of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes through exploratory factors analysis (EFA), principal component analysis with Varimax rotation was conducted. In the EFA, factors or dimensions were only retained if they possessed an Eigen Value greater than one, accounted for more than 5% of variance extracted, and are conceptually clear and interpretable (Harris & Ogbonna, 2001). Also, before performing the factor analysis, the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) measure of sampling adequacy was used to check whether the data from the relevant statements in the questionnaire were suitable for factor analysis (see Table 4). The KMO test result of 0.76 in Table 4 was higher than the threshold acceptable value of 0.5 (Leung & Wong, 2001). Therefore, the data were found suitable for Factor analysis. Generally, in EFA, if the KMO is ≥ 0.6 and Barlet's test of sphericity is significant (i.e. < 0.05), then the data is suitable for factor analysis (Leung & Wong, 2001).

The research data was subjected to exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The exploratory factor analysis (EFA), via Principal Component Analysis (PCA), revealed a three-factor structure, which accounted for 55% of variance explained. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assess the validity of the three-factor structure (Castro-Gonzalez et al., 2019), and the results are shown in Figure 1.

Acceptable model fit indices in CFA are, generally, indicated by Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) ≥ 0.80 ; Adjusted Goodness-of Fit Index (AGFI) ≥ 0.80 ; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) values ≤ 0.08 ; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) values ≥ 0.90 ; and Chi-square degrees of freedom ratio (CMIN/DF) value < 3 (Kline 2005). In addition, Bashir et al (2019) posit that model fit to research data can be confirmed when X^2/df value lies between 1 and 5, RMSEA below 0.08, and CFI value below 1. Therefore, the CFA values in Figure 1 seem to provide strong and acceptable model fit indices because the model fit indices met the threshold values recommended in relevant extant literature (Lal, 2017). The Research Findings & Discussion section presents the research results and associated discussions.

RESULTS

The research set out to explore the major determinants of Nigerian university students' choice of MBA programmes. Most 69.6%) of the respondents were male, and 57.5% of the respondents possessed relevant professional qualifications. Results from the analyzed data are presented in Tables 2 to 4 and Figure 1. In this section of the research, discussions of the results are presented, in addition to associated conclusions and recommendations. Also, areas for cognate studies are suggested. Presented in Table 2 are the Keys to research variables. Presented in Table 2 are the Keys to research variables.

Table 2. Keys to research variables

Variable ID.	Considerations for Choice of MBA Programme
A1.	Programme content.
A2.	Location of offering institution.
A3.	Monetary cost of the programme.
A4.	Perceived reputation of the University offering the programme.
A5.	Less academic stress from Lecturers in the University offering the programme.
A6.	Quality of Lecturers.
A7.	Facilities available for the programme.
A8.	Ranking of the University offering the programme by the NUC.
A9.	Promotional campaigns mounted for the programme.
A10.	Information from friends and relatives.
A11.	Information from professional colleagues.
A12.	Influence from employers.
A13.	Liberal entry qualifications required for the programme by offering institution.
A14.	Administrative competence of the University offering the programme.
A15.	Time convenience.
A16.	Geographical convenience.
A17.	Programme not affected by industrial strikes or students' union unrest.
A18.	To have social, economic and political relevance in contemporary Nigeria.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of programme choice.

Variable/Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic
A1	4.7412	1.03781
A2	4.4601	1.07380
A3	4.5016	1.08346
A4	4.3898	1.16911
A5	3.9425	1.36458
A6	4.3962	1.28960
A7	3.8243	1.36266
A8	4.0575	1.24675
A9	3.5112	1.34476
A10	3.8562	1.42610
A11	3.7987	1.34964
A12	3.6422	1.44107
A13	4.1789	1.34924
A14	4.2460	1.25071
A15	4.1118	1.33624
A16	3.8818	1.47264
A17	3.8562	1.73439
A18	4.2204	1.46080
N=313		

From Table 3, it can be seen that more than 50 % of the items listed in the research instrument determined the students' choice of MBA program "to an average extent". Specifically, "MBA programme content" (A1) had the highest extent (Mean = 4.74, SD = 1.04) of determining MBA programme choice, while "promotional campaign mounted for the programme" (A9) had the least extent (Mean = 3.51, SD = 1.34).

Table 4. Factor Analysis of MBA Programme Choice Items (KMO and Bartlett's Test)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy:	.758
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square: 857.795
	Df: 153.000
	Sig.: .000

Figure 1.0 shows results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the three-factor components or dimensions structure (model) revealed by the exploratory factor analysis. The model fit indices (RMSEA, CMIN/DF, GFI and NFI) reasonably confirm that the three-component structure (model) of determinants of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes fit the data: RMSEA= 0.04; CMIN/DF= 1.6; GFI= .98; NFI=.94; AGFI= .96.

In general, model fit is considered to be adequate if CFI and GFI are greater or equal to 0.90 and RMSEA is smaller than 0.08 (Jaccard & Choi, 1996; Cho &

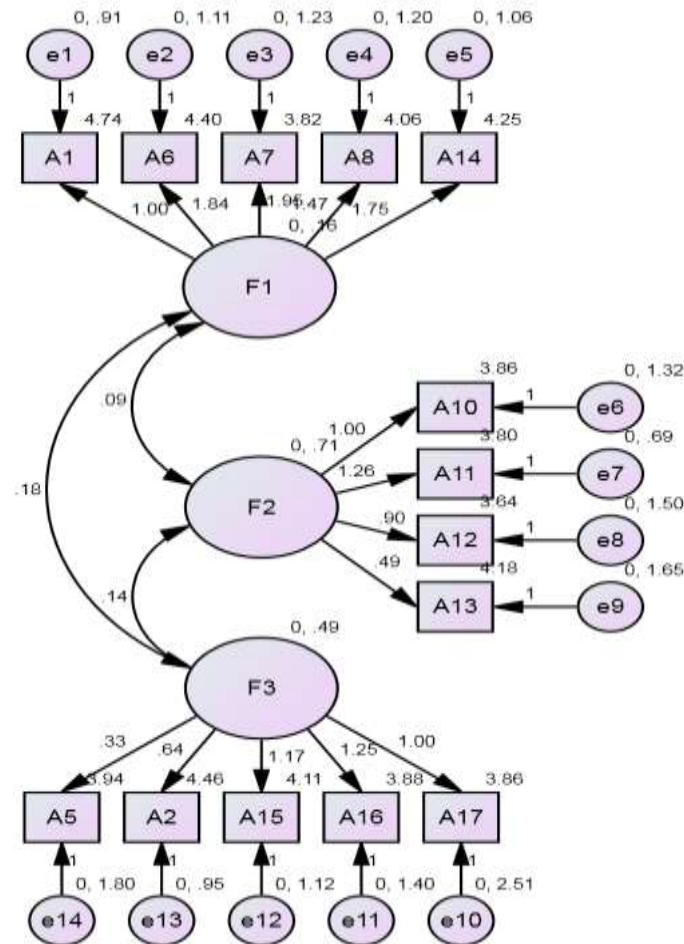
Lee, 2006; Kline, 2005). In CFA, Goodness-of-fit indices are considered not to be adequate when the AGFI, GFI, and CFI values are too low and when the RMSEA and chi – square to degrees of freedom(CMIN/DF) ratio values are too high (Valenzuela et al, 2006). However, it has been argued that no single method is appropriate to determine which CFA model best fits an empirical data and it is only through the application of multiple CFA model fit indices (each with its own strengths and Weaknesses) that the satisfactory fit of a particular model can be determined(Davey, 2005). Also, without consideration of relevant theories, a CFA model may fit the data and be deemed acceptable due to chance alone (Finch, Immekus & French, 2016). According to Sajidan and Gunarhadi (2020), there is no single criterion or index for determining model fit. Figure 1.0 shows the CFA results.

From Figure 1.0, it can be seen that the major determinants of Nigerian university students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes are made up of three factors Factor 1 is termed as "quality-related issues". Factor 2 is termed as "information-related issues, while Factor 3 is termed as "convenience-related issues". Therefore, it can be stated from this research that the major determinants of Nigerian university students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes are:

1. Quality-related issues (Q).
2. Information-related issues(I), and
3. Convenience-related issues(C).

This means that students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes (CBMBA) is a function of quality-related issues(Q), information-related issues(I) and convenience-related issues(C). This three-factor (QIC) model can be represented notationally as: $CBMBA = f(Q, I, C)$. This may be termed as the QIC model of determinants of consumer behaviour towards MBA programmes.

Figure 1. CFA Results of Major Determinants of Students' Choice Behaviour towards MBA Programmes.



DISCUSSION

Tale 2 The findings from this research, as depicted by the QIC model of major determinants of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes, seem interesting and are in accord with some relevant extant literature. For instance, some of the findings of the present research are in accord with relevant extant literature regarding determinants of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes: expanding their horizons; formation of contact networks outside their own companies; learning the skills of research methodology; learning to think logically; acquisition of communication skills; number of course credits associated with MBA degrees; quality of fellow students; quality of academic and non-academic staff; time for lectures; location of the university for the MBA programmes, in addition to the convenience associated with offering MBA programs via virtual platforms (Beenen, Pichler, & Davoudpour, 2017; Han & Liang, 2017; Arbaugh, 2018; and Jeong, Sun, & Fu, 2020). These previous studies seem to validate the findings of the present research.

Also, the broad factors of quality-related issues, information-related issues and convenience-related issues revealed in this research seem to make practical and theoretical forms of meaning. Generally, consumer behaviour towards any

product, including MBA programmes, can be a function of factors relating to product quality, information about the product, and factors that create convenience for the customer or client (Duong et al., 2021). In addition, the marketing-mix framework has relevance to the three broad factors revealed in this research: quality-related issues have connection with the P of Product; information-related issues have connection with the P of Promotion, while convenience-related issues have connection with the P of place (Chawla, 2013; Brkanlic et al., 2020). According to Salman et al (2017), the anchor of marketing activities is the marketing-mix model. However, Mustafa, Yunus, & Azman (2014) argue that the marketing of educational services is dominated by the 7Ps marketing management framework, which includes product, price, place, promotion, process, people and physical environment.

Although, over the years, the marketing-mix framework has shown substantial relevance in many sectors, including educational sector, its limitations should be noted. According to Gronroos (1996), the philosophical anchor of the marketing-mix elements does not fit the environmental realities of some economies and sectors. In addition, the marketing-mix elements do not allow organizations to adjust their marketing practices and strategies to the unique demands of customers and clients. Hence, the need for relationship marketing practices and strategies which will help organizations, including educational organizations, to create and maintain long term relationships with customers and clients/students (Gronroos, 1996; Osuagwu, 2004). Relationship marketing practices and strategies may, therefore, be appropriate for marketers of MBA programmes in Nigerian universities, especially for institutional markets/organizations that are interested in sponsoring some of their staff for MBA programmes.

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings from the present research seem to have some likely theoretical and managerial implications for scholars and practitioners in the fields of psychology, marketing and business education, especially the QIC Model of major determinants of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes. According to Gurol, Doruk, & Cemek (2016), the major determinants of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes include content of programme lectures, tuition fee, career plan outcomes, physical facilities and conditions, and service performance levels of student affairs departments. These are some of the determinants of students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes revealed in this research.

Although this research may have provided some managerial and theoretical implications, the limitations associated with the research may open some avenues for relevant future studies (Fazeli, Shukla, & Perks, 2020). For example, the limitations associated with the present research with regard to its cross-sectional nature, in addition to the usual limitations associated with survey research method used in this research, may be fertile grounds for further studies. In addition, the combination of MBA students from both private and government-owned universities is likely to pose some limitations. This is because private and government-owned universities in Nigeria have their unique managerial peculiarities which may affect the behaviours of their students, including their

perceptions and evaluations. In addition, focusing on students from only one country (Nigeria) presents external validity limitations (Pleshko & Abdulrahman, 2020).

So, it is suggested that relevant future studies should address the identified limitations in order to present a more relevant insights regarding factors that determine students' choice behaviour towards MBA programmes in universities. Such insights will assist university managers, in general, and business schools, in particular, to understand salient and relevant consumer behaviour issues, and design efficient and effective marketing strategies for their programs in Master's. This is likely to assist in creating beneficial long-term satisfaction for MBA students, universities offering MBA programmes, and organizations sponsoring their relevant staff for MBA programmes in universities, among others. Also, cognate research is encouraged in the general area of student behaviour determinants and student culture in relation to MBA and allied programmes. This proposed line of research is likely to highlight practical and theoretical implications of relevance to decision makers (Canavan & McCamley, 2020). Finally, future relevant research should be extended to universities operating in the six-geopolitical zones in Nigeria and Abuja in order to ensure appreciable generalization of research findings, especially in the Nigerian context.

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