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Article

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Cogent Business & Management

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Suggested Citation: Afeliga, Elijah; Lavalie, Daniel E. M. (2024) : Topic: assessing how the 'no-jobs syndrome' affects the purchasing and consumption patterns of locally manufactured products: a case study of tertiary students from Ghana and Sierra Leone, Cogent Business & Management, ISSN 2331-1975, Taylor & Francis, Abingdon, Vol. 11, Iss. 1, pp. 1-24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2339382>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/326233>

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To cite this article: Elijah Afeliga & Daniel E. M. Lavalie (2024) Topic: assessing how the 'no-jobs syndrome' affects the purchasing and consumption patterns of locally manufactured products: a case study of tertiary students from Ghana and Sierra Leone, Cogent Business & Management, 11:1, 2339382, DOI: [10.1080/23311975.2024.2339382](https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2339382)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2339382>



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Published online: 08 May 2024.



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Topic: assessing how the 'no-jobs syndrome' affects the purchasing and consumption patterns of locally manufactured products: a case study of tertiary students from Ghana and Sierra Leone

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ABSTRACT

With the rising rate of youth unemployment worldwide, the situation has become unbearable, with the majority of them engaging in various social vices to sustain themselves. The governments of various nations, including Ghana and Sierra Leone, have devised a variety of policies to encourage the development of local industrial capacities, as local industrialization significantly enhances the availability of employment opportunities. These local industries are only sustained if their products are consumed, and those to lead the way should be the inhabitants through the consumption of those products. This research, therefore, sought to assess the ethnocentric tendencies of tertiary students in Ghana and Sierra Leone who are expected to be looking for jobs upon completing their programmes of study on their consumption patterns and then provided some recommendations to increase the appetite for local products. Respondents were randomly sampled and mixed-ended questionnaires were admitted. The results showed that tertiary students are aware of the unemployment situation among tertiary graduates among genders in both countries. They are also aware of the positive contribution of consumption of local products towards the creation of jobs in their localities. However, there were significant differences in gender and factors such as quality and price that could compel them to consume local products. It is therefore recommended that the government develop strategies to reduce the cost of doing business if they want to whet the appetite for the purchase and consumption of locally manufactured products without necessarily thinking that ethnocentrism will propel it. Managers of local industries should also develop and implement strategies to reduce prices and improve the quality of their operations.

IMPACT STATEMENT

With the increasing rate of youth unemployment globally, life has become unbearable with most of them indulging in all manner of social vices to survive. Governments of various countries including Ghana and Sierra Leone, have developed several policies to promote local capacities in industrialization because local industrialization largely creates opportunities for job availabilities. These local industries are only sustained if indigents consume their products. This research therefore seeks to assess the consumption patterns of tertiary students who are deemed to be looking for jobs upon completing programmes of study in both countries and then propose some recommendations to increase the appetite for local products. Respondents were randomly sampled and mixed-ended questionnaires were admitted. The results showed that tertiary students are aware of the unemployment situation among tertiary graduates among genders in both countries. They are also aware of the positive contribution of consumption of local products towards the creation of jobs in their localities. However, there were significant differences in gender and factors such as quality and price that could compel them to consume local products.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 5 May 2023
Revised 8 January 2024
Accepted 29 March 2024

KEYWORDS

Consumption;
ethnocentrism; purchase;
employment; local
products; tertiary
students

REVIEWING EDITOR

Antonio Montero-Navarro,
Universidad Rey Juan
Carlos, Spain

SUBJECTS

Consumer Psychology;
Sustainable Development;
Business, Management
and Accounting; Industry
& Industrial Studies

Introduction

One of the biggest challenges facing the youth globally is unemployment. It was estimated that globally more than 202 million people are unemployed, implying that employment opportunities are not expanding as compared to the ever-growing supply of the global labor force (Global Employment Trends 2014: The Risk of a Jobless Recovery, n.d.).

The International Labour Organization (ILO) for example, reports that the total global number of unemployed youths is estimated to reach 73 million in 2022, a slight improvement from 2021 (75 million) but still six million above the pre-pandemic level of 2019 (Global employment trends for youth 2022: Investing in transforming futures for young people, 2022).

The youth which forms 25% of the total working-age population (World of work report 2013: Repairing the economic & social fabric, 2013) globally find it difficult to get jobs upon completion of their education. Almost one in seven (7) youth are looking for work (World employment & social outlook 2015: The changing nature of jobs, 2015). This led to young workers being twice as likely as adult workers to live in extreme poverty – that is, on less than US\$1.90 per day in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms and are also far more likely to be informally employed (Global employment trends for youth 2022: Investing in transforming futures for young people, 2022).

Enrolment and employment among tertiary graduates in the Sub-Saharan region

Sub-Saharan Africa has the fastest-growing youth population in the world, with 60 percent of its population under 24 years old. Harnessing their capability therefore would require increased and focused investments in education, to ensure a healthy labor force that is capable of meeting the demands of our current local and globalized job markets according to Assan (2019).

Although higher education plays a vital role in the socio-economic development of Sub-Saharan Africa as quoted by Assan in the previous paragraph, enrolment in universities in the region is unexpectedly low compared to other regions (Amin & Ntembe, 2020). However, in their view, Sub-Saharan African countries have made strides in increasing access to higher education amidst constraints and challenges. The efforts have led to increases in enrolment and what many countries did not anticipate is the increase in unemployment from the greater output of students.

Data available from the World Bank Development Indicators 2020 cited by Amin and Ntembe (2020) on tertiary education indicators and per capita income for selected years depicted, on average, the situation in the region. As a percentage of total education expenditures for Sub-Saharan Africa, it increased from 18.4% in 2012 to 21.0% in 2014, 21.8% in 2016, and 23.2% in 2018. The rate of enrolment also increased within the period from 8.6% in 2012 to 9.0% in 2014, 9.2% in 2016, and 9.4% in 2018 with the rate of unemployment also increasing from 5.8% in 2012 to 6.2% in 2018.

The unemployment rate in Sub-Saharan Africa remains relatively low with a rate of 6.7% in 2022 according to the World Bank, as the vast majority of employable active youth cannot afford not to work. However, they work under indecent work conditions according to the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) cited by Assan (2019), indicated that the number of poor employed youth has unfortunately risen by as much as 80% over the past 25 years. Given the region's emerging demographic projections, this problem will not go away anytime soon. The assertion of Assan (2019) is that for tertiary graduates to effectively contribute to their respective national economies, and address the current youth unemployment crisis, there should be employment initiatives and approaches to transition them to formal employment.

The situation in Ghana and Sierra Leone

The Ghana Statistical Services report on Ghana household income and expenditure survey published in 2022 indicates that 17.1% of tertiary graduates were unemployed in the first quarter of 2022, 15.9% in the second quarter, 14.6% in the third quarter of 2022 as against a national unemployment rate of 13.4% in the first quarter, 13.9% in the second quarter, and 13.7% in the third quarter of 2022. This indicated that unemployment among tertiary graduates is higher than the national rate.

The Sierra Leone Telegraph reported in April 2023 that over 70% of students who graduated from universities in Sierra Leone last year are still unemployed. The African Development Bank had earlier indicated in February 2023, that the National Youth Commission is reported to have said that about 70% of the youth in Sierra Leone are either underemployed or unemployed. Alemu (2016) had already reported that approximately 60% of Sierra Leonean youth are unemployed and it happened to be the highest in the sub-Saharan region. Turay et al. (2021) quoted Villa (2017) as saying that the unemployment situation in Sierra Leone was challenging with an average increment of 3.10% of the unemployment rate from 2004 to 2016.

This therefore makes life unbearable, thereby causing most of them to indulge in social vices such as terrorism and drug trafficking according to Biney (2015). 'Sierra Leone Struggles with Drug Abuse Politico SL' (2022) identified that the rate at which youths are consuming hard drugs in Sierra Leone was alarming and worrisome.

There is also ample evidence that shows that school leavers without work have been regarded as a political 'hot potato' for the governments of many countries (Biney, 2015; Williams, 1976). Therefore, it is not in doubt that many activities, disturbing the peace in developing countries including Ghana and Sierra Leone, are caused by young active people who are not seriously engaged in work, Biney (2015). Also, 'Sierra Leone Struggles with Drug Abuse Politico SL' (2022), reported that the reason these youths abuse drugs is a result of no job, hence the increase in trade and abuse of the intake of Kush, tramadol, and cocaine. It is therefore not surprising that research has shown that social unrest is more common in countries and regions where male youth unemployment is high or rising rapidly (World employment & social outlook 2015: The changing nature of jobs, 2015) which could be linked to the abuse of drugs.

In addition to this, even within the region, Sierra Leone is believed to have the highest rate of underemployment among the youth who are earning less than \$1 per day. The recent global Covid 19 pandemic and the Ukraine and Russia war have exacerbated their woes including Ghana and Sierra Leone with increases in job losses due to the continuous folding up of companies while others that manage to stay afloat are unable to employ more.

It is evidence that one of the methods governments have used to increase the creation of jobs in a country is to promote the production and consumption of local products. As consumption increases, the revenue of such companies increases and then they can expand, leading to an increase in employment opportunities for excess labour. For example, in 2004, the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry launched the 'Proudly Zambian Campaign' which seeks to spur job creation and economic development through the promotion of production and consumption of high-quality Zambian products (Feature: Zambia's Efforts to Enhance Consumption of Local Products Get Heightened Attention - Xinhua | English. news.cn, 2021).

This research seeks to find out if the no-job syndrome has therefore compelled tertiary students to be ethnocentric. Several studies conducted some time back including that of Bamfo (2012) found that attitudes of Ghanaian consumers towards made-in-Ghana products are not at a level that will help boost local production. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) estimated that 150 billion dollars will be spent on the importation of products meant for consumption by 2030 in sub-Saharan Africa. The figure seems to be alarming: considering the number of export revenues that would be used to pay such invoices. What future do we offer to the economies of the sub-region? What kind of jobs will we be able to offer to the youth?

The responsibility for this situation is threefold: the value chain's actors, the consumers, and public authorities are simultaneously responsible. Consumers play a key role. Depending on their choices, the system will become the central driver of economic, social, and environmental development, or if they prefer to opt for imported products, national endowment, and the marginalization of the vast majority of economic factors in the system will be largely affected negatively.

Therefore, countries in the sub-region need their citizens to be highly ethnocentric in their attitude toward local goods. The question that needs to be answered now is: is the no-job syndrome, the pain that will propel a change in the attitude of youth towards the consumption of local products?

Objective

The objective of this study is to assess the effect of limited job opportunities upon graduating on the level of ethnocentrism among tertiary students towards the purchase and consumption of local products in their localities in Ghana and Sierra Leone.

To be specific:

- a. Assess the unemployment situation among tertiary students
- b. Assess the level of perception on the contribution of consumption of local products towards the creation of jobs in their localities
- c. Assess the factors that will compel tertiary students to purchase and consume local products
- d. Provide recommendations for improvement.

Research question

Will tertiary students purchase and consume locally manufactured products based on ethnocentrism with the intention that it will lead to the creation of numerous job opportunities without considering price, quality health, safety, or environment?

H1: There is no relationship between the purchases of products only for the sake of them being made in the locality and no matter the quality, price, health, safety, or environment.

Expected outcomes

The study is expected to provide insights into how the no-job syndrome affects the purchasing and consumption patterns of locally manufactured products among tertiary students. The findings will help policymakers design policies that can enhance the competitiveness of local industry and create employment opportunities for young people. Additionally, the findings will help local manufacturers to understand the purchasing behaviours of tertiary students and to develop marketing strategies that target this group.

Literature review

Definition of youth

There is no universally agreed international definition of the youth age group. For statistical purposes, however, the United Nations, without prejudice to any other definitions, made by Member States defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. According to Ghana's National Youth Policy (2010), youth is defined as those between 15–35 years. The National Youth Policy (2003) and The Draft Revised Policy of Sierra Leone also defined youth as being between the ages of 15 and 35 however it also provides flexibility to accommodate young persons below 15, depending on the nature of programmes. This indicates that there isn't a standard definition of youth.

Rate of youth unemployment

Available data from the World Bank indicates that as of 2021, the youth unemployment rate for Ghana was 9.6% while that of Sierra Leone was 10.8%. Estimates of unemployment rates in developing countries based on the international standard definition of unemployment are said to consistently understate the true extent of unemployment as cited in Baah-Boateng (2015). It means that unemployment among the youth in these countries could even be higher. Previous data available indicated that the rate has been increasing (Global employment trends for youth 2022: Investing in transforming futures for young people, 2022).

Ghana: Students in Tertiary Education 2005–2020 Statista (n.d.) confirms the assertion that enrolment at the educational level has increased over the last 15 years. In 2020 for example, there were slightly over 547 thousand students enrolled in tertiary education in Ghana, an increase in comparison to the previous year.

Baah-Boateng (2015) believes that data on unemployment is generally obtained through the labour force and other forms of nationally representative household surveys as well as registered sources. However, in his view, as a result of the absence of effective and functional employment centres in many African countries, unemployment figures and other labour market indicators are often sourced from household or labour force surveys and population censuses. Since these surveys are not conducted regularly in many countries it is often difficult to obtain unemployment figures regularly

Causes of unemployment

The factors that account for unemployment among the youth in Ghana and Sierra Leone including tertiary graduates are numerous. They include poor education as explained in Baah-Boateng (2013), and Frimpong (2013), qualities of markets as indicated and explained further by Ghai (2003), corrupt leadership (Frimpong, 2013), and poverty as indicated by Sen (1973).

Efforts in addressing youth unemployment in Ghana and Sierra Leone

Ghana, for example, has since a few years back, introduced some policy interventions to reduce youth unemployment. Baah-Boateng (2013) and other researchers observed that youth unemployment requires the need for targeted policy interventions to remove the constraints facing them, particularly at the entry point of the labour market. The Youth Employment Agency (YEA) was set up under the Youth Employment Act 2015 (Act 887) to enable youngsters to contribute seriously to the financial and supportable advancement of the country. Subsequently, other youth-related programmes have been established including Nation Builders Corps (NABCO).

Sierra Leone National Youth Policy was launched on June 30th, 2003 covering several strategic areas. These included Job creation opportunities, skills training, Information and sensitization, community development projects, presidential award for excellence, and youth consultation/participation (Government of Sierra Leone, 2003). All these were geared towards reducing youth unemployment in both countries.

Consumption of local products

Several scholars indicated that the consumption of local products is considered good for the local economy. Purchasing local products keeps money circulating in the local community. Consumption of local products also makes the local economy more resilient to the threat of recession according to Prayana and Yuliarmi (2020).

Many scholars use the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to predict the intention of consumers to purchase local products. This psychological theory is widely used to determine consumption behavior related to attitudes, social norms, and behavior control. Some of the consumer attitudes include ethnocentrism, environmental concern, and concern for the local economy. These are extrinsic matters that affect consumer interest in local products, Prayana and Yuliarmi (2020).

The empirical work of Yagci (2001) indicates that the effect of consumer ethnocentrism on buying intention becomes more evident especially once consumers find themselves facing products manufactured in a less-developed nation. This means that the country of origin has a powerful effect even on the attitudes of highly ethnocentric consumers. Wang and Chen (2004) suggest that in the context of a developing country where people often underestimate the quality of their domestic products, a consumer with strong ethnocentric tendencies may evaluate products coming from developed countries as having a higher quality than domestic ones even though she or he considers buying non-domestic products as immoral behavior (Karoui and Khemakhem, 2019).

The theory of ethnocentric consumer behavior

The theory of ethnocentric consumer behavior is an essential framework in understanding consumer preferences and purchasing decisions based on cultural biases and nationalistic tendencies.

Consumer ethnocentrism is a psychological concept that describes how a consumer purchases products based on country of origin (Shimp & Sharma, 1987) even though the general concept of 'ethnocentrism' was introduced and used descriptively by Sumner in 1906 (Adorno et al. 1950) and remains a venerable concept in the fields of anthropology, sociology, and social psychology.

Levine and Campbell (1973) recognized that ethnocentrism is a psycho-social phenomenon with relevance to individual-level personality systems as well as to the more general cultural and social analytic frameworks

Previous research has shown that consumers in developed countries display a high level of consumer ethnocentrism by prioritizing local products over foreign-manufactured ones. It is generally believed that consumers from developing countries are more inclined to buy imported goods instead of domestic ones. Agbonifoh and Elimimian, (1999) reiterated that in developing countries, they practice reversing ethnocentrism where they regard their own culture as inferior. In these countries, consumers typically perceive foreign products especially those in developed countries as higher quality than domestic ones (Wu et al., 2010).

Again, consumer ethnocentrism is stronger among local-minded consumers but weak or nonexistent among global-minded consumers affecting perceived product quality and purchase intention of foreign products in developing countries (Ma et al., 2020).

However, generally, the level of ethnocentrism may vary from one customer to another (Shimp, 1984), from one region to another within a country (Shimp & Sharma, 1987), or from one country to another (Huddleston et al., 2001).

Ethnocentric consumers tend to place high value on and support domestic products, and place low value on and avoid purchasing foreign products (Dogbe et al., 2019). This is because, producing imported products, would lead to the collapse of domestic industries and increase unemployment which could hurt the domestic economy (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Vida & Reardon 2008).

It is therefore clear that several scholars have used this theory in developing different research topics as expressed earlier in this paper. However, there is no preceding literature that uses it to assess the level of the application of ethnocentrism among tertiary students with the mindset of creating job opportunities in their communities.

Overall, the theoretical framework on consumption and job creation underscores the interconnection of consumer spending and economic growth. As consumers increase their spending on local products, businesses respond by expanding their operations, creating new jobs and contributing to the overall economic prosperity. Therefore, policies that support and encourage consumer spending on domestic products can play a critical role in stimulating job creation.

In so doing, this research seeks to find out what tertiary students consider when purchasing products manufactured in their locality. Will they purchase and consume locally manufactured products because it will create job opportunities for them, no matter the quality of the product, the price they offer, or the environmental impact of the activities? That is the question this research seeks to answer.

Consumer demographic variables

An understanding of demographic variables is crucial in undertaking studies on consumer behaviours (Akbarov, 2021). It is therefore not surprising that previously, studies were conducted to determine the influences of consumer demographics variables on consumer ethnocentrism (Sevim et al., 2016). This research will therefore cover only two of the demographics. These are gender and national identity.

Gender

Theobald et al. (2017) referred gender to as socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and characteristics that society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender norms, roles, and relations vary from society to society and evolve. Depending on where they exist, they are often upheld and reproduced in the values, legislation, education system, religion, media, etc.

Already, Research conducted by Tirelli et al. (2015) indicated that ethnocentrism has a greater impact on food-buying decisions for males than females among international students. Also, Hasseebunissa and

Zinna (2018) show that ethnocentrism and narcissism negatively impact altruism in high school and college students, with male students being more narcissistic and ethnocentric. While Schooler (1971) and Dornoff and Tankersley (1975) found that women prefer products coming from abroad than men, McLain and Sternquist (1992) and Caruana and Magri (1996) found no significant relationship between gender and willingness to buy. The question that needs to be answered is will females in Ghana and Sierra Leone be ethnocentric because their future in the job market is at stake?

It is based on this that the following hypotheses have been crafted. They are as follows:

H2a: There is no difference in the awareness of the unemployment situation among genders of tertiary students

H2b: There is no difference in the opinion that sustained local manufacturing industries are avenues to create job opportunities for tertiary graduates among genders of tertiary students

H2c: There is no difference between genders of tertiary students on what compels them to consume local products

National identity

There has been a limited amount of work done regarding nationalism in the country of origin context Shimp and Sharma (1987) and others. National identity is a means by which culture is defined through these bounded, essentialized notions of 'being'. According to the scholar, 'being' is linked to belonging in notions of citizenship (Tolia-Kelly, 2009). National identity falls in the area of social identity where social identity is defined as a theory that people feel a desire and propensity to build a positive identity for themselves which may be manifested in their identification with various groups (Turner & Turner, 1982). According to Lantz and Loeb (1996), the national identity may be strong in some customers and weak in others.

Several scholars have indicated that developing countries including Sub-Saharan Africa practice reverse ethnocentrism where they rather consider products manufactured in their countries as inferior. This research will therefore seek to find out if there are differences between the two countries' tertiary students.

The following hypotheses therefore will require to be tested. They are as follows:

H3a: there is no difference in the awareness of the unemployment situation between the two national identities i.e. Ghana and Sierra Leone.

H3b: there is no difference in the opinion that sustained local manufacturing industries are avenues to create job opportunities for tertiary graduates between Ghana and Sierra Leone.

H3c: There is no difference between Ghana and Sierra Leone on what compels their tertiary students to consume local products.

Research gap

Unemployment stimulates university enrolment among individuals with highly educated parents affecting the composition of the student body and student educational path, leading to consequences for educational inequalities, Alessandrini (2018). However, results from research conducted by Turay et al. (2021) indicated that generally, expenditure on education has not had much effect in reducing the unemployment rate in countries such as Sierra Leone.

Empirical evidence from Park (1989) seems to suggest that the manufacturing sector contributes to employment creation in developing countries more through its inter-industry and inter-sectoral linkages, as well as its income-induced demand for various types of services, than through its direct employment effects.

Lavopa and Szirmai, (2012) therefore argue that manufacturing continues to be of considerable importance for economic development, employment creation, and the reduction of poverty. However, the findings from Juhana Mohd Abdul Kadir et al. (2020) revealed that employability skills, job mismatch, and unrealistic salaries are the main factors causing unemployment among graduates. There are empirical

results by Karras (1993) that suggest that permanent changes in government consumption have a greater impact on output and employment. Again, an economic analysis conducted by Fertő and Attila Soós (2010) suggests that changes in domestic consumption and production have a significant influence on employment. However, research linking aggregate consumption to the expected future employment opportunities among tertiary graduates has not been found.

Research findings by Cvijanović et al. (2020) on the main advantages and barriers to consumption of local products have pointed out the complexity of the relationships between market participants (i.e. Producers and consumers) and indicated that a deeper understanding is necessary for the overall economic development, which this research seeks to undertake to close that loophole.

In sub-Saharan Africa according to Avenyo et al. (2019), product innovations have a positive impact on total employment, creating both temporary and permanent jobs as well as skilled and unskilled jobs. Nyarko Adu et al. (2020) are of the view that integrating entrepreneurial education which involves product innovation into all tertiary programs in Ghana can promote entrepreneurship and reduce unemployment among university graduates.

However, research conducted by Harris (2022) indicated that in Sierra Leone, university-educated youth have limited entrepreneurial ambitions due to factors such as access to credit and are also largely driven by individual-level factors such as cultural perceptions about entrepreneurship. It is therefore not surprising that evidence by Chandrasiri (2008) revealed that the problem of graduate unemployment is not entirely a university problem. There is therefore the need to assess other areas to create job vacancies including the contribution of consumption patterns of tertiary students on locally manufactured products. Ensuring that customers have sufficient information regarding local products and increasing emotional interest in the local products specifically will help to increase willingness to pay for those products in the view of Campbell et al. (2014). However, not much research has been conducted among tertiary students even though Albayram et al. (2014) identified primarily, that the quality and origin of the products play significant roles in consumers' purchasing decisions and consumers' reliance on local products is greater.

Again, unlike many studies on ethnocentrism, graduate unemployment, and related areas conducted in single countries, this research covered two countries, making it easier to compare and draw conclusions.

Research methodology

In this study, the research methodology entailed both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study involved a survey of tertiary students in Ghana and Sierra Leone using a structured questionnaire containing open-ended and closed-ended two-point Likert scales to collect data on identifying the unemployment situation in both countries and the purchasing and consumption patterns of locally produced products that can lead to the creation of jobs. The data collected was analyzed using statistical tools such as regression analysis, analysis of variance, and descriptive statistics.

From the data analyzed using ANOVA to test for reliability above, Cronbach's alpha is 0.55 which indicates that the data collected for this study is satisfactorily reliable. van Griethuijsen et al. (2014) justified continuing with their analysis even though several of the Cronbach alpha are below the acceptable values of 0.6 or 0.7 by arguing that slightly increasing the numbers of items would lead to acceptable values for Cronbach's alpha.

Results and discussion

Demographics

In all, 126 students responded to the questionnaire administered in the form of Google Forms and shared through WhatsApp platforms. 52.38% of the respondents were from Sierra Leone and 47.0% were from Ghana. From the data collected, 67.46% of both countries were males while 32.54% were females. 81.1% of the male respondents and 80.4% of the female respondents had work experience.

Again, from the data collected, largely, most of the respondents fell in the range of 20 years to 25 years making up 41.3% of the entire respondents. Those who fell in the age ranges of 26 years to 30 years,

31 years to 35 years, and above 35 years made up 16.7% each. Only 8.7% of respondents fell in the age range lower than 20 years old.

Again, most of the respondents were undergraduate students covering about 76.8% of the total respondents. 8.8% of the respondents were postgraduate students, and 8.8% of the respondents were diploma students which most of them are likely to complete in 2024.

Perception of employment opportunities

Generally, respondents of both genders from both countries have work experience. While many more males of Sierra Leoneans than Ghanaians had work experience. With regards to females, many more Ghanaians than Sierra Leoneans had work experience as indicated in [Figures 1 and 2](#).

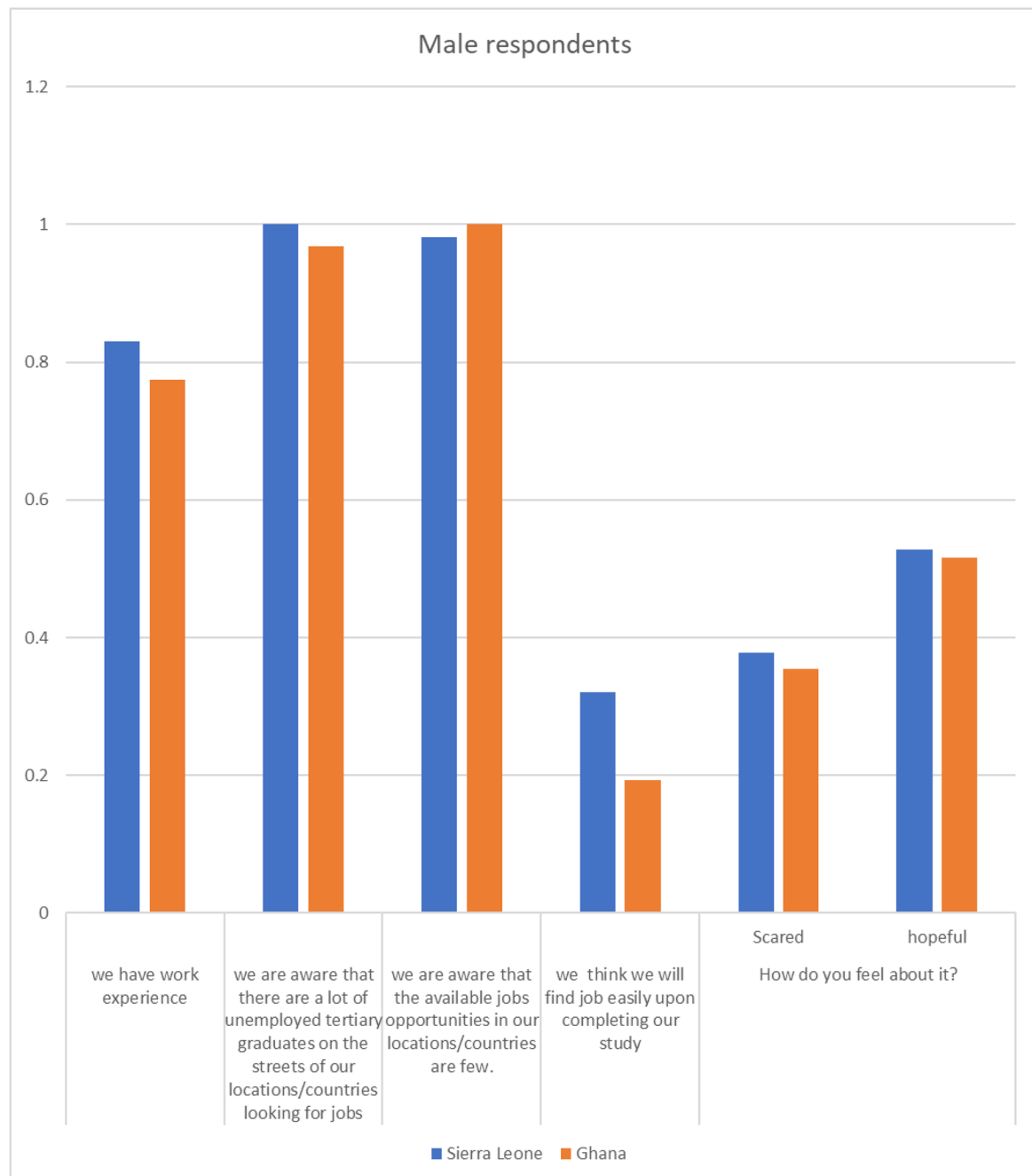


Figure 1. Perception of employment opportunities (males).

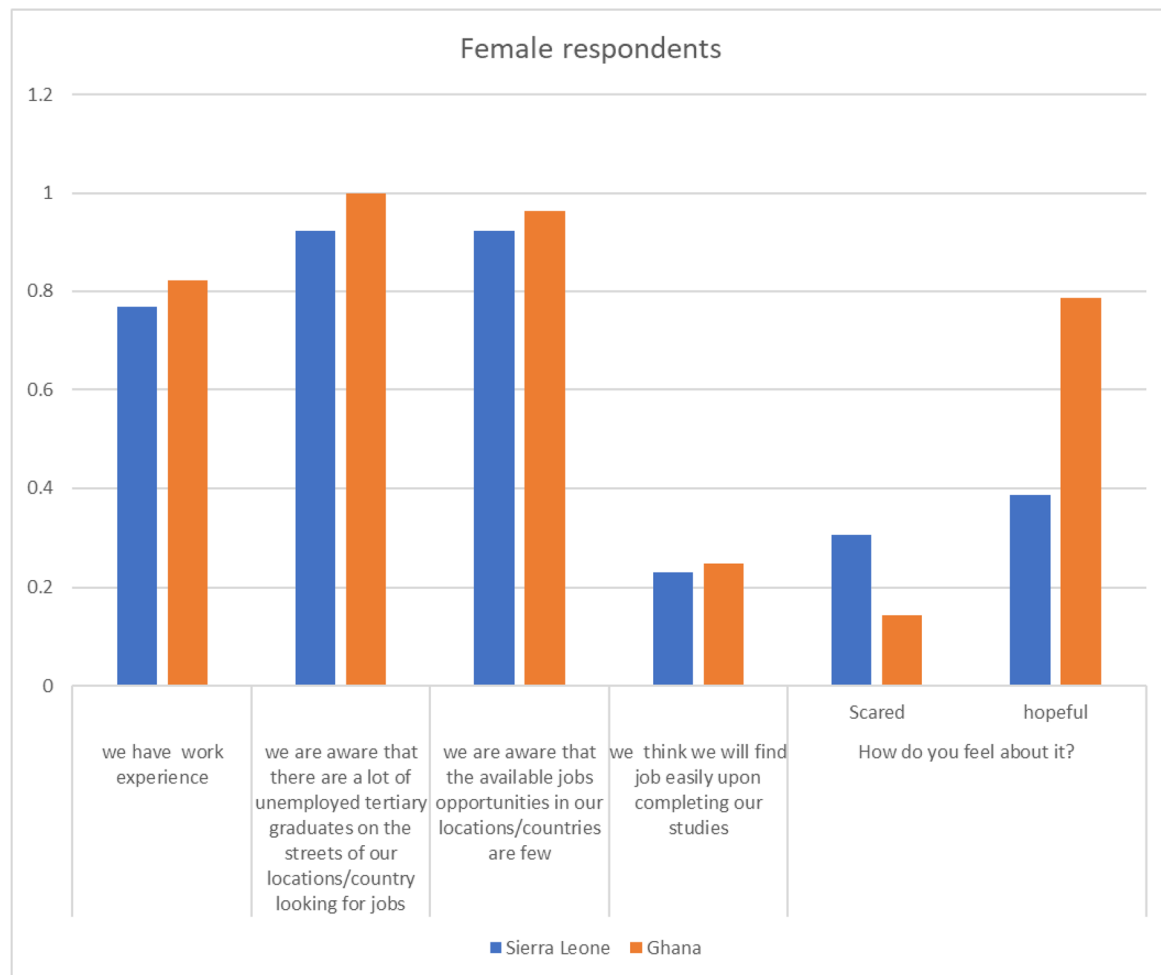


Figure 2. Perception of employment opportunities (females).

Again, generally, both genders in Table 2 from both countries are aware that there are a lot of unemployed tertiary graduates on the streets of their location/country looking for jobs. While many more males from Sierra Leoneans than males from Ghana are aware of it, many more females from Ghana than females from Sierra Leoneans are aware of it. However, many more Ghanaians of both genders are aware that the available job opportunities in their locations/countries are few compared with those from Sierra Leoneans. Again, more males than females from both countries are also aware of it.

Interestingly, very few of the respondents from both countries agreed that they would find a job easily upon completing their studies. In the case of females, more Sierra Leoneans than Ghanaians think that finding a job after completing their programmes of study will be difficult in Tables 3 to 5. In the case of males, it is different. Rather, more Ghanaians than Sierra Leoneans agreed that it would be difficult for them to locate jobs upon completing their programmes of study as shown in Figures 1 and 2 below.

Therefore, it was inspiring that from the data collected in Tables 6 and 7, generally, even though scared, most are hopeful. More males from both countries are scared than females. Again, generally, most Ghanaian females are more hopeful than their female colleagues in Sierra Leone and the males from both countries.

Testing of hypotheses

H3a: There is no difference in the awareness of the unemployment situation between Ghana and Sierra Leone.

In testing the H3a hypothesis, from the Table 8 above which contained the data analyzed, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. Hence there is no difference in the awareness between the two countries.

H2a: There is no difference in the awareness of the unemployment situation among genders

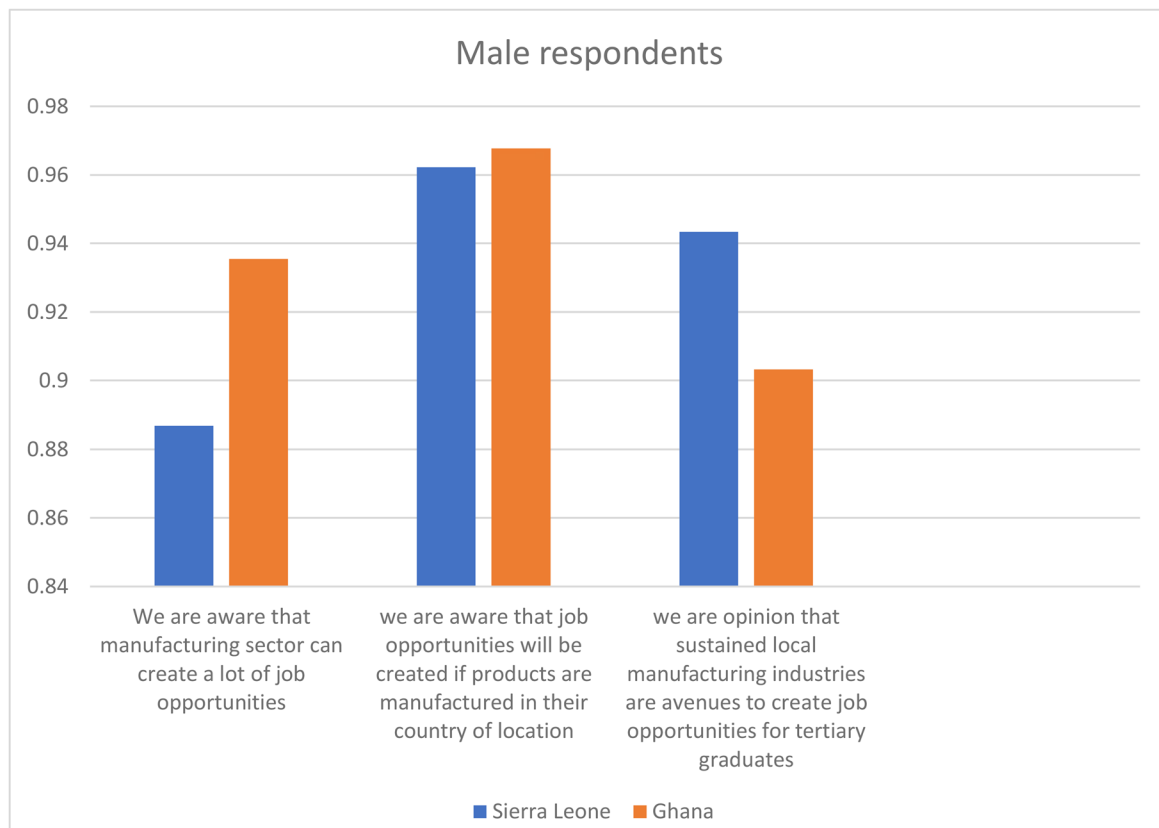


Figure 3. Job opportunities in the manufacturing sector (males).

Again in testing the H2a hypothesis from the data Table 9 above, since the F-Value is less than the critical value, the null hypothesis is failed to be rejected hence there is significant evidence to show that there is no difference between genders about the awareness of the unemployment situation in their localities.

Job opportunities in the manufacturing sector

From the data collected as indicated in Figures 3 and 4, many more Ghanaians than Sierra Leoneans are aware that the manufacturing sector can create a lot of job opportunities. Again, more female Ghanaians and Sierra Leoneans than male Ghanaians and Sierra Leoneans are aware of it even though, generally, most respondents are aware that the manufacturing sector can create a lot of job opportunities.

Again, more males than females from both countries are aware that job opportunities will be created if products are manufactured in their countries of location even though more Ghanaian females than Sierra Leonean females are aware of it. However, generally, most respondents of this research know that job opportunities will be created if products are manufactured in their countries of location.

Again, more males than females from both countries think that sustained local manufacturing industries are avenues to create job opportunities for tertiary graduates even though more females from Ghana than their counterparts of Sierra Leoneans agree with shown in Figures 3 and 4 below.

Testing of hypotheses

H2b: There is no difference in the opinion that sustained local manufacturing industries are avenues to create job opportunities for tertiary graduates among genders

In testing the H2b hypothesis from the data analysed in Table 10 above, the null hypothesis is failed to be rejected. This indicates that there is significantly no difference in the opinion that sustained local manufacturing industries are avenues to create jobs opportunities for tertiary graduates among genders

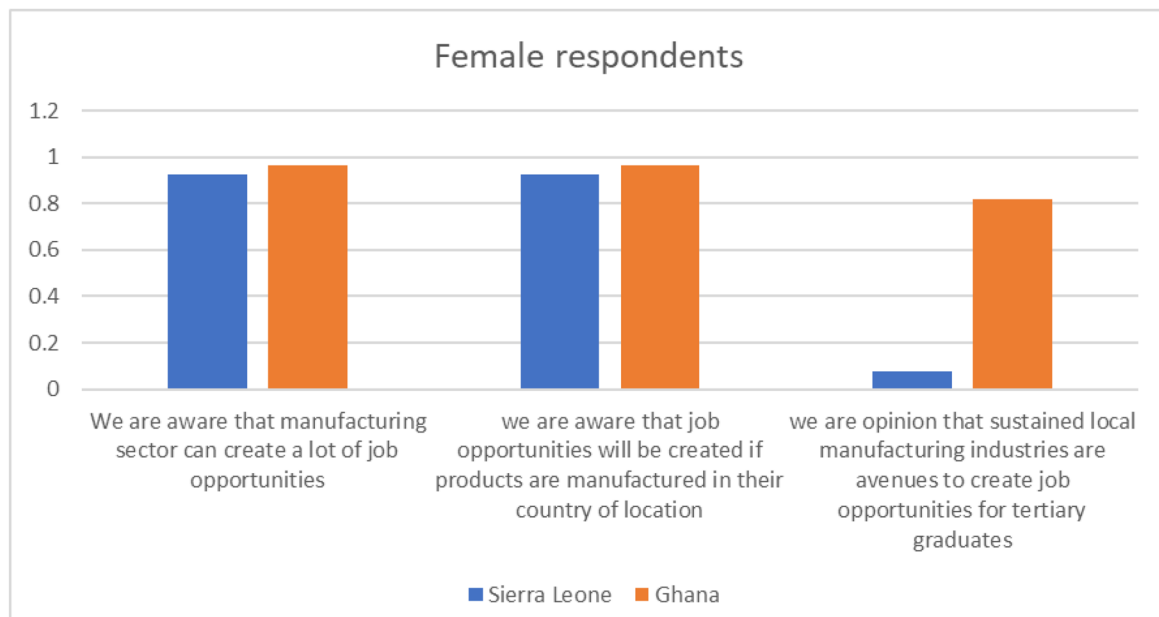


Figure 4. Job opportunities in the manufacturing sector (females).

H3b: There is no difference in the opinion that sustained local manufacturing industries are avenues to create job opportunities for tertiary graduates between Ghana and Sierra Leone.

Again, from the data in [Table 11](#) analyzed above to test the H3b hypothesis, the null hypothesis is failed to be rejected. This indicates that there is significantly no difference in the opinion that sustained local manufacturing industries are avenues to create job opportunities for tertiary graduates between Ghana and Sierra Leone.

Purchase and consumption patterns

Generally, most respondents, as shown in [Figures 5](#) and [6](#), from both countries agree that continuous manufacturing of such products in their locations is sustained if customers purchase and consume those produced locally. However, more males than females from both countries agree with that assertion even though more females than males in Ghana are of that opinion.

In addition, generally, most respondents are aware that as these products are purchased and consumed, the revenue of the company that produces those products increases which would be used to expand the company thereby creating opportunities for them to recruit more staff. However, many more males than females from both countries are aware of it as indicated in [Figures 5](#) and [6](#).

Again, more females than males from both countries pay attention to the country where manufactured products come from when purchasing such products. However, generally, most respondents pay attention to it. Most respondents sometimes consume locally produced products. Many more females than males sometimes consume such products. As much as they pay attention to it, most of the respondents are of the view that the country of origin does not come to mind when purchasing products.

Factors they consider when purchasing

Most of the respondents consider quality when purchasing local products. Their second most important factor is the price of the products. Generally, both male and female respondents think that the country of origin of the product they wish to buy comes to mind when purchasing such products. Many females than males are of that opinion.

Generally, respondents as shown in [Figures 7](#) and [8](#), are of the view that they will not purchase products only for the sake of them being made in their locality no matter the price. However, many more

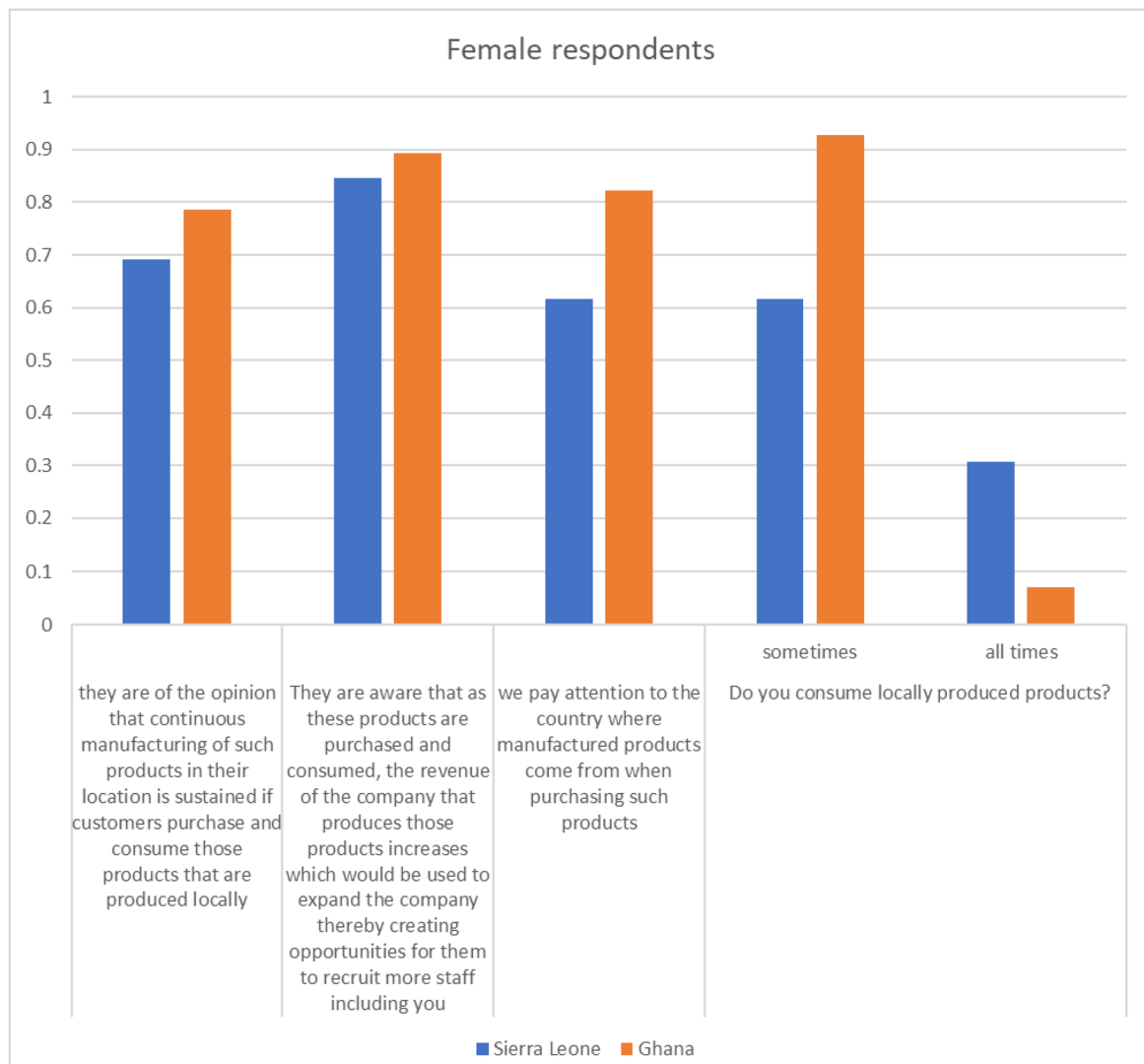


Figure 5. Purchase and consumption patterns (females).

males from both countries than females will not purchase products only for the sake of them being made in your locality no matter the price. However, more females than males from both countries will purchase products only for the sake of them being made in their locality no matter the quality or the impact on their health and environment.

In total, all respondents from both countries agreed that they purchase locally produced products with the conviction that it will lead to the expansion of that company, thereby creating jobs even though fewer females from Sierra Leoneans agree to it. Again, many more females in Ghana than their male counterparts agreed to it.

Testing for hypotheses

H3c: There are no differences between Ghana and Sierra Leone on what compels tertiary students to consume local products.

From the ANOVA analysis in Tables 12 to 14 above, there is significant differences among the factors that will compel them to consume in the various countries, even though there is no significant difference between the various countries about what factors compel them to consume products

H2c: There is no difference between genders on what compels them to consume local products

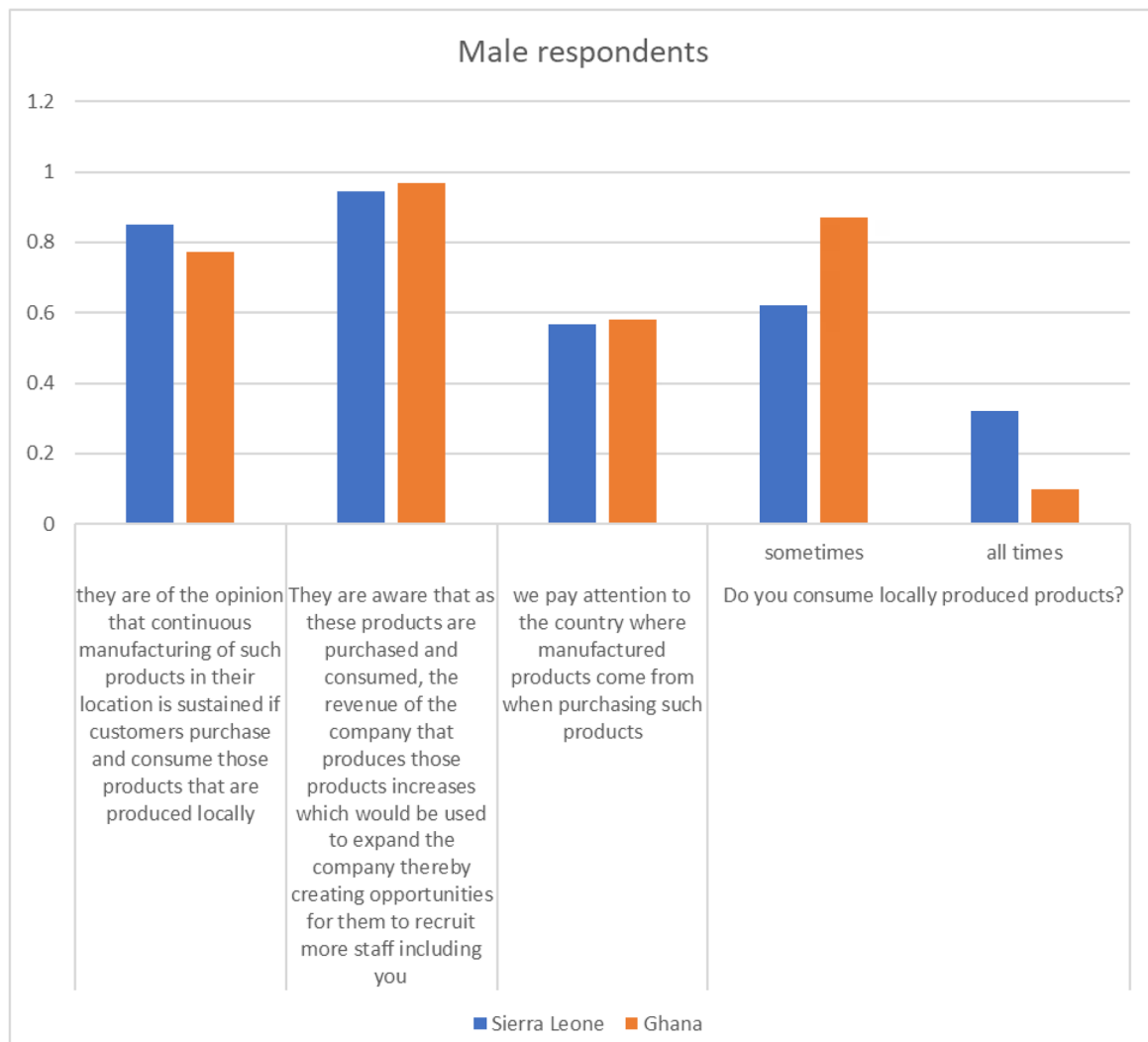


Figure 6. Purchase and consumption patterns (males).

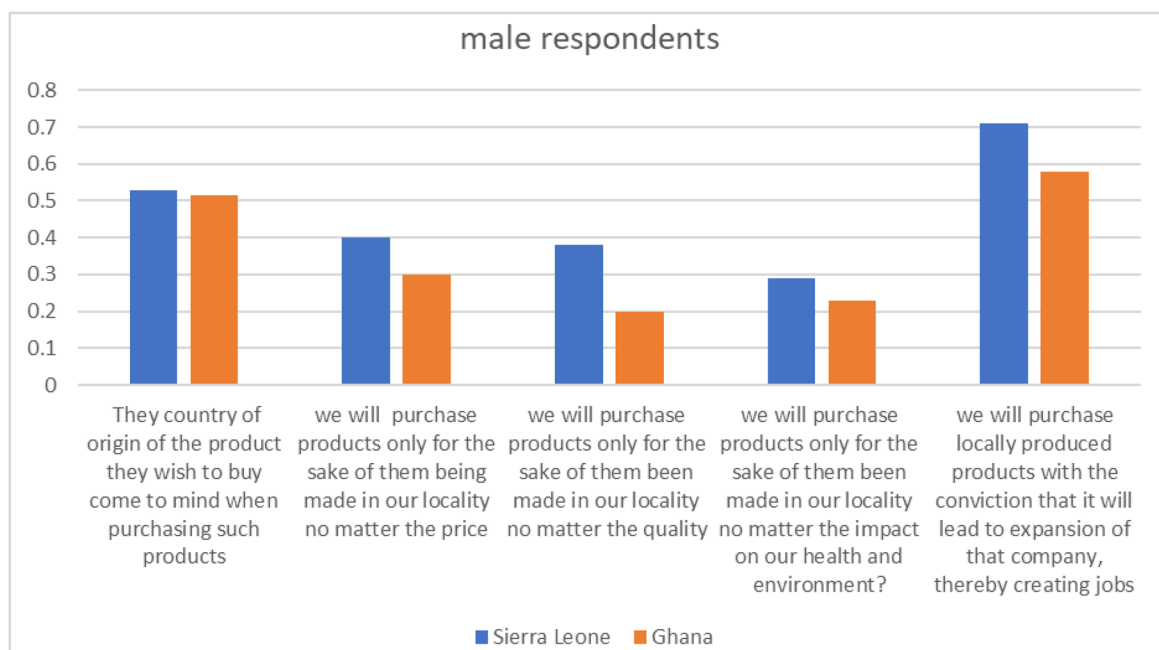


Figure 7. Factors they consider when purchasing (males).

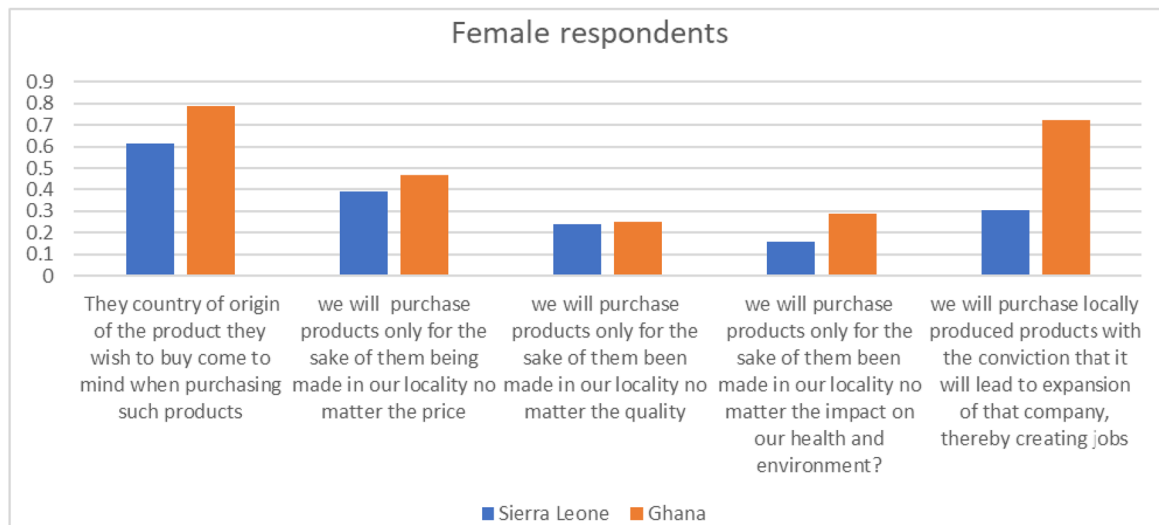


Figure 8. Factors they consider when purchasing (females).

Table 1a. Reliability test.

ANOVA						
Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	28396.56	126	225.3695	2.229716	4.11E-1	1.22086
Columns	280462.4	28	10016.51	99.09938	0	1.479535
Error	356594.1	3528	101.0754			
Total	665453	3682				

Table 1b. Demographics.

Count of timestamp		
Gender	Country of location	Total
Male	0	0.79%
	Ghana	24.60%
	Sierra Leone	42.06%
Male total		67.46%
Female	Ghana	22.22%
	Sierra Leone	10.32%
Male total		32.54%
Grand total		100.00%

Among genders, the data in Table 15 indicates that there is a significant difference in what will compel them to consume local products and there is also a significant difference between the various factors that will compel them to consume local products.

H1: There is no relationship between the purchases of products only for the sake of them being made in the locality and no matter the quality, price, or health, safety, and environment.

The regression analysis conducted as stated in Table 16 is used to determine if there is a significant relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable. In this case, the independent variables are 'No matter the price', 'no matter the quality', and 'no matter the impact on their health and environment' while the dependent variable is 'the purchase of products only for the sake of them been made in your locality'. A significance level of 0.09 means that the probability of making a type 1 error is only 9%, which suggests that there is a slightly low probability that the independent variables have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

Also, a multiple R of 0.226 indicates a weak positive linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Again, from the data analyzed, the coefficients of the independent variables have p-values more than 0.05 indicating they are not statistically significant at the 5% level. Furthermore, the significance F is more than the 5% significance level, so the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. Individually, since the p-values of 'no matter

Table 2. Are you aware that there are a lot of unemployed tertiary graduates on the streets of your location/country looking for jobs?

Count of timestamp		Are you aware that there are a lot of unemployed tertiary graduates on the streets of your location/country looking for jobs?		
Gender	Country of location	Yes	No	Grand total
Male	0	0.81%	0.00%	0.79%
	Ghana	24.19%	50.00%	24.60%
	Sierra Leone	42.74%	0.00%	42.06%
Male total		67.74%	50.00%	67.46%
Female	Ghana	22.58%	0.00%	22.22%
	Sierra Leone	9.68%	50.00%	10.32%
Female total		32.26%	50.00%	32.54%
Grand total		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 3. Are you aware that the available job opportunities in your location/country are few? (national identity).

Count of timestamp		Country of location		
Are you aware that the available job opportunities in your location/country are few?	0	Ghana	Sierra Leone	Grand total
Yes	100.00%	98.31%	96.97%	97.62%
No	0.00%	1.69%	3.03%	2.38%
Grand total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 4. Are you aware that the available job opportunities in your location/country are few? (gender).

Count of timestamp		Gender		
Are you aware that the available job opportunities in your location/country are few?		Male	Female	Grand total
Yes		98.82%	95.12%	97.62%
No		1.18%	4.88%	2.38%
Grand total		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 5. Are you aware that the available job opportunities in your location/country are few? (gender and national identity).

Count of Timestamp		Are you aware that the available job opportunities in your location/country are few?		
Gender	Country of location	Yes	No	Grand total
Male	No response	0.81%	0.00%	0.79%
	Ghana	25.20%	0.00%	24.60%
	Sierra Leone	42.28%	33.33%	42.06%
Male total		68.29%	33.33%	67.46%
Female	Ghana	21.95%	33.33%	22.22%
	Sierra Leone	9.76%	33.33%	10.32%
Female total		31.71%	66.67%	32.54%
Grand total			100.00%	100.00%

Table 6. How do you feel about it? (Gender).

Count of timestamp		Gender		
How do you feel about it?		Male	Female	Grand total
0		8.24%	4.88%	7.14%
Hopeful		52.94%	65.85%	57.14%
Scared		37.65%	21.95%	32.54%
16;15		1.18%	7.32%	3.17%
Grand total		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 7. How do you feel about it? (national identity).

Count of timestamp		Country of location		
How do you feel about it?	No response	Ghana	Sierra Leone	Grand total
No response	0.00%	6.78%	7.58%	7.14%
Hopeful	100.00%	64.41%	50.00%	57.14%
Scared	0.00%	25.42%	39.39%	32.54%
16;15	0.00%	3.39%	3.03%	3.17%
Grand total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 8. ANOVA: two-factor without replication for H3a.

Summary	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Ghana	2	59	29.5	1624.5		
Sierra Leone	2	66	33	2048		
Yes	2	123	61.5	24.5		
No	2	2	1	0		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	12.25	1	12.25	1	0.5	161.5
Columns	3660.25	1	3660.25	298.8	0.036788	161.5
Error	12.25	1	12.25			
Total	3684.75	3				

Table 9. ANOVA: two-factor without replication for H2a.

Summary	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Male	2	85	42.5	3444.5		
Female	2	41	20.5	760.5		
Yes	2	124	62	968		
No	2	2	1	0		
ANOVA						
Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	484	1	484	1	0.5	161.4476
Columns	3721	1	3721	7.688017	0.220357	161.4476
Error	484	1	484			
Total	4689	3				

Table 10. ANOVA for H2b.

ANOVA: two-factor without replication						
Summary	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Male	2	80	40	3042		
Female	2	35	17.5	480.5		
Grand total	2	115	57.5	5940.5		
Yes	3	224	74.66667	1574.333		
No	3	6	2	1		
ANOVA						
Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	1608.333	2	804.1667	1.042792	0.489526	19
Columns	7920.667	1	7920.667	10.27102	0.085115	18.51282
Error	1542.333	2	771.1667			
Total	11071.33	5				

Table 11. ANOVA: two-factor without replication for H3b.

Summary	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Ghana	2	54	27	1152
Sierra Leone	2	60	30	1800
Yes	2	111	55.5	40.5
No	2	3	1.5	4.5

ANOVA						
Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	9	1	9	0.25	0.704833	161.4476
Columns	2916	1	2916	81	0.070447	161.4476
Error	36	1	36			
Total	2961	3				

the price, 'No matter the quality', and 'No matter the impact on their health and environment' are more than 5% significance level, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Simply there is no relation between purchasing products only for the sake of them being made locally and no matter the price, quality, or impact on the environment at a 5% significance level in both countries.

Therefore, from the regression analysis, tertiary students from both countries will not purchase and consume locally manufactured products without considering the price of the said product, assessing its quality, and the impact it will have on their health, safety, and the environment.

Table 12. Does the country of origin of the product you wish to buy come to mind when purchasing such products?

Count of timestamp		Does the country of origin of the product you wish to buy come to mind when purchasing such products?			
Country of location	Gender	0	1	2	Grand total
No response	Male	0.00%	1.37%	0.00%	0.79%
No response total		0.00%	1.37%	0.00%	0.79%
Ghana	Male	25.00%	19.18%	32.65%	24.60%
	Female	0.00%	30.14%	12.24%	22.22%
Ghana total		25.00%	49.32%	44.90%	46.83%
Sierra Leone	Male	25.00%	38.36%	48.98%	42.06%
	Female	50.00%	10.96%	6.12%	10.32%
Sierra Leone total		75.00%	49.32%	55.10%	52.38%
Grand total		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 13. What will compel or force you to purchase locally produced products? (gender and national identity).

Count of timestamp	Country of location	Gender		Ghana	GH total	Sierra Leone	S.L total	Grand total	
	Country of origin	CoO Total							
What will compel or force you to purchase locally produced products?									
	3		3	5		3	5		
0	0.00%	0.00%	16.13%	14.29%	15.25%	20.75%	30.77%	22.73%	19.05%
31	0.00%	0.00%	12.90%	28.57%	20.34%	30.19%	23.08%	28.79%	24.60%
32	0.00%	0.00%	25.81%	17.86%	22.03%	16.98%	15.38%	16.67%	19.05%
33	0.00%	0.00%	9.68%	0.00%	5.08%	11.32%	7.69%	10.61%	7.94%
34	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	7.14%	3.39%	0.00%	7.69%	1.52%	2.38%
32;33	0.00%	0.00%	16.13%	14.29%	15.25%	5.66%	7.69%	6.06%	10.32%
32;33;34	0.00%	0.00%	3.23%	0.00%	1.69%	0.00%	7.69%	1.52%	1.59%
32;34	0.00%	0.00%	9.68%	3.57%	6.78%	5.66%	0.00%	4.55%	5.56%
32;34;33	0.00%	0.00%	3.23%	3.57%	3.39%	1.89%	0.00%	1.52%	2.38%
33;32	100.00%	100.00%	3.23%	3.57%	3.39%	5.66%	0.00%	4.55%	4.76%
33;32	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.89%	0.00%	1.52%	0.79%
33;34	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.57%	1.69%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.79%
34;32;33	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.57%	1.69%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.79%
Grand total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Meaning: 0 = No response, 31 = country of origin, 32=Quality, 33 = Price, 34 = Health, safety and environment.

Table 14. ANOVA testing on H3c.

Summary	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
0	2	24	12	18		
31	2	31	15.5	24.5		
32	2	24	12	2		
33	2	10	5	8		
34	2	3	1.5	0.5		
32;33	2	19	9.5	4.5		
32;33;34	2	6	3	2		
32;34	2	7	3.5	0.5		
33;34	2	1	0.5	0.5		
4	9	59	6.556	21.778		
6	9	66	7.3333	43.75		
ANOVA						
Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	466.444	8	58.306	8.073	0.00392	3.438
Columns	2.72	1	2.722	0.3769	0.556	5.318
Error	57.78	8	7.222			
Total	526.94	17				

Discussion

The main objective of this research is to assess the intentions of tertiary students to purchase and consume local products in their localities amid limited job opportunities hence their inability to get employed upon graduating.

Table 15. Testing ANOVA for H2c.

Anova: two-factor without replication						
SUMMARY	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
0	2	24	12	32		
31	2	31	15.5	40.5		
32	2	24	12	50		
33	2	10	5	32		
34	2	3	1.5	4.5		
32;33	2	13	6.5	4.5		
32;33;34	2	2	1	0		
32;34	2	7	3.5	12.5		
32;34;33	2	3	1.5	0.5		
33;32	2	6	3	8		
33;32	2	1	0.5	0.5		
33;34	2	1	0.5	0.5		
34;32;33	2	1	0.5	0.5		
Male	13	85	6.538462	50.10256		
Female	13	41	3.153846	12.14103		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	635.3846	12	52.94872	5.696552	0.002595	2.686637
Columns	74.46154	1	74.46154	8.011034	0.015165	4.747225
Error	111.5385	12	9.294872			
Total	821.3846	25				

Meaning: 0 = No response, 31 = country of origin, 32=Quality, 33 = Price, 34 = Health, safety and environment.

Table 16. Regression analysis.

Regression statistics					
Multiple R	0.226151798				
R square	0.051144636				
Adjusted R square	0.027619296				
Standard error	0.483344914				
Observations	125				
ANOVA	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	3	1.523701	0.5079	2.174023	0.094583
Residual	121	28.2683	0.233622		
Total	124	29.792			
	Coefficients	Standard error	t stat	P-value	Lower 95%
Intercept	0.902241239	0.203661	4.43012	2.08E-05	
No matter the price?	0.049152111	0.110368	0.445348	0.656864	−0.16935
No matter the quality?	0.01115165	0.138604	0.080457	0.936007	−0.26325
No matter the impact on their health and environment?	0.221745718	0.13031	1.701677	0.091384	−0.03624

In this regard, the objective is to study the influence of specific variables such as Gender and nationality on ethnocentrism without considering the price, quality, health, safety, and environment when purchasing and consuming products amid the non-availability of jobs in their locality.

First, on the perception of employment opportunities, tertiary students from both countries and genders are of the view that it will be difficult to get a job upon graduating. A study conducted by Yun-Fei (2008) examined the unemployment anxiety and the pressure felt by Chinese university students. It was found that the unemployment of university graduates has become a striking problem among students causing career pressure and anxiety. This was no different from Turgut et al. (2004) and hence confirms the outcome of this research which shows that there are no differences among genders and national identities. Again, in terms of gender, males are more scared than females as contained in this research. This supports Yasar and Turgut (2020) who stated that the reason for this situation could be due to the high social and cultural men's job prospects and responsibilities.

Furthermore, tertiary students from both countries agree that continuous manufacturing of products locally is sustained if customers purchase and consume those products. It is concluded that there are no significant differences among genders and national identities. This supports the views expressed by Varner and Otto (2008) and Hughes, (2009).

However, tertiary students from both countries will not consume locally manufactured products at the expense of quality, price health, safety, and environment. This supports research conducted by Ofori and Appiah-Nimo (2019) where quality is the main determinant of online shopping among tertiary students in Ghana. Other scholars also mentioned price. This shows that there are varied factors that propel tertiary students to purchase local products. This is confirmed in this research where it is shown that there is a significant difference between the factors in gender and national identity.

In addition, a study conducted recently by Ma et al. (2020) confirmed that consumer ethnocentrism is stronger among local-minded consumers but weak or non-existent among global-minded consumers in developing countries. Global mindset as defined by Levy et al. (2007) is a highly complex cognitive structure characterized by an openness to and articulation of multiple cultural and strategic realities on both global and local levels, and the cognitive ability to mediate and integrate across this multiplicity as quoted from Levy et al. (2007). Global-minded customers will therefore include tertiary students because of their level of education. It is therefore not surprising varied factors are likely to compel tertiary students to consume local products. These include quality and price. Tertiary students understand the world they live in and how they fit into that world, as well as their willingness to take action on global issues. Also, previous studies indicate that individuals become less conservative as their level of education increases and this increases their biases towards foreign products and brands (Pentz et al., 2014; Vadhanavisala, 2015).

Finally, a study conducted by Shankarmahesh (2006) suggests that gender affects consumer ethnocentrism. In this study, it is found that females were found to take into consideration the country of origin when purchasing products. This is not supervising because previous research conducted by Balabanis et al. (2001) and Pentz et al. (2014) showed that females were found to be more consumer-ethnocentric than males.

Conclusion and recommendation

Generally, it became clear from this research that the students of tertiary institutions of both countries are aware that the job opportunities are few and therefore, even though scared, are hopeful of finding jobs upon completing their programmes of study.

Again, even though students from both countries are aware that consumption of locally produced products can lead to the creation of a lot more factories in their localities, they will not just purchase and consume local products at the expense of quality and price which they put a high premium on. However, there are varied views on what genders will consider when purchasing local products.

Generally therefore, tertiary students in Ghana and Sierra Leone will not consume products manufactured in their locality without considering other factors such as the price of the product, its quality, and the impact it has on their health and safety, and the environment.

This seems to support research conducted by Karoui and Khemakhem (2019) who advised that local and domestic producers in developing countries should not overestimate the effect of consumer ethnocentrism because people in developing countries have generally a low level of consumer ethnocentrism. Many empirical studies have already shown that countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have considerably a low level of consumer ethnocentrism (Bahae & Pisani, 2009; Bamfo, 2012; Cazacu, 2016; Hamelin et al., 2011).

It is therefore recommended that governments of both countries should know that the government's promotion of the consumption of locally produced products will come to nothing if policies are not developed to encourage and help manufacturers to reduce the cost of production and improve quality. If nothing is done, it will not be surprising if enrolment in tertiary institutions begins to drop as research conducted by Amin and Ntembe (2020) showed that higher levels of unemployment are a disincentive to the demand for tertiary education. Once prospective students find that their peers are unable to find jobs after graduating, they look for alternative ways of earning incomes which might adversely affect enrolment.

Again, manufacturers should understand from this research that there are significant differences between genders on the factors that are considered when purchasing local products and so manufacturers of both countries should be made aware that it is paramount to invest in strategies that are gender-focused toward improving the quality of their products as well as health and environmentally-friendly nature of the products with competitive pricing regimes. Further research could be done to figure out

what strategies can be implemented on production floors to improve quality with a competitive pricing strategy mindset in these two countries.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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