Article

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CORPORATE ATTRIBUTES AND OVERALL DISCLOSURE OF CONSUMER GOODS FIRMS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study focused on corporate attributes and overall disclosure of consumer goods firms in Nigeria. To achieve the objectives of the study, ex-post facto research design was adopted. Data was generated using secondary data through the use of annual reports and accounts of selected firms. The population consists of all the twenty-one (21) consumer goods firms at the first-tier market of the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) within the period ranging from 2012–2022. In order to gain the advantages of an in-depth study and effective coverage, 16 listed consumer goods firms in Nigeria were used as the sample size of the study. The data collected were analyzed using panel data multiple regression analysis. The finding revealed that corporate attributes (firm size, profitability, leverage, firm age) have a significant effect on overall disclosure index of consumer goods firms in Nigeria. The study recommends among others that The Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN), the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC), the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) and other regulatory agencies shall take appropriate actions to guarantee comprehensive disclosure in accordance with relevant international accounting disclosure rules. An improvement in the quality of information disclosure will enable consumers in making informed predictions and evaluating the company's progress, which will invariably support stock market growth. Also, to protect the interests of the various user groups, effective enforcement programs should be implemented. To ensure that all listed building material businesses in Nigeria comply with the statutory accounting standards, a strict reward/punishment program should be implemented.

Keywords: Corporate attributes, firm size, profitability, leverage, age and financial disclosure.

Introduction

Business entities are associated with certain corporate attributes which impact on their performance either positively or negatively. These attributes also affect corporate information disclosure. Corporate attributes are those attributes such as firm size, leverage, liquidity, capital, firm age, dividend, market share, off balance sheet activities, operating expenses, among others, that affect the operations of a firm. Firm attributes refer to firm characteristics or specific features that distinguish one company from another. Firm attributes are numerous, it could be the size, profitability level, leverage level, industry type, geographical location, nature of the business, corporate governance mechanism and any other feature that distinguish one company from the other (Dogan, 2013). These features normally influence company decisions and information disclosure (Dogan, 2013). Most business entities use debt to finance their operations with the hope of improving their performance. By doing so, a company increases

its leverages level because it can invest in business operations without increasing its equity. Leverage is the amount of debt used to finance firms' assets and other capital expenditure that can improve firms' performance (Lin, Li & Yang, 2006). Tudose (2012), posits that leverage disciplines managers, as the debt level may be used to monitor managers. Thus, it is expected that increasing leverage components of a firm's capital structure may increase the level of efficiency and thereby influencing company's decision and information disclosure. Company's managers who are able to identify the level of leverage as a component of firms' capital structure are rewarded by reducing firm's cost of finance thereby maximizing the firm's revenue (Zeitun & Tian, 2007). From creditors' points of view, it is possible that debt to equity helps in understanding firms' risk management strategies and how firms determine the likelihood of default associated with firms' information disclosure.

Firm size is also expected to have an influence on information disclosure (Dogan, 2013). Large firms may exercise economies of scale, have good knowledge of markets and are capable of employing competent managers for reliable information disclosure (Driffield, Mahambare & Pal, 2005). However, large firms can be less efficient than smaller ones, because of the loss of control by managers over strategic and operational activities (Williamson, 1967 cited in Aluwoung and Fadio, 2019). In addition, the amount of cash a company has at hand or can generate quickly reveals how healthy the company is financially.

Issue of corporate disclosures has been widely discussed in recent years mainly due to financial crises and need for effective corporate governance system. Why corporate firms should disclose more information in financial reports as pronounced in several theories like stakeholder theory, agency theory, legitimacy theory and political economy theory (Choi, 1973 cited in Rotich, 2017). The agency theory implies that companies increase disclosure in order to reduce conflicts between principals (shareholders) and agents (managers). In addition, companies aiming to increase their value may do so by increased disclosure (Lobo, 2001). Several studies have mentioned that improved disclosure reduces the gap between management and the outsiders, enhances the value of stock in the capital market, increases liquidity and reduces cost of capital (Apostolos, 2009 cited in Nahiba, 2020).

The fall of Enron in the United States and other multinational corporations had created the need for wider recognition of corporate transparency and disclosures (Akhtaruddin, 2005). Corporate transparency is determined by the information corporate entities disclose in their financial report. Accurate, relevant and reliable disclosures are seen as means of enhancing corporate image, reducing cost of capital, and improving marketability of shares. High-quality accounting information facilitates the acquisition of short- and long-term fund and also enables management to properly account for the resources put in their care. Thus, it acts as a significant spur to the growth and development of money and capital markets, which are fundamental to the smooth running of any economy. Meek, Roberts, and Gray (1995 cited in Hossain 2019) submit that effective functioning of capital markets, however, significantly depends on the effective flow of information between the company and its stakeholders.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of corporate attributes on overall disclosure of consumer goods firms in Nigeria.

Specifically, the objectives of this research are to:

i. To examine the effect of firm size on overall disclosure of companies in Nigeria.
ii. To determine the effect of profitability on overall disclosure of companies in Nigeria.
iii. To ascertain the effect of leverage on overall disclosure of companies in Nigeria.
iv. To assess the effect of firm age on overall disclosure of companies in Nigeria.

Financial statements and information disclosure

Financial statements of Nigerian companies are regulated by the requirements of the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN) through

the adoption of its pronouncements referred to as International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The disclosure requirements of this Standard (IAS/IFRS) define the way accounting information should be presented in financial statements. Other voluntary disclosures, which are discretionary accounting information, over and above the mandatory disclosures, are also provided by management. The financial statements provide valuable information for different stakeholders. The major objective of financial statements is that they provide information about the financial position, performance and changes in the financial position of an enterprise (Elliot & Elliot, 2005). According to Meigs and Meigs (1993), financial statements are the principal means of reporting general-purpose financial information to users. There are several users – managers, investors, suppliers, customers, lenders, employee, government and the general public - who have vested interest in these financial statements (Glautier & Underdown, 1997; Lewis & Pendrill, 2000; Werner & Jones, 2003; Sutton, 2004; Elliot & Elliot, 2005; IASB, 2006). The accounting data presented in the financial statements must be relevant and meaningful to the user (Omolehinwa, 2000). With the literature review in this chapter, a conceptual framework for this study is developed by exploring the relationship between the dependent variable, overall disclosure index (ODI = MDI + VDI) and explanatory variables (company size, profitability, leverage, listing age, industry type, auditor size and multinational affiliation).

Corporate attributes and financial disclosure

Company size is the most consistently reported significant corporate attribute in previous empirical studies (Street & Bryant, 2000; Meek et al, 1995). According to Owusu – Ansah (1998), theory, intuition and empirical studies suggested that size positively influences mandatory disclosure practices. On the other hand, Wallace et al (1994) admit that although there is overwhelming support for a positive relationship between firm size and level of disclosure, the theoretical basis is unclear. The direction can be positive or negative. On the positive, it can be argued that since large companies usually operate over wide geographical areas and deal with multiple products and have several divisional units, they are likely to have well-built information system that enables them to track all financial and non-financial information for operational, tactical and strategic purposes. With this type of well structured internal reporting system, the incremental costs of supplying information to external users will be minimised. This will make them disclose more information than their smaller counterparts.

Watts and Zimmerman (1990) argue that larger companies are likely to show more information in order to improve the confidence of stakeholders and to reduce political costs. Generally, large firms disclose more information than smaller ones (Meek et al, 1995). On the other hand, it can also be argued that large firms are visible and susceptible to political attacks, in the form of pressure for the exercise of social responsibility, greater regulation such as price control and higher corporate taxes. Firms may react to this political action by avoiding attention which disclosure of some significant facts could have brought to them. Therefore, large firms disclose less detailed information in their annual reports to avoid attention (Wallace et al 1994; Wallace & Naser, 1995).

The positive accounting theory (PAT)

Positive Accounting Theory (PAT) came into being in the mid 1960s. It stemmed from the works of the popular theorist Fama in the 1960s, particularly the work that related to the Efficient Markets Hypothesis (Deagan, 2004). ‘Positive’ Accounting theory was popularized with the works of Gordan (1964). He argued that senior management was likely to manipulate the information in the financial statements in its own favour by selecting accounting procedures that maximize their own utility. Afterwards several attempts had been made to provide a positive theory of financial reporting (Jenson & Meckling, 1976; Watts, 1977; Watts & Zimmerman, 1978). They tried to explain why accountants do what they do and explained its effect on people and resource allocation. ‘Positive’ Agency theory was developed and utilized by Jensen and Meckling (1976) to analyze the relationship between the owners of

the organization and the managers within the nexus of contract. Prior to this period, Italian Professor Aldo Amaduzzi in 1949 published a book entitled, *Conflitto ed equilibrio di interessi nel bilancio dell'impresa*' (translated in English it means, Conflict and Equilibrium of Interests in Corporate Financial Statements), in which he analyzed financial statements and their contents as the equilibrium outcome of a conflict of interests between different corporate stakeholders. Due to language barrier, his work was not considered as mainstream (Melis, 2007). 'Positive' Agency theory is concerned with resolving the problems that can occur in agency relationships (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). They define agency relationship as a contract under which the owners of the organization (principal(s)) engage the manager (agent) to perform some service on their behalf. Under this arrangement, the owners delegate some decision making authority to the manager. It is presumed that both parties are utility maximizers, with varying philosophies and this could result in divergent and misaligned interest between them. Owners' would want to maximize net present value of firm while the managers would want to maximize utility, of which income is part. Most cases, the agent will not always act in the best interests of the principal. The agents could also hide information for selfish purpose by non-disclosure of important facts about the organization (Barako et al., 2006). Owners face moral dilemmas because most times they cannot ascertain or evaluate the decision made by their agents (Barako, 2007). This conflict of interest results to "agency problem" a.k.a. "principal-agent problem" whose resolution incurs agency costs (Al-Shammari, 2005).

Jensen and Meckling (1976): Jensen (1983) acknowledged that agency problem is common to all organizations and it exists in all corporative efforts at each level of management in firms. This includes public organizations, private organizations, not-for-profit organizations such as schools, hospitals, and foundations, as well as governmental enterprises and bodies such as the federal, state and local government. Jensen and Meckling (1976) focused exclusively on the positive aspects of the agency relationship as it applies to corporations. That is how to structure the contractual relation between the owner and manager to induce the manager to make choices which will maximize the owner's welfare, given that uncertainty and imperfect monitoring exist.

Positive accounting theory has a direct bearing on the research topic. In this research, accounting disclosure presents an excellent opportunity to apply positive agency theory. This is premised on the fact that managers (agents) have better access to company's' accounting information, can make credible and reliable communication to the market to optimise the value of the firm.

Empirical Review

Nor, Bahari, Adnan, Kamal, and Ali (2020), examined the impact of firm characteristics on mandatory corporate disclosures. The company has an incentive to make mandatory disclosures. One is to show that the company has better performance than other companies. This study aims to determine what characteristics of the company that influence the mandatory disclosure. By using a sample of annual financial reports from 207 companies listed on the Indonesian Stock Exchange (IDX) in 2017 and OLS analysis techniques this research was conducted. The results prove that managerial ownership, foreign ownership, profitability and industry type affect the level of mandatory corporate disclosure. Consistent with initial predictions, high managerial ownership establishes management position and reduces public disclosure demands. As a result it reduces the level of mandatory disclosure. On the other hand, high foreign ownership encourages management to make better mandatory disclosures to meet the demands of foreign investors. A high level of profitability also encourages better mandatory disclosure to show the performance to the market in order to get investors. The demand for comprehensive reporting in the financial industry sector also encourages better mandatory disclosure.

Chandok, Chandok, Singh, and Singh (2020), The study examined the influence of some selected corporate attributes on financial disclosures using univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis. In the empirical model, financial disclosure (ODI) has been used as dependent variable and corporate attributes have

been used as independent variables. The empirical result reveals that profitability, multilisting, earning per share, internationality and international link of the audit firm have significant influence on the financial disclosures. Contrarily, asset size, number of shareholders, year of listing, ownership structure, market category, audit fee, and leverage do not have any significant influence on the disclosure level. This provides a sign of dissimilarities in financial reporting among the companies due to corporate attributes. Consequently, the conflict of interest between shareholders and board of directors (BOD) has been increasing gradually. In order to minimize the conflict of interest between shareholders and BOD and also to reduce the deviation of financial disclosures in corporate annual report, the study recommends several ways such as- examine the legal and professional frameworks of accounting and auditing continuously, setting up a Financial Reporting Council (FRC), monitoring compliance of accounting standards and corporate governance guidelines, campaigning against the danger of preparing a discretionary financial report, and finally training of BOD members on corporate governance and corporate ethics.

Ahmad, Hassan, and Mohammad (2019), examined the effect of firm characteristics on environmental reporting practices of listed manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The population of the study comprises of sixty-one (61) manufacturing firms with a sample size of 29 firms drawn using judgmental sampling technique. Data were gathered using annual reports and accounts of the sampled firms through content analysis and analysed using multiple regression technique. The study found that the firm characteristics of firm size, leverage, return on assets and firm age have significant and positive effect on environmental reporting practices of listed manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study recommends that listed manufacturing firms should be raising fresh funds by retaining a good portion of their profits for the acquisition of assets to enhance environmental reporting practices in Nigerian listed manufacturing firms.

Hossain (2019), erxamined the impact of firm specific characteristics on corporate financial disclosures amongst UAE companies. A total of 153 public, joint-stock companies, listed and unlisted, were incorporated at the time of study. Both descriptive statistics and multiple regression analyses are used to test the relationship between the characteristics of UAE firms and the extent of their financial disclosure. Eight hypotheses were established to examine the relationship between a number of explanatory variables (namely, type of industry, listing status, return on equity, liquidity, market capitalization, foreign ownership, non-executive directors, and audit committee) and the extent of disclosure in corporate annual reports. The results of this study show that listing status, industry type, and size of firm are found to be significantly associated with the level of disclosure. This finding not only provides support for previous studies, but also is of relevance to those in the UAE who want to understand corporate disclosure and should also be of interest to UAE user-groups. Conclusions drawn from this study may be of interest to policy makers and regulators who want to improve corporate financial disclosure in their countries.

Abeywardana and Panditharathna (2019) examined the extent of voluntary disclosure level and its determinants. In order to achieve these objectives the study develop a voluntary disclosure index including 83 items and the nine sub categories which include in this index analyzed by employing content analysis in the annual reports of quoted public banking and finance companies for the time period of 2012 to 2015. Furthermore, this study analyze the selected variable to identify the determinants of voluntary disclosure level by employing panel data analysis. The study find that disclosures about general information, corporate environment, financial performance and risk management has more than 61% level and Corporate strategy, forward looking information, human and intellectual capital, competitive environment and outlook and corporate social responsibility information have less than 45% average in 2015 and it indicates that there is a much room for improvement in the context of voluntary disclosures. Furthermore, the study find that firm size, profitability, firm's age,

leverage and board independence as determinants of voluntary disclosure level and among them firm size, profitability and firm's age have positive relationship and leverage and board independence has negative relationship.
Lundberg and Åhman (2019) examine the quality of the disclosure IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements, paragraphs 122 and 125 in the annual reports of Swedish publicly listed firms. A quantitative research approach is used and the sample consists of 1,519 annual reports over a 7-year period. They constructed a disclosure index to assess the quality of the disclosures in Critical judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty (IAS 1:122 and 1:125) note and categorize the annual reports into four index groups. Additionally, the number of headlines in the note are counted and sorted into three other groups, creating a headline index. Lastly, they multiply the disclosure index with the headline index to get a score, which then enable the study to distinguish and rank the quality of disclosure between firms. Further, they counted the number of words in each individual disclosure in each annual report. This additional quantitative data enable regression analyses, further ensuring objectivity in assessing the disclosure quality. It was found that firms in Sweden on an average of 45% disclose financial information in line with IAS. Sulong (2015) also reported that corporate governance disclosure (CGD) using disclosure index by GRI G4 did not correlate with financial performance of firms.
Gunawan and Lina (2019) examined the influence of mandatory disclosure, voluntary disclosure on investor reaction to either partially or simultaneously market ratios of firms. The study was conduct on 38 manufactured companies listed on Indonesian Stock Exchange. There are five variables that mandatory disclosure, voluntary disclosure as the independent variable, cash flow operating activities (AKOp), cash flows investing activities (AKIn), cash flows financing activities (AKDa) as the control variable and the investor reaction was measured by using trading volume activity as the dependent variable. The result indicates that mandatory disclosure partially affect the investor reaction mandatory disclosure, voluntary disclosure simultaneously affect the investor reaction. Limitations are mandatory disclosure, voluntary disclosure, cash flow operating activities (AKOp), cash flow investing activities (AKIn), cash flow financing activities (AKDa) are less able to measure the volume of stock trading prediction of the future.
Aljifri, Alzarouni, Ng and Tahir (2019), provided empirical evidence of the impact of firm specific characteristics on corporate financial disclosures amongst UAE companies. A total of 153 public, joint-stock companies, listed and unlisted, were incorporated at the time of study. Both descriptive statistics and multiple regression analyses are used to test the relationship between the characteristics of UAE firms and the extent of their financial disclosure. Eight hypotheses were established to examine the relationship between a number of explanatory variables (namely, type of industry, listing status, return on equity, liquidity, market capitalization, foreign ownership, non-executive directors, and audit committee) and the extent of disclosure in corporate annual reports. The results of this study show that listing status, industry type, and size of firm are found to be significantly associated with the level of disclosure. This finding not only provides support for previous studies, but also is of relevance to those in the UAE who want to understand corporate disclosure and should also be of interest to UAE user-groups. Conclusions drawn from this study may be of interest to policy makers and regulators who want to improve corporate financial disclosure in their countries.
Basuony and Mohamed (2016) examine the determinants and characteristics of voluntary internet disclosures by listed companies in Oman. The study uses archival data from listed companies on Muscat Securities Market (MSM). Binary Logistic Regression analysis is used to examine the determinants of internet financial reporting. The results of this study reveal that ROA is one of the factors that impacts internet financial reporting. Also, the results reveal that ownership concentration has a negative effect on the internet financial disclosure. The study provides insights into corporate internet disclosures in the GCC countries that will benefit

all stakeholders with an interest in corporate reporting in this important region of the world.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study made use of an ex-post facto research design. Ex-post facto is a systematic empirical enquiry in which the scientist does not have direct control of independent variables because they are inherently not manipulated.

Population of the study

The population consists of all the twenty-one (21) consumer goods companies at the first-tier market of the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) within the period ranging from 2012 - 2022. The entire consumer goods companies constituted the population size.

Sample Size

The study adopted judgmental sampling in generating its data. This is a sampling method that involves using certain predetermined criteria in selecting a number of samples from the population to be examined during a course of research. Thus, the sample size of this study is based on the following criteria:

i. The firms used must be listed on the Nigerian exchange group as at the period of the investigation and must operational during the relevant period (2012-2022)
ii. Each consumer good firms must also have complete published financial statement covering the period of the study (2012-2022)

After considering the above criteria, the following 16 consumer goods firms were selected for the study; Cadbury Nig Plc, Champion Breweries, Dangote Sugar Plc, DN Tyre and Rubber Plc, Flour mill Nig Plc, Guinness Nig Plc, Honeywell Plc, International Breweries, N.Nig Flour Mills Plc, Nascon Allied, Nestle Nig Plc, Nigeria Breweries, Nigeria Enamelware Plc, PZ Cussons, Unilever Nig Plc and Vitafoam Nig Plc.

Data sources / methods of data collection

For the purpose of the content analysis undertaken in this study, secondary data was utilised. The secondary sources of data consist of annual audited reports, and IASs/ IFRSs issued by the International Accounting Standard Board (IASB).

Model specification

$\mathbf{ODI_{it}} = B_0 + B_1 LogFSIZE_{it} + B_2 LogFAGE_{it} + B_3 LogPRO_{it} + B_4 LogLEV_{it} + u$ -- **(1)**

In the measurement model, FSIZE stands for Firm size; FAGE stands for Firm age; PROF stands for Profit after tax; LEV stands for Leverage; ODI stands for Total disclosure.

Data analysis techniques

The data for the dependent and independent variables were captured from the annual audited financial statements and collated with the aid of Microsoft Excel 2010. The gathered data were scrutinized and analyzed by employing panel regression in exploring the secondary data.

Data Presentation

The data for this study is based on the variables for the dependent and independent variables. Firm size (FSIZE), firms age (FAGE), leverage and return on equity (ROE) were the proxies for the independent variables (components of corporate attributes) while overall disclosure index, (ODI) was used as proxies for the dependent variable.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

	ODI	FSIZE	FAGE	LEVERAGE	ROE
Mean	1.608295	46524803	26.74432	16.44323	0.535625
Median	1.580000	1867988.	33.00000	0.534689	0.118927
Maximum	1.780000	3.64E+08	41.00000	556.8392	8.952657
Minimum	1.340000	-3572058.	1.000000	-48.44579	-2.656842
Std. Dev.	0.117120	1.05E+08	12.98868	85.81432	1.485252
Skewness	-0.035121	2.127390	-0.812517	5.229294	3.237155
Kurtosis	1.911244	5.760717	2.062156	29.33537	15.96447

Jarque-Bera	8.729037	188.6478	25.81541	5888.182	1539.958
Probability	0.012721	0.000000	0.000002	0.000000	0.000000
Sum	283.0600	8.19E+09	4707.000	2894.009	94.26998
Sum Sq. Dev.	2.400489	1.91E+18	29523.49	1288717.	386.0452
Observations	**176**	**176**	**176**	**176**	**176**

Table 1 showed the result of the descriptive or summary statistics of various variables (ODI, FSIZE, FAGE, LEVERAGE and ROE). It is important to states that for the summary statistics, the raw data in their untransformed state were used to enable an appraisal of the structure of the raw data used for the regression analysis. The summary statistics were used to compare the measures of central tendency, the measures of dispersion and the measures of normality of the data set. The measures of central tendency compared the mean and median values of the data set. While the mean considered the average values of the variables the median looked at the middle distribution of the data set. From the result, it could be observed that the mean values of ODI, FSIZE, FAGE, LEVERAGE and ROE were respectively, 1.608295, 46524803, 26.74432, 16.44323 and 0.535625. The measures of dispersion considered how widely spread the dataset was from their mean values. The measures of dispersion considered in this study were the minimum value, the maximum values and the standard deviation. From the E-view output, the dataset for minimum for ODI, FSIZE, FAGE, LEVERAGE and ROE ranged respectively from 1.340000, -3572058, 1.000000, -48.44579 and -2.656842. The standard deviation measures how far the observations are from their sampled averages. From the summary output of the data set, the standard deviation was 0.117120, 1.05E+08, 12.98868, 85.81432 and 1.485252 respectively for ODI, FSIZE, FAGE, LEVERAGE and ROE.

The normality test measures whether the data set is normally distributed or otherwise. The measures of normality considered by this study were skewness and kurtosis. Skewness measured the degree of asymmetry of the series. The series may be normally skewed, positively skewed or negatively skewed. A skewness value of zero is said to be normal and implies that the distribution is symmetry around its mean; a positive skewed value implies that the distribution has a long right tail, implying that the skewness value is higher than the sampled mean. A negative skewness implies that the distribution has a long left tail with lower values than the sampled mean. From the E-view result, the skewness values of FSIZE, LEVEARAGE and ROE have the values of 2.127390, 5.229294 and 3.237155 respectively. These variables have positive values, implying that which implies that FSIZE, LEVEARAGE and ROE have a long right tail. While ODI and FAGE have skewness values of -0.035121 and -0.812517. These variables have positive values, implying that which implies that ODI and FAGE have a long left tail.

Kurtosis measures the peakedness or flatness of the data relative to the normal distribution. Kurtosis could be mesokurtic, leptokurtic or platykurtic. A kurtosis value of 3.0000 is mesokurtic, meaning that the distribution is normal. A kurtosis value greater 3.0000 is said to be leptokurtic or positive kurtosis, meaning that it has a peaked curve and produces higher values than the normal. A kurtosis value less 3.0000 is platykurtic or negative kurtosis, meaning that it has a flatted curve and that it produced lower values than the sample mean. From the result obtained in table 4.1 for the dataset, FSIZE, LEVERAGE and ROE have kurtosis values of 5.760717, 29.33537 and 15.96447 respectively. It, therefore, means that FSIZE, LEVERAGE and ROE were leptokurtic, meaning that they produced higher value than the normal. While ODI and FAGE have kurtosis values of 1.911244 and 2.062156 which implies that ODI and FAGE is flatted curve and produced lower values than the sample mean.

The Jarque-Bera (JB) test measures the difference of the skewness and kurtosis of the series with those from the normal distribution. The null hypothesis for the JB statistics is that the series is normally distributed. Given the result in table 4.1 above, the JB values of ODI, FSIZE, FAGE, LEVERAGE and ROE produced the values 8.729037, 188.6478, 25.81541, 5888.182 and 1539.958 with their respective p-values of 0.012721, 0.000000, 0.000002, 0.000000 and 0.000000 respectively. This meant that their null hypotheses were rejected.

Data Analysis

Hausman test

Table 2
Correlated Random Effects - Hausman Test
Equation: Untitled
Test cross-section random effects

Test Summary	Chi-Sq. Statistic	Chi-Sq. d.f.	Prob.
Cross-section random	5.039258	4	0.2833

Cross-section random effects test comparisons:

Variable	Fixed	Random	Var(Diff.)	Prob.
LOGFSIZE	0.046379	0.038716	0.000032	0.1721
LOGFAGE	0.026830	0.027820	0.000056	0.8946
LEVERAGE	-0.000232	-0.000231	0.000000	0.9843
ROE	-0.005150	-0.006590	0.000004	0.4926

The Hausman test is used to differentiate between fixed effects model and random effects model in panel data. In this case, random effect is preferred under null hypothesis due to higher efficiency, while under the alternative fixed effects is at least as consistent and thus preferred. In this case, random effect panel data is preferable. This is so because the null hypothesis was accepted (p-value of 0.2833 is greater than 0.05).

The panel data results show the effect of corporate attributes on overall disclosure of consumer goods firms in Nigeria. The coefficient of determination R-square of 0.336 implied that 33.6% of the sample variation in the dependent variable over all disclosure index (ODI) is explained or caused by the explanatory variables corporate attributes (FSIZE, FAGE, LEVERAGE and ROE) while 66.4.3% is unexplained. This remaining 66.4% could be caused by other factors or variables not built into the model. The value of R-square is an indication of positive relationship between the dependent variable (ODI) and independent variables (FSIZE, FAGE, LEVERAGE and ROE). The F-statistic was also used to test the overall significant of the model. The adjusted R^2 of approximately 0.310 indicates that if other factors are considered in the model, this result will deviate from it by only 0.026 (i.e. 0.336 – 0.310). This result shows that there will be a further deviation of the variation caused by the independent factors to be included by 0.026%. The regression results as presented in Table above to determine the relationship between FSIZE, FAGE, LEVERAGE & ROE and ODI show that when all the independent variables are held stationary; the ODI variable is estimated at 1.208231. This simply implies that when all independent variables are held constant, there

will be an increase in the ODI of listed consumer goods firms up to the tune of 1.208231% occasioned by factors not incorporated in this study.

Table 3
Dependent Variable: ODI
Method: Panel Least Squares
Date: 10/31/23 Time: 10:08
Sample: 2012 2022
Periods included: 11
Cross-sections included: 16
Total panel (unbalanced) observations: 174

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	1.208231	0.086908	13.90248	0.0000
LOGFSIZE	0.057907	0.011539	5.018317	0.0000
LOGFAGE	0.018895	0.027121	0.696684	0.4871
LEVERAGE	-0.000195	0.000107	-1.816866	0.0712
ROE	-0.001211	0.006763	-0.179111	0.8581

Effects Specification

Cross-section fixed (dummy variables)

R-squared	0.385549	Mean dependent var	1.606667
Adjusted R-squared	0.309740	S.D. dependent var	0.116794
S.E. of regression	0.097035	Akaike info criterion	-1.719713
Sum squared resid	1.450024	Schwarz criterion	-1.356604
Log likelihood	169.6151	Hannan-Quinn criter.	-1.572414
F-statistic	5.085792	Durbin-Watson stat	1.681544
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000		

Thus, a unit increase in FSIZE will lead to an increase in ODI by 0.057907%. For FAGE, a unit increase in FAGE will lead to an increase in ODI by 0.018895%. For LEVERAGE, a unit increase in LEVERAGE will lead to a decrease in ODI by 0.000195%. Finally, a unit increase in ROE will lead to a decrease in ROE by 0.001211%. The F-value of 5.085792 with p-value of 0.00000 is an indication that the model is statistically significant at 5 percent level of significant. Finally, the test of autocorrelation using Durbin-watson shows that the Durbin-watson value of 1.681544 falls outside the conclusive region of Durbin-watson partition curve. Hence, we can clearly say that there is no sign of autocorrelation.

The F-statistic of 5.08792 with p-value of 0.0000 at 5% level of significance, since the probability of the F statistics is less than 5% level of significance, the study would rejects the null hypothesis, H_0 and therefore conclude that corporate attributes (firm size, profitability, leverage, firm age) have a significant effect on overall disclosure index of consumer goods companies in Nigeria**.**

Discussion

The result revealed that corporate attributes (firm size, profitability, leverage, firm age) have a significant effect on the overall disclosure index of consumer goods companies in Nigeria. The decision is based on the fact that the P-value is greater than 0.05. The finding is consistent to the findings of Karim (2019), who investigated the influence of corporate attributes on disclosure by oil companies in Nigeria. The study finds that

corporate attributes significantly affect the accounting disclosure by oil companies in Nigeria. The findings of karim (2019) showed that financial leverage has a significant positive effect on accounting disclosure by companies in Nigeria. Second, profitability has a significant positive effect on accounting disclosure by companies in Nigeria. Third, the study also find that firm size has a significant positive effect on accounting disclosure. Also, the findings of Aljifri, Alzarouni, Ng and Tahir (2019), provided empirical evidence of the impact of firm specific characteristics on corporate financial disclosures amongst UAE companies. The results of this study show that listing status, industry type, and size of firm are found to be significantly associated with the level of disclosure.

Conclusion

The study conducted on the effect of corporate attributes on financial disclosure of consumer goods firms in Nigeria. The study was carried out using secondary data. Firm size, firm age, profitability and leverage were used to measure corporate attributes while overall disclosure was used to measure corporate disclosure. It was deduced from the empirical studies that majority of work used only mandatory disclosure and voluntary disclosure as measure for corporate disclosure without considering overall disclosure. The complete variables are used in this study. Data were collected from the selected listed building material firms in Nigeria. Data collected were analyzed using panel data based multiple regression analysis after testing some pre-estimation test. The result of the analysis revealed that corporate attributes (firm size, profitability, leverage, firm age) have a significant effect on overall disclosure index of consumer goods firms in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made.

(i) The Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN), the Securities Exchange Commission(SEC), the Nigerian Stock Exchange(NSE),and other regulatory agencies shall take appropriate actions to guarantee comprehensive disclosure in accordance with relevant international accounting disclosure rules. An improvement in the quality of information disclosure will enable consumers in making informed predictions and evaluating the company's progress, which will invariably support stock market growth.

(ii) To protect the interests of the various user groups, effective enforcement programs should be implemented. To ensure that all listed building material businesses in Nigeria comply with the statutory accounting standards, a strict reward/punishment program should be implemented.

(iii) Smaller construction material companies should be encouraged by the government, which should promote IT growth in Nigeria. Every business should be able to afford cutting-edge technology. This will lower the cost of information and encourage the sharing of sufficient financial data.

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