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Factors leading to increase in Imported Substandard Products on the Zambian Markets: A case of Zambia Bureau of Standards

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets and also to find solutions in order to eradicate causes of these products from the country.

Methodology: The study collected primary data using questionnaires to 43 experts at Zambia Bureau of Standards and Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency responsible for quality assurance of imported products into the country. The study also collected data from 150 consumers of imported products around the city of Lusaka using questionnaires. Experts at ZABS were all selected for the study while the consumers of imported products were sampled purposively. Since the target population was known, the study used Glens and Israel (1992) table and at 95% confidence level with a margin of error of 10% in coming up with the sample size of 150. Data analysis involved descriptive statistical analysis, summarized and presented in tables showing frequencies and percentages using IBM statistical package for social science version 21 as an analytical tool. Correlation analysis was used to determine the nature of the relationship between variables.

Findings: The study revealed that substandard imported products are rife on the Zambian markets and causes include lack of testing facilities at border towns, inadequate funding to agencies mandated to prevent entrance of substandard imported products and porous borders. The study further found that inadequate consumers' disposable incomes and insufficient consumers' awareness on quality were also some leading motivations behind consumers buying substandard imported products. The study did not only end at identifying the causes of substandard imported products but went further to identify strategies to this vice which included increasing consumers sensitization programs on quality, increasing testing facilities at border towns, setting up stronger border protection and testing imported products from their countries of origin.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: The study concludes that combating substandard imported products will increase operations of local industries and with this increased operation of local industries, the level of unemployment in the country will reduce and this will in turn result into increased revenue for the government from this increased tax base. Furthermore, the study concludes that the country will have a productive population because people will be

consuming quality products unlike these harmful to human health substandard products which are not regulated by any international approved standards when being produced. In view of the above, the study recommends stiffer legal framework on importers of substandard imported products, increased testing facilities at Zambia Bureau of Standards and increased funding to Zambia Bureau of Standards for operational efficiency as some of the measures to be implemented to curb the vice of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

Key Words: *Substandard Products, Causes, Strategies and Zambian markets*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Substandard is a broad term which encompasses any manufacturing of a product which is of low value, inferior or of poor quality. Therefore, substandard products may also include trademark infringing goods, as well as copyright infringements (Admin, 2011). Substandard products have a reputation of being of lower quality and sometimes not working at all and may even include toxic elements. This has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people, due to automobile and aviation accidents, poisoning, ceasing to take essential compounds for example in the case a person taking non-working medicine. Substandard products are often produced with the intent to take advantage of consumers

1.1 Background

International trade is an essential driver for economic prosperity of every nation in the modern world today. It is for this reason that most nations have now opened up their borders in order to grow up their economies through international trade and collaborations. No single country today can survive on its own without trading with other countries. However, with all the advantages international trade brings, it has also brought about massive movement of substandard products across borders (OECD, 1998). OECD-OCD (1998) report further states that free movement of substandard products has been on the increase globally and nations need to make sure their markets are safeguarded from these substandard products. These products have health and safety risks to consumers because they are not regulated when being manufactured (Homeland Security 2020). Apart from the health and safety risks substandard products have, Sowder (2013) in his study concluded that businesses and industries lose about \$200billion each year worldwide in revenues due to these substandard products. Furthermore, Levin (2009) also states that about 2.5million jobs worldwide are lost due to the negative impact substandard products have on local industries because these products are usually priced very cheap, making local industries to be uncompetitive.

In order to curb the entrance of substandard imported products into the country, the Zambian government has created two agencies namely Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS) and Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (formally inspections department at ZABS) to ensure that the Zambian markets are supplied with quality products. ZABS operates under the new Standards act number 4 of 2017 with the following as some of the functions:

- i. To develop and publish Zambian National Standards
- ii. Provide inspection services, testing services and system and product certification.
- iii. Promote quality health and safety standards for commodities, products and services.

- iv. Facilitate training in, and provide public education on, standards and quality assurance etc.

Despite these functions of ZABS, Zambia is still battling with the presence of substandard imported products on her markets. From the surveillances conducted by ZABS between 2015 and 2017, it can be observed that substandard imported products were found on the Zambian markets each time random inspections were conducted by ZABS. According to ZABS (2015), ZABS (2016) & ZABS (2017) monthly reports, in 2015, K963, 027 worth of substandard imported products were confiscated from the Zambian markets and destroyed by ZABS because they were not fit for human consumption. In 2016 the value was K409, 940 and K30, 250 was recorded in 2017 respectively. Although most countries globally are facing the problem of substandard products, causes and solutions to this problem differ from country to country as highlighted in the literature review. It is for this reason that this problem of substandard imported products be localised so as to find the best solutions fit for Zambia in order to safeguard the economy and protect Zambian residents since some of these substandard products have been proved to be very harmful to human health if consumed (Lewis, 2009).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Substandard imported products exist in Zambia and their impact on the economy is grave. From the surveillances conducted by ZABS between 2015 and 2017, it can be observed that substandard imported products were found on the Zambian markets each time random surveillances were conducted by ZABS. According to ZABS (2015), ZABS (2016) & ZABS (2017) monthly reports, in 2015, K963, 027 worth of substandard imported products were confiscated from the Zambian markets and destroyed because they were not fit for human consumption. In 2016 the value was K409, 940 and K30, 250 was recorded in 2017 respectively.

Substandard imports have a potential to kill the local industries if not controlled because these products are usually priced unreasonably low, making the local industries to be uncompetitive. This can be evidenced by the closure of some textile industries in Zambia like Kafue textiles, which received very stiff competition from dealers of second-hand clothes whose prices were unreasonably very cheap. At a global level, 2.5 million jobs are lost world wide annually due to collapse of the local industries as impacted by substandard products (Levin, 2009). In return, massive unemployment in a country results in high crime levels as citizens will resort to all manner of illegal activities just for survival (Levin, 2009). Additionally, substandard imported products have a potential to deny the government the much-needed revenue through uncollected taxes because these substandard imported products usually move through illegitimate channels, making it difficult for the tax agencies to capture these importers (Sowder, 2013). Globally, businesses and governments lose 200billion dollars in revenues due to these products and according to OECD (2016) report, 3.3% of world trade is in counterfeit or substandard products.

Furthermore, as a way of getting more benefits from consumers, manufacturers of substandard products do not follow any approved international standard when manufacturing these products and as such, there is high risk of harm on the health of human beings because these products are not regulated (Lewis, 2009 and Sagan, 2010). There is also a tainted image of the country from

investors of genuine products into the country if markets are flooded by substandard imported products.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Various studies have been done on what actually leads to substandard imported products on markets and below are some reasons researchers identified.

2.1 Factors to Substandard Imports

2.1.1 Porous Borders

Walters (2017) states that porous borders is one of the major factors leading to increase in substandard products in most countries especially on the continent of Africa. This is also supported by the study done by Onwumere (2014). Most borders of African countries are wide and lack adequate security. Most African countries lack sufficient resources to put up enough security surveillances to man their borders and as a result, this creates free entrance of goods especially illegitimate products. Manias (2020) also asserts that weak borders is a recipe for influx of substandard imports as there is always limited control on products passing through the borders.

2.1.2 Insufficient Consumers Awareness

Sowder (2013) in his study notes that the ignorance of most consumers causes substandard products on the markets. Sowder (2013) discovered that most consumers buy literally anything sold on the markets without even verifying quality status of these products. Because of this insufficient consumer awareness, dealers of substandard products have taken advantage of this and are selling anything to consumers. The confederation of Tanzania Industries (2017) asserts that consumers' lack of interest to scrutinize the products they buy has created demand for these substandard products. Because of this demand for substandard imported products, manufacturers have continued to produce these inferior products in order to fill this demand.

2.1.3 Insufficient Consumers' Disposable Incomes.

According to the study done by Walters (2017) and Onwumere (2014), the number one cause of substandard imported products on the African continent is consumers little disposable incomes. Because most consumers on the African continent are poor, they lack capacity to buy genuine products which are usually a bit expensive. Because of this inability of consumers to buy genuine products, this has created a demand for cheap substandard products to continue to be supplied on the continent. This has also created some wealthy countries to dump their expired products on poor countries because of this incapacity of poor nations to buy new and genuine products. Additionally, Ships and Ports (2016) and Thomas (2015) also stated that the high demand for cheap and substandard goods has made the business lucrative as most consumers on the African continent cannot afford the high quality but yet very expensive top-quality products. African voice (2018) report also highlight poverty as the cause for most African consumers demand for substandard imports. The high level of unemployment in most African countries is contributing to this insufficient income in most African countries (Udo, 2016)

2.1.4 Insufficient Testing Facilities

Makuya (2018) states that lack of equipment by agencies mandated to prevent entrance of substandard products is also a major cause especially in Zambia. When products reach the borders, they should be subjected to a thorough testing in order to assess whether the imported products meet the country's quality standards. However, due to lack of most testing equipment, most products are unable to be tested, resulting in them ending up on the markets because government agencies are unable to test these products on time due to lack of equipment.

2.1.5 Insufficient Funding to Regulatory Agencies

According to Ships and Ports (2016), the regulatory organizations responsible for preventing entrance of substandard products should be empowered, so that they can carry out their duties accordingly. If there is insufficient funding to these institutions, then entrance of substandard products in a country will be the norm because these agencies will have no capacity to control movement of these substandard imports.

2.2 Solutions to Sub Standard Imports

Various strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products have been identified by various scholars and this section highlights some of these strategies.

2.2.1 Increase Consumer awareness

Sowder (2013), Ships and Ports (2016) and Onwumere (2014) all state that increasing consumer awareness has a great impact on the amount of substandard products in countries. If consumers are aware of the dangers of buying substandard products, the benefits of genuine products and also how to identify fake products, the demand for these substandard products will greatly reduce.

If demand is reduced, producers of these substandard products will stop producing them because there won't be any market for them. Furthermore, Ships and Ports (2016) study on substandard products states that awareness should be created locally on how to identify substandard products and its negative impact. Consumers should also be educated on the need of improving locally made products by creating demand for locally produced products in order to reduce the need for importation. Haysom (2019) and Andino (2014) agrees that increasing consumer awareness on buying quality products is a vital resource to keep away substandard products on the markets because consumers will be demanding quality products only.

2.2.2 Stronger border Protection

Sproxil (2020) has identified stronger border protection as the best solution to deal with porous borders. The protection can be in form of increased security personnel at border points, security equipment like cameras, border walls and any other gadgets which will improve surveillances of all product movements into the country. Esposho (2018) also states that having technologies to identify fake products at every supply chain point is key to capture all substandard products before they are even allowed on the markets.

2.2.3 Stiffer Penalties for Offenders

European Parliamentary Assembly (2004) and Ships and Ports (2016) studies reveal that if stiffer penalties are imposed on all people involved in the entrance of substandard products, people will be scared to involve themselves in these vices because of these penalties. Penalties which may be imposed can include long jail sentences, revoking of licenses or embargos on all foreign companies involved in the spearheading of substandard imported products movements.

2.2.4 Increased Funding

The study done by Abdul-Rahman (2020), Taylor (2019) and Muanya (2015) all mentions increasing funding to people and border control agencies in order to enhance market surveillance, as the solution to the problem of substandard imported products on the markets. If there is adequate funding to agencies responsible for protecting markets from substandard imported products, this problem will be dealt with easily because these agencies will have the capacity to carry out their mandates easily without any challenges.

2.2.5 Increased and Improved Testing Facilities

Makuya (2018) and Risktopics (2013) states that if testing facilities in the country are increased and improved, most products coming into the country will be able to be tested.

Once most goods are tested at the point of entry, substandard products will be able to be captured and destroyed right at the point of entry, without allowing them to even reach the markets.

2.2.6 Improved Standard of Living

Ships and Ports (2016) states that most African consumers live below the poverty line. Governments should therefore raise the standard of living of average people so that they can afford to buy quality genuine products. If consumers continue to live in poverty, purchase of cheap substandard imported products will continue because of insufficient disposable incomes. According to the Central Statistics Office (2018) report, 54.4% of Zambians were totally poor as at 2015. With the findings of Ships and Ports, these poverty levels will need to be reduced if the fight of substandard imported products is won, or else, there will always be high demand for substandard imports if the issue of poverty is not addressed.

2.2.7 Reduce Corruption

Ships and Ports (2016) asserts that corruption is one of the major factors leading to increase in substandard product entrance in most African countries. Even if controls are in place, as long as this vice of corruption is not dealt with, controls will just be on paper and not in practice. Corruption should therefore be dealt with from the roots and government agencies responsible for reducing levels of corruption should be empowered in order to do their work efficiently.

2.3 Knowledge Gap

Most strategies to counter substandard imported products which have been pursued and brought out by researchers have got more to do with strategies at a global and national level. There has been insufficient literature on strategies employed by government organizations or agencies such as ZABS to fight against entrance of substandard imported products. Additionally, the literature review also brought out the fact that factors leading to substandard imported products and solutions

vary from country to country, meaning that factors to substandard products and solutions are not universal. This therefore means that each country should explore its own causes and solutions in order to best fight this problem as there are no factors to this problem which fits in all countries.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

A critical examination of the research design matrix showed that a mixed method approach for both data collection and analysis was appropriate in this study. The quantitative part gave us a broader, robust view, based on hard statistics for example how many consumers from the sample have bought substandard imported products before. The qualitative part provided depth and detail of the causes and solutions to substandard imported products on the *Zambian* markets.

The sample size for this study was sixty (60) for experts on quality assurance at both ZABS and ZCSA. At the time of the study, there were a total of sixty quality assurance experts at both ZABS and ZCSA (formally inspections department at ZABS) responsible for testing, inspection, training, product certifications and standards development. All these sixty experts were sampled. The study also sampled 150 consumers of imported products in Lusaka city. According to the Central Statistics Office (2018) report, Lusaka city had a population of 745,422 residents in both formal and informal employment as at the year 2017. Since the target population was known, the study used Glens and Israel (1992) table and at 95% confidence level with a margin of error of 10%, a sample size of 150 was used.

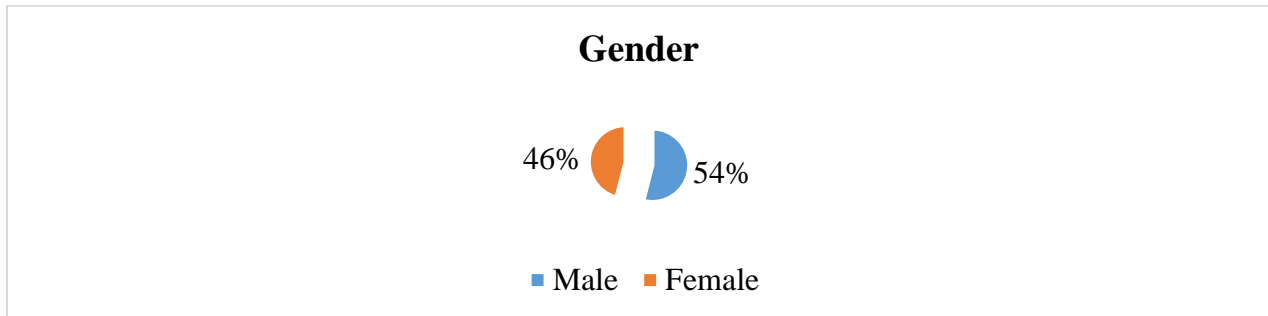
This study used primary data that was collected using structured questionnaires which were served on respondents through personal interviews of situations that were presented to them. The researcher utilized Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) as the main descriptive statistical tool to analyze the data and determine the extent of relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The results of the processed data were presented using percentages, means, standard deviations, frequencies, and tables for easy understanding.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the causes to do with substandard imported products on the *Zambian* markets. The chapter also provides an analysis of the suggested solutions to substandard imported products. The research utilized structured questionnaires to collect primary data. Utilizing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods made the research more reliable and useful.

4.1 Demographic Results

The respondents were quality assurance experts at Zambia Bureau of Standards and Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (Formally inspections department at ZABS) and some consumers of imported products. The results showed that majority of respondents amongst the participants were males at 54% while 46% were females.

**Figure 1: Gender of the Respondents**

Source: (Author field data, 2020)

4.2 Coefficient of determination

The coefficient of determination clarifies the extent to which changes in the dependent variable can be explained by the change in the independent variables. The three independent variables that were studied were import procedures, consumers purchasing behavior and strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products.

4.3 Correlation results

The study conducted data analysis using simple descriptive statistical measures such as, mean, standard deviation and variance to give glimpse of the general trend. However, correlation analysis was used to determine the nature of the relationship between variables at a generally accepted conventional significant level of $P=0.05$ (Sekaran, 2003). In addition, chi-square was employed to analyze the relationship between a single dependent variable and several independent variables (West, 2008). The beta (β) coefficients for each independent variable generated from the model, was subjected to a t -test, in order to test each of the hypotheses under study:

$$X^2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$$

Where;

X^2 = substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

O_1 = Observed frequencies,

O_2 = import procedures,

O_3 = consumer purchasing behavior

E = Expected frequencies

I = entrance of substandard imported products

4.3.1 Chi-square test for relationship between import procedures and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

The Chi-square test at $p \leq 0.05$ significance level illustrating statistically significant association between import procedures and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets are as displayed in the Table 1. Hence, Table 1 presents the Chi-square test that was done to find the relationship between import procedures and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets. To achieve this, the hypothesis below was tested;

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between import procedures and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

Table 1: Chi-square test for the relationship between import procedures and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	433.042a	132	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	251.723	132	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	75.616	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases		122	

a. 152 cells (97.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.

Source: (Author field data, 2020)

From the results in Table 1, the P-value for the Linear-by-Linear Association, Chi-Square test for the relationship between import procedures and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets is 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis that, there is no significant relationship between import procedures and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets was rejected ($p < 0.05$). This implies that there is a significant relationship between import procedures and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

4.3.2 Chi-square test for the relationship between consumer purchasing behavior and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

The Chi-square test at $p \leq 0.05$ significance level illustrating statistically significant association between consumer purchasing behavior and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets. Hence, Table 2 presents the Chi-square test that was conducted to establish the relationship between consumer purchasing behavior and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets. To achieve this, the hypothesis below was tested;

H₀₂: There is no significance relationship between consumer purchasing behavior and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

Table 2: Chi-square test for there is no significance relationship between consumer purchasing behavior and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	463.067a	121	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	281.323	121	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	81.214	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases		122	

a. 140 cells (97.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.

Source: (Author field data, 2020)

From the results in Table 2, the P-value for the Linear-by-Linear Association, Chi-Square test for association between consumer purchasing behavior and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets is 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis that, there is no significance relationship between consumer purchasing behavior and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets was rejected ($p < 0.05$). This implies that there is a significance relationship between consumer purchasing behavior and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

4.3.3 Chi-square test for relationship between strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

The Chi-square test at $p \leq 0.05$ significance level illustrating statistically the relationship between strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets as shown in Table 3. Hence, Table 3 presents the Chi-square test that was conducted to establish the relationship between strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets. To achieve this, the hypothesis below was tested;

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

Table 3: There is no significant relationship between strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	628.085a	121	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	262.903	121	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	83.269	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases		122	

a. 141 cells (97.9%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

Source: (Author field data, 2020)

From the results in Table 3, the P-value for the Linear-by-Linear Association, Chi-Square test for the relationship between strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets is 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is significant relationship between strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets was rejected ($p < 0.05$). This implies that there is a significant association between There is significant relationship between strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products and presence of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets.

4.4 Discussion of the Findings

4.4.1 Causes of Substandard Imports on the Zambian Markets

The study found that there has been insufficient funding to Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS) and other government agencies responsible for quality assurance in the country. For example, in 2020, only 50% of ZABS budget was funded by the central government, thereby making it difficult for the agency to carry out its quality assurance mandate for the country. This is in agreement to the study by Ships and Ports (2016) who attributed insufficient funding to regulatory agencies as the major cause for substandard imports in most countries. The study also found that insufficient consumers' awareness on quality matters was also a major contributing factor to entrance of substandard imports. 39.8% of consumers who responded indicated that they bought substandard imported products because they were unaware that the products bought were substandard. This finding is in line with the studies by Sowder (2013) and The Conderation of Tanzania Industries (2017) who both indicated lack of consumer awareness as the main cause of substandard imports. Furthermore, the study found that most Zambian borders are porous, making entrance of substandard imports into the country easily. Walters (2017), Onwumene (2014) and Manias (2020) all put porous borders as the number one cause of substandard imports in most countries according to their studies.

Additionally, no testing facilities at all the border points of the country were found, making it difficult to capture these substandard imported products at the point of entry. Testing facilities were only found in Lusaka in the whole country. This finding is in agreement to the study by Makuya (2018) who attributed insufficient testing facilities at port of entry as the cause for the entrance of substandard imports. Finally, the study found that there is insufficient disposable incomes by citizens to buy quality genuine products. 55.3% of consumers who responded indicated that they bought substandard imported products because they had no enough money to buy genuine products which are usually priced a bit high. This finding is in agreement to studies done by Udo (2016), Onwumere (2014), Waiters (2017), Thomas (2015) and African voice (2018) who all found insufficient disposable incomes by consumers as the leading cause for high demand in cheap substandard imports, thereby creating a high demand for these products.

4.4.2 Strategies to counter entrance of substandard imported products

Having testing facilities at border points will reduce entrance of substandard products into the country. 32.6% of experts strongly agreed to this, 48.8% agreed while 14% disagreed to this strategy. Only 4.7% of experts strongly disagreed. Apart from having testing facilities at border points, the study also found that testing products destined to Zambia from country of origin can

reduce substandard imports on Zambian markets. 20.9% strongly agreed to this while 39.5% agreed to this strategy. 11.6% however strongly disagreed while 20.9% disagreed. 7% of experts were not decided on this. These findings are in agreement to the study by Risktopics (2013) who found improvement in testing facilities as a solution to entrance in substandard imports in countries.

Improving consumer awareness was also a strategy found by the study as a solution to substandard imports. 37.2% of experts strongly agreed to this while 39.5% agreed. Only 9.3% and 14% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. This finding agrees to the studies by Hayson (2019) and Andino (2014) who all concluded that improving consumer awareness has potential to reduce entrance of substandard imports as consumers will be aware of the dangers of these products. Additionally, increasing funding to ZABS and other quality assurance agencies will enable these agencies to carry out their mandates easily 44.2% and 37.2% of experts strongly agreed and agreed to this strategy. Only 9.3% and 7% of experts disagreed and strongly disagreed. 2.3% of experts did not respond. This agrees well with studies by Muanya (2015), Taylor (2019) and Abdul-Rahman (2020) who all put across increased funding to regulatory agencies as the best weapon to entrance of substandard imports.

Furthermore, sealing off porous borders was found to be another major strategy to countering entrance of substandard imports into the country. 41.9% of experts strongly agreed to this strategy while 32.6% agreed. 7% of the experts disagreed while 9.3% strongly disagreed. 9.3% were undecided. This agrees with the suggestions by Sproxil (2020) and Esposho (2018) who both put forward increasing border security as a solution to preventing entrance of substandard imports in countries. Finally, the study found that improving the standards of living of citizens will greatly reduce entrance of substandard imported products because citizens will have enough disposable incomes to buy genuine products, thereby reducing the demand for cheap substandard imports. 39.5% of experts strongly agreed to this strategy while 27.9% agreed to it. Only 16.3% disagreed while 9.3% strongly disagreed. 7% of the experts did not respond. This finding is in agreement to the findings by Ships and Ports (2016) who asserted that improving the standard of living for consumers reduces the demand for substandard imports as consumers will have capacity to buy genuine products.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

The aim of the study was to establish strategies that can counter entrance of substandard imported products on the Zambian markets. It was concluded that the causes of substandard imported products included lack of testing facilities at border towns, inadequate funding to agencies mandated to prevent entrance of substandard imported products and porous borders. Other causes included inadequate consumers' disposable incomes and insufficient consumers' awareness on quality as some leading motivations behind consumers buying substandard imported products.

After identifying causes of substandard imported products, the study then went further to establish strategies to counter entrance of these substandard imported products into the country. The strategies identified by this study included increasing consumers sensitization programs on quality,

increasing testing facilities at border towns, setting up stronger border protection and testing imported products from their countries of origin.

The study concludes that combating substandard imported products will increase operations of local industries and with this increased operation of local industries, the level of unemployment in the country will reduce and this will in turn result into increased revenue for the government from this increased tax base. Furthermore, the study concludes that the country will have a productive population because people will be consuming quality products unlike these harmful to human health substandard products which are not regulated by any international approved standards when being produced.

5.2 Recommendation.

The study therefore, based on the above findings recommends the following:

- i. Testing products from country of origin
- ii. Increased Funding to Zambia Bureau of Standards
- iii. Product and Management system services for ZABS should be accredited
- iv. Stiffen the legal framework on dealers of substandard products
- v. Sensitizing the public on the dangers of substandard products.

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