

EFFECT OF PROMOTIONAL MIX ON CONSUMER BUYING DECISIONS OF LOCAL AGRIPRODUCTS IN NORTH CENTRAL, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The preference of local consumers for foreign agriproducts over locally produced ones has threatened the existence of local ones and this necessitated this study which examined the effect of promotional mix on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in the north central, Nigeria. The study adopted the cross-sectional research design whereby structured five-point Likert scale questionnaires were administered to a sample of three hundred and eight-four (384) respondents. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses formulated and the study found a positive and significant effect of sales promotion on consumer buying decisions and also a positive and insignificant effect of advertisement on consumer buying decisions. Based on these findings, the study recommends that local agribusinesses should increase their offer of both price and quantity discounts to consumers. By so doing, the consumer will favor locally-made products over other products since the consumer tends to prefer where he/she can get more quantity for his/her money. Also, that local agribusinesses should design quality and attractive contents for their advertorials and also employ the use of influencers to advertise and serve as ambassadors to their products and brand.

Keywords: *Promotional Mix, Sales Promotion, Advertising, Consumer Buying Decision.*

INTRODUCTION

In today's world which is characterized by rapid changes and advancements in diverse spheres of life especially with changes arising from the rapid transfer of information, businesses are challenged to consider media and communication as a tool for the transfer of new ideas that reflect on the concept of competitive struggle between organizations towards ensuring survival and growth (Abdullah & Nuri, 2019). Every business organization therefore, desires to create and maintain a reliable, cost-effective and accessible medium through which their goods and services are known and patronized by the target customers so as to provide for the attainment of their stated objectives. It is therefore understandable to state that business organizations are established to accomplish objectives of improving performance leveraging on their interactions with the customers (Ibojo & Akinruwa, 2014).

Promotional mix has been posited to mean an optimal combination of various types of promotional tools and strategies or the selection of the most effective ones to influence consumers' decisions to buy a company's product (Budianto, et al., 2020) or increase patronage/sales (Suliyanto, 2006; Ederm, et al., 2002). Promotion is an all-inclusive term that covers the entire scope of advertising, public relations, personal selling and sales promotion. These and other forces have been identified as key elements in the present competitive business environment that businesses need to pay attention to should they desire survival in the market (Abedin & Ferdous, 2015). Therefore, promotion can be analyzed as a strategy deployed by businesses to place their goods and services as adequately provided to satisfy customer demands as well as assisting the buyer or prospective customer to make purchase decisions.

Buying decision of consumers are attributed to certain elements such as product/service offering, location of such product, discount, product value, brand name, warranty, among others. It is therefore considered that these decisions may be aided by marketing activities since marketing create opportunities through the provision of effective means of determining the desires and needs of customers and obtaining their satisfaction (Abdullah & Nuri, 2019). Hence, promotional mix elements are seen to be effective in guiding customers to decide whether to purchase a product or try a service (Neha & Manoj, 2013). This informed the choice of advertisement and sales promotion in this study with the need to examine how they affect consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in north central, Nigeria.

The agricultural sector in Nigeria has received lots of support from government and relevant stakeholders in recent times especially in the last decade. These supports include but not restricted to border closure for food importation, high tariffs for imported agriproducts, foreign exchange restrictions among others. This led to what seem like a revolution in the sector as seen in the emergence of many firms seeking to boost domestic production of agriproducts at a profit. However, recent happenings have shown a continued decline in the performance of local agribusinesses in the country as customers continue to show preference for foreign agriproducts such as rice, tomato paste among others over locally processed ones leading to low patronage of the locally made agriproducts. Since it is said that the success or failure of any business organization is hinged on how best such organization can fulfill its customers' demands, it becomes pertinent for agribusinesses to review their marketing activities with a view to improving patronage and hence the need for this study which examines the effect of promotional mix elements of advertisement and sales promotion on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria.

The study centered on examining the effect of promotional mix on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria by assessing specifically, the effect of sales promotion and advertising on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria. The following hypotheses stated in null form guided the study:

H₀₁: Sales promotion has no significant effect on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria.

H₀₂: Advertisement has no significant effect on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Promotional Mix

Promotion is concerned with making a customer conscious of a product and getting him/her to buy it. Khan (2016) states that promotion is an effective way to reach potential customers to influence their purchase decisions (profiles) and actions related to the product or service. Thus, the promotional mix is a blend of various promotional elements (tools) consciously used by enterprises to create and capture market share by letting consumers know their product specifics and factors. This is in line with Armstrong (2009), who believes that promotion is all those activities deployed to promote and raise awareness about a product or service.

The ultimate goal of promotion is to persuade the target consumer to buy or consume the product offering, on regular basis. Ralph (2007) defines promotion as the method of communication by marketers to persuade consumer to buy their products or services. Kotler and Keller (2006) explained further that promotion can be a cost-effective way to disseminate messages, whether to build a brand preference or to educate people. It is the non-personal communication of marketing related information to a target audience, usually paid for by an identified sponsor in order to reach the specific objective of the sponsor (Benneth, 2006).

The content of promotional tools should help the customer in making valuable decisions. This can be firmly said that, well designed promotional mix is very important to promote small and medium printing press firms effectively (Victor, 2012). There are various forms of promotional mix used by organizations to publicize their products or services to their target audience. Such promotional mix include, sales promotion, advertising, sales force, public relation and direct selling (Arvinlucy, 2012). However, these promotional mix elements aren't limited to the ones listed above. For the purpose of this study, promotional mix is defined as those direct methods by which a business uses to communicate with its target audience.

Sales Promotion

Afanda and Maina (2015), affirm that sales promotion is any enticement used by manufacturers or retailers to aggravate trade with other sellers or middle men, or with consumers in order to promote their products, despite inciting the sellers to sell their goods. Kotler (2013) asserts that sales promotion is adverse collection of incentive tools mostly short-term, that is designed to stimulate quicker or greater

purchase of particular brand, products, or service by consumers or the traders. According to Kwajafa, *et al.*, (2018) sales promotion includes several communications activities pursued in an attempt to provide added value or incentives to consumers to stimulate immediate sales which are usually geared towards stimulating product interest, trials or purchase. It is specifically designed to boost quick sales and ultimately create loyalty.

According to Abdullahi (2012), sales promotion is any method of encouraging consumers to buy outside advertising, personal selling, publicity etc. To him, it can also be seen as activities that complement the firm's personal selling and advertising effort. It is a term that is mostly used by companies to describe different promotional activities. Sales promotion is seen by Richard (2012) as procedure and apparatus usually adopted temporarily to attract products and services to those who deliver goods to final users. This is done with the provision of more rewards that may come in any form sooner or later.

Advertising

According to Odunlami, *et al.* (2020) advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor. According to Agbeja, *et al.* (2019) advertising is a subset of promotion mix which is one of the 4Ps in the marketing mix i.e. product, price, place and promotion. Advertising consists of all the activities involved in presenting to an audience a non-personal, sponsor-identified, paid for message, about a product or organization (Glory & Chris, 2019). Adima (2019) defines advertising as any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, and services by an unidentified sponsor.

As a promotional strategy, advertising serves as a major tool in creating product or brand awareness and conditions the mind of a potential consumer to take eventual purchase decision. Liban (2015) defined advertising as a promotional tool for non-personal communication about an organization to a target audience through a mass medium. It also tells people about a product or service publicly. Polo *et al.* (2011) views advertising as any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services, which has an identified sponsor. He indicated that advertising influences relationship between existing clients and service providers.

Consumer Buying Decisions

Kotler and Keller (2016) define purchase decision as a decision-making process that includes determining what to buy or not from a seller which is reliant on the other activities which precedes the decision-making process. The purchasing decision process has stages to achieve purchasing decisions made by customers; this include recognizing needs, seeking information, evaluating alternatives, purchasing decisions, and behavior after purchase (Syaparudin & Hertati, 2020). Kotler and Armstrong (2012) also stated that the purchase decision is a purchase process related to the brand to be purchased. They posit further that purchasing decisions are individual activities that are directly involved in the decision-making process to make purchases of products offered by the seller. While decision making is an individual activity that is directly involved in obtaining and using the goods offered, consumers will consider various aspects before deciding to buy or not (Hertati & Safkaur: 2020; Syafarudin, 2020).

Sales Promotion and Consumer Buying Decisions

Anuraj (2018) studied effect of sales promotion on consumer behavior. The data for the study were collected through both primary and secondary means. The primary data were collected through the administering of questionnaire to the randomly selected samples. The analysis was done with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel. The study revealed that sales promotion has the crucial effect on the change in pattern and behavior of the consumers towards the different strategies of sales promotion. The study also reveals that the sales promotion has an influence in the purchase decision of consumers though their entire decision depends on making purchase anytime they wished to. It is recommended that to increase the sales in cost effective manner and to outstand the competitors, the practice of sales promotion would be useful to improve the sales by influencing the consumers buying behavior. Similarly, Anam (2018) studied sales promotion and price discount effect

on consumer purchase intention with the moderating role of social media in Pakistan. The data of the study were collected using the simple random sampling and through the questionnaire technique. Two hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed among the students. The confirmatory factor analysis and the structural equation model technique were used to analyze the data. The results indicated that the sales' promotion and the social media had a remarkable and positive effect on the consumers' purchase intention. In addition, social media moderated the relationship between the sales' promotion and the consumers' purchase intention.

Akhter et al. (2014) narrowed their study on women shoes, only, by examining how different varieties of shoes impact on sales promotions that ultimately influence purchase intentions of customers, and how attitude towards price discount affects sales promotional activities, thereby influencing customers' purchase decision. On customer loyalty, the study selected 164 brand customers through random sampling but found that there was no relationship between customer loyalty and sales promotion whereas attitude towards price discount had a positive relationship with sales promotion

Advertisement and Consumer Buying Decisions

Donjeta (2021) examined the impact of advertising spending on brand loyalty: the case of banking sector in Kosovo. The study used primary data, which was collected via random sampling. The questionnaires were delivered to 220 bank customers covering the whole territory of Kosovo. The data collected was processed and fed into STATA for analysis. The study revealed that advertising spending has direct effect on customer orientation and perceived service quality. It was observed that any increase in advertising spending by the banks, results in increasing of customer orientation and perceived quality regarding the service received. The study therefore recommends that banks in Kosovo should focus on the development of advertising whose primary focus is customer orientation and the impact on customer's perceptions of quality banking services, in order to strengthen customer loyalty to the brand or Bank. Also, Okolo et al. (2018) studied influence of online advertising on consumer brand awareness and patronage of financial institutions in Enugu: A Study of United Bank for Africa (UBA). Sample size was determined using Freund and William's method as the population is indefinite. Purposive sampling technique was adopted and survey method was used to gather primary data using questionnaire instrument. Content validity was conducted to sort out for consistency of the questionnaire and reliability was achieved using Cronbach's alpha and a value of 0.890 was arrived at. Findings revealed online advertising significantly influences customer brand awareness of UBA products. Also, it was discovered that online advertising has no significant influence on consumer purchase behavior. The study recommends that the banks should design their online advertising in attractive texts, images and even videos to create better awareness of their various products.

The study by Mai, et al. (2016) found that television advertising messages, humors, musicals, lyrics, image motion repetition on the screen, were factors that positively contributed or related to brand awareness and customer loyalty. In particular, the study emphasized that customer loyalty was more directly and positively affectual to brand recall, trust and brand recognition. The outcome and the take of the study supports the view that resort to use of promotional mix elements strongly influences sales performance, brand loyalty and repeat purchases. The study's use of multiple regression and factor analysis among others to ascertain the cause-and-effect relationship between the variables, show the scientific or empirical dimensions used by the researchers. This study was carried out in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, to establish the effects of television commercials on customer loyalty through brand awareness.

Planned Behavior Theory (PBT)

Ajzen (1991) developed the Planned Behavior Theory. He shows a model that has been widely applied in diverse studies on behavioral intention (Lee et al., 2010; Fraser et al., 2010). PBT explains that voluntary human behavior is preceded by a preconceived intent to engage in such behavior. This can be shown in the figure below, adapted by Ajzen to explain this model. This theory postulates that behavioral intention, in turn, is determined by three significant determinants; Attitude towards Behavior (AB), Subjective Norm (SN) and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC).

“This means that the degree to which individuals see a certain behavior positively (that is attitude), or foresees that substantial other want them to engage in the behavior (that is the subjective norm) and believe that they are capable of carrying out the behavior (that is perceived behavioral control), serve as direct determinants of the extent of their intention to perform the behavior” (Ajzen, 1991).

The PBT is one of the best-supported social psychological theories for predicting human behavior. The central premise is that behavioral decisions result from a reasoned process in which the action is influenced by attitudes, norms, and perceived behavior control (Smith et al., 2007). This theory is largely useful in Marketing Communication discourse because marketing can affect one or more of the factors that this theory describes, to control potential consumers' intentions to use a product, and by extension, perceive and plan control of potential patronage decisions.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the cross-sectional research design. Data was collected with the aid of a five-point Likert questionnaire from a conveniently selected sample of 384 consumers in north central, Nigeria. The sample figure was gotten using the Cochran sample size determination formula since the population is infinite. The questionnaire items were adapted from the works of Wahyudi and Melinda (2018) and designed using likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” The data were analyzed using the multiple regression analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

$$\text{CBD} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{SPM} + \beta_2 \text{ADV} + e \quad - \quad - \quad - \quad - \quad - \quad - \quad (i)$$

Where: CBD = Consumer Buying Decisions, SPM = Sales Promotion, ADV = Advertisement, e = Error term (5% = 0.05), β_0 = Intercept, $\beta_1\beta_2$ = Coefficient of independent variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study distributed a total of 422 copies of the questionnaire which is a 10% increase in the sample size to provide for attrition. Out of the 422 distributed, a valid response of 396 representing 94% was received and used for the analysis subsequently.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
SPM	396	1	5	4.60	.711	-1.749	.167	1.470	.332
ADV	396	1	5	1.96	1.181	1.201	.167	.389	.332
CBD	396	1	5	2.94	1.240	.311	.167	-.973	.332
Valid N (listwise)	396								

Source: SPSS Output, 2024

The table above indicates the behavior of all the variables under study. The average value of sales promotion (SPM) recorded was 4.60 indicating that most of the responses were between agree and strongly agree while the maximum and minimum value stood at 5 and 1 respectively. Also, the skewness value which stood at -1.749 indicates that the variable is normally distributed since it is less than 1.96. Also, advertisement (ADV) recorded a minimum and maximum of 1 and 5 respectively, while the mean value stood at 1.96 with a skewness value of 1.201, the variable also indicated normal distribution. Lastly, consumer buying decision (CBD) had a minimum and maximum values of 1 and 5 respectively with an average value of 2.94 and a skewness value of 0.311 signifying normal distribution.

Table 2: Correlations

		SPM	ADV	CBD
SPM	Pearson Correlation	1	.085	.036
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.215	.597
	N	396	396	396
ADV	Pearson Correlation	.085	1	.069
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.215		.315
	N	396	396	396

	N	396	396	396
CBD	Pearson Correlation	.036	.069	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.597	.315	
	N	396	396	396

Source: SPSS Output, 2024

Sales promotion (SPM) showed a weak and positive relationship with advertisement (ADV) which stood at 0.085 which is insignificant at 5% level of significance. SPM showed a weak but positive relationship with consumer buying decision (CBD) which stood at 0.036 and is insignificant at 5% level of significance. Also, ADV showed a weak and positive relationship with CBD which stood at 0.069. All the variables under study satisfy multicollinearity as though none of the independent variable is strongly related to another.

Table 3: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.263 ^a	.513	.511	1.243	1.933

a. Predictors: (Constant), ADV, SPMI

b. Dependent Variable: CBD

Table 4: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	167.344	2	.934	13.605	.000 ^b
	Residual	158.863	393	1.544		
	Total	326.207	395			

a. Dependent Variable: CBD

b. Predictors: (Constant), ADV, SPM

Table 3: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.829	.590		4.792	.000		
	SPM	.054	.121	.031	7.445	.000	.993	1.007
	ADV	.070	.073	.067	.445	.656	.993	1.007

a. Dependent Variable: CBD

Source: SPSS Output, 2024

The result, as shown in the tables above revealed an R-square value of 0.513 which signifies that 51.3% of the variation in consumer buying decision (CBD) is explained by the combination of sales promotion and advertisement. The remaining 48.7% variation could be explained by other factors or variables not included in this study. The f-statistics stood at 13.605 and also the probability of the f-statistics was found to be significant at 5% level of significance (p 0.000<0.05) which therefore, indicates that the model is fit to measure the association between the variables under study.

Test of Hypotheses

From the regression table above, the result indicates a significant effect of sales promotion (SPM) on consumer buying decision as seen in the p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 level of significance and hence the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative one which states that sales promotion has significant effect on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria. However, the result revealed an insignificant effect of advertisement on consumer buying decisions as seen in the p-value of 0.445 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance and as such the

null hypothesis which states that advertisement has no significant effect on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the effect of promotional mix on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria and further tested two hypotheses the results of which are discussed accordingly. Firstly, the study found a positive and significant effect of sales promotion on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria implying that discounts offered consumers has contributed immensely to consumers choice of local agriproducts in north central, Nigeria as consumers try to maximize value for their money. This finding agrees with that of Anuraj (2018) and Anam (2018) who found positive and significant effect of sales promotion on buying decisions. However, the findings from the second hypothesis revealed that advertisement has a positive and insignificant effect on consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria. This implies that advertorials by local agribusinesses has not critically influenced buying decisions of consumers. This could be attributed to the usage of poor advertorial contents and/or mediums. This finding agrees with the findings of Okolo et al., (2018) who found no significant effect of online advertisement on buying decisions. However, it disagrees with Donjeta (2021) who found a significant effect of advertisement on buying decisions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the finding of this study, the study concluded that sales promotion has contributed significantly in influencing consumer buying decisions of local agriproducts in North Central, Nigeria however, the buying decisions of these consumers has not favored local agriproducts due to the meagre contribution of advertisement. Based on the foregoing, the study recommends;

- i. That local agribusinesses should increase their offer of both price and quantity discounts to consumers. By so doing, the consumer will favor locally-made products over other products since the consumer tends to prefer where he/she can get more quantity for his/her money.
- ii. Also, that local agribusinesses should design quality and attractive contents for their advertorials and also employ the use of influencers to advertise and serve as ambassadors to their products and brand

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