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The Role of Sales Promotions on Consumers' Purchasing Behaviour in the Manufacturing Sector in Ghana

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Abstract:

This study examined the influence of the organization's sales promotion on consumer purchasing behaviour. The research intended to answer questions on the impact sales promotions have on consumer's purchasing behaviour; types of sales promotion are preferred by the consumers when making a purchasing decision and the relationship between marketing tools and consumer buying behavior. The study adopted the mixed methods approach. Two Hundred (200) questionnaires were administered to collect quantitative data while two (2) respondents were also interviewed to capture qualitative data. The study found that the company uses flyers/brochure, radio/TV medium and billboards as their promotional strategies to promote their products and attract customers. The study further revealed that most customers purchase products of Nestle Ghana Limited because of the use of sales promotion strategies. The findings further indicated that the company uses advertisement, discounts and personal selling on a daily basis to influence the purchasing behaviour of consumers. Also it was revealed that the company do not provide free samples for pretesting of new products before launching them in the market. Prices of products are sometimes reduced to boost sales. The study further agreed that the company uses draws, promotions and coupons to reward loyal customers as well as road shows to promote the consumption of their brand. The study recommended that the company should appoint a website developer or train an existing IT officer of the company to put into practice the use of social media to promote the various brands of the company. Nestle Ghana Limited must intensify the use of sales promotion as consumers have shown greater interest and are highly influenced by sales promotion activities.

Keywords: Sales promotion, consumer purchasing behaviour, manufacturing sector, Ghana

1. Introduction

Sales promotion is the largest contributor of sales in organizations, especially those in the consumer market (Kotler, 2012). According to the researcher and marketing scholar, as advertising message urges the markets to buy the product, sales promotion asks them to buy the product now hence, trigger immediate action than advertising (Kotler, 2003). Globally, the growth and development of every business is based on its competitive advantage over others (Aderemi, 2003). This may cover areas in-terms of technology, infrastructure and information about a product. In the light of this, the preferences of customers for various products keep changing in the consumer market (Aderemi, 2003). The idea of growth for businesses including those in Ghana includes the need for business owner to put into practice policies that attracts consumers to their products in the manufacturing sector (Darko, 2012).

Gbolagade et al. (1995) pointed out that advertising has been the promotional tool which is drawing the attentions of owners of businesses in Ghana. Gbolagade et al. (1995) further indicated that the situation had changed as expenditures incurred for sales promotions have rapidly increased than as it was previously in most organizations in the manufacturing sector. It is for this reason that Stanton et al. (2001) expressed the view that sales promotion campaign is often the only promotional tool available at the point of purchases which inform, remind and also stimulate the consumer. Kotler & Armstrong (2008) emphasized that sales promotion have numerous advantages to organizations in the manufacturing sector in Ghana and across the globe. This helps owners of businesses to make short term changes in supply and demand (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). Huff & Alden (1998) stated that "the increased importance of sales promotion as strategic tools in consumer markets has generated strong interest among practitioners in understanding the mechanisms, effectiveness, and efficiencies of different sales promotion approaches.

According to Shimp (2003) sales promotion is a type of pull marketing technique that is used to promote the sale of a product that has not gotten the attention of consumers. Sales promotion can also be seen as the provision of incentives to consumers to stimulate demand for a product source (Shimp, 2003). Sales promotion consists of a set of short period motivation tools which is used for consumer's or buyer's provocation to buy more and faster (Neslin, 2002). It is an important marketing strategy along with advertising, public relations and personal selling. According to Aderemi (2003) sales promotion acts as a competitive weapon by providing an extra incentive for the target audience to purchase or support one brand over the other. It is particularly effective in spurring product trials and unplanned purchases (Aderemi,

2003). Sales promotion is an effective tool in influencing consumers to buy a product in any competitive environment. Kotler & Keller (2006) indicated that sales promotion is highly useful when it has to do with convincing retailers and customers to select a consumer product over those of competitors. It also tends to work best when it is applied to items which features can be judged at the point of purchase (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Results on sales data in a study conducted by Dodson et al (2001) seem to suggest that the repurchase probabilities of sales promotion items (a behavioral outcome) are lower for some time after the end of the promotion period.

Several models are developed with a view to providing explanations for the consumer buying behaviors. Blackwell et al. (2006) define consumer behavior as a summation of acquisition, consumption and disposal of products or services. American Marketing Association (2008) defined consumer behavior as the cognitive process that consumers go through prior to a transaction decision. Darko (2012) viewed consumer purchasing behaviour as the process by which the individual consumer searches for, purchases and uses goods and services for the purposes of satisfaction of needs and wants. The behaviors of consumers in purchasing goods and services in the manufacturing sector have adverse effects on the success story of every company and therefore there is the need for creating a marketing mix that satisfies consumers (Darko, 2012). According to Darko (2012) before buying a product, consumers exhibit about certain buying behaviours which includes; a routine response, limited decisions, extensive decision and finally performance of psychological risk. Blackwell et al. (2006) indicated that consumers go through certain steps in taking one purchasing decision which include the need recognition, search for information, pre-purchase, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, consumption and post-purchase decision (Blackwell et al., 2006). The existence and increased competition in Ghana has made Nestle Ghana a customer oriented company. As a result sales promotion is used to entice new customers; maintain the existing ones and also reward the loyal customers.

Nestle Ghana Limited provides goods to a vast range of consumers in the manufacturing sector across the country and beyond for the purposes of meeting consumer needs. For the company to meet those needs and survive in a highly competitive marketing environment there is the need to understand consumer purchasing behaviour to help them evaluate the delivery of their service (Darko, 2012). The widely held view is that sales promotion influence consumers to behave positively towards the company's product and services. However, some academic scholars/researchers (Dodson, 2001; Peattie&Peattie,1993) indicated that promotion is considered to be an external stimulus and when it is gone consumers are less likely to re-purchase. One of the benefits of sales promotion in relation to goods produced by Nestle Ghana Limited and other firms in the manufacturing sector is that it might also encourage low-probability buyers to try a product for the first time (Dodson, 2001).

Other studies show that sales promotions increase the likelihood for consumers to repeat purchases (Peattie&Peattie,2000). If consumers are satisfied with the brand that is being promoted, it is more likely that they will also buy it later after the promotion is over (Peattie&Peattie,2000). The high patronage of products of Nestle Ghana needs to be investigated. It was not clear as to whether this high patronage was due to the company's promotional campaigns or not. Therefore, the influence of the organizations' sales promotion on consumer purchasing behavior in the manufacturing sector remains the focus of this study.

2. Review of Relevant Literature

2.1. Concepts and Definitions

According to Blackwell (2006) purchase decision can be divided into unplanned buying, partially planned buying and fully planned buying. Unplanned buying means that consumers do not make decisions at all to buy a product category and a brand in a store. Individual attitudes and unpredictable situations do influence purchase decision Kotler (2003).

Purchase decision according to Schiffman (2000) is a situation in which a customer agrees to make a transaction with the retailer. According to Neslin (2002) purchase decision comes into deliberation when a customer is most likely attempting to purchase some product or service. However, Kotler (2003) indicated that consumer behavior is highly dependent on their purchase decision. The researcher further pointed out that the focus is on the intent not the behavior, Kotler (2003). Also, Peattie & Peattie, (2000) conducted a research on consumer's knowledge about the product on product evaluations. A cursory look at the sector indicated that consumers having more knowledge about a product are able to solve their problem with lesser efforts compared to less knowledgeable consumers. Also consumers with higher knowledge are not biased in making their decisions related to product purchase. Product knowledge plays a significant role in purchase decisions when the product is new or is manufactured in other countries and is distributed in the rest of the countries (Peattie & Peattie, 2000). Besides that Kotler (2003) indicated that customer knowledge for a product does not affect purchasing decisions directly rather it has an effect on perception of the value and final decision. It is pertinent however to note that consumers knowledge of product depends heavily on some important concepts of the marketing mix. Shimp (2003) defines sales promotion as any incentive used by manufacturer or a retailer to encourage the sales force to aggressively sell the product and also to induce the buyer to buy the product. In sales promotion, consumers are likely to repeat purchase of a product if only they are satisfied with the brand being promoted. There is a high probability to buy the product later after the promotion is over (Peattie,2009). One of the major problem facing sales promotions on consumer purchases behaviour in most developing countries is whether consumers' purchase behaviour towards sales promotional efforts yield positive or negative results for the product concerned since manufacturing companies operate under intense competitions and increasing harsh challenges that make it almost impossible for the company to meet the profitability target and reasonable return on investment. Most company's now

concentrate on promotion strategies and techniques to reach the dwindling profit problem. Govon (2006) indicated that not all sales promotion strategies are directed to consumers, some are directed to the middle men.

Consumer purchasing behavior is the sum total of consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer behavior in the market place when purchasing a product or a service (Govon, 2006).

Consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society (Darko, 2012). It attempts to understand the decision-making processes of buyers, both individually and in groups. Several models are developed with a view to provide explanations for the consumer buying behaviors. Although they vary in form of presentation, most of them are composed of stages such as pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase (Schiffman, B.; Cowley, O.; Watson, & Kanuk, 2000). As far as the consumer decision process model is concerned, consumers need to go through seven steps before reaching their final decisions. These seven steps include need recognition, search for information, pre-purchase, evaluation, purchase, consumption, post consumption, evaluation and divestment (Blackwell et al. (2006).

2.2. Sales Promotional Impact

As it's well known, promotion is a component of the marketing mix which puts emphasizes on the use of various communication tools to promote the value of a company product. Promotion mostly focuses on long term communication strategies, sales promotion have specific motive to make or create immediate sales. Sales promotion has the ability to attract customers. This implies that the use of price inducement strategy to attract price conscious consumers who for one reason or the other would have not being interested in a product makes explains why sales promotion attracts consumers. Sales promotion also has the effect of increasing revenue, Govon, 2006). This is because in a short run a company can increase the volume of its sales. That is to realize massive revenue in flow; a company will need more consumers to buy a product hence the use of sales promotion strategies. No matter the sales promotional strategy adopted by a company, the have long term impact is always on increasing the firm's market share, improve sales volume, retain customers and reduce switching of customers.

2.3. The Promotional Mix Elements

There exist various elements that an organization can use for the purpose of promotion the sales of products. The study will look at the following promotional mix elements including; advertising, exhibition, public relation, direct marketing, personal selling, and sales promotion.

2.4. Advertising

Pettit (2000) define advertising strategy as any paid form of non-personal communication directed towards target audiences and transmitted through various mass media in order to promote and present a product, services or idea. The key difference between advertising and other promotional tools is that it is impersonal and communicates with large numbers of people through paid media channels.

The institutional advertising consists of promotion of the firms' image as a whole and promotion of the products offered, with extra emphasis on the specific firm's name organization. The organization seeks through its marketing communications to build awareness and to impress customers looking for the best range of services (Lee, 2002). While institutional advertising is directed towards the whole population, the brand advertising of particular products has to be much more selective since it has to show that the consumer will benefit from the service. Furthermore, all the individual campaigns of brand advertising have to be compatible in tone and presentation and match the image the business has created through its institutional advertising (Mortimer, 2001).

Mortimer (2001) states that an important part of advertising is to make the service tangible in the mind of the consumer in order to reduce perceived risk and provide a clear idea of what the service comprises. Furthermore she considers it important to advertise consistently, with clear brand image in order to achieve differentiation and encourage word-of-mouth communication. Mortimer (2001) suggests that there are two types of advertising channels appropriate for business advertising. That is "above-the-line" and under-the-line" advertising. Above-the-line advertising contains different channels of communication such as television, radio, posters, magazines and newspapers. Under-the-line advertising constitutes a huge part of a company's advertising activities. These may include leaflets, pamphlets, explanatory guides and manuals that can be used to support selling of a specific product or service.

2.5. Sales Promotion

According to Brassington(2000) sales promotion is tactical marketing techniques with mostly short- term incentives, which are to add value to the product or service, in order to achieve specific sales or marketing objectives. Furthermore, Lee (2002) states that it has two distinctive qualities. Firstly, it provides a "bargain chance" since many sales promotion tools have an attention gaining quality that communicates an offer that although they appeal to a wide range of buyers, many customers tend to be less brand loyal in the long run. Secondly, if sales promotions are used too frequently and carelessly, it could lead to insecure customers, wondering whether the services are reliable or reasonably priced. Lee (2002) indicates that due to conflicting ideas concerning the benefits of sales promotions, healthcare organization must base its decision upon relevance and usefulness of sales promotion as well as cost effectiveness. Petit (1994) claim that normally, coupons, special offers and other forms of price manipulation are the dominant forms of sales promotion. The primary objectives with sales promotion within a manufacturing company are attract new customers;

to increase market share in selected market segments; and to lower the cost of acquiring new customers by seeking to avoid direct price competition with other healthcare organizations.

2.6. Personal Selling

Pettit (2000) argue that, personal selling is a two way communication tools between a representative of an organization and an individual or group, with the intention to form, persuade or remind them, or sometimes serve them to take appropriate actions. Furthermore, personal selling is a crucial element in ensuring customers' post-purchase satisfaction, and in building profitable long-term buyer-seller relationship built on trust and understanding. Furthermore, Julian & Ramaseshan (1994) state that the long term person to person relationship is an important factor for a retail firms to achieve a competitive advantage. Lee (2002) indicated that personal selling is probably the most important element in the communication press within the financial services industry. Lee (2002) stated that personal selling can be performed either face to face or through technological aids such as the internet.

2.7. Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is an interactive system of marketing, using one or more advertising media to achieve measurable response anywhere, forming a basis for creating and further developing an on-going direct relationship between an organization and its customers, to be able to create and sustain quality relationship individual customers, an organization needs to have as much information as possible about each one, and needs to be able to access, manipulate and analyze that information, thus, the database is crucial to the process of building the relationship, (Brassington & Pettit, 2000).

Moles (2000) claimed that as computer literacy and the availability of computers increase and the costs decrease. Through the internet, businesses can identify their customer interests. Furthermore, the internet technology also makes it possible to follow individual customer usage. With the information gathered in an integrated database it is possible to read the customers' needs and satisfy them. This knowledge can be used for different kinds of direct marketing (Lee, 2000).

2.8. Public Relation

Brassington & Pettit (2000) indicated the essence of public relations (PR) is to look after the nature and quality of the relationship between the organization and its different publics, and to create a mutual understanding. Public relations cover a range of activities, for example the creation and maintenance of corporate identity and image; charitable involvement, such as sponsorship, and community initiatives; media relation for the spreading of good news as well as for crisis management, such as damage limitation. Lind (2005) states that another part of public relations is the publicity gained through magazines. Manufacturing company's obtain considerable publicity in so called quality press.

2.9. Exhibition

In order to draw attention of many customers to a particular product's, many business organizations employ the use of exhibition technique. This is a type of sales promotion in which a product is displayed so as to encourage consumers to buy the product (Lind, 2005). This implies that, exhibition displays and demonstrates products at the point where it can be purchased. More important, in this day of advancement in technology, this can be equally achieved with the use of the internet. Here, the Retail outlet can open a web site where prospective customers can view new displays from time to time. The implication here is that, customers do not necessarily have to personally visit retail stores before they can have access to products being displayed for the first or continuous times.

2.10. Consumer Purchasing Behaviour

Consumer Purchasing behavior is the sum total of consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer behavior in the market place when purchasing a product or a service, (Lofland, 1995). It can be further explained as the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society (Shawn Grimsley, 2016). Behavioral study is based on consumer buying behaviour, with the customer playing the three distinct roles of user, payer and buyer (Darko, 2012). Several models are developed with a view to providing explanations for the consumer buying behaviors. Although they vary in form of presentation (Lofland, J & Lofland, L.H, 1995) indicated that most of them are composed of stages such as pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase. Blackwell et al (2001) define consumer behavior as a summation of acquisition, consumption and disposal of products or services. However, such definition falls short of the continuity of the processes. Based on this loophole, Mortimer, (2001) further propose the circle of consumption that recognize purchasing processes as a loop, comprising acquisition of goods and services, consumption, as well as disposal of used goods.

According to Blackwell et al (2006) as far as the consumer decision process model is concerned, consumers need to go through some steps before reaching their final decisions. These steps include need recognition; search for information, evaluation of alternatives, purchase/consumption; post purchase/decision. The researcher further added that most consumer research would primarily base on these five stages and how different elements affect each stage of consumers' decisions, regardless of the different terms and consolidation of stages (Blackwell et al 2006).

- Stage one; recognition of needs which occurs when an individual is aware of a difference between their perception and the actual satisfaction level (Blackwell et al 2006). The buying process is initiated when people recognize their

unsatisfied need (Schiffman, 2000). There are two kinds of needs, namely functional needs and psychological needs. Functional needs are related to the performance of the product whereas psychological needs are intrinsically obtained when customers feel contented with shopping or owning a product which they long for (Blackwell et al.2006).

- Stage two; the search for information. The length and depth of search vary for different customers and depend on variables like personality, social class, income, size of purchase, past experiences, prior brand perceptions, (Schiffman, 2000), as well as customer satisfaction. As mentioned by Blackwell et al. (2006), search for information can further be divided into pre-purchase search and ongoing search. Pre-purchase search is initiated when consumers recognize a need and hence look for more information from the marketplace. Ongoing search, on the other hand, is more likely to be based on personal interest on a particular brand. Customers pursuing this kind of search would like to obtain the most updated information about the designated brand (Kolter &Armstrong, 2008).
- Stage three; the pre-purchase evaluation of alternative sources that consumers compare among different products and brands to make a purchasing decision. In this stage, consumers pay particular attention to the attributes which are most relevant to their needs, (Kolter et al., 2005). Attributes like quantity, size, quality and price are commonly used to judge a brand by customers. Any changes in these attributes can affect consumer decisions on brand or product choices (Blackwell et al., 2006). According to Shimp (2003), firms can create value by providing lower price or unique offers to the customers so as to excel their competitive advantages over the others.
- Stage four; the purchase decisions made by the consumers after evaluating the offers from different retailers. As stated by Blackwell et al (2006), there are two phases contributing to the decision making processes, including retailer and in-store selection. Retailer selection is made by judging which retailers to buy after investigating the attributes from the previous stage whereas in-store selection is affected by the selling skills of salesperson, visual displays inside the shops, as well as point-of-purchase advertising (Blackwell et al., 2006). In addition to in-store purchase (Dodson, & Sternthal, 2001) further point out the significant impact of internet on consumer purchasing decision. As pointed out by Gbolagade; Adesola & Oyawale,1995), this new kind of non-shop retailing format has begun replacing the fairly established catalogue and TV shopping and its development is rapid albeit it is more recently found in comparison with the existing non-shop retailing modes.
- Stage five; the post-purchase stage. In stage five, customers begin evaluating the transactions the products where customers evaluate the consumption process after purchase. This gives rise to satisfaction when consumers' expectations are higher than the perceived performance and vice versa (Blackwell et al., 2006). Last but not least, is its divestment, which the consumers dispose or recycle the products at the sametime. The firms need to think about the possibility of remarketing. This stage is crucial since customers could possibly make repeat purchases provided that they are satisfied with the aforementioned stages (Dodson, & Sternthal, 2001).
- Nowadays, consumers seem to be more aware of the products they buy, and at the same time, products are developed in an unprecedented way (Blackwell et al., 2006). Only by understanding the consumer behavior can the products or brands be developed in a right way (Dodson, & Sternthal, 2001).

2.11. Conceptual Framework

Conceptualization attempts to visualize the causality of the research problem prior to understanding of this research in detail. In this research it is planned to explain the relationship between promotion mix and sales of a company products. This seeks to preempt the outcome of the research.

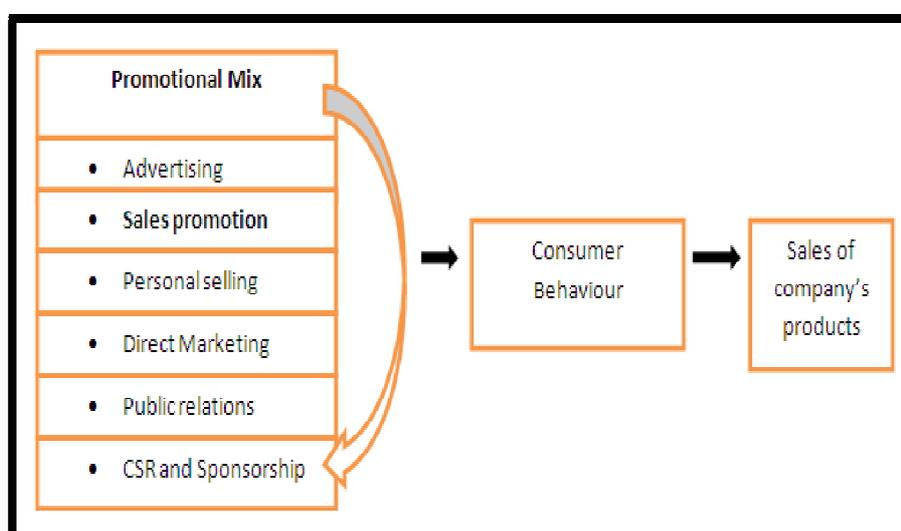


Figure 1: A Conceptual Framework
Source: Developed by the Researcher from Literature

The promotional mix which includes advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, direct marketing, public relations and exhibitions are influencing factors that cause the consumer to behaviour positively or negatively towards the purchase of a company's product. If the company under study applies all or any of the promotion mixes, then the reaction of consumers will be affected and hence sales might increase. Also in the event in which the company does not consider applying any of the promotional mix then the reaction of the consumer might cause a decline in the sales of the product. The sales of the company therefore depend largely on the buying behavior of the consumer or customers; which also depends on the enforcement of the promotional mix elements. The current study is underpinned and could be pre-empted by the above theoretical or conceptual framework. However, the achievement or realization of these objectives contained in the framework is largely depends on the research methodology adopted by the researcher. In the proceeding chapter, a detailed explanation of the approach of research methodology adopted for this study is given.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research Design

The research design focused on the collection and analyses of data by combining both qualitative and quantitative data. Creswell (2003) stated that "the use of this method was based on the fact that it enabled the researcher to triangulate the findings from both methods". This according to the International Federation of Red Cross & Redj Crescent societies (2011) will assist in reducing the biasness and limitations inherent in both methods and complement their strengths.

The process by which data is collected in qualitative research is fundamental as it shows how credible the findings are. They state that transformation of raw data into a final description, narrative, or themes and categories are important when analyzing qualitative data. The in – depth interview will be used as an instrument to collect data from the field. The study also used judgmental sample framework to understand other variables such as demographic characteristics of the respondents to generate the sound and relevant qualitative data. The study also investigated the purchasing decision of customers in relation to the organizations sales promotion activities. In this case quantitative data collection approach is adopted to know the entire group the study is interested in. Simple random probability sample will be used to collect data since it will save time and cost.

3.2. Qualitative Research Approach

The major method employed for the collection of qualitative data was key informant interviews and observation. One of the methods for the collection of qualitative data was in-depth interviews with key informants. An in-depth interview according to Lofland & Lofland (1995) is described as a form of conversation between a researcher and research participant. In that line of thought, in-depth interviews are conducted with key informants for the purpose of gathering some specific information. The interviews are conducted in an informal and unstructured manner. This give the research participants the flexibility to choose a location and time that will be convenient for the researcher to interact with them. Two (2) participants are to be involved in the in-depth interviews. This included 2manager/distributor of Nestle Ghana Limited.

Through this method, the researcher had the opportunity to probe and ask follow up questions in order to establish clarity and deeper understanding of the individual's experiences on the subject under study. This was done to cover broad topical areas for the purpose of gathering comprehensive data for the study through the lists of questions in an open ended format. The researcher adopted the key informant interview method because, it helps to explore in detail with participants with the aim of knowing the extent to which organizational sales promotions influence consumer behaviour. The method is also less distractive and offers the chance for deeper insights of the subject matter (Kuhn, 2010).

3.3. Quantitative Research Approach

Quantitative data were collected from 500 respondents using a semi structured questionnaire which includes both close and open ended questions. The questionnaires were executed personally by the researcher. This method provides the researcher the opportunity to explain questions they cannot understand themselves (the respondents) while observing non-verbal signal for probes especially for open ended questions. This is justified by Williams (2008) who notes that face-to-face method of administering questionnaires has the advantage where unclear questions can be clarified to the respondent and open-ended questions can be used to collect a range of possible responses. Each questionnaire was administered between one hour and one and half hours. The questionnaire were constructed by the researcher within a short time period.

3.4. Target Population

The target population for this study includes customers, distributors and staff of Nestle Company Limited in the three Northern regions of Ghana. According to Lind Marshal & Wathen (2005) a sample is the selection of a portion of to study population for inclusion.

3.5. Sampling Frame

Sampling frame is defined by Panneerselvam (2004 p.191) as "the complete list of all members/units of a population from which each sampling unit is selected". In Reference to the above definition, the sampling frame for this

study consists of staff, distributors and customers of Nestle Ghana Limited in the three Northern Regions of Ghana. The selection of these Regions for the study is warranted by the high level of poverty rate in these Regions; where the inhabitants are compelled to look for promotional commodities that add value to their purchases. The key informants consisted of staff (male/female), distributors as well as customers (students, workers, retail shop owners etc) of the company. All these groups serve as a frame within which the research participants were selected.

3.6. Sample Size

According to Lind, Marshal and Wa then (2005), a sample is the selection of a portion of the study population for inclusion in a study. A sample size is therefore the total number of people who are selected from a given population to participate in a study. The selection of a sample size for a particular study is based on certain factors such as homogeneity (commonness in terms of characteristics of the research participants), heterogeneity (diversity in terms of characteristics of researcher participants), the methodology (quantitative or qualitative) and the availability of resources (financial, time and human) (Arthur, 2012).

In this study, the heterogeneity of the sample frame and the methodology were the main criteria that guided the researcher's choice of the sample size. Five hundred (500) people were sampled for the study made up of customers and staff of Nestle Company Limited from the three Northern Regions; Bolgatanga, Wa and Tamale while two respondents comprising of the marketing manager and one distributor were also interviewed in order to capture a qualitative and in-depth data. This sample size is justified by the methodology used for the study. The 500 sample size was chosen in order to make the findings of study worthy for generalization, and the interview with the two respondents will enable the researcher explore the full understanding of the phenomenon under investigation and obtain insightful and in-depth information of the study. The two respondents who are marketing experts (manager and a distributor) were from Nestle Ghana Limited (Case 1 and Case 2). This sample size is selected based on Lind (2005) qualitative and quantitative approaches of research.

3.7. Sample Technique

Probability sampling techniques were used to gather information. For probability sampling, all persons had a chance of being selected and the results were more likely to accurately reflect the entire population. In probability sampling, factors such as availability, cost, time etc need to be considered (Lind, 2005). The research considered random sampling because it enabled the representation of each respondent under study, that is, producers and customers of Nestle Ghana Company Limited allowed generalization of a larger population with a margin of error that is statistically determinable (Mugenda, 2003).

3.8. Data Collection Instruments

An in-depth interviews were held with the top management (e.g marketing manager and sales executive) of the distributive agency of Nestle Ghana Limited, Bolgatanga. A semi-structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The survey was self-administered on 500 respondents (i.e. the respondent completed the questionnaire on their own) and anonymous. By using the self-administered survey, the respondents were able to answer the questionnaire without any interference. The advantages of this instrument were that; they collect information that is not directly observable, are less costly, using less time as instruments of data collection and useful in obtaining objective data (Lee, 2002). A qualitative interview was also held with two key personnel of the company. The possibilities of the interviewer biases were also reduced by the use of the questionnaire. The Semi-structured questionnaire was used for quantification of responses. Data collection is one of the central parts of research activities. The complete research programme depends on valid and accurate data and information, which may be gathered by authors from different sources. In this research the main instrument used in collecting the primary data was the use of questionnaire designed and an interview guide.

This study utilized first hand data (primary data) which came from the chosen respondents who answered the survey questionnaires and the interview guide. It also included data from the management under study.

3.9. Pre-test of Questionnaire

The researcher pre-tested the questionnaire with some students and staff of the Bolgatanga Polytechnic; a suburb of Bolgatanga township with similar characteristics of the sampled population and administered the instrument on them. This enabled the researcher to understand the clarity, the scope and depth of data to be collected. It also assisted in finding out whether the instruments needed some revision to meet the research objectives and seeking appropriate answers to the research questions in order to address the research problem (Huff, & Alden, 1998). The questionnaire was revised and made clearer for data collection as a result of the experience from the pretest. Nevertheless, the researcher does not rule out the fact that there could still be inherent weaknesses in the questionnaire due to the short time frame of its construction. These weaknesses were ironically overcome through the self-administration of the questionnaire, where clarification and explanation is given by the researcher when necessary.

3.10. Data Analysis

The researcher recorded all interviews conducted with key informants and focus group discussions. The recorded information was stored in different media for safe keeping and analysis. The researcher recorded the discussions on tape and transcribed the interviews with key informants with the aid of audio recorder and Microsoft work. The questionnaire was properly coded with numbers so as to identify a particular response on each questionnaire

administered. During the interviews, notes were taken, which was compared with the recorded one on audio tape to see whether it was the same. This was done to ensure the reliability and validity of data collected. The researcher also took note of recurring themes at this initial stage as he attempts to familiarize with the data.

Secondly, questionnaires were issued and answered; data was collected and sorting of data according to the themes was created. At this stage, themes that were similar are brought together. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), this stage of thematic data sorting allowed the researcher to focus on each subject in turn so that the detail and distinctions that lie within can be unpacked.

The final stage of data management and analysis is the summary of data. This helped reduce the amount of materials to a more manageable level. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) assert that the stage brings the process of distilling the essence of the evidence for representation. It also ensured that the researcher inspected every word of the original material to consider its meaning and relevance to the subject under enquiry. All quotations were presented verbatim in order to present a true reflection of the voices of the participants.

Analyzing data involved reducing and arranging the data, synthesizing, searching for significant patterns and discovering what was important. Creswell, (2003) has noted three steps involved in analyzing data: organizing, interpreting and summarizing data. Statistical tools such as tables, bar graphs and pie chart were used. The analysis was done with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel. The results of data analyzed are presented in the form of tables and charts (Descriptive statistics) in order to assist in the easy understanding of the findings of the study. The Analysis of Variance (ANNOVA) was used to determine the differences of the promotional prices of the company's products in the three regional capitals and a correlation matrix and regression out was also employed to determine the correlation effect of other variables. These devices are reflected on the proceeding chapter; the presentation of results and discussion of findings.

4. Analysis of Data Collected

4.1. Background Information

Age Group	Frequency (F)	X	Fx	Midpoint	X ²	Fx ²
Below 30-35	85	32.5	2762.5	35.5	1,056.25	7631406.25
36-40	90	38	3420	40.5	1,444	11696400
41-45	60	43	2580	45.5	1,849	6656400
46-50	70	48	3360	50.5	2,304	11289600
51-55	50	53	2650	55.5	2,809	7022500
56-60	40	58	2320	60.5	3,364	5382400
61-65	45	63	2835	65.5	3,969	8037225
66-70	60	68	4080	70.5	4,624	16646400
	$\Sigma f = 500$		$\Sigma fx = 240075$			$\Sigma fx^2 = 7436231.25$

Table 1: Age Distribution
Source: Field Survey, 2018

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{\Sigma fx}{\Sigma f} = \frac{240075}{500} = \text{Mean} = 480.15$$

Standard Deviation S.D =

$$\sqrt{\frac{\Sigma fx^2 - \frac{(\Sigma fx)^2}{\Sigma f}}{\Sigma f}}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{74362331.25 - \frac{(240075)^2}{500}}{500}}$$

$$\sqrt{\frac{1487246625 - 230544.0225}{500}}$$

1487016081

Therefore, Standard Deviation S.D = 38,561,847.48

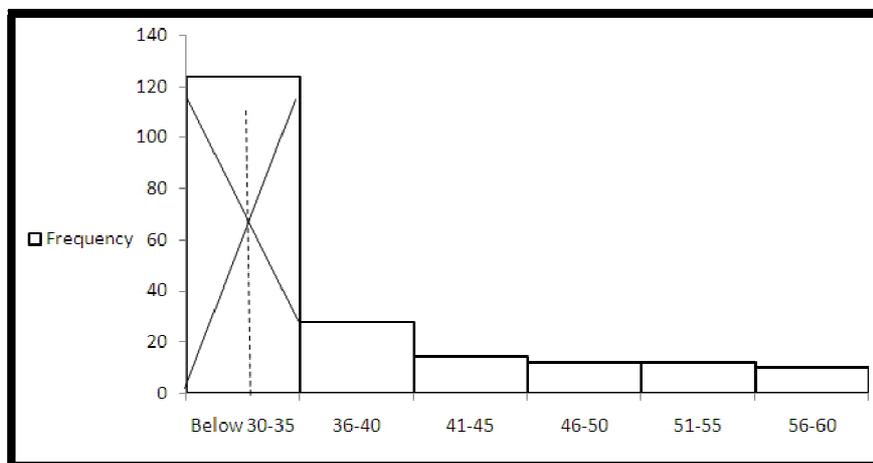


Figure 2: A Histogram Showing the Age Distribution of the Respondents
Source: Field Survey, 2018

Results showed that ninety (90) of the respondents representing eighteen (18) percent were below 36 to 40 years. This was followed by those aged below 30 to 35 years bracket; which stood at eighty-five (85), representing seventeen (17) percent of the total sample of five hundred (500). The 46 to 50 year-group were also seventy (70), representing fourteen (14) percent followed by the 41 to 45 and 66 to 70 which consists of sixty (60) respondents each, representing twelve (12) percent while those who were in the 61 to 65 age bracket was only forty-five (45), representing nine (9) percent of the total sample. The least was those in 56 to 60 years who was only forty (40) representing eight (8) percent. The figure shows that the modal age group was those aged in 36-40 while the median age of distribution is purged at 37.5 as indicated on the histogram above.

Quite a number of the respondents from the survey attained tertiary education level. That is 268 of them representing (53.6%) had obtained tertiary education. Out of the number one hundred and twenty-four (124) representing (24.8%) had attained the secondary education while only one hundred and eight (108) of them, representing (21.6%) attained basic education. This is an indication that majority of the respondents who answered the questions were educated hence, are enlightened and understand and know the insight of the products they patronize at Nestle Ghana Limited since they had gone far in terms of their education and can read write.

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teachers	82	16.4
Health workers	80	16
Commercial workers	120	24.0
Agriculture workers	80	16.0
Mining workers	76	15.2
Others	62	12.4
Total	500	100

Table 2: Occupation
Source: Field Survey, 2018

The survey conducted showed that majority of respondents was in the commercial/business sector. This was one hundred and twenty (120) representing twenty-four (24) percent of the total respondents. This was closely followed by customers from the education sector with eighty-two respondents representing sixteen point four percent (16.4%). Eighty (80) of the respondents, representing sixteen (16) percent came from agriculture while those who were health workers stood at eighty (80), representing sixteen (16) percent while the

Rest of the respondents who came from the mining sectors and other non stated sectors stood at 76 and 62 each, representing fifteen point two (15.2%) and twelve point four (12.4%). The table clearly indicates that most customers of Nestle Ghana Limited were the commercial/business workers.

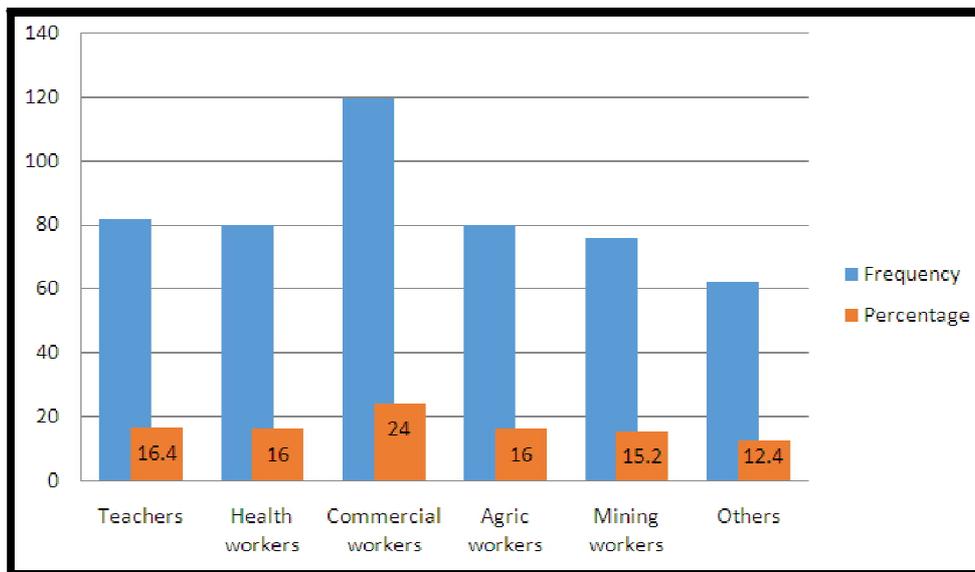


Figure 3: A Single Bar Chart, Showing the Business Type of the Respondents
Source: Field Survey, 2018

4.2. The Role of Sales Promotion on Companies' Sales Increment

Out of the total sample of 500, 200 of them agreed that their buying behaviour is often influenced by the sales promotions strategy embarked by the company. The rest of the 300 were of the view that they buy from the company because of its advertisement, its corporate communication strategy, and the pursuance of the company's sales force, public relation, direct marketing and sponsorship rather than sales promotion This 200 buyers is further divided into groups. The individual buyers was 30, which represent (15%); the customers/users were also 30 representing (15%); retailers was 70, representing (35%) while the wholesalers and organizational customers were 60 and 10, representing (30%) and (10%) respectively. The fig. 4 below shows the various customer groups who agreed that their decision to buy Nestle Ghana Company's product is as a result of its sales promotion campaigns strategy.

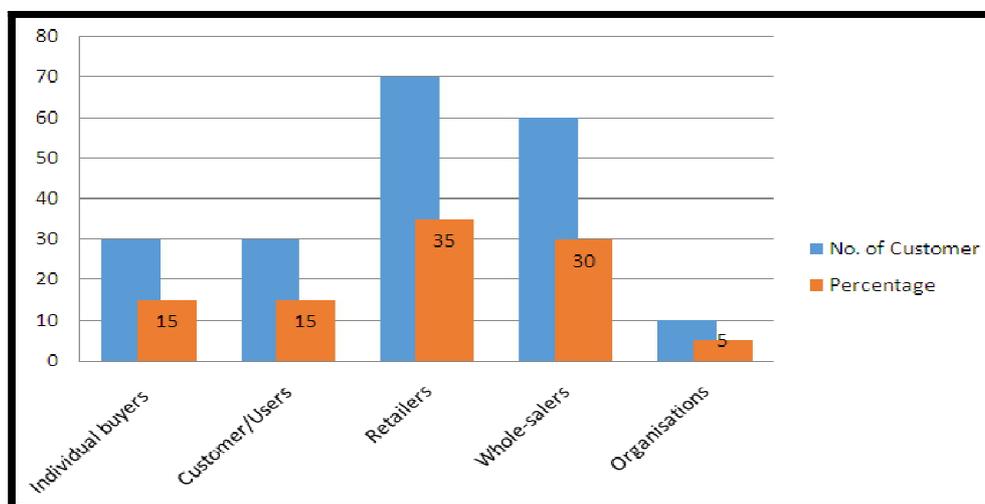


Figure 4: A Multiply Bar Chart Representing the Number of Customer Groups Who Agree That Sale Promotions Has a Direct Influence on Their buying Behaviour
Source: Field Work, 2018

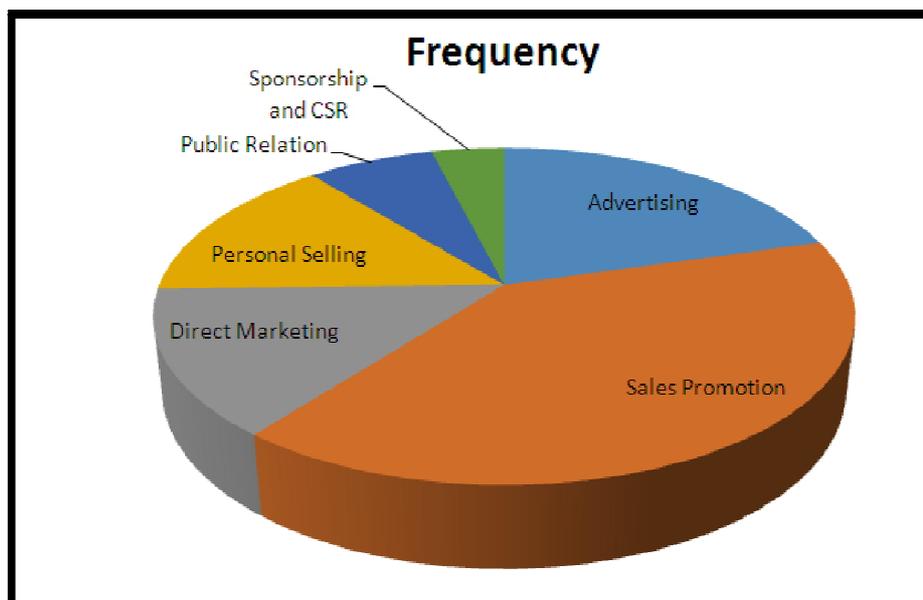


Figure 5: Determining the Statistically Significant Differences in the Mean Prices of the Promotional Products of Nestle Company Limited in the Three Northern Regions

4.3. The Region That Charge the Higher Promotional Price and the Correlation of the Promotional Tools

Predicting the impact of SP on the organisation’s sales in the three Northern Regions of Ghana, the outcome variable is associated with certain factors together with SP used by the company. It is believed that sales increment will be contingent on sales promotion (SP), advertising (AD), personal selling (PS), direct marketing (DM) public relation (PR) Sponsorship (S) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The scores of each of the contribution of these tools in thousands exhibit the individual contribution of these promotional tools. The correlation matrix and the regression output are displayed as below:

	SP	AD	DM	PS	PR	S	CSR
SP	1.00						
AD	0.58	1.00					
DM	0.50	0.76	1.00				
PS	0.31	0.24	0.30	1.00			
PR	0.32	0.37	0.28	0.29	1.00		
S	0.34	0.22	0.75	0.70	0.24	1.00	
SCR	0.35	-0.23	-0.27	-0.38	-0.34	-0.40	1.00

Table 3

4.4. A Correlation Matrix

Strong negative weak negative

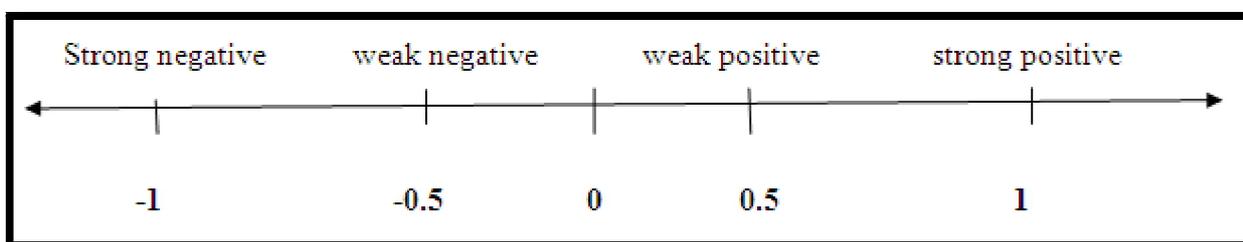


Figure 6

The correlation matrix indicates that advertising and direct marketing are good predictors since they have the higher correlation coefficient of 0.48 and 0.47 respectively as displayed in the table 3 above. This implies that Advertising and Direct Marketing are highly correlated with the dependent variable. The two pairs that are mostly multicollinear were Advertising and Direct Marketing; Sponsorship and Public Relation with the correlation output of 0.76 and 0.74 respectively. The variable that is least correlated is the CSR with weak negative outputs as shown in the correlation matrix table 3 above.

4.5. The Interviews with the Key Marketing Experts of the Company

4.5.1. Research Question One

4.5.1.1. What is the impact of sales promotion on sales?

Analyzing the responses from the two cases, the participants agreed that Nestle Ghana limited uses sales promotional activities and strategies to influence a lot of customers to patronize their products. Cases 1 and 2 respondents revealed that whenever the company uses a promotional activity such as the advertisement of products through billboard or TV, influences a lot of customers to try out these new products as they have seen it as advertised. When the respondents were asked about the kind of promotional strategy used Nestle Ghana Limited and whether sales promotions can have positive impact on sales of the organization, these were the words of the respondents:

- Case 1: "If you advertise new produced goods by displaying it on places like the TV programmes or on a billboard that is nicely described with attractive colours and other places, people are always easily attracted to find out what this product is and if they have heard of it before or used it. You see, they start asking questions about the product. Some will go to buy it just to try it and see if it is good for them and their family".
- Case 2: "For me, I believe that the company uses the electronic media most of the times to promote new products, TV stations as well as the websites or the social media platforms more than other traditional mediums. As people hear and see the usage of these products and it accompany benefits then they develop interest in trying them out. Most especially the youth are always targeted the most since they make the larger population".

4.5.2. Research Question Two

4.5.2. 1. What factors influence customers purchasing behavior?

The interview participants indicated that the sales promotional activities use by the company included; Advertisement, Discounts, Price cuts, free samples and Personal selling. Below are the explanations given by the respondents:

- Case 1: "With this one, most at times we use discount, that is we sometimes reduce the prices of some of the products especially those that are not frequently bought at the market centers, we do the buy one get one free activity, we do the house to house sales sometimes. For us, we believe that if we do this we will be able to influence consumers to try our products and that will even bring new consumers after they try out our products".
- Case 2: "Apart from Advertisement which is more or less a traditional promotional activity, the company also embarks on personal selling or door to door sales. This we believe enables us bring the product to the door step of our consumers".

4.5.3. Research Question Three

4.5.3.1. What Marketing Tools Influence the Buying Behaviour Of Customers?

Respondents for the interview further indicated that the marketing tools used by the company included; reduction in prices to boost sales of products during off-seasons, the company provide gifts to our distributors and retailers to maintain a good relationship, the use of draws and coupons to reward loyal customers at market centers and at our retail shops among others. Below is an explanation given by the respondents:

- Case 1: "Again, price cut is a marketing tool we use as well as the location in which we mostly apply these marketing tools is a key. This is because if we go to a place like SSNIT or Yekine on a market day to promote a product, you see it is not a smart thing to do. So another marketing tool we use is we factor the place or environment to which we will promote our product. Our distributors are also key to our operations hence we periodical give them gifts to kind of motivate them".
- Case 2: "With this one we also adopt the use of the use of draws and coupons to reward loyal customers at market centers and at our retail shops among others".

5. Discussion of Findings

5.1. Research Objective One: The Impact Of Sales Promotion On Consumer Purchasing Behaviour

The findings revealed that sales promotion has a positive impact on companies' sales since consumers' purchasing behaviour in response to the promotion strategy is positive. The study found that anytime the company embarks on a sales promotion campaign, the company sales increases significantly. This is in line with Kotler (2012), that "as the advertising message says buy our products; sales promotion message on the other hand says buy them now".

5.2. Research Objective Two: The Various Types of Sales Promotion

The study revealed that there are various types of sales promotions mostly considered by consumers. These sales promotional types includes; coupons, discounts, samples, draws and displays. The study found that the sales force and trade/cash discounts are the dominant sales promotion tools used by Nestle Ghana Company Limited. Also, the findings revealed that radio/television, flyers/brochure and billboards were used much more at Nestle Ghana Limited. It was

however ever also revealed that majority of the sample strongly disagreed to the assertion that the company provides free samples for pretesting to consumers before a new product is launched.

5.3. Research Objective Three

5.3.1. The Relationship between Promotion Tools and Consumers' Buying Behaviour

The findings of the study denotes that there was agreement among the sampled that the company sometimes uses the following marketing tools to boost sales through the ability of the tools to influence consumer buying behaviour. These tools are the reduction in prices, the use of draws, promotions, coupons and road shows to introduce products of the company for the purpose of rewarding them as well as influencing their purchasing behaviour.

5.4. The Major Findings of the Study

5.4.1. Addressing the Research Objective One

To begin with, research objective one was to evaluate the impact of sales promotion on consumer purchasing behaviour in the manufacturing sector in Ghana. It was discovered that the company uses flyers/brochure, radio/TV medium and billboards as their main promotional strategies to promote their products on the consumer market. The study further established that the promotion tools help to influence consumers purchasing behaviours.

5.4.2. Research Objective Two

Addressing this objective; assessing the various types of sales promotion always used by consumers, the study revealed that most customers purchase products of Nestle Ghana because of the use of sales promotional strategies. The findings indicated that the company uses advertisement, trade discounts and personal selling as its main type of sales promotions to influence the purchasing behaviour of consumers. The company also uses the point of study (POP) displays and warranties as its promotional strategies. It was further indicated that the company uses draws, promotions and coupons to reward loyal customers as well as road shows to promote the consumption of their brand.

5.4.3. Research Objective Three

In addressing research objective three; the relationship between marketing tools and consumer buying behavior, the study revealed that the company do not provide free samples for pretesting of new products before launching them in the market. Prices of products are sometimes reduced to boost sales. The findings revealed that there was a division between those who thought the company provides gifts to distributors and retailers to maintain a good relationship and those who disagree to that assertion. The experts further revealed that advertisement of products through billboard or TV is the promotional tools adopted by the company to attract a lot of customers to try out these new products. The following were revealed by the study as the marketing tools used by the company; reduction in prices to boost sales of products during off-seasons, the company provide gifts to our distributors and retailers to maintain a good relationship, the use of draws and coupons to reward loyal customers.

6. Conclusion

It can be deduced from the study that sales promotions are vital mechanisms that companies who are into sales of products should consider at all levels of their operations. With regards to the impact of sales promotion, the study revealed that sales promotion has an influence in the purchase decision of consumers. It also became apparent that the use of the various promotional strategies helps the company to attract and maintain customers around the region. The use of an appropriate promotional strategy and at the right time is vital to correct lapses relating to low sales and the reduction on the number of customers we have hence the promotional strategy or tool has a great impact on the buying behaviour of consumers.

The study identified the use of advertisement; discount and personal selling are appropriate types of sales promotions. The study therefore concludes that the company needs to include free samples, door to door sales as some of the types of sales promotional strategies used frequently.

As evident on the relationship between the marketing tools and the consumer buying behaviour discussed above, the study concludes that free sampling for pretesting should be given to selected customers before a new product is launched as well as the use of the point of sales promotional activity.

In conclusion, this study has demonstrated that in order to attract and influence the purchase decisions of the consumers in today's competitive market, sales promotion should be a prominent feature in operations of companies such as Nestle Ghana Limited.

7. Limitations of the Research and Areas of Future Research

The findings of the study are limited in scope and level of analysis in nature. The findings are applicable to all companies/businesses in the manufacturing sector in Ghana except those in the other sectors rather than manufacturing or consumer-goods sector in Ghana. The findings are therefore limited to firms in Ghana any attempt to apply the findings on other sectors other than a consumer goods sector in a Ghanaian economy may be quite misleading.

8. Areas for Future Research

The study recommended that future studies should look at: The interactive effect of sales promotion and advertising on profitability; the effect of sales promotions on the acquisition of new customers; and the impact of sales promotions on consumers' buying behaviour in the service sector in Ghana and beyond so as to cross examines the multiplier effects on consumers in all sectors of the economy.

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Appendix

Bolgatanga Polytechnic

Department Of Marketing

Research Questionnaire for customers

Dear Respondent,

I am a Marketing student of Bolgatanga Polytechnic, conducting a research into the organization sales promotion of consumer purchasing behaviour in the manufacturing sector. You have been identified as a respondent who can assist by responding to the questionnaire intended for the research. I wish to assure you of utmost confidentiality of any information you may provide and also that your responses are only for the purposes of this research,

Thank you.

Please supply the required data by filling in the blanks where space is provided or by ticking [√] against the most appropriate answer.

Section A: Background Information

1. Age.

a) 30-35 years b) 36 – 40 years c) 41 – 50 years d) 51 – 60 years e) 60 and above

2. Gender

a) Male b) Female

3. Level of education.

a) Basic Education

b) Secondary education

c) Tertiary education

d) Others, specify

4. Occupation:

a) Teacher b) Health worker c) Commercial worker d) Agriculture worker

e) Mining f) others, specify.....

5. Business type:

a) Retailer b) Wholesaler c) Customer d) Consumer e) Users f) others specified.....

6. Are you a regular customer of Nestle Ghana?

a) Yes [] b) No [] c) Not sure []

7. If yes, how long have you been a customer of Nestle Ghana?

.....

Section B: Impact of Sales Promotion

8. Are you being influenced by company's sales promotion activities?

a) Yes [] b) No [] c) Not sure []

9. Do you buy Nestle products because of its sales promotion strategies?

a) Yes [] b) No [] c) Not sure []

10. If Yes, What are some of the promotional strategies used by Nestle Ghana which gives you satisfaction?

a) Promotion through demonstration

b) Promotion through flyer and brochure

c) Promotion through radio/TV

d) Promotion through billboards

e) Promotion through websites

f) Others, specify.....

11. If No, why?.....

Section C: Types of Sales Promotion

12. As a regular customer of Nestle Ghana Limited, what are some of the sales promotion activities carried out by Nestle Ghana to satisfy you as a customer?

a) Advertisement

b) Discounts

c) Price cuts

d) Free samples

e) Personal selling

f) Others, specify.....

13. Have the sales promotion you have chosen in question 12 identified above influence your buying behaviour?
 a) Yes b) No c) Not sure

Section D: Relationship between Marketing Tools and Consumer Buying Behaviour

14. Which of the following marketing tools are used by Nestle Ghana Limited to sell their products?

No.	Marketing Tool	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Before new products are launched, the company provides free samples to consumers for pretesting.					
2.	The company sometimes reduce prices to boost sales during off-seasons					
3.	The company provide gifts to our distributors and retailers to maintain a good relationship					
4.	The company use draws and promotions to reward customers who emerge winners					
5.	The company use coupons to reward loyal customers					
6.	The company use road shows to promote consumption of our brand					
7.	New products are promoted with point of sales displays					

Table 4

15. Do the above stated marketing tools influence consumer buying behaviour?
 a) Yes b) No

An Interview Guide

Please state your position

1. Are customers influenced by the company's sales promotion activities?

a) Yes [] b) No [] c) Not sure []

2. Please list some/all of the promotional strategies used by Nestle Ghana Limited?

.....

3. What are some of the sales promotion activities carried out by Nestle Ghana to satisfy your customers?

.....

4. What are some of the marketing tools Nestle Ghana use to promote their products?

.....