

Full Length Research Paper

Marketing strategies and consumers' purchasing behaviour in Ghana: A case of Nestle Ghana Limited

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The role marketing strategies plays in influencing purchasing behaviors of consumers in various economies can never be overemphasized. However, this assertion requires further investigation with respect to consumers of Maggi seasoning products in Ghana especially those in Tamale metropolis. The study analyzed the effect of marketing strategies specifically sales promotion and perceived product quality on consumers' purchasing behavior toward Maggi products in the Tamale metropolis of Ghana. To achieve this goal, the study adopted the quantitative approach, descriptive design and structured questionnaire. Valid data sets were retrieved from 162 food vendors in Tamale Metropolis. The IBM SPSS Statistics software version 26 was employed to process the data and subsequently analyzed with both descriptive and inferential tools. The study found all the marketing strategies to significantly influence the purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products focusing on food vendors within the Tamale metropolis, Ghana. As a result, the research found that marketing strategies, particularly sales promotion and perceived product quality, have a major role in encouraging consumers to make better purchasing preferences. According to the research, Nestle Ghana could use more comprehensive methods, such as unique sales promotion packages, better pricing, and better product concepts in order to guarantee high purchasing behavior among its clientele.

Key words: Marketing strategies, consumers' purchasing behavior, sales promotion, perceived product quality.

INTRODUCTION

The competitive and unpredictable nature of business environments has induced businesses to explore various avenues and strategies in order to survive, enjoy high profit-levels while enhancing overall corporate performance (Romdonny and Rosmadi, 2019). Arguably, businesses can never achieve set targets in the absence of customers. Customers have become the key assets to any business establishment and as such, their tastes and preferences are key to promoting business performance

(Alzoubi et al., 2020). According to Orji et al. (2020), failure to provide relevant strategies to meet customers' demands could have severe negative repercussions on overall performance levels. As such, firms need to adopt relevant marketing strategies in a bid to promote customers' purchases, loyalty and invariably meet set performance targets. Donny et al. (2018) similarly opined that, business can only attract and maintain customers by adopting various marketing strategies which include

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processes, systems and techniques for providing value to customers. These strategies are also associated with establishing relevant measures to predict customers' demands and culture, determine their tastes and preferences while ensuring that the firms' products and/or services conform to their requirements. A recent study by Bestari and Butarbutar (2021) similarly revealed that marketing strategies induce businesses strategically to configure various resources to make relevant marketing decisions in areas of product quality, pricing, distribution and after-sales services delivery.

Moreover, previous studies have linked marketing strategies with consumers' purchasing behaviour (Bestari and Butarbutar, 2021; Orji et al., 2020). These arguments have been reinforced by the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 2011) and theory of reasoned action (Fishbein, 1979). The theory of planned behavior, for instance, suggests that consumers exhibit certain purchasing behaviors based on exposure to various methods, processes or strategies (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011). As such, customers are highly likely to repeat purchases once they have strong intentions of exhibiting such behaviors and vice versa. This clearly indicates that the adoption of relevant marketing strategies influence consumers intentions of consistently purchasing from a firm (Guerin, 2017; Homburg, Jozić and Kuehnl 2017). Consumer purchasing behavior is related with the behaviors or attitudes of consumers toward purchasing a product or service (Inonii, 2017). Similarly, Orji et al. (2017) asserted that consumers' purchasing behaviour focuses on studying customers' behavioral, mental and emotional responses and other related purchasing activities. Prior to making purchases, consumers are mostly influenced by their perceptions and socio-cultural characteristics and they are likely to make purchases repeatedly if they hold positive perceptions or attitudes toward a firm's product. According to Orgi et al. (2020), businesses that emphasize on consumers' behavior enjoy competitive advantage and achieve performance standard. To influence purchasing behaviors of customers, Le-Anh and Nguyen-To (2020) revealed that 75% of organizations in most developed economies including USA adopt different marketing strategies such as quality products delivery, pricing, quality packaging and effective promotion techniques.

Equally, other authors posit that the linkage between marketing strategies and consumers' purchasing behaviour within developing economies is growing in importance (Hasan and Ali, 2015; Juwaheer et al., 2012). Marketing strategy is a set of integrated decisions and actions by which a business expects to achieve its marketing objectives and meet the value requirements of its customers through the marketing mix (product, place, price and promotion) (Chikweche, Lappeman and Egan, 2021)). In these economies notably Ghana, for instance, large businesses are continuously realizing the contributions of customers to achieving set performance

levels. This has prompted them to adopt varying marketing strategies to convince existing, new and prospective customers to exhibit positive purchasing behaviors towards their products and/or services. This has been evidenced in the business activities of Nestle Ghana Limited leading to their success stories since its incorporation in Ghana in 1957. Nestle Ghana Limited is known for producing and exporting diaries, beverages, confectionary and culinary products. Within the sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, Nestle Limited operates in several countries but is yet to meet its performance targets. This is evidenced in Ghana where its actual performance remains inconsistent. Despite Nestle Ghana Limited's ranking among the best food consumer processors in Ghana, it still struggles to critically determine consumers' purchasing decisions regarding their products especially the Maggi seasoning brand. This product is undoubtedly a household name within the Tamale Metropolitan of Ghana but the factors that influence the customers' purchase decisions remain unclear. This situation could exhale and have rippling effects on their marketing strategies.

Several studies have revealed that consumers' purchasing behavior is influenced by many factors such as situation, psychological, environmental and marketing factors, personal factors, family, and culture (Mashao and Sukdeo., 2018). However, the focus of such research studies has not been on how marketing strategies especially sales promotion and perceived product quality have influenced consumers' purchasing behavior of Maggi seasoning products. Even though extant literature exists on factors influencing consumers' behavior, most of those studies were found in banking, automobile and hospitality sectors (Ahmad and Ahmad, 2014; Wang, 2017; Dholakia et al., 2010) and in developed countries. Only a few like Ofosu-Boateng (2019) studied on how only sales promotion influenced consumers' behavior in a retailing of consumers' goods in Ghana.

Furthermore, previous studies have largely focused on food processors in various countries other than Nestle Ghana Limited. Thus, research is yet to be conducted on marketing strategies and purchasing behaviors using consumers of Nestle Ghana Limited's Maggi product as a case study in the Ghanaian context. It is against this background that the study investigated the influence of marketing strategies (such as sales promotion and perceived product quality) on consumers' purchasing behavior of Maggi seasoning product in the Tamale Metropolis of Ghana. Moreso. Many of these studies conducted were in the Western world whose cultural differences significantly differ from those in third world countries such as Ghana. This study therefore aims at closing the gap and also contributing to existing literature on marketing strategies and consumers' purchasing behavior. The question therefore is what are the marketing strategies that have influenced the purchasing behavior of consumers of Nestle Maggi seasoning

products in Ghana? Specifically, the study sought to investigate the following research objectives: evaluate the effect of sales promotion on consumers' purchasing behaviour of Maggi products within Northern Ghana and examine the effect of perceived product quality on consumers' purchasing behaviour of Maggi products within Northern Ghana;

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was conducted which examined the various marketing strategies that influenced consumers' purchasing behavior, sales promotion and perceived product quality. A marketing strategy contains the overall plan of a business for reaching its prospective customers and eventually turning them into actual consumers of its products or services (Saura et al., 2019). Also, a marketing strategy comprises the value propositions, data on customers' demographic features and brand messages of a business. According to Hollensen (2019), this strategy captures all the four basic marketing Ps in areas of pricing, promotion, place and product. It revolves around the techniques, methods and practices that are used to communicate relevant information to customers in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage over competitors. Aghazadeh (2015) added that marketing strategies should be clear and in line with the value propositions of a company in order to communicate the company's key information to consumers in terms of how it operates, what it stands for and why consumers should transact business with it. According to Shashishekar and Anand (2019), a marketing strategy informs the company's marketing plan by documenting the specific marketing activities that need to be carried out in order to provide maximum satisfaction to consumers. Marketing strategies generally have longer lifespans and contain vital elements that help understand consumers well. Previous studies have revealed marketing strategies to include sales promotion, product packaging, perceived product quality, pricing and product branding (Alao et al., 2020; Thakur et al., 2017; Raheem et al., 2014).

Sales promotion

Sales promotion is among the commonly used marketing strategies for stimulating demand among customers (Kaveh et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2019). Sales promotion refers to the marketing strategy where a company promotes its products or services using attractive short-term initiatives (Fam et al., 2019). It aims at stimulating demand among consumers in order to exceed sales targets. This strategy has been grouped under three elements: pull, push and hybrid dimensions respectively (Gikonyo, 2020; Nangoy and Tumbuan, 2018). The pull strategy, for instance, is aimed at inducing customers to 'pull' a company's products. The push strategy, on the

other hand, is used to push a company's product to the customers through intermediaries (such as; wholesalers, retailers, agents) and finally, the hybrid strategy focuses on attracting customers by providing incentives to distributors and adopting special coupons to promote a given product. According to Shamsi and Khan (2018), sales promotion is generally used to introduce new products, clear existing inventories, induce potential customers while inspiring purchases among existing customers. Furthermore, Yang and Mattila (2020) added that, sales promotion is primarily short-term oriented strategy and is used to persuade customers to purchase a given product. It is relevant for spreading information about a product to customers, stabilizing sales and arousing customers' demand. Firms have also been found to use sales promotion to remain competitive, gain consumers' trust, introduce new products, and promote brand awareness while wooing existing customers. Examples of sales promotion include; free gifts, samples, exchange schemes, discount coupons, discount prices and bulk purchase deals (Ofosu-Boateng, 2020). Other examples include point of purchase displays, trade shows, premiums (Gorji and Siami, 2020).

Perceived product quality

Perceived product quality is also a key marketing strategy that identifies a customer's views about a product's brand equity and total superiority in comparison with competitors' products (Golder et al., 2012). Styliadis et al. (2015) viewed perceived quality as a 'customer's perception' as against 'objective' quality; thus, primarily focused on the subjectiveness of a customer's judgement. This strategy focuses on providing quality products to satisfy consumers' needs by including several relevant and unique features. Okolo (2017) also suggested that perceived quality of a product focuses on the overall product assessment and serves as a source of satisfaction to consumers. Again, it also refers to consumers' estimations by relying on several elements to measure the performance of a particular product (Rosillo-Díaz et al., 2019). According to Styliadis et al. (2020), marketing strategy creates better understanding of consumers' requirements in order to provide valuable products to them. Saleem et al. (2015) were of the view that perceived product quality is the summation of product perception and product expectations. This strategy has been found to directly influence the purchase intentions of consumers. As such, if the quality of a given product is high then the purchasing intention of the consumer is perceived to be high and vice versa.

Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Consumer Purchasing Behavior (CPB) has become a very significant concept in today's business environments

especially in the area of marketing (Romdonny and Rosmadi, 2019). As such, for businesses to achieve competitiveness, they need to provide value to their customers; however, this goal can never be achieved in isolation if firms ignore the concept of CPB. Consumer purchasing behavior focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, efforts) on consumer-related items that include what they buy, why they buy, when they buy, where they buy, how often they buy, how they evaluate it after the purchase (Olbrich and Holsing, 2011). According to Inoni (2017), consumer purchasing behavior is the summation of attitudes, behaviors and action that are carried out by a consumer prior to purchasing a product or service, during the actual purchase consumption and post purchase evaluations. Similarly, it also refers to the various behaviors an individual exhibits before deciding to buy a product (Falebata et al., 2020). Prior to making purchases, consumers are faced with several stimuli including the marketing mix that they need to respond to and these influence their purchasing behaviors. Thus, purchasing behavior is also defined as the acts and decision processes of ultimate consumers who are involved in purchasing and using products (Orji et al., 2020). Researchers such as Orji et al. (2017) opined that CPB focuses on studying of individual, organizations and groups and all relevant actions related with the purchase, utilization and disposal of products coupled with the behavioral, mental and emotional responses of the consumers. This concept is therefore associated with all the various elements of purchasing behavior from pre-purchase actions through to post-purchase consumption, evaluating and disposal events. As such, having adequate knowledge about consumers' behavior renders immense assistance during planning, controlling and implementations of relevant marketing strategies in competitive business environments to influence the purchasing behavior of the consumers of a firm's products. Several studies have revealed that companies which rely on consumer behavior during production and delivery of products and services create unique competitive advantages over their rivals (Ramafamba, and Mears, 2012; Orji et al., 2020; Nasse et al., 2019; Nasse, 2021). Romdonny and Rosmadi (2019) added that CPB sums up the preferences, attitudes and decisions associated with the buying of any product or service. These are clear indications that consumer purchasing behavior predicts actual purchases and as such requires the needed attention.

Sales promotion and consumer purchasing behavior

Sales promotion has empirically been found to affect the purchasing behavior of consumers within several study areas. For instance, Ahmed and Javed (2015) investigated how sales promotion influenced consumer buying behavior

in Pakistan focusing on those within the Punjab metropolis. Using self-administered questionnaires, the data gathered were analyzed through hierarchical multiple regression after processing using the IBM SPSS version 20. It was found that sales promotion strategies such as free samples, price discounts, coupons and buy-one-get-one-free significantly and positively influence the respondents' buying behavior. Also, a similar study was conducted by Shamout (2016) and found sales promotion to significantly promote consumers' behavior. Imaningsih (2018) added that sales promotion plays a crucial role in ensuring positive consumers' behavior. This finding was generated from the use of multiple linear regression. Similarly, Nakarmi (2018) did a quantitative study to examine the contributions of sales promotion in improving consumers' behavior. The author opined that sales promotion serves as a marketing strategy for meeting and persuading targeted consumers to purchase a product. The study found sales promotion as a useful tool for understanding consumers' features and their differing behaviors. In a similar vein, Khan et al. (2019) studied 297 randomly sampled walk-in customers of 25 supermarkets in Lahore. Using a quantitative research technique, data were analyzed using both correlation and regression analytical tools. The study outcome revealed sales promotion tools such as bonus packs and free samples have no significant effect on consumers' behavior; whereas, other promotion tools including coupons, price discounts and buy one get one free offer rather significantly affected consumers' purchases. According to Shamout (2016), sales promotion is an important marketing strategy adopted by marketers to induce consumers to exhibit positive purchasing behaviors. Ofosu-Boateng (2020) also conducted a recent study on this subject matter focusing on retailing consumer goods within the Tema Metropolis of Ghana. The study was quantitative in nature but wrongly adopted the structured interview and convenience sampling technique. The choice of these methods affected the quality of the study and made it to have some research gaps. Regardless, the study data gathered from 220 respondents and were analyzed using Pearson correlation instead of linear regression. However, the study found sales promotion to be significantly correlated with consumers' purchasing behavior. Thus, a unit increase in sales promotion would lead to a significant unit increase in purchasing behavior of consumers. It could be deduced from the various reviews that sales promotion plays a significant positive role in promoting consumers' purchasing behavior.

Perceived product quality and consumers' purchasing behavior

The role perceived product quality plays in consumers' purchasing behavior has been investigated by previous

researchers producing inconsistent findings. Previous studies have also been conducted in different study areas with minimal focus on consumers of Maggi seasoning products within the Tamale municipality. Saleem et al. (2015) measured how a product's perceived quality affects the purchasing intention of 122 randomly sampled consumers. Data were appropriately gathered through questionnaires but the sampled respondents were inappropriately done using convenient sampling. Also, the researchers wrongly used statistical software to analyze data and found perceived product quality to significantly improve the consumers' purchasing decisions at D.G. Khan District. Brata et al. (2017) conducted a study and as part of their objectives investigated the role of perceived product quality in the purchasing decisions of consumers of Nitchi at PT. Jaya Swarasa Agung, Central Jakarta. The study relied on the quantitative approach and used a sample size of 115 buyers of Nitchi products in Supermarket Rezeki. Primary data were collected from structured questionnaires and analyzed using multiple regression. The study shows that product quality plays a significant role in promoting the purchasing decisions of consumers of this product. It was, therefore, concluded that the production of quality products is key to ensuring high and quality purchasing behaviors of consumers of the Nitchi product. Imaningsih (2018), for instance, investigated product quality and purchasing decisions among its specific objectives. Data obtained through structured questionnaires were processed using SPSS version 23.0 and further analyzed using T-test and linear regression. The study found that perceived product quality positively influenced the purchasing behavior of consumers of HONDA H-RV. The study concluded that product quality, promotion and pricing lead to better purchasing behaviors among consumers. Furthermore, Konuk (2018) also investigated the role of perceived product quality and other elements in predicting the purchasing intention of consumers of organic privatelabel food. The researcher gathered empirical data through self-administered questionnaires from consumers in Istanbul, Turkey. The hypotheses were tested using the structural equation modelling technique and it was found that product quality contributes significantly to influencing consumers' purchase intentions toward the product. It was, therefore, concluded that consumers' perception about product quality plays an important role in predicting their purchasing behaviors.

In summary, it is evidenced from the literature review that marketing strategies influencing consumers' purchasing behavior is an important area that researchers and practitioners are still giving attention to in these competitive business environments. There are extensive researches on consumers' purchasing behaviors in the online shopping, financial services, Cellular service sector, food and restaurants service industries (Ahmad and Ahmad, 2014; Dholakia et al., 2010; Wang, 2017) in developed countries; there are few of such studies

revealing the marketing strategies that influence the buying behaviors of consumers in developing countries especially Ghana in relation to food seasoning products. This gap is what the current research seeks to fill. This section presented the conceptual framework to further explain and link the study's relevant concepts. The framework specifically provided a graphical presentation of the study's objectives which are valuable in organizing empirical research. This graphical demonstration was drawn based on two basic variables: independent (that is, marketing strategies) and dependent (that is, consumer purchasing behavior). The conceptual presentation is shown in Figure 1. From Figure 1, the independent variable (that is, marketing strategies) is represented by sales promotion, and perceived product quality; whereas, consumer purchasing behavior represented the dependent variable. The framework emphasizes the relationship that exists between these strategies and purchasing behavior of consumers. Simply put, a unit change in any of the marketing strategies could also lead to a unit change in consumers' purchasing behavior. However, the framework does not provide the actual strength and magnitude of the relationship between these variables under study.

Mathematically, this conceptual framework can be illustrated as an estimable regression function and this is given as follows:

$$CPB = \beta_0 + \beta(SP) + \beta(PPQ) + \epsilon$$

Where: CPB = Consumer purchasing behavior; SM = Sales promotion; PPQ = Perceived product quality; β_0 = Intercept/ constant; ϵ = Error term; β = Contribution

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data were collected from consumers located in the Tamale Metropolis of Ghana, the regional capital of the Northern Region. Tamale has a land size of 646.9 sq. Km, a population of 642,000 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). With the view providing explanatory and predictive logic regarding the nature of empirical relationship between marketing strategies and consumers' purchasing behaviour, the study adopted the explanatory research design backed by the quantitative orientation of the measurement of the variables and analytical stance of the statistical techniques employed for the test of the formulated research objectives pursued. This design was adopted for this study because, it allows for description of characteristics of relevant groups, such as consumers in a study, help determine the perception of consumers about product and service characteristics and help to make prediction about a phenomenon (Malhotra, Nunan and Birks, 2017; Segbenya and Ansah, 2020). The design affords the researchers to collect a large pool of data from large respondents at a time through cross-sectional design. The target population of the study consisted of 420 registered food vendors within Tamale metropolis (GTA, 2020). A sample size of 201 was determined through the population- sample matrix developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Due to the regression technique employed for the data analysis, a probability sampling technique was used for the selection of the participants of the study. However, data point for the analysis was based on 162 food vendors; hence response rate

Table 1. Measurement of Variables.

| Variable | Measurement indicators | Source |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Consumer purchasing behaviour | Frequency of purchase, consumer attitude, willingness to repeat purchases, brand choice, purchase time | Peattie and Peattie (2009); Dagher and Itani (2014) |
| Sales promotion | Product availability, past experience, discount sales, gift offer, stimulating offer | Sinha and Verma(2020), Daramola et al. (2014) |
| Perceived product quality | Reliability, tangibility, responsiveness, assurance, expectation | Liao and Tseng (2009); Zeithaml et al. (1990) |

Source: Author's Own Construct (2020).

of 81% was obtained. This number of cases is deemed representative because above 70% of the minimum sample size is considered in the study (Malhotra, 2018; Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Serial numbers were assigned to the registered food vendors in the sampling frame. Through a computer application, random numbers were generated based on the total number of elements in the sampling frame. Elements whose serial numbers appeared as part of the random numbers were selected and contacted for the primary data collection. This sampling technique gave all elements in the sampling frame equal chance of selection and helped to avoid sampling bias (Meng, 2013).

The study used structured questionnaire to collect the primary data from the participants. Food vendors served as proxies for the businesses that were targeted. With a structured questionnaire, every respondent answered the same set of questions in a pre-arranged directive (Creswell et al., 2011; Saunder et al., 2012). On a Likert-like scale (using interval data), the questionnaire was organized with 1 representing the least agreement, while 5 represented the highest agreement. This scale is effective when the researcher intends to use analytical tools to generate factual conclusions. The scales, after careful scrutiny, proved to fit the context of the study, thereby cementing its validity already attested to by its tests in previous empirical studies. The structured questionnaire was divided into 3 segments (that is, Parts A to C). Part A, for instance, collected the respondents' demographic characteristics; Part B also contained items on the marketing strategies whereas the final part contained items on the measurement of consumers' purchasing behavior. The study relied on pre-validated scales for the measurement of the constructs/variables under investigation. Summary of source of the scales is presented in Table 1.

A pre-test was performed at the Cape Coast metropolitan assembly by using 30 registered food vendors who use the Maggi seasoning product for preparing food. The pre-testing was actually carried out to test how reliable the instrument was. The 30 data set was then analyzed with the use of reliability analysis. The study reported α of the various constructs as suggested by Best and Kahn (2016). An overall α of 0.912 was achieved when all the items were combined. In terms of determinants of consumers' purchasing behavior, the study achieved α of 0.831, the marketing strategies had α of 0.865 and finally, measurement of consumers' purchasing behavior had α of 0.816, respectively. It could, therefore, be deduced that all α values were > 0.7 ; thus, indicating reliability of the questionnaire. Self-administration of questionnaires through the drop-and-pick method was used for the collection of the primary data. The data collection started from 21st January, 2021 and ended 16th February, 2021. Certain ethical practices were employed so as to avoid the violation of the rights and privacy of the participants. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that the privacy, integrity and identity of the participants were greatly

respected. Informed consent of the participating businesses was sought through an official introductory letter. Once permission was granted by the participants, they were then asked if they were willing to participate in the study or otherwise. Fortunately, in all instances, they agreed to participate in the study. Therefore, no participant was forced to participate in the data collection exercise phase of this empirical study. The purpose and benefits of the study were fully explained to all the participants who genuinely influenced their decision to participate in the study. The primary data collected were treated as confidential because the data file was not made available to any third parties. No manipulative behavior was put up in respect of the analysis of the primary data as determined by the nature of the formulated research objectives. The results were presented as found.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of the study were presented based on each research objectives using linear and multiple regression techniques with the support from SPSS software version 26. The study met the following assumptions underpinning the use of linear regression: uniformity of variation, data linearity and independence, sample adequacy (≥ 30) and the data should have a normal distribution (Casson and Farmer, 2014; Ruginski, 2016). The regression analysis determines the degree to which the independent variables are associated with any change to consumer purchasing behaviour which is the dependent variable. The coefficient informs us about these changes and the p-value let us know if these coefficients are significantly different from zero. R-Squared informs us of the proportion of variation in the dependent (response) variable, consumer purchasing behaviour.

Demographic features of respondents

This section presented a description of the respondents' demographics with respect to sex, age, level of education and years of patronizing the Maggi products. The results presented in Table 2 revealed that 119(73.5%) of the consumers (that is, food vendors) are females whereas 43(26.5%) of them are males. This result means that majority of the food vendors in the Tamale metropolis are

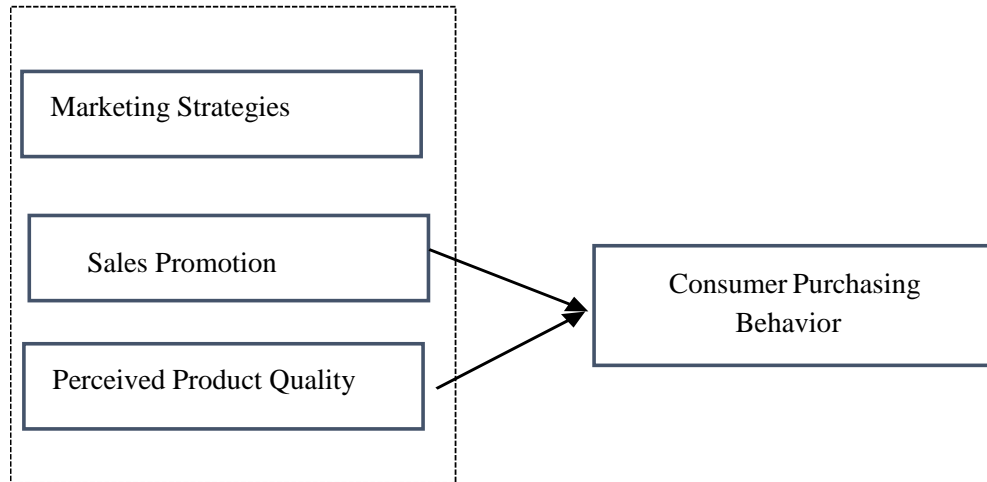


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework on Marketing strategies, and Consumer Purchasing Behavior
Source: Author's own construct (2020).

Table 2. Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

| Item | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Sex | | |
| Male | 43 | 26.5 |
| Female | 119 | 73.5 |
| Age (years) | | |
| 18-30 | 44 | 27.2 |
| 31-40 | 55 | 34.0 |
| 41-50 | 34 | 21.0 |
| 51-60 | 29 | 17.9 |
| Level of education | | |
| No Formal Education | 138 | 85.2 |
| Basic Education | 24 | 14.8 |
| Years patronizing the product | | |
| <10 | 30 | 18.5 |
| 10-20 | 68 | 42.0 |
| 21-30 | 43 | 26.5 |
| 31-40 | 21 | 13.0 |
| Total | 162 | 100.0 |

Source: Field data (2021).

females. This result is not surprising as report from the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) has proven that majority of food vendors in the country and especially those within the remote areas like Tamale metropolis are dominated by women. This could also be because the Ghanaian cultural setting has forced females to be involved in food-related activities unlike the male group. In terms of age, Table 2 revealed that 44(27.2%) of the food vendors were between 18 and 30 years of age; 55(34.0%) were between the ages of 31 and 40

years; 34(21.0%) of them were between the ages of 41 and 50 years; whereas 29(17.9%) of the food vendors were between the ages of 51 and 60 years. This means that all the respondents were within the legal age (that is, >18) with majority of them within the active working age bracket. This means that all the food vendors are within the legal age to respond to issues in the study devoid of ethical or legal breaches in terms of age. Also, the table revealed that majority of the respondents (138, 85.2%) had no formal education with the remaining 24(14.8%)

Table 3. Model Summary.

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R square | Std. error of the estimate |
|-------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 0.600 ^a | 0.360 | 0.356 | 2.54278 |

^aPredictors: (Constant), PPQ
Source: Author's computation

Table 4. ANOVA.

| Model | | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|--------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 582.252 | 1 | 582.252 | 90.052 | 0.000 ^b |
| | Residual | 1034.519 | 160 | 6.466 | | |
| | Total | 1616.772 | 161 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: CPB; b. Predictors: (Constant), SP
Source: Author's computation

Table 5. Coefficients^a.

| Model | | Unstandardized coefficients | | Standardized coefficients | | |
|-------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | B | Std. error | Beta | T | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 7.236 | 1.036 | | 6.984 | 0.000 |
| | SP | 0.580 | 0.061 | 0.600 | 9.490 | 0.000 |

^aDependent Variable: CPB
Source: Author's computation

had basic (that is, high school) certificates. This means that most of the respondents were given the needed assistance during the data collection exercise to minimize the difficulties they face in responding to the question items. Finally, the number of years the respondents have been patronizing the Maggi product was presented. Table 2 reveal that majority (68, 42.0%) of the food vendors has purchased the Maggi product for about 10 to 20 years. Also 43(26.5%) of the food vendors have purchased the product for between 21 and 30 years; 30(18.5%) of them have patronized the product for less than 10 years and finally, 21(13.0%) of them have patronized the product for between 31 and 40 years respectively. These are clear indications that majority of the respondents have patronized the Maggi product for a considerable number of years and as such have the needed experience to respond to issues associated with their purchasing behaviors.

Sales promotion and consumer purchasing behaviour

The first study's objective focused on how sales promotion (SP) affects consumer purchasing behavior (CPB) of consumers of Maggi seasoning product within the Tamale metropolis of Ghana. To achieve this research, the linear regression was adopted and discussed in Tables 3 to 5 respectively. More precisely, Table 3

presents the regression result; Table 4 discusses the regression's ANOVA outcome while Table 5 presents the coefficients of the analysis. The result presented in Table 3 was the Model summary of the regression analysis and it captured the R, R squared, adjusted R² and the analysis' standard error. This study reported the R² value instead of R and this is because it provides more valid, reliable and accurate results. The R² specifically accounts for the degree of variation in the objective's dependent variable that is linearly contributed by the predictor variable (Creswell, 2014). In line with this, the study's R² value of 0.360 meant that the predictor variable (that is, SP) linearly contributes about 36% to any change in the dependent variable (that is, CPB). The implication is that about 36% of variation in purchasing behavior of consumers of the Maggi seasoning product within the Tamale metropolis was linearly accounted for by sales promotion. Also, the adjusted R² of 0.356 indicates that any variation in consumer purchasing behavior is explained by adjustments made in the company's sales promotion strategies. Therefore, for any adjustments made in the sales promotion it will contribute about 35.6% of change in consumer purchasing behavior of the Maggi seasoning product. It could be seen that the R² and adjusted R² values were similar and thus reporting the R² value was justifiable. Table 4 presents the ANOVA result of the linear regression analysis for research objective two.

Table 6. Model summary.

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R square | Std. error of the estimate |
|-------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 0.398 ^a | 0.159 | 0.153 | 2.91572 |

^aPredictors: (Constant), PPQ
Source: Author's computation

Table 7. ANOVA^a.

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|--------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 256.541 | 1 | 256.541 | 30.176 | 0.000 ^b |
| | Residual | 1360.230 | 160 | 8.501 | | |
| | Total | 1616.772 | 161 | | | |

^aDependent Variable: CPB; ^bPredictors: (Constant), SP
Source: Author's computation

Also, the results in Table 4 presented the ANOVA result of the linear regression analysis. The table specifically presented the sum of squares, df, mean square, F and sig. values in relation to the objective. The F-stat's sig. value should be < 0.05 to indicate that the predictor variable plays a better role in describing any change in the study's dependent variable. This means that, whether a significant association exists between the variables or not is statistically determined by the F-stat's sig. value. It could be deduced from the table that, the F-stat of 90.052 with mean square of 582.252 had a sig. value of 0.00. This result implies that there is a significant linear relationship between sales promotion (SP) and consumer purchasing behaviour (CPB). Finally, Table 5 indicates the regression's coefficient and shows the standardized and unstandardized coefficients to actually explain the cause-and-effect relationship between the variables under study. Table 5 shows how the independent variable (sales promotion) contributed to the prediction of the dependent variable (Consumer purchasing behaviour). The beta value under Standardized Coefficient was used which indicated a figure of $\beta=0.600$, and Sig.=0.000. This means that sale promotion makes a strong unique contribution to explaining consumer purchasing behaviour and is significant. The estimated regression function is:

$$CPB = 7.236 + (0.580 * SP).$$

Perceived product quality and consumer purchasing behaviour

The second objective of the study focused on analyzing the effect of perceived product quality (independent variable) on consumer purchasing behavior (dependent variable) towards Maggi seasoning products of Nestle Ghana Limited. To attain this objective, the study adopted the linear regression analytical tool and as such presented

three tables comprising Model Summary, ANOVA and Coefficient score respectively. Table 6 presents the model summary of the regression analysis by specifically reporting the R square (R^2) result. The R^2 provides the regression's coefficient of determination to show the extent to which any change in a dependent variable is statistically accounted for by a predictor variable.

Results from Table 6, showed an R^2 of 0.159 indicating that for any change in consumer purchasing behavior (CPB), perceived product quality (PPQ) linearly accounts for about 15.9% of it. Simply put, PPQ statistically accounts for about 16% of any variation in CPB; implying that other variables account for the remaining 84.1% of the overall change. Therefore, for any change in the purchasing behaviors of the consumers of Maggi products, about 15.6% of it is linearly accounted for by perceived product quality. The model summary report was further explained using the ANOVA output. The ANOVA output presents the sig. value of the F-stat to show whether statistically significant relationship exists between PPQ and CPB. The output is presented in Table 7.

From Table 7, an F-stat of 30.176 reported a sig. value of 0.000 to indicate that there is a statistically significant correlation between PPQ and CPB of the Maggi product. This means that perceived product quality could play a crucial role in explaining any change in consumer purchasing behavior. This is simply because a significant association exists between the two variables under study. This result provided grounds for the analysis of the coefficient output. Note that, the coefficient output reports the extent to which one variable statistically influences the other and this can only be achieved if a correlation exists between those variables. Table 8, therefore, presents the coefficient score in two basic themes unstandardized and standardized coefficients.

Table 8 shows how the independent variable (perceived product quality) contributed to the prediction of

Table 8. Coefficients^a.

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | Sig. |
|-------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | B | Std. error | Beta | T | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 8.930 | 1.466 | | 6.093 | 0.000 |
| | PPQ | 0.460 | 0.084 | 0.398 | 5.493 | 0.000 |

^aDependent Variable: CPB;
Source: Author's computation

Table 9. Model summary.

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 0.621 ^a | 0.386 | 0.379 | 2.49819 |

^aPredictors: (Constant), PPQ, SP.
Source: Author's computation

Table 10. Coefficients^a.

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. | Collinearity Statistics | |
|-------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Tolerance | VIF |
| 1 | (Constant) | 4.882 | 1.362 | | 3.585 | 0.000 | | |
| | SP | 0.508 | 0.066 | 0.525 | 7.678 | 0.000 | 0.824 | 1.213 |
| | PPQ | 0.206 | 0.079 | 0.178 | 2.600 | 0.010 | 0.824 | 1.213 |

^aDependent Variable: CPB.
Source: Author's computation

the dependent variable (Consumer purchasing behaviour). The beta value under Standardized Coefficient was used which indicated a figure of $\beta=0.398$, and $\text{Sig.}=0.000$. The regression analysis produced a standardised coefficient of 0.398 and this indicates that perceived product quality statistically predicts about 39.8% of change in consumer purchasing behaviour. This means that perceived product quality makes a weak unique contribution to explaining consumer purchasing behaviour of consumers of Maggi products within the Tamale metropolis of Ghana. The estimated regression function is:

$$\text{CPB} = 8.930 + (0.460 \cdot \text{PPQ}).$$

In order for the study to provide further explanation to the results, multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the combined effect of sales promotion and perceived product quality on consumer purchasing behaviour. The result is in Tables 9 and 10. Multiple regression is one of the fussier of the statistical techniques. This approach would tell us how much unique variance in the dependent variable each of the independent variable explained. An assumption of multicollinearity was tested. Multicollinearity exists when the independent variables are highly correlated ($r=0.9$

and above) (Pallant, 2020). In checking for multicollinearity, the result presented in Table 10 under collinearity statistics was performed labelled Coefficient. Two values were given: Tolerance and VIF. Tolerance is an indicator of how much of the variability of the specified independent variable is not explained by the other independent variables in the model. Since the tolerance figures were above 0.10 and VIF. less than 10, as indicated in Table 8, it shows that there was no problem with multicollinearity.

The results from Table 9 indicate R Square of 0.386 or 39% implying those other variables account for the remaining 61% of the overall change. Therefore, for any change in the purchasing behaviors of the consumers of Maggi products, about 39% of it is accounted by sales promotion and perceived product quality. Furthermore, the results from Table 10 under Standardized Coefficient showed $\beta=0.525$, $\text{Sig.}=0.000$ for sales promotion and $\beta=0.178$, $\text{Sig.}=0.000$ for perceived product quality. The results implied that sales promotion contributes about 52% in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour of Maggi products in Tamale, which is significant; while perceived product quality contributes 18% of consumer purchasing behaviour of Maggi products in Tamale. The estimated regression function is:

$$CPB = 4.882 + (0.508*SP) + (0.206*PPQ).$$

DISCUSSION

The first objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of sales promotion on consumer purchasing behaviour of Maggi products within Northern Ghana. The study reported the beta value of the standardized coefficient in order to reveal the extent to which sales promotion significantly predicts consumer purchasing behavior. More precisely the beta coefficient of 0.60 under the column marked standardized coefficient explains that SP significantly predicts CPB. This means that, for any change in consumer purchasing behavior, sales promotion statistically predicts about 60% of such change. The result implies that a unit increase in sales promotion practices, strategies or techniques would lead to a significant positive and moderate unit increase in consumer purchasing behavior toward Maggi seasoning products. Simply put, SP contributes about 60% of change in CPB; thus, the more relevant sales promotion measures are adopted by Nestle Ghana Limited, the better the consumers' purchasing behavior towards the product. Findings from the study have largely been corroborated by previous related literature. For instance, a study by Ahmed and Javed (2015) found sales promotion to significantly and positively influence consumers' purchasing behavior in Pakistan. Also, Adela (2017) found consumer purchasing behavior to be significantly predicted by sales promotion and thus concluded that sales promotion plays a vital role in improving the purchasing behavior of consumers. Similarly, Imaningsih (2018) and Nakarmi (2018) all concluded that sales promotion is a significant predictor of purchasing behavior. Thus, consumers are highly likely to exhibit better purchasing behavior in the presence of effective sales promotion strategies such as; discounts/discount coupons, free samples, free gifts, bulk purchase deals.

The second research objective was to examine the effect of perceived product quality on consumer purchasing behaviour of Maggi products within Northern Ghana. The regression analysis produced a standardized coefficient of 0.398 as indicated in Table 8, and this suggests that perceived product quality statistically predicts about 39.8% of change in consumer purchasing behavior. This result implies that perceived product quality plays a weak role in contributing to improving the purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products within the Northern region, especially Tamale metropolis of Ghana. This finding is empirically supported by Imaningsih (2018), Konuk (2018), Brata et al. (2017) and Saleem et al. (2015). Imaningsih (2018), for instance, found perceived product quality to be significantly correlated with consumers' intention to purchase Honda H-RV. The researcher, therefore, concluded that consumer-purchasing intention is primarily and strongly

influenced by consumers' perception about product quality. In addition, Konuk (2018) found that a unit increase in perceived product quality is associated with a unit increase in consumer purchasing behavior toward organic private label food. Brata et al. (2017) also agreed that the perceived quality of a product plays a vital role in promoting the purchasing behavior of consumers of Nitchi products within Central Jakarta. Thus, these studies statistically concluded that perceived product quality is crucial to ensuring better purchasing behaviors of consumers toward a given product or service.

Conclusion

This particular research employed a theoretical framework derived from an academic and practical consumer behavior discourse on consumer purchasing behavior of Maggi seasoning product. Against the backdrop of the findings of the study, sales promotion as a marketing strategy has a strong effect on consumer purchasing behavior in Ghana. The study's result revealed that sales promotion had a significant positive and moderate influence on purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products within the Northern region of Ghana, especially Tamale metropolis. This outcome suggests that continuous increase in sales promotion strategies would consequently lead to improved consumer purchasing behaviors. Thus, consumers are likely to purchase more of the Maggi products when the company continues to adopt sales promotion techniques. This implies that any unit increase in sales promotion is statistically linked with better consumer purchasing behavior within the study area. Finally, perceived product quality was also found to significantly influence consumer-purchasing behavior towards Maggi products within the Tamale metropolis. This result implies that perception about product quality plays an important role in inducing the purchasing behaviors of consumers. Perceived product quality is associated with consumer's perception about a product in terms of its brand equity, effectiveness and general superiority. The quality of a product is perceived as a critical dimension of product development and it guides the purchasing behaviors of consumers. In view of this, the study found that any unit increase in perceived product quality would lead to a unit increase in consumer purchasing behavior toward Maggi products. Overall, it can be confirmed that consumer purchasing behavior of Maggi products is influenced strongly by sales promotion and perceived product quality within the Northern region of Ghana.

Recommendations

Based on the study objectives, recommendations are provided. With reference to the first research objective, the study concluded that sales promotion plays a

significant role in promoting purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products. The study recommended that more engaging and innovative sales promotion techniques should be adopted by Management of Nestle Ghana Limited to stimulate positive purchasing behaviors among consumers. Sales promotion techniques notably the use of coupons, bonus sales, premium offers, affordable prices and lucrative discount sales should be implemented and intensified as a marketing strategy to continuously promote positive purchasing behavior. Adopting varying sales promotion technique would not only promote better purchasing decisions but help the company to introduce new products, reduce inventory wastages while attracting more consumers. Furthermore, in the light of Perceived Product Quality (PPQ), the study concluded that, perceived product quality plays a vital role in affecting the purchasing behaviors of consumers of Maggi products. Based on this conclusion, the study recommended that management of Nestle Ghana should pay the needed attention to continuously promote the quality of the Maggi products. This can be achieved by developing innovative ways to identify and address possible factors such as branding, promotion packages, pricing policies that could impede production of quality Maggi seasoning products. For example, proper usage of advertisements, warranty, low-cost pricing and creation of positive brand image can help improve perceived product quality and in turn promote better purchasing behaviors among the consumers.

Limitations

This study presented valuable insights into marketing strategies and consumer purchasing behavior; however, the area is still biased, thus, affecting the generalization of findings across the entire population (that is, consumers of the Maggi products in Ghana). This is because, the study focused on registered food vendors in the Northern region of Ghana; specifically, the Tamale metropolis. As such, further researchers could improve generalization of findings by including other food vendors in other metropolises of the country. Additionally, potential researchers should examine how other variables of marketing strategies such as distribution strategies, pricing etc. influence consumer purchasing behavior in order to improve or enhance the current research findings.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interest.

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