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Effect of Personal Selling on Consumer Impulse buying Behaviors: Evidence from Selected Quoted Foods and Beverages Firms in Nigeria

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Keywords: *personal selling, marketing, consumer, buying behaviour, strategy.*

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I. Introduction

Management focus in every organization is mainly how to get their offering across to their target customers. The main task is the selection of the best tools that will get the total attentions of the target audience, encourage loyalty and increases volume. Best and suitable communication tools must be employed be the organizations to inform the target customer and their prospects about their offerings, the unique benefits, uses and features as well as the price and convenient place of purchases. Chris and Barbara (2011) categorized communication tools into advertising, personal selling, sales promotion of any kind; direct marketing, publicity and public relation. All these tools or mix were employed by different organizations.

Sharma, Mehta and Sharma (2014) categorized consumer buying behaviors into routine response/programmed buying, limited decision buying behaviors, extensive/complex buying behaviors and impulse buying behaviors. Meanwhile, management major tasks are to firstly identify consumer's attitude and then identify the best tools that will strategically influenced the target customers so as to achieve organization objectives. At one time or the other most of these communication tools have being used without ascertained the most effective or significant to organization objectives. Therefore, this study is analyzing the effect of personal selling on consumer's impulse buying behavior.

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II. Personal Selling

Personal selling is an ancient art. It is a strategy that involves one on one presentation of ideas or products to the customers, in which the seller influenced or convinced buyer's intention to purchase. Personal sales are two way approach communication between seller and buyer in order to affect the purchase by targeting long-term relationships with all parties involved - SRM. It involves personal contact between the parties, either face-to-face or telephone conversation, such as telephone sales. De Pelsmacker*et al.* (2007) affirmed personal selling contains different kind of after sale activities – such as guidance, supporting, and assistance. At the end, the tools strategically achieved it stated objective.

Today sales personnel have more than instinct, moreover organizations spend millions of dollars yearly to train and retrain their staffs on different methods of analysis and customer management, also to convert them from passive order takers into active business developers. Sales representatives are taught the SPIN method to develop long-term relationships with their customers, Kotler (2012). Since firms understand that consumer has individual differences, it become necessary to thoroughly understand consumer buying behavior so as to make use of appropriate marketing communicate tools to pass the messages. Getting consumers attentions involved direct contact between organization representatives and consumers, this play a significant roles in strengthening the relationship between the parties, in turn influence buying decision.

Therefore, organizations pay more attention to equipment of sales personnel, because their activities are key to the achievement of organization objectives. Personal selling involved face-to-face interactions between company representatives and consumers in order to achieve set goals, which are sales, and build long-term relations with each other's (Kotler & Armstrong, 2013). It also involves eight processes: searching for salespersons, determining the course of action, assessing needs, nature of the offer, method of presentation, dealing with objections, commitment, and follow-up (Spiro, Rich and Stanton 2008). Personal selling is one of the organizations strategies to influence customer's decision towards particular products; by

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selling products benefits which will provide them with all the information relating to the products, and eliminating consumer fears about such offering (Laura, 2016).

a) Elements of Personal Selling

Personal selling has the following elements:

i. *Face-to-Face interaction:* It involves a well trained company representative having face-to-face discussion with the prospective buyers

ii. *Persuasion:* The process involves company representatives persuading the prospective customers to buy the product. Therefore company representative must display convincing roles that will influence customers so that there will be positive attitude towards the product.

iii. *Flexibility:* Company representatives must be flexible in the selling approaches. Products features and benefit must be explained and products demonstration may be required in other to influenced customers decision.

iv. *Promotion of sales:* These is another strategies that involved different techniques that will influenced buying decision it may be introduction of gift items, free samples, coupon among others, with main objective of influencing buying decisions.

v. *Supply of Information:* Through personal selling organization will have access to different and necessary information that can direct the organization vision and missions?

vi. *Mutual Benefit:* Personal selling allows both parties to derived benefits; while customers enjoyed satisfactions, organization also make profits.

b) Consumer buying behaviour

Consumer behavior is an action people involved when obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services. In the entire process of buying, apart from being influenced by their lifestyle, income, opinions, play group, culture, and personality. Yakup and Sevil (2011); Zemack, Corus and Brinberg (2012) .Buying behavior is the consumers' decision processes which involved anticipating, convincing, selecting buying and using products or services. The behavior refers to the buying attitudes of the ultimate consumer.

Organization needs to strategize by analyzing its consumers and prospects buying behavior, since buyers actions has a great influence on the organization success, and the concept stresses that a firm should create a marketing mix that satisfies customers. Therefore, what, where, when and how consumer buys need to be analyzed so that organization will perform accordingly. Kotler (2006). Specifically, the following have been identified as the major buying behaviors of the consumer in recent time; routine/programmed buying behavior, limited/variety buying, extensive/ complete buying and impulse dissonance.

III. Statement of the Problem

Organizations have come to the term with the significant effect of marketing communication on consumer behaviors in every sector of economy. It has been established that consumer's needs are multi – variants, divergent and insatiable. For organization to achieve their set goals in a situation like this, right messages must flow to consumers in a well understanding manner that will eventually yield expected results. Therefore, best approach and techniques to communicate the offering must be employed to get the target audience attentions, strategy or techniques use is marketing communication. Kotler (2012) define marketing communication as a process of delivering organization offers to the target audience in a clear and unambiguous manner by informing, persuading, educating, and reminding consumers directly or indirectly about the services, products, brands and the packages its sell. While Chris and Barbara (2011) affirmed marketing communication tools are personal selling, advertising, sales promotion of any kind; direct marketing, publicity and public relation all with significant effects on consumer's behaviors.

Despite identification of all the tools, scientifically the best tools that will pass appropriate and clear messages across to the target audience has not been established. This challenge has prompt organization to involve in employment of different tools so as to penetrate the audience, get their attention, build relationship, strengthen customer's loyalty and become the market leaders. But most organization has not really identified relationship between personal selling and consumer impulse buying behaviour, which the study intends to evaluate.

Hypothesis

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between personal selling and consumer buying behavior.

IV. Conceptual Frameworks

The study of the effect of personal selling on consumer impulse buying behaviour, based on other author's findings on the variables. Rudain, (2016) in Jordan Worked on the Personal Selling impact on the Purchasing Behavior towards Clothes: A Case Study of the Youth Category. Structured questionnaire was used for respondents' opinion on personal selling and buying behaviour. The results established opinion on personal selling, and the study suggested the significance of training and qualification for salespersons in personal selling to help them deal truthfully with customers and develop the ability to negotiate, it was also recommended that Salespersons should used their discretion to approve discounts.

Mirela, & Ivana, (2017) in Croatia, studied shopping enjoyment: personal factors, word of mouth

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and moderating effects of demographics. It explore influences of personal factors on shopping enjoyment, its impact on the word of mouth communication (WOM) and the moderating effects of demographic variables (gender and education) on these relationships. 1000 respondents' opinion was analyzed with SEM statistical techniques. The results revealed that personal factors positively influence shopping enjoyment, which is positively related to WOM communication. Furthermore, the results confirm the moderating effects of gender and education on the relationship between the shopping enjoyment and WOM.

Empirically, the aforementioned authors have identified personal selling variables and their influence on consumer impulse buying behaviors variables e.g. Routine/programmed buying, Limited/variety buying, extensive/complex buying and impulse/dissonance buying which leads to organization performance.

Therefore, this study conceptualizes as thus;

PS = CIBB

Where PS = Personal Selling,

CBB = Consumer Buying Behaviour.

V. Research Design

Linear regression and ANOVA was used for this research. Linear regression is an approach to modeling the relationship between a dependent variable and independent variable. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) test is a way to find out the variability and degree of significant. Linear regression is to analysis the relationship, this is chosen because of the natures that exist between personal selling and consumer's impulse buying behaviour. Talo Yamani formula was used to arrive at four hundred respondents (400). The questionnaires were administered across Lagos, Ogun, Oyo and Ondo States. ANOVA was used to test the degree of significant of the variables, it was not only been considered as a powerful and strong research instrument but also most recent and efficient analytical methods in handling econometric data of this nature.

VI. Method of Data Collections and Data Analysis Techniques

Primary data were used to generate necessary information for the purpose of this study. It consists of structured questionnaire wherein respondents opinions were graduated using Likert scale design. Questions in the questionnaire were closed ended. Four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaire were administered on consumers across the selected states.

a) Model Specification

General Model

- $Y = f(x)$ (1.1)
- $Y = f(X_{1,} + X_2 + X_2 + X_4 + X_5 + \mu_)$
- $_{OP =} X_{1PSL} + X_2IMP + \mu$
- PSL = Personal Selling
- IMP = Impulse Buying Behaviour

μ = Error

b) Model

Linear regressions analysis was used to evaluate the effect of independent variables on dependent variables. Personal selling (PS) was assumed to be functions of 5 independent variables which are mathematically expressed as follows:

$$IBB = f(X1_{,} + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5 + \mu_) \quad (1.2)$$

$$_{IBB} = \beta_O + \beta_1 CR + \beta_2 FIFA + \beta_3 PP + \beta_4 PD + \beta_5 PA + \mu \quad (1.3)$$

Where

$\beta_{O =}$ Beta

CR = Company representatives

PP = Products presentation

PA = Peoples advice

μ = Error

IBB = Impulse buying behaviour

FIFA = Face to face advice

PD = Products display

VII. Results and Discussion

The summary of the descriptive statistics of the respondents. A total of four hundred (400) copies of structured questionnaire were administered on respondents across the selected states and collected back by the researchers and all the copied of questionnaires were returned representing 100% of the total. Table 1. Showed the socio-economic characteristics which covered sex, marital status, age, academic qualification, State of residence, Occupations

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and the year of buying experience of the respondents. Details of these are subsequently elucidated by showing the frequencies and percentages of respondents. It is obvious from the table that 45% of the respondents are from Lagos state, 30.6% from Ogun, 14.6% are from Oyo while 9.8% are from Ondo. This show that majority of the respondents are from Lagos, and Ogun state the economic hub of the country and the states that host most of the head quarters of the selected firms in Nigeria.

The table also showed that Females formed 65.2% of the respondents while Males formed 36.8%. The results therefore revealed that majority of the respondents were females. It is also observed from the table, in relation to marital status, that majority of the respondents totaling 64.6% are married. The table further revealed that 33.4% are single while a total of 2% picked other option which signified they are divorcee, widow or widowers. The distribution of respondents by academic qualification reveals that 3.6% of the respondents are OND, NCE and NURSING Certificates holders while 15% are HND degree holders. The table further shows that 54.8% of the respondents are B.Sc./B.Ed. holders, while M.Sc. represents 19.2% of the respondents. This indicates that majority of the respondents were well educated. This table further showed a crucial aspect of the questionnaire which is their buying years of experience. Majority of the respondents have more than 5 years buying experience which is 77.8%, those that fall under the category of less than 2years buying experience, is 8.2% once in a while categories are 7.8%,4.4% of the respondents started buying foods and beverages of resent, while 1.8% where just experiencing buying behaviour for the first very time. Which indicated that majority of the respondent understand buying behaviours.

Table 1: Demographic characteristic of Respondents

Characteristic of Respondents

S/N	Bio data variables	Grouping	Frequency	Percentage
1	Sex	Male Female	139 261	34.8% 65.2%
2	Marital Status	Single Married Others	133 258 9	33.4% 64.6% 2%
3	Age	18-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56- Above	29 59 208 74 30	7.2% 14.8% 52% 18.6% 7.4%
4	Academic Qualification	OND/NSC/NURSE HND B.SC MBA/M.SC Others	14 52 219 77 38	3.6% 13% 54.8% 19.2% 9.4%
5	State of Residence	Lagos Ogun Oyo Ondo	180 122 59 39	45% 30.6% 14.6% 9.8%
6	Occupations	Civil servant Public Servant Artisan Farmer Others	130 167 81 17 5	32.4% 42% 20.2% 4.2% 1.2%
7	Buying years of Experienced	Less than 2years Above 5years Once in a while Of recent My first time	33 311 31 18 7	8.2% 77.8% 7.8% 4.4% 1.8%

Source: Field survey, 2018.

Table 2 revealed critical information about personal selling factors influence on consumer's impulse buying behaviors. It shows in the tables that 67% strongly agreed and 23.4% agreed that company representative's efforts has influenced on buying decision on the products in which consumers are not

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intending buying. This therefore implies that majority of the respondents agreed that companies representatives efforts influenced consumers impulse buying behaviors. It is further revealed that 40.8% strongly agreed and 23.6% agreed that face to face advice, telephone conversation and cat log advice influence the choice of place to buy products and buying decisions. 15% strongly disagreed, 13% disagreed while 7.6% were indifferent. It implies that impulse buying behaviour can influence the face to face advice, telephone conversation and cat logs advices.

The table also revealed that 67.8% strongly agreed and 23.6% agreed that products presentation and situations around influenced their unplanned buying decisions while 6.6% strongly disagreed and 1.8% disagreed and 2.8% were indifferent. It implies that products presentations, one of the tools that organization used to educates and sell the benefits to customers has greater influence on consumer's impulse buying behaviors, It further shows that 68.6% strongly agreed and 20.2% agreed on the influenced of products display on products that consumers has no preference for. Also, 6.6% strongly disagreed, 1.8% disagreed and 2.8 indifferent. This implies that products display influence consumers impulse buying behaviors. However, the table revealed that 33.8% strongly agreed and 22.4% agreed that if they need beverages and their choices are not available they will prefer people's advice while 23.4% strongly disagreed, 13.2% disagreed and 7% were indifferent. It implies that though people's advice also influenced consumer's impulse buying behaviors but not at the same level as others factors

Table 2: Explaining effect of personal selling on consumer's impulse buying behavior

S/N	Effect of personal selling on consumers impulse buying behaviour	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
1	I have bought products i do not have intention of buying through the effort of company representatives	SA	268	67%
		A	94	23.4%
		SD	30	7.4%
		D	5	1.4%
		IND	3	0.8%
2	I have choose place to buy products through face to face advice, telephone conversation, cater log advice	SA	164	40.8%
		A	94	23.6%
		SD	60	15%
		D	52	13%
		IND	30	7.6%
3	Products presentation and situation around me do influence my buying decision	SA	272	67.8%
		A	94	23.6
		SD	19	4.8%
		D	8	2%
		IND	7	1.8%
4	Regarding product that I do not have preference products display do influence my buying decision	SA	275	68.6%
		A	81	20.2%
		SD	26	6.6%
		D	7	1.8%
		IND	11	2.8%
5	When I need beverages and my choice is not available I listen to people advice	SA	135	33.8%
		A	90	22.4%
		SD	94	23.6%
		D	53	13.2%
		IND	28	7%

Source: Field survey, 2018.

Analysis of the evaluation of the effect of personal selling on consumer's impulse buying behaviors:

A linear regression established that personal selling could statistically predict consumer's impulse buying behavior. The results(F (5, 494) = 8.91, Prob. > F = 0.0000, R^2= 0.83.Adjusted R^2 = 0.74) estimated that personal selling has positive significant effect on consumer impulse buying behavior, the degree of confidence (73.8%) of variability between personal selling and impulse buying behavior. The results ((CR: Coeff= .089278, t= 1.86, p = 0.064, FTFA: Coeff =.0995106, t= 3.53, p= 0.000, PP: Coeff= .0331266, t = 0.74, p = 0.461) (PD: Coeff =.207137, t= 5.09p= 0.000, PA: Coeff =-.0031632, t= - 0.11 p= 0.914)) revealed connectivity and significant relationship between personal selling and consumer impulse buying behaviors. The result further revealed estimated insignificant associated between Consumer Impulse

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Buying Behavior and people's advice, at 95% confidence interval.

The coefficient result shows that a percentage increase in proportion of personal selling variables will lead to corresponding increase or decrease in consumer impulse buying behavior. Therefore, this implies that the explanatory variables (i.e. CR, FTFA, PP and PA) have associated significant effect on the consumer's impulse buying behaviors. These results are in agreement with similar studies that used linear regression, Sagini and Haridas (2014) studied personality- its impact on impulse buying behaviour among the retail customers in India. Rudain (2016) studied the impact of personal selling on the purchasing behavior towards clothes using youth category as a case study in *Jordan.* Likewise,. Mirela and Ivan (2017) examined shopping enjoyment: personal factors, word of mouth and moderating effects of demographics also, Effiong and Paul (2015) studied on retail store merchandise assortment, display and their influence on consumer's impulse buying behaviors in north – west region of Nigeria.

Table 3: The Regression Results of the Effect of Personal Selling on Consumer's Impulse Buying Behaviors

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	t.	P >|t	95% coefficient	Interval
Impulse Buying Behaviour	CR	.089278	.0480179	1.86	0.064	-.0050666	.1836225
	FTFA	.0995106	.0281838	3.53	0.000	.0441357	.1548855
	PP	.0331266	.0448802	0.74	0.461	-.0550531	.1213063
	PD	.207137	.0406972	5.09	0.000	.127176	.287098
	PA	.0031632	.0291565	-0.11	0.914	-.0604493	.0541229
R Squared	Adj. R-squared	Prob> F	F (5, 494)	Root R squared MSE			
0.0828	0.80268	0.0000	8.91	.80268			

Source: Researcher computation, 2018.
R-squared = 0.0828
Adj. R-squared = 0.0735

a) Analysis of Variance Analysis (ANOVA)

The Analysis of Variance Analysis (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if personal selling was different from groups with different marketing activity levels. Data is mean ± standard error. The results (.F (4.4.4.4, 4, 479) = 69.539, p=q = 0.0018) showed that there was a statistically significant difference between Representatives (q9), Face-to-face-advice (q10), products presentation (q11) and products display (q12) but people advice (q13) is statistically insignificant within the groups)The differences effects between the variables. Therefore, we accept the model; that personal selling has significant difference effect on consumer impulse buying behaviors at 95% level of significant.

These results are in agreement with similar studies that used ANOVA. Sagini and Haridas. (2014, p, 66) studied personality- its impact on impulse buying behaviour among the retail customers in India. Abraham, T. T and Carla, P (2015) studied Factor affecting Consumer in Impulse Buying (On Hypermarket in Makassar City)The results also supported by theory of reason action, Learning theory and stake holders theory. Reason action model suggests that external stimuli lead to a tendency to modify the person's belief structure. The theory believes that individual behavior is derived from the acquired concepts. In other words, intention to carry out a behavior by an individual is attributed to his attitude and norms.

Therefore, tools put in place by organization will consequently influence consumer's attitude or buying action. Likewise, learning theory encourages consumers to understand their right, awareness of a product or a brand, its availability, its benefits and so on. While products understanding will encourage consumer's impulse buying behaviour. Consumers have to acquire new skills in this high-tech age, with products life cycles getting shorter all the time and new products are becoming more and more advanced. These corroborate with stake holders theory which is to protect the interest of shareholders, customers and communities. Positive customer's attitude will increase revenues and all the parties will benefits from it.

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Table 4: Overall significant of the model (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Pro> F
Regression	82.718716	20	4.1359358	7.50	0.0000
Cr	9.62566622	4	2.40641655	4.36	0.0018
Fifa	16.4926446	4	4.12316114	7.47	0.0000
Pp	7.37547781	4	1.84386945	3,34	0.0103
Pd	24.3581145	4	6.08952862	11.04	0.0000
pa	10.4128056	4	2.60320141	4.72	0.0010
Residual	264.281284	479	.551735457		
Total	347	499	695390782		
R-squared	Adj R-squared	Root MSE			
0.2384	0.2066	.742789			

Source: Researcher computation, 2018

VIII. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that personal selling has significant effects on impulse buying behaviour, organization should have a clear and better understanding of the strategy to present the company offerings and implement it in away to get total attentions of both customers and prospects. Personal selling will significantly impact on consumers impulse buying behaviour.

IX. Recommendations

The following recommendations were suggested for this study.

Organization should have better understanding of their environment, customer's orientation level; these are the best tools and strategies that can influence the customers and prospects before deciding on the mix of communicating their prospective customers.

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