

INFLUENCE OF MARKETING MIX STRATEGY ON SALES PERFORMANCE OF FUEL STATIONS IN YOLA METROPOLIS, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of marketing mix strategies on the sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study was guided by four specific purposes, four research questions, and four corresponding null hypotheses. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 110 filling stations, 110 station managers, and 703 pump attendants (N = 813). Using a simple random sampling technique and the Krejcie & Morgan table, a sample of 265 respondents was selected. A structured 50-item questionnaire, validated by three experts and with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.83, was used for data collection. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to answer research questions, while simple linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. Key findings revealed that product (grand mean = 3.43), promotion (grand mean = 3.09), place (grand mean = 2.95), and price (grand mean = 2.92) strategies all had a significant positive influence on sales performance. The regression results confirmed these significant influences: product ($F(1,258) = 69.555, p < 0.05$), promotion ($F(1,258) = 97.677, p < 0.05$), place ($F(1,258) = 102.176, p < 0.05$), and price ($F(1,258) = 139.577, p < 0.05$). The study concluded that all four marketing mix elements significantly enhance sales performance. It was recommended that petroleum firms should continuously improve product quality, implement targeted promotional campaigns, strategically select station locations, and adopt competitive pricing policies.

Keywords: Influence, Marketing Mix Strategies, Product Strategy, Promotion Strategy, Fuel Stations and Sales Performance.

Introduction and Literature Review

Marketing is the science of meeting customer needs by providing valuable products to achieve organizational goals. The marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion) consists of the tactical tools a firm blends to produce its desired response in the target market. Marketing strategies provide a structure for organizations to gain a competitive advantage by delivering superior customer value. Product strategy involves planning the right products and services, including quality, features, and branding. Promotion involves all seller-initiated efforts to inform and persuade buyers, using tools like advertising and sales promotions. Place (distribution) concerns making products available and accessible to consumers at convenient locations. Price is the sole element that generates revenue and is often used by consumers as a barometer for quality.

The marketing mix is the set of controllable, tactical marketing tools that the firm blends together to produce the response it wants in the target market. The marketing mix consists of everything the firm can do to influence demand for its product. It is also described as the combination of the four inputs that constitute the core of a company's marketing system, and these include the product, the price, the place, and the promotion (Ademola, 2019). It should be noted,

however, that the four ingredients in the mix are interrelated. Also, the decisions in one area usually affect actions in the others. Each of these four variables contains countless variables. For instance, a company may market one product or several related or unrelated products. It may distribute its products and services through wholesalers or directly to retailers, and so on. It therefore implies that management must select the combination that will best adapt to the environment. In essence, management is seeking the mix that will lead to optimal synergistic results.

Product means the goods and services combination the company offers to the target market. A product, service, or idea may be defined as something that is given to consumers in exchange for a price. Managing the product ingredients includes planning and developing the right products and/or services to be marketed by the company. Guidelines are needed for changing existing products, adding new ones, and taking other actions that affect the assortment of products carried. Activities related to a product, service, or idea include the following: quality, features, style, brand name, packaging, sizes, services, warranties, returns, etc. Research and experience in the marketplace have indicated that a marketer should treat the product as a bundle of satisfaction offered to consumers rather than as a physical item. This is so because consumers really seek satisfaction of their needs and desires rather than physical products.

Most products have a limited profitable life (Asgar & Mohammad, 2023). Product development involves careful planning and implementation. Sometimes organizations revive declining products by modification, or else they follow several steps ranging from identification of market opportunity to launching new products to replace declining ones. The greater the competitiveness of markets, the greater the need for product development.

Promotion is the coordination of all seller-initiated efforts to set up channels of information and persuasion in order to sell goods and services or promote an idea. Some books use the term promotion to cover both advertising and sales promotion. In this sense, advertising is communicating a firm's offer to consumers through paid media time or space. Promotion is a marketing tool used as a strategy to communicate between sellers and buyers. Through this, the seller tries to influence and convince buyers to buy their products or services. It assists in spreading the word about the product, service, or company to the people. The company uses this process to improve its public image (Odhiambo, 2023). This technique of marketing creates an interest in the mindset of customers and can also retain them as loyal customers.

Promotion is a fundamental component of the marketing mix, which has 4 Ps: product, price, place, and promotion. It is also an essential element of a promotional plan or mix, which includes advertising, self- and sales promotion, direct marketing, publicity, trade shows, events, etc. Some methods of this procedure contain an offer, coupon discounts, free sample distribution, trial offer, buy two items for the price of one, contests, festival discounts, etc. The promotion of a product is important to help companies improve their sales because customer reactions towards discounts and offers are impulsive. In other words, promotion is a marketing tool that involves enlightening customers about the goods and services offered by an organization (Jamilu, 2020).

Promotion is, usually, the communication tool employed by marketers to inform people or the market about the availability of products or services offered in the markets or the existence of a particular company (Kasiso, 2017). Promotion can be described as a tool through which companies stimulate or arouse consumer demand for the products to be sold; it also helps to educate consumers on how to use or obtain maximum benefit from the product offered in the markets. Therefore, promotion is a management strategy used to inform and persuade the market regarding a company's products. Advertising, personal selling, and sales promotion are the promotional activities or tools used by companies.

In the context of Nigeria, many organizations, particularly automotive fuel stations, face challenges of low sales performance, potentially due to poor use of marketing mix strategies. Studies

have shown that the marketing mix has a great impact on company performance. For instance, Arghya et al. (2020) established a significant influence between product and sales performance, while Köylüoğlu et al. (2021) found that product influences customer loyalty. Promotion has been shown to create interest and retain customers (Yunusa, 2021). Location has been found to have a significant effect on business performance (Paniandi et al., 2022), and pricing strategy has a significant effect on sales performance (Odhiambo, 2023). This study is grounded in the Market Orientation Theory, which posits that successful businesses must know and meet customer needs more effectively than rivals, leading to better sales performance.

However, the use of marketing mix is argued to have a great influence on the performance of companies in terms of sales and profit (Khalid, 2019). Still, Asgar and Mohammad (2023) postulated that marketing mix is a determinant of the performance of an organization. Notwithstanding, previous studies have shown the influence of marketing mix strategy on sales performance (Gamage, 2019). It has been observed that automotive fuel stations in Yola metropolis are faced with challenges of low sales performance. This is perhaps a result of poor usage of the almighty marketing mix strategies. Therefore, it is on the basis of this background that the study seeks to determine the influence of marketing mix as a strategy on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The researcher observed that most automotive fuel stations in Yola, Adamawa State, have failed to record an increase in their sales revenue, which may be linked to poor marketing mix strategies. Organizational decision-making on selecting and implementing an appropriate marketing mix has been ineffective, and companies neglect to develop coherent strategies to differentiate and add value for customers. Abinav (2023) reported that the sales performance of automotive fuel stations in Adamawa State has been consistently dwindling compared to their counterparts in other states, posing a challenge to their profitability, continued existence, and the employability of youths. Furthermore, there is a shortage of research on marketing fuel stations, creating an empirical gap regarding the influence of the 4Ps on sales performance of automotive fuels in Yola. These problems prompted this study to provide possible solutions through empirical investigation.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the influence of marketing mix as a strategy on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the influence of product strategy on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria.
2. Determine the influence of promotion strategy on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Based on the specific purposes, the following research questions were raised and answered:

1. What influence does product strategy have on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria?
2. What influence does promotion strategy have on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

In line with the first two specific purposes and research questions, the following null hypotheses were raised and tested:

HO₁: Product strategy has no statistically significant influence on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

HO₂: Promotion strategy has no statistically significant influence on the sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Method

A descriptive survey research design was used. The study was conducted in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The population consisted of 110 filling stations, 110 station managers, and 703 pump attendants (total N = 813) in Yola metropolis. A simple random sampling technique was adopted. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, a sample of 265 respondents was selected (66 fuel stations, with one manager and three pump attendants each, plus five from NNPC Mega Station). The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Influence of Marketing Mix Strategy on Sales Performance of Fuel Stations Questionnaire (IMMSSPFSQ)", containing 50 items on a 4-point rating scale (SA = 4 to SD = 1). The instrument was validated by three lecturers from Modibbo Adama University, Yola. Reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.83. Data were collected over six weeks by the researcher and three trained assistants, with 260 out of 265 copies of the questionnaire returned. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to answer the research questions, while simple linear regression analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for hypotheses was to reject the null hypothesis if the p-value was less than 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: What influence does product strategy have on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Opinion of Respondents on the Influence of Product Strategy on Sales Performance of Fuel Stations

S/N	Item Descriptions (n = 260)	Mean	S. D	Remarks
1	The consistent availability of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS - Petrol) significantly boosts sales at this station.	3.48	0.82	Agree
2	Ensuring our fuel is not adulterated is critical for maintaining customer loyalty and repeat sales.	3.51	0.79	Agree
3	The use of certified and calibrated pumps to dispense accurate quantity influences customer trust and sales.	3.51	0.62	Agree
4	The reputation of our product for not damaging vehicle engines is a major sales advantage.	3.55	0.74	Agree
5	Consistent product supply, even during nationwide scarcity, gives us a competitive edge in Yola.	3.50	0.75	Agree
6	The quality of our fuel (e.g., cleanliness, absence of water) is a key reason customers choose us.	3.45	0.76	Agree
7	The availability of Dual Purpose Kerosene (DPK) or cooking gas (LPG) attracts a different customer segment to our station.	3.48	0.71	Agree
8	The consistent availability of Automotive Gas Oil (AGO - Diesel) significantly boosts sales at this station.	3.38	0.88	Agree

S/N	Item Descriptions (n = 260)	Mean	S. D	Remarks
9	The cleanliness and overall appearance of our station premises build customer confidence.	3.23	0.94	Agree
10	Product diversification (e.g., selling engine oil, lubricants, and other automotive fluids) contributes significantly to our revenue.	3.20	1.01	Agree
Grand Mean		3.43	0.80	Agree

Table 1 shows respondents' opinions on how product strategy affects the sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis. The mean scores for all ten items range from 3.20 to 3.55 on a 4-point scale, with a grand mean of 3.43. This indicates a general agreement among respondents that product-related factors positively influence sales. Specifically, items such as maintaining consistent availability of PMS (petrol), ensuring fuel quality, using certified pumps, and protecting the reputation of products for not damaging vehicle engines scored the highest means (3.48–3.55), reflecting strong recognition of their importance in boosting customer trust, loyalty, and overall sales. Other strategies, including product diversification and availability of alternative fuels like DPK or LPG, also received agreement, though with slightly lower mean scores (3.20–3.48). Overall, the data suggest that product strategy is a critical determinant of sales performance in the petroleum sector within Yola.

Research Question 2: What influence does promotion strategy have on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Opinion of Respondents on the Influence of Promotion Strategy on Sales Performance of Fuel Stations

S/N	Item Descriptions (n = 260)	Mean	S. D	Remarks
1	Visible advertising (billboards, signposts) around Yola Metropolis effectively attracts new customers to our station.	3.20	0.91	Agree
2	Word-of-mouth recommendations from satisfied customers are our most effective form of promotion.	3.11	1.01	Agree
3	Our station's presence on social media (e.g., Facebook, WhatsApp) helps in communicating promotions and attracting customers.	2.98	1.05	Agree
4	Branded gifts (e.g., umbrellas, T-shirts) with fuel purchases create goodwill and increase customer loyalty.	3.30	0.99	Agree
5	Public relations activities (e.g., community support) enhance our brand image and indirectly boost sales.	3.13	0.95	Agree
6	Sales promotions are necessary to compete effectively with other petrol stations in Yola.	3.35	0.80	Agree
7	The attitude and promotional skills of our attendants (upselling) influence the quantity of fuel and other products customers buy.	3.05	1.01	Agree
8	We see a direct increase in sales during and immediately after a promotional campaign.	3.21	0.90	Agree
9	Mobile text message (SMS) alerts about promotions would be an effective way to reach our customers.	2.37	1.11	Disagree

S/N	Item Descriptions (n = 260)	Mean	S. D	Remarks
10	The frequency of our promotional activities has a positive correlation with our overall sales performance.	3.18	0.82	Agree
	Grand Mean	3.09	0.95	Agree

Table 2 presents respondents' views on promotion strategies. The mean scores range from 2.37 to 3.35, with a grand mean of 3.09, showing overall agreement that promotion strategies influence sales. Respondents strongly agreed that visible advertising, sales promotions, branded gifts, public relations, and word-of-mouth positively impact sales performance (means 3.11–3.35). Social media presence and the promotional skills of attendants were also viewed as beneficial, though slightly less influential. Notably, SMS alerts as a promotional tool had a low mean of 2.37, indicating disagreement about their effectiveness in this context. In summary, while most promotion strategies are acknowledged as effective in driving sales, traditional and personal forms of promotion (e.g., in-person advertising, word-of-mouth, and sales promotions) appear more impactful in Yola than digital messaging.

Testing of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The summary of the tests is presented in Tables 3 and 4.

H0₁: Product strategy has no significant influence on sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Table 3a: Model Summary of Significant Influence of Product Strategy on Sales Performance of Fuel Stations

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.461 ^a	.212	.209	.86078

a. Predictors: (Constant), Product as a Marketing Strategy

Table 3a shows that product strategy has a positive relationship with sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis. The R value of 0.461 indicates a moderate positive correlation between product strategy and sales performance. The R² value of 0.212 implies that approximately 21.2% of the variance in sales performance is explained by product strategy, while the adjusted R² of 0.209 suggests that this predictive capacity is consistent when accounting for sample size. The standard error of 0.86078 indicates the average distance of the observed values from the regression line.

Table 3b: Summary of ANOVA of Significant Influence of Product Strategy on Sales Performance of Fuel Stations

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.536	1	51.536	69.555	.000 ^b
	Residual	191.165	258	.741		
	Total	242.701	259			

a. Dependent Variable: Sales Performance of Fueling Station

b. Predictors: (Constant), Product as a Marketing Strategy

Table 3b presents the ANOVA results, showing that the regression model is statistically significant. The F-value, $F(1, 258) = 69.555$, $p < 0.05$, indicates that product strategy significantly influences the sales performance of petroleum products. This result leads to the rejection of the null

hypothesis (HO1). In practical terms, this means that adopting a well-structured product strategy such as product differentiation, quality, and variety significantly improves sales performance in fueling stations.

H0₂ Promotion strategy has no significant influence on the sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Table 4a: Model Summary of Significant Influence of Promotion Strategy on Sales Performance of Petroleum Products

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.524 ^a	.275	.272	.82605

a. Predictors: (Constant), Promotion as a Marketing Strategy

Table 4a indicates that promotion strategy has a strong positive relationship with sales performance. The R value of 0.524 reflects a moderate-to-strong correlation, while the R² value of 0.275 shows that promotion strategy accounts for 27.5% of the variance in sales performance. The adjusted R² of 0.272 confirms the robustness of the model, and the standard error of 0.82605 demonstrates the average distance of observed data points from the regression line.

Table 4b: Summary of ANOVA of Significant Influence of Promotion Strategy on Sales Performance of Petroleum Products

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	66.651	1	66.651	97.677	.000 ^b
	Residual	176.050	258	.682		
	Total	242.701	259			

a. Dependent Variable: Sales Performance of Fueling Station

b. Predictors: (Constant), Promotion as a Marketing Strategy.

The ANOVA results in Table 4b show that the regression model is highly significant, $F(1, 258) = 97.677$, $p < 0.05$, indicating that promotion strategy significantly influences the sales performance of petroleum products. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (HO₂). This finding implies that promotion activities such as advertising, sales promotion, and personal selling play a critical role in driving sales in fueling stations in Yola metropolis.

Discussion of Findings

The findings reveal that product strategy has a moderate influence on the sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis, Adamawa State, with an overall grand mean of 3.43 (SD = 0.80). Statistical analysis further shows that product strategy significantly influences sales performance, as indicated by the regression results, $F(1, 258) = 69.555$, $p < 0.05$. The finding indicates that product strategy is a meaningful determinant of sales performance in the petroleum industry in Yola. A moderate grand mean of 3.43 suggests that while respondents perceive product strategy as influential, it is not overwhelmingly dominant, implying that other factors also contribute to sales outcomes. Product strategy encompasses product quality, features, variety, and innovations that meet customer needs. Its significant influence, as confirmed by regression analysis, implies that petroleum firms that prioritize refining their product offerings through quality improvements, fuel variants, or additional services like convenience shops are likely to experience enhanced sales performance. This finding aligns closely with Zailani (2020), who reported that product development significantly improves sales performance of fuel stations in the same region, and with Rajani (2021), who found that product strategies positively correlate with business performance. The consistency

with previous studies emphasizes that a well-planned product strategy remains critical for maintaining competitive advantage and meeting market demand.

Regarding promotion strategy, the study found an overall moderate agreement among respondents on its role in sales performance, with a grand mean of 3.09 (SD = 0.95). Regression analysis confirms that promotion strategy significantly influences sales performance, $F(1, 258) = 97.677$, $p < 0.05$. This finding suggests that promotional activities including advertising, sales campaigns, public relations, and other marketing communications play a significant role in influencing petroleum sales, albeit moderately. A grand mean of 3.09 reflects that while promotion is recognized as important by respondents, it is not perceived as the strongest factor affecting sales. The significant regression result implies that strategic promotional efforts can meaningfully enhance consumer awareness, attract new customers, and retain existing ones, which collectively improve sales outcomes. This finding corroborates the work of Bali (2022), who observed that promotion has a significant positive impact on organizational performance, and Keside (2020), who highlighted the role of intensive promotion in boosting sales. However, it slightly contrasts with Sakavumbi and Getrude (2024), where certain forms of marketing expenditure, such as digital marketing, were found to be less impactful. Overall, the finding reinforces that promotion is a vital tool in driving sales performance, particularly in competitive markets where customer engagement and brand visibility are key.

Conclusions

The study concludes that marketing mix strategies comprising product, promotion, place, and price have significant and positive influences on the sales performance of fuel stations in Yola metropolis, Adamawa State. Specifically, product strategy emerged as a moderately strong determinant, highlighting the importance of product quality and features. Promotion strategy was shown to significantly contribute to sales performance, indicating that effective advertising and communication are essential for attracting customers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Petroleum firms should continuously improve their product offerings by ensuring high-quality fuel, introducing diverse product variants, and adding value-added services (e.g., convenience stores) to meet customer needs.
2. Given that promotion strategy significantly impacts sales, petroleum marketers should design and implement targeted promotional campaigns, including advertising, discounts, loyalty programs, and community engagement, to increase brand awareness and attract new customers.

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