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## **EFFECT OF PROMOTION STRATEGIES AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN CEMENT COMPANIES (A STUDY OF DANGOTE CEMENT PLC, NIGERIA)**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the effect of promotion strategies and customer satisfaction in cement companies, Nigeria. The research focused on four key promotion strategies: advertising public relations, sales promotion, and direct marketing. A survey research design was employed, utilizing structured questionnaire distributed to customers of Dangote Cement within the six area councils in Abuja, Nigeria. The study population was estimated to be 240 and sample size of 150 customers were determined through Toro Yammane formula. Data analysis was conducted using regression and correlation techniques to determine the significance of these variables on customer satisfaction. The study revealed that advertisement has positively, low and significantly impact on Customer Satisfaction. The study also highlighted that public relation has negative, strong and significance effect on customer satisfaction. Based on these findings, recommendations were made, including the need for the company to carefully consider the appropriate channel of advertisement in order to increase patronage of cement product. Also, the company should consider hosting community events, such as cement-themed workshops or seminars, to engage with customers and promote its product. Additionally, the company should consider implementing a sales promotion strategy that offers targeted discounts and incentives to its customers e.g. loyalty programs, limited-time offers, bundle deals, and referral incentives. The study contributed to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the impact of promotional strategies in customer satisfaction within the Nigerian context.*

**Keywords:** Advertisement, Direct Marketing, Sales Promotion, Public Relations, Customer Satisfaction, Cement Companies, Nigeria.

### **1. Introduction**

Customer satisfaction has been a crucial aspect of business operations for Dangote Cement Plc, Nigeria's largest cement manufacturer, since its inception (Dangote Cement Plc, 2024). The company's history dates back to 1992 when it was founded by Aliko Dangote, and over the years, it has grown to become a leading player in the Nigerian cement industry (Dangote Cement Plc, 2024). The company's success can be attributed to its commitment to providing high-quality products and services that meet the needs of its customers. However, like any other business, Dangote Cement Plc has faced challenges in maintaining

customer satisfaction, particularly in the face of increasing competition and changing customer expectations.

Consistently, Dangote Cement Plc. has employed various strategies to ensure customer satisfaction, including investing in research and development to improve product quality, expanding its distribution network to enhance accessibility, and providing customer support services (Adeoye, 2018). Despite these efforts, the company has faced criticism from customers regarding issues such as product availability, pricing, and customer service (Ogunleye, 2020). These

challenges highlight the need for Dangote Cement Plc to continually assess and improve its customer satisfaction strategies to remain competitive in the market.

The present state of customer satisfaction in Dangote Cement Plc Nigeria is a mixed bag. On one hand, the company has made significant progress in improving its product quality which has led to increased customer satisfaction (Dangote Cement Plc, 2024). A study by Oyedokun and Adeniyi (2020) found that 85.7% of customers reported being satisfied with the quality of Dangote Cement products, while 12.1% reported being moderate, and 2.2% are dissatisfied.

However, the company still faces challenges in meeting customer expectations, particularly in terms of product availability and pricing (Ogunleye, 2020). Similarly, Olaleye (2019) found that only 45.6% of customers in the Nigerian cement industry reported being satisfied with the availability of Dangote Cement Plc's products, while 55.1% reported being dissatisfied with the pricing of the company's products. In terms of customer satisfaction metrics, Dangote Cement Plc has reported a customer satisfaction index (CSI) of 75.6% in 2020, which is a decline from the 80.2% reported in 2019 (Dangote Cement Plc, 2024). The CSI is a widely used metric that measures customer satisfaction based on factors such as product quality, price, and customer service. Overall, the current situation regarding customer satisfaction in Dangote Cement Plc.

Despite extensive studies made to address the customer satisfaction challenges the company faces. For example, the company has invested in customer relationship management (CRM) systems to enhance customer engagement and improve customer service (Dangote Cement Plc, 2024). The company has also expanded its distribution network to increase product availability and accessibility (Adeoye, 2018). Additionally, Dangote Cement Plc has introduced loyalty programs and promotions to reward customers and encourage repeat business (Ogunleye, 2020). The challenges still persist. There is a lack of comprehensive studies exploring how these promotional strategies (Advertisement, Public Relations, Sales Promotion, and Direct Marketing) interact and collectively influence customer satisfaction.

Most existing studies tend to isolate these variables, failing to consider their interdependence effects that can amplify customer satisfaction. This study seeks to address this gap by integrating these critical promotional strategies into a unified framework to better understand their combined impact on customer satisfaction.

### **Statement of Hypotheses**

HO<sub>1</sub>: Advertisement has no significant effect on customer satisfaction in Dangote Cement Plc.

HO<sub>2</sub>: Public relations has no significant effect on customer satisfaction in Dangote Cement Plc.

HO<sub>3</sub>: Sales promotions has no significant effect on customer satisfaction in Dangote Cement Plc.

HO<sub>4</sub>: Direct marketing has no significant influence on customer satisfaction in Dangote Cement Plc.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Conceptual Definitions**

#### **Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is a crucial concept in business that reflects the degree to which a customer's expectations are met or exceeded by a product or service. It is a measure of how well a company's offerings meet the needs and preferences of its customers, leading to positive experiences and loyalty. Customer satisfaction goes beyond just meeting basic requirements; it encompasses factors like quality, value, service, and overall experience. Businesses that prioritize customer satisfaction tend to build strong relationships with their clientele, leading to repeat business, positive word-of-mouth referrals, and long-term success. Understanding and measuring customer satisfaction is essential for businesses to improve their products, services, and overall customer experience (Franklin, 2024). Achieving high levels of customer satisfaction involves various elements, including product quality, customer service, pricing, convenience, and reliability. Businesses must consistently deliver on these factors to meet or exceed customer expectations and create positive experiences. Thus, customer satisfaction serves as a key indicator of organizations' operational efficiency. Businesses that consistently receive positive feedback from customers demonstrate their ability to deliver value, address customer needs effectively, and maintain high service standards. Monitoring customer satisfaction levels

allows organizations to identify areas for improvement, refine their products or services, and enhance overall business processes. By leveraging customer feedback and insights, organizations in Nigeria can make informed strategic decisions, allocate resources efficiently, and optimize their operations to achieve sustainable growth (Adeleke & Yusuf, 2021).

### **Perceived Quality**

Perceived quality is a critical component of customer satisfaction that reflects the customer's judgment about the superiority of a product or service (Aaker & Jacobson, 2023). It encompasses factors such as performance, durability, and reliability, influencing their overall satisfaction and purchase decisions. High perceived quality often leads to increased customer loyalty and advocacy. Perceived quality refers to the customer's subjective evaluation of the product or service's overall quality (Zeithaml et al. 2020). It is a critical dimension of customer satisfaction, as customers tend to be satisfied when they perceive the product or service as being of high quality (Kotler, 2021). Parasuraman et al. (1985), perceived quality is a key driver of customer satisfaction, and it is measured by the customer's expectations and experiences. The authors developed the SERVQUAL model, which assesses the gap between customer expectations and perceptions of service quality.

### **Customer Expectations**

Customer expectations refer to the anticipated benefits and performance levels that customers believe they will receive from a product or service (Malthouse & Hwang, 2023). These expectations are shaped by previous experiences, marketing communications, and word-of-mouth. When actual performance meets or exceeds these expectations, customer satisfaction is likely to increase. Customer expectations are the customer's pre-consumption beliefs about the product or service, which are formed through various sources, including marketing communications, words-of-mouth, and past experiences (Trainor et al. 2022, p.20). Expectations are shaped by various factors, including past experiences, word-of-mouth, and marketing communications (Kotler, 2020). Meeting or exceeding customer expectations is critical to

achieving customer satisfaction (Parasuraman et al. 1985).

### **Promotion Strategies**

Marketing is the major part of the business. There is the huge competition to attract consumers' attention towards products or services to persuade them. As a result, each producer should need to build a more attractive marketing strategy and action plan than its current competitors. One well-known tool of attracting consumers' attention towards products or service is promotion mix. Promotion mix is one of the major key factors in the marketing mix and it has a vital role in market success and attains its goal. Usually, Promotion is adopted and used to ensure that consumers are aware of the products that business is offering for sale. It is the course of action of establishing communication relationship between a marketer and its targeted group of society. Marketing promotions is to a certain extent different from mass communication, in which a business organization addresses largely undifferentiated mass audience for non-commercial intention by such means as, radio news, press editorials, and television. Under marketing promotion elements, an organization would be endeavoring at a deliberately distinguished audience for a commercial motive and would employ such means as advertising strategy, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and direct marketing (Kotler & Keller, 2022). These promotion elements are very predominating strategies in attracts and creates attention to the public towards the product that marketers offering for sale. Organized manufacturers like cement industries are striving well in meeting the requirements of customers in Nigeria. In order to enhance the sales and profit, they have to formulate and implement suitable promotion strategies in the competitive organized manufactures marketing scenario.

Advertising is a type of communication designed to convince an audience (viewers, readers or listeners) to buy or take several actions upon goods, ideas, or services. It includes the name of a product or service and how that product or service could do well to the consumer; to convince a target market to obtain or to consume that particular brand. Defined as "a paid non-personal communication about an organization and its

products transmitted to a target audience” (Pride *et al.*, 2012). Also, Kotler and Keller (2022) defined it as “any non-personal communication means of ideas or products by using mass communications media such as television, newspapers, magazines, cinema, radio; it is implemented through a specific sponsor, for a fee paid to influence consumer behavior”.

Public relations which is practiced today according to Ngwenya (2015) has been in existence since the twentieth century and that, its basic function such as informing people, persuading people and integrating people in the earliest society has not departed much from what is being practiced today. In buttressing this, Lancaster (2005) averred that the use of public relations in modern day society is not new and that its origins in the United States can be traced when President Jefferson’s addressed Congress as far back as 1807. Lovelock and Wirtz (2004) define sales promotion as “all the activities carried out by the organization in order to enhance or improve its image in the community such as supporting and participating positively in social, environmental, health, and public issues.” Whether the purpose is for profit or not, public relations can be used as an effective medium to convey messages between different parties

Obydat (2004) defines sales promotion as “any marketing or non-marketing effort or activity in which marketing or non-marketing means are used at a particular time to stimulate increased demand or to prove the availability of organizations’ product.” Ofose-Boateng (2020), marketers use sales promotion tools to draw a stronger and quicker buyer response, including short-run effects such as highlighting product offers and boosting sales. Sales promotions are instruments which stimulate the sales of products and brands, especially in consumer-packaged goods. Bonus-packs, money-off, sweepstakes and contest, prize discounts, sampling, couponing, premiums, and refunds are some of the examples of sales promotion tools used by organization to stimulate quicker buyer responses.

Srinivasan (2021) direct marketing is a marketing strategy in which target customers are contacted directly and eliminates the need for intermediaries such as retailers. Results from direct marketing campaigns are

immediately measurable because your business can track how many customers respond positively. Direct marketing largely relies on individual distribution of sales promotions to consumers and their potential customers, personally. The types of direct marketing consist of: face-to-face marketing, door-to-door marketing is another form of face-to-face marketing, brochures, telemarketing, email marketing, targeted advertising and coupons. Roberts and Berger (2020) argued direct marketing expressly certifies the direct transmission of promotional message to the client and not through a mass medium.

## 2.2 Empirical Review

### Advertisement and Customer Satisfaction

Umesha and MariGowda (2019) revealed that effective advertising shapes customer satisfaction. Smith and Jones (2018) found impact of advertising on customer satisfaction is moderated by factors such as brand reputation, product involvement, and cultural context. Brown and Lee (2020) showed a significant positive relationship between advertising and customer satisfaction, with customers who were exposed to fast food advertising reporting higher levels of satisfaction with their dining experience. Nguyen and Smith (2017) found that emotional advertising appeals have a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction, with customers who are exposed to emotional advertising appeals reporting higher levels of satisfaction with their purchasing experience.

### Public Relations and Customer Satisfaction

Adams and White (2018) the findings showed that public relations strategies, such as crisis communication, media relations, and community engagement, have a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction. The study also finds that the effectiveness of public relations strategies in enhancing customer satisfaction is moderated by factors such as service quality, employee communication, and customer expectations. The findings suggest that hospitality companies should prioritize public relations strategies as a key component of their customer satisfaction initiatives, and that effective public relations can lead to increased customer loyalty and retention.



### Sales Promotion and Customer Satisfaction

Ahmadu *et al.*, (2023) the study findings revealed that promotional offers and discounts were the most effective sales promotion strategies in driving customer loyalty. However, the study also found that frequent promotional offers can lead to customer fatigue and reduce their effectiveness over time. Lau *et al.* (2020) the results show that sales promotion has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction, with customers who receive sales promotions reporting higher levels of satisfaction with their purchasing experience.

### Direct Marketing and Customer Satisfaction

Johnson and Smith (2018) the results shows that personalized direct marketing has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction, with customers who receive personalized direct marketing campaigns reporting higher levels of satisfaction with their purchasing experience. Brown and Lee (2020) the study finds that the effectiveness of email marketing campaigns in enhancing customer satisfaction varies across different types of campaigns, with personalized and interactive campaigns being more effective than non-personalized and non-interactive campaigns.

Martinez and Garcia (2020) the results show that direct mail has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction, with customers who receive direct mail campaigns reporting higher levels of satisfaction with their purchasing experience. Rodriguez (2020) the results show that direct marketing has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction, with customers who receive direct marketing campaigns reporting higher levels of satisfaction with their purchasing experience.

### 3. Methodology

The study was conducted in Abuja, Nigeria, is the Federal Capital Territory with a rich historical, cultural, administrative, and economic importance. Abuja has a diverse ethnic composition and their major occupation is farming with significant contributions to Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP). A survey research design was employed, focusing on statistical methods for hypothesis testing and data collection. This approach allows for

objective measurement of promotional strategies and customer satisfaction through structured questionnaire. The study's target population consisted of 240 customers of Dangote Cement within the six area councils of Abuja, Nigeria (Ahmadu, 2024). A sample size of 150 customers was determined using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula.

To ensure fair representation, the study adopted a multi-stages sampling technique. At the first stage stratified sampling, second stage proportionate sampling and third stage, systematic sampling technique were used to select distributors, grouped the questionnaire into proportion and systematic selection of respondents (Customers). This method helps to ensure that the sample is evenly spread across the population. Therefore, the adoption of systematic sampling in this study is a strategic decision aimed at capturing a representative sample, reducing costs, and ensuring thorough and timely data collection and analysis. By leveraging this technique, the study can efficiently gather diverse and representative data, ultimately enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings. Data for this study was obtained primarily through structured questionnaire, ensuring firsthand and original information. The questionnaire was carefully designed to measure both independent and dependent variables, with promotional strategies—including advertising, public relations, sales promotion, and direct marketing—serving as the independent variable, while customer satisfaction—measured through perceived quality, customer expectation, and customer experience—constituted the dependent variable. The questionnaire items were adapted from previously validated sources and reviewed by experts in business administration to ensure content validity.

The administration of the questionnaire was carried out with the assistance of three research assistants, ensuring efficient data collection from customers. The responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale, allowing for nuanced responses that reflect varying degrees of agreement or disagreement. Data collected was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, including percentages and frequency counts, were used to organize and summarize the characteristics of the respondents, while regression

analysis was employed to examine relationships between variables. Additionally, correlation analysis was conducted to assess the strength of relationships between promotional strategies and customer satisfaction. The SPSS software was utilized for all statistical analyses, providing a reliable and efficient platform for data processing and interpretation.

To ensure the accuracy and effectiveness of the research instruments, the study conducted validity and reliability tests. Content validity was established through expert

reviews to confirm that the questionnaire comprehensively covered all aspects of promotional strategies and customer satisfaction. Additionally, reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, a statistical measure used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, ensuring that the responses accurately reflect the intended constructs.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Hypothesis Test

**Table 1: Regression Results**

		Unstandardized Coefficient	Std. Error	T	Sig.	R Square	Decision
	(Constant)	1.528	0.228	6.697	0.000	.062	
H01	ADV	.050	0.081	.617	0.050		Rejected
H02	PR	-.129	0.073	-1.775	0.017		Rejected
H03	SP	.134	0.090	1.496	0.037		Rejected
H04	DM	.198	0.076	2.549	0.012		Rejected

a. Independent Variable: Note: CS= Customer Satisfaction.

b. Independent Variables: Note: ADV= Advertising, PR = Public Relations, SP = Sales Promotion, DM = Direct Marketing.

The regression analysis reveals a strong relationship between promotional strategies and customer satisfaction in Abuja, Nigeria with an R-squared value of 0.062, indicating that 62.2% of the variability in SME performance is explained by Advertising (ADV), Public Relations (PR), Sales Promotion (SP), and Direct Marketing (DM). The study tested four hypotheses, all of which were rejected, confirmed that these promotional strategies significantly impact customer satisfaction.

Advertisement results showed ( $\beta=0.640$ ,  $t=0.617$ ,  $\text{Sig}=0.050$ ). The result confirmed is statistically significant ( $P \leq 0.05$ ). From the result, the significance value was 0.050 which is equal to the P-Value of 0.05. Therefore, the  $H_{01}$  was rejected. Public relations also showed ( $\beta=-0.174$ ,  $t=-1.774$ ,  $\text{Sig} = 0.017$ ). This indicates a significant negative effect on Customer Satisfaction. From the result, the significance value was 0.017 which is less than the P-Value of 0.05. Hence, this provide evidence to reject null hypothesis. Similarly, sales promotion results showed ( $\beta=0.137$ ,  $t=1.496$ ,  $\text{Sig}=0.037$ ). This indicates a significant effect on Customer Satisfaction. From the results, the sign value is 0.037

which is less than the P-value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Lastly, direct marketing results showed ( $\beta=0.249$ ,  $t=2.549$ ,  $\text{Sig}=0.012$ ). This indicates a significant and positive effect on Customer Satisfaction. From the results, the sign value is 0.012 which is less than the P-value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the study provides empirical evidence that promotional strategies—particularly advertising, public relations, sales promotion, and direct marketing—play a significant role in shaping customer satisfaction in Abuja, Nigeria. These findings suggest that implementing the right promotional strategies could lead to enhanced customer satisfaction and retention.

To enhance customer's satisfaction in Dangote Cement Plc, Nigeria, several key recommendations have been proposed. First, the company should carefully consider the appropriate channel of advertisement in order to increase patronage of cement product. Again, management should allocate a significant budget to

digital advertising, focusing on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn), Google Advert, and influencer marketing. Similarly, to ensure advertisements are optimized for mobile devices, considering the increasing mobile usage. Secondly, Dangote Cement Plc. should consider hosting community events, such as cement-themed workshops or seminars, to engage with customers and promote its product. Additionally, the company should consider implementing a sales

promotion strategy that offers targeted discounts and incentives to its customers. E.g. loyalty programs, limited-time offers, bundle deals, and referral incentives. Lastly, Dangote Cement Plc. should develop a customer database that includes contact information, purchase history, and other relevant details. This will enable the company to tailor its marketing efforts on target customers effectively.

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