

EFFECT OF SALES PROMOTION PROGRAMS ON PURCHASING BEHAVIOR AT HYPERMARKETS IN RIYADH, KSA

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ABSTRACT

The study aims at determining the effect of sales promotion programs using main four programs - price discounts, free samples, buying vouchers and celebrities - on purchasing behavior of consumers in Saudi Arabia, as well as diagnosing the statistical differences in using the sales promotion programs according to the demographical variables of the consumer. The research population consists of all Saudi and non-Saudi buyers residing in the city of Riyadh reaches 3.874 million people in 2018. The unit sample represents the total number of Saudi and non-Saudi employees working in public and private sectors in the city of Riyadh. The proportional stratified sample is used and the calculated sample size is 387 employees. The study concludes that the sales promotion programs have a positive significant effect on the purchasing behavior of the consumer, and the price discount program is the engine program of purchasing behavior. The study finds that there are statistical differences in the perception of sales promotion programs according to age, education and marital status. Finally, the study recommends a set of implications that enhance the marketing communication uses and some recommendations are presented

INTRODUCTION

Since the mid -1950s, many businesses have begun to focus on customer-oriented marketing, that aim of improving sales and market share in the short-run. This was before the changes happened in the 1980s and the communicative dimension of marketing was very clear in businesses, and it aimed to improve the brand image and institutional identity in the long run. Consequently, marketing has passed the traditional idea of marketing function. The attention has changed from focusing on customer needs and desires of goods and services and offering them at the right price and place, into how to give this consumer with the necessary information about what has been produced, and linking them with the specifications, characteristics, and benefits that seek to influence, persuade and buying behavior later. Many businesses have tried to harness their efforts to create and find marketing tools that can influence the behavior of the target audience and change it in the desired direction, most studies have proven that sales promotion programs have been one

of the most innovative communication tools that have effectively contributed to this (Lee and Lee, 2006). Sales promotion were also seen as a marketing tool that increased the added value of the brand especially at a time when purchasing trends were unstable (Simonson, Armon&O'curry,1994). At the individual consumer level, this tool has been able to contribute effectively in adjusting consumer behavior towards the desired objectives by companies, and this tool achieved many marketing benefits that exceeded its impact in the short run. On the one hand, sales promotion tools increased sales volume (Inman & McAlister, 1993), accelerated purchasing decisions (Pauwels&Hanssens,2007), helped the shift towards the brand (Alvarez&Casielles,2005), increased storage options for purchased quantities (Gupta,1988), Improving the visit to stores (Huff&Alden,2008), as well as enhancing the attraction and retention/ of the new customers in the long run (Luk&Yip,2008). The great importance of the sales promotion programs is the reason why the planners and organizers in the businesses are interested in such programs, they merge them into a marketing communication strategy that ensures the easy use and select the communication messages that fulfill the customers' desire, and enhances the added benefits when consuming products. In addition to achieving the distribution benefits that effectively meet its purchasing goals (Ndubisi& Moi,2006). Therefore, it is very necessary for these institutions to embrace promotional activities that enable them to build and support positive relationships with the marketing environment for as long as possible (Inman & McAlister, 1993).

Finally, sales promotion techniques have become important tools for working in the mature and competitive markets that require diverse communication and marketing capabilities, so that they can gain the competitive advantage to increase sales and attract new consumers (Neha&Manoj,2013).in light of such new trends, the share of sales promotion in the marketing Communication strategy has increased to 75% versus 25% for advertising (Cox,2008), and this improvement made businesses more able to support the activities of the marketing system within the organization, enhanced personal selling efforts increased the organization's competitiveness and harmonized the mix of marketing communication in the same direction. This study attempts to measure the impact of four tools of sales promotion that are commonly used in retail stores in the city of Riyadh. A review of the literature found that price reduction, free samples, and coupons are common in the markets, but in this study, we added the celebrity tool as an important method.

It is a very effective tool to influence the purchasing behavior, especially underuse of modern technologies. This study is one of the first studies conducted in the Kingdom; despite the clear research assertion that sales promotion tools are widely used in marketing communication literature for many years up to the fifties of the last century.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

What is the efficacy of sales promotion programs on purchasing behavior at hypermarkets in Riyadh, KSA?

IMPORTANCE OF SALES PROMOTION

Sales promotion tools have the support and approval of a lot of producers and traders due to the positive effects they have achieved in the short and long run (Odunlami & Ogunsiji, 2011), and the literature suggests that attracting the customer needs to offer something exceeds the basic product offer. Therefore, sales promotion programs are able to give the consumer with all promotional activities and materials that reflected on the short-run profits, and improved the effectiveness of advertising supported by images, symbols, and messages. Marketers have found that sales promotion is an effective tool to avoid short-run selling problems and it is tools have advantages more than communication, incentives, and call for purchase (Achumba, 2002). Sales promotion programs have influenced the most components of purchasing decision, which include brand selection, time and quantity of purchase, and a shift towards the brand (Nijs, Dekimpe, Steenkamp&Hanssens,2001), and has also been a means of reducing price sensitivity for some consumers (Bridges, Yim & Briesch, 2006), also had a clear impact on the volume of sales and profitability of companies (Pauwels&Hanssens,2007). The research shows that sales promotion increase the amount of purchase of perishable storable products, and it is estimated that the duration of the financial impact of these programs ranges from 2-8 weeks, which means that the impact of these programs recede at the short run only (Pauwels&Hanssens,2007). The sales promotion method has a set of elements with promotional messages or a visual representation of the brand capable of persuading consumers to experience at the point of purchase (Hackeley,2010),

thus stimulating the switch towards the brand and leaving competitors (Kotler & Keller, 2009), and it present the offer of obtaining a good deal may it cannot be obtained in the future, especially after ends the promotion (Schultz et al, 1998). These results confirm that the role of sales promotion in stimulating demand has been limited to a certain period (Leham & Winer, 2002; Walsh, 2000). Sales promotion leads to a number of marketing and communicative goals. On the one hand, it seeks to increase sales volume in the short-run (Downs & Adrian, 2004), targeting the potential and loyal customer, the switch towards the brand and the benefits of cash savings (Alam & Faruqui, 2009), in addition to other benefits such as saving, quality, comfort, expression of value, exploration and recreation (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990). In more detail, the research results distinguish between monetary incentives such as saving, quality, and comfort (Babin, Darden & Griffin, 1994), while non-monetary incentives lead to pleasure, recreation, psychological stimulation and fun (ChandonWansink & Laurent, 2000). In general, these benefits have not been able to confirm the effect of using sales promotion on customer loyalty, but their use remains an important element and incentive to buy at the time of promotion (Devecchio, Henard&Freeling,2006), and these behaviors will certainly vary after the promotion ends. This tool has also been shown to have a negative impact on the long-run value of a company and product (Pawels, Srinivasan, Silva-Risso & Hanssen, 2003). Here, studies suggest that the decision to choose and switch towards a brand has led to a low-level of loyalty (Guadagni & Little, 2008), so other studies have found that it is not possible to sell large quantities of the product because of this. Ahamad et al. (2015) have found that the flexibility of sales promotion and its inclusion of different marketing methods combined monetary and non-monetary incentives, making it an effective tool capable of enhancing communication with the target market, and employing different tactics to solve short-run inventory problems. Although it has a significant share of promotional spending, it is still less important in strategic context than other marketing communication tools (Srinivasan & Anderson, 1998). Dawes (2004) confirm that there are no effects of sales promotion on brand building and profitable in the long run. Davies (1992) shows that sales promotion has no effect on customer satisfaction and it is a major cause of destroying the brand image (Tellis & Gaeth, 1990).

IMPACT OF SALES PROMOTION ON PURCHASING BEHAVIOR

Many studies have agreed that sales promotion plays an important role in stimulating the repeated purchases from a particular store (Schultz&Block, 2011; Leischnig et al, 2011), and other studies have expanded to say that sales promotion has the ability to influence the elements of purchasing behavior such as shopping intent and habits from a particular outlet. (Mathur et al., 2013). Many findings confirm that sales promotion programs have positive effects on sales and profit levels (Dhar&Hoch,1996; Hoch, Dreze&Purk,1994), and it is a reason to change the purchasing behavior of most consumers (Sands, Beveriand&Oppewal,2009). Sales promotion changed the time of buy, the quantity purchased, the switch of the brand, and reduced the price sensitivity and encouraged the consumers to buy (Bridges, Briesch&Yim,2006). Sales promotion confirmed the immediate and impulsive behaviors in the purchasing behavior (Ndubisi&Moi,2005). However, a few other studies suggest that the level of impact of sales promotion is still a matter of debate, as it is found that sales promotion is ineffective and caused the decline of market shares in the long run (Ehrenberg, Hammond & Goodhardt,1994), and further studies explain the source of discrepancy between results to demographic and cultural differences offer value, timing, type of product, and technique of promotion used (Ailawadi, Kusum&Neslin,1998). Price reduction is one of the most prominent promotion techniques whereby a larger quantity of the product is given at the same price or the same quantity is purchased at a lower price (Fill, 2002). The results show that the price reduction has an important effect in stimulating new behaviors towards the experience of the products offered (Shimp,2003; Blackwell et al, 2001; Fill, 2002; Brandwick,1994), and increased product value (Chen, Chen&Huang,2012), and studies believe that the optimal value of the discount is up to 15% of the selling price (Gupta & Cooper, 1992). This technique is generally used in competitive markets where commodities are short-run and seasonal, and it has been shown that many customers may not back to buy the brand after ends the sale season (Ehrebberg et al, 1994). The literature also indicates that there is a clearer link between the sale price of the product and the level of quality, so a low price may give the impression of low quality of the product and vice versa (Moore,2003), which negatively affects the preference of the trademark, trust and loyalty (Shrestha, 2015). The free samples play a smart role in increasing the amount of consumer sales and introducing new products to the market (Nathwani,2017), and studies confirm the

positive impact on consumer behavior (Shimp,2003), and such studies have shown that sales increase by between 300% - 500% in the period of promotion (Mei & Moses, 2005; Lindstedt, 1999) and by 37% to 50% on the first day of promotion (Heilman, Lakishyk & Radas, 2011). This technique a real chance to try out a product that may lead to latter purchase (Wellner, 1998), but it stimulates a fast buy by 72% (Fill,2002). Some studies say that the small quantity of the product may not be sufficient to choose and motivate the purchase (Pramataris, Vrechopoulos&Doukidis,2000), and their effect may vary depending on product quality and time of promotion (Gilbert&Jackaria,2002), and it is found that free samples attract high-income consumers (Kokli&Vida,2009). Vouchers and coupons are a certificate that gives customers savings when purchasing a particular product (Kotler&Keller, 2017), and studies have shown a very weak relationship between coupons and purchasing behavior, it orients the buyer towards products that he does not want at all (Shamout, 2017). Coupons has the last rank among sales promotion techniques used and has less impact on trial product (Gilber &Jacquia, 2002) as well as gives the consumer the less awareness of the product (Ndubisi&Chew, 2006). A trial purchase, if any, will not affect the product value (Silva- Risso& Bucklin, 2004). A high financial incentive is a sufficient reason to redeem the voucher, but identifying certain brands in the coupons may weaken the purchase intent (Cook, 2003). Experiences show that the customer's social class is an important reason for redeeming the voucher, and there is an inverse relationship between redeeming the voucher and income and education levels (Blattberg&Neslin, 1990). The use of celebrities has been increasingly involved in marketing communication strategy because of their effectiveness in the communication process (Bhatti, Maraim&Arif,2017), and according to studies, celebrity use has an impact on consumer purchasing intentions reaches 88% (Smith,2011). New technologies have provided more opportunities for interaction between people and companies with each other (Bhatti, Mehar, Arif & Younas, 2017), and this development has been reflected in the relationship between marketers and brands, as accessing to the public is no longer linked only to companies, but by users who called the celebrities (Henning-Thurau et al., 2004). Therefore, companies put the consumers face to face with each other, and this makes purchasing decisions more easily (Muthiah & Kannan,2015), and gave them access to direct information from actual users of the brand (Kozinets,1999). The studies show that the sharing of purchasing experiences

and exchange of information with others will strengthen the mechanism of purchasing decision-making and changing the purchasing trends (Lai&Turban,2008). Other studies linked to the level of response to celebrities with income need, motivation of purchase, marketing strategy, ease of access to product, and type of consumer (Pahwa&Goyal, 2019) But in the end, Celebrities are playing an important role in stimulating and changing the purchasing decision (Fue et al,2009), and studies have provided much evidence of the effectiveness of this tool in product promotion (Duffett,2015), therefore, the positive relationship between celebrity use on social media and improved Purchasing intentions of consumers is proved (Dlodlo & Dhurup, 2013). Finally, there are many studies that distinguish between financial and non-financial programs in the sales promotion (Campbell&Diamond,1990), and the distinction refers to the advantages and characteristics of each type (Chandon et al.,2000). The financial programs such as price reduction, +coupons, and discounts justify the behavioral objectives in the short-run (Huff et al.,2008; Lee et al.,2006; (Campbell et al.,1990). The non -financial installments, sweepstakes, contests, and free gifts correlate with the emotional and behavioral goals that seek to enhance the brand image in the long run (Jean et al.,2015). In general, studies show that financial promotions are more pronounced but it adds less value to the product and are favored by most consumers (Huff et al.,1999). On the contrary, a number of researchers believe that consumers have a more interactive behaviors with non-financial offers because it gives more value to the product than financial offers (Shrestha, 2015). In conclusion, the financial offers improve purchasing intentions towards all the offered products because of the immediate benefits that have, especially the financial benefits (Kwok&Uncles,2005).

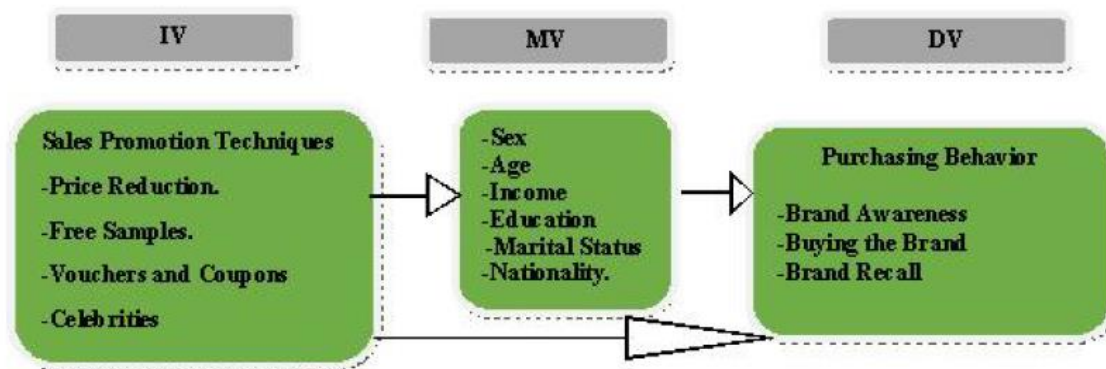
THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- Diagnosing The effect of the four sales promotion programs ‘price discounts, free samples, buying vouchers and celebrities ‘on the purchasing behavior of consumers at the level of statistical significance 5%.
- Determining the statistical differences in the sales promotion programs according to the demographical factors at the 0.05 significance level

- Determining their statistical differences in the purchasing behaviors according to the demographical factors at the 0.05 significance level.

RESEARCH MODEL

The following figure represents the model used in this study. It aims at determining the direction of the relationship among independent and dependent variables.



These hypotheses are developing, and the research model as follows:

- There is a statistically significant effect of the sales promotion programs on the purchasing behavior of consumers at the level of statistical significance 5%.
- There are statistically significant differences in the sales promotion programs according to the demographic factors at the 0.05 significance level.
- There are statistically significant differences in the purchasing behaviors according to the demographic factors at the 0.05 significance level.

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Sharing the following link via social media to target the research population:

<https://www.surveio.com/survey/d/Z9I9S9V4A7F0R9J4W>

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Research Population:** It represents all Saudi and non-Saudi employees residing in the city of Riyadh. The total research population in the fourth quarter of 2018 reaches 3.874 million people in the city of Riyadh. This number represents the total number of Saudi and non-Saudi employees working in public and private sectors in the city of Riyadh (General Authority of Statistics, 2018).
- **Type and Size of the Research Sample:** A proportional stratified sample method is used. It is one of the samples that divides the indigenous community into segments and classes according to nationality and work sector. This method is based on determining the sample size on an equal basis for each segment. In order for the sample to be more specific and accurate, the size of the selected sample must be proportional to the original size of the research population. Stratification means the segments of the divided population, and proportionality means that the chosen number of each segment should be proportional to the actual size and representation within the original population. According to the sampling tables, it is found that the maximum sample size required is 387 employees in public and private institutions in Riyadh city with a significant level of 0.05 (Sekran, 2009). The researcher developed the questionnaire and it is distributed in the workplace. In more detail, the researcher visited the employees in the public and private institutions operating in Riyadh city, and the researcher randomly selected the workers in those institutions to fill the questionnaire according to the percentages calculated in table 1. The percentage of questionnaires distributed to employees in public institutions reaches 31.4% compared to 68.6% of employees in the private sector. Accordingly, all questionnaires distributed are retrieved and are subject to final analysis. In this study, the unit of analysis is all Saudi and non-Saudi buyers working in public and private sector institutions.

Table 1 : Sample Distribution

Nationality	Private Sector			Public Sector		
	N (1000)	%	Sample Size	N (1000)	%	Sample Size
Saudi	637.86	24	63	1167.2	96	117
No Saudi	2019.88	76	202	48.6	4	5
Total	2657.74	100	265	1215.84	100	122

Source : General Authority of Statistics, Year Book , 2018.

- **Measurement:** The research tool is the questionnaire. It is developed to collect the primary needed data by reviewing the literature related to the questions and research variables. The five points Likert scale is used, which expresses the degree of response and the consistency between the statements and the respondent's opinions, where the value (5) is given for very high response, (4) is high response, (3) is given for neutral response, a low response is given for the value (2), and the value (1) is given for a very low response.
- **Data Analysis:** In order to analyze the research results, the descriptive statistical analysis (arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and relative frequency) is calculated. The degree of response of the variables are evaluated according to the relative mean as follows: more than 4.2 is very high, (2) 4.2 – more than 3.4 is high, (3) 3.4- more than 2.6 is average (moderate), (4) 2.6 – 1.8 is weak and less than 1.8 is very weak. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. It considers a measure of scale reliability. Cronbach's alpha is not a statistical test, so it is a coefficient of reliability (or internal consistency). The Cronbach alpha coefficients of the research variables are between 0.959 - 0.984. This means that the variables have relatively accepted. Internal consistency of all variables and all the coefficient values are statistically accepted since it is more than the statically permitted rate of 60%.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

The independent variable "sales promotion programs" consists of 24 statements, the responses vary according to the technique used. The mean value of the total statements in this variable about (3.556). This means that the level of intention of study sample with the sales promotion technique in the hyper retail stores in Riyadh city is high, and the standard deviation reaches (1.069). There are 56.5% of the sample have agreed on this result. In more detail, sales promotion techniques as follows:

- **Price Discounts Program**

The first independent sub-variable "Price Discount" consists of 6 statements. According to the approval of 84.3% of the sample, one statement obtains very high level: "The price discounts help

to buy the product earlier than planned”. The other of the statements get a high degree of responses, and none has a medium, low or very low score. The use of price discount technique is enough reason to buy, to build a smart purchase, as well as early purchase, and the adoption of new products. The overall mean of this sub variable is (3.983) with (0.993) as a standard deviation. This shows that the level of interest by research sample with the price discount technique in the hyper markets in Riyadh has a high degree according to 75% of the respondents.

- **Free Samples Program**

The second independent sub-variable “Free samples” consists of 6 statements. All variables have a high degree of response. The statement “free samples is an opportunity to try other alternative brands on the market” has the highest mean among statement in this sub variable. The use of free samples technique is enough reason for the early purchase with large quantities, and the respondents show that this technique is a key reason for smart deal as well as the adoption of new products. The overall mean is (3.755) with standard deviation (1.013). This means that the degree of attention by the respondents with the free samples technique in hyper markets in Riyadh has a high degree according to approval of 63.2% of the respondents.

- **Buying Vouchers and Coupons Program**

The third independent sub-variable, “buying vouchers and coupons” consists of 6 statements and all the variables have a high degree of response. The statement “When I buy a brand that offers vouchers, I guarantee a good purchase”, according to approval of 59% of the respondents with mean reaches (3.667). The use of coupons and voucher technique is a key reason for early and extra purchase, as well as the adoption of new products. The overall mean means a high degree of intention. In general, the overall mean of this variable reaches (3.552) and (1.046) as a standard deviation, which means that the level of attention of buyers with coupons and vouchers technique in the hyper markets in Riyadh is high, according to the approval of 54.7% of respondents.

• Celebrity Program

The fourth independent sub-variable, “use of celebrities,” consists of 6 phrases and all such phrases have a high degree of response. The phrase “When I buy a brand that offers vouchers, this guarantees to get a good purchase”, according to 59% of respondents and recorded an average account (3.667). The use of celebrities promotes early purchase in large quantities, and the sample considers it the enough reason to adopt new products. Overall, the mean value of the total terms of this variable (3.552) and standard deviation (1.046), which means that the level of attention of buyers of this technique is a medium degree according to 33.3% of respondents.

Table3 : Frequencies, Percentages, Means of Sales Promotion Programs

N	The Statement	Response Degree%					S.D	Mean	Degree
		SA	A	N	DA	SDA			
1	The Price discount is a reason of buying the brands	33.8	46.2	15.2	3.8	1	4.0810	0.85175	Strong
2	The price discount means making a good (smart) deal.	27.6	46.2	20.5	4.3	1.4	3.9429	0.88397	Strong
3	Price discount is an opportunity to use alternative brands in the market.	29.5	42.9	15.2	9.5	2.9	3.8667	1.03588	Strong
4	Price discounts helps buy the product earlier than planned.	43.8	40.5	11.4	2.4	1.9	4.2190	0.88020	Very Strong
5	Price discount on certain brands helps to buy larger quantities.	33.3	31.9	22.4	10	2.4	3.8381	1.07270	Strong
6	Price discount helps to buy new products.	30	44.3	18.1	5.7	1.9	3.9476	0.93937	Strong
Overall Price Discount Program		33	42	17.13	5.95	1.9167	0.943978	3.983	Strong
1	Free samples are a reason of buying the brands	21.9	41.4	24.3	10	2.4	3.7048	0.99687	Strong
2	The Free samples mean making a good (smart) deal.	29	38.1	22.4	9.5	1	3.8476	0.98098	Strong
3	Free samples are an opportunity to use alternative brands in the market.	40.5	39	13.3	5.7	1.4	4.1143	0.94149	Strong
4	Free samples help buy the product earlier than planned.	24.8	33.3	27.6	12.9	1.4	3.6714	1.03139	Strong
5	Free samples on certain brands help to buy larger quantities.	21.4	23.8	33.3	19	2.4	3.4286	1.09682	Strong
6	Free samples help to buy new products.	26.2	39.5	21.9	9.5	2.9	3.7667	1.03426	Strong
Overall Free Samples Program		27.3	35.85	23.8	11.1	1.9167	3.75557	1.013635	Strong
1	Vouchers and Coupons are a reason of buying the brands	21.4	39	24.8	12.4	2.4	3.6476	1.02580	Strong
2	The Vouchers and Coupons mean making a good (smart) deal.	21.9	37.1	29.5	8.6	2.9	3.6667	1.00398	Strong
3	Vouchers and Coupons are an opportunity to use alternative brands in the market.	17.1	32.9	31.9	12.9	5.2	3.4381	1.07982	Strong
4	Vouchers and Coupons help buy the product earlier than planned.	17.6	37.1	26.2	16.2	2.9	3.5048	1.05017	Strong
5	Vouchers and Coupons on certain brands help to buy larger quantities.	21	28.1	30	18.1	2.9	3.4619	1.09849	Strong
6	Vouchers and Coupons help to buy new products.	20.5	34.8	31.9	9.5	3.3	3.5952	1.02270	Strong
Overall Buying Vouchers and Coupons Program		19.917	34.83	29.05	12.95	3.2667	3.552383	1.046827	Strong
1	Celebrity is a reason of buying the brands	17.1	16.2	31	19	16.7	2.9810	1.30865	Medium
2	Celebrity means making a good (smart) deal.	12.9	14.3	31	23.3	18.6	2.7952	1.26452	Medium
3	Celebrity is an opportunity to use alternative brands in the market.	14.3	22.9	31.4	18.6	12.9	3.0714	1.22558	Medium
4	Celebrity helps buy the product earlier than planned.	14.8	20.5	25.7	23.8	15.2	2.9571	1.28408	Medium
5	Celebrity on certain brands help to buy larger quantities.	12.4	19.5	25.7	25.7	16.7	2.8524	1.26496	Medium
6	Celebrity helps to buy new products.	13.8	21	29	19	17.1	2.9524	1.28205	Medium
Overall Celebrity Program		14.217	19.07	28.97	21.567	16.2	2.93492	1.27164	Medium
Overall Sales Promotion Programs		23.608	32.94	24.738	12.892	5.825	3.5564	1.069	Strong

- **The Purchasing Behavior**

The dependent variable “purchasing behavior” consists of 19 statements; the responses vary according to the component of the behavior. The overall mean of the total statements in this variable is (3.95). This means that the level of purchasing behavior of the buyers in the hyper retail markets in Riyadh city is high, and the standard deviation reaches (0.997). There are 70.35% of the sample have agreed on this result.

TESTING THE HYPOTHESES

There Is a Statistically Significant Effect of the Sales Promotion Programs on the Purchasing Behavior at the Level of Statistical Significance 5%, and has three sub-hypotheses as follows:

- 1. There Is A Statistically Significant Effect of Sales Promotion Programs on the Brand Awareness at the Statistical Significance Level of 5%.**

In order to test the first sub-hypothesis, the dependent and independent variables are placed in a linear equation as follows:

$$Y = A + f'1 X1 + f'2 X2 + f'3 X3 + f'4 X4$$

Y refers to the dependent variable (brand awareness), while X 1, X2, X3, and X4 refer to the independent sub variables the formed the sales promotion programs respectively: price discounts, free samples, coupons and vouchers, and celebrity. A and B are the model estimators. The following table shows the results of the previous model estimation as follows:

$$Y = 0.015 + 0.646 X1 + 0.322 X2 + 0.127 X3 - 0.089 X4$$

The initial analysis shows that there are three statistically significant programs according to the statistical decision rule by comparing the level of statistical significance for each variable with the

level of significance as a whole 5%. The significant programs are price discounts, free samples, vouchers, and coupons. According to estimator B, it is found that price discount technique has the greatest influence on brand awareness (0.646), then the free samples in the second. These results confirm that there is a high tendency among the buyers to enhance awareness through programs other than celebrity. The use of celebrities is a kind of non-financial promotional techniques in which they harness their personal abilities to raise awareness of certain products. It is found that there is a positive statistical relationship between the overall sales promotion techniques that achieved statistical significance (price discount, free samples, vouchers, celebrity use) and the brand awareness reaches 91% and it explain 89% of variation in brand awareness. The stepwise analysis is used in order to find the key program which enhance the brand awareness. The price discounts method is the most effective tool, and the analysis automatically deletes other programs (free samples, vouchers, celebrity use). Price discounts program is the most significant variable in influencing brand awareness, and the positive relationship between them reaches 87%. So 75% of the variation in brand awareness refers to price discounts in sales season by the hypermarkets in Riyadh. In order to test the first hypothesis, we use the analysis of variance F, and it is found that the calculated value of the significance level is 0.00, which is less than the tabulated value 5%, and we accept the first hypothesis that there is a statistically significant effect of sales promotion programs on brand awareness at significance level 5%. The price discounts program is the main source of awareness among consumers in the sales season in Hypermarkets Riyadh.

Table 5: Results of First Sub Hypothesis Using Enter Method

Table 3: Results of First Sub Hypothesis Using Enter Method				
Variable	B	t	Sig.	Statistical Results
Intercept	0.015	0.272	0.786	F= 28.009 Sig. = 0.00 r=0.91 R ² = 0.89
Price Discounts	0.646	13.773	0.000	
Free Samples	0.322	4.386	0.000	
Vouchers and Coupons	0.127	2.820	0.005	
Celebrity	0.089	3.457	0.001	
Results of First Sub Hypothesis Using Stepwise Method				
Price Discounts	1.005	9.781	0.00	F=8060.688 Sig.= 0.00 r=0.87 R ² = 0.75

2. There Is A Statistically Significant Effect of Sales Promotion Programs on Buying the Brand at The Statistical Significance Sevel 5%.

The linear equation is developed in the first hypothesis, where Y refers to the dependent variable (buying the brand), while X1, X2, X3, and X4 as previously defined, and the estimated equation as follows:

$$Y = 0.005 + 0.677 X1 + 0.099 X2 + 0.247 X3 - 0.0144 X4$$

In the same way, the initial analysis shows that there are two significant programs of sales promotion in the hypermarkets in Riyadh, and this result by comparing the statistical significance level of each tool with the overall level of significance 5%. These programs are price discounts and vouchers. The Free samples and the celebrity are not motives during the sales season. The estimator B shows that the price discounts program used by hyper retail stores in Riyadh is the most influential factor on buying the promoted products during the sales period (0.677), while the vouchers and coupons have the second effect rank (0.247) to stimulate the purchase. It is found that there is a positive statistical relationship between tow sales promotion program (price discounts and vouchers) with buying the brand reaches 91%, and therefore, these significant programs can explain 89% of the variation in the purchasing behavior during the sales period. The stepwise analysis identifies the most effective sales promotion program on buying the brand during the sales period. In this hypothesis, it shows that the price discounts program has more influence and the analysis automatically deleted other insignificant programs (free samples, vouchers and coupons, and celebrity). Therefore, it is found that price discounts program is the most significant program in influencing the purchasing decision during the sales period, and there is a positive relationship between them reaches 87%, and the price discounts program explains75% of the variation in buying the brand during the sales period In order to test the second hypothesis, we use the analysis of variance F, and it is found that the calculated significance level is 0.00 which is less than the overall tabulated significance level 5%, and we accept the text of the second hypothesis

that says there is a statistically significant effect of sales promotion programs on buying the brand at the statistical significance level 5%. The price discounts program used by hyper markets in the city of Riyadh is responsible for explaining this behavior towards the promoted brands.

Table 6: Results of Second Sub Hypothesis Using Enter Method

Table 6: Results of Second Sub Hypothesis Using Enter Method					
Variable	B	t	Sig.	Statistical Results	
Intercept	0.005	0.088	0.930	F= 33.009 Sig. = 0.00 r=0.92 R ² = 0.85	
Price Discounts	0.677	15.318	.0000		
Free Samples	0.099	1.437	0.152		
Vouchers and Coupons	0.247	5.808	0.000		
Celebrity	0.014	0.567	0.572		
Results of Second Sub Hypothesis Using Stepwise Method					
Price Discounts	1.025	9.366	0.00	F=86.267 r=0.67	Sig.= 0.00 R ² = 0.55

3. There Is A Statistically Significant Effect of Sales Promotion Programs on the Brand Recall at The Statistical Significance Level 5%.

The linear equation is developed and Y refers to the dependent variable (brand recall), while X1, X2, X3, and X4 as before defined. The estimated equation as follows:

$$Y = - 0.296 + 0.94 X1 + 0.084 X2 + 0.071 X3 - 0.01 X4$$

The initial analysis shows that there is one significant programs of sales promotion in the hypermarkets in the city of Riyadh. Such program has statistically significant effect on brand recall. The price discounts program is the source of effect but the other programs (free samples, vouchers, and celebrities) have no significant effect on brand recall during the sales period. It is found that the price discounts program used by the hypermarkets in Riyadh has the highest impact factor on the brand recall during the sales period reaches 0.94, while the other programs have no statistical effect as shown above. It is also found that there is a positive statistical relationship between the price discounts program and the brand recall during the sales period reaches 76%, and the price discounts can explain 53% of the variation in the brand recall during the sales promotion period. To confirm the previous result, the stepwise analysis identifies that price discounts is the most effective tool used by hypermarkets in Riyadh, and it can influence the brand recall during the sales period. The analysis automatically deletes the other three programs that have no statistical

effect on the brand recall (free samples, vouchers, use of celebrities). Therefore, the effect of price discounts program on brands recall during the sales period is proved, and the positive relationship reaches 76%, and therefore the price discounts program explains 53% of the variation in the brand recall during sales period. In order to test the text of the third sub-hypothesis using the analysis of variance F, and it is found that the calculated significance level 0.00 which is less than the tabulated significance level of 5%, and we accept the text of the third hypothesis that there is a statistically significant effect of sales promotion programs on the brand recall at the statistical significance level of 5%. The price discounts program used by the hypermarkets in Riyadh can explain 52% of the variation in the brand recall among buyers during the sales period.

Table 7: Results of Third Sub Hypothesis Using Enter Method

Variable	B	t	Sig.	Statistical Results	
Intercept	-0.296	-2.975	0.003	F=10.987 Sig. = 0.00 r=0.76 R ² = 0.53	
Price Discounts	0.94	11.266	0.000		
Free Samples	0.084	0.646	0.519		
Vouchers and Coupons	0.071	0.881	0.379		
Celebrity	0.01	0.216	0.829		
Results of Third Sub Hypothesis Using Stepwise Method					
Price Discounts	1.09	6.292	0.00	F=41.33 r=0.76	Sig.= 0.00 R ² = 0.52

To test the first main hypothesis that there is a statistically significant effect of sales promotion programs on the purchasing behavior of consumers at the level of statistical significance 5%, the dependent and independent variables are placed in the linear equation previously used, where Y refers to the dependent variable that expresses the purchasing behavior, while X1, X2, X3, and X4 refer to the independent sub-variables that consist the sales promotion, respectively: price discounts, free samples, vouchers and coupons, and celebrity. A and B are the model estimators and the following table shows the results of the estimation.

Table 8: Results of Main First Hypothesis Using Enter Method

Variable	B	t	Sig.	Statistical Results	
Intercept	-0.092	-1.611	0.109	F=29.302	
Price Discounts	0.754	15.74	0.000	Sig. = 0.00	
Free Samples	0.168	2.248	0.026	r=0.91	
Vouchers and Coupons	0.148	3.217	0.002	R ² = 0.82	
Celebrity	0.038	1.428	0.155		
Results of Main First Hypothesis Using Stepwise Method					
Price Discounts	1.04	9.986	0.00	F=22.367	Sig.= 0.00
				r=0.81	R ² = 0.64

Accordingly, the sales promotion programs used by hypermarkets in Riyadh have a statistically significant effect on the purchasing behavior of consumers during the sales period, and using the stepwise analysis shows that price discounts program is the only key influencer. This result is previously confirmed in the three sub-hypotheses. The stepwise analysis deletes other insignificant programs. The price discounts program has an impact factor and a high degree of effect reaches 1.04. This means that each one SAR spent on the price discount (reductions) contributes to generate 1.04 SAR as revenue of hyper retail stores that in the sales period. The correlation coefficient between them is and reaches 81%, so this program can explain 64% of the variation in the purchasing behavior of consumers in Riyadh during the sales period. To test the text of the first main hypothesis, it is found that the level of test significance (0.00) less than the overall significance level (0.05), and we accept the hypothesis that says there is a statistically significant effect of sales promotion programs on the purchasing behavior of consumers in Riyadh during the sales period.

TABLE OF RESEARCH VARIABLES

Table 2: The Cronbach alpha coefficients of the research variables

N	Research Variables	Reliability	Number of Sentences
1	Price Discounts	0.984	6-1
2	Free Samples	0.985	12-7
3	Vouchers and Coupons	0.991	18-13
4	Celebrities	0.994	24-19
Sales Promotion Programs		0.995	1-24
4	Brand Awareness	0.973	29-25
5	Buying the Product	0.989	38 – 30
5	Recall / Reminder	0.984	43-39
Purchasing Behavior		0.995	43-25
Total Reliability		0.997	1-43

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

- The Study includes all of the Saudi and non- Saudi residing in Riyadh city.
- The study includes all of the employees working in the public and private institutions in Riyadh.
- The study includes the hypermarkets working in Riyadh that using sales promotion programs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

❖ The Concept of Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is a key part of the communications marketing mix in retailing, it is a process that involves a set of informative, persuasive, and reminder functions for the consumer at the same time (Yildirim&Aydinb,2012), and is a short run initiative to attract customers using a range of monetary and non-monetary incentives (Kotler&Keller,2017) The famous marketer Kotler (2006) emphasized that sales promotion is a set of short-run incentive tools used to encourage the purchase of certain products and facing competitors, and Mercer, Ganzalezthe, and Marshall (2002) add it as a temporary technique used by marketers to generate demand for a set of goods or services during a specified time period (Kumar, Suganya&Imayavendan,2018).

Sales promotion is an activity that producers usually do in the short run to encourage wholesale and retail trade and improve consumer influence (Kumar,Suganya&Imayavendan, 2018), and it is a type of communication that includes information that increases communication between the seller and the buyer and enhances the buying decision (Shipm,2003). Brassington and Pettitt (2000) introduced a new definition that put sales promotion into strategic marketing frame as a tactical tool combines short run sales targets (Mercer et al., 2002) with planning strategy in the long run (Sam&Buabeng,2011).

The literature also determined that sales promotion is an intended marketing effort to provide information in an attractive manner that ensures a high degree of immediate response to customers (Zafar, Niazi&Zafar,2018). Studies show that sales promotion programs are a profitable tool due to repeated purchases, but this purchase may not necessarily reflect consumer commitment to the

brand in the future (Nsour et al, 2017). The ICC agrees with ASA that sales promotion is one of marketing tools used to make goods and services more attractive through provide some additional monetary and nonmonetary benefits to the consumer (Boddewyn&Leardi,1989).

Finally, Sales promotion differs from other marketing communication elements (Van Waterschoot&Van den Bulte,1992), where the difference is that they provide direct price incentives gives additional power to the producer and salesmen (Schultz,Robinson&Petrison, 1998). It is approved that sales promotion help to grow sales, extend product life cycle, enhance brand name (Ngolanya,Mahea,Nganga,Amollo&Karuiki,2006). In spite of the above, there are those who criticize the use of sales promotion , and Nsour (2018) says that this technique promotes the negative consumption in times of no actual need for the product. In the long run, may it loses the influence on the consumer, and he will postpone the buying decision or reduce the brand value (Kotler&Keller,2017). In the last, easing the access of target customers to the brand, and promoting demand for high-quality products at affordable prices; are engine elements in the marketing communication strategy that will lead to competitive advantage and customer loyalty (Omotayo,2011).

❖ Importance of Sales Promotion

Sales promotion tools have the support and approval of a lot of producers and traders due to the positive effects they have achieved in the short and long run (Odunlami & Ogunsiji, 2011), and the literature suggests that attracting the customer needs to offer something exceeds the basic product offer. Therefore, sales promotion programs are able to give the consumer with all promotional activities and materials that reflected on the short-run profits, and improved the effectiveness of advertising supported by images, symbols, and messages. Marketers have found that sales promotion is an effective tool to avoid short-run selling problems and it is tools have advantages more than communication, incentives, and call for purchase (Achumba, 2002).

Sales promotion programs have influenced the most components of purchasing decision, which include brand selection, time and quantity of purchase, and a shift Towards the brand (Nijs, Dekimpe, Steenkamp&Hanssens,2001), and has also been a means of reducing price sensitivity

for some consumers (Bridges, Yim & Briesch, 2006), also had a clear impact on the volume of sales and profitability of companies (Pauwels&Hanssens,2007). The research shows that sales promotion increase the amount of purchase of perishable storable products, and it is estimated that the duration of the financial impact of these programs ranges from 2-8 weeks, which means that the impact of these programs recede at the short run only (Pauwels&Hanssens,2007). The sales promotion method has a set of elements with promotional messages or a visual representation of the brand capable of persuading consumers to experience at the point of purchase (Hackeley,2010), thus stimulating the switch towards the brand and leaving competitors (Kotler & Keller, 2009), and it present the offer of obtaining a good deal may it cannot be obtained in the future, especially after ends the promotion (Schultz et al, 1998). These results confirm that the role of sales promotion in stimulating demand has been limited to a certain period (Leham & Winer, 2002; Walsh, 2000). Sales promotion leads to a number of marketing and communicative goals. On the one hand, it seeks to increase sales volume in the short-run (Downs & Adrian, 2004), targeting the potential and loyal customer, the switch towards the brand and the benefits of cash savings (Alam & Faruqui, 2009), in addition to other benefits such as saving, quality, comfort, expression of value, exploration and recreation (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990). In more detail, the research results distinguish between monetary incentives such as saving, quality, and comfort (Babin, Darden & Griffin, 1994), while non-monetary incentives lead to pleasure, recreation, psychological stimulation and fun (ChandonWansink & Laurent, 2000). In general, these benefits have not been able to confirm the effect of using sales promotion on customer loyalty, but their use remains an important element and incentive to buy at the time of promotion (Devecchio, Henard&Freeling,2006), and these behaviors will certainly vary after the promotion ends. This tool has also been shown to have a negative impact on the long-run value of a company and product (Pawels, Srinivasan, Silva-Risso & Hanssen, 2003).Here, studies suggest that the decision to choose and switch towards a brand has led to a low-level of loyalty (Guadagni & Little, 2008), so other studies have found that it is not possible to sell large quantities of the product because of this. Ahamad et al. (2015) have found that the flexibility of sales promotion and its inclusion of different marketing methods combined monetary and non-monetary incentives, making it an effective tool capable of enhancing communication with the target market, and employing different tactics to

solve short-run inventory problems. Although it has a significant share of promotional spending, it is still less important in strategic context than other marketing communication tools (Srinivasan & Anderson, 1998). Dawes (2004) confirm that there are no effects of sales promotion on brand building and profitable in the long run. Davies (1992) shows that sales promotion has no effect on customer satisfaction and it is a major cause of destroying the brand image (Tellis & Gaeth, 1990).

❖ **Impact of Sales Promotion on Purchasing Behavior**

Many studies have agreed that sales promotion plays an important role in stimulating the repeated purchases from a particular store (Schultz&Block, 2011 ; Leischnig et al, 2011), and other studies have expanded to say that sales promotion has the ability to influence the elements of purchasing behavior such as shopping intent and habits from a particular outlet. (Mathur et al., 2013). Many findings confirm that sales promotion programs have positive effects on sales and profit levels (Dhar&Hoch,1996; Hoch, Dreze&Purk,1994), and it is a reason to change the purchasing behavior of most consumers (Sands, Beveriand&Oppewal,2009). Sales promotion changed the time of buy, the quantity purchased, the switch of the brand, and reduced the price sensitivity and encouraged the consumers to buy (Bridges,Briesch&Yim,2006). Sales promotion confirmed the immediate and impulsive behaviors in the purchasing behavior (Ndubisi&Moi,2005). However, a few other studies suggest that the level of impact of sales promotion is still a matter of debate, as it is found that sales promotion is ineffective and caused the decline of market shares in the long run (Ehrenberg, Hammond & Goodhardt,1994), and further studies explain the source of discrepancy between results to demographic and cultural differences offer value, timing, type of product, and technique of promotion used (Ailawadi,Kusum&Neslin,1998). Price reduction is one of the most prominent promotion techniques whereby a larger quantity of the product is given at the same price or the same quantity is purchased at a lower price (Fill, 2002). The results show that the price reduction has an important effect in stimulating new behaviors towards the experience of the products offered (Shimp,2003; Blackwell et al, 2001; Fill, 2002; Brandwick,1994), and increased product value (Chen, Chen&Huang,2012), and studies believe that the optimal value of the discount is up to 15% of the selling price (Gupta & Cooper, 1992). This technique is generally used in competitive markets where commodities are short-run and seasonal, and it has been shown that many customers may not back to buy the brand after ends the sale season (Ehrebberg et al,

1994). The literature also indicates that there is a clearer link between the sale price of the product and the level of quality, so a low price may give the impression of low quality of the product and vice versa (Moore,2003), which negatively affects the preference of the trademark, trust and loyalty (Shrestha, 2015). The free samples play a smart role in increasing the amount of consumer sales and introducing new products to the market (Nathwani,2017), and studies confirm the positive impact on consumer behavior (Shimp,2003), and such studies have shown that sales increase by between 300% - 500% in the period of promotion (Mei & Moses, 2005; Lindstedt, 1999) and by 37% to 50% on the first day of promotion (Heilman, Lakishyk & Radas, 2011). This technique a real chance to try out a product that may lead to latter purchase (Wellner, 1998), but it stimulates a fast buy by 72% (Fill,2002). Some studies say that the small quantity of the product may not be sufficient to choose and motivate the purchase (P ramataris, Vrechopoulos&Doukidis,2000), and their effect may vary depending on product quality and time of promotion (Gilbert&Jackaria,2002), and it is found that free samples attract high-income consumers (Kokli&Vida,2009). Vouchers and coupons are a certificate that gives customers savings when purchasing a particular product (Kotler&Keller, 2017), and studies have shown a very weak relationship between coupons and purchasing behavior, it orients the buyer towards products that he does not want at all (Shamout, 2017). Coupons has the last rank among sales promotion techniques used and has less impact on trial product (Gilber &Jacquia, 2002) as well as gives the consumer the less awareness of the product (Ndubisi&Chew, 2006). A trial purchase, if any, will not affect the product value (Silva- Risso& Bucklin, 2004). A high financial incentive is a sufficient reason to redeem the voucher, but identifying certain brands in the coupons may weaken the purchase intent (Cook, 2003). Experiences show that the customer's social class is an important reason for redeeming the voucher, and there is an inverse relationship between redeeming the voucher and income and education levels (Blattberg&Neslin, 1990). The use of celebrities has been increasingly involved in marketing communication strategy because of their effectiveness in the communication process (Bhatti, Maraim&Arif,2017), and according to studies, celebrity use has an impact on consumer purchasing intentions reaches 88% (Smith,2011). New technologies have provided more opportunities for interaction between people and companies with each other (Bhatti, Mehar, Arif & Younas, 2017), and this development has been reflected in the

relationship between marketers and brands, as accessing to the public is no longer linked only to companies, but by users who called the celebrities (Henning-Thurau et al., 2004). Therefore, companies put the consumers face to face with each other, and this makes purchasing decisions more easily (Muthiah & Kannan, 2015), and gave them access to direct information from actual users of the brand (Kozinets, 1999). The studies show that the sharing of purchasing experiences and exchange of information with others will strengthen the mechanism of purchasing decision-making and changing the purchasing trends (Lai & Turban, 2008). Other studies linked to the level of response to celebrities with income need, motivation of purchase, marketing strategy, ease of access to product, and type of consumer (Pahwa & Goyal, 2019). But in the end, Celebrities are playing an important role in stimulating and changing the purchasing decision (Fue et al, 2009), and studies have provided much evidence of the effectiveness of this tool in product promotion (Duffett, 2015), therefore, the positive relationship between celebrity use on social media and improved Purchasing intentions of consumers is proved (Dlodlo & Dhurup, 2013).

Finally, there are many studies that distinguish between financial and non-financial programs in the sales promotion (Campbell & Diamond, 1990), and the distinction refers to the advantages and characteristics of each type (Chandon et al., 2000). The financial programs such as price reduction, coupons, and discounts justify the behavioral objectives in the short-run (Huff et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2006; (Campbell et al., 1990). The non -financial installments, sweepstakes, contests, and free gifts correlate with the emotional and behavioral goals that seek to enhance the brand image in the long run (Jean et al., 2015). In general, studies show that financial promotions are more pronounced but it add less value to the product and are favored by most consumers (Huff et al., 1999). On the contrary, a number of researchers believe that consumers have a more interactive behaviors with non-financial offers because it gives more value to the product than financial offers (Shrestha, 2015). In conclusion, the financial offers improve purchasing intentions towards all the offered products because of the immediate benefits that have, especially the financial benefits (Kwok & Uncles, 2005).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research on the effect of sales promotion programs on purchasing behavior at hypermarkets in Riyadh, KSA provides valuable insights into consumer behavior in the retail sector. The findings suggest that sales promotions play a significant role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions at hypermarkets in Riyadh. By offering discounts, coupons, and other promotional incentives, hypermarkets can attract customers, increase sales, and enhance customer loyalty. Understanding the impact of sales promotions on consumer behavior is crucial for hypermarkets to design effective marketing strategies and maximize their profitability in a competitive market environment.

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