

NEW PRODUCT ADVERTISING AND CONSUMERS' BUYING BEHAVIOUR AT GROCERY IN LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

The grocery retail sector has become an increasingly competitive landscape in which promotional activities play a central role. This study investigated how advertising of new products shapes the purchasing decisions of consumers in grocery outlets across Lagos State. Four research questions were formulated to guide the investigation. A descriptive survey design was employed to systematically gather data from the study population of 181,715 residents. A sample of 384 participants was selected using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) statistical table. A multistage sampling procedure was applied. Data were collected through a researcher-constructed questionnaire that was validated by subject matter experts. Instrument reliability was established via the test-retest approach, yielding a Spearman rank correlation coefficient of 0.91. Descriptive statistics comprising mean scores and standard deviations were used to analyse the collected data. Findings revealed that print and broadcast media were the dominant advertising channels used for promoting new grocery products. Cultural influences, prevailing economic conditions, the surrounding environment, and consumer interest were identified as key factors shaping purchasing responses to new product advertising. The study further established that misleading nutritional claims constituted one of the major challenges consumers face when encountering new product advertisements. Additionally, advertising was found to stimulate shifts in consumer beliefs regarding products. The study recommends that grocery businesses deploy a diverse mix of media platforms to maximise product visibility and ensure that promotional campaigns are precisely targeted at relevant consumer segments.

Keywords: Advertisement, Consumer, Grocery retail, New product, Purchasing behaviour

Introduction

Promotional strategies, particularly advertising, occupy a central position in the daily operations of vendors within grocery retail environments. These strategies are deployed to cultivate customer patronage and expand market reach. Businesses utilise varied promotional approaches to build awareness of newly introduced products among potential shoppers. When employed effectively as a promotional instrument, advertising serves to stimulate repeat purchasing, boost revenue, attract new clientele, sharpen competitive positioning, and

encourage brand switching. Moshood (2014) argued that advertising serves the fundamental purpose of informing target audiences about both newly launched and pre-existing products, thereby creating opportunities to attract and retain customers who might not otherwise have engaged with a brand. With regard to digital platforms, Ramzan (2019) established that internet-based communication offers a richer and more interactive experience than traditional print media, affording users a greater degree of control over the content they consume. For the purpose of this inquiry, the concept of the

internet extends to social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, as well as email communication. Jui, Aaditya, Ishan, and Pranav (2023) further affirmed that promotional messages disseminated across multiple media channels play a significant role in directing consumer preferences, making the selection of appropriate advertising platforms a strategic priority for product promotion.

The link between advertising and consumer purchasing decisions is well established in marketing literature, given that promotional messages fundamentally shape how individuals make product choices. Abdul, Muhammad, Fauzia, and Farisa (2016) observed that while advertising may not generate substantial short-term sales volumes, sustained and well-executed campaigns tend to yield improved revenue outcomes over time. Some scholars contend that possessing detailed knowledge of consumer behaviour is not strictly necessary, as it may be possible to persuade buyers to part with their money even for products they have little genuine desire for. However, Hussainy, Riaz, Kazi, and Herani (2018) countered that truly effective advertising operates by engaging the cognitive processes of potential buyers and inspiring authentic purchase motivation.

Consumer behaviour encompasses the study of how individuals, groups, and organisations make decisions related to acquiring, utilising, and disposing of goods and services, and how psychological and emotional factors shape these processes. According to Neal and Quester (2006), purchasing behaviour specifically describes the mechanisms through which people or collectives select, procure, and relinquish products, services, or experiences in alignment with personal needs and preferences. Smith (2006) observed that purchasing decisions are frequently driven by consumer reactions — whether positive or negative — to advertising messages and the media through which these messages are communicated. In essence, consumer behaviour relates to the

entire process of selecting and consuming goods in pursuit of need satisfaction.

A wide range of variables can shape how grocery shoppers respond to newly advertised products. Scholars have classified these determinants into cultural, social, personal, psychological, and environmental categories. Backhaus and Wilken (2007) noted that purchasing behaviour is substantially shaped by cultural norms, family dynamics, brand perception, and brand recognition. The latter, in particular, can act as a deciding factor when consumers select between competing offerings. It is for this reason that food manufacturers invest heavily in advertising — to build brand familiarity and preference. Adelaar, Lee, and Morimoto (2003) found that research evidence presents conflicting conclusions: some investigations indicate that shoppers continue to purchase familiar grocery items regardless of advertising exposure, while others demonstrate a notable decline in patronage in its absence. Furthermore, advertising channels may fail to reach the intended consumer segment, which can undermine campaign objectives and complicate attempts to predict shopping behaviour in relation to new offerings. Grocery operators must therefore maximise the efficiency with which they exploit available promotional resources. New product advertising can be a complex undertaking, further complicated by budgetary constraints and an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Advertising for new food items exerts influence on consumer behaviour by generating product awareness, facilitating informed product selection, and promoting healthier eating habits. In the contemporary environment, consumers are constantly exposed to an overwhelming volume of promotional content, all of which competes for their attention and shapes their decisions. Engaging, creative, and relevant advertising is more likely to make a lasting impression than dull or uninspiring content. Additional factors such as

perceived social desirability, product quality signals, and lifestyle associations embedded in advertising also play a role in shaping dietary choices. Proctor et al. (1982) as cited in Moshood (2014) noted that consumer behaviour research endeavours to uncover the economic, social, and psychological variables most likely to determine the most effective marketing combination for management to adopt. Ayanwale, Alimi, and Ayanbimpe (2005) confirmed that advertising and product quality are the two most influential drivers of product success, suggesting that consumers remain loyal when quality is maintained and supported by persistent promotional reminders. These scholars also reported that advertising serves as the primary channel through which consumers first encounter new products.

The fundamental objective of launching advertising campaigns for new products is to acquaint buyers and channel intermediaries with the product's features, benefits, scope of application, and market identity. Without adequate promotional investment, newly introduced grocery items risk premature expiry, poor patronage, or failure to reach the right audiences. A prevailing misconception holds that companies that invest heavily in advertising still observe negligible changes in sales volumes. In reality, the inappropriate selection of advertising strategies may prevent the attainment of promotional goals. Overcoming the various challenges associated with new product advertising requires strategic thinking, financial discipline, and a thorough understanding of the target market. It was against this backdrop that the present study sought to evaluate the perceived impact of new product advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour in Lagos State grocery retail outlets.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, product promotion has served as a key mechanism through which grocery retailers have stimulated repeat patronage, grown their customer base, intensified market

competition, and encouraged shifts in brand loyalty. Although advertising may not produce dramatic short-term sales increases, carefully designed campaigns for new products can deliver meaningful long-run commercial benefits. Certain marketing practitioners subscribe to the view that consumer knowledge is of limited utility, arguing that psychological persuasion techniques can be employed to secure purchases even from unwilling buyers. Effective advertising, however, works by genuinely engaging consumer interest and inspiring authentic purchase decisions. Notwithstanding the recognised commercial value of advertising, a number of grocery operators report persistent indifference in sales volume despite significant promotional expenditure. Frolova (2014) revealed that approximately 78 percent of buyers have, at some point, purchased a brand outside their habitual choices as a direct result of advertising, while 72 percent only commit to a purchase when a trial sample or price incentive is offered, and 77 percent choose retail outlets partly based on coupon redemption opportunities. This paradox explains where advertisers question the impact of advertising while continuing to fund it might remain a subject of scholarly debate. Some shoppers remain indifferent to new products even in the presence of vigorous advertising, while others reduce purchases when promotional activities cease. Moreover, advertising messages do not always reach their intended audiences, limiting the scope of campaigns and making consumer behaviour towards new offerings difficult to predict. It was on this basis that the study sought to determine the perceived influence of new food product advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour in Lagos State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to determine new product advertising and consumer buying behaviour at grocery in Lagos State. Specifically, the study:

- i. identify the advertising approaches used for new product promotion at grocery outlets in Lagos State;
- ii. What are the non-advertising variables shape consumer responses to new products at grocery outlets in Lagos State;
- iii. examine the difficulties consumers experience in relation to new product advertising at grocery outlets in Lagos State; and
- iv. assess the perceived influence of new product advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour at grocery outlets in Lagos State.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the investigation:

- i. What advertising approaches are used for new product promotion at grocery outlets in Lagos State?
- ii. What non-advertising variables shape consumer responses to new products at grocery outlets in Lagos State?
- iii. What difficulties do consumers face when encountering new product advertising at grocery outlets in Lagos State?
- iv. What is the perceived influence of new product advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour at grocery outlets in Lagos State?

Methodology and Methods

A descriptive survey design was employed to systematically collect information from grocery consumers in Lagos State. The total study population comprised 181,715 individuals, drawn from the National Bureau of Statistics (2019) as cited by Abiamuwe, David, Seriki-Mosadolorun, Olusegun, and Nwahunanya (2022), representing residents of the Epe Local Government Area of Lagos State. A sample of

384 respondents was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table as cited in Olalekan, Abiamuwe, David, and Obembe (2022), which is appropriate for studies involving populations of known size.

A multistage sampling procedure was implemented. In the initial stage, Lagos State was stratified into its three senatorial zones Lagos Central, Lagos East, and Lagos West from which Lagos East and Lagos Central were purposively selected, as consumers in these zones tend to have earlier access to newly introduced products given the proximity of manufacturing facilities. In the subsequent stage, Lagos East Senatorial District was subdivided into its five constituent local government areas, with Epe selected as the focus area whose jurisdiction spanning both mainland urban territory and the northern shores of the Lekki Lagoon. At the final stage, convenience sampling was employed to reach participants across key commercial and residential zones within Epe, including the Aiyetoro market area, Poka, Pobo, Raghushi, Mojoda, Eredo, and Agric Estate.

Data collection was undertaken using a researcher-developed structured questionnaire. Responses were scored on a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Content validity was established through expert review. To assess reliability, the instrument was administered on two separate occasions to 20 grocery consumers in the Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area, yielding a Spearman rank correlation coefficient of 0.91, which was deemed satisfactory. Data analysis was conducted using mean scores and standard deviations. A mean score of 2.50 or above was taken as an indicator of agreement, while scores below 2.50 reflected disagreement.

Research Question One: What advertising approaches are used for new product promotion at grocery outlets in Lagos State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on Advertising Approaches for New Products at grocery.

S/N	Advertising Approaches for New products at grocery	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Sta.Dev.	Remark
1.	Print media such as magazines, newspapers, bulletins, fliers	158	170	32	24	3.67	1.01	Agreed
2.	Broadcast media such as Radio, Television and Internet	210	96	74	04	3.78	0.93	Agreed
3.	Outdoor: Posters, Billboards and vehicles designed with new product pictures	87	194	53	50	2.79	1.05	Agreed
4.	Celebrity such as adverts having actors or musicians in campaign for a food product	208	111	42	23	2.71	0.99	Agreed
5.	Covert: Advertising new products at intervals during movie or TV programme	117	128	94	45	2.53	0.82	Agreed

The data presented in Table 1 capture respondents' mean and standard deviation ratings of various advertising strategies for new products in grocery settings. All five strategies obtained mean scores above the threshold of 2.50, indicating that respondents collectively endorsed them as applicable promotional approaches. The mean values ranged from a

high of 3.78 to a low of 2.53, with standard deviations spanning from 0.82 to 1.05, suggesting that responses were relatively consistent across participants.

Research Question Two: What non-advertising variables shape consumer responses to new products at grocery outlets in Lagos State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on non-advertising variables that shapes Consumer Behaviour towards New Products.

S/N	Non-advertising variables shaping Consumer Behaviour Towards New Products	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Sta.Dev	Remark
1.	Cultural factors	120	170	63	31	3.66	1.01	Agreed
2.	Technological factors	180	128	61	15	3.39	0.97	Agreed
3.	Money at hand	220	122	28	14	3.68	1.03	Agreed
4.	Economic Situation	137	171	42	34	3.24	0.97	Agreed
5.	Lifestyle of the individual	144	157	43	40	3.34	0.86	Agreed
6.	Motivation	195	136	33	20	3.84	0.92	Agreed
7.	Preference	150	178	35	21	3.78	1.02	Agreed
8.	Environmental factors	181	124	71	15	3.53	0.92	Agreed
9.	Psychological	190	108	72	14	3.44	1.02	Agreed
10.	Interest	147	151	52	34	3.71	0.91	Agreed

Table 2 presents respondents' ratings of factors capable of moderating consumer responses to new product advertising. All ten items were endorsed above the threshold value of 2.50. Mean

scores ranged from 3.84 to 3.24, while standard deviations fell between 0.86 and 1.03, indicating reasonably close clustering of responses around the mean values.

Research Question Three: What difficulties do consumers face when encountering new product advertising at grocery outlets in Lagos State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on Difficulties Consumers faced in New product Advertising

S/N	Difficulties Consumers Face in New product Advertising	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Sta.Dev	Remark
1.	Some adverts may be misleading on nutrition facts for the new product	157	171	52	34	3.71	1.01	Agreed
2.	Some advertisements may provide false nutrition to consumers	189	151	30	14	3.81	0.89	Agreed
3.	Advertisements sometimes make consumers engage in impulsive buying	168	171	31	14	3.69	0.95	Agreed
4.	Some advertisements do not provide all nutritional information for a new product	150	168	36	30	3.49	1.03	Agreed
5.	New product advertisement media may not get to the target intended group	191	134	51	15	3.79	0.92	Agreed
6.	Advertisement manipulates consumers into parting with their money in return for new products that they do not want	160	138	62	24	3.46	1.02	Agreed

Table 3 displays respondents' ratings of the challenges associated with new product advertising. All six items recorded mean scores above the 2.50 threshold, confirming that each represents a genuine consumer concern. The

range of mean scores was 3.46 to 3.81, with standard deviations spanning 0.89 to 1.03, indicating limited variation in respondent perspectives.

Research Question Four: What is the perceived influence of new product advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour at grocery outlets in Lagos State?

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses on the perceived influence of New Products' Advertising on Consumers Buying Behaviour.

S/N	Ways New Products' Advertising Influences Consumers Buying Behaviour	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Sta.Dev	Remark
1.	It encourages consumers to change beliefs about certain	137	191	42	34	3.77	1.00	Agreed

	products								
2.	It encourages consumers to purchase a new product	190	136	44	14	3.81	0.95	Agreed	
3.	It persuades consumers to try a new product	107	174	83	20	3.57	0.91	Agreed	
4.	It motivates consumers to shift from a brand to a new product brand	188	131	52	13	3.71	1.02	Agreed	
5.	It convinces consumers to change food habits and making new product choices	127	148	74	35	3.23	0.99	Agreed	

Table 4 presents respondents' views on the ways in which new product advertising influences their purchasing decisions. All five items were endorsed above the cut-off point of 2.50. Mean scores ranged from 3.23 to 3.81 and standard deviations from 0.91 to 1.02, indicating relatively homogeneous responses among participants.

Discussion of Findings

The first findings established the advertising approaches most commonly deployed for new products campaigns at grocery settings. Respondents identified print media platforms such as magazines, newspapers, bulletins, and flyers as well as broadcast media including radio, television, and internet channels. Outdoor advertising such as billboards and posters, celebrity-endorsed promotions, and embedded product placement in entertainment programming were also acknowledged as active strategies. These results are broadly consistent with the position advanced by Abdul, Muhammad, Fauzia, and Farisa (2016), who identified newspapers, television, digital platforms, films, and billboards as widely utilised promotional channels. Featherstone (1991), as cited by Rai (2019), further corroborated these findings by documenting print, outdoor, broadcast, covert, public service, and celebrity advertising as standard formats in product promotion.

The second findings concerned variables beyond advertising itself that can

shape consumer responses to new product campaigns. Cultural background, technological access, disposable income, prevailing economic conditions, individual lifestyle, personal motivation, preferences, environmental context, psychological orientation, and inherent interest were all identified as significant moderating factors. Frolova (2014) similarly categorised buying behaviour determinants into cultural, social, personal, and psychological dimensions. This is further supported by Adelaar, Lee, and Morimoto (2003), who reported that purchasing decisions are shaped by consumers' ways of life, purchasing capacity, technology adoption, cultural traditions, and income levels.

The third findings addressed the difficulties consumers encounter with new product advertising. These included inaccurate nutritional representations, misleading dietary content, encouragement of impulse purchasing, incomplete product information, failure of advertising to reach intended audiences, and the use of persuasion tactics that lead consumers to acquire products they do not genuinely need. Desai (2014) confirmed that repetitive advertising exposure can trigger impulsive buying behaviour. Gaibraith (1969), as cited by Moshood (2014), maintained that advertising is most influential when consumers are uncertain of their own preferences, and that marketing can effectively manufacture desire for products that hold no intrinsic utility for the buyer.

The fourth findings identified the specific ways in which new products'

advertising shapes purchasing behaviour at grocery outlets. These included shifting consumer beliefs about products, motivating product trial, stimulating brand migration, promoting dietary change, and encouraging new product exploration. Abideen, Farough, and Latif (2011) confirmed that advertising exerts a long-term influence on individual attitudes, behavioural patterns, and even broader cultural norms. Ayanwale, Alimi, and Ayanbimpe (2005) further reported that advertising represents the primary channel through which consumers discover and subsequently acquire newly available products. Katke (2007) complemented these observations by noting that advertising heightens product awareness and equips consumers with information necessary to evaluate new offerings.

Conclusion

Promotional advertising is a powerful determinant of how consumers form and act upon purchasing decisions, with tangible effects on overall consumption patterns and commercial performance. The findings of this investigation indicate that grocery operators predominantly rely on print and broadcast media, supplemented by outdoor and digital channels, for new product advertising. Advertising was found to exert meaningful influence on consumer purchasing behaviour by prompting attitudinal shifts, encouraging product trials, and facilitating brand switches. Key moderating factors encompassing cultural norms, economic realities, personal preferences, technological context, and individual psychology were also confirmed as significant. Consumers face notable challenges in the form of misleading product claims, incomplete nutritional disclosure, and susceptibility to impulse purchasing triggered by advertising. These challenges, coupled with issues of audience reach and targeting precision, underscore the need for more ethical

and strategically sound advertising practices in the grocery retail sector.

Recommendations

Based on the foregoing findings, the following recommendations are advanced:

- i. Grocery operators should strive to maximise the strategic use of available promotional resources to sustain competitive advantage.
- ii. Shoppers are advised to exercise deliberate caution and resist unplanned purchases when interacting with new product promotions in grocery settings.
- iii. Consumers should develop the habit of scrutinising product labels to verify nutritional accuracy and avoid being misled by advertising content.
- iv. Advertising campaigns should be designed to authentically persuade and guide consumers toward informed product selection.
- v. A broad spectrum of media channels should be leveraged to maximise new product visibility and awareness.
- vi. Advertising strategies should be carefully calibrated to ensure they engage the most relevant consumer demographics.

Suggestions for Further Research

- i. Consumer awareness and comprehension of new food product advertising.
- ii. Variables driving new food product acceptance among younger consumer segments.
- iii. The ecological and community-level effects of new food product advertising in rural markets.

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