

Integrated Marketing Communication and Sales Performance of Quoted Pharmaceutical Companies in Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study assessed the relationship between integrated marketing communication strategies and the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. The study adopted an ex post facto design. The population of the study was 4566 marketers of seven quoted pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria, and a sample size of 368 was determined. A structured questionnaire was employed to gather primary data from the respondents, while secondary data was collected from annual financial records of the firms for the period covered. The Cronbach's alpha was used to validate the questionnaire and assess its reliability. The Person's Product Moment Coefficient statistic tool and regression analyses were used for inferential statistical testing of the hypotheses at the 0.05 confidence level. The results showed that there is a significant correlation between integrated marketing communication strategies and sales performance. The study found that advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, and direct selling are significant predictors of sales performance. The study concluded that the adoption of integrated marketing communication strategies increases customer patronage and sales performance. The study recommended, amongst others, that pharmaceutical companies should prioritise public relations marketing over other integrated marketing communication techniques and tactics to increase sales. For optimum selling, more focus should be placed on direct-to-customer and personal selling.*

Keywords: *Marketing communication, sales performance, advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, direct marketing.*

Introduction

Sales performance, which reflects a company's ability to generate revenue through the effective selling of goods and services, is a vital indicator of a firm's market competitiveness. Sales performance has become a key concern amid increasing competition, stringent regulatory requirements, and the growing influence of generic brands in the pharmaceutical industry. In today's turbulent environment, companies in the industry must go beyond traditional marketing efforts and adopt integrated communication strategies that effectively engage diverse stakeholders, including doctors, pharmacists, healthcare institutions, government agencies, and final consumers (Onuoha & Mba, 2020).

Organisations across the globe are increasingly recognising the need for a coordinated and coherent approach to marketing communication to increase market share and sales volume. This shift has led to the growing adoption of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) as a strategic tool for driving organisational performance, especially sale outcomes. Integrated marketing communication involves the strategic coordination of various promotional tools: advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, and digital marketing to provide unified and persuasive message about a brand or product (Belch & Belch, 2018). Local studies show that firms that blend personal selling with well-structured advertising and direct marketing record

higher sales turnover and better customer retention (Adebisi & Babatunde, 2021).

The Nigerian pharmaceutical industry comprises both multinational and indigenous companies, many of which are listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange. The industry is confronted with numerous challenges, including intense competition, regulatory restrictions, low consumer trust, and limited access to medical channels (Uzochukwu et al., 2021). Given the regulatory complexities and ethical considerations surrounding drug promotion, especially in developing economies like Nigeria, an integrated approach to marketing communication becomes even more important.

However, marketing communication strategies among many quoted pharmaceutical companies remain fragmented. The adoption of IMC strategies is often inconsistent, lacking synchronisation across various promotional tools (Okafor, 2020). Another concern is the limited empirical evidence linking specific IMC strategies to sales performance outcomes in the Nigerian pharmaceutical context. Most prior studies have focused on general marketing practices, while others are conducted in sectors, such as fast-moving consumer goods, banking, and telecommunications (Ogidi & Adeleke, 2022; Adebisi & Babatunde, 2021; Okeke & Chinedu, 2020; Adewale, 2015). Few studies have examined the unique dynamics within the pharmaceutical industry, which is characterized by a blend of ethical marketing, professional

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prescriptions, and over-the-counter sales. The study is therefore necessitated to investigate how IMC is adopted by pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria as a pathway for improving customer engagement and boosting sales performance

Objective of the Study

The broad aim of the study is to examine the effect of integrated marketing communication on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. The specific objectives include:

- i. determine the effect of advertising on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.
- ii. ascertain the effect of sales promotion on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.
- iii. evaluate the effect of public relations on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.
- iv. examine out how personal selling affects the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.
- v. assess the effect of direct marketing on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- Ho1: There is no significant effect of advertising on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.
- Ho2: There is no significant effect of sales promotion on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.
- Ho3: There is no significant effect of public relations on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.
- Ho4: There is no significant effect of personal selling on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.
- Ho5: There is no significant effect of direct marketing on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Review or Related Literature

Integrated Marketing Communication Strategies

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a strategic approach that coordinates and integrates various promotional tools and communication channels to deliver a consistent and unified message to the target audience. According to Widjaja (2022), IMC is a strategy that achieves marketing campaign objectives through the deliberate use of multiple complementary promotional techniques. Syed Alwi et al. (2022) emphasise that IMC involves a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of different

communication disciplines and integrates them to achieve maximum clarity, consistency, and impact.

Odongo and Ronald (2021) define IMC as the process of integrating different promotional methods to produce a single, customer-focused sales message. The dimensions of integrated marketing communication include advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, and direct marketing (Gabriel et al., 2024; Adnan et al., 2021; Afolabi et al., 2020).

Advertising

Advertising functions as the catalyst for an entire pharmaceutical marketing communication chain, and it delivers paid, non-personal messages across mass-reach TV channels. This includes detail segments, health-themed radio spots, medical journal spreads, YouTube pre-rolls, programmatic banners, in-app placements on tele pharmacy platforms, and digital out-of-home screens in hospital lobbies (Sevruk, 2020).

Sales Promotion

Sales promotions in the pharmaceutical industry comprise a spectrum of short-term incentives intended to spark an immediate rise in demand and speed up product trials. Tactics range from price-oriented offers such as bulk discounts for wholesalers or seasonal rebates for pharmacies to non-price tools, including physician sample kits, patient starter packs, sponsorships, loyalty cards for chronic therapies, on-pack adherence aids, and high-visibility booths at medical congresses or community health fairs (Aydinel & Esenye, 2019). Promotions exert their influence through several intertwined mechanisms; they stimulate trials and reduce barriers, they create channel push and pull effects, and they reinforce therapeutic behavior.

Public Relations

Public relations in pharmaceutical marketing refers to a strategic communication process aimed at building, managing, and sustaining a favourable image of a pharmaceutical company among its diverse stakeholder groups, such as consumers, healthcare professionals, regulatory bodies, investors, media, and the public (Egwuenu & Aliku, 2018). PR initiatives in the pharmaceutical sector often take the form of corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes, such as sponsoring free medical outreach, organising health education campaigns, offering complimentary health screenings, or supporting underserved populations with lifesaving medications.

Personal Selling

Personal selling involves direct, face-to-face interactions between sales representatives, commonly known as medical representatives, and healthcare professionals such as doctors, pharmacists, and hospital administrators (Afolabi et al., 2020). It supports a two-way, interactive communication process that is both personalised and adaptable in real time. This makes it particularly effective in the pharmaceutical sector, where the buying process is highly technical, regulated, and consultative in nature. By delivering accurate and relevant information, personal selling not only supports informed decision making but also builds the credibility and trust needed in a field governed by stringent ethical and professional standards (Al Azzam, Alserhan & Al Assaf, 2024).

Direct Marketing

Direct marketing focuses on engaging directly with specific individuals to elicit measurable responses or transactions. Unlike traditional mass media strategies that rely on intermediaries, direct marketing connects businesses with potential customers through personalised channels such as email, telephone, SMS, postal mail, catalogues, and various digital platforms. This approach allows organisations to bypass middlemen and tailor their messages to meet the unique needs of each recipient (Adnan et al., 2021).

Sales Performance

Sales performance in the pharmaceutical industry refers to the degree to which a company effectively generates revenue through the sale of its products, such as prescription drugs, over the counter (OTC) medications, vaccines, and medical supplies. It serves as both a financial and strategic indicator of how well a firm captures market opportunities, satisfies consumer demand, and sustains long-term growth (Dirar & Aldnanai, 2021). Unlike other industries, pharmaceutical sales performance is influenced not only by consumer demand but also by regulatory oversight, the influence of intermediaries such as physicians and pharmacists, and ethical restrictions on product promotion (Vinod et al., 2024).

Quantitative measures of sales provide tangible, numerical evidence of a firm's performance in the marketplace. They include sales volume, which represents the total number of product units sold within a specific period, and sales revenue, which refers to the total monetary value generated by product sales. Market share indicates the proportion of industry sales controlled by a company relative to its competitors (Mebuge & Mudzanani, 2019).

Qualitative measures focus on non-financial but equally significant aspects of sales performance that contribute to long-term success. One of such measures is customer retention and loyalty, which reflects the firm's ability to maintain enduring relationships with clients. Sales force effectiveness is another critical dimension, capturing the professionalism, skill, and productivity of the sales team in driving results. Brand credibility also plays a vital role, as the trust and reputation a company builds influences both physician prescriptions and consumer purchasing behaviour (Khizar et al., 2016).

Advertising and Sales Performance

Advertising serves as a cornerstone of pharmaceutical IMC by generating awareness, informing target audiences, and building brand image. In the pharmaceutical sector, advertising helps introduce new drugs, communicate benefits, and differentiate products in crowded markets (Ikechukwu et al., 2017). Vinod et al. (2024) found that advertising significantly enhances product visibility and fosters brand recall, both of which are closely linked to sales increases. Similarly, Suprpto et al. (2020) argue that advertising facilitates emotional and cognitive engagement, influencing prescribing behaviour among physicians and purchase decisions among patients. This is especially crucial in a market where trust and evidence-based messaging are key to influencing high-stakes decisions.

Sales Promotion and Sales Performance

Aydinel and Esenye (2019) emphasised that sales promotion is effective in triggering quicker responses from target audiences and can significantly boost sales volumes in the short term. These promotional strategies not only improve product accessibility but

also reduce perceived risk and encourage product trials, critical steps in customer conversion in a conservative industry like pharmaceuticals. Also, Al Azzam, Alserhan, and Al Assaf (2024) noted that sales promotion, when integrated into an IMC framework, enhances message clarity and reinforces brand messages across touchpoints, thereby improving overall consumer responsiveness and conversion rates.

Public Relations and Sales Performance

Public relations focus on maintaining a favourable public image and building long term relationships with stakeholders, including customers, regulatory bodies, healthcare professionals, and the media. PR indirectly affects sales performance by enhancing brand reputation and credibility (Afolabi et al., 2020). Khanam (2022) points out that pharmaceutical PR campaigns that emphasise transparency, safety, and patient welfare are effective in gaining the goodwill of both the public and the medical community, thereby increasing the likelihood of product adoption and sales. Also, Pahlevi and Nurcahyo (2022) suggest that strategic PR, when aligned with advertising and promotions, enhances the overall coherence of the brand message, thus reinforcing consumer confidence and engagement, two major predictors of sustained sales performance.

Personal Selling and Sales Performance

Research has consistently highlighted the strong link between personal selling and sales outcomes. Ikechukwu et al. (2017) revealed that personal selling has a direct, statistically significant impact on prescribing behaviour, especially when the information provided is perceived as credible, relevant, and evidence-based. Bhattacharjee and Kumar (2016) also reported that personal selling is highly effective in converting physician interest into prescriptions due to its ability to offer customised, responsive dialogue tailored to the decision maker's needs. Adesanoye (2019), affirmed that pharmaceutical firms that successfully integrate IMC components experience better message penetration, stronger customer relationships, and measurable increases in market share and revenue.

Direct Marketing and Sales Performance

Direct marketing, such as emails, newsletters, mobile messages, and customised offers, enables pharmaceutical firms to reach healthcare professionals and end users with targeted, relevant information. Suprpto, Herwanto, and Indarini (2020) noted that direct marketing facilitates two-way communication, making it easier for pharmaceutical companies to gather feedback, adapt messages, and influence decision makers efficiently. A study by Pahlevi and Nurcahyo (2022), showed that firms that integrate direct marketing with other IMC tools see enhanced engagement, customer responsiveness, and ultimately improved sales outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Hierarchy of Effects Model (HEM), which was developed by Lavidge and Steiner (1961), which is one of the earliest and most influential frameworks in marketing communication. It posits that consumers pass through a series of psychological stages before making a purchase decision: awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and purchase. These stages follow a cognitive affective conative sequence, moving the consumer from initial awareness of a brand, through emotional attachment, to actual buying behaviour. The

model provides marketers with a structured roadmap for designing communication strategies that guide customers through each phase of decision-making.

In practice, HEM is highly applicable to the pharmaceutical industry. The HEM link IMC tools with different stages of consumer or prescriber behaviour, offering firms a way to align marketing strategies with decision-making processes. For quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria, it is particularly useful given challenges such as low health literacy, heavy reliance on prescriber recommendations, and competition from imported generics. Despite its relevance, HEM has been criticized for its overly linear and rigid structure, which assumes that consumers always move through the stages in sequence.

Methodology

The study employed a causal-comparative (ex post facto) research design. The population of the study includes 4,566 staff of seven quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria as of December 31, 2023. Seven pharmaceutical companies were listed on the Nigerian Exchange Group (NGX). These companies include Fidson Healthcare Plc, Neimeth International Pharmaceuticals Plc, Mecure Industries Nigeria Plc, Morison Industries Plc, Pharma Deko Plc, PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc, and May & Baker Nigeria Plc. A sample size of 368 was determined using Taro Yamane's formula for

sample size calculation. The participants were selected using a random sampling technique to ensure fair representation across the sampled pharmaceutical companies. Questionnaires were administered both physically and online. For online distribution, a web link was created to facilitate accessibility and ease of response, and respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Secondary data were gathered from company annual reports, publications of the Nigerian Exchange (NGX), and relevant industry documents to complement and validate the primary findings. A pilot test was conducted among 30 marketers of May & Baker Nigeria Plc, who were not part of the main sampled population. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha statistical tool. The results of the reliability analysis showed that all constructs exceeded the benchmark value of 0.70 recommended for social science research, indicating that the questionnaire was reliable. Data analysis techniques used include correlation and regression analysis.

Results and Discussion

The results collected from the respondents were analysed, interpreted and presented in tables. Correlation was used to assess the relationship between the variables, while regression was employed to test the effect of IMC dimensions of sales performance.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	ADV	SP	PR	PS	DM	SPer
Advertising (ADV)	3.55	0.30	1					
Sales promotion (SP)	3.30	0.32	0.382**	1				
Public Relations (PR)	3.41	0.34	0.126*	.248**	1			
Personal Selling (PS)	3.56	0.34	0.331**	.279**	0.353**	1		
Direct Marketing (DM)	3.54	0.55	0.243**	.183**	0.153**	0.197**	1	
Sales Performance (SPer)	3.29	0.33	0.161**	.308**	0.391**	0.250**	0.131*	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

M: Mean

SD: Standard Deviation

The result presented in Table 1 shows the descriptive and correlation analysis among the variables studied. The first innovative variable, Integrated Marketing Communication (M = 3.46; SD = 0.37), was significantly correlated with advertising (r = 0.262), sales promotion (r = 0.265), public relations (r = 0.254), personal selling (r = 0.292), direct marketing (r = 0.144), and sales performance (r = 0.193). Advertising (M = 3.55; SD = 0.30) was also significantly correlated with sales promotion (r = 0.382), public relations (r = 0.126), personal selling (r = 0.331), direct marketing (r = 0.243), and sales promotion (r = 0.161). Sales promotion (M = 3.30; SD = 0.32) as an innovative practice by companies significantly correlated with other practices studied, which are public relations (r = 0.248), personal selling (r = 0.297), direct marketing (r = 0.183), and sales performances (r = 0.308). Public relations (M = 3.41; SD = 0.34) significantly correlated with

personal selling (r = 0.353), direct marketing (r = 0.153), and sales promotion (r = 0.391). Personal Selling (M = 3.56; SD = 0.34) was also correlated with direct marketing (r = 0.197) and sales performance (r = 0.250). There was a significant correlation between direct marketing (M = 3.54; SD = 0.55) and sales performance (M = 3.29 and 0.33; r = 0.131). The results presented in Table 1 showed that sales performance had the highest correlation between the two and the two of the public relations. Next to public relations is sales promotion and thereafter came personal selling.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant effect of advertising on the sales performances of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Table 2: Effect of Advertising on Sales Performance of Quoted Pharmaceutical Companies in Nigeria (N= 366)

Variable	Unsaturated Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta (β)	T	P
	B	SE			
Constant	2.661	.202		13.156	.000
	.176	.057	.161	3.100	.002

Note. F (1, 365) = 9.61 **, p<.001, Adjusted R²=0.023

In testing if advertising is significantly related to the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. Table 2, the result of the analysis indicated that advertising explained a variance of 2.3% in sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria (Adj. R²=0.023; F (1, 365) = 9.61; p< 001). The β coefficient of 0.176 obtained revealed that for 1 unit increase in quoted pharmaceutical company’s efforts towards advertising their drugs, there would be a corresponding 0.170 unit increase in r sales

performance (if and only if other variables are held constant). The null hypothesis is rejected, and this implies that there is a significant relationship between advertising and the sales performances of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant effect of sales promotion on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Table 3: Effect of Sales Promotion on Sales Performances of Quoted Pharmaceutical Companies in Nigeria (N= 366)

Variable	Unsaturated Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta (β)	T	P
	B	SE			
Constant	2.233	0.172		12.995	0.000
Sales promotion	0.318	0.052	0.308	6.151	0.000

Note. F (1, 365) = 37.83 **, p<.001, Adjusted R²= 0.092

Using simple linear regression analysis, null hypothesis two was tested. The result as presented in Table 3 showed that sales promotion explained a variance of 9.2% in sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria (Adjusted R²=0.092; F (1, 365) = 37.83; p< 0.01). Sales promotion is significantly related to sales performance and predicts sales performance significantly (β = 0.308; p< .001). The β coefficient of 0.318 obtained is an indication that for 1 unit increase in quoted pharmaceutical companies’ efforts in promoting their sales, there would be a corresponding 0.318 unit increase in their sales

performance (if and only if other variables are held constant). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative accepted. The result implies that there is a significant relationship between sales promotion and the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant effect of public relations on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Table 4: Effect of Public Relations on Sales Performance of Quoted Pharmaceutical Companies in Nigeria (N= 366)

Variable	Unsaturated Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta (β)	T	P
	B	SE			
Constant	2.000	0.159		12.553	0.000
	0.377	0.047	0.391	8.099	0.000

Note. F (1, 365) = 65.591 **, p<.001, Adjusted R²= 0.150

Using simple linear regression analysis, null hypothesis three was tested. The result as presented in Table 4 showed that public relations explained a variance of 15% in sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria (Adj. R²=0.150; F (1, 365) = 65.591; p< 001). Public relation is significantly related to sales performance in quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria and predicts sales performance significantly (β = 0.391; p< 001). The β coefficient of 0.377 obtained is an indication that for 1 unit increase in quoted pharmaceutical companies’ efforts in improving their public relations, there would be a corresponding 0.377 unit

increase in their sales performance (if and only if other variables are held constant). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative accepted. The result implies that there is a significant relationship between public relations and the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Four

There is no significant effect of personal selling on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Table 5: Effect of Personal Selling on Sales Performances of Quoted Pharmaceutical Companies in Nigeria (N= 366)

Variable	Unsaturated Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta (β)	T	P
	B	SE			
Constant	2.431	.174		13.994	.000
	0.240	.049	.250	4.937	.000

Note: $F(1, 365) = 24.37^{**}$, $p < .001$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.060$

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to test null hypothesis four. The result as presented in Table 5 showed that personal selling accounts for a variance of 15% in sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria (Adj. $R^2 = 0.060$; $F(1, 365) = 24.37$; $p < .001$). Personal selling is significantly related to sales performance in quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria and predicts sales performance significantly ($\beta = 0.250$; $p < .001$). The β coefficient of 0.240 obtained in an indication that for 1 unit increase in quoted pharmaceutical company's efforts in improving their personal selling ability results

in a corresponding 0.377 unit increase in their sales performance (if and only if other variables are held constant). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative accepted. The result implies that there is a significant relationship between personal selling and the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Five

There is no significant effect of direct marketing and the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Table 6: Effect of Direct Marketing Sales Performance of Quoted Pharmaceutical Companies in Nigeria (N= 366)

Variable	Unsaturated Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta (β)	t	P
	B	SE			
Constant	3.006	0.111		27.040	0.000
	0.079	0.031	0.131	2.532	0.012

Note. $F(1, 365) = 6.41^{**}$, $p < 0.05$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.015$

The result as presented in Table 6 showed that direct marketing explained a variance of 15% in sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria (Adj. $R^2 = 0.015$; $F(1, 365) = 6.41$; $p < .001$). The result also shows that direct marketing is significantly related to sales performance in quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria and predicts sales performance significantly ($\beta = 0.131$; $p < .001$). The β coefficient of 0.079 obtained indicates that for 1 unit increase in quoted pharmaceutical company's efforts in improving their direct marketing ability, it results in a corresponding 0.079 unit increase in their sales performance (if and only if other variables are held constant). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative accepted. The result implies that there is a significant relationship between direct marketing and the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The result of hypothesis one indicated a significant effect of advertising on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. Advertising serves as a cornerstone of pharmaceutical IMC by generating awareness, informing target audiences, and building brand image. A study by Vinod et al. (2024) reported that advertising significantly enhances product visibility and fosters brand recall, both of which are closely linked to sales increases. Similarly, Suprpto et al. (2020) explained that advertising facilitates emotional and cognitive engagement, influencing prescribing behaviour among physicians and purchase decisions among patients.

The outcome of hypothesis two showed that there is a significant effect of sales promotion on the sales performance of quoted

pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. The result agrees with Aydinel and Esenye (2019) who indicated that sales promotion significantly boost sales volume of firms. This is supported by Al Azzam, Alserhan, and Al Assaf (2024) who averred that sales promotion enhances message clarity and reinforces brand messages across touchpoints, thereby improving overall consumer responsiveness and conversion rates.

The result of hypothesis three revealed that public relations have a significant effect of advertising on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. This finding is in line with Khushboo and Ujjwal (2024), whose study found that public relations strategies have an impact on sales. Similarly, a study by Afolabi et al. (2020) showed that public relations affect sales performance by enhancing brand reputation and credibility. Other studies by Khanam (2022) and Pahlevi and Nurcahyo (2022) also emphasized the role of public relations as a predictor of sales performance.

Findings showed a positive and significant relationship between personal selling and the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. The result aligns with Ikechukwu et al. (2017) whose study demonstrated that personal selling has a statistically significant effect on consumer behaviour, and increased sales. This is affirmed by Adesanoye (2019), who reported a significant effect of personal selling on market share and revenue.

Finally, the results of the study revealed that there is a significant effect of direct marketing on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. The result agrees with Suprpto et al., (2020) who noted that direct marketing facilitates

two-way communication, making it easier for pharmaceutical companies to gather feedback, adapt messages, and influence decision makers efficiently. A similar study by Pahlevi and Nurcahyo (2022), also affirmed that firms that integrate direct marketing with other IMC tools see enhanced engagement, customer responsiveness, and ultimately improved sales outcomes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusion

The study examined the effect of integrated marketing communication on the sales performance of quoted pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria. The findings highlighted a strong relationship between IMC dimensions and sales performance. The study concludes that IMC significantly influences sales volume and plays a crucial role in strengthening organizational performance. Pharmaceutical companies that adopt and sustain a coordinated IMC approach are more likely to secure market visibility, build customer loyalty, and achieve increased sales turnover.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations have been made to strengthen marketing effectiveness and enhance sales performance. Advertising strategies should be improved, given their significant effect on sales performance. Pharmaceutical firms need to design compelling, data-driven advertising campaigns across both traditional and digital platforms. Pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria should increase budget allocations for promotional activities such as time-bound discounts, product bundling, and customer loyalty schemes. Also, public relations should be strengthened to sustain a positive corporate image and influence customer perceptions. Additionally, personal selling requires deliberate attention, as it remains a crucial driver of sales performance. Pharmaceutical firms in Nigeria should continuously train their sales representatives in product knowledge, customer relationship management, and digital engagement tools. Lastly, direct marketing strategies should be expanded and modernized. Companies are advised to utilize personalized communication methods, such as email, SMS, and social media, as well as personal selling and telemarketing, while leveraging customer data for tailored messages that improve engagement and conversion rates.

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