



Journal of Creative Media (JCM)
Centre for Media and Communication Research,
School of Media and Communication,
Pan-Atlantic University
Published by Pan-Atlantic University Press

© 2025 Pan-Atlantic University Press
Published July 2025 | <https://doi.org/10.70553/pau.2025.1991.29>

Integrated Marketing Communication and Consumer Behaviour in Owo Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria: A Study of Select Sachet Water Companies

PIUS OWOICHO OGWUCHE

Adeleke University Ede, Osun State, Nigeria

FATIMAH ABISOLA AFOLABI

Achievers University, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the impact of integrated marketing communication by various sachet water companies on customer behaviour in Owo Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. The study relied on a survey. The sample size was 154 respondents, comprising staff from thirteen (13) functioning sachet water companies registered with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in Owo, LGA Ondo State, Nigeria. The study relied on connectionist theories. The questionnaire served as a data collection instrument. The study examined the collected data using descriptive statistics. The study found that respondents had a strong awareness of the effectiveness of integrated marketing communication. The findings revealed that applying IMC would increase consumer education and foster long-term client-customer relationships. The study concludes that marketing communications organisations may be able to address customers' marketing challenges more quickly by utilising integrated marketing communication, which will ultimately cut a product's overall promotional expense. The study recommends that organisational management should ensure that horizontal and top-down (vertical) communication techniques do not lead to misunderstandings about their company's aims. It is critical that all Integrated Marketing

KEYWORDS

Behavior,
Consumer,
Integrated
Marketing
Communication,
Promotional Mix,
Sachet Water

Communications (IMC) initiatives align with the overall business goal and vision of sachet water companies operating in Owo LGA, Ondo State, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Divergent views exist on how successfully integrated marketing communications work to entice buyers to buy items in the twenty-first century. Some researchers, such as Yunis et al. (2019), Alharthey et al. (2015), and Butkouskaya, Llonch-Andreu, and Alarcón-del (2017), argue that only some aspects of the promotional mix, such as TV and media, should be utilised. Some scholars, like Elrod and Fortenberry (2020), on the other hand, are adamant that mixing the components will result in resonance. Effective interaction with target audiences, or current and future clients, demonstrates an essential and ongoing obligation for businesses and enterprises intending to sell products. Elrod & Fortenberry (2020) stated that successful communications enlighten and inform audiences, generating interest and attention, which are required to attract customers and gain market share in a competitive business environment. Furthermore, the increasing use of online platforms in recent years, according to Rehman, Gulzar, and Aslam (2022), has made it necessary for businesses to use social networks as promotional channels because it affects a company's performance in the current marketing competition as well as its overall corporate identity and reputation.

As traditional mass media fail to connect with unsatisfied and fragmented audiences, integration becomes increasingly important. IMC circumvents this by seeking to influence the intended audience's time-related behaviour. According to Rehman et al. (2022), the notion of integrated marketing communication (IMC) has gained traction in recent decades, controlling and influencing numerous firms' promotional plans and communication methods. In modern Nigeria, businesses have achieved success in terms of brand attractiveness, particularly in sachet water-making enterprises, which have seen tremendous customer demand.

According to Butkouskaya, Llonch-Andreu, and Alarcón-del (2017), customer acquisition, or gaining new clients, has given way to customer interactions in marketing (retaining clients for a lifetime) and customer de-selection (removing unproductive clients while focusing on finding and retaining successful ones). The following factors are driving the trend towards integrated marketing communications: increased promotion, audience fragmentation, media proliferation, the online world and information advances, customer empowerment, channel-related power shifts, clustering, and the need for greater transparency. Numerous Nigerian organisations have yet to appreciate the importance of strategically combining each component of the marketing plan in order to develop communications that are cohesive, consistent, exact, productive, and easy to understand (Yunis et al., 2019).

The dynamic nature of the 21st-century market fosters rivalry in many product and service markets (Abedin & Ferdous, 2015). Every result-oriented company faces the challenge of effectively coordinating its marketing communications initiatives in order to convey a trustworthy, viable, unambiguous, and reliable narrative about itself and its product or business, particularly in Afrocentric societies and Global South countries such as Nigeria. For this reason, any productive and goal-oriented organisation requires excellent promotional communications (Alharthey et al., 2015).

In today's competitive market climate in Nigeria, businesses are required to maintain ongoing communication with existing and new stakeholders, deliver excellent products and services, set acceptable prices, and make it easy for them to reach out to clients (Luxton et al., 2017). According to Butkouskaya, Llonch-Andreu, and Alarcón-del (2017), the world of marketing is becoming increasingly competitive, but integrated marketing communications (IMC) is outperforming the once-glamorous world of advertising. IMC enables managers to mix techniques, giving brands a consistent voice across all media formats (Luxton et al., 2017).

Many Nigerian sachet water makers use a variety of marketing strategies without considering the pricing or the product's life cycle (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). They frequently require clarification on how to correctly organise the communication mix based on a product's life cycle. For the past ten years, sachet water producers, also known as pure water firms, have been a major force in Nigeria, creating thousands of jobs and generating vast amounts of revenue for the country (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). To the best of the researchers' knowledge, no research has been conducted to examine the effects of integrated marketing communication by specific sachet water companies on customer behaviour in the Ondo State local government area of Owo, Nigeria, despite the high level of sachet water consumption and rapid growth in sachet water production trends in the local government area. A lack of empirical study on the subject can inhibit proper implementation of IMC and reduce customer demand for sachet water in Owo, Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria. This study filled a gap in the literature on the topic.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions guide the research:

1. What is the perception of staff at sachet water-producing companies in Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria, of IMC's effectiveness in improving customer patronage?
2. What factors influence the adoption of the IMC by sachet water companies in Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria?
3. What is the impact of integrated marketing communication on consumption of Sachet water in Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section of the study provides a pertinent review of the conceptual, empirical, and theoretical literature studied for the investigation.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Organisations believe that branding is intrinsically essential in strengthening organisational identities because it not only demonstrates what a firm stands for but also serves as the foundation for productive engagement (Kitchen & Schultz, 2012). Restructuring and reengineering are not one-time events in most organisations; rather, they are evolutionary processes that need managers to constantly strategise and realign priorities and resources with organisational goals (Wilson, 2016). The communication function and process are crucial to this development (Smith & Taylor, 2013).

Integrated marketing communications yield significant benefits, despite the fact that more effort is required. It has the ability to create healthy competition, increase sales profit, and save money, time, and pressure. Integrated marketing communication by involving customers in communication assists them in the various stages of buying, consolidating the organisation's image while also developing and leading to interaction among buyers (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 2013). This 'relationship marketing' fosters client trust, which can protect them from the long-term effects of competition. The capacity to keep a customer for life is advantageous in competitiveness (Smith & Taylor, 2013). IMC increases profitability while also improving effectiveness.

Integrated marketing communication improves brand comparison outcomes and reduces customer perceived risk during the search process, lending credibility to messaging (Nasco & Brunner, 2017). In contrast, integrated communication conveys a sense of order. Appropriate messaging and consistent images promote long-term consumer connections. It is implied that customer databases can help predict consumer patterns and purchase timing. Finally, by employing techniques such as advertising, exhibitions, and sales materials, IMC helps to reduce the financial waste caused by duplication in domains such as design and photography. It also makes it easier to coordinate the actions of different agencies, such as agency fee payments. This coordination takes place collectively for briefings, brainstorming sessions, and strategic planning (Smith & Taylor, 2013; Tiwaa, 2015).

Nsikan-Abasi and Dafiovo (2015) studied how Etisalat uses integrated marketing communications to impact how people in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, choose to use its products. The study used a survey technique, with data collected via a questionnaire and an interview schedule. A sample of 388 responses was drawn from the 81,546 members across five zones in Uyo City. We employed both cluster and purposive sampling methods. Concurrently, the Cronbach Alpha statistical instrument was employed to determine dependability, yielding a coefficient of 0.73. According to the study findings, Etisalat Nigeria was completely devoted to using the five primary tactics of integrated marketing communications to create awareness and impact network patronage in Uyo (Nsikan-Abasi & Dafiovo, 2015).

According to the Nsikan-Abasi and Dafiovo (2015) survey, subscribers in Uyo, Nigeria, are satisfied with Etisalat Nigeria's promotional efforts and prefer them to their competition. Nonetheless, of the five tactics tested, sales promotion and advertising had the biggest impact on customer behaviour. Nsikan-Abasi and Dafiovo (2015) concluded that by incorporating these marketing communication techniques, Etisalat Nigeria influenced the network's patronage. However, low rates and referrals from friends and family were two other factors that influenced patronage. As a result, Etisalat Nigeria was encouraged to remain with Integrated Marketing Communications, which focuses on advertising and sales promotions while also investing in word-of-mouth marketing. Furthermore, it is critical to keep promotional promises in order to build client trust and, as a result, patron loyalty (Nsikan-Abasi & Dafiovo, 2015).

Similar to the study by Abdulwasiiu, Sulu, and Abu (2023), which looked at service quality and customer loyalty in specific retail businesses in Lagos State, Nigeria, Adegbola, Binuyo, and Afolabi (2020), cited in Abdulwasiiu, Sulu, and Abu (2023), conducted a study to investigate the effect of IMCs on customer satisfaction at selected private universities in South-West Nigeria. Adegbola, Binuyo, and Afolabi (2020) conducted their study using a cross-sectional survey

design. The study population consisted of 554 Institutional Marketing Department employees and ad hoc Registry Department professionals from the institutions selected for the study. We used the complete enumeration approach. The instrument was a validated, modified questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha reliability scores for the constructions ranged from 0.701 to 0.832. The response rate was 85%. The data was examined using multiple linear regression.

The study discovered that IMCs considerably improved customer satisfaction (Adj. $R^2 = 0.834$, $F(5, 467) = 475.554$, $p < 0.05$). Customer satisfaction was positively and significantly impacted by advertising ($\beta = 0.132$, $t = 3.038$, $p < 0.05$), service promotion ($\beta = 0.195$, $t = 4.502$, $p < 0.05$), web marketing ($\beta = 0.269$, $t = 5.972$, $p < 0.05$), and public relations. Direct marketing had a positive impact, although not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.059$, $t = 1.130$, $p > 0.05$). The study found that IMCs had an impact on customer satisfaction. To maintain and improve their customer satisfaction rate, higher education institutions should focus their promotional efforts on public relations, web marketing, advertising, and service promotion rather than direct marketing (Adegbola, Binuyo & Afolabi, 2020).

Oluwafemi and Adebiyi (2018) conducted a similar study to explore the influence of integrated marketing communications (IMC) components on consumer loyalty to cellular telecommunication services among competing telecom providers. Data was collected from 150 respondents, or 134 copies of the retrieved questionnaires, utilising a multistage sampling technique (stratified, quota, and simple random) procedure. The study design was a cross-sectional survey. The data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics (regression and correlation, respectively). ANOVA was used to test hypotheses concurrently. The statistics show a significant correlation between customer loyalty and direct marketing ($r = .375^*$), publicity ($r = .514$), sales promotion ($r = .470$), and advertising ($r = .562^*$). According to the multiple regression results, integrated marketing communication features explain 48.3% of the variance in customer loyalty, with an R^2 value of .483.

As a result, the study recommends adopting IMC as a strategic strategy to target subscribers in order to gain their business and retain them as long-term consumers of a mobile telecom service provider. To achieve the organisation's short- and long-term goals, it also recommends that industry managers prioritise their strategies based on the IMC dimension that contributes the most to the criterion of interest, with beta and high coefficients in their budgetary allocation for the optimal promotional mix.

Tiwaa (2015), on the other hand, stated that despite its obvious benefits, IMC has several drawbacks. There are also substantial limitations in terms of resistance to change and the challenges of targeting different audiences as the IMC grows. These challenges include inadequate operational facilities, restricted innovation, time-related friction, and a lack of managerial abilities (Kitchen, 2013; Tiwaa, 2015). For example, a manager defending monetary policies and authority demonstrates operational capabilities and stringent organisational measures. As illustrated by the PR department's failure to report to marketing, certain managers have a negative influence on facts, communication, and other administrators. Salespeople frequently do not engage with those in charge of promotions or other individuals. What happens when salespeople ignore the latest marketing offer? As a result, people of different departments may question some managers' financial decisions (Tiwaa, 2015).

Businesses seek the most effective ways to interact with their customers in today's highly competitive and dynamic global economy. Businesses make every attempt to persuade customers of the value of their offers and the advantages of using their products and services (Aaker & McLaughlin, 2016). As a result, communication is now an important part of marketing and critical to the company's success. Businesses use a number of marketing communication tactics to achieve their non-profit or financial objectives (Balmer, 2013). One of the most commonly used communications strategies is integrated marketing communication, or IMC.

According to Tiwaa (2015), the next area of concern is the organisation of the IMC department and its potential impact on innovation. The reality is that an advertising agent may not be keen to adopt a creative idea conceived or produced by another department, such as a direct marketing consultant or public relations expert. IMC may thus limit innovation unless it aligns with the overall marketing purpose; otherwise, the excitement of continual creation is lost. Dealing with a more stringent creative brief will reveal larger creative obstacles (Kitchen, 2013; Tiwaa, 2015). Furthermore, as a tactical business process capable of building brand value, integrated marketing communication is supported. Though extensive study into IMC's strategic and tactical components is gaining traction, effective communication is widely recognised as critical to increasing brand awareness and image (Tiwaa, 2015; 2015).

Though considerable work remains to be done, Tiwaa's (2015) recommendations for integrated marketing communications produce major benefits. Integrated marketing communication, which involves consumers in communication, assists them in the various stages of purchasing while also consolidating the organisation's image and developing and leading to interaction among buyers; it can foster healthy competition, increase sales profit, and save money, time, and pressure.

Tiwaa (2015) contends that relationship marketing builds client trust, which helps protect them from the long-term effects of competition. Customer retention is advantageous in a competitive environment (Smith & Taylor, 2013). IMC boosts profitability while enhancing effectiveness. Unified communications have a significant impact on a disparate set of messages. In a busy world, using a consistent set of communications enhances the likelihood of passing through a deluge of irrelevant business information, continually bombarding buyers (Tiwaa, 2015; Smith & Taylor, 2013).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two theories served as the theoretical foundation for this study. The underlying foundations of the study are the diffusion of innovation and marketing mix theories (also known as connectionist theories). Chisnall (1997) agreed that marketers employ connectionist theories to explain components of the marketing mix, specifically product, place, and promotion. The chance of getting a reward for doing a specific action ties two objects together. Alternatively, in certain situations, there may be some punishment. E.M. Rogers' (1962) Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory, which is relevant to this study, states that the adoption of a new idea or product (i.e., "innovation") does not occur simultaneously in a social system; rather, it is a process in which some people are more likely than others to adopt the innovation. Interpreted marketing communication, on the other hand, accelerates and improves adoption.

MARKETING MIX THEORIES

Product and Place

According to Rehman, Mahabadi, Sanvictores, et al. (2023), the most well-known product hypothesis is the pleasure-pain theory, which is based on Pavlov's well-known research on conditioned responses in dogs. Even when there was no food available, he could make dogs salivate by ringing a bell to signal that food (items) were accessible at that time. The food quality and location must be certified. According to Rehman, Mahabadi, Sanvictores, et al. (2023), Edward Thorndike made assumptions about how cats would act if placed in puzzle boxes and forced to paw at a thread or lever to obtain food. He established the 'law of effect,' which states that the consequences (reward or punishment) of an answer determine whether or not a strong stimulus-response link can be established. Hull invented the 'law of effect,' intimately tying it to factors of motivation. According to him, association and selective trial-and-error learning occur because they meet needs.

Promotion

According to Rehman, Mahabadi, Sanvictores, et al. (2023), Skinner distinguished between responses to stimuli (elicited responses) and activity occurring as a result of purchases (emitted responses) in 1933 when developing the concept of conditioned reflex. For example, a food and beverage company's advertisement promoting a new type of milk drink at a reduced price would entice a man to question the product at UTC's shop. Nonetheless, John B. Watson popularised the stimuli-response paradigm in advertising (Chisnall, 1997; Rehman et al., 2023).

Pricing

Ansoff and McDonnell (1981), as stated in Rehman et al. (2023), supported the purpose of pricing for profit maximisation. He proposed that (i) a person engages in any economic action with the intention of maximising utility. Profits are one way to measure utility. Profit maximisation thus has a rational basis. Profit maximisation guarantees both economic survival and social welfare.

DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION (DOI) THEORY

The Boston University School of Public Health (2022) determined that the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory, created by E.M. Rogers in 1962, is one of the oldest social science theories. It evolved in communication to describe how an idea or product gains traction over time and diffuses (or spreads) throughout a given demographic or social system. As a result of this dispersion, people accept new ideas, behaviours, or items as part of a social system. Adoption is defined as someone doing something different from previously. The key to adoption is the user's perception of the concept, activity, or product as novel or imaginative. This is how diffusion occurs.

A social system cannot accept a new idea, habit, or product (i.e., "innovation") while being compatible with the Boston University School of Public Health (2022). It's more of a process in which some people find the invention more

appealing than others. According to studies, early adopters of an innovation exhibit distinct traits from later adopters. According to Mbogo (2020), advertising a product to a target customer or consumer needs understanding the characteristics of the target product client that will either facilitate or impede the acceptance or purchase of such products or inventions.

According to Azeta, Eweoya (2016), and Mbogo (2020), Rogers established the diffusion of innovation hypothesis, which holds that some people are intrinsically more open to adopting new products than others. He focused his diffusion investigation on the following five components:

1. Features of an invention that may impact its adoption.
2. People make decisions while considering adopting a new concept, service, or method.
3. Characteristics that boost the possibility of concept adoption.
4. The impact of innovation adoption on individuals and society.
5. The use of communication channels during the adoption process.

According to Dihua (2017), Rogers classified consumers into five classes, which included the following types of people:

1. The speaker portrayed innovators as daring individuals who use communication to effect change.
2. Early Adopters: Respected thinking leaders who explore new ideas with caution.
3. Early Majority: He describes them as more cautious and adaptable than the overall population.
4. The Late Majority: This group is pessimistic and only adopts new ideas or products after the majority has done so.
5. Laggards: Rogers referred to these individuals as "fractional people," as they prefer traditional or antiquated practices. People, he claims, are wary of new ideas and will only embrace them if they become commonplace or widely accepted.

According to Dihua (2017), Rogers emphasised the necessity of diffusion of innovation theory and how to use it, making it easy for marketers to remember. Furthermore, it is best to begin by persuading the innovators and early adopters of a new, contentious product concept rather than attempting to immediately and widely persuade the wider public. Furthermore, target groups for communication purposes can be estimated using categories and percentages as a first draft.

METHODOLOGY

This study conducted a cross-sectional descriptive survey research. The study's target demographic was the employees at specific sachet water companies in Owo LGA, Ondo State, Nigeria. Thirteen (13) sachet water companies are functioning in Owo Local Government Area, Ondo State, as registered with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC). The selected sachet water companies employed 250 people. Drawing 154 sample sizes from the population utilising Taro Yamane's technique assisted the study in determining the sample size. A self-administered structured questionnaire was also used to collect data using a simple random sampling procedure. The instrument used a Likert scale measure. The data was analysed using a statistical

tool created expressly for this purpose (SPSS Version 20). Descriptive statistics, such as frequency and proportion, helped to simplify the data.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the results are presented in this part. Descriptive statistics were applied to the data analysis.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 shows respondents' perceptions of the effectiveness of integrated marketing communication in increasing customer demand for sachet water in Owo LGA, Ondo State.

Keynote: SA= Strongly Agree, AG= Agree, DA= Disagree, SDA= Strongly Disagree

	SA n (%)	AG n (%)	DA n (%)	SDA n (%)	Total n (%)
IMC can promote customer education, which will lead to the development of long-term relationships between clients and customers.	78(50.6)	44(28.6)	13(8.4)	19(12.4)	154(100)
The degree of literacy in the community can motivate a business to employ integrated marketing communication.	65(42.2)	69(44.8)	11(7.1)	9(5.8)	154(100)
The extent to which a corporation uses integrated marketing communication for its products can be determined by its marketing objectives.	63(40.9)	71(46.1)	10(6.5)	10(6.5)	154(100)
The use of IMC by Nigerian sachet water providers is greatly recognised.	11(7.1)	10(6.5)	80(51.9)	53(34.4)	154(100)
A variety of marketing communications tools are being used by numerous Nigerian pure water companies to advertise their products.	45(29.2)	32(20.8)	22(14.3)	55(35.7)	154(100)

Using IMC will enable marketing communications agencies to offer customers quicker answers to their marketing challenges.	37(24.0)	44(28.6)	33(21.4)	40(26.0)	154(100)
The use of IMC will encourage more significant engagement between marketers and their consumers.	39(25.3)	32(20.8)	38(24.7)	45(29.2)	154(100)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

According to Table 1, the majority of respondents, or 122 (79.2%), feel that adopting IMC will improve consumer education and promote long-term client-customer relationships in the sachet water company in Owo Local Government Area, Ondo State. This data comprises respondents who strongly agree with the Likert measurement (78/50.6), as well as those who agree with 44/28.6. Furthermore, 134 (87%) respondents, or 65 (42.2%), strongly agree that the literacy rate of the community can stimulate a company's use of integrated marketing communication. Simultaneously, the same percentage stated that a company's marketing objectives may influence the level of integrated marketing communication it utilises for its products. Furthermore, 52.6% of respondents stated that employing IMC enables marketing communications agencies to resolve clients' marketing difficulties faster. 53.9% of respondents disagree that using IMC will foster a more meaningful connection between marketing communications professionals and their clients.

Table 2: Factors impacting the adoption of integrated marketing communications by sachet water firms in Owo Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria

	Yes n (%)	No n (%)	Total
The brand culture	133(86.4)	21(13.6)	154 (100)
Consumer experience	141(91.6)	13(8.4)	154 (100)
Promotional tools use	112(72.7)	42(27.3)	154 (100)
The culture of where the brand is located	120(77.9)	34(22.1)	154 (100)
Nature of the market	140(90.9)	14(9.1)	154 (100)
Pricing strategy	145(94.2)	9(5.8)	154 (100)
Distribution strategy	129(83.8)	25(16.2)	154 (100)
Nature of the products	150(97.4)	4(2.6)	154 (100)
Characteristics of buyers	122(79.2)	32(20.8)	154 (100)
Market size	118(76.6)	36(23.4)	154 (100)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 investigates the key determinants driving IMC adoption by sachet water companies in Owo LGA. According to the findings, the majority of respondents (86.4%) agreed with brand culture, 91.6% with consumer experience, 90.9% with market nature, and 94.2% with pricing strategy as factors impacting the

integration of marketing communication among sachet water enterprises. Furthermore, 83.8% of respondents agreed with the distribution strategy, 97.4% agreed with the categories of products, and 76.6% agreed that market size was a factor encouraging IMC adoption.

Table 3: Impact of integrated marketing communication on sachet water companies in Owo LGA, Ondo State, Nigeria

Keynote: SA= Strongly Agree, AG= Agree, DA= Disagree, SDA= Strongly Disagree

	SA n (%)	AG n (%)	DA n (%)	SDA n (%)	Total n (%)
Proper execution of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) programs on a sachet water-producing organisation's products will minimise the overall promotional budget for such a product over time.	87(56.5)	35(22.7)	15(9.7)	17(11.3)	154(100)
Better or more effective marketing communication with target consumers will result from the right mix of aspects of marketing communication and the use of IMC programmes.	90(58.4)	53(34.4)	6(3.9)	5(3.3)	154(100)
Marketing communications solutions can help the company's promotional efforts on the market be more coordinated.	71(46.1)	36(23.4)	19(12.3)	28(18.2)	154(100)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

According to Table 3, 79.2% (122) of respondents, comprising those who strongly agree and agree, believe that employing integrated marketing communication will eventually reduce a product's overall promotional budget. This suggests that the majority of respondents believe that employing integrated marketing communication will assist sachet water companies in the Owo Local Government Area in saving money on marketing communication. In comparison, 107 (69.5%) respondents believe that using marketing communications technologies will better coordinate the company's marketing initiatives and actions in the marketplace.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Research Question One: What is the perception of staff at sachet water-producing companies in Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria, of IMC's effectiveness in improving customer patronage?

According to the study's findings, respondents have a positive assessment of the success of integrated marketing communication, with the majority believing that employing IMC will improve consumer education and foster long-term client-customer connections for sachet water companies in Owo LGA. The findings of this study are consistent with those of Adeniran et al. (2016), who discovered that IMC aids in the design, implementation, and supervision of trademark messaging that fosters client connections. It was also stated that a corporation's literacy level may drive it to use integrated marketing communication and that promotional communications organisations can respond to clients' marketing difficulties more swiftly. The study discovered that respondents had good attitudes towards the efficiency of integrated marketing communication, which confirmed the findings of a previous study by Duncan and Caywood (2018).

Research Question Two: What factors influence the adoption of the IMC by sachet water companies in Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria?

According to the conclusions of this study, the most important elements influencing sachet water enterprises' application of unified communication for marketing in Owo Local Government Area, Ondo State, are brand culture, consumer experience, market nature, and pricing strategy. Furthermore, factors influencing IMC adoption include distribution method, product kind, and market size. Nasco and Brunner (2017) conducted a survey that included all of the parameters addressed in this study.

Research Question Three: What is the impact of integrated marketing communication on consumption of Sachet water in Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria?

The positive impact of integrated marketing communication on sachet water companies in Owo LGA, as observed in this current study, lends credence to Aaker's (2016) assertion that the use of integrated marketing communication will eventually result in a reduction in the product's total promotional expenditure as well as the amount of money a company spends on marketing communication. The findings of this study back up this claim, demonstrating that employing integrated marketing communication by sachet water providers in Owo LGA will successfully reduce overall marketing communications costs. This study found that integrated marketing communication has a substantial influence on marketing communications.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings reinforce the specialists' continued fixation with embedding the marketing communication process into the organisation's strategic approach. Marketers, such as sachet water manufacturers, continually seek new ways to connect more effectively with their target audience by merging and utilising integrated marketing communication platforms. Competitive pressure, changes in consumer behaviour, and the continuous variety of their demands and expectations all contribute to this. Furthermore, the purpose is to create a strategy that differentiates itself from competitors and positions the company suitably in the eyes of the public. Furthermore, one of the most obvious and visible methods of marketing activity that sachet water companies in Owo Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria, can use to increase profitability is integrated marketing communication, which is defined as a process that can improve the perception of the company, its goods, or its brand. Its goal is to create good changes in consumer behaviour that will benefit all stakeholders throughout the short, medium, and long term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn, we propose the following recommendations:

1. To avoid confusion about corporate goals, sachet water companies should adopt both horizontal and vertical communication tactics. Aligning all IMC operations with the overarching business goal and vision is critical.
2. Before outsourcing IMC services, assess internal capabilities to avoid employee dissatisfaction with outside consultants. Most of the time, management needs to maintain close working relationships with both external consultants and internal R&D. This agreement will improve the efficiency and coordination of IMC activities.
3. To enhance channel members' businesses, management could provide new packages alongside price reductions.
4. Management should review and control IMC activities. Regular assessments of the company's brand equity and replies to client complaints are also necessary.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, D. & McLoughlin, D. (2016). *Strategic Market Management: Global Perspectives*. John Wiley and Sons, United Kingdom.
- Abedin, M. Z., & Ferdous, L. (2015). Promotional strategies of telecommunication industries and customers perception. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research: E-Marketing*. 15(3), 1–18.
- Abimbola, A.E., Oluwole, B.A., & Kolawole, A.G. (2020). Effect of Integrated Marketing Communications on Customer Satisfaction of Selected Private Universities in South-West Nigeria. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 12, 78.

- Adeniran, J. A., Egwuonwu, T. K., & Egwuonwu, O. K. (2016). The impact of sales promotion on sales turnover in the airline industry in Nigeria. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 8(3), 99-110.
- Adoyi, J. (2012). *Impact of Integrated Marketing Communications on the Companies' Sales Performance* (Unpublished master's dissertation). University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus.
- Alharthey, Bandar khalaf. (2015) 'Understanding Decision Making of Consumers through Advertising Strategy and Integrated Marketing. *Journal of marketing management*, 5(26), pp. 10446-10451.
- Ansoff, H. I., McDonnell, E. J. (1988). *The New Corporate Strategy*, 1st ed.; J. Wiley: New York, NY, USA, 1988.
- Azeta, A. A. and Eweoya, I. (2016) *Applying Diffusion of Innovation Theory to Mobile Learning for Quality Education*. International Journal of Multimedia and Ubiquitous Engineering.
- Belch, G. E., and Michael A. B. (2012). *Advertising and Promotion*. New York: McGraw-Hill Irwin, c2012.
- Boston University School of Public Health (2022). *Behavioural Change Model, Diffusion of Innovation Theory*. <https://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/mphmodules/sb/behavioralchangetheories/behavioralchangetheories4.html>
- Butkouskaya, V., Llonch Andreu, J. y Alarcón del Amo, M.D.C. (2017). IMC customer-based perception: strategic antecedents and consequences on post-purchase customer behaviour. *En XXIX Congreso de Marketing AEMARK* (277-296), Sevilla: ESIC.
- Chang, Y. & Thorson, E. (2011). Television and Web Advertising Synergies. *Journal of Advertising*, 33, pp. 75–84.
- Chisnall, P.M. (1997). *Marketing: A Behavioural Analysis, Berkshire*. McGraw: Hill Book Company (UIC) Limited.
- Denduluri V., Jeyalakshmi, R and Undabatla, R. (2020). Positive influence of competitive pressure on customer satisfaction. *Waffen-UND Kostumkunde Journal*, 11(2), 227-223.
- Dihua, X (2017). *Applying the Diffusion of Innovation Theory to Characterize STEM Faculty Attending Professional Development Programs*. Student Research Projects, Dissertations, and Theses – Chemistry Department. 87. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/chemistrydiss/87>
- Duncan, T. & Caywood, C. (2018). The concept, process, and evolution of integrated marketing communications, in Thorson, E. & Moore, J. (eds) *Integrated Communication: Synergy of Persuasive Voices*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 13–34.
- Elrod, J. K., and Fortenberry, J. L. (2020). Integrated marketing communications: a strategic priority in health and medicine. *BMC Health Serv Res* 20 (Suppl 1), 825. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-020-05606-7>
- Fill, C. and Osmond, L., (2017). *Marketing Communications* (Edinburgh Business School). Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh.
- Kitchen, P.J. and Schultz, D.E. (2012). *Raising the Corporate Umbrella: Corporate Communications in the 21st Century*. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Publishers Ltd.
- Luxton, S., Reid, M.; Mavondo, F. (2017). IMC capability: Antecedents and implications for brand performance. *Eur. J. Mark.* 2017, 51, 421-444.
- Mbogo, F. M. (2020). Effects of Kenya revenue authority's innovation strategy on the performance of customs at the port of Mombasa. (Post Graduate

- Diploma Project, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology).
- <https://ikesra.kra.go.ke/server/api/core/bitstreams/8342fa18-bf62-4a6d-92d3-27f025f414bf/content>
- Nasco, A. S. and Brunner, G. C (2017). “Perception and Recall of Advertising Content Presented on Mobile Handled Devices”. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, ISSN: 1525: 2019.
- National Bureau of Statistics. (November 12, 2016). Retrieved from: <http://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng>
- Nsikan-Abasi S. N., and Dafiovo, J. O. (2015). Integrated Marketing Communications and Consumer Patronage of Etisalat Products in Uyo, Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 3(10), 77-94.
- Oluwafemi, A. J., Adebisi, S. O. (2018). Customer Loyalty and Integrated Marketing Communications among Subscribers of Telecommunication Firms in Lagos Metropolis, Nigeria. *Journal of Competitiveness*, 10(3), 101-118. <https://doi.org/10.7441/joc.2018.03.07>
- Place, K. R., Smith, B. G., & Lee, H. (2016). Integrated Influence? Exploring Public Relations Power in Integrated Marketing Communication. *Public Relation*, 10(1), 1–36.
- Rahim, A. G, Ignatius, I. U., & Adeoti, O. E. (2012). Is customer satisfaction an indicator of customer loyalty? *Australian Journal of Business and Management Research*, 2(7), 14-20.
- Rehman I, Mahabadi N, Sanvictores T, et al. (2023). Classical Conditioning. In: StatPearls Internet. *Treasure Island* (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2024 Jan- Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK470326/>
- Rehman, S. ul, Gulzar, R., & Aslam, W. (2022). Developing the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) through Social Media (SM): The Modern Marketing Communication Approach. *Sage Open*, 12(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221099936>
- Rogers, E. (2008). Innovation Adoption Curve. *Executive Fast Track*, 10(1), 1–2.
- Smith, P.R. and Taylor, J., (2013). *Marketing Communications, An Integrated Approach*. London: Kogan Page
- Tiwaa, M. H. (2015). *The Effect of Integrated Marketing Communication on Corporate Brand Image: A Case Study of Guinness Ghana Breweries Limited – Kumasi*. (Masters Dissertation, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology). <https://ir.knust.edu.gh/server/api/core/bitstreams/9b75b897-8729-46ed-bc8a-bf8f70b378c0/content>
- Wilson, A. (2010). *The Marketing of Professional Service*. McGraw Hill: London.
- Yunis, M.; Hashim, H., Anderson, A. (2019). Enablers and Constraints of Female Entrepreneurship in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan: Institutional and Feminist Perspectives. *Sustainability*, 11, 27.
- Zeithaml, V., Parasuraman A. V., & Berry, L., (2013). *Delivering Quality Service: Balancing Customer Perceptions and Expectations*. New York, Free Press

CONTRIBUTORS DETAILS

Pius Owoicho Ogwuche is a doctoral student in the Department of Mass Communication, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna state. He possesses B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in Mass Communication from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. Pius was a radio presenter and producer at the Ahmadu Bello University Campus FM Radio (ABU Samaru 101.1 FM radio) for 7 years before transitioning to full-time lecturing. He also served as a lecturer II in the Mass Communication Department at Achievers University in Owo, Osun State. His research interests include broadcasting, sports journalism, media research, and theory, among others. Ogwuche Pius has 18 scholarly research publications in high-indexed journals and mass communication textbooks. He is also a Scholar of the African Council for Communication Education (SACCE) Nigerian Chapter, a member of the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN), an Associate Member of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), and a member of the Association of Media and Communication Researchers of Nigeria (AMCRON).

ORCID: 0000-0001-9037-3860

Email: ogwuchepius@gmail.com

Fatima Abisola Afolabi is a media enthusiast and a graduate of Mass Communication from Achievers University, Owo, Ondo. Her research interests are in the field of public relations, advertising, marketing communication and emerging media.

Email: fatimahafolabi22@gmail.com

Pius Owoicho Ogwuche, Bisi Olawunmi and Fatima Abisola Afolabi have asserted their right to be identified as authors of this work in the format submitted to Pan-Atlantic University Press.