

The Impact of Immediate Sales Promotion Techniques on Brand Recall

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Abstract

The study aimed to resolve the impact of immediate sales promotion techniques on brand recall. The independent variable divided into three sub-variables: price reductions, free samples, and purchasing vouchers. The research population is all foreigner workers in the private sector in Riyadh. A proportional stratification method was used, and the recommended sample size was 387 customers. The study concludes that a statistical impact of free samples on brand recall and there was no impact of immediate techniques on brand recall. Finally, the study presented and recommended a set of marketing implications to develop uses of sales promotion techniques in the retail stores.

Introduction

Sales promotion is the pillar of the marketing communication mix and is a process that involves many of the communication functions of businesses, namely news, persuasion, and recall at the same time [1]. Sales promotion is a short-term trigger to attract customers using a set of immediate instruments [2]. Kotler adds that sales promotion is a set of short-term tools to stimulate the purchase of certain products and avoid competitors. It is also a temporary technique to create initial demand for products at a specific time [3]. The Figure 1 shows that the population size reached a 3.4 million in 2021.

Since the marketing concept in the 1950s, businesses have been adopting customer-oriented initiatives to improve their market share. Integrated marketing communication has emerged since the early 1980s: attention has shifted towards marketing communication, with which businesses have become interested in their image, building their corporate identity, and improving their long-term reputation [4]. These trends have led to a focus on fulfilling consumer needs and desires at the right price and place, into how the consumer can get the necessary information about the brand, and linked to the benefits and attributes affecting purchasing decisions [5].

Sales promotion is one of the innovative tools to achieve enterprise goals. They have a role in raising the brand value added in instability periods of purchasing wishes and tendencies [6]. From the consumer perspective, sales promotion can adjust consumer behavior with corporate goals, enhance purchasing experience, and provide long-term marketing benefits [7]. It shifted the consumer to their favorite brand [8], raised the storage level, and repeated frequent visits [9]. It attracts new customers and improves long-term retention [6].

The great possibilities of sales promotion tools are a reason to be used in strategic planning and an effective tool in the marketing communication strategy. Sales promotion technique includes the power of communication messages that fit consumer wishes, enhance consumption, and benefit spatial

and time distribution benefits [10]. From this point of view, businesses must benefit from the ability of sales activation programs to build and maintain positive consumer-enterprise relationships for as long as possible [11].

Nevertheless, brand recall is still one of the concepts that capture the interest of modern-day researchers and specialists, one of the most complex variables that can measure; because of its connection to the perception in shoppers' minds. Thus, the level of knowledge and awareness helps shoppers to arrange and classify brands in different stores. Although many studies have attempted to investigate this subject, they have not agreed on one view to understand the mechanism that formulates awareness [12]. The method of recall differed between them due to personal characteristics, product quality, and shopping places.

This study aimed at the effect of sales promotion tools used by retailers. Price discounts, free samples, and purchasing vouchers. Therefore, the study is an attempt to focus on brand recall. Studies confirm that information provided by sales promotion programs; allows consumers to make comparisons that enhance brand recall and lead to more effective purchase decisions in the stores [13]. Consumer behavior studies say that shopping and searching for sales promotion enhance brand recall and benchmarking with other brands in the market. In this case, immediate sales promotion is a tool for a consumer's attention to a particular brand, enhances his recall, and the logical comparison with other stores or brands in the market [13].

Literature Review

Definition and importance of sales promotion

Sales promotion is the pillar of marketing communication strategy and a short-term activity by producers to stimulate wholesalers and retailers and improve consumer action [3]. It is a type of communication containing information; that increases the degree of contact between seller and buyer and enhances the buying intention [14]. With the evolution of integrated marketing communication theory, sales promotion has become at the core of strategic marketing and a tool that combines short-term and long-term marketing objectives [15].

The literature says that sales promotion is an intentional marketing effort to provide information attractively; achieve a high degree of immediate customer response [5]. Recent studies confirm that sales promotion may repeat purchases and may not impose any commitment to the brand [16]. Sales promotion differs from other marketing communication elements. It provides immediate price incentives; gives further power to the brand and sales forces [17]. It also causes growing sales, expands the product life cycle, and enhances brand fame [4]. Sales promotion facilitates access to the brand

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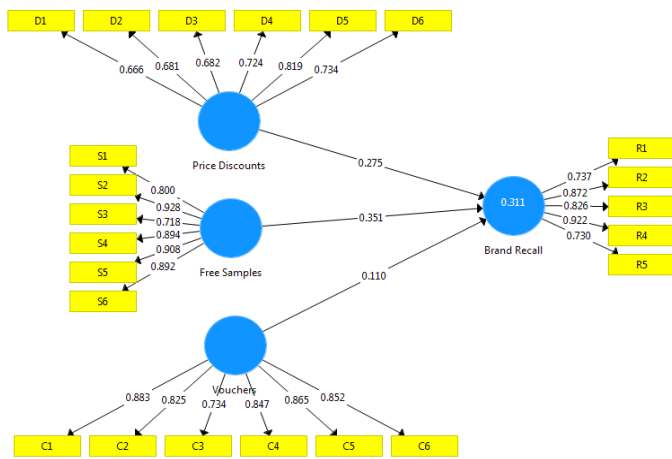


Figure 1. The population size reached a 3.4 million in 2021.

by targeted customers, boosts the demand for high-quality products, ultimately leads to competitive advantage, and enhances customer loyalty [18].

Sales promotion techniques offer all activities and promotional instruments that achieve short-term profits, improve the effectiveness of advertising supported by images, symbols, and messages, and are a tool to resolve short-term sales problems [19]. Sales promotion techniques affect all stages of purchasing decisions; brand selection, time and quantity of purchase, and consumer satisfaction [20]. The power source is from a range of tools that carry visual messages and connotations about the brand, and it is suitable for consumers at the point of sale [21]. Sales promotion includes a set of marketing and communication objectives to increase sales in the short term [22] and the advantage of savings, quality, convenience, value expression, and exploration in the long run [23]. The fun, entertainment, psychological stimulation, and pleasure are further advantages [24].

Sales promotion techniques stimulate purchasing behavior, affecting the intent and habits of shopping from a particular outlet or store [17]. The results also confirmed that they were a reason to change purchasing behavior and encourage spontaneous purchasing of most consumers [10]. Price reductions are one of the most prominent sales promotion techniques to stimulate new behaviors toward the brand, but they reduce brand preference, confidence, and loyalty [25]. It promotes consumption in times of unwanted products [26]. In the long run, it may lose its effect on the consumer, and he begins to postpone purchasing decisions or brand value [2].

Free samples have a role in increasing sales volume and presenting new products to markets. It is responsible for doubling sales by 500% during the promotion and by 37% - 50% on the first day of promotion [27]. It is a way to experiment with new products that leads to purchases by 72% [28]. Purchasing vouchers are the weakest tool in stimulating purchasing behavior and are located in the last rank within sales promotion techniques [2]. It allows buyers toward undesired brands [29]. Using such a tool is not a real opportunity to purchase and pay back the reward value [5].

Relationship among immediate sales promotion techniques and brand recall

The consumer behavior literature decided that awareness (perception) is linked closely with brand-recall behavior. Recall requires accurate knowledge of the brands offered in different markets and stores [30]. The literature agreed that high accuracy of recall; creates a choice of the best brand in the market. The knowledge of the attributes and features of the brand means attention to information to make successful comparisons among the brands [31]. Price rebates enable store information to make effective purchase decisions [12]. Brand recall is the tendency to search for brands in a particular store. It means that the shopper spent time and money to collect information at the point of purchase and the number of products compared [32]. So the price reductions significantly affected brand recall and loyalty [33].

Purchasing voucher tools is widely used to attract consumers towards

products and brands. Purchasing vouchers is a low-cost tool in a rapidly changing economic environment [34]. Purchasing vouchers have been used in the United States to recover more than 3.3 \$ billion in the global crisis between 2008-2011. Purchasing vouchers may improve the brand experience more than other sales promotion tools [35]. From a retailer's perspective, purchasing vouchers attracts new buyers, switchers, and real dealers [34]. Purchasing vouchers are easy to understand and recognize, so it is an effective tool for shaping underlying perceptions, improving brand recall, and evaluating future purchase decisions [36].

Free samples involve a free-cost experience of the brand then the consumer may adopt the brand in the future [37]. The incremental uses of free samples affect consumer behavior, specifically brand recall and selection [38]. Specialists agreed that the free samples technique has a high impact on brand recall behavior; it is a technique that encourages trying new products, then enhancing the memory that stimulates the purchasing process [39]. Free samples are used to sell the product in global markets, especially in the early stages of the product life cycle, and also raise brand recall in less developed and low-share markets [10].

Sales promotion techniques have a role in building the promotional awareness of the shopper, especially if he knows the brand, and searching for the fit promotional information. Promotional awareness creates price awareness. It enables the shopper to price recall in times of discounts and offers compared to other periods. This price recall gives the shopper the power to price estimates [40]. Sales promotion is a reason for purchasing from stores, and it keeps the information in shoppers' minds, especially those related to discounted cheap products. So, moving from one store to another is arguably more about looking for price reductions than looking for products [41].

The literature classifies sales promotion techniques in terms of immediately and liquidity. The difference is due to the advantages and features offered to consumers [42]. Immediate techniques are critical and have low value to the product, and most consumers are looking for instant promotional tools. It improves buying intent and strengthens immediate financial return. The popular tools are price rebates, purchase vouchers, and free samples [29]. Despite its significant benefits, it may negatively affect the brand's image and products because it is measured immediately at the point of sale [43].

Immediate sales promotion is more spontaneous by the shoppers and may add less value to the product, and most consumers like such tools because it improves buying intent and reduces consumer interaction compared to non-instant [39]. Instant techniques for short-term selling goals and immediate rewards due to purchasing [4]. But many studies warn against using these rewards to evaluate future purchases [20]. It, therefore, promotes negative recall towards discounted brands and their brand awareness and image in general [9]. These tools focus on the immediate benefits rather than the cumulative impact of offerings on the future behavior of the consumer.

Sampling method data collection plan

The research population includes all non-Saudi workers in middle-income group residents in Riyadh. There are no official estimates of the number of middle-income foreigners in Saudi Arabia. The number of foreign workers in the private sector in Riyadh 3.4 million in 2021 (Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, 2021). The proportional stratified method used. This technique based on dividing the actual population into segments according to income. The statistical tables found that the recommended sample size was 387 elements, and 850 questionnaires distributed to the research population. The researchers excluded the people who have more than 20 thousand riyals, or less than 4000 riyals monthly, by the Ministry of Labour and human Resources decision of 2021. The questionnaire distributed to non-Saudi residents at weekend discounts at the points of sale. Table 1 indicates the non-Saudi workers according to monthly income. It shows that middle-income people between 4-20 thousand S.R accounted for 50.3% of the sample size. This number represents the sample size of the study. The unit of analysis is foreign workers in the private sector in Riyadh, the middle-income people who buy discounted products from retail stores (Table 1).

Measurement and data analysis

The Questionnaire is the research tool to collect the primary data needed for this study. It is developed according to previous studies and literature. The Likert five-point scale was used. The response levels start from 1- 5. The response level refers to the compatibility between the item and the opinion of the respondent. The value (5) means "strongly agree" while (1) means "Strongly disagree. The descriptive statistics analysis to characterize data such as arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and relative frequencies.

Descriptive analysis of data

Sales promotion techniques: The independent variable "Sales promotion techniques" consists of 18 items. The arithmetic mean of the variable was high (3.728), meaning that the perceived level of sales promotion techniques was high, and a standard deviation of 0.927. A simple analysis of sales promotion techniques is as follow:

Price reductions: includes 6 items. It indicates the high level of responses by respondents. The study finds that price reductions are a reason for the purchase, a source of a good purchase deal, a sufficient for early purchase, and the adoption of new products. The use of price reductions is high according to the arithmetic mean (4.028) and a standard deviation (0.811).

Free samples: Includes 6 items. 5 of 6 items have a high degree of response, while one item is moderated (item 6). The use of free samples was a reason for purchase, and half of the samples consider it as part of a good purchase deal, and a real opportunity to adopt new products, and early and additional purchases. Free samples recorded a high arithmetic mean (3.57) and a standard deviation (1.0297). Purchasing vouchers include 6 items that recorded a high level of response. The use of purchasing vouchers is a sufficient reason for early purchases in large quantities and for adopting new products. The use of purchase vouchers recorded a high value for the arithmetic mean (3.58), and a standard deviation (0.94).

Brand recall: It consists of 5 items, all of which have a high degree of response. A brand recall means telling others about purchasing experience, price recall of discounted products, and discovering counterfeit brands during discounts. It allows comparing competing brands to build effective decisions and better deals. The brand recall has a high value for the arithmetic mean (3.93) and a standard deviation of (0.798).

Validity and reliability tests for measurement model

Discriminate validity: This is the degree to which items differ in the scale and measures the level of interference and correlation between the constructs [44]. It includes cross loading test. It indicates that the value of each Item in the latent variable should be higher than other variables. Table 2 shows the

coefficient value per item within the initial variable varies from other variables in the matrix. So, it means there is no correlation between those items and other variables. Arguably, that current place is the best for those items.

Convergent validity: The level of agreement between the items in construct, to measure the same concept. It consists of three tests [44]. Individual Item Value: a level of reliability that measures the level of consistency between many items in the constructed scale. Each item should be associated with other items in the construct. The acceptable value of the test is higher than 0.7. According to Table 3, all items are statistically accepted. Composite Alpha: The statistical rule considers that acceptance of the latent variable (Latent Variable) requires the test value to be greater than 0.7 [44]. Table 4 shows that the IV and DV have met the statistical requirements, and Table 1 shows that result. Average Variety Extracted: The statistical rule considers the minimum test rule is 0.5. The results of Table 4 show that all variables have values greater than 0.5, thus all statistical requirements are proved [45].

Research hypothesis

The first hypothesis says that a statistically significant impact of instant sales promotion techniques on brand recall by the middle-income residents in Riyadh is at the significance level 5%. The first hypothesis is that there are two main variables: the IV expresses the immediate sales promotion techniques used by stores in Riyadh. The DV reflects the brand recall. Three programs give immediate rewards and incentives to customers at the point of purchase: price reductions, free samples, and purchasing vouchers.

Table 2 shows the statistical results using the structural equations modeling SEM. The Bootstrapping results in 500 times to calculate the P-Value indicator used to measure the directional relationship between the IV and DV. The statistical rule says that the recommended P-Value is lower than the 5% probability of error, which means accepting the directional relationship between the two variables and vice versa [44]. According to the results of the PLS Algorithm 300 times, P-Value immediate sales promotion tools were for price reductions (0.122) and for purchasing vouchers (0.599) are more than the permitted level of 5%, while they were less than 5% for free samples (0.031).

The previous outcome shows that the directional relationship between price reductions, purchasing vouchers, and brand recall are not statistically proven. There is a positive relationship between free samples and brand recall by customers residing in Riyadh. Based on the Standard Beta value used to measure this relationship, a strong positive correlation between the free samples and the brand recall (0.351). As a result, the overall three sub-variables called immediate sales promotion techniques and using the same statistical analysis very high positive relationship between instant sales promotion techniques and brand recall in the discount stores in Riyadh (0.553).

Table 1. Sample size.

Income Group	N.	%
Less than 4000 (Low Income)	349	41.1
4 – less than 20000 (Middle Income)	427	50.3
More Than 20000 (High Income)	73	8.6
Total	850	100

Table 2. Path coefficients of research hypotheses.

H	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	T-Value	P-Value	Decision	f ²	R ²	GoF	Q ²
H0 ₁	Price Discounts → Brand Recall	0.275	0.178	1.547	0.122	No Signifiant Effect	0.095	0.254	-	0.169
Ho ₂	Free Samples → Brand Recall	0.351	0.163	2.161	0.031	Strong Signifiant Effect	0.151	-	0.508	-
HO ₃	Vouchers → Brand Recall	0.110	0.208	0.527	0.599	No Signifiant Effect	0.016	-	-	-
HO	Instant Sales Promotion → Brand Recall	0.553	0.082	6.750	0.000	Strong Signifiant Effect	0.440	0.287	0.306	0.171

Table 3. Discriminate validity – cross loading.

Construct	Items	Price Discounts	Free Samples	Vouchers	Recall
Price discounts (D)	D1	0.666	0.299	0.182	0.218
	D2	0.681	0.187	0.396	0.233
	D3	0.682	0.299	0.131	0.362
	D4	0.724	0.054	0.044	0.344
	D5	0.819	0.409	0.403	0.345
	D6	0.734	0.194	0.066	0.232
Free samples (S)	S1	0.208	0.800	0.205	0.392
	S2	0.421	0.928	0.210	0.489
	S3	0.358	0.718	0.141	0.392
	S4	0.228	0.894	0.332	0.396
	S5	0.303	0.908	0.291	0.372
	S6	0.180	0.892	0.264	0.379
Vouchers (C)	C1	0.184	0.238	0.883	0.253
	C2	0.130	0.045	0.825	0.120
	C3	0.023	0.183	0.734	0.075
	C4	0.147	0.178	0.847	0.115
	C5	0.321	0.374	0.865	0.284
	C6	0.173	0.218	0.852	0.289
Recall (R)	R1	0.435	0.255	0.186	0.737
	R2	0.421	0.421	0.246	0.872
	R3	0.308	0.509	0.253	0.826
	R4	0.345	0.345	0.234	0.922
	R5	0.114	0.252	0.166	0.730
Construct	Price Discounts	Free Samples	Vouchers	Recall	
Price discounts	0.720	-	-	-	
Free samples	0.336	0.860	-	-	
Vouchers	0.229	0.276	0.836	-	
Recall	0.418	0.474	0.270	0.821	

Table 4. Summary of results of measurement model – convergent validity of successful items.

Construct	Item	Factor Loading	Cronbach,S Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Ave
Price discounts (D)	D1	0.666	0.815	0.865	0.518
	D2	0.681	-	-	-
	D3	0.682	-	-	-
	D4	0.724	-	-	-
	D5	0.819	-	-	-
	D6	0.734	-	-	-
Free samples (S)	S1	0.8	0.927	0.944	0.739
	S2	0.928	-	-	-
	S3	0.718	-	-	-
	S4	0.894	-	-	-
	S5	0.908	-	-	-
	S6	0.892	-	-	-
Vouchers (C)	C1	0.883	0.919	0.933	0.699
	C2	0.825	-	-	-
	C3	0.734	-	-	-
	C4	0.847	-	-	-
	C5	0.865	-	-	-
	C6	0.852	-	-	-
Recall (R)	R1	0.737	0.879	0.911	0.674
	R2	0.872	-	-	-
	R3	0.826	-	-	-
	R4	0.922	-	-	-
	R5	0.73	-	-	-

Analysis shows the impact factor f^2 to determine the power of IVs to explain the differences in DV. According to the statistical base, the f^2 value between 0.02 and 0.15 means weak impacted level and between 0.15–0.35 means moderately affected. While a value of above 0.35 indicates a strong impact of IV on DV [46]. In this sense, the f^2 of price reductions (0.095), free

samples (0.151), and purchasing vouchers (0.016). The f^2 of overall immediate sales promotion techniques is 0.153. So there is a moderate impact of free samples on the brand recall on the one hand. All sales promotion techniques in the study have moderately impacted the brand recall of foreign workers in Riyadh.

The R^2 coefficient of determination is a complement part of the P-Value previously calculated. The R^2 refers to the power of the IV to explain differences in the DV [44]. The statistical decision rule shows that the R^2 value below 0.12 represents the weak power to explain the differences in the DV. The R^2 between 0.12 and 0.26 explains the moderated differences in the DV, while the value above 0.26 indicates a high-power explanation [47]. The use of free samples has a high power to explain the differences in brand recall (0.351), and the results show that the overall immediate sales promotion techniques have a high power to explain the variations in the brand recall by foreign customers residing in Riyadh (0.129).

To diagnose the predictive capacity in the regression model Q^2 test was used. The statistical rule says that Q^2 above 0.00 indicates a predictive capability of the model used [46]. Accordingly, the results of Table 2 showed Q^2 for free samples (0.169) and immediate sales promotion tools (0.171). This value is above the permitted value (0.00). As a result, there is a high predictive ability to use immediate sales promotion tools on brand recall by foreign customers in the stores in Riyadh.

The Goodness of Fit to resolve the quality of the regression model. The GoF test is an indicator of the quality of the performance of structural models. The statistical rule states that the GOF test value above 0.36 indicates that the regression model is highly appropriate [48]. Thus, according to the test values GoF shown in Table 2 (0.508 and 0.306), the regression models used are appropriate to the nature of the research variables and a high degree.

Discussion and Recommendations

The current study is consistent with many other findings that confirmed the impact of sales promotion techniques on purchasing behavior [3,20]. In detail, the current study focused on purchasing behavior measured by brand recall reaching 71% of middle-income workers. The recall behavior has many indicators: positive recommendations for others about purchasing experience at 72.5%, price recall at 70%, discovering fake brands at 65%, recall competitors at 67.5%, and making successful comparisons at 80%.

The key objective is measuring the effectiveness of immediate sales promotion techniques: price reductions, free samples, and purchasing vouchers. It shows that immediate sales promotion techniques; raised brand recall with 68% of middle-income people. This result is consistent with other studies that confirm the close relationship between sales promotion and brand recall. Brand recall requires accurate knowledge of brands in different stores [30], and the high level of recall stimulates selecting the best brand in the market. Knowing characteristics and advantages facilitates benchmarking with other brands. Sales promotion techniques are the pillars of the marketing communication strategy and are most influential in brand recall [49-51].

Back to immediate sales promotion techniques, price reductions are a reason for 90% of middle-income people to buy. Therefore 72.5% of customers show a good purchasing deal and an opportunity to try new products (60%). It is also a source of accelerated purchase decisions (87.5%), increased quantity, and acceptance of new products (70% and 82.5%). In sum, price reductions represent an immediate short-term strategy to stimulate demand, gain market share and increase sales [4]. Price reductions are an easy-to-implement promotional method and are a high incentive to buy only. Therefore, studies show that the information provided by price reductions is a reason to recall discounted brands on the market [33]. However, a previous study by researchers [4], showed that price reductions do not lead to brand awareness, which is consistent with the current finding that causes a conflict between the marketing and communication objectives of price reductions. This clash makes price reductions an unaffected tool for brand recall by the middle-income group. Many studies have not confirmed the effect of price reductions but consider it a quick free source of price information. As a result, it is a factor in the purchasing process [14,51,52].

Free samples were a reason to buy brands from 62.5% of customers, and more than half of the customers use free samples to get a good deal. According to 67.5%, it is an opportunity to try new products, stimulate purchases (52.5%),

and raise purchases (35%), and it is a reason to buy new products 55% of customers. Free samples are less immediate than other tools (price reductions and purchasing vouchers). The study shows a highly positive impact of free samples on brand recall. It is a credible tool because of no additional costs and obligations on the customer for urgent or future purchases [32]. It also allows product experimentation, reduced purchasing risk, and enhanced recall. Perhaps, for this reason, brand recall is associated with the five senses of free samples touch, smell, taste, and seen [4].

The lack of impact of purchasing vouchers on brand recall is proven. Although purchasing vouchers a reason to buy the brand (70%), provide a good deal (62.5%), try new products (52.5%), stimulate purchasing (57.5%), buy more products (45%), and trigger purchasing of new products for 50% of customers. Overall, 56.2% of customers perceived the importance of vouchers in retail stores. However, the discount value of the voucher played a role in shaping the perceived value of the promotion, it impacted the buying intent from other brands, and the voucher's face value may increase the purchase rate [37]. Therefore, purchasing vouchers from classical advertising tools stimulates immediate purchasing compared to others. Purchasing vouchers affects the expectations and perceptions of a particular group of consumers and is more oriented and focused [53]. The products used for purchasing vouchers are consumer products, and purchasing vouchers is favorable to retailers and producers in consumer markets [54].

Marketing Implications

This study aimed at measuring the impact of immediate sales promotion techniques on brand recall. The immediate features focused on the short term at the point of purchase at the moment of the promotion. Studies have agreed that immediate sales promotion techniques can raise brand awareness, but the most features are their impact on sales, frequent purchases, expanding the market, and avoiding competitors. The immediate tools may not be able to build long-term relationships and achieve the communication goals between the client and the brand. In many approved cases, the client gets cash savings, immediate rewards at the moment of purchase, spatial and brand value, and entertainment at less psychological and financial costs. After the promotion, the customers go back to brands that reflect his convictions, self-perceptions, and personality.

The study concludes with a variation in the impact of immediate sales promotion techniques on brand recall. This study is further evidence that immediate sales promotion techniques are less powerful in expanding market shares, raising price sensitivity, and increasing brand image in the future. Behavioral studies have shown that the most benefits of immediate techniques financially oriented without considerations for communication features. This result defects the customer impressions about the brand and accelerates the disposal of unusual customers looking for financial benefits only. A recent study shows that price reductions and purchasing vouchers were less powerful in communication and brand recall [4]. It showed that free samples are more credible and enhance brand recall. Using more immediate sales promotion techniques in future studies provide further evidence about relations among variables in different markets and stores. All of the above provides a broader framework to understand the process of sales promotion techniques accurately.

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