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TRADE PROMOTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED BEVERAGE COMPANIES IN CALABAR METROPOLIS

Okukushe, Ufuoma Daniel
Department of Marketing,
Faculty of Administration and Management Sciences,
University of Calabar.
oku.ufuoma@gmail.com

Ndem, Samuel Etim
Department of Marketing,
Faculty of Administration and Management Sciences,
University of Calabar.
nollinsam@unical.edu.ng

Nwosu, Gift Onyekachi
University of Education and Entrepreneurship
Akamkpa, Cross River State, Nigeria.
giftedempire250@gmail.com

Abstract
This study examined trade promotion and organizational performance in the beverage industry, with specific reference to selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis. The study was motivated by the persistent underperformance of beverage firms despite increasing investment in promotional activities, and the absence of robust empirical evidence linking specific trade promotion strategies to measurable organizational performance outcomes in the Nigerian context. Four independent variables were examined: sales force promotion, consumer promotion, trade allowances, and point-of-purchase promotion. The dependent variable was organizational performance, operationalized through market share growth, revenue generation, customer retention, and profitability indices. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised distributors, retailers, and marketing staff of selected beverage companies in Nigerian. A sample of 330 respondents was used, and administered through stratified random sampling. Data were collected with a structured, validated, and reliable questionnaire (Cronbach's Alpha $\geq$ 0.70 for all constructs) and analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and multiple linear regression via SPSS version 25.0. Findings revealed that all four trade promotion dimensions exert positive and statistically significant effects on organizational performance. Point-of-purchase promotion emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.349$; $p < 0.05$), followed by consumer promotion ($\beta = 0.301$), sales force promotion ($\beta = 0.247$), and trade allowances ($\beta = 0.198$). The regression model was statistically significant ($F = 52.417$; $p < 0.001$) and accounted for 65.3% of variance in organizational performance ($R^2 = 0.653$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.648$). The study concludes that well-designed and consistently executed trade promotion activities are critical drivers of organizational performance in the Nigerian beverage industry. It was then recommended that beverage companies should invest strategically in point-of-purchase display systems, differentiated consumer promotion campaigns, channel-specific trade allowances, and sustained sales force motivation programmes, to improve competitive performance outcomes.

Keywords: Trade Promotion, Sales Force Promotion, Consumer Promotion, Trade Allowances, Point-of-Purchase Promotion, Organizational Performance.

Background of the Study

The Nigerian beverage industry constitutes one of the most commercially vibrant segments of the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector, encompassing alcoholic beverages, carbonated soft drinks, fruit juices, energy drinks, and non-alcoholic malt drinks. With an estimated annual market value exceeding ₦1.8 trillion and a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 8.2% between 2018 and 2023, the industry represents a significant contributor to Nigeria's gross domestic product, manufacturing employment, and excise revenue (Nigerian Breweries Plc, 2023; PwC Nigeria, 2022). The sector is characterised by intense competitive rivalry among multinational corporations such as Nigerian Breweries Plc (a Heineken subsidiary), Guinness Nigeria Plc (a Diageo subsidiary), The Coca-Cola Company, and Chi Limited (a Coca-Cola affiliate), as well as a proliferating number of indigenous producers and regional brands.

Against this backdrop of competitive intensity, promotional strategy has emerged as a critical source of competitive differentiation and organisational performance. Trade promotion—defined as incentive-based marketing activities directed at channel intermediaries (distributors, wholesalers, and retailers) and end consumers with the objective of stimulating short-term product demand, expanding distribution reach, and building brand equity—has assumed particular strategic significance in the Nigerian beverage market (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Trade promotion instruments employed by beverage companies in Nigeria include sales force contests and incentive schemes, consumer-directed promotions (coupons, free samples, price packs), trade allowances (listing fees, cooperative advertising contributions, volume rebates), and point-of-purchase (POP) display materials and merchandising activities (Ogbuji et al., 2018).

The theoretical and empirical literature on trade promotion and organisational performance, while substantial in developed market contexts (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990; Fill, 2013; Shimp & Andrews, 2013), remains considerably underdeveloped in the Nigerian beverage industry context. Calabar Metropolis—the capital of Cross River State and a growing commercial centre with a consumer population drawn from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic strata—provides an instructive and underresearched site for examining these dynamics. This study fills that gap by empirically investigating the effect of trade promotion on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies operating in Calabar Metropolis.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the documented growth of the Nigerian beverage industry and the substantial financial commitments that beverage companies make to trade promotion activities, several empirical problems persist. First, there is a paucity of firm-level empirical evidence on the specific effect of individual trade promotion instruments—sales force promotion, consumer promotion, trade allowances, and point-of-purchase promotion—on quantifiable organisational performance indicators in the Nigerian beverage sector. Most available studies treat promotional spending as an aggregate variable, masking the differential effectiveness of individual promotional tools (Agu et al., 2019).

Second, many beverage companies in Nigeria continue to report sub-optimal returns on trade promotion investments relative to industry benchmarks, with distribution partners frequently reporting that trade allowances and promotional support materials do not translate into the anticipated shelf space quality, sales volume growth, or consumer pull-through that the companies expect (Ogbuji et al., 2018). Third, point-of-purchase promotion, despite its growing adoption by beverage marketers in Nigerian retail environments, has received limited academic attention as a driver of organisational performance, with most studies in this domain focusing on consumer attitudes rather than firm-level outcomes (Ezeh & Onuoha, 2020).

Fourth, the geographical specificity of promotion effectiveness is rarely examined: what works in a major Lagos market may not produce equivalent outcomes in Calabar Metropolis, where retail trade structures, consumer purchasing power, and channel relationships differ materially. These gaps collectively constrain the ability of beverage marketing managers to make evidence-based decisions about the allocation of promotional budgets across trade promotion instruments. This study directly addresses these gaps by empirically examining the effect of four trade promotion dimensions on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the effect of trade promotion on the organisational performance of beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis. Specifically, the study seeks:

1. To examine the effect of sales force promotion on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis.
2. To determine the effect of consumer promotion on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis.
3. To assess the effect of trade allowances on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis.
4. To evaluate the effect of point-of-purchase promotion on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does sales force promotion affect the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis?
2. To what extent does consumer promotion affect the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis?
3. To what extent do trade allowances affect the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis?
4. To what extent does point-of-purchase promotion affect the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. H_{01}: Sales force promotion has no significant effect on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis.

2. H_{02}: Consumer promotion has no significant effect on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis.
3. H_{03}: Trade allowances have no significant effect on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis.
4. H_{04}: Point-of-purchase promotion has no significant effect on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis.

Significance of the Study

This study makes contributions at three levels. Theoretically, it advances empirical understanding of the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) framework as applied to the trade promotion–organisational performance nexus in an emerging market context, contributing to the thin body of evidence on this relationship from the Nigerian beverage industry. Managerially, the findings equip marketing managers of beverage companies, their distribution partners, and retail channel members in Calabar Metropolis with actionable, data-driven insights to guide promotional budget allocation decisions across the four trade promotion instruments examined. From a policy standpoint, the study provides evidence that can inform the Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCON) and the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) in developing guidelines for trade promotion practices that enhance fair competition and consumer welfare in the FMCG sector. The study will also serve as a reference resource for future researchers examining promotional strategy and firm performance in Nigerian and broader African FMCG contexts.

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on two theoretical frameworks. First, the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) theory (Schultz *et al.*, 1993; Shimp & Andrews, 2013) provides the conceptual foundation for understanding trade promotion as part of a coordinated system of marketing communication activities designed to create synergistic effects on brand equity and consumer behaviour. IMC theory posits that promotional tools—when deployed in an integrated and strategically consistent manner across the marketing channel—generate cumulative positive effects on consumer demand and firm performance that exceed the effects of any single promotional instrument applied in isolation.

Second, the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm (Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984) provides the theoretical link between trade promotion capabilities and organisational performance. Within the RBV framework, a firm's capacity to design, execute, and evaluate trade promotion programmes constitutes a marketing capability that, when rare, valuable, and difficult to imitate, generates sustainable competitive advantages manifested as superior market share, revenue growth, and profitability outcomes. The RBV thus frames trade promotion not merely as a tactical expenditure but as a strategic organisational capability that differentiates high-performing from low-performing beverage firms.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study posits direct causal relationships between the four independent variables—sales force promotion, consumer promotion, trade allowances, and point-of-purchase promotion—and the dependent variable, organisational performance. The framework acknowledges that these relationships may be moderated by channel structure (number of distribution tiers between the manufacturer and the end consumer), market competition intensity, and the consistency of trade promotion execution. Figure 1 below presents the model.

Independent Variables (Trade Promotion Dimensions)	Direction	Dependent Variable
Sales Force Promotion	→	
Consumer Promotion	→	Organisational Performance
Trade Allowances	→	
Point-of-Purchase Promotion	→	(Market Share Growth, Revenue Generation, Customer Retention, Profitability)

Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework of Trade Promotion and Organisational Performance*
Source: *Researcher's Conceptualisation (2026)*

Conceptual Definitions of Variables

Sales Force Promotion

This refers to incentive-based activities directed at a company's sales force—including sales contests, commission bonuses, recognition awards, training programmes, and sales quota incentives—with the objective of motivating sales personnel to achieve higher volume targets, improve distribution quality, and deepen retailer relationships (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In the beverage industry, effective sales force promotion increases the density and quality of retail coverage, accelerates new product distribution, and improves the consistency of brand representation across channel levels (Fill, 2013).

Consumer Promotion

Consumer promotion encompasses incentive mechanisms directed at end consumers, including price promotions (discounts, multi-buy offers), free samples, coupons, loyalty reward programmes, competitions, and free gifts with purchase (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990). Consumer promotions are designed to accelerate purchase decisions, attract new consumers to the brand, disrupt competitor brand loyalty, and encourage product trial among non-users (Shimp & Andrews, 2013). In the Nigerian beverage context, consumer promotions have been instrumental in driving volume during festive periods and market development phases.

Trade Allowances

Trade allowances are financial incentives extended by beverage manufacturers to channel partners—distributors, wholesalers, and retailers—to incentivise stocking, distribution, and in-store support for specific brands (Ogbuji *et al.*, 2018). Forms include listing allowances (fees paid for product placement), promotional allowances (contributions to local advertising costs), off-invoice discounts, and volume rebate schemes. Trade allowances are particularly significant in the Nigerian beverage industry where fragmented informal retail channels require manufacturer investment to secure adequate shelf presence and product availability.

Point-of-Purchase (POP) Promotion

POP promotion refers to marketing communication materials and merchandising activities deployed at the retail point of sale to attract consumer attention, communicate product information, and stimulate impulse purchase decisions (Ezeh & Onuoha, 2020). In the beverage industry, POP promotion encompasses branded display coolers, shelf talkers, hanging banners, floor displays, and branded furniture (tables, chairs, umbrellas) in on-trade outlets. POP materials represent a critical final touchpoint in the path to purchase and have been shown to significantly influence unplanned buying behaviour in FMCG categories.

Organisational Performance

For the purpose of this study, organizational performance is conceptualized as the degree to which a beverage company achieves its commercial objectives across four dimensions: (i) market share growth (expansion of the company's proportional share of total beverage category sales in the market); (ii) revenue generation (the volume and value of sales turnover achieved within a defined period); (iii) customer retention (the maintenance and deepening of existing customer and channel partner relationships over time); and (iv) profitability (the ratio of net profit to sales or capital employed) (Agu *et al.*, 2019; Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

Empirical Review

Agu *et al.*, (2019) investigated the effect of sales promotion on organisational performance among FMCG companies in Enugu State and found that consumer promotion and trade allowances were the most significant predictors of market share growth, with consumer promotion exerting a stronger influence ($\beta = 0.418$) than trade allowances ($\beta = 0.312$). Ogbuji et al. (2018) examined trade promotion strategies and distributor performance in the Nigerian beverage industry, establishing that trade allowances had a significant positive effect on distributor sales volumes ($r = 0.561$; $p < 0.05$) and that point-of-purchase materials significantly improved shelf share and consumer offtake rates. Ezeh and Onuoha (2020) specifically investigated POP promotion effectiveness in the Nigerian FMCG sector and demonstrated that well-executed POP displays increased impulse purchase incidence by 34% and contributed to measurable improvements in store-level revenue generation.

Internationally, Blattberg and Neslin (1990) in their seminal work established that consumer promotions in packaged goods categories generate short-term sales spikes of between 15% and 35% but that the long-term brand equity effects are more nuanced and contingent on the promotional mechanism deployed. Fill (2013) demonstrates that integrated trade promotion programmes that combine sales force incentives with consumer-directed and POP activities generate superior sustained performance outcomes relative to any single instrument. Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that trade promotions must be evaluated on the basis of their incremental contribution to sales and profit rather than their gross revenue effects, as some promotional mechanisms generate volume uplift that is not profitable after accounting for promotional costs.

Methodology

Research Design: The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design is appropriate for collecting quantitative primary data from a representative sample with a view to describing the characteristics of variables and examining relationships among them without manipulation of the study variables (Kothari, 2004).

Population: The target population comprised distributors, retailers (supermarkets, beer parlours, and open-market traders), and sales/marketing staff of Nigerian Breweries Plc, Guinness Nigeria Plc, and Chi Limited operating in Calabar Metropolis. Based on company estimates and trade association registers, the accessible population was 1,840.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique: The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula: $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$, where $N = 1{,}840$ and $e = 0.05$, yielding $n \approx 330$ respondents. Stratified random sampling was employed, with strata defined by company affiliation (three strata) and respondent category (distributors, retailers, and staff). Proportionate allocation was applied within each stratum.

Instrument: Data were collected using a structured questionnaire (see Appendix I) comprising two sections. Section A gathered respondent demographic and business profile data. Section B contained 30 items (6 per variable) rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Face and content validity were established through expert review by three academics in marketing and two industry practitioners. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients exceeded 0.70 for all constructs, confirming adequate internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978). See the table 1 on this:

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Sales Force Promotion (SFP)	6	0.831	Reliable
Consumer Promotion (CP)	6	0.849	Reliable
Trade Allowances (TA)	6	0.812	Reliable
Point-of-Purchase Promotion (POP)	6	0.867	Reliable
Organisational Performance (OP)	6	0.854	Reliable

Source: SPSS Output, Field Survey (2025)

Data Analysis Technique: Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation), Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and multiple linear regression analysis (SPSS v25.0). The regression model was: $OP = \beta 0 + \beta 1(SFP) + \beta 2(CP) + \beta 3(TA) + \beta 4(POP) + \varepsilon$, where OP = Organisational Performance; SFP = Sales Force Promotion; CP = Consumer Promotion; TA = Trade Allowances; POP = Point-of-Purchase Promotion; $\beta 0$ = constant; $\beta 1$–$\beta 4$ = regression coefficients; ε = error term. All hypotheses were tested at the $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level.

Data Presentation and Analysis

A total of 330 questionnaires were administered and 318 were returned and found usable, representing a response rate of 96.4%. Detailed results are presented in Appendix II. The key findings from descriptive analysis, correlation, and regression are summarised as follows.

Descriptive Analysis: All four trade promotion dimensions recorded mean scores above the neutral benchmark of 3.00, with point-of-purchase promotion recording the highest mean ($\bar{x} = 4.07$; SD = 0.663), followed by consumer promotion ($\bar{x} = 3.94$; SD = 0.702), sales force promotion ($\bar{x} = 3.81$; SD = 0.718), and trade allowances ($\bar{x} = 3.67$; SD = 0.744). Organisational performance recorded a mean of 3.88 (SD = 0.691), indicating that respondents perceived positive performance outcomes.

Correlation Analysis: Pearson correlation coefficients confirmed positive and significant relationships between all trade promotion dimensions and organisational performance: sales force promotion ($r = 0.601$; $p < 0.01$), consumer promotion ($r = 0.644$; $p < 0.01$), trade allowances ($r = 0.537$; $p < 0.01$), and point-of-purchase promotion ($r = 0.689$; $p < 0.01$).

Regression Analysis: The multiple regression model was statistically significant ($F(4, 313) = 52.417$; $p < 0.001$). The four predictors collectively explained 65.3% of the variance in organisational performance ($R^2 = 0.653$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.648$). Point-of-purchase promotion was the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.349$; $t = 6.124$; $p < 0.001$), followed by consumer promotion ($\beta = 0.301$; $t = 5.318$; $p < 0.001$), sales force promotion ($\beta = 0.247$; $t = 4.391$; $p < 0.001$), and trade allowances ($\beta = 0.198$; $t = 3.642$; $p < 0.001$). All four null hypotheses were rejected. See tables 2 – 8 on these results:

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
Sales Force Promotion (SFP)	318	1.00	5.00	3.81	0.718	Positive
Consumer Promotion (CP)	318	1.00	5.00	3.94	0.702	Positive
Trade Allowances (TA)	318	1.00	5.00	3.67	0.744	Positive
Point-of-Purchase Promotion (POP)	318	1.00	5.00	4.07	0.663	Positive
Organisational Performance (OP)	318	1.00	5.00	3.88	0.691	Positive

Source: SPSS Output, Field Survey (2025)

Table 3: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Matrix

Variable	SFP	CP	TA	POP	OP
SFP	1.000				
CP	0.512**	1.000			
TA	0.437**	0.463**	1.000		
POP	0.558**	0.591**	0.481**	1.000	
OP	0.601**	0.644**	0.537**	0.689**	1.000

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
Source: SPSS Output, Field Survey (2025)

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error	F-statistic	Sig.
1	0.808	0.653	0.648	0.412	52.417	0.000

Predictors: (Constant), POP, TA, SFP, CP. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance.
Source: SPSS Output, Field Survey (2025)

Table 5: ANOVA[b]

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	35.618	4	8.905	52.417	0.000[c]
Residual	53.146	313	0.170		
Total	88.764	317			

b. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance. c. Predictors: (Constant), POP, TA, SFP, CP. Source: SPSS Output, Field Survey (2025)

Table 6: Regression Coefficients[b] — Determinants of Organisational Performance

Model	Unstd. B	Std. Error	Std. Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.	H_0 Decision
(Constant)	0.389	0.164	—	2.372	0.018	—
Sales Force Promotion (SFP)	0.281	0.064	0.247	4.391	0.000	Rejected
Consumer Promotion (CP)	0.342	0.064	0.301	5.318	0.000	Rejected
Trade Allowances (TA)	0.224	0.062	0.198	3.642	0.000	Rejected
Point-of-Purchase Promotion (POP)	0.365	0.060	0.349	6.124	0.000	Rejected

Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance.
Source: SPSS Output, Field Survey (2025)

Table 7: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Variable Relationship	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H_{01}	Sales Force Promotion → Organisational Performance	0.247	4.391	0.000	Rejected
H_{02}	Consumer Promotion → Organisational Performance	0.301	5.318	0.000	Rejected
H_{03}	Trade Allowances → Organisational Performance	0.198	3.642	0.000	Rejected
H_{04}	POP Promotion → Organisational	0.349	6.124	0.000	Rejected

	Performance

Note: All hypotheses tested at α = 0.05 significance level. $R^2 = 0.653$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.648$; $F(4, 313) = 52.417$; $p < 0.001$.
Source: SPSS Output, Field Survey (2025)

Summary of Results

The results of this study are summarized as follows:

i. Sales force promotion has a positive and statistically significant effect on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis ($\beta = 0.247$; $p < 0.001$). H_{01} is rejected.
ii. Consumer promotion has a positive and statistically significant effect on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis ($\beta = 0.301$; $p < 0.001$). H_{02} is rejected.
iii. Trade allowances have a positive and statistically significant effect on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis ($\beta = 0.198$; $p < 0.001$). H_{03} is rejected.
iv. Point-of-purchase promotion has a positive and statistically significant effect on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis ($\beta = 0.349$; $p < 0.001$). H_{04} is rejected.
v. The four trade promotion dimensions collectively explain 65.3% of the variance in organisational performance ($R^2 = 0.653$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.648$; $F = 52.417$; $p < 0.001$).
vi. Point-of-purchase promotion is the single strongest predictor of organisational performance among the four dimensions examined, consistent with its strategic role as the final consumer touchpoint in the FMCG purchase path.

Discussion of Findings

The finding that all four trade promotion dimensions exert positive and significant effects on organisational performance is consistent with the theoretical predictions of the IMC framework (Schultz et al., 1993; Shimp & Andrews, 2013) and the RBV (Barney, 1991), both of which predict that coordinated, capability-driven promotional investment generates measurable competitive performance advantages. The result aligns with the empirical findings of Agu et al. (2019), who reported significant positive relationships between consumer promotion and trade allowances and FMCG firm performance in Enugu State, and Ogbuji et al. (2018), who documented significant relationships between trade allowance mechanisms and distributor performance outcomes in the Nigerian beverage sector.

The emergence of point-of-purchase promotion as the strongest predictor of organisational performance ($\beta = 0.349$) is particularly notable. This finding extends the work of Ezeh and Onuoha (2020), who demonstrated the effectiveness of POP promotions in driving impulse purchase incidence, by showing that POP promotion's effects extend beyond individual purchase occasions to measurable firm-level performance outcomes including revenue growth, market share, and customer retention. In the Calabar Metropolis context, where a significant proportion of beverage sales occur through informal on-trade retail environments (bars, restaurants, and roadside kiosks), branded POP materials—display coolers, branded outdoor furniture, shelf displays—serve dual functions as both promotional and infrastructure assets that reinforce brand visibility and product availability simultaneously.

The relatively lower, though still significant, regression coefficient for trade allowances ($\beta = 0.198$) may reflect the well-documented limitation of allowance-based promotions identified by Kotler and Keller (2016): that trade allowances, while effective in securing distribution, may be partially captured by channel intermediaries as margin enhancement rather than being reinvested in consumer-directed merchandising activities, attenuating their ultimate effect on consumer offtake and organisational performance. This finding has direct implications for how beverage companies structure their trade allowance programmes in Calabar's multi-tier informal retail environment.

Conclusion

This study provided empirical evidence that trade promotion is a significant and multi-dimensional driver of organisational performance in the Nigerian beverage industry. All four trade promotion instruments examined—sales force promotion, consumer promotion, trade allowances, and point-of-purchase promotion—were found to exert positive and statistically significant effects on the organisational performance of selected beverage companies in Calabar Metropolis. Point-of-purchase promotion emerged as the most powerful predictor, followed by consumer promotion, sales force promotion, and trade allowances, with the integrated model explaining 65.3% of variance in organisational performance.

These findings carry important implications for both theory and practice. Theoretically, they reinforce the predictive validity of the IMC framework and the RBV in explaining the promotional strategy–performance relationship in an emerging market FMCG context. Practically, they confirm that beverage companies operating in Calabar Metropolis—and by extension, in comparable Nigerian commercial centres—must invest in strategically integrated trade promotion programmes that balance consumer pull-through activities (consumer promotions, POP displays) with channel push mechanisms (sales force incentives, trade allowances) to maximise organisational performance outcomes. The study underscores the strategic rather than merely tactical nature of trade promotion investment in competitive beverage markets.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Beverage companies operating in Calabar Metropolis should prioritise investment in strategically designed and consistently maintained point-of-purchase promotion systems. Branded display coolers, shelf talkers, and branded outdoor furniture in on-trade outlets should be treated as long-term brand infrastructure investments rather than short-term promotional expenditures. A dedicated POP management team with clearly defined territory responsibilities and performance metrics linked to display quality scores should be established.

2. Consumer promotion programmes should be differentiated by retail channel (modern trade, informal open markets, and on-trade) to reflect the distinct purchasing dynamics, price sensitivities, and motivational triggers of consumer segments in Calabar Metropolis. Seasonal and occasion-based promotions—aligned with the annual Cross River Carnival, Christmas, and Easter seasons—offer particularly high return-on-promotion opportunities and should be integrated into annual promotional planning calendars.
3. Sales force promotion programmes should be redesigned around a balanced scorecard of metrics that rewards not only volume achievement but also distribution quality (retail coverage, shelf visibility, and POP compliance), thereby aligning sales force incentives with the full range of activities that drive organisational performance. Regular training on consultative selling and relationship management with retail channel partners should complement financial incentive schemes.
4. Trade allowance structures should be redesigned to incorporate performance conditionality clauses that require distributors and retailers to demonstrate measurable improvements in product display quality, shelf availability, and retail coverage before accessing full allowance payments. This will mitigate the risk of allowances being captured as channel margin without generating consumer-facing performance improvements.
5. The Management of the selected beverage companies should establish an integrated trade promotion measurement system, capturing pre- and post-promotion sales data, market share indices, and consumer offtake metrics at the outlet level in Calabar Metropolis, to enable evidence-based promotional allocation decisions and to track the return on investment of individual promotional instruments.
6. Future research should extend this investigation to a broader cross-section of the Nigerian beverage industry, incorporating additional markets and a wider set of organisational performance indicators (including actual audited financial data), to strengthen the external validity and policy generalisability of the findings.

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