

Influence of Sales Promotional Strategies on Water Purifier Purchase: A Study

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ABSTRACT

Marketing is regarded as an activity and process that help in creating, exchanging and delivering the value not only to customers but also extended to the other stake holders such as clients, suppliers etc in general and society in particular. Marketing activity today has become more challenging due to frequent changes in the expectations levels of every stakeholder. Reaching and delighting the right customer with right product in a right time with right cost has become more challenging task for the companies. Majority of the companies fail today in this initiative. The basic purpose of this research paper is to investigate the influence of various sales promotion strategies on the purchasing behavior of consumers in water purifier market. After understanding the efficacy of various promotional tactics in the market, the paper aims at providing the better insights and strategies to optimize their promotional efforts not only for markets but also for the manufacturers.

The study considered a mix approach of collecting the quantitative data from 450 respondents through a structured questionnaire and qualitative data by observations and interviews with customers, industry experts, distributors, dealers and retailers who sell the water purifiers to consumers. The results of the study indicates that the sales promotion has significant impact on consumer purchasing behavior such as offers, special discounts, quantity offers, free trials etc. It was observed that demographic features play a crucial role in moderating the promotional effectiveness. Research finding clarifies and recommends of having a mixed and innovative approach of tailoring a hybrid promotional strategy of leveraging modern digital marketing channels and few traditional sales promotions strategies to drive consumer engagement and to further the sales of water purifiers.

The research study will contribute to further the literature on sales promotional activities by specifically focused on water purifier industry, the area which was ignored earlier and have received less attention in the yester years. The insights from this study will help the companies to device an effective and efficient promotional strategy which ultimately leads to increased market penetrations and better customer loyalty.

Keywords: Sales Promotion, Water purifiers, buying behavior, sales effectiveness, Communication, price discounts, customer loyalty,

INTRODUCTION

The water purifier industry in India has witnessed rapid growth in the last two decades due to rising concerns over health and water safety and more specifically post COVID 19. With increasing competition, manufacturers are compelled to differentiate themselves not only through product features but also through effective marketing and promotional strategies. Sales promotion, as a short-term incentive tool, plays a crucial role in stimulating consumer demand and influencing purchase decisions. Despite extensive research on sales promotions in FMCG and consumer durable sectors, the water purifier industry has received limited attention. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the influence of various sales promotional strategies on consumer purchase behavior in the water purifier market.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the effectiveness of different sales promotional strategies in influencing consumer purchase decisions.

- To analyze the role of pricing, communication channels, and promotional offers in consumer responses.
- To study the association between demographic factors and promotional strategy effectiveness.
- To provide recommendations for devising effective promotional strategies in the water purifier market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sales promotion is one of the most widely researched topics in consumer behavior and marketing strategy. It is defined as a set of incentive tools designed to stimulate quicker or greater purchase of a particular product or service by consumers or trade (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Traditionally, sales promotions include price discounts, coupons, free samples, gifts, loyalty programs, and contests, each influencing consumer behavior differently depending on product type, consumer demographics, and market context.

Studies have consistently shown that sales promotions affect both consumer purchase intention and brand switching behavior. Blattberg and Neslin (1990) argue that promotions serve as a short-term tool to increase sales but may also lead to long-term brand preference if executed effectively. Ndubisi and Moi (2005) found that consumers are more likely to change their purchase decisions when promotions align with their perceived value, especially in markets where risk reduction (health, safety) plays an important role. In the context of durable goods such as water purifiers, promotions can reduce perceived financial risk and encourage trial purchases.

Price related promotions are among the most effective tools in influencing purchase decisions. Monroe (2003) emphasized that consumers evaluate price not only as a monetary sacrifice but also as a signal of product quality. In markets like water purifiers, where trust and safety are paramount, consumers often prefer “reasonable” pricing over “low” pricing, since the latter may raise doubts about product quality. Ailawadi, Neslin, and Gedenk (2009) confirmed that value conscious consumers respond strongly to discounts, especially when they perceive the product as essential.

While price discounts are popular, non-price promotions such as gifts and bundled offers also play a role in creating added value. Shimp and Andrews (2013) highlight that free gifts enhance customer perceptions of fairness and reciprocity. Chandran and Morwitz (2006) suggested that promotions framed as “bonus packs” or free add-ons are more effective than equivalent price discounts because they enhance the sense of gain without reducing perceived product value. In water purifier sales, where recurring costs (filters, maintenance) are significant, non-price promotions can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The effectiveness of sales promotions depends not only on the incentive but also on the mode of communication. According to Belch and Belch (2018), promotional communication through pamphlets, print ads, and personal selling continues to be highly effective in markets with less digital penetration. On the other hand, digital communication (social media, influencer endorsements, email campaigns) is emerging as a dominant medium in urban markets (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). This duality suggests that a hybrid communication approach is necessary in industries like water purifiers that cater to both rural and urban consumers.

Research has shown that demographic variables such as income, age, and education moderate consumer responses to promotions (Gupta & Cooper, 1992; Neslin, 2002). Younger consumers may be more responsive to digital and experiential promotions, while older and middle-income groups often prefer traditional promotional formats such as discounts and pamphlets. Since water purifiers are a necessity-driven product, understanding these demographic differences is critical for designing effective promotional strategies.

Research Gap: Although extensive literature exists on sales promotions in FMCG and consumer durables, very few studies have focused on the water purifier industry. Given the unique context of this market health related necessity, trust in brand quality, and recurring service requirements promotional strategies may function differently than in other product categories. This study addresses this gap by exploring the influence of sales promotions on consumer purchase behavior specifically in the water purifier industry.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed-method research design considering both qualitative and quantitative data:

- **Quantitative data:** Collected from 450 respondents using a structured questionnaire across urban and semi-urban regions, out of which 434 questionnaires were found to be complete in all aspects were finally considered for analysis.
- **Qualitative data:** Obtained through observations, interviews with industry experts, distributors, dealers, and retailers.

Tools of Analysis: The study used descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages. Chi-square tests and correspondence analysis were conducted to examine associations between promotional strategies and consumer responses.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The data collected from 434 respondents were considered for data analysis. The results are presented as follows:

Table No. 01- Approach followed to sell products

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Others	5	1.2	1.2
Personal Selling	166	38.2	39.4
Through Dealers	14	3.2	42.6
Retail	220	50.7	93.3
Wholesale	29	6.7	100.0
Total	434	100.0	-

Table 1 analysis shows that retail outlets (50.7%) dominate the selling approach for water purifiers, followed by personal selling (38.2%). Very little selling occurs through wholesale and dealer networks. This suggests that consumers prefer direct interactions (retail and personal selling), likely due to the trust and assurance they seek when buying a necessity product such as a water purifier. Similar findings were noted by Belch and Belch (2018), who argued that direct selling remains effective for products involving health and safety concerns.

Table No.02- Which pricing attract you to purchase

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Others	4	.9	.9
Low Price	14	3.2	4.1
Normal Price	92	21.2	25.3
Discount Price	83	19.1	44.5
Reasonable Price	241	55.5	100.0

Total	434	100.0	-
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As per (Table 2), reasonable pricing (55.5%) is the most attractive factor influencing purchases, followed by normal and discounted prices. Low-price attraction is minimal (3.2%). This highlights that consumers associate reasonable prices with quality and trustworthiness. Since water purifiers are directly linked to health, “too low” a price may raise doubts about durability and safety (Monroe, 2003). The results validate the idea that in durable and health related goods, consumers are value conscious rather than bargain hunters (Ailawadi et al., 2009).

Table No.03-Which sales promotion attracted you to purchase the water purifier

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Others	149	34.3	34.3
Gifts	62	14.3	48.6
Buy one Get one free	23	5.3	53.9
Huge Discounts	200	46.1	100.0
Total	434	100.0	-

The data analysis figures in table 3 indicates that huge discounts (46.1%) are the most effective promotional strategy, followed by “other strategies” (34.3%) such as free services, filter replacement offers, etc. Gifts (14.3%) and “buy one get one free” (5.3%) play minor roles. Unlike FMCG where “buy one get one” is dominant, durable goods such as water purifiers gain more from price-based promotions (Blattberg & Neslin, 1990). This reflects that financial relief through discounts or value-added offers is more appealing than free product bundling in this industry.

Table No.04-Mode of communication to the customers

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Others	121	27.9	27.9
Pamphlets	216	49.8	77.6
Paper Ads	97	22.4	100.0
Total	434	100.0	-

According to (Table 4), pamphlets (49.8%) remain the primary communication tool, followed by paper ads (22.4%). Other forms (27.9%) include personal references, local events, and emerging digital methods. This underlines the continuing dominance of traditional offline media in semi-urban and rural markets where digital penetration is lower. At the same time, literature (Ashley & Tuten, 2015) emphasizes that digital media is growing, suggesting that firms should gradually adopt hybrid communication strategies.

Table No.05- Prices are helpful in attracting the customers

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Neutral	60	13.8	13.8

Agree	285	65.7	79.5
Strongly Agree	89	20.5	100.0
Total	434	100.0	-

The statistical analysis in table 5 reveals that 65.7% of respondents agree and 20.5% strongly agree that pricing strategies help attract customers. Only 13.8% remain neutral. This strongly supports the notion that pricing is a central driver of consumer purchase decisions in the water purifier market. It resonates with Gupta and Cooper's (1992) finding that consumers are highly sensitive to promotional price thresholds.

Table No.06-Marketing plans are effectively functioning

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Disagree	9	2.1	2.1
Neutral	75	17.3	19.4
Agree	275	63.4	82.7
Strongly Agree	75	17.3	100.0
Total	434	100.0	-

The analysed data in table 6 indicates that 63.4% agree and 17.3% strongly agree that current marketing plans are effective. Only 2.1% disagreed. This shows that the industry's promotional efforts are on the right track, though there remains scope for fine-tuning with innovative strategies. According to Shimp and Andrews (2013), marketing plan effectiveness increases when promotional strategies align with consumer value expectations as validated here.

Table No.07 - Response level for promotional strategies

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Less	4	.9	.9
Neutral	139	32.0	32.9
High	267	61.5	94.5
Very High	24	5.5	100.0
Total	434	100.0	-

The data analysis in table 7 shows that 61.5% rated the response level as high, while 32% remained neutral and 5.5% very high. Very few considered responses low. This indicates that consumers are highly receptive to promotional efforts, reaffirming the effectiveness of promotions in influencing purchase decisions. It aligns with Blattberg & Neslin's (1990) argument that sales promotion creates measurable short-term spikes in demand.

Table No.08-Profile of workforce in promoting the sales

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Based on requirement	197	45.4	45.4

Men Employees only	111	25.6	71.0
Men and Women	56	12.9	83.9
Completely women employees	70	16.1	100.0
Total	434	100.0	-

The statistical analysis in table 8 shows that 45.4% of workforce deployment is based on requirement, while 25.6% involve only men, 16.1% only women, and 12.9% a mix of both. This reflects a flexible deployment strategy in sales promotion, with reliance on requirement-based manpower allocation rather than strict gender roles. The involvement of women-only teams (16.1%) indicates a shift toward diverse workforce engagement in marketing roles, resonating with contemporary HR practices.

Association between marketing variables: The following analysis examines the association between marketing variables. Chi Square and Correspondence analysis were used to identify the association between these variables as most of these variables have been measured on nominal scales.

H₀ : Approach followed to sell products is not associated to type of sales promotion

H₁ : Approach followed to sell products is associated to type of sales promotion

Table No.09- Correspondence analysis table

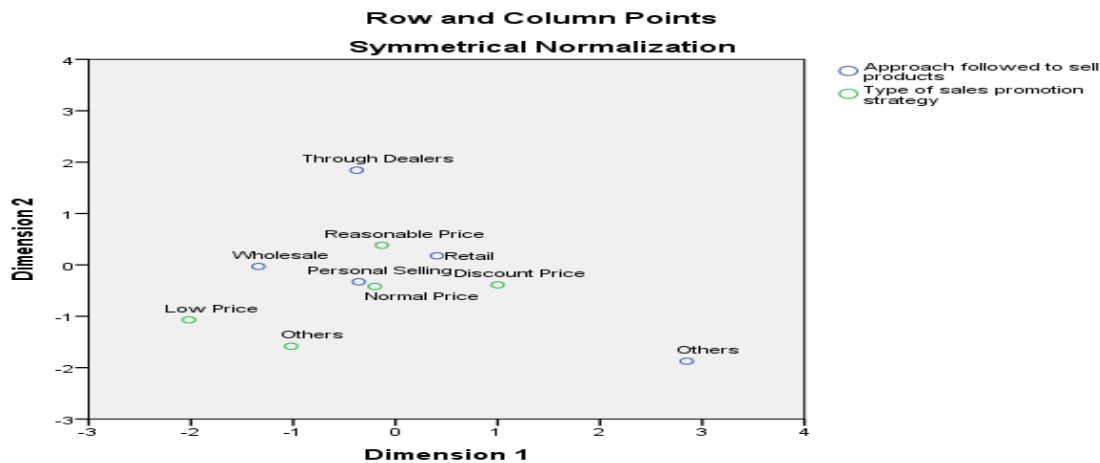
Type of sales promotion strategy	Approach followed to sell products					
	Others	Personal Selling	Through Dealers	Retail	Wholesale	Active Margin
Others	0	4	0	0	0	4
Low Price	0	9	0	0	5	14
Normal Price	0	46	0	41	5	92
Discount Price	5	22	0	56	0	83
Reasonable Price	0	85	14	123	19	241
Active Margin	5	166	14	220	29	434

Table No. 10- Summary

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Value	Singular
					Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	Correlation
								2
1	.351	.123			.634	.634	.038	-.040
2	.207	.043			.221	.855	.029	
3	.158	.025			.128	.983		

4	.057	.003			.017	1.000		
Total		.194	84.327	.000 ^a	1.000	1.000		
a. 16 degrees of freedom								

The summary in the above table depicts that the value of the chi-square test statistic is 84.327 and the corresponding p-value of the test statistic is $p = 0.000$. Since the p-value is less than our chosen significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis. An association was found between Approach followed to sell products and type of sales promotion.



Graph No.01 Correspondence Analysis Graph

The correspondence graph shown above states that majority of products are sold using personal selling at normal price. Next best selling happens at reasonable price and discounted price through retail. Sometimes wholesale selling also happens at reasonable price and normal price. Fewer sales happen through dealers and at low price and other strategies.

Selling Approach & Type of Sales Promotion: The chi-square test ($\chi^2=84.327$, $p<0.05$) shows a significant association. Personal selling strongly corresponds with normal pricing, while retail channels correspond with reasonable and discounted pricing. So, the firms must align channel strategies with pricing promotions to maximize effectiveness.

H₀: Prices are helpful in attracting the customers is not associated to type of sales promotion

H₁: Prices are helpful in attracting the customers is associated to type of sales promotion

Table No.11- Correspondence analysis table

Prices are helpful in attracting customers	Type of sales promotion strategy					
	Others	Low Price	Normal Price	Discount Price	Reasonable Price	Active Margin
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutral	4	5	30	8	13	60
Agree	0	9	53	65	158	285

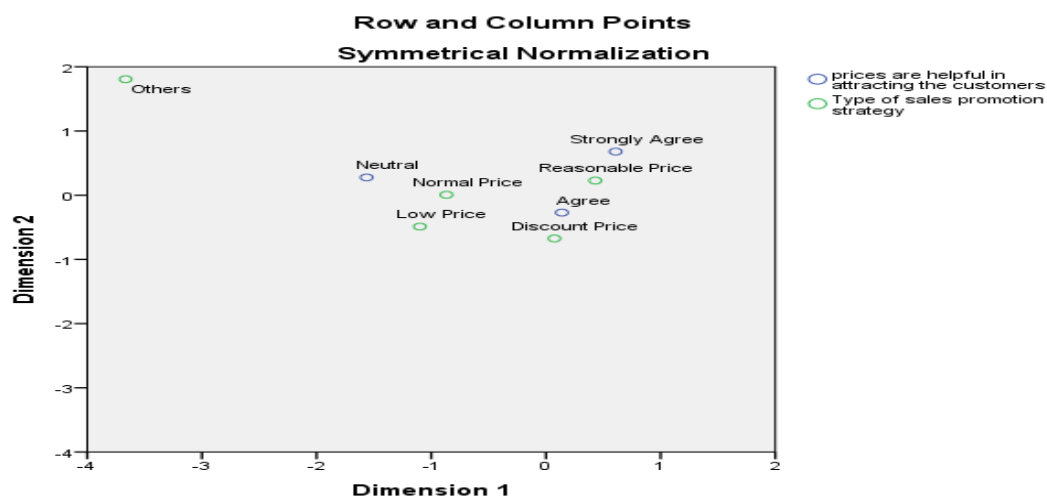
Strongly Agree	0	0	9	10	70	89
Active Margin	4	14	92	83	241	434

Table No.12- Summary

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Value	Singular
					Accounted for	Cumulative		
1	.426	.182			.885	.885	.047	.128
2	.153	.024			.115	1.000	.039	
Total		.205	89.138	.000 ^a	1.000	1.000		

a. 16 degrees of freedom

The summary in the above table depicts that the value of the chi-square test statistic is 89.138 and the corresponding p-value of the test statistic is $p = 0.000$. Since the p-value is less than our chosen significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis. An association was found between prices are helpful in attracting the customers and type of sales promotion



Graph No.02 : Correspondence Analysis Graph

The correspondence analysis graph shows that entrepreneurs strongly agree that if the product is given at reasonable price it attracts customers the most. And, if product is given at discounted price, normal price and low price, the customers are convinced to buy the product. The customers are neutral when other promotional strategies are used.

Prices & Sales Promotion: The chi-square test ($\chi^2=89.138$, $p<0.05$) shows a strong association. Consumers strongly agreed that reasonable and discounted prices attract them most. Hence, the reasonable pricing combined with discount-driven promotions yields maximum impact.

H₀:Marketing plans are effectively functioning is not associated to other sales promotion strategies

H₁:Marketing plans are effectively functioning is associated to other sales promotion strategies

Table No.13- Correspondence analysis table

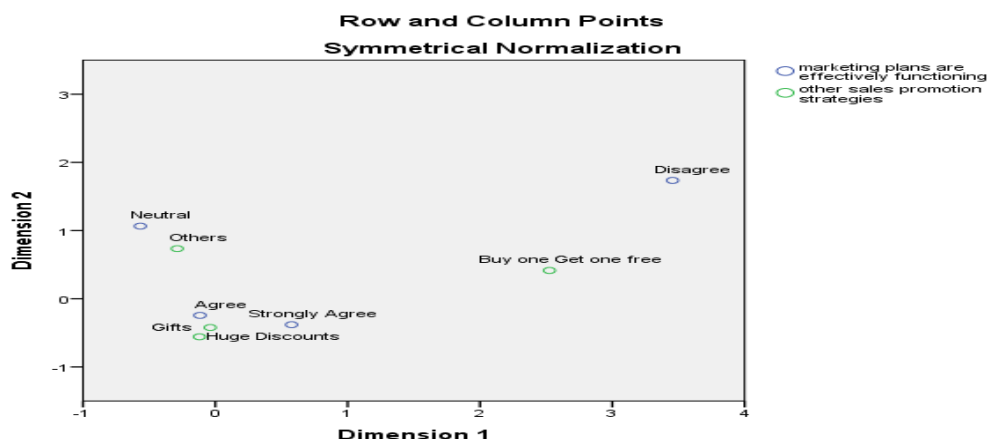
Marketing plans are effectively functioning	other sales promotion strategies					
	Others	Gifts	Scratch Cards	Buy one Get one free	Huge Discounts	Active Margin
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	4	0	0	5	0	9
Neutral	50	4	0	0	21	75
Agree	81	49	0	9	136	275
Strongly Agree	14	9	0	9	43	75
Active Margin	149	62	0	23	200	434

Table No.14- Summary

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Value	Singular
					Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	Correlation
1	.369	.136			.557	.557	.090	.014
2	.321	.103			.421	.978	.044	
3	.073	.005			.022	1.000		
Total		.244	106.105	.000 ^a	1.000	1.000		

a. 16 degrees of freedom

The summary table presented above depicts that the value of the chi-square test statistic is 106.105 and the corresponding p-value of the test statistic is $p = 0.000$. Since the p-value is less than our chosen significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), we reject the null hypothesis. An association was found between Marketing plans are effectively functioning and other sales promotion strategies.



Graph No. 03 : Correspondence Analysis Graph

The correspondence graph shows that gifts given along with the products bought makes the marketing plans more effective. The next best effective sales promotion strategy is huge discounts. Sometimes buy one get one free attracts the customers. Customers are neutral when other strategies are used.

Marketing Plans & Sales Promotion: The chi-square test ($\chi^2=106.105$, $p<0.05$) reveals an association. Gifts and discounts make marketing plans more effective. So, the firms should design integrated marketing plans where promotional incentives (gifts, discounts) reinforce branding efforts.

H₀: Response level for promotional strategies is not associated to Mode of communication to the customers

H₁: Response level for promotional strategies is associated to Mode of communication to the customers

Table No.15- Correspondence analysis table

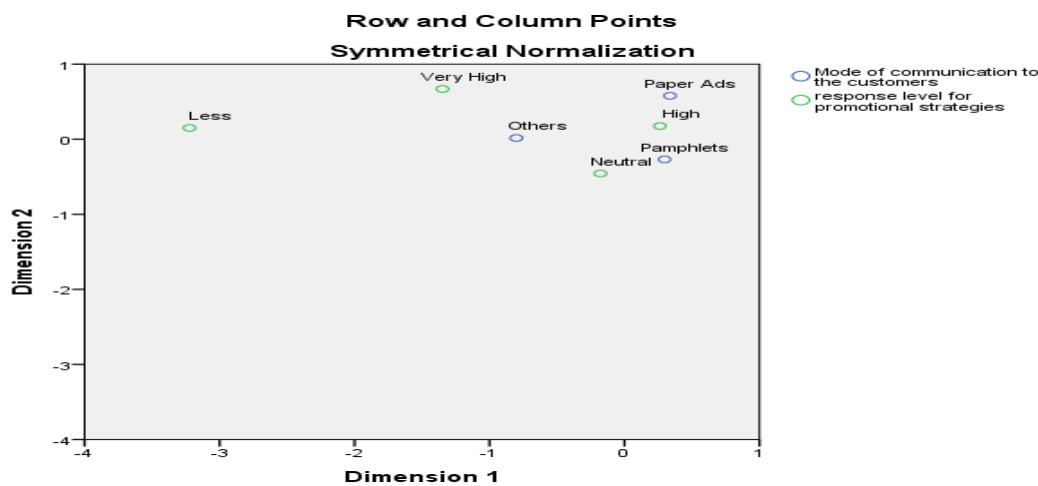
Response level for promotional strategies	Mode of communication to the customers					
	Others	Pamphlets	Paper Ads	TV Ads	Advertisements through Brand Ambassadors	Active Margin
Very Less	0	0	0	0	0	0
Less	4	0	0	0	0	4
Neutral	44	74	21	0	0	139
High	59	137	71	0	0	267
Very High	14	5	5	0	0	24
Active Margin	121	216	97	0	0	434

Table No. 16- Summary

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Value	
					Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	Correlation
1	.249	.062			.835	.835	.047	-.080
2	.111	.012			.165	1.000	.043	
Total		.074	32.180	.009 ^a	1.000	1.000		

a. 16 degrees of freedom

The summary depicts that the value of the chi-square test statistic is 32.180 and the corresponding p-value of the test statistic is $p = 0.009$. Since the p-value is less than our chosen significance level ($\alpha = 0.009$), we reject the null hypothesis. An association was found between response level for promotional strategies and Mode of communication to the customers.



Graph No.04: Correspondence Analysis Graph

The correspondence graph shows that majority of customers responded to paper ads and pamphlets. For other modes of communication the response level is either very high or neutral. The response level is sometimes less for any of the strategies used.

Response Level & Mode of Communication: The chi-square test ($\chi^2=32.180$, $p<0.05$) indicates that pamphlets and paper ads receive the highest consumer responses, while digital or “other” strategies show mixed outcomes. Hence, the A traditional-dominant, digital-supported communication mix is recommended.

Findings of the study: From the research study, the following observations were made.

- Consumers value reasonable pricing and discounts more than low prices or free offers.
- Retail and personal selling channels dominate purchase approaches.
- Pamphlets and offline ads are still the strongest communication modes, though digital is emerging.
- There is strong statistical evidence linking sales promotion strategies with consumer purchase decisions.
- Promotions in the water purifier industry are effective but must evolve into hybrid (traditional + digital) strategies for broader reach and sustained loyalty.

DISCUSSION

The study demonstrates that sales promotions significantly affect consumer behavior in the water purifier industry. Unlike FMCG products, where buy one and get one for free dominates, consumers of water purifiers respond more positively to discounts, gifts, and reasonable pricing. The reliance on pamphlets indicates that traditional communication still plays a critical role, though digital tools present untapped opportunities. Demographic features such as age, income, and education influenced the perception of value, with middle-income families showing stronger responses to discounts and gifts. The findings underline the necessity of a hybrid promotional approach integrating traditional offline methods with digital campaigns for maximum impact.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that:

- Reasonable pricing and huge discounts are the most influential factors in consumer purchase decisions.

- Pamphlets and personal selling remain effective communication modes.
- Gifts bundled with purchases enhance marketing plan effectiveness.
- There exists a strong statistical association between promotional strategies, pricing, and consumer responses.

Recommendations for Marketers:

- Develop hybrid promotional strategies combining traditional (pamphlets, gifts, personal selling) and digital tools (social media ads, influencer marketing).
- Focus on value-based pricing rather than low-cost pricing to build trust in quality.
- Introduce personalized promotions leveraging customer data for targeted discounts.
- Highlight eco-friendly and CSR-linked promotions to appeal to socially responsible consumers.
- Invest in training sales personnel as personal selling continues to play a crucial role.

Scope For Future Research

The present paper has provided some major insights into the influence of sales promotional strategies on purchasing behavior in the water purifier market. Nevertheless, there are many unexplored areas which need further investigations into the research on this topic. The enthusiastic researcher in future can explore on conducting longitudinal studies to highlight the changes in consumer behavior and their preferences over period of time which help in providing a comprehensive understanding of the long term effectiveness of various sales promotional strategies. Investigations can be conducted to study the same impact on various geographical areas to uncover the regional variations in consumer responses. The study can be extended by focusing on ethics, sustainability, promotion of eco friendly features and CSR initiatives and their influence on purchasing decisions. Assessment studies on the effectiveness of personalized sales promotion strategies which are tailored to individual consumer preferences and behaviors may reveal the potential for making more precise and impactful marketing strategies to attract and retain the consumers. Further studies also can be conducted on how the sales promotional strategies influence on product usage, customer satisfaction, and long term loyalty. Further studies can be done on exploring the impact of emerging and budding technologies such as AI, big-data, IoT and ML in optimizing and devising an effective sales promotional strategies, which undoubtedly may prove to be avenues for effective personalization and better targeting efforts. Finally this research can be taken as foundation stone to carry further research in the area to find deeper insights which will help in defining and redefining the strategies for effective and efficient strategies to drive the consumers to buy, use and reuse the water purifiers.

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