

Influence of African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE) on Utilization of Product Promotion Strategies by Micro - Entrepreneurs in Osogbo, Nigeria: Implications for Sustainable Development

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Abstract

The influence of national and ethnic culture on entrepreneurial disposition and practice has long been established in several different cultures across the world. Such cultures often enhance, but sometimes inhibit entrepreneurial success. Previous studies indicate that many micro-entrepreneurs in Nigeria, especially in the southwestern part of the country do not sufficiently employ modern product promotion strategies, even though they are not completely unaware of them. Rather, they prefer to trust in God and other spiritual forces for sales growth and product preferment. This practice has grave negative implications for sales volume, entrepreneurship durability and sustainable development, profitability, and other success metrics. This paper is focused on evaluating the influence of African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE) which is commonly employed by micro-entrepreneurs of southwestern Nigeria, on the utilization of product promotion techniques for increasing sales volume. The study employed descriptive survey research design. The sample size for this study comprised 52 micro-entrepreneurs randomly selected among entrepreneurs within the Osogbo metropolis. Structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data from respondents. Relevant works of authorities in related fields were reviewed. Data were analyzed using mean rating and standard deviation. One sample test and regression analysis (Structural Equation Modeling) were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Results show that there is an inverse relationship between the usage of ATSE and application of product promotion by micro-entrepreneurs, also that employment of ATSE by micro- entrepreneurs is falsely perceived to increases sales volume. The study recommended adequate education and orientation of micro-entrepreneurs to promote adoption and usage of product promotion strategies. Entrepreneurs should be weaned off the culture of relying on spiritual forces for advancement. Government should come up with policies that will reduce the cost of product promotion in order to encourage usage of product promotion and reduce the level of reliance on ATSE..

Keywords: *ATSE, Micro- Entrepreneurs, Product Promotion, Sales Volume*

Introduction

One of the major challenges affecting entrepreneurship practice in Nigeria, especially South West Nigeria is the inordinate belief in the act of excessive use of African Traditional Sales Enhancer. Adetunmibi (2017) explained that as a race, the Yoruba people of South West Nigeria have strong faith in the power of spiritual forces regardless of their religion to influence and even determine success and failure in all aspect of human life including commerce. Observation shows that South West Nigerians hold their cultural values in high esteem, and it is very common for them irrespective of whether they are Christian, Muslim or Traditional believers to make spiritual consultations whenever they are in dilemma, when sales volume falls, when business undergoes unexpected challenges. These result in many micro-entrepreneurs placing greater faith in African Traditional Sales Enhancer than in the practical aspect of product promotion to enhance their sales.

African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE) has been observed to be an age long practice which south westerners in Nigeria believe to be an alternative way of increasing sales or patronage by spiritually manipulating potential consumers/costumer to buy products offered to the market. In Yoruba land, sales enhancer is given different names like Awure (fortune booster), Aworo (Customer Dragger) Asina (way opener), Osole (money drawer), Ose Itaja (sales enhancer soap) etc. These were coming by through the three major different types of religions, Traditional religion, Christianity (especially those of African origin), and Islam.

Dopamu (2000) argues that Yoruba religion doctrine promotes/beliefs in a spiritual force that negatively affects sales, causes evil and instigates people or prompts micro-entrepreneurs not to be successful. Awoniyi (2011) and Ayegboyin (2011) are emphatic about spirits being the authentic source of business misfortune in Yoruba religious culture. Quayesi-Amakye (2014) upholds that many leaders of prophetic associations have strong confidence that nothing can occur by accident and physical manipulation, and that there is always a connection between physical occurrences and spiritual forces.

As a result of the above belief, African entrepreneurs attribute business related problems like lack or dwindling trend in sales and related problems to negative spiritual attacks or occurrences which require spiritual solutions and cleansing. This idea propels them to go after spiritual means of sales enhancement in line with their religious belief and as alternative to product promotion.

Product promotion is observed to comprise all communication and publicity activities designed to create awareness and direct market intention towards buying or consuming product produced or service rendered by Micro-entrepreneurs. Chadon and Larent (2020), Agarawal (2016), Jobber and Lancaster (2019), Blattberg and Briesch (2010) defined product promotion as an integrated marketing action whose determination is to have a direct influence on the behavior of consumers. Marath (2017), Subramanian (2017), Nwabufo (2013) explained that the essence of product promotion is to enable micro-entrepreneur to provide relevant information needed by consumers to take the right decision about the product.

Business jargon (2021), Ashley and Tuten (2015) explain that Promotion is the fourth element of the marketing mix which is considered as a mode of communication that business adopts for achieving specific set of business

objectives. Product promotion is the propagation of information about the product/service and micro-enterprise to the potential consumers with the intent to generate or increase sales volume and develop a brand loyalty.

Statement of the Problem

Preliminary investigation of researchers revealed that majority of micro-entrepreneurs in Osun State are not breaking-even in their engagements; many currently have existential challenges. While others have folded-up. Sizable numbers of micro-entrepreneurs in Osun State make use of African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE) in the forms they understand according to their religious beliefs to enhance sales and draw customers to their products. This is perceived to have distracted them from making use of product development initiatives available at their fingertips. The development is threatening the revenue generation of government, and at the same time, negatively affecting job creation and employments, the eventuality of which crime rate is prone to increase. The resources invested in the production of goods and services by micro-entrepreneurs are often wasted because of inadequate promotion of products and services. Since consumers would only buy products and services they are aware of, bridging the identified gap between micro-producers and consumers would have to do with adequate awareness creation of the products and services in form of product promotion. Hence, reason for this research.

Purpose of the Study

The following are the specific objectives of this research:

1. To determine the extent of use of African Traditional Sales Enhancer in product marketing by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs.
2. To investigate impact of African Traditional Sales Enhancer on the application of product promotion by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs.
3. To examine the influence of African Traditional Sales Enhancer on sales volume of Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs

Research Hypotheses

Based on the specific purposes, three hypotheses were raised and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H01: There is no significant usage of African Traditional Sales Enhancer for product promotion by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs

H02: There is no significant influence of African Traditional Sales Enhancer on application of product promotion by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs.

H03: There is no significant influence of African Traditional Sales Enhancer on sales volume of Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey research design and obtained its data from both secondary and primary sources. Secondary data were sourced from the works of relevant authorities in related fields. Primary data were obtained through interview and questionnaire. To establish the usage of African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE), preliminary investigation was conducted to determine extent of practice of ATSE. It was after the conduct of preliminary investigation that

questionnaire was administered on 58 entrepreneurs who were identified to believe in the application of ATSE. The researcher was able to retrieve 52 questionnaires correctly completed by respondents, this pegged the mortality rate at 10% and sample size was 52 which contained 20 items. It was structured based on 4-point rating scale as: Strongly Agreed (4), Agreed (3), Disagreed (2) and Strongly Disagreed (1). The face and content validity of instrument for data collection for this study was done by two experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined by statistical analysis of data collected from the pilot study. The correlation between data of test-retest was calculated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The reliability index obtained is 0.77 which shows that the instrument is reliable. Mean rating and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics to analyze the primary data. Mean score of 3.50 and above is taken to be strongly agreed, between 2.50 and 3.49 is agreed, 2.0 to 2.49 is disagreed, while below 2.0 is strongly disagreed. One sample test and regression analysis (Structural Equation Modeling) were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. If P value is greater than Alpha value (0.05), null hypothesis is accepted. Models' specification for this study are as follows:

$Y = a + bx \dots (i)$, $PP = a + b(ATSE) \dots (ii)$, $SV = a + b(ATSE) \dots (iii)$. Where: PP = Product Promotion, SV = Sales Volume, ATSE = African Traditional Sales Enhancer.

This study employed ATSE as the independent variable, PP and SV as dependent variables.

Findings

Data was summarized and presented in form of mean ratings and standard deviation.

Research Question 1

What is the extent of use of African Traditional Sales Enhancer in product marketing by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs?

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation on Practice of African Traditional Sales Enhancer by Micro-Entrepreneurs in Osogbo

Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
I have been practicing ATSE for more than 5 years	4	.000	SA
I enhance my sales through spiritual or metaphysical means	3.71	.463	SA
Application of ATSE has no negative effect on my profitability	3.62	.498	SA
My practice of ATSE is as a result of religion affiliation and belief	3.57	.507	SA
I believe in the effectiveness of ATSE for success of my business	3.52	.512	SA
Average Men and Standard Deviation	3.67	0.396	Agree

Table 1 shows that majority of respondents were unanimous in their answers to the items on the table, majority of them agreed to all the questions. This agreement is obvious as all the mean scores are above the fixed decision value of 2.50. The standard deviation on the table ranged from 0.00 to 0.512, this indicates a low variability in the respondents' responses. The average mean and standard deviation of 3.67 and 0.396 respectively are indicators to this fact. The implication of this is that Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo, Osun State agree to the awareness and usage of African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE) for the success of their enterprise.

Research Question 2

What is the influence of African Traditional Sales Enhancer on the usage of product promotion by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs?

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviation of Product Promotion of Micro-entrepreneurs Using African Traditional Sales Enhancer

Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
I make use of personal selling to promote my products	2.76	.625	A
I rely on public relations to promote my products	2.24	.944	D
Aside using ATSE, I display my products to promote them	2.19	.750	D
I engage social media and internet to promote my products	2	.775	D
I make use of sales promotion to promote my products	1.9	.831	D
I make use of Advertisement to promote my products	1.9	.889	D
I employ publicity to promote my product	1.76	.700	D
I make use of Product Promotion to sell my products	1.71	.463	D
Average mean and standard deviation	2.06	0.747	Disagree

Table 2. shows that respondents were not unanimous in their answers to all the items on the table, as they only agreed to item one on the table with the mean of 2.76 and S.D. of 0.625. Respondents disagreed to all other items on the Table. This disagreement is noticeable as only the mean score of item one is above the fixed decision value of 2.50. The standard deviation ranged from 0.463 to 0.944 is a pointer to the fact that there is low variability in the respondents' responses. The average mean and standard deviation of 2.06 and 0.747 respectively are indicators to this fact. The implication of this is that usage of African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ASTE) prevents the application of product promotion by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs.

Research Question 3

What is the influence of African Traditional Sales Enhancer on sales volume of Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs?

Table 3

Mean and Standard Deviation of Sales of Micro-entrepreneurs Using African Traditional Sales Enhance

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
I apply spiritual sales booster to enhance sales of my product	3.71	.463	SA
My customers buy whatever I offer with the influence of ATSE	3.67	.483	SA
ATSE makes me sell than my competitors	3.52	.512	SA
My sales volume brings adequate income to cover my cost of production	3.52	.512	SA
I visit my Spiritual Leaders for solutions when my sales is low	3.52	.512	SA
Boosting my sales through ATSE contributes to my continuous existence	3.52	.512	SA
The Substance given to me by my Spiritual Leaders boost my sales after application	3.38	.498	A
Average mean and standard deviation	3.55	0.499	Agree

Table 3, shows that majority of respondents were unanimous in their answers to the items on the table, majority of them agreed to all the questions. This agreement is obvious as all the mean scores which are above the 2.50. The standard deviation ranged from 0.463 to 0.512, this indicates low variability in the responses. The average mean and standard deviation of 3.55 and 0.499 respectively are pointers to this fact. The implication of this is that African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE) has influence on sales volume of Osun State Micro- Entrepreneurs because of the fact that their agreement with the items on Table 3 shows that they are in one way or the other enhancing their sales through spiritual means.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant usage of African Traditional Sales Enhancer by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs

Table 4

Showing One Sample Test for the Practice of ATSE by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs

Test Value =0					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Items	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
I enhance your sales through spiritual or metaphysical means	49.222	51	.000	3.615	3.47	3.76
I have been practicing ATSE for more than 5 years	207.000	51	.000	3.981	3.94	4.02
I believe in the effectiveness of ATSE for success of my business	44.296	51	.000	3.538	3.38	3.70
Application of ATSE has no negative effect on my profitability	58.505	51	.000	3.712	3.58	3.84
My practice of ATSE is as a result of religion affiliation and belief	54.848	51	.000	3.654	3.52	3.79

Table 4 reveals that the One Sample Test for hypothesis one. The P-value value for each of the questionnaire items on the Table are $0.000 < 0.05$ significant value. this implies that the usage of ATSE by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs is significant at 5% significant level.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between African Traditional Sales Enhancer and application of product promotion by Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs.

Table 5

Showing the Model Summary of Product Promotion and Practice of ATSE

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.311 ^a	.097	.079	.243
<i>a. Predictors: (Constant), Practice of ATSE by Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo</i>				

The value of the co-efficient of correlation R value of .311 implies a positive relationship between product promotion and Practice of ASTE by Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo.

Table 6*Showing ANOVA of Product Promotion and Practice of ATSE*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.316	1	.316	5.369	.025 ^b
	Residual	2.947	50	.059		
	Total	3.263	51			
<i>a. Dependent Variable: Application of Product Promotion by Micro Entrepreneur Using ATSE</i>						
<i>b. Predictors: (Constant), Practice of ATSE by Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo</i>						

Table 6, the ANOVA table for hypothesis one shows F-statistics value of 5.369 and P-value of $0.025 < 0.05$. this implies that the overall model is significant at 5% significant level.

Table 7*Coefficients of Product Promotion and Practice of ATSE*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.494	.642		5.438	.000
	Practice of ATSE	-.402	.173	-.311	-2.317	.025
<i>a. Dependent Variable: Application of Product Promotion by Micro Entrepreneurs Using ATSE in Osogbo</i>						

Table 7, Product promotion reveals co-efficient value of -0.402 and t-statistic value of -2.317 and p-value 0.025 less than significant level 0.05. This implies that a unit increase in the Practice of ASTE by Micro Entrepreneurs result to a significant decrease of 0.402 in the application of Product Promotion by Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo. Here, the null hypothesis is rejected and we thereby conclude that African Traditional Sales Enhancer has significant impact on the application of product promotion by Osun State Micro- Entrepreneurs. However, it is obvious that the impact of Practice of ATSE by Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo appears negative on application of product promotion. Therefore, the more Micro Entrepreneurs engage in practice of ATSE, the lower the application of product promotions by Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo.

Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: There is no significant influence of African Traditional Sales Enhancer on sales volume of Osun State Micro-Entrepreneurs.

Table 8*Model Summary of Sales Volume and Practice of ATSE*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.300 ^a	.090	.072	.175
<i>a. Predictors: (Constant), Practice of ATSE by Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo</i>				

The value of the co-efficient of correlation R-value of 300 implies a positive relationship between Sales Volume and Practice of ASTE by Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo.

Table 9*ANOVA of Sales Volume and Practice of ATSE*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.150	1	.150	4.936	.031 ^b
	Residual	1.523	50	.030		
	Total	1.673	51			
<i>a. Dependent Variable: Application of Product Promotion by Micro Entrepreneur Using ATSE</i>						
<i>b. Predictors: (Constant), Practice of ATSE by Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo</i>						

Table 9, the ANOVA table for hypothesis two shows F-statistics value of 4.936 and P-value of $0.031 < 0.05$. this implies that the overall model is significant at 5% significant level.

Table 10*Showing the Coefficients of Sales Volume and Practice of ATSE*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.547	.462		5.513	.000
	Practice of ATSE	.277	.125	.300	2.222	.031
<i>a. Dependent Variable: Sales Volume of Micro Entrepreneurs using ATSE is Osogbo</i>						

From Table 10, Sales volume reveals co-efficient value of 0.277 and t-statistic value of 2.222 and p-value 0.031 less than significant level 0.05. This implies that a unit increase in the Practice of ASTE by Micro Entrepreneurs result in a significant increase of 0.277 units in the Sales Volume of Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo. Here the null hypothesis is rejected and we thereby conclude that African

Traditional Sales Enhancer has significant impact on Sales Volume of Micro-Entrepreneurs in Osogbo, Osun State. Therefore, statistical inference drawn from the above is that application of ATSE bring about increase in the sales volume Micro Entrepreneurs in Osogbo.

Discussion

Findings on research question one and hypothesis one show that micro-entrepreneurs in Osogbo, Osun State make use of African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE) as they agree to enhancing their sales through spiritual or metaphysical means. These findings are in line with the finding of Adetumbi (2017) who found that all life's problems have spiritual origins. Findings on research question two and hypothesis two show that micro-entrepreneurs in Osogbo Osun State that are making use of African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE) do not use any form of product promotion except personal selling. This conclusion corroborates the submissions of Adetumbi (2017), Ademiluyi and Agboola (2011), Howell (2000) that Yoruba people believe that the success depends largely on spiritual forces.

Findings on research question three and hypothesis three show that micro-entrepreneurs agreed that usage of ATSE improved their sales volume. They agreed to making use of spiritual sales boosters which they believed influenced their customers to buy whatever they offer to the market. These findings on research question three and hypothesis three are not linked to any previous findings and submissions due to the fact that there is very few current literature on the relationship between African Traditional Sales Enhancer and sales volume of micro-entrepreneurs.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it is evidenced that micro-entrepreneurs are not in the habit of making use of product promotion to enhance their sales preferring the use of personal selling; this is probably because of lack of adequate education on the effect of product promotion on sales. This study has statistically evinced that there is positive relationship between African Traditional Sales Enhancer (ATSE) and sales volume. Micro entrepreneurs prefer to employ ATSE instead of employing product promotion, ultimately to the detriment of micro businesses' durability and sustainable national development.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered.:

- i. That Micro-Entrepreneurs in Nigeria should be encouraged to align with best marketing practices in the world.
- ii. That proper education and orientation on the fundamentals of application of product promotion be included both formally and informally in the training curriculum of entrepreneurs in Nigeria.
- iii. That government should make policies that would reduce the cost of product promotion so as to encourage micro-entrepreneurs to always apply product promotion and at the same time discourage their absolute reliance on the usage of ATSE

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