

Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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2015

Abstract

Aligning Sales Promotion Strategies With Buying Attitudes in a Recession

by

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Some managers lack an effective strategy for aligning sales promotion strategies with consumers' buying attitudes in a recession. The intent of this comparative design was to determine the most effective sales promotion strategy for sales improvement and business sustainability during a recession. The theories of (a) sales promotions, (b) consumer behavioral metrics, (c) price reductions, and (d) strategy in a competitive environment represented the theoretical framework that grounded and complemented this research. Using a confidential paper-based survey and random sampling method, preference data were obtained from 287 consumers in retail stores located in a city in the southern United States. This analysis comprised examining the effects of types of sales promotions and gender of customers. Statistical tests for the data analysis encompassed a 4X2 ANOVA and Bonferroni post hoc tests for mean pairs. The principal findings from the analysis were that there is a significant difference in buying attitudes means among the 4 types of sales promotion in a recession [$F(3, 279) = 101.360; p = .000 < .001; \text{Partial } \eta^2 = .522$]. However, there is no significant difference in buying attitudes means in a recession [$F(1, 279) = .000; p = .999 > .05; \text{Partial } \eta^2 = .000$] between genders. Price discount strategy had a higher buying attitudes mean than did any other type of sales promotion under study for both genders. The most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession is price discount. Implications for business practice and positive social change include the sales increase in a recession, improvement of lifestyle of individuals, and reduction of negative tendencies such as crime and poverty associated with unemployment.

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Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to my mother, Dessoï Houindode (God rest her soul), who taught me the self-discipline and value of a strong work ethic in attaining personal goals in any circumstance. To my father, Augustin Adjagbodjou (God rest his soul), who always valued higher education and taught me the perseverance even in the midst of adversity. To my wife, Colette, for her encouragement and support throughout the process. To my children, Adinawa, Ededi, Finagnon, Tchegnon, and Tchessimin, who will succeed more than me. To my sisters, brothers, and other family members who encouraged me.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	iv
List of Figures	v
Section 1: Foundation of the Study.....	1
Background of the Problem	1
Problem Statement.....	3
Purpose Statement.....	4
Nature of the Study	5
Research Question	6
Hypotheses	6
Survey Questions	7
Theoretical Framework.....	11
Definition of Terms.....	14
Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations.....	15
Assumptions.....	15
Limitations	15
Delimitations.....	16
Significance of the Study	16
Contribution to Business Practice.....	16
Implications for Social Change.....	17
A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature.....	18
Literature Review of Sales Promotion.....	19

Literature Review of Factors Influencing Buying Attitudes.....	30
Literature Review of Factors Affecting Sales.....	37
Literature Review of the Financial Crisis Impact on Sales.....	46
Summary of Literature Review.....	50
Transition and Summary.....	51
Section 2: The Project.....	52
Purpose Statement.....	52
Role of the Researcher	53
Participants.....	54
Research Method and Design	56
Method	56
Research Design.....	57
Population and Sampling	58
Ethical Research.....	60
Data Collection	62
Instruments.....	62
Data Collection Technique	65
Data Organization Techniques.....	66
Data Analysis Technique	67
Reliability and Validity.....	70
Reliability.....	70
Validity	71

Transition and Summary	72
Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change	74
Overview of Study	74
Presentation of the Findings.....	76
Presentation of the Results.....	77
Discussion of the Results	84
Applications to Professional Practice	90
Implications for Social Change.....	90
Recommendations for Action	91
Recommendations for Further Study	92
Reflections	92
Summary and Study Conclusions	93
References.....	96
Appendix A: List of Demographic and Survey Questions	118
Appendix B: Permissions to Use Existing Survey.....	122
Appendix C: Consent Form	129
Appendix D: Confidentiality Agreement.....	131

List of Tables

Table 1. Sales Promotions Statements Part-One.....	9
Table 2. Sales Promotions Statements Part-Two	10
Table 3. Buying Attitudes Statements	11
Table 4. Descriptive Statistics: Dependent Variable, Buying Attitudes.....	78
Table 5. Buying Attitudes: Interactions Between-Subjects Effects.....	79
Table 6. Buying Attitudes by Types of Sales Promotion and Gender	80
Table 7. Buying Attitudes: Bootstrap for Multiple Comparisons.....	82
Table A1. Sales Promotions Survey Part-One.....	119
Table A2. Sales Promotions Survey Part-Two	120
Table A3. Buying Attitudes Survey.....	121
Table B1. Statements Part-One.....	126
Table B2. Statements Part-Two	128

List of Figures

Figure 1. Plot of estimated marginal means of buying attitudes..... 84

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The intent of this doctoral study was to determine the most effective strategy of sales promotions towards buying attitudes of customers in a recession, in a city, in the southern United States (U.S.). The evaluation of customers' buying attitudes underlay a potent model for aligning sales strategies with buying attitudes. The literature included sales, sales promotions, buying attitudes, and financial crisis. Understanding the background might assist business leaders in developing appropriate strategies for recessions.

Background of the Problem

The 2008 global financial crisis commenced the crash of stocks in the U.S, spread into the world, and engendered a recession (Hsu, 2012). Levchenko, Lewis, and Tesar (2010) confirmed that the financial crisis caused a collapse of trade in the U.S. and was intense in magnitude and worldwide in nature. Furthermore, Hsu (2012) supported that the economic crisis covered much of both the developing and developed worlds and was equally devastating for many companies. For example, the U.S. nonpetroleum exports and imports declined by 27% from August 2008 to April 2009 (Alessandria, Kaboski, & Midrigan, 2010), and exports and imports decreased respectively by 18.9 and 21.4% over the same time (Levchenko et al., 2010). The U.S. has struggled unsuccessfully to recover from the consequences of the crisis, although the country has had the highest ratio of businesspersons per capita compared to any nation in the world (Monahan, Shah, & Mattare, 2011).

Information related to sales and other key economic indicators have been poor, confirming the crisis tendency even though company leaders have implemented different models, trying to develop business (Milić, 2011). However, theoretical and practical methods have been obsolete in this crisis (Mitran & Bebeselea, 2012). Mishra and Mishra (2011) supported this view, providing examples from previous findings. When all else is equal, consumers prefer bonus packs to price discounts (Mishra & Mishra, 2011). Mishra and Mishra examined the way price and quantity based sales promotions impact the consumption of foods and found that this preference does not hold for unhealthy foods in this recession. Consistency of the price in a perfectly competitive market when an auctioned good is homogeneous was the insight of previous research (Dulaney & Wiese, 2011). Conversely, Dulaney and Wiese (2011) found a significant variation of prices in this crisis. Moreover, Mitran and Bebeselea (2012) confirmed the trend and suggested the need for companies to anticipate the domino effect the financial crisis has engendered. Milić (2011) reinforced this prospect, establishing that the financial crisis effects may continue even beyond 2014.

The change in the nature of value creation might present a need to increase sales. Apetroaie, Florescu, and Ducu (2012) supported this opinion and showed that company leaders should integrate the financial requirement of consumers in the development plan of firms. Price is a critical factor in every consumer purchase as customers use price information to determine the value of the product and make a decision whether to consume this good or service (Samper & Schwartz, 2013). Samper and Schwartz (2013)

explained that the transparency of higher prices causes a decrease in consumption. Additionally, Zhang and Zaric (2011) posited that the manager capitalizes when selecting marketing efforts to promote diverse usages.

An overview of the recession allowed the perception of a lack of research in sales strategy. There was a need to examine strategies such as sales promotions and align approaches with buying attitudes. Mitran and Bebeselea (2012) supported that receiving fresh information about marketing development from sales potency in time and channeling the resources of the organization to achieve marketing objectives are essential requirements for sales performance. Understanding the types of sales promotions that might influence buying attitudes significantly in a crisis was of crucial importance to company leaders. The goal of this doctoral study was to assess customers' buying attitudes towards sales promotions in a recession. Findings from the research might serve as a basis for the development of appropriate sales strategies involving promotions. Inferences for positive social change included the potential to enable the profitability of firms and employment opportunity for individuals.

Problem Statement

One of the challenges for corporation leaders consists of increasing sales of products (Apetroaie et al., 2012). The collapse of sales in the U.S. was a remarkable consequence of the financial crisis that occurred in 2008 (Alessandria et al., 2010). Sales of (a) agricultural products, (b) consumer goods, (c) manufacturing supplies, and (d) automotive products decreased respectively by 9, 15, 47, and 49% during the 2008-2009

sales collapse (Levchenko et al., 2010). In 2011, Milić found that the financial crisis effects might continue until 2014 and even later. Kotler (2011) explained the persistence of sales issues by the magnitude of the crisis, which has constrained consumers to modify lifestyles to a *lower level* of revenue and spending. The general business problem was a loss of profits for the business because of the collapse of sales and nonexistence of a sales promotion strategy that significantly influences buying attitudes. The specific business problem was that some managers lack an effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative study using a comparative design was to determine the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. A southern U.S. city represented the geographic location of the study because the 2008 recession has affected the profitability and sustainability of retail stores in the city (Apetroaie et al., 2012; Levchenko et al., 2010). The specific population group of the study consisted of consumers involved in the buying process in retail stores because the increase of sales should generate from customers, not from internal requirements or perspectives of corporations (Apetroaie et al., 2012). Every customer had scores on three variables, which were two factors and one dependent variable. The independent variables or factors were sales promotion and gender of customers. The factor sales promotion included cases divided into four levels: (a) coupons, (b) buy-one-get-one-free, (c) price discounts, and (d) control case for which there was no sales

promotion strategy. The factor gender encompassed cases divided into two levels, male and female. The dependent variable was buying attitudes of customers. An examination of the mean difference between the sales promotions and customers' buying attitudes was necessary to understand the sales promotion strategy that could contribute to a significant growth of sales. The implications for positive social change comprised the potential to enable the sustainability of businesses, employment opportunity, and reduction of poverty associated with unemployment.

Nature of the Study

The quantitative research method was the approach for the study. This process allowed the investigation of the relationship between dependent and independent or outcome variables in a population (Williams, 2011). The research design for the inquiry was survey research, which facilitated the evaluation of objective theories by examining differences between groups or relationships among variables (Anyiwe, 2012). The intent of the research question was to determine the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. Shuval et al. (2011) and Słysz and Soroko (2012) found that the qualitative method is useful when the researcher does not identify the key variables in the analysis. Consequently, a qualitative approach was not suitable for the study since there was identification of the independent variables, which were sales promotion and gender of customers. The dependent variable was buying attitudes of customers. In addition, a quantitative approach was relevant because the research required a systematic scientific process, defining a problem, and building and

testing hypotheses. The mixed methods approach integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches in research (Anyiwe, 2012). This approach was not necessary since there was no need for qualitative data collection and analysis. Thus, a quantitative method using a survey instrument was appropriate for the purpose of this study.

Research Question

The purpose of this quantitative comparative design was to identify which sales promotion strategy influences buying attitudes significantly in a recession. The research question was as follows: What is the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession? The sales promotions under investigation were coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, price discounts, and control case for which there was no sales promotion strategy. The analysis included effects of both types of sales promotions and gender of customers. The subquestions generated from this question were as follows:

1. How do buying attitudes means differ among the types of sales promotion in a recession?
2. How do buying attitudes means differ among customers male and female in a recession?

Hypotheses

The null and alternative hypotheses built from the research question were as follows:

H_{1o}: There is no significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession.

H1a: There is a significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession.

H2o: There is no significant difference in buying attitudes means among customers male and female in a recession.

H2a: There is a significant difference in buying attitudes means among customers male and female in a recession.

Survey Questions

The survey included demographic, sales promotion, and buying attitudes statements (Appendix A). The buying attitudes and sales promotion questions were instruments Bakewell and Mitchell made in 2003 and those that Osman and Fah created in 2011. The demographic statements encompassed both close-ended and open-ended questions. The sales promotion and buying attitudes questions represented the 5-point Likert-type rating scales.

For the demographic questions, participants chose answers among statements generated from standard classifications used in 2012 by the U.S. Census Bureau:

1- Gender:

Female Male

2- Age:

18 - 24 years old 25 – 44 years old 45 – 59 years old 60 years and older

3- Race:

- White Black or African American American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- Some Other Race

4- Marital Status

- Single (never married) Married Cohabiting Separated
- Divorced Widowed Not Stated

5- Employment Situation:

- Employed Unemployed Student

5- Family Monthly income:

- Under or \$19,999 \$20,000 – \$29,999 \$30,000 – \$39,999 \$40,000 – \$59,999
- \$60,000 – \$79,999 \$80,000 – \$99,999 \$100,000 – \$249,999 \$250,000 or
over

For the survey questions, the respondents chose among the following responses: *strongly disagree* (SD), *disagree* (D), *neutral* (N), *agree* (A), or *strongly agree* (SA) after reading each of the sales promotion and buying attitudes statements. Table 1 and table 2 include sales promotion statements. Table 3 encompasses buying attitudes statements.

Table 1

Sales Promotions Statements Part-One

<i>No.</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
	Price discount					
1	If a brand offers a price discount, that could be a reason for me to buy it.					
2	When I buy a brand that offers a price discount, I feel I am getting a good buy.					
3	A price discount has allowed me to buy another brand, which I do not regularly buy.					
4	I usually buy the same brand even when I have a price discount on the other brands.					
5	I have favorite brands, but most of the time I buy a brand that offers a price discount.					
6	A price discount has allowed me to buy the product earlier than planned.					
7	A price discount has allowed me to buy more quantities of the same product.					
8	Compared to most people, I am more likely to buy brands that offer a price discount.					
	Coupon discount					
1	If a brand offers a coupon, that could be a reason for me to buy it.					
2	When I buy a brand that offers a coupon, I feel I am getting a good buy.					
3	A coupon has allowed me to buy a brand I do not regularly buy.					
4	I usually buy the same brand even when I have a coupon on the other brands.					
5	I have favorite brands, but most of the time I usually buy the brand that offers a coupon.					
6	A coupon has allowed me to buy the product earlier than planned.					
7	A coupon has allowed me to buy more quantities of the same product.					
8	Compared to most people, I am more likely to buy brands that offer a coupon.					

Note. Strongly disagree = SD, Disagree = D, Neutral = N, Agree = A, Strongly agree = SA.

Table 2

Sales Promotions Statements Part-Two

<i>No.</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
	Buy-one-get-one-free (B1G1F)					
1	If a brand offers (B1G1F), that could be a reason for me to buy it.					
2	When I buy a brand that offers (B1G1F), I feel I am getting a good buy.					
3	(B1G1F) has allowed me to buy another brand, which I do not regularly buy.					
4	I usually buy the same brand even when I have (B1G1F) on the other brands.					
5	I have favorite brands, but most of the time I buy a brand that offers B1G1F					
6	B1G1F allows me to buy the product earlier than planned.					
7	B1G1F allows me to buy more quantities of the same product.					
8	Compared to most people, I am more likely to buy brands that offer B1G1F.					

Note. Strongly disagree = SD, Disagree = D, Neutral = N, Agree = A, Strongly agree = SA.

Table 3

Buying Attitudes Statements

No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
	Buying attitudes					
1	Once I find a product I like, I buy it regularly					
2	In general, I try to get the best overall quality.					
3	I usually buy well-known brands.					
4	I prefer to buy the bestselling brands.					
5	It is great to buy something new and exciting.					
6	I look very carefully to find the best value for money.					
7	I buy as much as possible at sale prices.					
8	I usually buy the lower price products.					
9	To get variety, I shop in different stores and buy different brands.					
10	I should spend more time deciding on the products and brands I buy.					
11	I normally shop quickly, buying the first product or brand I find that seems good enough.					
12	The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best.					
13	I carefully watch how much I spend.					

Note. *Strongly disagree* = SD, *Disagree* = D, *Neutral* = N, *Agree* = A, *Strongly agree* = SA.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework was the term for this subsection as the method for this study was a quantitative approach. Four ideas from the literature grounded and complemented this quantitative research. The theoretical framework was a study of the management theory, author, date, and the way the concept was relevant to this doctoral study.

The first theoretical framework was the model Chen, Marmorstein, Tsiros, and Rao (2012) found. Chen et al. (2012) showed a considerable advantage in sales volume

for sales promotions, provided evidence in support of the result, and indicated useful boundary circumstances for when the influence is likely to be manifest. In addition, Chen et al. also identified a tendency among customers to neglect base values when processing proportion change information and stated that understanding the implications of how customers evaluate offers such as sales promotions is necessary for business leaders to increase sales and profitability of companies. The idea of learning how consumers appraise the types of sales promotions was pertinent in that the principles of the theory were inherent for the inquiry.

The idea Frischmann and Gensler (2011) developed was the second model. According to Frischmann and Gensler, the intent when developing several customer metrics in the past was to value and measure marketing investments and to link returns to business performance and results in accordance with the growing importance of the subject. Frischmann and Gensler supported that, in general, managers acknowledged the need for quantitative procedures of marketing performance when facing the challenge of determining which metrics managers should measure and a way to interpret the results. Furthermore, Frischmann and Gensler established the relevance of mediating effects of consumer behavioral metrics on the correlation between buyer perceptual metrics and profitability. This theory was useful for this research because Frischmann and Gensler addressed the issues and impact on consumer profitability, considering direct and indirect mediator effects and associations.

The management model Ferrer and Mallari (2011) found was the third theoretical framework serving as a guide. Ferrer and Mallari posited in the theory that reductions in price allow creating value for investors. The authors found that reductions of product prices have a positive impact on sales and investors' revenue and that firms earn per share when cutting prices. This management theory was relevant as the theory enables the establishment of a relationship between product price reduction and the profitability of companies.

The final theoretical framework was a theory developed in Harvard Business Essentials (2005). Harvard Business Essentials included the concept that the best strategy starts with goals. Using the analysis that consists of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), the authors showed the way a strategic choice should emerge from the process consisting of looking outside and inside of an organization. The authors defined different types of strategies, strategic moves, and ways a firm may stay on course in a competitive environment. This theory was relevant since the researchers indicated how an organization might survive and acquire or maintain a leadership position in a competitive environment by aligning strategy to goals, implementation, and action plans. The literature review section included a discussion of the theoretical frameworks. The definition of a number of terms was essential for the insight of the analysis.

Definition of Terms

The study contained a number of relevant terms and concepts that common definitions helped understand. Below, authors from peer-reviewed sources informed the definition of the term. The ideas referred to jargon or technical expressions.

Ambidextrous organizations: Organizations with leaders who manage conflicting demands of using existing competencies and exploring innovative opportunities and enjoy higher performance (Jasmand, Blazevic, & de Ruyter, 2012).

Bonus pack: The additional product shoppers receive for the same price (Mishra & Mishra, 2011).

Delayed promotion: The future reward clients receive after buying a promoted product, which is contingent on completing requirements (Kim, 2013).

Immediate promotion: The instant saving to shoppers at the time of buying and managers require almost no effort from clients (Kim, 2013).

Loyal customer: A client who buys a brand repeatedly (Liu-Thompkins & Tam, 2013).

Prevention focus: The orientation that is toward negative results (Ramanathan & Dhar, 2010).

Price discount: The sales promotion that consists of offering the same product at a reduced price (Mishra & Mishra, 2011).

Promotion focus: The orientation that is toward positive results (Ramanathan & Dhar, 2010).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

The doctoral study included assumptions. The study included various limitations and delimitations as the credibility and reliability of the inquiry depended on the respondents' statements. In this subsection, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations issues were the focus.

Assumptions

The assumptions in the study consisted of clear understanding of questions by respondents. Participants answered honestly, exhibiting integrity and truthfulness. Furthermore, information about the three sales promotion strategies in the research was invariant. In addition, a literature review was sufficient to portray the objectives of the study accurately.

Limitations

The interpretation of results from the study included unavoidable limitations. Respondents answered all questions and might show a spontaneous approach in completing the survey. I relied on the credibility and reliability of participants' statements. The sample was likely to represent a viable sample of the population. However, this sample might not be typical of the entire population of the city. The number and quality of consumers willing and available to participate were indispensable to determine the limits of the study and ability to extrapolate findings to the general population.

Delimitations

The research was an analysis of only three sales promotional tools instead of a large number of sales promotion implements such as rebates, free samples, sweepstakes, and in-pack premiums. The focus was not a category of goods or service. The generalization of the results required increasing the size of the sample and extending the study to other geographical locations. Although the investigation included limitations and delimitations, the significance of the study was evident.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this doctoral study was to evaluate customers' buying attitudes towards sales promotions in a recession. The analysis contributed to the sales development in a recession. The implications for positive social change and effective business practice were substantial. This subsection includes the contribution to business practice and implications for social change.

Contribution to Business Practice

The implications of this research for business practice included the prospective to address sales issues, identify the sales promotion strategies that contribute to a substantial increase of sales, and facilitate sustainability of organizations. Kotler (2011) established that meeting the new sales challenges requires balancing growth goals and social marketing thinking in combination with the necessity to pursue sustainability. The intent was to suggest a business strategy consisting of using sales promotions to improve profits through the increase of sales volume. The implications of the inquiry included a possible

increase of sales and profitability for companies. There is an extraordinary level of uncertainty among corporations regarding the economic context because sales have been in recession (Dzikowska & Jankowska, 2012). Executives might use findings from this research to develop business in a recession and ensure profitability for firms. The rise of the sales volume should have a direct and positive impact on social change.

Implications for Social Change

The employment opportunity was one of the positive social changes anticipated through the study. Increasing sales might require growing the production volume and hiring more employees. The inferences of this inquiry for positive social change encompassed the potential to promote the improvement of lifestyle of individuals and the reduction of negative tendencies such as crime and poverty in association with unemployment. For individuals, positive emotion usually accompanies a positive outcome (Erevelles & Fukawa, 2013).

As companies sell more products and obtain more profits, governments might collect more taxes and invest more in social programs. The gross domestic product (GDP) might increase because of the growth of companies and transactions. The implementation of appropriate sales promotion strategies might allow profits, success, and prosperity opportunities for businesses, individuals, and governments. Overall, the implications for business practice and positive social change were substantial. A literature review was an evaluation of the body of research in sales promotions, factors influencing buying attitudes, and the impact of the recent financial crisis on sales.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

A review of the professional and academic literature consisted of searches, a historical overview of dates from 2005 through 2013. Out of the 117 sources on the broad category of sales, 116 sources, equivalent of 99% were from peer-reviewed sources and published between 2010 and 2013. A search of the research literature through the Walden University Internet search engines, including ProQuest, ABI/INFORM, and Business Source Complete served in the literature review. Key terms and phrases used in primary and secondary searches included *sales promotions, factors influencing buying attitudes and sales, price impact on sales, price reductions impact on sales, price impact on consumer good sales, and recession*. The outcomes of searches generated references to scholarly peer-reviewed studies and articles.

The intent of this study was to assess the impact of sales promotions on buying attitudes in a recession. The research question consisted of identifying the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. The answer to the question needed to test the null hypothesis, which assumed that there is no significant difference in buying attitudes among groups of customers based on the gender and sales promotion in a recession. Hence, the assessment of buying attitudes towards sales promotions was a key issue in this quantitative comparative design. The literature review comprised sales promotions, factors influencing buying attitudes, factors affecting sales, and the recent financial crisis impact on sales.

Literature Review of Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is one of key factors in the marketing mix for different consumers' products worldwide used to stimulate customer purchases (Esfahani & Jafarzadeh, 2012). Mir and Rehman (2012) confirmed that sales promotion is a key implement managers use frequently to influence customers' buying attitudes directly. Kanagal (2013) explained that promotions as part of the information of value, comprise trade promotions, consumer sales promotions, and promotions to the sales dynamism. The author considered the conceptualization and definition of promotions as business transactions, defining transactions and promotions and placing transactions as a component of the business sequencing of contracts, transactions, and exchanges. Kanagal found market transactions dissimilar to transactions, which are a part of studies in the industrial organization. Kanagal uncovered that promotions have a significant function in transactional marketing in four aspects, which are market share dynamics, demand management, market equilibrium, and market potential realization resulting in need. Promotions should allow acting as basing on effective competitive market transactions upon which managers create markets (Kanagal, 2013). Kanagal also acknowledged that marketing strategists should consider promotions as an efficient method and strategy for managing customers and rivals in the end.

The goal managers pursue through advertising consists of informing potential purchasers about the business and supply (Gherasim, 2012). Gherasim (2012) argued that the central goal managers try to reach through a sales promotion is to activate stimuli and

turn customers into actual buyers. The author established that sales promotions are not for a broad audience as in the case of advertising, nor for a slight group of individuals as in direct sales. Instead, sales promotions are between advertising and direct sales (Gherasim, 2012). Gherasim found sales promotion to be an activity through which the sales agents or distributors offer a product to purchasers or set added value or particular reward to generate short-term sales growth. Sales promotions are a part of promotion actions and different from promotions in general (Gherasim, 2012). Gherasim documented that frequently, marketers offer 50% more time to sales promotions than to advertising, and managers allocate even up to 25% of the total budget of the corporation to promotion.

Esfahani and Jafarzadeh (2013) strengthened the tendency, revealing that resources allocated to sales promotions have increased rapidly with marketers shifting attention to implementing sales promotions more than other strategies such as advertising. Higher media costs might have been the principal factor in this change. Esfahani and Jafarzadeh evidenced that sales promotions have attracted more customers this decade than other past decades. Esfahani and Jafarzadeh also revealed that sales promotions have stimulated marketers to rely more on sales rather than promotions to respond to customer behavior trends. The authors gathered data from 171 chain store customers in Kerman, Iran to confirm that sales promotions affect significantly psychological variables involving price consciousness, quality consciousness, store loyalty, variety seeking, and planning. However, sales promotions do not affect variables

such as shopping enjoyment, brand loyalty, financial constraints, time pressure, and impulsive behavior (Esfahani & Jafarzadeh, 2012).

The behavior of customers might vary from one sales promotion to another. Mir and Rehman (2012) showed the comparative impact of different formats and advantage ranks of instant price discounts and buying promotions on the consumer perceptions and buying intentions of promoted products. Moreover, Mishra and Mishra (2011) demonstrated that consumers desire bonus packs to price discounts for healthy food items and desire price discounts to bonus packs for unhealthy food items. Mishra and Mishra explained the result of a price discount on unhealthy food by that related to a guilt-mitigating mechanism. The authors concluded that for healthy food, the nonexistence of anticipated post consumption guilt leads consumers to choose a bonus pack over a price discount.

Osman and Fah (2011) brought a substantial contribution to the debate by simulating coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, price discounts, and free samples towards buying attitudes among students. The authors assessed the impact of sales promotion on buying attitudes in this community using data collected from a sample of 150 University Putra Malaysia students. Osman and Fah exploited self-administrated surveys and statistical tests such as multiple regression and the *t* test for the analysis. The authors found significant consistency between gender and buying attitude. Osman and Fah established an important difference between buying behavior and family monthly revenue and revealed the presence of a significant association between buying attitudes and

coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, price discounts, and free samples. Osman and Fah concluded that findings might assist marketers in understanding the categories of sales promotion that significantly affect buying attitudes among Malaysian students. The study by Osman and Fah was inspiring as the purpose of this doctoral study was to achieve a similar goal.

Shrestha (2012) examined other aspects of sales promotions. The study was exploratory research of marketers' observations of the sales promotion programs' effectiveness and customers' opinions regarding products. Shrestha evaluated customers' perceptions of goods, and services purchased under sales promotion offers, results on rebuying intentions of the same goods, and services after the end of the offers. The author uncovered that customers recognize quality and price benefits. However, Shrestha found that consumers do not distinguish benefits from the goods and services acquired under product and price built on sales promotion offers. Shrestha documented that sales promotion offers encourage neither rebuying intentions nor significant short-term brand switching.

Nevertheless, Volpe and Li (2012) showed that the estimate of sale frequency is higher while previous estimates are higher than the estimate of price rigidity. Volpe and Li highlighted the problem of sale duration and revealed that sales often run considerably longer than 1 or 2 weeks and could no longer appear as temporary price diminutions. Volpe and Li proposed the reconsideration of the empirical definition of sales. Furthermore, Yi and Yoo (2011) compared the impact of sales promotions on brand

attitudes through promotions types over time. Yi and Yoo used 154 subjects in an experiment consisting of testing materials for 12 weeks. The authors found that the long-term effects of sales promotions on brand attitudes differ across deal types. Over time, nonmonetary promotions appear to work better in eliciting customers' promising brand attitudes than monetary promotions (Yi & Yoo, 2010). Nonetheless, customers' deal proneness moderates such effects (Yi & Yoo, 2010). Yi and Yoo documented that although monetary promotions allow inducing more negative impacts than nonmonetary promotions; these influences are weaker for high deal-prone customers than for low deal-prone clients. Promotions facilitate a partial power of the distributor performance, and the connection between performance and sales promotions relies on a set of moderating factors (Turki & Kammoun, 2013).

Onditi (2012) assessed the impact of the promotional mix elements on sales and indicated that the use of sales promotion could produce cost problems connected to a shortage of finances for carrying out the promotion. Communication mix marketers exploit modes consisting of sales promotion, communication, personal selling, advertising, direct marketing, and public and publicity (Onditi, 2012). In addition, Winterich and Barone (2011) found that consumers in possession of interdependent self-construal desire promotions to a higher degree than consumers holding independent self-construal. Moreover, Winterich and Barone evidenced that the impact decreases when donation-based promotions do not include charity, identity consistency, or more salient (cause-congruent identity) than self-construal at the time of decision-making.

Furthermore, Zebra Rizvi, Malik, and Batul Zaidi (2012) showed the presence of many extraneous factors influencing the effectiveness of sales promotions. For instance, Dulaney and Wiese (2011) analyzed a category of gift cards that employ the standard auction format and confirmed that different factors influenced the proportion of the total value got for the cards. Similarly, Felgate, Fearn, Di Falco, and Garcia Martinez (2012) revealed that using loyalty card data produces more statistically significant results and offers a more detailed picture of the way promotion influences sales.

Chen et al. (2012) conducted several statistical tests to identify a tendency among consumers to neglect base values when processing proportion change information. The emphasis was the implications of base value neglect for how customers evaluate offers such as bonus packs and price discounts. Chen et al. unveiled significant advantages in the sales volume for bonus packets over a corresponding price discount in field experiment directed in a retail store. In a mall-intercept survey and many laboratory inquiries, Chen et al. provided further evidence in support of the result and identified useful boundary circumstances for when the impact tends to be evident. Likewise, Melnik, Richardson, and Tompkins (2011) tested whether product features and sellers influence the use of informational-type promotion versus display-type on eBay. Melnik et al. (2011) assumed that less-experienced sellers exploit display-type promotion and demonstrated that experienced sellers prefer the informational promotion because high scores make seller-provided messages more credible.

Melnik et al. (2011) theorized that product features, such as product condition and price have an impact on the promotion and established that higher prices allow driving more funds in display-type promotions, even when a promotion is less effective. Melnik et al. documented that the better the situation of the good, the higher utilization of the informational promotion since this category of disclosure is particularly influential. Melnik (2011) supported that the increasing insertion fee scheme of eBay is an incentive for sellers to lower opening prices, which enables the growth of the bidding activity in turn. Melnik posited that there would be no transactions without bidders and explained that the success of online auction website relies on appeal to bidders. Melnik mentioned that the auctioneer could make lower opening prices through an increase with respect to the opening prices insertion fee structure. Melnik evidenced that, in turn, the increase bidder participation raises an auction probability that results in a sale.

Liu, Cheng, and Ni (2011) supported a contradictory view, mentioning that when customers miss an initial chance to obtain a good as a gift during the time of the promotion those consumers are likely to reduce buying the good at a discounted price, especially if the gift has a great regular price (Liu et al., 2011). Liu et al. (2011) explained this behavior of shoppers by the inaction inertia. In addition, those customers are more unlikely to purchase a good or service managers offered earlier as a gift when providing a larger total amount of the gift during a promotional period (Liu et al., 2011). Liu et al. concluded that anticipated valuation and regret affect the mediating function of inaction inertia substantially.

In the case of motorcycle or scooter products, only the extrinsic attribute of product quality on the basis of the apparent quality has a significant impact on the brand loyalty in place of intrinsic attributes, which are objective quality (Shaharudin et al., 2011). Changes in these perceptions are possible if the good or service has a *high level* of consumer alertness and a good appearance from marketing events such as advertising and the promotion of sales (Shaharudin et al., 2011). Kim (2013) revealed that a variety-seeking environment stimulates a risk-taking mindset while an inertial environment motivates a risk-averse mindset. According to Kim, such a difference in risk propensity creates a delayed promotion more appealing for shoppers with a variety-seeking tendency. Kim evidenced that preferences for a brand that presents a delayed promotion are stronger when consumers have a variety-seeking propensity. The author explained that these preferences of clients low in need for cognitive closure are more swayed by the difference in variety-seeking versus inertial propensity. Kim underlined the impact of variety-seeking versus inertial propensity on a real-world selection.

Nonetheless, Serviere-Munoz and Mallin (2013) proposed and tested a model that illustrates the direct impacts of five neutralization methods: denials of victim, injury, and responsibility, appeal to greater loyalties, and accusing the condemner on the salespeople's moral intentions. Serviere-Munoz and Mallin theorized that two neutralizations were prevalent in swaying ethical intentions, appeal to higher loyalties and denial of injury, and tested these associations in three sales behavioral situations, sales organization, sales promoting, and customer relationship constructing and

maintenance. In addition, Laran and Tsiros (2013) argued that whereas uncertainty consisting of not knowing which gift will be available reduces buying probability when the decision is cognitive, uncertainty raises the buying likelihood when the decision is affective. Laran and Tsiros provided a framework to predict buying attitudes when uncertainty has a detrimental or beneficial effect on marketing that implicates gifts. Field and laboratory studies served to establish that individuals like surprise and value uncertainty in the buying process when the decision is affective (Laran & Tsiros, 2013). The authors documented that when the decision is cognitive, customers appreciate having information about goods and services offer.

Hui, Inman, Yanliu, and Suher (2013) investigated the impact of in-store travel distance problems on unplanned path and directed a field experiment to assess the efficiency of mobile promotions. Hui et al. (2013) documented that only purchasers' paths cover less than half of the zones in a grocery store. In addition, Hui et al. acknowledged that buyers frequently exploit physical products in the store as exterior memory cues, and encouraging consumers to travel more can stimulate shoppers to increase unplanned spending. Nevertheless, Hui et al. identified the endogeneity of in-store travel distance and the difficulty of gathering in-store path data as the principal problems managers face when estimating the direct impact of in-store travel distance on unintended spending. Hui et al. showed that the elasticity of unplanned spending on a travel distance is 57% higher than the uncorrected regular least squares estimate. The use of coupons that necessitates travelling farther from the planned path results in a

significant increase in unplanned spending over a coupon for an unplanned type near the planned path (Hui et al., 2013). The authors found that targeted mobile promotions aimed at raising the in-store path length increase unplanned spending.

The framing of savings messages on sales promotions, expiration of date restriction cues, and familiarity of brands are independent primes of regulatory focus (Ramanathan & Dhar, 2010). Such cues, when compatible with prior regulatory focus or one another, lead to more unrelated buying in the store (Ramanathan & Dhar, 2013). Ramanathan and Dhar (2010) showed that sales promotions affect the sales of brands under promotion and promoted brands and theorized managerial implications for the sales promotions design and store positioning. Buyers add unpromoted items on shopping baskets because of the incentive of saving or exploring money (Ramanathan & Dhar, 2013). The right marketing indications positively affect the shopping basket and sales (Ramanathan & Dhar, 2013). For example, Bui, Krishen, and Latour (2012) revealed a difference of gender indicating that focused promotions for kiosks are critical to decreasing probable risk and regret perceptions, especially for females.

Leeflang and Parreño-Selva (2012) developed a framework to determine the effect of price promotions on category revenues that comprise interdependencies among a considerable number of types at the category demand level. Variables such as category features (own-category effects), promotion intensity, and spatial distances among shelf locations (cross-category effects) weaken the own-and cross-category demand impacts (Leeflang & Parreño-Selva, 2012). The authors confirmed that approximately half of all

price promotions increase own-category revenues, particularly for categories with deeper reinforced discounts and that a price promotion influences sales of at least one other category. Leeflang and Parreño-Selva revealed the presence of cross-promotional influence among categories more closely situated in the store.

Liu-Thompkins and Tam (2013) analyzed how to differentiate the two drivers of repeat purchase and how these drivers affect customer response to cross-selling promotions. The authors yielded substantial managerial insights into higher effective cross-selling to repeat customers. Liu-Thompkins and Tam found that the attitudinal loyalty enables cross-selling while habit has the opposite effect. In addition, Liu-Thompkins and Tam showed that a particular promotional design works better for habitual customers than for those with attitudinal loyalty. Liu-Thompkins and Tam pointed out that ignoring these two principal drivers may lead to inadvertent negative consequences on customer behavior.

Nevertheless, Nwielaghi Michael and Ogwo (2013) argued that not all firms are at optimal points in both marketing performance and trade promotion tools. Trade promotion strategies influence the marketing performance through trade contests and allowances (Michael & Ogwo, 2013). Cuellar, Noland, and Kirkwood (2012) mentioned that differences in price between nonpromoted and promoted sales as well as heterogeneity amongst customers who purchase nonpromoted and promoted products often confound the establishment of the promotion effect. For given optimal levels, firm leaders should implement trade promotion strategies that underscore trade allowances and

trade contests (Nwielaghi Michael & Ogwo, 2013). Adaptation associates with performance positively when intensity and duration are low and short respectively (Hultman, Katsikeas, & Robson, 2011). Mir and Rehman (2012) found that the scope, together with the promotion adaptation and sociocultural distance, apply a complex three-way impact on export performance. Mir and Rehman revealed the need for more research attention in the field and underlined that customers' buying attitudes vary from one sales promotion to another. These findings were stimuli to pursue the doctoral study and determine the most effective strategy of sales promotions towards the buying attitudes of customers in a recession.

Literature Review of Factors Influencing Buying Attitudes

Different factors affect buying behaviors, and marketers might need to apply the appropriate sales increase strategies for the crisis. Harvard Business Essentials (2005) explained that the best strategy starts with goals. Harvard Business Essentials showed how a strategic choice should emerge from the process consisting of looking outside and inside. The authors defined different types of strategies and how a firm may stay on course in a competitive environment. The assessment of customers' buying attitudes towards sales promotion requires understanding these factors.

Various reasons might explain the decision to buy a product rather than another. Rahutami and Kekalih (2011) supported this approach, providing the example of consumers who might prefer one product rather than another because of availability, quality, attractive design, or price. Hiraide and Chakraborty (2012) confirmed that the

demand for automobiles in the U.S. relates negatively to the vehicle price and gas price. Hiraide and Chakraborty also showed that such a demand associates with nonfarm employment and single-family housing start. Zhang and Breugelmans (2012) reinforced the theory, showing that customers become less reactive to price discounts than to reward point promotions when the comparison is in the matching monetary value. Customers are no longer reactive to rival's reward point promotions, and present cumulative reward point impacts (Zhang & Breugelmans, 2012). Zhang and Breugelmans concluded the need to make marketing decisions based on a price-volume agreement.

The advertising and marketing communities have traditionally understood television advertising success (Harvey, Herbig, Keylock, Aggarwal, & Lerner, 2012). Nevertheless, changes of packaging may impact the market share, sales, and consumer decision to buy. For instance, Harvey et al. (2012) applied actual single-source, household-level data to show a methodology for optimizing the mix of in-store and television advertising. Moreover, Mishra and Jain (2012) examined the effect of packaging in a purchase decision for a category of consumer goods and determined that the packaging is an essential part of modern lifestyle and how managers organize business. Packaging is a product for sales and is a significant part of the branding process, serving in communicating the identity and image of a company (Mishra & Jain, 2012). Mishra and Jain asserted that the interest in a package as a sales promotional tool and stimulator of impulsive purchase behavior is increasing inducing changes in business contexts. Furthermore, Shahhosseini and Ardahaey (2011) mentioned that such changes

could affect a seller's performance. In the globalization process, the development of the cultural and art activities is important, and marketers in cultural fields should examine the purpose cultural customers' understanding, perception, and preferences (Shahhosseini & Ardahaey, 2011).

Anglin and Wiebe (2013) confirmed that changes allow modifying the trade-off between the effects of list price on buying attitudes and the influences of list price on bargaining attitude. Shahhosseini and Ardahaey (2011) posited that considering the significance of elements of business in interesting cultural consumers and pursuing satisfying buyers should be the fundamental disquiet for all marketers in the cultural business. Shahhosseini and Ardahaey studied marketing mix and factors such as price, product, place, and promotion in the cultural industry and explained that marketing models may indeed define suitable strategies in cultural fields to provide the products in the most recipient way for companies.

Nonetheless, Kwanho, Jiheon, and Lichtenstein (2012) established that customers commonly believe that quality and price are in positive correlation and that price-quality perceptions affect price willingness and evaluations. Kwanho et al. (2012) showed that customers tend to decide on higher-price options when differing brand options are in downward price order, and when differing brand options are in arising price order, buyers tend to choose lower-priced options. The authors documented that consumers' price-quality perceptions are an indispensable condition for such a result. Additionally, Mcshane, Bradlow, and Berger (2012) revealed that for cars of the same price levels,

visual effects exist and vary from one zone to another. These effects are subject to saturation and depend on the consumer gender (Mcshane et al., 2012).

The product information theory and market power model could generate divergent results, and advertising is likely to affect resale price maintenance over the market power effect and the product information impact (Wu & Chen, 2012). Advertising discourages manufacturers from forcing resale price maintenance when the market power is dominant, and the opposing is true in case the product information effect is prevailing (Wu & Chen, 2012). Wu and Chen (2012) showed that the way advertising influences the relation between demand quantities and prices is necessary to evaluate how advertising engenders the approval of resale price. In addition, Wu and Chen evidenced the need for managers to coordinate resale price maintenance and advertising strategies based on real options theories.

Although Rajput, Kalhoro, and Wasif (2012) did not reject the concept, the authors focused on the impact of the product price and quality of the consumer buying behavior. Rajput et al. (2012) found the presence of significant positive relationship between product price and buying behavior. A negative relationship exists between buying attitudes and product quality (Rajput et al., 2012). Exploiting the cultural theory of buying behavior, Rajput et al. gathered data from a convenience sampling of 100 participants involved in the buying process in Pakistan to show these associations. Likewise, Ray, Wood, and Messinger (2012) highlighted the relative extent of price reductions for the product systems and components assuming that these price reductions

fluctuate across different types of systems systematically. Ray et al. (2012) argued that the result depends on the price rigidity as firms would not see any effect of demand for small reductions. Ray et al. clarified the theory of rational inattention and asserted the patterns of plunging rigidity in online price of cameras and computers that are consistent with this theory. Ignoring small price changes under definite conditions is rational for consumers, and this inattention differs systematically across different categories of multicomponent classifications, leading to particular postulates about vendors' pricing behavior (Ray et al., 2012).

Bruno, Hai, and Dutta (2012) confirmed the association between price and transaction, arguing that consumer experience with the salesperson could intensify the loss aversion affect. The authors revealed the presence of the reference price effects on the transaction pricing outcome and buying level in the business-to-business market transactions. Business consumers react asymmetrically to price decreases and price increases, and salespeople hold reference prices that affect the transaction price (Bruno et al., 2012). Bruno et al. (2012) addressed the role of the reference price in a situation when managers set both the quantity and price through personal interaction during the process of transaction. Che Ahmat et al. (2011) reinforced this theory, providing the example of a hotel. According to Che Ahmat et al., the experience clients gain when staying in a hotel affects response behaviors positively while the experience clients acquire pertaining to room rates impacts the response behaviors negatively. Che Ahmat et al. tested four factors, price information, treatment experience, price expectation, and price experience

and found that client judgments and perceptions of price unfairness lead to a negative emotional response such as self-protection, revenge, and no action.

Broadcasts direct-to- consumer advertising (DTCA) influence sales and price positively while nonbroadcasts DTCA have a relatively smaller power (Dave & Saffer, 2012). Frischmann and Gensler (2011) highlighted the relevance of mediating effects of consumer behavioral metrics on the relationship between purchaser perceptual metrics and purchaser profitability. Lack of direct experiential information is in part why only a small percentage of apparel sales occur online (Merle, Senecal, & St-Onge, 2012). Nevertheless, Anderson, Fong, Simester, and Tucker (2010) found that the current U.S. sales taxes laws have a significant effect on both consumer and firm performance. Anderson et al. (2010) analyzed buying attitudes among buyers who live far from the store but need now to pay sales taxes on the internet and catalog purchases and clarified that catalog sales are genuine while internet sales decrease significantly. The study was an exploration of how opening a store affects catalog and internet market. Based on the results from the investigation, Anderson et al. explained that when a multichannel retailer opens the first retail store in the state, managers must gather sales taxes on all catalog and internet orders shipped to that state. In addition, Anderson et al. showed that the difference in the results is partly attributable to the ease with which consumers could search for lower prices at rival retailers. Retailers who earn a high proportion of income from direct channels avoid opening a first retail store in high-tax states (Anderson et al., 2010).

Ghani and Kamal (2010) demonstrated that the impulse buying is gaining significant rank in the minds of marketers. According to Ghani and Kamal, implications for placed display material, robust shelf lay-out, and further off-shelf presentation include operational merchandising and result in the impulse buying of goods in the store. Ghani and Kamal found that females did more impulse purchase on the shelves while males are on the counter. However, exhibition of the goods on the counter and shelves is a major factor that affects the impulse behavior. Khan and Dost (2011) reinforced that dynamics of impulsive buying behavior and sales promotion have an insignificant positive correlation. Nevertheless, there is no significant relationship between customers' buying decisions and advertisements kids endorse; such commercials affect the married and unmarried more or less equally (Malik & Guptha, 2013).

Činjurević, Tatić, and Petrić (2011) examined the fashion consciousness on customers' impulse buying behavior. In addition, Činjurević et al. (2011) analyzed the effect of six broad types of hedonic shopping motivations, adventure, role, gratification, value, social, and idea shopping. The authors used an online survey to gather data from 224 participants. Činjurević et al. exploited a nonprobability convenience sampling method and e-mailed a survey to a sample of individuals in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The researchers designed a survey instrument using scales already validated in prior research to establish that social shopping, role shopping, and fashion awareness do not have an association with impulse buying attitudes. However, Činjurević et al. found that impulsive buying attitudes relate to gratification, adventure, value, and idea shopping

motivations. Činjarević et al. argued that a focus on adventure, excitement, entertainment, and sales might be an effective retailing strategy to motivate impulse buying attitudes. As the objective of the research was to determine the most effective design that aligns sales promotion strategies with buying approach of customers, this suggestion was a stimulus to conduct the doctoral study.

Literature Review of Factors Affecting Sales

Several factors might affect sales. Evans, McFarland, Dietz, and Jaramillo (2012) identified underresearched topic areas that offer promising opportunities for future investigators in search of an advanced understanding of marketers of the sales performance field. This literature review encompassed a part of these topic areas: information technology, price, loyalty, and other factors affecting sales.

Effect of information technology on sales. The internet might have an impact on sales of a product. Pathak, Garfinkel, Gopal, Venkatesan, and Yin (2010) supported that information technologies (IT) and the strength of recommendations have a positive impact on sales. Pathak et al. (2010) established that online retailers are increasingly exploiting IT to provide value-added services to consumers. The authors mentioned that noticeable examples of these services are customer feedback mechanisms and online recommender systems, both of which serve to reduce customer search costs and the uncertainty associated with the buying of unfamiliar products. Pathak et al. found that recommender systems help strengthen the long-tail electronic commerce phenomenon, and obscure suggestions affect cross-selling positively. Pathak et al. showed the presence

of a positive effect of suggestions on prices and indicated that there is the opportunity for traders to adjust prices and have a greater impact on sales than does customer feedback. Implications for companies include the possibility to allow sales development and offer added flexibility to retailers (Pathak et al., 2010).

Engelen (2011) confirmed that IT is vital in sales development. Furthermore, Mithas, Tafti, Bardhan, and Goh (2011) theorized that IT investment contributes to the improvement of sales and profitability of corporations. The impact of IT investments on profitability and sales is higher than that of other optional investments, such as research and development and advertising (Mithas et al., 2011). The technology in sales environment that leads to the documentation of social media is a prevailing new selling tool (Marshall, Moncrief, Rudd, & Lee, 2012). When managers auction a homogeneous good, the price obtained is not consistent in a perfectly competitive market (Dulaney & Wiese, 2011). Moreover, Lin, Cheng, Wang, and Chang (2012) emphasized that a higher fee of perceived transaction engenders a higher switching intention.

Cui, Lui, and Guo (2012) averred that the volume of reviews has a significant impact on sales of a new product in the early time and that such influence drops over time. The authors used data encompassing 332 new products over 9 months from Amazon.com to confirm the tendency. As result, Cui et al. (2012) indicated that marketers should consider the distinctive effect of various online reviews aspects when devising e-marketing strategies and launching new products. Social discussion via electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) becomes a significant market driver and a shared

signal of reputation with the minimal role of price in the buying decision (Amblee & Bui, 2011). Amblee and Bui (2011) measured the effect of reputation signals e-WOM engenders and investigated the whole business of Amazon Shorts e-books, digital micro products sold at a low and uniform price. The authors acknowledged the need for both e-tailers and shoppers to consider e-WOM technology as the first and possibly primary source of social buying experience.

Impact of price on sales. A literature review of the price impact on sales was a need in the analysis of buying attitudes of customers towards sales promotions. Price influences risk intentions, and the perception to consume the good or service is a key factor in purchasers' decision-making (Samper & Schwartz, 2013). Reduced prices signal higher accessibility to anyone in need of a product and increase consumption of this good or service, and the opposite is true for higher prices (Samper & Schwartz, 2013). Alrjoub et al. (2012) reinforced the theory and demonstrated that the price reduction increases sales and profitability. In addition, Alexy, Criscuolo, and Salter (2012) confirmed that a tool of low-prices increases sales. Ferrer and Mallari (2011) posited that reductions in price create value for investors, establishing a positive impact of the product price reductions on sales and investors revenue. In the 21st century, cost will not be the only key factor, but also value and revenue in successful companies (Kumar & Kumar, 2011). Nevertheless, Milić (2011) examined the strategies companies frequently implemented between 2008 and 2010 all over the world and revealed that results were poorer than

firms' expectations. Eggert and Serdaroglu (2011) argued that managers should build the sales technology to develop customer relationship rather than cut costs.

Lin, Cheng, et al. (2012) remarked that a higher perceived transaction fee engenders a higher switching intention. An association exists between higher cross-price effects among personal computer brands and a higher casual of follower price rivalry (Roy & Raju, 2011). Nevertheless, beyond the price reduction, the entry of new generic rivals is useful for dropping the real transaction price of purchases (Puig-Junoy, 2010). Lin, Ke, and Whinston (2012) underlined that a higher advertising return rate leads to lower service prices. The optimal policy for a monopolist is both advertising-supported and advertising-free services as advertising returns compensate for the cannibalistic effect of vertical differentiation (Lin, Ke, et al., 2012). Lin, Ke, et al. (2012) clarified that the price reductions are more simple in the cost-per-thousand-impressions model than in the cost-per-click model consistently across both duopoly and monopoly settings.

Jazayeri and Jazayeri (2011) examined the dynamic behavior and impact of price elasticity on the overall profit and uncovered that the dynamic behavior of price elasticity can affect the overall profit of the corporation. Enduring actions such as regular price changes and assortment have a higher elasticity for products such as organics than for conventional goods (Bezawada & Pauwels, 2013). Bezawada and Pauwels (2013) underlined that higher assortment and lower prices contrasted with more and deeper promotions are the most effective strategies. The long-term own and cross-price elasticity increase during contractions and the short-term price elasticity becomes stronger

significantly throughout the observation period (Van Heerde, Guseberg, Dekimpe, & Steenkamp, 2013). The price transmission elasticity is higher or lower when inventories are below or above the target level (Abbassi, Tamini, & Gervais, 2012).

Fazlzadeh, Mohammadi, and Sepehrfar (2011) explained that the policies consisting of inelastic one price fits everything are unsuitable in several conditions of business to business market. The authors evaluated the effect of price delegation on organization performance and uncovered that the degree of price delegation impacts customer heterogeneity positively and influences risk-aversion of salespeople negatively. Information asymmetry has no association with price delegation (Fazlzadeh et al., 2011). Fazlzadeh et al. (2011) documented a positive price delegation impact on corporation performance, which intensifies when salespeople hold better customer-related information than managers do and when market-related uncertainty is high. Consumer value of a status product influences the proportion of desirable type among owners positively and proportion of the preferable type among nonowners negatively (Kuksov & Ying, 2012). Shapiro and Drayer (2012) also examined the secondary market prices and dynamic ticket pricing in major league baseball and found that time had a significant impact on ticket price. A positive association is reliable with managers employing operational discretion to get benefits that allow better performance or to signal future company value (Gunny, 2010).

Homburg, Jensen, and Hahn (2012) theorized a framework of how managers organize pricing authority within the sales function and across the marketing, sales, and

finance functions. The authors revealed that a positive interaction exists between horizontal dispersion and vertical delegation, indicating that corporations need to design horizontal dispersion and vertical delegation jointly. Homburg et al. (2012) highlighted margin-based motivations as a mediator of vertical delegation of the pricing authority-profitability relationship and price-related market dynamism as a mediator of the horizontal dispersion of the pricing authority-profitability connection. Obadia (2013) examined the efficacy of price manipulations by exporters in a circumstance of information asymmetry and found that, in general, such price manipulations have no impact on sales performance. Export price manipulations weaken performance once information asymmetry is high (Obadia, 2013). Brown (2011) found the presence of a significant relationship between rates of change in sales and rates of change in stock prices.

Chou, Sim, Teo, and Zheng (2012) contributed to the debate by constructing a model allowing making marketing decisions based on a price-volume agreement. Niu, Zhao, Castillo, and Joro (2012) examined joint pricing and inventory and production matters under three scenarios considering decision issues for members in a domination two-stage dual-channel trader supply chains. The authors assumed that managers of retail companies have adopted a multi-channel approach that comprises both pre-existing offline channels and web-based channels. Niu et al. (2012) indicated that pricing in one channel influences the business in the other channel for a dual-channel retailer. Niu et al. revealed that subsequently, such pricing impacts the retailer's replacement decisions,

which affect the producer's plan decisions, inventory price, and manufacture wholesale price. Niu et al. concluded that inventory, production, and pricing decisions interrelate in each participant of the supply chain and among the participants in the chain.

Kuksov and Ying (2012) confirmed the presence of a positive impact of price reduction of a product on the market for alternate products. Niu et al. (2012) supported the existence of a unique equilibrium under definite, realistic conditions. Song (2011) elucidated that the price reductions in rival retailers tend to reduce prices in the retailer. The threshold incentives enhance channel profits in the balance when the retailer practices first-level price discrimination (Caliskan Demirag, 2011). Caliskan Demirag (2011) theorized that incentives lead to suboptimal channel effectiveness when the retailer applies uniform pricing. The manufacturer should support the retailer only after crossing a subsidy threshold and provide more support when the retailer has one competing retailer (He, Krishnamoorthy, Prasad, & Sethi, 2012). However, support starts declining with the presence of further retailers (He et al., 2012).

Impact of loyalty on sales. A brief review of the existing body of research on loyalty was necessary as the loyalty might have an impact on sales. The consumer's perspective of the impact of relationship marketing orientation on consumer loyalty is important in business, and growing consumer loyalty is a significant challenge marketers face (Alrubaiee & Nahla, 2010). Cultivating loyal consumers is the single key driver of firms' long-term financial performance, which may lead to improved sales and consumer share, lower costs, and upper (Alrubaiee & Nahla, 2010). Corporation or brand name,

price, guarantee, and after sales service are the key factors in the buying of durables (Vyas, 2011). Source of information about authorized dealers and shops, technical expert advice through mass media, and impact of neighbors, relatives, and friends are important factors persuading in the purchase of durables (Vyas, 2011). Manning and Sydow (2011) indicated that the project entrepreneurs create collaborative paths by forming core teams with particular consumers and services suppliers.

Lei, Dawar, and Gürhan-Canli (2012) theorized that users who discount a first crisis are prone to discount a second one for the same brand, and users who subtype a first crisis are improbable to subtype again. For brands with positive earlier beliefs, a high base level of product-harm crises leads to less responsibility if the crisis is analogous to others in the industry (Lei et al., 2012). In the absence of similar information, low base rate of crises creates less responsibility toward the brand (Lei et al., 2012). Draganska and Klapper (2011) found that consumers are not mindful of all available brands at buying time and arguing that advertising influences market shares by two processes, the direct effect on brand mindfulness and impact on the buyer's preferences. In the case of ignorance of purchaser heterogeneity, in select sets, both the estimated brand and price coefficient are unfair plunging (Draganska & Klapper, 2011). Draganska and Klapper posited that such biased estimates could lead companies to make costly price-setting errors.

Other factors affecting sales. Many other factors might affect sales, and salespeople need to consider these aspects to be successful when implementing a sales

promotion strategy. Erevelles and Fukawa (2013) strengthened this insight, mentioning that salespeople and sales managers should be up-to-date on the rapid progresses in the understanding of emotional manners in psychology and consumer behavior and apply these progresses in sales contexts. According to Erevelles and Fukawa, sales technology impacts the performance of salespersons when serving as a customer relationship tool in the pharmaceutical industry. Factors that trigger voluntary usage drive the customer relationship dimension and factors imposed from outside explain the internal coordination dimension (Eggert & Serdaroglu, 2011). A stigmatized type association does not create disapproval for companies automatically (Vergne, 2011). Erevelles and Fukawa posited that the future of the personal selling and sales management depends gradually on understanding the affective manners to reach a competitive advantage, highlighting the increasingly competitive aspects of markets.

Jasmand et al. (2012) identified cross-and up-selling in inbound call centers as an emergent business practice, with the promise of customer retention and improved revenue creation. A customer service representatives' (CSR's) locomotion orientation assists the ambidextrous behavior and interrelates positively with a valuation orientation (Jasmand et al., 2012). Jasmand et al. found that managers struggle to create conducive conditions to CSRs' concurrent engagement in sales and service although team identification and bounded discretion weaken the valuable interplay. Jasmand et al. theorized that the ambidextrous behavior improves sales performance and customer satisfaction while decreasing efficiency. Baumgarten, Bonenkamp, and Homburg (2010) found a strong and

positive correlation between sales and selling, general, and administrative (SG&A) cost. The value of best sellers and that of low ones might be respectively overestimate and underestimate (Oestreicher-Singer, Libai, Sivan, Carmi, & Yassin, 2013). However, the value of goods grows with an increasing number of people using these goods and services (Lickus, 2012). Cognitive dissonance after buying affects purchasers' goods return intentions positively (Nadeem, 2012). Marketers should manage the development time that reduces progress costs and adept market-entry timing, which capitalizes on new goods and services sales (Langerak, Griffin, & Hultink, 2010).

Evans et al. (2012) identified strategies such as sales promotions as significant factors of sales performance in the marketplace. Nevertheless, Hui, Wong, and Wong (2012) evidenced that the effectiveness in optimizing retailers' returns and time-on-market depends on the availability of other options such as economic contexts. Hence, a literature review of the financial crisis impact on sales was necessary to inform this inquiry.

Literature Review of the Financial Crisis Impact on Sales

The financial crisis that occurred in 2008 might have influenced sales over the world. Understanding the impact of the crisis on sales was a need for this research. A literature review of the financial crisis impact on sales included the magnitude of the financial crisis and effect the crisis has had on sales.

Magnitude of the recent financial crisis. Sales issues that were the focus in this research might be the consequences of the 2008 financial crisis. The behavior of

customers towards sales promotions in this recession might depend on the magnitude of the recent financial crisis. Hsu (2012) demonstrated that the 2008 crisis generated from the housing market in the U.S. and spread rapidly into the financial market. The 2008 global financial crisis had a ripple effect throughout the world, affected outcomes of almost every industry, and was the worst category since the Great Depression in 1929 (Hsu, 2012). Apetroaie et al. (2012) confirmed this insight, showing that the crisis covered much of both the developing and developed worlds and was equally devastating.

The magnitude of the financial crisis was at a point that strong financial institution tools have failed to measure factors of sales (Stanton & Wallace, 2011). Mitran and Bebeselea (2012) argued that the crisis was a global economic, financial crisis that had reached unimaginable points, and theoretical and practical approaches had become obsolete to take on the role of a universal remedy. Ben-David, Franzoni, and Moussawi (2012) reinforced the magnitude evidence of the financial crisis by presenting the hedge funds' trading performance in 2007-2009. Ben-David et al. (2012) established that capital withdrawals on the part of pressure by lenders and investors hedge fund selloffs in the crisis drove overpoweringly, a situation associated with the principles of limits-of-arbitrage. Ben-David et al. mentioned that hedge funds vended about 29% of the aggregate portfolio, reducing the equity holding significantly during the crisis. In response to poor returns, stakeholders withdrew capital three times as intensely as mutual stakeholders did (Ben-David et al., 2012).

Dzikowska and Jankowska (2012) supported the trend and magnitude of the crisis. The authors evidenced that corporations operating in financial, motor vehicles, airlines, and shares industries dominated the organizations whose business performance worsened the most in the crisis. This economic crisis has engendered a domino effect by the magnitude, and crisis marketing models should anticipate this effect and provide efficient solutions to overwhelm the crisis (Mitran & Bebeselea, 2012). This brief evaluation of the magnitude of the financial crisis was a support for the doctoral study as the review enabled the assessment of the crisis impact on sales.

Impact of the financial crisis on sales. The literature review of this impact was essential in understanding customers' buying attitudes towards sales promotions. Hiraide and Chakraborty (2012) examined the impact of the economic crisis on the U.S. auto industry in general and demand of Ford vehicles in particular. The authors documented that the auto industry in the U.S. faced the most severe troubles, which threatened the survival of the industry. Shapiro, DeSchraver, and Rascher (2012) supported that, despite the presence of a variety of factors impacting the luxury suites pricing, the recession has influenced the premium seat sales business. Levchenko et al. (2010) reinforced that relative to the economic activity, the decline in trade was higher than what occurred in the previous postwar recessions in order of magnitude. Levchenko et al. emphasized that the severest percentage declines in trade have been in automobiles, capital goods, and durable industrial supplies. Three factors have affected retail sales, lack of the available credit, increasing of the saving rate associated with decreasing of consumption

expenditures, and dropping of consumer sentiment and confidence (Levchenko et al., 2010). Agafonov (2011) and Hiraide and Chakraborty (2012) supported that the financial crisis engendered a global recession that has affected the economic world severely and had a significant negative impact on sales.

Suresh (2012) strengthened the tendency of change in buying attitudes by giving the example of the gold market. Gold is an important component in international transactions (Suresh, 2012). Most of the central banks in advanced and emerging market economies either had purchased fresh gold stock or stopped vending existing stock (Suresh, 2012). Alessandria et al. (2010) confirmed that the international trade dropped drastically, and a large adjustment of inventory followed. The decline was evident for the automobile industry, sector in which Alessandria et al. observed the largest drop of sales.

Monahan et al. (2011) analyzed the recent trade collapse, which symbolized a puzzle and found small corporations as a solution for this enigma. Companies leaders should balance growth goals and social marketing thinking (Kotler, 2011). Managers need to pursue sustainability and consequently, revise policies on product development, pricing, delivery, and branding (Kotler, 2011). Mitran and Bebeselea (2012) showed the need to impose the respect of strict discipline in the entire marketing activity. In addition, Mitran and Bebeselea recommended fresh information about marketing development from sales potency in time as a critical condition for sales performance. This idea appeared as stimulation for the doctoral study since the aim of the survey was to provide

fresh marketing information managers might use for sales increases. The following summary included the essential aspects of the theory for improved business practice.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature review allowed the perception of a substantial body of research related to the sales promotion, factors that affect buying behavior and sales, and the 2008 financial crisis impact on the sales issues. This review facilitated the identification of various sales promotion strategies and insight of the relationship between the recent financial downturn and the recession. A literature review was a support for the theoretical framework in that the analysis reinforced the concepts that grounded and complemented this quantitative comparative design. The review included the idea that coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, and price discounts were sales promotions, which might affect buying behavior of customers, enable sales increases even in the time of a sales downturn. Ferrer and Mallari (2011) supported that reductions of product prices have a positive impact on sales and investors revenue, and firms earn per share when reducing prices.

However, a gap in research appeared through the literature review as there was no evidence of sales promotion strategies towards customers' buying attitudes. The way to acquire or maintain a leadership position in a competitive environment by aligning strategy to goals, implementation, and action plans was necessary for an organization to survive and sustain profitability (Harvard Business Essentials, 2005). Managers admitted the need for quantitative measures of marketing performance and faced the challenge of determining and interpreting metrics and standards (Frischmann & Gensler, 2011). Chen

et al. (2012) argued that understanding the implications of how customers evaluate offers such as sales promotions is indispensable for businesses. Hence, there was substantiation of a potential research opportunity. The insight of the sales promotions that affect significantly customers' buying attitudes among coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, and price discounts was of the critical need for corporations in this recession.

Transition and Summary

The intent of this research was to evaluate customers' buying attitudes towards three sales promotional tools in a recession. Section 1 included the contextual problems of the analysis. The sales promotions under investigation were coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, and price discounts. The main topics of the literature review were sales promotion, factors influencing buying attitudes, factors affecting sales, and impact of the recent financial crisis on sales. A review of the body of sales research allowed perceiving the need to determine the most effective strategy of sales promotions towards buying attitudes in a recession. The intent of the inquiry was to address this gap using a quantitative comparative design. Implications comprised the potential to improve business practice and enable positive social change. Section 2 included aspects regarding the purpose, role of the researcher, participants, population and sampling design, ethical research, data collection and analysis techniques, reliability, and validity of the research. The outcomes and conclusions of the study were the focus in section 3.

Section 2: The Project

Section 2 includes further descriptions and discussions of the research. Aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes of customers in a recession was the purpose of this business project. Section 1 of the study allowed the insight that there was no evidence of sales promotion strategies towards customers' buying attitudes in a recession. Section 2 contains additional information on how the study led to addressing this gap identified in the body of sales literature.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative study using a comparative design was to determine the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. The independent variables were types of sales promotion and customers' gender. The dependent variable was buying attitudes of customers. Data from customers of retail stores in a city in the southern U.S. region allowed extending the body of the literature of sales promotions in a recession. Retail stores in the city have experienced sales issues (Levchenko et al., 2010). Consumers involved in the buying process in retail stores were the specific population group of the study. Apetroaie et al. (2012) revealed that the increase of sales should generate from customers, not from companies. Assessing differences in buying attitudes among groups of customers based on the gender and type of sales promotion had implications for effective business practice and positive social change. Inferences for effective business strategies encompassed the potential to identify the sales strategy that enables a substantial increase of sales and sustainability of firms.

Implications for positive social change included the prospective to promote the employment and improvement of lifestyle of individuals. Managers should increase sales and create value by offering products at reduced prices in this recession (Kotler, 2011).

Role of the Researcher

In this quantitative comparative design, my role as a researcher was identifying the most effective strategy of sales promotions towards buying attitudes in a recession. Such a strategy was a need for business leaders in this crisis (Mitran & Bebeselea, 2012). A function consisted of exploiting data collected from consumers in a southern U.S. city, using a confidential paper-based survey implement. My role included gathering, organizing, analyzing, and interpreting data. This process allowed assessing objective theories by investigating differences between groups or connections among variables (Anyiwe, 2012). The data set contained demographic, sales promotions, and buying attitudes data from consumers involved in the buying process in the city. In addition, my function consisted of organizing the data, computing statistics tests, describing the data tendency, and summarizing the relevant characteristics of the data sets.

The version 21.0 of statistical package for social science (SPSS) served to perform complex computations necessary for the analytical testing. Skarzauskiene, (2010) supported that the SPSS is a validated measurement tool for association testing of variables when scrutinizing data. The role of explanation comprised providing information related to the need to use a number of statistical tests as well as how analyses fit with the study and interpreting results from the statistical scrutiny. The role

encompassed analyzing whether results reject predictions based on the null hypotheses or not. Furthermore, I standardized the data, determined the implications of the data to generate inferences about the entire population and other regions, summarized the results of the study, and addressed recommendations for future research.

Participants

The process for data collection was a random sampling method. Fowler (2002) posited that a random sampling method ensures representative samples where every member in the group holds an equal probability of being a component of the sample. I gathered data from consumers involved in the buying process, in a southern U.S. city, using a confidential paper-based survey. A random starting point within a list of retail stores in the city helped select every fifth store from this list. Four retail stores represented the data collection sites for different days of data gathering until I obtained the required number of respondents. Participants received information on the purpose of the study and accepted to participate by signing an informed consent (Appendix C). A respondent could stop answering the survey questions anytime during the survey completion process as participation in the study was voluntary. I provided volunteer participants with (a) the Walden informed consent form, (b) demographic questions, and (c) sales promotions and buying attitudes survey after receiving permission from stores' management to do so. The strategy for gaining access to participants consisted of approaching every fifth customer who was about to enter the main entrance of retail

stores. Osman and Fah (2011) found the process consisting of approaching every fifth participant in front of the main entrance of stores appropriate for the investigation.

A random representative sample assisted researchers in drawing conclusions concerning the population (Spiegel, Schiller, & Srinivasan, 2012). I used a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test for assessing an overall difference of means. As a significant difference existed among means, Bonferroni multiple comparison procedures allowed examining the nature of the differences among the means. The design for the analysis was a 4 X 2 ANOVA as the factors type of sales promotion and gender of customers were at four and two levels respectively. An a priori power test analysis enables researchers to calculate the sample size that is appropriate for a comparative study (Kadam & Bhalerao, 2010). An a priori power analysis for the ANOVA model using a power level of .80, alpha level of .05, effect size of .25 (medium), numerator df of 3, and 8 as the number of groups generated a sample size of 179 respondents for the survey (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). However, I used a minimum of 287 respondents to yield a power of .95 (Faul et al., 2007). Streiner (2003) supported that larger sample sizes allow detecting smaller differences among groups.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is a federal regulation that allows keeping populations from being at risk (Crocker, 2012). The conduct and protection of participants observed the guidelines of the IRB. Being in the study did not pose a risk to participants' safety or wellbeing. The study included the protection of survey respondents by confidentiality of identity, location, and privacy rights of individuals. I saved the

research data and related documents in an electronic folder, and access will be only via security enabled email and password. All raw data will be in a locked container for 5 years after completion of the study. A summary of findings will be available, and I will provide participants and anyone interested in having the results from the research with this summary upon request during the data collection or later via e-mail. The managements of cooperating stores will receive a summary of findings from this study. I will shred physical documents and erase electronic files 5 years after completion of the doctoral study.

Research Method and Design

The intent of this study was to determine the most effective strategy of sales promotions towards buying attitudes in a recession. The sales promotions under investigation were coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, and price discounts. There are several approaches for research. The present subsection consisted of examining the research method and design that were appropriate for the study.

Method

The research method for the doctoral study was a quantitative. Questions contain how much or derivatives are likely to favor survey methods, which are advantageous in case the objective for the inquiry is to predict definite results (Yin, 2014). The intent of this research question was to determine the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. Therefore, survey research was relevant for the research question. The research was an inquiry using numeric values to form

statistical analysis, and two-way ANOVA and multiple comparison procedures were the statistical techniques for the data analysis.

The insight of differences in buying attitudes among groups of customers based on the gender and type of sales promotion was essential to answer to the research question. The independent variables were the type of sales promotion and gender of customers. The dependent variable was buying attitudes of customers. A quantitative research method was necessary for the study because this methodology facilitates the examination of the differences among key variables in a population (Williams, 2011). As key variables were definite in the study, a qualitative approach was not convenient (Shuval et al., 2011; Słysz & Soroko, 2012). Thus, the mixed methods approach, which combines both qualitative and quantitative methods (Anyiwe, 2012) was not relevant for the study. Any inquiry other than the quantitative method was not suitable for the analysis of the issue and question under study.

Research Design

The research design for this quantitative study was comparative. A quantitative method was necessary to form statistical analysis, a scientifically based research that employs numeric values (Gelo, Brankman, & Benetka, 2008). Comparative research design relates to the research questions and problem statement (Crocker, 2012). The research question consisted of determining the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. A quantitative comparative design was relevant for this research question because examining the extent to which variables affect

buying attitudes was the purpose of this doctoral study. A quantitative comparative design allows analysis to determine how single or combinations of variables influence patterns of attitudes, trends, and opinions of a population by analyzing a sample of the population (Gelo et al., 2008).

Sales promotion type and gender of customers were the independent variables, and the dependent variable in the analysis was buying attitudes of customers. Regarding the impossibility to randomly assign shoppers to control and treatment groups, a quasi-experimental design was appropriate (May, Joshi, & Nair, 2012). An experimental design was not feasible as there was no necessity to assign individuals to treatment groups randomly and test whether a particular treatment affects an outcome (May et al., 2012). Instead, a comparative design was appropriate because the research was about analyzing mean differences (Bertilsson, Högberg, & Hanson, 2012). Davis (2010) supported that each element of a design interacts with every other piece of the design system. A quantitative comparative design was the relevant research design for this doctoral study.

Population and Sampling

The target population for this quantitative comparative design consisted of customers involved in the buying process, in a southern U.S. city. The eligibility criteria for choosing the population sample were that participants be consumers involved in the buying process in the city and 18 years of age or older. Four retail stores selected randomly from a list of retail stores in the city were the data collection sites. I chose every fifth store from this list until I obtained a total of four stores. I accessed the

participants implementing the strategy consisting of approaching every fifth customer who was about to enter the main entrance of stores. Therefore, the sampling units were 5, 10, 15, 20, and so on until I obtained a total of 287 participants. Osman and Fah (2011) found this process appropriate for the investigation.

Fowler (2002) found that sampling technique researchers may use include random sampling and systematic sampling methods. Random sampling was the method for this doctoral study. Fowler supported that a random sampling method ensures representative samples where every member in the group holds an equal probability of being a component of the sample. Randomization is more desirable than nonprobability or convenience sampling and allows the researcher to generalize findings to the study population (Spiegel et al., 2012). Spiegel et al. (2012) posited that a representative sample assists the researcher in drawing conclusions concerning the population of interest. Spiegel et al. emphasized that a random sampling method can represent the population. Green and Salkind (2010) supported that a random sample of the population allows meeting the underlying random sample assumptions necessary for the ANOVA and multiple comparison data analysis. The sample was a *genuine* customer sample. Lowe and Barnes (2012) found genuine customer sample rare while those such as student samples serve in research frequently. The authors underlined that interpretation of findings on the basis of student's data requires caution and replication with actual customers while genuine customer samples enhance the generalizability of findings.

The sample size for this inquiry was 287 volunteer respondents to yield a power of .95 (Faul et al., 2007). Streiner (2003) confirmed that a researcher might detect smaller differences among groups when using larger sample sizes. A power analysis using a power level of .80, alpha level of .05, effect size of .25 (medium), numerator *df* of 3, and 8 as the number of groups generated a sample size of 179 respondents for the survey (Faul et al., 2007). Kadam and Bhalerao (2010) concluded that there is a set for the alpha value of committing a Type I error at 0.05 and 20% the probability of committing a Category II error or 80% the power of the test value for social science research. The authors showed that a small effect size necessitates a large sample size, and a large effect size allows for a small sample size. In addition, Kadam and Bhalerao established that an a priori power test analysis allows the evaluation of proper sample size for an examination. I approached random customers in front of retail stores located in the city expecting 287 responses from a cross-section of the customer body's different socioeconomic demographic. Data gathering took place following Walden's IRB approval.

Ethical Research

I complied with all regulations of both the IRB and Walden University relevant to rights of participants. IRB is a federal regulation institution that allows keeping populations from being at risk (Crocker, 2012). The IRB approval number for this research was 10-07-14-0361937. I approached customers who were 18 years of age or older in front of retail stores after receiving permission from the management of stores to

do so. The survey was confidential. Being in the study did not pose a risk to participants' safety or wellbeing.

- Volunteer participants received information on the purpose of the study and agreed to participate through an informed consent (Appendix C). The informed consent form included diverse information such as ways to maintain the privacy, confidentiality, and right of respondents.
- Participants (a) agreed to all provisions in the consent form before answering the survey instrument; (b) received a demographic, sales promotion, and buying attitudes survey; and (c) stopped answering the survey questions anytime during the survey completion process if the wish was to do so since the participation in the survey was voluntary. The buying attitudes and sales promotion questions were instruments Bakewell and Mitchell (2003) and Osman and Fah (2011) created.
- There were (a) confidentiality agreement documents (Appendix D) for the protection of respondents; (b) no compensation for respondents of the survey; (c) no identifying numbers, which linked an individual survey respondent to a particular survey form; and (d) no information in the reports of the study that helped identify respondents.
- For continuing confidentiality and safety purposes, I will store and lock the survey instrument, raw and coded data, collective results, and

recommendations in a container, security monitored place for 5 years after completion of the study.

- I will shred confidential data that will be physical documents and erase electronic 5 years after completion of the study.
- A summary of findings from this research will be available to participants and anyone after receipt of the request.

Data Collection

Data collection was an important step in this quantitative comparative design. The quality of the study depended on the instruments that served in the data collection and relied on the data collection technique. Finally, a successful data gathering might depend on the method of the data organization.

Instruments

The instrument tools included a form of demographic, sales promotions, and buying attitudes survey for analysis (Appendix A). The demographic data were a part of the information that assisted in evaluating the validity of participants. The sales promotions under study were coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, and price discounts. The survey questions served to test the customers' buying attitudes towards the three sales promotions in the city, using a 5-point Likert-type scale. The Likert-type scale is a prevalent method to measure psychometric responses from participants completing surveys and set surveys employing closed-ended questions (Sardar, Rehman, Yousaf, & Aijaz, 2011).

Crocker (2012) stated that identifying the central theme of the survey and instituting the numeric scale (5, 7, or 9), is important when using a Likert-type scale. Using a numeric scale of 5 allows rating statements and measuring the attitudes of survey respondents (Crocker, 2012). Waples, Weyhrauch, Cornell, and Culbertson (2010) mentioned that the reliability of responses increases by exploiting Likert-type rating scales. The rationale for surveying was gathering structured data with the intent to employ the data as a generalized sample of the population. Participants completed confidential paper-based surveys. Data computation using the SPSS version 21.0 facilitated the analysis. I will keep raw data in a locked container for 5 years after completion of the study. A summary of findings will be available upon request.

The definition of the variables was proper in the study to avoid threats to the validity of the analysis (Miles, 2013). Sales promotion type and gender of customers were the two independent variables for the analysis. Sales promotion type and gender served as two factors at respectively four and two levels while buying attitudes of customers served as the dependent variable. The statistical tests consisted of using a two-factor ANOVA indicating significant overall mean differences, and Bonferroni multiple comparison procedures served for examining which buying attitudes means differed significantly among groups of customers based on the gender and type of sales promotion. The approach to preventing possible internal and external threats consisted of having appropriate sample size, establishing clear questions, identifying and verifying

assumptions, and expressing relevant business strategies. Approaches to addressing threats to validity included double checking and viewing data.

The survey instrument tools were the instruments by Bakewell and Mitchell (2003) and Osman and Fah (2011). Appendix B included permissions to use these survey instrument tools. Osman and Fah assessed the reliability and validity of the survey instruments and documented that the survey instruments had reached adequate reliability for social science research and business. The scales of reliability for buying attitudes towards coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, and price discounts had reached respectively reliability coefficients of 0.752, 0.827, and 0.862 while buying attitudes scale had attained the reliability coefficient of 0.680 (Osman & Fah, 2011). The scale of reliability for coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, and price discounts had achieved the coefficient of determination of 23 points (Osman & Fah, 2011). The scale of reliability for buying attitudes had attained the coefficient of determination of 36 points (Osman & Fah, 2011). Osman and Fah concluded that respondents who score the mean scale of 23 points or below have unfavorable buying attitudes and those who score above the mean scale of 23 points have favorable buying attitudes. Buying attitudes are at *low level* for respondents who score the mean scale of 36 points or below and at *high level* for those who score above the mean scale of 36 points (Osman & Fah, 2011). Revisions or adjustments to the use of the standardized research instruments were unnecessary. The methods for scale score measurement and point attribution are reliable research tools for closed-ended questions and quantitative studies (Sardar et al., 2011).

The first part of the survey included six close-ended demographic questions. Close-ended questions allowed participants to choose from a provided set of possible answers. The second part of the survey included 37 items consisting of assessing participants' buying attitudes towards the three sales promotion strategies and buying attitudes of respondents. In this part, respondents chose an answer from a 5-point ordinal scale, which were: *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neutral*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree*. Eight items served to measure each sales promotion type, and 13 items facilitated the assessment of buying attitudes of participants.

The quantitative comparative design and analysis reflected the patterns of preferences among the respondents. Points for responses varied from 1 in one end (*strongly disagree*) to 5 in the other end (*strongly agree*). Data analysis using SPSS version 21.0 generated calculations allowing identifying the most effective strategy of sales promotions towards buying attitudes in the city. The total scale of buying attitudes towards coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, and price discounts was on the basis of the mean score. Two scale categories described the total score of buying attitudes towards coupons, price discounts, and buy-one-get-one-free based on the measurement of mean scores.

Data Collection Technique

A confidential paper-based survey represented the instrument to collect data from 287 participants using a random sampling method. This process enabled the possibility of the underlying random sample assumptions necessary for data analysis (Green & Salkind, 2010). The data collection technique consisted of approaching customers on sites of retail

stores after receiving permission from stores' management to do so. Four retail stores selected randomly represented the sites of the data collection. There was no transcriber or translator. The random selection process consisted of approaching every fifth customer who was about to enter the main entrance of stores until I obtained a total of 287 respondents. Randomization is preferable over convenience or nonprobability sampling and allows generalization to the population (Spiegel et al., 2012). I provided volunteer respondents with a Walden informed consent form, demographic questions, and sales promotions and buying attitudes survey. Customers received information on the purpose of the study and accepted to participate through an informed consent. There was no compensation for participants. The study did not include a pilot study as the survey was existing instruments tools. Osman and Fah (2011) established the reliability and validity of the survey instrument tools and evidenced readability and understanding of questions. Hence, a pilot study was not necessary.

Data Organization Techniques

The SPSS, version 21.0 software program, served to compute a two-way ANOVA and, as determined from the overall ANOVA results, multiple comparison testing for the data analysis. I coded the data into an SPSS data file for analysis and used the same software program to check for data entry errors. Rating statements and measuring the attitudes of survey respondents (Crocker, 2012) required an appropriate measurement tool. Skarzauskiene (2010) identified SPSS as a validated measurement tool for effects testing of variables when examining data. Sardar et al. (2011) found the Likert-type scale

as a prevalent technique to measure psychometric responses from participants completing surveys using closed-ended questions. The SPSS, version 21.0, allowed keeping track of data, logging data into a matrix, and analyzing the effects (Skarzauskiene, 2010) of the types of sales promotion and gender on buying attitudes. I will store and lock the survey instrument, raw and coded data, and the collective results and recommendations in a container for 5 years after completion of the study to protect rights of participants.

Data Analysis Technique

The research question for this doctoral study was: What is the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession? The research was a quantitative comparative design, not requiring interview questions. The list of the demographic and survey questions included 43 questions (Appendix A). For the demographic questions, the participants selected answers among statements. The demographic and survey questions included six close-ended questions and 37 statements of sales promotion and buying attitudes respectively. For each survey question, the respondents chose among answers, which were *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neutral*, *agree*, or *strongly agree* after reading each of the sales promotion and buying attitudes statements.

The data analysis consisted of testing two null hypotheses. One null hypothesis consisted of nonexistence of a significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession. The other null hypothesis consisted of nonexistence of a significant difference in buying attitudes means between customers'

gender in a recession. The participants' responses to the demographic, sales promotions, and buying attitudes survey were confidential and helped identify the respondents only as Participant 1, Participant 2, and so on. The points (ordinal scale) for responses *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neutral*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* were respectively 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 for the statistical tests computation. SPSS is a validated analysis tool for effects testing of variables when analyzing data (Skarzauskiene, 2010). The SPSS, version 21.0 software tools enabled the creation of data spreadsheet and charted demographic, survey, and analysis data in the study. After obtaining frequency counts to review the distribution of responses to each question on the survey and identify possible outliers, a two-way ANOVA served as a statistical test for assessing an overall difference of means. As a significant difference existed among means, multiple comparisons using Bonferroni multiple comparison procedure (Green & Salkind, 2010) enabled me to examine the nature of the differences and identify which sales promotion type is the most effective towards buying attitudes. Assumptions for the ANOVA test included homoscedasticity. There was a test for homogeneity of variances to ensure that all within-group variances were the same before the ANOVA test. The Levene's test revealed the presence of heteroscedasticity, and I used SPSS' bootstrapping feature to assure the statistical validity of the *post hoc* tests and determine which sales promotion strategy was the most effective for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession.

Four concepts from the literature grounded and complemented this quantitative comparative design. Harvard Business Essentials (2005) suggested that managers should

look not only inside, but also outside of the firm to obtain or maintain a leadership position by aligning strategy to goals in a competitive environment. When looking outside, marketers might uncover that reductions in the product price have a positive impact on sales and create value for investors (Ferrer & Mallari, 2011). Frischmann and Gensler (2011) supported that, in general, managers admitted the need for quantitative measures of marketing performance face the challenge of determining which metrics to measure and in what way to interpret metrics. Chen et al. (2012) stated that understanding the implications of how customers evaluate offers such as sales promotions is indispensable for organizations. The doctoral study was congruent with these ideas as the research question consisted of identifying the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. The inquiry allowed data gathering to determine the most effective strategy of sales promotions. Hence, the research question was a support in establishing the sales promotion strategy that aligns properly with the sales increase goal in a recession and addressing the theoretical framework.

The data presentation, explanation, and interpretation helped establish critical consistency in association with the research question and illustrate implications of the population under study. Johnson and Christensen (2007) supported that the statistical process assists in attempting to either disprove or prove if a difference exists between the independent and dependent variables. Because there were two factors at four and two levels, a 4X2 two-way ANOVA was a support, and multiple comparison procedures helped examine differences in buying attitudes among the groups of customers. Johnson

and Christensen reinforced that such a design was suitable as data analysis allows using samples and inferential statistics methodology for mean differences examination in the population.

Reliability and Validity

The data accuracy allowed understanding whether a gap exists between the results of the inquiry and practice. Reliability and validity were important to evaluate potential weaknesses and strengths of the analysis and for this study. This subsection included a discussion of the reliability and validity of the study.

Reliability

A compilation of appropriate materials, when creating survey questions is necessary to generate reliable research (Johnson & Christensen, 2007; Yukl, George, & Jones, 2010). The quality of the survey, data collection method, approach of data transferring, and proper data analysis procedure were factors that led to internal and external reliability (Yukl et al., 2010). Wikman (2006) confirmed that managing the measuring indicators is easier when the researcher chooses proper questions on surveys. The instruments for this research had reached acceptable reliability for business and social science research (Osman & Fah, 2011). Osman and Fah (2011) established that the scale of reliability for buying attitudes towards coupons had attained the reliability coefficient of 0.827 while the scale of reliability for buying attitudes towards price discounts had achieved the reliability coefficient of 0.752. The scale of reliability for buying attitudes towards buy-one-get-one-free had reached the reliability coefficient of

0.806. In addition, Osman and Fah indicated that the scale of reliability for buying attitudes had reached the reliability coefficient of 0.680. The SPSS, version 21.0 software program, served to compute a two-way ANOVA and, as necessary, multiple comparison procedures for the data analysis. SPSS provides estimates of the coefficient of determination and effect sizes for main effects and the two-factor interaction for a two-way ANOVA (Green & Salkind, 2010).

A confidential paper-based survey represented the instrument to collect data from 287 participants using a random sampling method for this quantitative comparative design. For each survey question, the respondents chose among answers, which were *strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree*. The points (ordinal scale) for these responses were respectively 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1.

Validity

Validity consists of factual conclusions reflecting (a) real world phenomena, (b) accuracy of data collection, (c) authenticity, (d) credibility, and (e) trustworthiness (Miles, 2013). Minimizing external validity problems in the research design and analysis was a goal. External validity referred to the ability of other researchers to apply the study's findings and recommendations for customers of different regions or types of store. The generalizability and applicability of findings to other circumstances depend on the study's external validity (Rodriguez Jaime, 2013). Internal validity related to the variables and ability to verify the cause and effect, which was not the focus of a comparative design (Rodriguez Jaime, 2013). The statistical tests consisted of using a

two-factor ANOVA for examining the differences in buying attitudes among groups of customers based on the gender and type of sales promotion. Assumptions of the ANOVA test included homoscedasticity that all within-group variances are the same. The Levene's test enabled me to conclude the presence of heteroscedasticity, and using SPSS's bootstrapping procedures enabled me to assure the statistical validity of the *post hoc* tests' results (Green & Salkind, 2010). Appropriate methods for data collection and analysis were necessary for assuring the statistical conclusion validity of this quantitative comparative study. In addition, profile plots and viewing data helped in assuring statistical conclusion validity. Before the ANOVA test, I examined the frequency distributions of responses to each question on the survey and identified no outliers. Watrous-Kelley (2012) concluded that external validity issues can result in other researchers reaching incorrect inferences. The population group of the study consisted of consumers involved in the buying process in retail stores in a southern U.S. city as the increase of sales should generate from customers, not from internal requirements or perspectives of corporations (Apetroaie et al., 2012). The recession had affected the profitability and sustainability of retail stores in a southern U.S. city, which represented the geographic location of the study (Apetroaie et al., 2012; Levchenko et al., 2010).

Transition and Summary

Section 2 included (a) the purpose statement, (b) role of the researcher, (c) participants, (d) population and sampling design, (e) ethical research, (f) data collection and analysis techniques, and (g) means for assuring the reliability and validity of this

study. Section 2 encompassed the explanation and discussion of the substance of this research. Observing ethical rules in data collection and analysis was necessary for the reliability and validity of the study and protection of participants.

Section 3 included the discussion of the (a) presentation of findings, (b) application to professional practice, (c) inferences for social change, (d) suggestions for actions and further research, and (e) reflections. Findings comprised the (a) presentation of the purpose, (b) research question, (c) reintroduction of hypotheses, and (d) summary of findings. The presentation encompassed conclusions on the basis of the statistical evidence. The application to professional practice comprised how the study related to business relevance for improving business practices. Implications to social change comprised establishing the way the findings and recommendations enabled the development of (a) organizations, (b) individuals, or (c) institutions in the community. Change recommendations for action were suggestions of how the study's findings led to future research. Reflections included suggestions and thoughts about sales promotion tools, and conclusion was a message regarding effective sales promotion tools towards buying attitudes.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

The purpose of this quantitative comparative study was to determine the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. Section 1 was a discussion of the foundation of the study, and Section 2 was an explanation and discussion of the research methodology and design. Section 3 includes an (a) overview of the study, (b) presentation of the findings, and (c) description of ways findings from the research apply to professional practice and might influence social change. In addition, this section encompasses (a) recommendations for action and further research in the field, (b) reflections, and (c) summary and conclusions of the study.

Overview of Study

The intent of this research was to identify which sales promotion strategy influences buying attitudes significantly in a recession. The sales promotions under investigation were (a) coupons discount, (b) buy-one-get-one-free, (c) price discounts, and (d) control case for which there was no sales promotion strategy. The research question was as follows: What is the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession? This analysis comprised effects of both types of sales promotions and gender of customers. The subquestions generated from the research question were as follows:

1. How do buying attitudes means differ among the types of sales promotion in a recession?

2. How do buying attitudes means differ among customers male and female in a recession?

Data from customers completing a confidential paper-based survey and random sampling method served for computing 4X2 two-way ANOVA and Bonferroni post hoc testing. The main effect for customers' gender [$F(1, 279) = .000$; $p = .999 > .05$; *Partial* $\eta^2 = .000$] was not significant. The difference in buying attitudes was not significantly different ($p = .99 > .05$) for male and female participants. However, there was a significant main effect with respect to the types of sales promotion [$F(3, 279) = 101.360$; $p = .000 < .001$; *Partial* $\eta^2 = .522$]. The price discount mean was higher than coupon discount, buy-one-get-one-free, and control means. The price discount strategy had a higher buying attitudes mean (38.51) than did any other type of sales promotion for both genders. Findings enabled the identification of price discount as the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession.

Findings from this research enable business practitioners to develop a sales promotion strategy that contributes to a substantial increase of sales for sustainability of organizations in a recession. Increasing sales might require growing the production volume and hiring more employees. Findings could catalyze the improvement of lifestyle of individuals and reduction of negative tendencies such as crime and poverty associated with unemployment. The next section includes a presentation of the findings.

Presentation of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine which sales promotion strategies differed significantly in customers' buying attitudes in a recession. The research question was the following: What is the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession? This data analysis consisted of testing two null hypotheses. The null and alternative hypotheses built from the research question were as follows:

H1o: There is no significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession.

H1a: There is a significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession.

H2o: There is no significant difference in buying attitudes means among customers male and female in a recession.

H2a: There is a significant difference in buying attitudes means among customers male and female in a recession.

Using a confidential paper-based survey and random sampling method, I obtained and analyzed data from 287 consumers. There was a quick review for completion of each survey package returned during the data gathering, and participants completed any missing parts, if necessary without coercion. As a result, there were no missing answers or variables when completing analyses. Demographic data such as race and occupation were not necessary for the analysis or research question. I coded the data into an SPSS

data file for analysis and used the same software program to check for data entry errors. There were frequency counts to develop and review the distribution of responses to each question on the survey. Below is a presentation of results from the analysis.

Presentation of the Results

This data analysis consisted of (a) calculating descriptive statistics, (b) computing a 4X2 ANOVA, and (c) employing Bonferroni post hoc tests. The descriptive statistics comprised the responses by question label, group name, number per group, mean, and standard deviation. Descriptive statistics allowed for the examination of possible mean differences. Table 4 contains the descriptive statistics of buying attitudes of male and female customers towards each of the four types of sales promotion. The ANOVA test enabled the analysis of the significance of mean differences. Buying attitudes mean was an indication of the average perception of each group in relation to each factor.

The results did not include any outliers. Buying attitudes means for customer males ranged from 38.51 to 32.00 while means for customer females ranged from 38.51 to 32.22. Buying attitudes means for types of sales promotion ranged from 38.51 for price discount to 32.00 for coupon discount. The overall buying attitudes means were 38.51 for price discount, 32.13 for coupon discount, 33.48 for buy-one-get-one-free, and 32.82 for the control case for which there was no sales promotion strategy.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics: Dependent Variable, Buying Attitudes

Sales promotion	Customers' gender	Mean	SD	N
Price discount	Male	38.51	2.538	55
	Female	38.51	2.824	116
	Total	38.51	2.728	171
Coupon discount	Male	32.00	2.102	25
	Female	32.22	2.609	36
	Total	32.13	2.398	61
B1G1F	Male	32.73	.467	11
	Female	34.00	3.651	16
	Total	33.48	2.860	27
Control case	Male	33.73	3.580	11
	Female	32.24	2.862	17
	Total	32.82	3.186	28
Total	Male	35.77	3.854	102
	Female	36.32	4.049	185
	Total	36.13	3.982	287

Note. a. Price discount is a discount based on prices.

b. Coupon discount is a discount based on coupons.

c. B1G1F is buy-one-get-one-free.

d. Control case represents case of absence of sales promotion strategies.

The ANOVA test enabled the assessment and significance of mean differences by comparing buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotions and gender of customers. This ANOVA testing related to both Subquestions 1 and 2 generated from the research question. Assumptions for the ANOVA test comprised homoscedasticity that all within-group variances are the same. I tested for homogeneity of variances to ensure that all within-group variances were the same before the ANOVA test. The Levene's test [$F(7, 279) = 2.37; p = .023 < .05$] was significant, and I, therefore, concluded the

presence of variances' heterogeneity (heteroscedasticity). Hence, SPSS's bootstrapping procedures were necessary to assure the statistical validity of the conclusions from the post hoc testing. Table 5 is a presentation of the interaction between the effect of customers' gender and the effect of type of sales promotion resulting from the two-way ANOVA test using SPSS's bootstrapping procedures.

Table 5

Buying Attitudes: Interactions Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Partial η^2
Corrected model	2465.103	7	352.158	47.456	.000	.544
Intercept	188668.269	1	188668.269	25424.516	.000	.989
Sales promotion	2256.487	3	752.162	101.360	.000	.522
Customers' gender	.000	1	.000	.000	.999	.000
Sales promotion * Customers' gender	26.115	3	8.705	1.173	.320	.012
Error	2070.382	279	7.421			
Total	379084.000	287				
Corrected total	4535.484	286				

Note. a. R squared = .544 (Adjusted R squared = .532).

b. * represents the interaction between the effect of customers' gender and the effect of type of sales promotion.

This ANOVA test enabled the analysis of the effects of the customers' gender and type of sales promotion (factor variables) on the buying attitudes (dependent variable).

The sales promotion group main effect examination was to understand whether the buying attitudes means of the types of sales promotion were significantly different. The gender main effect analysis was to determine whether the buying attitudes means of customers' gender were significantly different. The interaction test was to analyze

whether the differences in buying attitudes among types of sales promotion changed with the gender of customers. The overall ANOVA [$F(7, 279) = 47.456; p = .000 < .001; \text{Partial } \eta^2 = .544$] was highly significant. Table 6 is a representation of the estimated marginal buying attitudes means along with the bootstrapped confidence intervals for the means of buying attitudes.

Table 6

Buying Attitudes by Types of Sales Promotion and Gender

Sales promotion	Customers' gender	Mean	SE	95% Confidence interval		Bootstrap for mean ^a			
				Lower bound	Upper bound	Bias	SE	BCa ^b 95% Confidence interval	
						Lower	Upper		
Price discount	Male	38.509	.367	37.786	39.232	.018	.333	37.746	39.217
	Female	38.509	.253	38.011	39.007	.008	.257	37.978	38.992
Coupon discount	Male	32.000	.545	30.928	33.072	-.028	.417	31.231	32.800
	Female	32.222	.454	31.328	33.116	.007	.440	31.461	33.162
B1G1F	Male	32.727	.821	31.110	34.344	-.004	.141	32.444	33.000
	Female	34.000	.681	32.659	35.341	-.030	.935	32.271	35.776
Control case	Male	33.727	.821	32.110	35.344	-.019	1.080	31.758	35.743
	Female	32.235	.661	30.935	33.536	-.005	.694	31.068	33.625

Note. a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples.

b. BCa is bias corrected accelerated.

There was a statistically significant main effect for the types of sales promotion group [$F(3, 279) = 101.360; p = .000 < .001; \text{Partial } \eta^2 = .522$]. The difference among the types of sales promotion accounted for approximately 52% ($\text{Partial } \eta^2 = .52$) of the

variability in buying attitudes (Table 5). Further analysis of the specific differences in the mean effects was necessary because of the presence of a statistically significant main effect for types of sales promotion ($p = .000 < .001$; *Partial* $\eta^2 = .52$). The overall mean (Table 4) for the price discount (38.51) was significantly higher than that for coupon discount (32.13), buy-one-get-one-free (33.48), or control case for which there was no sales promotion strategy (32.82). However, the difference in buying attitudes means for customers' gender (Table 5) was not significant [$F(1, 279) = .000$; $p = .999 > .05$; *Partial* $\eta^2 = .000$]. The sales promotion * customers' gender interaction (Table 5) was not statistically significant [$F(3, 279) = 1.173$; $p = .320 > .05$; *Partial* $\eta^2 = .012$]. Post hoc pairwise comparisons for the customers' gender ($p = .99 > .05$) and sales promotion * customers' gender ($p = .32 > .05$) were unnecessary since the effects were not significant.

I then conducted the follow-up of the tests for mean differences with pairwise comparisons among the four types of sales promotion averaged across gender. The nature of the post hoc pairwise comparison testing depended on the degree to which variance across all of the groups was equal, through the use of the Levene's test. There was evidence of heteroscedasticity. The Levene's test [$F(7, 279) = 2.37$; $p = .023 < .05$] was significant, rejecting the assumption of equal variance across all subpopulations. Bootstrapped non-parametric confidence intervals were, therefore, necessary for conducting multiple comparison testing. I used Bonferroni adjustment for the post hoc pairwise comparisons across the groups of types of sales promotion. Field (2013) concluded that Bonferroni procedures enable researchers to control for the Type I error

across groups. Table 7 is a presentation of *bootstrapping* results for non-parametric confidence intervals for the pairwise differences resulting from employing SPSS's bootstrapping procedures.

Table 7

Buying Attitudes: Bootstrap for Multiple Comparisons

(I) Sales promotion strategy	(J) Sales promotion strategy	Mean difference in buying attitudes (I-J)	Bias	SE	Bootstrap ^a BCa ^b 95% Confidence interval	
					Lower	Upper
Price discount	Coupon discount	6.38	.01	.38	5.59	7.15
	B1G1F	5.03	.04	.60	3.73	6.31
	Control case	5.69	.03	.65	4.28	7.04
Coupon discount	Price discount	-6.38	-.01	.38	-7.06	-5.69
	B1G1F	-1.35	.02	.63	-2.66	-.11
	Control case	-.69	.01	.68	-2.11	.61
B1G1F	Price discount	-5.03	-.04	.60	-6.11	-3.98
	Coupon discount	1.35	-.02	.63	.19	2.56
	Control case	.66	-.01	.86	-1.04	2.29
Control case	Price discount	-5.69	-.03	.65	-6.91	-4.46
	Coupon discount	.69	-.01	.68	-.53	2.05
	B1G1F	-.66	.01	.86	-2.35	1.07

Note. a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples.

b. BCa is bias corrected accelerated.

The multiple comparison testing related to the Subquestion 1 generated from the research question and allowed identifying which type of sales promotion significantly differed with respect to buying attitudes. The post hoc confidence intervals for the

differences in means of buying attitudes identified significant mean differences for the bootstrap confidence intervals, which did not contain zero. Based on Table 7, the confident intervals that did not overlap zero difference in buying attitudes were for (a) price discount and coupon discount [5.59, 7.15], (b) price discount and buy-one-get-one-free [3.73, 6.31], (c) price discount and control case [4.28, 7.04], (d) coupon discount and price discount [-7.06, -5.69], (e) coupon discount and buy-one-get-one-free [-2.66, -.11], (f) buy-one-get-one-free and price discount [-6.11, -3.98], (g) buy-one-get-one-free and coupon discount [.19, 2.56], and (h) control case and price discount [-6.91, -4.46].

Participants had almost identical buying attitudes in the presence of buy-one-get-one-free, coupon discount, and control case (absence of sales promotions) strategies. The buying attitudes mean for price discount was significantly higher than those for coupon discount, buy-one-get-one-free, and that of the control case. The mean differences in buying attitudes varied from 6.38 for price discount and coupon discount to 5.03 for price discount and buy-one-get-one-free. The mean difference in buying attitudes was 5.69 between price discount and control case and 1.35 between buy-one-get-one-free and coupon discount.

There was a significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession (Table 5). Buying attitudes towards the price discount strategy were substantially higher than those towards the coupon discount, buy-one-get-one-free, and that of the control case strategies (Table 7). Osman and Fah (2011) concluded that buying attitudes are at a low level for respondents who score below or the

mean scale of 36 points and at a high level for those who score above the mean scale of 36 points.

Figure 1 is a plot of the estimated marginal means of buying attitudes towards sales promotion and a demonstration that the overall buying attitudes mean for price discount (38.51) was above 36 points, indicating high buying attitudes. Buying attitudes means for coupon discount, buy-one-get-one-free, and control case were below 36 points, indicating low buying attitudes and variability. Findings allowed understanding that price discount strategy might allow managers to improve sales. Furthermore, Figure 1 is a confirmation of the ANOVA test's results that there is no significant difference ($p = .99 > .05$) in buying attitudes means between male and female participants across the four types of sales promotion strategies (Table 5).

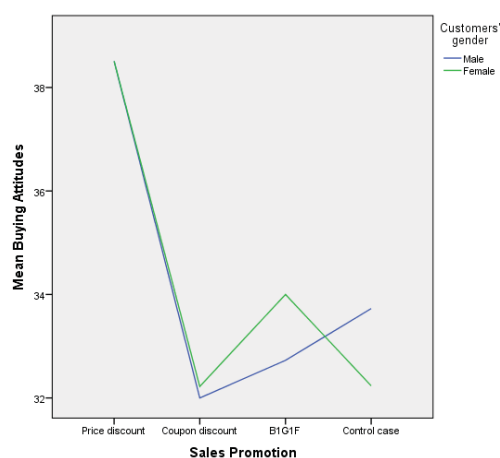


Figure 1. Plot of estimated marginal means of buying attitudes for sales promotion type.

Discussion of the Results

The intent of this quantitative comparative design was to identify which, if any, sales promotion strategy resulted in the highest mean participant buying attitude in a

recession. The research question was as follows: What is the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession? Two subquestions generated from the research question led to two null and alternative hypotheses.

Subquestion 1. The first sub-question stemming from the research question consisted of understanding how buying attitudes means differ among the types of sales promotion in a recession. Null hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession. Null hypothesis 1 was false. Buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion are significantly different in a recession. This result is similar to previous researchers' findings. Mir and Rehman (2012) found that the behaviors of customers vary from a sales promotion strategy to another. Mishra and Mishra (2011) provided an example of price discount and bonus packs and showed that customers desire price discounts to bonus for unhealthy food items. Osman and Fah (2011) reached a similar conclusion when simulating coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, price discounts, and free samples towards buying attitudes among students. Osman and Fah established a significant difference in buying attitudes among these types of sales promotion. Chen et al. (2012) conducted several statistical tests and documented that buying behaviors of buyers change when managers vary sales promotion strategies. Zhang and Breugelmans (2012) reinforced this concept when comparing price discount with other sales promotion strategies. Khan and Dost (2011) found that dynamics of impulsive buying behavior and sales promotion have an insignificant positive correlation. Overall, the conclusion that there is a significant

difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession is a confirmation of findings from previous studies.

Price discount is a sales promotion strategy that influences buying attitudes. This finding is similar to results from the research by Osman and Fah (2011). Osman and Fah found the presence of a significant association between buying attitudes and sales promotions. Effective marketing strategies affect the consumers' shopping basket decisions and sales (Ramanathan & Dhar, 2013). Findings are a confirmation of the conclusion Esfahani and Jafarzadeh reached in 2012. Sales promotion is one of the key factors in the marketing mix for different consumers' products worldwide used to stimulate customer purchases (Esfahani & Jafarzadeh, 2012). Mir and Rehman (2012) supported that sales promotion is a key implement managers frequently rely on to influence customers' buying attitudes directly. Strategists should consider promotions as an efficient method and strategy for managing customers and rivals in the end (Kanagal, 2013). Esfahani and Jafarzadeh (2013) confirmed that marketers use more sales promotions to respond to customer behavior trends. Ramanathan and Dhar (2013) reinforced that sales promotions affect the sales of brands under promotion and promoted brands. Nevertheless, managers need to identify the right sales promotion tool for the improvement of buying attitudes.

Price discount is the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. This result from the research is similar to previous findings. Kotler (2011) explained the persistence of sales issues by the magnitude of this

recession, which has constrained consumers to modify lifestyles to a *lower level* of revenue and spending. Price influences risk intentions, and the perception to consume the good or service is a key factor in purchasers' decision-making (Samper & Schwartz, 2013). Leeflang and Parreño-Selva (2012) found that approximately half of all price promotions increase own-category revenues, particularly for categories with deeper reinforced discounts and that a price promotion influences sales of at least one other category. Reduced prices signal higher accessibility to anyone in need of a product and increase consumption of this good or service, and the opposite is true for higher prices (Samper & Schwartz, 2013). Nonetheless, Mishra and Mishra (2011) revealed that consumers prefer bonus packs to price discounts for healthy food items. Bezawada and Pauwels (2013) elucidated that higher assortment and lower prices contrasted with more and deeper promotions are the most effective strategies. Alexy et al. (2012) supported that a tool of low-price increases sales and Alrjoub et al. (2012) reinforced that price reductions increase sales and profitability of firms. Rajput et al. (2012) confirmed the presence of significant positive relationship between product price and buying attitudes. Kuksov and Ying (2012) showed the presence of a positive impact of price reduction of a product on the market for alternate products. Overall, the conclusion that price discount is the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession aligns with conclusions from previous similar studies.

Subquestion 2. The second sub-question generated from the research question consisted of understanding the extent to which buying attitudes means differ with

customers' gender. Null hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in buying attitudes means among male and female customers in a recession. Null hypothesis 2 could not be rejected. There is no significant difference in buying attitudes means among male and female customers in a recession. This finding is similar to results from the research by Osman and Fah (2011). Osman and Fah found no significant difference in buying attitudes among customers male and female. Nevertheless, Kwanho et al. (2012) found a significant difference in buying attitudes among male and female customers for car markets.

In summary, buying attitudes means differ significantly among the types of sales promotion in a recession. Buying attitudes do not differ significantly between customers' gender. Findings from the null hypotheses 1 and 2 testing assisted in responding to the two subquestions generated from the research question. Findings from this analysis allowed answering the research question and identifying price discount as the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession.

The concepts of sales promotions, consumer behavioral metrics, price reductions, and strategy in a competitive environment represented the theoretical framework that grounded and complemented this quantitative comparative design. Findings were congruent with these ideas as the analysis led to identifying the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. Chen et al. (2012) showed a considerable advantage in sales volume for sales promotions. Managers face the challenge of determining, which metrics marketers should utilize and how to interpret

results (Frischmann & Gensler, 2011). Chen et al. suggested that understanding the implications of how customers evaluate offers such as sales promotions is necessary for business leaders to increase sales and profitability of companies. Frischmann and Gensler (2011) found the relevance of mediating effects of consumer behavioral metrics on the correlation between buyer perceptual metrics and profitability. The concepts Frischmann and Gensler developed were pertinent in that the principles of the theories were inherent for the inquiry.

Harvard Business Essentials (2005) suggested that managers look not only inside, but also outside of the firm to obtain or maintain a leadership position by aligning strategy to goals in a competitive environment. The current study was an opportunity to look outside of firms by collecting data from customers for examining the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. Fresh information about marketing development was necessary for integrating the financial requirement of consumers in the development plan of businesses. Reductions in the product price have a positive impact on sales and enable value creation for investors (Ferrer & Mallari, 2011). Findings were in association with the theory Ferrer and Mallari (2011) developed since results enabled the identification of price discount as the most effective strategy for sales increase and value creation. Hence, the research question was catalyst for establishing the sales promotion strategy that aligns properly with the sales increase goal in a recession and addressing the theoretical framework.

Applications to Professional Practice

The intent of this research was to provide executives with an effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. The four types of sales promotion under investigation were coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, price discounts, and control case for which there was no sales promotion strategy. There is the presence of a significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession. There is no significant difference in buying attitudes means between male and female customers in a recession for the four sales promotion strategies. Identifying the sales promotion strategy that is in association with buying attitudes in a recession was necessary for company leaders for the development of sales forecasts for different promotion strategies. Findings from this research enabled the identification of price discount as the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. The applicability of these findings might be of importance for not only managers, but also stakeholders. Kotler (2011) explained the persistence of sales issues by the magnitude of the recession, which has constrained consumers to modify lifestyles to a *lower level* of revenue and spending. Based on findings from the inquiry, managers could potentially increase sales to ensure profitability and sustainability for companies in a recession.

Implications for Social Change

Findings from this research enabled a direct and positive impact on social change. Based on findings from this research, managers could increase sales and ensure

sustainability for companies in a recession. Findings may enable company owners, stakeholders, and employees to remain profitable during a recession. The implementation of price discount strategy should allow individuals to buy more products for less spending. Increasing sales requires growing the production volume and hiring more employees. As for individuals, positive emotion usually accompanies a positive outcome (Erevelles & Fukawa, 2013), findings enabled the promotion of the lifestyle improvement of individuals. In addition, results should assist in reducing potential negative consequences of recession such as crime and poverty associated with unemployment. The implementation of results should enable sales, transactions, profits, companies, and gross domestic product (GDP) growth, which could allow governments to collect more taxes and invest more in social programs. Overall, the application of findings should allow profits, success, and prosperity opportunities for businesses, individuals, and governments.

Recommendations for Action

The purpose of this quantitative comparative design was to provide managers with an effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. Based on findings from this study, price discount is the sales promotion strategy that influences buying attitudes significantly in a recession. Managers should implement effective price reduction strategies for sales increase. The implementation of the price discount strategy elicits interest in training programs to support improved

strategy for sales increase. Dissemination opportunities include providing business journals, institutions, and business owners interested in the study with findings for action.

Recommendations for Further Study

Results from this study can serve as a *springboard* for future in-depth studies of sales promotion in a recession. The participants in this study might not be typical of the entire population of the city. The number and quality of consumers willing and available to participate were indispensable for determining the limits of the study and other researchers' ability to extrapolate findings to the general population. The generalization of the results might require increasing the size of the sample and extending the research to other geographical locations. The research was an analysis of only three sales promotional tools instead of a large number of sales promotion implements such as rebates, free samples, sweepstakes, and in-pack premiums. Future researchers could address the assessment of buying attitudes towards a larger number of sales promotion strategies. The first issue is defining and listing all sales promotion tools. A category of goods or service was not the focus for this study. Future researchers should delve deeper into buying attitudes among customers male and female.

Reflections

As a result of conducting this research, I have gained an increased understanding of the complexity of planning, collecting, and analyzing data from customers, using a confidential paper-based survey. A personal aim for conducting this quantitative comparative design was to (a) hone professional skills in quantitative research, (b)

enhance understanding of sales issues, and (c) suggest potential solutions to address a problem of general concern. There was no compensation for participants of the survey. The ability to convince volunteer customers for participating in such a survey was a moment of self-discovery. The analysis of data enabled the identification of the price discount as the most effective sales promotion strategy for sales increase in the city, which represented the geographic location of the study.

Summary and Study Conclusions

The intent of this quantitative study using a comparative design was to determine which sales promotion strategy influences buying attitudes significantly in a recession. The main topics of the literature review were (a) sales promotion, (b) factors influencing buying attitudes, (c) factors affecting sales, and (d) impact of the recent financial crisis on sales. A review of the body of sales research enabled the insight of the need to determine the most effective strategy of sales promotions towards buying attitudes in a recession. The research question was as follows: What is the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession? The analysis included examining effects of customers' gender and type of sales promotion. The sales promotions under investigation were coupons, buy-one-get-one-free, and price discounts. Two subquestions stemming from the principal research question allowed addressing the need to understand how buying attitudes means differ among the male and female customers and types of sales promotion in a recession.

The data analysis comprised testing two null hypotheses. One null hypothesis consisted of nonexistence of a significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion in a recession. The other null hypothesis consisted of nonexistence of a significant difference in buying attitudes means between customers' gender in a recession. I collected data from 287 volunteer participants using a confidential paper-based survey and random sampling method to obtain data for the analysis.

Utilizing Levene's test enabled me to conclude the presence of heteroscedasticity. Statistical tests for the data analysis comprised 4X2 two-way ANOVA and derivative post hoc using SPSS's bootstrapping confidence interval procedures. Bootstrapping procedure allowed for assuring the statistical validity of the conclusions from the post hoc pairwise comparisons tests. The ANOVA test assisted in assessing an overall mean difference in buying attitudes among the types of sales promotions and gender of customers. There was a significant difference in buying attitudes means among the types of sales promotion. However, there was no significant difference in buying attitudes means among participants male and female. The post hoc pairwise comparisons were across the groups of types of sales promotion. Findings enabled the identification of price discount as the most effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. The implementation of this strategy is of importance for not only managers, but other stakeholders such as business owners. Implications of this research for business practice included increasing firms' sales, market share, and profitability in a

recession. Inferences for positive social change comprised improvement of lifestyle of individuals and reduction of concomitant negative consequences such as crime and poverty associated with unemployment.

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Appendix A: List of Demographic and Survey Questions

List of Statements

A-Demographic Statements**1- Gender:**

- Female Male

2- Age:

- 18 - 24 years old 25 – 44 years old 45 – 59 years old 60 years and older

3- Race:

- White Black or African American American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- Some Other Race

4- Marital Status

- Single (never married) Married Cohabiting Separated
- Divorced Widowed Not Stated

5- Employment Situation:

- Employed Unemployed Student

5- Family Monthly income:

- Under or \$19,999 \$20,000 – \$29,999 \$30,000 – \$39,999 \$40,000 – \$59,999
- \$60,000 – \$79,999 \$80,000 – \$99,999 \$100,000 – \$249,999
- \$250,000 or over

B- Sales Promotions Statements

Table A1
Sales Promotions Survey Part-One

No.	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
	Price discount					
1	If a brand offers a price discount that could be a reason for me to buy it.					
2	When I buy a brand that offers a price discount, I feel I am getting a good buy.					
3	A price discount has allowed me to buy another brand, which I do not regularly buy.					
4	I usually buy the same brand even when I have a price discount on the other brands.					
5	I have favorite brands, but most of the time I buy a brand that offers a price discount.					
6	A price discount has allowed me to buy the product earlier than planned.					
7	A price discount has allowed me to buy more quantities of the same product.					
8	Compared to most people, I am more likely to buy brands that offer a price discount.					
	Coupon discount					
1	If a brand offers a coupon, that could be a reason for me to buy it.					
2	When I buy a brand that offers a coupon, I feel I am getting a good buy.					
3	A coupon has allowed me to buy a brand I do not regularly buy.					
4	I usually buy the same brand even when I have a coupon on the other brands.					
5	I have favorite brands, but most of the time I usually buy the brand that offers a coupon.					
6	A coupon has allowed me to buy the product earlier than planned.					
7	A coupon has allowed me to buy more quantities of the same product.					
8	Compared to most people, I am more likely to buy brands that offer a coupon.					

Note. Strongly disagree = SD, Disagree = D, Neutral = N, Agree = A, Strongly agree = SA.

Table A2

Sales Promotions Survey Part-Two

<i>No.</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
	Buy-one-get-one-free (B1G1F)					
1	If a brand offers (B1G1F), that could be a reason for me to buy it.					
2	When I buy a brand that offers (B1G1F), I feel I am getting a good buy.					
3	(B1G1F) has allowed me to buy another brand, which I do not regularly buy.					
4	I usually buy the same brand even when I have (B1G1F) on the other brands.					
5	I have favorite brands, but most of the time I buy a brand that offers B1G1F					
6	B1G1F allows me to buy the product earlier than planned.					
7	B1G1F allows me to buy more quantities of the same product.					
8	Compared to most people, I am more likely to buy brands that offer B1G1F.					

Note. Strongly disagree = SD, Disagree = D, Neutral = N, Agree = A, Strongly agree = SA.

C- Buying Attitudes Statements

Table A3

Buying Attitudes Survey

<i>No.</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
	Buying attitudes					
1	Once I find a product I like, I buy it regularly					
2	In general, I try to get the best overall quality.					
3	I usually buy well-known brands.					
4	I prefer to buy the bestselling brands.					
5	It is great to buy something new and exciting.					
6	I look very carefully to find the best value for money.					
7	I buy as much as possible at sale prices.					
8	I usually buy the lower price products.					
9	To get variety, I shop in different stores and buy different brands.					
10	I should spend more time deciding on the products and brands I buy.					
11	I normally shop quickly, buying the first product or brand I find that seems good enough.					
12	The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best.					
13	I carefully watch how much I spend.					

Note. Strongly disagree = SD, Disagree = D, Neutral = N, Agree = A, Strongly agree = SA.

Appendix B: Permissions to Use Existing Survey

Permission and Request E-mails

Permission from Dr. Yeoh Sok Foon to use the sales promotions survey

Subject : RE: USW1-49711-201360: Paulin Adjagbodjou- Request of permission to use
your questionnaire

Date : Wed, Jul 31, 2013 01:39 AM CDT

From : Yeoh Sok Foon

To : Paulin Adjagbodjou

Dear Paulin,

I am glad that you have adopted the article as one of your references material. You may use the questionnaire for your study.

I am here to wish you a great success in your study and future.

Thank you.

Regards,

Stephy

From: Paulin Adjagbodjou

To: Yeoh Sok Foon

Subject: USW1-49711-201360: Paulin Adjagbodjou- Request of
permission to use your questionnaire

Hello Dr. Foon!

My name is Paulin Adjagbodjou. I am a DBA candidate at Walden University. Please accept my congratulations on your excellent work in the study referenced below. I need the survey in the appendix of the paper. I would be grateful if you could allow (grant permission) the use of the questionnaire for my research (Dissertation).

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Best Regards,

Paulin Adjagbodjou

Reference

Osman, S., & Fah, B. (2011). Simulation of Sales Promotions towards Buying Behavior among University Students. *International Journal Of Marketing Studies*, 3(3), 78-88. doi:10.5539/ijms.v3n3p78

Permission from Dr. Ben Fah to use the sales promotions survey

Subject : Re: USW1-49711-201360: Paulin Adjagbodjou- Request of permission to use your questionnaire

Date : Wed, Jul 31, 2013 05:44 AM CDT

From : Ben Yahoo

To : Paulin Adjagbodjou

Yes, you may use the instrument..... And sorry for my late reply

Sent from my iPhone

On 31 Jul 2013, at 01:14 PM, Paulin Adjagbodjou

Hello Dr. Fah!

My name is Paulin Adjagbodjou. I am a DBA candidate at Walden University. Please accept my congratulations on your excellent work in the study referenced below. I need the survey in the appendix of the paper. I would be grateful if you could allow (grant permission) the use of the questionnaire for my research (Dissertation).

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Best Regards,

Paulin Adjagbodjou

Reference

Osman, S., & Fah, B. (2011). Simulation of Sales Promotions towards Buying Behavior among University Students. *International Journal Of Marketing Studies*, 3(3), 78-88. doi:10.5539/ijms.v3n3p78

Permission from Dr. Catherine Bakewell to use the buying attitudes survey

Subject : Re: USW1.49710.201440: Paulin Adjagbodjou - Request of permission to use your questionnaire

Date : Sun, Jan 19, 2014 02:00 PM CST

From : Catherine Bakewell

To : Paulin Adjagbodjou

Ok by me

Cathy

Sent from my iPhone

On 18 Jan 2014, at 20:06, "Paulin Adjagbodjou"

Hello Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Bakewell!

My name is Paulin Adjagbodjou. I am a DBA candidate at Walden University. I would like to congratulate you on the development of the excellent questionnaire I copied below. I need this survey and would be very grateful if you could allow me the adoption and use for my research (Dissertation).

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

Best Regards,

Paulin Adjagbodjou

Table B1

Statements Part-One

<i>No.</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>SD</i> <i>N(%)</i>	<i>D</i> <i>N(%)</i>	<i>A</i> <i>N(%)</i>	<i>SA</i> <i>N(%)</i>
1	Once I find a product I like, I buy it regularly				
2	In general, I try to get the best overall quality.				
3	I usually buy well-known brands.				
4	I prefer buy the bestselling brands.				
5	It is funny to buy something new and exciting.				
6	I look very carefully to find the best value for money.				
7	I buy as much as possible at sale prices.				
8	I usually buy the lower price products.				
9	To get variety, I shop in different stores and buy different brands.				
10	I should spend more time deciding on the products and brands I buy.				
11	I normally shop quickly, buying the first product or brand I find that seems good enough.				
12	The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best.				
13	I carefully watch how much I spend.				

Note: Strongly disagree = SD, Disagree = D, Agree = A, Strongly agree = SA

Permission from Dr. Vince Mitchell to use the buying attitudes survey

Subject : RE: USW1.49710.201440: Paulin Adjagbodjou - Request of permission to use your questionnaire
Date : Mon, Jan 20, 2014 06:55 AM CST
From : "Mitchell, Vince"
To : Paulin Adjagbodjou

Sure. No problem

Professor Vince Mitchell:
Marketing Group Subject Head
Faculty of Management |Cass Business School

From: Paulin Adjagbodjou
Sent: Saturday, January 18, 2014 8:06 PM
To: Mitchell, Vince
Subject: USW1.49710.201440: Paulin Adjagbodjou - Request of permission to use your questionnaire

Hello Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Bakewell!

My name is Paulin Adjagbodjou. I am a DBA candidate at Walden University. I would like to congratulate you on the development of the excellent questionnaire I copied below. I need this survey and would be very grateful if you could allow me the adoption and use for my research (Dissertation).

Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

Best Regards,

Paulin Adjagbodjou

Table B2

Statements Part-Two

<i>No.</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>SD</i> <i>N(%)</i>	<i>D</i> <i>N(%)</i>	<i>A</i> <i>N(%)</i>	<i>SA</i> <i>N(%)</i>
1	Once I find a product I like, I buy it regularly				
2	In general, I try to get the best overall quality.				
3	I usually buy well-known brands.				
4	I prefer buy the bestselling brands.				
5	It is funny to buy something new and exciting.				
6	I look very carefully to find the best value for money.				
7	I buy as much as possible at sale prices.				
8	I usually buy the lower price products.				
9	To get variety, I shop in different stores and buy different brands.				
10	I should spend more time deciding on the products and brands I buy.				
11	I normally shop quickly, buying the first product or brand I find that seems good enough.				
12	The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best.				
13	I carefully watch how much I spend.				

Note: Strongly disagree = SD, Strongly agree Disagree = D, Agree = A, = SA

Appendix C: Consent Form

Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study of an effective strategy for aligning sales promotions with buying attitudes in a recession. The researcher is inviting adults consumers involved in the buying process, in the city to be in the study. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to participate.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Paulin Adjagbodjou, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to determine which of price discounts, coupons, and buy-one-get-one-free influence buying attitudes significantly in a recession.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study:

- You will be asked to complete a confidential paper-based survey.
- You do not need to disclose any confidential business or financial data to complete the survey
- The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes

Here are some sample questions:

If a brand offers a price discount, that could be a reason for me to buy it.

If a brand offers a coupon, that could be a reason for me to buy it.

I buy as much as possible at sale prices.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at Walden University will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop participating at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

A summary of findings from this research will be available to participants and anyone interested in having the results from the study upon request during the data collection or by contacting later the researcher via e-mail. The researcher will provide the managements of cooperating stores with a summary of findings from this study.

Implications of the study will include scholarly research, sales increase, and improvement of lifestyle of individuals.

Payment:

There will be no compensation for participants of this survey.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential, and no identification of you will be requested within the survey. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. In addition, the researcher will not include your name or any other information that could identify you in the reports of the study.

Data will be kept secure by the researcher in a locked container. The researcher will keep data for 5 years after completion of the study, as required by the University.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via e-mail. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 612-312-1210 or email address irb@waldenu.edu. Walden University's approval number for this study is **10-07-14-0361937** and it expires on **October 6, 2015.**

Please keep this consent form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By returning a completed survey, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant

Date of consent

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Confidentiality Agreement

Name of Signer:

During the course of my activity in collecting data for this research, I, Paulin Adjagbodjou will have access to information that is confidential and should not be disclosed. I acknowledge that the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participant.

By signing this Confidentiality Agreement I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I will not disclose or discuss any confidential information with others, including friends or family.
2. I will not in any way divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, alter, or destroy any confidential information except as properly authorized.
3. I will not discuss confidential information where others can overhear the conversation. I understand that it is not acceptable to discuss confidential information even if the participant's name is not used.
4. I will not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, modification, or purging of confidential information.
5. I agree that my obligations under this agreement will continue after termination of the job that I will perform.
6. I understand that violation of this agreement will have legal implications.

7. I will only access or use systems or devices I'm officially authorized to access and I will not demonstrate the operation or function of systems or devices to unauthorized individuals.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the agreement and I agree to comply with all the terms and conditions stated above.

Signature:

Date: