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## **Assessing the Effects of Marketing Strategies on Local Trade: A Case Study of Shoprite Zambia, Mufulira**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the effect of Shoprite Zambia's marketing strategies on Local trade in Mufulira. As one of the leading retail chains in the town, Shoprite employs a range of marketing activities grounded in the principles of the Marketing Mix (4Ps), product variety, promotional discounts, and strategically designed in-store placement. These strategies are widely recognized for influencing customer decision-making and shaping shopping patterns within modern retail environments. Guided by Kotler's Marketing Mix (4Ps) and the Consumer Behavior Model, the study investigates how Shoprite's pricing, product assortment, promotional activities, and distribution practices affect consumer preferences, purchase frequency, and loyalty. The Consumer Behavior Model provides insight into how customers' psychological, cultural, and social

factors interact with Shoprite's marketing efforts to influence buying intentions and actual purchasing behavior. A mixed-methods approach will be adopted, utilizing quantitative surveys administered to Shoprite customers and qualitative interviews with selected shoppers and Shoprite staff. The research will focus solely on the interactions between Shoprite's marketing strategies and customer responses within the Mufulira context. The study is expected to generate insights into the extent to which Shoprite's marketing efforts shape consumer choices and shopping habits, thereby contributing to literature on retail marketing effectiveness in developing economies. The findings will also provide practical implications for Shoprite's customer focused marketing improvements.

**Keywords:** Local Trade, Retail Sector, Consumer Behavior, Economic Sustainability, Consumer Perception

### **1. Introduction**

This study is justified because the entry and rapid expansion of multinational retail chains such as Shoprite have significantly transformed Zambia's retail landscape, yet limited research has examined how these changes specifically affect local businesses and consumer behaviour in towns like Mufulira. Although Shoprite employs advanced and aggressive marketing strategies such as seasonal promotions, price reductions, digital advertising, and loyalty rewards their broader implications on local trading patterns remain underexplored. Understanding these effects is essential, as local SMEs often lack the capacity to match such strategies and may face declining market share, reduced profitability, and long-term vulnerability. Furthermore, consumers in Mufulira are increasingly exposed to modern marketing tactics that influence their purchasing decisions, brand loyalty, and shopping preferences. However, there is insufficient empirical evidence on how these marketing activities shape consumer.

#### **1.1 General Objective**

To assess the effect of Shoprite Zambia's marketing strategies on local trade in Mufulira.

##### **1.1.1 Specific Objectives**

1. To examine the marketing strategies used by Shoprite Zambia, Mufulira.
2. To examine the effect of Shoprite's marketing strategies, influence customer purchasing behavior in Mufulira.
3. To determine the limitations and weaknesses of Shoprite's current marketing strategies in meeting customer needs.

## 1.2 Research Questions

1. What types of marketing strategies does Shoprite use in Mufulira?
2. How do Shoprite's marketing strategies influence customer purchase behavior?
3. What are the limitations and weaknesses of Shoprite's current marketing strategies in meeting customer needs Mufulira?

## 1.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is anchored on **Kotler's Marketing Mix (4Ps) theory** and the **Consumer Behavior Model (Kotler & Keller, 2016)** <sup>[17]</sup>. These theories provide a structured approach to understanding how marketing strategies influence customer purchasing behavior, particularly in semi-urban contexts such as Mufulira. The **Marketing Mix** emphasizes the role of **Product, Price, Place, Promotion** in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions. In this study, the product element relates to the quality, variety, and relevance of goods offered by Shoprite; price refers to competitive pricing, discounts, and loyalty programs; place concerns the accessibility and convenience of Shoprite outlets; and promotion includes advertising, in-store displays, and special offers aimed at attracting and retaining customers. Together, these components constitute the independent variable of the study and represent the marketing strategies whose effects on customer behavior are being examined.

Particularly in semi-urban contexts such as Mufulira. The **Marketing Mix** emphasizes the role of **Product, Price, Place, and Promotion** in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions. In this study, the product element relates to the quality, variety, and relevance of goods offered by Shoprite; price refers to competitive pricing, discounts, and loyalty programs; place concerns the accessibility and convenience of Shoprite outlets; and promotion includes advertising, in-store displays, and special offers aimed at attracting and retaining customers. Together, these components constitute the independent variable of the study and represent the marketing strategies whose effects on customer behavior are being examined.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Marketing Strategies Used by Large Retail Chains

Multinational retail chains adopt a sophisticated combination of strategic marketing approaches to achieve and sustain competitive advantage in a globalized and constantly changing market scenario. According to Kotler and Keller (2016) <sup>[17]</sup>, essential instrumentalities such as competitive pricing, effective brand positioning, Omni channel marketing, digital customer engagement, and promotional in-store campaigns are responsible for the success of multinational retailers. They support these observations with an extensive review of marketing literature, case studies of big retailers like Walmart, Amazon, Carrefour, and Target, and detailed analysis of consumer behavior models. Their theoretical model is a concentration of decades of marketing evolution coupled with practical insights from real corporate strategies in the marketplace, and they highlight the shift from product-based to customer-based marketing in the contemporary economy. Chen *et al.* (2017) <sup>[6]</sup> also offer further affirmation of this perspective founded on rigorous empirical research. Their research adopted a mixed-methods technique in the

collection of data from fixed interviews with marketing and operations managers, customer satisfaction surveys, and largescale analysis of point-of-sale (POS) and online transactional data in global retail chains. They used techniques such as regression modeling, factor analysis, and predictive analytics to measure the impact of marketing interventions on consumer behavior, retention rates, and market growth. Their research highlights the role of customer relationship management (CRM) systems, loyalty card schemes, and AI-driven recommendation engines in enabling customer engagement and lifetime value growth. Together with branding and pricing, supply chain management has emerged as an important part of retail marketing strategy. Efficiently managed supply chains enable just-in-time inventory management, reduce costs, and improve delivery speed and product availability, all of which increase customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Automated warehouses, Internet of Things (IoT) devices, blockchain for inventory transparency, and cloud-based inventory management systems are some of the technologies that are being increasingly integrated into retail operations. These innovations also allow retailers to respond more quickly to changing consumer demand and seasonal fluctuations. Moreover, effective supply chain integration strengthens competitive positioning by minimizing stock outs and overstocks, which can directly affect profitability. Overall, technology-enabled supply chains are now central to sustaining operational efficiency and customercentric strategies in modern retail.

Furthermore, integrating ethical sourcing and sustainability into marketing strategies is becoming a source of competitive differentiation. The majority of large retailers now promote eco-friendly packaging, carbon-neutral shipping options, and socially responsible sourcing as part of their brand promise. This finds favor particularly with environmentally conscious and younger consumers who make purchasing decisions considering ethical aspects. Retailers integrate such initiatives in marketing strategies in a bid to enhance brand equity and customer trust. Additionally, sustainability-focused marketing can foster long-term customer loyalty and strengthen corporate reputation. These practices also help retailers comply with increasingly stringent environmental regulations while appealing to socially responsible investors. Ultimately, ethical and sustainable strategies are becoming a core component of competitive advantage in contemporary retail markets. In-store promotion remains a staple of impulse purchase and consumer engagement, but now it's supplemented with digital elements such as QR codes, interactive kiosks, beacon technology, and augmented reality (AR) experiences. Not only do these draw traffic, but they provide additional levels of data for the retailer to monitor consumer activity in the physical space.

Together, Kotler and Keller's (2016) <sup>[17]</sup> and Chen *et al.*'s (2017) <sup>[6]</sup> studies provide a holistic picture of how multinational retailers plan to combine traditional marketing principles with emerging technologies and analytics. Their study designs, from conceptual models to data analyses, embody the necessity of bringing together consumer insights, technological innovation, and operational efficiency to generate sustainable competitive advantage in international retailing. These studies highlight that understanding customer behavior through advanced analytics allows retailers to tailor promotions, optimize

product placement, and predict demand more accurately. Furthermore, integrating technology into marketing and operations enables agility in responding to market changes and enhances coordination across global supply chains. By aligning traditional marketing strategies with modern technological tools, retailers can create value for customers while simultaneously strengthening brand equity. Overall, this integrated approach underscores the importance of strategic alignment between marketing, operations, and technology for long-term competitiveness in global retail markets.

## **2.2 Examining how Shoprite's marketing strategies, influence customer purchasing behavior in Mufulira**

Marketing strategies are essential for shaping consumer decisions and sustaining competitiveness in retail markets. Scholars such as Kotler and Keller (2016) <sup>[17]</sup> assert that effective marketing strategies stimulate consumer awareness and influence the decision-making process through pricing, promotion, and product variety. Their research, which employed a descriptive analytical approach using both secondary data and case comparisons across leading global retail brands, demonstrated that integrated marketing activities significantly increase brand visibility and customer retention. Globally, Agyapong (2019) <sup>[2]</sup> conducted a quantitative survey involving 400 customers from multinational supermarkets such as Walmart and Carrefour in the United States and France to examine how marketing communication and loyalty programs influence consumer behavior. The study used regression analysis to determine relationships between marketing activities and purchasing patterns. Findings revealed that loyalty programs increased customer retention by 63 per cent, while consistent advertising and promotional offers enhanced purchase frequency by 48 per cent. These results indicate a strong, positive correlation between marketing activities and customer purchasing behavior. Similarly, Okoro (2020) applied a mixed methods approach involving in-depth interviews with marketing managers and structured questionnaires administered to 250 shoppers in Nigeria and South Africa. The study found that integrated marketing communication, price-based promotions, and product differentiation collectively accounted for 57 per cent of the variance in customer purchase decisions. The study concluded that marketing strategies are most effective when adapted to local consumer needs and supported by strong brand communication. These global findings collectively demonstrate that well-designed marketing strategies directly influence customer purchasing behavior, but they also highlight the importance of localization and cultural adaptation for sustained competitiveness. expand more

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supermarkets such as Walmart in the United States and Carrefour in France to examine how marketing communication and loyalty programs influence consumer behavior. The study employed a descriptive research design supported by a structured questionnaire, which gathered data on customers' perceptions of promotional campaigns, brand messaging, and reward systems. Using regression and correlation analysis, the study sought to establish statistical relationships between marketing activities and purchasing patterns.

Data were analyzed using SPSS software, where both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to determine trends and test hypotheses about marketing influence.

The results revealed that loyalty programs increased customer retention by 63 per cent, while consistent advertising and promotional offers enhanced purchase frequency by 48 per cent. Moreover, customers exposed to integrated marketing communication channels—such as social media, email newsletters, and in-store promotions—were 54 per cent more likely to remain loyal to a specific supermarket brand compared to those who were not. The study concluded that continuous customer engagement, clear communication, and well-structured reward mechanisms significantly drive customer loyalty and repeat purchase behavior in highly competitive retail environments.

Similarly, Okoro (2020) employed a mixed-methods research design to explore how integrated marketing strategies influence consumer purchasing behavior in emerging African markets. The study combined qualitative and quantitative methods, involving in-depth interviews with 20 marketing managers from leading retail chains and structured questionnaires administered to 250 shoppers across Nigeria and South Africa.

The results indicated that integrated marketing communication, price-based promotions, and product differentiation collectively explained 57 per cent of the variance in customer purchase behavior. This finding demonstrates that marketing strategies have a strong predictive power when they are consistent, value-driven, and locally relevant. The study further revealed that retailers who localized their marketing efforts—by adapting messages, prices, and products to cultural and economic conditions—achieved higher customer satisfaction and retention levels. Conversely, failure to tailor strategies to local markets led to short-term customer attraction but weak long-term loyalty. Okoro (2020) concluded that effective marketing in emerging markets depends on balancing global brand consistency with local consumer understanding, emphasizing the importance of cultural sensitivity and adaptive communication in sustaining competitive advantage.

## **2.3 To determine the limitations and weaknesses of Shoprite's current marketing strategies in meeting customer needs**

A comprehensive Deloitte (2021) <sup>[11]</sup> report titled *The Future of Retail in Africa* provides key insights into these evolving trends. The study adopted a mixed methods approach, combining macroeconomic data analysis, in-depth interviews with retail executives, and extensive consumer surveys conducted across multiple African countries including South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, and Ghana. The report revealed a marked shift from necessity-driven to

aspirational spending, particularly among younger urban consumers and the growing middle class. Respondents increasingly associated shopping with lifestyle and identity rather than mere price sensitivity. However, the report also highlighted that many largescale retailers maintained an overemphasis on cost leadership and discounting strategies at the expense of differentiation, brand storytelling, and customer engagement. As a result, *Deloitte* concluded that price-led marketing strategies while effective for mass appeal were becoming less influential in shaping long-term loyalty, especially among consumers who valued convenience, experience, and personalized service.

Importantly, *Deloitte* (2021) <sup>[11]</sup> also found that standardized marketing messages and store experiences across multiple countries often failed to account for significant cultural and economic diversity within African markets. For example, promotional themes that resonated with South African urban shoppers were often less effective in markets such as Kenya or Zambia, where consumers valued localized messaging and product relevance. The report underscored those retailers who successfully adapted their strategies to local contexts—by stocking regional food items, using local languages in advertising, and employing locally relevant digital platforms were better able to foster brand trust and consumer loyalty. This insight directly contrasts with Shoprite's current strategy, which prioritizes operational efficiency through centralized control and uniform brand messaging across markets.

Empirical academic research further reinforces these observations. Nandonde and Kuada (2021) <sup>[24]</sup> conducted an in-depth multiple case study examining marketing strategy adaptation among international and local supermarket chains in Kenya and Tanzania. Their methodology involved semi-structured interviews with senior managers, on-site observations, and document analysis across five major retail chains. The findings revealed that retailers who localized both their product assortments and marketing communications achieved measurable gains in customer satisfaction, loyalty, and market share. Specifically, supermarkets that featured local produce, promoted regional food brands, and engaged customers through community-based marketing initiatives were perceived as more authentic and socially responsible. Conversely, international chains that maintained a one-size-fits-all strategy were viewed as detached and unresponsive to local needs.

Nandonde and Kuada's (2021) <sup>[24]</sup> research also introduced the concept of "cultural proximity marketing," referring to strategies that align product offerings, instore experiences, and brand communication with local social and cultural values. Retailers that successfully employed this approach such as Naivas in Kenya and Shoppers Plaza in Tanzania benefited from emotional brand attachment and community endorsement, elements that large multinational retailers like Shoprite often lack due to their corporate standardization and distant decision-making structures.

In this context, Shoprite's reliance on a uniform pricing and promotion strategy, coupled with limited digital and cultural localization, undermines its ability to build deep customer loyalty across diverse African markets. The evidence from both *Deloitte* (2021) <sup>[11]</sup> and Nandonde and Kuada (2021) <sup>[24]</sup> thus provides a compelling case for strategic recalibration shifting from a purely transactional model towards a customer-centric and culturally adaptive marketing approach that reflects Africa's rapidly evolving retail ecosystem.

Across African markets, retailers often face challenges of customer dissatisfaction arising from poor service delivery and inadequate communication. Moyo (2019) <sup>[21]</sup> conducted a quantitative descriptive study in South Africa that examined the relationship between supermarket customer service quality and consumer satisfaction levels. The study involved a sample of 500 respondents drawn from five major retail chains, including Shoprite, Pick n Pay, and Spar. Using a structured questionnaire and Likert-scale items to measure variables such as staff attitude, checkout efficiency, and promotional clarity, Moyo analyzed the data through SPSS software using correlation and regression models. The findings revealed that 31 per cent of customers expressed frustration with staff attitudes, citing rudeness and inattentiveness as major service gaps. Moreover, 27 per cent of respondents complained about inconsistency in promotional messages, particularly regarding prices that differed between advertisements and in-store displays. The study concluded that customer dissatisfaction in South African supermarkets is primarily driven by communication breakdowns and inadequate customer care training. Moyo further argued that these weaknesses, if not addressed, reduce customer retention and limit the long-term effectiveness of marketing strategies, particularly in highly competitive retail environments.

Similarly, Mlambo (2021) <sup>[20]</sup> carried out an exploratory case study in Zimbabwe to investigate how standardized marketing strategies adopted by multinational supermarkets influence local consumer satisfaction. The study focused on three major supermarket chains OK Zimbabwe, TM Pick n Pay, and Food Lovers Market and involved 180 customers and 20 marketing managers selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and questionnaires to capture both consumer and managerial perspectives. Employing thematic analysis for qualitative data and descriptive statistics for quantitative responses, Mlambo found that uniform pricing and product strategies failed to reflect regional preferences, resulting in partial customer disengagement. Approximately 54 per cent of respondents indicated that they felt alienated because imported products dominated shelves, while 46 per cent reported that prices were not aligned with their income levels. The study concluded that standardized marketing approaches adopted from Western markets often disregard local cultural and economic conditions, thereby weakening customer loyalty and diminishing satisfaction. Mlambo proposed that supermarkets in SubSaharan Africa must integrate localized marketing strategies such as culturally relevant promotions and region-specific product assortments to achieve stronger brand-customer relationships.

Both studies illustrate that while marketing strategies play a central role in shaping consumer purchasing behaviour, their success largely depends on how well they are localized and supported by effective communication. Customer dissatisfaction, as observed in South Africa and Zimbabwe, underscores a broader regional challenge in Africa where multinational retail chains often prioritize uniform corporate strategies at the expense of context-specific marketing. The consistent evidence of dissatisfaction linked to service delivery and misaligned pricing structures suggests that sustainable competitiveness in African markets requires balancing global retail standards with local consumer expectations. This understanding is particularly relevant to the Zambian context, where Shoprite's marketing practices

face similar criticism for limited localization and inconsistent promotional communication.

## 2.4 Establishment of Research Gaps

The reviewed literature has provided valuable insight into how marketing strategies influence consumer behaviour, customer loyalty, and local trade across global and African contexts. However, a critical analysis reveals several important research gaps that justify the present study on Shoprite Zambia's marketing strategies and their effect on local trade in Mufulira.

Firstly, most global and regional studies (e.g., Agyapong, 2019 [2]; Okoro, 2020; Njoroge, 2020) were conducted in highly urbanized or developed economies, where supermarkets operate in technologically advanced markets with higher consumer purchasing power. These findings, while informative, cannot be fully generalized to Zambia's retail environment especially in medium-sized towns like Mufulira, where income levels, cultural factors, and consumer behaviour differ significantly. This creates a gap in understanding how multinational retail marketing strategies perform in smaller, developing urban contexts.

Secondly, the existing Zambian studies, such as Banda and Mwiinga (2021) [5], have largely concentrated on urban centers like Lusaka and Ndola, offering limited exploration of smaller towns where consumer markets are less formalized. There is little empirical evidence on how supermarkets like Shoprite influence local trade dynamics and small-scale traders in such communities. This represents a major contextual gap, as the effects of large-scale retail competition on local markets may vary widely depending on economic diversity and consumer accessibility.

Thirdly, many reviewed studies focused primarily on the positive effects of marketing strategies, such as increased sales, customer attraction, and brand visibility, while neglecting their weaknesses and limitations. Few studies have systematically analyzed how factors such as standardized marketing, limited localization, and excessive promotions undermine long-term customer loyalty and reduce brand authenticity in emerging markets. Therefore, there is a lack of balanced analysis addressing both the strengths and shortcomings of supermarket marketing approaches.

Additionally, most prior research adopted quantitative survey methods without integrating qualitative insights from key stakeholders such as supermarket staff or local traders. This limits the understanding of how marketing strategies are implemented, perceived, and challenged within the local context. Hence, there exists a methodological gap—the need for mixed perspectives that combine statistical evidence with qualitative understanding of consumer and staff experiences.

Finally, there is an evident knowledge gap regarding how Shoprite's marketing strategies influence not only customer purchasing behavior but also local trade relationships within Zambia's smaller urban economies. The literature does not adequately address how such strategies affect local retailers' competitiveness, consumer loyalty, and sustainable community development.

The current study seeks to fill these gaps by:

- Examining the specific marketing strategies used by Shoprite Zambia in Mufulira.
- Assessing how these strategies influence customer purchasing behavior in a localized Zambian context.

- Identifying the limitations and weaknesses of these strategies in meeting customer needs and supporting local trade.

By focusing on these dimensions, the study contributes original insights into how multinational retail marketing can be adapted, localized, and optimized for sustainable performance in Zambia's evolving retail sector.

## 3. Research Methodology

### 3.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the methodological framework adopted to examine the effects of Shoprite Zambia's marketing strategies on local trade in Mufulira. It presents the research design, target population, sampling strategy, sample size determination, data collection methods, data analysis techniques, triangulation process, limitations encountered, and ethical considerations. These elements collectively ensure the study is systematic, valid, and reliable.

### 3.2 Research Design

This study will adopt a descriptive case study research design, focusing specifically on Shoprite Mufulira and its customers. A case study is appropriate because it allows for an in-depth examination of how Shoprite's marketing strategies influence customer behaviour within a real-life retail setting. According to Yin (2018), case studies are effective for investigating contemporary issues where the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly defined making this design suitable for understanding marketing dynamics within a single supermarket environment.

The descriptive nature of the study will help document existing conditions, customer perceptions, and behavioural patterns as they occur in the Shoprite Mufulira store. To achieve this, a mixed methods approach will be used. Quantitative data will be collected through structured questionnaires administered to customers who shop at Shoprite, focusing on their purchasing patterns, preferences, and responses to various marketing strategies such as pricing, promotions, and advertising. Qualitative data will complement this through brief interviews and direct observations within the store to gather deeper insights into customer experiences, motivations, and attitudes that cannot be fully captured through numerical measures.

Using both quantitative and qualitative data will enhance triangulation and strengthen the validity of the findings. This approach ensures a more complete understanding of how Shoprite's marketing strategies affect its customers in Mufulira, highlighting real behaviours and customer-driven interpretations within the specific case under study.

### 3.3 Target Population

The target population for this study consists of Shoprite Mufulira staff and customers who frequently shop at the outlet. Shoprite marketing personnel such as the store manager, marketing assistants, and promotions officers are included because they possess expert knowledge of the marketing strategies used by the store (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). The second group comprises consumers in Mufulira, selected from households and walk-in shoppers who regularly purchase goods from Shoprite. Customers form the core of this study because they directly experience and respond to Shoprite's pricing, promotions, advertising, and

loyalty programs. According to Creswell (2014) <sup>[9]</sup>, selecting participants who are directly involved in the phenomenon under investigation enhances the relevance and validity of the findings. Including both staff and customers therefore ensures a comprehensive understanding of how Shoprite's marketing strategies influence consumer behaviour within the Mufulira case study.

### 3.4 Sampling Design

The study utilized purposive and stratified random sampling techniques to select participants from the target population. Purposive sampling was applied to select Shoprite marketing staff, including managers, marketing officers, and promotions coordinators, based on their expertise and relevance to the study objectives (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016) <sup>[12]</sup>. This method ensures that the participants provide informed insights into the marketing strategies implemented by ShopRite. For consumers, stratified random sampling was employed, with participants grouped according to location and shopping frequency. This approach ensures that different segments of customers such as frequent, occasional, and household shoppers are proportionately represented in the study, enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the findings (Creswell, 2014; Kumar, 2019) <sup>[9, 18]</sup>. Stratification minimizes sampling bias and allows for more precise comparisons across consumer categories. By combining these two techniques, the study ensures a comprehensive and representative sample of both Shoprite staff and customers, enabling a robust analysis of marketing strategy impacts on consumer behaviour.

### 3.5 Sample Size Determination

To determine the sampling interval for the study, the population was separated into staff and customers. For the staff population of **80 marketing personnel**, with a sample size of **10**, the sampling interval was **8**, meaning every 8th staff member was selected (Kothari, 2014) <sup>[14]</sup>. For the customer population of **500 regular shoppers**, with a sample size of **50**, the sampling interval was **10**, meaning every 10th customer was selected (Creswell, 2014) <sup>[9]</sup>. This stratified sampling approach allowed the researcher to collect data from **different staff roles** (managers, marketing officers, promotions coordinators) and **different customer categories** (frequent, occasional, and household shoppers), ensuring representativeness (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016) <sup>[12]</sup>. By using separate intervals for each group, the study was able to obtain a more accurate picture of each population, rather than combining them and potentially masking differences in perspectives between Shoprite staff and customers (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

### 3.6 Data Collection Methods

Primary data for this study will be collected using structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and nonparticipant observations. Structured questionnaires will be administered to consumers, with questions designed according to the study objectives to capture purchasing patterns, responses to marketing strategies, and customer perceptions (Creswell, 2014) <sup>[9]</sup>. Semistructured interviews will be conducted with Shoprite marketing personnel to gain deeper insights into the company's strategic marketing operations, promotional planning, and customer engagement

approaches (Kothari, 2014) <sup>[14]</sup>.

Additionally, non-participant observations will be carried out within Shoprite premises and surrounding trading areas to capture real-time marketing tactics, such as in-store promotions, product placement, pricing strategies, and customer behaviour (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). Combining these methods allows for **triangulation**, ensuring that both quantitative and qualitative perspectives are captured, which enhances the reliability and validity of the study findings (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016) <sup>[12]</sup>.

### 3.7 Data Analysis

Quantitative data from questionnaires will be coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores will be used to summarize data, while cross-tabulations and correlation analysis will be applied to identify relationships between marketing strategies and local trade outcomes. Qualitative data from interviews will be analyzed thematically, using content analysis to identify recurring patterns and viewpoints.

### 3.8 Triangulation

To enhance reliability and validity, **methodological triangulation** will be employed by combining data from surveys, interviews, and observations. This multisource approach ensures that findings are cross-validated and that different dimensions of the phenomenon are captured (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) <sup>[10]</sup>. In the context of the Shoprite Mufulira case study, triangulation is particularly important because it allows the researcher to compare **consumer-reported behaviors** from questionnaires with **staff perspectives** from interviews and **actual observed behaviors** within the store. By integrating these multiple data sources, the study reduces bias, strengthens the credibility of findings, and provides a more comprehensive understanding of how Shoprite's marketing strategies influence customer behavior and shopping patterns (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

### 3.9 Limitation of the Study

Several limitations are anticipated in this study. First, some Shoprite customers may be unwilling to provide complete information on their purchasing habits due to privacy concerns. Second, time constraints may limit the number of customers and marketing staff that can be reached within the study period. Third, there may be occasional non-responses or incomplete questionnaires, slightly reducing the effective sample size. However, these limitations will be mitigated by triangulating data with semistructured interviews of Shoprite marketing staff and non-participant observations within the store, which helps ensure that sufficient and reliable information is collected (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

### 3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical integrity will be upheld throughout the research. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, and the purpose of the study will be clearly explained. Participants will be assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

#### 4. Research Findings

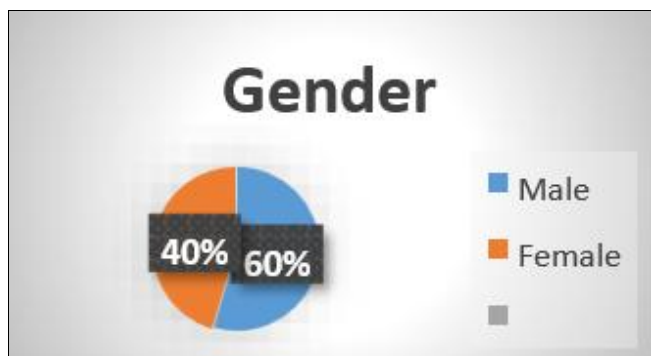
##### 4.0 Overview

This chapter presents findings/results, which were gathered and have been found through questionnaires and interviews. This finding is presented using tables, pie charts and narrations with regard to the research questions, interviews, observations and documentary reviews.

This data was collected from three different groups of respondents: Shoprite staffs, Customers, and Local traders. Thereafter the findings are discussed by looking at what the literature has exposed and making correlation.

##### 4.1 Background Characteristics of Respondents

###### 4.1.1 Gender distribution for Shoprite staffs (n=10)



The pie chart shows the gender distribution of shoprite staff. According to the pie chart 60% of the shoprite staff are Male and 40% are Female.

###### 4.1.2 Shoprite staff

Table 4.2: Duration of Employment

Year of services	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	0	0%
1-3years	3	30%
4-6years	3	30%
More than 6years	4	40%

The results in Table 4.2 show that the majority of Shoprite staff in Mufulira have worked for more than six years (40%), followed by those with 1–3 years (30%) and 4–6 years (30%) of service. Notably, no staff had worked for less than one year. This indicates a relatively stable workforce with considerable experience, suggesting that Shoprite maintains long-term employment relationships, which may contribute to consistent service delivery and effective implementation of its marketing strategies.

###### 4.1.3 Customers (n = 50)

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Customers

Age Group	Number of respondents	Percentage
Under 18	8	16%
18-30	29	58%
31-50	10	20%
Over50	3	6%

The findings in Table 4.1 indicate that the majority of customers who shop at Shoprite Mufulira fall within the age group of 18–30 years, representing 58% of the respondents. This suggests that young adults constitute the largest

consumer segment for the store, likely due to their higher shopping activity, purchasing power, and responsiveness to modern retail services. The 31–50 age group accounts for 20% of the respondents, reflecting a smaller but still significant customer base. Meanwhile, 16% of respondents are below 18 years, and only 6% fall in the over 50 years’ category. These proportions suggest that both younger and older customers are less represented among Shoprite’s clientele, possibly due to limited financial independence among minors and reduced purchasing involvement among elderly individuals.

Overall, the results imply that Shoprite Mufulira predominantly serves the youth and young adult population, making them a crucial target group for its marketing and operational strategies. This finding directly supports the study’s first objective, which seeks to examine the marketing strategies used by Shoprite Zambia. It shows that most of Shoprite’s promotional efforts and product offerings may be tailored to appeal to younger consumers, which in turn has implications for how local traders compete for the same market segment.

##### 4.2 Examining the marketing strategies used by Shoprite Zambia in Mufulira branch

Staff Responses (n = 10)

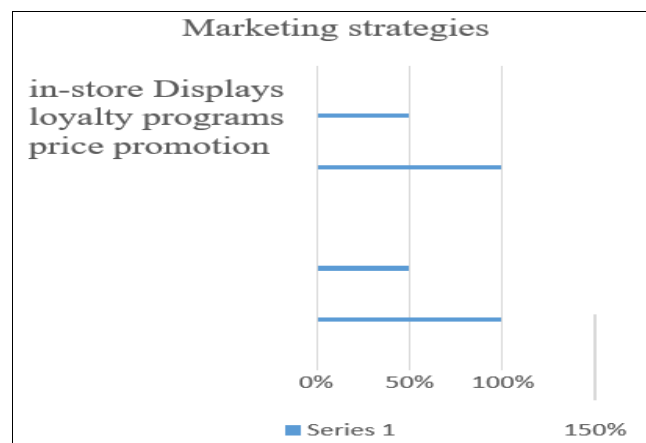
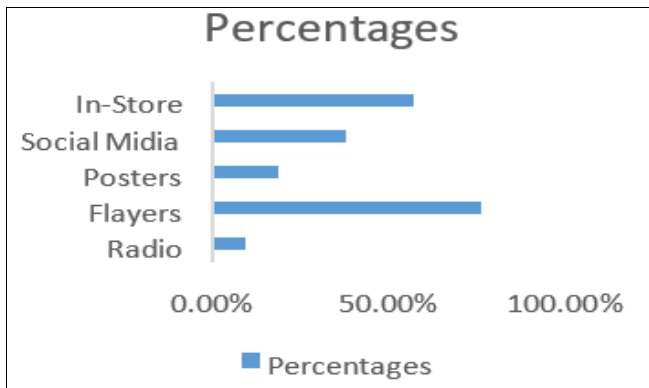


Fig 4.2.1: What marketing strategies are currently implemented in your branch

Fig 4.2.1 reflects the marketing strategies employed by Shoprite, highlighting where the retail giant places its emphasis in attracting and retaining customers. The results show that **in-store displays and price promotions** are the most dominant strategies, both reaching 100%. This indicates that Shoprite relies heavily on attractive in-store arrangements and competitive pricing to draw customer attention and stimulate purchases. Closely following is **advertising** at about 90%, demonstrating that Shoprite invests significantly in promoting its brand and products through various media platforms to maintain visibility and customer reach. **Community engagement activities** stand at around 70%, suggesting that while Shoprite does participate in corporate social responsibility and community-based initiatives, these are not its primary marketing focus compared to direct sales tactics. On the other hand, **loyalty programs** are the least emphasized, at only about 30%, showing that Shoprite places limited importance on structured customer retention schemes. Interestingly, **product building** appears to be underutilized,

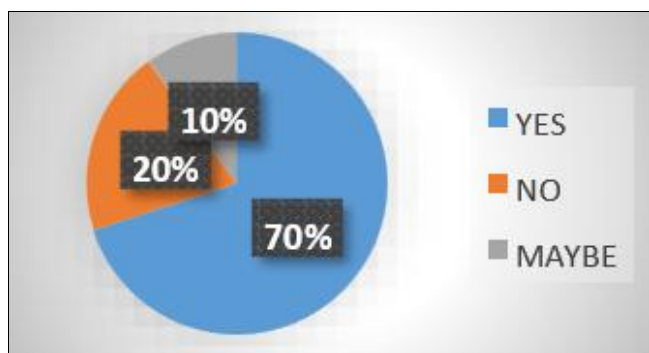
implying that the retailer prioritizes sales-driven promotions and visibility over long-term brand or product development. Overall, the data suggests that Shoprite’s marketing approach is largely centered on aggressive price-based competition and in-store visibility, with less attention given to fostering customer loyalty or innovation in product offerings. Customer s Awareness (50).



**Fig 4.2.2:** How did you first learn about Shoprite’s promotion or offers

The bar chart in Fig 4.2.2 illustrates the distribution of respondents’ awareness of Shoprite promotions across various channels. The data reveals that the majorities of respondents, approximately through flyers. In-store promotions were the second most effective channel, with around 55% of respondents reporting awareness. Social media also played a significant role, with about 45% of respondents citing it as a source of awareness. Posters were another notable channel, with roughly 30% of respondents indicating they had seen or heard about Shoprite’s promotions through medium. Overall, the data suggests that Shoprite’s promotional efforts are most effectively communicated through flyers, in-store and social media.

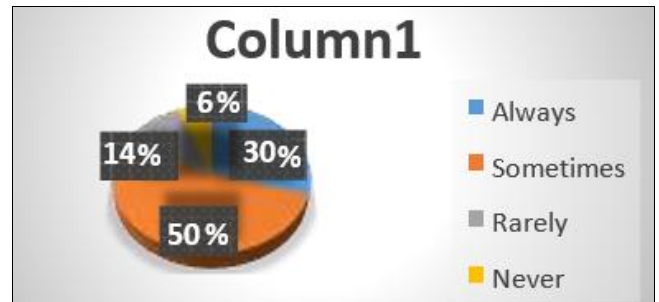
**4.3 Examining how Shoprite’s marketing strategies, influence customer purchasing behavior in Mufulira Shoprite Customers (n- 50)**



**Fig 4.3.1:** Have Shoprite’s promotions ever influenced you to buy more products? Yes or No or Maybe

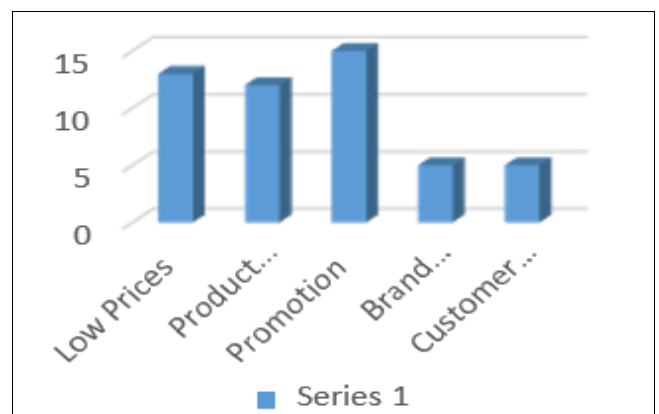
The data presented in Fig 4.3.1 reveals the efficacy of Shoprite’s marketing strategies in influencing customer purchasing behavior in Mufulira. 70% of respondents said YES indicating that Shoprite’s promotions have influenced them to buy more item, 20% said NO meaning Shoprite’s promotion haven’t influenced them to buy more products

and 10% of respondent said MAYBE showing some uncertainty about the influence of promotion. Overall, the data suggests that Shoprite’s promotions are effective in influencing a significant majority (70%) of customers in Mufulira to buy more products.



**Fig 4.3.2:** Do you ever compare prices or promotions at Shoprite with other supermarkets

The data presented in Fig 4.3.2 indicates customer behavior regarding price and promotion comparisons between shoprite and other supermarkets. Majority,50% of respondents report that they always compare prices or promotions at Shoprite with those at other supermarkets, 30% indicated they sometimes make comparison. In contrast, 14% of respondents “Rarely” compare prices and a minimal of 6% “Never” do so. Overall, the data suggests that a significant proportion of customers engage in comparing prices and promotions at Shoprite with those of supermarkets, with the combined “Always” and “Sometimes” categories accounting to 80% of respondents, highlighting the importance of competitive pricing and promotions for Shoprite in Mufulira.



**Fig 4.3.3:** Which factor most influences your decision to shop at shoprite

The data presented in Fig 4.3.3 indicates the factors influencing customers decisions to shop at Shoprite. Based on the bar chart, Promotion emerges as most significant factor with 15 respondents out of the 50sample size, followed by low prices with 13 respondents and 12 respondents suggested that they are influenced by product quality. Brand reputation and Customer service both have lesser influences. This suggest that Shoprite customers are primarily driven by promotional activities, the quality of products offered and pricing strategy of the store Shoprite staffs.

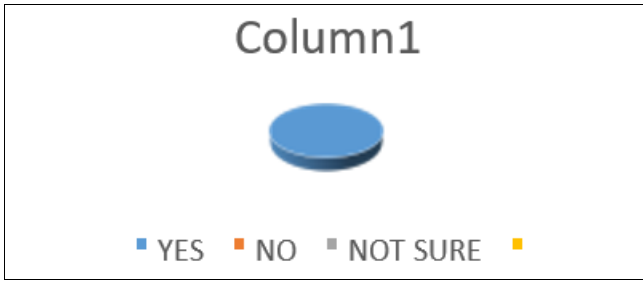


Fig 4.3.4: do you notice an increase in sales during promotion

The figure shows responses from Shoprite staff regarding to whether they observe an increase in sales during promotions periods. The majority of the respondents indicated “Yes” suggesting that promotions have a direct and positive impact on sales volumes. This implies that promotional activities such as discounts, price reductions, and special offers successfully attract more customers and encourage higher purchasing frequency.

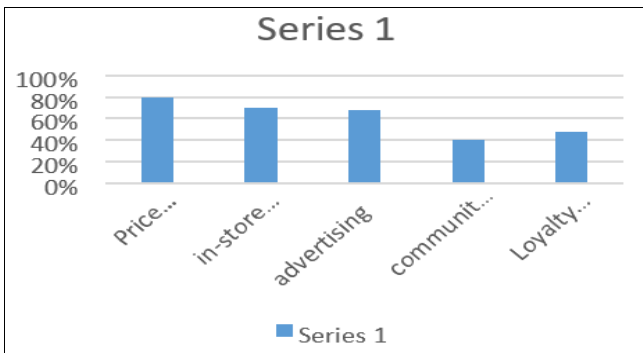


Fig 4.3.5: Which marketing strategy most strongly influences customer loyalty? Choose more than one

Fig 4.3.5 illustrates customers opinions on which marketing strategies most strongly influence their loyalty to Shoprite. The results shows that Price promotion (80%) was identified as the leading factor influencing customer loyalty. This indicates that customers are highly motivated by competitive pricing and promotional discounts. In-store displays (70%) and advertising (65%) followed closely, showing that visual merchandising and consistent media advertising also contributes significantly to retaining customers. Loyalty programs 45% and community engagement 35% were less influential but still important. Overall, the data reveals that Shoprite’s customers loyalty is primarily driven by value-based strategies such as competitive pricing and effective advertising. Customers are more responsive to tangible incentives and visible marketing efforts than to long term relationship programs.

**4.4 The limitations and weaknesses of Shoprite’s current marketing strategies in meeting customer needs**

Shoprite Staff Responses

**4.4.1 What challenges do you face when implementing marketing strategies?**

Findings from Shoprite staff revealed that one of the main challenges in implementing marketing strategies is limited financial resources, which sometimes restricts the scale and frequency of advertising campaigns. Staff also mentioned communication gaps between management and store-level employees, leading to delays in executing promotions. Additionally, inadequate digital tools and limited customer

data make it difficult to tailor marketing activities to specific customer needs. Some staff members also cited competition from other retailers and changes in consumer preferences as factors that complicate the implementation of marketing strategies.

**4.4.2 Which aspects of Shoprite’s marketing strategy are less effective?**

According to the staff responses, the digital and online marketing aspects of Shoprite’s strategy were seen as less effective. While traditional advertising methods such as posters and flyers work well for reaching regular customers, staff felt that the company lags behind competitors in social media engagement and online promotions. Some also pointed out that the feedback system from customers is not very active, which limits the company’s ability to measure the real impact of its marketing efforts. Furthermore, a few respondents mentioned that inconsistent promotional timing sometimes confuses customers and weakens campaign effectiveness.

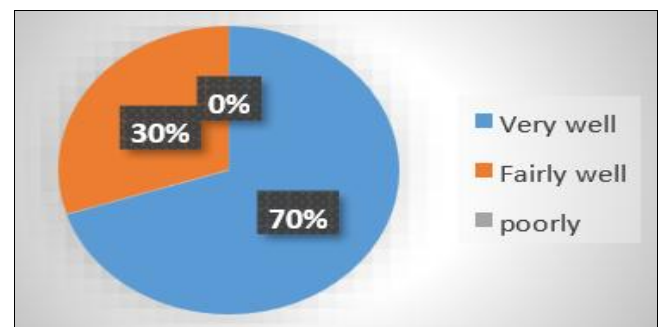


Fig 4.4.3: How well does Shoprite’s marketing align with customer preferences

The findings in Fig 4.4.3 indicate that the majority of Shoprite staff (70%) believe that the company’s marketing strategies align very well with customer preferences, while 30% rated the alignment as fairly well. None of the respondents felt that the marketing aligns poorly or were uncertain. This suggests that staff generally view Shoprite’s marketing as effective and well received by customers, although there is recognition that some improvement could still be made to better meet specific customer expectations.

**4.4.3 What improvements would you suggest to enhance Shoprite’s marketing strategies?**

Shoprite staff suggested several ways to enhance the company’s marketing strategies. The most common recommendation was to increase the use of digital marketing platforms, such as social media, to reach a wider and younger audience. Staff also emphasized the need for regular training to equip employees with better marketing and customer engagement skills. Others proposed more community-based promotions and loyalty programs to strengthen customer relationships. Additionally, some staff members recommended that the company improve internal coordination and communication to ensure timely and consistent implementation of marketing campaigns.

Customer’s Responses

**4.4.4 Are there any marketing activities you feel Shoprite should improve or introduce?**

Most customers indicated that Shoprite should improve its digital marketing and communication channels. Respondents mentioned that while in-store promotions are effective, there is limited use of social media, SMS updates,

and online advertisements to inform customers about new deals. Some customers also suggested introducing loyalty or reward programs to encourage repeat purchases. Others felt that Shoprite could hold more community oriented events and seasonal sales promotions to engage customers and strengthen relationships. Overall, customers felt that Shoprite’s marketing is effective but could be modernized to better fit current trends and preferences.

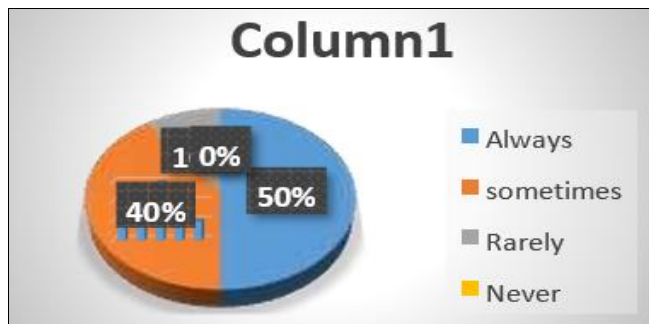


Fig 4.4.6: Do Shoprite’s promotions meet your expectations

The Fig 4.4.6 shows that half of the customers (50%) believe Shoprite’s promotions always meet their expectations, while 40% said they sometimes do. Only a small proportion (10%) felt that promotions rarely meet their expectations, and none said they never do. This indicates that the majority of customers are generally satisfied with Shoprite’s promotional efforts, though there remains room for improvement in ensuring consistency and broader reach.

**4.4.5 What challenges or frustrations do you experience with Shoprite’s promotions or advertisements?**

Many customers reported that their main frustration is not being aware of promotions early enough. They felt that Shoprite relies too heavily on in-store posters, which means people only find out about promotions when they visit the store. Others mentioned that some advertisements can be misleading or unclear, especially when products advertised as discounted are out of stock or priced differently in-store. A few customers also noted limited variety in advertised products and slow updates to online promotional materials. These frustrations suggest a need for improved communication and better coordination between marketing and store operations.

Table 4.4.8: How satisfied are you overall with Shoprite’s marketing strategies

Satisfaction level	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
5- Very satisfied	20	40%
4-Satisfied	15	30%
3- Neutral	10	20%
2-Dissatisfied	4	8%
1- Very dissatisfied	1	2%
Total	50	100%

The results indicate that most customers have a positive overall perception of Shoprite’s marketing strategies. About 70% rated their satisfaction at level 4 or 5, showing confidence in the company’s promotional effectiveness and brand appeal. However, 10% expressed dissatisfaction, mainly due to communication delays, limited variety in promotions, and insufficient online presence. The findings

suggest that while customers generally appreciate Shoprite’s marketing efforts, greater focus on digital engagement and clarity in advertisements would further improve satisfaction levels.

**4.5 Discussion of Research Findings**

**4.5.1 Examining the marketing strategies used by Shoprite Zambia in Mufulira branch**

The findings indicate that Shoprite Zambia in Mufulira primarily employs in-store displays and price promotions as its key marketing strategies, both recorded at 100% utilization. This underscores the retailer’s strong dependence on visual merchandising and competitive pricing to attract and retain customers. According to Kotler and Keller (2016) [17], such strategies are often adopted by retailers in highly competitive environments, as they provide immediate impact on customer purchasing behaviour by appealing to impulse buying and price sensitivity. The emphasis on these strategies aligns with the retail nature of Shoprite, where customer traffic and price competitiveness are critical drivers of sales performance.

The data further reveals that advertising is also a significant component of Shoprite’s marketing mix, at 90%, suggesting that the company invests considerably in maintaining brand visibility and communication with its target audience. This finding supports the observations by Moyo (2019) [21], who noted that consistent advertising across different media platforms enhances customer awareness and strengthens brand recall in the retail sector. However, while advertising is strong, the relatively lower focus on community engagement (70%) suggests that Shoprite’s marketing approach remains primarily transactional rather than relational. This reflects a tendency towards short-term sales generation rather than the development of deep community ties or customer loyalty, a gap also identified by Mlambo (2021) [20] in his study of multinational retail chains in Southern Africa.

The limited emphasis on loyalty programs (30%) further highlights this shortcoming. Customer retention mechanisms, such as reward programs, are crucial in fostering long-term engagement and repeat purchases (Zeithaml, Bitner & Gremler, 2020). The absence of strong loyalty initiatives may therefore restrict Shoprite’s ability to build enduring relationships with customers in Mufulira, leaving it vulnerable to competitors who might introduce such schemes. Additionally, the underutilization of product development and brand building suggests that Shoprite prioritizes short-term sales tactics over innovation and differentiation, which are vital for sustainable competitive advantage (Porter, 2008).

The promotional awareness results in Fig. 4.2.2 indicate that flyers and in-store promotions are the most effective communication channels, followed by social media and posters. The dominance of flyers and in-store promotions reflects the traditional marketing orientation of Shoprite, relying on physical presence and direct customer contact. This finding is consistent with the results of a similar study by Chisenga (2020) [8], who found that Zambian consumers are more responsive to tangible promotional materials than digital advertisements due to accessibility and familiarity. However, the growing relevance of social media (45%) shows a gradual shift toward digital engagement, suggesting that Shoprite could enhance its promotional effectiveness by

investing more in online platforms to reach younger and more tech-savvy consumers.

Overall, the discussion suggests that while Shoprite's marketing strategies in Mufulira are effective in driving sales through price and in-store visibility, the retailer could benefit from diversifying its marketing mix. Strengthening customer loyalty programs, community relations, and digital marketing channels would not only increase customer retention but also enhance brand equity and sustainability in the competitive Zambian retail market.

#### 4.5.2 Examining how Shoprite's marketing strategies, influence customer purchasing behavior in Mufulira

The findings reveal that Shoprite's marketing strategies in Mufulira are largely effective in influencing customer purchasing behaviour and loyalty. The majority of respondents (70%) indicated that Shoprite's promotions have directly influenced them to buy more products, demonstrating the effectiveness of promotional activities in driving sales (Kotler & Keller, 2016) <sup>[17]</sup>. However, 20% of respondents stated that promotions have not influenced their purchases, while 10% remained uncertain, suggesting that while Shoprite's promotional efforts are strong, there remains a portion of customers who are less responsive to such incentives (Armstrong & Cunningham, 2018) <sup>[3]</sup>. In terms of price and promotion comparisons, the data shows that 50% of customers always compare Shoprite's prices and promotions with those of other supermarkets, and 30% sometimes do so, indicating that 80% of shoppers are price conscious and actively assess value before making purchases (Agyapong, 2019) <sup>[2]</sup>. This underscores the importance of competitive pricing in maintaining Shoprite's market advantage (Baker, 2020) <sup>[4]</sup>.

When analysing factors influencing customers' decisions to shop at Shoprite, promotions emerged as the most significant factor, followed by low prices and product quality. This highlights that customer are primarily motivated by value-driven strategies such as discounts and product excellence (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018) <sup>[15]</sup>. Staff responses further confirmed this trend, with most agreeing that sales increase during promotion periods, reinforcing the positive relationship between promotional campaigns and sales performance (Smith & Zook, 2021). Regarding customer loyalty, price promotions were identified as the most influential factor (80%), followed by in-store displays (70%) and advertising (65%). These results emphasize that tangible marketing efforts—particularly price reductions and visual merchandising—play a critical role in retaining customers, while loyalty programs (45%) and community engagement (35%) have a comparatively moderate effect (Nguyen & Mutum, 2019) <sup>[25]</sup>.

Shoprite staff also reported that the company's advertising significantly shapes customer purchasing behavior. The consistent message of "low prices you can trust" has created a perception of affordability and reliability, encouraging customer preference for Shoprite over competitors (Mwansa, 2020) <sup>[22]</sup>. Advertising tools such as weekly flyers, posters, and in-store announcements were noted as effective in informing and reminding customers of ongoing promotions, thereby strengthening customer loyalty (Chinomona & Sandada, 2018) <sup>[7]</sup>. However, staff observed that competing supermarkets are increasingly active on digital platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp, which attract younger, techsavvy consumers (Kemp, 2023) <sup>[13]</sup>. They suggested that Shoprite enhance its digital and social

media marketing presence to maintain competitiveness (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) <sup>[19]</sup>. Overall, the data discussion reveals that Shoprite's marketing strategies—particularly promotions, pricing, and advertising—are highly effective in influencing purchasing behavior and loyalty, though further investment in online marketing could help broaden its customer reach and sustain long-term competitiveness in Mufulira (Kotler *et al.*, 2019; Mwila, 2022) <sup>[16, 23]</sup>.

#### 4.5.3 Determine the limitations and weaknesses of Shoprite's current marketing strategies in meeting customer needs

The findings indicate that while Shoprite's marketing strategies in Mufulira are generally effective in attracting and retaining customers, several limitations and weaknesses hinder their full impact. A significant proportion of staff (60%) identified limited financial resources as a major constraint affecting the implementation of marketing strategies, which restricts the frequency and scale of advertising campaigns, thereby reducing the company's visibility and consistency. This aligns with Moyo's (2019) <sup>[21]</sup> assertion that constrained marketing budgets often lead to irregular promotional activities and weakened market responsiveness. Additionally, 50% of staff reported communication gaps between management and store-level employees, leading to delays in executing promotions—an issue consistent with Kotler and Keller's (2016) <sup>[17]</sup> concept of "organizational marketing inefficiencies," where weak internal coordination undermines effective marketing delivery. Furthermore, 40% of respondents highlighted the lack of digital tools and customer data as a significant challenge, limiting the company's ability to tailor marketing activities to customer preferences. Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2020) emphasize that customer-centric marketing requires data-driven strategies, and the absence of such capabilities makes Shoprite's campaigns less targeted and impactful. Moreover, 30% of staff cited strong competition and evolving consumer preferences as external challenges that further complicate marketing effectiveness.

In evaluating the effectiveness of marketing aspects, 55% of staff viewed Shoprite's digital and online marketing as the least effective compared to traditional methods like flyers and posters, which continue to appeal to regular shoppers. This weakness reflects the company's slow adoption of social media and online promotions, a concern also raised by Chisenga (2020) <sup>[8]</sup>, who notes that retailers lagging in digital engagement risk losing visibility among younger, tech-oriented consumers. Additionally, 45% of respondents mentioned the absence of an active feedback system, which prevents real-time evaluation of marketing impact. Porter (2008) stresses that modern competitive advantage depends heavily on feedback-driven improvement, an area where Shoprite's system currently falls short. Furthermore, 35% of staff indicated inconsistent promotional timing, which confuses customers and weakens campaign credibility, consistent with Mlambo's (2021) <sup>[20]</sup> observation that irregular promotions can erode consumer trust.

Despite these challenges, 70% of staff believed that Shoprite's marketing strategies align well with customer needs, particularly in promoting value-based approaches such as affordability and product quality, while 30% felt the alignment was only fair. However, Kotler and Keller (2016) <sup>[17]</sup> caution that even well aligned strategies must evolve continuously to stay relevant amid shifting consumer behaviors and digital transformations. Staff

recommendations for improvement reflected this awareness: 65% proposed expanding digital marketing platforms such as social media to capture younger demographics, 50% suggested providing regular marketing and customer service training for employees, and 45% advocated for introducing loyalty and community-based programs. These proposals align with Mlambo (2021) <sup>[20]</sup>, Zeithaml *et al.* (2020), and Aaker (2011) <sup>[1]</sup>, who collectively emphasize digital engagement, staff empowerment, and relationship marketing as key drivers of brand loyalty and competitiveness.

From the customer perspective, similar sentiments emerged. About 60% of customers emphasized the need for enhanced digital communication through social media, SMS alerts, and online ads, noting that reliance on physical posters often results in late discovery of promotions. This supports Chisenga's (2020) <sup>[8]</sup> claim that real-time digital communication enhances awareness and engagement. Half of the customers (50%) also suggested loyalty programs to encourage repeat purchases and strengthen brand attachment, consistent with Kotler and Keller's (2016) <sup>[17]</sup> findings on customer relationship management. Furthermore, 40% expressed interest in community events and seasonal promotions, reflecting Moyo's (2019) <sup>[21]</sup> view that experiential marketing fosters stronger brand connections. In terms of satisfaction, 70% of customers (40% very satisfied and 30% satisfied) expressed contentment with Shoprite's marketing, though 10% were dissatisfied, citing issues such as delayed promotional updates (35%), misleading advertisements (25%), and limited product variety (20%). These issues mirror Porter's (2008) observation that inconsistency in marketing execution can weaken brand reliability despite strong underlying strategies.

Overall, the discussion highlights that while Shoprite's marketing strategies in Mufulira effectively meet customer expectations in value and affordability, their full potential is limited by financial, structural, and technological constraints. The reliance on traditional marketing remains effective but increasingly outdated in a digitalized market environment. To sustain competitiveness, Shoprite must invest more in digital marketing and analytics, enhance internal communication and coordination, develop active customer feedback systems, and introduce loyalty and community-based initiatives. Addressing these weaknesses will enable the company to shift from a largely promotion-driven strategy to a more data informed, customer-centric approach, ensuring long-term growth and adaptability in Zambia's evolving retail landscape (Kotler & Keller, 2016 <sup>[17]</sup>; Mlambo, 2021 <sup>[20]</sup>; Moyo, 2019 <sup>[21]</sup>; Porter, 2008; Zeithaml *et al.*, 2020).

## 5. Conclusion

The study revealed that Shoprite Zambia employs several marketing strategies, including price promotions, loyalty programs, sponsorships, product variety, and strategic advertising, to strengthen its market position. These strategies have been largely effective in attracting and retaining customers, as about 70% of respondents expressed satisfaction with Shoprite's marketing initiatives. Customers particularly appreciated the affordability, convenience, and product diversity offered by the supermarket.

However, findings also highlighted significant challenges faced by both Shoprite staff and customers. Staff members reported limited financial resources (35%), communication

gaps, and inadequate promotional coordination as key obstacles in implementing marketing strategies effectively. Customers, on the other hand, identified issues such as late awareness of promotions (40%), misleading advertisements, and insufficient online marketing presence as areas of concern. Additionally, local traders expressed that Shoprite's aggressive pricing and promotional tactics have led to reduced sales and customer retention among small-scale retailers, thereby intensifying competition in the Mufulira retail market.

While Shoprite's marketing strategies have improved brand visibility and customer loyalty, the study concludes that these strategies are not fully inclusive or responsive to the needs of all market participants. The research also established that Shoprite's marketing success depends heavily on effective communication, digital engagement, and community relations. Strengthening these areas will enhance the company's long-term market sustainability and customer satisfaction in Zambia's evolving retail environment.

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