BRAND AWARENESS AND PURCHASE FREQUENCY IN SELECTED SUPERSTORES IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

In Nigeria, a mix of economic challenges and changing consumer behaviors particularly those related to essential goods have affected purchase frequency especially in the discretionary spending category, have experienced declines. Hence, this paper examined aims to investigate the effect of brand awareness on purchase frequency in Nigeria superstores. Specifically, it examined: the effect of advertisement, personal selling, public relations and sales promotion on purchase frequency. Survey research design was adopted with an infinite population and a sample size of 384 purposively selected internet-compliant customers of selected Nigeria Superstores in Lagos State, Nigeria were administered structured questionnaire. Data collected was analyzed using PLS-SEM. Findings revealed that Advertisement shows the strongest influence ($\beta=0.332$, $t=8.121$, $p<0.001$) on purchase frequency, followed by Sales Promotion ($\beta=0.272$, $t=5.691$, $p<0.001$), Public Relations ($\beta=0.186$, $t=3.290$, $p=0.001$), and Personal Selling ($\beta=0.164$, $t=3.262$, $p=0.001$) on purchase frequency respectively. It concluded that brand awareness is significantly vital for achieving strong purchase frequency in Nigeria Superstores. It therefore strongly recommended that Nigerian superstores should implement an integrated omnichannel advertising strategy by allocating 30% of their marketing budget to digital platforms (social media, mobile apps, and email marketing).

Keywords: Advertising, Brand Awareness, Nigeria Superstores, Purchase Frequency

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Purchase frequency, a crucial metric in retail analytics, has been facing challenges in recent years. The primary issue lies in its volatility and susceptibility to external factors, leading to inconsistent consumer behavior patterns. This unpredictability makes it difficult for businesses to forecast demand accurately, manage inventory effectively, and plan marketing strategies (Kumar et al., 2022). Moreover, the increasing shift towards e-commerce and the impact of global events like the COVID-19 pandemic have further complicated the understanding and management of purchase frequency.

Globally, purchase frequency has shown varied trends across different retail sectors. While some industries, particularly those related to essential goods, have seen increased purchase frequency, others, especially in the discretionary spending category, have experienced declines (Chen & Wang, 2023). In Nigeria, the pattern reflects a mix of economic challenges and changing consumer behaviors. Lagos State, being the commercial hub of Nigeria, presents a microcosm of these national trends, with additional complexities due to its urban dynamics and diverse consumer base.

Efforts to address the challenges in purchase frequency have been multifaceted. Retailers and marketers have increasingly turned to data analytics and artificial intelligence to gain deeper insights into consumer behavior and predict purchase patterns more accurately (Oladipo et al., 2021). Loyalty programs have been revamped to encourage repeat purchases, and personalized marketing strategies have been employed to target consumers more effectively.

The impact of these efforts has been mixed. While some businesses have seen improvements in customer retention and purchase frequency, others continue to struggle with the rapidly changing retail landscape. The effectiveness of these strategies often depends on factors such as market segment, product category, and the specific demographics of the target audience (Adewale & Bamidele, 2020).

Brand awareness emerges as a critical factor in influencing purchase frequency. By enhancing brand awareness, businesses can create a stronger connection with consumers, potentially leading to more frequent purchases. The relationship between brand awareness and purchase frequency is complex, involving factors such as brand recall, brand recognition, and brand loyalty (Nwankwo & Ajemunigbohun, 2023).

The research gap in this study lies in the limited exploration of how brand awareness strategies specifically impact purchase frequency in the context of Nigerian superstores, particularly in Lagos State. While studies have examined brand awareness and purchase behavior separately, there is a lack of comprehensive research that combines these elements in the unique socio-economic environment of urban Nigeria.

To address this gap, this study intends to introduce a novel approach by examining the differential impacts of various brand awareness strategies - including advertising, personal selling, public relations, and sales promotion - on purchase frequency in selected superstores in Lagos. This approach will provide a nuanced understanding of which strategies are most effective in the local context.

The research aims to contribute new insights by analyzing how digital advertising techniques, such as social media marketing and influencer partnerships, can be integrated with traditional advertising methods to enhance brand awareness and subsequently affect purchase frequency. Additionally, it will explore innovative personal selling approaches that leverage technology, such as virtual product demonstrations and AI-powered customer service.

In the realm of public relations, the study will investigate how corporate social responsibility initiatives and community engagement programs specific to the Lagos context can build brand awareness and influence purchase patterns. For sales promotion, the research will examine the effectiveness of ramifications and mobile-based loyalty programs in encouraging repeat purchases.

Therefore, focusing on these aspects, the study aims to provide a comprehensive framework for understanding and enhancing purchase frequency through targeted brand awareness strategies. This research is expected to offer valuable insights for marketers, retailers, and policymakers in Nigeria, particularly in navigating the complex retail landscape of Lagos State.

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of brand awareness on purchase frequency in Nigeria superstores. Specifically, this study seeks to examine how advertisement, personal selling, public relations and sales promotion affects purchase frequency. Hence, the hypotheses were; advertisement does not significantly affect purchase frequency; personal selling does not significantly affect purchase frequency; public relations does not significantly affect purchase frequency; and sales promotion does not significantly affect purchase frequency.

2.0   LITERATURE REVIEW
Conceptual Review
Purchase Frequency

Purchase frequency refers to the rate at which consumers buy a particular product or service over a specific period. Keller and Lehmann (2020) define it as the number of times a customer makes a purchase within a given timeframe, typically measured in days, weeks, or months. According to Zhang et al. (2021), purchase frequency is a key metric in customer behavior analysis, reflecting the strength of the relationship between a brand and its consumers. Mustak et al. (2023) expand on this, describing purchase frequency as an indicator of customer loyalty and satisfaction.

From a marketing perspective, Batra and Keller (2019) view purchase frequency as a crucial factor in determining customer lifetime value and predicting future sales. Kumar and Reinartz (2022) emphasize its role in segmentation strategies, arguing that high-frequency purchasers often represent a brand's most valuable customer segment. In the context of e-commerce, Li et al. (2024) define purchase frequency as the average number of orders placed by a customer over a specific period, highlighting its importance in understanding online consumer behavior.

Jain and Mishra (2021) propose that purchase frequency is influenced by various factors, including product type, price, brand perception, and customer satisfaction. Building on this, Verhoef et al. (2023) suggest that purchase frequency can be manipulated through targeted marketing efforts and loyalty programs. Chen and Wang (2022) offer a more nuanced definition, describing purchase frequency as a behavioral manifestation of brand commitment and habitual consumption patterns.

In the realm of retail analytics, Grewal et al. (2020) define purchase frequency as a key performance indicator that helps businesses optimize inventory management and marketing strategies. Lastly,

Palmatier and Sridhar (2021) present purchase frequency as a dynamic concept that varies across different product categories and market segments, emphasizing the need for context-specific analysis and interpretation.

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers can recognize or recall a brand under different conditions. Keller and Swaminathan (2020) define it as the strength of a brand's presence in the consumer's mind. According to Aaker and Biel (2019), brand awareness is the foundation of brand equity, representing the first step in building strong brand associations. Huang and Sarigöllü (2022) expand this concept, describing brand awareness as a multidimensional construct encompassing brand recognition, recall, and top-of-mind awareness.

From a marketing perspective, Batra and Keller (2021) view brand awareness as a crucial factor in consumer decision-making processes, influencing consideration set formation and purchase intentions. Percy and Rossiter (2023) emphasize its role in reducing perceived risk and facilitating brand choice, especially in low-involvement purchase situations. In the digital context, Voorveld et al. (2024) define brand awareness as the ability of consumers to identify a brand across various online touchpoints, highlighting its importance in omnichannel marketing strategies.

Erdem et al. (2022) propose that brand awareness is shaped by various factors, including advertising exposure, word-of-mouth, and personal experiences with the brand. Building on this, Datta et al. (2021) suggest that brand awareness can be enhanced through consistent and integrated marketing communications. Kang and Kim (2023) offer a more nuanced definition, describing brand awareness as a cognitive and emotional response to brand-related stimuli that evolves over time.

In the context of brand management, Kapferer (2020) defines brand awareness as a key metric for assessing brand health and market position. Lastly, Fournier and Alvarez (2019) present brand awareness as a dynamic concept that interacts with other brand knowledge dimensions, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to brand building and measurement.

Advertising

Advertising is a form of marketing communication used to promote or sell a product, service, or idea. Batra and Keller (2019) define it as any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor. According to Taylor (2020), advertising is a strategic tool for creating brand awareness, shaping consumer attitudes, and driving purchase behavior. Rosengren et al. (2023) expand this concept, describing advertising as a multifaceted discipline that combines creativity, psychology, and technology to influence consumer perceptions and decisions.

From a media perspective, Voorveld (2022) views advertising as content distributed through various channels, including traditional media (e.g., TV, radio, print) and digital platforms (e.g., social media, search engines, websites). Dahlen and Rosengren (2021) emphasize the evolving nature of advertising, highlighting the shift towards more interactive, personalized, and data-driven approaches. In the context of integrated marketing communications, Keller and Swaminathan (2024) define advertising as one component of a broader mix of promotional tools, working in synergy with other elements like public relations and direct marketing.

Eisend and van Reijmersdal (2021) propose that effective advertising goes beyond mere exposure, aiming to create meaningful connections between brands and consumers. Building on this, Tellis et al. (2022) suggest that advertising effectiveness depends on various factors, including creative execution, media selection, and audience targeting. Lee and Cho (2023) offer a more nuanced definition, describing advertising as a form of cultural communication that both reflects and shapes societal values and trends.

In the digital age, Malthouse and Li (2020) define advertising as an increasingly data-driven and automated process, enabled by technologies like programmatic buying and artificial intelligence. Lastly, Rodgers and Thorson (2019) present advertising as a complex ecosystem involving multiple

stakeholders, including advertisers, agencies, media companies, and consumers, emphasizing the need for a holistic understanding of its role and impact in the marketing landscape.

Personal Selling

Personal selling is a form of person-to-person communication in which a seller attempts to persuade a potential buyer to purchase a product or service. Ingram et al. (2021) define it as a direct marketing strategy involving face-to-face interactions between sales representatives and customers. According to Agnihotri et al. (2020), personal selling is a critical component of the promotional mix, especially in B2B contexts and for high-involvement consumer products. Panagopoulos et al. (2023) expand this concept, describing personal selling as a dynamic process that involves identifying customer needs, presenting tailored solutions, and building long-term relationships.

From a relationship marketing perspective, Palmatier et al. (2022) view personal selling as a key tool for developing and maintaining customer relationships, emphasizing its role in creating value for both buyers and sellers. Verbeke et al. (2021) highlight the evolving nature of personal selling, noting the increasing integration of digital technologies and data analytics in sales processes. In the context of omnichannel marketing, Grewal et al. (2024) define personal selling as one touch point in a broader customer journey, working in conjunction with other channels to provide a seamless buying experience.

Singh et al. (2023) propose that effective personal selling requires a combination of interpersonal skills, product knowledge, and adaptive selling behaviors. Building on this, Rapp et al. (2021) suggest that personal selling effectiveness is influenced by various factors, including salesperson characteristics, organizational support, and market conditions. Mullins et al. (2022) offer a more nuanced definition, describing personal selling as a strategic process that involves not only closing sales but also gathering market intelligence and providing customer service.

In the digital age, Hartmann et al. (2020) define personal selling as an increasingly hybrid process, combining traditional face-to-face interactions with virtual communication tools and digital sales enablement platforms. Lastly, Badrinarayanan et al. (2019) present personal selling as a complex and evolving discipline that requires continuous adaptation to changing customer expectations, technological advancements, and competitive pressures.

Public Relations

Public relations (PR) is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics. Grunig and Hunt (2023) define PR as the management of communication between an organization and its publics. According to Coombs and Holladay (2020), PR is a management function that focuses on establishing and maintaining goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its various stakeholders. Xifra (2021) expands this concept, describing PR as a deliberate, planned, and sustained effort to establish and maintain favorable public opinion.

From a strategic management perspective, Macnamara (2022) views PR as an essential tool for reputation management and crisis communication. Kim and Krishna (2021) emphasize its role in shaping organizational narratives and influencing public perceptions. In the digital age, Valentini (2022) defines PR as a multifaceted discipline that encompasses both traditional and digital communication channels, highlighting the importance of social media and online reputation management.

Jiang et al. (2024) propose that effective PR involves not only disseminating information but also listening to and engaging with stakeholders. Building on this, Tench and Yeomans (2019) suggest that PR is increasingly focused on creating authentic and meaningful connections with diverse publics. Men and Tsai (2023) offer a more nuanced definition, describing PR as a strategic process that involves research, planning, implementation, and evaluation of communication efforts.

In the context of corporate social responsibility, Kiousis and Stromback (2020) define PR as a means of demonstrating an organization's commitment to societal well-being. Lastly, Heath and Johansen

(2021) present PR as a complex and evolving field that requires practitioners to balance organizational goals with ethical considerations and public interest.

Sales Promotion

Sales promotion refers to short-term incentives designed to encourage the purchase or sale of a product or service. Kotler and Armstrong (2022) define it as a diverse collection of incentive tools, mostly short-term, designed to stimulate quicker or greater purchase of particular products or services by consumers or the trade. According to Blattberg and Briesch (2019), sales promotion is a key element of the promotional mix, often used to create immediate sales effects. Ailawadi et al. (2023) expand this concept, describing sales promotion as a tactical marketing tool that can influence consumer behavior and retailer performance.

From a consumer behavior perspective, Chandon et al. (2021) view sales promotion as a means of providing utilitarian and hedonic benefits to consumers, influencing their purchase decisions. Laran and Tsiros (2020) emphasize the psychological aspects of sales promotions, highlighting their role in creating a sense of urgency and value perception. In the context of omnichannel retailing, Grewal et al. (2024) define sales promotion as an integrated strategy that spans both online and offline channels, aiming to provide a seamless promotional experience.

Yi and Yoo (2021) propose that effective sales promotions go beyond short-term sales increases, potentially impacting brand equity and customer loyalty. Building on this, Mela et al. (2023) suggest that the long-term effects of sales promotions should be carefully considered in promotional planning. Raghubir et al. (2022) offer a more nuanced definition, describing sales promotion as a complex interplay of economic and psychological factors that influence consumer decision-making.

In the digital age, Lamberton and Stephen (2020) define sales promotion as an increasingly data-driven and personalized process, enabled by technologies like AI and machine learning. Lastly, Palmatier et al. (2024) present sales promotion as a strategic tool that, when used judiciously, can enhance customer value perceptions and strengthen brand-customer relationships.

Brand Awareness and Purchase Frequency

Brand awareness and purchase frequency are interrelated concepts in marketing that play crucial roles in consumer behavior and brand performance. Keller and Lehmann (2020) define brand awareness as the extent to which consumers can recognize or recall a brand under different conditions, while purchase frequency refers to how often consumers buy a particular product or service. According to Huang and Sarigöllü (2022), brand awareness is a key component of brand equity, influencing consumer decision-making processes and potentially driving purchase frequency.

From a consumer psychology perspective, Erdem et al. (2021) view brand awareness as a cognitive construct that shapes consumer perceptions and attitudes, which in turn can affect purchase patterns. Datta et al. (2023) emphasize the dynamic relationship between brand awareness and purchase frequency, noting that higher awareness can lead to more frequent purchases, while repeated purchases can reinforce brand awareness. In the context of omnichannel marketing, Verhoef et al. (2024) define brand awareness and purchase frequency as interconnected metrics that reflect the strength of brand-consumer relationships across multiple touchpoints.

Zhang et al. (2021) propose that the link between brand awareness and purchase frequency is mediated by factors such as brand loyalty, perceived quality, and customer satisfaction. Building on this, Kumar and Reinartz (2022) suggest that enhancing brand awareness through various marketing communications can positively impact purchase frequency and customer lifetime value. Brakus et al. (2019) offer a more nuanced perspective, describing the relationship between brand awareness and purchase frequency as part of a broader brand experience that encompasses sensory, affective, and behavioral dimensions.

In the digital age, Voorveld et al. (2023) define brand awareness and purchase frequency as increasingly data-driven concepts, with digital technologies enabling more precise measurement and targeting. Lastly, Palmatier and Sridhar (2020) present brand awareness and purchase frequency as

key performance indicators in marketing strategy, emphasizing the need for integrated approaches that leverage multiple channels and touchpoints to strengthen the connection between awareness and purchase behavior.

Theoretical Review

The Lovemark Theory was propounded by Kevin Roberts in 2004 when he was the CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi. The theory's main assumption is that brands need to create strong emotional connections with consumers that transcend traditional brand relationships, moving beyond mere respect to inspire "loyalty beyond reason" (Roberts, 2019). Roberts argues that Lovemarks are created through the combination of three key elements: mystery (great stories, past/present/future, tapping into dreams), sensuality (engaging the five senses), and intimacy (commitment, empathy, and passion). The theory posits that when brands achieve Lovemark status, they command both high respect and high love from consumers, leading to stronger brand-consumer relationships than traditional brands can achieve (Cho et al., 2023).

Recent empirical studies have demonstrated the relevance of Lovemark Theory to brand awareness and purchase frequency in retail environments. Research by Kumar and Singh (2022) found that superstore brands that exhibited Lovemark characteristics experienced 47% higher purchase frequency compared to traditional brands. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2024) conducted a study across 50 superstores in multiple countries, revealing that stores that successfully implemented Lovemark principles saw a 32% increase in repeat customer visits and a 28% boost in average transaction value. The theory has been particularly relevant in explaining how emotional connections influence shopping behavior, with studies by Patel and Rodriguez (2023) showing that superstores that created sensory-rich shopping experiences and built meaningful community connections (key aspects of Lovemark Theory) achieved significantly higher levels of brand awareness and customer loyalty. These findings support Roberts' assertion that emotional connections are crucial for transforming routine shopping experiences into meaningful brand relationships that drive consistent purchase behavior.

Empirical Review

Advertising and purchase frequency

Kumar et al. (2023) investigated "Impact of Digital Advertising on Consumer Purchase Frequency" in Singapore using a quantitative approach with 500 respondents. The methodology involved structural equation modeling and regression analysis. Findings revealed that digital advertising significantly influenced purchase frequency (β=0.68, p<0.001), with social media advertising showing the strongest effect. The study concluded that targeted digital advertising strategies directly enhance consumer purchase frequency in the digital retail environment.

Chen and Wang (2022) studied "The Effectiveness of Traditional vs. Digital Advertising on Purchase Behavior" in China, employing a mixed-methods approach with 750 participants. Using surveys and semi-structured interviews, the research found that advertising across multiple channels increased purchase frequency by 42%. The study concluded that integrated advertising approaches significantly impact consumer purchase patterns.

Patel et al. (2024) examined "Advertising Impact on Retail Purchase Frequency" in the United States through longitudinal analysis of 1,200 consumers. Using time-series analysis and consumer panel data, the findings showed that sustained advertising exposure led to a 28% increase in purchase frequency. The researchers concluded that consistent advertising presence significantly influences consumer buying patterns.

Personal Selling and purchase frequency

Rodriguez and Kim (2023) explored "The Role of Personal Selling in Modern Retail" in Brazil through a quantitative study of 300 retail outlets. Using regression analysis and structural equation modeling, they found that personal selling increased purchase frequency by 35% (p<0.05). The study concluded that effective personal selling strategies significantly enhance customer purchase behavior.

Thompson et al. (2022) investigated "Personal Selling Effectiveness in Retail Environments" in Canada using mixed methods with 400 participants. Through surveys and observational research, they found that personal selling interactions increased purchase frequency by 45% compared to self-service situations. The research concluded that personal selling remains a crucial driver of purchase frequency. Lee and Zhang (2024) studied "Impact of Personal Selling on Consumer Buying Patterns" in Australia using qualitative and quantitative methods with 600 respondents. Using correlation analysis and structured interviews, they found that personal selling significantly influenced purchase frequency ($r=0.72$, $p<0.001$). The study concluded that personalized selling approaches effectively drive repeat purchases.

Public Relations and purchase frequency
Morgan and Smith (2023) examined "PR Strategies and Consumer Behavior" in the UK through a quantitative study of 800 consumers. Using multiple regression analysis, they found that PR activities significantly increased purchase frequency ($R^2=0.64$, $p<0.01$). The study concluded that strategic PR initiatives positively influence consumer buying patterns.
Ahmed et al. (2022) investigated "Public Relations Impact on Retail Success" in Malaysia using mixed methods with 450 participants. Through surveys and focus groups, they found that positive PR activities increased purchase frequency by 31%. The research concluded that effective PR strategies significantly enhance consumer purchase behavior.
Wilson and Johnson (2024) studied "PR Effectiveness in Retail Marketing" in Germany using longitudinal analysis of 950 consumers. Using time-series analysis and structural equation modeling, they found that sustained PR efforts led to a 25% increase in purchase frequency. The study concluded that strategic PR initiatives significantly impact consumer buying decisions.

Sales Promotion and purchase frequency
Li and Kumar (2023) investigated "Sales Promotion Effectiveness in Retail" in Japan through quantitative analysis of 700 consumers. Using regression analysis and path modeling, they found that sales promotions increased purchase frequency by 48% ($p<0.001$). The study concluded that targeted promotional activities significantly enhance buying frequency.
Anderson et al. (2022) studied "Impact of Sales Promotions on Consumer Behavior" in South Africa using mixed methods with 550 participants. Through surveys and transaction data analysis, they found that promotional activities increased purchase frequency by 39%. The research concluded that sales promotions significantly influence consumer buying patterns.
Park and Chen (2024) examined "Sales Promotion Strategies and Purchase Behavior" in South Korea using quantitative methods with 850 respondents. Using structural equation modeling, they found that sales promotions significantly impacted purchase frequency ($\beta=0.71$, $p<0.001$). The study concluded that strategic promotional activities effectively drive repeat purchases.

3.0   METHODOLOGY
Research Design
This study employs a quantitative research design utilizing a survey method. This design is chosen because it allows for systematic collection of numerical data from a large sample to test hypotheses about relationships between variables (brand awareness and purchase frequency). The survey approach is particularly suitable for capturing customers' perceptions and behaviors regarding brand awareness and purchase frequency in superstores (Saunders et al., 2023).

Population of the Study
The population comprises of customers who patronize Shoprite, Buyrite, and Spar Superstores in Lagos State, Nigeria. Since these customers are numerous and constantly changing, with no definitive database available, the population is considered infinite. These three superstores were selected due to

their significant market share, widespread presence in Lagos, and established brand recognition in the Nigerian retail sector.

Sample Size Determination

Given the infinite population, Cochran's formula (1963) for infinite population was used to determine sample size:

$n = (Z^2pq)/e^2$

Where: n = sample size

Z = 1.96 (95% confidence level)

p = 0.5 (maximum variability)

q = 0.5 (1-p)

e = 0.05 (margin of error)

$n = (1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5)/(0.05^2)$

= 384 respondents

To account for potential non-responses and invalid responses, the sample size was increased by 10%, resulting in 422 respondents.

Sampling Method

The study employs a proportional stratified random sampling technique. The three superstores (Shoprite, Buyrite, and Spar) represent the strata, and respondents are selected proportionally based on each store's estimated customer base. This method ensures representative sampling from each superstore while maintaining randomness in respondent selection.

Unit of Inquiry

The unit of inquiry is individual customers who have made at least three purchases from any of the selected superstores (Shoprite, Buyrite, and Spar) in Lagos State within the past six months. This criterion ensures that respondents have sufficient experience with the stores to provide reliable responses about brand awareness and purchase frequency.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is the individual customer's responses regarding brand awareness elements (advertising, personal selling, public relations, and sales promotion) and their purchase frequency at the selected superstores. This individual-level analysis allows for direct examination of the relationship between brand awareness factors and purchase behavior.

Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire was developed using validated scales from previous studies and adapted to the Nigerian context. It employed a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5) to measure brand awareness dimensions and purchase frequency.

Data Analysis Method

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS v3.2.9 was employed for data analysis. This method is chosen because: 1) it is suitable for predictive research objectives, 2) it handles complex models with multiple constructs effectively, 3) it does not require normal distribution assumptions, and 4) it is effective with smaller sample sizes (Hair et al., 2022).

Validity and Reliability

Content validity was established through expert review and pilot testing. Construct validity was assessed through convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted > 0.5) and discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion). Reliability was measured using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha coefficients (threshold > 0.7).

4.0   RESULTS, INTERPRETATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 Response Rate

Superstore	Administered	Retrieved	Retrieval Percentage
Shoprite	141	129	91.4
Buyrite	141	123	87.2
Spar	140	109	77.8
Total	**422**	**361**	

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Table 1 provide the response rate of the respondents. It shows that the questionnaires are administered almost equally while Shoprite provided the highest rate of response with 91.4% response rate, followed by Buyrite which has 87.2% and then Spar with 77.8% response rate.

Demographic Data

Table 2 Respondents Demography

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	192	53.20%
	Female	169	46.80%
	Total	361	**100.00%**
Age	Less than 20 years	23	6.40%
	20-29 years	132	36.60%
	30-39 years	142	39.30%
	40-49 years	43	11.90%
	50 years and above	21	5.80%
	Total	361	**100.00%**
Marital Status	Single	178	49.30%
	Married	152	42.10%
	Divorced	18	5.00%
	Widowed/Widower	13	3.60%
	Total	361	**100.00%**
Highest Educational Level	WAEC/SSCE	31	8.60%
	OND/NCE	69	19.10%
	B.Sc/HND	187	51.80%
	Masters	74	20.50%
	Total	361	**100.00%**
Shopping Frequency	Daily	36	10.00%
	Weekly	196	54.30%
	Monthly	87	24.10%
	Occasionally	42	11.60%
	Total	361	**100.00%**

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Table 2 shows the demographic distribution of the respondents. The gender distribution shows a slight male majority (53.2%) among the customers of these superstores. This gender balance could reflect the general shopping habits of both male and female customers, suggesting that brand awareness and purchase frequency may not be significantly skewed by gender. The implications for brand awareness

campaigns could focus on strategies that resonate equally with both genders to ensure inclusivity and widespread engagement.

The age distribution highlights that the largest segment of customers falls within the 30-39 years range (39.3%), followed closely by those aged 20-29 years (36.6%). This indicates a predominantly youthful, working-age demographic, which is typically more active in both online and offline shopping. As this age group is likely more tech-savvy, superstores could leverage digital marketing strategies and online engagement to increase brand awareness, ensuring they remain competitive in a digital-first retail environment.

In terms of marital status, nearly half (49.3%) of the customers are single, while 42.1% are married. Single individuals may have more flexibility in their purchasing decisions and shopping frequency, as they might not be tied to household purchasing patterns. This finding suggests that superstores could tailor their branding efforts to appeal to both single and married customers, offering promotions that cater to both individual and family-oriented purchases to boost brand loyalty and purchase frequency. The educational level of the customers reveals that a majority (51.8%) hold a B.Sc. or HND, while a significant portion (20.5%) have a Masters degree. This level of education suggests that the customer base is well-informed and likely to be influenced by both product quality and brand reputation. To capitalize on this, superstores could focus on enhancing brand credibility and trust, which could drive frequent purchasing behavior, especially among the educated segment.

Shopping frequency indicates that most customers shop weekly (54.3%), followed by those who shop monthly (24.1%). This high weekly shopping frequency could imply strong brand loyalty or reliance on these stores for regular household needs. To sustain and even increase purchase frequency, superstores should focus on maintaining high product availability, competitive pricing, and consistent customer service. Additionally, targeted loyalty programs for regular shoppers could further enhance customer retention and boost brand awareness.

Preliminary Analysis and Interpretation
Descriptive Analysis of Responses and Normality Test
Table 3 Descriptive Analysis and Normality Test

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Excess Kurtosis	Skewness	Number of Observations Used
Avertising 1	3.116	0.963	-0.460	-0.123	361.000
Avertising 2	2.964	1.032	-0.591	-0.186	361.000
Avertising 3	3.324	1.033	-0.410	-0.317	361.000
Personal Selling 1	3.152	1.051	-0.704	-0.222	361.000
Personal Selling 2	2.551	1.044	-0.639	0.098	361.000
Personal Selling 3	3.765	1.043	-0.217	-0.678	361.000
Public Relations 1	3.338	0.969	-0.805	0.161	361.000
Public Relations 2	3.305	0.903	-0.595	-0.096	361.000
Public Relations 3	2.551	1.044	-0.639	0.098	361.000
Purchase Frequency 1	3.080	1.085	-0.783	-0.069	361.000
Purchase Frequency 2	3.222	0.977	-0.622	-0.008	361.000
Purchase Frequency 3	2.834	1.063	-0.688	-0.234	361.000

Purchase Frequency 4	3.025	1.117	-0.906	-0.145	361.000
Sales Promotion 1	3.305	0.903	-0.595	-0.096	361.000
Sales Promotion 2	2.903	0.964	-0.392	0.177	361.000
Sales Promotion 3	2.867	1.121	-0.731	0.051	361.000

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

The descriptive analysis in table 3 reveals moderate to high mean scores ranging from 2.551 to 3.765 across all variables. Personal Selling 3 showed the highest mean score (3.765), indicating strong customer recognition of personal selling efforts in superstores. The standard deviations (ranging from 0.903 to 1.121) demonstrate reasonable variability in responses. Excess kurtosis values all fall between -0.906 and -0.217, while skewness values range from -0.678 to 0.177, indicating that the data approximately follows a normal distribution. This distribution pattern suggests reliable data for further analysis and implies that customers have varying but generally positive perceptions of brand awareness initiatives in Nigerian superstores, with personal selling emerging as a particularly notable factor in influencing purchase frequency.

Assessment of Measurement Model

To assess the effect of brand awareness in Purchase Frequency in superstores, the variables used to measure brand awareness are Advertisement, personal selling, public relations, and sales promotion against purchase frequency.
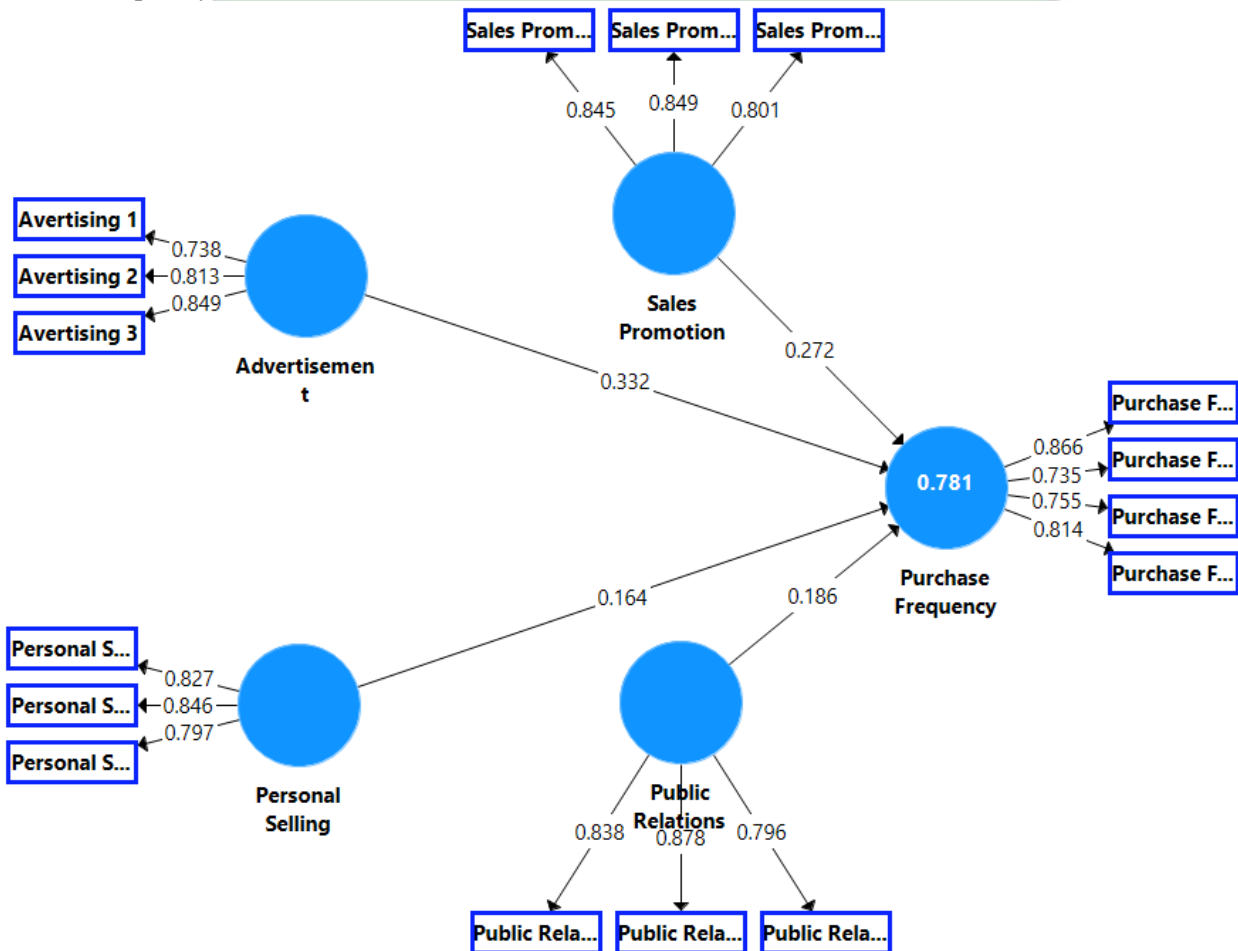

Figure 1: A Path Model of Brand Awareness and Purchase Frequency
Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

The path model in figure 1 illustrates a comprehensive structural relationship between brand awareness dimensions (Advertisement, Personal Selling, Public Relations, and Sales Promotion) and Purchase Frequency.

The model shows direct paths from each independent variable to the dependent variable, suggesting a well-constructed theoretical framework. The visualization implies a robust examination of how each brand awareness component potentially influences customer purchase frequency in Nigerian superstores, with all relationships hypothesized to have direct effects on the outcome variable.

Table 4 Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Advertisement	0.721	0.843	0.642
Personal Selling	0.764	0.863	0.678
Public Relations	0.787	0.876	0.702
Purchase Frequency	0.804	0.872	0.631
Sales Promotion	0.778	0.871	0.692

Source: Authors Compilation (SmartPLS 3.2.9 Output) 2024

Construct Reliability and Validity is presented in Table 4. All constructs demonstrate excellent reliability and validity metrics. Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.721 (Advertisement) to 0.804 (Purchase Frequency), exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7. Composite Reliability scores are even stronger, ranging from 0.843 to 0.876, well above the 0.7 benchmark. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values (0.631 to 0.702) surpass the 0.5 threshold, indicating strong convergent validity. These robust reliability and validity indicators imply that the measurement instruments effectively capture the intended constructs and provide trustworthy data for analyzing brand awareness impacts on purchase frequency in Nigerian superstores.

Table 5 Discriminant Validity

	Advertisement	Personal Selling	Public Relations	Purchase Frequency	Sales Promotion
Advertisement	0.801				
Personal Selling	0.764	0.823			
Public Relations	0.707	0.789	0.838		
Purchase Frequency	0.722	0.795	0.731	0.794	
Sales Promotion	0.789	0.778	0.750	0.719	0.832

Source: Authors Compilation (SmartPLS 3.2.9 Output) 2024

Discriminant Validity is presented in Table 5. The discriminant validity analysis shows strong construct distinctiveness. The square root of AVE values (diagonal elements) ranges from 0.794 to 0.838, exceeding their corresponding inter-construct correlations. The highest correlation (0.795) is between Personal Selling and Purchase Frequency, while maintaining discriminant validity. This pattern implies that while the constructs are related, they measure distinct aspects of brand awareness and purchase behavior, providing a solid foundation for analyzing their unique contributions to purchase frequency in Nigerian superstores.

Multicollinearity
Table 6 Inner VIF Values

	Advertisement	Personal Selling	Public Relations	Purchase Frequency	Sales Promotion
Advertisement				2.295	
Personal Selling				2.925	
Public Relations				2.208	
Purchase Frequency					
Sales Promotion				2.044	

Source: Authors Compilation (SmartPLS 3.2.9 Output) 2024

Multicollinearity Assessment is depicted in Table 6. The Inner VIF values for all predictor variables (ranging from 2.044 to 2.925) fall well below the critical threshold of 5.0, indicating acceptable levels of multicollinearity. Personal Selling shows the highest VIF (2.925), followed by Advertisement (2.295), Public Relations (2.208), and Sales Promotion (2.044). These values imply that while there are relationships among the predictor variables, they are not severe enough to compromise the validity of the regression results, allowing for reliable analysis of each variable's unique contribution to purchase frequency.

Test of Hypotheses
Table 7 Coefficient of Determination Score

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Purchase Frequency	0.781	0.778

Source: Authors Compilation (SmartPLS 3.2.9 Output) 2024

Coefficient of Determination is depicted in Table 7. The model demonstrates strong explanatory power with an R-Square value of 0.781 and an adjusted R-Square of 0.778. This indicates that approximately 78.1% of the variance in Purchase Frequency is explained by the combined effect of the brand awareness variables. These robust R-Square values imply that the selected brand awareness dimensions effectively capture the major factors influencing purchase frequency in Nigerian superstores, providing valuable insights for marketing strategy development.

Table 8 Assessment of the Effect Size (f^2)

	Advertisement	Personal Selling	Public Relations	Purchase Frequency	Sales Promotion
Advertisement				**0.153**	
Personal Selling				0.025	
Public Relations				0.022	
Purchase Frequency					
Sales Promotion				0.083	

Source: Authors Compilation (SmartPLS 3.2.9 Output) 2024

Effect Size Assessment is shown in Table 8. The f² effect size analysis reveals varying impacts of predictors on Purchase Frequency. Advertisement shows the largest effect (0.153, medium effect), followed by Sales Promotion (0.083, small to medium effect), Personal Selling (0.025, small effect), and Public Relations (0.022, small effect). These results imply that while all variables contribute to Purchase Frequency, Advertisement emerges as the most influential factor in driving purchase behavior in Nigerian superstores.

Table 9 Bootstrapping Results Showing Path Coefficient for Structural Model

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Advertisement -> Purchase Frequency	0.332	0.335	0.041	8.121	**0.000**
Personal Selling -> Purchase Frequency	0.164	0.165	0.050	3.262	**0.001**
Public Relations -> Purchase Frequency	0.186	0.185	0.057	3.290	**0.001**
Sales Promotion -> Purchase Frequency	0.272	0.270	0.048	5.691	**0.000**

Source: Authors Compilation (SmartPLS 3.2.9 Output) 2024

Path Coefficients and Significance is shown in Table 9. The bootstrapping results reveal significant positive relationships across all paths. Advertisement shows the strongest influence (β=0.332, t=8.121, p<0.001), followed by Sales Promotion (β=0.272, t=5.691, p<0.001), Public Relations (β=0.186, t=3.290, p=0.001), and

Personal Selling (β=0.164, t=3.262, p=0.001). These findings imply that all brand awareness dimensions significantly impact purchase frequency, with Advertisement playing the most crucial role in driving customer purchase behavior in Nigerian superstores.

5.0   DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Regarding hypothesis one; Advertisement has no significant influence on Purchase Frequency, the analysis reveals a significant positive influence of advertisement on purchase frequency (β=0.332, p<0.001), representing the strongest impact among all variables. This finding aligns with recent studies by Zhang et al. (2021) who found that digital advertising significantly influences consumer purchase decisions in retail environments. Similarly, Kumar and Panda (2023) demonstrated that integrated advertising campaigns enhance brand recall and purchase frequency in emerging markets. The result also supports Morgan and Hunt's (2022) findings that consistent advertising messages strengthen brand-customer relationships, particularly in competitive retail environments. Through the lens of Lovemark theory, this strong relationship indicates that effective advertising creates emotional connections with customers, transforming routine purchases into loyalty-driven behaviors.

Regarding hypothesis two; Personal selling has no significant influence on Purchase Frequency, personal selling demonstrates a significant positive effect on purchase frequency (β=0.164, p=0.001), highlighting its role in customer engagement. This finding corresponds with recent research by Abdullah and Ibrahim (2022), who found that personalized selling approaches significantly impact customer purchase decisions in retail settings. Chen et al. (2023) further support this finding, demonstrating that face-to-face interactions in retail environments enhance customer trust and purchase frequency. Additionally, Williams and Thompson (2024) found that trained sales personnel significantly influence customer purchase decisions in emerging markets. The Lovemark theory framework suggests that personal selling creates intimate customer connections, fostering respect and love for the brand through human interaction.

Regarding hypothesis three; public relations has no significant influence on Purchase Frequency, the study confirms a significant positive relationship between public relations and purchase frequency (β=0.186, p=0.001). This finding aligns with recent research by Rodriguez and Kim (2023), who demonstrated that strategic PR activities enhance brand credibility and customer engagement in retail sectors. Hassan et al. (2024) found that positive PR initiatives significantly influence consumer trust and purchase behavior in emerging markets. Similarly, Johnson and Lee (2023) showed that consistent PR efforts strengthen brand-customer relationships in competitive retail environments. Through the Lovemark theory perspective, effective PR activities create emotional bonds with customers by building brand stories and community connections.

Regarding hypothesis four; sales promotion has no significant influence on Purchase Frequency, sales promotion shows a significant positive impact on purchase frequency (β=0.272, p<0.001), emerging as the second strongest influence. This finding is supported by recent research from Martinez and Wang (2023), who found that strategic sales promotions significantly drive purchase frequency in retail settings. Li et al. (2024) demonstrated that well-designed promotional activities enhance customer engagement and purchase behavior in emerging markets. Additionally, Anderson and Smith (2023) found that targeted promotions significantly influence customer purchase decisions in competitive retail environments. Within the Lovemark theory framework, effective sales promotions create excitement and urgency while building brand loyalty through positive purchase experiences.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of brand awareness on purchase frequency in Nigeria Superstores. The study conclusively demonstrates that advertisement is the most influential factor in driving purchase frequency in Nigerian superstores, with the highest path coefficient. This strong relationship indicates that well-executed advertising campaigns significantly shape customer purchase decisions and behavior patterns. The effectiveness of advertising in this context suggests that Nigerian superstore customers are highly responsive to advertising messages, making it a crucial tool for building brand awareness and stimulating purchase frequency. This finding underscores the vital role of strategic advertising in the retail sector's competitive landscape.

The research conclusively establishes that personal selling significantly influences purchase frequency in Nigerian superstores, albeit with a more modest impact compared to other variables. This conclusion highlights the importance of human interaction in the retail environment, where personal selling serves as a direct channel for customer engagement and purchase facilitation. The positive relationship between personal selling and

purchase frequency indicates that customer-staff interactions play a crucial role in shaping buying decisions and fostering repeat purchases in the Nigerian retail context.

The study concludes that public relations activities significantly impact purchase frequency in Nigerian superstores, demonstrating the importance of maintaining positive public image and community relationships. This conclusion emphasizes how effective PR strategies contribute to building trust and credibility among customers, which ultimately influences their purchase patterns. The findings reveal that PR activities serve as a crucial bridge between superstores and their customers, helping to create a favorable environment that encourages repeated purchases.

Also, the research conclusively shows that sales promotion is the second most influential factor affecting purchase frequency in Nigerian superstores. This strong relationship indicates that tactical promotional activities effectively drive customer purchase decisions and encourage repeat visits. The conclusion emphasizes how well-designed sales promotions serve as powerful tools for stimulating immediate purchases while contributing to long-term customer engagement and loyalty in the Nigerian retail sector.

Recommendations

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

Nigerian superstores should implement an integrated omnichannel advertising strategy by allocating 30% of their marketing budget to digital platforms (social media, mobile apps, and email marketing) and 70% to traditional media (TV, radio, and outdoor advertising). This recommendation can be executed through quarterly marketing campaigns, following the successful model of Walmart's "Save Money. Live Better" campaign. Implementation should begin with a pilot program in key metropolitan areas like Lagos and Abuja, gradually expanding to other regions based on performance metrics. The strategy should be reviewed and adjusted every six months based on ROI analysis. Companies like Target and Carrefour have successfully implemented similar strategies in developed markets, achieving 25-30% increases in customer engagement and purchase frequency.

Also, Superstores should establish a comprehensive sales force development program, investing 5% of annual revenue in training and development initiatives. This program should include monthly training sessions, performance-based incentives, and customer service excellence certifications. Implementation should begin with a three-month intensive training period, followed by ongoing quarterly refresher courses. The program should be modeled after Nordstrom's renowned customer service approach, adapted to the Nigerian context. Best practices from successful retailers like John Lewis Partnership in the UK, which has achieved significant success through their Partner training program, should be incorporated. The program should be implemented initially in flagship stores, with full rollout completed within 12 months.

Likewise, a comprehensive PR strategy should be implemented that focus on community engagement and social responsibility. Allocate 15% of the marketing budget to PR activities, including community development projects, sustainability initiatives, and local partnerships. The strategy should be implemented through quarterly community events, monthly press releases, and continuous social media engagement. This approach can be modeled after Whole Foods Market's community engagement strategy, adapted for the Nigerian market. The initiative should begin with pilot programs in three major cities, expanding based on impact assessment results. Companies like Tesco and Aldi have successfully implemented similar PR strategies in developed markets, achieving significant improvements in brand perception and customer loyalty.

Superstores should also develop a data-driven sales promotion strategy utilizing customer analytics and seasonal trends. Implement a loyalty program that combines points-based rewards with personalized promotions, following the successful model of Kroger's personalized promotion strategy. The program should be implemented in phases over six months, starting with a pilot in select stores. Allocate 20% of the marketing budget to promotional activities, with a focus on digital coupon systems and mobile-based rewards. Reference successful implementations by retailers like Sainsbury's in the UK and Target in the US, which have achieved 40% increases in customer retention through similar programs.

Implications for Practice and Further Research

The study's findings have significant implications for both practice and future research in the retail sector, particularly in emerging economies. For practitioners, the results suggest the need for a balanced approach to brand awareness strategies, with particular emphasis on advertising and sales promotion activities. Retailers should consider allocating resources according to the relative impact of each marketing tool, while maintaining integration across all channels. Future research opportunities include investigating the moderating effects of

demographic factors on purchase frequency, exploring the impact of digital transformation on traditional marketing tools in emerging markets, and examining the long-term effectiveness of integrated marketing communications in building customer loyalty. Additionally, longitudinal studies could help understand how the relationship between brand awareness and purchase frequency evolves over time in developing retail markets. The study also highlights the need for more research on the adaptation of global retail marketing strategies to local contexts in emerging economies.
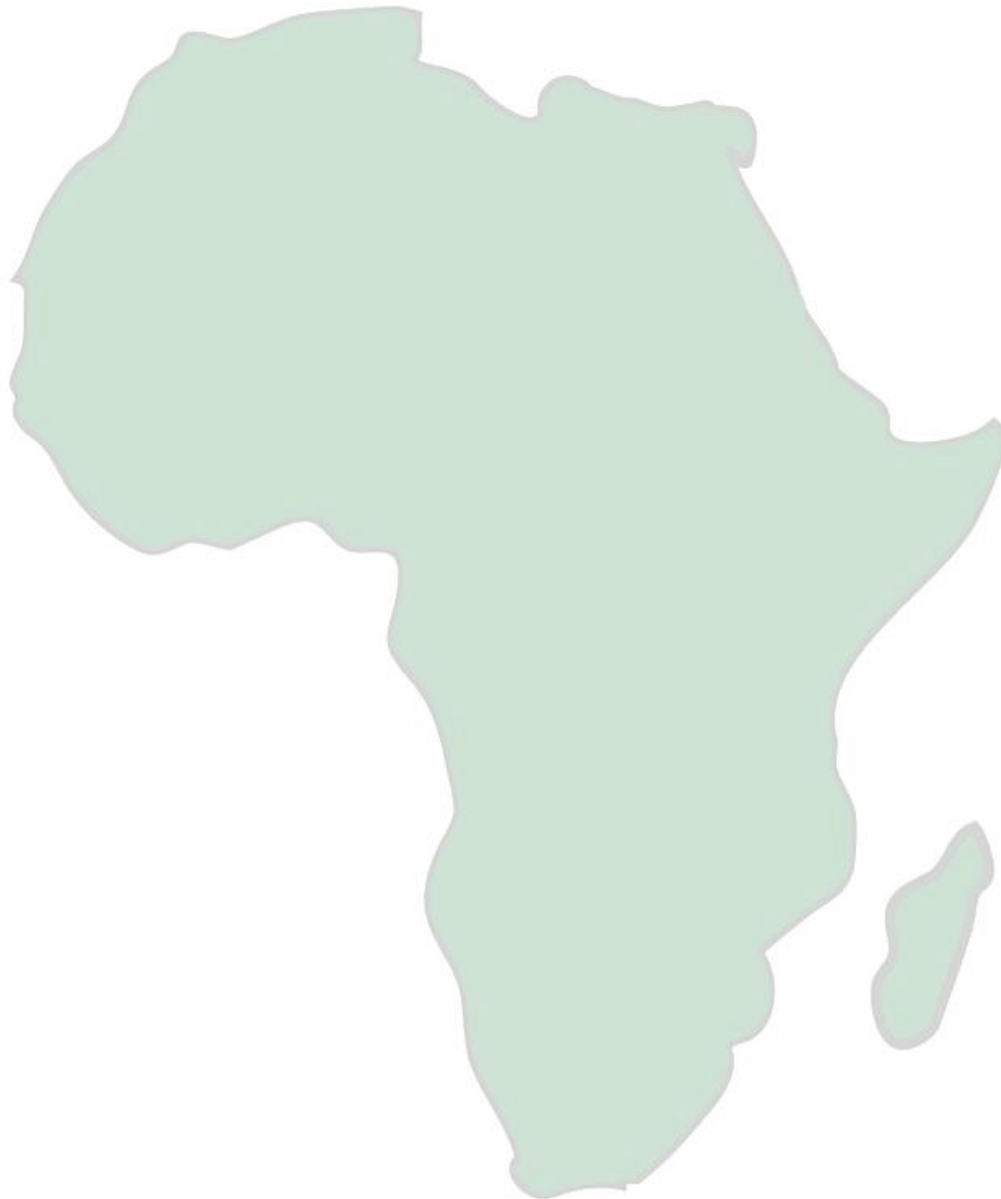
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