

**Research Paper**

**An Empirical Determination of Customers' Perception of the Advertising Slogan –“ New” or “New improved” As Used by Low Risk Brand Marketers.**

**Abstract**

Persuasion and information are some of the overriding reasons why marketers communicate and advertising is one of the communication tools that marketers use to attain these objectives. In advertising, marketers employ certain product/packaging stimuli such as colour, copy claims etc to persuade customer perception in order to garner positive sales response. This is in agreement with extant literature which suggests that consumers actively process product stimulus/message in their day-to-day buying activities. Hence, marketers must adopt devices capable of stimulating optimal perceptual performance.

The copy claim- “new” or “new improved” has enjoyed generous usage by low risk product marketers in advertising this range of products. The prevalence of this slogan has made it necessary to understand what it stands for, the purpose it is intended to achieve and buyers' perception and use of the slogan. Thus, this study sought to ascertain whether consumers identify with the advertiser's objective and perceive the slogan as really communicating product revision/improvement based on their collective experience.

The study was purely descriptive. 363 respondents were conveniently selected from mainland area of Lagos state Nigeria, and were administered with copies of closed-ended structured questionnaire. This unit of analysis is very much active in the low risk market dominated by such products like dental creams, toilet soaps, detergents, etc. Using SPSS (version 19) one sample t-test inferential statistics was used to analyze the generated data.

Results show that majority of consumers interpret the slogan “new” or “new improved” to mean either a reformulated or redesigned product in the same product class. Though, consumers agree that products with this slogan are products which they have seen in the past, yet, consumers find this slogan believable, arousing, recallable and convincing. Thus, this slogan influences consumers when making product or brand choice.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

“New” or “New Improved” represents mundane advertising slogan usually encountered on the packaging of well established low risk brands in such product categories as detergents, dental creams, toilet soaps and breakfast cereals. These advertising slogans are widely used by marketers.

To a marketing student or an ordinary observer, the need arises as to what the slogan stands for and the purpose the slogan is intended to achieve. Hence, there is the need to empirically investigate buyers' perception of this slogan.

Kotler and Armstrong [1] in their account of new product dilemma confronting marketers, note that competition has made it mandatory for marketers to develop new products even when the risk of new product failure is high. Though, Hopkins and Bailey [2] found new product failure rate of consumer goods to be 40 percent, industrial goods 20 percent and services 18 percent, Booz, Allen and Hamilton [3] report that in a study of 700 consumer and Industrial firms, overall success rate for new products is put at 65 percent.

Literature identifies the existence of four brand categories of new products: (i) Product replacement, (ii) Addition to existing lines (iii) New product lines, and (iv) new-to-the-world products [3]. Product replacement is said to account for forty-five percent (45%) of new product launches and covers revision and improvements to an existing products. Existing products when subjected to reformulation or redesigned seem to cost less to produce. Addition to existing lines is said to account for about twenty-five percent (25%) of new product launches and takes the form of new products that add to a company's existing product lines. This tends to facilitate a greater product depth. New product lines is said to account for around twenty percent (20%) of new product launches, and represent a move to a new market. This strategy seeks to broaden a seller's product mix. New-to-the-world is said to account for less than ten percent (10%) of new product launches and create entirely new markets. For instance, video recorder, camcorder and internet have created new markets because of highly valued customer benefits they tend to provide.

Clearly, the degree of risk and reward varies across the new product categories enumerated above. A further discuss of these categories of new products readily suggests differences in objectives. Whilst product replacement seeks to achieve product reformulation and/or redesign through revision and improvement of existing product for the purpose of keeping the product alive by increasing the shelf -life of same, addition to existing line and new product lines strategies seek to achieve greater product depth and widens a seller's product mix respectively. However, new-to-the-world strategy is to create an entirely new market.

Application of the slogan can be hypothetically inferred to be employed by the seller as a strategy to achieve product revision and improvement of existing product. The onus is on the study to ascertain whether the consumers identify with the seller's objective and perceive the slogan really communicating product revision/ improvement based on their collective experience.

It is also suggested that sellers tend to employ this slogan because consumers usually look for something new or how they can put existing product into new uses.

## 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The challenges which this study proposes to unravel include:

1. Level of Customers' awareness of the advertising slogan- 'new' or 'new improved'.
2. Customers' interpretation or meaning of this ad slogan.

3. The credibility attached to this slogan as a guide in making product choice.
4. Whether this ad slogan do arouse the interest of the consumer in making purchase decision.
5. Whether this ad slogan is convincing to customers when making purchase decisions.
6. Whether consumers do recall this ad slogan when making product decisions.
7. Whether consumers do indeed employ this ad slogan when making a brand choice.

## 1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

1. To determine consumers awareness of the ad slogan 'new' or 'new improved' popularly used in advertising low risk brands
2. To determine the customers' meaning of this slogan.
3. To examine whether consumers believe in this particular slogan.
4. To determine whether this ad slogan do arouse the interest of consumers.
5. To establish whether this ad slogan is convincing to consumers.
6. To determine whether consumers are able to recall this ad slogan.
7. To investigate whether the slogan- "new" or "new improved", is put to use in making brand/product decision.

## 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. Are consumers aware of the slogan 'new' or 'new improved' used in advertising low risk brands?
2. Do consumers really attach any meaning to the advertising slogan-"new" or "new improved"?
3. Do consumers believe this ad slogan?
4. Is the interest of the consumer aroused by this slogan to make favourable brand decision?
5. Are consumers convinced by this slogan to make product/brand choice?
6. Do consumers put the slogan: new or new improved to use in developing purchase intentions?
7. Do consumers actually believe the advertising slogan as a guide in making product decision?

## 1.4 BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing organizations communicate for multifarious reasons. Advertising is a major communication tool employed to convey information, develop attitude and induce action [4]. Kotler and Armstrong [5] defines advertising objective as a specific communication task to be achieved with a specific target audience during a specific period of time. These advertising objectives include communication and sales objectives.

While Naik and Raman [6] note that the purpose of advertising is to increase the retention rate of customers, Rossiter and Percy [7] recognize four possible objectives of marketing communications to include category need, brand awareness, brand attitude and brand purchase intention.

Additionally, advertising objectives identified by Kotler and Armstrong [5] include, informative, persuasive and reminder advertising. Advertising that aims to inform tells the market about a new product, suggests new uses for a product, informs the market of a price change, explains

how a product works, describes available services, corrects false impressions, reduces consumers' fear and builds a company's image. When persuasion is the objective, advertising builds brand preference, encourages switching to the company's brand, changes customers' perception of product attributes and influences customers to receive sales calls. When reminder is the overriding objective, advertising reminds consumers that the product may be needed in the near future, where to buy the product, keeping the memory of the product in the consumers' mind during off seasons and maintaining a top-of mind awareness

In order for communication objectives to be realized, marketers must ensure that the attention of the customer is captured. Unfortunately, competitive activities breed information overload and clutter which discount customers' attention and thus, "the power of marketing is eroding . . . from lack of attention"[8]. Attention has been referred to as the scarcest resource in today's business [9, 10]. As a result, Pieters and Wedel [11] caution that effective communication is hindered by failure of a communication medium to both attract and retain the attention of the customer which in turn jeopardizes the long term marketing goals.

Effective communication requires marketing communicators to ensure that their encoding process match with their audiences' decoding process such that the message must be made of words and symbols that the customers are familiar with. This is to avoid distortion and to ensure that the customers perfectly understand the message being communicated [5]. The foregoing is vital for all marketing communications no matter the medium of communication. In agreement with the above Schiffman and Kanuk [12] state that among other factors, the audiences' personal characteristics, involvement with product or product category, the congruency of the message with the medium and the receiver's mood, all affect the decoding and comprehension of persuasive messages.

According to wiki-answers [13], advertising is basically a type of communication which attempts to persuade potential customers to purchase or consume a product or service. It is designed in such a way that it creates and reinforces brand image and brand loyalty.

Thus, advertising plays a very important role in forming consumer behavior. Advertising is usually important for triggering the first time purchase of the product. Then, if the consumer likes it, he will purchase the product again. However, if the advertising and promotion portrays a good image of the product, the repurchase of the product is guaranteed.

Buyers of convenience goods are especially affected by advertising. This is because the products are more or less the same. Advertising plays a vital role in reminding consumers of the brand name. Thus, a strong brand image portrayed through advertising would ensure the repurchase of convenience goods.

But how does advertising work? Literature reveals a consensus in the opinion of experts that there is no single all-embracing theory that explains how all advertising works because it has varied tasks [14, 15]. Though, competing theories have been developed but these theories tend to coalesce into what Jones [16] has termed strong and weak theories of advertising.

The strong theories of advertising are represented by such models as AIDA and DAGMAR. According to AIDA theory, a person passes through the stages of awareness, interest, desire and action. Jobber [15] sees AIDA as a powerful and a conversion theory of advertising as it is

171 seen to be capable of persuading and converting non-buyers to become buyers. In the same  
172 vein, DAGMAR is a popular flow-model of advertising developed by Colley [17] which proposes  
173 that for a business communication to be effective and achieve its aim, it must carry the  
174 prospective customer through the four levels of awareness creation, comprehension, conviction  
175 and action.

176 Other writers whose works fall under such flow models as above (and which Chisnall [18]  
177 termed hierarchical models of advertising) include Starch [19], Rogers [20], and Lavidge and  
178 Steiner [21]. As presented by Chisnall [18], Starch [19] outlined “the behavior of advertising” as  
179 a flow from advertising’s call to attention and information to people about products and services,  
180 through an establishment of preferential link between a need and a brand name such that when  
181 a need arises, the brand will receive a favourable consideration over other competing brands.  
182 This way, advertising leads to purchase action.

183 Also, Rogers [20] in his studies of the process of innovation, believes that an effective  
184 advertising must be able to engender awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption or  
185 rejection. In their own postulation, Lavidge and Steiner [21] believe that people move up a  
186 series of steps driven by the force of advertising. As observed by Chisnall [18] these steps  
187 which include awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction and purchase, are similar to  
188 steps described by Starch [19], Colley [17], Rogers [20] and others.

189 These hierarchy –of – effects models which present step by step persuasion effects have been  
190 criticized by such writers as Haskins [22], Palda [23] and Ehrenberg [24]. Jobber [15] has  
191 summarized the criticisms of these models on two broad grounds. Firstly, for many low risk and  
192 inexpensive products there is little evidence that consumers experience a strong desire before  
193 action as brands in this product category may be bought on trial basis without any strong  
194 conviction that it is better than other competing brands. Second, these models focus more on  
195 conversion of non-buyer to buyer while ignoring what happens after purchase as in reality some  
196 adverts are aimed at buyers who have bought the brand at least once.

197 Making a case for these hierarchal models of advertising, Chisnall [18] argue that even though  
198 these models of advertising which concentrate on the learning process: that people will “take in”  
199 a certain amount of information which will then encourage them to move up the ladder towards  
200 the final step of purchase; has been regarded as inadequate; the paradigm, in general, offers a  
201 useful framework which should not be entirely discarded.

202 Offering an alternative to the hierarchy of effects models, Ehrenberg [24] posit that advertising  
203 can first arouse awareness and interest, nudge some customers towards a doubting first trial  
204 purchase and then provide some reassurance and reinforcement after that first purchase. In  
205 agreement with this line of thought, Jobber [15] argues that ATR model is a major alternative to  
206 the hierarchical model of advertising. This ATR model which Jobber [15] termed weak theory of  
207 advertising represents awareness, trial and reinforcement.

208 However, on the applicability and effectiveness of these groups of advertising models, Jones  
209 [16] and Jobber [15] have identified the role of levels of involvement in determining both how  
210 people make product decisions and when each of these groups of advertising models apply.  
211 Jobber [15] posits that for high involvement decisions such as purchase of expensive products,  
212 the decision-making process involves a consideration of many alternatives coupled with  
213 extensive information search. In this case advertising is likely to follow the hierarchical effects  
214 (strong) theories by creating a strong desire to buy or by convincing the audience to find out  
215 more about the product or service. Thus, the purchase of high risk and expensive products will

require a strong desire and conviction. On the other hand, in low involvement decisions such as in purchasing low cost and low risk products, buyers are less likely to comprehensively consider a broad range of brands before purchase and consequently, the weak theory of advertising applies. Here, advertising is mainly intended to keep consumers doing what they already do by providing reassurance and reinforcement [15]. Advertising slogan can in the light of Jobber's expression be said to have its origin in the supposed weak theories.

Advertising slogan is both a message and a product stimulus put forward by a marketing communicator to influence and engender positive perceptual responses of consumers towards an advertised object/product.

But what is consumer perception? Bordeaux, Boulic & Thalmann [25]; and Baker [26] see the concept of perception as the process whereby stimuli are received and interpreted by the individual and translated into a response. Concurring, Robbins [27] defines perception as a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment. Thus, sensory perception enables humans perceive and process sensory stimuli through their five senses. In like manner, consumer perception relates to the concept of sensory perception to marketing and advertising and helps to explain how individual consumers form opinions about companies and the products/services they offer through their patronages or purchases. Marketers employ consumer perception theory to determine how their customers see them. Consumer perception theory is considered when marketing and advertising strategies are intended to retain current customers and equally attract prospective ones.

Another aspect of consumer perception theory is SELF PERCEPTION. Schiffman and Kanuk [12] posit that in Self perception theory, individuals make inferences or judgments about his/her own behavior. In terms of consumer behavior, Schiffman and Kanuk [12] argue that this theory suggests that attitudes develop as consumers look at and make judgments about their own behavior. Self perception theory thus, looks at how individuals develop an understanding of the motivations behind their own behavior. Self perception by customers relates to values and motivations that drive buying behavior. Researchers posit that consumers' self perception is a driving factor in whether or not they place a priority on socially conscious purchases and consumption practices. Buyers who viewed themselves as socially conscious tend to place more weight on issues such as environmental impact when making buying decisions than buyers who do not hold similar views themselves.

Writing on the influence of learning construct on buyer's perception of product stimulus and its implication for the entire marketing process, Ladipo, Olufayo and Bakare [28] argue that consumers actively process product stimulus/message in their day to day buying activities. Thus, the authors argue that product stimuli are employed to elicit favourable sales response.

In agreement with the above, Sekular and Blake [29] in explaining the importance of perception, posits that perception study enables marketers to design devices that ensure optimal perceptual performance. Arguably, advertisers of low risk products/brands intend the copy claim- 'new' or 'new improved' as a device to enhance the perceptual performance of their brands, yet little empirical evidence exist as to the perception of consumers and the use to which they put this advertising slogan. This creates obvious gap in literature which this study aims to fill.

## 260 1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

261 *H<sub>0</sub> 1: Consumers are not significantly aware of the advertising slogan 'new' or 'new improved.'*

262 *H<sub>0</sub> 2: Consumers do not significantly attach any meaning to the advertising slogan-new or new*  
 263 *improved as used sometimes by branders.*

264 *H<sub>0</sub> 3: Consumers do not significantly believe the advertising slogan-new or new improved as a*  
 265 *guide in making product choice.*

266 *H<sub>0</sub> 4: The ad slogan 'new' or 'new improved' do not significantly arouse the interest of the*  
 267 *consumer in making purchase decision*

268 *H<sub>0</sub> 5: The ad slogan 'new' or 'new improved' do not significantly convince the consumer in*  
 269 *making purchase decision*

270 *H<sub>0</sub> 6: Consumers do not significantly pay attention to the advertising slogan 'new' or 'new*  
 271 *improved' when making purchase decisions.*

272 *H<sub>0</sub> 7: Consumers do not significantly put the advertising slogan-'new' or 'new improved', to use*  
 273 *when making a brand choice.*

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## 275 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS:

276 **2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN:** Descriptive and cross-sectional research design was used as the  
 277 variables investigated are purely descriptive.

278 **2.2 POPULATION OF STUDY:** Respondents for this study were drawn from both male and  
 279 female residents of mainland area of Lagos State of Nigeria. Lagos State is the commercial hub  
 280 of Nigeria and more populated than the island area. Lagos is the former capital city of the  
 281 country and a converging point for all tribes and ethnic groups of Nigeria. Commercial activities  
 282 are mainly concentrated in the state particularly at the mainland part.

283 **2.3 SAMPLE SELECTION AND SIZE:** Sample size of 400 respondents, employing a  
 284 convenience sampling approach was involved in the study. Ten (10) localities were selected  
 285 from Lagos mainland and 40 respondents obtained from each locality to arrive at 400 sample  
 286 respondents.

287 **2.4 INSTRUMENTATION:** A structured multiple choice questionnaire is used as the instrument  
 288 for data collection. The instrument was designed with multiple-choice close-ended questions.  
 289 The choice of this design is dictated by the ability of the instrument to generate better response  
 290 rate than open-ended questionnaire and, it has the property of self administration.

291 **2.5 INSTRUMENT VALIDATION:** To verify the suitability of the instrument for data collection, it  
 292 is originally subjected to validity and reliability test through a pilot study of thirty five  
 293 respondents. This was conducted through the use of Split-half technique and the resulting data  
 294 correlated using Pearson product moment correlation statistical tool resulting in a co-efficient of

0.826. On the strength of this parameter, conclusion was reached about the reliability and validity of the instrument and hence the suitability of the instrument for data collection.

| Table 1: Reliability Statistics of pilot study of thirty-five respondents |                  |            |                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|------------|----------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha                                                          | Part 1           | Value      | .762           |
|                                                                           |                  | N of Items | 4 <sup>a</sup> |
|                                                                           | Part 2           | Value      | .855           |
|                                                                           |                  | N of Items | 3 <sup>b</sup> |
|                                                                           | Total N of Items |            | 7              |
| Correlation Between Forms                                                 |                  |            | .826           |
| Spearman-Brown Coefficient                                                | Equal Length     |            | .905           |
|                                                                           | Unequal Length   |            | .906           |
| Guttman Split-Half Coefficient                                            |                  |            | .892           |

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**2.6 ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTRUMENT:** Having found the instrument suitable for data collection, same were immediately and physically administered on the respondents in their offices, schools and residencies during the late part of April, 2013. High response rate was recorded through this approach.

**2.7 PROCEDURE FOR DATA ANALYSIS:** Relevant data were obtained and analyzed through the agency of SPSS statistical package. 400 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents who completed and returned 363 copies, giving a success rate of about 90.75 percent.

## 3.0 RESULTS

### 3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ANALYSIS

Table 2: RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHY

| Response variable |               | Code | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|---------------|------|-----------|------------|
| Sex               | Male          | 1    | 222       | 61.2       |
|                   | Female        | 2    | 141       | 38.8       |
|                   | Total         |      | 363       | 100.0      |
| Marital Status    | Married       | 1    | 162       | 44.6       |
|                   | Single        | 2    | 201       | 55.4       |
|                   | Total         |      | 363       | 100.0      |
| Age Range         | 18 - 25 years | 1    | 48        | 13.2       |
|                   | 26 - 40 years | 2    | 291       | 80.2       |
|                   | 41 – 55 years | 3    | 24        | 6.6        |
|                   | Total         |      | 363       | 100.0      |

|                      |                                |   |     |       |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|---|-----|-------|
| Education Attainment | School Certificate & below     | 1 | 1   | 0.3   |
|                      | National Diploma (OND)         | 2 | 2   | 0.6   |
|                      | First Degree/ HND              | 3 | 256 | 70.5  |
|                      | Post Graduate Degree           | 4 | 104 | 28.7  |
|                      | Total                          |   | 363 | 100.0 |
| Occupation           | Civil Servant/National Service | 1 | 50  | 13.8  |
|                      | Self-employed                  | 2 | 29  | 8.0   |
|                      | Student                        | 3 | 11  | 3.0   |
|                      | Private/ PLC Company Worker    | 4 | 259 | 71.3  |
|                      | Unemployed                     | 5 | 14  | 3.9   |
|                      | Total                          |   | 363 | 100.0 |
| Annual Income        | N500,000 & below               | 1 | 70  | 19.3  |
|                      | N500,001 – N1,000,000          | 2 | 80  | 22.0  |
|                      | N1,000,001 & above             | 3 | 193 | 53.2  |
|                      | No earnings                    | 4 | 20  | 5.5   |
|                      | Total                          |   | 363 | 100.0 |

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310 As shown in table 2 above, 222 respondents representing 61.2 percent are males while 141  
 311 constituting 38.8 percent are females. Marital status of these respondents reveals that majority  
 312 are single (55.4 percent), while the remaining 44.6 percent are married.

313 The profile of respondents' age shows that 13.2 percent are young adults with age range of 18  
 314 to 25 years. While majority of respondents (80.2 percent) are within the age range of 26 to 40  
 315 years, the rest 6.6 percent of respondents fall within the age bracket of 41 to 55 years.

316 Analysis of the educational attainment of respondents shows that 28.7 percent of them possess  
 317 post graduate educational qualification. 70.5 percent possess first degree or its equivalent while  
 318 those with national diploma and those with secondary school certificate and below make up the  
 319 remaining portion of 0.6 percent and 0.3 percent respectively. It can thus be inferred that the  
 320 literacy level of respondents is reasonably high.

321 In the area of employment and occupation, while a small sum of respondents (3.9 percent) is  
 322 unemployed, majority 71.3 percent of the respondents are employed by private/public  
 323 companies. 13.8 percent of respondents are civil servants and those on national youth service.  
 324 While 3 percent of participants are students, the remaining 13.9 percent are self employed.

325 The analysis of income distribution of respondents reveals that majority (53.2 percent) earn an  
 326 annual income of one million naira and above. 22 percent have their annual income fall within  
 327 the bracket of N500, 001 and N 1,000,000. Also, while 5.5 percent do not earn income as at the  
 328 time of this survey, the remaining 19.3 percent of respondents earn between N500, 000 and  
 329 below per annum.

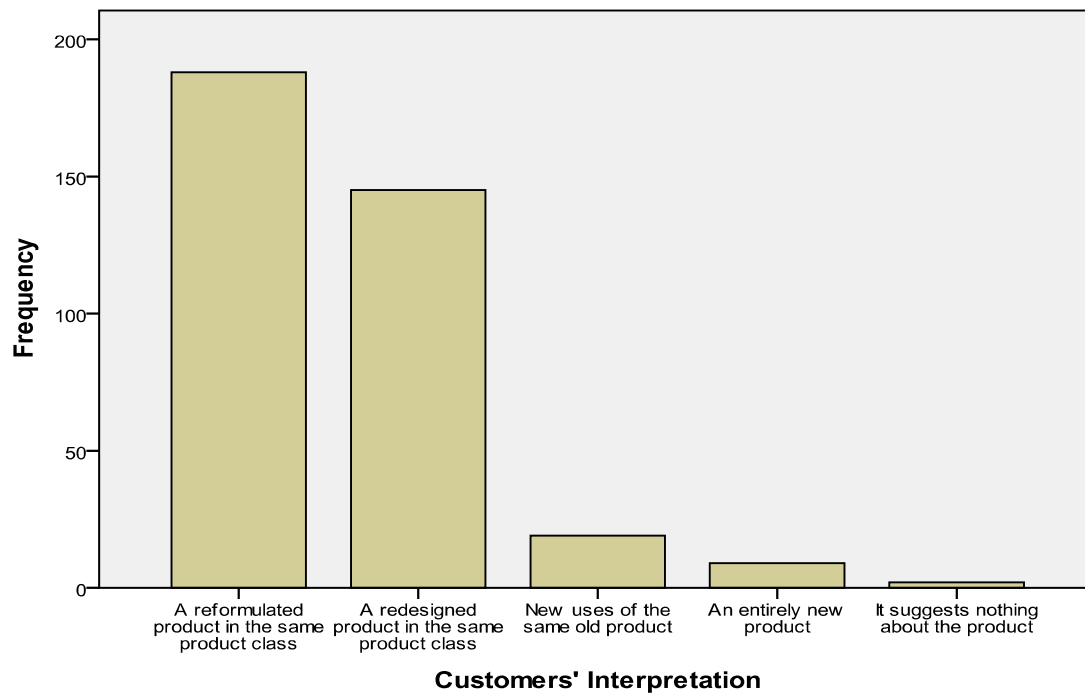
330 Given the spread in the demographic data of these respondents as outlined in table 2, it can  
 331 confidently be inferred then that data generated through these respondents are reliable and  
 332 suitable; and therefore valid for this study.

## 3.2 RESPONDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE AD SLOGAN "NEW" AND "NEW IMPROVED" AS USED BY MARKETERS

| Table 3: Consumers interpretation of the ad slogan "new" or "new improved" |                                                  |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Response Variables                                                         |                                                  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                      | A reformulated product in the same product class | 188       | 51.8    | 51.8          | 51.8               |
|                                                                            | A redesigned product in the same product class   | 145       | 39.9    | 39.9          | 91.7               |
|                                                                            | New uses of the same old product                 | 19        | 5.2     | 5.2           | 97.0               |
|                                                                            | An entirely new product                          | 9         | 2.5     | 2.5           | 99.4               |
|                                                                            | It suggests nothing about the product            | 2         | .6      | .6            | 100.0              |
|                                                                            | Total                                            | 363       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

As captured in both table 3 and figure 1, 51.8 percent of respondents (representing 188 consumers) interpret the ad slogan 'new' and 'new improved' to mean a reformulated product in the same product class. 39.9 percent representing 145 consumers understand the ad slogan to mean a redesigned product in the same product class. A paltry 5.2 percent of respondents take the ad slogan to mean new uses of the same old product. Again, while this ad slogan suggests nothing about the product to 0.6 percent of respondents, 2.5 percent respondents interpret the ad slogan to mean an entirely new product.

**Figure 1: Customers' interpretation of ad slogan "new" or "new improved"**



### 3.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON AWARENESS AND USE OF THE AD SLOGAN 'NEW' AND 'NEW IMPROVED'

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of customers' awareness & use of the ad slogan 'new' and 'new improved'**

| Response Variables                                                                     | Mean   | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------|
| I am aware of the ad slogan "New" or "New Improved"                                    | 4.4986 | 1.03094        |
| I have seen this product somewhere before this slogan                                  | 3.7989 | 1.12028        |
| I believe this slogan                                                                  | 3.5620 | .94219         |
| This slogan arouses my interest in the product                                         | 3.7989 | .99490         |
| in a conducive environment, the slogan will help me make up my mind to buy the product | 3.7163 | 1.04561        |
| When shopping for similar product in the market, i usually remember this slogan        | 3.4904 | 1.11335        |
| This slogan influences me to actually buy the product                                  | 3.5152 | 1.17368        |
|                                                                                        |        |                |

Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics of customers' awareness and use of the ad slogan 'new' or 'new improved'. This table shows the mean and standard deviation of the measurement items in which the minimum expected value is 1 and the maximum expected value is 5. This is

so as the study instrument was constructed with 5 points Likert scale. All the response variables have a mean score above 3 points, and standard deviation range of 0.94219 to 1.17368.

## 3.4 INFERENCE STATISTICS

| Table 5: One-Sample Test                                                               |                |     |                 |                 |                                           |        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------|--------|
|                                                                                        | Test Value = 3 |     |                 |                 |                                           |        |
|                                                                                        | t              | df  | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |        |
|                                                                                        |                |     |                 |                 | Lower                                     | Upper  |
| I am aware of the ad slogan "New" or "New Improved"                                    | 27.696         | 362 | .000            | 1.49862         | 1.3922                                    | 1.6050 |
| I have seen this product somewhere before this slogan                                  | 13.587         | 362 | .000            | .79890          | .6833                                     | .9145  |
| I believe this slogan                                                                  | 11.364         | 362 | .000            | .56198          | .4647                                     | .6592  |
| This slogan arouses my interest in the product                                         | 15.299         | 362 | .000            | .79890          | .6962                                     | .9016  |
| in a conducive environment, the slogan will help me make up my mind to buy the product | 13.051         | 362 | .000            | .71625          | .6083                                     | .8242  |
| When shopping for similar product in the market, I usually remember this slogan        | 8.391          | 362 | .000            | .49036          | .3754                                     | .6053  |
| This slogan influences me to actually buy the product                                  | 8.363          | 362 | .000            | .51515          | .3940                                     | .6363  |

One-sample t test is used to test all the hypotheses. As seen in table 5, all the results are statistically significant, thus,  $H_01$ ;  $H_02$ ;  $H_03$ ,  $H_04$ ,  $H_05$ ,  $H_06$  and  $H_07$  are rejected ( $P < 0.000$ ) and therefore the following can be concluded:

1. Consumers are significantly aware of the advertising slogan 'new' or 'new improved.'
2. Consumers significantly attach some meaning to the advertising slogan "new" or "new improved" as sometimes used by branders.

3. Consumers do significantly believe the advertising slogan-‘new’ or ‘new improved’ as a guide in making product choice.
4. The ad slogan ‘new’ or ‘new improved’ significantly arouses the interest of the consumer in making purchase decision
5. The ad slogan ‘new’ or ‘new improved’ do significantly convince the consumer in making purchase decision
6. Consumers significantly recall the advertising slogan ‘new’ or ‘new improved’ when making purchase decisions
7. Consumers significantly put the advertising slogan- ‘new’ or ‘new improved’ to use when making a brand choice.

## 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.

Several reasons propel marketing organization’s communications. These reasons could range from information dissemination, consumer education and persuasion to consumer’s choice reinforcement. Advertising is one of the communication tools that marketers employ to attain organizations’ communication and marketing objectives.

In advertising, marketers engage certain product/package stimuli such as colour, copy claims etc in order to influence customer perception and elicit favourable sales response. Ladipo, Olufayo and Bakare [28] argue that consumers actively process product stimulus/message in their day-to-day buying activities. Hence Sekular and Blake [29] recognized the importance of perception study if marketers must generate devices capable of engendering optimal perceptual performance.

Booz, Allen and Hamilton [3] identified four categories of new products. These are: product replacement, addition to existing lines, new product lines and new-to-the-world products. Even when consumers usually look for something new or how they can put existing product into new uses, the degree of risk and reward associated with these product categories varies.

The copy claim- “new” or “new improved” has enjoyed generous usage by low risk product marketers in advertising this range of products. The preponderance of this slogan has made it imperative to understand what it stands for, the purpose it is intended to achieve and buyers’ perception and use of this slogan. Thus, the challenge was on this study to ascertain whether consumers identify with the advertiser’s objective and perceive the slogan as really communicating product revision/improvement based on their collective experience.

The study was purely descriptive and data collected analyzed through the instrumentality of relevant statistical tools. As the results of this study reveal majority of consumers interpret the slogan “new” or “new improved” to mean either a reformulated product in the same product class or a redesigned product in the same product class. Again, with a mean score of 3.7989 and standard deviation of 1.12028 consumers agree that products with these copy claims are products which they have seen in the past. Thus, supporting customers’ interpretation that these products are either reformulated or redesigned.

The other aspects of the results of this study which harbor practical implication for adopters and proponents of this copy claim are that consumers significantly believe this slogan; it arouses their interest in making product and brand decisions; consumers significantly recall this advertising slogan at the point of purchase decision and find the slogan both convincing and influential as they put it to use when making a brand choice.

These results are in tandem with the arguments of Jones [16], Ehrenberg [24] and Jobber [15] that in low risk and low cost product category where brand loyalty is rare, as most consumers purchase a repertoire of brands, advertising objective is mainly defensive. Defensive advertising is successful when consumers' existing favourable perceptions are reinforced. As a result, advertising slogans are aimed at retaining existing buyers, and possibly expand the frequency with which buyers purchase the brands.

This study has shown that the advertising slogan "new" or "new improved" frequently encountered on the packaging of prominent low risk brands in such product categories as detergents, dental creams, toilet soaps and breakfast cereals is a successful communication tool which helps marketers position their brands on top of consumers' mind such that recall comes handy at various purchase situations. This way, advertisers help their brands capture large portion of buyers' budget and no doubt defend their market share in a category where consumers are not particularly brand loyal.

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors affirm that no competing interests exist.

## Authors' contributions

This research is a product of collaboration between the two authors. The authors have read and approved the final manuscript

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