



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38035/dijms.v7i1.5576>
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The Effect of Price Discounts and Sales Promotions on the Increase of Medicine Sales Volume at PT MBF Surabaya

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Abstract: This study investigates the effect of price discounts and sales promotions on the sales volume of pharmaceutical products at PT. MBF Surabaya, a distributor operating in a competitive market environment. The research was motivated by fluctuating sales performance and the company's reliance on discount schemes and promotional activities as key marketing strategies. The objective was to analyze the individual and combined influence of discounts and promotions on sales outcomes. A quantitative associative method was employed, using structured questionnaires distributed to 32 respondents consisting of marketing staff and customers, supported by internal sales data. Data were analyzed through multiple linear regression, validity and reliability testing, as well as classical assumption tests. The results revealed that both discounts and sales promotions significantly increase sales volume, with promotions contributing more strongly than discounts. Simultaneous testing showed that 72% of the variance in sales volume was explained by the two variables combined. The findings highlight the importance of integrating financial incentives with creative promotional strategies to sustain competitiveness.

Keyword: Price Discount, Sales Promotion, Sales Volume, Pharmaceutical Marketing, Consumer Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

In the midst of a slowing economy and increasingly competitive business environment, companies are required to continuously innovate their marketing strategies to increase sales volume and maintain their position in the market. This situation is particularly true in the pharmaceutical industry, where competition among firms has intensified alongside the growing public demand for healthcare products. One of the most widely adopted marketing strategies is the use of discounts, which serve as direct incentives to encourage larger or faster purchases. Discounts are commonly understood as price reductions from the normal rate for a limited period (Sutisna, 2003) or as reductions from the regular or previous price (Armstrong & Chen, 2020). Discounts may also be granted in the form of cash reductions for credit buyers who pay earlier than scheduled (Khadafi, 2023), or direct price cuts applied when purchasing in larger

quantities (Kotler & Keller, 2012). According to Kotler and Keller (2012), there are five types of discounts: cash discounts, quantity discounts, functional discounts, seasonal discounts, and trade discounts. The provision of discounts not only stimulates purchases but also reduces consumer spending and creates customer attachment (Sutisna, 2003).

Beyond discounts, sales promotion has also become an essential strategy to increase sales volume. Griffin in Rokhim (2019) defines sales promotion as short-term promotional activities aimed at attracting buyers, while Kotler and Keller (in Muhammad Fuad, 2021) describe it as a collection of tools such as coupons, contests, and gifts. Sales promotions encourage consumers to try products, attract new customers, reward loyal ones, and stimulate repeat purchases (Ningsih, 2018). Forms of promotion include free samples, coupons, refunds, price packages, premiums, frequency programs, contests, and cross-promotions (Fernando, 2022), while their effectiveness can be measured through frequency, quality, and target accuracy (Rokhim, 2019). In addition, the utilization of digital marketing strategies has been proven effective in increasing sales of both services and products, as it allows companies to expand customer interactions while reducing promotional costs (Nuryadi et al., 2024). Complementing these efforts, the marketing communication mix—consisting of advertising, sales promotions, events, public relations, direct marketing, interactive marketing, word-of-mouth, and personal selling—serves as a holistic tool to deliver value and strengthen relationships with consumers (Nabila & Agustin, 2024; Kotler & Armstrong, 2018; Collins et al., 2021).

Brand image also plays a crucial role in consumer purchasing decisions. It is perceived as the set of consumer impressions formed through experiences and information about a brand (Firmansyah, 2019; Winata in Muhammad Fuad (2021). The dimensions of brand image include identity, personality, associations, attitudes, behaviors, benefits, and competencies (Wijaya in Firmansyah, 2019). Its strength is reflected in superiority, consistency, and uniqueness of brand associations (Agisnawati, 2021). In turn, sales volume, defined as the total number of units sold within a specific period (Lupiyoadi, 2013 in Fransiskho et al., 2021), is shaped by internal factors such as product quality, price, marketing strategy, customer service, salesforce, and supplier relationships, as well as external influences like competition, economic conditions, and consumer behavior (Nabila & Agustin, 2024; Zebua, 2018).

Consumer behavior theory further highlights how individuals search for, purchase, use, and evaluate products (Sumarwan, 2017; (Anwar & Mujito, 2021). This process can be explained through rational decision-making, emotional experiences, and the impact of external forces including culture, economy, law, and marketing strategies. Moreover, the Hierarchy of Effects model by Lavidge and Steiner (1961) illustrates the sequential stages consumers undergo—from awareness, knowledge, desire, and preference to conviction and purchase—offering a useful framework to understand how marketing communications and promotions influence consumer decision-making.

Within this theoretical landscape, PT. MBF Surabaya, as a pharmaceutical distributor, faces significant challenges in sustaining sales volume amidst market competition and evolving consumer demands. Serving hospitals, pharmacies, and individuals, the company must design effective strategies to retain customer interest and loyalty. However, sales fluctuations and stagnation in certain periods underline the need to evaluate its discount and promotional programs. Consistent with prior research, Fransiskho et al. (2021) confirmed that discounts and consumer satisfaction significantly increase sales, while Fernanda et al. (2023) emphasized the role of product attributes and promotions in boosting performance. Similarly, Sari and Azis (2024) demonstrated that discounts and seasonal promotions accounted for 60% of pharmacy sales growth, Suryawan et al. (2023) found that bundling promotions effectively improved OTC sales, and Zebua (2018) showed that discounts strengthen customer loyalty in pharmaceuticals.

Although these strategies can enhance short-term sales and long-term brand performance, they also carry risks. Excessive or frequent discounts may create negative perceptions about

product quality, requiring firms to be selective in applying them. In the case of PT. MBF Surabaya, discount schemes include cash reductions, seasonal offers, loyalty-based incentives, and introductory prices, while promotional efforts involve free shipping, bundling, health seminars, and social media campaigns. Understanding the impact of these combined strategies is crucial to design sustainable marketing policies.

Accordingly, this study seeks to answer three questions: (1) How do discounts affect the sales volume of pharmaceutical products at PT. MBF Surabaya? (2) What is the impact of sales promotions on pharmaceutical sales volume? and (3) How do discounts and sales promotions jointly influence sales outcomes? The objectives are therefore to examine the effect of discounts, analyze the role of sales promotions, and evaluate their combined influence on sales performance at PT. MBF Surabaya.

Theoretically, this study contributes to marketing literature by enriching empirical insights into the effectiveness of discounts, promotions, and related constructs such as brand image, consumer behavior, and the hierarchy of effects in shaping purchase decisions. Practically, it provides recommendations for PT. MBF Surabaya to enhance its discount and promotion strategies in order to strengthen competitiveness, increase sales, and sustain growth in the dynamic pharmaceutical industry.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative associative approach aimed at testing the causal relationship between independent and dependent variables using measurable numerical data (Sugiyono, 2017; Creswell, 2014). This approach was chosen to examine the extent to which discounts and sales promotions affect sales volume at PT. MBF Surabaya, allowing the hypotheses to be tested objectively through statistical analysis. Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to respondents using a five-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). The questionnaire was designed to measure respondents' perceptions regarding discount practices, sales promotions, and their impact on sales performance, and was reviewed by experts and tested for validity and reliability before use. Secondary data were collected from internal company documents, including sales reports, promotional records, discount policies, and financial statements, which provided historical and contextual information to support triangulation of findings.

The study involved two independent variables, namely price discount (X_1) and sales promotion (X_2), and one dependent variable, namely sales volume (Y). Price discount referred to reductions in product prices provided through cash discounts, bulk purchase discounts, or seasonal discounts, while sales promotion referred to temporary promotional activities such as bonuses, vouchers, bundling, and gifts. Sales volume was defined as the total number of pharmaceutical products sold by PT. MBF Surabaya within a given period. Operational definitions for each variable were established through measurable indicators such as discount percentage and frequency, type and attractiveness of promotion, and purchasing trends.

The population of this study consisted of PT. MBF Surabaya's customers and marketing staff actively involved in sales and purchasing activities. Sampling was carried out using a purposive sampling technique with two main criteria: respondents must have made at least two purchases within the last six months, and they must have decision-making authority in procurement, such as pharmacists, purchasing managers, or sales supervisors. Based on these criteria, a total of 40 respondents were selected as the research sample.

The main instrument of this research was a structured questionnaire containing closed-ended questions to ensure systematic responses and ease of quantitative analysis. Validity testing was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment correlation, where items were deemed valid if the correlation coefficient exceeded the r -table value. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, and items were considered reliable if the coefficient exceeded 0.60.

Data were processed through three stages, namely checking, coding, and tabulation, before analysis. Inferential statistical analysis using multiple linear regression was then applied to determine both partial and simultaneous effects of discounts and sales promotions on sales volume.

By adopting this method, the study ensured an objective, replicable, and statistically reliable assessment of the influence of discount and promotional strategies on pharmaceutical sales performance at PT. MBF Surabaya.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Overview of the Research Setting

The research was conducted at PT. Mahakam Beta Farma (PT. MBF), located at Jl. Makam Peneleh No. 80, Surabaya, one of the first pharmaceutical companies affiliated with the Mahakam Group headquartered in Jakarta. PT. MBF was established to produce affordable and high-quality pharmaceutical products and began its operations in the 1980s under a licensing agreement with Mundipharma AG, Switzerland, to produce *Betadine* antiseptic. Over the years, the company expanded production capacity, relocated to the Pulo Gadung Industrial Complex, and established representative offices in several major cities, including Surabaya. PT. MBF’s vision is to become a respected and recognized corporate group, with a mission to understand customer needs, offer high-quality products and services, and ensure sustainable success. In Surabaya, PT. MBF operates under the leadership of a Sales Manager, supported by District Managers, Supervisors, and Medical Representatives (MRs), who are responsible for implementing sales and promotional strategies across East Java.

Data Presentation

The data analysis was based on questionnaires distributed to 32 valid respondents who met the sampling criteria. The study focused on three variables: price discount (X_1), sales promotion (X_2), and sales volume (Y). Each variable was measured using multiple Likert-scale items, as shown in the questionnaire structure (Table 1).

Table 1. Questionnaire Structure by Variables

No.	Statement	Variable
1	Discounts encourage me to purchase in larger quantities	X_1 – Price Discount
2	PT. MBF’s discounts are competitive compared to other distributors	X_1 – Price Discount
3	I am satisfied with PT. MBF’s discount policy	X_1 – Price Discount
4	Promotional information from PT. MBF is attractive and easy to understand	X_2 – Sales Promotion
5	I prefer to purchase PT. MBF’s products when discounts are available	X_1 – Price Discount
6	I learn about PT. MBF’s promotions through appropriate media	X_2 – Sales Promotion
7	Promotions influence my purchase decision	X_2 – Sales Promotion
8	PT. MBF’s promotions are useful and relevant	X_2 – Sales Promotion
9	I purchase in larger quantities when promotions or discounts are offered	Y – Sales Volume
10	I buy more products when discounts are available	Y – Sales Volume
11	PT. MBF’s promotional strategies increase my purchase frequency	Y – Sales Volume
12	My purchase volume has increased in the last six months	Y – Sales Volume

Source: Research data

Price Discount (X_1)

Respondents’ evaluations of price discount items showed consistently high scores. For instance, 81.3% agreed or strongly agreed that discounts encouraged bulk purchasing, while 87.5% believed PT. MBF’s discounts were competitive compared to other distributors. Overall, the mean score across discount-related items was 4.11, indicating a strong agreement that discounts positively influence purchasing behavior (Table 2).

Table 2. Mean Scores of Price Discount (X₁)

Item	Mean
Item 1	4.06
Item 2	4.13
Item 3	4.16
Item 5	4.13
Item 10	4.09
Total Mean (X₁)	4.11

Source: Research data

Sales Promotion (X₂)

Results showed that 87.5% of respondents found promotional information attractive and easy to understand, while 84.4% agreed that promotions were delivered through appropriate media. Likewise, 78.2% confirmed that promotions directly influenced purchase decisions. The overall mean score of the sales promotion variable was 4.08, suggesting strong support for the effectiveness of PT. MBF’s promotional strategies (Table 3).

Table 3. Mean Scores of Sales Promotion (X₂)

Item	Mean
Item 4	4.13
Item 6	4.09
Item 7	3.94
Item 8	4.16
Item 9	4.06
Item 11	4.09
Total Mean (X₂)	4.08

Source: Research data

Sales Volume (Y)

The dependent variable was measured with four items reflecting respondents’ perceptions of increased purchasing behavior. Findings revealed that 90.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their purchase volume had increased over the last six months (Table 4). The mean score for sales volume was 4.09, supporting the conclusion that PT. MBF’s marketing strategies had effectively boosted sales.

Table 4. Sales Volume (Y)

Score	Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	0	0.0
2	0	0.0
3	3	9.4
4	23	71.9
5	6	18.8
Total	32	100

Source: Research data

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

1. Validity and Reliability Testing

Validity tests confirmed that all questionnaire items had correlation coefficients above the r-table value of 0.349 with significance levels below 0.05 (Table 5).

Table 5. Validity Test Results

Variable	Item	r-count	r-table	Sig.	Status
Price Discount (X ₁)	X ₁₁	0.854	0.349	<0.001	Valid
	X ₁₂	0.735	0.349	<0.001	Valid
	X ₁₃	0.669	0.349	<0.001	Valid

Variable	Item	r-count	r-table	Sig.	Status
Sales Promotion (X ₂)	X ₁₄	0.753	0.349	<0.001	Valid
	X ₂₁	0.739	0.349	<0.001	Valid
	X ₂₂	0.676	0.349	<0.001	Valid
	X ₂₃	0.729	0.349	<0.001	Valid
	X ₂₄	0.775	0.349	<0.001	Valid
Sales Volume (Y)	Y ₁	0.835	0.349	<0.001	Valid
	Y ₂	0.841	0.349	<0.001	Valid
	Y ₃	0.767	0.349	<0.001	Valid
	Y ₄	0.628	0.349	<0.001	Valid

Source: Research data

Reliability analysis using Cronbach’s Alpha indicated values above 0.70 for all variables, confirming that the instrument was reliable (Table 6).

Table 6. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach’s Alpha	Status
X ₁ (Price Discount)	0.747	Reliable
X ₂ (Sales Promotion)	0.701	Reliable
Y (Sales Volume)	0.774	Reliable

Source: Research data

2. Classical Assumption Tests

Multicollinearity testing showed VIF values of 3.218 for both independent variables, indicating no multicollinearity (Table 7).

Table 7. Multicollinearity Test Results

Variable	VIF	Status
X ₁ (Price Discount)	3.218	No Multicollinearity
X ₂ (Sales Promotion)	3.218	No Multicollinearity

Source: Research data

Normality testing using Shapiro–Wilk produced a significance value of 0.980, confirming normal distribution of residuals. Heteroscedasticity testing using Glejser yielded significance values above 0.05 for all variables, showing no indication of heteroscedasticity (Table 8).

Table 8. Heteroscedasticity Test Results (Glejser)

Variable	Sig.	Status
X ₁ (Price Discount)	0.724	No Heteroscedasticity
X ₂ (Sales Promotion)	0.695	No Heteroscedasticity

Source: Research data

3. Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis produced the following model:

$$\hat{Y} = 1.073 + 0.364X_1 + 0.569X_2$$

The constant value (1.073) indicates the baseline sales volume in the absence of discounts and promotions. The regression coefficients show that a one-unit increase in price discount raises sales volume by 0.364 units, while a one-unit increase in sales promotion raises sales volume by 0.569 units.

4. Simultaneous Testing (F-test)

The F-test yielded a significance value of <0.001 (Table 9), indicating that both independent variables simultaneously have a significant effect on sales volume.

Table 9. ANOVA (F-test)

Model	F	Sig.	Status
Regression	42.351	<0.001	Significant

Source: Research data

5. Partial Testing (t-test)

The t-test results showed that discounts significantly influenced sales volume (Sig. = 0.045 < 0.05), as did sales promotions (Sig. = 0.006 < 0.05) (Table 10).

Table 10. Coefficients (t-test)

Variable	Coefficient (β)	t-count	Sig.	Status
Constant (a)	1.073	–	–	–
X ₁ (Price Discount)	0.364	2.094	0.045	Significant
X ₂ (Sales Promotion)	0.569	2.983	0.006	Significant

Source: Research data

6. Coefficient of Determination (R²)

The R² value was 0.720, meaning that 72% of the variance in sales volume can be explained by the two independent variables, while the remaining 28% is influenced by other factors not included in this study.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the role of price discounts and sales promotions in shaping consumer purchasing behavior and ultimately influencing sales volume at PT. MBF Surabaya. Multiple linear regression analysis confirms that both variables, individually and simultaneously, contribute significantly to increasing sales volume. This section discusses each factor in greater depth, supported by theory and previous empirical studies.

1. The Effect of Price Discounts on Sales Volume

The partial test results indicate that price discounts (X₁) have a positive and significant effect on sales volume (Y), with a significance value of 0.045 (<0.05). The regression coefficient of 0.364 suggests that every one-unit increase in discount strategy is associated with an increase in sales volume of 0.364 units, holding other variables constant.

This finding reinforces classical marketing theories. Kotler and Keller (2012) explain that discounts are one of the most commonly used sales strategies because they provide immediate financial benefits to consumers. By reducing perceived monetary barriers, companies encourage consumers to purchase more in a shorter period. Discounts also create a sense of urgency and exclusivity, stimulating demand in the short term.

The results also align with Sutisna (2003), who emphasized that discounts serve to streamline cash flow and enhance purchase intention by reducing transaction costs for consumers. Similarly, Stanton (1996) classified discounts as either nominal reductions or added-value offers (e.g., buy one get one free), both of which shape consumer perception of value. In PT. MBF’s case, discounts make their pharmaceutical products more competitive compared to other distributors, as confirmed by 87.5% of respondents who considered MBF’s discount policy attractive relative to competitors. This finding is consistent with studies in the modern retail sector, where promotional strategies have been shown to significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions, as evidenced by research at Lotte Mart Marvell City Surabaya (Ariyani et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, the contribution of discounts to sales volume at PT. MBF appears weaker than that of sales promotions. This may be explained by the temporary nature of discounts, which tend to be effective only during specific campaigns (e.g., end-of-year sales or new product launches). This condition highlights the importance of diversifying strategies, not only by offering price reductions but also by integrating digital promotions, which have been proven to more effectively reach a wider consumer base (Nuryadi et al., 2024). Overuse of discounts risks devaluing the brand and weakening customer loyalty in the long run (Sari, 2019). Zebua (2018) also noted that while price reductions may increase short-term sales volume, they do not guarantee sustained consumer loyalty without being accompanied by quality improvements and customer service excellence.

2. The Effect of Sales Promotion on Sales Volume

The results of the partial test demonstrate that sales promotion (X_2) exerts a stronger positive and significant influence on sales volume (Y), with a significance value of 0.006 (<0.05). The regression coefficient of 0.569 indicates that every one-unit improvement in sales promotion is associated with a 0.569-unit increase in sales volume—larger than the effect of discounts.

This result corroborates Griffin's perspective (in Rokhim, 2019), who describes sales promotion as a short-term activity designed to capture consumer attention and accelerate decision-making. For PT. MBF, promotional strategies such as vouchers, bundling, bonus packages, and health seminars not only provide functional benefits but also enhance the emotional connection between the company and its customers.

Research by Utami and Fauziah (2020) further supports this finding, showing that promotional intensity through social media and direct consumer engagement tends to foster stronger purchase impulses compared to price cuts alone. Similarly, Wijaya and Handayani (2020) highlighted the effectiveness of bundling programs in encouraging repeat purchases of over-the-counter (OTC) products. In the case of PT. MBF, promotions were not limited to transactional incentives but also involved communication strategies that positioned the company as responsive to consumer needs, which in turn promoted customer loyalty.

These findings are also consistent with Fernando (2022), who argued that promotional forms such as sampling, frequency programs, and cross-promotions are highly effective in influencing purchase frequency. At PT. MBF, 87.5% of respondents agreed that promotional content was relevant and useful, indicating that the company successfully matched promotional efforts with consumer expectations.

3. Combined Effects of Price Discounts and Sales Promotion

The simultaneous test (F-test) provides a broader view of the interaction between discounts and promotions. Both variables together significantly affect sales volume (Sig. < 0.001), with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.720. This means that 72% of the variation in sales volume can be explained by price discounts and sales promotions, while 28% is influenced by other factors such as product quality, distribution efficiency, market competition, and macroeconomic conditions.

This finding validates the integrated marketing communication (IMC) framework proposed by Kotler and Keller (2012), which stresses that a combination of marketing tools is more effective than relying on a single strategy. Discounts provide direct financial incentives, while promotions enhance experiential value and customer engagement. When combined, these strategies offer consumers both monetary savings and emotional benefits, strengthening their motivation to purchase and encouraging repeat transactions.

The synergy of discounts and promotions is evident in PT. MBF's ability to increase not only immediate purchases but also overall sales volume over the past six months. Respondents confirmed this by reporting increased buying frequency and satisfaction with MBF's

promotional strategies. As Anwar and Mujito (2021) and Ridarta (2023) suggest in their consumer behavior studies, purchasing decisions are influenced by rational and emotional factors as well as external triggers. PT. MBF appears to have successfully tapped into both rational (price discounts) and emotional (promotional engagement) aspects of consumer decision-making.

The result is also in line with the study by Fransiskho et al. (2021), who found that the combination of discounts and promotions could expand market share and strengthen long-term loyalty. Similarly, Nabila and Agustin (2024) emphasized that integrated strategies involving discounts, promotions, and communication mix elements are crucial in sustaining competitive advantage. Thus, PT. MBF's approach of combining these two strategies reflects a well-balanced marketing effort in a competitive pharmaceutical market.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that both price discounts and sales promotions significantly influence sales volume at PT. MBF Surabaya. Based on the regression analysis, discounts were found to have a positive and significant effect, though their impact was relatively smaller compared to sales promotions. Sales promotions, through strategies such as bundling, bonuses, and direct marketing activities, demonstrated a stronger influence on consumer purchasing decisions and contributed more substantially to the growth of sales volume. Moreover, the simultaneous test revealed that the combination of discounts and sales promotions accounted for 72% of the variance in sales volume, confirming their synergistic effect in enhancing consumer interest and driving repeat purchases. These findings directly answer the research objective, which was to determine the extent to which discounts and sales promotions affect sales performance.

Beyond the immediate managerial implications for PT. MBF, this research advances the field of industrial engineering and marketing science by providing empirical evidence of how integrated promotional strategies operate in a competitive pharmaceutical industry. It highlights the importance of balancing financial incentives with creative promotional activities to optimize consumer response. From a theoretical perspective, the findings strengthen existing models of consumer behavior and integrated marketing communications by demonstrating their applicability in real business contexts. Practically, the study recommends that companies in similar industries adopt a balanced approach that combines discounts with targeted promotions, thereby ensuring sustainable sales growth and stronger brand competitiveness in increasingly dynamic markets.

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