

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Investigating Tagline Impact on SME Brand Recognition in Selected Regions in Ghana

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Article History

Received 2025-07-12

Revised 2025-08-12

Accepted 2025-09-06

Published 2025-10-13

Keywords

Brand Recall Taglines

Brand Recognition

Consumer Perceptions

Ghana

Small and Medium-sized

Enterprise

How to cite

Ahiabu S. (2025). Investigating Tagline Impact on SME Brand Recognition in Selected Regions in Ghana. *Adom Social Science and Humanities Journal*, 1(3): 400-422.

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Abstract

This research is aimed at finding out how taglines can steer consumer recognition of brands existing in Ghana's SME environment positively. Branding trends in advanced economies have been the focus of significant scholarly work; the nuanced factors affecting brand awareness within Ghana's SME market have been less researched in relation to tagline impact. To collect data, a quantitative methodology using a structured questionnaire was used, to reach 231 respondents. Likert scale questions were utilized to measure how respondents perceive tagline properties and their effect on the recall of brands. The collected data was summarized using descriptive statistics and analysed further using inferential statistics in order to work out meaningful conclusions. Findings indicated a high positive relationship between memorable taglines and consumer brand awareness, which underlined their relevance. According to the respondents, taglines are important signals for identifying brands at point of sale, and help brand recall all along the buying journey. The results very much endorse the advice that Ghanaian SMEs should consider designing effective taglines as a critical strategic agenda. The paper concludes by considering the implications for both marketing practice and theory of these findings in terms of strategic implications and future research intentions. The paper recommends that a comparative study on local to

English language taglines may also bring into view delicate differences in favour of rural or urban Ghanaian audiences so that branding can be culturally accommodated.

Introduction

In Ghana's rapidly growing economy, Small and Medium-scale Enterprises (SMEs) are the focal point of economic and social growth. Although there is potential in the majority of SMEs, they lack a chance to make their mark in a highly competitive business environment since they possess limited resources to carry out business and raise finances. Successful branding strategies, primarily the application of strong taglines, are most vital in facilitating recall and visibility among consumers (Lawless et al., 2020).

Gilmore et al. (2001) opines that taglines are short, strong declarations of the identity of a company, and through them, organizations can make a lasting mark on the market. This study is concerned with investigating the use of taglines in brand recall in Ghanaian SMEs, i.e., as call-to-recall cues, reminders for brand associations, and overall visibility within the Ghanaian socio-cultural and economic landscape unique to the country.

Extensive research has been carried out on branding strategies in the developed world like Building value-based branding strategies by Doyle, (2001), E-branding strategies of internet companies: Some preliminary insights from the UK by Ibeh, (2005) and Brand strategies in social media by Tsimonis, (2014). In spite of this, there is limited information available regarding the application of taglines by Ghanaian SMEs. Ghana provides a distinct business culture with diversity, consumer history, and a far more vibrant digital economy. Ghanaian SMEs, as compared to large organizations that have vast advertising budgets, apply low-budget brand practices in promoting their brands among the target market. A cleverly written and well-conceived tagline is a strong pole when such companies launch it, allowing them to bypass the noise of a busy market and communicate a concise but compelling brand message asserted by Rohman et al. (2023).

This study employs a mixed-methods research design using quantitative questionnaires to establish brand recall and qualitative interviews to examine consumer attitude to conduct an in-depth examination of the effect of taglines on Ghanaian SME brand awareness. The study will offer practical recommendations for SMEs to enhance branding resulting in long-term business growth in Ghana's expanding economy.

This research is guided by two general objectives, each of which is followed by respective research questions to guide a specific inquiry:

- The objective one was to examine the effect of taglines on brand awareness among SMEs in Ghana. In respect, answers the research question one, what is the effect of taglines on brand awareness among SMEs in Ghana? This question seeks to establish the extent to

which taglines contribute to brand awareness and differentiation in the Ghanaian SME market. From comparisons of levels of consumer response and levels of brand recall, this study will establish the extent to which taglines contribute to allowing SMEs to remember in the market.

- The objective two was to establish how taglines affect consumer memory and brand meanings in the Ghanaian SME market. The second research question was how have taglines affected consumer attitude and brand recall in Ghana's SME sector? This question is more exploratory in that it seeks to uncover the psychological and cultural basis of consumer response to taglines. It seeks to explore whether taglines enhance recall, engender brand loyalty, and resonate in Ghana's socio-cultural milieu to create long-term brand perceptions. These research questions and objectives complementarily endeavor to create the strategic importance of taglines to Ghanaian SMEs, presenting helpful guidelines to companies willing to make brands memorable in a competitive market. Taglines are a significant yet neglected brand tool amid Ghanaian SMEs.

There is an immense gap that this study bridges through an analysis of the function taglines serve towards the remembering of brands amid an economy that is characterized by scarcity and diversity in culture. From consumer recall and attitude measurement practice, the research will gain evidence-based knowledge on Tagline writing by SMEs that can be applied to their target market. Tagline writing that can be applied to the target market of SMEs will not only add to scholarly research on branding in emerging economies but also give managerial insights to Ghanaian SMEs on Tagline writing that can be used for market visibility and long-term growth opportunities. Lastly, this study confirms the core importance of strategic branding in the improvement of the competitiveness and sustainability of SMEs in Ghana's dynamic business landscape.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation

Within the competitive SME market in Ghana, taglines play a crucial role as brand tools, impacting brand recall and consumer consciousness. Adopting the Aaker's (2009) Brand Equity Model which measures the value of a brand and its impact on customer behaviour and loyalty. The first four drivers of brand strength are defined as being brand awareness, associations, perceived quality, and loyalty, the current research explains their impact in consonance with such. Taglines as brief names of a brand impact the first two drivers, making them more memorable and having some impact on consumer perception.

The research also draws on the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) by Kitchen et al. (2014) to describe why and how taglines affect consumers' attitudes. The Elaboration Likelihood Model is used to in research to understand how people process persuasive messages and form attitudes. Given the vast media coverage of Ghana, under which SMEs do not spend much on promotional efforts, an effective tagline serves as an extension cue that helps low-

involvement processors understand brand communication from complex adverts. Schema Theory also explains the manner in which taglines sanction existing mental templates, whereby the consumer in Ghana can associate SMEs directly with trustworthiness, quality, or cultural aptness.

Based on these theories, the study develops actionable recommendations for Ghanaian SMEs to leverage taglines as low-cost branding tools. Findings will be useful to academic research on SME branding in emerging economies and business development strategy in Africa's digital economy.

Nuances of Brand and Tagline

According to Skinner (1994) "A brand is defined as a name, term, design, symbol, or any other differentiating feature that sets one seller's goods or services apart from those of competitors" (p.324). However, a brand is more than a logo or a product; it is the total reputation of an organization, its cultural identity and basic values, overruling traditional marketing (Checco, 2005, 2006; Fritz, 2011). Branding is the powerful tool of strategic messaging that promotes consumer identification, sustains quality, and increases promotional task (Onkvisit & Shaw, 1997, p. 426). Further, it operates as an advocate for the organization which reinforces its legitimacy and characterizes consumer impression (Fredriksson, 2009). It is worthy to note that contemporary brands are not only influencing commercial environments but also sports, politics, and nonprofits environments, reflecting their growing influence on society.

Indeed Editorial (2025) team identifies tagline as short but attractive phrase that communicates a brand's mission and unique selling point effectively. They are central to marketing campaigns intended to guarantee that the brand recall and communicate the brand's image. Furthermore, it is a snapshot of a brand's identity and values, and is more often than not used to make a lasting impression on consumer perception (Hartman, 2024).

Tagline Content and Brand Identification

According to Nagarjuna (2022), a proper slogan is one that is able to communicate concepts and reinforce brand recognition. His research area concentrates on the slogans developed by Indian businesses. The study found that successful slogans are usually no longer than four words and can promise either specific tangible and intangible benefits to the particular product or brand situation. Based on a content analysis of 311 taglines from various product divisions, the present study presented the linguistic characteristics of these taglines. The results demonstrate that the phonological factors are very important to make slogans more effective ($p < 0.05$), in particular, the use of rhymes. According to the study, small and medium-sized companies can enhance brand image and create a trusting consumer image by means of the strategic use of clear and memory-friendly slogans directly indicating product advantages.

Tagline and Brand Recall

Kohli, Thomas, and Suri (2013) assert that taglines play a pivotal role in brand formation, with memorability serving as a critical measure of slogan efficacy. Their experimental study, which evaluated 150 slogans among 220 participants, demonstrated that prolonged slogan longevity and significant marketing investment substantially improve recall rates. Contrary to popular beliefs, the study actually showed that there was little influence on memorability by stylistic features like complexity, jingles and rhyming, with conciseness being a major factor. According to the study, SMEs should focus on producing short but memorable taglines to improve their brand awareness and recall among consumers.

Vieira et al. (2014) carried out some research to determine the effect of taglines within different areas of consumer goods. Vieira et al. (2014) tested recall and recognition for twenty-one brand slogans in investigating fundamental characteristics such as slogan length, product category, and length of time the slogans have been used. Analysing the data, the researchers justified how important tagline is to branding and presented the necessity for strategic coordination with broader organizational branding purposes. Moreover, it was noticed that shorter taglines worked better compared to the longer ones in the recollection process and that compact and memorable taglines could represent an advantage, especially in the case of small and medium-sized companies. Such findings can be useful as actionable suggestions for the marketers in crafting taglines that do much to enhance the enterprising recall of a brand in the minds of the public.

Tagline and Brand Perception

Many scholarly works corroborate the fact that taglines have significant influence on the way consumers look at brands and how they interact with those brands. Farooq-E Azam (2016) Cheema's study examined the effects taglines had on consumer perception & behaviours towards an offered product, Kit-Kat, by studied 378 responses taken from Karachi individuals, and applied statistical methods such as correlational tests & regression. Data was obtained through shopper intercept with the aid of pre-selected enumerators who interfaced directly with the shoppers.

The research discovered two important insights into tagline effectiveness. First, carefully crafted taglines are a major influence on consumer branding attitudes. Second, meaningful connections consumers establish with a brand begin with effective taglines. Even though the research acknowledged that Kit-Kat has become popular because of a variety of reasons, it clearly pinpointed the tagline as an important factor to construct a positive brand image. Apart from contributing to existing brand management theory, this study underscores the relevance of taglines in influence brand identity. Practical results show that businesses must carefully select the important aspects in developing product taglines toward increased success.

Do's research in 2018 investigated the influence of the usage of taglines on how consumers perceive brands image and value. A unique experimental design was followed in order to study these dynamics in the context of emerging markets. Participants were presented with stimuli that engaged all five senses as part of a good between subjects experimental arrangement. The findings showed that tagged products analyzed had significantly higher positive brand evaluations when compared to the untagged versions. In general, consumers considered products with the "handmade locally" label, as better, however, the effect of such perception depended on personal experience and daily routine. This result lends to "consumptionscape," demonstrating how consumption is shaped by individual lifestyles and social contexts in shaping value perceptions and understanding of brands.

Tagline and Customer Influence

Khurram, Qadeer, and Sheeraz (2018) explore the relationship between consumers' brand awareness (including recall, recognition, and action) and their purchasing behaviour. Through two studies with a total sample size of 175 participants, the authors demonstrate a positive correlation between brand awareness, recall, and consumers' propensity to buy. Their study proves that memorable taglines are key to creating brand awareness, which will eventually affect consumer purchase behaviour. It is evident from the study that price sensitivity does not change the relationship between brand recall, recognition and the purchasing behaviour thus confirming equal significance of both recall and recognition. The results strongly indicate that memorable tag lines are critical for small and medium sized enterprises, promoting the importance for brands to pay attention to the contents of slogans in order to maximize visibility and change consumer behaviour.

2018 research by Do's showed local handmade brands were believed to be priced higher and had a higher popularity among consumers when compared to non-local products. According to the research, it pointed out social group dynamics have significant roles to play in non-taglined products especially the implication that taglines can be distinctive brands if there is little social validation.

Drawing on the study by Poku and Ampadu (2014), the extent to which the content of advertising influences customer loyalty in the Ghanaian telecommunications sector is examined and a set of practical lessons for practitioners in this industry are generated. The research looked at 450 consumers' responses in Kumasi Metropolis that used SPSS for descriptive analysis, regression tests and correlation studies. It was clear in their work that standardized messages showed negative correlation with loyalty, which implies that consumer engagement might decrease due to standardized content. It was identified that humour and personality in message content was one of the identified driver of positive outcomes. The study shows that some content aspects of advertising messages are able to influence consumer loyalty in expanding African economies particularly among small and medium-size forms that have difficulty in defining themselves.

The usage of language as a part of taglines is critical in forming brand awareness and affecting consumer decisions. Mantonakis did his research in 2012 to discuss the effects of visual design on the brand recognition focusing on the influence of the distance between the brand names and the essential details in tag-lines. The results show that strategic pauses in language enhances consumer ability to remember a brand and positive inclinations towards it. Consequently, small pauses help to retain better memory and performing fluency leading to enhanced attention towards brands message by consumers.

These findings are particularly important for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Pausing elements in taglines can lead SMEs to increase the effectiveness of their ads, thereby boosting both recognition and customer engagement. This study adds to marketing theory by showing how people's mental processing influences brand perception and bringing valuable guidance for creating effective taglines. The results support the idea that manipulating language pacing cost-effectively supports stronger brand communication.

In his stylistic study, Alvi (2021) looks at how brand taglines in Pakistan use rhetorical strategies to influence customers. The study examines the appeal of persuasive language used in advertising by inspecting thirty taglines from a range of global companies and asking opinions from one hundred fifty Generation Z consumers. According to the findings, effective rhetoric in taglines attracts customers, especially when social and rhetorical techniques are applied. The data suggests that slogans that stand out in people's minds help them retain brand knowledge and attract new consumers. For businesses in Pakistan's small and medium enterprise sector, using memorable slogans is important for attracting customers and growing sales, and this study emphasizes how advertising language plays a role in shaping consumer opinions. According to the research, marketers should spend resources on taglines that are well-written and tailored to their audience, giving importance to the effect of literary styles.

Tagline and Brand Equity

Kohli et al. highlighted, in a landmark study published in 2007, how important taglines are for brand equity and identity, showing empirically how well-executed taglines contribute to brand building and giving concrete suggestions for creating memorable slogans. Analyzing what has been written on taglines in scholarly studies and looking at how businesses use them, the authors determined three main functions required of effective taglines. brand identification, better brand memory, and development of unique brand associations. This common situation in the market, brought to light by their study, is that slogans which lack proper strategic planning often do not accurately represent the brand. For this reason, Kohli et al. proposed an approach to slogan generation that comprises three key parts. According to the model, slogans require being friendly to the audience, in line with the brand's values, and easy to recall. Kohli et al. found that effective slogan use can improve how consumers see a brand and drive greater engagement with it.

This study has considerable importance for small and medium enterprises. The results emphasize that SMEs ought to make tagline development a strategic priority for cost-effective brand building. Marketers who want to increase brand recognition and memory recognition will find the study’s practical recommendations useful, particularly if they work for SMEs operating in crowded markets.

To conclude, studies dedicated to tagline impact and brand awareness provide necessary information about taglines’ place in marketing. Investigations focused on aspects including slogan length, simplicity or ambiguity, style of language, and how well they fit the brand. There is a major need to expand studies on how SME taglines affect customer actions and how demographic and regional factors may be involved. Many studies have examined the reasons for using taglines, but few have analysed how their effectiveness changes according to market segments or situations. This research seeks to establish how distinct tagline elements influence consumer reactions in the Ghanaian small and medium enterprise sector. The results are intended to support marketing teams in their work and help improve brand recognition in a competitive sector.

Methodology

Research Approach and Method

This study adopted the mixed method as by asserted by Ivankova, (2009) to investigate tagline impact on SME brand recognition in Ghana. The study effectively used the convergent parallel mixed method to measure tagline impact statistically which helped to examine the efficacy of taglines in enhancing brand recognition among SMEs in Ghana.

Quantitative Surveys: Likert scale questions were designed to assess respondents' perceptions of different tagline attributes and their influence on brand recall. Questions were distributed to individuals living in the major cities of Ghana (Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, Tamale, Cape Coast, Ho). The surveys included questions on tagline on brand recall, brand awareness, and brand recognition.

Population for the Study and Sampling

The study focused on individuals living in the major cities in Ghana namely; Accra, Tema, Kumasi, Takoradi, Tamale, Cape Coast, Ho. The study established its sample size employing Cohen et al. (2002) 30% assertion of a sample size being a fair representation for the study.

Table 1. Distribution of accessible population and sample size for the study

Population Type	Accessible Population (Frequency)	Sample Size 30% (Frequency)
Accra	230	70
Tema	100	30

Kumasi	130	40
Takoradi	105	32
Tamale	70	21
Cape Coast	60	18
Ho	70	20
Total	765	231

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

A total of 231 participants from diverse cities in Ghana provided their data after filling out a standard questionnaire. With this sampling approach, a range of age, gender, and educational groups were well-represented in the completed sample, according to Etikan et al. (2016).

Data Collection Tools

The study employed online-based questionnaires distributed for ten weeks to allow for broad demographic representation. The extended period of data collection allowed different consumer segments in Ghana to participate, including differences in income, gender, age, and locations. Electronic management allowed for effective coverage of both urban and peri-urban areas at cost-effectiveness for the SME-specific research.

Participants were sampled through a mix of social media websites, email invitations, and SME customer lists in order to balance the sample of participants. The ten-week period served to reduce temporal biases and allow for the examination of differences in consumer participation patterns. Brand recall, tagline recall, and associated perceptions were assessed through both open-ended questions and Likert-scale items.

This design provided quantitative estimates of tagline performance while allowing subsequent qualitative analysis of emerging themes. Having a long collection period provided a sufficiently large sample size for statistical power while capturing dynamic brand consciousness in Ghana's evolving SME landscape. Measures were taken for data cleaning to remove incomplete or inconsistent responses before final analysis.

Data Analysis

Content Validity: The research instruments (survey questionnaires) were reviewed by experts in the fields of marketing, branding, and communication to ensure they adequately covered the research objectives and key concepts.

Reliability: A pilot study was conducted to test the reliability of the survey instruments. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure internal consistency.

Triangulation: Data from the quantitative surveys were triangulated to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

Information gathered from the study participants was examined using both descriptive statistics for overview purposes and inferential statistics for further evaluation. Descriptive statistics is used to summarize, organize, and describe the basic features of a dataset, George, (2018) whereas inferential statistics allows researchers to make generalizations about a population based on data collected from a sample Allua, (2009). This method used a reliable design to study the effect of tagline effectiveness on consumer actions among SMEs in Ghana.

Results and Discussion

The study revealed analysis of taglines in brand name recognition among Ghanaian SMEs, among consumers. The research revealed that well-designed tagline for Ghanaian SMEs in descriptive analysis.

Table 2. Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 to 24 years	37	16.2	16.2	16.2
	25 to 34 years	94	40.5	40.5	56.7
	35 to 44 years	62	27	27	83.7
	45 to 54 years	29	12.6	12.6	96.3
	Above 55 years	9	3.7	3.7	100.0
	Total	231	100.0	100.0	

In Table 2, the age composition of respondents is demonstrated, providing a detail-based overview of the sample’s demographic attributes. The majority of participants, 94 in total, fall within the 25 to 34 years age range and make up 40.5% of the sample. The prominent showing of this group emphasizes the strong interest of younger consumers, mainly those aged from late twenties to early thirties, in the study’s emphasis on SMEs’ taglines in Ghana. A further 62 respondents—27% of the total—are included in the 35 to 54 years group. These results point to the prominence of middle-aged respondents, recommending that brand approaches, particularly with regard to taglines, should consider their expectations.

Younger consumers contribute importantly to the study with 37 respondents from the 18 to 24 years age group (16.2% of the sample) helping show how taglines appeal to this audience.

The 45 to 54 years group is represented by 29 respondents, representing a share of 12.6% in the overall sample. Because older individuals form a reasonable minority, it is conceivable that they either have less attachment to SME brands or prioritize different factors than their younger counterparts. Among the respondents, the group of individuals aged 55 or more totalled 9, equating to 3.7% of the entire cohort. Though the oldest respondents are not numerous, understanding their perspectives is important for interpreting how older people comprehend and remember brand taglines.

From the total sample, almost all participants, or 96.3%, are in the 18 to 54 age range, evidencing a strong preference for younger and middle-aged people. These findings point to the fact that young and middle-aged respondents are the principal contributors to SME engagement, so marketers ought to devise campaigns tailored to their needs. For this topic, 231 participants' feedback provides support for analysis of how age is linked to the impact of taglines on brand awareness and recall among Ghanaian SMEs.

Table 3. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	129	55.9	55.9	55.9
	Female	102	44.1	44.1	100.0
	Total	231	100.0	100	

The number of participants is reported by gender in Table 3. Among the entire group, 129 males constituted 55.9 percent of our participants. Given that males and females participated almost equally, our sample showed a satisfactory balance between genders. However, female participants made up 44.1% of the total, totalling 102 females in the research. Because there were only a few more males than females in the sample, it seems that men had a bigger role in looking at taglines in Ghanaian SMEs, which might explain some of our results on brand awareness and recall. In comparison, females represented 44.1% of all participants, including 102 who contributed to the study. Since the difference between male and female subjects was minimal, it is possible that male participants were more involved in analysing taglines from Ghanaian SMEs, shaping our final results on brand awareness and recall.

By bringing together 231 participants, the study is able to study the entire population under investigation. The gender balance in participant recruitment improves the credibility of our investigation and permits us to analyse the association between taglines and variations in male and female brand awareness and recall. Gender diversity in our approach helps us understand significant differences in brand understanding and memory between men and women. As a result, the findings offer a foundation to develop brand messages that take into account the distinguishing tastes and behaviours of Ghanaian male and female entrepreneurs.

The results above indicate that research on tagline responses must cover the views of both men and women.

Table 4. Educational Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Junior High School	2	0.9	0.9	0.9
	Senior High School	21	9	9	9.9
	Certificate	7	3.6	3.6	13.5
	Diploma	15	6.3	6.3	19.8
	HND	3	0.9	0.9	20.7
	Bachelor's Degree	113	48.7	48.7	69.4
	Master's Degree	63	27	27	96.4
	PhD	7	3.6	3.6	100
	Total	231	100	100	

Tertiary qualifications are largely held by survey respondents, with Bachelor's degrees representing 48.7% of respondents, Master's degrees 27%, and PhDs 3.6%. As a result, it appears that the study's participants are well-educated, and this may affect how they interpret and evaluate brand taglines' influence on SME recognition. Because educated respondents tend to think carefully about brand messaging, their opinions are important for this study. Having a Bachelor's degree is the most widespread education amongst respondents (48.6%), making it the largest education group. These findings may primarily arise from the opinions of respondents with business or marketing educational backgrounds at the undergraduate level, potentially making the results more valuable for SME branding initiatives.

Over a quarter of the participants are master's degree holders, pointing to a meaningful number of respondents with expertise and specialized knowledge. The relevance of opinions from these highly specialized respondents for discussing the role of taglines in brand recognition is very likely. The sample included few respondents who had obtained the highest education of Junior High School (0.9%), Senior High School (9%), or Certificate (3.6%). This situation may reflect reduced participation in SME branding among people with less education, or alternatively, greater response from those who did well in education.

Diploma and HND holders account for only 6.3% and 0.9% respectively in the sample size, respectively. This difference could indicate that individuals holding vocational or technical

diplomas seldom participate in research on branding, and effort should be made to include them in future studies.

Table 5. Impact on Brand Perception

	Yes		No		Not Sure	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
Does the tagline of a brand influence how you perceive the brand?	156	67.6	48	20.7	27	11.7
Does the tagline of a brand increase your likelihood of buying their product or service?	118	50.5	66	28.8	47	20.7
Do you find brand taglines as an effective communication of the brand's message and value proposition?	203	87.4	14	6.3	14	6.3

You will find in Table 5 the results of participants' assessments of how taglines influence brand perception, using three agreement items. At the outset, respondents were presented with the question, 'Does a brand's tagline influence how you think of the brand?' There were 156 responses indicating yes, suggesting that most participants believe taglines shape how they see a brand. By comparison, 20.7% of respondents answered no, and 11.7% said they were unsure, so fewer participants either do not agree with or are not certain that taglines affect brand perception.

The second question, "*Does the tagline of a brand increase your likelihood of buying their product or service?*" was well received enjoying 118 (Yes) responses (50.5%). 66 respondents however said no (28.8%) with 47 (20.7%) undecideds. This indicates a moderate perception of taglines as a determinant of purchasing behaviour though not more to all respondents.

The question was "Do you find Brand taglines an effective way to communicate the brand's message and value proposition?", results show that many believe in the role of Brand's taglines in communicating the message and role of Brand", 30.3% of the respondents said it is not effective However, The large fraction of respondents whose responses were, No that is 6.3% and Not sure 6.3% suggests that some people might use other type brand communication media other than tagline.

From the above, the findings in Table 4 reveal generally that most respondents are of the view that notwithstanding a strong brand perception, taglines has a significant contribution to it as depicted in Table 4. The data indicate that taglines are contributors in the creation of

how people will perceive the brand and ultimately bringing them around to purchase their product or service. The fact that neutral and negative responses were present, however, highlights the need for additional studies on individual differences in perception to better explain the complexities of tagline effectiveness in SMEs in Ghana.

Table 6. Impact on Brand Recall

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
I remember the brand name after seeing or hearing the tagline.	67	28.8	102	44.1	50	21.6	8	3.6	4	1.8
I easily associate taglines with the specific brand.	50	21.6	123	53.2	40	17.1	12	5.4	6	2.7
I recognize brands more easily when their taglines are memorable	46	20	124	53.6	42	18.2	6	2.7	13	5.5
I often remember taglines even if I cannot recall the business name.	31	13.5	154	66.7	35	15.3	11	4.5	0	0

Table 6 indicates responses as to the effect of taglines on brand recall, that recorded participants' impressions of the effectiveness of taglines in remembering products and brands. The quote "I easily remember the brand name after seeing or hearing the tagline" was turned out to be positive with 102 respondents (44.1%) agreeing and 67 (28.8%) strongly agreeing to the same. This indicates that a considerable number of participants consider taglines useful in increasing brand recall. 12 respondents (27%) disagreed, or strongly disagreed meaning that some people might not remember brand names as easily after observing a tagline. This dual reaction reflects degrees of effectiveness of a tagline among the study's participants.

The second one "I easily associate taglines with the specific brand" underlines the importance of the presumed nature of tagline quality. Most respondents, 50 (strongly agreed), 123 (agreed), agree to easily associate taglines to certain brands (21.6%, 53.2% respectively). However, 18 (% of the respondents disagreed) and this means that there are those who find it difficult to establish this connection. This finding reveals variability of effectiveness in which taglines are associated with brand identity among participants.

For the statement, "I recognize brands more easily when their taglines are memorable," the data indicate that 124 respondents (53.6%) agreed and 46 (20%) strongly agreed that memorable tag lines allowed people to identify the brands more easily. On the opposite side of the coin however, only a small percentage of 19 respondents (8.2%), disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, implying that, though taglines as a whole help in brand recognition, the effectiveness of taglines may vary with persons.

Fourth statement "I often remember taglines even if I cannot recall the business name" was supported by positive reaction as 119 respondents (44.9%) agreed while 90 (34.0%) strongly agreed to the four-point Likert scale. This enhances the concept that taglines are critically important in enhancing brand recall. However, 38 respondents (14.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that taglines could be effective in consumer brand memorization with the implication that while many consumers see taglines as effective means of memorizing brands, other consumers may rely on other cues to remember brands.

One of the phrases "I often remember taglines even if I cannot remember the business name" caused a huge response from the participants. of 31 there were 13.5% strongly agreeing and 66.7% agreeing. This is to say that taglines are ethically remembered by most people than business names. But 46 (19.8) respondents disagreed with wide experiences and differences in which way taglines bring brand calling in decision-making.

Generally, from Table 5, the findings show that most respondents feel that taglines positively dictate brand recall. The data indicate that well established and memorable taglines enhance consumers' ability to associate products and services to particular brands. However, such neutral and negative response does show the grounds for further research into individual differences in the perception of the use of taglines to reveal complexities of their effectiveness in SMEs in Ghana.

Table 7. Impact on Brand Awareness

	Strong Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
The tagline of a business significantly influences my awareness of the brand.	37	16.2	140	60.4	48	20.7	4	1.8	2	0.9
Taglines help me identify SME's brands when I want to buy a product or I want a service.	27	11.7	129	55.9	54	23.4	19	8.1	2	0.9
A catchy tagline makes me more aware of a brand's presence in the market.	63	27.3	137	59.1	19	8.2	10	4.5	2	0.9

Table 7 shows responses as to the effect of taglines on brand awareness through levels of agreement on three statements. For the first statement (The tagline of a business significantly influences my awareness of the brand) a strong majority of respondents 140 (60.4%) agreed and 37 (16.2%) strongly agreed, showing that most participants believe taglines play a crucial role in establishing brand awareness. This highlights the need to have well designed taglines to increase on the recognition of brand. On the other hand, only 2 (0.9%) respondents

strongly disagreed this indicating that few participants ignore taglines effect on brand awareness.

The second statement "Taglines help me to recognize SME brands when I need to purchase a product/service-based on taglines" responded positively, with 129 respondents (55.9%) agreeing and 27 (11.7%) strongly agreeing. This implies a high correspondence between taglines and brand identification process in shopping. Some of the respondents however disagreed (8.1%) or strongly disagreed (0.9%); indicating that not all persons use taglines to relate to brand identification and may use other cues.

For the statement: A catchy tagline increases my sense of awareness of a brand in the market" responses were generally positive, with 137(59.1%) agreeing and 63 (27.3%) strongly agreeing. This demonstrates a very close relationship between the catchy tag lines, and the brand awareness. However, some of the respondents disagreed (4.5%), or strongly disagreed (0.9%) Meaning as some consumers, taglines may not impact well on brand awareness.

On aggregate, the numbers in Table 3 show a strong consumer belief in the positive effects of taglines on the generation of brands and its importance as the main marketing tool for SMEs in Ghana. Although the majority of respondents find promising in memorable and catchy taglines, some are neutral or disagreed, which indicates the potential necessity of additional studies of consumers' preferences and attitudes.

Discussion

Demographic Engagement: Age, Gender, and Education

The high levels of response by the young and middle-aged consumers (96.3%) indicate taglines are best received by this group of consumers probably because they are the most exposed to digital marketing and media. This is consistent with world trends as young viewers connect better with concise digital marketing brands as asserted by Limin Buchanan, (2017) which states that, digital marketing has greater impacts on the young adults than the peripheral cues like emotional appeals. Taglines of modern language which are relatable to members of these age groups should be prioritized by SMEs.]

The nearly equal gender shares mean that taglines affect gender patterns of brand engagement but there are minor differences in tastes (e.g. women seeking emotional appeals, men wanting more functional messages) that require further analysis Grohmann, (2009).

The dominance of well-educated respondents indicates that they are quite critical of the taglines, which they look for being clear and creative. But the lack of representation of less-educated groups restricts understanding about the way taglines work with the mass population. In the subsequent research, marginalized demographics should be incorporated to measure inclusivity in the process of design work.

Tagline Effectiveness: Perception vs. Purchase Decisions

Most respondents accepted taglines in influencing brand image supporting theories that taglines are mnemonic devices Aaker, (1991). For instance, captivating slogans such as "MTN: "Everywhere You Go" make use of simplicity and repetition. The divergence reveals that although taglines increase recall, they may not be directly purchasing drivers. This is reflected in studies indicating the purchase decision is on wider factors (price, quality) other than taglines, as Kotler & Keller, (2016) agrees with this position by stating that just because a consumer can engage with a brand, doesn't mean they will engage it.

The recall rate is high (73.6%) confirming taglines as useful in terms of recipient memory but the 27% disagreement indicates design effectiveness differences. For example, too generic taglines (for example "Quality You Can Trust") may not stand out.

Brand Awareness: Catchiness and Limitations

Catchy taglines (e.g., "Vodafone: *The Future is Exciting*") amplify brand visibility, consistent with the elaboration likelihood model, where simplicity aids peripheral persuasion Petty & Cacioppo, (1986).

Some respondents relied on other cues (e.g., logos, jingles), indicating that taglines are one component of brand identity. SMEs should adopt integrated marketing communications for maximum impact.

Key Findings

Findings are that the largest group lies between 25–34 years (40.5%), with great participation from younger consumers, middle-aged respondents (35–54 years) comprise 27% which indicate their significance in tagline plans. Younger adults (18–24 years) make up 16.2% and older groups (45+ years) are less represented – 12.6% and 3.7%. All respondents are aged 18–54, 96.3% while taglines are needed to appeal to a younger and middle-aged audience. Both genders are well represented (55.9% and 44.1% males and females respectively) so that insights into the effects of taglines on brand awareness and recall among the genders can be gleaned. A majority of the respondents (79.2%) have a tertiary qualification, where 48.7% come with a Bachelor's degree, and 27% come with a Master's degree, meaning highly educated participants evaluate the taglines critically. Underrepresented groups (e.g., Senior High School, 9%) include lower educational groups and this may identify areas of misunderstanding with less formally educated consumers.

Regarding brand perception, 67.6% agree that taglines influence how they perceive a brand, while 20.7% disagree or are unsure. Additionally, 50.5% believe taglines increase their likelihood of purchasing, though 28.8% disagree, showing mixed views on their influence. A strong 87.4% find taglines effective in communicating a brand's message, but 6.3% disagree or are unsure, indicating some reliance on other communication methods. For brand recall, 72.9% agree that taglines help them remember brand names, but 27% disagree, showing

variability in effectiveness. Similarly, 74.8% easily associate taglines with specific brands, while 8.1% struggle with this connection. Memorable taglines aid 73.6% in recognizing brands, though 8.2% disagree, and 78.9% remember taglines even if they forget the business name, with 14.4% disagreeing.

As far as awareness of brand, 76.6% respondents agree that to quite extent taglines affect awareness, whereas only 0.9% strongly disagree. Although 67.6% use taglines to identify SME brands when shopping, 9% disagree, meaning others depend on other prompts. Catchy taglines make brand awareness for 86.4%, 5.4% disagree showing contrasting effectiveness. Overall, the finding signifies the importance of the well-crafted tagline for SMEs in Ghana, yet recommends further research to harmonize individual differences as well as to increase inclusivity.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Although this study is insightful on the effectiveness of tagline on SME brand recognition, the study fails to examine how effectiveness of tagline may change over time, the generalizability of the study was limited to seven (7) regions in Ghana, there is limited understanding about how brand impact on SMEs would be long term. In addition, the study does not compare tagline effectiveness to other branding elements (for example, logos, jingles, social media presence) so it is not easy to judge their relative value.

This study reminds one of taglines as powerful yet implicit SME brand tools in Ghana, where 67.6% of the respondents had validated their impacts on brand perceptions and 87.4% had acknowledged the efficiency of their messages. Although 73.6% of them acknowledge simpler brand recollections by means of taglines, purchasing power is skewed (50.5% agree vs. 28.8% disagree), indicating loopholes in its implementation.

Demographic statistics confirm the extensive involvement of youth (18-54 years, 96.3%) and tertiary-educated customers (79.2%) and the fairly balanced gender contribution (55.9% male, 44.1% female). The minority segment (older/more-less-educated customers) also identify needs for inclusiveness.

Evidence-based tagline-supported research has the potential to heavily increase awareness (76.6% agreement) and recall (72.9%), with varied impacts by segments. Taglines must be used in conjunction with evidence-based measures by SMEs and executed alongside A/B testing to optimize ROI, within a comprehensive branding strategy with taglines, not an ad-hoc solution. Follow-up studies should attempt cross-generational and lower-educational consumer responses for increased representativeness.

In order to dive deeper into understanding the effectiveness of taglines, the comparative research on the brand elements and the ways to help these elements realize brand recognition should be given priority in concern of the future studies. Comparative studies on

local to English language taglines may also bring into view delicate differences in favour of rural or urban Ghanaian audiences so that branding can be culturally accommodated.

Funding: This research received no external funding

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Selasi Ahiabu is a dynamic lecturer and accomplished graphic designer, recognized for his innovative approach to teaching and design. Holding a Master of Technology in Graphics with a major in Advertising, Selasi brings a wealth of knowledge and practical expertise to the classroom. His background in graphic design enables him to provide students with practical insights and hands-on experience, seamlessly blending theory with real-world applications. Selasi's research focus lies at the intersection of technology and creativity, with a specific emphasis on Advertising. He explores how emerging digital tools and technologies can enhance the learning experience, foster creativity, and inform effective advertising strategies among students. Through his work, Selasi aims to inspire and empower the next generation of designers and advertising professionals.

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