

Influence of Airtel Television Advertising on the Choice of Mobile Telecommunication Network by Students of Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu

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Abstract – Advertising is charged with the responsibilities of promoting goods and services, thereby creating awareness about the product and, persuading target audience and influence patronage from consumers and prospective consumers. Television is one of the most powerful and influential medium of communication around the world. Most of the advertisers rely on television for advertisement of their products and services to attract the viewers across the globe. This study therefore, assessed the influence of Airtel television advertising on the choice of mobile telecommunication network by students of the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu. Literatures were reviewed to provide empirical support to the study. The study was anchored on the Cultivation theory. The researchers adopted the survey research method for the study. A sample of 387 was drawn from a population of 11,525 respondents using the Taro Yamane formula. The measuring instrument of the study was the questionnaire structured into open-ended and close-ended questions and distributed to the sampled population. The research questions were analysed using simple percentage table. The researchers found that IMT Enugu students use Airtel network and exposed heavily to Airtel television advertisements. The study recommended that advertising messages should both be persuasive and reminder-oriented.

Keywords – Influence, Airtel, Television, Advertising, Mobile Network Data, Students

1 Introduction

Television is one of the most powerful and important forms of global communication. Because of its powerful effect, most advertisers rely on television to sell their products and services in order to attract viewers, who are, in most cases, their target demographic (Rishante, 2014). Advertising in the media has evolved into a powerful instrument for communicating product and service messages to both viewers and potential buyers in society. High patronage, sales volume, productivity, and profit levels of firms will all grow when there is appropriate awareness through advertising.

Among the other forms of advertising, the television commercial is the most powerful instrument for influencing people's minds and emotions, causing them to buy a product or service (Todua, 2011). The perspectives of numerous scientists regarding the influence of TV ads on consumer behavior have been highlighted in the offered article based on this examination. Television advertising, according to study, boosts willingness to pay in both direct and indirect ways. Furthermore, commercials have a favorable impact on customer interaction with a business since they are perceived as the most trustworthy and relevant kind of advertising by customers (Delauro, 2020).

Many television advertisements feature catchy jingles (songs or melodies) or catch-phrases that generate sustained appeal, which may remain in the minds of television viewers long after the span of the advertising campaign, some of these and jingles or catchy-phrases may take on lives of their own, spawning gags or "riffs" that may appear in other forms of media, such as comedy, movies or television variety shows, or in written media, such as magazines, comics or literature, etc. These long-lasting advertising elements may therefore be said to have been placed in pop culture. Advertising agencies often use humour as a tool in their creative marketing campaigns. In fact, many psychological studies tried to demonstrate the effect of humour and indicate the way to empower advertising persuasion. Bishnoi and Sharma (2009) found that TV advertisements affect more to rural teenagers as compared to urban teenagers.

This study examined features that are absent in television advertisement of mobile telecommunication companies that would have made viewers to prefer their services or packages or dislike the services of the company with the advertisement. The use of telecommunication companies in Nigeria as a case study is justified in the fact that they keep up with modern trend in television advertising.

Television advertisement can be used to influence mobile network data subscribers with the aid of persuasion in the advertisements, as well as repetition. The constant exposure of these audiences (IMT Enugu students), with time, can influence them into choosing Airtel network as their service provider for both calls and mobile network data.

Advertising can influence consumers' choice of Airtel by frequent exposure to the ads by both existing and potential customers. The use of funny/comic lines, catchy jingles, celebrity advertising, etc., could also influence consumers' choice of Airtel. Before now, Globacom are the ones known for

celebrity advertising especially on television, but in the recent past, Airtel has as well joined. Seeing popular faces like Gabriel Afolayan can influence consumer choice of Airtel.

2 Statement of the Problem

Advertising is in charge of advertising goods and services, thereby raising public knowledge of the product, persuading target audiences to patronize products and services, and always preserving the life of brands. Unfortunately, commercial messages or advertising on television only last as long as they are displayed on the screen. If a viewer does not watch or listen at the precise moment an advertisement is shown, the message is lost and fades away in the viewer's mind. The viewers were left without recall, which the advertisement directors need knowledge of the viewers and how they react to certain factors under different situations. Most modern television advertisements are not directed by the dictates of psychological principles. This is a problem because the viewers are humans and they have their cognitive or mental process, if the television advert is not well designed, it will turn the people off instead of attracting them. The absence of television advertisement of mobile telecommunication companies that would have compelled media viewers to select or reject their services were completely eroded. It is against this backdrop that this study examined the influence of Airtel television advertising on the choice of telecommunication network by students of IMT Enugu.

3 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives are:

- 1 To determine if students of the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, use Airtel mobile network.
- 2 To determine whether IMT Enugu students are influenced on their choice of mobile network data by Airtel television advertisements.
- 3 To determine whether IMT Enugu students are influenced on their choice of mobile network call by Airtel television advertisements.
- 4 To find out if Airtel fulfills what is promised in their television advertisements.

5 Research Questions

The following research questions have been raised to guide the study:

- 1 Do students of the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, use Airtel mobile network?
- 2 To what extent were IMT Enugu students influenced on their choice of mobile network data by Airtel television advertisements?
- 3 To what extent were IMT Enugu students influenced on their choice of mobile network call by Airtel television advertisements?

- 4 Does Airtel fulfill what was promised in the television advertisements?

5 Review of Literature

1.1 Understanding the Concept of Advertising

Advertising is a commercial message or text in the media for the promotion and marketing of goods, ideas and services. Omeje and Oparaugo (2021) see advertising as all forms of print, electronic or online media messages written or spoken and paid for by a sponsor aimed at an audience with the objective of selling or marketing a product or service. Advertising is the communication of information about the price, quality and availability of a product. Generally, advertising involves a message communicated with the intention to sell by persuading consumers or intending consumers to buy (Oparaugo, Dogo Daji & Kawoh, 2020). Advertising is a form of marketing communication. It entails the persuasion of an audience or consumer to take some action with respect to products, ideas or services. More commonly, the desired result is to drive consumer behavior with respect to a commercial offering. For these purposes, advertisements often contain both factual information and persuasive messages (Akpan, Nda & Nkenta, 2015).

Advertising has been with us for centuries, although it is a lot different from what it was decades ago. Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas or products by an identifiable sponsor. The definition identifies fundamental elements. First, it is a paid form of presentation, which emphasises that advertising space or time must be purchased. It is nonpersonal, meaning that it is not a direct or personalised presentation to one individual, but to the masses (Kenechukwu, Asemah & Edegoh, 2013, p.952).

Advertising serves a critical purpose in the business world since it increases sales, draws buyers' attention, and makes the audience aware of products or services' existence, releases, and improvements (Kontos & Bomba, 2021).

1.2 Television and Advertising

Television advertising is designed to influence consumer behavior either by encouraging consumerism, principally to switch from one brand to another or to remain loyal to the one they are using currently. To some extent, advertising may also be concerned with creating market for new brands (Narasimhamurthy, 2014).

Television plays an important role in terms of advertising for a variety of reasons. The first viable contributor to the growth of TV advertising popularity is the width of reach that commercial ads give to their end users. Knowing that TV sets are practically omnipresent, it may be safe to say that the modern world would not be able to cope with the growing amount of information without their help (Coombs & Batchelor, 2014). The role of television, in this

case, consists of allowing users to watch TV even if they do not have a TV sets – numerous live streams are available online and can be easily accessed with the help of smartphones and laptops, which extends the role of television even further (Kuyucu, 2020).

Television advertising is largely used to influence viewers' purchase decisions. Ads are divided between local and national time slots, and many of both of those types of ads are specific to selling products and services. Local television ads offer the region's service-based businesses and retail outlets the opportunity to reach their area's demographic with important announcements and offers (Lazzari, 2019).

National time slots are purchased for specific times and shows which product or service is most likely to reach the target demographic. A company can raise brand awareness and drive consumers to the point of purchase through well placed television ads.

One of the benefits of television advertising is that companies are free to target any audience they want. This is also the key means of building engagement on other platforms such as social media and create room for the company's expansion based solely on the influence of an advertisement (Qualter, 2016). Television advertisers have practically limitless capabilities because they have the right and ability to purchase spots at different times: for instance, toy manufacturers typically market their products during morning cartoons on Saturday while local bars could make the best use of sporting events to market their services (Kuyuncu, 2020).

The biggest issue linked to television advertising is that there are no definite chances that the viewers are going to see ads at all, as they often choose to work on their personal needs during a commercial break (Lim, Ri, Egan, & Biocca, 2015). Therefore, they are going to get back to the series without seeing the advertisement and the marketing effort will get no views respectively. On the other hand, television advertising is rather costly and it could significantly influence the company's budget with the latter having to spend enormous amounts of financial resources even for a single spot (especially if that spot might be aired during prime time) (Kuyuncu, 2020).

Television has the intimacy of radio and the believability of personal participation. It has an intimate approach which becomes more appealing and attracts the attention and interest of the people (Currie, 2012).

1.3 About Airtel Network

Airtel Networks Limited (Airtel Nigeria) is a leading mobile telecommunications company in Nigeria. According to the Subscribers' statistics released by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) on 30 August 2019, Airtel Nigeria has 26.8% mobile telephone market share and 46.8 million subscribers. The company is a member of Airtel Africa, the holding firm for Bharti Airtel's operations in 14 countries in Africa.

The company was established in 2001 as Econet Nigeria and was awarded Digital Mobile License (DML) for communication service in Nigeria. It made history on August 5, 2001 by becoming the first telecommunications service provider to launch commercial GSM services in Nigeria. In 2004,

Vodacom took charge of the company as management changed hands. Later in 2004, Vee Networks took the reins of the company and became known as Vmobile. In May 2006, Vmobile was acquired by Celtel. In 2008, Zain Group, another telecommunications company acquired all Celtel International's shares of over \$3 billion. As a result of this acquisition, all operations of Celtel Africa was rebranded from Celtel to Zain. In 2010, Bharti Airtel, the parent company of Airtel Nigeria, completed the acquisition of Zain Group's Africa business in a \$10.7 billion transaction.

Airtel Nigeria is the second-largest telecommunications company in Nigeria by number of customers behind MTN Nigeria despite its initial tooting problem. It has an estimated 46.8 million subscribers representing 26.8% market share and in terms of mobile internet users, Airtel Nigeria has the second-largest users with 32.4 million subscribers in July 2019. Besides, it is rural-based mobile communication network. It was the first mobile phoning to go rural in Nigeria. In fact, many ruralities who use cellphone would attribute to Airtel Nigeria. None is surprise to see Airtel in becoming the second largest telecommunication service provider after suffering managerial transformation from inception to date. This however, gave them the credit.

1.4 Some Airtel Television Advert Messages

Airtel in one of their most popular TV adverts hired Nollywood actor Gabriel Afolayan to advertise their tariff for cheap calls. The advert was accompanied by a jingle with the lyrics describing the Nollywood star as Igboro, who does not trust anyone and is as well stingy. The voice over of the advert encouraged subscribers to choose Airtel and have a rest of mind.

In another advert, Afolayan is now seen with a car with his friend. His friend appeared to have trust issues while Afolayan is now calm since he chose Airtel network.

Another advert sees two sisters who live in the same house. The elder sister takes advantage of her data subscription to get the younger sister to the almost all the jobs in the house with a promise of sharing her a hotspot, until the younger sister discovered how to subscribe to Airtel data plan.

Another advert sees an old man trying to match young men's ability at the gym but could not. He then opted to use two wraps of fufu to gym. The message is that there is a data plan for everybody.

In another advert, a woman is seen trying to manage her red oil, then walk in her daughter who brought out another gallon of red oil from the cupboard, with the message: why manage your data when you can choose Airtel?

6 Empirical Review

Pushpalatha (2017) in his study "Impact of Television Advertisement on the Consumption Behaviour of Rural People, found out that television advertisements have great influence on consumers due to various factors like the innovations in presentations, the theme of ads, the charisma of the model, the music, slogan and the power of brands and so on, which have multiple

dimensions. The researcher also found out that the popularization of electronic media like television as a medium of communication has gained importance in the marketing of products, services, persons, ideas, and corporate entities. Celebrity attachment is one of the factors that heavily influence the buyers of the product.

Haider and Shakib (2017) in their study “Study on the Influences of Advertisement on Consumer Buying Behavior”, found out that consumers are more motivated to buy a product when they see an advertisement of it somewhere; they also feel safe to buy a product that they have seen advertisement of. Consumer develops a level of trustworthiness for a brand they have seen its advertisement.

In another study by Sandhe (2016) titled “An Empirical Study on the Impact of Advertising on Buying Behaviour”, he found out that advertising plays a vital role in a competitive era. With all major and minor players in the market trying to impress the “lord of the market”, the consumer, advertising becomes an important tool among others in trying to persuade the consumer to buy a particular brand. Whether new or old, market leader or new entrant, everyone has an advertising strategy.

Vasumathi and Banudevi (2018) in their study titled “Impact of Television Advertisement on the Buying Behaviour of FMCG Customers in Coimbatore District: A Study”, found out that television advertisement is considered one of the most effective medium to influence the purchase decision of consumers. They also found that most of the respondents felt they were influenced by food items, and noticed that most of the respondents expressed that advertisement are entertaining and call to mind. They also found out that FMCG advertisements are successful in creating impact on buying behavior of the FMCG products, particularly about the food items and skin care products. The customers are expecting much information from the short advertisements.

Punnivamoorthy and Parthiban (2015) in their study titled, “An Empirical Study on Impact of Advertisement with Reference to Fast Moving Consumer Goods in Chennai”, found out that advertisement attracts towards the preference and choices to influence the consumer buying behavior.

Medhi (2015) in a study, “A Study on the Effectiveness of Increased Advertisement towards Increasing Consumer Response”, found that big business houses are adopting the means of advertisement to influence the consumers to purchase their products and acquire their services not only television media, but enormous ways and means have been coming up to attract customers. The researcher also found out that television has become a strong marketing tool to increase their sales and occupy a good amount of market share.

7 Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the Cultivation Analysis theory developed by Professor George Gerbner. He began 'Cultural Indicators' research project in the mid-1960s, to study whether and how watching television may influence viewers' ideas of what the everyday world is like in the 'effects' tradition.

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Cultivation theorists argue that television has long-term effects which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant.

Cultivation theory in its most basic form, suggests that television is responsible for shaping, or 'cultivating' viewers' conceptions of social reality. The combined effect of massive television exposure by viewers over time subtly shapes the perception of social reality for individuals and, ultimately, for our culture as a whole. Gerbner argues that the mass media cultivate attitudes and values which are already present in a culture: the media maintain and propagate these values amongst members of a culture, thus binding it together. He has argued that television tends to cultivate middle-of-the-road political perspectives. Gerbner called this effect 'mainstreaming'. Cultivation theorists distinguish between 'first order' effects (general beliefs about the everyday world, such as about the prevalence of violence) and 'second order' effects (specific attitudes, such as to law and order or to personal safety). There is also a distinction between two groups of television viewers: the heavy viewers and the light viewers. The focus is on 'heavy viewers' when you are researching for influence.

Only those heavy viewers could be said to be significantly influenced than the light viewers. The later may not rightly pay attention when the advert messages are communicated or transmitted. Accordingly, people who watch a lot of television are likely to be more influenced by the ways in which the world is framed by television programs than individuals who watch less, especially regarding topics of which the viewer has little first-hand experience. 'Resonance' describes the intensified effect on the audience when what people see on television is what they have experienced in life. This double dose of the televised message tends to amplify the cultivation effect. The author admonished that children who were exposed to violent film are likely to act same with their mates. He opined that children were prohibited from watching film that was attached to violence.

This theory is however, applicable to this study as it explains that those who are heavy television viewers, and are exposed to Airtel's television advertising, are very likely to cultivate the habit of choosing it as their mobile network provider for calls and /or data. TV ads can affect and shape the attitude of people highly exposed which transform their opinion in the likely positive expectation. TV ads had over the years helped to switch the audience or consumerism to mere community that was what the Airtel is doing to millions of Nigerians in rural and urban areas. Inadvertently, the cultivation theory stole the show.

8 Methodology

The research design adopted by the researchers in this work is the Survey Method. Oparaugo (2021, p.7) argues that surveys are often used to collect information from large groups of people using scales that have been tested for validity and reliability. This approach permits the study of a fraction of a population called the Sample, whose result would be used to make generalization about the characteristics of the population.

The population of the study is 11,525 for 2020/2021 academic session. A research sample of 387 was determined using Taro Yamane formula. The systematic sampling technique was used to select a sample on the basis of equal representation from the students of the school. The questionnaire was the instrument of data collection. In collecting data for this study, the researchers personally administered the questionnaire through hand delivery and applied same personal retrieval in the collection process.

9 Data Presentation and Analysis

Data collected is presented and analysed in tables below:

Research Question 1: Do students of the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, use Airtel mobile network?

Table 1: Usage of Airtel network

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	300	78.12%
No	84	21.88%
Total	384	100%

Table 1 indicated that 300 (78.12%) of the students of the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, use Airtel mobile network, while 84 (21.88%) of them said no. This indicates that those who said yes are highly significant.

Research Question 2: To what extent were IMT Enugu students influenced on their choice of mobile network data by Airtel television advertisements?

Table 2: Impact of Airtel television advertisements on mobile network data choice

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To great extent	192	50.00%
To average extent	100	26.04%
To minimal extent	08	2.08%
Not at all	84	21.88%
Total	384	100%

Table 2 shows that 192 (50%) of the respondents were influenced on their choice of mobile network data by Airtel television advertisements to a great extent, 100 (26.04%) of them were influenced by same advertisements to an average extent, 08 (2.08%) of them were influenced to a minimal extent while 84 (21.88%) of them were never influenced at all by Airtel television advertisements on their choice of mobile network data. This further indicates that majority of the respondents were influenced on their choice of mobile network data by Airtel television advertisements.

Research Question 3: To what extent were IMT Enugu students influenced on their choice of mobile network calls by Airtel television advertisements?

Table 3: Impact of Airtel television advertisements on mobile network calls choice

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To great extent	115	29.95%
To average extent	80	20.83%
To minimal extent	109	28.39%
Not at all	84	21.88%
Total	384	100%

Table 3 shows that 115 (29.95%) of the respondents were influenced on their choice of mobile network calls by Airtel television advertisements to a great extent, 80 (20.83%) of them were influenced by same advertisements to an average extent, 84 (28.39%) of them were influenced to a minimal extent while 84 (21.88%) of them were never influenced at all by Airtel television advertisements on their choice of mobile network calls. This further indicates that quite a good number of the respondents were influenced on their choice of mobile network calls by Airtel television advertisements.

Research Question 4: Does Airtel fulfill what were promised in the television advertisements?

Table 4: Degree of fulfillment of advertising promises

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	205	53.39%
No	109	28.39%
Can't say	70	18.22%
Total	384	100%

Table 4 indicated that 205 (53.39%) of the respondents believe that Airtel fulfills what was promised in the television advertisements, while 109 (28.39%) said no, and 70 (18.22%) of them have no idea. The table therefore, shows that more of the respondents believe that Airtel fulfills what were promised in the television advertisements.

10 Discussion of Results

Four research questions were raised and all were analysed. The tables analysed were done using the simple percentage formula. Students of the Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, use Airtel mobile network. To a great extent, the IMT Enugu students were significantly influenced by Airtel television advertisements. This influence means that they chose Airtel mobile network as their service provider either for calls or for data or for both.

This is supported by the findings of Pushpalatha (2017), who submitted that television advertisements have great influence on consumers due to

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various factors like the innovations in presentations, the theme of ads, the charisma of the model, the music, slogan and the power of brands and so on, which have multiple dimensions. The popularization of electronic media like television as a medium of communication has gained importance in the marketing of products, services, persons, ideas, and corporate entities. Celebrity attachment is one of the factors that heavily influence the buyers of the product. Vasumathi and Banudevi (2018) added that television advertisement is considered one of the most effective medium to influence the purchase decision of consumers, more importantly, the customers are expecting much information from the short advertisements.

Medhi (2015) opines that big business houses are adopting the means of advertisement to influence the consumers to purchase their products and acquire their services. Not only television media but enormous ways and means that could draw massive attention and attract customers. Television has become a strong marketing tool to increase their sales and occupy a good amount of market share.

Television has the intimacy of radio and the believability of personal participation. It has an intimate approach which becomes more appealing and attracts the attention and interest of the people (Currie, 2012). Television advertising is largely used to influence viewers' purchase decisions. Ads are divided between local and national time slots, and many of these ads are specific to selling products and services. Local television ads offer the region's service-based businesses and retail outlets the opportunity to reach their demographic consumers with important announcements and offers. Our bone of contention is influence of Airtel TV ads on the students of IMT Enugu, which appeared highly significant. This equally affirmed the influence which the higher TV viewers receive the best level of TV exposure. Gerbner's argument on this was upheld by this result.

11 Conclusion

Quite a number of important conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study which have policy implications for the firm under study and other telecommunication companies. Firm's preference does exist in the telecom business. Many consumers do not subscribe to whatever is available or affordable if a product is good value for its price, it will command brand loyalty. However, advertising helps in projecting product quality and value before the consumers. This is applicable to Airtel presently. Advertising has a major influence on consumers' preference for Airtel and it has, in no small measure, contributed to its success. The same thing goes for its availability.

12 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

- i. Advertising messages should both be persuasive and reminder-oriented. The messages must be strong and appealing enough to

- persuade and build brand preferences, encourage switching to the company's brand by changing the perception of the consumers of rival brands of the product.
- ii. There is a need to conduct research regarding personality characteristics of consumers and find their impact on the consumer buying behavior.
 - iii. The need for mobile telecommunication networks in Nigeria to research more in the market segmentation as regards age distribution in rural and urban areas.
 - iv. More research should be carried out in areas of television viewing time across different age groups targeting other telecommunication products.

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[IMPACT-OF-ADVERTISEMENT-WITH-Punniyamoorthy-](#)

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