

“Assessing the Type of Advertising Influencing Consumers’ Behaviour of Telecommunications Firms in Ghana: A Case Study of MTN Ghana”

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to assess the type of advertising influencing consumers’ behaviour to respond to offerings of MTN Ghana. The study adopted the survey design. Convenient sampling technique was used to gather data from a sample of 124 customers of MTN Ghana in Accra and Kumasi using a structured interview guide and data analyses carried out using SPSS version 20. The findings of the study reveal a steady growth of advertising of MTN Ghana. At another level, the study shows broadcast advertising ranked 1st, outdoor advertising ranked 2nd, print advertising ranked 3rd, public service advertising ranked 4th and celebrity advertising ranked 5th as the type of advertising employed by MTN Ghana to influencing consumers’ behaviour to respond to the company’s offerings. Based on the findings, the study recommends MTN Ghana to consider fostering strong laden-relationships with consumers to retain them. Also, the study recommends MTN Ghana strengthening the use of broadcast, outdoor and print advertising since they contribute significantly to influencing consumers’ behavior to respond to the company’s offerings. Notwithstanding, public service and celebrity advertising should not be ignored since they also contribute to influencing consumer behaviour to respond to the company’s offerings.

Keywords: *advertising and consumer behavior.*

Introduction

Background of the study

In today’s world of competitive business environment, advertising is taken as an important tool to gain customer attention and to give information on product. All around the world, billions of dollars are invested in advertisement of products and brands. In the year 2008 only, advertisement expenditure of US, UK and China was \$ 158,547 million, \$26,802 million and \$57, 077 million respectively (Warc, 2009). According to statistics media, the money spent on advertising in Finland was 1313.1 million euro in 2012 and 1206.7 million euro in 2013 (Finnish Advertising Council, TNS Gallup, Ad. Intelligence 2014). Thus, Advertising spends across all media accounted for INR 300 billion in 2011, contributing to 41 percent of the overall M&E industry’s revenues (FICCI-KPMG report 2012). Researchers in the United States have estimated that by the age of 18 the average American will have seen around 350,000 commercials (Law 1994:28). Love them or hate them, you cannot avoid them. As countries and businesses are spending these huge amounts of money, there must be some main reason behind it. The main reason might be to increase sales or profits. According to Khan (2007), advertising has become very useful and have gained the status of an independent discipline and have grown at very fast speed where companies use it to differentiate their products. According to Kotler, it is vital that companies differentiate themselves from competitors by creating even more powerful, entertaining and innovative advertising messages, as well as sponsoring different events. In a similar vein Raymond Williams (1980) has called advertising ‘the magic system, ...a highly organized and professional system of magical inducements and satisfactions functionally very similar to magical systems in simpler societies but rather strangely co-existent with highly developed scientific technology’.

In Ghana, the use of advertising by most businesses has increased drastically due to fierce competition. The telecommunications industry is one of such examples. Currently, there are five networks operating in Ghana, namely, MTN, TIGO Vodafon, Airtel, Glo (NCA, 2016). The National Communications Authority, (NCA) statistics 2018 showed that, the total cellular/mobile voice

subscriber base in Ghana as at January, 2018 stood at 23,534,581 with MTN Ghana, commanding 13,681,145 subscribers. The fierce and rivalry nature in the industry has compelled the firms to use competitive advertising as one of the means to woo consumers. They engage in advertising through various media, coming out with different themes of advertising almost every quarter. According to Kotler (2009), advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor through print media (newspapers and magazines), broadcast media (radio and television), network media (telephone, cable, satellite, wireless), electronic media (audio tape, video tape, video disc, CD ROM ,webpage) and display media (billboards, signs, posters). The major aim of advertising is to create positive attitude towards the advertisement and the brand until the consumer purchases that product and through this positive attitude, it creates an emotional response in the mind of the consumer (Kotler 2009). It is believed that MTN Ghana advertises for this purpose. The study therefore assesses factors influencing consumers to respond to MTN Ghana's advertisement.

Problem statement

The major aim of advertising is to increase purchases, reinforce attitudes, and to inform potential customers about a product (Wright and Crimp, 2000). However, it is not clear whether the use of a particular advertising leads to increase in sales or influences consumers' behaviour. A report from Delta partners, titled "Ghana Telecommunications Market-perspectives on industry, economic and competitiveness" dated October, 2016, noted that market leader MTN alone paid GHC 1.218bn being 6.94% of government income for 2017 and 69.4% of taxes and levies from the telecom industry. As such, it is of no surprise that the number of mobile network providers in Ghana has increased over the years due to the industry's lucrative nature. Telecommunication firms buy slots or airtime on the radio, television, newspapers, bill board spaces and other media for the purpose of advertising their products, with the hope of yielding expected returns in the volume of sales of the company.

There is a lot of debate as to whether the intensive use of advertising actually influences consumer behaviour. Surprisingly, Ghanaians have been made to love MTN as they see it as the funky network that everybody is on. MTN phone communication is meant to ease life and add flavour to it. However, it has turned out to be a nuisance to consumers in the past few years, fed-up subscribers of MTN Ghana have continuously and publicly complained of bad network and unsolicited marketing advertising messages from the company (Wafula, 2009). O. Annabel, a subscriber on the network, published her complaint in one of the daily newspapers of August 27, 2016. She said "I am really growing weary of all the unsolicited text adverts messages of all kinds." Despite the intermittent interruption in the network, MTN still keeps intensify their advertisement and campaign to increase market share. For example, the market share of MTN Ghana rose from 46.43% in 2015 to 58% in 2017 (NCA, 2017). It is ambiguous, MTN with its bad network still increase its market share and whether any type of advertising, promotional is solely capable of influencing MTN subscribers' behaviour. A number of other factors may influence consumers' decision to buy MTN product (Bakamitsos and Siomkos, 2003) and this includes other marketing communication stimuli such as product quality, packaging, price, brand image (Williams, 2003). The problem is, what type of MTN adverts, is used to generate the desire level of favourable responses? Due to the afore-mentioned problems, it has therefore become prudent for this study to be conducted to assess the type of advertisement of MTN influencing consumers' behaviour to response to their offerings.

Specific objectives of the study

In order to achieve the stated aim of the study above, the following objectives have been set.

1. To conduct incidences of trend analysis of MTN Ghana's advertisement.
2. To examine specifically the type of advertising influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to offerings of MTN Ghana.
3. To identify the underlying factor(s) influencing consumer behaviour to respond to advertising of MTN Ghana.

Significance of the study

The outcome of this study will help MTN Ghana to take advertising more seriously to give them a better exposure in the fast-growing competitive markets. Equally, the study should aid MTN in identifying that particular type of advertising influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to their offerings in relations to that of their competitors. Again, the study would also serve as a reference material for students and marketing practitioners who would want to delve further in the area of advertising.

Scope of the study

This study focuses on the type of advertisement influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to offerings of MTN Ghana. Unfortunately, the study assesses broadcast, print, outdoor, public service and celebrity advertising of MTN Ghana only. Also, the study is a mix method with a chunk amount of quantitative techniques and considerable in-depth qualitative techniques, so the study could not be expanded to cover large respondents across the regions of Ghana.

Limitations of the study

This study was limited to only one service firm, MTN Ghana due to time constrain. Another limitation was inadequate sample size. Two hundred (200) respondents were to be considered during questionnaire administration. However, it was observed that one hundred and twenty-four (124) numbers of questionnaires were successfully retrieved from the respondent. Finally, financial constraint is not left out since the researcher made lots of visits to MTN centers to capture responses from subscribers and also from some staff of MNT Ghana.

Literature review

Concept of advertising

According to Laver (2004) advertising is a device which first arrest the attention of the passer-by and then induces him to accept a mutually advantageous exchange. Williams (1988) focus on the institutionalization and professionalization of advertising on its commercial functions and its persuasive force. As a social critic, he locates advertising in a social context. For him, advertising belong to a particular historical moment. It is a part of modern capitalist society, and it distinguishes it from attention- grabbing devices in non-capitalist societies in other times and places. For Williams, advertising cannot be decoupled from the way it come into being and the work it does in society. He drew attention to sponsorship of art in modern times. His definition said advert is the official art of capitalist of society.

Randazzo (1993) examined advertising as a form of myth making. While myths are more than entertaining little stories about gods, goddesses, and heroic characters, the universality of myths the fact that the same myths recur across time and many cultures, suggest that they originate somewhere inside us. Advertisers sell products by mythologizing them, by wrapping them in our dreams and fantasies in advertising is not simply in the business of "selling soap" advertising turns product into brands by mythologizing them by humanizing them and giving them distinct.

Types of advertising

According to Manohar (2009) there exist various categories of advertising.

Broadcast advertising (Television and Radio)

Television

Despite the fact that the attention of advertising agencies is shifting towards digital media, TV is still playing significant role in communicating value to customers. According to Belch & Belch (2009), it is often considered to be perfect due to the mix of sounds, visual aspects and motions that help to create vivid perception in consumer minds. According to Kelley & Jugenheimer (2008), by using TV commercials advertisers gain ability to shape and control the message, its form and structure. An ad can induce whole array of emotions triggering certain feeling in consumer's hearts. It

is possible to transmit dramatic, cheerful or inspirational message. Some products can be more successful when customers see it on screen with full representation. Kelley & Jugenheimer (2008) points out that TV is still a mass-communication tool which helps to reach broad audience of all ages, genders, incomes, beliefs.

Radio

Though radio does not comprise visual elements as television, it is still believed to be one of the most efficient media types. Hollensen (2014) thinks that one of the reasons for that is their low cost. Placing commercials on radio requires not much budget as the time itself is not expensive compared to other media, and it includes lower production expenses. Cutting costs means that advertisers can increase the frequency of campaigns and rapidly bring awareness among listeners about a brand. Belch & Belch (2009) notice that radio audience tend to have close emotional bonds with radio and trust things said there more than in any other media channel. That environment makes people extremely receptive and sensitive.

Outdoor advertising (Billboard and Kiosk)

According to Kelley & Jugenheimer (2008, 82) outdoor advertising allows companies to cover a broad group of people in local markets. When properly executed, this media type can provide high level of reach. As the advertising cycle for placement usually runs for 30-day period customers are exposed to commercial more often, meaning that frequency level remains high. Worth mentioning that the outdoor ad is flexible in location terms. Advertisements can be placed anywhere with law permission. However, according to Wilson & Till (2011), many outdoor advertising locations can be banned due to changing legislation and public pressure. Indeed, country and local regulations are vital and can cause unpredictable results for campaign.

Billboards advertising

On-Premise Signs can act as billboards, rising above all other stores and buildings. Even if the sign is not huge it can be still captivating and recognizable (Moriarty *et al.*, 2012). Donthu *et al.*, (2003) in their research also assume that color, location and words are important in customers' recall. Some companies invest in creating monuments or repair old ones to be associated with contributing to something new. Outdoor advertising can also be seen in the form of kiosk. In Russia for instance, this structure has just gained popularity as most posters used to hang in chaotic order on the streets.

Kiosk

Kiosks not only provide an easy outlet for companies' products but also make for an effective advertising tool to promote the companies' products. Organizing several events or sponsoring those makes for an excellent advertising opportunity. Companies can organize trade fairs, or even exhibitions for advertising their products. If not this, the company can organize several events that are closely associated with their field. For instance, a company that manufactures sports utilities can sponsor a sports tournament to advertise its products.

Print advertising (Newspapers and Magazines)

Newspapers

Newspapers and magazines have served as communication channels for more than 200 years. Local newspapers are important sources of advertising for many small companies and as well as the way for people to learn about new offers and opportunities. Print media in general has a big advantage of letting people process information at their own pace (Belch & Belch 2009). There is also always a chance to return to the interesting offer later. Kelley & Jugenheimer (2008) noticed that newspapers enable readers to control exposure to advertising compared with TV and radio. For example, there are certain types of service newspapers that include mostly advertising offers. Consumers buy them on purpose to monitor current offers and compare prices to find the best ones. Moriarty *et al.*, (2012, 383) state that through newspapers advertisers can reach many diverse households in various

geographic locations. Moreover, since a great percentage of this media is read daily, high frequency rate can be achieved.

Magazines

Due to growing number of various magazines, there is a lot space for specialization, thus opportunities for companies to target their advertising campaign in chosen areas. Every lifestyle, interest, age group is present in certain magazine making it an attractive place for marketers. Moreover, Kelley & Jugenheimer (2008) claim that different media types can turn into marketplace. For example, magazine devoted to fashion and clothes appealing to certain targeted population can at the same time serve as a perfect advertising place for brands. Unlike newspapers, reproduction quality of ads in magazines is superior. The appealing color and form are attracting attention of readers and communicate a vivid message.

Celebrity advertising

Because credibility and attractiveness play an important role to improve the persuasiveness of a message, companies try to find sources that satisfy these two criteria (i.e., credibility and attractiveness) to present their messages to customers (Kahle & Kahle 2006). One of the sources used frequently in marketing, specifically in advertisements, is celebrities. A celebrity endorser is defined as "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement" (McCracken 2009, 310). Because celebrity endorsement has become one of the most prevalent forms of advertising globally, several studies have examined the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in advertising.

Public service advertising

Public Service Advertising (PSA) via mass media are public interest messages disseminated in the form of an advertisement communication and are easily apprehensible and persuasive to promote behavioral changes of the public towards a social issue. Public service advertising can act as a window to increase knowledge about a particular issue related to the public because it can play an important role as an informant or a carrier for the viewers to change their attitude. In addition, unlike commercial advertisements that mainly focus on creating "product images" and inducing "purchasing the product", public service advertising concentrates on actual behavioral change through information.

Concept of consumer behaviour

Consumer behavior is defined as the acquisition, consumption and disposition of products, service, time and ideas by decision making units. It is the body of knowledge which studied various aspect of purchase and consumption of products and services by individuals with various social and psychological variable of pay. Richens (2001) refers to the ways in which people use the product they buy i.e. where the product is consumed and when (in terms of what occasions the product might be used) and how the product is used. Loyal (1998) indicate that convergence of attitudes across a number of different polar groupings within the social structure accelerate or hasten acceptance of an emergent consumer behavior pattern while divergence across different polar a consumer pattern.

Diamond (2002) holds that achieving organizational goals depends on knowing the needs and wants of target markets and delivering the desired satisfaction.

Factors that influence consumer behaviour

According to Engel (1986), consumer purchases are influenced strongly by: cultural factors, personal factors and psychological factors.

Culture factors

The set of basic values perceptions, wants, and behaviours learned by a member of society from family and other important institutions. Culture is the most basic cause of a person's wants and behaviour. Every group or society has a culture, and cultural influences on buying behaviour may vary greatly from country to country. Sub culture is also identified as a culture factor. This refers to group of people with shared value systems based on common life experiences and situations. Each

culture contains smaller sub cultures a group of people with shared value system based on common life experiences and situations. Sub culture includes nationalities, religions, racial group and geographic regions.

Personal factors

It is shaped by: age and life cycle stage, family life cycle and occupation

Personal factors such as age and life cycle stage bring changes to the goods and services people purchase over their lifetimes. Tastes in food, clothes, furniture, and recreation are often age related. Buying is also shaped by the stage of the family life cycle.

Occupation: - A person's occupation affects the goods and services bought. Blue collar workers tend to buy more rugged work clothes, whereas white-collar workers buy more business suits. A company can even specialize in making products needed by a given occupational group. Thus, computer software companies will design different products for brand managers, accountants, engineers, lawyers, and doctors.

Psychological factors

Psychological factors include: motivation, perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes.

Motivation: - Motive (drive) a need that is sufficiently pressing to direct the person to seek satisfaction of the need

Perception: - The process by which people select, Organize, and interpret information to form a meaningful picture of the world.

Learning: - Changes in an individual's behaviour arising from experience.

Beliefs and attitudes: - Belief is a descriptive thought that a person holds about something Attitude, a Person's consistently favourable or unfavourable evaluations, feelings, and tendencies towards an object or idea

Consumer behaviour theory and consumer decision model

Consumer behaviour theory

Consumer behaviour and consumer decision making has long been of interest to researchers. Beginning about 300 years ago early economists, led by Nicholas Bernoulli, John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern, started to examine the basis of consumer decision making (Bray, 2008). This early work approached the topic from an economic perspective, and focused solely on the act of purchase (Loudon & Della, 1993). The most prevalent model from this perspective is 'Utility Theory' which proposes that consumers make choices based on the expected outcomes of their decisions. Consumers are viewed as rational decision makers who are only concerned with self-interest (Schiffman & Kanuk 2007). Where utility theory views the consumers a 'rational economic man' (Zinkhan & Hirschheim 1993), contemporary research on Consumer Behaviour considers a wide range of factors influencing the consumer, and acknowledges a broad range of consumption activities beyond purchasing. These activities commonly include; need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, the building of purchase intention, the act of purchasing, consumption and finally disposal. This more complete view of consumer behaviour has evolved through a number of discernible stages over the past century in light of new research methodologies and paradigmatic approaches being adopted. While this evolution has been continuous, it is only since the 1950's that the notion of consumer behaviour has responded to the conception and growth of modern marketing to encompass the more holistic range of activities that impact upon the consumer decision (Blackwell *et al.*, 2001). This is evident in contemporary definitions of consumer behaviour: "*consumer behaviour..... is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires.*" (Solomon & Bamossy, 2006).

(Schiffman & Kanuk 2007) take a similar approach in defining consumer behaviour: "*the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs*" (p.3).

Consumer decision model

The Consumer Decision Model (also known as the Engel-Blackwell-Miniard Model) was originally developed in 1968 by Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell and has gone through numerous revisions; the latest publication of the model is depicted in Figure 1 below. It can be seen that many of the elements of the model are similar to those presented in the Theory of Buyer Behaviour (Howard & Sheth 1969), however the structure of presentation and relationship between the variables differs somewhat. The model is structured around a seven-point decision process: need recognition followed by a search of information both internally and externally, the evaluation of alternatives, purchase, post purchase reflection and finally, divestment. These decisions are influenced by two main factors. Firstly, stimuli is received and processed by the consumer in conjunction with memories of previous experiences, and secondly, external variables in the form of either environmental influences or individual. The environmental influences identified include: Culture; social class; personal influence; family and situation. While the individual influences include: Consumer resource; motivation and involvement; knowledge; attitudes; personality; values and lifestyle (Blackwell *et al.*, 2001).

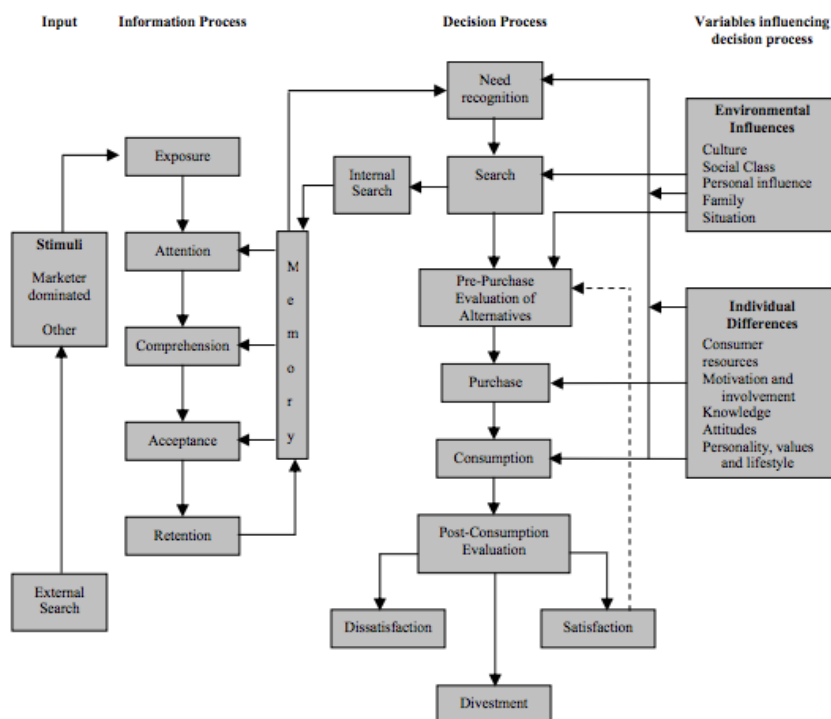


Figure 1. Consumer decision model

Source: (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2001).

Entry to the model is through need recognition when the consumer acknowledges a discrepancy between their current state and some desirable alternative. This process is driven by an interaction between processed stimuli inputs and environmental and individual variables. After a need has been acknowledged the consumer embarks on a search for information, both internally through the consumers' memory bank of previous experiences, and externally. The authors argue that the model is suitable for use in explaining situations involving both extended problems solving and limited problem solving by modifying the degree to which various stages of the model are engaged in by the consumer (LoudonDavid & Della, 1993). The depth of information search will be highly dependent on the nature of problem solving, with new or complex consumption problems being subjected to extensive external information searches, while simpler problems may rely wholly on a simplified internal search of previous behaviour. Information is said to pass through five stages of processing before storage and use, namely: exposure, attention, comprehension, acceptance and retention (Blackwell *et al.*, 2001). The alternative consumer choices are evaluated by the establishment of beliefs, attitudes and purchase intentions. This process of evaluation is influenced by both the

environmental variables and the individual variables. Intention is depicted as the direct antecedent to purchase which is the only outcome tolerated by the model. Inhibitors are not explicitly depicted as mediating between intentions and purchase; however, the environmental and individual influences are again said to act on purchase. Situation is listed as an environmental influence, and while this factor is not clearly defined, it could include such factors as time pressure or financial limitations which could serve to inhibit the consumer from realizing their purchase intentions (VanTonder & Berner, 2003). Consumption is followed by post-consumption evaluation which serves a feedback function into future external searches and belief formation. Divestment is depicted as the final stage in the consumption process acknowledging that the product purchased is likely to be disposed of at some point post consumption.

The influence of advertising on consumer behaviour

The literature on advertising and consumer behavior has suggested that consumers' processes in receiving, using, and retaining advertising information to assist their purchase decision making is very different for high- and low-involvement products (Assael, 2008; Bowen & Chaffee 2004; Krugman 2005; Muehling, Laczniak, & Andrews 2003; Slama & Tashchian, 2000; Vaughn, 2002; Zaichkowsky, 2006). Relevant to this study is the view that consumers are generally more highly involved and selective when making a purchase of durable goods than when purchasing nondurables because they are more concerned about reducing risk when purchasing durables. As a result, advertising tends to create a long "memory" effect in the minds of buyers because "thinking" is the key element in the hierarchy of effects (Vaughn, 2002). Consequently, consumers are supposed to remember past advertising and develop "goodwill" toward the advertised brands if their experience with the brand has been positive (Givon & Horsky 2010). It has also been suggested that the dynamic impact of advertising on sales can work indirectly through purchase reinforcement: Advertising gives consumers an incentive to make both an initial purchase and repurchase (Horsky & Simon, 2003). Thus, buyers tend to stick to the brands they have purchased before.

On the other hand, consumers often feel little involvement in buying nondurable products because they are frequently purchased, inexpensive, and have few differentiating attributes. Buyers may not search for information before purchasing a nondurable product, and it is difficult for them to form real attitudes or strong preferences toward a brand afterwards. In this case, consumers are a passive audience to advertising and pay little attention to ads before the purchase. Even if they catch product information in ads before buying the product, they may forget it quickly after the purchase (Krugman, 2005).

Empirical review

Sonkusare, (2013) conducted a study on the impact of television advertising on buying behavior of women consumers with special reference to Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMGCs). The findings of the study showed that majority of consumers depend on Television advertisements in making their final decision regarding what to buy with regard to FMGCs. The author concluded that advertisements have great impact on buying behavior of women customers. Before purchasing any product customers/consumers collect information for their comparing alternative product options before making proper purchasing decision making activities hence advertising is mostly adopted to get information about FMCG products.

Kumar (2011) conducted a study on the impact of advertising on consumer buying behaviour with special reference to Nestle Limited in India. He found that advertising and sales promotion together with the image of the company influence the consumer buying decision. He also found that the quality and price of product also influence consumer purchase of a good.

Ayanwale et al., (2005) conducted a study on the impact of advertisement of Bournvita on consumer buying behaviour in Nigeria. They found out that advertising has major influence on consumers' likeliness for Bournvita food drink.

Methodology

Research design

The study was a mixed methods approach, but specifically, a descriptive cross-sectional survey research, the data are collected at one point in time for a sample selected to represent a larger population was used for this study. According to Owens (2002), cross-sectional surveys make it possible for a group of respondents to be asked a set of questions at one point in time. In this study attempts were made to capture the attitudes of consumer towards advertising of MTN Ghana in the sample at specific time frames and this timeline made it vital in collecting bit by bit relevant data for the study as posited by Owens (2002).

Population of the study

A population is the aggregate of all the elements showing some common set of characteristics that comprises the universe for the purpose of the marketing research problem (Malhotra, 1996). In this study, all the telecommunication firms in Ghana were the population of the study. According to the National Media Commission, (2017) there are five telecommunications firms in Ghana. This document was retrieved from the online repository of National Media Commission (NMC). The target population was customers and marketing staff of telecommunication industry in Ghana. The reason for concentrating on these staff was that they are responsible for advertising and publicity of the of telecommunication firms. They also have a greater understanding of advertising on consumer behaviour.

Sampling technique and sampling size

Sampling techniques are population reduction methods used to restrict data collection to a subgroup of a population since it is almost impossible to collect data from every single individual or units within a population in most cases. The study uses a non-probability sampling particularly a mixture of convenience and purposive sampling technique to achieve the set objective. This is in line with the work of other researchers (Amoah *et al.*, 2007; Stanley & Thurnell, 2014).

Sample size

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study (Kothari, 2004). In this study, a sample of 124 customers of the telecommunication firms was conveniently selected and structured questionnaires were administered to assess the type of advertising influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to offerings of MTN Ghana. According to Dillman (2000), a sample size of more than a hundred (100) is sufficient to provide a fair representation of the study population. Also, 10 marketing staff of MTN Ghana were interviewed to enrich study.

Sources of data

The main source of data for the study was the field survey. A close-ended structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews were used in carrying out the survey.

Pre-testing of instrument

In this study, the questionnaire was pre-tested using 15 customers from the insurance sector for the simple reason that the characteristics of the respondents were similar to those in the study. The final interview guide was not modified or changed and no changes were made to the items after the pre-test since the respondents could grasp the meaning of the items.

Distribution of the questionnaire

It took the researcher approximately 14 days to administer the questionnaires and conduct interviews. Averagely, each respondent took about 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The respondents (customers) were approached mostly on weekends after lunch whilst those of the marketing staff of the telecommunication were approached mostly on weekdays between 2: 00 pm - 3:30 pm. The researcher adopted this method because most of the marketing staff were very active on weekends hence getting them is difficult compared to any other time adopted by the study. Also,

customers of the telecommunication industry are met in numbers during weekends. In essence, the study recorded a good response rate during these times.

Data analysis

All information received from the respondents via the data collection instrument was entered, coded and analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Data were presented by tables of frequencies and percentages which were computed for each item. Cronbach's alpha coefficient analysis was done on the responses that were received from the respondents. The mean and standard deviation used to rank the responses of respondents.

Ethical consideration

Neuman (2003) defined ethics as what is or is not legitimate to do or what moral research procedure ought to be involved by the investigator. Kumeckpor (2002) emphasized that the most important elements in the research enterprise are the respondents, and everything must be done to alleviate their fears and anxiety. To this end, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to participants and participants participated in their own volition without being coerced.

Overview of MTN ghana

Launched in 1994, the MTN Group is a leading emerging market operator, connecting subscribers in 22 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The MTN Group is listed on the JSE Securities Exchange in South Africa under the share code: "MTN." As of 30 June 2013, MTN recorded 201.5 million subscribers across its operations in Afghanistan, Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Republic, Iran, Liberia, Nigeria, Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville), Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia. MTN's brand is the most valuable in Africa, and is ranked in the top 100 brands worldwide. MTN's shares constitute the biggest primary listing on the JSE – Africa's largest stock exchange. MTN, the leading provider of telecommunications services in Africa and the Middle East, entered the Ghanaian market following the acquisition of Investcom in 2006. MTN's overriding mission is to be a vehicle for Ghana's economic growth and development, helping to promote Ghana's strong development potential from the provision of world-class telecommunications products and services, through to innovative and sustainable corporate social investment initiatives (National Communication Authority website, December, 2018)

Background characteristics

Table 1. Background characteristics of respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	%
Gender (N=124)		
Male	64	51.6
Female	60	48.4
Age in years (N=124)		
20-29	2	6.5
30-39	59	47.5
40-49	55	44.4
50-59	8	1.6
Educational Background (N=124)		
Undergraduate	64	51.6
Masters	51	41.1
Professional	5	4.0
Doctorate	4	3.2

Years with MTN Ghana (N=124)		
1-5 years	30	24.2
6-10 years	35	28.2
11-15 years	25	20.2
16-20 years	20	16.1
21 years & above	14	11.3

Source: Researcher's field work, 2018

According to findings obtained from the administration of questionnaires to respondents, it was observed that 51.6% of respondents were males whereas 48.4% of the respondents are females. It can be concluded that there were more male respondents than females although this was not predetermined at the beginning of the questionnaire distribution.

As can be seen from the table above, the percentage of respondents who are between the ages of 30-39 years was 47.5% while those between the age of 40-49 years was found out to be 44.4%. It was revealed from the research also that 6.5% of the respondents are between the ages of 20-29 years whilst the age 50-59 years was 1.6%. The study showed that the majority of customers of MTN Ghana are in the age bracket of 30-39 years.

The findings showed that customers with doctorate degree accounted for the least group of respondents with only 3.2% of the total respondents. Professional qualification holders followed with 4.0%. This was followed by master's degree holders who accounted for 41.1% of the population. Undergraduate holders accounted for the most with 51.6%. From the statistics above it is obvious that most customers of MTN Ghana are undergraduate.

It was part of demographic information to search for the number of years respondents have stayed with MTN Ghana. The results showed that 28.2% of the respondents have stayed with MTN Ghana for 6-10 years whereas 24.2% of the respondents have stayed with MTN Ghana for 1-5 years. The findings also showed that 20.2% of the respondents have stayed with MTN Ghana for 11-15 years. It can be observed that most of the customers have been with MTN Ghana for more than 6 years.

Table 2. Incidences of Trend Analysis of MTN Ghana's Advertising

Year	Number of Advertising Recorded	Amount of money spent (in Ghana Cedi)
2013	320	35,000
2014	360	47,000
2015	440	70,000
2016	560	850,000
2017	700	980,000
Total	2,380	1,982,000

Source: Researcher's field work, 2018

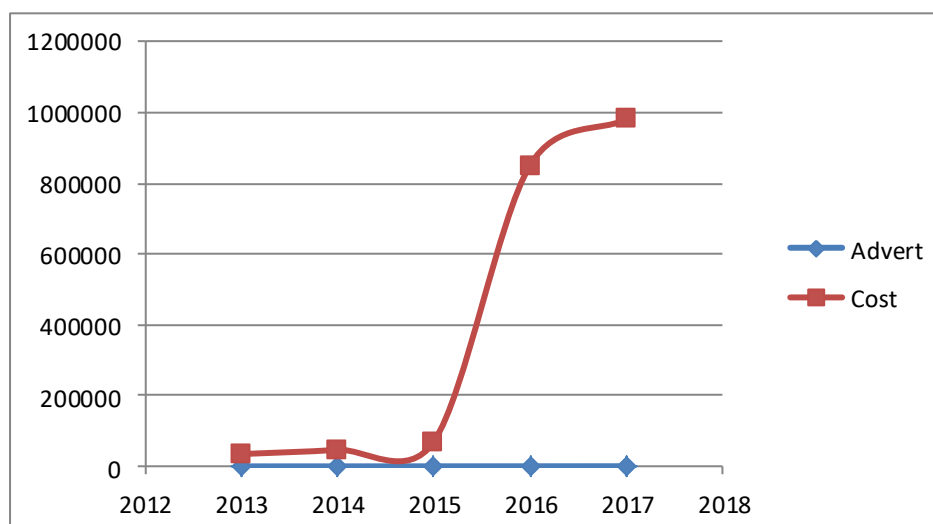


Figure 1. Incidences of trend analysis of MTN Ghana's advertising from 2013-2017

Source: Researcher's field work, January 2018

The statistics from Table 2 and Figure 1 above expounds the distribution of trend analysis of MTN Ghana's advertising between 2013 and 2017. The five-year trend analysis depicts a steady growth of MTN Ghana's advertising with 2017 witnessing the highest advertising with its attendant expenditure amounting 980,000 Ghana Cedi. The year 2015 recorded 440 number of advertising with its associated cost of 70,000. 560 number of advertising was recorded in 2016 with its attendants cost 850,000. The year 2014 recorded 360 number of advertising with the cost of 47,000 Ghana cedi. The modest year according to Table 2 and Figure 1 was the year 2013 with its attendant advertising cost amounting to 35,000 Ghana Cedi. This could be attributed to the low competition MTN Ghana was facing during the said year.

Reliability statistics

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient analysis was done on the responses that were received from the respondents on the type of advertising influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to offerings of MTN Ghana. Inferring from Tavakol and Dennick (2011), a Cronbach alpha coefficient value between 0.700 and 0.800 is acceptable for research. The internal consistency of the responses received from the respondents is thus valid. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Reliability statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.742	5

Source: Researcher's field work, 2018.

Table 4. Type of advertisement influencing consumers to respond to MTN Ghana's offerings

Type of Advertising	Mean			Rank
	Statistics	S.E	S.D	
Broadcast advertising (television and radio)	4.77	0.050	0.399	1 st
Outdoor advertising (billboards and kiosk)	4.72	0.039	0.112	2 nd
Print advertising (newspapers and magazine)	4.62	0.057	0.352	3 rd
Public Service advertising	3.98	0.046	0.464	4 th
Celebrity	3.76	0.045	0.243	5 th

Source: Researcher's field work, 2018

The findings of the analysis on the type of advertising influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to offerings of MTN Ghana revealed that; *broadcast advertising (television and radio)* (M =

4.77, S.D = 0.399) ranked first, *outdoor advertising (billboards and kiosk)* (M = 4.72, S.D = 0.112) ranked second, *print advertising (newspapers and magazines)* (M = 4.62, S.D = 0.057) ranked third, *public service advertising* (M = 3.98, S.D = 0.464) ranked fourth, *celebrity advertising* (M = 3.76, S.D = 0.243) ranked fifth as shown in Table 4 above.

Reliability statistics

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of the responses that were received from the respondents was 0.811. Inferring from Tavakol and Dennick (2011), a Cronbach's alpha coefficient value between 0.800 to 0.900 is good for research, hence the internal consistency of the responses is validated. Table 4.8 limns the reliability statistics of the responses received on the underlying factors influencing consumer behaviour to respond to advertisement of MNT Ghana.

Table 5. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.811	5

Source: Researcher's field work, 2018

Table 6. Underlying factors influencing consumer behaviour to respond to advertisement of MTN ghana

Motivational Factors	Mean			Rank
	Statistics	S. E	S. D	
Brand image	4.76	0.042	0.134	1 st
Product quality	4.73	0.039	0.154	2 nd
Advertising message	4.32	0.057	0.119	3 rd
Location of advertising message	4.52	0.040	0.147	4 th
Frequency of the message	4.20	0.063	0.144	5 th

Source: Researcher's field work, 2018

Analysis of data on the underlying factors influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to advertisement of MTN Ghana revealed that *Brand image* ranked first with a mean of 4.76 and a standard deviation of 0.134, *Product quality* ranked second with a mean of 4.73 and a standard deviation of 0.154, *Advertising message* ranked third with a mean of 4.32 and a standard deviation of 0.119, *medium of the advertising* ranked fourth with a mean of 4.52 and a standard deviation of 0.147, and *Frequency of the advertising* ranked fifth with a mean of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.144.

Allen & Seaman (2007) asserted that a five-point Likert scale with a confidence interval of 95% should be at least 3.50 to be considered significant. This implies that most of the respondents agreed on the variables given in the questionnaires as the underlying factors influencing consumer behaviour to respond to advertisement of MTN Ghana. Again, this assertion is buttressed by the fact that the standard errors (S.E) were small (that is, relatively close to zero), thus implying that the underlying factors motivating customers to respond to advertisement as chosen by the respondents were a true reflection of the study population. According to Altman and Bland (2005), the S.E is the standard deviation of the sampling distribution of the mean and also a degree of how likely a sample represents the population. Therefore, a large S.E relative to the sample mean implies that there is a lot of variations between the means and the samples while a small S.E relative to the sample mean implies that most sample means are similar to the population. Table 6 above presents the underlying factors influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to advertisement of MTN Ghana.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusion

1. It can be concluded that MTN Ghana has more male customers than female customers although this was not predetermined at the beginning of the questionnaire distribution.
2. From the results of the study, majority (47.5%) of the respondents were within the age group of 30-39 years which denotes an active year group.
3. A little over half (51.6%) of the respondents are undergraduate whereas 41.1% of the respondents have master's degrees. Also, it can be observed that 4.0% of the respondents are professional certificate holders while 3.2% have doctorate degrees. The results clearly indicate that all of the respondents have attained some level of education although the level of attainment varies.
4. The majority of the respondents had been with MTN Ghana for periods between six and ten years, while 24.2.% had been with MTN Ghana for periods between one and five years. Also, it can be revealed that 20.2% had been with MTN Ghana for periods between eleven and fifteen years while 16.1% had been with MTN Ghana for periods between sixteen and twenty years. The least respondents had been with MTN Ghana for twenty-one years and above
5. The results revealed a steady growth of MTN Ghana's advertising with 2017 witnessing the highest advertising with its attendant expenditure amounting 980,000 Ghana Cedi. The year 2015 recorded 440 number of advertising with its associated cost of 70,000. 560 number of advertising was recorded in 2016 with its attendants cost of 850,000. Also, it was observed that the year 2014 recorded 360 number of advertising with the cost of 47,000 Ghana cedi. The modest year however was the year 2013 with its attendant advertising cost amounting to 35,000 Ghana Cedi. This could be attributed to the low competition MTN Ghana was facing during the said year
6. The results of the analysis showed broadcast advertising such as television and radio ranking 1st with a mean of 4.77 and a standard deviation of 0.399, outdoor advertising such as billboards and kiosk ranking 2nd with a mean of 4.72 and a standard deviation of 0.112, print advertising such as newspapers and magazines ranking 3rd with a mean of 4.62 and a standard deviation of 0.057. Also, the study observed that public service advertising ranked 4th with a mean of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.464 and celebrity advertising ranked 5th with a mean of 3.76 and a standard deviation of 0.243 as the type of advertising employed by MTN Ghana to influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to the company's offerings
7. Analysis of data on the underlying factors influencing consumers' behaviour to respond to advertisement of MTN Ghana revealed that *Brand image* ranked 1st with a mean of 4.76 and a standard deviation of 0.134, product quality ranked 2nd with a mean of 4.73 and a standard deviation of 0.154, advertising message ranked 3rd with a mean of 4.32 and a standard deviation of 0.119, medium of the advertising ranked 4th with a mean of 4.52 and a standard deviation of 0.147, and frequency of the advertising ranked 5th with a mean of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.144.

Recommendations

1. MTN Ghana should focus on fostering strong-laden relationships with consumers in order to retain them. In the mist of strenuous competition, retention is the best bet. Retained customers become loyal and not much is spent on them. This will help reduce the already rising advertising cost.
2. Broadcast advertising (television and radio), outdoor advertising (billboards and kiosk) and print advertising (newspapers and magazine) should be strengthened to enable the company continue its market dominance.
3. There is the need for MTN Ghana to continue building strong brand image. Having strong brand image enhances the company's credibility and gives the company competitive edge in the telecommunication industry.
4. MTN Ghana should as well focus on maintaining its quality of products. A quality product helps in building a good reputation with customers. Also, the company should focus on churning out good advertising messages. Successful advertising allows consumers to respond to the message.

5. More so, the company should identify the most efficient media for its advertising campaign in order to reach out to its consumers. Also, the advertising frequency should be intensified so that the positioning statement can create a positive impression on the hearts and minds of the target audience.

Areas for future research

Since advertising is not the only element influencing consumer' behaviour, other elements could be explored in future studies to examine the level of influence on consumers' behaviour.

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