



Does Information Sharing, Product Advertisement, Price, and Peer Relation Predict Consumer Buying Behavior- for- GSM among Young People.

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of price, brand information sharing, product advertisement and peer relation on consumer buying behavior –for- GSM service. This study is the first attempt to empirically investigate and explicitly explain the mechanisms underlying the impact of product price, product advertisement, information sharing, and peer relation on consumer buying behaviour –for- GSM. The participants were 139 consumers 65 Men (46.76%) and 74 women (53.24%) that participated in the study. Four operator brands of GSM service providers were used (MTN Nigeria, Airtel, Globacom, Etisalat). Five valid and reliable psychological scales were used in the study. However, the study was guided by four research hypotheses. The first hypothesis stated that product price will significantly predict CBB-GSM and this was disconfirmed by the regression statistical finding ($\beta = -.23, p < .01$). The second hypothesis stated that information sharing will significantly predict CBB-GSM and this was confirmed by the regression statistical finding ($\beta = .27, p < .01$). The third hypothesis stated that product advertisement will significantly predict CBB-GSM and this was confirmed by the regression statistical finding ($\beta = .28, p < .01$). The fourth hypothesis stated that peer relation will significantly predict CBB-GSM and this was confirmed by the regression statistical finding ($\beta = .33, p < .01$). Based on these results, it was recommended that GSM service providers should engage in promotional advertisement and information sharing of their brands to create product awareness which may draw interest from consumers towards the product brands. They should also strive to understand group behavior with particular reference to peer group values, interest and preferences for low price brands, as this will help GSM service providers to plan and strategize production and advertisement of their brands towards satisfying a target set of consumers.

Keywords: Product Price, Information Sharing, Product Advertisement, Peer Relation, Consumer Buying Behaviour- for- GSM Network, MTN Nigeria, Airtel, Globacom, Etisalat, Young Consumers.

Introduction

In recent time, scholarly research information on consumer buying behavior has dramatically increased, but systematic knowledge of the external drivers (such as advertisement,



information sharing, and peer influence and price) of consumer buying decision in Nigeria appear scarce in consumer behavior literature. The importance of consumers buying behavior cannot be overemphasize in today's global and competitive market. Consumer buying behaviour according to Dawson, Findlay and Sparks (2006), drew a set of attitudes that characterize the patterns of consumers' choices. Apart from the essential internal factors, which are recognized as influential to buying behaviour, there are a number of external situational contexts that affect consumer choices. Consumer behaviour is a combination of customers' buying consciousness or stimuli- driven -product cognition like advertisement and information sharing and external drives or extrinsic motives like peer influence which are likely to influence behaviour remodeling and market regime index like product price can determine a consumer buying behaviour. Customer buying behaviour study is based on product choice behaviour, with the customer playing the three distinct roles of user, payer and buyer. Consumers are the people who buy and use all the products and services offers for sell in the market, therefore, consumers are the main target of every business. As the buyer and user of products and services, companies need to understand consumer buying behavior to be able to caption what drives their purchase decision. Obviously, companies that understand the buying decisions of the consumers and use the best consumer-oriented approach will stand the chance of winning more customers and make more profit. However, the need to understand consumer buying behavior is paramount and important not only for firm profitability (Goh, Jaing, Hak & Tee, 2016), but also for its sustenance in today's marketing competitive environment (Goh, Jaing, Hak & Tee, 2016). Apparently, buying pattern of consumers varies accordingly to price of products and attitude to products such as love of products. Ghosh and Ghosh (2013) further stated that there are different factors that directly or indirectly affect consumer buying behaviour. It includes information sharing and advertisement through newspaper and television, online social media platform that attracts the consumer in a sensational manner through their offers and presentations and provides effective consumer with an option to select a particular brand. Again, buying behaviour of a consumer is affected through peer group influence as in form of friends, and neighbours, and family members. Research indicates that societal reference groups that has the greater influence upon young individuals are family and peers (Mitra, Reiss & Capella, 1999). Apart from personal influence, individuals can also gather information about an issue or innovation



by observing the experience and evaluation of a peer group member (Karahanna, Straub & Chervany, 1999). Such a vicarious absorption of the information experience is often a very effective information source to the individual (Bandura, 1997). Researches have been emphasizing the importance of looking at how individuals fit into a broader social context and the influence this context has on their consumer responses (Briley & Wyer 2002; Grier & Desphande, 2001).

Research findings have shown that peers' influence on teenagers' identification is reflected through impacted teenagers' consumption (Mangleburg, Doney, & Bristol, 2004). In terms of buying and consumption, studies have shown that communication with peers positively affects teens' social motivation for consumption, materialistic values, and tendency to use peer influence in making a product choice and consumer buying behaviour (Liu & Laird, 2001). Logically, a person's cognitive thinking, price evaluation and consumer perception cues like advertisement- driven emotional sensation, information sharing, product price, and peer influence, be it as an individual or as part of a group, has a direct influence on their brand choice and buying behaviour.

However, through various promotional activities, like advertisement and price, a product advertisement can attempt to manipulate consumer perception, attitude and behaviour as to encourage a purchase (Kotler & Keller, 2011). The consumer's decision making may be influenced by different price of products. However, price is the amount of money charged for a product, or the amount of the values that consumers exchange for benefits because of having or using the product or services (Garry, 2011). In other word, the price is a cost incurred by the consumer to obtain a desired product or service. Thus in the process of purchasing, the price is a factor that influences how consumers perceive a certain product ; the high price, low price, fair price will have an influence on purchasing behavior. Consumer's perception on the price is generated by three types of reference. The types are low and fair, high and fair, and high and unfair prices. For consumers, low and fair price is within acceptable range market. High and fair price is at the maximum. While high and unfair prices are above the maximum limits of acceptable range of market prices. Consequently, the reference price will not be accepted by consumers and can affect consumers' assessment of the credibility of product as well as credibility of the company (Schiffman, 2010).



Shoppers' price awareness has attracted the attention of various researchers over the last few decades, with price recall accuracy the most common focus of research. Estelami and Lehmann's (2001) conducted a Meta-analysis that lead them to conclude that the actual research design used significantly impacted findings regarding consumers' ability to accurately recall prices. However, price is the cost that shoppers can best determine, and thus plays an important role in their purchase decision behaviour. For example, in a recent study of shoppers' selection of an outlet at which to make a purchase, price was consistently stated as a major influencing factor (GfK, Shopping Monitor, 2000). Such a finding is consistent with the feelings of retailers themselves, who indicate that price is an important selection criterion for shoppers (Agárdi & Bauer, 2000). Most of the consumers are very sensitive to the price, so in the buying process, consumers are ensuring to get the best value of their money. The ensuring effort begins prior to the purchase, that is indicated by comparing the price of similar product(s). Consumers are willing to make a purchase if the products offered, were worth the money being paid. Among the variables that affect the consumer's purchase decision is the price, which has a significant influence on communication factors concerning the advantages of purchasing a product or hiring a service. Price can be accompanied by a "discount," which increases the perceived value of the product for the purchaser. The value is based on the consumer's perception of the benefits of the product vis-à-vis the price.

As content specific, the current study is limited to psychological variables that can predictors global service mobile (GSM) network brand buying behavior of young smartphone users. Without doubt, smartphone is one of the new inventions that have greatly improved the general standard of living of Nigerian consumers. Apart from the normal communication function, smartphone is designed with special features and internet applications that people utilize to do all manner of social and business connections as well as vital professional work. Today's Smartphone is taking the role of the computer, making it possible to do a lot with this small handheld device (Ayodele & Ifeanyichukwu, 2016). It has a broad use such as sharing information, paying for the product, browsing and shopping (Malviya, Saluja & Thajur, 2013). Virtually every activity today has a Smartphone application for it (Malviya, Saluja & Thakur, 2013). However, partly due to its importance, the demand for smartphone has increased tremendously in recent time. Osuagwu (2014) stated that Nigeria has one of the



fastest Smartphone market penetrations in Africa after South Africa (Ayodele & Ifeanyichukwu,2016). Also according to statistical record, an estimate report by statistical portal for smartphone users for 2016 revealed that there are about 15.5 million smartphone users in Nigeria (Guardian Newspaper of July 8, 2016). Similarly, Nigeria communication commission (NCC) in 2015 reported that the users of Smartphone rose from 10 -15 million in 2014 to about 20 million in 2015, while Danbatta (2015) report showed that there were about 1914.6 billion smart phone users in the world as at 2015. These figures simply demonstrate high usage of smartphone in Nigeria and the world at large.

As demand for smartphone increases, with many brands of smartphone available in the Nigeria market, producers compete for customers, and consumers on the other hand take very careful decision regarding choice of smartphone brand to buy and choices of global service mobile (GSM) network provider brand to adopt or switchover. Hence, the challenges facing smartphones industries given the broader array of smartphones offer in Nigerian market is to be able to produce a brand that will meet consumer's needs and accommodate the product offer from different global service mobile (GSM) networks provider. By focusing on the consumers and understanding their buying behavior, company will be able to win customer, secure their fair market share and market profit (Sit, Ooi, Lin, & Chang, 2009). Therefore, the competitive forces in the contemporary market calls for the need to understand what informed buying behavior decision of consumers.

. Today, different smartphone companies advertise their phones in Nigeria using different advertising media. Samsung, Nokia, infinix, Iphone, among others all advertise their smartphone on the television, billboard, printing and so on. Similarly, different global service mobile (GSM) network providers in Nigeria offer different advertisement packages, various information sharing platforms. Global service mobile (GSM) network providers in Nigeria like MTN, Globacom, Etisalat, Airtael among others compete for customers through their various advertisement outlets and information sharing platforms. Consumer after watching this advertisement may decide to try the product. A good experience of its trial may turn consumer likeness to the product and lead to decision to repeat purchase. Consumers who repeat purchase of a particular product or brand are less likely to switch to other product, even when competitors offers cheaper price (Kuo, Hu, & Yang, 2013). Previous research



findings conducted in developed countries have consistently found a positive correlation between advertisement, information sharing and consumer buying behavior.(Naizi & Hujra, 2012; Rehman, Nawaz, Khan & Hyder, 2014).

Similarly, peer group could influence buying behavior of the consumers. A peer group is a group of people who share certain social characteristics, such as age, class, occupation, or education, and interact on a level of equality. That is to say that an individual may be a member of several peer groups, including friends, schoolmates, and coworkers. In the society today, peers often like to share similar class, similar behavior and similar interest. Therefore, the brand of Global service mobile (GSM) network provider one adopts as well as the brand of smartphone one use is somewhat associated with ones peer group value. According to Eszter (2008), the brand reference group provides image association, meaning that people choose to buy same brand of GSM line like MTN, Globacom, Etisalat, or Airtel common among the peers to feel belonged. However, Individual may place their peers as a reference group and buy a brand of GSM line like MTN, Globacom Etisalat or Airtel that reflect the group attitude and values. In order word, peers values may tend to influence attutide formation, product selection, and shopping behavior (Lachance, Beaudion, & Robitaille 2003). Goh, Jiang, Hak and Tee (2016) stated that there are some individuals who buy a brand of GSM network like MTN, Globacom Etisalat or Airtel to impress the peers. Researchers stress that peer groups inform and make individuals aware of specific products and brands; provide individuals with opportunities to compare their own thinking with the attitudes and behavior of the group; and influence individuals to adopt attitudes and behavior that are consistent with the norms of the group (Lessig & Park, 1978; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007).

Acquiring information and knowledge demand many resources. Nevertheless, people often share data, content, knowledge, and code. In fact, some identify the act of sharing information as an attribute of humanity itself (Dunbar, 1996). Sharing information is performed regularly, even spontaneously, via formal and informal channels. Information is typically shared face-to-face, in departmental meetings, written reports, telephone conversations, water-cooler meetings, and other traditional forms. It seems that sharing occurs uniquely with information, in ways not replicated with other goods or services.



Background to the Study

Price and product advertisement are major issues that drives the market forces and consumer buying behaviour. Studies have shown that understanding consumer buying behavior increase firm profitability (Goh, Jaing, Hak & Tee, 2016). Yet, limited studies have been conducted in Nigeria in respect to factors that influence consumer buying behavior. Though, several studies have been conducted on the antecedents of mobile service providers Network brand adoption purchase behavior in western countries (Chow, Chen, Yeow & Wong 2012; Malviya, Saluja & Thakur, 2013; Jain arain, 2012; Das, 2012; Osman, Talib, Sanusi Shiang-Yen & Alwi, 2012; Yu-Jui, 2012; Leelakulthanit & Hongcharu, 2012; Vinyrinda & Sihombing, 2013 and Juwaheer et al., 2014), these studies were alien to Nigerian environment and were carried out in different cultural settings. To the best knowledge of the researcher, no empirical study, with the exception of the work of Ayodele and Ifeanyichukwu (2016), has been carried out in the South-East Nigeria with respect to consumer buying behavior of GSM mobile Network users. Even the study of Ayodele and Ifeanyichukwu consider mainly minor product –related factors such as price, brand name and product feature. Yet, the knowledge of the relationship between consumer external stimuli such as advertisement, and information sharing and consumer normative motive such as peer relation are lacking in the Nigeria literature on consumer buying behavior. So far, studies on price, product advertisement, information sharing and peer influence in relation to consumer buying behavior have been scanty in the literature. Meanwhile, the few available related studies were conducted mainly in countries outside African continent. Yet, Africans, and Nigerians in particular, are one of the major users of GSM mobile lines in smartphone as revealed in the record. The GSM mobile operators as well as smartphone industries could benefit if they should know more about consumers buying behavior of Nigeria GSM mobile phone users, and factors that drive their buying behavior. The study is positioned to examine some predictors of consumers buying behavior and specifically aim to examine price, product advertisement, information sharing and peer relation as correlate of consumer buying behavior for GSM network among young people.

In Nigeria, telecommunication companies spend heavily on their promotion strategies that include advertisement to attract the consumers and to influence their buying behavior. But, sometimes it appears that advertisement fails to convince consumers and do not



persuade their purchase intentions due to its non-effectiveness to produce emotional feelings essential to change their purchase intentions. Most telephony companies create and sustain information sharing platforms for the dissemination of products related information and also use same to receive communication feedback from prospective consumer. Whether information sharing, price, product advertisement and peer relation effectively influence consumers choice of GSM phone line communication has not, to the best knowledge of the researcher, been ascertained in any empirical study in Nigeria. Besides ,the fact that studies pertaining to price , product advertisement ,information sharing and peer relation influences on consumer buying behavior of GSM sim-card users is lacking in mobile voice communication in Nigeria calls for systematic enquiry to bridge the gap.

Studies on the peer relation and consumer buying behavior relationship across countries yielded inconsistent results. For example, while Nagarkoti (2009) found no significant influence of peer relation on consumer buying behavior of smartphone, Chow, Chen, Yoow & Wong (2012) found the relationship between peer relation and consumer buying behavior of Malaysian smartphone users to be significant. Goh, Jiang, Hak Tee (2016) also found social influence to be significantly related to purchase decision. However, no such study has been done in Nigeria that relates price, product advertisement, information sharing and peer relation in exploration of consumer attitude to GSM voice communication in Nigeria.

The problematic issue is that the study targets young consumers. Young consumers are enthusiastic and adventurous social organisms. Consumers are influenced by social perception and socialization group norms of the society where they live. Young consumers are primarily perceived as social organisms conform to the general forms and norms of the peer group surrounding them and to the more specific standards of the sub-culture to which their life is bound through socialization attachment. In essence, young consumer's attitudes and behaviours are influenced by several levels of society's sub-culture or reference groups (peer group), and external cognitive stimuli (information sharing) or perceived sensation driven emotion (advertisement). The challenge to consumer psychologist and customer-centric behaviorists like marketer or retailer is to determine how product attributes like price of product; and which of the selected socio-cultural factors are most important in influencing the demand for a particular GSM Sim-card products brand. Peer group relations, being part



of the societal sub-culture is likely to influence people's values, belief, attitude, and buying behavior. Similarly, information sharing and products advertisement are sensationally packaged perceptual stimuli that impinges on consumer's cognitive schemata that is likely to influence individual emotional states, affectivity, thinking, attitude and consumer buying behavior. It is, therefore, imperative to explore the relationship between these factors and consumer buying behaviour of GSM sim-card brands used in mobile voice communication with smartphones in Nigeria. The general purpose of this study is to determine psychological factors that influence buying behavior for GSM of smartphone consumers in Nigeria. The study narrowed the psychological factors to examine four variables of interest : price, product advertisement, peer relation and information sharing. Therefore, the specific objectives of this study are:

- . To explore relationship between product price and consumer buying behavior for GSM sim-card brands among smartphone users; to verify relationship between information sharing and consumer buying behavior for GSM sim-card brands among smartphone users; to examine relationship between product advertisement and consumer buying behavior for GSM sim-card brands among smartphone users; to explore relationship between peer relation and consumer buying behavior for GSM sim-card brands among smartphone users.

This study will, however, attempt to answer the following questions:

- . Will there be a significantly positive relationship between price of product and consumer buying behavior for GSM sim-card brands among smartphone users.
- . Will there be a significantly positive relationship between information sharing and consumer buying behavior for GSM sim-card brands among smartphone users.
- . Will there be a significantly positive relationship between product advertisement and consumer buying behavior for GSM sim-card brands among smartphone users.
- . Will there be a significantly positive relationship between peer relation and consumer buying behavior for GSM sim-card brands among smartphone users.



Theory and Hypotheses

Consumer Buying Behaviour

The central theme in the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) is that the individual's intention to perform a given behavior is based on reasoned action. Individual has to reason before acting because they want to get justification for their actions. In the context of consumer buying behavior, consumers are rational beings who would want to reason their buying decisions so as to get satisfaction for their needs. Hence, they prioritize their needs and plan based on information which they have evaluated as it relate to their buying behavior.

Cutting Edge Research Trend on Consumer Buying Behaviour for GSM

Shah (2012) examined those factors considered by the customers to shape their preference for mobile service providers and the impact of motivators on subscription decision for a particular service operation among GSM mobile users in Bardoli, India, and found that service quality and brand image, service charges and plan, and network quality, plays a vital role to the choice of a Mobile Service Providers, as well as the role of the word-of-mouth in the marketing of a service provider. Khan and Rohi (2013) investigated the factors affecting youth brand choice for mobile phones purchase among students of City University and Sarhad University, Peshawar, Parkistan. Self administered questionnaire was used to collect data from the students, and the result found that quality, brand image and recommendations by family and friends are the key variables that influence the brand choice of youths for mobile handset purchase in Peshawar, Parkistan. Similarly, Hasan, Yeasmin, and Dey (2013) examined the factors that influences customer's choice of mobile phone operators and their change behavior, among consumer in Bangladesh, India, and found that call charge, network coverage, faster internet services and promotional package such as bonus on recharge, cash back on use are the main factors that influence consumer's mobile phone operators choice and switching behavior, and also that there are no significant difference between stayers and switchers with respect to supplementary services and value added services, which both gave more importance on service price and connectivity and mobility factors. Okeke (2014) investigated the major factors influencing the choice of GSM network



among 90 phone users of oil and gas workers in port Harcourt, Nigeria, and the study found that network coverage, network quality, tariff calls and customer care service are the important influencing factors in the choice of GSM service provider. Sata (2013) investigated the factors affecting consumer buying behavior of mobile phone devices among consumers in Hawassa, Ethiopia, and found that consumer's value price, followed by mobile phone features as the most important variable amongst all and it also acted as a motivational force that influences them to go for a mobile phone purchase decision. Akeke, Akinruwa and Akeke (2016) conducted a survey to examine consumer's preference of mobile phone service providers among phone users of Ekiti State, Nigeria. The data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire and the result showed that connectivity was considered most significant with customer's preference, followed by tariff rate, network coverage and quality of service for mobile phone service providers in the state. Okechukwu, Ede and Ukenna (2013) examined the factors influencing undergraduates' choice of mobile telecomm networks, using students from SouthEast, Nigeria. The study found that new technology and social factors were undergraduates' important choice criteria for mobile telecomm network. Karachuka, Catik, and Huacap (2012) conducted a survey which investigated the effects of consumer choice and local network in mobile telecommunication, among individuals randomly selected from 61 cities in Turkey. The findings indicated that customers are more likely to be affected by the choice of other people within their local areas, than by the overall size of a network, and also that local effects may outweigh macro network effects in Turkey. Olalekan, Babatunde and Ishola (2015) investigated the influence of advertising on consumer choice of telecommunication services, among individuals randomly selected from the six geographical zones in Nigeria. The study found that product's self service charge and service quality has a greater impact on consumer choice of telecommunication services than advertisement which has a less impact. Umamaheswari and Savitha (2017) examined the preference and satisfaction of customers towards various cell phone service providers, among phone users in Udumalpet, Taluk, and found that majority of cell phone users are satisfied with their Airtel mobile networks and the services they render. Isik and Yasar (2015) examined the effects of brand on consumer preferences, using respondents from Turkmenistan, a 5 point Likert scale questionnaire was used in the collection of data, and the



findings revealed that brand name variable has a significant impact on the overall preferences of GSM communication consumers.

Product Advertisement

The Theory of Trying (Bagozzi & Warsaw, 1990) focuses on the assessment of trying to act. In theory of trying, consumers attempt to try a product as advertisement changes their cognition and perception (Carsrud, 2009). In case of new product, advertisement simply serves as a means of introducing the product to consumers, who may decide to try the product. According to Rehman, Nawaz, Khan and Hyder (2014), advertisement is defines as “sharing of information about products in a non-personal way usually paid by a sponsor through different media. These media could be television, billboard, newspaper, radio, internet website, and so on. Advertising is done to create likeness, attraction and influence buying behavior in positive way” (Rehman et al, 2014). Similarly, Ayanwala, Alimi and Anyanbimipe (2005) defines advertisement as “ a non-personal paid form where ideas, concepts, products or services, and information are promoted through media (visual, verbal, and text) by an identified sponsor to persuade or influence behavior”. Advertisement is one means that companies apply to get their products and services known to consumers.

Current Empirical Studies on Advertisement and Consumer Buying Behavior for GSM

Fitima and Lodhi (2015) conducted a study on the “Impact of advertisement on buying behavior of the consumers of cosmetic industry in Karachi city”. A sample of 200 male and female cosmetic consumers participated in the study. Pearson correlation result indicated that advertisement had positive significant relation with consumer buying awareness. Further, a regression analysis was also conducted to examine the impact of consumer awareness on consumer buying behavior, and the result demonstrated that consumer awareness had significant impact on consumer buying behavior ($\beta = .598, p < .05$) and contributed 39% increase in consumer buying behavior. In another study by Rehman, Nawaz, Khan and Hyder (2014) on “how advertising affects the buying behavior of consumer in rural areas: a case of Paskistan”. The sample used was 416 participants comprise of students, teachers, and professionals. A pearson correlation result demonstrated a



significant negative correlation between factor of rural area (educational level and buying power) and consumer behavior ($r = -.637$) and a significant positive correlation between advertisement and consumer buying behavior, all at $p < .001$. Further regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of advertisement on consumer behavior. The result indicated that advertisement had significant effect on consumer buying behavior. Rehman et. al (2014) explained that the reason for the negative correlation between factor of rural areas and buying behavior was due to the high ratio of unemployment in the rural area. The positive correlation was due to awareness that advertisement created on the consumers' cognition. Russo and Chaxel, (2010) also conducted a study that examined influence of persuasive message (advertising) on consumer choice. The study employed an experimental design consisting of 203 participants divided and placed under five conditions; two uncontrolled and three controlled; in verifying the ability of a specific, observable process to explain the influence of a persuasive message on choice. The study indicated that although people are aware of advertising's direct effect on their choice, they are not aware of its indirect effect through biased evaluation of the product information.

Peer Relation

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) proposes that people can learn by watching other people as they perform the behavior, hence, behavior are shaped by observation and imitation. In the context of peer relation, peers are social group that share common attitude and value. They learn this value by imitating one another. Based on this, individual are likely to observe and imitate the behavior of peers and try to integrate in their own behavior. They imitate the behavior vicariously and exhibit it unconsciously. Thus, social learning theory provides good explanation for why peer within a given social context share similar characteristics. In addition, it provide ground for the relationship between peer relation and consumer buying behavior in the sense that peer influence make consumers to opt for product they commonly use. As espouse by Lessing and Park (1978), Individuals may place their peers as a reference group before they finally decide their brand choice. Thus, they will collect brand information from various peers such as co-worker, friend and family. A reference group is a group whose values and attitudes are used by an individual as a basis for his or her current behavior (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007; Hawkins et al., 2006). A peer is a



person or group who is (are) equal in social standing, rank, age and background. A peer relation is a group whose beliefs, values, mannerism and attitudes are used by an individual as a basis for his or her current behavior (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007; Hawkins et al., 2006). Ibrahim, Kassim, and Mohamood (2013) affirmed that peer influence has high impact in attracting young consumers to purchase smartphone. Informational peer group pressure is likely to influence an individual purchase decision if he or she receives the information as evidence about reality and desires to make informed decisions (Mangleburg et al., 2004). Utilitarian peer influence is explained as an individual try to meet the expectation of peers in order to receive prize (recognition) or to prevent a form of punishment (isolation). According to Karen (2013), peer influence has significant relationship with the customer purchase decision.

Cutting Edge Studies on Peer Relation and Consumer Buying Behavior- for-GSM

Makgosa and Mohube (2007) conducted a study in Batswana on “peer influence on young adult products purchase decision” using 101 university students. The study found that peer influence had no significant influence on consumer purchase intention. Similarly, the study of Childers and Rao (1992) on the impact of peer influence on consumer buying behavior conducted in Thailand did not show significant impact on consumer buying behavior.

Contrarily, Chang and Change (2005) found a significant relationship between peer influence and consumer buying behavior. Farzana (2012) found that consumers are influenced by their social group in the purchase decision making process. According to Farzana (2012), in the purchase of smartphone, the social influence might come from peer. In the same vein, Osman (2012) found in his study that 36.6% of 1814 Malaysian respondents think that the trend in society is the criterion that will influence the smartphone purchase decision of consumers.

Price of Product

The storage model (Williams & Wright, 1991) studies how speculators will engage in commodity transactions based on their expectations of future price changes. Typically, when the actual price is below the level speculators expect to prevail in the next period (namely, the long-term mean of the price adjusted for storage and interest rate costs), speculators will



store the commodity in order to sell it at a higher price during the next period. By contrast, when the current price is above the next period's expected value, speculators will not store the commodity. In the case when there are no incentives to store (the so-called stock-out case), price dynamics simply follow the path of the underlying supply shocks. Clearly, the storage model theory is best suited for commodities which are easily stored and whose production is unpredictable due mainly to inflation.

Empirical Studies on Price

One of the early studies that compared prices for books, CDs and software between the Internet and conventional retailers concluded that prices on the Internet were, on average, higher than prices in conventional stores (Bailey 1998). The following reasons were given for the unexpected results: incomplete search mechanisms on the Internet, different demographics of consumers on the net, an experimental stage of the online retail shops, and the differentiation of the online shops in terms of additional services, namely, more options and customized suggestions. In a comparison of 46 pharmacy portals in the US in 1999, Spiegel (2000) also reported that Internet drug prices and physician consultations were more costly online than their offline counterparts. Similar results were found in a study by Massad and Tucker (2000) who compared an online auction conducted in eBay.com with the traditional in-person auction on prices for 60 collectible plates and gurnes known as 'Hummels'. The study concluded that for buyers it was better to buy at in-person auctions as they could get lower prices than at online auctions. Lee (1998) had arrived at the same conclusion for used car prices conducted at auctions and through traditional retailers. Lee concluded that higher prices in the auction could be explained for reasons other than search costs such as: higher quality of cars in the auction, greater bargaining power of the sellers not having to carry the costs moving cars, and an increase in the number of bidders.

Lynch and Ariely (2000) conducted an experiment that simulated a shopping environment similar to the Wine.com website. Seventy-two MBA and PhD students shopped for wines from two competing electronic wine stores and were asked to taste 10 of the wines to see which they preferred. The independent variables were price usability (high or low use of



price), quality usability (product description, eg, varietal, acidity, body), and store comparability (high or low use of store comparison). The dependent variable, price sensitivity was based on two measures: quantity difference and price elasticity. The authors concluded that making it easy for consumers to compare across stores need not intensify price competition – at least not if competing stores are selling exclusive (non-overlapping) merchandise. The results show that for common wines, increasing store comparability increased price sensitivity, but that the same effect was not found for unique wines. Hossain and Morgan (2006) present a field experiment on partitioned pricing. Buyers in an eBay auction made bids for CDs and Xbox games. In the auctions there was a reserve price and separate (fixed) shipping and handling costs. Hossain and Morgan observed that when the reserve price is low as compared to the retail price of the good, and the shipping and handling costs are high, then the auction always results in a higher sale price than in a situation in which the reserve price is high (relative to retail) and the shipping and handling is low. In a follow-up paper Hossain and Morgan sold different iPod 4models on Yahoo Taiwan and eBay Ireland. They find that shrouding low shipping charges is a money-losing strategy for the seller but that raising shrouded shipping charges does increase revenue. In this instance shipping charges were either shown on the search page for each auction or they were shrouded because buyers had to read each individual auction page to learn the shipping costs. Wansink, Kent, and Hoch (1998) report results from a field experiment to examine multi-unit price frames which they compare to single-unit offer frames. The multiple unit frames typically used the format “buy two for x” where one unit would have been available for $x/2$, that is, both frames relied on simple linear pricing. Utilizing a data set from 86 stores that are randomly assigned to one of the two offer frames they find that, for a wide range of products, sales under the multiple-unit frame were, on average, 32% higher than under the single-unit frame. Ellison and Ellison (2005) analyzed a market characterized by the presence of price search engines. Price search engines are designed to make consumer search and price comparison easier, and as such, reduce friction in the market such that the price of identical goods should be identical. However, retailers may seek to put friction back into the market by making price search more difficult and thereby less of a threat to profitability. Ellison and Ellison (2005), using field data from an actual price comparison site in the US observed a highly successful version of baiting where sellers advertise a low quality product at a very



low price as a bait and then try to convince consumers to switch to better quality, more expensive, products once they are in their on-line store (despite the cheap product being available).

Conceptual Framework for the Study

Conceptual framework is formed based on the research objectives and research questions. It displays both dependent variable (consumer buying behavior for GSM provider) and independent variables (price, product advertisement, peer relation and information sharing). These variables are connected and linked to form a test on this study. Figure 1 is the conceptual framework that focuses on the relationship between independent variables (price, product advertisement, peer relation and information sharing) and the dependent variable (consumer buying behavior for GSM provider).

Research Hypotheses

This study will, however, attempt to propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Information sharing will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior – for- GSM Sim-card brands among smartphone users.

H2: Product advertisement will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior- for- GSM Sim-card brands among smartphone users.

H3: Price of product will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior- for- GSM Sim-card brands among smartphone users.

H4: Peer relation will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior- for- GSM Sim-card brands among smartphone users.

Method

Participant

Overall, 139 participants comprised 65 (46.76%) male, and 74 (53.24%) females participated in the study. A simple random sampling was adopted to select the consumers as participants in the study. The consumers comprised of 69 (49.64%) undergraduate students from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and 70 (50.36%) workers. The student sample include: male 33



(47.80%), Female 36 (52.20%), and working class sample include: male 32 (45.70%) and female 38 (54.30%) all were drawn from daily consumer polls of three big shopping malls (Robban store, Stanel complex and Denobel electronics) in Awka metropolis. The some of the consumers were students from Social Sciences 19(27.54%), Management 18(26.09%), Biological Sciences 15(21.74%) and Engineering 17(24.64%), whereas few of the consumers were workers comprising of of 31 (44.30%) civil servants, 10 (14.30%) entrepreneurs, 9 (12.90%) bankers, 18 (25.70) artisans (tailors) and 2 (2.90) public servants. In terms of their age, the students' age ranged from 18 to 32 years (Mean age= 22.33, SD = 2.72) while workers age were between 21 to 40 years (Mean = 37.17, SD = 10.40). Regarding their marital status, for worker's sample 33 (46.80%) were single, 37(42.50%) were married, and for students' sample; 63(91.30%) were single while 6(8.70%) were married. In respect to tribe, 133(95.68%) come from Igbo, 2(1.43%) were from Urhobo, 2(1.43%) were from Yoruba, and 1(.72%) was from Efik. However, workers who participated in the study hailed from different states; Anambra 37 (52.90%), Enugu 14 (20.00%), Imo 8 (11.40%), Abia (8.60%), Ebonyi 1 (1.40%), Edo 1 (1.40%), Delta 1 (1.40%), Cross-River 1 (1.40%) Ogun 1 (1.40%) but were all residing in Awka metropolis.

Instrument

Four different scales: consumer buying behavior -for- GSM scale (CBB-GSM), index of peer relation (IPR), product advertisement scale (PAS) and product price index (PPI) were used in the study.

Consumer Buying Behavior- for- GSM: The consumer buying behavior –for- GSM scale (CBB-GSM) of Nnedum (2016) was used in the study. Nnedum (2016) CBB-GSM scale was developed, standardized and validated as a 20 items measure that access consumer's purchase behavior –for- GSM Sim-card brands. It is a 5-point likert response format that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Nnedum (2016) reported construct validity of the CBB-GSM scale. Nnedum (2016) reported a Cronbach alpha measure of internal consistency of .80. However, a reliability analysis was carried out on the present data. A cronbach alpha coefficient reliability score of .78 was obtained. The high reliability score indicated that the consumer buying behavior for GSM scale items have high internal consistent which demonstrate that the scale was reliable in the present study.



Peer Relation : A 25-item index of peer relation scale developed by Hudson (1982) was used in the current study. It is a dimensional scale that measured peer group influence, with a five point Likert-format responses that ranged from 1-strongly disagree, to 5 – strongly agree. One example of peer relation item is “I get along very well with my peers. The scale has been validated in Nigeria by Nnedum (2006), using participants from Igbo cultural background. Similarly, the current study also used participants from same Igbo cultural background. In addition, a reliability analysis was conducted on the current data which yielded a cronbach alpha reliability coefficient score of .74. Thus, the high reliability value indicates that the peer relation scale items have high degree of internal consistent.

Product Advertisement: Product advertisement scale (PAS) used in the study was a 9-item scale that was developed by Obermiller (1998) that measures consumers’ attitude toward advertisement. An example of the scale item includes “we can depend on getting the truth in most advertising”. A reliability analysis conducted on the current data gave a high cronbach alpha reliability coefficient value of .75. This high score demonstrated that the advertisement items are internally consistent, and reliable for the current study.

Price: Product Price Index (PPI) of Nnedum (2017) was used in the study. Nnedum (2017) PPI was developed, standardized and validated as a 10 items measure that access consumer’s perception of the product price. It is a 5-point likert response format that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Nnedum (2017) reported construct validity of the PPI measure. Nnedum (2017) reported a cronbach alpha measure of internal consistency of .76. However, a reliability analysis was carried out on the present data. A cronbach alpha coefficient reliability score of .78 was obtained. The high reliability score indicated that the product price index items have high internal consistency which demonstrates that the scale was reliable for the present study.

Procedure

160 copies of questionnaire were distributed to consumers in the shopping malls. The battery of test comprised of four different versions of same questionnaires that reflect four different GSM service providers in Nigeria (MTN Nigeria, Globacom, Etisalat, and Airtel). Each were produced 40 copies. Two forms of consumer questionnaire differ only on some demographics for the students’ category and for the workers’ group. For the students



version, faculties and departments were included as well as year of study; and for that of workers, income and salary levels were included. The researchers obtained an official letter of identification and introduction from the Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The researchers obtained permission from the proprietors of the shopping malls to conduct the study. The researchers obtained informed consent from participants to participate in the study. All the participants were consumers of GSM services (sim-card) network. Based on the random sampling method, all the consumers who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study were given equal chance of participation. One core inclusion criteria was that the consumer must have a GSM sim-card in active use. The questionnaire was distributed to them at the shopping malls. Because different individuals used different brands of GSM sim-card, the researchers normally asked the participants questions, like “which type of GSM sim-card do you used”, to enable the researchers select which type of questionnaire, of sim-card brands, to administer. The field work lasted for 14 working days. At the end, 160 copies of questionnaires were distributed and 150 returned. During examination of the 150 filled questionnaires, 11 were invalid because majority of the items were not filled properly. Thus, 139 valid questionnaires served as a valid data for the current study that showed a response rate of 86.88 % in this study.

Design / Statistics

The study was a cross-sectional survey method with a correlation quantitative design. Based on this design, the relationship between Price, Information sharing, product advertisement, peer relation (IVs) and consumers buying behavior- for- GSM (DV) was empirically examined using a simple regression statistics. However, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 was applied to the data for analysis.



Result

Test of Hypotheses

H1: Product Price will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior –for- GSM among smartphone users.

Table 1: Regression of Product Price on Consumer Buying Behavior- for -GSM

Variables	N	Mean	SD	β	r2	p sig
Price	139	5.21	.94	-.233	.226	.004 **
CBB	139	3.24	.44			

β = standardized beta alpha coefficient, r2 (adjusted r square) = %of variance in DV accounted for by the IV , ** = P < .01

In the finding of the regression analysis presented in table 1, product price was found to significantly predict consumer buying behavior ($\beta = -.233$, $p < .01$). However, r2 value of -.226 implies that product price contributed negatively to consumer buying behavior –for- GSM by 22.6%. In order word, it means that 22.6% variance in consumer buying behavior were accounted for by product price. Therefore hypothesis 1 which stated that product price will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior for GSM was not confirmed.

H2: Information sharing will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior – for- GSM among smartphone users.

Table2: Regression of Information Sharing on Consumer Buying Behavior –for- GSM

Variables	N	Mean	SD	β	r2	p sig
Inform sharing	139	3.67	1.17	.272	.254	.003 **
CBB	139	3.24	.44			

β = standardized beta alpha coefficient, r2 (adjusted r square) = %of variance in DV accounted for by the IV , ** = P < .01



The finding indicated that information sharing significantly predicted consumer buying behavior- for-GSM ($\beta = .272, p < .01$), with information sharing contributing about 25.4% variances (increase) in consumer buying behavior –for- GSM .In order word, it means that 25.4% variance in consumer buying behavior –for- GSM were accounted for by information sharing. Therefore, hypothesis 2 which stated that information sharing will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior –for- GSM was confirmed.

H3: Advertisement will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior-for-GSM among smartphone users.

Table 3: Regression of Advertisement on Consumer Buying Behavior- for- GSM

Variables	N	Mean	SD	β	r2	p	sig
Advertisement	139	4.01	.70				
CBB	139	3.24	.44	.276	.268	.003	**

β = standardized beta alpha coefficient, r2 (adjusted r square) = %of variance in DV accounted for by the IV , ** = P < .01

The finding of the regression analysis showed that that advertisement had a significant effect on consumer buying behavior ($\beta = .28, P < .01$). However, the r2 value of .268 implies that 26.8% variances in consumer buying behavior –for- GSM, was accounted for by advertisement. In order word, it means that 26.8% variance in consumer buying behavior - for- GSM were accounted for by product advertisement. Therefore hypothesis 3 which stated that advertisement will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior for GSM was accepted.

H4: Peer Relation will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior-for-GSM among smartphone users.

Table 4: Regression of Peer Relation on Consumer Buying Behavior- for- GSM

Variables	N	Mean	SD	β	r2	p	sig
Peer relation	139	4.00	.70				
CBB.	139	2.98	1.31	.329	.304	.002	**

β = standardized beta alpha coefficient, r2 (adjusted r square) = %of variance in DV accounted for by the IV , ** = P < .01



The regression result of table 4 indicated that peer relation predicted consumer buying behavior significantly ($\beta = .329, p < .01$). In addition, the r^2 (r square) value .304 in the table portrayed that 30.4% variance in consumer buying behavior- for- GSM was accounted for by peer relation influence. In order word, it means that 30.4% variance in consumer buying behavior for GSM were accounted for by peer influence. Therefore hypothesis 4 which stated that product price will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior - for- GSM was accepted.

Discussion

The study found that price and consumer buying behavior –for- GSM has a significant negative relationship, and this finding disconfirmed the first hypothesis of the study. It is consistent with the previous findings of Choi (2010, 2008) and Rashed, Azeem, and Halim (2016) who found significant negative relationship between price and consumer buying behavior. This finding implies that the more companies place their product on high and unfair product price, the less consumers tend to purchase the GSM service products (like recharge card, data plan, cash transfer) for voice communication in Nigeria. The essence of low and fair price is to create motive, desire as well as attraction, which can change consumers' thinking and attitude favorably toward GSM products (Hart, 2004). By the finding of this study, product price indeed creates attraction, and influence consumer buying behavior- for-GSM products for voice communication, such that as companies decrease products price, consumers' choice for the product also increases. The Nigerian consumers mainly are conscious of price affectivity, especially at this period of economic recession and psychological hardship such that the lower the price of sim-cards, cheaper the tariff rate, lower the call rate charges, the more tendency that consumer will easily buy GSM branded products for mobile voice communication from GSM service providers.

The study found that information sharing and consumer buying behavior-for- GSM has a significant positive relationship, and this finding agrees with the second hypothesis of this study. It is in consistent with the previous findings of Zhou, and Benton (2007) and Fawcett, Osterhaus, Magnan, Brau, and McCaeter (2007) that found significantly positive relationship between information sharing and consumer buying behavior. This finding implies that the more companies place emphasis on information sharing between the GSM operators,



producers of GSM communication products and consumers of GSM services and products, the more consumers tend to purchase more of their GSM products. The essence of information sharing is to create interaction, awareness, feedback, between providers of GSM services products and buyers of GSM products, such that can positively change consumers' perception and attitude favorably towards more inclination for the GSM products (Wadhwa, & Saxena, 2005; Chen, 2003; Aviv, 2001; Chen & Yu, 2001). By the finding of this study, information sharing creates interaction, awareness, encourage feedback information platform between providers of GSM products and consumers of GSM voice communication products, that influence consumer buying behavior for GSM services, such that as companies increase their contents of information sharing connectivity, the more consumers tendency to buy their GSM voice communication products in Nigeria.

The study found that product advertisement and consumer buying behavior -for- GSM has a significant positive relationship, and this finding agree with the third hypothesis of this study. It is in consistent with the previous findings of Zia (2016) and Naizi et al (2016) who also found significant relationship between advertisement and consumer buying behavior. This finding implies that the more GSM operators place their GSM products on advertisement, the more consumers tend to purchase their GSM service products. The focus of advertisement is to create awareness, change consumers' perception and attitude favorably to buy the GSM service products (Fitima & Lodhi, 2015). By the finding of this study, advertisement indeed creates awareness, and positively influence consumer buying behavior for GSM, such that as GSM service providers increase advertisement of their GSM brand of products, the more consumers tendency to purchase their GSM products increases.

The fourth hypothesis states that peer relation will significantly and positively predict consumer buying behavior -for- GSM. The finding of the present study confirmed the hypothesis 4. This finding is consistent with previous studies that attest to the fact that peer relation positively enhance consumer purchase behavior (John, 2013; Karen, 2013; Makgosa, & Mohube, 2007; Osman, 2012). It therefore implies that peer relation and consumer buying behavior- for- GSM have linear relations with each other. The finding demonstrates that peer influence positively relate with decision to buy GSM service product brands that are in congruence with the value of the peers group (Bristol & Mangleburg, 2005; Farzana, 2012). Thus, consumers tend to buy a particular GSM sim-card brand probably



because of their peer value for features, connectivity, and network accessibility of that brand. Possibly either that the GSM sim-card is commonly used by their peer group, or that their peer want to show class, or better still to impress the peer group members.

Conclusion

Based on the result, it is concluded that information sharing, product advertisement, and peer influence were important factors that tends to increase consumer buying behavior- for- GSM service product brands. Also, price of product relate negatively to consumer buying behavior –for- GSM service sim-card brands and other GSM voice communication products. GSM providers in Nigeria are informed of the dire consequences of price affectivity for GSM service products.

Implications

The results of this study can provide new consumer behavior dynamics to GSM operators, producers of GSM service products and consumers, buyers of GSM voice communication products. The information sharing nexus, will contribute a major share in the product innovation strategy, network accessibility improvement, enhance connectivity performance, that in turn will increase revenue of these GSM service operator in the telephony industries. Peer influence and advertisement also leverages veritable information to GSM operators, producers of GSM sim-card; GSM vendors, marketers of GSM products and buyers, consumers of GSM products in their operations and strategic plan of production and marketing logistics.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the scientific evidence provided by the findings of the study:

- GSM communication operators should encourage the creation and sustenance of information sharing platform that encourage interaction and feedback on consumer need for product improvement. GSM service providers should apply best strategic production practices capable of satisfying consumers' need for low price and fair price for quality GSM service products that have been found to increase sales of GSM voice communication products in Nigeria.



- Various product features and attributes that affect consumer choice behavior should be highlighted through advertisement cues, finding have demonstrated the advertisement enhancement influence on consumer buying behavior for GSM products. GSM operators should ensure that information portrayed in the advertisement cues actually reflects the beneficial features of the product so that consumers post experience of product use will positive enhance repeat purchase and low switching behavior for consumers of GSM products or GSM services.
- Strategic product feature that emphasizes new technology, and brand features capable of capturing a particular peer group values, interests and preferences should be promoted, as finding show that peer influence increase the tendency of consumers to choose particular brand of GSM product.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of the study was the scope. The study has a regional bias since the respondents were only residents of Awka metropolitan urban city. For better generalization of result, sample size could be made more appropriately large to represent a wider geographical area in the state.

The second problem was social desirability bias. As the predictor and criterion variables were framed in a cross-sectional survey with the same Likert response format, future researchers should employ experimental method, that not only increases generalizability of findings but also reduce difficulties in common method bias.

Suggestion for further Study

Based on the limitations of the research outcomes, it is suggested that future research in this area of consumer behaviour should explore the mechanisms through which psychological factor like advertisement and information sharing, sociological variable like peer influence, and market force like price trade off, mediate or moderate the consumer behaviour relations in a transition economy.



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