

Gender Differences and Brand of GSM Service Provider On Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract: The study investigated the gender differences and the brand of GSM service provider on customer satisfaction. The goal of this study is to ascertain gender differences and brand of GSM service provider on consumer satisfaction. A total of 110, (53.64%) 59 males and (46.37%) 51 female participants were selected for the study. Their ages ranged from 18-35 with a mean age of 6.46 and standard deviation of 3.75. All participants available who met the inclusive criteria who were willing to participate and signed the consent form were selected. The instrument used was the customer satisfaction on telephone industry, a 14 (fourteen) item questionnaire. This is descriptive research design and it employs a two way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for data analysis. The findings of the study showed that there is a statistical difference between male and

female on their satisfaction with telephone services and also that there is no statistical difference between MTN, GLO and AIRTEL brands on their services satisfaction. It is recommended that the customer's perceived satisfaction towards the services of the service providers be taken into considerations especially among the genders. Again the National Communication Commission should formulate a taskforce for customer's satisfaction and essential loyalty from the telecommunication companies to ensure that they meet up with the customer's need and expectation

Keywords: gender difference, GSM providers, customer satisfaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The world is fast becoming a global village. Besides, the use mobile phone has become indispensable because of the need to disseminate and to communicate information from person to person. Mobile phones are fast dramatically spreading to the remotest parts of the world (Friedrich et al., 2009). Statistics shows that, by 2015, more than half of the world inhabitants are expected to be using mobile phones (World Telecommunication /ICT Development Report, 2010). What is evident is that Global System for Mobile communication (GSM) has been playing a significant and stimulating role to most nations' economic development in the last few decades (Paul et al, 2010). In Nigeria, with democratization and the inception of GSM in 2001, and with a growing population of about 160 million people and 78% subscribers Tele -density, the industry has increased from NITEL (or government monopoly) to a highly competitive market with market share spread of 46.19%, MTN; 26.87%, Glabacom; 24.74%, Zain (Celtel, now Airtel); 1.76%, Etisalat; and 0.44%, Mtel (NCC Report, 2009).

In the light of GSM contributions to the nation's economy, it is expected that more operators will be licensed in the near future. Its' significant contribution has led an increase of 3% - 4% in 2009 to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), to technology transfer, and employment in Nigeria (Gabriela and Badii, 2010). It has also contributed indirectly to the correction of market inefficiency, transport substitution, risk aversion and social cohesion (Asheetta, Rowena, Subramanian and peter, 2008). But with a critical look, however, it does not appear that the full potential of GSM is being harnessed in the world. Therefore the concern of Scholars, professionals and policy makers who show keen interest to the industry should be how to sustain this growing and influential role of telecommunication, as many research questions about how to sustain gender differences on consumer behaviour towards GSM providers in Nigeria remain unanswered.

In Nigeria over the years, the adoption of mobile telephone technology and the deregulation of the telecommunication sector have led to an exponential growth in the number of people (male and female) who have access to telephone lines. Also there has been a reversal in the ratio of mobile lines to fixed lines which are virtually dead. Also, the development of smart phones and other sophisticated telecommunication devices and the increasing affordability of these devices have caused an upsurge in the number of people (male and female) with access to various GSM services. The radical change in telecommunication access level in Nigeria has had a lot of impact on virtually all sectors of our national existence compared to the period when only fixed lines were available in the country. Indeed the rise in the use of GSM has extended to all states in Nigeria. A reasonable numbers the population of people (male and female), who were in time past cut off from the rest of the country as a result of lack access to GSM access, have now been incorporated to goings-on in the nation. The impact of this integration is evident in the lives of both male and female genders that today enjoy country-wide expansion of telecommunication infrastructure by GSM service providers.

Currently, GSM operators have realized that retaining existing customers is as important as acquiring new ones (Coyles and Gokey, 2005). In view of this, operators now strive to determine what factors influence gender difference on consumer behaviour towards patronage. Though, the complicated interrelationship among key constructs; service quality, brand image, customer value, customer patronage, gender differences and satisfaction have not been fully uncovered and understood (Jones and Sasser, 1995), yet it has been found that in different countries unique factors play active role in influencing customer behaviors in mobile telecom markets (Wan-Jin, 2009); brand image (Boohene and Agyapong, 2011).

Gender difference is the behaviours that are viewed as being suitable for males and females in a given society (Otnes and McGrath, 2001). In Nigeria, it appears that the work place in last few decades have been enhanced by both male and female input and conventional gender differences have been indistinct. Grigsby (1992) sustains that presently women are no longer influenced by their traditional roles like raising children and housekeeping. Both genders are participating equally in all social and consumption activities. Meyers-Levy (1998) has reported gender differ in their purchase behaviour. In response to this trend companies are now giving greater importance to gender in making peculiarity and market strategies. From experience it now obvious that the companies are trying to produce gender oriented products bringing about the fading of conventional concept of single gender oriented society. The emerging concept is equal opportunity and status, and in the adoption of mobile communication system gender differences plays a vital role (Nysveen et al., 2005).

Research findings shows that gender often differ in their purchase behaviour (Meyers-Levy, 1989). It is believed that men do have the capability to contain excessive stress in work situation (Enuka, Okoli et al, 2024). As far as the female consumers are concerned, they are prone to conduct a detailed analysis of specific product or services (Meyers-Levy and Maheswaran, 1991). Most females were found to express greater concern about product attributes than males (Meyers-Levy and Sternthal, 1991). Enuka, Okoli et al, (2024) recommended that females are more likely to be influenced by culture and stereotyping, as such will conform to social pressure. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that males are strongly guided by trends toward self-statement, self-efficiency, and mastery. According to Meyers-Levy, (1989), males tend to chase goals having personal consequences, whereas, females are guided by their interpersonal orientation, they have the desire to become affiliated to groups as well as to nurture friendly relationships and that can also be attributed to their consumer behavior towards GSM service providers. So it can be said that the role of the male is relatively self-focused, but females behave differently and are more concerned with self and others (Meyers-Levy, 1989). This research proposes that Gender difference certainly ought to play a very vital role on customer behaviors towards GSM providers in Nigeria.

It can be said that the concept of customer behaviour has become an issue un-debatable in the enhancement of organizational sales and profitability. Reichheld (1996) confirmed that a 5% improvement in company's customer attrition rate can push company's profits to 75% higher. Zhang and Feng (2009) stated that customer behaviour is the ultimate goal of every relationship marketing particularly in the GSM industry where the switching rate among subscribers is deemed to be one of the highest across industries. Based on this awareness researchers and industry players today strive to have a clearer understanding of the concept with the intent of uncovering its relevant antecedents. Many studies on customer behaviour have focused on these antecedents from the perspective of organizational related attributes. For instance, Jahazez, Fatima and Khan (2011) examined the concept by focusing on the predicting power of service quality, Trust, Staff loyalty and switching cost while Adekiya (2014) uncovered a positive and significant relationship between the combination of customer satisfaction, brand image, trust on one side and customer behaviour on the other side. This is to indicate that the combination of these attributes can be used as a precursor to the differences and commitment of customers in organizational settings.

However, a search of literature reveals that no study has attempted to examine the concept by focusing on gender difference on customer behaviours towards GSM providers in Nigeria; these genders are the ultimate buyers of organizational products and services. Evidences from several studies have indicated that there is a relationship between consumer's behaviours and gender differences. However, there seems to be lot of inconsistencies as regards the nature of this relationship. For instance, Fournier (1998) is of opinion that the famine nature associated with women is closely linked to more and stronger interpersonal capabilities which in turn translate to more brand relationships among them than their male counterpart. According to Satish and Sri (2004) the average loyalty across products is 86% for men and 88% for women. Saad, Ishak, and Johari (2013) pointed that females are known to generally place higher value on longterm relationships and have a more famine orientation than their male counterpart. Empirically, the research by Alrubaiee and Al-Nazeer (2010) among bank customers in Jordan clearly indicated that gender has a significant role in the prediction of customer differences from the perspective of relationship marketing tactics. In order words, while relationship marketing tactics was found to have a positive and significant relationship with customer differences, such relationship was however moderated by gender in that it is stronger and more significant among the female respondents in the study. In contrary, Zulkifli and Tahir (2012) concluded in their study that customers' perceptions of customer relationship practices among banks are similar regardless of gender, age group, education level, employment, and that these demographic factors have no relationship whatsoever to customer loyalty. These are findings from other industries and environment. Thus it is not clear as to what the situation will be in the mobile telecom sector particularly among the mobile phone subscribers in Nigeria hence to confirm or disrepute this earlier investigation.

In Nigeria, in recent years Consumers of the GSM sector are varied and their priorities, needs and expectations are also diverse. Organizations are focusing on value creation to compete in the existing business era. Deng et al. (2009) have showed that to make a product unique and to develop long lasting relations with customers, GSM providers are generating systems to accelerate customer satisfaction. According to Hanif et al. (2010), the GSM industry is trying to develop long term relation with customers through multiple packages. Consumer behaviours and satisfaction lead users toward brand consciousness and profitable relationships (Eshghi et al., 2007). Although it is not an easy task to keep the users of a product or service satisfied, Anderson et al. (2004) have noticed that it is profitable for an organization in the long run. Gustafsson et al. (2005) have detected that it is necessary for mobile service organizations to ponder over the enhancement of service quality and charge suitable fair prices to get user satisfaction which will eventually help the service provider to retain its users.

On the other hand, Ahn et al. (2006) have noticed that sometimes brands completely satisfy users, but it only happens when customers find all the necessary benefits in a single brand. According to Herrmann et al. (2007), awareness about the correct price and perception regarding service rates both simultaneously impact users' satisfaction. Looking at the current market, we can say that mobile technology is becoming very competitive and companies are behaving aggressively by trying to attract users with various packages and services (Rahman et al., 2010). The image of a GSM provider is very significant for mobile subscribers. As Lambert (1980) said, brand plays a vital role in selecting any mobile services, a strong brand being able to compensate for the higher rates offered by one provider. Service availability of a mobile service provider has similar influence on consumers. The telecom industry is trying to fulfill customers' needs through various products and services; therefore, to achieve best possible consumers' satisfaction is an overriding concern for the mobile service providers. In Nigeria gender difference on male and female on consumer behaviour towards GSM providers.

Purpose of the Study

The general objective of this study is to ascertain gender differences and brand of GSM provider on customer satisfaction. However, the specific objectives are to:

1. To compare the difference between male and female on their perceived satisfaction with telephony services providers in Nigeria.
2. To investigate the significant difference between MTN, GLO and AIRTEL telephony brand on their services satisfaction.

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis will guide this study.

1. H1: There will be no significant difference between male and female on their perceived satisfaction with telephony services providers in Nigeria.
2. H2: There will be no significant difference between MTN, GLO and AIRTEL telephony brand on their services satisfaction.

Operational Definition of Key Study Variables

The key study variables defined here as they apply to this study:

Gender: This is the biological state of being either male or female

Customer: A person utilizing the services of the provider

Satisfaction: it is the pleasure derived from the use of the GSM service providers.

Providers: The companies providing the GSM services

2. METHOD

Participants

The participants of this comprised of students Enugu State University of Science and Technology Enugu, civil servants and businessmen and women who resides in Enugu. For the purpose of this study, customers of MTN, GLO and AIRTEL were randomly selected across the selected participants. The participants comprised of 110, (53.64%) 59 males and (43.374) 51 females. Their ages ranged from 18-35 with a mean age of 6.46 and standard deviation of 3.75. In terms of age, 4 (3.6%) were 18 years old, 2 (1.8%) were 19 years old, 22 (20%) were 20 years old, 15 (13.6%) were 21 years old, 20 (18.2%) were 23 years old, 6(5.5%) were 25 years old, 4 (3.6%) were 26 years old, 4 (3.6%) were 27 years old, 7 (6.4%) were 28 years old, 5 (4.5%) were 29 years old, 4 (3.6%) were 30 years old, 4 (3.6%) were 32 years old, 8(7.3%) were 33 years old, 3 (2.7%) were 34 years old and 2 (1.8%) were 35 years old. Among the participants 68 (61.8%) were single and 42 (38.18) were married. Regarding the place of residence in Enugu, 52 (43.7%) live in rural areas, 30 (27.3%) live in semi-rural and 28 (25.5%) live in urban area. As regards phone network use, 46 (41.8%) use MTN line, 34 (30.9%) use GLO while 30 (27.3%) use AIRTEL. In terms of education, 81(73.6) were undergraduates, 9 (8.2%) hold NCE, 12(10.9%) hold HND, 4(3.6%) were degree holders and 4 (3.6) holds Masters of Science.

Instruments

The present study employed the customer satisfaction on telephony industry instrument, a 14 (fourteen) item questionnaire developed and validated by Nnedum (2007). The instrument has a cronbach alpha reliability co-efficient of 0.85. In the present study, it has a cronbach alpha reliability co-efficient of 0.75.

Procedure: the customers who were willing to get involved in the study were selected.

Design and Statistics

This is descriptive research design and it employs a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for data analysis

3. RESULTS

Presentation of Results and analysis of the findings from the data are as follows:

Table 1: The Table of Mean and Standard Deviation of male and female.

Sex	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. error	Confidence Lower bound	Interval Upper bound
Male	71.87	13.20	1.94	68.07	75.68
Female	64.79	12.88	4.40	56.13	73.45

Table 2: The table of Mean valued and Standard deviation of telephony brands.

Telephopny brands	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Confidence Interval Lower bound	Upper bound
MTN	66.99	13.01	.69	65.63	68.34
GLO	60.00	12.00	12.99	34.46	85.54
AIRTEL	72.07	13.21	2.17	66.81	76.33

Table 3: Summary ANOVA between subject effect for sex and telephony brand

Sources	Type III sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	1136.99	4	284.25	1.68	.15
Intercept	63735.94	1	63735.94	377.53	.000
Sex	719.45	1	719.45	4.26	.04
Telephony brand	883.62	2	441.81	2.62	0.7
Sex telephony brand	481.08	1	481.08	2.82	0.9
Error	67529.34	100	168.82		
Total	1904981.00	105			
Corrected Total	68666.33	104			

The result from the table 2 above shows that there is a statistical difference between male ($X=71.89$, $SD = 13.20$) and female ($X = 64.79$, $SD = 12.88$) on their satisfaction with telephone services, $F(1,100) = 4.26$ at $P.05$ level of significance. Therefore the hypothesis 1 which stated that there will be no significant difference between male and female on their perceived satisfaction with telephony services was rejected.

The result of the Table 2 above reveals that there is no statistical difference between MTN ($X=66.99$, $SD=13.01$), GLO (60.00 , $SD.12.00$), AIRTEL ($X=72.07$, $SD=13.21$) brands on their services satisfaction based on the data above the hypothesis two is confirmed and accepted.

4. Discussion

Hypothesis 1 examined the significant difference between male and female on their perceived satisfaction with telephony services. The findings of this study show that there is a statistical difference between male and female on their satisfaction with telephone services. This implies that male shows higher satisfaction than female on their with telephone services. The findings of this do not agree with previous studies. Fournier (1998) is of opinion that the famine nature associated with women is closely linked to more and stronger

interpersonal capabilities which in turn translate to more brand relationships among them than their male counterpart. According to Satish and Sri (2004) the average loyalty across products is 86% for men and 88% for women. Saad, Ishak, and Johari (2013) pointed that females are known to generally place higher value on long-term relationships and have a more feminine orientation than their male counterpart. However, in the study by Ozougwu, Okoli and Ofojebe (2019) on the psychological impact of academic information and gender on the students' choice of university: a study of UNN undergraduates they reported that there is no gender difference. Similarly, Ofojebe, Okoli and Okemefuna (2019) in their study of the role of gender and personality (Type "A" and "B"); on emotional stressful experience noted that gender however did not significantly affect manifestation of emotional stress. On the other hand it was shown that there is interactive effect between gender and personality type in emotional stress reaction to noxious life experiences. Also Elias Eze and Ogwude found significant sex difference in health seeking behaviour with females making better choice than males.

Hypothesis 2 considered the significant difference between MTN, GLO and AIRTEL telephony brand on their services satisfaction. The result of the present shows that however, in contrast to the findings of the present study Egena (2013) reported that MTN are more dissatisfied with the services provided by the network provider whereas the customers of GLO were more satisfied than dissatisfied with the services provided. Moving further Egena (2013) offer reasons why many kept their loyalty still to the MTN irrespective of their dissatisfaction with their service delivery, why are subscribers still loyal to service providers despite the poor services received? Several reasons are responsible. Before the rise in telecoms service providers, MTN was the first to launch its services in Nigeria. Similarly, Opele, Afolabi, and Onifade (2018) in their study of Consumers' Preference and satisfaction Of GSM service providers among students of tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria observed that there is a significant positive relationship between service responsiveness and customer satisfaction with GSM service providers. Likewise Bello, Osman, Rahim and Yufus (2023) noted from the findings of their study that consumer satisfaction, involvement and help a business concentration a particular type of relationship that builds a powerful consumer company connection

Implication of the Findings

The result of this study has implications both for the customers and the services provider. On the first instance, it highlights the customer's perceived satisfaction towards the services of the service providers, taken this into considerations will enable the management of these companies to do the needful to enhance their service efficiency.

The National Communication Commission should formulate a taskforce for customer's satisfaction and essential loyalty from the telecommunication companies to ensure that they meet up with the customer's need and expectation.

Limitations of the Study

The research has shown that result should be viewed within the context of the limitations posed by the method and sample size.

Again, unnecessary sensitivity and lack of co-operation among the persons approached to participate delayed the work and limited the size of the participant as participation was on voluntary bases.

Suggestions for Future Studies

It is recommended that future researchers in this field of may seek to examine the effects of information on customers and customer's preferences on their satisfaction with the telecommunication industries in Nigeria Furthermore, future researcher should study how the personality profiles like openness to experience and consciousness, low and high self-esteem will affect customer's preferences on their satisfaction with the telephony industry.

Contributions to Knowledge

This study has been able to contribute to the body of knowledge on customers' behaviour particularly in Nigerian context telephony. It offers information on the current state of customer behaviour attitude based on gender.

5. Conclusion

This research project was embarked upon to gender difference on consumer behaviour towards GSM providers in Nigeria.

The subjects were drawn from students Enugu State University of Science and Technology Enugu, civil servants and businessmen and women who resides in Enugu. Also the participants comprises of 110 (53%) 59 males and (40.4) 51 females. The review of literature covered the areas that are relevant to the study. The self-evaluation questionnaire used in this study was without serious modification after a pilot study and tallies with the hypothesis.

The findings reveal that there is a significant difference between male and female on their perceived satisfaction with telephony services. This implies that both male and female have the same perceived satisfaction with telephony services. This shows that none of the brand provides better services and so none offers better satisfaction in their service providing to their customers. It is plausible that these findings have come from a particular data set, yet the present study gives a direction for the necessity of more integrated research in this field.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationship(s) that may have inappropriately affected their report of the findings of this research.

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