

EFFECTS OF TELEVISION COMMERCIALS ON MTN
SUBSCRIBERS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS
A STUDY OF MOLETE HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract

The study focuses on the effect of television commercial of MTN subscribers among secondary school students in Oyo state with particular reference to Molete High School. The paper adopts Limited Effect Model and Reinforcement theory. The two theories emphasize the relevance of Mass Media to consumer behavior. The study adopts survey research method where 200 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents and 180 were properly filled and returned. Findings from the study reveal that TV commercial has significant impact on respondents as a result of the use of visuals, sounds and text. Majority of the respondents strongly agree that MTN TV commercials create awareness which significantly influence product patronage. The study concludes that TV advertisement is important in sales promotion and that other methods of adverts should complement TV commercials. From the study, it is recommended that companies should maintain a good balance in their choice of advertising channels and encourage creativity in advertising messages. The study concludes that advertisers should do regular review of their advertisement messages so as to sustain audience interest in their advertisement messages. In conclusion, the study reveals that TV advertisement is an effective medium in today's world of business opportunities because of its audio visual influence on consumers.

Key words: Television, Commercial, Advertisement, Mass media, Secondary School Students.

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INTRODUCTION

Advertisement over the years has assumed tremendous proportions both as a business activity and as a social phenomenon. It is a powerful marketing communication tool used by companies to fulfill promotional tasks, as it is an impersonal form of communication or presentation of goods, ideas or services conducted through paid media under open or identified sponsorship. Advertisement can be defined as a sponsored message through one or more mass media (radio, television, newspaper, internet and magazine) to reach large numbers of potential users or buyers of a product. It is a vital marketing tool that helps to sell goods, services, images and ideas through information and persuasion.

Tejuoso (2011) remarks that advertisement is the most important form of sales promotion because it is used to create demand for products. Advertisement stimulates business and is also an informative and educational force that aids the consumer in making judgment on issues and product that affects one's standard of living. Television, which is an audio-visual medium, blends pictures with sounds to explain the visual presented on the screen. Akpan (2005) posits that television, which is an electronic device, brings to the audience, informational, educational and entertainment programme.

According to MTN Consumer Analysis of 2013, the need to gain adequate number of subscribers and to have a market edge above competitors makes the company to engage television commercials to reach prospective customers who are scattered across geographical boundaries. The power of television and its relative advantages over other media to penetrate and cover a wide area with power of sight and sound is what makes television commercial a veritable tool for advertisement.

According to MTN Customer Analysis (1991) the company adopts television commercials to reach out to their customers because of the following reasons.

- To introduce new products
- To persuade customers to buy
- To create demand
- To change customer belief

- To create brand loyalty
- To develop large market
- To promote the image of the firm

In order to achieve the above purpose, Tejuoso (2005) suggested the following media channels for advertisement purpose.

- Newspaper
- Magazine
- Radio
- Television
- Internet

History of Global System Mobile (GSM) and MTN in Nigeria

The Global System Mobile (GSM) revolution started in Nigeria in August 2001, with the licensing of three mobile operators, MTEL, ECONET, now (Airtel) and Mobile Telecommunication Network (MTN). Since then the face of information and communication Technology in Nigeria has been transformed.

Globacom and Etisalat were later licensed to operate thereby making GSM operators to be five in number. Since then, GSM mobile telephone has rapidly become the most popular method of voice communication in Nigeria relegating CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) a much earlier introduced telecommunication platform to the background.

The Nigeria Telecommunication Commission is the only body established by the Federal Government of Nigeria to regulate and control the affairs of telecommunication industry in Nigeria.

Wojuade (2006) confirms that GSM Mobile Communication is one of the explosive developments ever to have taken place in the telecommunications industry. Wojuade further noted that the GSM combines the convenience of mobility with the rich multimedia content of the internet with the integration of the mobile telephone with palm-sized computers, cameras, and content related information makes it almost inevitable.

MTN Communication Nigeria commenced operation in November 2000 and it was one of the major mobile operators to resume operation. MTN is making efforts to be the preferred network by Nigerians because it perceives Nigeria to be a key market to be concerned with as far as African market is concerned.

Statement of Problem

Marketing problem in this era of recession has created a lot of problem for many companies in Nigeria not leaving behind the telecommunication industry. The poor purchasing power of the people coupled with high cost of living, unemployment, retrenchment, inflation and high exchange rate have caused so many services and manufacturing industries in Nigeria to become comatose thereby threatening job security of their staff. The poor economic situation in Nigeria has made it compulsory for companies operating in the country to evolve integrated marketing communication approach to reach their customers. Television commercial is an aspect of corporate communication. Television commercials of competing brands in the major telecommunication segments are increasing very rapidly as consumers are now more knowledgeable than before.

MTN is now faced with a lot of marketing challenges despite all efforts to retain its leadership position in the telecommunication industry. The extent to which this marketing effort and the use of television commercial are influencing MTN subscribers especially the High School student is yet to be determined. This study is out to examine the influence of television commercials of MTN subscribers among secondary school students in Ibadan because of their population and by extension their marketing potentials.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the effect of television advert of MTN among secondary school students in Ibadan while the specific objectives include:

- i. Investigation of students' interest in watching MTN commercials on Television
- ii. To identify the medium of advertisement used by MTN that has generated the greatest awareness among secondary school students in Ibadan.

iii. To establish the extent to which MTN advertisement has affected product patronage among secondary school students in Ibadan.

Research Questions

- i. To what extent are secondary school students aware of MTN Telecommunication Network?
- ii. Do secondary school students have the interest of watching MTN adverts on television?
- iii. Which of the media of advertisement used by MTN has created the greatest awareness among the secondary school students?
- iv. Do secondary school students have access to television sets at home?
- v. To what extent has MTN advertisement influenced respondents patronage?

Significance of the Study

Although several studies have been conducted on the role of television commercials on MTN subscribers in the past, this research work will seek to fill the gap of neglect of teenagers or high school students in MTN Television Advertisement commercials.

This study will assist the top management of MTN in developing products that will suit the preference of the teenagers. The study will serve as reference point for other research work in the area of media study.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to students of Molete High School, Ibadan.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

This study was anchored on a theory and a model. Limited Effect Model and Reinforcement Theory propounded by Joseph Klapper (1960) will serve as theoretical framework upon which the study will rest.

Limited Effect Model

Klapper (1960) presented five generalizations about the effects of Mass Communication, but the two stated below are most relevant to the model being discussed. Mass Communication does not

serve as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects, but rather functions among and through a nexus of mediating factors and influences. These mediating factors are such that they typically render mass communication a contributory agent but not the sole cause in a process of reinforcing the existing conditions.

The mediating factors that Klapper was referring to include the selective processes (selective perception, selective exposure, and selective retention) group processes, group norms, and opinion leadership. This position that the effects of Mass Communication are limited is also sometimes referred to as “the law of minimal consequences”. The relevance of this study is unambiguous. The model does not suggest that television commercials are the only factors that affect audience reasons to patronize MTN product.

Television advertisement due to its power of sight and sound can serve as contributory factor to advertisement messages of MTN. It may however help to persuade the subscribers to embrace and purchase MTN product.

Reinforcement Theory

This theory was propounded in 1960 as remarked by Baran (2002).

The theory recognizes that Mass Communication does not serve as necessary and sufficient cause of audience effect, but rather functions among and through a nexus of mediation factors. These mediating factors are such that they typically render Mass Communication as contributory factors but not the sole cause in the process of reinforcing existing conditions.

On such occasions as Mass Communication does function in the service of exchange, one of the two conditions is likely to exist. Either (a). The mediating factors will be found to be imperative and the effect of the media will be found to be direct or (b). The mediating factors, which normally favor reinforcement, will be found to be themselves impelling change.

There are residual situations in which Mass Communication seems to produce direct effects or directly and of itself to serve certain psychophysical functions. The efficacy of Mass Communication either as a contributory agent or as an agent of direct effect, is affected by various aspects of the media and communication themselves or communication situation.

Klapper's theory is prominent because of its emphasis on media's limited power.

Cultivation Theory

Cultivation Theory attempts to explain the dynamics of television as the distinctive and dominant cultural force of our age. The study done by George Gerbner (2009) specifies that repeated and intense exposure to mass media may influence behavior. Gerbner notes that his objectives are not with information, education, persuasion and the like or with any kind of direct communication 'effects' but on the collective context within which and on response to which different individual and groups selectors and interpretation of messages take place.

His work presents a social psychology theory on communication effects and consequently on persuasion as related to mass media. "Cultivation" rather than "long term effects" indicates the emphasis on the constant nurturing, exposure and consistent incorporation of the viewing public experiences through mass media channels. Cultivation theorists argue that television has long-term effects, which are small, gradual, indirect but cumulative and significant. It monopolizes and subsumes other sources of information, ideas and consciousness.

Literature Review

Onabajo (2000) remarks that broadcast media in Nigeria have come a long way and have gone through a lot of changes in trying to keep pace with the intricacies of an ever-changing society. Television is one of the major and significant ways of passing on information to the people because it is considered to be the greatest communication mechanism ever designed and operated by man after the internet. TV influences our perception on politics, education, religion, movies, governance, fashion and culture.

Rodman (2006) remarks that TV remains the most time consuming activity and it remains the main source of news and information and medium through which politics is conducted and it is humanity's main form of entertainment and it is also the world's most powerful sales tool.

In defining advertisement, Mc Cathy (1982) posits that advertisement is any paid form of non-personal presentation of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor. In similar

direction, Semenik and Bamossy (1993) define advertisement as the non-personal presentation of information to a large number of potential customers through the mass media.

McLuhan (1964) considers television advertisement as the most effective mass-market advertisement and this is reflected by the high prices television networks charge for advertisement airtime. Television advertisement appears between shows but also interrupts the programmes at intervals.

Although television advertisements have been found to have great influence on consumer behavior, people still deny being influenced by advertisements. Lewis (1995) however found out in a study that individuals who deny being influenced by advertisement unconsciously bought widely television advertisement products. Krugman (1975) in support of Lewis noted that public lets down its guard to the repetitive commercial use of the television medium and it easily changes its way of perceiving products and brands without thinking very much about it at the time of television exposure.

Livisohn et al (1977) also mentioned in their study on television advertisement that it has become for example a truism to observe that the impact of an advertisement is determined by complex interactions involving the product advertisement, the appeal that is made on its behalf, and the consumers.

Television advertisement is also affected by the extent to which it rightly addresses the motives of the prospect. These motives of behavior are generally accepted as mainly fear, sex, anger and happiness. Advertisement fulfills some functions in the society, these among other according to Asemah (2011) include:

- a. It served as marketing function by helping companies that provide products or services to sell their products. Advertisement works with other forms of marketing communication like personal selling, sales promotion, direct marketing etc to sell ideas, goods and services.
- b. Advertisement makes the public to be loyal to product
- c. Advertisement informs the consumers about products in the market
- d. Advertisement increases usage of product

e. Advertisement helps the public to identify products and differentiate them from others. Anyacho (2007), remarks that most commercial oriented companies advertise to achieve the following objectives.

- Create awareness for new products
- Sustain interests and help to alleviate cognitive dissonance by constantly reinforcing the unique quality of the product and service
- Fight competition to secure the desired market share
- Increase profit, thereby ensuring the continued life of the business
- Invest in research and development

Research Methodology

The survey method was used for data collection through the use of questionnaire. The target population for this study was students of Molete High School, Ibadan who served as respondents. The sample-size was selected from the population of about 600 students. The total sample size of two hundred (200) students were randomly selected from among the students of Molete High School, Ibadan. Out of the 200 copies of the questionnaire administered, 180 were filled, collected and returned. The questionnaire was distributed to the students of Molete High School, Ibadan through a research assistant and with the permission of the school principal. Purposive sampling technique was used, as this is a non-probability sampling where the researcher consciously selects particular elements or subjects for addition in a study so as to make sure that the elements will have certain characteristics pertinent to the study. The responses of the respondents were presented in simple distribution tables and classified under frequency counts and percentages. The data presented in the distribution tables were frequently analyzed using simple percentages.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

TABLE 1

GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Female	60	33

Male	120	67
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

The above table shows that 60 or 33% of the respondents were female while 120 or 67% were male. There were more male than female students in the sample population.

TABLE 2**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE**

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
13-14 years	54	31
15-16 years	68	37
17-18 years	58	32
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

The above table shows that there were 54 or 31% respondents in the age bracket of 13-14 years, while those at 15-16 years were 68 or 37%. Respondents in the age bracket of 17-18 years were 58 or 32%.

TABLE 3**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY CLASS**

CLASS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
SS1	30	18
SS2	70	38
SS3	80	44
Total	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

The table above reveals that majority of the respondents are in the senior class SS3 with 80 respondents or 44% SS2 respondents are 70 or 38% while SS1 are 30 respondents or 18%. Students in higher classes are in better position to give an informed opinion because their ability to read and understand the questionnaire is not in doubt.

Analysis of Research Questions

Question 1: To what extent are secondary school students aware of MTN Telecommunication Network?

TABLE 4

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO POSSESSION OF MOBILE PHONES

DO YOU HAVE A MOBILE PHONE?	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Yes	180	100
No	-	-
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

From the above table it was revealed that all the respondents have mobile phones. This information leads to another question which bothers on respondents level of awareness about MTN Network.

TABLE 5

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO AWARENESS OF MTN NETWORK

MTN TELECOMMUNICATION NETWORK IS WELL KNOWN TO ME	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Strongly Agree	110	61
Agree	50	28
Disagree	15	8
Strongly Disagree	5	3
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

From the response from the above table it could be seen that 110 respondents or 61% confirms that MTN Network is well known to them. 50 respondents or 28% agree that they know MTN Network while 15 respondents or 8% disagree and 5 respondents or 3% strongly disagree.

TABLE 6**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF AWARENESS OF TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES OPERATING IN NIGERIA**

TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
MTN	50	28
Airtel	45	25
Glo	40	22
Etisalat	25	14
Visafone	5	3
All of the above	15	8
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

From the above table 50 respondents representing 28% are aware of MTN Telecommunication Network operating in Nigeria, 45 respondents or 25% are aware of Airtel while 40 respondents or 22% are aware of Glo, 25 respondents or 14% are aware of Etisalat. 5 respondents recognize the existence of Visafone while 15 respondents or 8% are aware of the existence of all the networks.

TABLE 7**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO FAMILIARITY WITH MTN TELEVISION ADVERTS.**

AWARENESS LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Strongly Agree	80	44
Agree	65	36
Disagree	20	12
Strongly Disagree	15	8
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field survey 2017

From the above table 80 respondents (44%) express their strong familiarity with MTN Television Adverts while 65 respondents (36%) signify their agreement with familiarity with

MTN Television Adverts. However, 20 respondents (12%) express their disagreement, and 15 respondents (8%) express strong disagreement.

TABLE 8
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO SOURCES OF INFORMATION

MEDIUM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Newspaper	35	19
Magazine	14	8
Television	84	47
Billboard	12	7
Radio	27	15
Friends	8	4
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field survey 2017

From the table above six sources of information were explored for the study out of which 35 respondents (19%) signify that their sources of information concerning MTN adverts is through Newspaper, in similar direction, 14 respondents (8%) acknowledge the fact that they receive their information about MTN adverts through magazine. Sizeable number of respondents that is 84 respondents (47%) acknowledge Television adverts as their major source of information. In similar direction 27 respondents (15%) recognize radio adverts as their source of information while 12 respondents (7%) recognizes billboard and 8 respondents (4%) claim that their source of information concerning MTN advert is through friends.

TABLE 9
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENT ACCORDING TO MEDIA INFLUENCE ON PATRONAGE

MEDIUM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Newspaper	28	16

Magazine	15	8
Television	64	36
Billboard	15	8
Radio	38	21
Friends	20	11
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

From the above, 28 respondents (16%) are of the that newspaper advert influence their patronage of MTN services and 64 respondents (36%) claim to be influenced by T.V. adverts. Respondents that are influence by magazine is 15 (8%) while billboard equally has 15 respondents (8%) and Radio came second to T.V. with 38 respondents (21%) while those respondents that have their friends as major influence on patronage is 20 (11%).

TABLE 10

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO REASON FOR PREFERRED MEDIUM

MEDIUM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Artiste	30	17
Creativity	70	39
Jingles	35	19
Visuals	45	25
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

From the table above, 30 respondents (17%) claim that the usage of renowned artistes for advertisement by MTN has influence on them for choosing the network. Significant percentage 70 respondents (39%) appreciate the creativity in the MTN adverts and are thus influenced by it. Radio jingle also play a significant role among the respondents for choosing MTN. It could be seen from the above table that 35 respondents (19%) appreciate radio jingles while T.V. visuals has 45 respondents (25%).

TABLE 11**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO FAMILIARITY WITH MTN TELEVISION COMMERCIALS**

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Strongly Agree	82	46
Agree	35	19
Disagree	52	28
Strongly Disagree	12	7
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

Television commercial is another source of familiarity with MTN products. From the table above, 82 respondents (46%) indicate their strong agreement concerning their familiarity with MTN television commercial. In similar direction, 35 respondents (19%) equally express their familiarity with MTN T.V. commercials. On the contrary, 52 respondents (28%) express their disagreement concerning their familiarity with MTN commercials while 12 respondents (7%) express their strong disagreement concerning MTN television commercials.

TABLE 12**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO PREFERENCE OF MEDIUM USED BY MTN**

MEDIUM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Newspaper	12	7
Magazine	79	44
Television	15	8
Billboard	24	13
Radio	40	22
Friends	10	6
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

From the above table six variables concerning respondents preference to medium used by MTN. From the above table 12 respondents (7%) signify their preference for newspapers. Television adverts was favorably endorsed by 79 respondents (44%). In similar direction magazine has 15 respondents (8%) showing their preference for magazine. Billboards has 24 respondents (13%) expressing their preference for it while radio as a medium of advert used by MTN has 40 respondents (22%) showing their preference for it and at the bottom of the table was friends with 10 respondents (6%) showing their preference for it.

TABLE 13

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF MTN ADVERTISEMENTS SHOWING PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

MEDIUM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
MTN U and MENewspaper	20	11
MTN Happy Hour (Magazine)	35	19
MTN Saka Port (Television)	75	42
MTN round d clock(Radio)	20	11
MTN street Promo (Friends)	30	17
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

From the above table, five MTN products and their medium of advertisement were explored. U and Me usually advertise through newspaper has 20 respondents (11%). MTN, Happy Hour popularly advertised through magazines has 35 respondents (19%). MTN Saka Port popularly advertised through television has 75 respondents (42%) while MTN Round the Clock advertised through radio has 20 respondents (11%) while MTN Street Promo advertised through friends has 30 respondents (17%).

TABLE 14**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON INFLUENCE OF T.V. COMMERCIAL ON PATRONAGE**

VIEW ON T.V. COMMERCIAL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES %
Strongly Agree	80	44
Agree	50	28
Disagree	20	12
Strongly Disagree	30	16
TOTAL	180	100

Source Field Survey 2016

On the relevance of MTN T.V. advertisements in choice of products patronage, as shown on table 15 above, 80 (44%) indicates that they strongly agree that T.V. adverts has influenced their choice. 50 respondents (28%) agreed, 20 respondents (12%) disagree while 30 respondents (16%) strongly disagree.

Discussions of Findings

The result from the study shows that the respondents have knowledge of the existence of different telecommunication networks, but majority indicated that they were more familiar with MTN telecommunication Network. The study present varied reasons for the preference of television advertisement in which visuals appear to be the greatest, this supports the view of Berlin (2002) who posits that television command more impact because of the use of visual, sound and text. Thus it can be inferred from the study that advertisers desiring a significant impact on its potential audience should include television advertisement as a means of reaching them. As for the influence of television advertisements majority of the respondents indicated they were induced by network commercials. Similarly, a significant percentage of the respondents noted that their use of MTN Network was as a result of television commercials. Based on the above findings one may conclude that there is a significant relationship between awareness and patronage of a product.

Conclusions

Advertisement is essentially communication, as it needs the help of other media to project its voice-media such as television, radio, newspaper, magazine, billboard, etc. Television is an effective medium in today's form of advertisement as it aid the advertising displaying of a product through its audio-visual capacity.

Even though T.V. advertisement is aired between 30, 45, to 60 seconds, viewers are under pressure of time to view the product but it is also effective.

Advertisement boosts the image of a product as MTN has been able to use its advertisement to provide adequate sales information to its audience not only in English Language but also in different indigenous languages. To keep its audience aware of the brand, an organization has to keep running advertisements so that its audience will not forget the organization, its products and services.

Advertisement has been used as a tool for refreshing the mind of customers through its various promotional strategies; television advertising plays a significant role in the mind of its audience because of the combination of color, sound and actions.

Recommendation

From the findings from this study, it was revealed that television was the most preferred medium of the respondents. Television had a favorable perception from respondents attributable to the combination of creativity, jingles, sound and visual signals used.

The study found out that MTN channeled a greater part of its advertising effort on television neglecting other media. It is recommended that companies should maintain a good balance in the choice of advertising channels. That is, companies should imbibe the culture of using many media channels for the purpose of advertising.

Creativity is very important in any advertising message; therefore, it is recommended that advertisers should strike a balance between creativity and message. It is recommended from the study that advertisers should try to do a regular review of their advertisement messages because the audience may loose interest in advertisement which is repeated over a long period of time.