

Sales Promotion in the Marketing of Telecommunication Services in Nigeria: Impact Analysis

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The adoption of sales promotion in the marketing of telecommunication services in Nigeria is common among the front line GSM service providers. This however does not yield the much assured increasing return on investment, hence is unprofitable and the required fund for the expansion of infrastructure base of operation is not earned, and serve rendition is as a result poor. Studying the impact of sales promotion on patronage based on the data sourced and analyzed using Likert's ranking scale, questionnaire and analysis of variance (ANOVA), the work discerns and concludes that the high level of illiteracy based on quantitative rather than qualitative education high level of poverty as well as high rate of rural dwelling are challenges to the expansion of the level of consumption of telecommunication services even at the offer of sales promotion incentives. Recommended is a good quality marketing research with consumers as thrust point for efficiency in market segmentation as basic in the adoption of sales promotion strategy.

Keywords: Sales promotion, telecommunication, perception income, illiteracy, rural dwelling, marketing research and market segmentation

JEL Classification: M31

1. Introduction

Most economies, developed and developing are showing interest in information and communication technology (ICT) as thrust for economic growth and development and for positive impact on citizens' quality of life. In the midst of the ICT aspirations, Nigeria is challenged by poor level of infrastructural development, low level per capita income, high level of rural urban population and high level of illiteracy-BBC News (2007 July 11), Nkanega (2007) and Onah (2007). Hence the development of the know-how for building content, and applications considered vital for social, educational, political and economic interactions as bases for the consumption of the services of the telecommunication industry have been poor.

In the presence of this circumstance, the government has initiated and executed liberalization policies and exercises in the telecommunication industry that are challenges to its ability to wire the country, with the additional struggles to meet the attendant regulatory and governance challenges for network service providers. In between the government as platform for telecommunication service provision and the consumers of the services are the providers of the services-as GSM operators. The need to satisfy the government regulatory requirements and the service consumers with good quality services for high level service turnover as basis for

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profitability is challenged by the unwillingness and inability of the consumers to make demand. Thus service provider are compelled to adopt sales promotion marketing strategies to stimulate service consumption.

Frame Work of the Study

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is considered a factor index in Nigerian's strive for economic development through growth. Given this, government policies have been much in the area of addressing the challenges to comprehensive ICT infrastructural development as hub for social economic liberalization. These policies have spurred up indigenous and foreign firms' collaboration, direct foreign investments and franchise investments that have attracted national long distance communication operators, wireless access network operators, interconnect exchange operators, internet exchange operators and internet service/solution providers – Xinhua (2007) as well as unified access network providers – Nweke (2007).

Based on the availability of these ICT services, the consumption level has multiplied in GSM and CDMA base solutions respectively - Adekoya (2007) as well as internet and mobile subscribers respectively - Balancing Act News Update (2007).

The increase in demand for the services of these GSM providers has spurred up increase in cost of service provision far beyond measure, thus service providers are caught in the webs of service failures, poor service quality, law suits instituted by dis-satisfied service consumers among others – Funso (2007), AAGM (2007) and ANC (2007), resulting from inability to generate enough fund in the midst of regulation in service charges. Following this, marketing warfare exist between the firms in the telecommunication industry and the popular tool (weapon) of this warfare is tailored around price as service charge with its cardinal issue as sales promotion.

This work is thus focused at identifying the challenges to adopting the tool (weapon) of sales promotion in the telecommunication industry of Nigeria.

Significant of the Study

Literature exist on the study of the relevance and challenges to the adoption of sales promotion in different facets of domestic durable and non-durable items of exchange both in the developed and developing economies. These include Vyas (2007), that appraised the role of sales promotion practice in the apparel retail sector of India and associated future challenges; Liu (2007), on the long term impact of loyalty programs on consumer purchase behavior and loyalty; Meyer-Waarden and Benavent (2006), on the impact of loyalty on Repeat Purchase Behavior based on the behavior scan single source panel; Kincade et al. (2012), a study of Buyer-Seller relationships for promotional support in the apparel sector, Deeter-Schmeltz et al. (2000); and Hyllegard et al. (2005) that x-rayed the perception of Spanish consumers of US apparel specialty-retailers products and services. These studies have their thrust as perceptions of market intermediaries; comparative of foreign retailers and local market target, longitudinal sourced data for convenience store franchise; and offering frequency and perceptions of importance. None of these studies considered the peculiar characteristics of the target market as seller market advantaged, high level rural-urban density base and high level of quantitative rather qualitative literacy rate as basic characteristics of consumers of telecommunication services in Nigeria-BBC News (2007), Nkanga (2007) and Onah (2007).

Based on these, this work is considered significant as it assesses the impact on sales promotion of the consumption behavior of Nigerians as target market for telecommunication services given the fact that more than 50% of Nigerians live below the poverty line (BBC News, 2009), 70% of the country's populations dwell in the rural areas (Nkanga, 2007) and 85% of the 60 million adults in Nigeria under the age of 35 can neither read nor write (Onah, 2007).

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to ascertain the impact of sales promotion on the sales volume and value of telecommunication services in Nigeria; however the subsidiary objectives include:

- To determine the impact of the low level of per capita income situation in Nigeria on the consumption of telecommunication services in the face of the adoption of sales promotion.
- To determine the impact of the high level of rural – urban dwelling rate in Nigeria on sales volume and value of telecommunication services given the adoption of sale promotion tool by service vendors.
- To determine the impact of the high level of quantitative rather qualitative education on the turnover of GSM providers given the adoption of the tool of sales promotion.

Hypotheses

The work is based on the following hypotheses stated in their null form.

H₀₁: The low level of per capita income in Nigeria has no significant impact on GSM service providers offer giving the adoption of sale promotion incentives.

H₀₂: The high level of Nigeria population as rural dwellers does not have significant impact on the consumption of telecommunication service given the offer of sales promotion incentives,

H₀₃: The high illiteracy rate in Nigeria does not have significant impact on the acceptance level of the service of GSM providers given the available promotion incentives

Methodology

The study has its scope as the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria with an acceptable Pareto ratio of 7:3 sample populations between the rural and urban dwellers. This ratio makes it possible to have fair character representation of poverty rate and level as well as level of academics attainment. Copies of questionnaire were administered to the sample population and were supported with oral interview schedule. The copies of questionnaire were ranked based on the Likert ranking scale and analyzed using statistical tool of analysis of variance (ANOVA) –Ezejelue et al. (2008).

Organization of the Study

The work is organized under sub-headings of introduction, made up of frame work of the study, significance of the study, objectives of the study, research hypotheses and methodology of the study; literature review; analysis; findings; discussion of research findings; conclusion and recommendations.

2. Literature Review

For GSM service providers to spur up demand for their market offer as means to enhanced profitability, the tool of sales promotion is considered vital. This is because of the relatively low level of business initiatives, low level of poor capita income, high level of illiteracy among others common among the Nigeria communities that constitute over 70% of the market for the offer. Thus Nigeria subscribers need to be motivated to loyalty based on incentives.

2.1. Characteristic of Sales Promotion:

Sales promotion as marketing incentives and inducements offered a target market has the potency of spurring up efficiency along the channel of product distribution based on staff force motivation for ultimate objective of turnover enhancement based on increase in product demand (Oko, 2002); therefore it is targeted at the members of corporate sales force (personnel); members of the marketing intermediaries and the ultimate consumers. Organizations adopt the tool of sales promotion as aid to building brand loyalty, given its ability to attract loyal and profitable customers and to protect the product vendor from competition, especially as it grants the vendor greater control in the planning and blending of the marketing mix elements (Shira, 2003).

Firms adopt sales promotion tool as weapon of warfare for securing and enhancing marketing share, given the degree of market competitive (Odunlami and Ogunsiji, 2011), hence it is cost involving in terms of planning and execution (Preko, 2012). Thrust issues of sales promotion are generation of turnover, stock file disconnection (elimination), enhancement of vendor's image and the creation of price image (high-low). (Vyas, 2007).

In the Nigeria telecommunication service market, like in most other sectors, sales promotion aids the vendor manage the perceived financial, social and psychological risks associated with product consumption- Oko (2013), Oko and Etuk (2012) and Oko and Egwu (2014) as consumers develop confidence in the offer, as acquired from accredited vendor(s); product usage confirming to the societal norms and are within the technological awareness and acceptance level of the society and as accepted brand are offered for sale during a defined sales promotion marketing period.

These characteristics of sales promotion, if positively integrated and efficiency adopted yield functional publicity in favour of the vendor and the product, based on functional word of mouth communication - Vyas (2007), Oko (2013), Kotler and Armstrong (2010) and Kotler and Keller (2010).

2.2. Application of the Tool of Sales Promotion

The ability to determine sales promotion target market leads to the selection of the target audiences – sales force, marketing intermediaries or ultimate consumers to receive the sales promotion messages, as well

as the role of sales promotion in the integrated (total) marketing communication (promotion) effort of the organization within the defined time frame. This provides answers to:

- What is the role of product users, influencers and purchasers in the product buying decision process and buying process, and
- What purchasing groups of individuals make purchase decision (Luck and Ferrell, 1979).

For sales promotion inclined market offer; the decision is often in favor of pushing the product the promotion messages and efforts to the ultimate consumers through the marketing intermediaries whose corporation must be gained. This accounts for the use of sales agents in the marketing of telecommunication services in Nigeria.

2.3. Sales Promotion (Effectiveness Measurement) Evaluation and Control:

It is important to establish control mechanism in the exercise of sales promotion as means of ascertaining its adequacy or otherwise, and for the purpose of checking excessive, wasteful or irritating marketing warfare actions (Krugman, 1975). Sales promotion as an intra-element of promotion complements other marketing mix elements, thus its effectiveness is measured using either or a combination of economies of scale; threshold effect and interaction effects (Lilien et al. (1976), in the face of good marketing intelligence activities, inclusive of marketing research activities tailored around a good systematic method of performance data collection and collation (Luck and Ferrell, 1979). This measurement should be based on clearly determined objectives of sales promotion exercise; comparing sales promotion performance as actual results with expected performances as stated objectives and the evaluation and improvement of overall effectiveness of the utilization of sales promotion research results and managerial judgment –Cravens et al., 1976).

Contrary to this projection, vendors measure the impact of sales promotion activities by assessing sales volume and value during promotion period, some others assess this based on the rate of decline in number of calls by buyers, or/ and average bill size during promotions period among others (Vyas, 2007). Only very few however assess the level of profit made during promotion relative to the cost of profit generation Vendors do not go beyond these as measures of sales promotion effectiveness, as a result of paucity in ability at data collection and collation. This is compounded by the inability of the firms involved in sales promotion at isolating the effect of different promotions events in situations of promotion overlap as well as the impacts of other elements of marketing on sales volume and value.

2.4. Challenges of Sales Promotion in Nigeria:

Generally, the impact of sales promotion on sale volume and value is only on the short run; as it does not build market offer brand nor sustain market loyalty. Given this, market performance does not have linearity in relationship with the different market periods' sales activities. The seasonality of the characteristics of sales promotion tailored around communication, provision of incentives and calls to defined target market to engage in transaction-Kotler (2003), are valid within a specific time frame.

The level of awareness in Nigeria is low given the high level (rate) of quantitative rather than qualitative education that has given rise to low level of marketing awareness and knowledge assimilation rate. Corporate marketing policies in price and pricing issues, product design and formulation, distribution and general promotion do not create the desired impact on the target market. Hence the expense of sales promotion and policy issues have remained of least significance to different target markets (Ewah and Ekeng, 2009).

It is on record that Nigeria is one of the nations with lowest per capita income globally –Bureau of Statistics (2013), and BBC News (2007, July 11). This situation constrains the ability of Nigerians to exploit the benefits associated with the adoption of sales promotion both from the vendors' and target markets' points of view. In addition to this, is absence of active competition among firms inter and intra industrially. Most firms in different industries adopt collusive oligopolistic competitive marketing principles and strategies thus; sales promotion activities are poorly executed.

The gross absence of competition has significant negative impact on the rate of macroeconomic development. Given this, the catalytic activities necessary for spurring up the acceptance of sales promotion as marketing warfare tool and strategy are not considered relevant. This is evidenced by the poor level of the nation's per capita income-World Development Reports (2010) and National Bureau of Statistics (2012).

3. Analysis and Data Presentation:

The per capita income as a variable influences the level of education attainment as well as level of awareness and the status of the people. This is also exhibited in the place of residence of the people; and access to and the use of the services of telecommunication.

Based on the foregone, this analysis has its thrust as assessing the impact of the peoples' per capita income, level of quantitative and qualitative education/knowledge and ratio of rural urban population on the acceptance and adoption of the use of telecommunication services as offered and spurred based on the entrance of sales promotion.

Analyses:

Analyses of data in this work are built around the relationship between sales promotion as an independent variable and per capita income, rural population density and high level of illiteracy as dependent variables in relation to the acceptance of telecommunication services offered based on sales promotion incentives. These are presented thus:

3.1. Test 1: Test for the impact of low per capita income in Nigeria in the acceptance of telecommunication services based on the use of sales promotion incentives.

Data base of the analysis is presented in table 1.

Table 1. Low per capita income and the Rate of Acceptance of Telecommunication service Offer Based on Sales Promotion

Basis	Firms	Agent	Consumers
Availability of basic infrastructure for telecommunication	21	16	14
Availability of office, school and home basic technologies for telecommunication	18	15	12
Cost of telecommunication consumables	15	18	14
Cost of telecommunication skill acquisition	17	18	16
Technological choice & developments	16	15	13
Telecenters in development	8	6	4
Compliance to telecommunication policies, trade & regulations	30	26	24
The demand by people for telecenter services	40	36	40
Poverty level	28	26	27
Total	193	176	164
Mean	21.4	19.4	18.2

Based on Likert's ranking scale, the decision rule that serves as guide to decision is as follows,

- Accept Projected Statement: If and only if the value calculated as mean is greater than the accepted mean of 50 (fifty) percent
- Reject Projected Statement: If otherwise

Projected Statement: The demand for telecommunication services is high in Nigeria given its accompanying sales promotion offer.

Analysis: Based on calculation in table 1, the firms in telecommunication service marketing, their agents and consumers assessed the rate of telecommunication services acceptance given sales promotion inducements at 21.4%, 19.6% and 18.2% respectively.

Decision: The ratings of the firms, agents and consumers as marketers and consumers of telecommunication services respectively are below the fifty (50) percent acceptance mean. The decision therefore is that the demand for telecommunication services is low in Nigeria given its accompanying sales promotion inducements.

To test for significance in mean difference or otherwise between the rating of the three groups of respondents at 0.05 level of confidence. The hypothesis is re-structured thus:

$H_0: (\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3)$ there is no significance difference between the rating of the vendors, their agents and consumers on the impact of sales promotion inducements on the demand for and consumption of telecommunication services.

H₁: ($\mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \neq \mu_3$) significant difference exists between the rating of the vendors, agents and consumers on the impact of sales promotion inducement on the demand for and consumption of telecommunication services.

Where μ_1 , μ_2 and μ_3 are means of the rating of the three groups of respondents.

$$\text{Given } f = \frac{V_b}{V_w} = \frac{\text{between groups variance}}{\text{within group variance}} = \frac{S_B^2}{S_W^2}, \quad \text{where } V_B = \frac{SSB}{df_B} \text{ and } V_W = \frac{SSW}{df_W}$$

The computation of f - ratio is shown in table 2.

Table 2. Computation of f-ratio; rating of impact of sales promotion indumenta on the demand for telecommunication services in Nigeria given the low level of per capita income

Vendor Firms		Agents		Consumers	
X_A	X_A^2	X_B	X_B^2	X_C	X_C^2
21	441	16	256	14	196
18	324	15	225	12	144
15	225	18	324	14	196
17	289	18	324	16	256
16	256	15	225	13	169
8	64	26	36	4	16
30	900	26	676	24	576
40	1600	36	1296	40	1600
28	784	26	676	27	729
$\sum X_A = 190$	$\sum X_A^2 = 4883$	$\sum X_B = 176$	$\sum X_B^2 = 4038$	$\sum X_C = 164$	$\sum X_C^2 = 3882$
$\bar{X}_A = 21.4$		$\bar{X}_B = 19.6$		$\bar{X}_C = 18.2$	
n = 9		n = 9		n = 9	

$$\text{Grand Mean} = \frac{21.4 + 19.6 + 18.2}{3} = 19.7$$

$$SSB = 46.35$$

$$SST = 2,408.35$$

$$V_B = \frac{46.35}{2} = 23.175$$

$$V_W = \frac{2362}{24} = 98.41$$

Substituting for the formula f-ratio

$$f = \frac{V_B}{V_W} = \frac{23.175}{98.41} = 0.23$$

A summary of the ANOVA is shown in table 3.

Table 3. Summary of ANOVA

Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares SS	Mean of Square MS	f-cal	Critical Value of F	Significance	Decision
Between groups	2	SSB 46.35	V_B 23.18				
Within groups	24	SSW 2362.08	V_W 98.41	0.23	4.53	Not significant	Reject H ₁
Total	26	2408.35	12.59				

At 0.05 level of significance, the critical value of F is given as 4.53 $f < f_{0.05}$ (4.53) H₁ is rejected. The conclusion is that there is no significant difference between the rating of the vendors of telecommunication services, their agents and consumers on the impact of high level of poverty in Nigeria on the demand and consumption of telecommunication services based on sales promotion inducements.

3.2. Test 2: Test for the impact of the high level of rural urban population in Nigeria on the demand for telecommunication services based on its offer using sales promotion inducements

Data for this test are presented in table 4.

Table 4. Assessment of the acceptance rate of telecommunication services as presented given sales promotion inducements

Basis	Firms	Agents	Consumers
Weak domestic coverage and last mile connectivity	22	20	21
Poor level of business activities	18	16	14
Under developed nature of schools, offices and public structures	16	18	20
High level of unemployment	18	16	16
Low level of social network of relationships	20	22	24
Poor and irregular supply of power supply for energizing telecommunication base of operation	18	16	18
Poor attitude of rural dwellers to telecommunication services	16	18	20
Expensive nature of telecommunication infrastructure and high cost of service	18	18	16
Unaffordability of the basis for consuming telecommunication service, phone, computer and internet connectivity	19	18	16
Total	165	162	165
Mean	18.3	18.0	18.3

Based on Likert's ranking scale, the decision rule stated as follows serve as guide:

- Accept projected statement: If and only if the value calculated mean is greater than the accepted mean of 50 (fifty) percent
- Reject Projected Statement: If otherwise

Projected Statement:

The high number of rural dwellers in Nigeria does not have significant negative impact on the consumption of telecommunication services given the offer of the service based sales promotion incentives.

Analysis:

From the calculation as shown in table 4, it is discernable that the level of consumption of the services of telecommunication vendors is low in Nigeria based on the high level of rural density in spite of the fact that the offer is based on sales promotion inducements. These calculations are at 18.3%, 18.0% and 18.3% are all below the 50% acceptance mean value.

Decision:

The rating of firms, as vendors, their agents and consumers as marketers and consumers of telecommunication services respectively in Nigeria are below the 50(fifty) percent acceptable mean. The decision therefore is that the high number of rural dwellers in Nigeria has significant negative impact on the consumption of telecommunication services even at the offer of sales promotion incentives by vendors.

To test for the level of significance or otherwise in the mean difference assessment of the vendors, agents and consumers of telecommunication services at 0.05 level of confidence, the hypothesis is re-structured thus:

H₀₂: ($\mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3$) there is no significant difference between the assessment of vendors agents and consumers on the impact of high level of rural dwelling rate on the consumption of telecommunication services as offered based on sales promotion incentives.

H₁₂: ($\mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \neq \mu_3$) significant difference exists between the assessment of vendors, agents and consumers on the impact of high level of rural dwelling rate on the consumption of telecommunication services as offered on sales promotion incentives.

Where μ_1 , μ_2 and μ_3 are mean ratings of the three groups of respondents.

$$\text{Given } f = \frac{V_b}{V_w} = \frac{\text{between groups variance}}{\text{within group variance}} = \frac{S_B^2}{S_W^2}, \quad \text{where } V_B = \frac{SSB}{df_B} \text{ and } V_W = \frac{SSW}{df_W}.$$

The computation of f-ratio is shown in table 5.

Table 5. Computation of f-ratio, rating of the impact of sales promotion inducements on the demand for telecommunication services in Nigeria given the high level of rural dwelling ratio.

Vendor Firms		Agents		Consumers	
X_A	X_A^2	X_B	X_B^2	X_C	X_C^2
22	484	20	400	21	441
18	324	16	256	14	196
16	256	18	324	20	400
18	324	16	256	16	256
20	400	22	484	24	276
18	324	16	256	18	324
16	256	18	324	20	400
18	324	18	324	16	256
19	361	18	324	16	256
$\sum X_A = 165$	$\sum X_A^2 = 3053$	$\sum X_B = 162$	$\sum X_B^2 = 2148$	$\sum X_C = 165$	$\sum X_C^2 = 3105$
$\bar{X}_A = 18.3$		$\bar{X}_B = 18.0$		$\bar{X}_C = 18.3$	
n = 9		n = 9		n = 9	

$$\text{Grand Mean} = \frac{18.3+18.0+18.3}{3} = 18.2$$

$$SSB = 0.54$$

$$SST = 140.54$$

$$V_B = \frac{0.54}{2} = 0.27$$

$$V_W = \frac{140}{24} = 5.8$$

Given this, substituting for f-ratio formula is thus:

$$f = \frac{V_B}{V_W} = \frac{0.27}{5.8} = 0.05$$

A summary of the ANOVA is shown in table 6.

Table 6. Summary of ANOVA

Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares SS	Mean of Square MS	f-cal	Critical Value of F	Significance	Decision
Between groups	2	SSB 0.54	V_B 0.27				
Within groups	24	SSW 140.0	V_W 5.8	0.23	4.53	Not significant	Reject H_1
Total	26	140.54	6.35				

At 0.05 level of significance, the critical value of f is given as 4.53. Since $f < f_{0.05}$ (4.53), H_1 is rejected. The conclusion is that there is no significant difference between the assessment of vendors, agents and consumers on the high level of rural dwelling in Nigeria on the consumption of telecommunication services, give the offer of sales promotion incentives. The impact is on the negative as consumption rate does not increase significantly.

3.3. Test 3: Testing for the impact of the high illiteracy rate in Nigeria on the consumption rate of telecommunication services at the offer of sales promotion incentives.

Association data for this assessment is shown in table 7.

Table 7. Illiteracy rate and consumption of telecommunication services as offered based on sales promotion incentives

Basis	Firms	Agents	Consumers
High rate of illiteracy	21	20	18
Lack of awareness of the need for information	20	18	20
Inability to communicate in writing in local language (language barriers)	18	18	18
Inability to code information for transaction as text	19	20	16

Inability of information recipient to de-code text messages	16	18	20
Smallness in scope of business activities	19	18	16
Limited official working period	16	20	22
Total	129	132	130
Mean	18.4	18.9	18.6

Assessing for the impact of the indices of illiteracy rate on consumption of telecommunication services as offered, using sales promotion tools, based on Likert ranking scale, and the decision rule of:

- Accept Projected Statement: If and only if the value calculated is greater than the accepted mean mark of 50 (fifty) percent
- Reject Projected Statement: If otherwise.

Projected Statement:

The high level of illiteracy rate in Nigeria does not have significant negative impact on the acceptance rate of telecommunication services, given the availability of sales of promotion incentives

Analysis:

Table 7, shows that sales promotion as its inducements does not cause Nigerians to increase their patronage for the telecommunication services given their high level of illiteracy and associated challenges. Given this the telecommunication services firms assessed sales promotion induced patronage at 18.4%, agents at 18.9% and consumers themselves at 18.6%.

Decision:

Based on the ratings (18.4%, 18.9% and 18.6%) that are below the acceptance mean score of 50%, the decision is to reject the projected statement that high level of illiteracy rate in Nigeria does not have significant impact on the acceptance rate of the services of telecommunication firms given the availability of promotion. Hence, the high level of illiteracy rate in Nigeria has significant impact on the acceptance rate of the service of telecommunication firm.

For the purpose of testing for significance in difference or otherwise between the assessments of the three groups of respondents on the acceptance rate of telecommunication service at 0.05 level of confidence, the hypothesis is re-structured thus:

H₀₃: (μ₁ = μ₂ = μ₃) there is no significant difference between the assessment of service providers, their agents and consumers on the impact of the high rate of illiteracy rate in Nigeria on the acceptance of telecommunication services as offered based on sales promotion incentives.

H₁₃: (μ₁ ≠ μ₂ ≠ μ₃)_ significant different exist between the assessment of service providers, their agents and consumers on the impact of the high illiteracy rate in Nigeria on the acceptance of telecommunication services as offered based on sales promotion incentives.

Where μ₁, μ₂ and μ₃ are mean ratings of the three groups of respondents.

$$\text{Given } f = \frac{V_b}{V_w} = \frac{\text{between groups variance}}{\text{within group variance}} = \frac{S_B^2}{S_W^2}, \quad \text{where } V_B = \frac{SSB}{df_B} \text{ and } V_W = \frac{SSW}{df_W}.$$

Based on the foregone, the computation of f-ratio is shown in table 8.

Table 8. Computation of f-ratio, the rating of the impact of high level of illiteracy on the demand for telecommunication services given the accompany sales promotion inducements

Vendor Firms		Agents		Consumers	
X _A	X _A ²	X _B	X _B ²	X _C	X _C ²
21	441	20	400	18	324
20	400	18	324	20	400
18	324	18	324	18	324
19	361	20	400	16	256
16	256	18	324	20	400
19	361	18	324	16	256
16	256	18	324	20	400
19	361	18	324	16	256
16	256	20	400	22	484
Σ X _A = 129	Σ X _A ² = 2399	Σ X _B = 132	Σ X _B ² = 2496	Σ X _C = 130	Σ X _C ² = 2444
$\bar{X}_A = 18.4$		$\bar{X}_B = 18.9$		$\bar{X}_C = 18.6$	
n = 7		n = 7		n = 7	

$$\text{Grand Mean} = \frac{18.4+18.9+18.6}{3} = 18.6$$

$$SSB = 0.91$$

$$SST = 59.20$$

$$V_B = \frac{0.92}{2} = 0.46$$

$$V_W = \frac{58.27}{18} = 3.23$$

Given this, f-ratio is calculated thus:

$$f = \frac{V_B}{V_W} = \frac{0.46}{3.23} = 0.14$$

Summary of the ANOVA is shown in table 9.

Table 9. Summary of ANOVA

Source of Variation	df	Sum of Squares SS	Mean of Square MS	f-cal	Critical Value of F	Significance	Decision
Between groups	2	SSB 0.91	V _B 0.46				
Within groups	18	SSW 58.27	V _W 3.23	0.14	4.59	Not significant	Reject H ₁
Total	20	59.18	3.69				

At 0.05 level of significance, the critical value of f is given as 4.59, since $f < f_{0.05}$ (4.59), H₁ is rejected.

4. Conclusion

The conclusion therefore is that the high level of illiteracy in Nigeria and its associated problems has significant negative impact on the acceptance rate and level of telecommunication services as offered based on sales promotion incentives. However no significant difference exists between the assessments of vendors, agents and consumers of the services.

4.1. Findings

This work has the following as findings:

- In spite of the offer of incentives based on sales promotion, the low level of per capita income in Nigeria makes it difficult for Nigerians to patronize the telecommunication service offer of the vendors relative to investment on sales promotion.
- The high level of rural dwelling is a challenge to the consumption of the services of telecommunication firms in Nigeria even in the presence of offer of sales promotion incentives.
- It is also evident, that the high level of quantitative rather than qualitative education with its high tendency to illiteracy is responsible for the relative lack of patronage for telecommunication services in Nigeria even in the face of sales promotion incentives offered by vendors.

4.2. Discussion of Findings

Literature and research findings show increase in revenue accruable to government as increase of taxes and levies following enhanced acceptance of telecommunication service and its core base of operation –Nigeria Tribune Newspaper (2004, July 16). This sector of the economy has been so attractive that it is considered second to the oil sector as National Revenue earner, hence investment in the telecommunication industry has increased, as well as the rate of intra industrial competition-Ndukwe (2003).

Advocates of increase acceptance of the telecommunication offer are of the opinion that the adoption of telecommunication services account for improvement in sectorial efficiencies especially productivity with reduction in transaction costs and service innovations that have improved the macro quality of life - Ndukwe

(2003), Diso (2006), Zaid and Popoola (2010) and Adeyinka et al. (2007). This quality of life enhancement is attributed to increase in private sector earning that has made it possible for people to own houses (Okello, 2007); more hither-to jobless people are employed courtesy of telecommunication services marketing - Mohombu (2000); the earning capacity of the populace of the macro society has also been enhanced as the telecommunication facilities aid market inter connectivity for better value for productive output (Okiy, 2003, and Phillipis, 2005), hence poverty level is reduced (Fasorandti, 2008).

In the area of health as an off shot of quality of life, telecommunication services as basis for educating people on health management (Okello, 2009) and in the education sub sector, the telecommunications facilities are increasingly being adopted for formal and informal learning – Zaid and Popoola (2010) and Vision (2010).

The telecommunication services have also enhanced the social life of people within neighborhoods- Adejummobi and Odumosu (1998), as children are influenced positively or negatively socially, Becker (2000), Subrahmanyam et al. (2000), Kraut et al. (1998) and Kraut et al. (2002) and Psychologically - Schields and Behrman (2000), hence people enjoy enhanced feelings of self-worth.

In the family circle, people employ the services of telecommunication to encourage and advice one another on issues on marriage, childcare and juvenile delinquencies as means of improving quality of life – Diso (2006) and Zaid and Popoola (2010). People have also been encouraged to led fulfilled spiritual life based on spiritual values and faith passed through the telecommunication media; as such harmony and peace of mind are secured in inter and intra family social and business relationships (Zaid and Popoola, 2010).

Governments have also been able to influence target audience positively based on information past using the telecommunication media as mass media based or customized; deficiencies of government are equally past across to concerned agencies based on the use of defined telecommunication media, as such the quality of life is positively influenced for macro social and economic development.

On the account of these impacts of telecommunication on the quality of life, telecommunication service providers have always targeted at defined and or the general market with their service offer and have always adopted the tool of sales promotion for enhanced market acceptance of these offers.

Research results show that these firms expend implicitly and explicitly to attract the target market without adequate consideration of the peculiar nature of the Nigeria market; especially as it relates to the poor level of per capita income. Though income is an important, but not limiting factor to ownership and use of mobiles as medium of telecommunication, ownership of mobile telephones is shown to be less skewed towards those with higher income than for field lines in some countries – Samuel et al (2005) not Nigeria. Poverty accounts for one of the obstacles to information accessibility in Nigeria (Zaid and Popoola, 2010). Unlike education at specific levels and states and road networks that are provided by government at tax payers cost, electricity and telecommunication services are investments of the oligopolists in Nigeria, thus are not free rather are expensive compared to the standards in the developed societies (Zhao and Kanamori, 2007).

In the study on why Home Net Too children make so little use of the internet's communication tools, the US Department of Commerce (2000 & 2002) asserts that the children have friends and members of extended family that are poor; thus conclusively, poor people do not typically have home internet assess.

Though standard of living is not equal to amount of spending but assessing Nigerians in terms of ability to acquire necessities, comforts and luxuries at individual or group levels as are required to maintain proper states or circumstances, Nigerians are generally poor (Asogwa et al., 2013). Standard of living measurement based on gross domestic product, human development index, satisfaction with life index and happy planet index do not show Nigeria as measuring up to global standards (Nieck, 2011). Poverty limits the rate of responsiveness of Nigerians to the sales promotion incentives as base for the marketing of the telecommunication services, thus telecommunication service providers in their effort at wooing service consumers to enhanced patronage are challenged. More than 50% of Nigerians live below the poverty line – BBC News (2007, July 11). On account of this, these telecommunication services providers record decreasing return to scale on their investments.

Records have it that expansion in the number of telephone lines grew exponential between the year 2000 and 2003 compared to the period between 1960 and 2000. As at 2003, Nigeria had attained over 3 million lines (2.3 million of this figure were digital lines), tele density was recorded at 0.4 lines per 100 inhabitants in 1999 and 2.6 per 100 inhabitants by September 2003 (Adeyinka et al. 2007), and 3.92 lines per 100 inhabitants in 2004. This was when the National Population was estimated at 140 million (Itu, 2004). These statistics show a poor and dysfunctional pattern of technology diffusion given the supposed growth and development in the industrial sector of Nigeria.

The poor level of acceptance of the technology of communication is attributed to high level of rural-urban population in favor of the rural area at the ratio of 7:3 (Nkanega, 2007 and Adeyinka et al., 2007). Rural areas in Nigeria are economically backward and show high level of unfavorable income disparity compared

with people dwelling in the urban areas, especially at household levels (Torimiro et al., 2005, Torimiro and Lawal, 2001) and Zaid and Popoola, 2010), thus are unable to access information considered useful for the management of challenges of daily living as well are unable to accumulate capital for small scale enterprises that serve as catalyst for the consumption of telecommunication services.

Providers of telecommunication services are spurred into sales promotion on the account that the numbers of mobile users is growing twice as fast as in developing countries as in developed countries-Vodafone (2007), the question is how many of these persons that bear mobile phones make two (2) calls in a day. Most people especially rural women do not make calls throughout a period of 3 months; however they receive calls from relatives dwelling in the urban areas. Rural people do not afford the consumable base of telecommunication services and the electronic bases are most often gifts from relatives and friends.

Statistics show that the impact of urban migration from the rural area occasioned by the high level of poverty creates demographic in-balanced population of women, young children and older people (Crutsourka, 2004) who lack the basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, clothing among others (Zaid and Popoola, 2010 and Adeyinka et al., 2007). Based on this assertion, it is logical to conclude that those who cannot afford basic necessities of life will not and must not have saved money to re-charge their phones even when the phones they bear are gifts from friends and relatives.

This work is of the opinion that it is not an economically acceptable decision nor profitable for providers of telecommunication services to enhance the adoption of sales promotion (incentive based) strategy for the marketing of telecommunication consumables in Nigeria as returns on such investments record either a constant return or decreasing return to scale. This accounts for why the service providers are not able to satisfy the regulatory conditions of operation nor satisfy the basic need of regular supply of services across the nation. How can these firms break through without proper thought that 70% of the Nigeria population live in rural areas (Nkanga, 2007).

In this era of global growth in qualitative education, Nigerians are quantitatively educated with qualitative impact relegated to the background. Most people are capable to operate only a few operations/functions among the numerous functions in the different telecommunication electronics devices (making and receiving calls). The use of text messaging in the rural communities is much lower due to high level of illiteracy and the Nigeria indigenous languages are not basic codes of communication neither in writing nor in telecommunication device usage manuals. This, as supported by Vodafone (2008) research results, has implications for other technologies that use the written word, such as internet. Zaid and Popoola (2010) assert that good education, knowledge of the information sources, the formats, linguistic and cultural behaviours and the type of occupation the information recipients are engaged in constitute factors that limit access to information especially based on the use of telecommunication in Nigeria where over 70% of the population are rural dwellers and greater number of the rural dwellers are subsistent farmers with little or no formal learning background, the use of telecommunication systems and their gadget is poor, therefore their patronage for telecommunication services offered based on sales promotion inducement is also poor.

In the marketing of telecommunication services and associated consumables, the service providers are yet to accord recognition to the fact that over 85% of the 60 million adults target market in Nigeria under the age of 35 can neither read nor write (Onah, 2007), hence assessing the impact of internet on and potential contribution to social economic development, Nigeria is said to have strong international bandwidth, but weak domestic coverage and last-mile connectivity. This suggests a relatively low performance in infrastructure (Busayo, 2013) base of telecommunication service provision.

It is difficult on this account to accept that sales promotion activities of telecommunication service providers in Nigeria are based on good quality marketing plans and decisions where mass marketing strategies are adopted in product planning and design, marketing promotion, pricing and distribution and logistics especially given the fact that 25% of rural dwellers in Nigeria lack access to telecommunication (Busayo, 2013).

A study of these sales promotion incentives based on the situation in Nigeria reveals the reasons for the poor patronage of telecommunication source market offer in –spite of the associated inducements:

7078: Dear valued subscriber, recharge N1500 by today and get 25% bonus talk time Glo to Glo, Glo unlimited 2014./04/28.9.31am

7078: Dear valued subscriber, recharge N1000.with next 3 days and get 50% bonus talk time Glo to Glo Glo unlimited 2014/05/04/8.02am.

These sales promotion offers are presented using the platform of text message. Only very few Nigerians are literate enough to access and read text mails, some that are literate do not have time to study text mails.

The minimum wage in Nigeria is N17, 000.00. Some state governments pay what is referred to as “consolidated salary” where workers on grade level 1 do not earn more than N18, 000.00 per month and Directors on grade level 16 earn less than N80,000.00. per month. These has lowest and highest daily earnings as N600.00 and N2667.00 respectively are too low to attend to family needs for discretionary balance for telecommunication services as his wage structure is too poor that only a few persons may afford to recharge at N1000.00 or N500.00 at a stretch. Those who may afford to recharge at a stretch to earn the associated bonus may not have business opportunities for the utilization of the bonus offer as the business environment catalyst that spur of the consumption of telecommunication services are not present in Nigeria where social, education political and economic environmental interactions as basis for the consumption of telecommunication services are not poorly utilized. Most calls are family members based. This situation is worst in the rural areas.

These challenges to the consumption of the services of telecommunication services call for consumer marketing research, for good quality market segmentation as requisite for sales promotion incentives presentation

4.3. Conclusion

Economic growth for Nigeria like in most other economies is a function of efficiency in the integration of macro-economic variables which telecommunication is a part. The impacts of the adoption of the telecommunication network are evident in the improved quality of life of both urban and rural dwellers.

It is however important to note that the consumption of the services of the telecommunication industry does not show linearity in relationship with economic development in Nigeria, given the investment on sales promotion as platform for marketing of the service. This non linearity in relationship is attributed to the high level of poverty common in Nigeria, the high number of rural dwellers as well as high rate of illiteracy among the target market of these services of the telecommunication industry.

Following the above, it is important that vendors of telecommunication services in Nigeria should be involved in of marketing research as source of input for decision on market segmentation and targeting, as strategies for qualitative investment in sales promotion and for the achievement of increasing return to scale on investment rather than constant or decreasing returns.

4.4. Recommendations

The promising further of the telecommunication industry in Nigeria has attracted a few other service providers thus supply of services reasonably exceeds demand based on the fact of the high level of incidence of poverty and low literacy level. However in the midst of some technological hitches that have negative impacts on service efficiency rate, supply is projected as higher. To mop up this excess supply, vendors have always adopted the tool of sales promotion, with the entire market (universal) as target.

These mass market oriented marketing activities are considered non profitable, hence alternative strategies are advocated for. This is the essence of these recommendations.

Following World Bank recommendation –a systematic approach to the application of IT to the needs of rural communities –World Bank (1998), firms in telecommunication services provision should as a matter of importance:

- Identify the needs and priorities of Nigerians in the different sectors of industrial operations as well as domestic usage of telecommunication services.
- Determine the acceptable platforms that meet the information needs of the Nigerian populace with special bias for the urban-rural area dwelling density.
- Determine the gap difference between the intellectual capacity of the Nigeria populace and that necessary to operate, given the current weave in the telecommunication industry
- Devise strategies and techniques for the closing up of the gap based on the optimization of the features of the telecommunication service offer in favor of the target market.

Achievement of the optimized feature of telecommunication service lays in the qualitative and quantitative consumer research efforts, on the part of the telecommunication service providers that are aimed at determining the telecommunication service market size, market potential and market trends (Ogwo, 2012). These research activities should also identify telecommunication service consumers’ motivation in Nigeria, their buying pattern, network providers and the level of inter and intra industrial competition.

Data base of these research exercises should be relevant, accurate, timely and valuable (Oko, 2002 and Ogwo, 2012) especially given the dynamic nature of the consumption behavior of Nigerian consumers in response to environmental variables-economic, social, psychological, technology and competition.

Research into the Nigeria telecommunication service industry with bias for consumers should size the consumers along the ultimate and industrial consumers and prioritize the purchasing power of these difference classes of consumers, their size of purchase in quantity, frequency of purchase and geographical disperse.

This study should unveil consumers' buying motive along rationality; emotionality and admixture of both as well as the level of specialized /technical knowledge consumer categories have relative to telecommunication services and the rate of sensitivity the different classes of consumers have to changes in price-as price elasticity of demand variable.

Firms in the telecommunication service industry should be able to determine the demographic, firm graphic and economic profiles of the target markets as means of ascertaining the markets' disposable and discretionary income as basis for planning sales promotion activities targeted at members of the telecommunication service providers' sales force, members of the market intermediaries and the ultimate consumers (Oko, 2013).

Equally important in sales promotion management in the telecommunication service industry is good quality geographic mapping that enables service providers take decision on the sitting of service centers, agents' selections, and storage facilities location as well as the planning of transportation and logistics activities.

Knowledge of this market should aid service providers segment the telecommunication market for adequacy in adoption of sales promotion tools and incentives given the measurably, accessibility, substantiality, differentiability and actionability of the market for benefit maximization (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010).

It is appreciated that the rural areas in Nigeria do not yield much total revenue for telecommunication service providers compared to the low density urban areas (Harris et al., 2001), it is expected that incentive packages as part of the sales promotion programs for the rural Nigerians should aim at minimizing costs in terms of operating capital, operating expenses and maintenance costs. This must aim at recognizing the relative level of poverty of the rural areas.

Sales promotion activities in the telecommunication service industry must be believable especially given their incentive package and must address the economic appeals of the target markets (Okpara, 1999). Sales promotion should serve as a mix of elements in promotion and must be preceded by advertising (Christopher and Cowell, 1970, and Sungo and Lin, 1978).

5. References

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