

Influence of Advertising Appeals and Personality on Telecoms Consumption Preferences in Nigeria

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Abstract

This research purposely studied the influence of advertising appeals and consumer personality on telecoms consumption preferences, using MTN telecoms service as the product of study and 150 participants from Enugu metropolis and Agbani, Enugu state, Nigeria; age range of 16 to 35 years with a mean age of 23 years and standard deviation of 3. The research was empirically tested, using a two-way ANOVA (F-test) for the analysis, with the purpose of finding out if there will be an influence of advertising appeals and consumer personality on telecoms consumption preferences and if there will be any interaction effect. The findings are as follows; there was a significant influence of advertising appeals on telecoms consumption preferences; there was no significant influence of personality on telecoms consumption preferences, there was no significant influence of the interaction effect. Implication and limitations and recommendation were made for future research.

KEYWORDS: Introverts, Extroverts, rational appeal, emotional appeal, personality, consumption preference

INTRODUCTION

Advertising appeals is one of the main communicator that a firm uses to expose consumers to its products. Adverts consume a large part of production budget because the market is almost not in existence without advertisement. It is often said that, advertisement is a means of communications aimed at groups and populations. This is done through the use of media which includes the prints, audio and visual media and also the internet services. The most basic needs of a man is the need for food, clothing and shelter. Special needs for these

necessities cannot be created with advertisement. However, brand productions of these necessities and certain other products that provide comfort in life and their demands can be generated using advertisement as we can see in our society today. Advertisement is used as a form of persuasion by agencies, influencing people's ability to change the attitude of others. Companies hope that consumers will purchase their products due to the advertisements, which deliver messages about a certain brand and its products. Thorson and Leavitt (1992) stated that the best prophet for purchase is advertisement. Technologies progress rapidly day by day, contributing to the constant renewal of and changes in broadcasting forms. Among those forms, advertising media is widely used. Advertisements are useful for the representation of a commodity's image. They also act as announcement for the co-operate image and product positioning. Advertisements are a kind of persuasive communication that offers products information to every consumer via institutions in-charge of production or supply. In a complete study of marketing and promotional activities, advertising usually plays the most important role. Therefore, the advertising effect has become a key issue. Advertising appeals aim to influence the way consumers view themselves and how buying certain products can prove to be beneficial to them. The message conveyed through advertising appeals influences the purchasing decisions of consumers. Different types of appeals in adverts can be seen in the media today. Kotler (1997) pointed out in his study that advertising appeal is the theme of advertisement. To make the audience receive a necessary message, advertisers have to put some driving power into the message, and the driving power is the appeal. Every advertising appeal represents an attraction, which arouses consumer's desires. Kotler (2003) divided advertising appeals into rational and emotional appeal. All these explain that advertising appeals refers to packaging products, services, organisms, or individuals in a variety of ways that clearly delivers a certain benefit stimulation, identification or reason to explain what consumers are thinking about and why they buy the products. Berkman and Gilson (1987) defined advertising appeals as an attempt at creativity that inspires consumer's motives for purchase and affect consumers attitude towards a specific product or services. Advertising appeals can also be defined as an application of a psychological motivating power to arouse consumer's desires and attraction for buying while sending broadcasting signal to change receiver's concept of the product. Hence, advertising appeals is applied to attract the consumer concept of the product and to affect them emotionally about a specific product or services (Belch and Belch, 1998). To meet the varying demands of their target consumers, advertisers commonly use rational appeal and emotional appeal in their advertising in an attempt to influence consumer behaviour. By rational advertisement appeal, the product can be emphasized to highlight its functions and benefits to the consumer. On the other hand, Emotional Advertising appeal places stress on meeting consumers psychological, social or symbolic requirements where many purchase motives come from. Kotler (1997) defined rational appeal as rationally oriented purchase stimulated by directly giving explanations of a product's advantages. Rational appeal focuses on the benefits consumers may enjoy in an advertisement, it emphasizes that a product or service could achieve the function and benefits consumers desires. He further defined emotional appeal as the stimulation of consumers purchase intension by arousing positive or negative emotion. According to Kotler, positive emotional appeals covers, humor, love, happiness, sex, music, adventure, romance, emotional and sensitive words.

Humor appeals: Is an attempt that is used in around 30% of the advertisements. Humor can be an excellent tool to catch the viewer's attention and help in achieving instant recall which

can work well for sale of product. It can be excellently used when it is related to some benefit that the consumer can derive without which the joke might overpower the message.

Sex appeal: Sex and nudity have always sold well, sexuality, sexual suggestiveness, over sexuality and sensuality raises curiosity of the audience and can result in strong feelings about the product advertisement. It can also result in the product appearing interesting. However use of sex in types of advertising appeals can have a boomerang effect if it is not used carefully. It can interfere with the actual message of the advertisement and purpose of the product and can also cause low brand recall.

Music appeal: Music can be used as types of advertising appeals as it has a certain intrinsic value and can help in increasing the persuasiveness of the advertisement. It can also help capture attention and increase customers recall.

Romance appeal: These advertising display the attraction between sexes, it is used to signify that buying certain products will have positive impact on the opposite's sex and improve your romantic or love life. Fragrance, toothpastes, automobiles, shaving sticks, and Other products often use this type of advertising appeal.

Emotional words / sensitivity appeal: These advertisements are used to drive at and influence the sensitivity of consumers.

Adventure appeal: Directed towards giving the impression that purchasing a product will change the individual's life radically and fill it with fun, adventure and action.

Endorsement appeal: Celebrities and well known personalities often endorse certain products and their pitching can help drive the sale.

Play on words: Advertisements also make effective use of catch phrase to convey the message, such appeals help brand recognition and recall and can be quite popular with the youth in particular. Negative emotional appeal includes fear, a sense of guilty, scarcity appeal, snob appeal, less-than-perfect-appeal, etc.

Fear appeal: It is a factor that can have incredible influence on individuals. Fear is often used to good effect in advertising and marketing campaigns of beauty and health products including insurance. Advertising experts indicate that using moderating levels of fear in advertising can prove to be very effective.

Scarcity appeal: Scarcity appeals are based on limited supplies or limited time period for purchase of products and are often used while employing promotion tools including sweep takes, contests etc.

Snob appeal: This appeal is directed towards creating feelings of desire or envy for product that are termed top of the line or that have considerable qualities of luxury and elegance associated with them.

Less-Than-perfect appeal: Advertisement often try to influence people to make certain purchase by pointing out their inadequacies or making them feel less perfect and move dissatisfied with their present condition, mostly used by cosmetics and health industries.

There are other emotional appeals like, the band wagon appeals: which signifies that, "since everyone is involved in a particular behaviour, you should join as well". It appeals towards the popularity aspect of a person using the product.

Rational or informative appeals as the name suggest and as earlier defined aims on an individual's functional, utilitarian or practical needs for particular products and services. Such appeals emphasize characteristics and features of the products and the service and how it will be beneficial to own or use the product brand. Print media is particularly well suited for rational appeals and is often used with good success. It is also suited for business to business

advertisers and for products that are complex and that need high degree of attention and involvement and this has been linked to human preferences, which are aspects of personality.

Personality has been defined by psychologist in many different forms or ways, but common to all of the ways are two basic concept; Uniqueness and characteristic patterns of behaviour. It is said to be a complex set of psychological qualities that influence an individual's characteristic pattern of behaviour across different situation and overtime. Our personality which is built up by our "nature and nurture" determines how we think, feel and act. We are always trying to categorize people according to distinguishing features. These include class in University, sex and race and some personality theory also try to group people into distinct, non-overlapping categories that are called personality types. Personality types are all-or-non phenomena no matters of degree; if a person is assigned to one type, he or she could not belong to any other type within that system and this helps simplify the complex process of understanding other people. In this research we made use of Eysenck's Introverts- Extroverts (Type A and Type B) personality types. Eysenck hypothesized that extroversion-introversion is a matter of the balance of inhibition and excitation in the brain itself, in relation to Pavlov's finding in his dog experiment. Extraverted individuals according to Eysenck and Eysenck (1976), has good and strong inhibition when confronted with traumatic experience, outgoing, talkative, enjoys human interaction and they are assertive, and gregarious. They also enjoy noisy demonstrations, community activities. Introvert tend to quiet, deliberately and relatively don't engage in social situations, more reserved, less outspoken in groups, they enjoy reading, very analytical, easily overwhelmed by too much stimulation from social gathering and engagements. It is usually assumed that people respond similarly without considering individual differences, to advertisement. However, this might not be the case practically because a message which is effective with a specific personality type, may not be effective with another. Understanding this will help us tailor advertising messages to different target audiences, target it more effectively and better utilize advertising resources. This study was motivated by the observation that most advertisements, especially on television, radio, and internet are made to appeal to our emotions, giving rise to the speculation that these emotional appealing advertisements might not have a positive effect on a rational person. This study therefore, is not just aimed at, providing an examination on consumer's personality types and advertising appeals but to investigate how they (consumer's personality types and advertising appeals) independently and interactively influence telecom consumption preferences. Research in telecoms consumption preferences, especially in Nigeria as one may observe, has not investigated fully the option that different customers may react differently to different advertising information. Customers are distinguished by their needs, yet marketing efforts are focused on what customers want but not on who they are. The problem which rises from this misconception is that "economic motivations and firm centric philosophies drive most of today's production business" which leads to "artificial intimacy, rampant mailings, unnecessary test messages, and lack of reciprocation". Producers and marketers have to consider not only what consumers want, but also how it is sold. In order to achieve this, they have to start "seeing through the eyes of the consumers" and find out what but how to sell. To this effect, this research focused on questions such as;

Will there be a significant influence of advertising appeals on telecom consumption preferences?

Will there be a significant influence of personality on telecom consumption preferences?

Hypotheses

- 1) There will be a significant influence of advertising appeals on telecom consumption preferences.
- 2) There will be a significant influence of personality on telecom consumption preferences.

METHOD

Design/statistics

The design for the study is a cross sectional survey design. A 2X2 ANOVA was applied, using the method of weighted mean to analyze the data.

Participants

A total of one hundred and fifty (150) participants (79 males and 71 females) were used in this study. The participants were from Enugu metropolis and Agbani and were those who volunteered to participate in the research. The participants' ages ranged between 16 and 36 years with a mean age of 23years and standard deviation of 3, and were consumers of MTN services only.

Measures

Three instruments were used in the study the first one is the Eysenck personality inventory which measures extraversion and introversion by Eysenck and Eysenck (1976). The reliability of the EPI is .60 and the test-retest time interval is 1(one) month. Scores above the mean score shows extraversion while scores below the mean shows introversion. The second instrument is the advertising appeals questionnaire developed by the researchers the scale is made up of 12 items designed to measure the extent that a participant is emotionally appealed by MTN adverts. Sample of the items are: "I like the graphics creativity and celebrity endorsement that make-up MTN adverts" and "MTN adverts inspire my imaginations". The questionnaire measures emotional appeal and participants that scored below the average mean were counted as being rationally appealed. MTN services were used as the object of interest. The items were placed on a five point likert rating scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The researcher reported 0.89 split half reliability coefficient with a full scale reliability of 0.94 after the pilot study was conducted to ensure reliability and validity of the instrument. The higher the score on the scale the more emotionally appealed the participant is. 43 participants were used for the pilot study after the items had undergone item analysis by professionals.

The third instrument is the consumption preferences instrument developed by the researcher, an eight (8) item questionnaire in likert format, also using MTN services as the service of interest. Sample item include "I consume MTN service because of the service quality" and "MTN services come with lots of additional promo that is why I use it". The researcher conducted a pilot study and recorded a split half reliability of 0.99 and a full scale reliability of 0.99, and 43 participants were used, and the higher the score on the scale the higher the consumption preferences.

Procedure

(150) one hundred and fifty questionnaires of each of the 3 (three) questionnaires were used in this study, the questionnaire were given at the convenience of the participants and collection was done on the spot as well.

RESULTS

Table 1: Summary table of means for the influence of advertising appeals and personality on telecoms consumption preferences.

PERSONALITY

Independent variable	P1(introverts)	P2(extroverts)	Sum mean(X)
α_1 (rational appeals)	E=687 N=32 X=21.47	E=649 N=29 X=22.38	43.85
α_2 (emotional appeals)	E=1087 N=40 27.18	E=1308 N=49 X=26.69	53.87
Sum mean(X)	48.65	49.07	Total (X)=97.72

The means table shows that extroverts have a higher mean (49.07) than introverts [48.65], but not significant enough to influence consumption preferences. While emotional appeal has a higher significant mean of 53.87 than rational appeal of 43.85.

Table 2. ANOVA summary table of 2X2 Anova for the influence of advertising appeals and personality on telecoms consumption preferences.

Source Of Variables	Sum of squares	Df	MS	F-Ratio	p
Personality	1.44	1	1.44	0.03	>.05
Advertising appeal	904.6	1	904.6	16.7	<.05
Advertising & personality interaction	17.66	1	17.66	0.33	>.05
S/AP	7909	146	54.17		
Total	8, 832.7	149			

The result in table 2 showed that mean differences in personality was not significant at ($P>.05$). This suggests that extraverts do not significantly differ from introverts on consumption preferences. The table equally showed that advertising appeals has significant influence on consumption preferences as the mean differences between emotional appeals and rational appeals turned to be significant ($P<.05$). The interaction effect of advertising appeals and personality was not significant ($P>.05$)

DISCUSSION

The result of the study on the influence of advertising appeals and personality on telecoms consumption preferences showed that the first hypothesis which states that there will be a significant influence of advertising appeals on telecoms consumption preferences was accepted, because advertising appeal has significant influence on telecoms consumption preferences. This result showed that there is a significant mean difference between emotional appeal advertising and rational appeal advertising, thereby supporting the findings of Thorson and Leavitt (1992); Choi and Thorson, (1983): that emotional appeals are more effective and memorable than rational appeals. The result of the study also supported the findings of the research done in the twin cities of Pakistan by Ghulam et al. (2012); that, there is positive relationship of emotional responses with consumer buying behavior, that consumers purchase behavior is by emotional response. The result of the study also revealed a

contradiction in some of the empirical findings. For instance, the works of Zielske (1982); Golden and Johnson (1983); Coulson (1989) which suggest that rational appeals are more effective than emotional appeal and it also contradicts the favoritism given to rational appeal by advertising practitioners with the reason that rational appeals contain basic facts about the products as researched by Stafford (1993). The result of this study further reveals that there is no significant mean difference between introverts and extroverts on consumption preferences with exposure to advertising appeals. Therefore, it shows that the second hypothesis which stated that there will be a significant influence of personality on telecom consumption preferences was rejected. The findings disagree with the research findings of Myers, Sen, Alexandrov (2010); which states that there are some innate consumer differences based upon some measure of personality; that is, different people have unique preferences for different types of adverts according to their characteristics and this influences most of their reactions.

Implication of the study

The result of this present study seems to support the seemingly popular hypotheses that emotional appeal works more effectively than rational appeal. It is widely believed that the use of a celebrity in advertisements and the use of humor is a good marketing strategy, thus these findings support such assertion because there was a statistical significant mean difference between emotional appeal and rational appeal in telecom consumption preferences. This study has shown that people will remember advertisements and respond more if these adverts exhibit different creative moods and flavours or have their favorite stars and models or idols. Although extroverts seem to score higher mean than introverts, yet the mean difference seems to be insignificant, meaning that consumers' personality differences do not have effect on telecoms consumption preferences. Both introverts and extroverts find emotional advertising interesting.

Summary and conclusions

The result of the first hypothesis indicated that there was a significant influence of advertising appeal on telecoms consumption preferences in favor of emotional advertising appeals. The result on the second hypothesis also indicated that there was no significant influence of personality on telecoms consumption preferences. There was also no significant interaction effect between advertising appeals and personality on telecoms consumption preferences. This research was conducted using MTN Telecoms services as product object; therefore, for generalization of these results, it is necessary for future researchers to empirically contribute to this research by using other telecoms brands and products.

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