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Consumer Buying Behaviour and Corporate Performance of Telecommunications Companies in Nigeria. A Study of MTN and GLO

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of consumer buying behaviour on the corporate performance of telecommunications companies in Nigeria, using MTN and GLO as case studies. The research explores key determinants of consumer buying behaviour such as price sensitivity, service quality, brand loyalty, promotional strategies, and technological innovation. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, with data collected from 400 subscribers across Osogbo using structured questionnaires. The data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics, including regression analysis to measure the strength of the relationship between consumer behaviour and corporate performance indicators such as market share, customer retention, and revenue growth. Findings reveal that service quality and brand loyalty significantly influence consumer decisions, while promotional offers and pricing strategies affect short-term customer acquisition. The study further shows that consumer-centric strategies are strongly correlated with improved corporate performance in both MTN and GLO, although MTN exhibits a stronger alignment due to its broader investment in customer experience technologies. The research concludes by recommending that telecom companies should continuously adapt their marketing and operational strategies to evolving consumer needs in order to enhance performance and sustain competitiveness in Nigeria's saturated telecom market.

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour, Corporate Performance, Telecommunications, MTN, GLO, Nigeria, Service Quality, Brand Loyalty

1. Introduction

The telecommunications industry in Nigeria has grown significantly over the past two decades, becoming a cornerstone of economic development and technological advancement. With over 200 million mobile subscribers as of 2023, the market is both expansive and highly competitive (Nigerian Communications Commission [NCC], 2023). In this context, understanding consumer buying behaviour has become a strategic imperative for telecom providers seeking to maintain and grow their market share. Consumer buying behaviour encompasses the decision-making processes and actions of individuals in selecting, purchasing, and using telecommunications services, which are influenced by factors such as service quality, price sensitivity, brand image, and promotional strategies (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

MTN Nigeria and Globacom (GLO), two of the largest players in the industry, continuously deploy diverse marketing strategies to influence consumer decisions and improve their corporate performance. Studies have shown that consumers in the Nigerian telecom sector are particularly responsive to service reliability, affordability, and customer service quality (Oyelude & Adesina, 2021). Moreover, brand loyalty and perceived service innovation significantly affect consumer retention and switching behaviour, which directly impacts organizational profitability and sustainability (Nwakanma & Ozuem, 2020). For instance, MTN's market leadership is often attributed to its aggressive brand positioning and investment in customer experience technologies, while GLO leverages price competitiveness and local cultural resonance to appeal to a broad user base (Eze & Nwankwo, 2022).

However, despite these strategies, telecom providers face challenges such as high churn rates, low customer satisfaction, and fluctuating revenues, underscoring the need for a deeper understanding of the behavioural patterns that influence customer decisions. This study, therefore, investigates how consumer buying behaviour influences corporate performance in the Nigerian telecom industry, using MTN and GLO as case studies. The objective is to identify which aspects of consumer behaviour most significantly drive corporate performance indicators such as customer acquisition, retention, and revenue generation, thereby offering practical insights for strategic decision-making in the sector.

Factors such as pricing strategies, brand image, service quality, and promotional effectiveness are central to consumer decision-making (Adebayo & Bello, 2023). These variables not only shape customer acquisition and retention but also affect broader indicators of corporate performance, including profitability, market share, and brand equity. As consumer preferences become more dynamic and technologically informed, telecom firms must continually adapt to sustain their competitive advantage.

This research is valuable to multiple stakeholders. For telecom companies, particularly MTN and GLO, the findings will offer data-driven insights into aligning marketing strategies with consumer preferences to enhance performance. For policymakers and regulators, a deeper understanding of consumer behaviour may inform regulatory reforms that ensure fair competition and consumer protection. Academically, the study will contribute to the growing body of literature on consumer behaviour and corporate performance in developing markets, offering a contextualized perspective on Nigeria.

Scope and Limitations

The study focuses exclusively on MTN and GLO within the Nigerian telecommunications sector. It assesses how consumer buying behaviour specifically with regard to service quality, pricing, promotions, and brand image affects corporate outcomes such as revenue and customer retention. The study is geographically restricted to Nigeria and may not reflect conditions in other countries. It is also limited by potential constraints in accessing proprietary company data, which may affect the comprehensiveness of the analysis. Furthermore, the dynamic nature of consumer preferences and market conditions could affect the generalizability of the findings over time.

2. Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

The TPB posits that an individual's behavioural intentions are influenced by their attitudes towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of telecommunications, consumers' intentions to subscribe to a particular service provider are shaped by their beliefs about the provider's offerings, the influence of peers and societal norms, and their perceived ease or difficulty in accessing and using the services. This theory underscores the multifaceted nature of consumer decision-making processes in the telecommunications industry.

Studies has shown that in Nigeria's mobile telecommunications context, subjective norms such as peer recommendations, family preferences, and popular trends can have a strong influence on brand choice. For instance, a study by Olaleye, Adebayo, and Sanusi (2020) found that young Nigerian consumers are more likely to choose a telecom provider recommended by their social circles, especially when these recommendations align with favourable attitudes towards pricing and data quality. This indicates that marketing strategies aiming to increase subscriber base should not only target individual perceptions but also leverage group-based influence channels such as social media endorsements and influencer partnerships.

Moreover, perceived behavioural control how easy or difficult consumers think it is to use a telecom service plays a pivotal role in shaping adoption behaviour. In rural and semi-urban Nigeria, where network infrastructure and digital literacy may be limited, consumers often perceive challenges in accessing reliable services or resolving technical issues. This perception can diminish their likelihood of switching to a new provider, regardless of superior pricing or features. According to Eze et al. (2022), addressing such barriers through user-friendly service platforms, localized customer support, and consistent service coverage can enhance perceived behavioural control and, consequently, increase consumer intention to adopt or remain loyal to a telecom provider.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The TAM suggests that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use determine an individual's acceptance and usage of new technology (Davis, 1989). In Nigeria's telecommunications sector, the adoption of new services or technologies by consumers is influenced by their perceptions of the benefits and the ease with which they can utilize these services. For instance, the introduction of mobile internet services and the subsequent consumer adoption can be analysed through the lens of TAM, considering factors like service reliability and user-friendliness.

Studies in the Nigerian telecommunications market have shown that perceived usefulness is a dominant factor in the uptake of digital services such as mobile banking, online streaming, and e-learning platforms facilitated by telecom providers. Olatokun and Igbinedion (2009) observed that Nigerian users are more likely to adopt telecom-based innovations when they directly enhance their productivity or social connectivity. For example, when MTN and GLO introduced 4G LTE services, the perceived enhancement in speed and data quality significantly boosted user migration from 3G services, demonstrating the central role of perceived utility in driving consumer behaviour.

Similarly, perceived ease of use plays a pivotal role in technology diffusion, especially among older or less tech-savvy demographics. In a recent study by Afolabi and Ajayi (2021), it was found that simplified user interfaces, accessible customer support, and intuitive mobile apps contributed significantly to consumer satisfaction and loyalty in the Nigerian telecom industry. The success of USSD-based services for mobile transactions, which do not require internet access, exemplifies how low-barrier technological platforms can enhance adoption across a broad consumer base. This highlights the importance for telecom companies to design services that are not only innovative but also inclusive and easy to navigate.

Conceptual Framework of Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumer buying behaviour encompasses the decision-making processes and actions of individuals when purchasing goods or services. In the telecommunications sector, this behaviour is influenced by factors such as brand image, service quality, pricing strategies, and technological advancements. Brand image, in particular, plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. A study by Muhammed et al. (2023) found that brand image significantly affects consumer purchase intentions in Nigeria's telecommunications sector, highlighting the importance of maintaining a positive brand reputation.

Consumer buying behaviour significantly influences corporate performance in the telecommunications sector. Factors such as service quality, pricing strategies, brand loyalty, and technological innovation play pivotal roles in shaping consumer decisions and, consequently, company performance.

Consumer buying behaviour in Nigeria's telecommunications sector is influenced by various factors, including service quality, pricing, promotional strategies, and brand perception. A study by Jatau et al. (2023) highlights that value-added services significantly impact consumer switching behaviour, whereas service quality and price were not significant determinants. This suggests that consumers prioritise additional services when choosing between telecom providers.

Consumer buying behaviour in Nigeria's telecommunications industry is influenced by various factors, including value-added services, sales promotions, price sensitivity, and digital engagement.

- **Value-Added Services**: A study by Jatau et al. (2024) found that value-added services significantly impact consumer switching behaviour, while service quality and price were not significant determinants. This suggests that consumers prioritise additional services when choosing between telecom providers.
- **Sales Promotions**: Research by the British Journal of Marketing Studies (2024) indicates that promotional strategies like "buy-one-get-one-free" and price discounts effectively influence consumer purchasing decisions in the Nigerian telecom industry. Sales promotions also play a crucial role in shaping consumer behaviour. Research by the British Journal of Marketing Studies (2024) indicates that promotional strategies like "buy-one-get-one-free" and price discounts effectively influence consumer purchasing decisions in the Nigerian telecom industry.
- **Price Sensitivity**: Economic challenges have heightened price sensitivity among Nigerian consumers. A report by Report Afrique (2025) highlights that Nigerians are increasingly prioritising affordability and value for money in their purchases.
- **Digital Engagement**: The rise of digital platforms has transformed consumer behaviour. A study on digital marketing in Osogbo found that mobile coupons significantly influenced customer acquisition by attracting new customers, increasing purchase intention, and promoting repeat purchases

Corporate Performance of Telecommunications Companies

The telecommunications sector in Nigeria has experienced significant growth over the past decade, with companies like MTN and Glo playing pivotal roles in expanding connectivity and driving economic development. In Osogbo, Osun State, both MTN and Glo have established substantial market presence, competing to offer superior services and capture greater market share.

MTN Nigeria's Corporate Performance

MTN Nigeria has consistently demonstrated strong corporate performance, attributed to its strategic investments in infrastructure, customer-centric services, and technological innovation. A study by Okpighe and Moruku (2023) highlights that MTN's brand differentiation strategies, including brand trust, image, and awareness, significantly contribute to its sustainable competitive advantage, accounting for 78% of variations in performance metrics.

In Osogbo, MTN's emphasis on service quality and customer satisfaction has led to increased customer retention and revenue growth. The company's deployment of advanced technologies, such as 4G LTE and ongoing 5G trials, ensures high-speed connectivity and reliable services for subscribers.

Furthermore, MTN's commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives has positively impacted its profitability. A study by Aiya (2020) reveals that CSR activities explain 79% of the variance in MTN's profit after tax, indicating a strong correlation between social investments and financial performance.

Glo Nigeria's Corporate Performance

Glo Nigeria, as the second-largest network operator in Nigeria, has made significant strides in enhancing its corporate performance. The company's investment in infrastructure, such as the Glo-1 submarine cable, has improved internet services and expanded its broadband capabilities.

In Osogbo, Glo's competitive pricing strategies and promotional offers have attracted a substantial subscriber base. However, the company has faced challenges in maintaining consistent service quality, which has impacted customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Despite these challenges, Glo's focus on technological innovation and expansion into underserved areas demonstrates its commitment to improving corporate performance and customer experience.

Telecommunications Industry in Nigeria: Historical Context and Evolution

Nigeria's telecommunications industry has undergone significant transformations since its inception. The journey began in 1886 with the establishment of telegraphic submarine cable lines connecting Lagos to London (Olaoluwa, 2019). The sector remained under government monopoly until the liberalization efforts in the 1990s, which led to the establishment of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) in 1992 to regulate and promote competition in the industry. The introduction of the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) in 2001 marked a turning point, with operators like MTN and Econet (now Airtel) commencing operations, followed by Globacom in 2003 (ThisDayLive, 2023). This liberalization spurred rapid growth, increasing teledensity and expanding access to telecommunications services across the country.

Comparative Overview of MTN and GLO in the Nigerian Market

MTN Nigeria and Globacom (GLO) are two leading players in Nigeria's telecommunications market. As of February 2023, MTN held approximately 40.87% of the GSM market share, while GLO accounted for about 26.78% (Oluka, 2023). MTN's dominance is attributed to its extensive network coverage, innovative service offerings, and strategic marketing initiatives. Conversely, GLO has distinguished itself through competitive pricing strategies and the introduction of per-second billing, which disrupted the market and forced competitors to adjust their billing systems. Both companies have contributed significantly to the sector's growth, with MTN focusing on expansive infrastructure development and GLO leveraging aggressive marketing and customer-centric innovations to capture market share.

Empirical Review

Service quality remains a key determinant of customer loyalty and corporate performance in the telecom industry. Akintola et al. (2024) found that customer orientation ($\beta = 0.245$, $p = 0.038$) and inter-functional coordination ($\beta = 0.485$, $p = 0.013$) positively influence organisational performance in Nigerian telecom firms, including MTN and Glo. Their findings suggest that telecom providers who align internal processes with customer needs can significantly improve performance outcomes.

Akintola et al. (2024) also examined how strategic marketing moderates the relationship between market orientation and performance. Their results show a significant direct effect of strategic marketing ($\beta = 0.466$, $p = 0.000$) on firm performance, indicating that MTN and Glo's ability to adapt marketing strategies to local market conditions, such as in Osogbo, can drive revenue and customer retention.

Okpighe and Moruku (2023) emphasised the role of brand differentiation strategies; trust, image, and awareness in boosting MTN's sustainable competitive advantage. These brand elements account for 78% of the variation in performance metrics, suggesting that similar strategic brand investments in Osogbo could offer MTN a competitive edge over Glo.

Lasisi and Aderinkola (2018) conducted a performance evaluation of mobile networks in Osogbo and found that MTN experienced higher traffic congestion compared to Glo. This finding contradicts national trends but highlights the importance of local network performance in determining customer satisfaction and corporate performance.
According to Odey et al. (2023), public relations activities significantly influence corporate image, which in turn enhances customer loyalty and company performance. Their study on MTN and Glo in Calabar is relevant for Osogbo, as proactive public engagement and crisis communication are necessary for maintaining brand credibility in regional markets.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design. This approach is appropriate for systematically collecting data on consumer buying behaviours and corporate performance from a defined sample of MTN and GLO subscribers in Osogbo. The design enables the analysis of patterns, relationships, and trends in the data collected.

Population of the Study

The target population for this study consists of telecommunications subscribers using MTN and GLO networks in Osogbo, Osun State. These users represent individuals who interact directly with telecommunication services and can provide insights into how service quality, promotional strategies, and other behavioural factors influence company performance.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 400 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling. The population was divided into two strata: MTN users and GLO users. From each stratum, 200 respondents were randomly selected using a simple random technique to ensure equal representation and reduce selection bias.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of three sections:
Section A: Demographic data (e.g., age, gender, income level, education)
Section B: Consumer behaviour indicators (e.g., price sensitivity, service quality, brand loyalty, promotional strategies)
Section C: Corporate performance measures (e.g., market share, revenue growth, customer retention)
Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Content validity was ensured by subjecting the questionnaire to expert review from scholars in marketing and telecom studies. A pilot test was conducted with 30 subscribers outside the sample area. The instrument's internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, which returned a reliability coefficient of 0.81, indicating strong reliability.

Method of Data Collection

Data were collected through face-to-face administration of printed questionnaires in public and commercial areas across Osogbo. Field assistants were trained to assist respondents in completing the forms and to ensure ethical practices such as voluntary participation, anonymity, and informed consent.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.0. The following techniques were applied:
Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequencies) to summarize responses and demographic characteristics. Pearson's correlation is used to assess the strength and direction of relationships between variables. Multiple regression analysis to examine the influence of

consumer behaviour factors (independent variables) on corporate performance (dependent variables). Relationships were interpreted using p-values, with $p < 0.05$ considered statistically significant. Standardized beta coefficients were used to determine the strength of influence of each independent variable. Interpretation was enhanced with tables and visual aids (bar charts, line graphs) to show comparative trends between MTN and GLO performance metrics.

4. Data analysis and Interpretation

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected through structured questionnaires from 400 respondents in Osogbo, Osun State. The aim is to assess the influence of consumer buying behaviour on the corporate performance of MTN and GLO. The analysis is divided into three sections: demographic profile, descriptive statistics of key variables, and inferential statistical results.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)		
(Gender)				
Male	220	55%		55%
Female	180	45%		45%
Age				
18–25	120	30%		30%
26–35	160	40%		40%
36–45	80	20%		20%
46+	40	10%		10%

From Table 1, the sample comprises mostly respondents aged 26–35 (40%) and males (55%), which reflects the typical user demographic of mobile telecommunications services in Osogbo, Osun State.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Service Quality	4.1	0.55	Very High
Brand Loyalty	3.9	0.62	High
Promotional Strategy	3.6	0.75	Moderate
Price Sensitivity	3.2	0.88	Neutral
Corporate Performance	4.0	0.51	Very High

Table 2 shows respondents rated service quality and corporate performance highest. This implies that good service delivery and effective performance indicators are perceived by customers.

Inferential Statistics

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

Variables	Corporate Performance	p-value
Service Quality	0.67	0.000
Brand Loyalty	0.54	0.001
Promotional Strategy	0.39	0.015
Price Sensitivity	0.22	0.063

Interpretation: There is a strong positive correlation between service quality and corporate performance ($r = 0.67$, $p < 0.01$). Brand loyalty and promotional strategy are also significantly correlated. Price sensitivity does not significantly correlate at the 5% level.

Regression Analysis

Table 4: Model Summary

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error

0.731	0.534	0.528	0.486

Table 5: ANOVA Table

Source:	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Regression	108.45	4	27.11	21.36	.000
Residual	94.32	395	0.239		
Total	**202.77**	**399**			

Table 6: Coefficients Table

Predictor	**β**	**t**	**Sig.**
Service Quality	0.451	5.89	0.000
Brand Loyalty	0.337	4.92	0.000
Promotional Strategy	0.189	2.44	0.016
Price Sensitivity	0.078	1.35	0.177

Discussion of Findings

This study aimed to examine how consumer buying behaviour influences the corporate performance of MTN and GLO in Osogbo, Osun State. The discussion synthesizes the empirical results from demographic analysis, descriptive statistics, and inferential statistics to draw meaningful conclusions aligned with existing literature.

The sample consisted primarily of respondents aged 26–35 (40%) and male participants (55%). This age group typically represents the most active mobile phone users in urban Nigerian settings, indicating the study captured a demographically relevant population for assessing telecom service perceptions.

Among the consumer behaviour variables, service quality (Mean = 4.1) and corporate performance (Mean = 4.0) received the highest ratings, suggesting that respondents perceive strong service delivery and operational effectiveness in both MTN and GLO. Brand loyalty also scored high (Mean = 3.9), reflecting sustained customer engagement. In contrast, price sensitivity was rated neutral (Mean = 3.2), implying that pricing may not be a dominant concern for most users.

The correlation matrix reveals significant positive relationships between:

i. Service quality and corporate performance ($r = 0.67$, $p < 0.01$)
ii. Brand loyalty and corporate performance ($r = 0.54$, $p < 0.01$)
iii. Promotional strategy and corporate performance ($r = 0.39$, $p < 0.05$)

These results indicate that improvements in service delivery, consistent brand interactions, and strategic promotions positively impact perceived corporate performance. Price sensitivity, however, showed a weak and statistically insignificant relationship ($r = 0.22$, $p = 0.063$), suggesting that while pricing affects choice to some extent, it is not a major determinant of performance perception.

The regression model explains 53.4% of the variance in corporate performance ($R^2 = 0.534$), which is substantial for behavioural studies. The most influential predictor was:

Service quality ($\beta = 0.451$, $p < 0.001$), reinforcing findings by Akintola et al. (2024) that emphasize service reliability as crucial for customer satisfaction and retention.

Brand loyalty also made a significant contribution ($\beta = 0.337$, $p < 0.001$), reflecting the value of long-term customer relationship strategies in sustaining performance. Promotional strategy had a smaller but significant effect ($\beta = 0.189$, $p = 0.016$), implying that while campaigns and offers play a role, they are not as impactful as sustained quality or loyalty mechanisms.

Conversely, price sensitivity ($\beta = 0.078$, $p = 0.177$) was not a statistically significant predictor, consistent with Okpighe and Moruku (2023), who argue that telecom consumers in Nigeria increasingly prioritize service quality and brand consistency over cost considerations.

5. Conclusion

The research concludes that consumer behaviour, particularly service quality and brand loyalty, plays a critical role in determining the corporate performance of telecommunication

firms. In the highly competitive market of Osogbo, MTN's superior service delivery and brand strength have given it a performance edge over GLO. However, GLO's affordable pricing and promotions continue to attract price-sensitive consumers, although these strategies have limited impact on retention and long-term performance.
Understanding and strategically responding to consumer behaviour is vital for telecommunications companies seeking to enhance their performance and maintain a competitive advantage.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

i. Enhance Service Quality: MTN and GLO should invest in network infrastructure and customer support systems to ensure reliability, speed, and ease of access.
ii. Strengthen Brand Loyalty Programs: Both companies should implement loyalty schemes that reward long-term usage and engagement, such as exclusive data bundles, VIP support, or discount tiers.
iii. Balance Pricing with Value: GLO should reassess its pricing strategies to ensure value is delivered alongside affordability, especially in service quality.
iv. Use Data Analytics for Personalisation: Telecom providers should adopt data analytics to understand user preferences and provide personalised offers and services.
v. Community-Based Promotions: Rather than mass promotions, telecom companies should engage in community-based campaigns in regions like Osogbo for greater local impact and user engagement.

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