

Television Advertising and Subscribers' Choice of Telecommunication Service Providers in Calabar, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined television advertising and subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. Its specific purpose was to determine the effects of movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and news-time advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers. The study adopted cross-sectional survey research design. A structured questionnaire was used to obtain primary data from 246 customers of telecommunication companies. Descriptive statistics were applied for data analysis and interpretation, while the hypotheses developed for the study were tested using multiple linear regression. The findings of the study revealed that movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and new-time advertising had significant positive effects on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. Therefore, we recommended that telecommunication service providers should strategically choose popular movies and youth-centered TV programs like BBNaija, Nigerian Idol, and The Voice for advertising on cable TV to effectively reach a dynamic and sizable audience, particularly the youth who are the predominant users of telecom services in Nigeria. We also recommended that these companies should leverage prime slots during news hours on popular cable TV stations to promote their various product packages, aiming to increase customer patronage and boost sales volume by engaging with an active viewership. Furthermore, from the limitations of the study, we have suggested for further studies to be conducted on a nationwide basis, to include subscribers from different regions of the country in order to enhance the generalizability of current research insights.

Keywords: Television Advertising, Subscriber Choice, Telecommunications.

Introduction

The Nigerian telecommunications sector is one of the largest privately-controlled subunits of the Nigerian economy. Recent information from the Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report revealed that the telecommunications sector emerged as the third-highest contributing sector to Nigeria's GDP for the second quarter of 2023 (Akuchie, 2023). Specifically, the report revealed that the telecommunication sector supported the nation's GDP growth with 16.06 percent. This growth is bolstered by the activities and operations of companies like MTN, Globacom, Airtel and gMobile, who currently tussle for control of the Nigerian telecommunications market, which is growing rapidly. According to a recent report by the Nigerian Communications Commission, as of June 2023, MTN (with 84,663,653 subscribers) enjoyed the majority of subscriber data. This was followed by Globacom (27.91 percent), Airtel (27.39 percent), and gmobile (6.28 percent) (Akuchie, 2023). Studies have shown that central to the competitive performance of these telecommunication companies in

Nigeria is their investment in marketing strategies such as television advertising (Olalekan *et al.*, 2015; Oyesomi & Salawu, 2019; Amah *et al.*, 2017; Omeje *et al.*, 2022).

According to Asante-Gyimah *et al.* (2023), television advertising is the adoption and utilization of the television as a channel for the design, implementation and execution of advertising campaigns of organizations. It is the non-personal and paid form of presentation and promotion of goods, services and ideas through the television by an identified sponsor. Nigerian telecommunication companies have largely relied on television advertising to promote their services because it provides a widespread reach and exposure to a diverse audience (Simiyu *et al.*, 2022). Nigeria is a country with a large and diverse population, and television remains a dominant medium of mass communication. By utilizing television as a marketing platform, telecommunication companies can effectively target a broad spectrum of potential customers, spanning various demographics, regions, and socio-economic backgrounds. This allows them to tap into a wider subscriber base, increasing their market penetration and potentially driving higher revenues. Similarly, television advertising allows telecommunication companies to convey complex information in a visually engaging and easily understandable format (Olalekan *et al.*, 2015).

This is crucial because telecommunication services often involve intricate technical features, network capabilities, and pricing structures that may be challenging to communicate through other mediums like print or radio (Oyesomi & Salawu, 2019). Television therefore provides the opportunity to use visuals, animations, and demonstrations to simplify and clarify these concepts, making it easier for viewers to comprehend the value and benefits of the services being offered. To that end, several advertising campaigns have been delivered to Nigerian subscribers by telecommunication companies to this present time. This study was therefore interested in the use of movies-based, programmes-based and news-time television advertising by Nigerian telecommunications companies. While movies-based advertising relies on television movies to promote products (David & Bark, 2022), programmes-based advertising is delivered to viewers during, in-between or after television programmes (Cheung *et al.*, 2021). The news-time advertising is aired to viewers during, in-between or after news events on television (Takana, 2023). This study therefore sought to determine the effects of these television advertising campaigns on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Statement of the Problem

The telecommunications landscape in Nigeria has long been plagued by persistent issues surrounding inconsistent network provision and poor service connectivity (Etuk *et al.*, 2022). This has become a prevalent concern for subscribers who heavily rely on these networks for various communication needs. The frequency at which these problems occur has led subscribers to adopt a strategy of subscribing to multiple network providers. This practice has become almost a necessity for many Nigerians, rather than a luxury, as it provides a crucial contingency plan in times of poor network connection. One of the primary reasons behind this phenomenon is the technological and infrastructural inadequacies that persist in the Nigerian telecommunications sector (Etim *et al.*, 2020). Despite significant advancements in technology globally, Nigeria still grapples with outdated or insufficient infrastructure, leading to subpar network services. This is especially evident in remote or less urbanized areas, where the infrastructure may be even scarcer, exacerbating connectivity issues. As a result, subscribers are left with no choice but to seek alternatives.

Also, the demand for telecommunications services in Nigeria by individuals, businesses and entities has skyrocketed in recent years thereby overwhelming the capacity of individual network providers,

leading to service disruptions and unsatisfactory connectivity. In addition to technological and infrastructural challenges, factors such as power outages can further exacerbate the reliability of network services. Nigeria, like many countries, faces occasional power supply issues (Williams *et al.*, 2019), which can directly impact the functioning of cell towers and network equipment. The lack of adequate power supply to cell towers can cause severe damage to the infrastructure, resulting in extended periods of service outages. Even as telecommunication companies struggle to weather these challenges and improve service delivery, subscribers still do not have confidence in their ability to deliver satisfactory services consistently. Against this backdrop, this study was conducted to determine how television advertising could best be designed and utilized by telecommunication companies in Nigeria to promote their services and attract subscribers' choice of their networks.

Research Objectives

This study was carried out to seek the following specific objectives:

- i. To determine the effect of movies-based advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.
- ii. To ascertain the influence of programmes-based advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.
- iii. To examine the effect of news-time advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Research Hypotheses

In the course of the study, we tested the following null hypotheses:

- i. Ho: Movies-based advertising has no significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.
- ii. Ho: Programmes-based advertising has no significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.
- iii. Ho: News-time advertising has no significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Literature Review

Television Advertising

Television advertising, often referred to as TV advertising, is a form of marketing communication that involves the promotion of products, services, or ideas through television channels (Pam & Yakubu, 2021). It is a widely used and influential medium for reaching a mass audience. According to Sánchez-Montes and Marco-Lajara (2022), television advertising is defined as the placement of television commercials and program sponsorships on the air by advertisers. In the views of Tan and Yusof (2023), television advertising is the use of paid advertising messages intended to inform, persuade, and remind TV viewers of a commercial product, service or idea, often conveyed through a narrative or persuasive format. In another view by Tetteh and Oppong (2018), television advertising is defined as the placement of promotional messages on television shows and segments with the aim of reaching a wide and varied audience. In the views of Larmie (2023), television advertising leverages the visual and auditory capabilities of the medium to convey persuasive messages to a broad and diverse audience. Furthermore, Loganathan (2020) maintained that one of the key strengths of television advertising lies in its ability to combine sight, sound, and motion. This multi-sensory experience can have a powerful impact on viewers, allowing for the creation of memorable and emotionally resonant messages. Advertisers often employ creative storytelling

techniques, music, visuals, and celebrity endorsements to capture the audience's attention and leave a lasting impression. In addition, Ndour (2019) argued that television advertising provides a platform for a wide range of products and services to be promoted. From consumer goods like electronics and clothing to services like insurance or travel, virtually any type of offering can be advertised on television. This versatility makes it a popular choice for businesses of all sizes and industries. Moreover, Ntsiful and Asamoah (2018). observed that television advertising offers advertisers the ability to target specific demographics based on the content of the program and the channel itself. For example, a sports-related product may be advertised during a live sports event to reach an audience with a particular interest.

Subscribers' Choice of Telecommunication Services

Subscribers' choice of telecommunication services entails the process whereby subscribers decide to patronize a particular telecommunication network instead of others due to observed or experienced benefits or value (Adomako & Boateng, 2021). In the views of Tan and Lim (2019), subscribers' choice of telecommunication services is influenced by a multitude of factors that range from technological preferences to pricing structures and customer service. This choice is pivotal in modern society as telecommunication services are integral for various aspects of daily life, including communication, internet access, and entertainment. Subscribers' choices are heavily influenced by their technological preferences (Yilmaz & Kaya, 2018). Some may prioritize access to the latest and most advanced technologies, such as 5G networks, high-speed broadband, or cutting-edge devices. Others may prefer more basic services that fulfill their core communication needs. The availability of specific technologies in a particular area can significantly impact a subscriber's choice of telecommunication service provider.

Also, Al-Dmour and Al-Momani (2020) argued that one of the most critical factors for subscribers is the extent of coverage and the reliability of the network or service. They want assurance that they will have access to stable and fast connections wherever they go, whether it is for making calls, browsing the internet, or streaming content. A provider with a wide and robust network is more likely to attract and retain subscribers. Moreover, many telecommunication companies offer bundled services that combine offerings like internet, TV, and phone services. These bundles can be appealing to subscribers as they often come at a discounted price compared to purchasing each service individually. Customizable packages that cater to specific needs and preferences also play a significant role in subscribers' decisions (El-Sheikh, 2023). Similarly, Kim and Park (2019) observed that affordability is a pivotal factor for subscribers, especially in competitive markets. They weigh the cost of the service against their budget constraints. Additionally, hidden fees or long-term contracts can influence decisions. Some subscribers might opt for prepaid services to have more control over their expenses, while others may commit to contracts for lower monthly rates. Furthermore, Wibowo and Pratama (2022) maintained that the quality of customer service is a crucial determinant of subscriber satisfaction. Prompt and effective customer support, clear communication, and easy access to help when issues arise can greatly influence a subscriber's loyalty to a provider. Negative experiences with customer service can drive subscribers to switch to a different provider.

Movies-based Advertising and Subscribers' Choice

Movies-based television advertising refers to the strategic placement of commercials or promotional content within televised broadcasts of movies (Akhtar & Malik, 2022). It capitalizes on the substantial

viewership and audience engagement that popular films generate, aiming to promote products, services, or brands. This advertising approach leverages the immersive and emotional experiences that movies offer to effectively reach and resonate with a wide audience, with the intention of influencing consumer behavior and driving sales. According to Aning and Darko (2019), movies-based television advertising refers to a marketing strategy where commercials or advertisements are specifically designed to promote or showcase products, services, or brands in association with movies or film content. This form of advertising leverages the popularity and widespread viewership of movies to reach a large and diverse audience. Typically, movies-based television advertising involves creating commercials that are thematically or visually linked to a particular film or film genre (Bojang, 2020).

In the views of Zhang and Liu (2019), movies-based television advertising holds significant potential for enhancing customer patronage of telecommunication companies in contemporary times. This is because it taps into the emotional connection viewers have with movies. By associating a telecommunication brand with the positive emotions and experiences generated by popular films, companies can create a strong brand affinity. This emotional resonance can lead to increased trust and loyalty among customers. Also, movies-based advertising provides a platform for telecommunication companies to showcase their products and services in a context that aligns with entertainment and leisure (Guzel & Alkan, 2018). The foregoing viewpoint suggests that as a major television advertising tool, movies-based advertising has the potential to substantially influence subscribers' choice for products and services in contemporary times. This viewpoint is backed by the study of Cheung *et al.* (2021), which revealed that movies-oriented advertising had a significant relationship with consumers' preference for hotels in Shanghai, China. The viewpoint is also corroborated by the study of Takana (2023), which revealed that movies-based television advertising had a significant positive impact on customer patronage of mobile phone technologies in Tokyo. On this basis, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₁: Movies-based advertising has a significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Programmes-based Advertising and Subscribers' Choice

Programmes-based television advertising refers to the strategic placement of commercials within specific television programs or shows, targeting a particular audience demographic (Jatta, 2019). This form of advertising leverages the viewership of popular TV programs to reach a specific target market. It involves selecting programs that align with the interests, preferences, and behaviors of the desired consumer base. By doing so, advertisers aim to maximize the impact and effectiveness of their campaigns by ensuring they are seen by the right audience at the right time. According to Kargbo and Kamara (2018), programmes-based television advertising is a vital component of integrated marketing communications, allowing companies to strategically position their brand messages in the context of content that resonates with their target audience. This approach is rooted in the understanding that viewers tend to be more engaged and receptive when advertisements are seamlessly integrated into content they are already interested in. Also, Kariuki *et al.* (2019) emphasized that programmes-based television advertising is a sophisticated method that involves careful consideration of factors such as the genre of the program, the time slot, and the viewership demographics. Advertisers conduct extensive research to identify the programs that are most likely to attract their ideal customer base. This approach enables companies to optimize their advertising

budget by concentrating resources on channels and programs that offer the highest likelihood of connecting with potential customers.

Furthermore, Khaing and Myint (2021) maintained that in the context of telecommunication companies, programmes-based television advertising plays a pivotal role in improving customer patronage. This is because it allows these companies to target specific segments of the market with tailored messages. This ensures that their message reaches the audience most likely to be interested in their services. Also, Larmie (2023) argued that programmes-based television advertising helps telecommunication companies to build brand awareness and trust. By associating their brand with popular and reputable television programs, these companies can leverage the positive sentiments and trust that viewers have for the content they consume. This can lead to an enhanced perception of the telecommunication company, ultimately influencing customer loyalty and patronage. The foregoing viewpoint suggests that as a major television advertising tool, programmes-based advertising has the potential to substantially influence subscribers' choice for products and services in contemporary times. This viewpoint is backed by the study of Caren *et al.* (2019), which revealed that programmes-based television advertising had a significant positive impact on consumer buying behaviour towards insurance companies in New York City. The viewpoint also aligns with the study of David and Bark (2022), which revealed that programmes-based advertising had a significant positive effect on customer patronage of retail firms in Ontario. On this basis, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₂: Programmes-based advertising has a significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

News-time Advertising and Subscribers' Choice

New-time television advertising refers to the practice of airing advertisements during news programs or broadcasts (Loganathan, 2020). This form of advertising targets a specific audience demographic, as news programs typically draw viewers interested in current events, politics, and related topics. The timing of these advertisements is strategically chosen to reach a more engaged and attentive audience. This approach contrasts with other forms of advertising that might be scattered across different time slots or shows. New-time television advertising capitalizes on the captive audience that tunes in for news updates and analyses. According to Ndour (2019), new-time television advertising is a targeted marketing strategy that involves the placement of advertisements during news programs, with the intention of reaching a focused audience interested in current affairs and related topics. This form of advertising is characterized by its precision in timing and content, aiming to maximize viewer engagement and impact. Similarly, Ntsiful and Asamoah (2018) viewed new-time television advertising as the deliberate placement of commercials during news broadcasts. This approach leverages the high viewership of news programs, ensuring that advertisements reach an audience with a keen interest in staying informed about current events. This strategic alignment enhances the effectiveness of the advertising campaign.

In the views of Ogunnusi and Lawal (2021), news-time television advertising offers telecommunication companies a unique opportunity to engage with a highly attentive and informed audience. When viewers tune in for news updates, they are typically in a receptive state of mind, seeking information and analysis. By strategically placing advertisements during these programs, telecommunication companies can present their services in a context that aligns with the viewers' interest in staying connected and informed. Moreover, the credibility associated with news programs can transfer to the advertisements aired during these slots (Onyango & Ombuki, 2019). Viewers may

be more inclined to trust and consider the services of a telecommunication company that is featured during a reputable news broadcast. This association with credible information sources can enhance the company's reputation and build trust with potential customers (Osinowo, 2020). The foregoing viewpoint suggests that as a major television advertising tool, news-time advertising has the potential to substantially influence subscribers' choice for products and services in contemporary times. This viewpoint is backed by the study of Asante-Gyimah *et al.* (2023), which revealed that news-time advertising had a significant positive relationship with customer patronage in the Ghanaian telecommunication industry. The viewpoint is also supported by the study of Simiyu *et al.* (2022), which revealed that news-time advertising had a significant positive correlation with subscribers' patronage of telecommunication companies in Kenya. On this basis, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₃: News-time advertising has a significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Empirical Review and Conceptual Model

Asante-Gyimah *et al.* (2023) carried out a study on the role of television advertising in improving customer patronage in the Ghanaian telecommunication industry. The primary aim of the study was to determine the correlation between television advertising (infomercial, news-time advertising and programmes-based advertising) and customer patronage in the Ghanaian telecommunication industry. The study used an online structured questionnaire to obtain primary data from 572 telecommunication subscribers in Kumasi and Takoradi in Ghana. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while the hypotheses of the study were tested using Pearson's product moment correlation. The findings of the study revealed that infomercial, news-time advertising and programmes-based advertising had significant positive relationships with customer patronage in the Ghanaian telecommunication industry. In another study, Simiyu *et al.* (2022) examined television advertising and subscribers' patronage of telecommunication companies in Kenya. The study sought to predict the statistical relationship between television advertising (news-time advertising and movies-based advertising) and subscribers' patronage of telecommunication companies in Kenya. To that end, the study used a 5-Point Likert scale questionnaire to collect primary data from 284 subscribers of selected telecommunications companies in Nairobi. The data were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics, while the hypotheses of the study were tested using structural equation modeling method. The findings of the study indicated that news-time advertising and movies-based advertising had a significant positive correlation with subscribers' patronage of telecommunication companies in Kenya.

In a similar study, Caren *et al.* (2019) conducted a study on the "Impact of television advertising on consumer buying behaviour towards insurance companies in New York City". The specific objective of the study was to determine the impact of sports-based television advertising, news-based television advertising, and events/programmes-based television advertising on consumer buying behaviour towards insurance companies in New York City. Structured questionnaire delivered through the email was used to collect primary data from 207 respondents in New York City. Simple regression was used to test the four null hypotheses of the study. Consequently, it was found that sports-based television advertising, news-based television advertising, and events/programmes-based television advertising had a significant positive impact on consumer buying behaviour towards insurance companies in New York City. Similarly, Patterson and Walker (2018) investigated the

empirical relationship between television advertising and customer patronage of automobiles in Kentucky. The study aimed at ascertaining the exact nature of relationship between television advertising (movies-based television advertising, sports-based television advertising and news time-based television advertising) and customer patronage of automobiles in Kentucky. The study adopted longitudinal research design; primary data was collected from 163 car buyers in Kentucky over a period of 2 months using copies of structured questionnaire. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was the statistical tool adopted to analyze the primary data collected. As a result, the study found the existence of a significant relationship between television advertising (movies-based television advertising, sports-based television advertising and news time-based television advertising) and customer patronage of automobiles in Kentucky.

Furthermore, David and Bark (2022) investigated the effect of television advertising on customer patronage of retail firms in Ontario. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaire and interview methods from 184 shoppers at 16 retail firms in Ontario, Canada. The data were analyzed using Chi-square statistics in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings of the study revealed that movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising, and news time advertising had a significant positive effect on customer patronage of retail firms in Ontario. On that basis, the study came to the conclusion that television advertising had a significant positive effect on customer patronage of retail firms in Ontario. It was recommended that the attention of retail firms should be refocused on television advertising media given its proven capacity to create broad based awareness and improve customer patronage. In addition, Cheung *et al.* (2021) carried out a study on relationship between television advertising and consumers' preference for hotels in Shanghai. The study was based on primary data collected from 248 hotel guests in Shanghai, China using a questionnaire. Pearson Correlation analysis was run on the primary data collected and it was found that television advertising (news time advertising, movies-oriented advertising, sports-oriented advertising and events-oriented advertising) had a significant relationship with consumers' preference for hotels in Shanghai, China. Therefore, the study concluded that television advertising had a significant relationship with consumers' preference for hotels in Shanghai, China.

Also, Takana (2023) investigated the impact of television advertising on customer patronage of mobile phone technologies in Tokyo. The study aimed at determining the impact of movies-based television advertising, programmes-based television advertising and sports-based television advertising on customer patronage of mobile phone technologies in Tokyo. Copies of structured questionnaire were distributed to 301 mobile phone users in Tokyo, Japan in order to elicit primary data for the study. Multiple regression in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was adopted to test the hypotheses of the study. Subsequently, it was found that movies-based television advertising, programmes-based television advertising and sports-based television advertising had a significant positive impact on customer patronage of mobile phone technologies in Tokyo. Therefore, the study concluded that television advertising had a significant positive impact on customer patronage of mobile phone technologies in Japan. On the basis of these prior studies, the focus of our study was to assess television advertising and subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. Its specific aim was to determine the causality between the independent variable (television advertising) and the dependent variable (subscribers' choice) in the context of telecommunication companies.

To that end, the independent variable (television advertising) was decomposed into three (3) proxies, namely: movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and news-time advertising. On the other hand, the dependent variable (subscribers' choice) was measured using the following

parameters: subscribers' preference, subscribers' patronage and subscribers' repeat patronage. In the context of this study, movies-based advertising was operationalized as a form of television advertising that uses movies to deliver advertising campaigns of telecommunication companies to customers. Programmes-based advertising was viewed as a form of television advertising that uses popular television programmes to deliver advertising campaigns of telecommunication companies to customers. Whereas, news-time advertising was operationalized as a form of television advertising that airs advertising campaigns of telecommunication companies during national, local and international news hours. From the hypotheses of the study, it was presumed that there is some sort of causality between these television advertising campaigns and subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar, as depicted in the conceptual model in Figure 1.

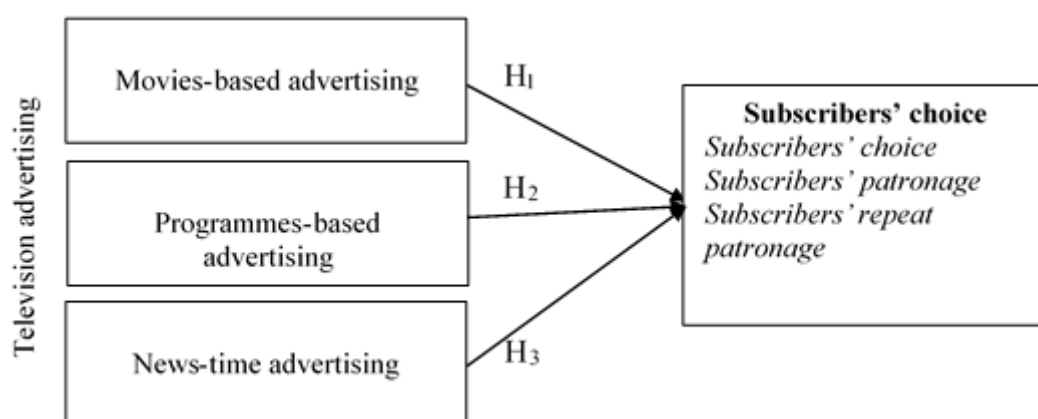


FIG. 1: Conceptual model of the study

Source: Informed by Caren *et al.* (2019); David and Bark (2022); Takana (2023)

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the AIDA theory of advertising developed by Lewis (1961). AIDA is an acronym that stands for attention, interest, desire and action. As a theoretical framework, it was developed to explain how advertising drives consumers to take patronage action, beginning with attracting their attention. The AIDA model is a classic framework in marketing and advertising that outlines the stages a consumer goes through when interacting with a promotional message. Its basic premise is that advertising propels consumers to take purchase actions by taking them through four (4) major cognitive and conative stages – attention, interest, desire and action (Lewis, 1961). Each of these stages plays a crucial role in capturing the consumer's attention, nurturing their interest, kindling desire, and ultimately driving them towards making a purchase. The first stage, Attention, is the initial point of contact between the consumer and the promotional message. In this phase, the marketer's primary goal is to grab the consumer's attention amidst the sea of information and stimuli in the modern world. This could be achieved through compelling visuals, striking headlines, or intriguing content (Ullal & Hawaldar, 2018). Once the attention of the consumer is secured, the journey moves to the second stage, Interest. This is where the features and benefits of the product or service are presented in a clear and persuasive manner to capture consumers' interest (Fortenberry & McGoldrick, 2020). Moving forward, the Desire stage aims to cultivate a strong desire or craving for the product or service (Lewis, 1961). Finally, the Action stage is where the consumer is encouraged to take the desired step, which could be making a purchase, signing up for a newsletter,

or requesting further information (Lewis, 1961). This phase is pivotal, as it translates the consumer's interest and desire into a tangible conversion. Calls-to-action (CTAs) are instrumental in this stage, providing clear instructions and removing any potential barriers to action.

The relevance of the AIDA model to this study is that it encapsulates a strategic progression that acknowledges the complexity of consumer decision-making. It acknowledges that converting a potential telecommunication subscriber into a paying one is a multi-faceted process, and each stage demands careful consideration and execution. By meticulously addressing the cognitive and conative aspects of consumer behavior, the AIDA model provides a comprehensive framework that telecommunication companies can leverage to create effective promotional campaigns capable of attracting subscribers' choice. Furthermore, its enduring relevance attests to its efficacy as a guiding principle in the ever-evolving landscape of telecommunication service marketing.

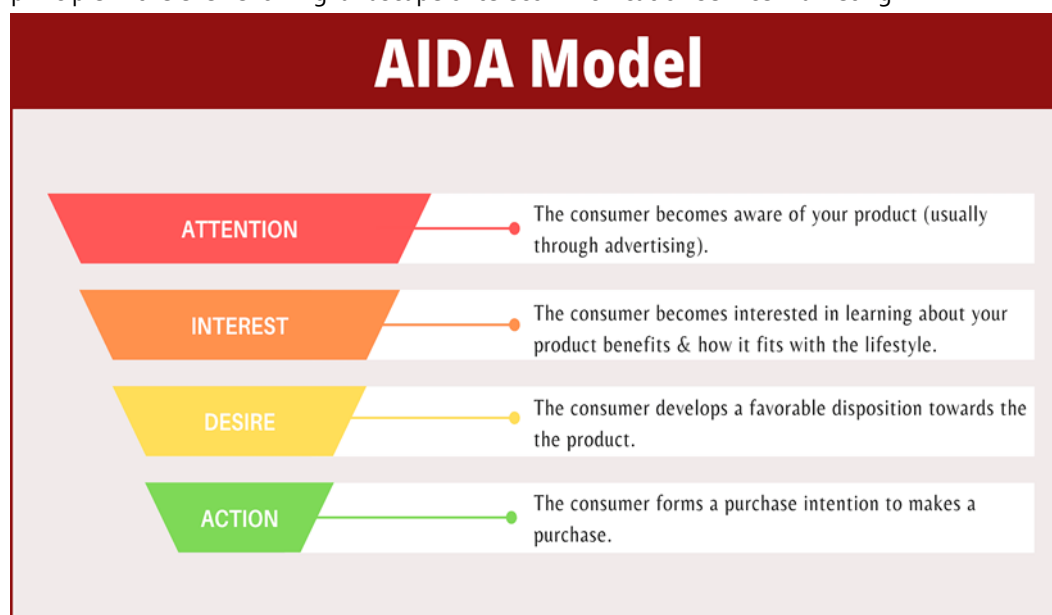


FIG. 2: AIDA Model

Source: Lewis, E. E. (1961). *The AIDA theory of advertising: A practical analogy*. Connecticut: Palmer Printing Press.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted cross-sectional survey research design, which enabled the researcher to obtain primary data from a heterogeneous sample of respondents at a single point in time without influencing or manipulating the data. This research design was chosen for the study because the study was survey-based in nature; hence the design was an affordable and easy way of gathering primary data and identifying correlations that can be investigated further in a longitudinal study. Following a cross-sectional design, data were collected from subscribers of telecommunication companies in Nigeria on a one-time basis, without lengthy repetitions.

Study Population and Sample

The target population of this study comprised subscribers of telecommunication companies in Calabar, Nigeria. These companies included MTN, Airtel, gMobile and Globacom. However, the actual numerical size of all active customers of MTN, Airtel, Globacom and gMobile Plc in Calabar

was unknown to the researcher due to the absence of accurate public records on the population of network service users in Calabar. Hence, the research adopted the Topman procedure for sample size determination from infinite populations to arrive at a sample size for the study. The Topman formula states thus:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 Pq}{e^2}$$

Where n: Sample size required

Z: Tabular statistical unit (1.96)

P: Probability of positive response (0.8)

q: Probability of negative response (0.2)

e: Margin of error (5 percent)

The researcher conducted a pilot survey by interviewing a random selection of 30 respondents along the branch office of MTN Nigeria Plc in Calabar. These respondents were asked to verbally identify which telecommunication networks they patronized by mentioning their brand names. Out of the 30 respondents interviewed, 24 representing 80 percent said that they patronized MTN, Airtel, Globacom and 9Mobile Plc, whereas, 6 respondents representing 20 percent said that they did not have a mobile phone at the moment so they patronized no telecommunication network. From the results of the pilot survey above, it can be seen that the probability of positive responses (P) was 0.8, while the probability of negative responses (q) was 0.2. By simple substitution, the Topman formula was applied thus:

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{1.96^2 (0.8 \times 0.2)}{0.05^2} \\ &= \frac{3.8416 (0.16)}{0.0025} \\ &= \frac{0.6147}{0.0025} \\ &= 245.88 \end{aligned}$$

n = 246 subscribers approximately

Having arrived at the sample for the study, we adopted convenience sampling technique to locate individual respondents to participate in the survey. In applying the technique, we busy areas with high population in Calabar, where telecommunication subscribers from all walks of life could be found. Assisted by a 3-member team of research assistants, we visited these selected locations and randomly administer copies of the questionnaire to respondents confirmed through enquiry to be subscribers of telecommunication companies. Potential respondents who identified as non-subscribers were deliberately excluded from the study. All potential respondents that provided their participation consent were fully debriefed on the subject and purpose of the study as well as the implications of their participation in order to ensure that they participated in full understanding. The benefit of this sampling technique is that it was convenient and less time-consuming for data collection and it ensured that only respondents that were easily available and willing to participate in the survey were included in the study.

Sources and Method of Data Collection

The study relied on primary data for analysis and findings generation. A structured questionnaire was designed to obtain primary data required for the study. The questionnaire composed of two sections, namely: Section A (which elicited respondents' demographic information such as age, gender,

marital status, and educational qualifications) and Section B (which contained statements drawn from the study variables: movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising, news-time advertising and subscribers' choice). The instrument's measurement scale was a 5-point Likert Scale containing the following metrics: Strong Agree (SA = 5), Agree (A = 4), Undecided (U = 3), Disagree (D = 2) and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1). Prior to data collection, all potential respondents were debriefed on the purpose of the study and offered guidance and assistance in completing copies of the questionnaire in order to mitigate questionnaire entry errors or omissions. The method of data collection was direct personal administration of questionnaire, which was facilitated by a 3-member team of enumerators.

Questionnaire Reliability and Data Analytical Techniques

Prior to actual field administration, the research instrument was confirmed for reliability using the internal consistency approach with the aid of Cronbach alpha coefficients. A pilot survey was earlier conducted using a random selection of 30 respondents in Calabar to pre-test the research instrument. The data obtained through the pilot questionnaire survey were subjected to reliability test using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 23). The instrument was subsequently considered reliable and adopted for the study because its measurement scales produced Cronbach's alpha coefficients not less than the 0.7 benchmark as shown in Table 1. Therefore, the instrument was considered reliable and adopted for field administration to obtain primary data for the study.

Table 1: Summary of reliability results

SN	Variables	No. of items	Alpha coefficients
1	Movies-based advertising	3	.793
2	Programmes-based advertising	3	.802
3	News-time advertising	3	.774
4	Subscribers' choice	3	.848
		12	

Source: Authors' analysis via SPSS 2023

Having confirmed the instrument to be reliable, we administered copies of it to respondents to obtain primary data for the study. The data obtained were descriptively analyzed and interpreted, while the hypotheses of the study were tested using multiple linear regression with the following model:

$$\text{SUBSCHO} = a + \beta_1\text{MVBADS} + \beta_2\text{PROGBADS} + \beta_3\text{NEWSADS} + e$$

Where:

SUBSCHO = Dependent variable (subscribers' choice)

a = The intercept

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = Coefficients of the independent variables

e = Error margin (5 percent)

Hence,

MVBADS: Movies-based advertising

PROGBADS: Programmes-based advertising

NEWSADS: News-time advertising

Data Analysis and Interpretation

In the field questionnaire survey, we administered a total of 246 copies of the questionnaire to subscribers of telecommunication companies in Calabar. As a consequence of rigorous follow-up

efforts by the research team, all copies of the questionnaire administered to respondents were successfully retrieved and confirmed to be usable for the analysis.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis one

Ho: Movies-based advertising has no significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Hypothesis two

Ho: Programmes-based advertising has no significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Hypothesis three

Ho: News-time advertising has no significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Independent variables: Movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and news-time advertising

Dependent variable: Subscribers' choice

Test statistic: Multiple linear regression

Decision criteria: Accept the alternative hypothesis if ($P < .05$) and reject the null hypothesis, if otherwise.

Table 2: Model summary of the effect of television advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.496 ^a	.246	.230	.73043

a. Predictors: (Constant), Movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and news-time advertising

Source: Authors' analysis via SPSS 2023

Table 3: ANOVA^a of the effect of television advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41.673	3	13.891	26.013	.000 ^b
	Residual	128.048	240	.534		
	Total	169.720	243			

a. Dependent Variable: Subscribers' choice

b. Predictors: (Constant), Movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and news-time advertising.

Source: Authors' analysis via SPSS 2023

Table 4: Coefficients^a of the effect of television advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	2.636	.602		4.381	.000
	Movies-based advertising	.156	.176	.444	2.736	.000
	Programmes-based advertising	.139	.262	.384	1.624	.003
	News-time advertising	.403	.160	.301	6.668	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Subscribers' choice

Source: Authors' analysis via SPSS 2023

Tables 2, 3 and 4 present the multiple linear regression results of the effect of television advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. The model summary presented on Table 2 shows that the correlation between the independent variable (television advertising) and the dependent variable (subscribers' choice) is 49.6 percent (as can be seen in the R column), thereby indicating that there is a fairly strong degree of correlation between the study variables. The R^2 (coefficient of determination) value of 0.246, signifies that up to 24.6 percent of the variation in the dependent variable (subscribers' choice) can be explained by the independent variable (television advertising). Hence, a unit change in the utilization of television advertising will affect subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar by up to 24.6 percent when other factors are held constant. The F-test (26.013, $P < 0.05$) statistic in Table 3 signifies that the overall prediction of the dependent variable by the independent variable is statistically significant; therefore, implying that television advertising has a significant effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Table 4 (the coefficients table) provides information on the capability of each television advertising campaign to explain or predict subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. As can be seen on Table 4, all television advertising campaigns tested (movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and news-time advertising) were found to significantly predict or explain subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. This is because their p-values [movies-based advertising (p-value = 0.000), programmes-based advertising (p-value = 0.003)], and news-time advertising (p-value = 0.000)] are less than the error margin of 0.05, with positive t-test values. This indicates that the relationship between these television advertising campaigns is a direct and positive one. Furthermore, the standardized beta coefficient column in Table 4.16 shows that the highest contributing variable to the model is movies-based advertising, with a beta coefficient of 0.444 (44.4 percent). The second highest contributing variable to the model is programmes-based advertising, with a beta coefficient of 0.384 (38.4 percent). Whereas, the least contributing variable to the model is news-time advertising, with a beta coefficient of 0.301 (30.1 percent). Therefore, we reject all null hypotheses, accept all alternative hypotheses and conclude that movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and news-time advertising had significant positive effects on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Discussion of Findings

The test of hypothesis one revealed that movies-based advertising has a significant positive effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. This finding is backed by the study of Cheung *et al.* (2021), which revealed that movies-oriented advertising had a significant relationship with consumers' preference for hotels in Shanghai, China. The finding is also corroborated by the study of Takana (2023), which revealed that movies-based television advertising

had a significant positive impact on customer patronage of mobile phone technologies in Tokyo. The implication of this finding, in the context of this study, is that movies-based advertising has been confirmed as an effective television advertising strategy capable of substantially improving subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

The test of hypothesis two revealed that programmes-based advertising has a significant positive effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. This finding is backed by the study of Caren *et al.* (2019), which revealed that programmes-based television advertising had a significant positive impact on consumer buying behaviour towards insurance companies in New York City. The finding also aligns with the study of David and Bark (2022), which revealed that programmes-based advertising had a significant positive effect on customer patronage of retail firms in Ontario. The implication of this finding, in the context of this study, is that programmes-based advertising has been confirmed through substantive empirical evidence to possess the ability to significantly influence subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Finally, the test of hypothesis three revealed that news-time advertising has a significant positive effect on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. This finding is backed by the study of Asante-Gyimah *et al.* (2023), which revealed that news-time advertising had a significant positive relationship with customer patronage in the Ghanaian telecommunication industry. The finding is also supported by the study of Simiyu *et al.* (2022), which revealed that news-time advertising had a significant positive correlation with subscribers' patronage of telecommunication companies in Kenya. This finding implies that news-time advertising has been confirmed as an effective television advertising strategy capable of substantially improving subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar.

Conclusion and Practical Implications

With its wide reach, coverage and adaptability, television advertising has remained one of the most popular forms of promotion in the service industry. Several companies, including telecommunication firms, have relied on television advertising to launch campaigns intended to promote their products and services. This study was designed to determine the influence of television advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. It specifically sought to assess the effects of movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and news-time advertising on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers. The study then obtained primary data from respondents through a structured questionnaire survey, comprising subscribers of telecommunication networks in Calabar. After careful analysis and hypotheses testing, the study revealed that movies-based advertising, programmes-based advertising and news-time advertising have significant positive effects on subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. These findings provide substantive empirical evidence to conclude that television advertising is an indispensable marketing strategy capable of effectively enhancing subscribers' choice of telecommunication service providers in Calabar. On the basis of the findings made, the following recommendations are suggested for possible implementation by telecommunications companies:

- i. Telecommunication service providers should carefully select popular movies on cable TV and place their advertisements on air in order to deliver their promotions to an active audience more likely to patronize their services. By aligning their advertisements with well-

loved films, these providers can tap into the existing viewer enthusiasm and enhance the visibility and impact of their promotions.

- ii. Popular youth-centered TV programmes like BBNaija, Nigerian Idol, The Voice, and others should be used as a medium to advertise telecom service providers in order to reach a large pool of young Nigerians who constitute the most users of telecom services in Nigeria. By strategically placing advertisements during these shows, telecom companies can tap into a vast and engaged audience, potentially increasing brand awareness and customer acquisition.
- iii. Telecommunications companies can take advantage of news hour on popular cable TV stations to promote their products and services packages in order to attract customer patronage and sales volume. By strategically timing their advertisements during prime news hours, these companies can tap into a captive viewership, making their messages more likely to resonate and leave a lasting impression.

Research Limitations and Further Research

This study was limited in geographic scope to Calabar, Cross River State, because its respondents were located in this region. It therefore fails to accommodate respondents from other regions of the country, due to logistical and time constraints. As a consequence, the study's findings may not be representative of the entire country or other regions, as the respondents are solely from Calabar, Cross River State. Generalizing the results to the broader population may be problematic since different regions may have unique characteristics, cultures, and perspectives. Against this backdrop, we suggest for further studies to be conducted on a nationwide basis, to include subscribers from different regions of the country in order to enhance the generalizability of current research insights.

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