

Advertising Slogan Recall and Consumers' Patronage of Mtn Products in Nigeria

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Abstract

The preoccupation of this study was borne out of the necessity to ascertain the relationship between consumer exposure to advertising slogans of heavily advertised brand like MTN GSM Network and slogan recall at one hand, and slogan recall and consumer patronage of the advertised products. This study which was conducted in some of the major cities in Nigeria was based on three hypothetical constructs. The data and test results of the hypotheses affirm that there exists a positive relationship between these variables. The interplay between exposure, recall and patronage depicts serious activism between the producer and the market; and heightens the projection of the consumer as highly potent especially in the context of hemispheric literalization.

Key Words: advertising slogan, aided recall, consumer patronage.

1. Introduction

Nigeria is often identified as the fastest-growing economy, and one of the most advanced ICT market sectors in Africa (Osaretti, 2005, p. 105). Little wonder it easily became the telecom hot spot in Africa (Nwachukwu, 2003, p. 17). The deregulation of the communication sector led to the issuance of the first Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) license, by the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC), on 9 February, 2001, after a much-lauded bid session, to MTN Nigeria. MTN consequently made its first GSM call on May 16, 2001 (www.mtnonline.com), and later launched full commercial presence in Lagos, Port Harcourt and Abuja.

Following MTN's monolithic success, and Nigeria being regarded as one of the fastest growing GSM markets in the world (Okonedo, 2010, p. 203), other network providers soon put a foot in the door. They included Econet (Airtel), Glo, and Etisalat, in that order. Furthermore, some Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) network providers evolved too, comprising Starcomms, Visafone and Zoom. This development had been explosive, as the NCC comparatively reckons that as at 2001, the number of working lines was approximately 450,000. This jumped to 7 million and over 70 million respectively by August 2004, and December 2009 (Okonedo, 2010, p. 305). Ten years on, and with intense competition, the network providers' focus seems to be shifting from coverage to improved quality.

MTN Nigeria began mobile phone services in Nigeria about a decade ago, with the craze for mobile handsets in this country. The everyday people were freed from the awful wired telephone services offered by the then prominent Nigeria Telecommunications Company (NITEL).

MTN has the widest network in Nigeria; its services cover probably every major town and city in the nation because it had captured so many customers before other competitors came, and continues to do so. MTN Nigeria is a subsidiary of the MT Group, based in South Africa.

MTN Nigeria offers a wide choice of service packages. One has a choice at the first instance between six basic calling plans, but this is not unique to any one-phone service operator; all of them offer varied calling plans. However, the value-added services are the real deal. The company links up with more than 382 other mobile telephone networks across the world.

The very best 3G services on offer by MTN include 'fastlink' mobile internet data card, voice and video calling, and you can get a Blackberry phone. There is the option to link to the internet via a Hyconnect Internet landline connection. You can search on the Google web search engine with MTN Google SMS on your phone, which does not require internet connectivity, only search by keywords using text-messaging service. You can record your own tunes or download the latest tunes for ringing tones with MTN Callertunez. And now there's even MTN SIM Plus with a huge storage capacity!

MTN as well as other telephone or mobile phone service operators find the operating conditions in Nigeria a bit challenging. That is because there is no steady electricity supply from the Government-owned Power Holding Company, which has been unbundled at the last quarter of 2013. The high costs of fuel to run private generators, gives the perfect excuse for high call rates (compared to some other existing networks). Perhaps the company makes up for this with sales promotions like the MTN "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" contest. But MTN's unbeatable strategy seems to be advertising.

It keeps rolling out series of eye-catching and appealing advertisements for every single service it offers on Radio, TV and in newspapers. Slogans like "Y'ello Nigeria"; "MTN - Everywhere You Go" and "Life is

Beautiful” are household slogans made popular by MTN. And it puts this magic to work by sponsoring big events like Nigeria’s FIFA U-17 World Cup 2009.

In advertising, slogans are standard statements and a means of communication for sales people and company employees. They stand as “battle cry” for the company. Good slogans help set a product apart from its competitors. It is usually short, easy to understand, memorable and easy to repeat (Bovee and Arens 1986, p. 316). Slogans have two basic purposes; to provide continuity for a campaign, and to reduce a key theme or idea the company wants associated with its product.

Most advertisements are a part of series of messages that make up an advertising campaign, which is a set of interrelated and coordinated marketing communications activities that center on a single theme or idea that appears in different media across a specific time period. A campaign theme which usually grows to become a product’s slogan should be a strong, memorable idea, as it is the central message that will communicate in all the advertisements and promotional activities. It must be developed with the intention of being used for a longer period. Its principal job should be, to influence consumers’ perception by informing, persuading and reminding them of a product.

In many product and service categories, competing brands are so similar that it is very difficult to find or create a unique attribute to use as the major selling idea. To sell these products, the creative strategy must develop a strong memorable identity for the product to enable it compete favourably in the market thereby leading to increase in demand. Although it may be argued that increased demand and amount of sales made on a product is a measure for determining advertising effectiveness, the ability for consumers to recognize and recall a product or brand also determines how effective an advertising campaign is.

Of all the marketing mix elements, advertising has the longest delay effect on sales. A substantial amount of time and memory processing passes from the consumer’s first exposure to advertising about a specific brand to when he can actually purchase the product. These processes later manifest in recall and recognition performance, that influence brand evaluation and choice.

Advertising recall therefore refers to the measure or proportion of a sample audience that can recall an advertisement, aided or unaided. This study therefore investigates through aided recall process, the relationship between slogans recall and product patronage among MTN consumers in Nigeria, so as to determine if patronage is as a result of recall of product slogan or other factors.

MTN consumers in Nigeria seem to react to products’ advertising and the products positively or negatively depending on their ability to recite or recall the slogans of the products advertised. Yet, it is not certain if recall is a by-product of exposure and, or if it leads to patronage. It is therefore pertinent to ascertain the value of slogans recall in product advertising and products patronage.

1.1 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to direct the study.

H₁ Frequency of consumers’ exposure to MTN products’ advertising slogans aids their recall of MTN slogans.

H₂ The advertising media used have positive impact on the recall of advertising slogans among MTN consumers in Nigeria.

H₃ The recall of MTN advertising slogans by consumers in Nigeria impacts significantly on its patronage.

2. Review of Empirical Study

IFPA (2005). *Advertising Recall Study*. Polle-Lepson Research Group: York Pennsylvania

This review is on IFPA (Insurance Fraud Prevention Authority) advertising recall study conducted in June 2005.

To determine the effectiveness of the Spring 2005 Advertising Campaign, the IFPA sought to measure the rate of recall of Pennsylvania residents, specifically the Pittsburgh and Philadelphia areas, through aided recall. The survey method was used to perform quantitative research. The telephone interview was the technique used. A total of 805 respondents were interviewed, 400 from Pittsburgh and 405 from Philadelphia. The areas were segmented into 6 and 5 counties respectively. Respondents were randomly contacted to verify completion of the survey. Appropriate univariate and multivariate analyses were performed. The predominant analytical technique used were frequencies and cross tabulations.

The findings show high recall rate especially with television advertisements. Thus, 88% of the respondents indicated recalling more of the advertisements seen on television, findings also indicate radio as second medium, newspaper, billboard, magazine and internet in that order. The study concludes that frequency of the message was a key for effective recall and effective advertising. This study uses aided recall to test advertising slogan recall and its relationship with product patronage among consumers of MTN in Nigeria.

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks

2.1.1 *Learning and Memory Effects Theory*

Most studies of media scheduling on advertising effects examines recall and other variables (especially attitude change) as a function of frequency of exposure and/ or repetition of advertising stimuli. This is quite similar to the methods of research on the psychology of learning. Bryant and Zillmann (2004, p. 346) cited Ebbinghaus (1902), one of the pioneers of learning research as identifying three basic memory processes:

- A negatively accelerating forgetting curve. After 20 minutes, Ebbinghaus observed, participants forgot one third of what was learned: After 6 days, another one- fourth of the material was forgotten, and a full month later, yet another fifth was forgotten.
- Serial position effects. Items at the beginning or end of a series were most easily learned: Items in the middle were learned more slowly and forgotten more rapidly.
- Over learning. Over learning or repetition beyond the point of repetition made very long conscious memory possible (for example: things go better with...’’).

The processes of learning and forgetting advertising stimuli are considerably more complex than learning simple stimuli in the laboratory. According to Bryant and Zillmann (2004, p. 24), consumer characteristics, such as prior experiences, shape these processes. Advertising factors, including message variables and media effects, also play an important role in determining these processes.

2.1.2 *Cognitive Response Theory*

This has not, by any means, ignored low involvement situations. It suggests that there are differences between high-involvement and low-involvement situations. The underlying cognitive response mechanism is the same in both situations however, what is hypothesized to differ is the content of the thoughts elicited by the communication (Krugman, 2007, p. 7). More involving situations elicit more thoughts directly related to the message, whereas less involving situations elicit more thoughts related to such non-message cues as source expertise, liking for the source, and so forth. In both high- and low- involvement circumstances, the message recipient is viewed as an active information processor. What changes as a function of involvement is the nature of the information attended and processed.

Several studies have specifically examined the effect of various kinds of involvement on responses to advertising. Lloyd and Clancy (2009, p. 11), and Bandura (2006, p. 27) reported large-scale studies that demonstrate the more highly involving media (i.e., print) are better vehicles for delivering product messages. This is true regardless of whether the measure of advertising performance is recall, persuasion, or message credibility.

3. Research Design

The research design for this study is survey, which is useful in opinion studies. The questionnaire was the major data-gathering instrument. This was directed to MTN service consumers in three Nigerian metropolises: Port Harcourt (south south), Lagos (south west) and Abuja (federal capital and north central)

The study areas are densely populated with a combined estimate of about 25 million people; and heterogeneous, comprising people from various parts of the country, engaged in various occupations in private and public enterprises, with diverse religious, cultural and linguistic characteristics; but with English language and its pidgin as central and dominant means of communication. These areas are highly industrialized; many small-scale industries are emerging in recent times to boost the economy, bringing about good infrastructural facilities and sustainable development. This gives a good patronage to GSM Networks operating in Nigeria.

A representative sample was drawn from the population of the study in an objective/scientific manner to make generalization possible. This was done in line with Meyer’s (1979) guide for sample size selection. According to Meyer, 383 sample elements are ideal for a population between 100,000 and 499,999 and above. Thus, 550 subjects were considered consistent with Meyer’s guide; these subjects were drawn from the population to form the sample for the study.

The systematic sampling technique was used to draw sample for the study. From each area, 110 subjects were drawn based on a skip interval of 6, which was obtained by dividing the population by the estimated sample, thus: $550 \div 100 = 5.5 = 6$. Consequently, every 6th subject was selected from the areas as indicated to form the sample of this study.

Although the questionnaire ought to be designed in two main types: the open- ended and the close-ended; it was expected that the close-ended questions would allow the respondents to generate their answers, especially recall of slogan in relation to the suggested product, to ensure uniformity of response on demographic issues, factors leading to recall are matched with product slogans advertisements.

In all, a twelve (12) item questionnaire was designed and administered on the respondents. This was divided into two parts: (1) demographic issues (2) factors and issues bothering on recall. Thus close-ended items were on demographics, issues bothering on recall (cognitive) and also sought recall information from the respondents as it relates to affective (liking and attitude change), and to conative- purchase behaviour.

The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Coefficient-alpha method. The summary is given in the Table 1 below:

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha 21 reliability table

Instruments	K	$\sum S_i^2$	S_1^2	r - coe
Frequency of exposure and recall	2	0.27	0.73	0.71
Media of exposure and recall	4	0.24	0.61	0.67
Recall elements	4	0.22	0.68	0.65
slogan recall and patronage	5	0.25	0.64	0.61

With an average reliability coefficient of 0.66, the instrument was considered significantly reliable, hence, appropriate for the study.

To gather data for this study each metropolis had five (5) streets within the area circumference with 22 subjects selected. A total of 505 copies of the questionnaire were collected and 5 copies were not duly completed. Thus, data analysis was based on 500 copies of the questionnaire which were duly filled.

3.1 Method of Data Analysis

Percentage (%) analysis was used in analyzing the research questions, while simple regression analysis was used in testing the null hypotheses. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.00.

4. Presentation of Data

The data obtained from the field are hereby presented quantitatively.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Distribution	Percentage
Male	286	57
Female	214	43
Total	500	100%

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Occupations

Occupations	Distribution	Percentage
Civil servants	114	23
Company workers	42	8
Self-Employed	98	20
Students	127	25
Unemployed	119	24
Total	500	100%

Table 3: Identification of MTN Slogan by Respondents

Slogans	Distribution	Percentage
Rule your world!	5	1
A Wonderful World!	10	2
Everywhere you go!	470	94
Now you are talking!	5	1
Feel free!	10	2
Total	500	100

Table 4: Respondents' frequency of exposure to MTN advertising Slogans

Responses	Distribution	Percentage
Very often	281	56
Often	157	31
Not often	43	9
Not very often	19	4
Total	500	100%

Table 5: Respondents Ability to Recall MTN Slogans

Slogans	Distribution	Percentage
Connecting people!	91	18
Everywhere you go!	105	21
In your neighbourhood!	5	1
Moving you ahead!	5	1
Y'hello!	40	8
All of above	254	51
Total	500	100

Table 6: Influence of Frequency of Exposure on Slogan Recall

Response	Distribution	Percentage
Strongly Agree	296	59
Agree	160	32
Undecided	35	7
Disagree	5	1
Strongly Disagree	4	1
Total	500	100

Table 7: Frequency of responses on slogan elements that aid recall and patronage of MTN

Reasons	Distribution	Percentage
Short and simple slogans	105	21
Clarity	98	20
Repeated slogans	110	22
Appeal	60	12
All of the Above	127	25
Total	500	100%

Table 8: Advertising medium that makes slogans recall more memorable

Media	Distribution	Percentage
Radio	147	29
Television	189	38
Print media (NSP/MAG)	103	21
Bill boards	61	12
Total	500	100%

Table 9: Slogan Recall and Patronage of MTN Products

Response	Distribution	Percentage
Strongly Agree	215	43
Agree	180	36
Undecided	85	17
Disagree	15	3
Strongly Disagree	5	1
Total	500	100

The research hypotheses were tested in null form using simple regression analysis.

Hypothesis 1: *Frequency of consumers' exposure to MTN products' advertising does not aid the recall of MTN slogans.*

In order to test the hypothesis, two variables were identified as follows:-

- i. Consumers' exposure to product advertising slogans - independent variable.

- ii. Recall of the slogan of advertised product - dependent variable.

The two variables were subjected to simple linear regression analysis.

Table 13: Model summary of the relationship between frequency of exposure to advertising slogans and recall of slogan

Model	R	R – square	Adjusted R–square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.899	0.868	0.898	0.66171

$p < 0.05$; $df = 498$; *Critical r – value = 0.113*

The calculated r-value (0.899) was greater than the critical r-value (0.113) at 0.05 alpha level with 498 degrees of freedom. The r-square (co-efficient) of 0.868 predicts 86.8% of the relationship between frequency of exposure to advertising slogans and slogan recall. The percentage is high and therefore implies a significant relationship between the two variables. The research hypothesis was therefore retained.

Hypothesis 2: *The advertising media used does not have positive impact on the recall of slogans by consumers.*

In order to test the hypothesis, two variables were identified:-

- i. Advertising media – independent variable.
- ii. Recall of advertising slogan – dependent variable.

The two variables were subjected to simple linear regression analysis.

Table 14: Model summary of the relationship between advertising media and recall of advertising slogan

Model	R	R – square	Adjusted R– square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.826	0.801	0.813	0.11124

$p < 0.05$; $df = 498$; *Critical r – value = 0.113*

The calculated r-value (0.826) was greater than the critical r-value of 0.113 at 0.05 alpha level with 498 degrees of freedom. The r-square (co-efficient) of 0.801 predicts 80.1% of the relationship between advertising media and recall of advertising slogan. The percentage is high. This implies a significant relationship between the variables. Thus, the research hypothesis was retained.

Hypothesis 3: *The recall of MTN advertising slogans does not have positive impact on the product patronage by consumers in Nigerian metropolis.*

In order to test the hypothesis, two variables were identified as follows:-

- i. Recall of advertising slogans - independent variable.
- ii. Patronage of the advertised products - dependent variable.

The two variables were subjected to simple linear regression analysis.

Table 15: Model summary of the relationship between recall of advertising slogans and product patronage

Model	R	R – square	Adjusted R–square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.766	0.738	0.747	0.56189

$p < 0.05$; $df = 498$; *Critical r – value = 0.113*

The calculated r-value (0.766) was greater than the critical r-value of 0.113 at 0.05 alpha levels with 498 degrees of freedom. The r-square co-efficient of 0.738 predicts 73.8% of the relationship between recall of advertising slogans and product patronage. The percentage is high and therefore implies a significant relationship between the two variables. The research hypothesis was therefore retained.

4.1 Discussion

The analysis in table 7 revealed that 281 or 56% of the respondents were very often exposed to MTN advertising slogans; 157 or 31% often exposed; 43 or 9% not often exposed; and 19 or 4% not very often

exposed to MTN advertising slogans. This suggests that patronage of MTN network is predicated by the level of consumers' exposure to its advertising slogans.

Similarly, the test of hypothesis one (table 13) revealed a significant relationship between the frequency of consumers' exposure to MTN advertising slogans and patronage of the MTN Network. The calculated r-value of 0.899 was greater than the critical r-value of 0.113. This led to the retention of the research hypothesis. This agrees with the finding of research questions one.

The finding of the study is in line with Walker and Dubitsky (2004). Consumers' exposure to advertising slogan is an important factor in determining their liking and patronage of the product. MTN takes time to advertise their products nationwide, using all variety of media. This, as found in the study, attracts a good patronage to the network. Exposure to product's advertising slogan is essential and capable of attracting consumers to the product.

The findings here (Table 8) revealed that 254 or 51% of the respondents were able to recall all the MTN advertising slogans; while 105 or 21% could recall "Everywhere you go!". The responses indicate a high level of remembrance of MTN advertising slogans. This accounts for the high patronage that the MTN network receives in these cities. Advertising slogans, according to Brierley (2002), are designed to foster remembrance of a company's product. Its purpose is to emphasize a phrase that the company wishes to be remembered by, particularly for marketing a specific corporate image or connection to a product (Brierley, 2002). The extent to which consumers recall a product's advertising slogan therefore determines its level of patronage.

Data analysis in research question three (table 10) indicated that 105 or 21% of the respondents were able to recall MTN advertising slogans because they are short and simple, while 127 or 25% of the respondents claimed that all the slogan elements were responsible for recall and patronage. The implication is that all the slogan elements are responsible for recall and patronage of MTN by consumers in Uyo Metropolis is cogent. Consumers find MTN advertising slogans appealing, easy to recall, regularly aired, easily understood, short and simple. The finding agrees with Burton (2006), who observed that a good advertising slogan should be appealing, short, brief, simple, offhand and memorable. This is further supported by Brierly (2002). For an advertising slogan to attract patronage, it must be simple, direct, concise, crisp and hard to forget. This explains the high patronage of MTN network by many consumers. Its advertising slogans meet the taste of its teaming consumers.

It is observed from table 11 that television makes advertising slogan recall more memorable with 189 (138%) respondents, followed by radio with 147 (29%) respondents. Print media with 103 (21%) came third, and lastly was the bill-boards with 61 or 12% respondents. In testing hypothesis two, a significant relationship was also established between the advertising media used and recall of product advertising slogans. The r-calculated was greater than the r-critical. This led to the retention of the research hypothesis.

This finding is in line with IFPA study (2005); Wimmer and Dominick (2000). The finding of IFPA on *Spring 2005 Advertising Campaign* indicated a high recall rate with television advertisement, 88% of the respondents indicated recalling more of the advertisements seen on television, followed by radio, newspaper, billboard and magazine. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2000), broadcast advertising is a very popular advertising medium. It constitutes such separate media as television, radio and the internet. These facilities are common in every household and drags product advertising direct to the consumers' convenience. This explains their popularity and the advantages over other media. The pictures displayed by the television and frequency of the slogans combine to make the slogan very memorable. The finding is equally supported by the theoretical framework. Bryant and Zillmann (2004) observed the broadcast media make for easy recall of advertising slogans than the print media.

The nature of the advertising media has a significant impact on the recall of advertising slogans (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000). The broadcast media (Radio, Television and the Internet) bring advert right to the home of the consumers without much effort. The consumers are at ease and get the advertisements at the comfort of their homes. Oftentimes, the ads are aired to their hearing as often as the medium is on. This has the ability to influence behaviour. The television combines both sight and hearing thereby impressing the information more on the consumer. This facilitates easy recall of the advertising slogan.

Analysis of data in Table 11 reveals that patronage of MTN network has to do with the recall of MTN advertising slogans. According to the table, 215 (43%) respondents strongly agreed that slogan recall influenced their patronage of MTN products, 180 (36% agreed, while only 85 (17%) and 15 (3%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

The analysis also indicates a significant relationship between the variables. The calculated r-value was greater than the r-critical. The research hypothesis was retained, while the null hypothesis was rejected. By implication, there exists a significant relationship between the recall of MTN advertising slogan and product patronage by consumers in Nigerian Metropolis.

The finding of the study is in line with Walker and Dubitsky (2004), who noted that the degree of liking expressed by consumers towards a product was significantly related to awareness, recall and the persuasive impact of the advertising slogan. The ability to recall a product's advertising slogan keeps the product alive in the mind of the recaller and is capable of inducing the patronage of the product. The scholars concluded that the ability to recall an advertising slogan greatly influences the product patronage. Recall keeps both the slogan and product alive in the mind of the consumers. This may in turn influence their patronage of the product.

5. Conclusion

MTN network consumers in Nigeria are frequently and adequately exposed to MTN advertising slogans. The frequency of this exposure contributes significantly to slogan recall and patronage of the network by consumers in Nigeria. MTN consumers in Nigeria very often recall the product-advertising slogan "Everywhere You Go", and it receives the greatest remembrance of the entire MTN product advertising slogans. MTN advertising slogans are very appealing and easy to recall and this perhaps, accounts significantly for its high rate of patronage in Nigeria. The broadcast media (radio and television) make MTN advertising slogans more memorable and easy to recall. The use of the broadcast media accounts for the high patronage enjoyed by MTN in Nigeria. Consequently, the high level of patronage enjoyed by MTN in Nigeria despite poor quality of service is significantly related to the ease at which the consumers recalled the product slogans.

5.2 Recommendations

The message of MTN advertising slogans should be reviewed as need arises to make such more appealing to the prospective consumers. This will enhance the frequency of recall and increase patronage for the network. Innovations that would make the recall of MTN advertising slogans easier should be introduced to facilitate recall by the teeming public. This is necessary for increased patronage of the product.

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