



COMPELLING FACTORS DETERMINING MOBILE PHONES PATRONAGE AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS AT ADEKUNLE AJASIN UNIVERSITY, AKUNGBA AKOKO, ONDO STATE

¹Sunday Adeniyi, OLASEHINDE (Ph.D.); ²Christie Folake, OGUNDIPE (Ph.D.); ³I. E. Oguntuase (Ph.D.); ⁴Taiwo Reuben, IBIJOJU (Ph.D.); ⁵Oluwawi Dayo, AKINNIYI; ⁶Modupe Titilayo G. ONIBON; ⁷Sunday C. ANIOBI (Ph.D.) & ⁸Solomon Ogiedo, EBHOAYE

^{1&6,8}Department of Business Administration Faculty of Management Sciences
Federal University, Oye-Ekiti Ekiti State, Nigeria

²⁻⁵ Department of Business Administration Faculty of Management Sciences
Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Email: Sunday.olasehinde@fuoye.edu.ng, & folakeogundipe14@gmail.com

Abstract

The study looked at the factors that influence female university students in Adekunle Ajasin, Akungba Akoko, in terms of their use of mobile phones. The study assessed the effects of brand name, income, and phone qualities on customer patronage as well as the effects of each on consumer patronage. The study was conducted using a descriptive survey research approach. According to the Yamane sampling model, 383 people made up the sample. Through the distribution of a well-constructed questionnaire, the study's primary data were collected. The target respondents were polled using a questionnaire to gather information. Using a regression model, the collected data were examined. The outcome shows that brand name, income, and product characteristics all have a favourable impact on consumer spending. The study found that factors related to mobile phones have a favourable impact on consumer spending.

Keyword: Customer Patronage, Mobile Phone

Introduction

Utilisation of mobile phones among Nigerians has increased dramatically in recent years. The worldwide technological trend and people's increased exposure in the 21st century may be to blame for the growth in usage. No matter where a person lives in the country or how far away they are from one another around the world, mobile phone technology has made it easier for them to communicate with one another by phoning or texting. Today's mobile phones include a wide range of features, including the ability to send and receive emails, play games, visit social networking sites like facebook, listen to music, play radio, read books, take great photos, and use mobile applications. Mobile phones have a number of advantages, one of which is that they help users who are 15 years of age and older feel less bored. Due to the technology age, even today's children are enthusiastic about using smartphones (Vaidya, Pathak & Vaidya, in Noah, 2019). Students in tertiary institutions are active participants in mobile phone usage in Nigeria because their age ranges from 15 to 35 years, and they have prior knowledge and understanding of how to use mobile phones, despite the fact that there is no gender discrimination or religious or ethnic bias among the students. However, some students are business focused, which means they may have a different impression of phone patronage than students who use mobile phones for personal reasons.

Mobile phone companies are now realising that maintaining existing customers is just as crucial as getting new ones (Coyles & Gokey in Goodie-Okio, 2022). This is due to the fact that the benefits of mobile phones extend beyond personal use and are an excellent tool for promoting enterprises not only locally but also across borders. As a result, carriers are now attempting to discover what characteristics influence client patronage of mobile phones. It has been found that particular factors actively influence customer loyalty and patronage in mobile telecom markets in various countries (Gerpott, Rams & Schindler; Ahn, Hun & Lee; Ranaweera & Neely; Lee & Feick, cited by Hossain & Suchy, 2013), even though the complex interactions among key constructs such as service quality, brand image, customer value, patronage, and satisfaction have not yet been fully uncovered and understood. Therefore, this study will concentrate on income, brand name, and mobile phone product features as a factor of consumer patronage taking into account female undergraduate students. Users, mobile phone advertisers, and mobile phone manufacturers will all gain from the study.

Research Objectives

The specific objectives are to:

- i. investigate the effect of phone attribute on mobile phones patronage among Female University Students;
- ii. determine the effect of income on mobile phones patronage among Female University Students and;
- iii. examine the effect of brand name on mobile phones patronage among Female University Students.

Literature Review

Face-to-face interaction has decreased as a result of mobile phone use. It is common for individuals to send texts during conversations. Even the guests and visitors are made to pause till the mobile phone usage is over. Even while class is in session, kids are playing games, texting, and making calls on their smartphones. Due to this, earlier studies have discussed mobile phone determinants from various angles. However, from the perspective of this study, mobile phone determinants will be in-depth explored from income, phone attribute, and brand name with particular reference to female undergraduate students in Nigeria.

Numerous researchers have outlined the benefits of using a mobile phone. Through this medium, students can maintain their existing ties and forge new ones (Power & Horstmanshof, cited by Yoshiko & Mariko, 2011). According to many academics, using a mobile phone in an emergency boosts feelings of security (Taylor & Harper; Carroll, Howard, Peck & Murphy, cited by Hafez & Akthe, 2017). Young people use mobile phone technology to meet their social demands because of its benefits of mobility, accessibility, and speed (Tjong, Weber & Sternberg, cited by Popescu; Balica; Lazăr; Buşu; & Vaşcu, 2022). Using the mobility offered by cell phones,

active working parents can stay in touch with their kids (Frissen; Matthews, cited by Popescu *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, SMS encourages student interaction, which results in more learning taking place in the lecture hall (Markett, Sánchez, Weber & Tangney, 2006). With the help of mobile phone technology, students may communicate with and share their experiences with their family.

Factors Determining the Choice of Mobile Phone Patronage

Due to the study's restriction to just female college students, the factors determining mobile phone consumption were confined to brand name, income, and mobile phone features.

Phone Features: When talking about mobile phone features, it's imperative to note that both internet connection and the availability of digital media like photos, music, and movies are included. Additionally, a smartphone must be able to use the diminutive software packages known as applications or apps (Karen, Han, & Benjamin, 2013). These characteristics are requirements that customers place on a product. Wireless networking, an integrated web browser, application installation, full programming, a file management system, multimedia presentation and capture, high resolution displays, multiple gigabytes of storage, and location and movement sensors are all featured in contemporary cell phones. Smartphone consumers prioritize the camera over the operating system (Chow, Chen, Yeow, & Wong, 2012). In Nigeria, Android, Windows Mobile, IOS (Internet operating system), and RIM Blackberry are the most popular operating systems (OS) for smartphones. According to Chang and Cheng (quoted in Chow, Chen, Yeow, & Wong, 2012), each operating system has its own distinct characteristics and history. Customers choose their mobile phones based on characteristics that produce particular benefits that lead to particular results that support their personal values affirms that customers use features to compare competing brands, and that marketers should be aware of product characteristics since they might affect consumer purchasing decisions. Application, high gigabytes of storing, a huge monitor, and a potent computer are so characteristics of smart phones. However, characteristics can also be revealed through touch screen, WiFi, high resolution display, and other features of cameras. Romariuk and Sharp (2003) consequently recommended that businesses concentrate more on how many functions or traits the smart phone should be connected to (Tan, 2015).

Income: Class, status, and other aspects of society are based on income. Different subcultures are shaped by factors such as social class, status, geographic location (rural vs. urban), religious affiliation, and ethnic heritage. Income, one of the key demographic characteristics, is linked to commitment to a specific product category, brand, or consumption activity, with marketing consequences relating to consumer spending (Mishra, 2021). Based on the context of the study, the type and brand of phone that female undergraduates choose depends on how much they earn every

month. However, some people receive financial assistance from parents or other family members before buying mobile phones because the money they make each month is insufficient for them to do so.

Brand Name: The idea that one product is currently the finest and will continue to be so in the future is more simply described by the word "brand name". The competitive offers that a strong brand name may make set it apart from a straightforward product (Mariotti, 2006). As a logo, emblem, or slogan, the brand name may be displayed on a product. Additionally, the brand possesses an elusive characteristic that encourages consumers to express their expectations for a product's dependability, efficacy, and reliability. By acting as identifiers for goods makers, brand names can also protect customers. Customers' impressions and comprehension of what they have read, heard, seen, and understood about the brand name have been discovered to have an impact on how strong the brand is perceived. Assali (2016) notes that for customers, a brand name can simplify the decision-making process, guarantee a particular level of quality, lower risk, and foster a sense of confidence. Therefore, after clients, a company's brand name is regarded as its second-most valuable asset (Sago & Hinnenkamp, 2014). Due to this, different brands of mobile phones exist, including Nokia, Samsung, Infinix, Techno, Itel, and others. University students tend to purchase mobile phones based on brand loyalty or word-of-mouth from their peers.

Customer Patronage: Customers may show patronage for certain brands or product categories. Customers must have a strong commitment to a company or its product in order for them to consistently use or repurchase from them. Customers who are brand loyalists do not assess the brand; instead, they simply make a purchase with confidence based on their experiences, as Kotler and Keller (2006) noted. Customer patronage is the need, desire, and thought that customers have that prompts them to buy something from a store. Patronage is often assessed by contrasting a customer's regular financial purchases with the average family consumption (Olsen & Connolly in Issa, & Musa, 2021). The endorsement or support that customers give to a specific brand is known as customer patronage. The basis for a stable and expanding market share is provided by patronage. In Nkpurukwe and Amangala (2020), Kotler expresses the opinion that consumers' levels of patronage for specific goods, such as mobile phones and other entities, are unpredictable. This study thus concentrates on the variables influencing the use of mobile phones. Customer patronage, however, in this context refers to the customer's decision to consistently buy mobile phones and the elements that lead them to a particular brand of mobile phone.

Empirical Review

Ahmed and Qazi (2011) examined Pakistani university students' mobile phone adoption and use. For data collecting, questionnaires were employed. The population

was students. Simple random selection with 500 respondents was utilised. This survey had an 80% response rate from 400 students. This suggests that Pakistani mobile phone users are loyal customers of network providers, Nokia is their favourite manufacturing brand, and U-fone is their favourite network provider, and they consider almost all mobile phone features before buying.

Ogwo and Igwe (2012) examined characteristics that affect GSM service patronage: Nigeria's story. 308 University lecturers in South-South Nigeria were surveyed using cluster and simple random methods. Multiple regressions and Spearman rank correlation were employed to test hypotheses. The empirical model showed that service quality, customer value, and brand image/reputation positively and significantly affect intention to use. Satisfaction moderates the effect of these antecedent factors on intention to use.

Ackaradejruangsri (2013) explored how product quality affects Thai customers' purchases. Further analysis of the responses to questionnaires distributed at the point of sale (POS) in Chonburi Province, Thailand shows that the seven attribute dimensions overall have relatively similar weight and influence on Thai consumers' buying decisions, with reliability, function, and durability being the most influential and eco-friendliness and customer satisfaction being less influential. Support service, value for money, and adaptability may also affect Thai customers' purchase selections. Demographic factors like gender, age, education, and money also affected Thai consumers' buying habits.

Adikari (2013) investigated university students' mobile phone use, specifically at Rajarata University in Sri Lanka. Stratified sampling selects the sample. Data from 10 open-closed questions. Secondary data from books and the internet was utilised in the study. This study hypothesises that university students' mobile phone demand is primarily influenced by monthly income and phone facility. The study found a positive and significant association between mobile phone demand and university students' income levels, however phone features did not affect demand. However, the report recommended a country-level analysis for mobile phone manufacturers' marketing methods.

Oladele, Okolugbo, and Oshode (2016) explored how subjective norm and consumer innovativeness affect Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti students' mobile phone adoption. The study was based on Ajzen's planned behaviour theory and Rogers' adoption theory. The institution's 13,798 full-time undergraduate students were sampled using stratified random sampling to acquire 389 responses. The structured questionnaire had a 97.6% response rate with 380 completed and usable copies. Multiple regression analysis was utilised to test the study hypothesis. The result showed that subjective norm and consumer innovativeness had a combined positive effect on adoption (0.782), but subjective norm's effect was 0.315 but negligible ($p > 0.05$, $p = 0.286$), implying that subjective norm had no significant effect on mobile

phone adoption. The survey found that students are driven or innovative in their pursuit of new phones, which explains the large quantity of new phones on campuses. The survey also found that their friends and peers (subjective norm) do not impact their phone purchases. The study proposed that mobile phone marketers and promoters recognise students' innovativeness and willingness to buy new phones on their own. Since students are not encouraged by peers or friends to buy new phones, they need tailor their marketing and promotion to each customer.

Methodology

This investigation was carried out at the Adekunle Ajasin University in Ondo State's Akungba Akoko. This study's research method was a descriptive survey. A descriptive survey research design uses questionnaire to obtain data needed for the study. All female undergraduate students of Akungba Akoko's Adekunle Ajasin University make up the study's population. Female students from levels 100 to 500 were considered in the study, which included the full faculty. According to the Nigeria University System Statistical Digest (2019), the study population consists of nine thousand one hundred and ninety six (9,196) female students. The Yamane (1967) sampling approach was used to select the sample size for this study from the entire population of female undergraduate students at Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko. Convenient sampling strategies were used in this investigation. Three hundred eighty three (383) people make up the sample. The Yamane sampling model is shown as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

n = anticipated sample size

N = population size

e = sampling error (0.05)

Consequently, the overall sample size was calculated as:

$$n = \frac{9,196}{1+9,196(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{9,196}{1+9,196(0.0025)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{9,196}{1+22.99}$$

$$n = \frac{9,196}{23.99}$$

$$n = 383.$$

Method of Data Analysis: Using frequency tables and percentages, the demographic information and answer of the respondent were examined. The study's hypotheses were examined using regression analysis. Regression model is stated as:

$$P_{tn} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Pat + \beta_2 Inc + \beta_3 Brn + \mu$$

$$Ptn = f' (Pat, Inc, Brn)$$

Where: Ptn = (Patronage) Dependent Variable; Pat = Phone Attributes; Inc = Income; Brn = Brand Name; β_0 = constant; b= gradient of the slope and; μ = error term

Results and Discussion

Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Three hundred and fifteen (315) students from Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, served as the study's target respondents. The questionnaire was collected for processing, and a choice was made. The student level of the respondents showed that 15 (4.8%) of the respondents are 200 level students, 75 (23.8%) of the respondents are 300 level students, 150 (47.6%) of the respondents are 400 level students, while 75 (23.8%) of the respondents are 500 level students thus implied that most of the respondents are 400 level students. The phone brand showed that 60 (19%) of the respondents uses Samsung brand, 165 (52.4%) of the respondents uses infinix brand while 90 (28.6%) of the respondents uses techno brand thus implied that most of the respondents uses infinix brand.

From patronage mode distribution, it was revealed that 45 (14.3%) of the respondents patronise mobile phone monthly, 165 (52.4%) of the respondents patronise mobile phone yearly while 105 (33.2%) of the respondents patronise mobile phone occasionally thus implied that most of the respondents patronise mobile phones yearly.

The income distribution of the respondents revealed that 240 (76.2%) of the respondents earn below ₦30,000 while 75 (23.2%) of the respondents earn between ₦31,000-50,000 thus implied that most of the respondents earn below ₦30,000.

Table 1: Demographic Distribution

	Frequency	Percent
Level		
200	15	4.8
300	75	23.8
400	150	47.6
500	75	23.8
Total	315	100.0
Phone Brand		
Samsung	60	19.0
Infinix	165	52.4
Techno	90	28.6
Total	315	100.0
Patronage Mode		
Monthly	45	14.3

Yearly	165	52.4
Occasionally	105	33.3
Total	315	100.0
Income		
Below 30,000	240	76.2
31,000-50,000	75	23.8
Total	315	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2023)

Interpretation of Results

Three variables (phone attributes, income and brand name) which are determinants of mobile phone and customer patronage were calculated and put through multiple regression analysis. According to Table 2, the R (Regression Coefficient) has a positive value of 0.758, indicating that there is a very strong and positive correlation between phone attributes, income, brand name and customer patronage. The R^2 is the proportion of the dependent variable's overall variance that can be accounted for by the variance in the variables that are independent. From the outcomes, R^2 is equal to 0.574, which means that phone attributes, income, and brand name caused 57.4% of the difference in customer patronage. This is also shown by the adjusted R^2 , which shows how well the model fits the data and gives a value of 0.570. This means that when all errors are fixed and adjustments are made, phone attributes, income, and brand name can only explain 57% of the difference, while the error term in the model explains the other 43%.

Discussion of Findings

Firstly, with $t=19.738$ and ($p=0.000 < 0.05$), the random beta coefficient of the phone attribute is 0.749. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the phone attribute is positively correlated with customer patronage. This recommends that phone attribute can positively influence customer patronage among female students in Adekunle Ajasin University. This implied that regardless social stratifications and financial buoyancy, phone attributes influence student patronage of mobile phones. Secondly, the unstandardized beta co-efficient of income is 0.650 with $t= 17.317$ and ($p= 0.000 < 0.05$). These findings demonstrated a strong correlation between income and customer patronage. This suggests that income can positively influence customer patronage among female students in Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko. This implied that income dictate or predict the financial capacity of customers towards customer patronage.

Finally, the unstandardized beta co-efficient of brand name was 0.636 with $t= 9.738$ and ($p= 0.000 < 0.05$). According to these findings, brand name and customer patronage are positively correlated. This proposes that brand name can positively influence customer patronage among female students in Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko. The result implied that patronage is predicted through brand name

or preference for certain mobile phone brand which also determines patronage of customers.

Considering the F-Stat (139.818, at P-value $0.000 < .05$), it showed that the null hypothesis, phone attributes, income and the influence of a brand name on customer patronage is minimal, thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and accepted the alternative hypothesis that phone attributes, income and brand name affects customer patronage. The discovery is consistent with the research conducted in Nigeria by Olowogboye (2017). The study looked into what factors influence students at tertiary institutions in Nigeria to purchase smartphones. It was discovered that brand image, product attributes, place of origin, peer group influence, and pricing are crucial and determining elements to customer purchasing behaviour. More specifically, from a Pakistani study by Ahmed and Qazi (2011) on University students' use of cell phones. The survey came to the conclusion that Nokia is their preferred manufacturing brand and that when buying a mobile phone in Pakistan, they take into account practically all of its qualities.

Table 2: Estimated Effect of Phone Attributes, Income, Brand Name on Customer Patronage

Variables	Coeff.	Std. Error	t-value	Sig.
Constant	1.371	.266	2.393	0.000
Phone Attribute	0.749	.059	19.738	0.000
Income	0.650	.038	17.317	0.000
Brand Name	0.636	.065	9.738	0.000
R	0.758			
R-Square	0.574			
Adj. R-Square	0.570			
F-Stat.	139.818 (0.000)			

Dependent Variable: Customer's Patronage

Conclusion

According to study's finding, phone traits that are part of the product speak volumes when it comes to predicting consumer preference for mobile phones. These findings are supported by customers' ability to pay and brand recognition. The study looked at the factors that influence phone use among female undergraduates at Adekunle Ajasin University in Akungba Akoko. Its specific goals were to assess how phone characteristics affect customer use, look at how income affects customer use, and assess how brand name affects customer use. Descriptive analysis revealed that students at the 400 level have a greater population and that the majority of respondents utilise the Infinix brand. Additionally, the majority of respondents use mobile phones on a yearly basis, and the sample as a whole makes less than 30,000. However, to represent proxy factors of mobile phone patronage, phone characteristics, income, brand name, and perceived product quality were used. Based

on the research's conclusions, it was discovered that brand name, income, and phone qualities can all have a favourable impact on consumer spending. According to the results, the alternative hypothesis was accepted and the study rejected the alternative. Thus, it was found that among female undergraduate students at Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, phone qualities, income, and brand name are positively associated to consumer patronage.

Recommendation

- i. According to the findings, the study advises businesses to concentrate on reinforcing their product traits or features, assuring product durability, and implementing new features to increase customer support for mobile companies.
- ii. Additionally, mobile phone companies need to offer a choice of brands to cater to various customer segments based on their financial levels. Since each consumer has a distinct economic level, consideration of their affordability should come first.
- iii. Moreover, a mobile phone's brand name goes a long way, thus it is important for mobile phone companies to make affirmative reputation as well as image in the minds of prospective customers to entice customers to acquire such a product.

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