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## AN EVALUATIVE STUDY OF USE OF HIP HOP ARTISTS IN MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADVERTISEMENTS: A STUDY OF AIRTEL SUBSCRIBERS IN SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*Endorsement is a type of advertising that focuses on using celebrity power, fame, and popularity to gain recognition for a product and promote the purchase of such products or service. It is believed that the use of celebrity in advertising gives the product an instant popularity. This work examines the responses of airtel subscribers in Nigeria, (using Anambra State University, Igbariam Campus, Anambra State Nigeria, as a study area), towards the use of hip hop artiste (2face) in airtel advert. The survey research method was adopted in the study with 378 respondents studied. Purposive sampling technique was used and the data analysed were collected through the use of questionnaire. Data were analysed using frequency distribution table, and mean statistics while t-test statistical tool was used to test the hypothesis. Among the research questions formulated for the study are: what determines the respondents' choice of a network provider? How do the respondents perceive airtel testimonial advertising involving 2face Idibia? The hypothesis for the study was that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female respondents on their perception of whether the use of 2face in airtel's adverts brings about preference of airtel brand. The study found out that the respondents reacted favourably towards the advert because of the use of 2face in the advert. Thus, the study concluded that there is a relationship between the use of 2face in airtel adverts and preference of airtel brand to other networks. The study also recommended that the effectiveness of any advertising depends on how well the advert meets up with the needs of the target audience.*

### KEYWORDS

Advertisement, Hip Hop Artists, Personality Endorsement.

### INTRODUCTION

The buzz and hype in the world of advertising since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century till date are not only inundating and overwhelming, but almost embarrassing at times. We live in a world of advertising. It is a world of our making, of course. We don't like to pay full price of things, so we allow other people to pay part of that price in exchange for letting them pass a message to us.

Advertising can rightly be defined as any persuasive form of non-personal dissemination of information about a specific idea, opinion, product or service through an appropriate medium of mass communication by an identifiable sponsor(s) for the purpose of convincing, promoting and persuading the audience to undertake a desired action. Advertising is, thus, a collective term for public announcement designed to promote the sale of specific ideas, goals or services. It is a form of mass selling employed when the use of direct person to person selling is impractical or insufficient.

Okoro (1998), observes that historical accounts credit the Babylonians as being the first to produce an advertisement. Russell and Lame (1990), in Okoro (1998), observe that a Babylonian clay tablet of about 3000 BC bears inscriptions for ointment dealer, scribe and a shoemaker. According to Turner (1952:9), in Okoro (1998), in ancient Rome, advertising flourished. Adverts messages were written on the walls during gladiatorial shows and campaigns.

The symbolic and pictorial nature of early advertising gave rise to outdoor advertising which has proved to be one of the most enduring forms of advertising.

Wilson and Wilson (2001), note that the invention of technology for distance communication began in 1830 with the development of the telegraph in England and United States of America. Another breakthrough came in 1876 when Alexander Graham Bell invented and made the first telephone call. In 1897, Guglielmo Marconi patented the wireless telegraph. Another great improvement was made in 1983 with invention of the mobile cellular phone. The global system of communication (GSM) followed in the late 1990s and by 2001, MTN Nigeria had started operation.

Presently, there are about six telecommunication companies in Nigeria which airtel-Nigeria is one of them. Airtel-Nigeria took over from zain-Nigeria on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2010. The company is known for its intensive use of celebrities in its adverts both in the origin country, India and international.

Endorsement is a type of advertising that focuses on using celebrity power, fame, money, and popularity to gain recognition for a product and promote specific stores of products (Wikipedia, 2011). Celebrities are often involved in advertising campaigns such as television or print adverts to advertise specific or general products. The use of celebrities to endorse a brand can have its downside as one mistake by a celebrity can be detrimental to the public relations of a brand.

The use of celebrities in advertising was borne out of the need to arouse and sustain the interest of the target audience. Hip hop artistes serve as endorser of a particular new brand. If the advertisers lack ideas on how to promote a brand with products that have many competitors, they use popular hip hop artistes to optimize the brand image and to grant instant credibility or public relations coverage. This principle particularly holds true if the celebrity has ascending popularity or career. They project an attractive image with hidden message that if consumers patronize their product, they are likely to be leveled with celebrities that they can also share and live up the dream and success.

According to Stanley (1986), advertising is seen to be creative rather than a sales tool. Young people have different national attitude towards advertising and this does not prevent them from identifying with their superstars of music, television, radio, cinema and dressing or seeking to behave like them. This is among the principle of creative advertising techniques. If the ideal hip hop artiste is employed to represent the product, his strong appeal can send a brand message without further statement.

Ifedayo (2001), notes that testimonials are advertisement in which a celebrity endorses a product or service. The person appears as an average user of the product, and in the process help attracts attention to the advertisement and creates other interest in the product. Hip hop artistes are used to position a product to give it credibility. In the use of superstar, the image of the star is important to positioning of the products and services patronized because it is seen as a good image.

Modern advertising is now a persuasive force, which is also intrusive as a communication process that has invaded our homes, offices and streets. Nevertheless, advertising provides the consumers a checklist of choice of items favorably to purchase to standardize their living. Advertising in this modern time must be persuasive and appealing in order to win converts who are lured to patronize the goods and services advertised.

## THE PROBLEM

Airtel-Nigeria is one of the leading telecommunication companies in the country. Bharti airtel limited acquired zain on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2010. Airtel is the leading and the largest cellular service provider in India and fifth largest telecom operator in the world (Wikipedia, 2011). The company is known for its wide use of celebrities in its advertisement.

The company on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2010, unveiled a Nigeria hip hop artiste 2face Idibia as a new brand face of airtel-Nigeria (nextonlineinfo.com cited in Oluwaseun, 2010). The company decided to use 2face in its advert so as to draw the attention of his fans to airtel product (Oluwaseun, 2010). 2face, alongside R.kelly and seven other international hip hop stars did a team song for airtel.

Airtel has been recording a tremendous increase in the number of subscribers worldwide. The company has over 199.6 million subscribers across 19 countries at the end of 2010 (Samuel, 2011). This increase may be as a result of using celebrities or hip hop artistes in its adverts.

An unanswered question here is whether the company will hit its expecting record in Nigeria owing to series of metamorphosis undergone by the predecessors of the company in Nigeria. Again, the use of hip hop star to endorse a brand can have its downside as one mistake by the celebrity or hip hop artiste can be detrimental to the public relations of the brand.

More so, a research has shown that people tend to listen or read those messages that meet up with their dispositions and discard those that failed to meet up. As such, there exist some who are not 2face's fan and such people are likely to discard or disregard anything he says about airtel's products. Such individual differences may give rise to opinion like "he has been paid to sell the product". This work therefore centers on ascertaining the effectiveness of the use of 2face Idibia in airtel adverts.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to ascertain the consumers' response to the use of hip hop artistes in airtel adverts. Specifically, the work sets out to find out the following:

- Whether the use of hip hop artiste in advertising has anything to do with the respondents' choice of network provider.
- The respondents' perception on the credibility of the hip hop artiste(s) used in airtel adverts.
- The effect which the medium used by *airtel* in their adverts has on respondent's buying decision.
- If a testimony about a product given by a hip hop artiste motivates the respondents' buying habit.

These research questions guided the study:

- What determines the respondent's choice of network provider?
- How do respondents perceive the *airtel's* testimonial advertising using 2face Idibia like "*Airtel 2good*" by 2face?
- What effect(s) does the medium used by *airtel* in its adverts have on the respondents' buying decision?
- What is the respondents' perception on whether the use of 2face in *airtel* adverts brings about preference of *airtel* brand?

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H<sub>0</sub>: there is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female respondents on their perception of whether the use of 2face in airtel's adverts brings about preference of airtel brand.

H<sub>1</sub>: there is a significant difference between the mean scores of male and female respondents on their perception of whether the use of 2face in airtel's adverts brings about preference of airtel brand.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two theories of mass media effect guided this work. They are social categories theory and individual differences theory. The social categories theory states that people tend to respond to a mass media stimulus (message) based on the norms and interest of his sub-group or social category in the society. The social categories theory "assumes that there are broad collectives, aggregate or social categories in urban-industrial societies whose behaviour in the face of a given set of stimuli is more or less uniform" (Defleur, 1970 in Baran and Davis, 2006: 149). According to this theory, people with similar dispositions-age, gender, income, and educational level, will have similar patterns of media exposure and similar reactions to that exposure. While people possess individual traits that determine their susceptibility to media content, social categories theory maintains that people who share similar demographic traits will respond similarly to the mass media content. Okunna (1999): 164-165), asserts that "members of each sub-group belong to social category, and are likely to have similar interests and attributes which differ from those of member of other social categories, and which determine mass media they use and how they use them"

Individual difference theory observes that though people belong to the same social category and have group norms and values in common, each person still has trait(s) that is unique to him. Okunna (199:168-169), rightly observes that "depending on who you are and type of personal characteristics you have, a persuasive media message could fail either partially or totally to have effect which the mass communicator, and advertiser perhaps it to have on you. The same message could have the intended effect on another member of the audience with a different psychological make-up". The theory anchors on the fact that media content selectivity among the audience is as a result of their individual differences. "Individual demographics and experience shape audience perception of communicators and their transmission" (Whitaker Ramsey and Smith, 2009). Nwodu (2007; 261) asserts that "the theory therefore derives strengths from the two basic facts (1) No two individuals can be the same and as such, their reactions to mass mediated message vary and (2) No particular individual is the same all the time".

Consumer behaviour is concept that merges the two theories together. The concept is an activity people engage in when searching for, selecting purchasing, using evaluating and disposing of products and services so as to satisfy their needs and desires (Belch and Belch, 2007). An advertiser's success in influencing purchase behaviour of the audience depends largely on how well he understands his target consumers' behaviour. Selective perception determines how well the consumers will expose themselves to advertising messages and how to attend to them, understand them, and retain them for references during purchasing.

Therefore, the effectiveness of airtel adverts on its target audience depends largely on its ability to understand that "the more highly people value their membership in a group, the more closely their attitude will conform to those of the group and therefore the more resistant the person will be to change" (Baran and Davis, 2006:147). An individual's susceptibility to persuasion is not all about the person's willingness to be persuaded on a given advert issue but some personality factors like intelligence, gender, social status and age also contribute to change.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### THE CONCEPT OF ADVERTISING

The element of marketing communication mix that is non-personal, paid for by an identified sponsor and disseminated through mass media or channels of communication to promote the adoption of goods, services, persons, ideas, opinions or organization is known as advertising. An advertising message is either informative or persuasive in nature. It can be in form of a reminder (outdoor ads) ringing in the heart and or eyes of the target audience about the existence of a new or old brand or products or services as in airtel adverts.

Advertising is similar to other elements or forms of marketing communication only that a thin line differentiates it from others. Advertising message must be non-personal and it is paid for by identified sponsor. These attributes, differentiates, advertising from propaganda which according to Hornby (2000:935) is

"ideas or statements that may be false or exaggerated and that are used in order to gain support for a political leader, party, etc." the import asserts that while propaganda can omit or distort something relevant or important in order to curry favour the target audience, advertising thrives on honesty, decency, legal and faithful.

However, many scholars have advanced the meaning of advertising to include "a paid form of non-personal communication through a medium aimed at promoting ideas, individuals, organization, goods or services by an identified sponsor" (Nwabueze, 2006:164). According to a marketing communications expert, Ikechukwu Nwosu (1996), in Edegoh (2009), advertising is "any paid form of non personal presentation and promotion of person, Institutions, ideas, goods and services by identifiable sponsor using appropriate media or medium of communication."

#### ADVERTISING STRATEGIES

Advertising strategy is a well articulated and planned line of actions through which the interest of the target audience can be aroused. It is pertinent to note here that a good advertising strategy will reflect other business considerations and objectives as well.

According to Biagi (2005:214), "Advertising campaign is a planned advertising effort, coordinated for a specific time period. A campaign could last anywhere from a month to year, and the objective is a coordinated strategy to sell a product or a service". The cardinal point here is that every advertising campaign involves strategies to sell products or services. The aim of every advertising is to stimulate sales or promote ideas or opinions.

Advertising strategy involves devising a means of ensuring that a product finds its place in the market. Obeta (2008), observes that due to cut-throat competition inherent in the marketing industry as a result of numerous producers and marketers, it is only the company with a comprehensive, coordinated, integrated and well packaged advertising programs would find space in the little market area. This competition seems to be more pronounced in telecommunication industries. This has given rise to series of promotion bonanzas lingering on in the industry.

Advertising strategy could be classified under media strategy, audience strategy, creative strategy and coordination and measurement (Jugenheimer and white, 1980). Audience strategy involves a research into the nature of the audience of an advert. The research includes both their psychological and demographic dispositions.

Media strategy "is a decision about which basic media to use, what units to recommend and what time of day, week or year to use them" (Jugenheimer and White, 1980:325). Coordination and measurement involves evaluation of his advertising campaign to determine its success or failure rate.

#### AIRTEL: AN OVERVIEW

Bharti airtel; limited known as airtel, is an Indian telecommunication company that operates in 19 countries across South Asia. Africa and the channel of Island (wikipedia, 2011).

Sunil Bhari Mittal founded the Bharti group of companies which airtel-Nigeria is one of them with the name Bharti airtel – Nigeria (Oluwaseun, 2010). The company is known internationally for its creative slogan the centers on freedom. Some of them are "no wall can keep us apart only if we talk to each other", "when you stand for what you believe in, you can change the world, express yourself-a theme song for airtel adverts in India done by AR Rehman" (Amit, 2010), "avoid congestions, join airtel world", "wider coverage (Oluwaseun, 2010)", among others.

Airtel Nigeria started operations as Econet-Nigeria. Econet-Nigeria was later re-branded to Vodacom. However, vodacom did not last long in Nigeria. The development prompted Nigeria's first GSM operator brand to operate in the country without an identifiable cooperate name and strategy for over two months. The circumstances created Vmobile, which was later acquired by MTC, owners of celtel. Following the acquisition, Vmobile was re-brained celtel. Two years after the success story of celtel, Zain announced take over of the celtel brand from MTC across Africa and Middle East. On August 1, 2008, celtel made the way for Zain following global acquisition of celtel international by MTC group which transferred to zain. In just another two years interval, zain was acquired by Bharti airtel and re-branded for the sixth time to airtel-Nigeria (wikipedia, 2011)

Bharti airtel change its name to airtel in 2003. Following this change, the cellular phone operations under the name Bharti group were re-branded under the single airtel brand. Today, airtel is the largest cellular service provider in India and fifth largest in the world (wikipedia, 2011).

Airtel has about 199.6 million subscribers worldwide. 152. 5 million in India, 42.1 million are in African, 3.2 million in Bangladesh and 1.8 million in Sir Lanka as the end of 2010. The numbers include mobile service subscribers in 19 countries and Indian telemedia and digital services subscribers (Samuel, 2010).

Whether the company is making success in Nigeria is yet to be ascertained after

#### BRIEF LOOK AT HIP HOP IN AIRTEL ADVERTS

Celebrity advertising focuses upon using celebrity power, fame, money, popularity to gain recognition for a products or service. Celebrity's are used in advertising to grab attention, sell products and build the celebrity's brand and business opportunities (Leon, 2003). Analysis believe that famous celebrities are more capable of catching the attention of consumers.

Felix.inc (2010), defines hip as an urban youth culture associated with rap music and the fashion of African-American residents of the inner city. It is a genre of African-American music of the 1980s and 1990s in which rhyming lyrics are chanted to a musical accompaniment.

Airtel after acquiring of the "Kuwait" zain group in African adopted the idea of celebrity advertising to create awareness and endorse the brand. This gave rise to the formation of one8. This superstars group, one8, released an album titled "Hands across the world, which is the brainchild of airtel limited (Hamuza, 2010).

Airtel contracted 2face Idibia (Nigeria), Navio (Uganda), Alikiba (Tanzania), Fally Ipupa (Dr Congo), 4x4 (Ghana), Movazhaleine (Gabon), JK (Zambia), and Amani (Kenya), to represent airtel African in a theme song written by R&B matters, R.Kelly. Airtel's one8 is symbolic and the power of connectivity-using networks, technology and the power of music to connect fans all over African and the world through music (Oluwaseun, 2010).

The idea of airtel Nigeria endorsing 2face as its ambassador perhaps is borne out of the zeal to project its product as living and credible. In addition to that, analysis believes that brands being established by celebrities are more likely to retain longer on consumer's memory. But the problem now is whether the idea is working for them in a socially categorized state like Nigeria.

#### METHODOLOGY

The method of study employed by the researchers was the survey method. Survey method is usually used when it is not generally feasible to study the entire population. This research method is considered to be the most suitable method by a researcher studying attitudes and behaviour.

The population of study for this work comprises of the regular students of Anambra state university, Igbariam campus. The population stood at 6,832 as at the time of the study. According to statistics from the office of the faculty officers, faculty of arts and social sciences has 3777 students. Faculty of management sciences has 2351 while agric-economics and law have 449 and 255 respectively.

#### SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sample size for this study is 378. The researcher arrived at the size through the application of Taro Yamane's formula for determining the sample size when the population is known or finite.

The formula is stated thus:

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

where:

n = sample size

N = population figure

e = error margin.

Refer to appendix 1 for the workings on sample size determination using Taro Yamane’s formula. Based on the appendix 1, the sample size is 378 which represent 5.3% of the entire population.

The sample size of 378 airtel subscribers among the regular students of Anambra state university, Igbariam campus was drawn for the purpose of this study. The sampling technique used was the purposive method which is under the non-probability sampling technique. The researcher in a bid to ensure that all components of the entire population are fairly represented engaged on proportional allocation of units to each of the population component. Subsequently, 14 students were studied from law faculty, Agric-economics faculty had 25 students studied, while arts and social sciences and management sciences had 209 and 130 students studied respectively.

The researcher adopted purposive method of sampling technique which is under non-probability sampling technique. The researcher purposively selected that are using airtel network as their mobile phone service provider. This technique enabled the researcher to elicit data much more easily and readily since non-airtel subscribers were not included in the scope of study.

**TECHNIQUE OF DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

The data collected from the field were analyzed using frequency distribution and mean statistics. The research hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics. According to Okeke, Olise, and Eze (2008:176), t-test is “the name applied to the statistical technique that allows one to deal with the significance of differences between means in small independent samples”.

Furthermore, the researcher rated each response on a 5-point Likert scale of “strongly agreed” = 5, “agreed” = 4, “undecided” = 3, “disagreed” = 2, and “strongly disagreed” = 1. To determine the cut-off point, the mean of the values assigned to response categories items was calculated thus:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum Fx}{N}$$

where:

$\bar{x}$  = sample mean

f = frequency

N = total number of scores

X = allotted values.

Therefore, the mean of any response that was below the calculated cut-off point (3.0), was rejected or assumed to be negative. While the one that was above the cut-off point was accepted or assumed to be positive.

**FINDINGS**

**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

Questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. Out of three hundred and seventy eight (378) copies of questionnaire distributed, three hundred and seventy two (372) were returned and found useful. This shows that 98.4% of the questionnaire was valid while 6 which is 1.6% were not returned.

Similarly, female respondents constituted the majority of the respondents with 210 respondents accounting for 56.5%. Male respondents were 162 accounting for 43.5%.

The analysis of the data above shows that the majority of the respondents fall within the age bracket of 21-25 accounting for 65.1% with 242 respondents. This is followed by that fall within the age bracket of 15-20 with 79 respondents accounting for 21.2% and those that fall within the age bracket of 26-30 were 51 accounting for 13.7%. The age brackets of 31-35, 36 and above are none.

The data on the marital status shows that majority of the respondents are still single with 316 respondents accounting for 84.9% and 56 respondents accounting for 15.1% are married. None of the respondents is divorced.

The data presented on the faculty of the respondents shows that 130 respondents were from management sciences accounting for 34.9%. 204 respondents which accounted for 54.8% were from the faculty of arts and social sciences, while 14 and 24 respondents accounting for 3.8% and 6.5% were from the faculty of law and agric-economics respectively.

Also, the demographic data shows that 66 respondents representing 17.7% were year one students. 93 respondents accounting for 25% were year two students. Again, 116 respondents representing 31.2% were third year students, while 97 respondents representing 26.1% were fourth year students and nil goes for fifth year students and above.

**ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**RESEARCH QUESTION ONE**

Assessment of what determines the respondent’s choice of network provider.

To answer this research question, items 6-12 from the questionnaire were used.

**TABLE 1: RESPONDENTS’ RESPONSES ON WHAT DETERMINES THEIR CHOICE OF NETWORK PROVIDER**

S/N	Responses	SA	A	UND	DA	SDA	Total	$\bar{X}$	Remark
6	The quality of the network provider’s wave.	1015	464	45	76	0	1600	4.3	Positive
7	The testimonies of the active subscribers of the network about them.	930	480	42	90	7	1549	4.2	Positive
8	The benefits inherent in the network provider’s tariffs.	955	444	123	58	0	1588	4.2	Positive
9	The rate of coverage of the network provider.	900	416	66	88	22	1492	4.0	Positive
10	The rate of accessibility of the network provider’s product.	790	456	177	82	0	1505	4.0	Positive
11	The denominations of the network provider’s recharge cards.	695	488	150	132	15	1480	4.0	positive
12	The testimonies of the hip hop artist used in the network provider’s adverts.	615	380	198	102	37	1332	3.6	Positive

Source: 2011 field survey.

The results presented in the table above show that the mean responses of all the 7 items are positive that is, they are above the cut-off point (3.0). It then follows that all the responses weighted are factors that can determine the choice of a network provider. Respondents strongly agreed that the quality of the network provider’s wave is the chief determining factor (4.3). They also agreed that the testimonies of the hip hop artist (s) used in the network provider’s adverts (3.6) is another factor capable of determining the choice of a network provider. The respondents were also of the view that the testimonies of the active subscribers of the network about them (4.2) and the benefits inherent in the network provider’s tariffs (4.2) motivated them in preferring one network to the other.

**RESEARCH QUESTION TWO**

Assessment of how the respondents perceive the airtel’s testimonial advertising using 2face Idibia like “Airtel 2good” by 2face.

To answer this research question, items 13-18 from the questionnaire were used.

TABLE 2: RESPONDENTS PERCEPTION OF THE AIRTEL’S TESTIMONIAL ADVERTISING USING 2FACE LIKE “AIRTEL 2GOOD” BY 2FACE

S/N	Responses	SA	A	UND	DA	SDA	Total	X̄	Remark
13	It makes me to like airtel and its products.	760	556	66	118	0	1500	4.0	Positive
14	I love 2face and I love his adverts.	950	384	21	118	20	1493	4.0	Positive
15	It irritates me because I hate 2face.	255	40	21	244	182	742	2.0	Negative
16	I love 2face but I don’t think that can make me to like airtel.	485	436	84	144	66	1215	3.3	Positive
17	I believe that “airtel 2good” because 2face cannot lie in a situation like that.	510	288	105	178	74	1155	3.1	Positive
18	I see it as a paid form of testimony.	740	376	195	28	51	1390	3.7	Positive

Source: 2011 field survey.

The table above indicates that the respondents perceived airtel’s testimonial advertising using 2face Ibibia as a good one. This was justified by their agreement on the fact that it makes them to like airtel and its products (4.0). More so, they agreed on items (14, 16, 17, and 18) which were justified by their weighted means been above the cut-off point (3.0). Again, the respondents strongly disagreed that airtel’s testimonial advertising using 2face Ibibia irritates them because they hate 2face (2.0). This is a clear indication that they perceived the airtel’s testimonial advertising using 2face Ibibia as a good advert and they believed that “airtel 2good” because 2face cannot lie in a situation like that (3.1).

**RESEARCH QUESTION THREE**

Assessment of the effect(s) the medium used by airtel in its adverts had on the consumers’ or respondents’ buying decision. To answer this question, items 19-24 from the questionnaire were used.

TABLE 3: RESPONDENTS’ RESPONSES ON THE EFFECT THE MEDIUM (TV OR BILLBOARD) USED BY AIRTEL HAD ON THEIR BUYING DECISION

S/N	Responses	SA	A	UND	DA	SDA	Total	X̄	Remark
19	It shows seriousness and moves me to buy	1035	336	0	162	0	1533	4.1	Positive
20	It does not move me to buy.	210	440	111	140	113	1014	2.7	Negative
21	It makes me to believe that airtel is a good network provider.	795	532	0	116	22	1465	3.9	Positive
22	Whenever I see 2face on billboard adverts of airtel, I always feel like recharging my airtel line.	545	384	105	116	74	1224	3.3	Positive
23	It shows that airtel is a good competitor in the market.	1085	580	0	0	10	1675	4.5	Positive
24	Whenever I see 2face on Tv adverts of airtel, it always irritates me.	35	148	42	182	223	630	1.7	Negative

Source: 2011 field survey.

From the table above, it is clear that the respondents strongly agreed that the effects of the medium (Tv or billboard) used by airtel in its advert had on their buying decision among other things, shows seriousness and moves them to buy (4.1). They also agreed on items (21, 22, and 23) which had their weighted means above 3.0 (cut-off point).

More so, the respondents disagreed with items (20 and 24) which had their weighted means below 3.0 (cut-off point). This means that they disagreed with the items which claim that the medium used by airtel does not move them to buy (2.7) and whenever they see 2face on Tv adverts of airtel, it always irritates them (1.7).

**RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR**

Assessment of the respondents’ perception on whether the use of 2face in airtel adverts brings about preference of airtel brand. To answer this research question, items 25-30 from questionnaire were used.

TABLE 4: RESPONDENTS’ PERCEPTION ON WHETHER THE USE OF 2FACE IN AIRTEL ADVERTS BRINGS ABOUT PREFERENCE OF AIRTEL BRAND

S/N	Responses	SA	A	UND	DA	SDA	Total	X̄	Remark
25	I prefer 2face to other artists and that makes me to prefer airtel to other network providers.	725	324	66	118	65	1298	3.5	Positive
26	I love airtel because of the use of 2face in its adverts.	540	332	66	216	51	1205	3.2	Positive
27	The use of 2face in the advert makes the advert interesting and makes me subscribe to the network	400	520	201	102	44	1267	3.4	Positive
28	I believe that the use of 2face in the advert is a positive way of projecting the airtel brand.	1090	468	0	44	15	1617	4.3	Positive
29	The use of 2face in the advert makes me see airtel as a Nigerian brand.	935	556	48	0	30	1569	4.2	Positive
30	There is no relationship between the use of 2face in airtel’s advert and preference of airtel brand to other networks.	255	228	264	84	134	965	2.6	Negative

Source: 2011 field survey.

The results presented in the table above show that the mean responses of 5 items in this research question (25, 26, 27, 28, and 29) are above the cut-off point of 3.0 and the mean response of item (30) is below the cut-off point. This means that the respondents disagreed with the option that there is no relationship between the use of 2face in airtel adverts and preference of airtel brand to other networks.

The respondents agreed that the use of 2face in airtel’s adverts brings about preference of airtel brand. This was justified by their agreement on the fact that they prefer 2face to other artists and that makes them to prefer airtel to other network providers (3.5). They also believed that the use of 2face in the advert is a positive way of projecting the airtel brand (4.3).

**TEST OF HYPOTHESIS**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of male and female respondents on their perception of whether the use of 2face in airtel adverts brings about preference of airtel brand.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant difference between the mean scores of male and female respondents on their perception of whether the use of 2face in airtel adverts brings about preference of airtel brand.

To test the hypothesis, t-test statistical tool was applied using the formula

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{S_{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}} \text{ where,}$$

$\bar{X}_1$  = mean of group 1 data

$\bar{X}_2$  = mean of group 2 data

$S_{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}$  = standard error for the groups (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003).

TABLE 5: T-TEST CALCULATION ON WHETHER THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MEAN SCORES OF MALE AND FEMALE RESPONDENTS ON THEIR PERCEPTION OF WHETHER THE USE OF 2FACE IN AIRTEL'S ADVERTS BRINGS ABOUT PREFERENCE OF AIRTEL BRAND

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	STE	A	df	T <sub>cal</sub>	T <sub>tab</sub>	Remark
Male	6	520	5686.8	0.05	10	0.05	2.228	H <sub>0</sub> is accepted and H <sub>1</sub> is rejected.
Female	6	800						

t-cal = 0.05, P = 0.05, df = 10, t-tab = 2.228.

Using t-test statistical tool to test the hypothesis, the calculated t value was 0.05 while the table value was 2.228 at the 0.05 level of significance.

The decision rule is accept null hypothesis if the computed t statistical is less than the critical value if otherwise, fail to reject null hypothesis (Olise, Okeke, and Eze, 2008). In this case, t calculated value is less than t table value, thus, H<sub>0</sub> is accepted while H<sub>1</sub> is rejected. It then follows that gender is not a determining factor on whether the use of 2face in airtel adverts brings about preference of airtel brand.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the data presented and analyzed, the findings show that the use of 2face in airtel's adverts brings about preference of airtel brand. The respondents were of the view that there is a relationship between the use of 2face in airtel's adverts and preference of airtel brand to other networks. This was upheld by their unanimous disagreement with item 30 (2.6) from questionnaire. In other to consolidate their stand, the respondents were of the opinion that they preferred 2face to other artists and that made them to prefer airtel to other network providers (3.5).

The study found out that the quality of the network provider's wave is the major determinant of the choice of a network provider. The testimonies of the active subscribers of the network about them as well as the testimonies of the hip hop artist (2face) used in the network provider's adverts also determines the choice of a network provider. The benefits inherent in the network provider's tariffs, the rate of coverage of the network provider, the rate of accessibility of the network provider's products and the denominations of the network provider's recharge cards all determine the choice of a network provider.

The study also found out that the airtel's testimonial advertising using 2face made the respondents to like airtel and its products. Also they believed that "airtel 2good" because 2face said it (3.1).

Some of the respondents saw the advert as a paid form of testimony (3.7). This is in accordance with the observations on Rediffnews (2003), that "celebrity credibility is coming under question. Consumers are getting more and more advertising savvy and are beginning to voice opinion even in small towns, like "he has been paid to sell the product"". While some were of the opinion that it was a paid form of testimony, they still unanimously disagreed that the advert irritates them because they hate 2face (2.0).

The study also found out that the respondents always feel like recharging their airtel line whenever they see 2face on billboard adverts. The respondents strongly agreed that the medium (TV or billboard) used by airtel in its adverts shows seriousness and moves them to buy or recharge their airtel line. Again, they were of the view that the use of billboard or TV by airtel in its adverts showed that airtel is a good competitor in the market (4.5) and it made them to believe that airtel is a good network provider (3.9).

In line with this finding, Godbout (2011), observes that "billboards are best and effective when photos of popular celebrities grace them. There is no need for them to speak. Their image did it, and the statement is compelling." He further asserts that "brands being established by celebrities are more likely to retain longer on consumers' memory." This is believed to be a reason why airtel used 2face in its advert.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: There is a relationship between the use of 2face (hip hop artiste) in airtel adverts and preference of airtel brand to other networks. More so, the quality of the network provider's wave, the testimonies of the active subscribers as well as those of the hip hop artistes used in the network provider's adverts, the gains in the network provider's tariffs, the rate of their coverage, the accessibility of their products, and the denominations of the network provider's recharge cards all spur the subscribers' choice of a network provider. Airtel subscribers in Anambra State University, Igbaram campus, believe that "airtel 2good" and they love the advert. Television and billboard have proved to be effective in carrying out testimonial adverts.

The use of 2face (hip hop artiste) in airtel adverts made the brand a credible one and respondents preferred it to other brands. The essence of using hip hop artistes in advertising is to make the advert interesting thereby projecting the brand in a positive way. Again, airtel subscribers see the brand as a Nigerian brand and reacted positively towards the brand because of the use of 2face (hip hop artiste) in its advert.

Based on the findings, the recommendations of this study are as follows:

- That the uses of hip hop artistes to endorse a product is a positive way of bringing a life into a lifeless product or brand.
- Advertisers should ensure that they backed up their endorsement advertising with accurate information about the product or service.
- Advertisers should strive to contract celebrities or hip hop artistes with unquestionable image because an image problem of a celebrity or hip hop artiste can be detrimental to the public relations of the brand.
- That the effectiveness of any advertising depends largely on how well the advert meets up with the needs of the target audience. This is because the audience tends to respond well to the advert that meets up with their predispositions.
- An advertiser wishing to gain a space in the market place of a particular country must strive to contract a popular artist(s) of that country to endorse his product. This will make his target audience to feel that the brand is of their nationality.

Finally, the effectiveness of using hip hop artistes in advertising has been established here yet there is a need for further studies to consolidate the findings. This study, studied only the airtel subscribers in Anambra State University, Igbaram campus and there is a need to broaden the scope of this study. The potential researchers can commence from the areas not covered in this study. Again, further researches can be conducted on the use of celebrities or hip hop artists among GSM network providers like MTN, Glo, etisalat, etc.

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