

## CUSTOMERS' INTENSION TO CHANGE MOBILE COMMUNICATION NETWORKS REGARDING QUALITY OF INFORMATION SERVICES PROVISION IN ZARIA METROPOLIS

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### ABSTRACT

*The study was undertaken to determine customers' intension to change mobile communication networks regarding quality of information services provision in Zaria metropolis. The study raised three research questions and answers were sought to them, among which are the types of information services provided by mobile communication network to customers in Zaria metropolis, customers satisfaction level, and their intension to change network providers regarding information service quality. Survey research method was adopted for the study and data was collected from the sample of 1,269 out of the total population study of 1534. The data were analyzed descriptively using frequency tables, percentage, mean, and mode. The study revealed that customers in Zaria metropolis are provided with a wide range of information services. It was also revealed that customers are partially satisfied with the overall services of call, SMS, Internet, and SIM card service in the entire networks. It is recommended that attention should be directed toward services with lower satisfaction by setting a target using a set of benchmark of ACSI and N.C.C standard of communication services, to serve as a guide for mobile network industries and telecommunication industries to raise the satisfaction level so as to maintain the market share, maintain and generate their customers.*

*Keywords: Communication, Telecommunication, Mobile Communication Networks.*

### INTRODUCTION

Mobile telecommunication according to (Theo & Staffan, 2006) have become increasingly needed services with high penetration rate in most countries leading to extensive mobile communication usage. The mobile service market is now recognized as the most competitive part of telecommunication sector. The Nigeria mobile telecommunication market is ranked the 10<sup>th</sup> fastest growing market in the world, which according to the estimate by (Baez & Kechiche, 2010) report that annual revenue from mobile service represent between 2 per cent and 7 per cent of African countries, nominal GDP. In Nigeria, this ratio is close to 4 per cent, specifically, it was revealed

just recently that the 4 GSM operators in the country MTN, GLO, Airtel, Etisalat remit excess of N264 billion to government annually through company income tax education tax and government agency task.

Also (Baez & Kechiche, 2010) asserts that Nigeria is recognized as a major market for telecommunication equipment and services on African continent with a population of over 140 million. The telecommunication industries in Nigeria have continued since 1999 to grow exponentially, which has led to increase access nationwide. The market has been described as one of the fastest growing in telecommunication market, Information Services especially between 2001 and 2007. The Nigerian

Communication Commission (NCC) has proven its commitment to promoting regulating environment that is independent, fair, transparent, and predictable.

Furthermore, (Bayode, Samuel, & Muyiwa, 2012) note that Nigeria telecommunication sector was totally deregulated, and since then, the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) issued various licenses to private telephone operators in the country. MTN and Airtel-2001, Glo-2003, and Etisalat-2008 have made the market to be more competitive and easier for users to make choice that meet their actual needs and satisfaction.

## 1. Statement of Problem

Mobile communication networks had become the most popular communication industries that help in sustaining the economic growth of a country. In Nigeria, mobile networks ensure the provision of quality of information services to customers to enable them to get a good market share, retain, and generate users. The increasing economic importance inspired (Zeithmal, Parasuramal & Berry, 1990) to devote attention to this area as he observed the mobile networks ability in improving the service quality with several service quality standards to improve the quality and raise the customers' satisfaction level.

(Zeithmal, Parasuramal & Berry, 1990) further stated that, despite the several service quality standard to improve the quality and raise the customers' satisfaction level, customers perceived gap when service providers were unable to provide the information services at the desired level, also gap exists between information service delivered and information services received by customers and there is also a gap in understanding the basic requirement of customers which hindered them from effective communication. The researcher attempt to conduct this research on customers (GSM users) in Zaria metropolis to find out whether the value derived by customers is not meeting up to expectations, which lead to negative reaction. Also, to fill the void, the researcher adopted, ACSI to identify and reduce such gaps to enable then to yield accurate depictions, recommendations, and offer valuable insight for future research.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

- To determine the types of information services

provided by mobile communication networks in Zaria metropolis.

- To determine the level of satisfaction of customers with the information Services of mobile communication networks in Zaria metropolis.
- To find out the intension of customers to change network providers regarding quality of information services provision in Zaria metropolis.

## 3. Scope of the Study

Zaria metropolis was the geographical scope comprising of Sabongari and Zaria area. The study was limited to four (Zeithmal et al., 1990) mobile communication networks, i.e. MTN, Airtel, Glo, and Etisalat. The study does not cover Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA), i.e. visa, multilink's, and star-com. Short Message Services (SMS), call services, Multi Media Services (MMS), call centers, caller ring back tone, mobile internet, SIM card and coverage map are the information services provided by mobile networks.

## 4. Literature Review

Information services are very vital in the telecommunication industries. The growth of mobile telecommunication is responsible for the intense competition between mobile service operators in telecommunication industries. This competition is forcing the operators to adopt effective strategies to satisfy their users (customers). Lai (2004) posits that in order to get more competitive advantage, mobile industries (MTN, Airtel, GLO, Etisalat) have to improve and understand their users' perception and also provide the best services like SMS, internet, caller tune, etc., to users in order to increase their level of satisfaction.

### 4.1 Information Service Quality and Users Satisfaction

According to (Backlund & Holmqvist, 2006) that Information Service quality and users satisfaction are two closely related terms, Information service quality can be assess via; is it meeting the standard?, or is it satisfying the users? User satisfaction is the perceive degree of fulfillment of expectation and the actual services provided by mobile networks and large investment have been made to increase the level of users' satisfaction. Similarly, (Deoskar, 2009) explains that information service level satisfaction

can be measured in terms of customer satisfaction index. A user satisfaction index is a parameter for measuring the user service satisfaction. Measurement of users' satisfaction need to take a number of information services features like coverage, tariff, and attractive value added services scheme.

Other than that, users' satisfaction is often measured by users' information service, through survey the data can be collected using 5 point likert scale against service parameters. This gives the actual experience against those information services. Overall service quality satisfaction of mobile services is usually obtained through:

- Completely satisfied = 100%
- Satisfied = 75%
- Neutral = 50%
- Dissatisfied = 25%
- Completely dissatisfied = 0%

If all users are partially satisfied (But not completely satisfied) then this satisfaction may have value of 75%

#### **4.2 Users (Customer) Retention**

Satisfaction has influence on customer retention and new customer (users) generation. (Oyeniyi & Abiodun, 2008) pointed out that effective user's information service package has positive chain relationship with customer retention and the result of this will definitely have influence on users' retention and generating new ones. Most banks in the financial service sectors choose not to engage in price, but rather make use of service as an effective competition tools. The success or failure of generating value is jointly determined by the relationship between service event, the users prior and post perception, and perceive and actual quality of delivered services.

Accordingly, (Pura, 2005) in support of Woodruff opined that creating superior customer value have a relationship to users satisfaction.

#### **4.3 Users (Customer) Value**

(Woodruff, 1997) opined that the concept of customer value have a relationship to users' satisfaction. Nevertheless, creating superior customer value is a main goal for firms to obtain competitive advantage and attracted users in current and future by value creating

activities because users buy today regarding to the value or utility for it. Customers segments have different motivation to use, and perceive by customer also differed in value.

Customer value is the idea of perceive benefit and perceive cost, the concept of customer value can bring people in different ways of mind, and it is a share of personnel value, belief of right and wrong that is the way to guide people's behavior. In addition, (Bettman, Luce, & Payne, 1998) assert that Customer value perception steer purchase behavior and refer to the value that users perceive, receive, or experience by using the services.

Moreover, users' perception of value into four categories:

- Value is low price
- Value is whatever a user wants.
- Value is the quality users get for price he/she pays.
- Value is what users get for what he/she gives.

#### **5. Methodology**

Survey research method was adopted for the study. Out of the 1534 GSM users that constitute the population of the study using 2.5 margin of error and 95% confidence level, 1269 (82.72%) were randomly sampled for the study. One set of questionnaire and semi structured interview were constructed and administered which were retrieved and used for data analysis after three weeks of follow-up. The data collected was analyzed descriptively using frequency count, mean, percentage, and mode.

#### **6. Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

##### **6.1 Objective 1: Types of Information Services provided by Mobile Communication Networks in Zaria Metropolis**

The first research objective set to find out the types of information services that are provided to customers by mobile communication networks in Zaria. Therefore, to find out this, a visit was undertaken to the branch headquarters of these providers. On inquiry, the following information services as indicate in Table 1 are provided to GSM users in Zaria metropolis.

The researcher discovered as reflected in Table 1, ten different types of information services provided by mobile communication networks to customers in Zaria metropolis. These information services range from call services, SMS to

S/N	Information Services	Mobile Communication Networks			
		MTN	Airtel	GLO	Etisalat
1	Call Services	v	v	v	v
2	SMS	v	v	v	v
3	MMS	v	v	v	v
4	Mobile Internet (data)	v	v	v	v
5	Caller Ring Tone	v	v	v	v
6	Coverage Map	v	v	v	v
7	SIM Card Information	v	v	v	v
8	Call Centers	v	v	v	v
9	Location Based Services (LBS)	v	v	v	v
10	Promo (Bonus offer)	v	v	v	v

**Table 1. Information Services Provided To GSM Users by Network Providers In Zaria Metropolis**

location base service and promotion. This implication for this finding confirm the fact that mobile networks provide different services to their users to retain and generate users and to be able to get good market share and protect themselves in the competing business of network industries. This aligned with what (Nasser, Salleh, & Gelaidan, 2010) observed that delivering information services to customers are essential to the wellbeing of any mobile communication industries because it tends to retain their current users, getting the new ones, and less users' lost.

### 6.2 Objective 2: Level of Customer' Satisfaction with Information Services Quality provided by MCN in Zaria Metropolis

Objective two attempt to determine the level of customers satisfaction with information services provided by mobile networks in Zaria metropolis using Likert scale of Highly satisfied, satisfied, no opinion, dissatisfied, and highly dissatisfied considering the satisfied services those with

S/N	Information Services	Satisfaction Rating the Quality of Information Services							
		MTN		Airtel		GLO		Etisalat	
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
1	Call Services	4.057	1.766	3.974	1.717	4.220	1.868	4.156	1.826
2	SMS	4.134	1.813	4.011	1.739	4.234	1.877	4.161	1.829
3	MMS	3.160	1.423	3.419	1.475	3.60	1.536	3.481	1.494
4	Mobile Internet	3.757	1.603	3.854	1.652	3.989	1.726	4.112	1.799
5	Caller Ring Tone	3.535	1.512	3.542	1.515	4.023	1.746	3.388	1.467
6	Coverage Map	3.289	1.444	3.304	1.446	3.719	1.587	3.089	1.417
7	SIM Card Information	3.941	1.699	4.157	1.827	4.306	1.925	4.026	1.747
8	Call Centre	3.542	1.515	3.629	1.548	4.029	1.749	3.487	1.496
9	Location Base Services	3.243	1.435	3.217	1.432	3.412	1.473	3.487	1.496
10	Promo (Bonus offer)	3.451	1.484	3.875	1.661	4.179	1.894	3.917	1.686
	Average Mean and Standard deviation	3.611	1.570	3.69	1.60	3.97	1.861	3.73	1.630

**Table 2. Level of Users' Satisfaction with Networks Information Services in Zaria Metropolis**

average mean and above score to be the actual mean of acceptability in Table 2.

As indicated in Table 2, customers in all networks were satisfied with four of the services, which are call, SMS, internet, and SIM card. However, they do not express their satisfaction with the MMS service. Analyzing the network services further, the table indicates that apart from users expressing satisfaction in four services of all the network providers under study, GLO users expressed their satisfaction with seven of the services including caller ring tone, call center, and promo.

However, looking at the previous researches conducted in Nigeria, no set of benchmark (standard) was used by network industries on information services to know the level of users' satisfaction. The researcher considered an existing benchmark by American customer satisfaction index (ACSI) of 95% for communication services to enable the service providers to improve the quality and services satisfaction when compared. The researcher was able to come up with users' service satisfaction level of the entire network providers using likert scale, which shows that not all the network services providers meet the ACSI benchmark of 95% (completely satisfied). That is to say that not all network users are completely satisfied with the services, but only partially satisfied of 75% as in the case of GLO (79.4%) and Etisalat (75%) networks, while indicating below the average service satisfaction rating in MTN (72.2%) and Airtel (74%) networks.

### 6.3 Objective 3: Customers Intension to Change Network Providers regarding Quality of Services Provision

Objective three attempt to determine customers Intension to change network providers regarding quality of information services provision. The researchers considered rating average and above as likely to change network providers, below average as unlikely to change their providers, and average mean as showing no response of whether to change or not using likert scale of Very Unlikely, unlikely, No opinion, Likely, Very likely in Table 3.

Table 3 clearly shows that customers in Zaria metropolis express a greater likelihood of changing their network providers with regards to SMS, despite the high level of satisfaction exhibited by all the network users. This may be

S/N	Information Services	MTN		Intension to Change Airfel		Change GLO		Etisalat	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Call Services	3.522	1.508	2.786	1.430	2.383	1.544	2.977	1.415
2	SMS	3.473	1.491	2.868	1.427	2.490	1.503	3.114	1.419
3	MMS	3.338	1.454	2.844	1.423	2.738	1.438	3.000	1.414
4	Mobile Internet	3.707	1.581	2.667	1.453	2.689	1.449	3.018	1.414
5	Caller Ring Tone	3.387	1.466	2.968	1.415	2.406	1.534	2.877	1.419
6	Coverage Map	2.128	1.649	2.878	1.429	2.734	1.282	3.103	1.418
7	SIM Card Information	3.356	1.458	2.680	1.449	2.390	1.474	3.017	1.419
8	Call Centre	3.319	1.449	2.814	1.426	2.277	1.588	2.907	1.418
9	Location Base Services	3.322	1.450	2.654	1.456	2.017	1.722	2.634	1.461
10	Promo (Bonus offer)	3.444	1.482	2.800	1.428	2.336	1.562	3.232	1.433
	Average Mean and Standard deviation	3.302	1.490	2.79	1.43	2.450	1.510	2.990	1.560

**Table 3. Customers Intension to Change Network Providers Regarding Quality of Services Provision**

as a result of unwanted SMS received frequently by users that make them to change their network providers. Also GSM users for all the networks express a greater likelihood of changing providers with MMS, despites rating as not satisfied by user. The likelihood of changing might be due to level of awareness of MMS services from network users. The finding is in accordance with (Aamir, Ikram, & Zaman, 2010) that intension to change network providers by users is attributed to various factors like socio economic status such as cost of subscription (price), complains, awareness, perception and satisfaction with the services, etc.

## 7. Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis of the data collected, the following findings were summarized below.

- Call service, Short Message Service (SMS), MultiMedia Service (MMS), Mobile Internet, Caller Ring Tone, Coverage Maps, SIM card information, call Centers, Location Base Services (LBS), and promo (Bonus offer) were the types information services provided by all the mobile network providers to customers in Zaria metropolis.
- The study revealed that customers were satisfied with four of the information services in all the network providers among which are the SMS that was rated good and highly satisfied, others are call service, internet, and SIM card information, however only GLO network users express satisfaction that exceed the four services among which are caller tone, call center, and promo.

- The study revealed that customers are most likely to change their providers with regard to SMS despite it was rated satisfied, which is attributed to frequent receiving of SMS by customers in Zaria metropolis.

## Conclusion

Considering the findings of this study, the study concludes that the mobile networks provide various information services to customers in Zaria metropolis to maintain and generate users. Customers that experienced a wide gap with their information services given to them are likely to complain to their network providers. As customers complain with low quality and dissatisfied services, it will be difficult for the network industries to get a big market share, protect from competitors, maintain and generate users, but as the customers are happy with the services of their network providers, the customers will be loyal to their network providers which in turn gets a big market share in the telecommunication industries.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were raised:

- There is need for mobile network to provide more information services (value added services) to get good market share, retain and generate users, and to be able to protect themselves in the competing business of network industries globally.
- Network providers' attention should be directed to services with lower satisfaction level like caller ring tone, call center, promo with the exemption of GLO network, others are MMS coverage map and LBS.
- Attention should be directed to customers that are likely to change their network providers with SMS by reducing the unwanted SMS by all the network providers to prevent them from losing customers. There should be a benchmark from the regulatory body (NCC) or by using an existing standard of ACSI to be used by service providers to enhance the satisfaction level of their users.

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