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BRANDING AS A TOOL FOR CUSTOMER LOYALTY

Globacom Telecommunications Ltd, Lagos State, Nigeria

Thesis
CENTRIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
International Business
May 2021

ABSTRACT

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Degree programme International Business		
Name of thesis BRANDING AS A TOOL FOR CUSTOMER LOYALTY. Globacom Telecommunications Ltd, Lagos State, Nigeria		
Centria supervisor Sara Åhman	Pages 55 + 3	
Instructor representing commissioning institution or company. Sunday Adenrele		
<p>The aim of this study is to evaluate the role of branding in building customer loyalties in the Nigerian telecommunication industry focusing on Globacom Telecommunications Limited, one of the major players in the Nigerian telecommunication industry. The telecommunication industry, with four major companies holding 96% of the market share, is very competitive despite its potential for growth. As a result, organizations in the industry are devising various strategies to ensure that they do not lose their customers to rivals.</p> <p>This research work is based on a mixed method which involves the use of quantitative and qualitative research methodology with questionnaire and interviews used as a mean of data collection. An online questionnaire was administered on 30 customers of the commissioning company and six interviews were also conducted through channels such as Zoom and voice calls.</p> <p>The data was analysed using content analysis and the findings indicate that the brand identity, brand image and brand satisfaction were useful tools in creating customer loyalty. In the case of the commissioning company, a misalignment between the brand identity and brand image has resulted in some customers exhibiting spurious loyalty while others exhibit total loyalty.</p> <p>It was therefore suggested that the commissioner revamp its brand communication strategies to reposition the brand and focus on creating a lasting relationship between the brand and its customers. This is necessary in order to win over the customers who exhibit spurious loyalty.</p>		
Key words Branding, Brand Image, Brand Identity, Brand, Customer, Loyalty.		

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1 INTRODUCTION

In the telecommunication industry where each organization offers products and services similar in appearance and functionality, there is always the need to find a way to differentiate such products and services from each other as a means of attracting customers and convincing them to stay with the product or services. This process is called branding and it is used to attract and retain customers. The purpose of branding is to create an image of any organization and its products or services which convince the consumers that it is better than its competitors and that they should stay loyal to the organization and its products.

This study therefore aims to evaluate the effect of branding on customer loyalty (i.e; repeat purchase, customer advocacy, and price tolerance) and internationalization in telecommunication industry with focus on Globacom Telecommunications. The objective is to measure how various elements of branding such as brand identity and brand image affect customer loyalty so that they not only wish to stay with the operator, but they will also encourage others to patronize the business.

The theoretical part of the study will examine the concepts such as brand, branding and elements of branding such as brand identity and brand image with a focus on how they help drive customer loyalty. The theoretical part will also be linked with practice by highlighting how telecommunication companies develop their brands and their branding strategies focused on attaining customer loyalty.

The research will be based on a mixed method which is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods in which a questionnaire and interview guide will be used to collect data from selected respondents. The data collected through the questionnaire will undergo a descriptive analysis while data collected from the interviews will be analysed using thematic analysis to bring out key themes that answer the research questions. The questions in the questionnaire and interview guide will focus on getting information concerning branding constructs such as brand image and the brand identity and some of the questions will focus on the level of loyalty of the customers towards the commissioner's brand and how the brand image and brand identity impact on the level of loyalty expressed. The findings from the analysis of data will guide the recommendations made for the commissioner to improve its branding or maintain its strengths as the case may be.

Globacom Telecommunications Limited (GLO) is a privately owned Nigerian multinational telecommunications company headquartered in Lagos. GLO is a telecommunications carrier that started operations on 29 August 2003. It was the first operator to implement the per second billing system which other operators had declared impossible. In the first year of operation, it had one million subscribers in over 87 towns in Nigeria and over 120 billion Naira (246 Million Euro) in revenues. As of June 2009, the company has employed more than 2,500 people worldwide. According to data from Statista (2021), GLO has 54 million subscribers in Nigeria as at September 2020. After gaining ground in Nigeria, the operator embarked on an internationalization process that has established its presence in several west African countries.

2 COMMISSIONER

Globacom telecommunications limited (GLO) is a Nigerian multinational telecommunications company headquartered in Lagos. The company official rolled out its activities in 2003. As at the time it commenced operation in Nigeria, the industry had two major players, Econet Nigeria and MTN Nigeria. Both of these operators are foreign owned, so Glo emphasised its indigenous ownership status to appeal to subscribers. The organisation also presented itself as a patriotic operator established to make mobile communication affordable for all citizen. It was the first operator to implement the per second billing system which other operators had declared impossible. This attracted a lot of new subscriber especially those who could not afford the existing operators. Glo quickly amassed over one million subscribers and reportedly made 120 billion Naira in revenues within one. In less than a decade, the company became a well-established operator employing close to 3,000 employees globally. According to data Statistia (2021), Glo has 54 million subscribers in Nigeria as at September 2020. After gaining ground in Nigeria, the operator on an internationalization process that has established its presence in several west African countries. (Ogbechie, Ngwu & Ikiebey 2018.)

Glo has now established a significant foothold in West Africa. Apart from Nigeria, it also has subsidiaries in Republic of Benin, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire. Glo Mobile's launch in Benin Republic in 2008 was well received by subscribers. 600,000 SIM cards were sold in the first ten days of operation. This was attributed to the attractive billing system introduced by the company. Glo Mobile offered per second billing, which charges subscribers for the exact airtime used. They also offered other value added services such as MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service), Glo Magic Plus news and information, vehicle tracking, musical ring-back tones and mobile banking. In line with this ambition to be a leading player in the African telecommunication industry, Glo continues to invest in infrastructure and innovations (Abubakar & Bello, 2013).

One of such investments is the successful completion of a \$800 million high-capacity fibre-optic cable known as Glo-1, a submarine cable from the United Kingdom to Nigeria. The cable, which spans a distance of 9,800 km, originates from Bude in the UK and terminated in Alpha Beach in Lagos, where its landing Station has been established. Glo-1 is the first successful submarine cable from the United Kingdom to Nigeria, and GLO is the first African company to embark on such a project. Glo-1 has the potential to provide high speed internet services, faster, more reliable and cheaper telecom services. The

cable network has been promoted by the operator as its contribution to the efforts to attract foreign investment and create employment opportunities, not only for Nigerian but for Africans in general. Glo-1 will also improve teleconferencing, distance learning, disaster recovery and telemedicine among several other benefits for Nigerians and the people of West Africa (Cariolle, 2018).

GLO branding is not limited to infrastructural development and low prices, the operator also projects its image by sponsoring sports and cultural events. GLO has sponsored the Nigerian Premier League, Nigerian National Football Teams, The Lagos International Half Marathon, Glo people police marathon, Eyo festival, Ojude Oba Festival, Eleghe Festival and the Confederation Of African Football African Player Of The Year award. In Benin Republic, GLO sponsors the FITHEB. In Ghana, GLO sponsors the Glo Ghana Premier League, the Ghana National Football Teams and The CAF African Player of the year award. (Abichele 2018, 16.)

3 BRANDING

Branding can be explained as the creation of a unique and easily recognizable image or attribute in a bid to project an organization and its products/services as exceptional and distinct from rival organisations and their products/services (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016). In this era of intense competition between producers of goods and services, the best way to draw consumers' attention is to find a way to stand out from the rest. Each product or service has to be differentiated and presented in such way that it is not only easily recognizable but also attractive and desirable. Thus branding does more than just creating an identity for products and services, it also aids potential customers in making decision about products and services (Gielens & Steenkamp, 2019). The main aim of branding however is to ensure that a particular product or service remains the choice of customers once they make the first purchase (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016).

According to Swaminathan, Sorescu, Steenkamp, O'Guinn & Schmitt (2020), branding is an integral aspect of the product planning process in any organisation whether it deals with a product or service. It encompasses all the activities an organisation carries out to select, develop, establish and project a brand of services or products totally unique to it. Branding has emerged as a top management priority in the last decades due to the growing realization that brands are one of the most valuable intangible assets that firms have. Companies are realizing the power of good branding (brand name) to create instant consumer recognition of the company's product. Kasapi & Cala (2017) posited that the perception of a brand name by existing and prospective customers often serves as an indication of the quality and popularity of such product or service.

3.1 Brand

The result of branding activities is a brand. According to Rosengren, Standoft and Sundbrandt (2010, 4), the brand thus created is not the product or service offered by the company but something that imbues the product with an intrinsic value and set it apart from similar ones. The brand endows a product or service with a certain uniqueness. According to the American Marketing Association (2011), a brand can be defined as a name, term, design, symbol or device, or any combination thereof

adopted and used by a manufacturer or merchant to identify his goods and to distinguish them from that of other manufacturers, or in the case of services performed by others.

Demirdelen (2018) opined that basing the marketing strategy on the product alone is not enough as no consumers are more interested in what the products can do than the products themselves. Brands therefore became an effective tool in marketing. Demirdelen further reported that Manufacturers developed brands as a mean of taking back market control from the distributors who had been feeding fat at their expense. by creating a demand toward a certain brand instead of a product, producers of manufacturers with popular brands can then take a large share of the market and leave their competitors behind.

A brand can take many forms, including a name, sign, symbol, colour combination or slogan. The major aim of creating a brand is to attract and retain customers. In other words, one of the aims of branding is to stimulate customer loyalty. (Batey, 2016). Randall (2000) posited that the success of a brand is defined by the promise it offers the consumer and the view held by the consumer regarding the brand. Researchers summarized these into brand identity and brand image.

3.2 Brand Identity

According to Jordan and Quest (2018, 26), the concept of brand identity was introduced by Kapferer in 1986. It was conceptualized as everything a company desires for a meaningful and unique interpretation of the brand. Brand identity refers to how the brand owner wants the brand to be seen. It is the promise made by the manufacture or service provider. For instance, Globacom Communications Limited, projects itself as a pan Nigerian business with a promise to boost the image of Nigeria and Nigerians through world class service provision at affordable rates. Brand identity is also referred to the message a brand is passing across regarding its core value and unique selling point. By adopting the green colour which is prominent in the Nigerian flag, Globacom Communications Limited is projecting itself as a truly indigenous company proud of its roots and ready to identify with the country and the people. (Bolaji 2020.)

Brand identity is better solidified during brand positioning which is the stage when the organisation makes strategic use of the four Ps; product, promotion, price and place, which are the elements of marketing mix, to introduce its brand to the general public. During the brand positioning stage, emphasis is

laid on the unique features and attributes of the brand. Also, at this stage, the brand focuses on making it clear to the consumers all the benefits they stand to enjoy by engaging with it. (Jordan & Quest 2018; 25).

Effective marketing communication is essential at this stage to communicate the right message to the consumer about the various features of the brand. Indeed, Jordan & Quest (2018, 26) opined that the continued existence of brands is hinged on effective communication. The communication during brand positioning is focused around the key components of brand identity such as: brand vision, brand culture brand personality, and brand relationships.

Brand vision is the stated purpose for the existence of a brand. It represents a set of values that, along with brand culture, provide direction and guidance for the brand managers as well as the consumer. Brand personality refers to the emotional aspects of the brand. It is influenced by positioning as well as the core values and culture of the top management. Vision and culture are also responsible for the evolution of relationships between employees, consumers and other stakeholders. (Jakonen, 2016). It has been suggested that brand identity is a structure made up of core identity and extended identity (Aaker, 1996). The core identity is the foundation on which the brand is built. It is expected to remain unchanged as it is what defined everything else the brand symbolises and what differentiates it from competing brands. The core identity of a strong brand remains unchanged over time, regardless of changes in the brand positioning and communication strategies (Rosengren, Standoft & Sundbrandt, 2010, 5.) The extended identity on the other is more amenable to change and it is often changed or modified when the occasion demands (Aaker, 1996).

However, the fact that the extended identity can be modified or changed does not make it less important to the success of the brand than the core identity. Indeed, the extended identity provides brand with the flexibility to adapt to changes in the business environment. And integral part of the extended identity is the brand personality which provides a 'face' for the brand and makes it relatable to the customers. Researchers have indicated that consumers assess the brand personality and look for traits that conform with how they view themselves or how they would like to be viewed by others (Aaker 1997). As a result, it is important to create a personality for the brand which will be able to adapt and evolve to attract various consumer demographics.

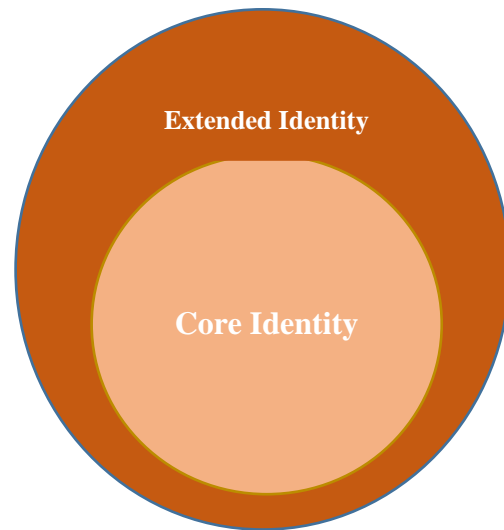


FIGURE 1. The Brand Identity Structure. (adapted from Aker, 1996, 86)

3.3 The AC2ID Framework for Brand Identity Alignment

As it has been established that an organization have several brand identities each of which, if not carefully managed may overlap or worse, contradict each other thus weakening the overall brand identity and negatively impact brand performance. Towards this end, Balmer & Greyser (2003) identified five distinct identities in an organization and they came up with a framework tagged the AC2ID framework which was designed to ensure that all of the identified identities are in alignment.

AC2ID is coined from the first letters of each of the five types of identity in the framework which are regarded as important elements in the overall brand identity (Heddin, Knudtzen & Bjerre, 2009, 35). Actual Identity refers to the apparent organizational behaviour and the true face of the organization. Communicated identity is the identity project to the general public through branding and general corporate publications. Conceived Identity is what the general public (i.e. consumers) makes of the identity projected by the organisation. Ideal Identity is the highest position an organization or brand can occupy in the market at any particular time and Desired Identity: this represents the strategic vision of the management of an organisation. It is what they want the organization to represents Hedin et al. (2009) suggested that organisations should engage in continuous evaluation to make sure that all the five separate identities are in alignment. It is also necessary to regularly update the ideal and desired identity to keep pace with any change or new development that is bound to emerge in the business environment. Failure to pay the necessary attention to all the outlined brand identities poses a great danger to the survival of the business.

3.3.1 Brand Image

While brand identity is project by the brand owner, brand image is the impression it forms on the minds of the public. Jordan & Quest (2018, 24) observed that, while a company may try its best to communicate the brand identity, consumers usually form their own opinions about the brand based on certain factors. brand image is thus defined as the opinion or impression of the brand held by the customer. This opinion or impression emerge as a result of the perceptions formed by consumers about a brand in the process of decoding brand identity communications (Roy & Banerjee 2014.)

Nandan (2005, 266) submitted that the information combined to form a brand image is received from many sources and it is the combination of all the sources and the interpretation given to them by the customers that combine to form a brand personality. This is also supported by Rosengren, et al. (2010, p6) who submitted that consumers gather information from various sources and use the information to create an image about the brand. Kuoksa (2017) further opined that the image formed about a brand does not always have to be about technicality or functionality; it may be as simple as how the brand makes the consumer feel.

The formation of brand image is outlined in a diagrammatic form by Riezeboz, (2003, 66). it shows that the information used by the consumer to create a brand image comes from sources such as marketing communication, consumption experience and social influence.

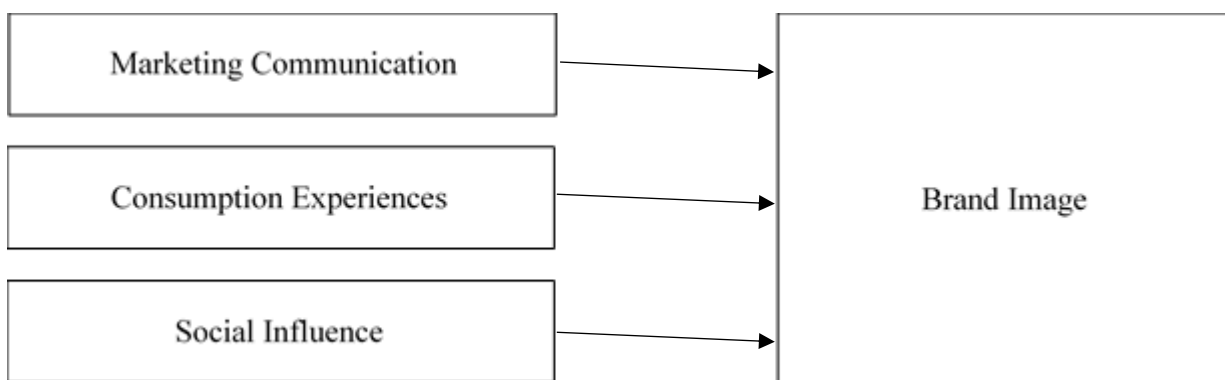


FIGURE 2. The process of inductive inference on brand image (Adapted from Riezeboz. 2003, 66.)

As indicated by figure 2, brand image is forged through sources such as marketing communication, consumption experience and social influence. Marketing communication comes from the company in its brand positioning efforts and the creation of brand identity. However, while the company attempts to

employ controlled signaling to create a brand identity and induce the consumer to form a positive image of the brand, there is other uncontrollable information that the consumer receives about the brand which also impacts on how they evaluate the brand (Beig & Nika, 2019).

Consumer experience also contributes to brand image. Brand positioning gives the consumer an idea of what to expect from a product or service. When such customers interact with the brand, it is expected that they evaluate their experience and translate that to form an image of the brand (Bacik, Fedorko, Nastisin, & Gavurova, 2018).

According to Romaniuk, Bogomolova, & Riley, (2012) the image formed by consumers who have experienced the brand are often stronger than explicitly presented company-generated information. This becomes even more significant with the element of social influence. Fotis (2015) reiterated the importance of effective communication in building brand image by examining the role of social media in moderating behaviour. Social influence has been established as a factor in the forming of brand image. With the advent of social media, people can share their experience about a brand online which will be broadcasted to a wide audience at once. Researchers such as Kohli, Suri, and Kapoor (2015) have therefore explored the role of social media in brand management. Their conclusion is that social media has a strong impact on brand management practices. However, whether the effect is positive or negative depends on the effective use of social media by the brand management team.

3.3.2 Linking Brand Identity and Brand Image

As outlined by Jordan and Quest (2018), brand identity and brand image are different but related concepts especially when viewed from the perspective of marketing communications. In brand identity, the company (source) encodes the information (message) and sends to the consumer (receiver) through various channels who then decode the information and create an image of the brand. Continuing with this theme, we can say that the chance of brand identity to match brand image is a function of the communication strategy.

The aim of brand management is thus to ensure that brand identity matches brand image. When this happens, customers are satisfied with the brand and the tendency for them to patronise the brand grows. It is only when the consumer understands and appreciates the brand identity and adopts it to create a brand image commensurate with the stand of the company that brand equity can occur (Rosengren, et

al., 2010, 8). Nandan (2005) submitted that both brand identity and brand image are key factors in the development of strong brands. When the consumer understands and appreciates the brand message, the value of the brand increases and even the consumers' benefits as they are assured that they are paying for valuable products and services.

However, it is recognized that the current hyper connected environment in which consumers are exposed to an ocean of information especially from competing brands, can make it difficult for the brand identity created by the company and image created by the perceptions of consumers about the brand to be aligned. It is important for the brand to communicate what edge it has over its competitor and it more beneficial for the consumer to choose over its competitors. It must find the most effective way of saying this so that the consumer will accept that it is so. Otherwise, the brand can easily lose its customers to an of the numerous competitors. (Nandan, 2005).

To ensure that this does not happen, Roy and Banerjee (2014) suggested that, since the brand identity is a promise of combined physical and psychological benefits to the consumer, far above what any other brand can offer, and the brand image is influenced by life style, expectation, experience, disposition, and differentiation, the levels at which the promise with the expectation and the perception tallies with the customers' disposition will determine the strength of brand. The authors outlined how each constructs lead to one another thereby forming a prism through which the benefits offered by the brand is screened and an image is formed. This scenario is capable of creating gaps between brand identity and brand image. In order to identify the gap that exist, the authors created the Brand Derby Matrix (Fig. 3)

3.3.3 The Brand Derby Matrix

Brand Identity	Strong	Blind Horse	Jackpot
	Weak	Lame Horse	Dark Horse
		Poor	Excellent
		Brand Image	

FIGURE 3. Brand Identity Matrix (adapted from Roy and Banerjee 2014, 145)

The matrix, as shown in figure 3 outlines four combinations of brand identity and brand image status revealing the overall brand strength (in the grids). A brand is considered to be a lame horse if its image is poor and its identity is weak. The verdict is that a lame horse brand is doomed to fail in the market. When the brand image is excellent and the brand identity is weak, the brand is labelled a dark horse. This mean that the brand can still do well because its competitors are in the dark about its appeal to the consumers. The third combination in the matrix is a brand with poor brand image but a strong brand identity. The tag given to this is blind horse. A blind horse may be strong but can hardly win any race. The ultimate pairing is of a brand with excellent brand image and strong brand identity. This pairing is tagged as the Jackpot because it has achieved the winning combination.

To evaluate a brand using this matrix, Roy and Barnejee (2014) suggested that the input of industrial experts is needed in measuring the brand identity while that of the consumers is necessary for the brand image. Any pairing apart from the one that makes the brand a Jackpot means that the brand managers have some work to do to ensure an alignment between brand identity and brand image.

4 CUSTOMER LOYALTY

Researchers have always made attempts to define and measure what is meant by customer loyalty due to its significant role in the growth and profitability of business organisations. As a result, a considerable amount of literature has been generated on the construct (Veloutsou 2015). Customer loyalty is defined as the willingness and readiness of customers to continue doing business with a particular organisation through their repeat purchases, irrespective of the marketing pressure generated by the competing brands (Leninkumar, 2017). The term, loyalty is traditionally used to describe fidelity and enthusiastic devotion to an individual or a cause. It mostly applied in intimate relationship where it is taken to mean that both partners will not be intimate with any other person. Its' application in a business context has also taken this meaning as it is used to denote the willingness of a customer to continue business transaction with a particular seller or service provider over the long term, preferably on an exclusive basis, and recommending the firm's products to friends and associates (Srivastava & Rai, 2018).

Customer loyalty is also conceptualized as a situation whereby a customer regularly patronises a business despite alternative options and efforts of competitors to lure them away from the brand. Customer loyalty often results in other secondary benefits to the firm such as brand advocacy, direct referrals, and price insensitivity. However, it has been contended that loyalty is a mirage as even the most devoted customer often patronises another business. As a result, studies have focused on the real activities that indicate customer loyalty (Mathew & Thomas, 2018).

4.1 Constructs of Customer Loyalty

Consumer behaviour theorists have always made efforts to understand the factors that determine customer loyalty. Their efforts have not been made easy by the evolution of commerce which means that marketing activities have gone beyond merchandise to include, not only products but brands, stores, services and activities (Makanyeza, 2015).

It is evident that concept of customer loyalty is an evolving one as various researcher have tinkered with the conceptualization and identify various approaches with which to look at customer loyalty. In the early periods of marketing research, customer loyalty is appraised from the point of product purchase. Thus, customer who repeatedly or regularly patronise a particular brand is regarded as 'loyal'. However,

as indicated by the conceptualization of customer loyalty examined so far, it can be seen that loyalty as a concept in marketing is not limited to repeated purchase by the customer (Alexandra & Cerchia, 2018). As observed by Veloutsou (2015), researchers have approached the conceptualisation and measurement of loyalty from many viewpoints which has resulted in some of them claiming that loyalty is unidimensional, while others say it is multidimensional. However, majority of the experts hold that loyalty is made up of two dimensions: behaviour and attitude. The behaviour dimension is characterized by consequential actions resulting from loyalty which is exhibited through repeated purchase, while attitudinal dimension refers to formative behaviour as commitment i.e. a desire to maintain a valued relationship (Liu-Thompkins and Tam, 2013).

4.1.1 Behavioural Approach to Customer Loyalty

From the point of view of the behavioural approach, brand loyalty is achieved when consumers exhibit repeated and systematic purchasing behaviour of a particular brand. The main condition here is that the repeated purchase behaviour should continue over a reasonable period of time. Other criteria applied to measure brand loyalty, as outlined by Touzani and Temessek (2009) include; purchase sequence, purchase proportion assigned to a given brand within a product class, and purchase probability.

The behavioural loyalty approach have provided several measures and modelling techniques to assess the affective pattern of brand loyalty and to improve brand repurchasing predictability. Nevertheless, experts have identified some shortcomings in using the only consumer behaviour to measure customer loyalty. As argued by Pai & Tsai (2011), it is no longer enough to measure loyalty based on the transactional exchanges between the brand and the consumer. This means that purchase and repeat purchase are not adequate measure of brand loyalty.

4.1.2 Attitudinal Approach to Customer Loyalty

The shortcomings of the behavioural approach have led researchers to examine the attitudinal approach. Saydan & Dülek (2019, 473) view attitude as the driving force behind consumer behaviour as they conceptualized consumers' attitude to brands as a combination of regular positive or negative general assessment and effective behaviour in relation to a brand that are defined as a certain measurement of brand preference. The attitudinal approach is considered a strong predictor of brand loyalty. Developing a positive attitude towards a brand leads to the manifestation of various loyalty constructs such as constant reliance on the products and services offered by that particular brand, repeat purchase of the

same brand, advocating for others to patronise the brand, and resisting the pressure to switch to other brand (Han, Nguyen, Song, Bee-Lia, Lee, & Kim 2018.)

The main contribution of the attitudinal approach is a better understanding of what motivates consumer to become loyal to any brand as well as a better insight into consumers brands relationships. However, Touzani and Temessek (2009), while making allowance for its conceptual richness, believe that the attitudinal approach is not the most reliable yardstick in predicting the effective repurchase behaviour. Their position was based on the fact that the attitudinal approach also ignores all that comes under the effective buying behaviour and focuses only on the strength of the attitude as an indicator of loyalty.

4.1.3 The Composite Approach to Customer Loyalty

A third approach was thus suggested which is the composite approach. This approach combines the attributes of both the behavioural and attitudinal approach to customer loyalty. The combination of behavioural and attitudinal approaches has taken hold in brand loyalty literature as most of the often-quoted definitions of brand loyalty combines elements of both approaches. This conceptualisation encompasses a behavioural and an attitudinal component. In essence, consumer loyalty is made up of three components i.e.; re-buy intention, primary behaviour and secondary level behaviour. Re-buy intention is willingness of the consumer to buy more of a given product or service in the future. Primary behaviour means the practical re-visiting behavior of a consumer; while secondary level behavior indicates the willingness of a customer to recommend the product to others and enhances customer loyalty through human relationship (Durmaz, Çavuşoğlu, & Özer, 2018).

The conceptualization of the three approaches as depicted by Touzani and Temessek (2009) is reproduced in figure 4.

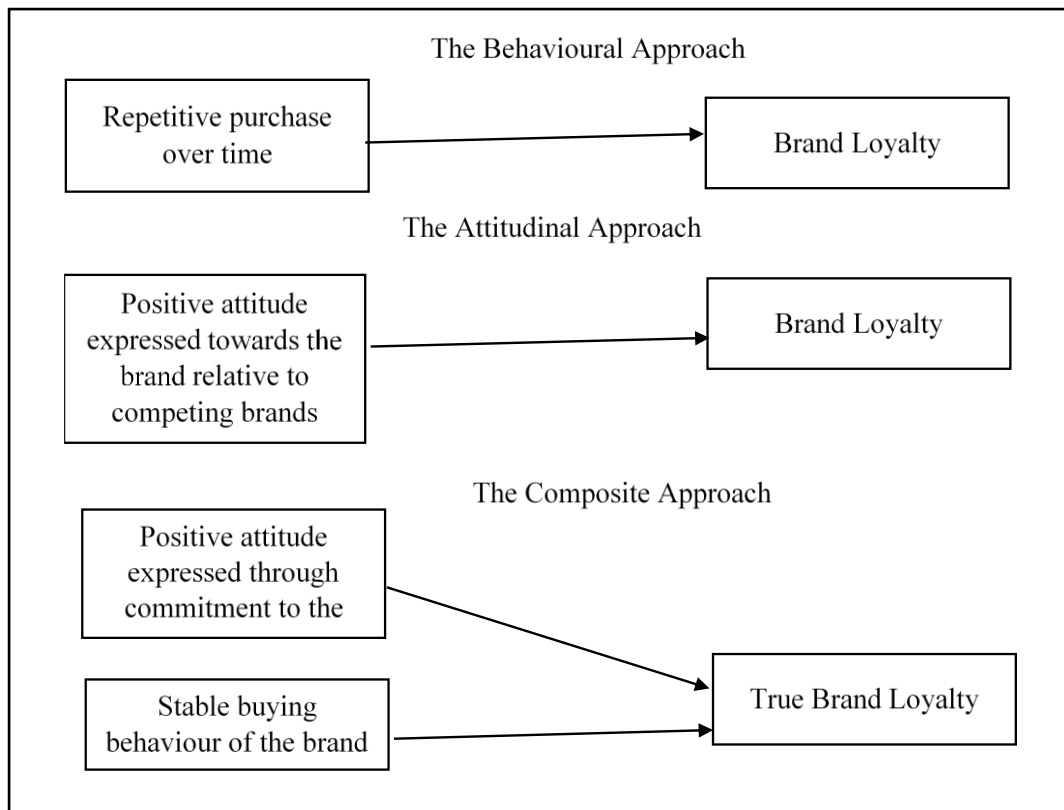


FIGURE 4. The three approaches of brand loyalty (Touzani & Temessek 2009.)

4.1.4 Measurement of customer loyalty

In work which further elaborates the importance of the composite approach to customer loyalty, Pileliene & Sikiene (2017, 204) submitted that, the only way to effectively measure customer loyalty is to combine the attitudinal and behavioural approach to loyalty. It was posited that combining both approaches are not contradictory but complementary because each customer would exhibit different attitude, which results in variations in their behavioural pattern. It is therefore posited that organisations should understand each shade of customer loyalty so that they would understand which segment needs improved marketing and promotional efforts (Pileliene & Sikiene, 2017, 205).

Accordingly, researchers who have made attempts to categorise customer loyalty based on the combination of both attitudinal and behavioural approaches to customer loyalty have come up with various distinct levels of customer loyalty. Zikienė & Prėskienė (2013) reported that several scholars have made attempt to apply a composite of both approaches to draw a scale for measuring customer loyalty but the most clear cut for was from Dick & Basu (1994) who based the categorization on the concept

that behavioural loyalty is manifested by continuous purchase of certain product and services over a measurable period of time and attitudinal loyalty is represented by consumers' expressed preference for a particular brand, their satisfaction with and commitment to the brand, their willingness to encourage others to patronise the brand as well as their intention to continue to patronise the brand.

The combination of both concepts has thus led to the identification of four categories of customer loyalty which is depicted in figure 5.

Relative Attitude	High	True Loyalty	Latent Loyalty
	Low	Spurious Loyalty	No Loyalty
		High	Low
		Behaviour (Repeat Patronage)	

FIGURE 5. Four levels of customer loyalty (adapted from Dick and Basu 1994.)

As depicted in the figure, the combination of the levels of attitudinal and Behavioural constructs of customer loyalty yielded four levels of customer loyalty with different outcomes. The four levels are true loyalty, which results from a combination of high relative attitude and behavioural intent; Latent loyalty, which results from a combination of high relative attitude and low behavioural intent; Spurious loyalty, which results from a combination of low relative attitude and high behavioural intent and No loyalty, which result from a combination of low relative attitude and low behavioural.

4.1.5 True Loyalty

True loyalty, which is underpinned by high positive attitude towards the brand and strong behavioural intention, results in repeated purchases/patronage on the part of the customer. Consumers in this category not only make repeat purchases but also spread positive word of mouth reviews about the brand to encourage others to patronise it (Makanyeza, 2015). Durmaz et al. (2018) also submitted that true customer loyalty is the ultimate that an organization should aim for as it combines a conscious repeat

patronage intention with brand love and brand commitment which makes customers ready to stay with a particular brand and encourage others to purchase or patronise the brand.

4.1.6 Latent Loyalty

Latent loyalty which is the result of high relative attitude and low behavioural intent is manifested through customers' strong brand commitment but low purchase. Customers with latent loyalty may spread positive word of mouth about a brand while making little or no purchase of the brand. Pilelienė & Zikienė (2017) identified various factors that may cause latent loyalty to include instances where the location of a favourite brand is not convenient, or the brand is usually out of stock as well as the influence of others. This means that consumers who love the brand and willing to purchase it are unable due to factors beyond their control so they can only express their love for the brand.

4.1.7 Spurious Loyalty

This level of loyalty is caused by low attitude and high behavioural intent. The result is that customers has no emotional attachment to the brand or product even though they frequently patronise such brand. Makanyeza (2015) explains that customers may perform repeat purchase of a brand even when they do not particularly love the brand because it is more convenient to reach than their preferred brand or because their preferred brand is not available. In this way, those who has latent loyalty to a product may exhibit spurious loyalty to another brand. Spurious loyalty may also be driven by promotional activities such as deals and special offers or sheer pressure from other.

Globacom Telecommunications Limited and others in Nigeria have experienced this type of loyalty in one way or another. There was a time when the network has not spread to all town in the country. So customers who had subscribed to the 'Globacom' network had to switch to another operator whenever they found themselves in areas not covered by their preferred operator.

4.1.8 No Loyalty

Customer with no loyalty to a brand have low relative attitude toward the brand and low behavioural intentions towards repeat purchases. This situation represents the absence or total failure of branding activities. When organisations fail to properly create any brand identity and brand positioning, their services and products become generic and seen as 'just another one' by the consumers which they may even take as standard for what not to purchase. In an era when consumers have a myriad of options to choose from, brands with obscure, no clear cut identity can easily attract negative image as they may be seen as inferior spin off of other more visible brands which may make people avoid them or recommend them to others. (Pilelienė & Zikienė, 2017.)

The implication of the four level of customer loyalty outlined is clear to brand managers. Odoom (2016, 1) also pointed out that researcher often fail to accommodate various level of loyalty in their study which makes their study findings unfit for generalisation especially in varying economic, social and cultural contexts. Segmenting loyalty into relevant levels makes it clear what action needs to be taken if the objective of the organisation to increase its market share through customer loyalty is to be achieved. As mentioned by Roy & Banerjee (2008), customers differ in lifestyle, expectation, experience, and disposition. This means that the strength of the image they form about a brand and thus, their attitude toward the brand will also vary in strength. The strength of customers' attitude towards the brand greatly influences their repeat purchase behaviour. Customers express their loyalty in many different ways, reflecting their attitudes of resulting in purchase patterns.

4.2 Brand and Brand Loyalty

Branding and customer loyalty are part of a continuum. As pointed out in Hedin et al. (2009, 13), the key focus of the branding process is the achievement of a significant level loyalty from the target consumers. This goal makes more sense when consider in the context of the maxim that; it costs five times more to acquire new customers than to manage and retain existing ones. Brand building is therefore considered as the most effective strategy for building consumer loyalty because of its ability to make it is easy for consumer to easily recognise a brand and provide an opportunity for customers to build and image of the brand. (Ferreira & Coelho, 2015)

It has been established that consumers' decision to purchase goods and services things is not based solely on utilitarian purposes but on what the product or service represents to them (Odoom, 2016, 653). Also,

Wijaya (2018, 179) submitted that consumers in the present era where there are multiple brands serving similar purposes no longer purchase products and services to meet utilitarian needs. Rather, they are patronising brands because of the emotional experiences surrounding them. These two insights show that effective branding activities are very important not only to get customers to patronise a brand but also to make them want to continue patronising it.

Sales promotion, deals, special offers etc. can attract new customers but it may not keep them loyal to the business for long (Nwazuluoke, 2012, 86). Hedin et al. (2009, 33) referred to this strategy as the economic approach to branding and brand loyalty. New insights into the theory of branding have shown the limitations of this approach. Rather, branding activities in the contemporary environment seeks to create a relationship with customers by ensuring that the brand consistently deliver on its brand promise as enshrined in the brand identity. This will create a good brand image and ensures that the brand remains the favourites of the consumer.

Odoom (2016, 653) submitted that organisations exploit elements of brand identity such as brand names, logos, symbols, colours, characters, packaging and slogans to raise awareness about the and to provide for consumers something with which they can associate the brand According to Hamid Hawass (2013), when consumers are able to associate a brand with a particular image, it reduces their risks and clears any doubt they may have about purchasing the brand. Ultimately, this makes the prefer the brand over other, patronise and can make it their brand of choice. Associating a brand with particular identity facilitate brand recall (Narteh, Odoom, Braimah, & Buame, 2012).

Furthermore, when the brand identity communicated by the organisation through various channel is perceived as intended by the organisation then, the brand is said to have a positive image. As stated earlier, when the brand image is aligned with the brand identity, the result is brand equity which is a value that has been bestowed on the brand by its acceptance by the customer. To achieve this, branding scholars are now talking about brand relationship (Kuoska, 2017).

According to Jakonen (2016) effective branding strategy seek to achieve customer loyalty be building brand equity. However, even the most valuable and powerful brands need to see brand management as a continuous activity because branding is not simply sales promotion, its aim in the context of the current competitive business environment is to create a relationship between the brand and the consumer so that each party understands one another and the brand is thus aware of the customers' specific needs and ensures that they are met in return of which the customer remains loyal to the brand.

5 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research, by nature, is a systematic investigation carried to understand phenomena, create new product or expand the frontier of knowledge. It involves the identification of a problem, forming hypotheses or outlined research questions to be answered, gathering relevant data, analysing the data and making the relevant inferences. Whether conducted in the sciences, arts or humanities research adopts scientific method which refers to the accepted techniques and steps followed in the conduct of a research. Research methodology therefore deals with the framework adopted for conducting research such as the research design, data gathering instrument and data analysis methods in order to ensure that research findings are accurate and generalizable. (Kumar, 2018).

5.1 Research Method

The research method refers to the overall strategy that a researcher adopts to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring that the research problem will be effectively addressed. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. Broadly speaking, research can adopt the qualitative or quantitative method. The method chosen will dictate such things as research instrument, data gathering and data analysis method among other things (Kumar, 2018). The research questions formulated from the research objectives are as follows;

RQ1: How does brand image impact the brand loyalty of the Globacom brand?

RQ2: How does brand satisfaction affect the brand loyalty of the Globacom brand?

RQ3: What level of brand loyalty is demonstrated by customers of the Globacom brand?

These questions will guide the preparation of the questionnaire as well as the interview questions and the researcher will be looking for responses from the interview that provide answers to them.

5.1.1 Quantitative Method

According to Inha & Laiho (2012), quantitative method includes gathering numerical data from a lot of study subjects in order to answer questions such as how, who and why, how many, among others. Quantitative is concerned with the collection of a large amount of numerical data from many respondents and the data is analysed with statistical software to test hypotheses and make generalizations.

Quantitative method involves the use of instruments such as questionnaires to gather empirical data from a diverse set of people who are located across a wide geographical area and which the researcher may otherwise find it difficult to reach individually (Inha & Laiho 2012). Using this method is considered effective because it provides research subjects a sense of anonymity that encourage them to provide accurate response to questions asked in the questionnaire (Kumar, 2018).

5.1.2 Qualitative Method

Qualitative method on the other has to do with conducting a research in the natural setting of the research subjects. The major focus of the quantitative method is on the quality, not on the quantity of responses obtained and this is achieved through close interaction with a small group of respondents from whom the researcher can get in-depth insight into the research problem. It allows an intensive scrutiny of the interaction between variables as they relate to a given research subject. Thus, qualitative method does not require the collection of data from a large number of respondents. It gathers data through observations, interviews, focus groups etc. (Kumar, 2018).

Due to the focus of this study on one organisation, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will be used in order to provide the opportunity for data triangulation and gain a deep insight on the role of branding on its customer loyalty.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods is considered very appropriate for the current study as it will enable the researcher to conduct an in-depth study of the commissioning company. Furthermore, the use of interview and questionnaire will assure a rich diverse source of research data which will ensure the accuracy of conclusions reached in the study.

For any given research, it is often impossible to target all members of the study population for data gathering. As a result, a system is developed to systematically select part of the population for the purpose of data gathering (Bovaird and Kevin, 2015). Convenience sampling procedure will be adopted to select the study sample. For this study, a sample of at least 30 respondents were selected from the customers of the commissioning company for the purpose of data gathering.

Furthermore, six interviewees were selected among those customers who visit the commissioning company's business outlets. Also, I interviewed the company representative, Mr. Sunday Adenrele, a Branch Manager to get insight about the brand identity.

5.2 Data Collection

Data collection in research is the process followed in order to obtain the evidence necessary to answer the research questions or test research hypotheses. All scientific studies rely on different types of data in order to make inferences or make a generalization. The data collection however depends on objectives and design of the study. Based on the type of study, a researcher can collect numerical or qualitative data in term of text, audio images etc. This study will adopt a combination of instruments such as interview guide and questionnaire. (Mohajan, 2018).

The instruments for data collection in this study is an online questionnaire and interview guide which contains questions drawn from the review of literature as well as the research questions and objectives. The questionnaire used is designed through Google forms which generated a link which users can access remotely to fill in the questionnaire. Sharing of the questionnaire was facilitated by the company representative, Mr. Sunday Adenrele, a Branch Manager. The interview guides include questions to elicit information about the perception of the interviewee concerning the brand identity and brand image of the commissioning company. There were also questions bearing on the level of loyalty that the interviewees have for the commissioning company. Although there is an interview guide designed to give the interviewees the same context of questions, allowance will be made for followed up questions based on the responses provided by the interviewees.

The consent of each interviewee was sought and only those who verbally agree to the interview were included in the sample All interviews were conducted remotely with video and audio calls through WhatsApp Each interview was expected to last a minimum of 20 minutes.

5.3 Validity and Reliability of Research

The concept of validity is viewed differently in quantitative and qualitative research. While validity in quantitative studies deals with the ability of the research instrument to measure the constructs it is designed to measure, in qualitative research, validity goes to the heart of genuineness of the research. It involves whether the right research questions were formulated, the adopted method is appropriate and that the research data is genuine and can hold up to critical scrutiny (Basheer et al., 2008). For this study, the researcher makes sure to rely on existing literature for the methodology adopted and followed strict guidelines to avoid sample bias.

Reliability of the study is test of whether the study as it is conducted can be replicated in another setting and yielded similar result. As pointed out by Leung (2015), this approach to reliability may not be too applicable in qualitative research. In the case of the current study, the author has made attempt to adhere as rigorously as possible to scientific research guidelines so it possible that similar steps can be followed with minor variations in results.

5.4 Method of Data Analysis

The quantitative data gathered for the study was analysed using the descriptive analysis method which involve the use of frequencies and percentage to present the results. Also, the qualitative data collected through the interview was analyzed using qualitative content analysis. This method is usually adopted in the analysis of qualitative data gotten from verbal interviews, open-ended questions, observations or data obtained from the literature. (Jakonen, 2017, 30) This method allows the researcher to identify themes relevant to the study. It is particularly useful if a great deal is known about the subject already, and the categories already established. In some instances, themes are quantified, and the results expressed statistically. According to Bengtsson (2016) content analysis is one of the methods adopted in qualitative studies. It involves four stages which include decontextualization, recontextualization, categorization and compilation.

Using this method, the answer to the research questions will be extracted from the interview results.

6 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULT

This chapter presents data collected during the research. The data were collected using two research instruments; a questionnaire and interview schedule. The results obtained from the questionnaire will be presented using tables and figures while that of the interview will presented using the the content analysis method.

6.1 Analysis of Quantitative Data

This section presents analysis of the quantitative data collected through a structured online questionnaire administered on the respondent with the assistant of the company representative, Mr. Sunday Adenrele.

TABLE 1. Gender Distribution of Respondents

Sex	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	21	70
Female	9	20
Total	30	100

Table 1 shows that there are more male than female respondents in the study. There are 21 male constituting 70% of the total respondents while female are 9 making them 30% of the total respondents

TABLE 2. Age Distribution of Respondents

AGE Range	Number of Respondents	Percentage
19-29	7	23.3
30-39	19	63.3
40-49	4	13.3
Total	30	100

Table 2 shows that 7 or 23.3% of the respondents are between the age of 19-29; 19 respondent or 63.3% of the total respondents are between the age of 30-39 and 4 respondent or 13.3% of the total respondents are between the age of 40-49. This demographic indicates that of a youthful sample.

TABLE 3. Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Professionals	10	33.3
Artisans	2	6.7
Traders	1	3.3
Students	9	30
Others	8	26.7
Total	30	100

Table 3 above shows the occupations in which the respondents are engaged. 10 respondents, constituting 33.3% are professionals; 9 respondents constituting 30% are students; 8 respondents constituting 26.7% are engaged in other occupations; 2 respondents constituting 6.7% are Artisans while only 1(3.3%) of the respondents is a trader.

TABLE 4: How long have you been a glo subscriber?

Length of Patronage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1-5 Year	8	26.7
6-9 Years	4	13.3
More than 10 Years	15	50
Less than a Year	3	10
Total	30	100

Table 4 reveals the length of relationship between the respondents and the commissioner. Those who have been a subscriber for more than 10 years were in the majority. There are 15 respondents in this category representing 50% of the total respondents. This is followed by those who have been customer for 1 to 5 years; they are 8 in number constituting 26.7% of the respondents. 4 respondents have been with the company for between 6-9 years which constitute 13.3%. those who have been customers for less than a year are 3 in number which makes them 10% of the respondents.

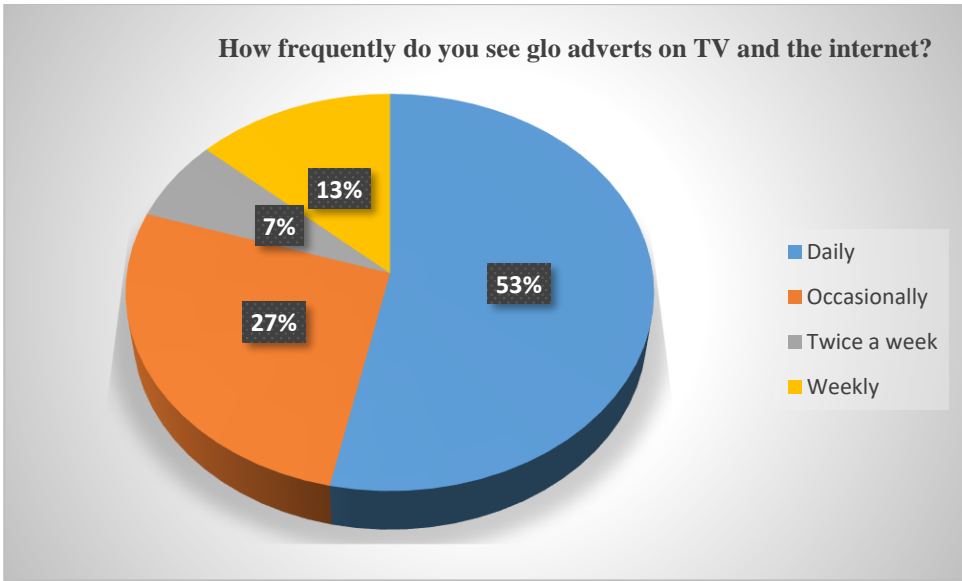


FIGURE 6: How frequently do you see glo adverts on TV and the internet?

Figure 6 shows that 16 respondents (53%) see the adverts daily; 8 respondents representing 27% see the adverts occasionally; 4 respondents representing 13% see the adverts at least once a week while 2 respondents representing 7% see the adverts at least twice a week. No respondent reported that they have never seen any advert from the commissioner.

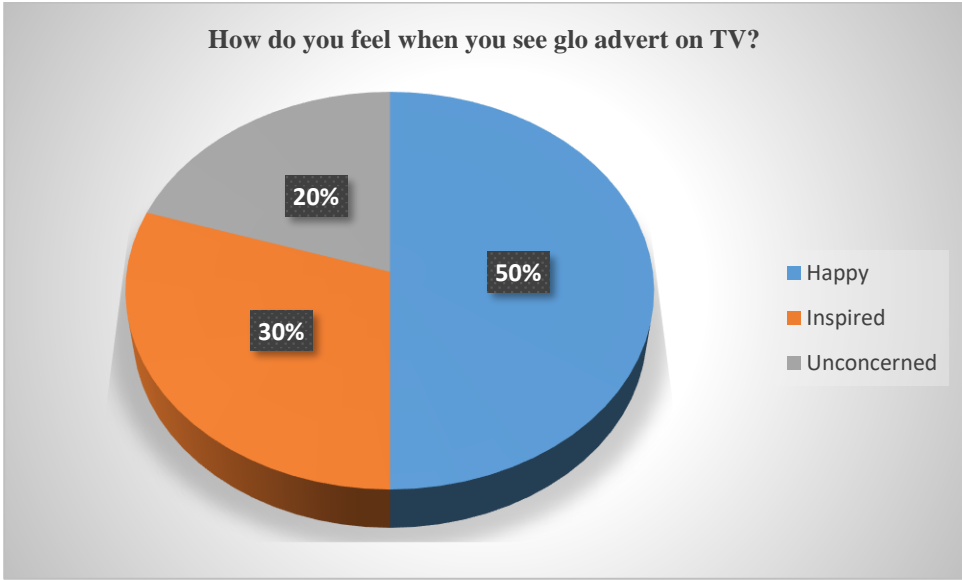


FIGURE 7: How do you feel when you see Globacom advert on TV?

Figure 7 above shows that 15 respondents representing 50% of the respondent reported that they are happy whenever they see glo adverts on TV; 9 respondents representing 30% reported that they feel

inspired while 6 respondents representing 20% of the total respondents reported that they feel unconcerned.

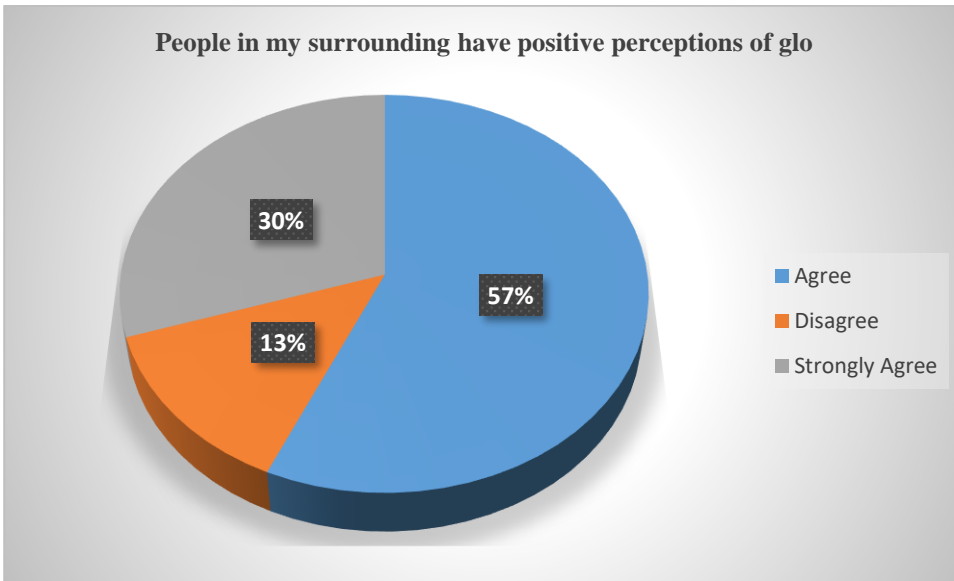


FIGURE 8: People in my surrounding have positive perceptions of glo

Figure 8 above shows data about customers perception of the commissioning company. 17 respondents representing 57% of the total respondents agreed that people in their surroundings have positive perception about the commissioning company. 9 respondents constituting 30% of the total respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 7 respondents constituting 13% of the total respondents disagreed with the statement.

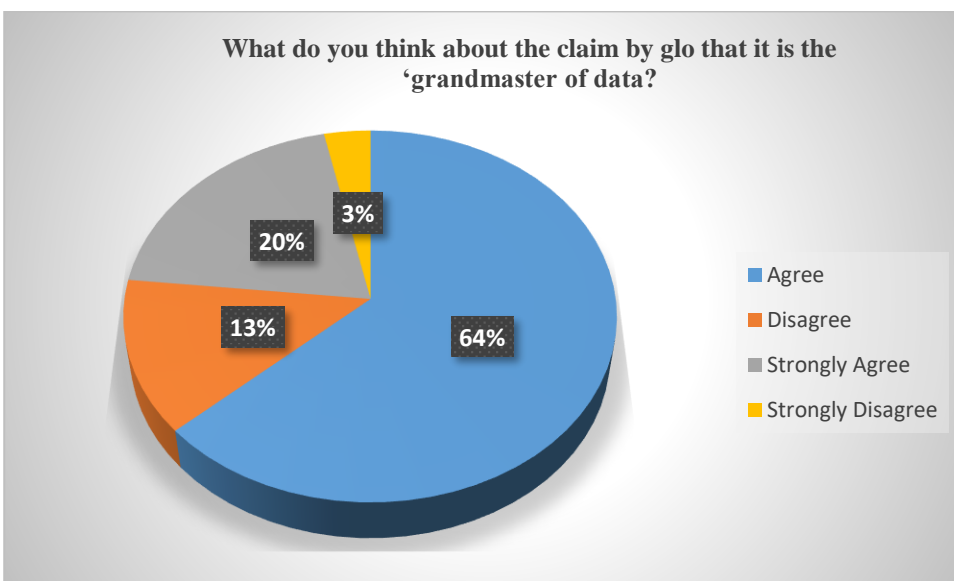


FIGURE 9: What do you think about the claim by glo that it is the 'grandmaster of data?'

Figure 9 above shows the responses to the claim that the commissioning company has the best internet rate in the industry. 19 respondents constituting 64% of the total respondents agree with the statement; 6 respondents representing 20% of the total respondents strongly agreed with the statement. However, 4 respondents representing 13% of the total respondents disagreed and 1 respondent representing 3% of the total respondents strongly disagreed. This result shows that majority agreed that glo is indeed the ‘grandmaster of data’.

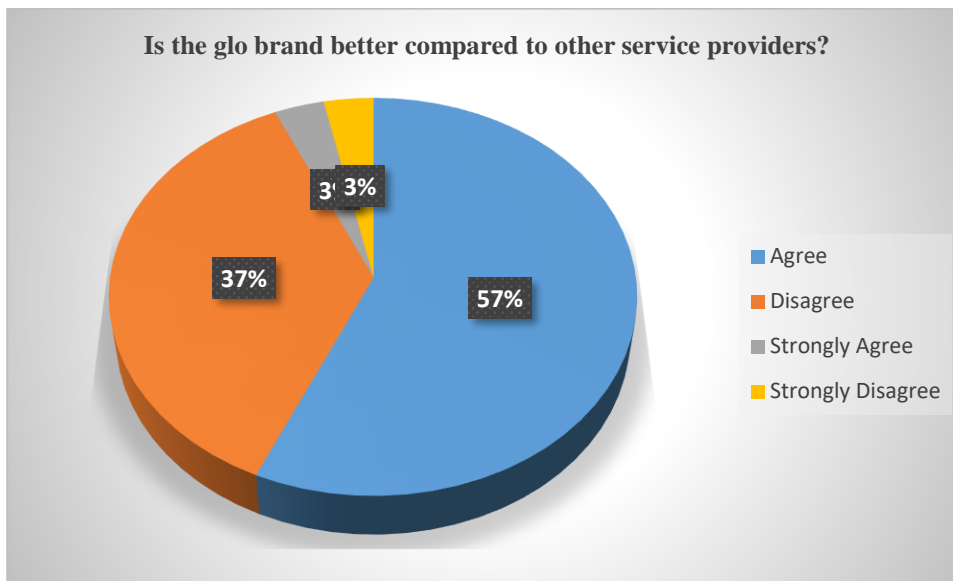


FIGURE 10. Is the glo brand better compared to other service providers?

Figure 10 above shows perception of the entire glo brand. 17 respondents constituting 57% of the total respondents agreed that the glo brand is better compared to other service providers. 1 respondent constituting 3% strongly agreed with the assertion while eleven respondents constituting 37% disagreed and 1 respondent constituting 3% strongly disagreed. With this result those who agree with the assertion are in the majority.

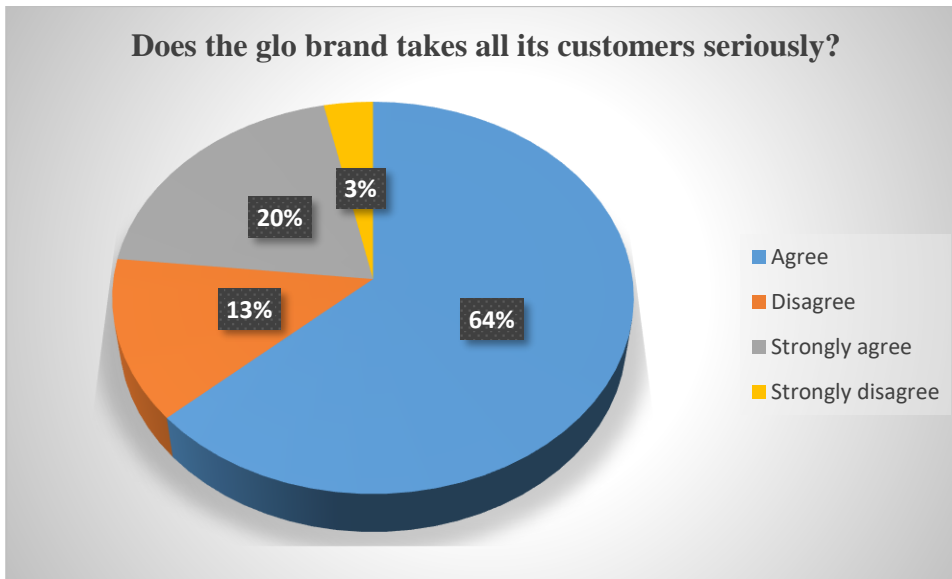


FIGURE 11. Does the glo brand takes all its customers seriously?

Figure 11 above shows the response of the respondents to the question of whether the commissioner takes all its customers seriously. 19 respondents constituting 64% of the total respondents agreed that the commissioner takes all its customers seriously and 6 respondents constituting 20% strongly agreed to the statement. However, 4 respondents constituting 13% disagreed with the assertion while only 1 respondent constituting 3% strongly disagreed. With this result those who agree with the assertion are in the majority.

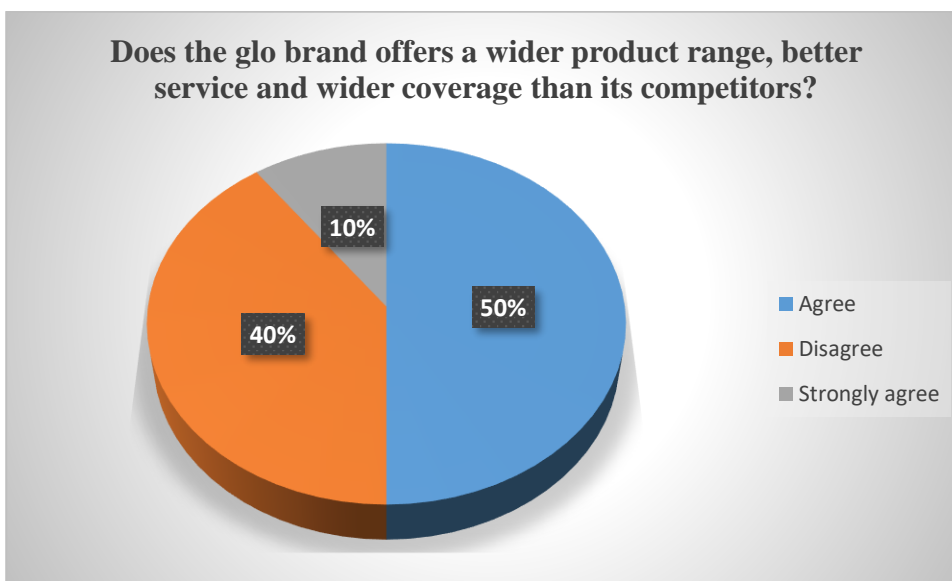


FIGURE 12. Does the glo brand offer a wider product range, better service and wider coverage than its competitors?

Figure 12 shows how the respondents rate the commissioner's product and services compared to its local competitors. 3 respondents constituting 10% strongly agreed and 15 respondents constituting 50% agree that the commissioner's products and services are better than those of its competitors. However, 12 respondents constituting 40% of the total respondents disagreed with the statement.

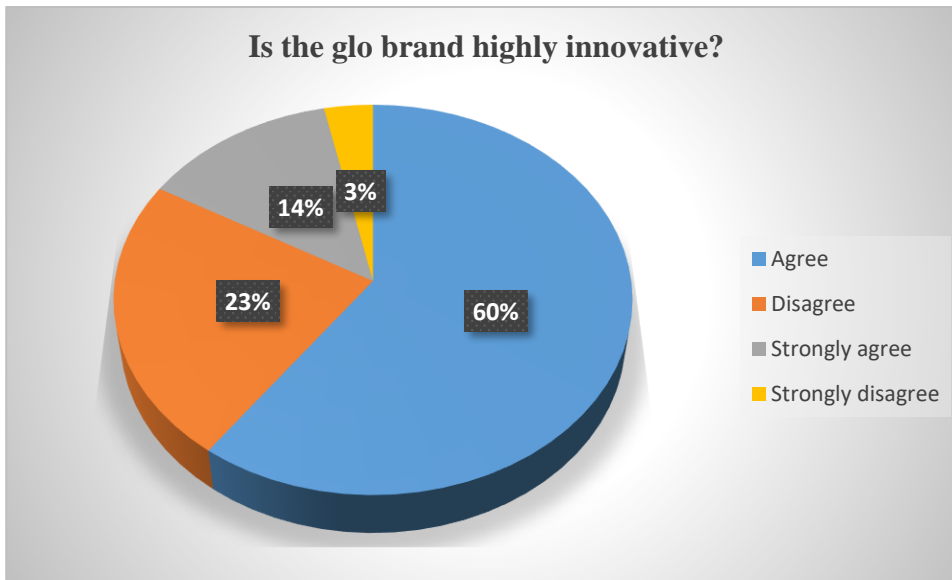


FIGURE 13. Is the glo brand highly innovative?

Figure 13 shows how the respondents rate the commissioner's innovativeness. 4 respondents constituting 14% of the respondents strongly agreed and 18 respondents constituting 60% agreed that the commissioner is highly innovative. However, 7 respondents constituting 23% of the total respondents disagreed with the statement while only one respondent constituting 3% of the total respondents disagreed.

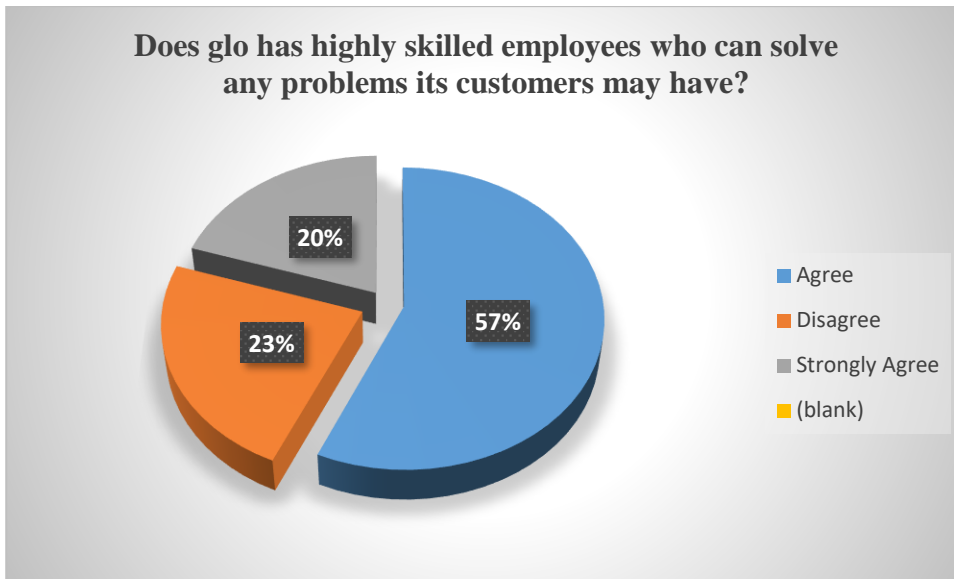


FIGURE 14. Does glo have highly skilled employees who can solve any problems its customers may have?

Figure 14 shows how the respondents rate the commissioner's skilled manpower . 6 respondents constituting 20% of the respondents strongly agreed and 17 respondents constituting 57% of the respondents agreed that the commissioner has highly skilled employees who can solve any problems its customers may have. However, 7 respondents constituting 23.3% of the total respondents disagreed with the statement.

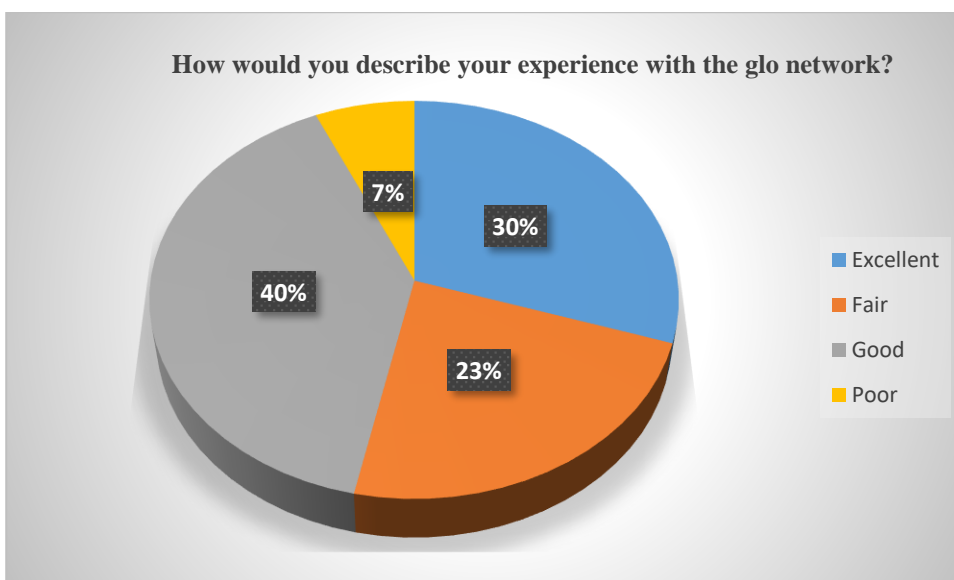


FIGURE 15: How would you describe your experience with the glo network??

Figure 15 shows how the respondents rate their experience using the commissioner's products and services. 9 respondents constituting 30% rated their experience 'excellent'; 12 respondents constituting 40% of the total rated it 'good. However, 7 respondents constituting 23% of the total respondents rated their experiences 'fair' while 2 respondents constituting 7% rated their experience 'poor'.

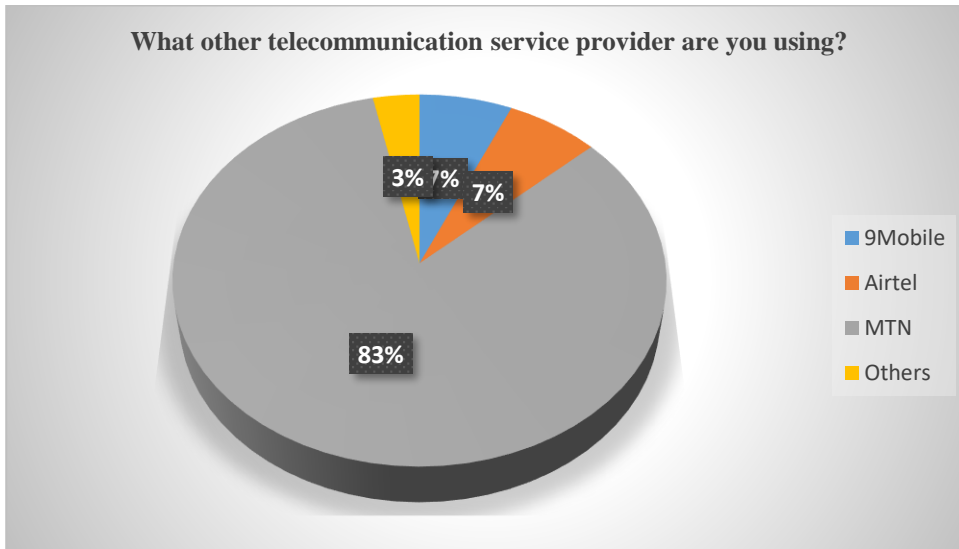


Figure 16. What other telecommunication service provider are you using?

Figure 16 shows the other networks that the commissioner's customers also subscribed to. 25 respondents constituting 83.3% of the total respondents are also using MTN, 2 respondents constituting 7% are also using 9Mobile and Airtel respectively while 1 respondent used other networks.

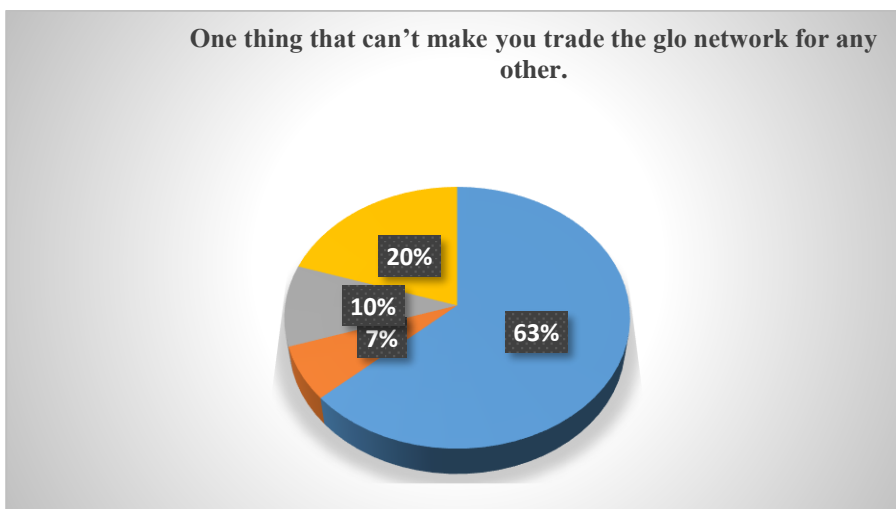


Figure 17: One thing that can't make you trade the glo network for any other.

Figure 17 shows the main attraction that makes customers stay with the commissioner. 19 respondents constituting 63% of the total respondents cited 'affordable data rates' as their main reason for staying with the commissioner. 6 respondents constituting 20% cited 'quality of service' as their main reason; 3 respondents constituting 10% cited the 'difficulty of moving to other networks' while 2 respondents constituting 7% of the total respondent cited 'Affordable call rates'.

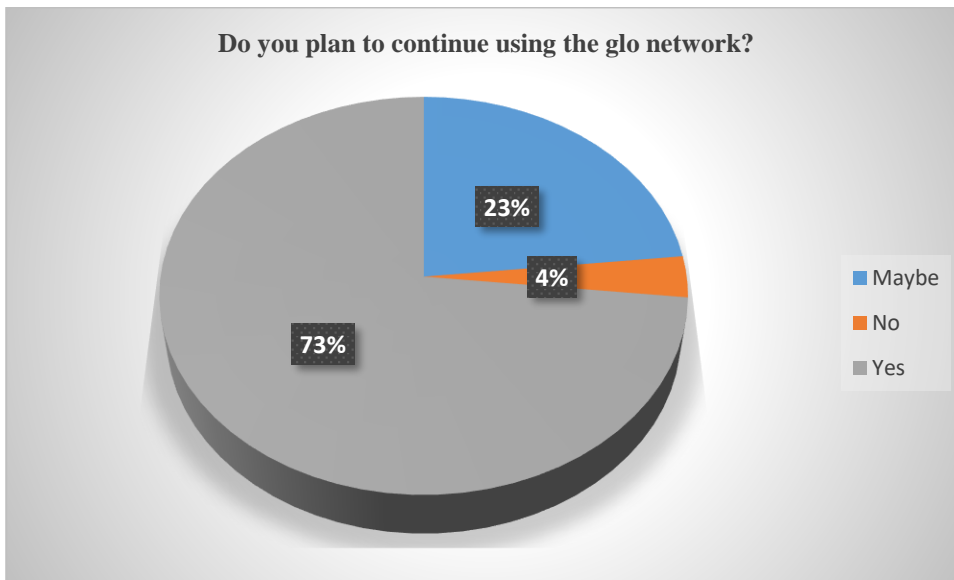


FIGURE 18: Do you plan to continue using the glo network?

Figure 18 shows the response of the respondents on whether they plan to remain loyal to the commissioner. 22 respondents constituting 73% of the total respondents responded 'yes' while 7 respondents constituting 23% responded 'maybe' and 1 respondents constituting 4% of the total respondent responded 'No'.

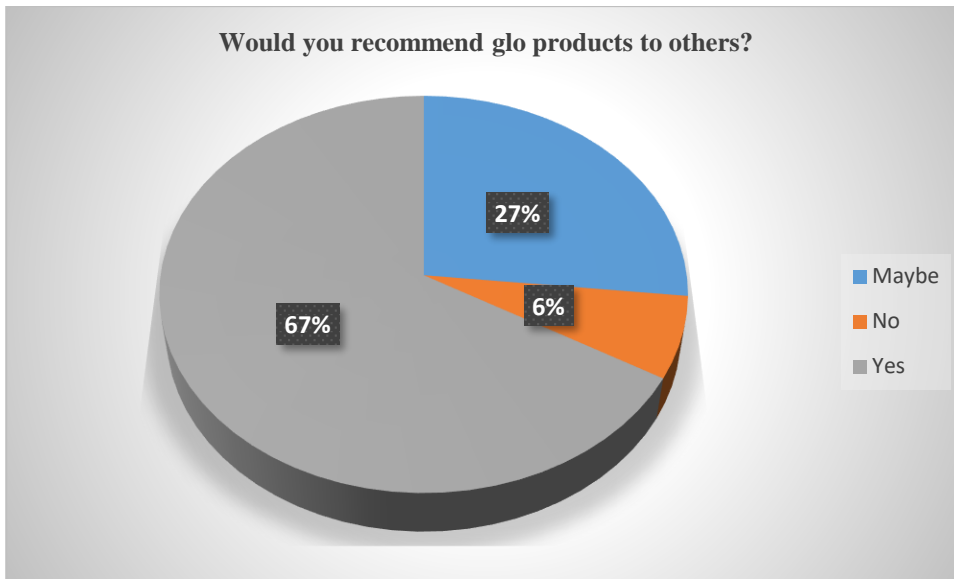


FIGURE 19: Would you recommend glo products to others?

Figure 19 shows the response of the respondents on whether they would recommend the commissioner to others. 20 respondents constituting 67% of the total respondents responded 'yes' while 8 respondents constituting 26% of the total respondent responded 'maybe' and 2 respondents constituting 6% of the total respondent responded 'No'.

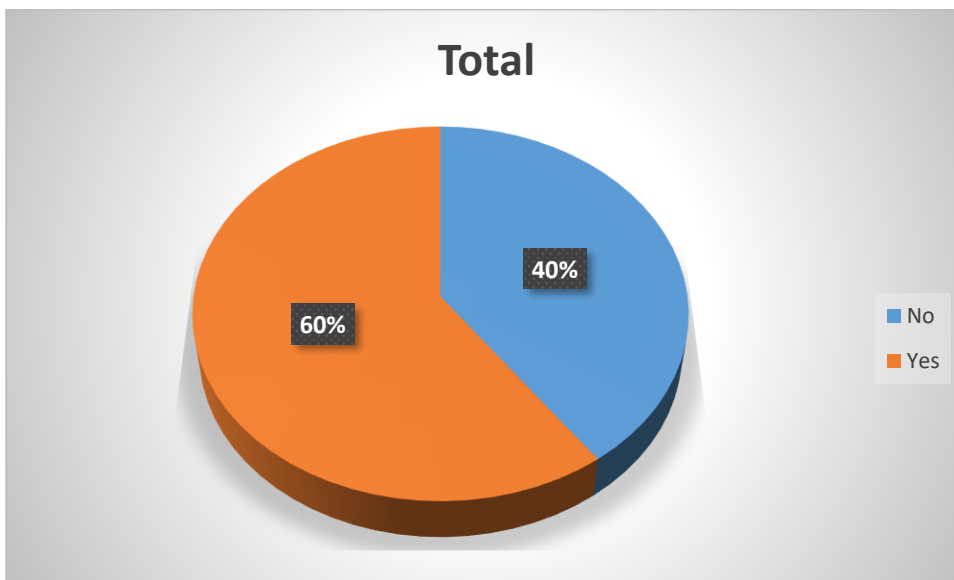


FIGURE 20: I will not subscribe to other networks unless the glo network is not available

Figure 20 shows the response of the respondents on whether the commissioner is really their brand of choice. 18 respondents constituting 60% of the total respondents responded 'yes' while 12 respondents constituting 40% of the total respondents responded 'No'.

6.2 Analysis of Qualitative Data

The qualitative data was gathered with the aid of an interview schedule. All the questions were open-ended which gave the interviewee the freedom to express themselves as they feel comfortable. The gathered data were then analysed using the content analysis method. The questions in the interview guide were derived from review of the literature and reflected the objective of the study which is basically to evaluate the use of brand as a tool for customer loyalty with focus on brand identity and brand image. All interviews were conducted electronically by telephone call on Sunday 23rd of May, 2021. Each subscriber had been initially contacted and scheduled for the interview and the researcher made sure to keep the appointed time for each interviewee to avoid time wasting.

Before the customer interview, I had a brief chat with a company representative, Mr. Sunday Adenrele, a Branch Manager with the commissioner to get an insight into the brand identity. He revealed that the core identity of the brand revolves around providing customers with world class but affordable services and product, consistent and real bonuses on data and Airtime purchase across board. He also disclosed that the target audience of the brand include; youth, Entrepreneurs and Students who are presumed to enjoy high value for low price.

The extended identity of the glo brand according to Mr. Adenrele include the brand personality which he explained as trendy, welcoming, and trustworthy. The logo 'Glo' simplifies lack of complexity; a brand easy to deal with. Part of the extended identity is the slogan "...With pride" and "Grandmaster of data". The first slogan was adopted initially to make customers take pride in dealing with an indigenous telecommunication service provide as opposed to the foreign owned operators they were used to. It was crafted to evoked a sense of patriotism and belonging in the customers. The company also use various local celebrities' endorsements to connect with the people.

With the reviewed material from the interviews the research questions were answered. The first stage of the analysis focus on individual interviewee with the subsequent analysis grouping the interviewees together based on the emerging themes as they relate to the objective of the study.

The first interviewee, (INT 1) is a self-employed male within the age bracket 35-40. He regularly uses his glo line to make calls and access the internet.

INT 1 is very aware of the glo brand as he disclosed that the glo brand uses various channels of communication to pass its brand message across to the public, so it is hard to claim ignorance about the brand. However, he expressed reservation about the heavy use of celebrities to promote the brand.

I think they spend too much money on celebrities. Everyone already knows them (Globacom) so no celebrity can make people know them better. People would just focus on the celebrity and ignore the message they are passing. To me, I think they should spend less on celebrity endorsements and focus on improving their services.

On his attitude towards the brand, the interviewee feels that glo is just another brand. However, he disclosed that he has positive attitude towards it as it is serving the purpose advertised. I also observe that people have a fairly good perception about the brand.

I think the stability of the brand over years compared to others such as Airtel and Etisalat and its efforts to improve its services has made people to accept it. People will stay with glo so long it is functioning.

The overall brand image seems to be perceived as strong by the interviewee as he agrees that the brand identity of Globacom limited. One example is the attempt to cast itself as the ‘grandmaster of data’ which means that its data rates are better than others. The interviewer admitted that the mobile data price of the brand is what attracted people to the brand.

In terms of satisfaction, INT1 indicates that he is satisfied with most aspect of the brand. He believes that the brand ‘takes its customer services seriously’ and make it easy for customers to resolve issues through self service outlets. He also agreed that the brand has enough skilled employees to resolve customer issues when they arise. There is an element of brand trust in this as he is assured that the brand will not disappoint him in the case of service issues. The interviewee’s satisfaction also comes from wide range of services and products offered by the brand.

I think glo has a lot of services that suit all categories of consumers. People may think MTN has better coverage, but I have been to remote places where only the glo network is active. Their tariff, their data and other things are okay.

The interviewee admit that he subscribes to another network apart from glo but this is not due to lack of trust in glo but ‘because everyone does it.’

Most smart phones come with two or more sim slots so people find it necessary to subscribe to more than one network. However, it is the network with better services and rates that will get used. I subscribed to MTN because everybody see it as the best but I used glo most for calls and browsing because it is less expensive.

Asked whether he ever thought of opting out of one network, he responded ‘no’ adding that ‘both of them are useful’.

INT 1 expressed his loyalty to the glo brand by saying that he sees no reason to discontinue using the brand. He also expressed his willingness to recommend the brand to others or spread good words about the brand. He also claimed that he will not subscribe to other networks unless the glo network is not available. Asked whether he would forgive the brand even if he feels disappointed by the brand, he responded that:

We always forgive them. It is not easy to just throw away your sim and say you’re not using glo again. Many people have this number, and the stress of changing will be too much. Apart from that, they don’t have much problem expect the service can fluctuate sometimes. So, I will always forgive them.

The second interviewee, (INT 2) is a male student within the age bracket 20-25. He mostly uses his phone for internet browsing and online social networking.

INT 2 expressed his loyalty to the glo brand in as much as the brand keeps serving his interest. He is also committed to the brand and would not abandon it due to some little glitches. He sees no need to forgive the brand as it has never gotten into any real scandal or disappoint the consumers on a large scale. The kind of loyalty exhibited by the interviewee can be termed as spurious loyalty as he admits that he does not see the need to spread good words about the brand, but he will continue to patronize the brand. However, it is apparent that if other brand offers better deals, he is likely to switch his loyalty.

The third interviewee, (INT 3) is a female civil servant within the age bracket 30-35. She uses her phone mostly to make voice calls and chat on applications such as WhatsApp and messenger.

INT 3 is also aware of the glo brand as he disclosed that the glo brand uses various channels of communication to pass its brand message across to the public. She mostly see the adverts online and on cable TVs and he always find them fascinating;

I like their adverts especially when they use artistes like Odunlade Adekola, Funke Akindele etc. It means that they identify with the people. But personally, I don't think it is the adverts that makes people like them. The adverts are just like entertainment.

The interviewee has also created a personalized image of the brand as a brand for low income people and perceives that the identity of the brand is built on low tariffs and affordable data rates.

GLO is for everyone. It makes it possible for anybody to be connected. When MTN came, it was so expensive, but Glo reduced the price. Till now glo charges is still the best and that's why people will always identify with them.

The interviewee however does not think that the brand is the best in the market as she feels that the low tariff rates indicate a low-quality service offering.

INT 3 also reported that she feels satisfied with the brand. As the service meets all her moderate needs. To her, the opportunity to talk more to her friends and family with a token is enough satisfaction and she believes no other network currently offer such low rate. The interviewee admit that he subscribes to another network apart from glo.

I bought another sim, but I don't usually use it. Glo is my main line. It is the phone number I give everyone.

INT 3 can be categorized as a customer with true loyalty because she always recharges her line and shared positive review about the network. She said there is no reason for her to get angry with the brand because it has always delivered. She also disclosed that she has convinced people close to her to subscribe to the brand so that they can enjoy the benefits together. She also claimed that she has no intention of switching to another brand.

The fourth interviewee, (INT 4) is an educated female trader within the age bracket 40-45. She uses her phone for both personal and business purposes as it is the main avenue for customers to contact her. INT 4 became aware of the glo brand through sale promotion drives where marketers visit various public spaces such as markets to introduce the brand to the market. That is where she got introduced to the

brand. Although she was not interested in the brand beforehand, she was convinced to subscribe based on the promised benefits and she has been using the line since 10 years ago.

While her brand experience is good, they mostly stem from her perception of the services and not any other strategic communications.

I usually see their billboard and television adverts but they don't resonate with me. I don't see the need because I want their services to speak for them.

As for how she feel about the brand. She responded that, while she will keep using the line, she has no particular attachment to the company as she is just a customer the interviewee also is not bothered about comparisons between network providers.

I am not concerned. All I need is to be able to make and receive calls. Glo allows me to do that so it is the best for me.

INT 4 also reported that she feels satisfied with the brand. As the service meets all her moderate needs. Like many others, she indicates a very low level of brand involvement as she simply sees the brand as just another tool. The further interviewee reported that she has no intention of switching brands as she sees no reason to. Her motivation is that it will be break her contact with many customers, family, and friends if she were to switch brand saying, 'even when I lose my phone, I always retrieve the line.'

INT 4 can be categorized as a customer with spurious loyalty because, while she always recharges her line make regular calls on the network, she does not see any reason to recommend the brand to others and she definitely has no emotional attachment to the brand which means that she will not get angry about any scandal or any misdeed of the brand.

The fifth person to be interviewed (INT 5) was a male retiree within the age bracket 65-70. Though retired, he keeps an active social live as he tries to keep contact with children and grandchildren as well as friends and acquaintances. He uses his phone for calls and to check social networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube.

INT 5 became aware of the glo brand right at the brand positioning stage as Globacom communication limited was trying to break into the market dominated by two foreign owned operators.

Back then, subscribing to mobile phone was a luxury as the operator created artificial scarcity and kept prices highs. But glo came and branded itself as

an indigenous operator established to make mobile telephony affordable to everyone. We cheered when they started, and I was among the first set of subscribers.

The interviewee has also created a personalized image of the brand as a brand for Nigerians. Its activities have also shown that it loves Nigeria and Nigerians.

Glo is our own. People may like MTN because it has been around for long and its foreign, but I prefer glo because it is home grown, and it is competing successfully with other global brands.

The interviewee sees no reason to compare but says if he must choose the best, he will still choose glo because; ‘there is nothing others can do that glo cannot do even better’.

INT 5 also revealed that he is satisfied with the brand in all dimensions.

Look at the Customer Service centers, it is world class. The staff is world class, and the services are world class. The decorations and layout make me feel comfortable and all these posters of popular artistes gives the place a familiar look.

The interviewee also admitted that he does not subscribe to another network apart from glo because he sees no need for it.

INT 5 can be categorized as a customer with true loyalty because he has strong passion for the brand and he regularly patronizes the brand. It is likely that he would not be swayed any price change or minor changes in services as he indicated that he plans to use the glo line ‘forever’.

The sixth person to be interviewed (INT 6) was a male graduate who is into blogging and online marketing. He is within the age bracket 25-30. He has multiple devices, and his major activities include internet browsing and the use of social media networks with occasional voice calls

INT 6 perceives the glo brand as an established brand whose attributes are already known to everyone. To him ‘glo’ is all about data’. He learns more about the offerings of the brand by checking online information on the company’s website than the regular adverts.

Their adverts are cool, but the celebrities often steal the show and blunt the messages. Whenever we watch the adverts, we talk more about the narrator than the message.

When asked to compare the services of the brand with its competitors, INT 6 discloses that no other brand comes closer to glo in term of data and call rate. He also believes that glo is as ‘trendy’ as MTN which was once considered the most sophisticated brand.

People used to see glo as inferior or a brand for the masses but that’s no more the case. I can use glo and feel proud about it although they need to improve their reputation for slow internet.’ Overall, INT 6 seems satisfied with the glo brand services especially in the area of internet connection.

The interviewee also admitted that he uses more one sim cards but’ it’s not like switching because I use each one for specific purpose that it is most useful for. Glo is for data and I do not use any other line for data.

INT 6 can be categorised as a customer with true loyalty because he is committed to the brand and he regularly patronises the brand. He is making repeat purchase, but he does not see reason to shared word of mouth about the brand claiming that; ‘there is no need as everybody already know about glo’. This indicates that there might be problems adapting Dick and Basu (1994) loyalty models to this environment.

6.3 Overview of the Interviews

This section of the analysis will combine all the interview responses and look for common threads and divergences with the aim of answering the research questions formulated for the study such as “How does brand image impact on the brand loyalty of the glo brand?” “How does brand satisfaction affect the brand loyalty of the glo brand”? and, “What level of brand loyalty is demonstrated by customers of the glo brand?”. The aggregate of the responses will give an insight into the right answer to each question and guide the suggestions made for the commissioning company.

All the interviewees have a high level of awareness about the as it seems that the organisation has succeeded in exploiting various channels to communicate its branding messages to its target as indicated by INT 3 who was introduced to the brand through a sales drive. INT 6 on the other hand reported that he finds information about the brand online. INT 1, 2 4 and 5 however reported that they became aware through television commercials, outdoor posters and billboards.

Also, the interviewees have formed their personal image about the brand. The two outstanding image is that of the brand as a brand for bargain seekers who enjoy low rates at the expense of quality. The other is that of a major vendor of data. INT 1, INT 2 and INT 6 reported that they choose the brand for its great data rates. Only INT 5 who is an adult seems to have an emotional attachment to the brand which transcends any other consideration. This also shows that there is an effect of demographics on the brand image.

On brand satisfaction, majority of the interviewees seems satisfied with the services of the brand as each interviewee focus on the service which he expects from the brand. INT 3 and INT4 were focused on the voice call and they expressed their satisfaction with both the call quality and the tariffs. INT 5 is satisfied with all aspect of the brand and has no complaints while INT 1, INT 2 and INT 6 were satisfied with the data service and the customer services.

On brand loyalty, INT 1, INT 3and INT 5 exhibit total loyalty as they patronise the brand regularly and spread good reviews about the brand. INT 2, INT 4 and INT 6 however exhibited what can be termed spurious loyalty as they patronise the brand regularly and intended to continue their patronage but do not feel part of the brand well enough to promote it by word of mouth. Curiously, INT 6 believes that the brand is visible enough that it does not even need advertisement.

6.4 Discussion and Suggestion to Commissioner

After the analysis of the interview is presented, we move to the discussion of the findings to finally present a coherent answer to the research questions on which the study is based.

Alexandria & Cechia (2018) have emphasised the need to create proper awareness for the brand in order to create the right brand image. However, it seems that the brand communication of the commissioning company has lost touch with the customers. Nwazuluoke (2012, 87) observed that the activities of the commissioning company are more sales promotion than brand marketing. As reported by the interviewees, the use of celebrity endorsements is not effective in creating a bond between the brand and its customers.

This has resulted in a brand image which is not totally in alignment with the brand identity. Although half of the interviewee recognise the effort of the brand to reposition itself as the foremost internet service provided, the company has not properly addressed consumers' image of it as a brand focused on quantity rather than quality. Bacik et al. (2018) have emphasised the need for brands to be aware of customer perceptions and design proper communication strategies to drive a narrative which is favourable to them instead of leaving gaps which competitors or disgruntled customers can exploit to spread negative information about the brand.

The age of social media has called for a proactive messaging strategy to ensure that it builds a lasting relationship between itself and the customers. The need for effective brand relationship was explored by Jakonen (2017). It has been realised that simply building a brand is no longer enough, the brand should be properly managed in such a way that a lasting bond develops between it and the customers.

While customer loyalty is examined from both the behavioural and attitudinal angle, Dick and Basu (1994) proposed that the level of behavioural and attitudinal manifestations may not be equal due to various factors such as brand image and the ability of the brand to create a bond with the customer. This is somewhat exhibited in this study.

There is little bond between the brand and its customer. Despite the claim of Odoom (2016) that buying smart phones is a high involvement transaction and one would expect that subscribing to a mobile network which is expected to be used indefinitely will also be similar, only one of the interviewees (INT 5) seems involved with the brand. The response of the others seems to suggest they were talking about just a temporary product with very little impact on their lives.

Curiously, the existing customers are satisfied with the brand image and express satisfaction with the brand. This has led to a significant degree of brand loyalty. Half of the interviewees demonstrated what can be construed as true loyalty based on the constructs of Dick and Basu (1994) while the other half of the interviewees exhibit spurious loyalty simply because they show no emotional attachment to the brand and are unwilling to spread positive words about it although they regularly make use of it.

6.5 Suggestions to the Commissioner

From the discussion, it is obvious that the commissioning has more to do if it aims to achieve customer loyalty. Nwazuluoke (2012) has already identified the potential for the company as he outlined how the brand can leverage on its indigenous status to appeal to the patriotic sentiments of Nigerian customers even if this has to be modified in other markets. It can also lay emphasis on its undersea fiber-optic cable which it had laid from the United Kingdom to Nigeria with some heavy financial implications. This can be used to debunk the claim that it is all about quantity and not quality. This investment can also be promoted as the reason why the company can offer internet services at the rate that other simply do not dare. While it is possible that the company is already doing this, it must definitely look at the faces for its communication. Virtually all of the interviewees admitted that the use of celebrities distracts them from internalising the messages.

Rather, experts in various field who are expected to be knowledgeable can be used. For instance, well known bloggers can narrate how the internet services has made their job easier and more rewarding. This will look more credible than an actor simply waltzing around with a smartphone.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The study set out with the objective to examine how Globacom Telecommunications Limited, a Nigerian Telecom operator can deploy branding as a tool to achieve customer loyalty. Because the company is operating in a highly competitive industry that is fast approaching the saturation point, branding has become a veritable tool for ensuring that it can hold on to its customers. The study therefore focused on how a perfect alignment of the brand identity and brand image can lead to customer loyalty. It also examined whether customer satisfaction leads to customer loyalty. The findings show that the brand identity, brand image and brand satisfaction have significant effect on brand loyalty. Brand image which is formed by the consumers based on their perception of the brand identity, their own personalities and information from other sources varies among the customers and it has led to different levels of brand loyalty. Half of the respondents exhibit true loyalty while the other half show spurious loyalty.

The theoretical part of the study examined concepts such as brand, branding and elements of branding such as brand identity and brand image with a focus on how they help drive customer loyalty. Branding focuses on creating a set of identities for the organization and its products and services. The brand identity thus created is combined with other information on the part of the consumer to form brand image. It indicated that consumers are not always rational in forming images about a brand so brands develop a close relationship with consumers in order to ensure that the brand identity and brand image align together. The alignment determines the level of customer loyalty which was found to be a key objective of branding. It was shown that evaluating customer loyalty in the modern era demands a multidimensional approach. Before this, the approach was unidimensional with the only measure of customer loyalty being repeat purchase/patronage of a brand. The multidimensional approach combines both the behavioural approach with the attitudinal approach to mean that customer loyalty involves both the behavioural, shown by repeat purchase and attitudinal which is represented by brand commitment and the willingness to share good reviews about the brand.

The research was based on a mixed research method in which a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was employed as a result, a questionnaire and an interview guide was used to collect data from selected respondents. The questionnaire was administered on 30 respondents while six customers were interviewed through Zoom and telephone conversations based on the interview guide created for the study. The questions in the research instruments focused on getting information concerning branding constructs such as brand image and the brand identity and some of the questions focus on

the level of loyalty of the customers towards the commissioner's brand and how the brand image and brand identity impact on the level of loyalty expressed. A company representative was also interviewed to get an authoritative insight into the company's brand identity.

The result indicated that the commissioner has a strong brand identity which is based on effective services at affordable rates and an appeal to the sense of pride of the people by leveraging its status as an indigenous operator competing with foreigners on its own turf (its initial slogan was 'glo... with pride'). However, in rebranding itself as a leader in internet services whose data bundles surpasses that of its competitors, the company did not properly manage its brand identities which affected the brand image changed consequently, brand loyalty. The result was that while half of the customers exhibit true loyalty, the other half exhibit spurious loyalty which is characterized by repeat patronage but lack of emotional attachment to the brand.

The competition in the telecommunication industry is fierce and achieving customer loyalty is an herculean task due to the fact each brand be easily substituted for the other without an hitch. So, differentiation through branding is more difficult. What is important in a situation like this is a new strategy which emphasizes deep relationship with the customers as the brand must develop a clear cut, lovable personality to which consumers can relate.

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Cover Letter

Centria University of Applied Sciences
Runebergsgatan 8
68600 Jakobstad
Finland

Dear Respondent,

I am a student of Centria University of Applied Sciences, Finland and I am presently carrying out a research work for my final thesis, on the topic **BRANDING AS A TOOL FOR CUSTOMER LOYALTY** with a focus on Globacom Communication Limited (Glo). I crave your indulgence to respond to the questions and statements that follows as accurately as they apply to you.

I assure you that any information you supply is confidential and will be used solely for research purposes. Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

Interview Guide

Branding as a tool for customer loyalty
Glo Telecommunication Limited, Nigeria

INTERVIEW GUIDE

From the interview, the interviewer would have recorded the sex (Male or Female) of the respondent/interviewee, profession as well as the age bracket of respondents.

1. How long have you been a glo subscriber?
2. have you seen glo adverts on TV and the internet?
3. How do you feel when you see glo advert on TV?
4. People in my surrounding have positive perceptions of glo.
5. What do you think about the claim by glo that it is the 'grandmaster of data'?
6. I would you rate the glo brand in comparison to other service providers.
7. Do you believe glo takes you seriously as a customer.
8. Does Glo offers a wider product range, better service and wider coverage than its competitors.
9. Do you think glo is highly innovative.
10. Does Glo has highly skilled employees who can solve any problems you may have.
11. How would you describe your experience with the glo network?
12. How many telecommunication service provider sim cards are you using? Why?
13. What another telecommunication service provider are you using?
14. One thing that can't make you trade the glo network for any other.
15. One thing that can make you trade the glo network for any other.
16. Have you ever switched networks?
17. Do you plan to continue using the glo network?
18. Would you recommend glo products to others?
19. I will not subscribe to other networks unless the glo network is not available.
20. If you are subscribing to a mobile service in the future, will glo still be your choice.

Questionnaire

Section A: Demographics Information

Instruction: Please tick as applied to you.

1. What is your Gender? Male ; Female ; Prefer not to say
2. What your age range? * 19-29 ; 30-39 ; 40-49 ; 50-59 ; 60 and above
3. Occupation *
Professional Artisan Trader Student (Tertiary Institution) Others

Section B: Research Questions

Instruction: Please provide the response that most applies to you

4. How long have you been a glo subscriber? *
More than 10 years
6-9 years
1-5 years
less that a year
5. How frequently do you see glo adverts on TV and the internet? *
Daily
Twice a week
Weekly
Occasionally
Never
6. How do you feel when you see glo advert on TV? *
Happy
Inspired
Angry
Unconcerned
7. What do you think about the claim by glo that it is the 'grandmaster of data'? *
Strongly Agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

8. People in my surrounding have positive perceptions of glo *

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

9. What do you think about the claim by glo that it is the 'grandmaster of data'? *

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

10. glo takes all its customers seriously *

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

11. the glo brand is better compared to other service providers. *

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

12. Glo offers a wider product range, better service and wider coverage than its competitors. *

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

13. glo is highly innovative. *

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

14. Glo has highly skilled employees who can solve any problems its customers may have *

Strongly Agree []

Agree []

Disagree []

Strongly Disagree []

15. How would you describe your experience with the glo network? *

Excellent []

Good []

Fair []

Poor []

16. What other telecommunication service provider are you using? *

MTN []

Airtel []

9Mobile []

Smile []

Others []

17. One thing that can't make you trade the glo network for any other. *

Affordable Data rate []

Affordable call rate []

Quality of Service []

Customer Service []

18. Do you plan to continue using the glo network? *

Yes [] No [] Maybe []

19. Would you recommend glo products to others? *

Yes [] No [] Maybe []

20. I will not subscribe to other networks unless the glo network is not available *

Yes [] No [] Maybe []