Ego-Identity as Determinants of University- Community Preference for GSM Service Providers in Ondo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) operation has grown very rapidly to become a highly competitive business in the country. The popular network providers in Nigeria are MTN, Globacom (Glo), Airtel and Etisalat now 9mobile. The study investigated the strength of Ego-identity as determinants of university-community preference for GSM service providers in Ondo State, Nigeria. One research question and one hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 38,631 undergraduate students, teaching and non-teaching staff of the four universities who were subscribers to the different service providers in Ondo State, Nigeria. Ten percent of the population was sampled, 3,865. Guttman split-half method was used for reliability of the study with r-value of Ego Identity, 0.783. Questionnaires were properly filled and used for analysis. The research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics, standard deviation and percentage. The hypotheses were tested using Discriminant Function Analysis at .05 level of significance. The results showed that ego identity (Wilks Lambda 0.583 $F_{(3,861)}$ 918.709 P<0, 05) classifying 28.2% of respondent's preferences. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among others, that the network providers should train and retrain their staff on how to rendered satisfactory services to their customers. The university community should endeavor to subscribe to the network that have high quality in order to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of its members*

KEYWORDS: ego-identity, network providers, preference.

INTRODUCTION

Preference is a condition or circumstance in which one has the ability or chance to make a choice. Preference is a profound affinity for one object over another. It refers to the ability and freedom to make choices. Preference refers to an individual's attitude towards a certain collection of things, which is evident in their decision-making process. Preference refers to an evaluative judgement

that involves expressing a like or disliking towards an item. This concept is commonly used in the field of psychology (Scherer, 2005).

Decision-making processes may significantly alter preferences, even unconsciously. Preference encompasses the assumptions made while ranking alternatives based on the level of happiness, satisfaction, gratification, enjoyment, or usefulness they offer. This process leads to an ideal selection, whether it is an actual or hypothetical decision. This study noted that a significant number of users exhibit a preference for one network over another and engage with two or more network providers simultaneously. There are several variables that impact subscribers' preferences for network providers. These factors might include aspects of the service itself, the individuals using the service, external influences, or environmental conditions.

Nigeria's communication industry has seen exponential expansion, earning it the reputation as one of the world's fastest-growing GSM markets. Consequently, several service providers have emerged in response to this trend. The prominent telecommunications companies in Nigeria are MTN, Globacom (Glo), Airtel, and Etisalat, which is currently known as 9mobile. These service providers vie for customers' loyalty, which is determined by the consumers' preferences.

Ego refers to an individual's perception of their own identity. It encompasses several mental processes like evaluation, acceptance, assessment of reality, regulation, strategic thinking, protection, integration of knowledge, cognitive abilities, and retention of information. The ego safeguards an individual's integrity, and all the elements that contribute to the ego's power enhance its sense of self (Roazen, 2005). The process of ego identification influences the existence of every virtuous individual. Cognitive, emotional, and physical experiences are meticulously organised into highly stable and inflexible structures. Ego identity, sometimes known as self-identification, pertains to an individual's perception of oneself or one's own identity. Ego identity undergoes development from childhood to adolescence.

Nugent (2013) posits that ego is acquired gradually via the process of human growth. The formation of ego occurs during early adulthood and is influenced by early developmental experiences. The object relation theory has emerged as the prevailing psychoanalytic hypothesis for the formation of the ego. The development of ego predominantly occurs through the assimilation of early experiences into coherent cognitive frameworks. The ego structures are mental frameworks composed of memories that have been organised via processes such as assimilation, introjection, identification, integration, synthesis, and others. These frameworks form an overarching schema that shapes the self. Ego identity is strongly correlated with the preference for GSM network providers. Individuals seek for network providers that align with their self-image and seamlessly integrate with them. Subscribers of different networks have specific objectives to accomplish, either in the short or long term, while selecting their preferred network provider. The link between choice and ego identification refers to an individual's view of self and thought processes that will impact their decision-making in order to fulfil their requirements.

GSM operation has become a highly competitive business among the service providers, the growth of communication in business has triggered the existence of many service providers. The popular network providers in Nigeria are MTN, Globacom (Glo), Airtel and Etisalat (now 9mobile).

These network providers are competing for customers and the retention of the new and old customers, it was observed by the researcher that many customers do switch from one service provider to the other frequently, some operates with two or three of the network providers and some customers stay put with one service provider for reasons best known to them. Although many of the service providers often engage in intense promotion and also launch customer care services with a view to attracting new customers and retaining the old ones, the customers still have preferences for the service providers of their choice. In the light of the above, this study examined the extent to which ego identity determines the university- community preferences for GSM service providers.

The study was to examine ego-identity as discriminant of university community preference for GSM service providers. Specifically, the study determined the strength of ego identity as discriminant of university-community preference for GSM service provider.

Research Question

1. What is the strength of ego-identity as determinant of university-community preference for GSM service provider?

Research Hypothesis

1. Ego identity will not significantly have determined university-community preference for GSM service providers in Ondo State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The study is built on Choice Theory. Choice Theory was propounded by psychiatrist William Glasser (1998). The theory pointed out that we are motivated by a never-ending quest to satisfy our five basic needs woven into our genes. The theory contends that we are internally motivated not externally motivated by rewards and punishment. Choice Theory suggests that we always have some capacity to make choices and exercise control in our lives. The theory says that we are always motivated by what we need.

Concept of Ego Identity

According to Ferlic (2005), Ego is the construct of the mind, Ego is a product of the mind and we will always have one as long as mind holds a memory. Roger (2015) defined ego identity as the sense of identity that provides individuals with the ability to experience their sense of who they are, and also act on that sense, in a way that has continuity and sameness. Ego identity is the sense of connection or belonging between a person and a particular social–religious, or political group, the values of which a person share.

Farlex (2012) contributed that ego is the sense of one's identity. The ego's sense of self, it is simply who we think we are. Ego is something that can be getting rid of, it is either active or inactive. Ego identity is the sense of identity that provides individuals with the ability to experience their sense of who they are and also act on that sense in a way that has continuity and sameness. Ego identity is the key element in a person's development and the adolescent period has been noted as a crucial time in shaping that development.

Ego identity is the key element in a person's development and the adolescent period has been noted as a crucial time in shaping that development. 'Erikson believed that childhood is very important in personality development. Ego is an identity of one's own construction, an identity which is false, it takes all the beliefs of what one is, belief about personality, talents and abilities. Ego hindes behind the 'I' and 'me', those are the declarative words about our identity (Warmerdam, 2013). The pattern or the particular psychic organization provides the direction of action, while the activity provides the drive to act.

Our ego identity is constantly changing due to new experiences and information one acquire in a daily interaction with others. New stage of development is faced with a new challenge that can help further develop or hinder the development of identity.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research survey. The population are undergraduate students, teaching and non-teaching staff of universities in Ondo State who were subscribers to each of the various popular service providers in Ondo State, Nigeria. The popular network providers in Nigeria are: MTN, Globacom (Glo), Airtel and Etisalat (now 9mobile). There are four universities in Ondo State. These are: Federal University of Technology, Akure (Students 17,597, Teaching staff 948 and Non-teaching 1556, total 20,101) Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko (Students 14,000, Teaching staff 500 and Non-teaching staff 690) , University of Science and Technology, Okitipupa (Students 1,849, Teaching staff 55 and Non-teaching 338, total 2,242), and University of Medical Sciences, Ondo State (Students 800, Teaching staff 139 and Non-teaching 159, total 1,098). The four universities have 34,246 students, 1,642 Teaching staff and 2,743 non-teaching staff totaling 38,631. (Source: Registries and Admission Offices of the Universities in Ondo State, 2017).

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample, the sample for this study are three thousand, and eight hundred and sixty-five (3,865) respondents, i.e. 10 per cent of the population. Federal University of Technology Akure (Students 1,760, Teaching staff 95, Non-teaching staff 156, total 2,011), Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko (Students 1,400, Teaching staff 50, Non-teaching staff 69, total 1,519), Ondo State University of Science and Technology, Okitipupa (Students 185, Teaching staff 06, Non-teaching staff 34, total 225) and University of Medical Sciences, Ondo (Students 80, Teaching staff 14, Non-teaching staff 16, total 110).

A questionnaire entitled 'University Community Preference for GSM Service Providers Questionnaire (UCPGSP) was used for data collection for this study. The questionnaire has one section, respondent name, institution, faculty, department, unit/division, status, Ego Identity Scale (EIS) was adapted and used to collect information on Ego Identity and Preference for GSM Service Providers. Ego Identity Scale (EIS) was developed by Erikson in 1950 and 1959. The scale is short, easily designed, and highly objective. Ego Identity scale is a 12-item paired scale. In each pair, one statement relates to ego identity and the other to diffused identity.

Scale was rated using 4-paired Likert scale. The present study adapted the scale and developed 24 items; the instrument was revalidated. For validity, the scale was given to experts and supervisors for face and construct validity. Unnecessary contents were removed and corrections were done. For reliability, the instrument was pilot tested on sample of 30 who were not included as sample in the main study. The sample was taken from University of Nsukka, Ikere Campus, Ekiti State. The instrument was administered on the sample once. The data collected on the test was analysed adopting Gultman Split-half method and an R-value of 0.783 was obtained indicating that the instrument is reliable for the study.

The researcher sought permission from Heads of Department before collecting data. The researcher and two trained research assistants administered the instrument. The instrument was given personally to the network subscribers in the study area. The researcher and the trained research assistant attended to all questions and gave instructions to the respondents. The administration of the instrument took four months. The schools were in section; all the students were fully available. Some collected it with joy, asking different questions although there were challenges of pleading to the staff and students to collect the questionnaire, they gave different reasons and some reluctantly collected it and filled. After filling the instrument, completed copies of the questionnaire were retrieved from the respondents, 3,863 copies of the instrument were distributed, only 3,671 copies were found to be properly filled and used for analysis.

The data generated for research questions was analyzed using descriptive statistics which are presented through charts (Pie and Bar charts) mean, standard deviation and percentage, while hypotheses was analyzed using discriminant Function analysis. (DFA) at 0.05 of significance.

RESULTS

3865 copies of the instruments were distributed, only 3671 copies were found to be properly filled. Descriptive statistics and discriminant analysis was used.

Table 1: Percentage Frequency of Currently used Network by the Respondents

Networks	Used	Not Used
MTN	2532 (69%)	1139 (31%)
GLO	2072 (56.4%)	1599 (43.6%)
AIRTEL	905 (24.6%)	2766 (75.4%)
ETISALAT (9 Mobile)	482 (13.1%)	3189 (86.9%)

The result presented in Table 1 revealed the mobile connections that are currently being used by the respondents. The table revealed that 2,532 (69%) of the respondents are using MTN network. The respondents using GLO network represent 2,072 (56.4%), AIRTEL represents 905(24.6%) and ETISALAT (9 mobile) represents 482 (13.1%). This implies that all the network service providers were currently being used in the selected study areas. However, the degree of use of one network service varies to the other.

Research Question 1: What is the strength of ego-identity as discriminant of university community preference for GSM service provider?

Table 2: Strength of Ego-Identity as Determinant of University Community Preference for GSM Service Provider

Table 2, presents the strength of ego identity as discriminant of university community preference for GSM service provider. The grand mean value (2.69) of respondents on ego identity was greater than 2.50 decision level. These indicated that many of the respondents agreed that they enjoy using preferred network at their own time, pace and not in the club or group. The users usually daydream on the benefits derived and not problems encountered from network line. However, whenever there is disappointment from the network, there is doubts as to the quality of service and ability of their service provider. The respondents stated that the evaluation of the success or failure of their network service provider depends on a given situation for which they use the service and in order to achieve goals, they formulate ideas that will be of help. The reason for this improvisation is that, the present service render by the network service provider has a lot in stock for the customer in the future.

The respondents are of the opinion that no matter what they encountered in their network service provider; they will continue using it because of their preference for the network service provider. This shows that ego identity as discriminant of university- community preference for GSM service provider was fairly relevance in the choice of GSM service provider.

Ego identity was another variable identified in the study to significantly discriminate university community preference for GSM service providers in Ondo State. The discriminate function correctly classifies about 28.2 percent. This indicated that many of the respondents opined that they enjoy using their preferred network at their own time, at their own pace and not in the club or group. The users usually daydream on the benefits derived and not problems encountered from network line. However, whenever there is disappointment from the network, there is doubts as to the quality of service and ability of their service provider. The study showed that the evaluation of the success or failure of their network service provider depends on a given situation for which they use the service and in order to achieve goals, the customers formulate ideas that will be of help. They are of the opinion that no matter what they encountered in their network service provider; they will continue using it because of their preference for their MTN network service provider. Roger (2015) stated that ego identity is the ability to experience their sense of who they are, and also act in a way that has continuity and sameness. This shows that it is a discriminant of university-community preference for GSM service provider is relevant in the choice of GSM service provider.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: Ego identity will not significantly discriminate university-community preference for GSM service providers in Ondo State.

S/N	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1.	I enjoy using my network in clubs and with youth groups.	2.34	0.45	Disagreed
2.	I enjoy using my network at my own time.	3.15	0.89	Agreed
3.	When I am thinking on my network, it is primarily on the benefits I derive from my network line.	3.32	0.79	Agreed
4	When I am thinking on my network, it is primarily on the problems I encounter from my network line.	2.36	0.34	Disagreed
5	No matter how well my network provider satisfies me, I always have the mind of using another network.	2.18	0.36	Disagreed
6.	Whenever there is disappointment from my network, I do not have doubts as to the quality of service of my service provider.	3.14	0.86	Agreed
7.	I have doubt as to the kind of my network provider and their abilities.	1.73	0.55	Disagreed
8	I formulate ideas on how to achieve my goals with my network provider.	3.24	0.99	Agreed
9.	The success or failure of my network Service Provider depends on a given situation for which I use the service.	3.36	0.83	Agreed
10.	The evaluation of my service provider remains about the same in most situations.	2.24	0.37	Disagreed
11.	I agree that it is sometimes necessary and even good having competition with other network provider.	2.67	0.56	Agreed
12.	Often I do not see the need for competition.	2.28	0.32	Disagreed
13.	Sometimes i don't know what I am expected from my network Service provider.	2.35	0.35	Disagreed

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14.	It is clear with the present service render that my network service provider has a lot in stock for the customer in the future.	3.41	0.39	Agreed
15.	What I demanded for myself and what others demand of me are often in conflict concerning my network provider.	1.83	0.40	Disagreed
16.	To avoid conflict, I do what others demanded from me	2.28	0.33	Disagreed
17.	I discipline myself not to change to another network, Whenever I am confronted with a network problem.	2.19	0.43	Disagreed
18.	Often when confronted with a network problem, I find myself thinking to go for another network provider	3.67	0.77	Agreed
19.	My philosophy of life makes me to be using this network Service only.	3.58	0.79	Agreed
20.	Because of uncertain nature of life, I use several networks.	2.45	0.34	Disagreed
21.	I voice out my opinion about my network provider even if it appears to be the only one in the group.	3.07	0.87	Agreed
22.	I keep quiet than to voice my opinion about my service provider in the group when I discover a problem with my service provider.	2.39	0.90	Disagreed
23.	The Short Message Service (SMS) from my service provider controls my emotion.	3.26	0.95	Agreed
24.	The SMS from my service provider makes me to lose control of my emotion.	2.08	0.54	Disagreed
	Grand Value	2.69	0.59	Agreed

Table 3: Tests of Equality of Group Means

	Wilks' Lambda	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Ego Identity	.583	918.709	3	3861	.000

The analysis in Table 3 Revealed that the values of Wilks lambda static for ego identity (0.583) is small, this can be interpreted that these predicators contribute to the discriminant function. Moreover, the F-values (918.709) and P-value of this predicator is significant at 0.05 level of significance. This led to the rejection of the hypothesis. Hence, ego identity will significantly determine university-community preference for GSM service providers in Ondo State.

Table 4.: Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients

	Function
	1
Ego Identity	.221

Table 4 revealed that the ego identity with canonical coefficient of 0.221 contributes in the model. This means that ego identity contributed discriminating to GSM service provider.

Table 5: Classification Results

		Preference for GSM	Predicted Group Membership				Total
			MTN	GLO	Airtel	Etisalat mobile)	(9
Original	Count	MTN	1961	0	3	0	1964
		GLO	956	0	16	0	972
		Airtel	53	0	481	0	534
		Etisalat (9 mobile)	100	0	101	0	201
	%	MTN	99.9	.0	.1	.0	100.0
		GLO	98.4	.0	1.6	.0	100.0
		Airtel	9.9	.0	90.1	.0	100.0
		Etisalat (9 mobile)	49.8	.0	50.2	.0	100.0

Table 5 revealed the classification matrix which shows low hit ratio. The discriminate function correctly classifies about 28.2 percent. The discriminate function fairly discriminates between categories of GSM service providers.

CONCLUSION

MTN was preferred mostly out of all the network providers, with this the subscribers were happily using it, not minding any problem they may encounter. The users were not easily influence. Ego hindes   behind the 'I' and 'me', those are the declarative words about our identity. The study concludes that ego identity is significant in determining university community preference for GSM service providers in Ondo State. The findings of the study indicated that service quality of the MTN makes them to have more subscribers than the other network providers.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in the study.

1. The university community should endeavor to subscribe to the network that have high quality in order to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of its members
2. The network providers should train and retrain their staff on how to rendered satisfactory services to their customers.
3. The service providers should always carry out a study to identify their strength, weakness, opportunity and threats, this will enable them to improve in the services render.

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