

IMPACT OF CELEBRITY EXPERTISE ON BRAND LOYALTY AMONG GSM SUBSCRIBERS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study focused on examining the effects of celebrity expertise on brand loyalty in the Nigerian telecommunications sector, while multiple celebrity endorsement serves as moderating variable. Cross-sectional survey research design was used. The population of the study consisted of 160,520,993 telecommunications subscribers as at August, 2018. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample size of 1,200 using Krejcie and Morgan formula. Validated questionnaire was used to collect data. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients for all major constructs of the instrument ranged from 0.73 to 0.83. Data were analysed using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Customers' perception of celebrity expertise had a positive moderate significant relationship with their brand loyalty to a telecom service provider ($r = 0.558, p < 0.05$); Multiple celebrity endorsement of a telecom service provider had a significant effect on the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty ($F_{(2, 1195)} = 2484.682, p < 0.05, \text{Adj. } R^2 = 0.327$). The study concluded that celebrity expertise exerts a great influence on brand loyalty. Telecom service subscribers should base their adoption of telecom services being promoted by celebrity on expertise of the endorser among others.

Keywords: Brand loyalty, Celebrity expertise, Multiple-celebrity endorsement, Telecommunications, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The drive to catch telecom subscribers' attention in Nigeria's telecom market remains a constant phenomenon among telecom service providers to create interest, arouse desire and engender improved market share. In order to achieve this objective, marketing communication practitioners often engage individuals who have achieved fame and popularity to promote and endorse their products and services to have competitive advantage and experience growth. According to Audi, Al-Masri & Ghazzawi(2015), the idea of featuring celebrities in a brand advertisement is applied for the purpose of strengthening the image of the brand in question, creating an emotional and psychological bond with the customer, and thus enhancing a long-term brand loyalty.

Celebrity endorsement, as form of advertising, is used to promote products and services primarily to engender sales and secondly to create a brand identity and communicate a very important change in the brand. Apejoye (2013) asserts that if properly used, celebrity endorsement can serve as an important role in developing product equity and enhancing a product's competitive position in market. Many companies and even literature have realized the importance of celebrity endorsement as a marketing communication tool used to capture audience and customers (Belch and Belch, 2001).

Celebrities are people who enjoy public recognition by a large share of a certain group of people and they have distinctive characteristics, such as attractiveness and trustworthiness (Silvera and Austad, 2004). Celebrities are individuals who are known to the public through their achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed (Johansson & Sparredal, 2002).

In order for the endorsement to be efficient and effective certain attributes should be communicated through the celebrity to the consumers. These include knowledge, skill and expertise concerning the brand. Expertise has been conceptualized in literature as authoritativeness, competence and qualification (Magnini, Honeycutt and Cross, 2008). Endorsers are considered to be 'experts' when they endorse products related to areas that have made them popular (Biswas, Biswas & Das, 2006). This remains the fundamental background that informed the concept behind this study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The success of any celebrity endorsement arrangement would depend on characteristics such as trustworthiness, likeness, attractiveness and expertise (Zipporah & Mberia, 2014). Celebrity endorser's expertise is a true sign of professionalism and has encouraging effect on receiver's loyalty (Ohanian, 1990). Data made available by the Nigerian Communications Commission indicates that there are over 172,000,000 registered subscribers in Nigeria as at December 31, 2018. However, a study conducted by Kendall and Rudd (2011) revealed that globally an average telecom service subscriber switches service providers every twenty seven (27) months. The study by Kendall and Rudd led credence to the reality of divided loyalty in the telecom sector.

According to Helm (2007), there is a widespread managerial and academic interest in loyalty of other stakeholder groups, such as customers and employees. However, Fill (2009) notes that many customers display elements of curiosity in their purchase habits, enjoy variety and are happy to switch brands as a result of marketing communication activities and products experience. Despite the controversies on the use of promotional tools to build loyalty, the growth of loyalty programmes has been a significant promotional development in recent years (Kolter & Armstrong, 2006). Moreover,

in consumer setting, investigations of various dimensions of celebrity endorsement as determinants of brand loyalty have led to inconsistent results and remain a matter of debate (ZarBari-Nwitambu&Kalu, 2017).

Therefore, the focus of this study is to examine the perception of telecom service subscribers in Nigeria on celebrity expertise and its influence on brand loyalty; using multiple-celebrity endorsement as intervening variable.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In view of the identified problem, the objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty in the telecoms sector in Nigeria; and
2. investigate the moderating effects of multiple celebrity endorsement on the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty in the telecoms sector in Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What is the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty in the Nigerian telecommunications sector?
2. To what extent does multiple celebrity endorsement moderate the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty in the Nigerian telecommunications sector?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses formulated below have been developed to investigate the research topic.

H₁1: Celebrity expertise has a significant relationship with brand loyalty.

H₁2: Multiple celebrity endorsement has a significant effect on the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

In this section, it is imperative to present different thoughts, views, opinions, ideas, perceptions and beliefs of previous scholars on the subject matter of celebrity endorsements, celebrity expertise and brand loyalty. Celebrity endorsement is a way to get a brand noticed among its contemporaries in a market place, which might affect consumers' purchase intention and attitudes toward the product (Lutz, MacKenzie, and Belch, 1983). Ahmed, Mir and Farooq (2012), state that celebrity endorsement is the best tool of advertisement to get most targeted audience and catch their attention, thereby having significant effect on financial returns and helps to get competitive advantage.

Endorsement arrangements are used for various purposes such as getting attention from consumer and penetrating commercial clutter (Zipporah and Mberia, 2014). The high cost of engaging celebrity for endorsement suggests that organizations should plan the programme well in order to add value through clever execution devices, designed to create consumers' awareness (Liu, 2009). Chaudhary and Asthana (2015), assert that for a celebrity endorser to be well accepted by members of the public, he/she must exhibit certain unique characteristics that are capable of projecting the image of the firm and its product high if employed.

The concept of expertise as it relates to celebrity endorsement is defined as the extent to which an endorser is perceived to be a source of valid assertions or authority (Erdogan, 1999). With regard to endorsement, it is desirable that the celebrity is really an expert in the field. Amos, Holmes and Strutton,(2008) state that the level of celebrity expertise will determine its effectiveness. In other words, the more expertise a celebrity is the more effective his or her endorsement would be. Moreover, the expertise of a celebrity will not be changed by negative publicity, but the believability and credibility will be negatively influenced.

In addition, the expertise of a celebrity provides consumers with a more concrete information on the product offering, which can then lead to a favourable attitude towards the brand (Magnini, Honeycutt & Cross, 2008). It is against this backdrop that Malik and Qureshi (2016) remark that perceived expertise of the celebrity is concerned with the experience, knowledge, skill and ability of the celebrity concerned to promote the endorsed product. Moreover, the level of expertise and competence displayed by a celebrity in getting his/her message across to the public will also determine the degree of his/her likability and admiration. Thus, consumers will tend to have a positive disposition towards a celebrity who is good at what he/she does, thereby commanding more attraction and followership.

The market terrain is changing on daily basis, customers are more educated, highly sensitive and above all, harder to please. They are smarter, more price sensitive, more demanding, less forgiving, and more pressured by many competitors with equal or better offers. The challenge therefore is to produce delighted customers and not merely satisfied customers. The delighted customers are the loyal customers. It is therefore imperative for every organization that strives or seeks to grow their sales and profits not to spend a lot of time and resources sourcing for new customers or increasing their customer base alone,

but need to enhance brand loyalty on sustainable basis. Loyalty as a concept has attracted much research attention. Loyalty at one level can be seen to be about increasing sales volume, i.e. fostering loyal purchase behaviour (Ballester&Aleman, 2001).

The concept of loyalty has attracted much research attention if only because of the recent and current popularity of this approach in the contemporary relationship marketing management. According to Helm (2007), there is a widespread managerial and academic interest in loyalty of other stakeholder groups, such as customers and employees. However, Fill (2009) notes that many customers display elements of curiosity in their purchase habits, enjoy variety and are happy to switch brands as a result of marketing communication activities and products experience. Despite the controversies on the use of promotional tools to build loyalty, the growth of loyalty programmes has been a significant promotional development in recent years (Kolter& Armstrong, 2006).

Helm (2007) remarks that loyalty can be understood as a behavioural attribute since individuals usually act according to an affective predisposition. Consequently, affective loyalty should be viewed as an antecedent to behavioural loyalty. Loyalty at one level can be seen to be about increasing sales volume, i.e. fostering loyal purchase behaviour (Ballester&Aleman, 2001). High levels of repeat purchase, however, are not necessarily an adequate measure of loyalty, as there may be a number of situational factors determining purchase behaviour, such as brand availability (Hanzaee&Farsani, 2011). However, according to Fill (2009), some of the more general types of loyalty are highlighted as:

- (a) Emotional loyalty is a true form of loyalty and is driven by person identified with real or perceived values and benefits;

- (b) Price loyalty is a typical form of loyalty that is driven by rational economic behaviour and the main motivations are cautious management of money or financial necessity;
- (c) Incentivised loyalty refers to promiscuous buyers; those with no one favourite brand and who demonstrate, through repeat experience, the value of becoming loyal;
- (d) Monopoly loyalty refers to the type of loyalty that arises where a customer has no purchase choice owing to a national monopoly. This, therefore, is not a true form of loyalty.

The loyalty schemes stated above suggest that consumers are capable of varying degrees of loyalty.

Loyalty is an important concept for marketers (Rundle-Thiele, 2004). A study conducted on executives in the lodging industry, for instance, has re-emphasized brand loyalty as a key to sustaining long-term business success (Nozar, 1999).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study is anchored on the innovation-diffusion theory. This theory was propounded by B. Ryan and N. Gross in 1943, and Everett Rogers in 1960. The main assumptions and principles of the theory are as follows:

1. Diffusion research centres on the conditions which increase or decrease the likelihood that a new idea, product or service will be adopted by consumers in a given market.
2. Diffusion of innovation theory predicts that marketing communication mix as well as interpersonal contacts provides information and influence opinion and judgement.
3. Opinion leaders exert influence on consumer behaviour via their personal contact, but additional intermediaries (called change agents) are also included in the process of diffusion.
4. The information flows through marketing networks, the nature of marketing networks and the roles opinion leaders

play in them determine the likelihood that the innovation will be adopted.

According to Rogers (1995), the innovation decision process is a mental process which an individual or other unit making decisions passes and the process consists of five stages:

1. Knowledge – exposure to an innovation and some understanding of how it functions;
2. Persuasion – formation of an attitude towards the innovation;
3. Decision – activity resulting in a choice to adopt or reject the innovation;
4. Implementation – putting the innovation to use; and
5. Confirmation – reinforcement or reversal of the innovation decision made.

Rogers also specifies five adopter categories classifying individuals or other decision-making units in their rate of adoption of an innovation:

1. Innovators – venturesome; eager to try new ideas; more cosmopolitan relationship than their peers.
2. Early Adopters – respectable localities; usually highest degree of opinion leadership within the social system.
3. Early Majority – deliberate; interact frequently within their peers but seldom hold leadership positions.
4. Late Majority – sceptical; often adopt an innovation because of economic necessity or increasing network pressure.
5. Laggards – traditional, most localite; many are near isolates; point of reference is the past.

The main thrust of the diffusion of innovation theory is how new ideas, products or services, and discoveries spread to consumers in a market system. Bittner (2003) emphasizes that, in the innovation diffusion process, the producer presents marketing promotional message that makes consumers aware of the existence of a product.

From there, the consumer get interested, constantly evaluate the product, takes a trial of the product and finally acquires it. Daramola (2003), on the other hand, stresses that the paradigm holds that the organizations have a crucial role to play in the process of diffusion of innovation because they create awareness among a large number of consumers at the same time.

The theory of innovation diffusion holds that there will be an increased rate of diffusion if potential adopters perceive the innovation:

1. To have a relative advantage: the relative degree to which it is perceived to be better than what it supersedes.
2. To be compatible with existing values, past experiences and needs.
3. As not overly complex, difficult to understand and use.
4. As trial-able: the degree to which it can be experimented with on a limited basis.
5. As offering observability: visible results (Rogers, 1995).

Innovation diffusion is characterized by passage of individuals and institutions through three stages. First, people 'play' with it, to find out its capabilities and limitations. In the second stage, they use the technology to assist them in their daily chores and responsibilities. In the third stage, they begin to use the innovation to help address new opportunities or problems which have not been addressed before the innovation (Anaeto, Onabajo & Osifeso, 2008).

Many innovations undergo radical changes from their original intentions, under local control. At the local level, individuals need to have the power to influence how the innovation is used in the sphere of interest. Resistance to innovation diffusion is a normal, natural and rational response. It is desirable to understand the leadership level needed to help people and institutions change this response (Anaeto *et al.*, 2008).

Empirical Review

Customer attitude regarding the brands and products are well enhanced by celebrities, but whether it generates repeat purchase intension and brand loyalty is not made explicit (Byrne & Whitehead, 2003). However, Nyarko *et al.* (2015) found that there is no evidence proving that the usage of celebrity endorsement will achieve stronger brand loyalty in comparison to a non-use of celebrity endorsement. In the work of Silvera and Austad (2004), they found that the expertise of an endorser correlates with the validity of the claims concerning the product, and is thus an important factor in increasing the persuasiveness of marketing messages.

ZorBari-Nwitambu&Kalu (2017) state that consumer will tend to have a positive disposition towards a celebrity who is good at what he/she does, thereby commanding more attraction and followership. Expertise is one of the main dimensions of celebrity endorsement (Ohanian, 1990). Some studies however have found the construct of celebrity expertise to be the most important dimension of celebrity endorsement (Maddux & Roggers, 1980; Sharma & Kumar, 2013). Therefore, suffice to conclude that the celebrity endorsement when in synchronization with the customer tastes can indeed lead to brand loyalty. Furthermore, celebrity endorsement as reflected in the endorser's perceived expertise improves the perceived quality of the brand and is correlated with repeat purchase intension (Kamins, Brand, Hoeke& Moe, 1989). In addition, Jain (2011) suggests that the use of celebrity in advertisements is positively affected on consumer brand attitude and repeat purchase intention while Nyarko *et al.* (2015) found that consumers are more likely to purchase and stay loyal to the endorsed brands being used and promoted by celebrities.

METHOD

This study adopted quantitative type of research and the design was cross-sectional survey research design to assess the influence of celebrity attractiveness on brand association vis-à-vis the moderating role of multiple-celebrity endorsement. Cross-sectional survey is used in social and behavioural sciences for investigating the nature, cause and effects of a phenomenon (Severin & Tankard 2001). The population of the study comprised all telephone users that cut across different federating units in Nigeria, totaling 160, 520,993 (NCC, 2018). Since the population of telecom service subscribers that operate the platforms of GSM technology is finite, the application of statistical formula becomes imperative in determining the sample size. The sample size for this study was determined using the formula for sample size determination for a finite population as expressed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). This is given by the formula below:

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where:

S = Desired Sample Size

X = Z value (e.g. 1.96 or 95% confidence level)

N = Population Size

P = Population proportion (expressed as a decimal and assumed to be 0.5 or 50%)

d = Degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion is 0.035 as a margin of error

With a working population of 160,520,993 active GSM subscribers (as at August 31, 2018) and at 0.035 degree of accuracy (error limit) using Krejcie and Morgan guide:

$$S = \frac{1.96^2 \times 160,520,993 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.035^2 (160,520,993-1) + 1.96^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{3.84 \times 160,520,993 \times 0.5(0.5)}{0.0012(160,520,992) + 3.84 \times 0.5(0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{3.84 \times 160,520,993 \times 0.25}{0.0012 \times 160,520,992 + 0.96}$$

$$S = \frac{154,100,152.32}{192,626.1504}$$

$$S = 799.99$$

$$S = 800$$

However, this sample size is small for factor analysis as far as Comrey and Lee's (1992) advice is concerned. Also, Simon and Burstein (1985), state that the sample size for research into human and institutional populations should be between 1,000 and 1,500 respondents. Therefore, 50% of the derived sample was added to achieve excellent result, in line with the suggestions of Comrey and Lee (1992) as cited in Howitt and Cramer (2008).

Therefore, the sample size = 800+400 = **1,200**

The instrument of data collection for this study is questionnaire with the consideration of Likert scale on a six-point interval scale in line with the research suggestions of Onigbinde and Odunlami (2014). The scores were coded 6 for Strongly Agree, 5 for Agree, 4 for Partially Agree 3 for Partially Disagree, 2 for Disagree and 1 for Strongly Disagree. The instrument was designed to obtain major sets of data, with focus on the customers' perceptions of various dimensions of celebrity attractiveness vis-a-vis brand association.

The research instrument was subjected to expert opinion validity (face validity) as used by Osuagwu (2004) and Onigbinde (2013). Senior academics specializing in marketing, mass communication and applied psychology validated the research instrument, in addition to expert opinion of some top-level executives in Advertising, Public Relations and Integrated Marketing

Communication. On the other hand, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of reliability were calculated for all the major research constructs adopted in the study.

The results at pilot stage indicate a high level of internal consistency among the constructs: celebrity attractiveness (0.71), multiple-celebrity endorsements (0.73), and brand association (0.71). Having all constructs exceeded the .70 benchmark for Cronbach's alpha reliability as recommended by Nunnally (1993), and having all the calculated Composite Coefficients of Reliability (CR) above the minimum threshold of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1993), the overall reliability of the whole scale is therefore guaranteed; hence, the internal consistency of the entire constructs is assured.

The data collection instrument was administered through one-on-one method with the aid of three trained Research Assistants. Subscribers that were selected as respondents to the questionnaire were those that have access and usage of GSM telecommunication services. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics, Pearson's Product-Moment correlation (PPMC) and multiple regressions.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive data on the constructs of celebrity expertise vis-à-vis multiple-celebrity endorsement and brand loyalty are given thus:

Table 1: Celebrity Expertise

Items	SA F (%)	A F (%)	PA F (%)	PD F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)	\bar{x}	SD
The celebrity endorsers engaged by my favourite telecom service provider are certainly competent	203 (16.9)	447 (37.3)	389 (32.4)	74 (6.2)	47 (3.9)	40 (3.3)	4.47	1.16
I do receive situational information (e.g. on consumer promo.) regarding the brand of telecom service I use through the celebrity endorsers engaged by my service provider	210 (17.5)	416 (34.7)	361 (30.1)	99 (8.3)	71 (5.9)	43 (3.6)	4.39	1.24
I gained better understanding on the brand of telecom service I use through the information provided by the celebrity endorsers	186 (15.5)	394 (32.8)	387 (32.3)	123 (10.3)	67 (5.6)	43 (3.6)	4.32	1.22
The celebrity endorsers engaged by my telecom service provider often make truthful statement on the usage of its brand of services	167 (13.9)	410 (34.2)	394 (32.8)	130 (10.8)	56 (4.7)	43 (3.6)	4.31	1.19
Average Mean							4.37	1.20

KEY: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, PA=Partially Agree, PD=Partially Disagree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree, ***Decision Rule if mean is ≤ 1.49 =Strongly Disagree; 1.5 to 2.49 = Disagree; 2.5 to 3.49 =Partially Disagree; 3.5 to 4.49= Partially Agree; 4.5 to 5.49= Agree; 5.5 to 6 = Strongly Agree

Table 1 depicts that participants partially agreed with the celebrity expertise scale ($\bar{x} = 4.37$). Participants partially agreed that: the celebrity endorsers engaged by their favourite telecom service provider were certainly competent ($\bar{x} = 4.47$), they received situational information (e.g. on consumer promo.) regarding the brand of telecom service they used through the celebrity endorsers engaged by their service provider ($\bar{x} = 4.39$), they gained better understanding on the

brand of telecom service they used through the information provided by the celebrity endorsers ($\bar{x} = 4.32$) and that the celebrity endorsers engaged by their telecom service provider often made truthful statement on the usage of its brand of services ($\bar{x} = 4.31$). From these, it could be inferred that there was partial celebrity expertise in the Nigerian telecommunication sector.

Table 2: Multiple Celebrity Endorsements

Items	SA F (%)	A F (%)	PA F (%)	PD F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)	\bar{x}	SD
Generally, I appreciate the use of many celebrity endorsements for the brand of telecom service being offered by my favourite service provider	226 (18.8)	385 (32.1)	361 (30.1)	130 (10.8)	53 (4.4)	45 (3.8)	4.39	1.24
Adoption of many celebrity endorsers by my favourite service telecom provider motivates me to use its brand telecom service more	182 (15.2)	432 (36)	399 (33.3)	84 (7.0)	59 (4.9)	44 (3.7)	4.39	1.19
Multiple celebrity endorsements enhance the liking for the brand of telecom service being offered by my favourite service provider	148 (12.3)	396 (33)	425 (35.4)	126 (10.5)	57 (4.8)	48 (4.0)	4.26	1.19
Involving multiple celebrity endorsers by my favourite telecom service provider makes me to be more passionate about its brand of service	116 (9.7)	436 (36.3)	402 (33.5)	150 (12.5)	60 (5.0)	36 (3.0)	4.24	1.14
Average Mean							4.32	1.19

KEY: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, PA=Partially Agree, PD=Partially Disagree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree, ***Decision Rule if mean is ≤ 1.49 =Strongly Disagree; 1.5 to 2.49 = Disagree; 2.5 to 3.49 =Partially Disagree; 3.5 to 4.49= Partially Agree; 4.5 to 5.49= Agree; 5.5 to 6 = Strongly Agree

Table 2 depicts that participants partially agreed with the multiple celebrity endorsement scale ($\bar{x} = 4.32$). Participants partially agreed that: generally, they appreciated the use of many celebrity endorsements for the brand of telecom service being offered by their favourite service provider ($\bar{x} = 4.39$), adoption of many celebrity endorsers by their favourite service telecom provider motivated them to use its brand telecom service more ($\bar{x} = 4.39$), multiple celebrity endorsements enhanced the liking for the brand of telecom service being offered by their favourite service provider ($\bar{x} = 4.26$), and that involvement of multiple celebrity endorsers by their favourite telecom service provider made them to be more passionate about its brand of service ($\bar{x} = 4.24$). This implies that there was partial multiple celebrity endorsement in the Nigerian telecommunication sector.

Table 3: Brand Loyalty

Items	SA F (%)	A F (%)	PA F (%)	PD F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)	\bar{x}	SD
I would retrieve my SIM card if damaged, stolen or lost to remain on my favourite telecoms network	518 (43.2)	399 (33.3)	174 (14.5)	41 (3.4)	38 (3.2)	30 (2.5)	5.02	1.18
I would consider my favourite telecom service provider a first choice always and in all ways	299 (24.9)	517 (43.1)	250 (20.8)	70 (5.8)	42 (3.5)	22 (1.8)	4.75	1.11
I would encourage friends and family members to patronize the brand of telecom service being offered by my service provider	278 (23.2)	497 (41.4)	313 (26.1)	66 (5.5)	27 (2.3)	19 (1.6)	4.73	1.05
I would say positive things to other people within my sphere of influence about the brand of telecom services being offered by my favourite service provider	287 (23.9)	497 (41.4)	298 (24.8)	54 (4.5)	35 (2.9)	27 (2.3)	4.72	1.10
I would recommend the brand of telecom service being offered by my service provider to someone who seek my opinion	217 (18.1)	579 (48.3)	275 (22.9)	74 (6.2)	36 (3.0)	19 (1.6)	4.68	1.04
Average Mean							4.78	1.10

KEY: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, PA=Partially Agree, PD=Partially Disagree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree, ***Decision Rule if mean is ≤ 1.49 =Strongly Disagree; 1.5 to 2.49 = Disagree; 2.5 to 3.49 =Partially Disagree; 3.5 to 4.49= Partially Agree; 4.5 to 5.49= Agree; 5.5 to 6 = Strongly Agree

Table 3 indicates that participants agreed with the brand loyalty scale ($\bar{x} = 4.78$). Participants agreed that: they would retrieve their SIM card if damaged, stolen or lost to remain on their favourite telecoms network ($\bar{x} = 5.02$); they would consider their favourite telecom service provider a first choice always and in all ways ($\bar{x} = 4.75$), they would encourage friends and family members to patronize the brand of telecom service offered by their service provider ($\bar{x} = 4.73$), they would say positive things to other people within their sphere of influence about the brand of telecom services being offered by their favourite service provider ($\bar{x} = 4.372$) and that they would recommend the brand of telecom service offered by their service provider to someone who sought their opinion ($\bar{x} = 4.68$). This suggests that there was a brand loyalty in the Nigerian telecommunication sector.

Test of Hypotheses

The pre-test level of significance for this study was 0.05. The hypotheses presumed that there was a significant influence between the variables under consideration. If the P-value which indicated the significance or the probability value was greater than the pre-test level of significance ($P > 0.05$), the hypothesis stated in alternate form was rejected. However, if the p-value was less than or equal to 0.05 ($P \leq 0.05$), the hypothesis was accepted.

H11: Celebrity expertise has a significant relationship with brand loyalty.

Research Question One: What is the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty in the Nigerian telecommunications sector?

Table 4 Pearson Product Moment Correlation Showing the Relationship between Celebrity Expertise and Brand Loyalty

Constructs		Brand Loyalty
Pearson Correlation	1	0.558**
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
N	1200	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows that celebrity expertise had a positive moderate significant relationship with brand loyalty ($r = 0.558$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that improved celebrity expertise was associated with better brand loyalty. Therefore, increase in celebrity expertise led to improved brand loyalty and vice versa in the Nigerian telecommunications sector. Consequently, the hypothesis that celebrity expertise has a significant relationship with brand loyalty was accepted.

H₁₂: Multiple celebrity endorsement has a significant effect on the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty.

Research Question Two: To what extent does multiple celebrity endorsement moderate the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty in the Nigerian telecommunications sector?

Table 5a ANOVA & Model Summary Testing Significant Effect of Multiple Celebrity Endorsement on the Relationship between Celebrity Expertise and Brand Loyalty

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4711.516	1	4711.516	540.265	0.000
Residual	10430.022	1196	8.721		
Total	15141.539	1197			
Regression	4969.364	2	2484.682	291.894	0.000
Residual	10172.175	1195	8.512		
Total	15141.539	1197			

Model 1:

R= 0.558

R Square = 0.311

Adjusted R Square = 0.311

Model 2:

R= 0.573

R Square = 0.328

Adjusted R Square = 0.327

Table 5a shows the ANOVA and model summary computations in relation to the test of significant effect of multiple celebrity endorsement on the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty.

Table 5b Stepwise Regression Testing the Significant Effect of Multiple Celebrity Endorsement on the Relationship between Celebrity Expertise and Brand Loyalty

Model	Construct	B	r	T	Sig.
	(Constant)	10.951		27.846	0.000
	Celebrity Expertise	0.631	0.558	23.244	0.000
	(Constant)	10.085		24.057	0.000
	Celebrity Expertise	0.479	0.423	12.443	0.000
	Multiple Celebrity Endorsements	0.216	0.187	5.504	0.000
Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty					

Table 5a and Table 5b indicate that multiple celebrity endorsement had a significant effect on the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty ($p < 0.05$). The first model indicates that celebrity expertise significantly influenced brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.631$, $T = 23.244$, $p < 0.05$; Adj. $R^2 = 0.311$). The introduction of multiple celebrity endorsement in the second model showed that the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty was improved with 1.6 percent Adj. R square change ($F_{(2, 1195)} = 2484.682$, $p < 0.05$, Adj. $R^2 = 0.327$). This suggests that multiple celebrity endorsement improved the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty. The implication of this is that multiple celebrity endorsement should be used to make the effect of celebrity expertise result in better brand loyalty. Therefore, the hypothesis that multiple celebrity endorsement has a significant effect on the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty was accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study investigated the influence of celebrity expertise on brand loyalty in telecommunication services among GSM subscribers in Nigeria, using multiple-celebrity endorsement as moderator. Table 4 shows that celebrity expertise had a positive moderate significant relationship with brand loyalty ($r = 0.558$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that improved celebrity expertise was associated with better brand loyalty. Therefore, increase in celebrity expertise led to improved brand loyalty and vice versa in the Nigerian telecommunications sector.

The results in table 4 also correspond with table 1 which shows that participants partially agreed with the celebrity expertise with average mean ($\bar{x} = 4.37$). Measurement in the descriptive table 1 revealed, also, that participants partially agreed that: the celebrity endorsers engaged by their favourite telecom service provider were certainly competent ($\bar{x} = 4.47$), they received situational information (e.g. on consumer promo.) regarding the brand of telecom service they

used through the celebrity endorsers engaged by their service provider ($\bar{x} = 4.39$), they gained better understanding on the brand of telecom service they used through the information provided by the celebrity endorsers ($\bar{x} = 4.32$) and that the celebrity endorsers engaged by their telecom service provider often made truthful statement on the usage of its brand of services ($\bar{x} = 4.31$).

The finding indicates the simultaneous effect of endorser's valid assertion, competence on efficiency of the brand, capacity to disseminate situational information on the brand and post official experiences of the endorser on brand loyalty is significantly positive and telecom service providers that have strong commitment to engage celebrity who is good at what he/she does and command sufficient attraction and followership would enjoy subscriber preference and loyalty.

In addition, the outcome of the current study corroborates social exchange theory which affirms that consumers give loyalty in return for the marketing promotional effort of an organization, while the organization may continue to meet consumer needs and wants in return for continuous patronage from the customers.

The data in table 5a and table 5b indicate that multiple celebrity endorsement had a significant effect on the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty ($p < 0.05$). The first model indicates that celebrity expertise significantly influenced brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.631$, $T = 23.244$, $p < 0.05$; Adj. $R^2 = 0.311$). The introduction of multiple celebrity endorsement in the second model showed that the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty was improved with 1.6 percent Adj. R square change ($F_{(2, 1195)} = 2484.682$, $p < 0.05$, Adj. $R^2 = 0.327$). The average mean value in the descriptive table 4.4 showed that participants partially agreed with the multiple celebrity endorsement ($\bar{x} = 4.32$). This suggests that multiple celebrity endorsement improved the relationship between celebrity expertise and brand loyalty.

The results of the present study are consistent with a number of empirical findings: Byrne and Whitehead, 2003, Jain, 2011; Kamins, Brand and Moe, 1989; Maddux and Roggers, 1980; Nyarko et al., 2015; Ohanian, 1990; Sharma & Kumar, 2013 and ZorBari Nwitambu and Kalu, 2017, which confirm that celebrity expertise is a veritable promotion strategy that enhances brand loyalty on sustainable basis. However, the result also contradict with the findings of Spry, Pappu and Cornwell (2011), who confirmed that celebrity expertise has indirect impact on brand loyalty, while this relationship is intervened by brand credibility as a moderator. In essence, celebrity expertise is associated with a higher level of brand credibility.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study have shown that celebrity expertise exert a great influence on brand loyalty thereby affirming that celebrity endorsement strategies are viable brand and product promotion tools for enhancing and sustaining brand loyalty. Therefore, telecoms service providers in Nigeria and other developing nations of the world should invest and engage celebrities who are experts and professionals in their field of endeavour for endorsement to stay afloat in competitive business environment.

The followings are therefore recommended for stakeholders in the Nigerian telecommunications sector.

1. It is recommended to the telecom service subscribers to base their adoption of telecom services being promoted by celebrity on expertise and favourable trustworthy records of the endorser.
2. There is need for telecom subscribers to evaluate the brand credibility and make informed decision on the telecom service provider that best satisfy their desired expectation.
3. Based on the findings of this study that show a strong and positive relationship between celebrity expertise and brand

loyalty, it is recommended to telecom service providers to engage the service of celebrities who are good at what they do for endorsement to ensure increased turnover and improved market share.

4. There is need for telecom service regulators especially NCC to develop a policy framework on celebrity endorsement so as to engender healthy rivalry among telecom service providers.

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