

# **Influence of Print Advertising on the Decisions of Tertiary Students to Purchase Telecom Products in the Cape Coast Metropolis: The Moderating Role of Price and Service Quality Delivery**

**Dominic Owusu**

Principal Research Assistant Department of Management Studies, School of Business University of Cape Coast, Ghana,

E-mail: dominic.owusu07@gmail.com , domytello@yahoo.com

**Kwamena M. Nyarku**

Lecturer/Consultant Department of Management Studies, School of Business University of Cape Coast, Ghana, Cell Numbers: +233 541750910 / 206376263

E-mail: knyarku@ucc.edu.gh, k\_nyarku@yahoo.com

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## **Abstract**

The proliferation of telecommunication (telecom) operators in the country has led to intense competition within the industry. Most telecom operators use advertising as a major competitive tool to attract, inform and persuade customers to purchase their offerings. Using tertiary students in the Cape Coast Metropolis as the data source, this study primarily examined the influence of print advertisement used by telecom operators on purchasing decisions. It also sought to find out how price and service quality moderate these.

The study employed the correlational study design. Convenience sampling was used to select 754 tertiary students from a total population of 17218. The main research instrument used was the questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics such as the mean, standard deviation, standard regression and hierarchical regression were used to analyze the data. The findings of the study showed magazine advert and not newspaper advert influenced the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products. It was also revealed that price and service quality delivery moderate the relationship between print advertising and consumer purchasing decisions.

It is recommended that the advertising budgetary expenditure of the telecom operators in Ghana should concentrate more on utilizing magazine when advertising their products.

**Key words:** Print Advertising, Tertiary Students, Purchasing Decisions, Price, Service Quality, M 37

## 1.0 Introduction

The business environment is changing rapidly owing to intense competition and globalization. Therefore it is a challenge for both small and large companies to ensure that their marketing skills and strategies keep pace. Advertisement is a very good marketing communication tool and all businesses should create awareness of their offerings and company in order to achieve their organizational goals. Any decision about the consumer builds, alters, maintains or destroys the marketing structure. Organizations combine advertising with media forms such as print, magazines, radio, television and the internet to “talk” to their customers and other stakeholders. The major aim of advertising as posited by Abideen and Saleem (2011) is to impact on buying behaviour; however this impact about the brand is changed or strengthened frequently in peoples’ memories. Consumers also go through a process in deciding whether, what, when, where, how, and from whom to purchase (Walters, 1974). Advertisement is thus used to provide answers to the question of whether, what, when, where, how and from whom to purchase for.

Advertising is part of our everyday lives. Advertisement dates back into the ancient times where societies used symbols, and pictorial signs to attract their product users (Saleem & Abideen, 2011). Hoyer and MacInnis (1997) (as cited in Sallam & Wahid, 2012) explained that at times, one’s attitude toward an object can affect one’s attitude toward another object with which it is associated. The researchers further explained that a consumer’s liking of the advert may be eventually transferred to the brand portrayed in the advertisement. Given that the use of mobile phones are activated by the use of mobile chips associated with network operators, telecom operators compete aggressively among themselves to lure customers who purchase these cell phones. The major way by which the telecom operators are able to persuade and convince customers to purchase from their network is the use of print and electronic advertising (Okyere, Agyapong & Nyarku, 2011). In order to influence the customer in purchasing a SIM card from their network, these telecommunication companies engage in aggressive advertising.

Magazines and newspapers are frequently used to communicate to the target audience of these telecom operators who are mostly students. Currently, there are six telecom operators (Airtel, Tigo, Vodafone, Expresso, MTN and Glo) in Ghana, with established offices in the Cape Coast Metropolis mainly selling mobile SIM cards, recharge cards, and dealing with customer complaints and enquiries. It is evident that newspapers circulating in the Cape Coast Metropolis have the products of these telecom operators advertised on daily basis. During graduation and/or matriculation events at the various campuses, these telecom operators openly advertise their products using various forms such as free souvenirs, price cut on customised phones as well as advertising in the programme catalogue of the event.

How does print advert evoke such a response and why would these telecom operators continue to use this media to advertise their products? Is advertising the only factor that influences the consumer to purchase from the advertised brand of these network operators? Various studies in the field of advertising have focused mainly on advertisement and consumer behaviour: Kotwal, Gupta and Devi (2008) focused on impact of television advertisements on buying pattern of adolescent girls; Rajagopal (2010) also focused on the role of radio advertisements as

behavioural drivers among urban consumers; Abideen and Saleem (2011) focused on the responses that adverts elicit in the telecom sector; Haque, Rahman, Ahmed, Yashmin and Asri (2011) focused on fast food restaurant advertisement and its influence on consumer behaviour without looking at the impact of other variables such as price and service quality delivery. Taking cognizance of the surge in the literature of advertisement, more research attention should be directed at the impact of other variables such as price and service quality. The primary objectives of this article are to focus on the influence of magazine and newspaper advert on the decisions of tertiary students to purchase a telecom product in the Cape Coast Metropolis and also determine whether price and the quality of service delivered by the telecom operators moderate the influence of advertising on the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis. For the purpose of this article print advertising refers to the use of newspaper and magazine to inform, persuade and influence the decisions of consumers.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The learning theory forms the theoretical framework for this study. The learning theory, according to Hackley (2005) was derived from Pavlov's dogs experiment. The theory uses Pavlov's dogs experiment to explain how the consumer will react when exposed to an advert. Hackley explained that Pavlov trained his dogs to associate the arrival of food with the ringing of a bell: a sound that will lead to the salivation response among the dogs. This, according to the author is likened to an advert. He further explained that advertising is seen as a stimulus that would give rise to the response just as it occurs in the dogs' salivation process. Mackey (2005) also explained that the learning theory had given rise to new up-to-date approach towards advertising; hence, the different models that explain how advertising produces its effect.

The different models of advertising try to explain how advertising produces its effect. The AIDA model, the Hierarchy of Effects model, the DAGMAR model etc. explain how the consumer progresses from a state of awareness of the existence of the product to a state of liking the product or service advertised. Through the advert, the advertiser is able to create the awareness of the existence of the product which goes further to influence the consumer to develop an interest in the product and then a desire to own the product which leads to the action to purchase the product. Although laboratory studies in marketing have shown that non-informative content may affect demand, and sophisticated firms use randomised experiments to optimise their advertising content strategy, academic researchers have rarely used field experiments to study advertising content effects.

#### **2.1.1 The Theory of Consumer Behaviour**

The aim of the advertiser is to inform, persuade and convince the consumer as posited by Fill (2009). The consumer is central to the success of the advert. The theory of consumer behaviour explains the processes consumers go through in making a decision whether to buy a product or subscribe to the services of a particular organisation. As the consumer decides whether or not to buy the product, the advertiser is able to develop the interest of the consumer towards accepting the products being offered. According to Assael (1995) successful marketers must

first define the benefits sought by consumers in the market place, followed by the drafting of marketing plans supporting the needs of consumers. Akir and Othman (2010) accentuated that understanding consumer behaviour was paramount for both marketers and business alike for two reasons: first was the degree of differentiation that a consumer perceived in the product or service; and secondly, the fundamental determinant of consumer behaviour was their degree of involvement in the purchase.

Jacoby (1977) pointed out that consumer behaviour reflected the totality of consumers' decisions with respect to the acquisition, consumption and disposition of goods, services, time and ideas by decision making units over time. Belch and Belch (2007) posited that consumer behaviour encompassed the process and activities people engaged in when searching for, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services to satisfy their needs and desires. This presupposes that the theory of consumer behaviour involves more than just how a person buys an item/goods but includes the purchase of services, time and ideas. More so, apart from understanding what consumers acquire, use or dispose of, the theory prescribes activities including the understanding of whether, why, when, where, how, how much, how often and how long consumers will buy, use or dispose of a product

### **2.1.2 Newspaper and Magazine Advertisement and their Influence on Consumers Purchasing Decision**

Shanon and Weaver (1949) (as cited in Karlsson, 2007) argued that communication is a process that originated from the sender, using pictures, words etc, and choosing a medium or channel to convey the message, ensuring that the message is interpreted by the recipient and that generates the necessary feedback used to measure the effectiveness of the communication process. The media is the vehicle for conveying the message of the marketer to the target audience. Newspaper, magazines, radio, television, outdoor, transports are among the commonly used media by marketers to convey their message to the target audience. Ayanwale et al. (2005) and Bovee (1992) highlighted that advert provides information through media in the form of visual, verbal and text to persuade or influence behaviour. The reaction of the consumer towards the advert is also an indication of the influence that the advert had on the consumer. A number of empirical studies provide support for this assertion that advertising specifically print advertising has an influence on consumers purchasing decisions.

A study by Haque, Rahman, Ahmed, Yashmin and Asri (2011) explored consumers' view on fast food restaurant advertisement. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested to cover print, internet and commercial advertisement and their impact on customers mind. The study concluded that internet advertising, followed by commercial advertising and print advertisements have an impact on consumers mind. Abideen and Saleem (2011) investigated the relationship between independent variables which are environmental response and emotional response with attitudinal behaviour aspect of consumer buying behaviour in Pakistan. The study was carried in three cities of Pakistan; Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Lahore. The results of the study indicated that there exists a weak association between environmental responses with the consumer buying behaviour including attitudinal as well as behavioural aspects of consumer buying behaviour. Emotional response, on other hand, established strong association with the consumer buying behaviour. The study therefore concluded that consumers purchase products in the areas of Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Lahore by emotional

response rather than environmental response. The emotional attachments are created through advertisements such as audio, video and text forms which appeal to him/her.

Sorce and Dewitz (2007) made a case for print media advertising in the internet age by reviewing the media usage patterns in the United States of America. They argued that the amount of dollars spent on newspapers, magazines and business paper advertisements account for approximately 40% of all media advertising expenditure in 2004 while broadcast, cable TV and radio represent an additional 44% of the media advertising dollar spent. Sorce and Dewitz (2007) concluded that magazine advertising was more effective than network TV advertising for promoting SUV brands over a ten year period. People who were exposed to print advertising had a higher recognition of advertising content than those who received on line version of the same advertising message.

Calder and Malthouse (2004) developed measures to assess the media user's qualitative experience with magazines and whether this experience related to the advertising in it. The researchers concluded that the way a person experiences a magazine or newspaper advert can affect the way the person reacts to advertising in the publication. Against this background the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- H<sup>1</sup>: magazine advertisements influence the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis
- H<sup>2</sup>: newspaper advertisements influence the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis

### **2.1.3 Price as a Moderating Factor**

Price is the only element in the marketing mix that generates revenue to the marketer (Boachie-Mensah, 2009). According to Rajput, Kalhor and Wasif (2012), price factor has always been an important factor in customer/consumer buying process in every context. Consumers always examine price and brand name information differently when they are making judgments on the dimensions of quality, ease of use, usefulness, performance, durability, and status (Brucks, Zeithaml & Naylor, 2000).

Chang and Wildt (1998) posited that the price has its significant influence on perceived quality when it is the only information available. According to the study of consumer behaviour, consumers prefer to have a price and quality rather than technical aspects in durable goods (Chiu, Chen, Tzeng & Shyu, 2006). The Marshallian economic model of human behaviour further noted that individual buyers spend their income on goods that will offer the greatest satisfaction, depending on their taste and the relative prices of goods. Rajput, Kalhor and Wasif (2012) again concluded that the consumer needs more awareness regarding the price and fairness in price in the shape of packages and discounts. The literature suggests that price has great influence on consumer buying behaviour effectively (Rajput, Kalhor & Wasif, 2012). It is therefore hypothesised that;

- H<sup>3</sup>: prices of the products offered by the telecom operators' moderate the relationship between newspaper and magazine advertising and consumer purchasing

### **2.1.4 Service Quality Delivery as a Moderating Variable**

The quality of the product/service you produce or deliver may also have the potential of influencing the consumers purchasing decision. Azadavar, Shahbazi, and Teimouri, (2011)

postulated that in business, there are five most important dimensions which make a successful business and these are service quality, tangible, reliability, responsiveness assurance and identification. Also Satya (2011), found that it is compulsory for the firms to maintain their quality because people are more conscious of quality than price. Most of the Asian country consumers would want to have European or American products to have better quality, so they always consider the “MADE IN” in their buying behaviour (Abedniya, 2011). In Ghana, some consumers will purchase a product or subscribe to a service not because of the price but the quality of the offering(s).

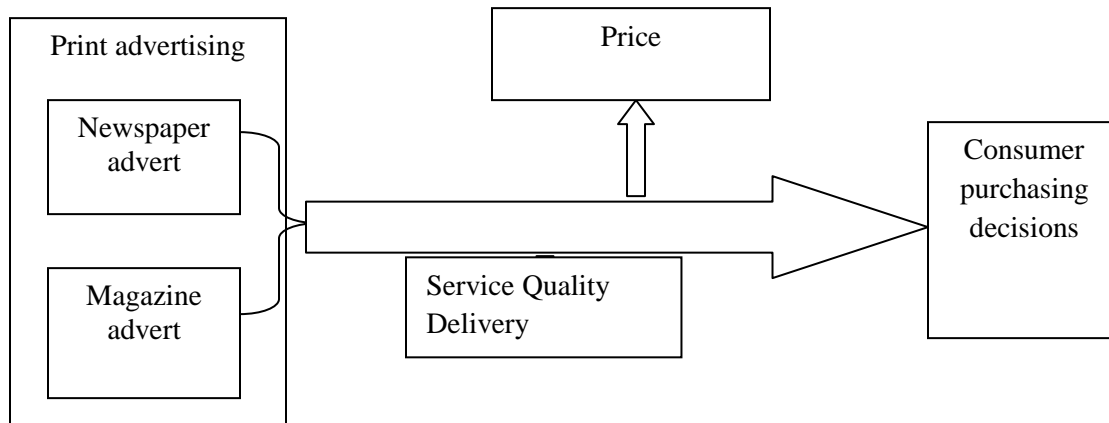
According to Nugroho and Wihandoyo (2009), the assessment of consumers of products based on quality is a very essential characteristic in purchasing processes and consumers are conscious of quality difference of all products. Consumers sometimes go for better quality brand rather than considering the price factor (Rajput, Kalhoru & Wasif, 2012). Consumers are most likely to purchase famous but better quality brands in the market instead of less known brands. They are also ready to pay higher prices for renowned brands (Boonlertvanich, 2009; Pelsmacker, Driesen & Rayp, 2005). An effective business-to-business relationship for many firms indicated that service quality is more significant than product quality. However, striving to improve service quality and product quality achieves customer satisfaction (Rossomme, 2003).

Rajput, Kalhoru & Wasif (2012) explained that quality is the major concern in every field of life, whether in buying some products or services. Tsotsou, (2006) found a positive direct effect of perceived quality on purchase intentions. From the foregoing it is evident that product/service quality plays a significant role in influencing the buying behaviour of consumers but it may vary from culture to culture. Against this background, it is hypothesised that

H<sup>4</sup>: the quality of service delivered by the telecom operators moderates the relationship between newspaper and magazine advertising and the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis

## **2.2 Conceptual Framework of Print Advertising and Its Influence on Consumers Purchasing Decisions**

Advertising is one of the major items that supply information about the product or service the consumer wants or needs and tries to persuade them to act in a particular way towards the offerings. This study concentrates on conceptual framework of print advertising and its influence on the decisions of consumers to purchase telecom products. The variables comprising print advertising are newspaper and magazine. Price and service quality delivery were also identified as variables that could moderate the relationship. The conceptual framework for this study is illustrated by figure 1.



**Figure 1: conceptual framework of the study**

### 3.0 Methodology

The accessible population comprises all regular students of University of Cape Coast excluding sandwich and distance students and regular HND students of Cape Coast Polytechnic. These students were chosen for the study because they fall within the youth who according to Schiffman and Kanuk (2009) cited in Marfo-Yiadom and Ansong (2012) are said to admire technologically new products. Since the products and services of these telecom operators are also technologically driven, the youth seems to be attracted to these products and since the study seeks to determine the influence of print advertising on the purchase decisions of consumers in relation to these products, these students were seemed to be more suited for the study.

With assistance from the data processing units of the various institutions, a total of 17,218 students were obtained from the Students' Records Management Unit of the University of Cape Coast and the Planning Department of Cape Coast Polytechnic for the 2011/2012 academic year. Out of the total 17,218 students, 15,835 students were from University of Cape Coast. A total of 1,383 were also from Cape Coast Polytechnic. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select the sample size. First, the population was grouped into two strata – University of Cape Coast and Cape Coast Polytechnic. The study adopted Krejcie and Morgan (1970) as cited in Sarantakos (2005) sample size determination table to determine the sample size for each of the stratum.

Using a population of 20,000 and 1,400 a sample of 377 and 302 was taken from University of Cape Coast and Cape Coast Polytechnic respectively. The disparities in the population of University of Cape Coast and Cape Coast Polytechnic resulted in wide variations in the sample sizes. Further, the researchers also anticipated a high non-response rate following observations from the pretest, which was conducted in a setting similar to that of the study population. The researchers resorted to oversampling. The sample that was drawn from the students of university of cape coast was increased by 25 and that of cape coast polytechnic was also increased by 50. The adjusted sample sizes were thus, 402 and 352 for university of cape coast and Cape Coast Polytechnic respectively.

A self-administered structured questionnaire was distributed to potential respondents at the convenience of the researchers. The questionnaire comprised of 49 items. Section A comprised 10 items relating to newspaper adverts. Section B also comprised 10 items also relating to

magazine adverts. Section C comprised eight items relating to price. Section D comprised eight items and section E comprised 11 items relating to service quality delivery and consumer purchasing decisions respectively. Respondents were given a scale of 1-5 to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement by rating the items. All the items included some open ended questions which allowed respondents to provide some explanations for some of their decisions.

To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, a pre-test was carried out using students of Takoradi Polytechnic and University of Education, Winneba campuses. In all, 30 questionnaires were administered. The statistical validation was done on the likert-scale type of questions. The Cronbach's alpha reliability test was done only on the rating. There was a 100 percent response rate. The reliability co-efficient for the questionnaire items varied between 0.517 and 0.980, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Computed reliability co-efficient for pre-test data collected (Sec. B, C, D, E, and F)**

Questionnaire Category	No. of Items	Sample Size	Cronbach's Alpha
Newspaper Advert	7	30	0.961
Magazine Advert	7	30	0.980
Price	6	30	0.764
Quality of Service Delivery	6	30	0.517
Consumer Purchasing Behaviour	11	30	0.802

Source: Field Work, 2013.

The study employed a Cronbach alpha co-efficient of 0.5 as suggested by Nunally (1978) and used by Mahmoud (2011). Only 20 out of the 754 responses received were rejected due to the fact the questionnaires were incomplete. In a total of 734 questionnaires were received from the respondents. These were subjected to various statistical analyses using SPSS 17.0. The relationships proposed in the hypothesised model were assessed by means of regression analysis having tested the assumptions of regressions which included multi-collinearity, outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and independence of residual.

#### **4.0 Analysis of the Findings**

A preliminary analysis was carried out to examine the demographic information of the respondents. The results are depicted in Table 2.



**Table 2: Background characteristics of respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	518	70.57
Female	216	29.43
Total	734	100
<b>Age of Respondents</b>		
N	732	
Maximum	45	
Minimum	17	
Mean age	22	
Standard deviation	2.92	
<b>Network (s)</b>		
Airtel	236	15.27
Espresso	10	0.65
Glo	134	8.67
MTN	596	38.55
Tigo	313	20.25
Vodafone	257	16.62
Total	1546 <sup>n</sup>	100

N= Multiple Responses

Table 2 depicts the sex, age and the type of mobile phone networks used by respondents. It can be seen from the table that 70.57 percent of the respondents were males whilst 29.43 percent were females. Out of the 732 respondents, the youngest was 17 years old and oldest was 45 years and the mean age was 22 years, hence confirming that tertiary students in the Cape Coast Metropolis are youth and are said to admire technologically driven products (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2009 cited in Marfo-Yiadom & Ansong, 2012). Table 2 clearly indicated that most of the respondents preferred MTN (38.55%) to the other networks.

One reason cited for the patronage of specific network was because relatives, friends and members of respondents' group patronised the same network services. This goes to explain why consumers behave the way they do as explained by Engel et al (1995). They indicated that consumers are influenced by a number of reasons. The reasons are grouped into individual, environmental and psychological processes.

#### **4.1 Influence of Print Advertising on the Decisions of Tertiary Students to Purchase Telecom Products in the Cape Coast Metropolis**

##### **Newspaper Advert**

The mean score for each of the items were ascertained including the aggregate mean score. The findings indicated that tertiary students in the Cape Coast Metropolis least agreed that their decision to purchase a telecom product was influenced by a newspaper advert ( $\bar{X} = 2.360$ ). Majority of the respondents ( $\bar{X} = 2.3511$ , 54.78%) disagreed that their decision to

purchase a telecom product was influenced by an advert by a telecom company placed in a newspaper.

The mean scores of items measuring newspaper advert are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Items used to measure newspaper advert**

Items	Mean score	Least in Agreement	Highest in Agreement
1. Newspaper advert influences my decision to buy a telecom product	2.3511	54.70	45.30
2. Newspaper advert influences my choice of network provider	2.3005	62.00	38.00
3. Continuous exposure to newspaper advert greatly influences my decision to purchase a telecom product or subscribe to a telecom service	2.2603	62.60	37.40
4. I get to know of the products of the network I use through newspaper advert	2.4850	63.30	36.70
5. Newspaper adverts provide me with enough information to decide on the network provider or the use of their service	2.5861	62.20	37.80
6. Promotions by a network provider through newspaper increases my loyalty	2.2923	63.70	36.30
7. I will subscribe to a product or service if the advert is made through newspaper	2.0779	65.70	34.30
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>2.3360</b>		

Scale (Mean): 0-2.9= Least In Agreement, 3-5= Highest In Agreement

Source: Field Work, 2013.

### Magazine Advert

The mean score for each of the items were ascertained including the aggregate mean score. The findings indicated that the tertiary students in the Cape Coast Metropolis were least in agreement with the assertion that magazine advert influenced their decision to purchase a telecom product ( $\bar{X} = 2.2809$ ). Majority of the respondents ( $\bar{X} = 2.3723$ , 56.60%) were least in agreement to the statement that their decision to purchase a telecom product was influenced by an advert by a telecom company placed in a magazine.

Table 4 presents the mean scores of the respondents to the items measuring magazine advert.

**Table 4: Items used to measure magazine advert**

Items	Mean score	Least in Agreement	Highest in Agreement
1. Magazine advert influences my decision to buy a telecom product	2.3723	56.60	43.40
2. Magazine advert influences my choice of network provider	2.2932	61.20	38.80
3. Continuous exposure to magazine advert greatly influences my decision to purchase a telecom product or subscribe to a telecom service	2.2679	58.00	42.00
4. I get to know of the products of the network I use through Magazine advert	2.1799	64.10	35.90
5. Magazine adverts provide me with enough information to decide on the network provider or the use of their service	2.4382	63.60	36.40
6. Promotions by a network provider through magazine increases my loyalty	2.3283	59.9	40.10
7. I will subscribe to a product or service if the advert is made through magazine	2.0865	67.90	32.10
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>2.2809</b>		

Scale (Mean): 0-2.9=least in agreement; 3-5=highest in agreement

Source: Field Work, 2013.

Two hypotheses were formulated to test the influence of newspaper and magazine advert on the decisions of tertiary students to purchase a telecom product. Hypothesis H<sup>1</sup> was stated as “Newspaper adverts influence the decisions of tertiary students to purchase a telecom product in the Cape Coast Metropolis”. Hypothesis H<sup>2</sup> was also stated as “magazine advert influences the decisions of tertiary students to purchase a telecom product in the Cape Coast Metropolis”. The results of the regression analysis used to test hypotheses H<sup>1</sup> and H<sup>2</sup> are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Regression results testing hypotheses H<sup>1</sup> and H<sup>2</sup>**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	28.360	1.603		17.695	.000
Mag	.123	.054	.093	2.290	.022
NP	-.032	.052	-.025	-.611	.541

a. Dependent Variable: CPD

Source: Field Work, 2013.

Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub>: a sought to determine the influence of magazine adverts on the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis. From table 5, magazine advert influenced the purchasing decisions of tertiary students with a T statistic and a sig value of 2.290 and 0.022 respectively. Magazine advertisements influenced the purchasing decisions of tertiary students with regard to telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis. It can be inferred that since all the respondents were students who are occasionally exposed to magazine publications which are sponsored partly by some of these telecom products, it may provide a reason for this result.

This finding is also consistent with the findings of Abideen et al. (2011) which concluded that advertisement arouses the emotions of consumers and these emotions are created in the form of audio, video and text. The result of this test is also consistent with the proposition of Calder et al. (2004) who accentuated that the way a person experiences a magazine or newspaper can affect the way the person reacts to advertising in the publication.

Table 5 also revealed that newspaper adverts do not significantly influence the purchasing decisions of tertiary students with regards to the purchase of telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis. It depicts a T statistic of -0.611 and a sig value of 0.541 respectively. Newspaper adverts do not significantly influence the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis. To provide explanation for why newspapers did or did not influence the decisions of tertiary students to purchase a telecom product in the Cape Coast Metropolis. It could be inferred that since most of these students use phones that have internet access, they obtain information from the net hence their decision not to purchase newspaper.

Furthermore, respondents were also asked what motivated them to read newspapers and most of the responses indicated that football news rather motivated them to read a newspaper and not adverts. However most of this football news is also available on the internet. This clearly supports the earlier point that newspapers had little or no influence on the purchase decisions of tertiary students in the Cape Coast Metropolis on telecom products. These responses contradict the other findings that concluded that newspaper advertisements influence the purchase decisions of consumers (Sorice et al, 2007; Abideen et al, 2011).

**Service Quality Delivery**

The mean score for items used to measure service quality delivery were ascertained as well as the aggregate mean score. The findings indicated that service quality delivery by the telecom operators in the Cape Coast Metropolis moderated the influence of advert and consumer purchasing decisions ( $\bar{X} = 3.4333$ ).

Table 6 presents the mean scores of the respondents to the items measuring service quality delivery.

**Table 6: Items measuring service quality delivery**

Items	Mean score	Least in Agreement	Highest in Agreement
1. Getting very good quality service from my telecom operator is very important to me	4.4432	10.40	89.60
2. My choice of a telecom operator is influenced by the good quality service provided by the telecom operator	4.2308	13.6	86.40
3. The staff of my network provider show a sincere interest in solving my problems	3.2926	32.4	67.60
4. I always get my calls through	2.5453	57.1	42.90
5. My network provider provides quality customer service	3.0701	39.80	60.20
6. My network provider provides services at the time they promise to do	3.0179	40.5	59.5
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.4333</b>		

Scale (Mean): 0-2.9=least in agreement; 3-5=highest in agreement

Source: Field Work, 2013.

**Price**

The mean score for each of the items were ascertained including the aggregate mean score. The findings indicated that price moderated the influence of advertising and consumer purchasing decision with regards to tertiary students in the Cape Coast Metropolis ( $\bar{X} = 3.5902$ ).

Table 7 presents the mean scores of the respondents to the items measuring price.

**Table 7: Items measuring price**

Items	Mean score	Least in Agreement	Highest in Agreement
1. If other factors are the same price is an important criterion for me	3.7104	23.40	76.60
2. My decision to purchase scratch cards are influenced by the price charged for calls by the telecom operators	3.6110	24.70	75.30
3. The money saved by finding low prices is usually worth the time and effort of shopping around the customer service agencies of the telecom operators	3.907	28.00	72.00
4. I look carefully to find the best value for money when purchasing a product/service from the telecom operators	3.6844	21.50	78.50
5. The time it takes to find low prices is usually worth the effort	3.3825	27.20	72.80
6. The lower price products/service of telecom operators are usually my choice	3.7623	23.40	76.60
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.5902</b>		

Scale (Mean): 0-2.9=least in agreement; 3-5=highest in agreement

Source: Field Work, 2013.

### **Price as a Moderating Factor**

The literature suggests that price influences consumers' purchasing decisions. To test this relationship a hierarchical regression was used. The results of the hierarchical regression analysis used to test hypothesis H<sub>3</sub> that price moderated the relationship between print advertising and the decisions of tertiary students to purchase a telecom product in the Cape Coast Metropolis is depicted in Table 8.

**Table 8: Results of hierarchical regression with the introduction of price**

Model	UnStandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		Collinearity Statistics			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	29.846	1.369		21.802	0.000		
	Print	0.06	0.029	0.077	2.035	0.042	0.965	1.036
	(Constant)	23.01	1.444		15.931	0.000		
	Print	0.054	0.027	0.069	1.956	0.051	0.964	1.037
	Price	2.479	0.243	0.359	10.193	0.000	0.966	1.035

a. Dependent Variable:  
Customer Purchasing Decision (CPD)

Table 8 provides the regression results of the hierarchical regression with the introduction of price. The result depicts that print ad has a significant influence on CPD with a T statistic of 2.035. The table also provides a sig value of 0.042 for print advertising. The standardised coefficient beta also depicted 0.77 for print advertising. When price was introduced, as depicted in Table 8, the T statistic of print was 1.956. Print then became insignificant with a sig value of 0.051. The standardised coefficient Beta for print also reduced from 0.077 to 0.069.

The standardised coefficient beta for price as depicted in Table 8 is 0.359 and also depicted a T statistic of 10.193 with a sig value of 0.000. Price had a significant influence on CPD than print since the beta of price is greater than that of print advertising with the introduction of price. Price moderates the relationship between print and electronic advertising on CPD. This finding also adds credence to the Marshallian model of human behaviour which posits that human beings will spend their income on goods that offer the greatest satisfaction depending on their taste and the relative prices of goods. Similarly, Chang and Wildt (1998) posited that price has a significant influence on consumers' decision. Chiu, Chen, Tzeng and Shyu (2006) also accentuated that consumers consider the prices of products and quality rather than the technical aspects of the product.

**Service Quality as a Moderating Factor**

The literature indicates that service quality delivery moderates the relationship between print and electronic advertising and consumer purchasing behaviour. To test this relationship hierarchical regression analysis was also used. The result of the hierarchical regression used to test hypothesis H<sub>4</sub> that is service quality delivered by the telecom operators' in the Cape Coast Metropolis moderated the relationship between print and consumer purchasing behaviour is depicted in Table 9.

**Table 9: Results of hierarchical regression with the introduction of service quality delivery**

Model	UnStandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta				Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	29.844	1.364			21.882	0.000		
Print	0.06	0.029	0.077		2.041	0.042	0.964	1.037
2 (Constant)	25.227	1.795			14.051	0.000		
Print	0.054	0.029	0.070		1.866	0.062	0.962	1.039
Service quality delivery	1.159	0.297	0.143		3.903	0.000	0.996	1.004

a. Dependent Variable: CPD

Source: Field Work, 2013.

When service quality was introduced, Table 9 depicted a T Statistic of 1.866 for print advertising. The sig value for print was 0.062. The Standardised coefficient beta for print also reduced from 0.077 to 0.070. The Standardised coefficient Beta for service quality delivery as depicted in Table 7 is 0.143 and a T statistic of 3.903 with a sig value of 0.000, quality of service provided by the telecom operators had a significant influence on CPD. Quality of service provided by the telecom operators moderated the relationship between print and electronic advertising and CPD. Similarly, Satya (2011) concluded that people are conscious of the quality of products. Tsiotsou (2006) posited that although product quality has a significant role in buying behaviour it may vary from culture to culture.

### 5.0 Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn based on the findings of the study. For the first objective, it is concluded that several factors influence the purchasing decisions of tertiary students in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Key amongst them are print advertising, price and service quality delivery affirming suggestions made by other researchers that advertising, price and service quality delivery influence the purchasing decisions of consumers. With regards to the second objective, it is concluded that print advertising influences the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products. The decision to purchase telecom products by tertiary students among regular students of University of Cape Coast and Cape Coast Polytechnic are influenced by magazine advert and not newspaper advert. It is therefore concluded that the use of magazine as a media of advertising telecom products influences the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis.



Finally, the last objective sought to find out whether price and service quality moderated the influence of print advertising on consumer purchasing decisions. It is concluded that price and service quality delivery reduces the strength of the relationship between print and the decisions of tertiary students to purchase telecom products in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Tertiary students in the Cape Coast Metropolis consider the prices charged by the telecom operators and the quality of the service delivered by the telecom operators before deciding on which particular network to purchase from.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

Based on the key findings and conclusions presented, marketing managers and consultants of the telecom operators in the Cape Coast Metropolis are advised to:

1. invest more in magazine ads in order to realise the budgetary expenditure on ads targeted at the youth.
2. explore price competition by charging relatively lower prices than that of competitors to gain more customers.
3. improve the quality of their service delivery to influence the decisions of students towards purchasing a telecom product.

The elements of print advertising are not exhaustive. Future research could investigate other forms of adverts for example the use of leaflets, posters, internet, radio, television, bill boards etc.

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