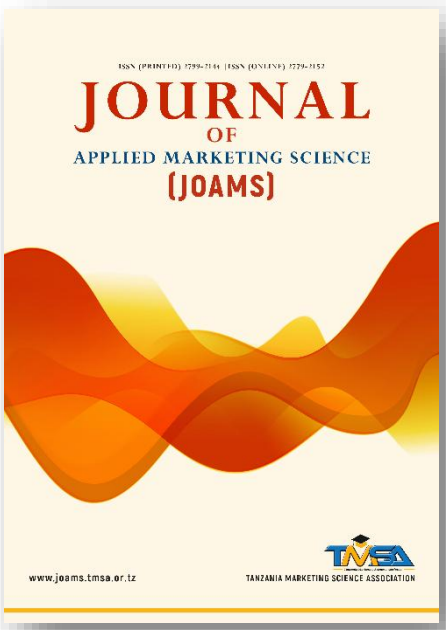


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Effects Of Mobile Marketing In The Purchase Decision Of Value Added Services. A Case Of Telecommunication Industry In Tanzania.

- **Frida Mugarula**

Abstract

This research paper investigates the effects of mobile marketing on value-added service (VAS) purchase decisions in Tanzania's telecommunications industry. With the ever-increasing popularity of mobile phones and the demand for VAS, mobile marketing has emerged as a critical tool for telecommunication companies to effectively engage with their customers. This paper aims to assess mobile marketing's effectiveness, analyze influencing factors of VAS purchase, and identify successful strategies that drive uptake and purchase of VAS. The research employed a quantitative approach, utilizing a structured questionnaire to collect data from 260 Telecom subscribers across Tanzania. The questionnaire covered Respondents' VAS purchase status, mobile marketing experiences, factors influencing their purchase decisions, and the effectiveness of mobile marketing strategies. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, and regression analysis using SPSS software.

The study revealed that mobile marketing significantly influences VAS purchases, with effective strategies including clear messaging, audience segmentation, engaging content, timely delivery, and personalization. The regression analysis performed revealed that trust on the benefit of VAS communicated and Personalization have a statistical significant influence on purchase of VAS among studied factors such as data privacy concerns, ad receipt frequency, shedding light on their influence in the effectiveness of mobile marketing in driving VAS purchases.

Key words; Mobile marketing, Value added services, Purchase decision, Telecommunication industry.

1. Introduction

The Tanzanian telecommunications industry is undergoing rapid growth, driven by an increasing number of mobile phone users and a surging demand for value-added services (VAS) such as mobile banking, mobile money transfer, and entertainment services. Within this evolving landscape, mobile marketing has become a pivotal tool for engaging with consumers effectively (Mwakalinga & Mwakaje, 2019). This paper explores the influence of mobile marketing on VAS purchase decisions within Tanzania's telecommunications sector and goes further by identifying the effective mobile marketing strategies that telecommunication companies can adopt to drive uptake and purchases of VAS.

The spread of mobile devices and increased mobile internet usage has made mobile marketing essential for businesses aiming to connect with their target audience while leveraging the benefits of VAS. The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) reported a 4% increase in telecom subscribers from 58.1 million in September 2022 to 60.3 million in December 2022, with over 31 million internet subscribers. TCRA further reports that there is healthy competition among telecom operators in Tanzania in retaining and recruiting consumers (TCRA, 2022).

Unlike traditional marketing methods, mobile marketing offers advantages such as cost-effectiveness, precise targeting, real-time engagement, and adaptability to linguistic diversity (Verma & Nema, 2012). Existing studies have demonstrated its effectiveness in increasing brand awareness, fostering customer loyalty, and influencing purchase intentions. However, the efficacy of mobile marketing campaigns can vary depending on the specific VAS offered and the characteristics of the target audience.

Due to the fact that the field of mobile marketing is still relatively new and insufficiently researched in Tanzania, this study addresses the research gap by evaluating the effects of mobile marketing in driving VAS purchases across Tanzania's telecommunications industry. It also identifies the most effective mobile marketing strategies tailored to Tanzanian telecom subscribers. These findings offer practical insights for telecommunications companies, regulators, and policymakers, enabling them to optimize mobile marketing strategies for the effective promotion and regulation of VAS in this dynamic market.

2. Literature review

Numerous studies conducted in various countries have shed light on the effects of mobile marketing in influencing consumer purchase decisions and its impact on consumer behavior. Leppäniemi et al. (2006) conducted a global review of mobile marketing research, highlighting the growing interest in mobile marketing as a tool and the need for further research. Wang and Wang (2015) revealed that mobile marketing had a positive influence on consumer purchase behavior in China, particularly when offering personalized and interactive information.

In Oman, Al-Jabri and Al-Hinai (2017) found that mobile marketing significantly

influenced consumer purchase decisions, especially through SMS, MMS, and mobile apps, with personalization and location-based marketing being effective strategies. Kiat et al. (2017) emphasized the importance of trust, perceived usefulness, and ease of use of mobile marketing, along with message relevance and personalization. Kim and Ko (2018) discovered that mobile marketing significantly impacted consumer purchase decisions in South Korea, driven by the convenience of mobile technology and trust in mobile marketing. Similarly, Jafari et al. (2016) found in Indonesia that mobile marketing positively influenced consumer purchase decisions, especially among young, tech-savvy consumers, highlighting the role of creativity, relevance, and non-intrusiveness.

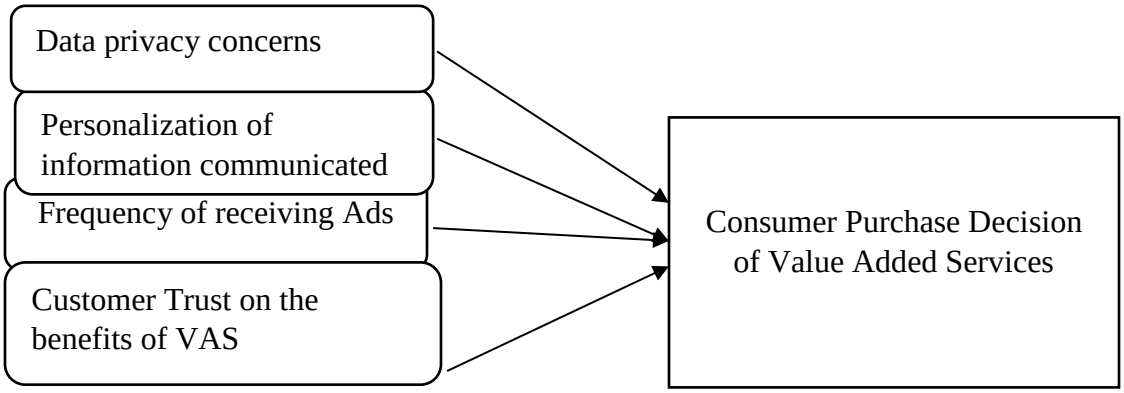
The findings of these studies can be better understood through the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory. TAM, developed by Davis (1989), posits that an individual's acceptance of new technology is largely determined by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. This explains why many studies emphasized the importance of usefulness, ease of use, and trust in driving mobile marketing adoption and influencing purchase decisions (Chile et al., 2021; Kiat et al., 2017). DOI theory by Rogers (2003) on the other hand suggests that innovations spread through society based on attributes such as relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. This lens explains why mobile marketing adoption tends to be higher among young, tech-savvy consumers (Jafari et al., 2016) and in contexts where mobile marketing strategies such as personalization and interactivity align with consumer preferences (Al-Jabri & Al-Hinai, 2017; Wang & Wang, 2015).

In the Tanzanian context, research by Chile et al. (2021) emphasized the substantial role of perceived usefulness, ease of use, and customer knowledge in fostering the adoption of mobile marketing in the telecom industry. This reflects TAM's central constructs and reinforces the importance of technological acceptance in shaping consumer behavior.

Conceptual framework

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable



Independent Variables

The relationship between privacy and consumer purchase decisions regarding value-added services (VAS) is a critical consideration in the realm of mobile marketing. Privacy concerns, which revolve around the collection, usage, and safeguarding of personal information by service providers, can significantly impact consumers' willingness to embrace and financially commit to VAS. Research, such as that conducted by Yoon et al. (2016) and Kim et al. (2019), reveals that privacy and security apprehensions exert a negative influence on consumers' intent to engage with mobile VAS.

Similarly, personalization in mobile marketing messages plays a pivotal role in shaping consumers' purchase decisions concerning VAS. The saliency of these messages, achieved through targeting specific segments, deploying personalized content, and delivering messages at opportune moments while respecting privacy preferences, has been well-documented (Lee et al., 2017). Lee et al. (2017) also found that personalized mobile marketing messages significantly influenced consumers' purchase intentions for mobile VAS.

Moreover, the frequency at which consumers receive mobile marketing messages also bears implications for their purchase decisions regarding VAS. Alalwan et al. (2017) discovered that a moderate frequency of mobile marketing was positively correlated with customer satisfaction and the intention to utilize VAS. However, excessive message frequency had adverse effects on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Khan et al., 2017; Alwalan et al., 2017).

Trust emerges as another pivotal factor impacting consumer purchase decisions regarding VAS. Trust in the benefits conveyed by VAS communications significantly bolsters consumers' intentions to adopt mobile VAS (Alwalan et al., 2017; Chong et al., 2012).

Collectively, this conceptual framework postulates a positive relationship between mobile marketing and consumer purchase decisions regarding VAS. The effectiveness of this relationship hinges on the delivery of personalized and targeted information through mobile marketing strategies. It underscores the multifaceted interplay of privacy concerns, personalization, message frequency, and trust, all of which are vital considerations for businesses seeking to influence consumer behavior and foster VAS uptake through mobile marketing.

3. Methodology

The research design for this study employed a quantitative approach, specifically utilizing a cross-sectional design, to investigate the effects of mobile marketing on the purchase decisions of value-added services (VAS) within Tanzania's telecommunications industry. This design enabled the examination of variable relationships and the identification of data trends and patterns.

3.1 Population, Sampling and data collection methods;

The study focused on Tanzanian telecommunications subscribers with active SIM cards, estimated at around 60 million people. Convenience sampling was used, selecting participants based on willingness and accessibility. This method was deemed appropriate because the target population is very large and geographically dispersed, making probability sampling techniques costly and time-consuming. Given the constraints of time, resources, and participant availability, this approach ensured that the researcher could collect data efficiently while still capturing diverse perspectives from both online and offline respondents.

Sample size determination followed Cochran's formula, resulting in a minimum of 385 mobile phone users, though only 260 responses were received due to time and accessibility constraints. Data collection utilized a structured survey questionnaire, covering demographics and perceptions of mobile marketing influence on value-added service (VAS) purchase decisions. Pre-testing ensured questionnaire reliability. Surveys were distributed online and offline. Despite constraints, the sample size was deemed sufficient for reliable results.

Measurement scales were thoughtfully chosen to enhance measurement reliability and validity. Variables, indicators, and measurements were aligned with the research's conceptual framework and data analysis technique, ensuring the robustness of the study's findings. See table 1 below

Table 1: The constructs of the model

Variable	Construct variable	Indicator/Observed variable	Measurement of scale
Dependent Variable	Purchase decision of value added service	Whether consumers are subscribed to any value added services offered by Telecommunication companies in Tanzania	Binary scale: 1. Yes, 2.No

Independent variables	Trust on the benefit of VAS	Consumer perception on whether the VAS benefit communicated is true.	Likert scale: 1 (No trust at all) to 5(Complete trust)
	Personalization of information	Whether consumers have ever received any personalized mobile marketing messages.	Binary; 1. Yes, 2. No
	Frequency of receiving ads	How many times telecom subscribers receive mobile marketing campaigns in a day	Likert scale: 1(Rarely) to 5 (very frequently
	Privacy concerns	How do subscribers' data privacy being considered	Likert scale 1(Not concerned) to 5 (Very concerned)

3.3 Data analysis and reliability.

Data analysis in this study encompassed both qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS Version 20. Initially, descriptive statistics were employed to summarize data characteristics, presenting mean values, standard deviations, ranges, and frequency distributions for clarity. Subsequently, logistic regression analysis was applied to explore relationships between the dependent variable (Purchase Decision) and independent variables (Trust, Information Relevance, Privacy, and Frequency). In this case, logistic regression analysis was used because the dependent variable was binary, i.e., it had only two responses.

Ensuring the reliability of the questionnaire involved pilot testing, which detected and rectified errors, enhancing result consistency. Content validity assured that the questionnaire comprehensively covered the study's topic by subjecting it to expert review in the fields of mobile marketing and value-added service purchase decisions. To minimize respondent bias, the study assured participants of anonymity and confidentiality, which helped reduce the likelihood of socially desirable responses. The questionnaire was designed with neutral wording to avoid leading questions and ensure objectivity. Data collection was conducted through both online and offline channels, allowing for broader coverage and reducing location or accessibility bias. In addition, participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were encouraged to provide honest answers without fear of judgment, thereby enhancing the accuracy and authenticity of the data collected.

Ethical considerations were integral to the study. Participants were informed about the research's purpose, procedures, and their rights through informed consent, emphasizing voluntary participation and the right to withdraw. Strict privacy and confidentiality measures safeguarded collected data, ensuring it was used solely for research purposes. Vulnerable groups were treated ethically, requiring informed consent from legal guardians when applicable. This comprehensive approach to data analysis and ethical conduct ensured robust results while safeguarding participant rights and data integrity.

4. Findings and Discussions

This part of the paper presents a discussion and interpretation of the findings from the research study titled "The Effects of Mobile Marketing on the Purchase Decision of Value-Added Services in the Tanzanian Telecommunication Industry." The primary objectives of the study were to examine the effectiveness of mobile marketing, evaluate factors triggering the purchase decision of value-added services, and identify the most effective mobile marketing strategies.

4.1 Descriptive results

Table 2: Respondents' demographic results

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percent
Age	18-24	70	26.5
	25-34	115	44
	35-44	34	13.5
	45-54	22	9
	54 years and above	17	6.6
Type of mobile phone used	Android smartphone	147	56
	iPhone	88	34
	Windows phone	1	.4
	Feature phone	23	9.2

The table 2 above shows the distribution of respondents across different age groups. With the majority of respondents fall within the age groups of 18-24 (26.5%) and 25-34 (44%), making up a significant portion of the sample. Age was considered an important variable in the context of this study because age has been found to have an effect on consumer perception, attitudes or preferences (Huang, L., & Chen, Y., 2017). How consumers purchase and use different types of VAS is different across age groups and each age group shows different purchase behaviors.

Table 3: Respondents' frequency of performing different activities with their mobile phones

Frequency of use	Sending text messages	Browsing the internet	Using Mobile Apps	Performing financial transactions
Very Frequently	100 (38.5%)	105 (48.4%)	103 (54.8%)	62 (29.5%)
Frequently	135 (51.9%)	59 (27.2%)	64 (34.0%)	104 (49.5%)
Occasionally	21 (8.1%)	31 (14.3%)	15 (8.0%)	38 (18.1%)
Rarely	4 (1.5%)	22 (10.1%)	6 (3.2%)	6 (2.9%)
Total	260 (100%)	217 (100%)	188 (100%)	210 (100%)

Table 3 above shows how frequent respondents performs different activities with their mobile phones. These activities includes sending messages, browsing the internet, performing financial transactions as well as using mobile apps. From the table, it can be learned that, Majority of respondents browse the internet and use mobile apps very frequently (48.4% and 54.8% respectively) as compared to performing other activities. Sending text messages also is one among the activities that are most performed by respondents(51.9% and 38.5% send text messages frequently and very frequently respectively).49.5% of respondents perform financial transactions frequently, 29.5% perform financial transactions very frequently and the rest 21% perform either occasionally or rarely. These results highlights the significance of utilizing different channels to deliver messages and engage customers when planning and performing mobile marketing activities given customers' level of usage and performing different activities with their mobile phones.

4.2 Results of Logistic Regression Model

To assess factors affecting purchase decision of value-added services, Logistic regression analysis was performed using SPSS version 20. The dependent variable was VAS purchase "Have you ever purchased any VAS?," and the predictors included consumer trust on the benefit of VAS communicated, personalized messages, frequency of ad receipt, data privacy concerns, and exposure to campaigns related to VAS. Logistic regression stands as the preferred method in this study due to its adaptability and resilience in handling deviations from normality assumptions (Cooper et al., 1994). This technique accommodates the prediction of a dependent variable from a mix of predictors, whether they are continuous, discrete, dichotomous, or a blend of these (Fabowale et al., 1995). Given our data's characteristics, we employed logistic regression to evaluate the effect of each predictor on purchase decision of VAS.

Table 4: Results of logistic Regression model on the factors affecting VAS purchase (n = 260)

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1[a]	VAS_awareness	-.255	.355	.518	1	.472	.775
	Ads_frequency	.049	.142	.119	1	.730	1.050
	Personalization	.749	.343	4.773	1	.029	2.115
	Trust	1.319	.176	56.472	1	.000	3.741
	Privacy_concern	.026	.128	.040	1	.841	1.026
	Constant	-4.353	.931	21.847	1	.000	.013

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: VAS_awareness, Ads_frequency, Personalization, Trust, Privacy_concern.

The findings of the study highlighted several key insights. Firstly, the study shed light on the Effectiveness of Mobile Marketing. The research uncovered that mobile marketing is indeed a potent force in shaping VAS purchase decisions. Trust in the benefits communicated through mobile marketing emerged as a substantial influencer of purchase decisions. Trustworthiness, as evidenced by a coefficient of 1.319 and a low significance level (p = .000), highlighted its substantial impact. Customers were nearly four times more likely to purchase VAS when they trusted the marketing messages. These findings resonate with previous studies by Kumar and Pansari (2016) and Liang and Wei (2017), emphasizing the pivotal role of consumer trust and personalized marketing in steering purchase intent. Nonetheless, some factors like frequency of ad receipt and data privacy concerns did not exhibit significance, potentially indicating unique consumer responses in Tanzania. Additionally, mobile marketing, especially via mobile apps and social media, was found effective in creating VAS awareness. This was underscored by 46.2% of respondents encountering mobile marketing campaigns through mobile apps and 56.9% via social media. These results align with the work of Singh and Soni (2019), affirming the power of mobile marketing through these channels.

Secondly, the study identified the most influential factors in the purchase decision of VAS. Findings shows that there is a significant relationship between trust in the benefit of VAS communicated through mobile marketing and the purchase decision of VAS. This trust factor was found to be a strong driver of VAS purchases, with customers being approximately 3.74 times more likely to purchase VAS when they trust the marketing messages. These findings align with previous research emphasizing the importance of consumer perception and trust in influencing purchase intent. Personalization was also found to be a significant factor affecting purchase decision where by customers are approximately 2.1 times more likely to purchase VAS when they received personalized and relevant mobile marketing messages.

When respondents who purchased VAS were asked on what triggered them to purchase, Positive reviews and personalized

recommendations emerged as the top factors impacting their decision-making process where as the importance of consumer perception of the VAS benefit and the receipt of personalized messages were also emphasized.

Thirdly, the study shed light on the most effective mobile marketing strategies for driving VAS purchases. The study proposed several effective mobile marketing strategies. Personalized content, emphasizing tailored VAS offers based on user data, was identified as influential. Building trust through transparent communication and accurate information was underscored, emphasizing its critical role in the digital age. Engaging visual content, clear messages, targeted audience segmentation, and delivering relevant and timely messages were also considered vital strategies. Leveraging positive customer feedback and reviews and ensuring a user-friendly experience were seen as crucial for customer satisfaction and loyalty. Attractive promotions, when carefully planned, were highlighted as effective in driving VAS purchases. Moreover, the study recognized the prominence of social media platforms and SMS/MMS messages as mobile marketing channels for VAS awareness, indicating the importance of these channels in the Tanzanian market. These findings offer telecom companies valuable insights into crafting effective mobile marketing strategies to boost VAS uptake, promoting competitiveness and customer engagement in the dynamic telecommunications landscape.

5. Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of mobile marketing on the purchase decisions of value-added services (VAS) within the Tanzanian telecommunications industry. The findings confirm that mobile marketing has a significant influence on consumer decision-making, particularly when it involves personalized communication, relevant information, trust-building, and convenience. By applying the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, the study demonstrated that perceived usefulness, ease of use, trust, and relative advantage are crucial determinants of consumer adoption and purchase decisions in mobile marketing contexts.

Overall, this research contributes to a better understanding of mobile marketing effectiveness in an emerging market environment such as Tanzania, where mobile penetration is high and the telecommunications sector is highly competitive. Importantly, it extends prior studies by highlighting the role of consumer perceptions and cultural factors in shaping mobile marketing outcomes in the African context.

6. Implications

6.1 Theoretical Implications

This study offers several theoretical contributions. First, it extends the application of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory to mobile marketing adoption in the telecommunications sector of Tanzania, an under-researched context. The findings confirm the predictive power of TAM constructs—perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use—in explaining consumers' purchase decisions of VAS. Additionally, DOI attributes such as relative advantage, compatibility, and observability were reflected in consumer perceptions of mobile marketing strategies. By integrating these theories, the study enriches the body of knowledge on consumer behavior in technology-driven marketing and provides a theoretical foundation for future research in similar emerging markets.

6.2 Practical Implications

From a managerial perspective, the study provides several practical insights for marketers and telecommunications companies. First, personalization should be prioritized, as tailored messages are more likely to resonate with consumers and influence their purchase decisions. Second, building and maintaining consumer trust is essential, particularly in addressing concerns about privacy and information security. Third, localized marketing strategies that align with Tanzanian cultural norms, language preferences, and consumer behaviors can enhance the effectiveness of mobile marketing campaigns. Finally, firms should leverage both SMS/MMS and mobile applications to maximize reach and engage consumers in a manner that balances convenience with interactivity.

7. Areas for Future Research

Although the study makes significant contributions, it also presents opportunities for further inquiry. Future research could investigate the role of cultural influences and social norms could provide a deeper understanding of how consumers respond to mobile marketing in Tanzania. Further studies might also examine the impact of social media platforms, mobile payment systems, and emerging digital tools on consumer behavior and mobile marketing outcomes. Longitudinal research could also explore how consumer perceptions and behaviors evolve over time as mobile marketing strategies advance.

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