BIG BROTHER NALJA: A DISCOURSE ON VIEWERS' PERCEPTION AND MARKETING IMPLICATIONS IN THE ENTERTAINMENT **INDUSTRY**

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ABSTRACT

The BBnaija show has been dubbed the most viewed non sporting event in African television and regarded as one of Nigerian's biggest entertainment export product outside of Nollywood. It is therefore imperative to ascertain the activities of this brand and underscore consumers' opinion of the show as well as its marketing implications in the entertainment industry. The aim of this research is to evaluate consumer's perception of BBnaija reality show as this is a determining factor to loyalty and profitability. To carry out this research, content analysis was adopted and a total of 1154 posts were evaluated and responses used as a criteria to draw conclusion. It was discovered that utilitarian, hedonic and symbolic values/benefits create positive perception among a larger number of viewers of BBNaija, which translate to brand loyalty and profitability of the reality show.

Keywords: BBnaija, consumer perception, hedonic value, marketing implication, social, profitability, utilitarian value

INTRODUCTION

Consumers' purchase of any product largely depends on their perception of the product Marketable products are those that consumers consider beneficial, especially when they compare with price and content (chartered institute of marketing) of the product. For a brand like Big Brother Naija (BBNaija) to thrive, it is pertinent to understand consumer's perception of the product offered in order to evaluate its marketability in the long run, otherwise it will fade like other reality television (TV) shows of its kind like Gulder Ultimate Search, Haier Thermocool, Next Movie Star, Who Wants to Be A Millionaire amongst others.

The predictability of most movies and the continuous recreating of old uninteresting stories have reduced viewers' excitement in audio-visual entertainment. Most viewers find these programmes less enticing and unworthy of their time. This has reduced the viewership of TV programmes and even subscriptions to cable networks. In a bid to increase viewership and create a less predictable programme, movie directors and creative minds have sort for in-depth knowledge of consumer preference, and have come up with less predictable entertainment programmes like reality TV show.

It is in no doubt that to create a transformation in the digital space one has to adapt new sets of business actions especially in an ever changing and constantly improving entertainment world. The reality show has recently become a norm in Nigeria as any well-crafted one elicit an upsurge in viewership as well as cable TV subscriptions and buzz on social media platforms.

It is notable that more persons are drawn to reality TV shows because they are neither scripted nor predictable, and also because they depict real life scenarios which most viewers can actually relate to, in their everyday life. In this paper, we attempt to explore consumers' perception of BBNaija reality TV show with a view to deducing marketing implications that will guide future activities of its hosts and sponsors, as well as those of other participants in the entertainment industry. This paper adopted content analysis approach to examine manifest content in a systematic and objective manner for the purpose of analyzing consumer's perception and marketing implication of BBNaija reality show.

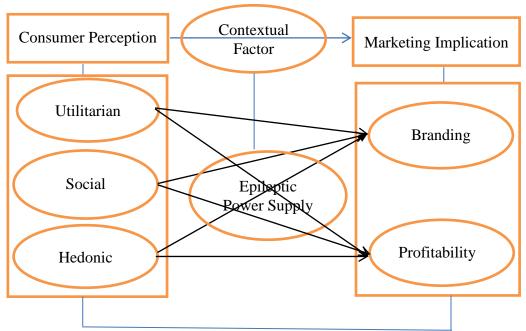


Fig. 1: Conceptual/Operationalization of BBNaija: A discourse on consumer perception and marketing implications in Nigeria entertainment industry.

Source: Adapted from Rintamaki et al (2016), Mimouni-Chaabane&Volle (2010),

BASELINE SOCIAL THEORY

Determining the driving force behind consumers' continued patronage of specific product(s), requires an understanding of underlining theories that motivate individuals to purchase or not to patronize a given product or brand. This study is thus founded on perception theory, which suggests that sensory perception helps individuals to process sensory stimuli. Perception help individuals to form opinion on any purchase decision.

According to Sta'vkova et al (2008), perception is the process of selecting (processing and interpreting) input data from the environment to make them purposeful. It involves gathering information through the senses (eye, ear, skin, tongue, nose, and mind) and effectively making meaning out of these information through the use of selective attention, selective distortion and selective retention (Kotler, 2000).

Perception is formulated based on individuals' construction. This explains the fact that what is evaluated as present at a given place, event, scenario, etc. is not necessarily all that is present but that which the

brain computes as present at the time (Smythies, 2015). According to (Frith 2007), the brain builds a model of what it evaluates to be present and continually modifies based on signals received from the senses.

As perceptual experiences are gained, the brain is modified to understand and explain them in certain ways that vary from individual to individual with respect to sensory stimulus: sound, taste, smell, touch etc. The concept of perception can be explained based on individuals' experience and interaction over a period of time. This means that a person termed a pessimist or optimist have built their judgment on events and situations based on experience and it is quite possible that this perception could be modified over a period of time due to new experiences.

CONCEPT OF CONSUMER PERCEPTION

The development of a positive attitude towards a brand is largely based on consumer's positive perception of the brand and its products. According to Mcneal (2007), consumer behaviour towards any product or brand is directly proportional to their perception towards such product. It is important to note that positive recall and attitude are not the only response consumers give to brands, this is because negative attitude could also arise as a result of unfavourable performance or experience with such brand (Aghekyan-Simonian et al, 2012). Consumers' perceived value and benefits of being associated to a brand like BBNaija is integral to their purchase, repurchase and recommendation of the reality TV show to friends and members of the public who are assumed to possess same self-concept with them.

In the entertainment world, individuals watch and patronize shows, movies and channels which they perceive to be beneficial and adds value to them, and encourage others to do same. This is the reason MultiChoice (owners of DSTV and GOTV) have provided various channels with different aspects ranging from reality TV shows, documentaries, news, sports, movies, religion, music, cartoons etc.; all of are all geared towards attracting and satisfying the viewing public and increasing their profitability.

Perceived Benefit and Value

Congruent self perception of any product depict beneficial value to an individual and therefore they become non-hesitant in purchasing and patronizing products that offer such intricate values. It is important to note that consumers patronize products and brands that offer both financial and non-financial benefits (Lennher et al 2007). Consumer perceived benefit/value can be sub-divided into three (3) according to Rintamaki et al 2006) namely utilitarian benefits, hedonic benefits and symbolic benefits.

Utilitarian Benefit/Value

According to Mimouni-Chaabane and Volle (2010), utilitarian benefits are the core satisfaction an individual gains from purchasing a product. It is the core product that is offered for sale by a marketing organisation. Therefore, the level of satisfaction derived will be dependent on the perceived value offered or benefits derived from consumption of such product. For the BBNaija, the perceived value depends largely on the activities that go on in the show, the twist and turns that the producers introduce or that come to play, the Saturday parties, Head of House challenge, veto power of chance are some of the events that increased consumer satisfaction, patronage and profitability of the show.

The introduction of fake housemates in season 3 which in season 4 turned out to be real housemates were the high points of the show and created its increased level of unpredictability, thereby leading to increase in consumer positive perception. However, it is still undisputed that some aspects brought negative perception but the likes and thumbs-up received via the show's Instagram and Twitter pages clearly indicates that its positive perception exceeded the negatives in terms of utilitarian value it offers.

Hedonic Benefits/Value

These are subjective and abstractive benefits/values derived from personal gratification Rintamaki et al (2016). Hedonic benefits are received from explorations and entertainments. According to Mimouni-Chaabane and Volle (2010), it is important to note that mere continuous interaction provided by BBNaija provided via online platforms and the ability to win prizes availed fans via voting platforms and weekly gifts availed to fans by merely watching the show provides a form of value/benefits to viewers of the BBNaija show.

In the history of the show, viewers have won dinner tables for two, gadgets and other prizes due to their ability to answer questions relating to the show and voting for contestants. This has increased visits to the pages of the brand, and increased viewers' positive attitude towards the show (Seo & Park, 2018). According to Omar et al. (2015), hedonic benefits evoke strong emotional response and creates a high level of loyalty.

This indicates that the opportunity granted to viewers to win prizes via voting and question answering is capable of increasing viewership and followership of BBNaija and create good perception in the minds of viewers; as "giving back to the society" is seen as way by which organisations exhibit socially responsible behavious. It is therefore most pertinent to note that this single act is capable of tripling revenue for the organisation as these set of customers will purchase higher packages such as explora so as not to miss any aspect of the show.

Symbolic Benefits/value

This source of benefit and value is accrued through a feeling of recognition. BBNaija avails fans of different contestants the ability to interact amongst themselves especially on social media. This source of value and benefits creates a special feeling of worth and being a part of a good cause especially when individual fans are given the opportunity to interact with celebrity fans on same fan page.

According to Mimouni-Chaabane and Volle (2010), recognition benefits offers members a form of prestige and special status. In the words of Keller(1993), social benefits offers a feeling of social approval which are intangible benefits that in most cases, supersedes utilitarian benefits for most individuals. Omar et al (2005), expresses the fact that symbolic benefits offer consumers a form of identification, and this can also be expressed in fan club platforms of the reality show. The fan page most times, go beyond the show and grows into a community of persons with like minds. It is important to note that brand pages have in recent times become channels for socialization amongst individuals of like minds.

BBNAIJA REALITY TV SHOW

BBNaija is an elimination/game form of reality TV show in which participants live together in a house under the monitoring eyes of "big brother" and are eliminated one after another until a winner emerges on the last day of the programme. The show is filmed and hosted in Nigeria, and was first hosted on 5th March 2006. The show has continues to thrive till date. Pay Porte was the first headline sponsor of BBNaija for two consecutive seasons. In the year 2018, Bet9ja became the new headline sponsor of the show.

The show involves 12 to 21 contestants who reside in an isolated house for a period of 71 days to compete for a large cash prize as well as other material gifts, at the end of the show by avoiding being evicted from the house by viewers. The show is traceable to George Orwell's novel "Nineteen Eighty-Four" in which Big brother monitors the activities of all on earth in the form of a surveillance (Daniel, 2016). This surveillance can be seen as a form of high definition remote cameras or an invisible superior being who is omnipresent.

The winner of BBNaija always walk away with large sums, in addition to other material prizes. The last edition of the show gave a cash prize of N25million and a breath-taking car. All that is required to win this show is to be live with a bunch of fellow crazy, irresponsible people, do all sorts of immoral things, and Viola, you are the winner, next thing, you are called a celebrity, winning big ads contracts and becoming the face of multinational companies.

If only there could be an educating version of this programme, if only they could house some intelligent people in like manner and make them compete for similar prizes. But lo! Our people do not encourage sanity. Many individuals as well as religious groups accuse organizers of BBNaija of promoting immorality. They feel the show is a mountain of pornography. It is accused of promoting nudity and moral depravity. The indecent behaviour and life sex on a TV show does not in any way portray the Nigerian conservative culture about sex. It is said that people with intelligence are not known to win BBNaija reality TV show.

Thus, our society is accused of promoting evil over good, indecency over decency, immorality over morality, and ungodliness over godliness. The best in mathematics competition will go home with either a carton of cowbell milk or indomie noodles, ridiculous stipends, yet these morons in BBNaija earn millions for coming to suck breasts, speak thrash, display nudity and get under the sheets on international TVS.

Wealthy individuals, companies and corporate organizations spend huge sums of money sponsoring dirty show, like BBN and Beauty Pegeants where they enthrone satanic activities, display nudity, molest under aged girls and make them win on bottom power rather than real beauty and brains. The questions that agitate the mind in this circumstance is: How do we raise the next Chike Obi, Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Cyril Stober, Apostle G. D. Numbere?

BBNaija is however not without advantages. It encourage housemates to play social games that reveals how the human mind works. These games focuses on bringing out the best in contestants. In this regard, the creativity in each contestant is easily discovered. It promotes teamwork. BBNaija influence housemates to form strong alliances to help prolong their stay in the house. They team and work together on different tasks and fight for their survival irrespective of their ages and status. Its major focus is their ability to work under pressure and creativity towards accomplishing assigned tasks.

BBNaija foster unity. The show also creates an avenue for promoting unity among Nigerians. In this respect, viewers learn from the show, how to live with different people from different background and upbringing. The show also helps to teach viewers about developing strategy on any mission they are getting into. For instance, many housemates go into the house with different strategies on how to beat others and win the heart of viewers, it could be use of pity, romantic relationship, humour or wildness.

Talent Discovery is yet another positive of BBnaija reality TV show. The show has become an avenue for discovering hidden talents, and harnessing potentials. Further, BBnaija is entertaining. Many people watch the show for relaxation, after a stressful day at work. Some worries and thinking are shelved as one need to sit back, relax, watch and laugh at the drama that the housemates have to offer, especially the Saturday house parties and arena games.

In addition, the show foster relationship and intimacy. The show has produced at least one unique friendship or relationship amongst housemates that may lead to a valuable lifetime partnership.

VIEWERS' PERCEPTION OF BBNAIJA

Viewers' perception of BBNaija vary based on evaluation of the various social media platforms. Most individuals find it as an exciting programme to watch, and some feel it lacks the Nigerian culture due to regular display of sex, immorality and nudity. It is important to note that most social media critics on the show have helped to make it more popular. The show currently provide marketing opportunities due to the level of awareness it has, the quality of the show, the viewer engagement is encourages and the profit making potential it offers its host and sponsors.

Awareness of the Show

Based on a review of various social media posts, there is a reasonable general acceptance of the BBNaija show, so much that viewers online long to know the start date. In an Instagram post on the official page of the show, a follower @realkaffy posted "come home quickly. The social media buzz on all platforms were quite enormous in the build up to the commencement of each edition of the show. The show has been dubbed the most viewed non sporting event in Africa and regarded as one of Nigeria's biggest entertainment export outside of Nollywood.

Programme Quality

What depicts quality of an entertainment programme goes beyond the event itself but also the environment where the event is hosted. Beginning with the stunning Performance at the opening ceremony that featured music sensation such as Teni and Burna Boy who dished out the Pepper in their music to the arrival of the housemates and onward entry into the lavishly furnished Big Brother house. On the opening ceremony, an Instagram user noted that the ambience of the house was a sight to behold. The daily task did not fall short too. The dramas (arguments) no doubt doubled the entertainment and adrenaline level of both viewers and contestants

Viewer Engagement

Evaluation is one of the reasons many viewers of reality shows follow through and the BBNaija show is always on the top of its game in ensuring viewers and voters are also winners. During the 2019 BBNaija show, as part of Hedonic benefits/value that increases perception, and endears viewers to follow through on all aspects of the show, MultiChoice and all its partners and sponsors continually offered viewers opportunities to win many prizes via predictions and show related question answering. In 2019, there was an opportunity for a viewer to win the Virtual Head of House Chair as well as Bedmate gifting furniture used for the show to lucky viewers amongst others.

Brand Profitability

Reviews shows that the 2019 edition gathered a total of 240 million votes according to www.news9naija.com.ng as announced by Ebuka Obi Uchendu the show anchor. The show is said to have made as much as 7.2billion Naira from votes alone. There was an increase in the subscription for DSTV and Gotv in the said period by more than 50% and also an increase in package step-up during the period of the show airing. This is because the higher your package, the higher votes you possess via that voting platform as such, viewers preferred the premium package due to the voting power and level of control it offers. MultiChoice is no doubt capitalising on its duality advantage. The show also received sponsorship from notable brands such as Bet9ja, Pepsi, Gulder, Innoson Motors, Legend Extra Stout, Indomie Noodles amongst others. Most of these sponsors were incharge of sponsoring the prize win for most task as well as supplies of usables and food in the Big Brother house.

Sponsors Profitability

It is in no doubt that BBNaija is not just profitable to its parent brand MultiChoice but also to its sponsors. Before 2019, quite a number of persons were unaware of brands like Oppo a mobile phone company in Nigeria, but as a show sponsor, its brand awareness grew tremendously giving it a soft landing in the

Nigeria mobile phone market amidst strong competitors. Its sales and popularity grew tremendously after one of its official flagship phone given to the housemates was smashed by an angry Mercy, one of the housemates who later emerged as the winner of the 2019 edition. Its sales was said to triple as mercy's fans purchased OPPO phones as a way to ask for forgiveness in her behalf. In October 2019, House of Lunnette an eyeglass brand announced it has sold out its products shortly after Tacha was made its brand ambassador. It is therefore convenient to say that BBNaija brand also created a profitable platform for its sponsors in terms of increased product awareness, revenue and profitability. Through constant hashtags, unknown brands became household names.

MARKETING IMPLICATIONS BBNAIJA

The outcomes of positive brand perception is acceptance of products offered for sale or associated with the brand. It is important to note that marketing implication could be positive or negative, though every business organization clamor for acceptance of their products. For the purpose of this research work, marketing implications will be evaluated on the basis of brand loyalty and profitability.

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty significantly affects consumer's purchase intention. In addition to brand committed, positive word-of-mouth and brand activism, loyal consumers exhibit other positive behaviours that benefit brands. These include purchase of products associated with the brand, repurchase intention, as well as identification with the brand. Extant literature show that brand loyalty on social media savvy products has offered brands many important opportunities to create value, present interesting and real-time contents, ensure co-creation, and encourage new ideas (Machado et al. 2019).

Social media interaction and brand loyalty offer new ways for businesses and customers to connect with each other. This interaction is necessitated by a need to understand consumer perceptions regarding the brand, spread and obtain information from them and understand the level at which consumers have gained value (Gummerus et al. 2012). Some studies investigating the effect of brand loyalty on purchase intention were found in the literature.

Profitability

The term Profitability indicates the ability of a firm to make profits from all of its business engagements whether internal or external. It indicates how efficiently the management has been able to make profits through effective use of all resources available to her in the market. Profitability is an index of efficiency; and is regarded as a measure of efficiency and management guide to greater efficiency. Profitability is an important yardstick for measuring a firm's level of efficiency, although it is important to note that the extent of profitability cannot be taken as a final proof of efficiency. Profitability ratios are of two typesthose showing profitability in relation to sales and those showing profitability in relation to investment. Together, these ratios indicate firm's overall effectiveness of operation.

EPILEPTIC POWER SUPPLY AS A MODERATING FACTOR

The unreliable electricity supply in Nigeria play a crucial role in shaping the connection between the general public's perception of BBNaija and its marketing consequences. The inconsistent electricity supply in the nation impacts the availability and quality of the show, hence altering public perception and engagement with it.

Frequent power outage adversely impact the uninterrupted transmission of television broadcasts. Considering the fact that BBNaija is a broadcast reality show, power outages might result in missed episodes and impede the audience's capacity to keep up with the show. The inconsistency may lead to audience irritation, which might affect their overall assessment of the programme (Colicev et. al., 2018).

The marketing ramifications of this relationship are significant. Irregular viewing caused by power interruptions may lead to decrease in exposure and impact for advertisers and sponsors affiliated with BBNaija. The efficacy of marketing methods, such as the inclusion of products within the presentation and the airing of ads, may be affected (Ruma et. al., 2011). Advertisers should reconsider their marketing techniques in order to address the difficulties presented by the unreliable electricity supply. This might involve integrating digital and social media tactics to expand their reach beyond the conventional television audience.

The unstable electricity supply in Nigeria adds a level of intricacy to the connection between the general public's impression of BBNaija show and its commercial consequences. To ensure the show's commercial success in the Nigerian market, it is crucial to modify marketing methods to address power-related obstacles.

CONCLUSION

It is in no doubt that no product exists without negative comments, BBNaija have had its fair share of this, but creating competitive advantage through consumer centric approach on social media platforms have in no little way increased its stay leading to high level of jostling amongst well-known brands to occupy its Gold sponsorship chair. The content analysis revealed that BBnaija have positive marketing implication through perceived benefits - utilitarian benefits (entertainment), hedonic benefits (exploration) and symbolic benefits (recognition and social benefits) of the show.

The duality advantage of owning the show and the means to the show has also given MultiChoice a higher power in dictating all that concerns the BBNaija show and gaining all the profits (via votes and via cable TV subscriptions). The openness of the MultiChoice brand has given it the ability to attract a wide range of sponsors. This is because unlike other shows, BBNaija is open to sponsorship from competing brands.

Most controversial issues of nudity and bad morals presented by its hater as they are termed have only created more popularity and trending hashtags to the show instead of reducing its followership because for many young persons, it avails them a moment of escape from the corruption known in the Nigerian political landscape.

The show will most definitely stand the test of time as long as it continues to offer a complete package of utilitarian, hedonic and symbolic benefits/ value to its viewers. This is because individuals have different point of engagements and a complete package captures a greater portion of them to like and accept one's product and brand and develop loyalty towards it.

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