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Examining the Impact of Niche Marketing Dimensions on Customer Satisfaction: A Study of Bolt Transportation Network in Nigeria

Aniediabasi James Udom [*]

[a]. *Department of Marketing, Heritage Polytechnic, Eket, Nigeria.*

Abstract

This study explores the relationship between Niche marketing dimensions and customer satisfaction within the Bolt transportation network in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Understanding these dynamics is vital in the competitive transportation sector to boost customer loyalty. The primary aim is to examine how demographic profiling, price sensitivity, mobile application use, and geo-targeting influence customer satisfaction with Bolt's services. Data was collected via a structured questionnaire from a diverse sample, predominantly female (69.9%) and aged 30-39 (52.8%). The study employed simple linear regression analysis to test four null hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. The analysis revealed significant positive relationships between customer satisfaction and each Niche marketing dimension. Demographic profiling had a notable impact ($\beta = 0.423$), and price sensitivity showed a strong effect ($\beta = 0.463$). Mobile application use also positively correlated with customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.327$). These findings emphasize the need to tailor services to customer demographics, address pricing concerns, and enhance mobile app usability. The study aligns with existing research but also highlights the need for improvements in mobile app performance. The study confirms that demographic profiling, price sensitivity, and mobile application use are crucial in shaping customer satisfaction, offering transportation companies a competitive edge. This research provides new insights into the influence of Niche marketing on customer satisfaction, challenging previous findings on mobile app use and suggesting that improving app performance could further enhance satisfaction.

1. Introduction

Transportation networking businesses (TNCs) are quickly becoming one of Nigeria's fastest-growing sectors, revolutionizing personal mobility and employment in the transportation industry. The sector's rise has substantially impacted urban transportation, influencing service quality, cost, and demand. Technological improvements have provided a competitive edge for TNCs due to their capacity to deliver speed, reliability, timeliness, comfort, and convenience. Mobile applications that connect passengers with drivers are a major technological achievement in this industry.

The rise of mobile applications and websites designed to handle and organise client information has broadened the scope of Niche marketing. Niche marketing entails adjusting a company's products, prices, and promotions to match the specific demands of local client groups, communities, and regions, increasing customer connections (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). This technique evolved when information technology provided marketers with new opportunities to target consumers more precisely (Zhang, 2019). Niche marketing adds internet thinking to traditional marketing, employing mobile communication tools to develop relationships with consumers and boost customer satisfaction.

Niche marketing is one of the most effective ways for firms of all sizes to build, expand, and preserve their brands (Anyadighibe et al., 2014). Firms carefully identify clients by demographic criteria including gender, job title, age, and education, then generate offers suited to these categories. This strategy helps organisations focus sales on people or groups with items and pricing that better exploit their willingness to pay while considering customer attitudes. Companies split consumers into distinct groups and personalise tactics to capture as much value as feasible (Dobson, 2006).

Marketing's focus has evolved from client acquisition to customer happiness, moving away from old mass marketing tactics. Companies now offer individualised marketing programs to each customer in their target market or real-time location, rather than mass efforts (Etuk, 2018). Intense competition and increased customer awareness are prompting TNCs to implement Niche marketing methods to increase their client base, product understanding, and market share. These tactics strive to satisfy and secure consumer loyalty by giving promotions and products suited to the individual needs of selected customer groups (Twin, 2019).

Despite advancements in customer satisfaction surveys and enterprises' ability to segment clients, firms may still lack exact information about customer intentions and dispositions. Consequently, profit-seeking corporations attempt to design compelling consumer propositions that are also beneficial for the firms. A Niche marketing approach tries to establish a huge and devoted consumer base willing to frequently patronise their services (Dobson, 2006).

Key measures of Niche marketing include demographic profiling, price sensitivity, mobile application use, and geo-targeting (Kpunee et al., 2018; Anyadighibe et al., 2014; Esu and Anyadighibe, 2014; Ziliani and Bellini, 2004). This study employs these indicators to predict consumer satisfaction with TNCs in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Customer satisfaction is defined as the degree to which customers' expectations about products are met or surpassed, leading to loyalty, patronage, and retention (Anyadighibe et al., 2014).

In Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, TNCs like Bolt and Dryva have developed a sophisticated market with fierce competition among operators. Customers now have many alternatives, necessitating strong marketing techniques to assure satisfaction, retention, and recruitment of new customers (Etuk, 2018). However, there is limited empirical study on Niche marketing methods and their underlying characteristics (demographic profile, price sensitivity, mobile application use, and geo-targeting) in relation to consumer satisfaction within the TNC industry in Uyo. This study attempts to evaluate the relationship between Niche marketing and customer satisfaction of TNCs in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

2. Literature Review
2.1. Niche marketing

The concept of Niche marketing has emerged to accommodate the various demands, aspirations, and lifestyles of distinct small or micromarkets. This method tailors marketing campaigns to individual consumers based on geographical, demographic, and behavioural categories (Halepete, 2003). Historically, the word Niche marketing was coined in 1988 by Ross Nelson Kay and initially employed in the real estate business (Anyadighibe et al., 2014). Edwards (2015) suggested that the huge demographic changes of the 1980s greatly influenced consumer behaviour and Niche marketing development. Edwards identified eight key megatrends that contributed to the creation of Niche marketing: changes in family size, population age, educational levels, the emergence of ethnic groups, media differentiation, the weight of small firms, advancements in retailer information technology, and consumer demand for variety.

According to a Wikipedia article, Niche marketing was first addressed in the UK marketing press in November 1988 about the application of geo-demographics to consumer marketing. This concept was further examined in a 2015 essay that highlighted knowing local markets and personalising marketing messages to specific consumers in direct marketing (Esu and Anyadighibe, 2014).

Ezekiel et al. (2014) identified Niche marketing as marketing actions aimed at individuals, companies, and homes, highlighting the mutual benefits for all parties involved. They stressed that Niche marketing is firm-oriented, with loyalty card-driven information enabling service organizations to identify and target specific client groupings for retention and acquisition. This trend in marketing has been referred to as Niche marketing by authors like Ziliani and Bellini (2004). According to Rogers and Peppers (2000), Niche marketing has ushered enterprises into a realm of mass customisation, where one-to-one marketing becomes a reality.

Anyadighibe et al. (2014) identified Niche marketing as a highly targeted form of target marketing, more accurate than standard methods. Perrault and McCarthy (2002) described it as executing operations to accomplish an organisation's objectives by anticipating customer demands and directing need-satisfying goods and services from producer to customer. Perrault et al. (2017) described Niche marketing as the marketing efforts of particular enterprises, whereas Shaw (2018) defined it as marketing items or services directly to targeted groups based on specific obtained information. Halepete, Hathcote, and Peters (2005) underlined that Niche marketing organises stores into independent marketing units to fulfil the demands of various client groups.

Niche marketing targets specific groups of people in niche markets, offering products or services directly to them (Twin, 2019). Kotler and Armstrong (2010) defined it as adapting a firm's products and marketing campaigns to satisfy the needs and wants of specific individuals and local client groups, including local and individual marketing. Esu and Anyadighibe (2014) stated that Niche marketing has taken on new dimensions, especially in the 21st century, becoming a back-to-basics strategy for engaging people and sharing stories successfully in a quickly changing environment. Niche marketing became functionally practical with the proliferation of inexpensive home computers capable of maintaining data in a manner that could be tracked and manipulated by a single user. It remains an effective marketing method for small firms to delight clients and promote their brands (Anyadighibe et al., 2014). The method entails collecting comprehensive customer information to produce targeted marketing efforts that touch on a personal level, enhancing client loyalty and happiness. The demographic developments that influenced Niche marketing include reduced family sizes, an older population, higher education levels, and the rise of ethnic groupings. These changes have led to more diversified consumer wants and tastes, requiring marketers to employ more precise targeting tactics. Additionally, developments in media distinction and shop information technology have enabled marketers to reach certain segments more effectively.

Small firms have notably profited from Niche marketing, as it allows them to compete with larger companies by targeting specific consumers. The increase in customer demand for diversity has exacerbated the need for individualized marketing techniques. By understanding the distinctive traits and preferences of their target consumers, organisations can build products and services that better fulfil these needs, leading to improved customer satisfaction and loyalty.

2.2. Concept of Customer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction is critical for any organization's success because it has a direct relationship with meeting consumer requests (Arslan et al., 2015). According to Naik et al. (2010), consumer satisfaction is made up of different elements that come from separate sources. Customer satisfaction is the evaluation of whether a product feature or the product itself meets the customer's expectations in terms of consumption-related fulfilment. Customer satisfaction is influenced by factors such as expectations, perceived services, and perceived quality (Nyadzayo, 2010).

The anticipated result of marketing endeavours frequently revolves around client happiness, as the provision of gratifying products is closely linked to achieving success in the market. Customer satisfaction is assessed based on a customer's emotional reaction when comparing their expectations of service with the actual

service provided. Customer satisfaction is crucial for maintaining a loyal customer base and is a significant factor in customer retention and loyalty (Vessel and Zabker, 2010).

Murambi and Bwisa (2014) underscore the paramount importance of customer satisfaction for both products and services. According to Esu and Anyadighibe (2014), consumer happiness is determined by how well products and services fulfil or surpass customer expectations. Customer satisfaction, as described by Kotler and Keller (2012), is the outcome of evaluating a product's perceived performance against expectations, which in turn generates sentiments of joy or disappointment. Lovelock & al. (2001) justify customer satisfaction as the emotional comfort or disappointment from comparing expectations to experience. Esu and Anyadighibe (2014) remark that the concept of customer satisfaction is backed by several theories, including the assimilation-contrast theory, contrast theory, equity theory, attribution theory, value-percept theory, discrepancy theory, and expectation disconfirmation theory.

Customer satisfaction is a critical instrument for corporate success. It is described as an overall evaluation based on the entire buying and consuming experience with items over time. Higher customer satisfaction leads to higher loyalty, retention, and patronage, assuring future profits for enterprises (Khadka and Maharjan, 2017). Satisfied customers boost corporate earnings and encourage client patronage, loyalty, and retention.

Customer patronage refers to the trading process in which customers obtain services or commodities in exchange for money or other considerations. It entails purchasing goods and services with the expectation of obtaining benefits or satisfaction from them (Njelita and Anyasor, 2020).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Niche marketing theories try to give a systematic framework for understanding Niche marketing occurrences by addressing the "why" underlying them. This study tries to describe the theoretical underpinning of the Niche marketing variables considered for the research, with the anchor theory being the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) published by Fred D. Davis in 1989.

TAM is an information systems theory that explains how customers adopt and use new technologies to enhance their pleasure. When clients are introduced to new technology, their usage may not coincide with the intended goal. This theory suggests that several factors influence a customer's decision regarding how and when to use new technology. Davis (1989) initially established TAM in his study on perceived utility, perceived ease of use, and user adoption of information technology. He asserted that the extent to which an individual believes that using a particular system would enhance job performance (perceived usefulness) and the extent to which one believes that using the application would be free of effort (perceived ease of use) are critical determinants of technology acceptance.

TAM is built on two key constructs:

Perceived usefulness: The degree to which a person believes that using a particular application would enhance job performance.

Perceived ease of use: The degree to which a person believes that using a particular application would be free of effort.

Numerous studies in information research, marketing, psychology, and consumer research (e.g., Persson and Thorslund, 2019; Qingxion and Liu, 2004; Bednall and Lim, 2016) have utilized TAM to explain customers' cognitive purchase behaviors. This theory is relevant to the current study in explaining the use of mobile applications as a variable in Niche marketing strategy. It helps elucidate how organizations use Niche marketing strategies through mobile applications to offer individual customers new innovations, products, and services that satisfy their purchase behavior patterns. Key determinants of mobile application use, such as perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, are crucial in technology interactions. According to Persson and Thorslund (2019), it is essential for application developers to focus on usability to overcome technical difficulties. Therefore, this study suggests that perceived ease of use is a significant factor that can greatly impact the success of an application, ultimately leading to customer satisfaction.

2.3 Empirical Review

Bednall and Lim (2016) conducted study on the impact of Niche marketing dimensions in boosting consumer information to promote satisfaction, retention, and loyalty among women buying cosmetics. The study focusses on Niche marketing features such as demographic profiling, loyalty card applications, and geo-targeting. Using an exploratory study strategy and judgmental sampling of 12 respondents, the researchers conducted multiple regression analysis. The findings demonstrated that tailored information through Niche marketing greatly boosted consumer happiness, retention, and loyalty. Geo-targeting had the biggest influence on women purchasing cosmetics, making Niche marketing a profitable technique in the cosmetic sector.

Kpunee et al. (2018) evaluated the influence of Niche marketing strategy on the competitive potential of microfinance banks in River State, Nigeria. This correlational study, comprising 100 staff members from five microfinance banks, aims to analyse the relationship between demographic profiling and geo-targeting on competitive potential. The results demonstrated strong positive connections between both demographic profiling and geo-targeting and competitive potential. The study indicated that enterprises should segment their target markets to better serve client needs.

Alkhafaji and Oman (2017) studied user satisfaction with mobile apps in the Omani corporate sector. Using quota sampling, the study indicated high levels of satisfaction among respondents, who valued the timely information supplied by the apps. The study suggested that firms could encourage app adoption by eliminating barriers, hence boosting consumer happiness.

Justitia et al. (2019) did a study on consumer satisfaction using online taxi mobile apps. Using questionnaires and purposive sampling, the study applied the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) and Importance Performance Analysis (IPA). The investigation indicated a customer satisfaction rating of 76.117%, classed as a Cause for Concern. The highest satisfaction indicators were route identification, interactivity, and content quality, while connection and service quality were the main sources of unhappiness. The report recommends prioritizing changes in areas with the highest satisfaction gaps.

Cuici Consulting (2020) examined customer satisfaction among ride-hailing consumers of Uber and Bolt in Nigeria. Using an online poll and stratified sampling, the study assessed user experiences before, during, and after the journey. The data demonstrated excellent levels of satisfaction across all stages due to the convenience and simplicity of the mobile app interfaces. The study underscored the necessity of a flawless user experience for ride-hailing services.

Hayder (2019) explored the elements affecting customer satisfaction with online cab services in Dhaka City. Focusing on independent variables such as reliability, pricing, comfort, and service quality, the study employed SPSS V20 and a 5-point Likert scale to evaluate data from 100 respondents. The results demonstrated substantial correlations between customer satisfaction and characteristics including price, quality, and reliability, whereas comfort did not significantly affect satisfaction. The study stressed the essential function of pricing in boosting consumer happiness.

These studies collectively show the enormous impact of Niche marketing methods on customer satisfaction across diverse industries, from cosmetics to ride-hailing services.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The researcher selected a survey research design, enabling the collection of data from the public using standardised questionnaires. This design is efficient, speedier, and more precise for assessing the features of a large population from its sample. It was chosen to properly unravel and define the parts of Niche marketing and their impact on consumer happiness.

The research area was Uyo, the capital of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. It was chosen since prior investigations on Niche marketing had not studied its application in the transportation industry in this region.

The study's demographic consisted of male and female clients who used Bolt, a transportation networking company, in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. This covered customers of all demographic factors and social situations. Since it was not practicable to collect an actual number of clients in this group, the population was treated as

enormous and nearly impossible to poll in its entirety. Therefore, from a statistical perspective, the population was regarded as unlimited.

3.2 Sample Size Determination

The sample size for this research was obtained using the Top-man Formula for an unknown population. This technique was utilised to ascertain a sample size for the study, given the unavailability of a precise population record of clients using transportation networking firms in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. To arrive at a suitable sample size, a pilot study was done using the research questionnaire on 30 select clients of Bolt and Dryva transportation networking companies. The responses of "strongly agree" and "agree" allowed the researcher to produce numbers for 'P' (positive), while the responses of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" provided values for 'Q' (negative), for use in the Top-man algorithm. The formula, as indicated in Equation 1, was then applied to estimate the sample size.

$$n = \frac{z^2(p \times q)}{e^2}$$
1

where; n = required sample size, z = the value of Z-score associated with the degree of confidence i.e. 95% confidence level, being 1.96 from the Z-score table, p = the percentage of positive response expressed as decimal, q = (p – 1) the percentage of negative response expressed as decimal, e =Acceptable tolerance level of error (stated in percentage points)

3.3 Sampling Technique

The researcher adopted a simple random sample strategy, a probability sampling method, for this study. This strategy assures that every member of the population has an equal and independent probability of getting selected. Respondents, comprising both male and female residents of Uyo metropolis in Akwa Ibom State, were chosen at random.

Data for the study were acquired from primary sources utilising a research questionnaire. The structured questionnaire was broken into two sections: Section A focused on gathering information related to demographic data to determine client characteristics, whereas Section B featured the study's key variables, organized into five sub-sections that addressed each of the four independent variables and the dependent variable. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice items, with the predictor and criterion variables measured on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree) assigned values of 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0, respectively.

3.4 Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

The reliability of the questionnaire was examined using the Cronbach Alpha technique. Twenty copies of the questionnaire were administered to 20 respondents who were not part of the final study. The data obtained were utilised to determine the reliability coefficient, as indicated in Table 1. The independent factors of the study were the underpinnings of Niche marketing (demographic profile, price sensitivity, and mobile application), whereas consumer happiness was defined as the dependent variable. Cronbach's alpha was utilised to measure the internal consistency of the 20 items in the study, stressing the consistency between the questionnaire items. When working with Likert scales, this method is the most frequently used for testing the dependability of study instruments. An acceptable Cronbach alpha value varies from 0.5 to 0.8. A Cronbach alpha above 0.5 demonstrates internal consistency of the items and may be relied upon to explain the association between Niche marketing and customer satisfaction of transportation networking firms in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The results of the reliability test for the study were all above the 0.5 benchmark, as indicated in Table 1, allowing us to proceed with the analysis.

Table 1: Computed Reliability Coefficient of the study Variables

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	no. of items
Demographic Profiling	0.714	4
Price Sensitivity	0.661	4
Mobile Application	0.769	4
Customer Satisfaction	0.813	4

Source: Researcher's Field Data (2024).

3.5 Method Data Analysis Technique

The personal data of the respondents were analyzed using simple frequency percentages and frequency distribution tables. To determine the extent of the relationship between Niche marketing dimensions (X1, X2, X3, X4) and customer satisfaction (Y), simple linear regression analysis was used to test four hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance, with the null hypothesis rejected if the probability value was less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$).

Customer satisfaction is estimated as a function of various Niche marketing dimensions, such as demographic profiling, price sensitivity, mobile application use, and geo-targeting. This relationship can be expressed in the following equation (Equation 2):

$Y = F (X_1, X_2, X_3)$ 2

Recoded to represent the variables, it is presented as (Equation 3)

$Cs = F (Dp, Ps, Ma)$ 3

The simple regression model that will represent the effect that exists between the independent variables (X_1, X_2, X_3) and the dependent variable (Y) will be expressed in this form (Equation 4 – 6).

$H_{01:} Y = a_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + e$ 4
$H_{02:} Y = a_0 + \beta_2 x_2 + e$ 5
$H_{03:} Y = a_0 + \beta_3 x_3 + e$ 6

To represent the variables in use, the simple linear regression equations are presented as:

$H_{01:} Cs = a_0 + \beta_1 Dp + e$
$H_{02:} Cs = a_0 + \beta_2 Ps + e$
$H_{03:} Cs = a_0 + \beta_3 Ma + e$

where: Cs (Y)   =Customer satisfaction, $Dp(X_1)$ =Demographic profiling, $Ps(X_2)$ = Price sensitivity, Ma (X_3) = Mobile Application use, e =error term

The above estimated equation is a linear function which was used in testing the model separately.

3.13 Decision Rule

In presenting the results of this study, each hypothesis was initially tested in its null form. The decision rule applied was as follows: reject the null hypothesis if the probability value (p-value) is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), and accept the null hypothesis if the probability value (p-value) is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). This can be expressed symbolically as:

Accept H_o if $Pc < Pt$
Reject H_o if $Pc > Pt$

4. Findings
Data Presentation

Out of the 296 questionnaires administered, 269 were retrieved in usable form, representing a response rate of 97.99%. These 269 completed questionnaires constituted the workable sample for the research. The remaining 27 questionnaires, accounting for 2.01%, were not properly completed and were excluded from the analysis. The responses were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The analysis of demographic variables is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Data of the Respondents

Variables	No. of Respondents		percentage (%)	
SEX				
Male		81		30.1
Female	188		69.9	
Total		269		100.0
AGE				
18-29		65		24.2
30-39		142		52.8
40-49		62		23.0
Total		269		100.0
MARITAL STATUS				
Single		197		73.2
Married	67		24.9	
Total		269		100.0
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND				
SSCE		74		27.5
NCE/ND	104		38.7	
HND/B.SC		48		17.8
B.SC and Above	43		16.0	
Total		269		100.0
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Civil servants		96		35.7
Self-employed		154		57.2
Unemployed/students		19		71
Total		269		100.0
Total	269		100.0	

Source: Field survey (2024).

The respondents' demographic distribution is displayed in Table 2. 188 (69.9%) of the total were female, and 81 (30.1%) were male. Regarding age, 65 respondents (24.2%) were in the 18–29 age range, 142 respondents (52.8%) were in the 30-39 age range, and 62 respondents (23.0%) were in the 40–49 age range. Additionally, the table shows that 67 respondents (24.9%) were married, and 197 respondents (73.2%) were single. Regarding educational background, 104 respondents (38.7%) had NCE/ND, 48 (17.8%) had HND/B.Sc., 43 (16.0%) had B.Sc. and above, and 74 respondents (27.5%) had SSCE. Furthermore, 154 (57.2%) of the respondents were self-employed, 96 (33.7%) were civil servants, and 19 (7.1%) were either jobless or students.

4.2   Data Analysis

Table 3: Distribution of respondents as to whether demographic profiling (Gender, age and educational level) enhances customer satisfaction.

S/N	Strong Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Undecided (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Total (n) %
1	67 (24.9)	151 (56.1)	19 (7.1)	23 (8.6)	9 (3.3)	269 (100)
2	72 (26.8)	153 (56.9)	14 (5.2)	23 (8.6)	7 (2.6)	269 (100)
3	49 (18.2)	148 (55.0)	20 (7.4)	33 (12.3)	19 (7.1)	269 (100)
4	87 (32.3)	121 (45.0)	24 (8.9)	18 (6.7)	19 (7.1)	269 (100)

Source: Researcher's Data Analysis (2024).

Table 3 presents the distribution of responses to the questionnaire. For Question 1, 67 respondents (24.9%) strongly agreed that their gender does not influence their choice of transportation companies, while 151 (56.1%) agreed. Nineteen respondents (7.1%) were undecided, 23 (8.6%) strongly disagreed, and 9 (3.3%) disagreed.

In response to Question 2, 72 respondents (26.8%) strongly agreed that all age groups enjoy using Bolt's transportation services through their mobile application, with 153 (56.9%) agreeing. Fourteen respondents (5.2%) were undecided, 23 (8.6%) strongly disagreed, and 9 (3.3%) disagreed.

For Question 3, 49 respondents (18.2%) strongly agreed that their education level enables them to effectively use and navigate the Bolt transportation app, while 148 (55.0%) agreed. Twenty respondents (7.4%) were undecided about the impact of their education on using the app, 33 (12.3%) strongly disagreed, and 19 (7.1%) disagreed.

In Question 4, 87 respondents (32.3%) strongly agreed that they use Bolt's app regardless of their demographic characteristics, with 121 (45.0%) agreeing. Twenty-four respondents (8.9%) were undecided, 18 (6.7%) strongly disagreed, and 19 (7.1%) disagreed. This indicates that customers are generally satisfied with the service regardless of their demographic characteristics.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents as to whether price sensitivity enhances customer satisfaction

S/N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total (n)%
5	47 (17.5)	152 (56.5)	19 (7.1)	15 (5.6)	36 (13.4)	269 (100)
6	56 (20.8)	155 (57.6)	29 (10.8)	15 (5.6)	14 (5.2)	269 (100)
7	72 (26.8)	118 (43.9)	65 (24.2)	9 (3.3)	5 (1.9)	269 (100)
8	71 (26.4)	104 (38.7)	44 (16.4)	23 (8.6)	27 (10.0)	269 (100)

Source: Researcher's Data Analysis (2024).

Table 4 displays the distribution of responses to the questionnaire. For Question 5, 47 respondents (17.5%) strongly agreed that the pricing of Bolt transportation services is satisfactory and encouraging, while 152 (56.5%) agreed. Nineteen respondents (7.1%) were undecided, 15 (5.6%) strongly disagreed, and 36 (13.4%) disagreed.

Question 6 shows that 56 respondents (20.8%) strongly agreed that Bolt's service prices are reasonable and reflect the quality of their services. In contrast, 155 respondents (57.6%) agreed with this statement. Twenty-nine respondents (10.8%) were undecided, 15 (5.6%) strongly disagreed, and 14 (5.2%) disagreed.

For Question 7, 72 respondents (26.8%) strongly agreed that they use these transportation services because the prices are low, while 118 (43.9%) agreed. Sixty-five respondents (24.2%) were undecided, 9 (3.3%) strongly disagreed, and 5 (1.9%) disagreed.

In response to Question 8, 71 respondents (26.4%) strongly agreed that they would continue to use the transportation companies even if prices were high. One hundred four respondents (38.7%) agreed, 44 (16.4%) were undecided, 23 (8.6%) strongly disagreed, and 27 (10.0%) disagreed with the statement.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents as to whether mobile application use enhances customer satisfaction

S/N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total (n)%
9	89 (33.1)	119 (44.2)	42 (15.6)	14 (5.2)	5 (1.9)	269 (100)
10	52 (19.3)	77 (28.6)	47 (17.5)	51 (19.0)	42 (15.6)	269 (100)
11	38 (14.1)	72 (26.4)	42 (15.6)	47 (17.5)	70 (26.4)	269 (100)
12	52 (19.3)	110 (40.9)	38 (14.1)	41 (15.3)	28 (10.4)	269 (100)

Source: Researcher's Data Analysis (2024).

Question 9, as shown in Table 5, indicates that 89 respondents (33.1%) strongly agreed that they are satisfied with the overall quality of service provided through the mobile application. A further 119 respondents (44.2%)

agreed with this assessment. Forty-two respondents (15.6%) were undecided, 14 (5.2%) strongly disagreed, and 5 (1.9%) disagreed.

For Question 10, 52 respondents (19.3%) strongly agreed that they are always satisfied when Bolt agents assist them with difficulties using the application. Seventy-seven respondents (28.6%) agreed with this statement. Forty-seven respondents (17.5%) were undecided, 51 (19.0%) strongly disagreed, and 42 (15.6%) disagreed.

In Question 11, 38 respondents (14.1%) strongly agreed that they enjoy using the application because Bolt prioritizes customer satisfaction, while 72 respondents (26.4%) agreed. Forty-two respondents (15.6%) were undecided, 47 (17.5%) strongly disagreed, and 70 (26.4%) disagreed.

Question 12 reveals that 52 respondents (19.3%) strongly agreed that the mobile application is designed to provide sufficient information and ease of use for making requests. One hundred ten respondents (40.9%) agreed with this statement. Thirty-eight respondents (14.1%) were undecided, 41 (15.3%) strongly disagreed, and 28 (10.4%) disagreed.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents as to how Satisfied Customers are with the Transportation Networking Companies.

S/N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total (n)%
17	116 (43.1)	108 (40.1)	12 (4.5)	15 (5.6)	18 (6.7)	269 (100)
18	154 (57.2)	77 (28.6)	14 (5.2)	14 (5.2)	10 (3.7)	269 (100)
19	84 (31.3)	162 (60.2)	10 (3.7)	4 (1.5)	9 (3.3)	269 (100)
20	116 (43.1)	108 (40.1)	12 (4.5)	15 (5.6)	18 (6.7)	269 (100)

Source: Researcher's Data Analysis (2024).

Question 17, presented in Table 6, indicates that 116 respondents (43.1%) were extremely satisfied with the transportation companies. Additionally, 108 respondents (40.1%) reported being very satisfied. Twelve respondents (4.5%) were undecided about their level of satisfaction, while 15 (5.6%) strongly disagreed with being satisfied, and 18 (6.7%) disagreed with the statement.

For Question 18, 154 respondents (57.2%) strongly agreed that they would speak positively about the transportation companies to others. Seventy-seven respondents (28.6%) agreed with this sentiment. Fourteen respondents (5.2%) were undecided, 14 (5.2%) strongly disagreed, and 10 (3.7%) disagreed.

Question 19 reveals that 84 respondents (31.3%) strongly agreed they would recommend the transportation companies to their friends. A larger group, 162 respondents (60.2%), agreed with this recommendation. Ten respondents (3.7%) were undecided, 4 (1.5%) strongly disagreed, and 9 (3.3%) disagreed.

In Question 20, 116 respondents (43.1%) strongly agreed that they consider these transportation companies their first choice among other options. One hundred eight respondents (40.1%) agreed with this preference. Twelve respondents (4.5%) were undecided, 15 (5.6%) strongly disagreed, and 18 (6.7%) disagreed with the statement.

4.3 Test of Hypotheses

To present the study results, each hypothesis was initially restated in its null form. This was followed by identifying the key variables and specifying the analytical techniques used for testing. All analyses were conducted at a significance level of 0.05 before interpreting the results.

Hypothesis 1

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between demographic profiling and customer satisfaction of transportation networking companies in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

Table 7: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis Showing Relationship between Demographic profiling and Customer satisfaction

	B_1	SE	B_2	t-value	Significant (2 tailed)
Constant	10.277	0.939		10.943	0.000
Demographic Profiling	0.423	0.61	0.392	6.968*	0.000

Dependent variable: customer satisfaction
R = 0.392ª
R^2 =0.154
Adjusted R-square = 0.154
Std. Error of estimate = 2.47068
F = 48.560
Significance = 0.000

significantly related at 5% (p<0.05). B_1= unstandardized beta, B_2= standardized beta, SE= standard error.
$Y = a_0 + \beta_1 x_1 +$ e
$Cs = a_0 + \beta_1 Dp +$ e
Thus, to justify the simple linear regression model the resulting equation is;
$Cs = 10.277 + 0.423\ Dp$
Source: Researcher's Data Analysis (2024).

Results from Table 7 indicate a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.154, suggesting that demographic profiling accounts for 15.4% of the variation in customer satisfaction. The significant F-ratio of 48.560, with a p-value less than 0.000, implies that the results of the regression model are unlikely to have occurred by chance and that demographic profiling significantly predicts customer satisfaction.

To evaluate the influence of demographic profiling on customer satisfaction, the beta coefficient for the independent variable X1 (demographic profiling) was found to be statistically significant, with a standardized coefficient of β = 0.423, a standard error of 0.61, and a t-value of 6.968 (p = 0.000). This means that each 1-unit increase in demographic profiling is associated with a 0.423 increase in customer satisfaction. Given that the p-value is less than 0.05 (p = 0.000), the null hypothesis is rejected. The analysis reveals a significant relationship between demographic profiling and customer satisfaction in transportation networking companies. This finding underscores the importance of demographic factors in shaping customer experiences and satisfaction levels within the industry.

Hypothesis 2
H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between price sensitivity and customer satisfaction of transportation networking companies in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.
Table 8: Summary of Simple Regression Showing Relationship between Price Sensitivity and Customer Satisfaction

	B_1	SE	B_2	t-value	Significant (2 tailed)
Constant	9.774	0.728	-	13.433	0.000
Price sensitivity	0.463	0.048	0.512	9.751*	0.000

Dependent variable: customer satisfaction
R = 0.512ª
R^2 =0.263
Adjusted R-square = 0.260
Std. Error of estimate = 2.30648
F = 95.090
Significance = 0.000

significantly related at 5% (p<0.05). B_1= unstandardized beta, B_2= standardized beta, SE= standard error.
$Y = a_0 + \beta_2 x_{2+}$ e
$Cs = a_0 + \beta_2 Ps +$ e

Hence, to justify the simple linear regression model the resulting equation is;

Cs = 9.774 + 0.463P

Source: Researcher's Data Analysis (2024).

Table 8 demonstrates that the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.263, indicating that price sensitivity accounts for 26.3% of the variance in customer satisfaction. The significant F-ratio of 95.090, with a p-value less than 0.000, confirms that the results of the regression analysis are unlikely to have occurred by random chance and that price sensitivity is a significant predictor of customer satisfaction. To evaluate the impact of price sensitivity on customer satisfaction, the beta coefficient for the independent variable X2 (price sensitivity) was found to be statistically significant, with a standardized coefficient of $\beta = 0.463$, a standard error of 0.048, and a t-value of 9.751 (p = 0.000). This result indicates that a 1-unit increase in price sensitivity is associated with a 0.463 increase in customer satisfaction. The p-value being less than 0.05 (p = 0.000) leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Thus, the analysis reveals a significant relationship between price sensitivity and customer satisfaction. This finding underscores the critical role of pricing strategies in influencing customer satisfaction within the transportation networking industry.

Hypothesis 3

H_{03}:   Mobile application use does not have any relationship with customer satisfaction of transportation networking companies in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

Table 9: Summary of Simple Regression Showing Relationship between Mobile Application and Customer Satisfaction

	B_1	SE	B_2	t-value	Significant (2 tailed)
Constant	12.344	0.567		21.782	0.000
Mobile application	0.327	0.041	0.441	8.024*	0.000
Dependent variable: customer satisfaction					
R = 0.441a					
R^2 = 0.194					
Adjusted R-square = 0.191					
Std. Error of estimate = 2.41099					
F = 64.378					
Significance = 0.000					

significantly related at 5% (p<0.05). B_1= unstandardized beta, B_2= standardized beta, SE= standard error.

$Y = a_0 + \beta_3 x_3 + \qquad e$

$Cs = a_0 + \beta_3 Ma + e$

Hence, to justify the simple linear regression equation the resulting equation is;

Cs = 12.344 + 0.327Ma

Source: Researcher's Data Analysis (2024).

Table 9 presents the coefficient of determination (R^2) as 0.194, indicating that 19.4% of the variance in customer satisfaction is accounted for by mobile application use. The F-calculated value of 64.378 exceeds the critical F-value, suggesting a statistically significant relationship between the independent variable (mobile application use) and the dependent variable (customer satisfaction). The beta coefficient for mobile application use (X3) is 0.327, with a standard error of 0.041, and a t-value of 8.024 (p = 0.000). This significant beta coefficient indicates that a 1-unit increase in the quality or use of the mobile application results in a 0.327 increase in customer satisfaction. Given that the p-value is less than 0.05 (p = 0.000), the null hypothesis is rejected. This result highlights that enhancements in the mobile application, such as adding personalized features, significantly boost customer satisfaction. Therefore, it is evident that improving the user experience and functionality of the mobile app can lead to higher levels of satisfaction among users of Bolt transportation services. This underscores the importance for the company to continually invest in and upgrade their app to meet customer expectations and improve overall service quality.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The study focused on exploring the relationship between micromarketing dimensions and customer satisfaction within the Bolt transportation network in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The sample comprised a diverse group of respondents, with a majority being female (69.9%) and a substantial proportion in the 30-39 age range (52.8%). Most respondents were single (73.2%) and had varying educational backgrounds, with the largest group having National Certificate in Education (NCE) or National Diploma (ND) (38.7%). The majority were self-employed (57.2%), with civil servants (33.7%) and a smaller group being students or jobless (7.1%).

The questionnaire results revealed several key insights. A significant proportion of respondents indicated that gender does not influence their choice of transportation company, with 80.9% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. This suggests that gender is not a major factor in customer satisfaction for Bolt's services.

When examining age and its influence on service enjoyment, a large majority (83.7%) felt that all age groups enjoyed using Bolt's transportation services, highlighting the company's broad appeal across different demographics. Education level also played a role, with 73.2% of respondents agreeing that their education level helps them effectively navigate the Bolt app, though a notable portion was undecided or disagreed.

In terms of pricing, 74.0% of respondents were satisfied with the pricing of Bolt services, finding it both encouraging and reflective of service quality. Furthermore, 70.7% felt that low prices were a key factor in their continued use of the services, while 65.1% indicated that they would continue using the service even if prices increased. This reflects a strong relationship between price sensitivity and customer satisfaction.

The overall quality of the Bolt mobile application was positively received, with 77.3% of respondents satisfied with its performance and usability. However, a smaller percentage expressed dissatisfaction with the application's ability to meet their needs or ease of use, indicating areas for improvement.

Regarding customer loyalty, a significant number of respondents (43.1%) were extremely satisfied with Bolt's services, and 57.2% expressed willingness to recommend the company to others. This high level of satisfaction was further reflected in the fact that 43.1% considered Bolt their first choice among transportation options. These findings underline the effectiveness of Bolt's micromarketing strategies in fostering customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Overall, the study demonstrates that demographic profiling, price sensitivity, mobile application usability, and customer engagement are crucial factors influencing customer satisfaction. Bolt's ability to cater to diverse demographic groups, offer competitive pricing, and provide a user-friendly application significantly contributes to its positive reception among customers. These insights suggest that continued focus on these areas will be essential for maintaining and enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The study revealed a significant positive relationship between each of the four micromarketing dimensions—demographic profiling, price sensitivity, mobile application use, and geo-targeting—and customer satisfaction within transportation networking companies in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

The first hypothesis test showed a notable positive relationship between demographic profiling and customer satisfaction, with a regression coefficient of β = 0.423. This result suggests that Bolt transportation networking company effectively segments its customers demographically, anticipating their needs and tailoring services through its mobile application. This aligns with previous research by Bednall and Lim (2016), Khurama (2014), and Kpunee et al. (2018), which identified demographic profiling as a significant driver of customer satisfaction.

The second hypothesis results indicate that price sensitivity significantly impacts customer satisfaction, with a regression coefficient of β = 0.463. This finding supports previous studies by Gupta (2014), Hayder (2019), and Esu and Anyadighibe (2014), demonstrating that price sensitivity is a crucial factor in customer satisfaction. It highlights that customers' overall satisfaction varies according to different micromarketing dimensions, including price sensitivity.

For the third hypothesis, the study established a significant relationship between mobile application use and customer satisfaction, with a regression coefficient of β = 0.327. This result confirms that mobile application use positively influences customer satisfaction, consistent with the findings of Alkhafaji and Oman (2017), Cuici Consulting (2020), Hayder (2019), and Zirawani and Syazwa (2018). However, this finding contrasts with

Justitia et al. (2019), who reported lower customer satisfaction levels with mobile application use. This discrepancy suggests a need for transportation companies to enhance their mobile application performance to better meet customer expectations.

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between micromarketing dimensions and customer satisfaction, focusing on Bolt transportation networking company in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, which explored four key micromarketing dimensions: demographic profiling, price sensitivity, mobile application use, and geo-targeting. The study aimed to understand how these dimensions influence customer satisfaction and establish the significance of each in shaping customer perceptions.

Four null hypotheses were formulated to test the impact of these micromarketing dimensions on customer satisfaction. Simple linear regression analysis was used to test these hypotheses, with all analyses conducted at a 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses were rejected, indicating that all the micromarketing dimensions had a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction.

The first hypothesis posited that there is no significant positive relationship between demographic profiling and customer satisfaction. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship, with a standardized coefficient of $\beta = 0.423$. This result suggests that demographic profiling, which involves segmenting customers based on demographic characteristics and tailoring services to their specific needs, has a substantial impact on customer satisfaction. The second hypothesis asserted that there is no significant positive relationship between price sensitivity and customer satisfaction. The results showed a significant positive relationship, with a standardized coefficient of $\beta = 0.463$. This indicates that price sensitivity significantly influences customer satisfaction. The third hypothesis proposed that mobile application use does not have a significant relationship with customer satisfaction. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship, with a regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.327$. This indicates that the effective use of mobile applications positively affects customer satisfaction.

The study's findings emphasize that demographic profiling, price sensitivity, and mobile application use are critical factors influencing customer satisfaction. Companies that integrate micromarketing strategies into their operations are likely to see higher levels of customer loyalty and satisfaction. By profiling customers demographically and addressing their needs through targeted services, companies can gain a competitive advantage. Additionally, effective pricing strategies and user-friendly mobile applications further contribute to enhanced customer satisfaction. The empirical results clearly demonstrate the importance of these micromarketing dimensions in driving customer satisfaction and suggest that transportation companies should focus on these areas to improve their overall service quality and customer experience.

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