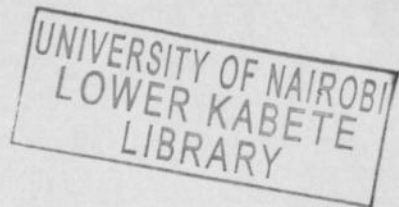


**STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY MOBILE PHONE COMPANIES IN
KENYA TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGE OF MOBILE
NUMBER PORTABILITY**

BY

WANGWE SHEILA MELLISA NALIKA

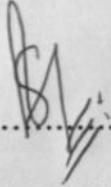


**A Research Project Presented in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the
Award of Master of Business Administration Degree (MBA), School of Business,
University of Nairobi.**

OCTOBER 2011

DECLARATION

This Management Research project is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other University

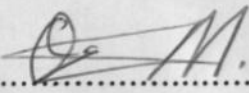
Signed..........

Date.....14/NOV/2011.....

Wangwe Sheila Mellisa Naliaka

D61/8423/2006

This research Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor

Signed..........

Date.....14/11/2011.....

Dr. Martin Ogutu

Department of Business Administration

University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

This Research Project is dedicated to my family whose love, inspiration and endless support encourages me make another step.

I thank God Almighty for strength and wisdom. My husband and son, who inspired and allowed me time. The Wangwe's family who are inseparable together. My supervisor Dr. Ogutu and Moderator Dr. Mwangi, for making me through. My cousin Sabini and friend Villa Magari, who supported me in this journey. Thank you all for your support, input and guidance without which this project would not have been complete. May you be blessed.

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It's taken a great effort and dedication to have this research written, and I therefore take this opportunity to thank everyone who has made it possible. God Almighty for strength and wisdom. My husband and son, who inspired and allowed me time. The Wangwe's family who we brainstormed together. My supervisor Dr. Ogutu and Moderator Dr. Machuki, for guiding me through. My cousin Sakini and friend Villa Magati, who assisted in data collection. Thank you all for your support, input and guidance without which this project would not have been complete. May you be blessed.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to find out the strategies that mobile phone companies in Kenya are using to counter the challenges brought about by Mobile Number Portability. Mobile Number Portability is a new phenomenon in Kenya, who is among the few countries in Africa that have embraced this mobile technology. With this technology mobile phone subscribers maintain their number regardless of the network they are using. To the subscriber it carries many benefits where as to the service provider it is a great source of competition. The study has looked at the strategies that all the four companies in Kenya are adopting to ensure gain or maintain of the subscriber market share. The studied companies are Safaricom, Airtel, Orange and Yu. The study found that rivalry influence by buyers, strong business influence by suppliers, operating costs, and advertising are the challenges that all respondents were in agreement faced Mobile Number Portability. System failure was found to be a challenge to some companies and not to others. Making products unique from the rest, focusing on differentiation on a niche market, outsourcing, making unexpected or unpredictable moves, were the strategies used by majority of the respondents to deal with challenges of Mobile Number Portability. Training and empowering of employees was considered an important strategy in coping up with the challenges of mobile number portability. Presenting current products and services to new markets is a strategy that was moderately adopted by mobile companies. Though retrenchment of turnaround was indicated as a strategy in dealing with mobile number portability, it was found that the strategy was not used by all mobile service providers. The recommendation made included; an adoption of differentiation strategy through making products unique and work towards achievement of competitive advantages so as to increase their customer loyalty, adoption of best price strategy as a way of coping with competition while achieving profit making goals, Training of employees to increase their efficiency and competence in dealing with teething problems of mobile number portability. A further study to be carried on other factors affecting mobile number portability apart from the challenges and strategies covered in this study. A similar study covering beneficiaries (Customers) of mobile number portability process to establish whether the challenges mentioned by service providers are similar challenges faced by the customers .

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Competition in the market place has evolved over time, from when markets were considered perfect, to currently where most markets are considered imperfect. In perfect market, it is assumed that; customer demand is homogenous within industries, resources (land, labour and capital) availability is homogenous, customer's preferences and tastes were the same, etc. This is guided by the Neoclassical Perfect Competition theory. On the other hand Hunt and Morgan (1995) argue that with the evolution of strategy, markets are indeed imperfect. In this market; industries or firms are competing for limited resources, individual tastes and preferences are diverse, rivalry as a result of competition exist among firms in the same industry, customer and firm information is imperfect and costly etc. They therefore insist that Comparative Advantage theory better explains the macro and micro phenomena of competition. This study therefore, has shown that firms within an industry respond differently to a similar challenge posed, because of the imperfection in the market. In this competition, each firm is aiming to gain superior financial performance over the rest.

Mobile Number Portability, the technology that allows mobile subscribers to migrate between different networks while maintaining their telephone number, is finally in Kenya where the telecommunication market is imperfect. For Mobile Phone Service providers this is a great challenge because other than gaining customers one may also lose to his competitor. Moreover, Mobile Number Portability levels the ground for all the players in this industry causing each provider to work extra hard and/or smart so as to have a competitive edge. This study has found out strategies that Mobile Phone Service Providers are putting in place to ensure they acquired more, as well as retained the loyalty of their existing customers. The results of the study, gives insight to Mobile Phone Service Providers on how to use Mobile Number Portability to their advantage.

1.1.1 Concept of Strategy

Strategy has been variously defined by different scholars. Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2010,6) define a company's strategy as consisting of the "competitive moves and business approaches that managers employ to grow the business, attract and please customers, complete successfully, conduct operations and achieve the targeted levels of organizational performance." They add that a good strategy is the one that will ensure the company achieves sustainable competitive advantage.

Wheelen and hunger (2008) define strategy as a master plan that states how the organization will achieve its mission and objective. David (2009, 44) also defines strategy as "means by which long term objectives will be achieved." He argues that all firms have a strategy whether informal, unstructured or sporadic. A company's strategy is partly proactive and partly reactive because of the changing environment. Therefore according to Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2010) a company's strategy is always a work in progress. Strategy has also been defined as a vehicle for communication and co-ordination within organizations. It is a unifying theme that gives coherence and direction to the actions and decisions of an individual or organization. Aime (1997) defines strategy as "what has to be done and how, to enhance a company's success and survival." The Process School argues that for a strategy to be effective it has to be implemented. The two i.e. strategy formulation and implementation are inseparable. According to the school, Strategy is constantly adjusted in light of experience.

1.1.2 Concept of Mobile Number Portability

Mobile Number Portability is the technology that allows one to migrate between different networks while maintaining their telephone number. It is currently being practiced in USA, Australia, South Africa, India among others including Kenya, which is among the few countries in Africa that have embraced the service. In Kenya it was launched on 1st April 2011, and has been centralized in the sense that it's being offered by a third company. (www.cck.go.ke)

For Mobile Phone Service Providers, Mobile Number Portability creates level playing ground especially for new entrants into the Market. It also ensures operators enhance their Quality of Service. For Customers it gives them more choices, and due to increased competition it may lead to reduction of tariffs. However the consumer losses supplementary or value added services and each operator may not accept responsibility for incomplete porting requests (www.safaricom.co.ke).

The porting Process entails, one approaching the recipient network to make the request, where he/she is issued with a new Sim-Card of the recipient network. From the previous Sim-Card he/she sends the message "Port/ Hama" to 1502 and later receive a confirmation text on whether the process has been successful. That is when he/she will change to his new Sim-card. Once one has ported to a new network he has a window period of 14days to port back. Once this elapses then he/she will have to stay with the new network for at least 60 days before porting again (Communications Commission of Kenya, 2011).

1.1.3 Mobile Phone Service Providers in Kenya.

Mobile Phone Service Provides currently in Kenya are Safaricom, Airtel, Orange and Yu (www.cck.go.ke). Safaricom Limited was formed in 1997 as a fully owned subsidiary of Telkom Kenya. Currently 40% of its shares are owned by Vodafone, 35% Government, and 25% Public. The company offers a number of services which include Voice, Data, M-pesa (Mobile Phone Money transfer service), etc. It also engages in charitable functions where it helps the less fortunate in the society mostly through the Safaricom Foundation (www.safaricom.co.ke).

Airtel Kenya is an international company owned by Bhati India. Airtel Kenya is a result of Kencell (2002), which was re-branded to Celtel (2004) then Zain (2008) and now Airtel (2010) due to change in ownership. Airtel offers data, voice, money transfer services among others (www.ke.zain.com). Orange Kenya, previously known as Telkom Kenya had been a government telecommunication monopoly for several years before the other players came into the market. Since December 2007, 51% of its capital is owned

by France Telkom. Orange offers both Fixed line and Mobile Telephone services making it the only integrated telecommunications solutions provider operating in Kenya (www.orange.co.ke). On the other hand Yu, also known as Essar Telecom Kenya Limited is the youngest Mobile Phone Service Provider in Kenya. It's owned by Essar Group. Its main target is the vibrant youth who are many and would want to call almost for free, thus the latest promotion 'all charges dropped' (www.yu.co.ke)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Companies do not exist in solitude. Therefore other than the internal factors, Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2010) argue that "All companies operate in a macroenvironment shaped by influences emanating from general economic conditions; population demographics; societal values and lifestyles; legislation and regulations; technology; and, closer to home, the industry and competitive environment in which the company operates." Therefore this necessitates the need to employ strategies in order to gain competitive advantage.

Mobile Number Portability is a service that allows the Mobile Phone subscribers to switch Mobile Operators while keeping their number. It will enable the subscriber avoid costs of switching to a new number which include; informing other parties of the number change, changing stationary and/or even business cards. The subscribers also enjoy the benefits of quality service and moving to any service provider with the best tariff deal. For Mobile phone service providers, Mobile Number Portability levels the ground for all players in the market as a result reducing significantly competitive advantage over the new entrants. The ongoing price war among the Mobile Phone Companies in a bid to retain customers or attract them into their fold, threatens their survival as they may likely not be meeting their operational costs. Mobile Number Portability makes it worse because it allows for the customer to easily switch over to another operator. Loss of customers threatens the financial stability of the operator. There has been selfish competition – as has been the case with Safaricom and Airtel. Safaricom refused to let the customers' port out with the money they had in Safaricom's M-Pesa service – making it

inevitable for the customers to port back. Mobile Phone Service Providers therefore have to come up with competitive and sustainable strategies in order to maintain their customer loyalty

Various studies have been done on the mobile phone industry and challenges that face it. Kiplimo (2008) looked at the challenges faced by telecommunication operators in Kenya that are brought about by globalization. Kamanda (2010), Kipkirui (2008) and Rumba (2008) among others looked at the strategies adopted to face the competition. Wandera (2008) and Jumba (2010) studied on the Customer loyalty and Retention strategies in the Mobile phone Industry. However, one challenge increasing competition is Mobile Number Portability. It is a new phenomenon and the researcher did not find any study on it. This study therefore found out, which challenges of Mobile Number Portability face Mobile Phone Service Providers in Kenya. And the strategies these service providers are adopting in order to cope with the Number Portability challenges.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were;

- i. To determine the challenges of Mobile Number Portability faced by Mobile Phone Service Providers in Kenya
- ii. To determine strategies adopted by Mobile Phone Service Providers in Kenya to cope with the challenge of Mobile Number Portability.

1.4 Value of the study

This study will help Mobile Phone Service Providers enhance their strategies of coping with Mobile Number Portability. It will help them evaluate their SWOT analysis and work on it so as to achieve competitive advantage. For the new entrants, this study will inform them of the challenges faced, therefore prepare before venturing in. The study will help the Regulator assess the challenges of Mobile Number Portability faced by the companies and therefore improve the effectiveness of Mobile Number Portability. This study will update the knowledge and understanding of scholars on MNP and the

Strategies the Mobile Phone Service Providers and employing in order to gain competitive advantage. It will also be used as literature and/or point of reference in future studies and will be an eye opener where further studies may be necessary.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Strategy

'A company's strategy is management's action plan for running the business and conducting operations' (Thompson, Strickland and Gamble 2010). Pearce & Robinson (1994, 4) define strategy as a company's game plan. They continue to say that the plan may not have all future deployments of resources but will provide a frame work for managerial decisions. Strategy has also been defined as "a large scale future oriented plans for interacting with competitive environment to achieve company objectives" (Pearce, Robinson and Motal, 2007).

Every organization has a set Vision and Mission which will only be achieved through strategies. Strategies in essence define how the goals and objectives will be realized. Thompson et al (2010) say strategy "represents a managerial commitment to pursue a particular set of actions in growing the business attracting & pleasing as well as competing successfully". They allude that a strategy guides the organization and makes managers aware of opportunities and threats presented by the changing environment.

Pearce and Robinson (1997) state that, a strategy will help the company identify how, when and where it should compete and the reasons why. Hayes & Upton (1998) argue that a strategy not only helps the company meet the challenge of competition but also enable a company attack competitors successfully. No wonder Joel Ross and Michael Kami in Thompsons et al (2010) state that "without a strategy the organization is like a ship without a rudder". According to Koch (2006) strategy helps the business; to define the different parts of the business and what needs to be done differently so as to achieve success, to know most profits and cash are made and the reasons why, to understand customers perspectives, identify areas of weaknesses and strengths and where more efforts should be concentrated, identify missing skills etc.

2.2 Concept of Competition

Competition has been defined as a contest between individuals, organizations who are striving for the same goal. This goal could be geared towards limited resources. “When two or more businesses sell the same goods or service, they are competing for the same market. When businesses compete, they try to find ways to get you to choose them. Buyers get to choose where to spend their money. This is competition in the marketplace” (www.econedlink). Kother (2004) argues that competitors are companies that satisfy the same customer needs.

Competition is everywhere and is healthy. In an industry where there is competition, consumers end up getting what they want. Each company will strive to put its best foot forward by being creative. Competition therefore leads to innovation (jmorganmarketing.com). Competition has been noted to affect the company directly or indirectly. Whichever the case Susan Oakes emphasizes that competition is good for any business because; it allows one to think and stop being complacent, helps identify threats, strengths and weaknesses of a business, “provides an alternative for customers who are not a good fit for your business”, pushes the business to provide better products and services etc (www.m4bmarketing.com)

2.3 Challenges of Competition

Competition influences a firm's prices costs and required investments according to Thompson et al (2010). There are five Generic forces that the influences the competitive nature of an industry. However there are also other challenges which affect competition. Therefore in this study they were categorized into two as below.

2.3.1 Porter's Five force Model

Substitute Products are a great source of competition in any industry because, when substitute products are readily available & attractively priced, it creates “competitive pressure by placing a ceiling on the prices industry can charge without giving an incentive to switch to substitutes and risking sales erosion” (Thompson et, al 2010). David (2009) also states that Substitute Products put a ceiling on the price that can be

charged before consumers switch to the substitute product. The Price ceiling puts a lid on the profits that a firm can get unless it lowers costs. He adds that “When substitutes are cheaper than an industry’s product, industry members come under heavy competitive pressure to reduce their price and find ways to absorb price cuts with cost reduction” According Thomson et al (2010) “competition from good performing substitutes unleashes competitive pressure on industry participants to incorporate new performance features and attributes that makes their product offering more competitive”. They add that high switching costs to substitute will deter customers from switching or will weaken competitive pleasure, therefore the industry has to work hard to ensure those costs e.g. time and convenience, quality, reliability other relationships, psychological costs are high. For the substitute to offset these high switching costs, then it will entice customers with price discounts & additional performance enhancement.

The level of competition in an industry is greatly affected by the buying power of its suppliers. If the cost of acquiring the inputs is high, then it will translate to the price of final product’s outputs. This in turn affects the profitability of the company and especially where there is a lot of competition and a price list has been set. Thomson et al. state that Suppliers bargaining is stronger when; there is high cost of switching to alternative supplier, when inputs are in short supply, when supplier has differentiated input that enhance quality, when suppliers are few and when supplier threaten to integrate forward.

David (2009) alludes; in an industry where buyers are many or buy in volumes then their bargaining power affect the intensity of competition. Rival firms may therefore offer extended warranties or special services to gain customer loyalty. He adds that customers gain increasing bargaining power when; it is inexpensive to switch to another brand or substitute, a buyer is important to the seller, customer demand is low, buyers are informed that products prices and cost the buyer has decision on whether and when to buy a product.

Competition in an industry create rivalry among participating firm. Thompson et al (2010), argue that every seller is ready to do whatever is in their power, in order to

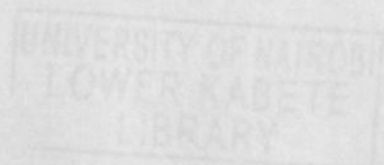
'improve their market position, strengthening their market position with buyer and earn good profit", making a market is competitive battle field. According to David (2009), rivalry increase when; the number of competitors increase, as competitors become more equal in size and capability, as price cutting becomes common, when customers can switch brands easily, barriers to leave are high, fixed cost are high etc. When rivalry is strong Thompson et al (2010) argue that the seller firm will therefore have to use weapon of battling rivals and attraction buyers. These weapons include lowering price adding more or different features, improving product performance, increase quality, strengthen Brand image and appeal ,increase selection of models and styles better or bigger dealer network, increase advertising, improve customer service capabilities etc.

David (2009), states that when firms can easily enter a particular industry, then competition within that industry will increase. Therefore there needs to be barriers. These barriers includes gaining economies of scale, gaining technology, strong customer loyalty, large capital requirements, Government regulatory policies, patents etc. However despite all these barriers, the existing company may still face challenges because 'the new firms sometimes enter the industry with higher quality products, lower prices & substantial market resources'. He adds that this may cause the existing firm to lower its price, extend warranties, and add features on its products.

2.3.2 Other Challenges of Competition

Competition leads to 'cut throat pricing'. Each firm or organization will try to offer its products and services at the best price possible, and this in some case may be lower than for all the operators in the market. This under-pricing is usually to win customers over. In such instances other companies will be forced to follow suite so as not to lose the clientele. This may not work well for some companies especially where there operating costs are high, thus reducing their overall profits.

Increased competition will cause the operating costs of a company to shoot up. This is because a lot has to be invested in order to gain competitive advantage. New machinery may need to be bought, a lot more promotions and advertising may need to be done, the



company may need to set aside a little more for research and development, more trainings may need to be done so as to keep the staff updated, after sale service may have to be used as a retention mechanism, loyalty schemes may have to be introduced, input materials maybe costly due to demand etc. all these will definitely cost the company.

Kotler (2004) argues that competition may cause an organization to lose focus on its core objective in the name of fighting competition. The organization will work hard at outsmarting competition rather than satisfying customer needs and expectations. In this process it tends to misplace its priorities. The company may redefine its strategies in cases where the signals may have been misread thus affecting the core strategies. In competitive environments, the company overemphasizes on current and known competitors and ignores the potential entrants and the small competitors.

Price Reductions or better service as a result of competition will definitely cause customers to shift to where they deem best, dependent on the Pricing, Service quality and quality of the products, convenience etc. This shift affects the customer base of a company where there are gainers and losers. For the company where customers have moved from, the profits will be affected and therefore have to look for a way to cover up the gap.

2.4 Strategies for Coping with Competition

Porter (1998), states that the most successful strategies for dealing with the five forces of competition in order for a firm to outperform others in an industry are; Cost leadership, Differentiation and Focus. These three have further been divided to, 'Porter's five Generic Strategies', namely; Low-cost strategy, Best-cost strategy, Differentiation, Focused low-cost strategy and Focused differentiated strategy. However Ansoff's Growth Strategies and Pearce and Robinson's Grand Strategies as discussed below, also ways of coping with Competition.

2.4.1 Porter's Generic Strategies

This strategy depicts that the firm should strive to minimize its costs as much as possible in order to maintain a higher profit margin. According to Porter (1998) Cost leadership

requires “aggressive construction of efficient –scale facilities, vigorous pursuit of cost reductions from experience, tight cost and overhead control and cost minimization in areas like R&D, advertising and so on”. When a firm has worked at keeping its costs low then it can defend itself from rival competitors who may compete away their profits and from powerful buyers who may cause the prices to go down (Porter, 1998). He continues to say that achieving a low overall cost requires relative market share or other advantages like access to raw materials.

In the low- cost provider strategy, David (2009) says that when a firm integrates forward, backward or horizontal it’s a strategy of wanting to achieve low costs. He adds that the low cost strategy is effective where; the market is composed of many price sensitive buyers, there are few ways to differentiate a product, buyers are not sensitive to differences from brand to brand, or when the buyers are many with a significant bargaining power. He argues that the basic idea of this strategy is to under price the competitors and gain market share, however insists that, a firm needs not to use aggressive price cuts that make their own profits are low or nonexistent. Thompson et al (2010) points out that ‘other than striving for a cost advantage over rivals, managers must take care to include e features and services that buyers consider essential’.

Strategies for achieving low cost advantage should be difficult and expensive for rivals to imitate. Both Thomson et al (2010) and David (2009) have shown that the two major ways to achieve low cost advantage is for the company to; perform value chain activities more cost effectively than rivals and revamp the firms overall value chain to eliminate some cost producing activities. That means each cost activity to be looked into and factors that cause the cost to be high determined. According to Thompson et al (2010) this strategy can be used in two ways to increase company’s profits. First by achieving low costs the company can therefore under price its products compared to rivals hence attract many buyers who in turn increase total profits. Secondly, it may maintain the present price, be content with the current market share but then use the low cost to earn higher profits.

“The competitive advantage of a best cost provider is lower costs than rivals incorporating upscale attributes, putting the company in a position to under price rivals whose products have similar upscale attributes” (Thompson, Strickland and Gamble, 2010). They continue to say that for the strategy to work effectively then a firm must be able to; first, add attractive features at lower cost than rivals whose products have similar features. Secondly, produce products of good to excellent quality at a lower cost. Thirdly, products should deliver good to excellent performance, and lastly, provide attractive customer service at a lower cost than the rivals.

Differentiation strategy aims at the firm making its product Unique e.g. in design or brand image, technology, features, Customer service dealer network etc. porter insists that in differentiating a product the firm does not ignore costs. It's just that it that cost is not a major strategic target. The strategy works effectively in a market where buyer's needs and preferences are very diverse, there are many ways to differentiate a product and this differences are considered valuable, rivals following a similarly differentiating approach are few, 'technological change is fast and competition revolves around rapidly evolving product features (Thompson et al, 2010). They add that It is very important for the firm to learn what buyers consider important, has value and are willing to pay which are then incorporated it into the product. David (2009) also points out that study of the buyer is essential before differentiation. Lynch (2009) says that one should note that as much as differentiation attracts benefits it also bares a cost.

Successful differentiation allows for a firm to; command premium price for its product, increase unit sales, and gain customer loyalty. According to David (2009) special differentiation features may include superior service, spare parts availability, engineering design, product performance useful life, ease of use etc. However the firm needs to be careful that their differentiating strategy is not easily imitated, adds value, and is not over or weakly differentiated, not too much is spent on it to the extent that profits are eroded.

According to Porter (1998) Focused Strategy is the final generic strategy. It focuses on a particular group of buyers, segment of a product line etc. Other scholars like David

(2009) have called it a market niche. He agrees that these segments are defined by, geographic uniqueness, specialized requirements in using the product's special attributes that appeal only to niche members. 'The strategy rests on the premise that the firm is thus able to serve its narrow strategic target more effectively or efficiently than competitors who are competing more broadly' (Porter 1998).

This strategy has been split into two, by different scholars e.g. Thompson et al (2010) and David (2009) among others. These two are; Focused low- cost, and Focused differentiated. They incorporate both differentiation and overall cost leadership strategies. In fact Thompson et al (2010) argues that 'what sets focused strategies apart from low-cost leadership and or broad differentiation strategies is concentrated attention on a narrow piece of total market'.

'Focus low cost strategy secures competitive advantage by serving buyers in target market niche at a lower cost and at a lower price than rival competitors' Thompson et al (2010) on the other hand, they continue to say that "a focused strategy keyed to differentiation aims at securing a competitive advantage with a product offering carefully designed to appeal to the unique preferences and needs of a narrow well defined group of buyers".

2.4.2 Ansoff's Growth strategies

These have been divided into four namely Market Development, Diversification, and Market Penetration and Product development strategies. Ansoff developed a matrix where he compared existing and new markets together with existing and new product. Therefore for Market Development Strategy, the market is new while products are present or existing. Wheelen and Hunger (2008) argue that when a company uses this strategy, it can "capture a larger share of the existing market for the current products through market saturation and market penetration or develop new markets for current products."

Diversification strategy is where new products are introduced to new markets. For Ansoff this strategy stands out than all the others because it requires a company to acquire new

skills, techniques and facilities. According to www.mba-tutorials.com, diversification other than development of new products or markets, it also includes acquisition of firms, formation of alliances, licensing of new technologies etc. the three types of diversification are concentric, horizontal and conglomerate. Concentric diversification is where industries have a technological similarity, horizontal diversification is where new products or services are unrelated to current products. Conglomerate/ lateral diversification, is where the new products have no technological or commercial synergies with current products but that may appeal to new groups of customers.

Market penetration strategy is where a company enters/penetrates a market with current products. This is achieved by gaining customers from the competitors. Therefore the company would have to convince the non users and encourage the current users to use more of the product. This is done mainly through advertising.

New product development strategy is where the market is present and the product is new. Wheelen and Hunger (2008) argue that in this strategy the firm can develop products for existing markets or develop new products for new markets. "Market penetration strategy can be implemented by offering sales, Increasing sales force, increase distribution and promotion of products, more" (www.mba-tutorials.com)

2.4.4 Pearce and Robinson Grand Strategies.

One of their strategies is formation of alliances and partnerships with other firms. "A strategic alliance is a formal agreement between two or more separate companies in which there is relevant collaboration of some sort, joint contribution of resources, shared risk, shared control, and mutual dependence" (Thompson, Strickland and Gamble, 2008). They continue to say that alliances help the company; achieve important objectives, enhance a core competence or competitive advantage, block a competitive threat, open up new market opportunities, and mitigate any risk.

Mergers and acquisitions are used where alliances and partnerships don't go far enough to provide the company with the needed resources and capabilities. Thompson et al (2008) alludes that Mergers and acquisitions help; to create a more cost effective

operation out of the combined companies, to expand the geographical coverage, to extend the company's business into new product categories, to gain access to new technologies or other recourses and competitive capabilities, etc.

Vertical integration, involves expanding backwards into sources of supply and/or forward toward the end user. Integrating backwards is a cost cutting strategy, where the company will be able to save some costs and in turn boost profitability. Integrating forward enhances competition according to Thompson et al (2010) this is because the company will 'gain access to end users and better market visibility.'

"Outsourcing involves farming out certain value chain activities to outside vendors" (Thompson et al, 2008). They add that outsourcing allows for the firm to focus its energies on its core competencies and may as well get these outsourced activities from the experts at a cheaper rate. Outsourcing; reduces the firms risk exposure to changing technologies or changing buyer preferences, allows for the company to be innovative, concentrate its energies on what is very important, allows for efficiency and the company to achieve competitive advantage etc.

Offensive strategies focus on improving market position and build competitive advantage. In this strategy the company does what unpredictable and unexpected by its competitors such that the competitors are taken by surprise and are put in a position where they cannot easily defend themselves. These strategies according to Thompson et al (2008) include, attacking competitive weakness of the rivals, deliberately attacking market segments where a key rival makes big profits, using guerilla warfare tactics to grab sales and market share from complacent and distracted rivals, being the first to adopt new generation technologies, offering an equally good or better product at a lower price etc. on the other hand defensive strategies lower the risk of being attacked and weaken the impact of being attacked. This is done by blocking the avenues open to challengers and signaling them that retaliation is likely.

The success of any organization is dependent on the knowledge behind it. Many companies have used this strategy to counter competition. Companies have invested

heavily in research and development as well as ensuring the staff is well equipped. Companies maintain continuous running training programs and workshops to ensure staff are up-to-date with the required skills and knowledge. Some staff is even sent for trainings and experience overseas where technology is more advanced.

Heavy promotions have worked for companies facing strong competition. To survive in a very competitive environment, one has to remain relevant. This is achieved by creating awareness of the products and services and why they are better than the rest. When a company has new or improved product, it has to make the public aware. Any free offers and price reductions on the products and services, has to be made known to the public.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study was conducted through a cross-sectional descriptive survey. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) a survey allows for a collection of a large amount of data from sizable population in a highly economical way. Furthermore, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) argue that a survey is ideal for determining the current status of a population with respect to one or more variables. They add that a survey is best for determining a population that is too large to be sampled or be observed directly.

3.2 Population of the Study

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define population as an entire group of individuals' events or objects having common observable characteristics. Kothari (2004) further adds that the target population is the total number of respondents in the total environment of interest to the researcher. For the purpose of this study, the target population included; all the Mobile Phone Service Providers currently operating in Kenya. According to the Communication Commissions of Kenya, they are four namely; Safaricom, Airtel, Orange and YU.

3.3 Data Collection Method

The study used primary data which was collected using a semi structured questionnaire which were administered either by personal interview or 'drop and pick later' method. The questionnaire was divided into three parts where, Part One focused on the company's background, Part Two on the challenges brought about by Mobile Number Portability and Part Three, dealt on strategies that are being implemented by these companies to fight the challenges of competition brought about by Mobile Number Portability. There was also an open ended question so as to ensure additional information was not left out. The researcher interviewed strategy managers in respective companies, because managers are considered useful in availing sufficient information.

3.4 Data Analysis

According to Babbie (2004) quantitative analysis is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect. Frequencies and percentages were used in the analysis and tables and figures will be generated during the analysis. To facilitate analysis of the data, each variable in the questionnaire will be assigned a numerical representation and the responses from each respondent will be coded using a defined coding scheme to facilitate in data analysis.

In analyzing the questionnaire quantitative methods were used to analyze and present data which entails the use of descriptive statistics. Descriptive methods have the advantage of summarizing measures, which are used to condense raw data into forms that supply information efficiently (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). For the data described by respondents through writing, qualitative data analysis was undertaken to reduce the data to a more manageable and intelligible set of observations which were then categorized and appropriately coded. The data was then analyzed and a report written from the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter has discussed the study findings on the challenges affecting mobile number portability in Kenya. The chapter represented the study findings under the following subsections; background information, challenges affecting mobile number portability and strategies adopted by mobile service providers to cope up with the challenges of mobile number portability.

On the response rate, the study targeted 4 respondents dealing with Mobile Number Portability at the four mobile service providers in Kenya i.e. Safaricom, Airtel, Yu and Telkom. Three out of 4 respondents responded to the questionnaire, a response rate of 75% which was adequate enough to address the study objectives. This indicated that the results represented in this study could be used to represent the challenges facing Mobile Number Portability and strategies adopted by Mobile Phone Service Providers to address these challenges.

4.2 Organizational Bio-data

Organizational Bio data was examined through establishing the respondent's years of experience at work and the nature of ownership of the Mobile Service Providing Companies examined. The finding was presented and discussed as below.

4.2.1 Experience of work

In order to seek respondents understanding of the study objectives, the study sought to find out their years of service on the respective companies examined. The findings were presented in Table 4.1

Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	33.3	33.3	33.3
2	33.3	33.3	66.7
3	33.3	33.3	100.0

Table 4.1: Respondents experience of work

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
3 Years and below	2	66.7	66.7	66.7
5-7 Years	1	33.3	33.3	100.0
Total	3	100.0	100.0	

Majority (66.7%) of the respondents confirmed having worked for their respective organizations for a period of 3 years and below while 33.3% said that they had worked for a period of 5-7 years. Though respondents indicated having worked for 3 years and below in their respective companies, there was an indication of an understanding the challenges affecting mobile number portability since it is a recently introduced concept in the mobile industry.

4.2.2 Company ownership

The ownership of the companies examined was sought in order to find out the role of different stakeholders in addressing the challenges facing mobile number portability as well their role in strategizing on how to cope up with this challenges. The study findings to this effect, was presented on Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Ownership structure.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Privately owned	1	33.3	33.3	33.3
Owned partly by government and partly private	2	66.7	66.7	100.0
Total	3	100.0	100.0	

Majority (66.7%) of the respondents revealed that their companies were partly owned by the government and partly owned privately, this could indicate that the government and the private owners of the companies examined had a role to play in addressing the challenges affecting mobile number portability and the strategies for addressing these challenges.

4.3 Challenges of Mobile Number Portability

The challenges affecting Mobile Number Portability were examined through asking respondents to rate various challenges on a five point scale of 1-5 with 1- indicating not at all 2 – indicating little extent , 3- indicating Moderate extent, 4 – indicating great extent and 5 – indicating very great extent . The statistics descriptive statistics on the 11 variable are presented on table 4.3, while the percentage charts for the 11 variables are presented on figure 4.1.-4.11.

	1.825	267	1.333
	1.828	265	1.331
	1.890	277	1.335
	1.892	274	1.330
	1.928	282	1.332
	1.936	287	1.333
	1.998	290	1.333
	1.998	290	1.333
	1.975	287	1.333

Table 4.3: Descriptive statistics on challenges affecting mobile number portability

Challenges	Mean	STD Deviation	Std Error of Mean	Variance
1. Competition in pricing	2.00	1.000	.577	1.000
2. Rivalry between company and it's competitors	3.33	.577	.333	.333
3. Buyer having strong influence in business	3.67	1.155	.667	1.333
4. Increased operating costs	2.33	1.528	.882	1.333
5. Need to enhance customer service level	3.00	1.000	.577	2.333
6. Customer migration to other networks	2.67	2.082	1.202	1.000
7. Introducing or promoting retention schemes	2.33	1.528	.882	4.333
8. Suppliers having strong influence on business	3.67	1.155	.667	1.333
9. System failure or teething issues during inception	2.33	1.528	.882	2.333
10. Advertising battles between company and it's competitors	3.67	2.000	1.155	4.000
11. Investing and research and development as well as empowering staff	3.00	1.155	.667	1.333
Mean Aggregate measure				

4.3.1 Competition in Pricing

Competition was considered among the challenges facing mobile number portability to entrants of new players in the field. The respondent's opinion on the effect of competition was presented on Figure 4.1.

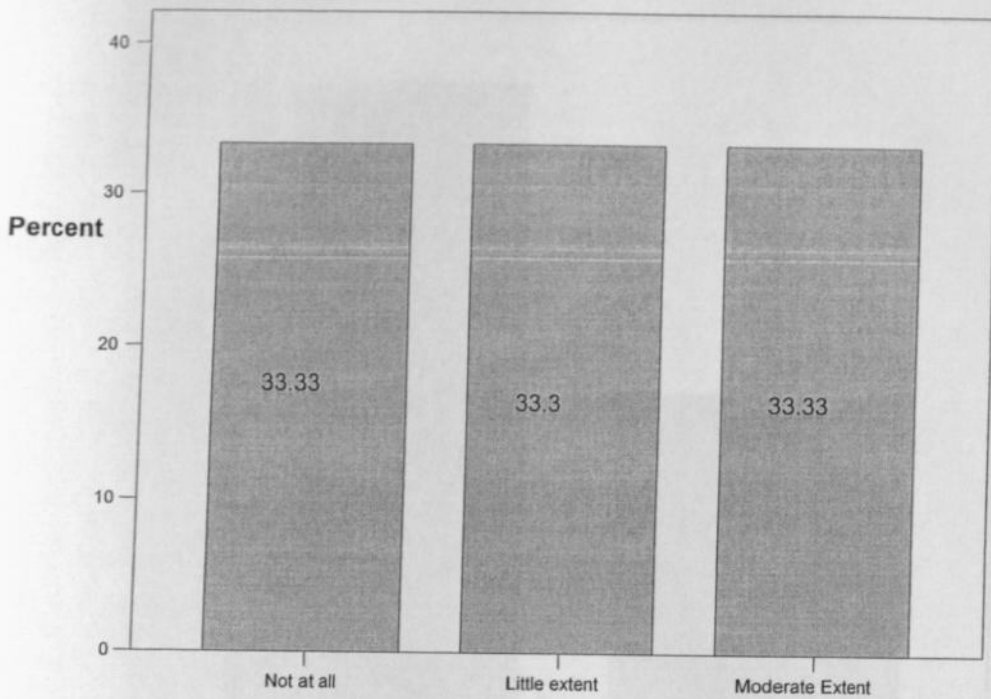
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Figure 4.1 Competition in pricing

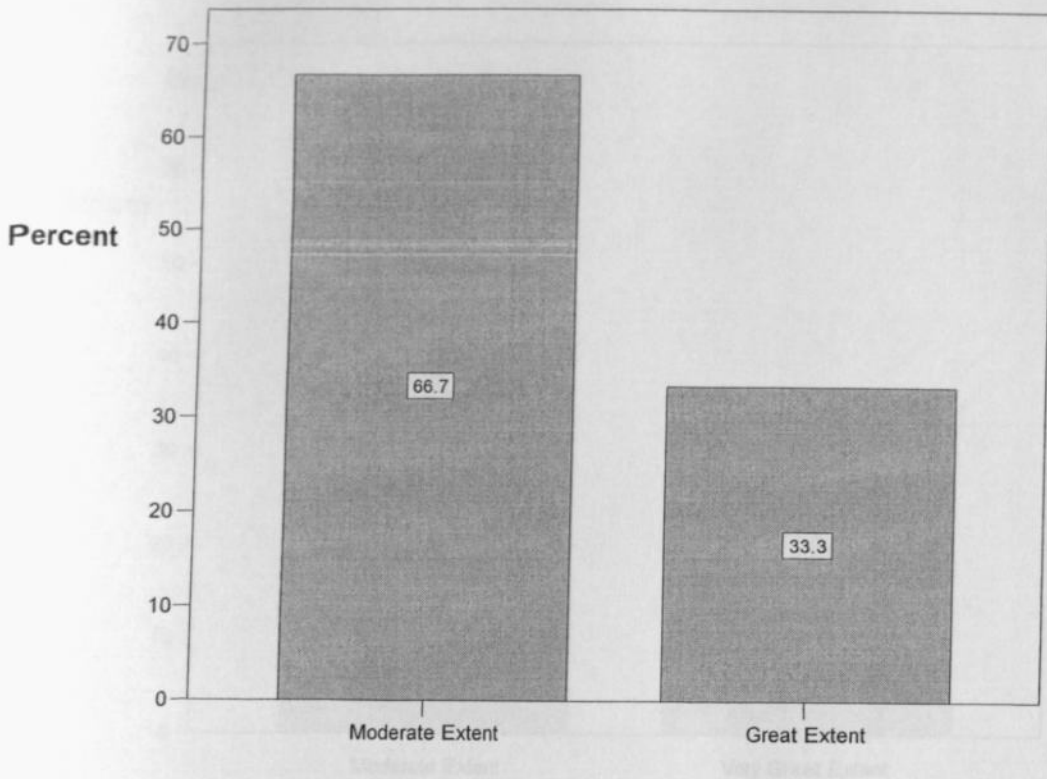


There was mixed opinions among respondents in identifying competition as one of the challenges facing mobile number portability. While there was a slight indication by 33.3% of the respondents who said that competition affected was a challenge to mobile number portability, evidence from 33.3% showed that it was not a major challenges as they gave it a rating of not all and to a little extent.

4.3.2 Rivalry between mobile service providers

The aspect of rivalry between mobile was considered to be among the challenges facing mobile number portability. The study therefore sought to establish this through examining the respondents rating on rivalry among mobile service providers as one of the challenges. The findings were represented on Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Rivalry between company and its competitors

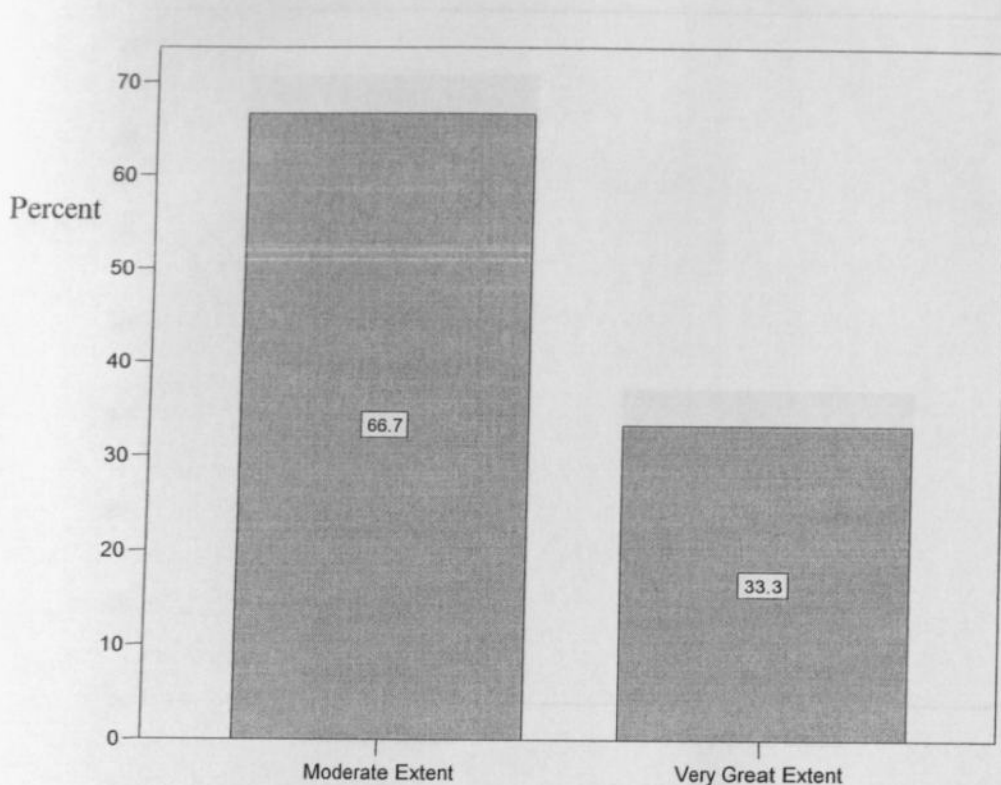


Rivalry among mobile service providers was rated moderate by 66.7% majority of the respondents, 33.3% rated to a great extent the challenge of rivalry. This indicated that rivalry was among the challenges faced by mobile phone service providers in number portability strategy.

4.3.3 Strong business influence by buyers

The study sought to examine the influence of buyers on mobile number portability. The findings to this regard were presented on Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Buyer having strong influence in business

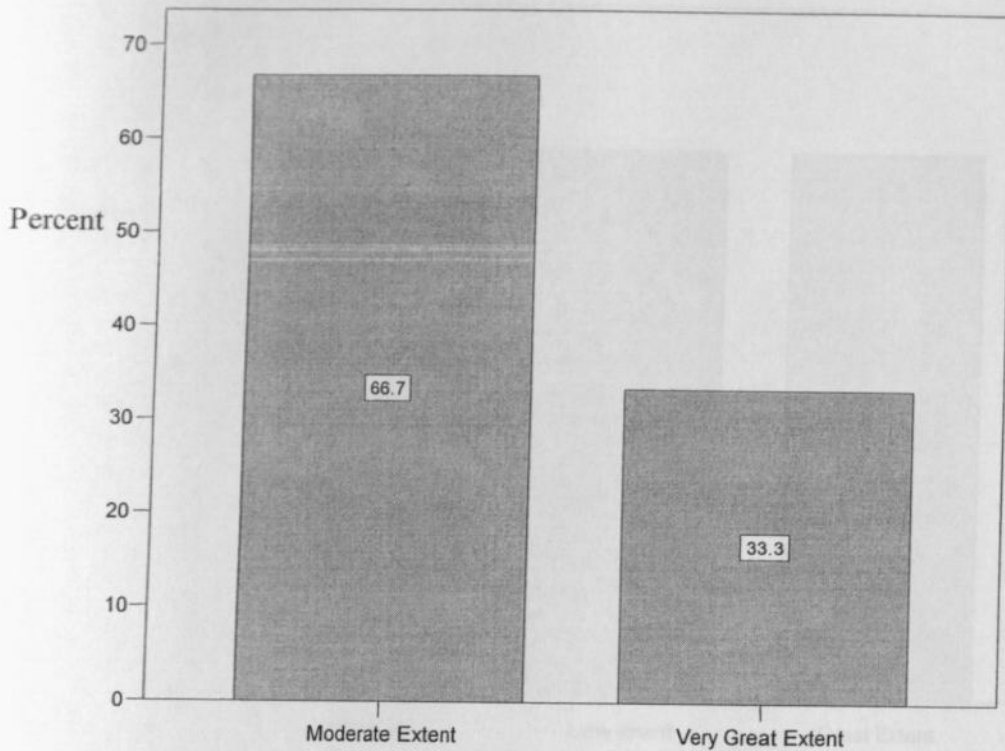


The study results reveal that buyers influence in business as a challenge towards mobile number portability as rated to a moderate extent by 66.7% majority of the respondents while 33.3% rated it to a very great extent. The results strongly reveal that the influence of buyers is major challenge in mobile number portability in Kenya.

4.3.4 Strong business influence by supplier

Strong business influence by suppliers was considered to be among the challenges facing mobile number portability. In pursuit of examining this, respondents were asked to rate extent to which strong influence by suppliers was a challenge towards achieving mobile number portability. The findings were presented on Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.4: Suppliers having strong influence on business

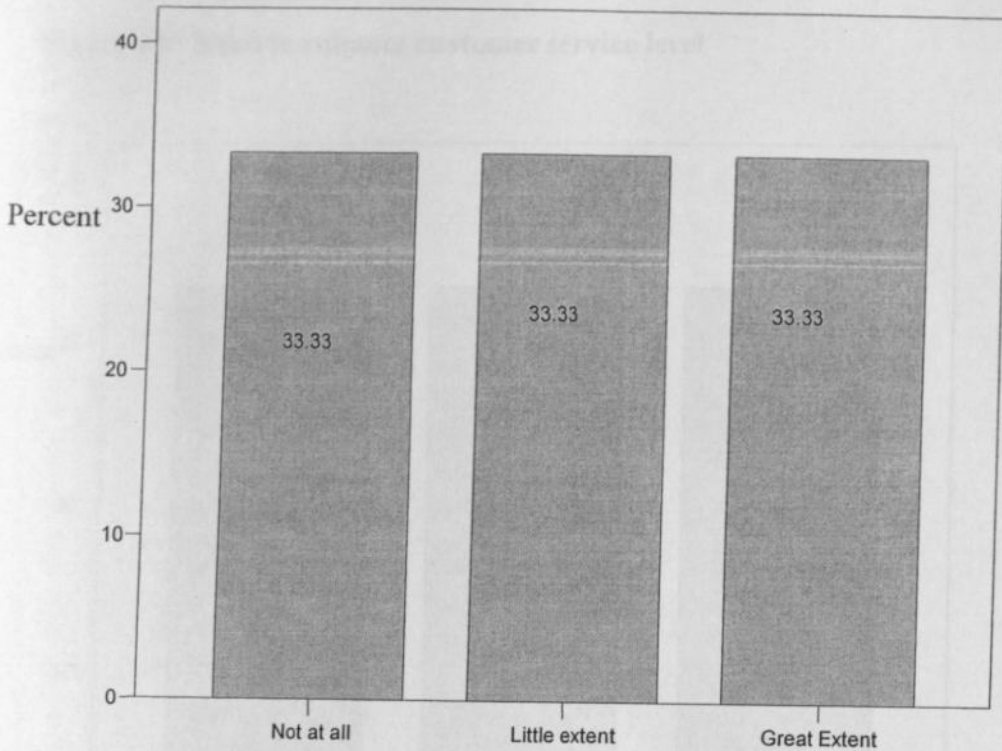


Results from the findings reveal that strong on business by suppliers was found to be a challenge in mobile number portability to a moderate extent by 66.7% majority of the respondents, while 33.3% the same was a challenge to mobile number portability to a large extent. The study findings evidently revealed that suppliers had strong business influence on mobile service providers and hence posed a big challenge to mobile number portability.

4.3.5 Operating costs

Like any other business, the cost of operation is considered a challenge to a business and organizations are always striving to create a balance between business costs and profit making objectives for businesses. The results of the respondents rating on operating costs as a challenge to Mobile Number Portability was presented on Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Increased operating costs



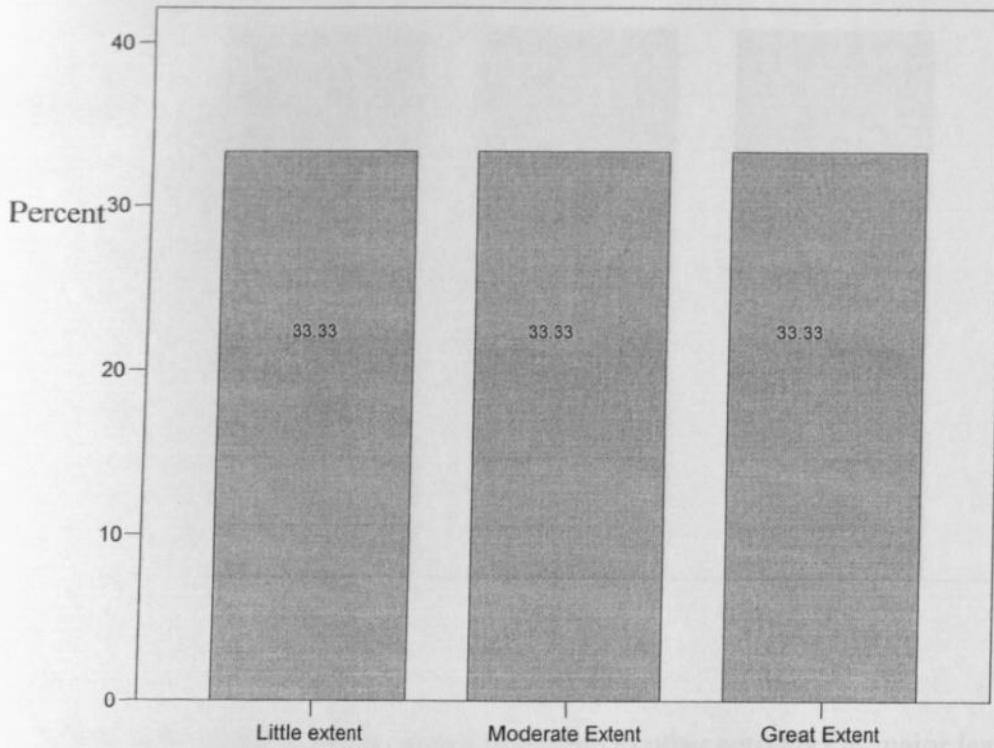
There were mixed opinions among respondents as to the extent to which operating costs were a challenge to mobile number portability. Respondents opinions were divided amongst, not at all, little extent and great extent .This issue operating cost as a challenge towards mobile number portability seemed to be unequally shared amongst the mobile phone service providers.

4.3.6 Enhance customer service level

Customer service is increasingly becoming a critical component of any business operations. Any successful business venture will be geared towards increasing the customer service level in order to increase the level of customer satisfaction. In pursuit of examining the extent to which the need to enhance customer service was a challenge to mobile number portability. The study examined the respondents rating on the assertion

“enhancing of customer service level as a challenge to mobile number portability. The study findings to this effect were presented on Figure 4.6.

Figure 4.6: Need to enhance customer service level

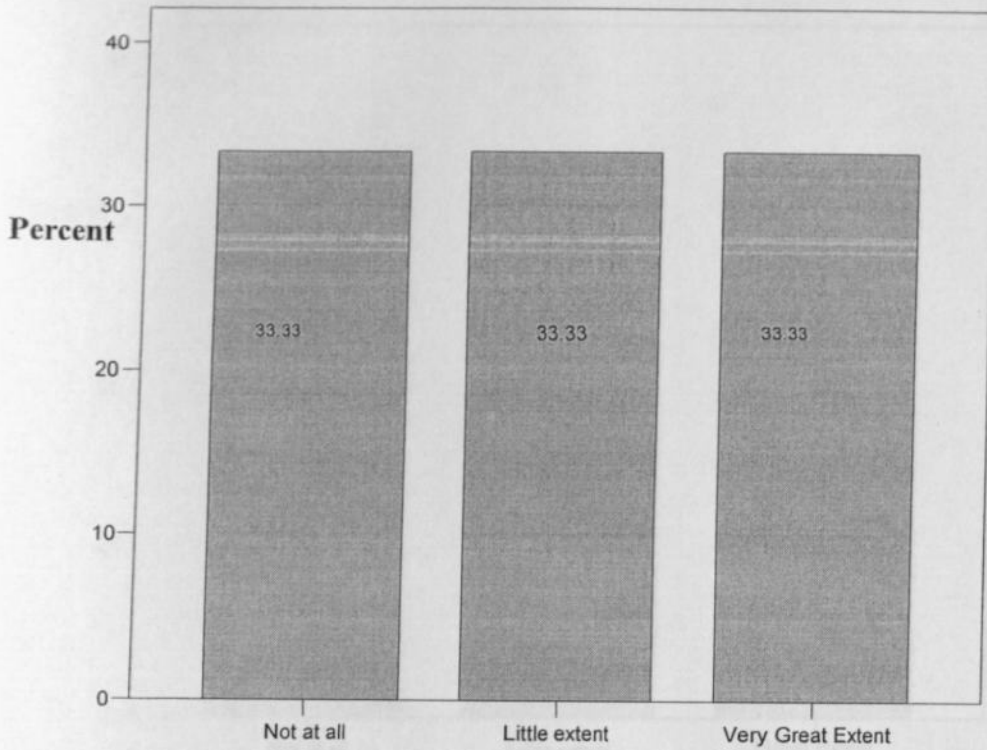


The study results revealed that all respondents were different degrees agreeing that the need to enhance customer service level was a challenge to mobile number portability. This was indicated by opinions little extent, moderate extent and great extent distributed equally among the respondents.

4.3.7 Customer migration to other networks

Movement of customer to other networks might perhaps be the greatest challenge for mobile phone service providers. The study sought to establish the extent to which this was a challenge. The finding with regard to this was presented on Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7: Customer migration to other networks

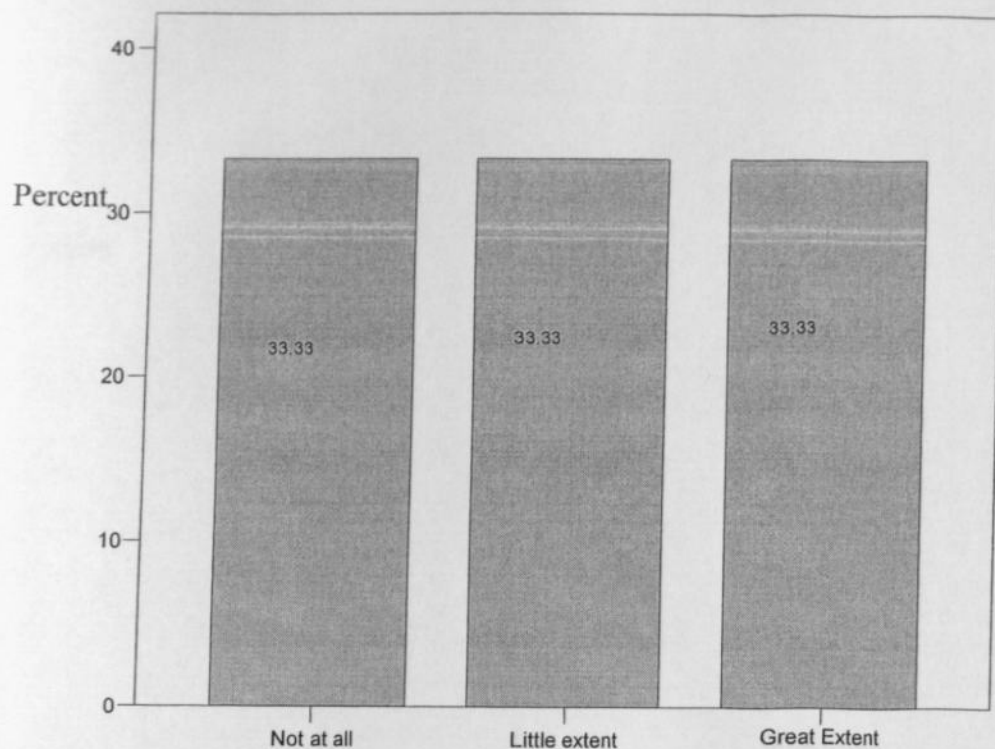


While some respondents indicated migration to other networks as major fears by indicate the degree to which migration was a challenge to a very great extent, other felt that the extent to which migration was a challenge was to a little extent while others said it was not a challenge at all.

4.3.8 Introducing or promoting retention schemes

One of the greatest wishes for every business organization is to have loyal customers who will remain with the company despite any prevailing adverse conditions. The study examined the extent to which introduction or promoting of retention schemes was a challenge to mobile number portability. The study results were presented on Figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8: Introducing or promoting retention schemes

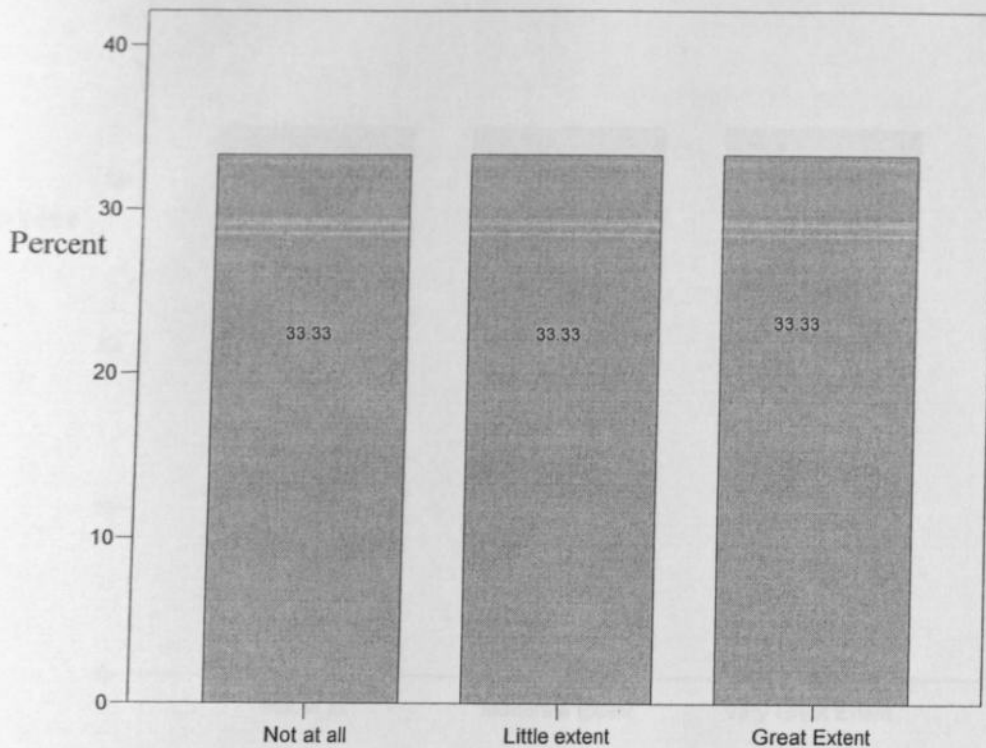


The study results revealed that the opinions of respondents were diversified between, not at all, little extent and great extent. While some felt that introduction that it as a small challenge. There was however some number of respondents who said that introduction or promoting of retention schemes was a challenge to mobile number portability to a great extent.

4.3.9 System failure or teething problems during inception

Among the technological challenges that mobile service providers were anticipated to face in mobile number transfer is systems failure. The study sought to examine the extent to which this was a challenge in mobile number portability in the companies examined. The study findings in response to this was presented on Figure 4.9.

Figure 4.9 System failure or teething issues during inception

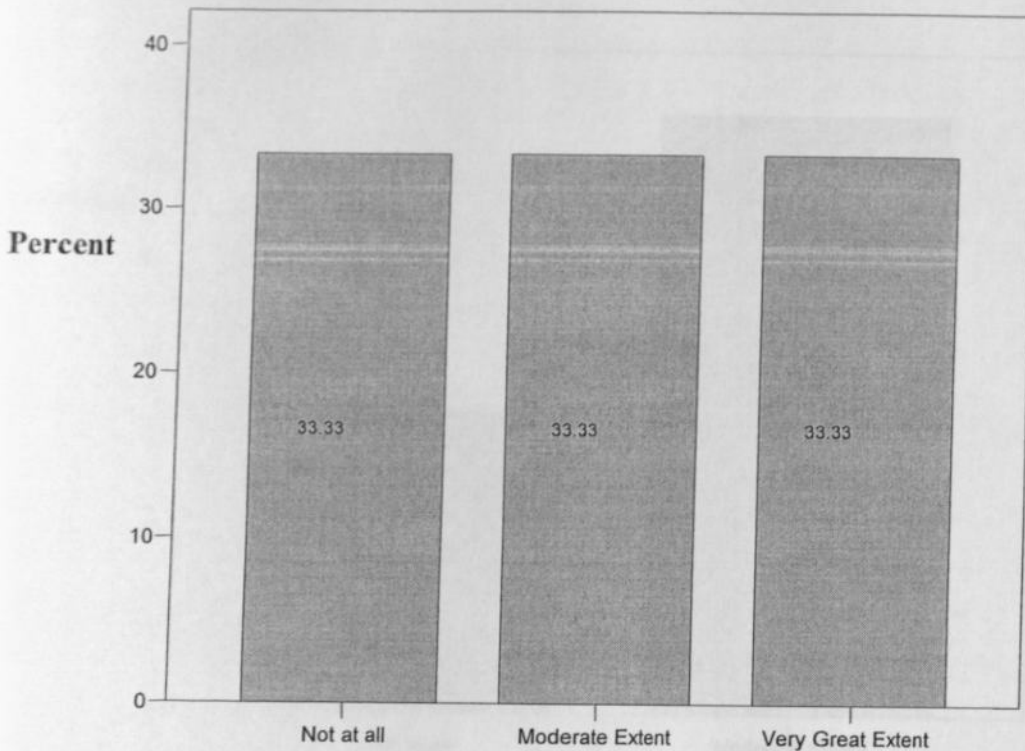


There was a diverted opinion on the extent to which systems failure or teething issues during inception was a challenge to mobile number portability. The findings indicated that opinions of the respondents was divided between not at all, little extent and great extent. While some respondents felt that systems failure was a great challenge to mobile number portability, some of the respondents felt it was a minor problem while others felt that it was not a problem at all.

4.3.10 Advertising battles between rival companies

Advertising was among the challenges assumed to affect mobile number portability. The study finding examined the extent to which advertising battles between rival companies was a challenge to mobile number portability. The finding in response to this was presented on Figure 4.10.

Figure 4.10 Advertising battles between company and its competitors

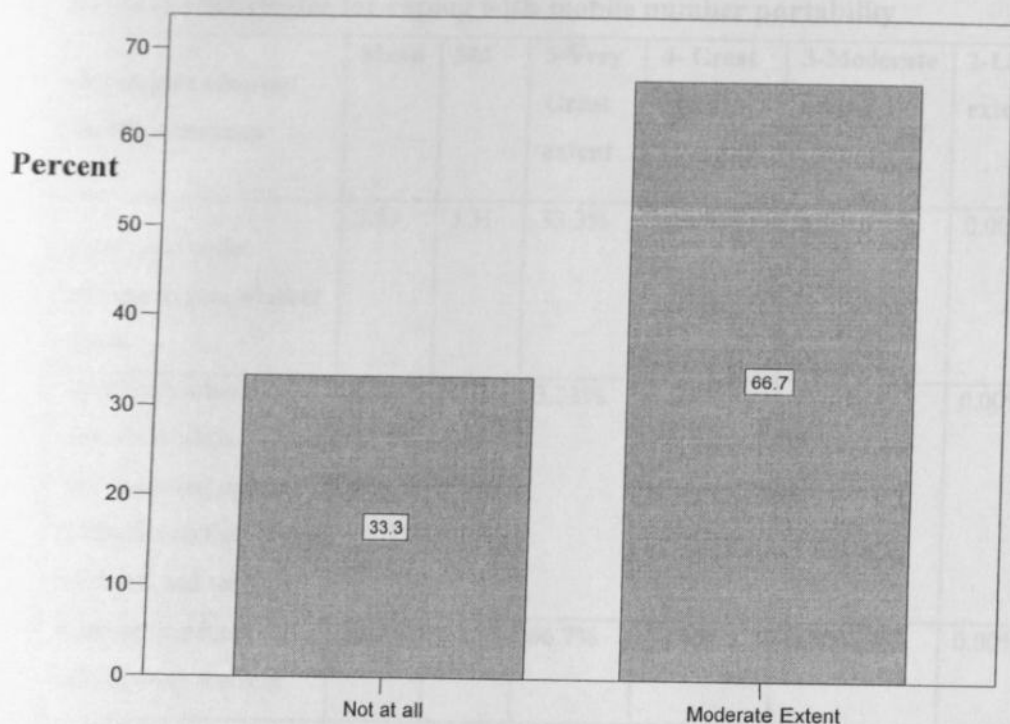


The study findings revealed equal distribution of respondent's opinion at 33.33%. The opinions were distributed between not all, moderate extent and very great extent. This indicated that advertising battle between mobile service providers was a great challenge in mobile number portability.

4.3.11: Research and development

The researcher considered research and development as one of the challenges facing mobile number portability. In pursuit of examining the extent to which it affected the process, the respondents were asked to rate their responses on the extent to which research and development was a challenge.

Figure 4.11: Investing and research and development as well as empowering staff



While majority of the respondents rated research and development as a challenge to mobile number portability to a moderate extent, 33.3% of the respondents said that research and development is not a challenge in mobile number portability.

4.4 Strategies for coping up with challenge of mobile number portability

The literature review identified various strategies aimed at coping with competition, cost, and competitiveness challenges frequently experienced by business organizations. As a strategy towards achieving mobile number portability, mobile service providers were assumed to have adopted some strategies which the study sought to examine. The study sought to examine the strategies adopted by mobile service providers in coping up with challenges affecting mobile number portability. Respondents were asked to rate different strategies on a scale of 1-5 that ranged from not at all, little extent, moderate extent, great

extent and very great extent. The results on the respondents rating was presented on Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Strategies for coping with mobile number portability

Strategies adopted by the company	Mean	Std	5-Very Great extent	4- Great extent	3-Moderate extent	2-Little extent	1-not at all
Low cost; under pricing to gain Market share	2.33	3.31	33.3%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.7%
Best cost; achieving low costs while incorporating upscale attributes on the products and services	3.67	1.53	3.33%	3.33%	0.00%	0.00%	3.33%
Making products unique from the rest	4.67	0.57	66.7%	33.3%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Focusing on a particular market group using the low cost strategy.	3.67	1.56	33.3%	0.00%	66.7%	0.00%	0.00%
Focusing on a niche of the market by differentiating products as per tastes and preferences.	4.33	1.16	66.7%	0.00%	33.3%	0.00%	0.00%
Forming of partnerships and alliances	2.00	1.73	0.00%	33.35	0.00%	33.3%	0.00%

Outsourcing: Forming out certain value chain activities to outside vendors.	4.00	1.00	33.3%	33.3%	33.35	0.00%	0.00%
Making unexpected/unpredictable moves.	3.33	2.08	33.3	0.00%	33.3%	0.00%	33.3%
Using a lot of advertising, promotions and give always.	3.33	0.57	0.00%	66.7%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Training and empowering employees	4.67	0.58	33.3%	66.7%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Investing in Research and Development	3.67	1.16	33.3%	0.00%	66.7%	0.00%	0.00%
Presenting current products and services to new markets	2.33	1.16	0.00%	0.00%	66.7%	0.00%	0.00%
Introducing new products to new markets	3.33	0.58	0.00%	33.3%	66.7%	0.00%	0.00%
Promoting current products in present market	4.00	1.00	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	0.00%	0.00%
Presenting new products to present market.	4.67	0.58	33.3%	66.7%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Retrenchment or Turnaround strategy	3.67	2.31	66.7%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.3%

Among the strategies adopted by mobile service providers to deal with the challenges of mobile number portability included; use of best cost i.e. Companies striving to achieve low cost while incorporating upscale attributes on products and services, this was revealed by respondents who gave this strategy a very great extent and great extent rating. Majority of the respondents agreed to a great extent that making products unique, from the rest was a strategy they practiced to deal with mobile number portability challenges.

No strong views raised on focusing on particular market group using low cost strategy as a strategy for countering mobile number portability challenges . Focusing on differentiation on a niche market was strongly rated by majorette (66.7%) of the respondents. While a few respondents said that the company practiced formation of partnerships and alliances, most (66.7%) of the respondents said that they did not have that practice.

The companies examined were almost in agreement that they used outsourcing as a strategy to cope with challenges of mobile number portability. This was evidenced by very great extent rating, great extent rating and moderate extent rating indicated by 33.3% of the respondents.

It was evident from the respondents that the practice of making unexpected or unpredictable moves was a strategy towards addressing mobile number portability challenges. This was shown by 33.3% of respondents indicating that the practice was used to a very great extent ad moderate extent respectively.

Advertisement was considered by majority of respondents (66.7%) as a practice that was moderately used to cope with mobile number portability challenges. However one of the companies examined gave a strong rating on the extent to which it used the practice.

Training and empowering employees could increase their knowledge capacity as well as their level of efficiency in dealing with mobile number portability challenges. An examination on the extent to which this practice was used revealed that 33.3% of the respondents said it was used to a great extent while 66.7% majority said it was used to a

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moderate extent. The results reveal that Training and empowering of employees therefore considered an important strategy in coping up with the challenges of mobile number portability.

There was evidence that investing in research and development was moderately practiced by mobile service providers. With a few of the respondents indicating that it was greatly used. Presenting current products and services to new markets is a strategy that was moderately adopted by mobile companies as revealed by 66.7% of the respondents who cited that the practice was used to a moderate extent While majority of the respondents (66.7%) indicated retrenchment or turnaround as a strategy to cope up with challenges of mobile number portability, a few said they did not use the strategy at all. This indicated that there was a difference in views regarding use of retrenchment or turnaround strategy to cope with challenges of mobile number portability.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study was carried out to examine the challenges affecting mobile number portability by mobile service companies in Kenya. The summary of findings were presented under the following subsections, background information, challenges facing mobile number portability and strategies adopted by mobile service companies to deal with mobile number portability.

5.2 Summary

Majority (66.7%) of the respondents confirmed having worked for their respective organizations for a period of 3 years and below while 33.3% said that they had worked for a period of 5-7 years.

Majority (66.7%) of the respondents revealed that their companies were partly owned by the government and partly owned privately, this could indicate that the government and the private owners of the companies examined had a role to play in addressing the challenges affecting mobile number portability and the strategies for addressing these challenges. There was mixed opinions among respondents in identifying competition as one of the challenges facing mobile number portability. Rivalry among mobile service providers was rated moderately by 66.7% majority of the as a challenge affecting mobile number portability.

The study results reveal that buyers influence in business as a challenge towards mobile number portability was rated to a moderate extent by 66.7% majority of the respondents while 33.3% rated it to a very great extent. Majority of the respondents rated research and development as a challenge to mobile number portability to a moderate extent, 33, 3% of the respondents said that research and development not a challenge in mobile number portability.

Among the strategies adopted by mobile service providers to deal with the challenges of mobile number portability included; use of best cost i.e. Companies striving to achieve

low cost while incorporating upscale attributes on products and services, this was revealed by respondents who gave this strategy a very great extent and great extent rating.

No strong views raised on focusing on particular market group using low cost strategy as a strategy for countering mobile number portability challenges . Focusing on differentiation on a niche market was strongly rated by majority (66.7%) of the respondents. While a few respondents said that the company practiced formation of partnerships and alliances, most (66.7%) of the respondents said that they did not have that practice.

It was evident from the respondents that the practice of making unexpected or unpredictable moves was a strategy towards addressing mobile number portability challenges. This was shown by 33.3% of respondents indicating that the practice was used to a very great extent and moderate extent respectively.

Advertisement was considered by majority of respondents (66.7%) as a practice that was moderately used to cope with mobile number portability challenges. However one of the companies examined gave a strong rating on the extent to which it used the practice.

Training and empowering employees could increase their knowledge capacity as well as their level of efficiency in dealing with mobile number portability challenges. An examination on the extent to which this practice was used revealed that 33.3% of the respondents said it was used to a great extent while 66.7% majority said it was used to a moderate extent.

There was evidence that investing in research and development was moderately practiced by mobile service providers. With a few of the respondents indicating that it was greatly used. Presenting current products and services to new markets is a strategy that was moderately adopted by mobile companies as revealed by 66.7% of the respondents who cited that the practice was used to a moderate extent, while majority of the respondents (66.7%) indicated retrenchment or turnaround as a strategy to cope up with challenges of mobile number portability, a few felt said they did not use the strategy at all.

5.3 Conclusion

The respondents interviewed indicated an understanding of the challenges affecting mobile number portability since it is a recently introduced concept in the mobile industry. Both the government and private owners had were found to be key stakeholders faced by the challenges affecting mobile number portability and also in addressing strategies these challenges.

Rivalry influence by buyers, strong business influence by suppliers, operating costs, and advertising was the challenges that all respondents were in agreement that it faced mobile phone number portability. System failure was found to be a challenge to some companies and not to others.

Making products unique from the rest, focusing on differentiation on a niche market , outsourcing , making unexpected or unpredictable moves , was a strategy used by majority of the respondents to deal with challenge of mobile number portability

Training and empowering of employees was considered an important strategy in coping up with the challenges of mobile number portability. Presenting current products and services to new markets is a strategy that was moderately adopted by mobile companies. Though retrenchment of turnaround was indicated as a strategy in dealing with mobile number portability, it was found that the strategy was not used by all mobile service providers.

5.4 Recommendation for policy practice

After successful completion of the study on the challenges affecting mobile number portability, the following recommendations were made; Mobile service providers should make their products unique and work towards achievement of competitive advantages so as to increase their customer loyalty. Low costs as a result of price wars might be detrimental to all stakeholders in mobile service provision , it is therefore important for companies to adopt best price strategy as a way of coping up with competition while achieving profit making goals .

Training of employees will increase their efficiency and competence in dealing with teething problems of mobile number portability. This strategy should therefore be adopted by all mobile service providers.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

Mobile Number Portability being a fairly new concept in the country the researcher found no references. It is also a concept that affects both the service providers and their customers however the study focuses on its effect on service providers. Though the researcher intended to collect data from the entire population which is the four companies, data was only collected from three respondents.

5.6 Suggestions for further studies

A further study should be carried on other factors affecting Mobile Number Portability apart from the challenges and strategies covered in this study. Since the study focused on service providers, it is important that a similar study covering beneficiaries (Customers) of mobile number portability process to establish whether the challenges mentioned by service providers are similar challenges faced by the customers.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

PART ONE: BACKGROUND OF THE COMPANY

1. Name of the company _____

2. Year of establishment _____

3. Position of respondent in the organization _____

4. How long have you been with the company? Kindly tick appropriate

3 years and below []

3-5 years []

5-7 years []

Over 7 years []

5. Ownership of the company. Kindly tick appropriate

Privately owned []

Fully owned by government []

Owned partly by Government and partly private. []

PART TWO: CHALLENGES OF MOBILE NUMBER PORTABILITY

To what extent do you encounter each of the following challenges as a result of Mobile Number Portability? Kindly rate on a five point scale where; 1=Not at all, 2= little extent, 3=Moderate extent, 4=Great extent, 5= Very great extent. (Tick where appropriate.)

Challenges Faced by the company	5	4	3	2	1
1.Competition in pricing of products and services					
2. Rivalry between your company and its competitors					
3. Buyers having a strong influence in your business					
4. Suppliers having a strong influence in the business					
5. increasing operating costs e.g. Purchase of Machinery and operating equipment, increased promotions and advertizing					
6. need to enhance customer service levels					
7. customers migrating to other networks					
8 Introducing or promoting retention schemes. Eg loyalty programs.					
9. system failure or teething issues during inception					
10. Advertising battles between your company and its competitors.					
11. Investing in research and development as well as empowering staff.					

Other challenges encountered (specify below)

PART THREE: STRATEGIES ADOPTED TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES.

To what extent do you practice each of the following strategies to counter competition as a result of Mobile Number Portability? Kindly rate on a five point scale where; 1=Not at all, 2=little extent, 3=Moderate extent, 4=Great extent, 5= Very great extent. Tick where appropriate.

Strategies adopted by the company	5	4	3	2	1
1.Low cost; under pricing to gain Market share					
2. Best cost; achieving low costs while incorporating upscale attributes on the products an services					
3. Making products unique from the rest					
4. Focusing on a particular market group using the low cost strategy.					
5. Focusing on a niche of the market by differentiating products as per tastes and preferences.					
6. Forming of partnerships and alliances					

7. Outsourcing: Forming out certain value chain activities to outside vendors.					
8. Making unexpected/ unpredictable moves.					
9. Using a lot of advertising, promotions and give aways.					
10. Training and empowering employees					
11. Investing in Research and Development					
12. Presenting current products and services to new markets					
13. Introducing new products to new markets					
14. Promoting current products in present market					
15. Presenting new products to present market.					
16. Retrenchment or Turnaround strategy					

Other adopted strategies. (Kindly specify)

Which among these strategies have been most effective? (Kindly specify)
