

1 **FACTORS INFLUENCING BRAND SWITCHING BEHAVIOUR OF MOBILE PHONES**  
2 **USERS: MEDIATING EFFECTS OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION.**

3 **Abstract**

4 Mobile phone market is one of the most turbulent market environments today due to increased  
5 competition and change. Thus, it is of growing concern to look at consumer switching behaviour  
6 and shade light on the factors that influence the consumer switching between different brands of  
7 mobile phones. On this basis, this paper deals with consumers' switching behaviour of mobile  
8 phone by studying factors that influence consumers to change their mobile phones brand and the  
9 mediating effects of customer satisfaction. Using literature review, it was found that although the  
10 purchase of a mobile phone is subjective, there are some general factors that seem to influence  
11 the switching behaviour of consumers among brands. The studies further show that among other  
12 things that influence consumer switching behaviour in the purchase of mobile phones includes  
13 reference group and product quality. The study further reveals that customer satisfaction has  
14 positive effects on customer switching. Thus, customer satisfaction is considered a positive  
15 determinant of how strong is the relationship between the customer and the product provider.  
16 The study therefore, recommends that mobile phone marketers should shift focus on building  
17 corporate image and analyze more carefully the reason for customers to switch brands in their  
18 industries in order to increase loyalty among these customers.

19  
20 **Key words:** Brand switching, product quality, reference group, mobile phone and consumers  
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24 **1.1.Introduction:**

25 In today's competitive world, consumer switching behaviour is becoming more complex  
26 due to the fact that consumers have easy access to information about different brands of products.  
27 Satisfying and creating a favourable impression about the product should be the priority of any  
28 organization. In view of this therefore, companies are constantly trying to build mutual  
29 relationships with their customers through delivering better value products and meeting their  
30 promises (Zikiene & Bakanauskas, 2006).

31 To this end Consumer Switching Behaviour (CSB) has gained considerable attention among  
32 scholars and practitioners in the marketing literature. Consumer's loyalty to institutions has been  
33 reported to be declining. Report shows that consumers loyalty to institutions, product or service  
34 has decline to 30% in 2016 as against 44% in 2012 (Cooperative Credit Purchasing Company,  
35 2017) This report was supported by Sharma, Kapse and Sonwalkar (2016), where 67.3% of  
36 consumers indicated their intention of switching their brand when next they consider buying a  
37 mobile phone device in India. The probability of consumers purchasing the same brand was 0.20.  
38 This is mainly because consumers want to save money from their earnings and achieve value for

39 money (Keaweney & Parthasarathy, 2001). Markets are increasingly becoming customer  
40 oriented and making it crucial for companies to build a long-term and maintain customers'  
41 relationship (Nimako & Winneba 2012). For a firm to maintain and keep its current customers, it  
42 is important for them to understand why customers switch brand of product as it would help  
43 them devise strategies to achieve the desired results.

44 Since the inception of mobile phone into the country Nigeria in 2001, many global mobile  
45 phone companies have flooded the markets. Due to the large entry of mobile phone companies,  
46 many smartphone brands have been introduced into the market namely: Apple, Samsung, Sony,  
47 Lenovo, HTC, Huawei, LG, Motorola, Nokia, ITEL, Blackberry, Tecno, Genee, Infinix and others.  
48 Consumers make their decision to opt for a particular brand with lots of considerations on their  
49 minds. \_Reference from friends or reference group, social status, product quality, product design,  
50 and others are some factors that are frequently seen as influencers of consumer switching  
51 behaviour in the mobile phone markets.

52 The purpose of this study is to explore factors that influence consumer's brand switching  
53 behaviour of mobile phone in Damaturu metropolis, Yobe state, Nigeria. With the view of  
54 ascertaining what influences the brand switching of consumers in regard to the mobile phone  
55 they are currently using. Furthermore, the study examined the mediating effects of customer  
56 satisfaction on the consumer switching behaviour in relation to the influence of reference group  
57 and product quality.

## 58 **2.1. Concept of Consumer Behaviour**

59 The concept of consumer behavior and its study is very important in marketing literature  
60 because everyone is a consumer of one product/service or the other. Therefore, there is no single  
61 definition to the concept. Consumer behaviour is defined as "the process and activities people  
62 engage in when searching, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products  
63 and services so as to satisfy needs and desires", "including the decision processes that precede  
64 and follow these actions" (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 1995). This definition indicates the  
65 comprehensiveness of the area and the wide scope it covers. In another definition, Jeddi, Atefi,  
66 Jalali, Poureisa, and Haghi, (2013) described consumer behavior as a series of activities directed  
67 toward the acquisition, use and disposal of goods and services. These activities include the  
68 decisions that are made before and after the purchase.

69 Consumer behavior mainly sheds light on how consumers decide to spend their various  
70 resources like time, money; and ideas on various products so as to meet their needs and  
71 requirements. Consumer behavior encompasses study of what, when, why and where the  
72 consumers will buy their products. It also focuses on how often the consumers use the products.  
73 It further explains how the consumers evaluate the products after the purchase and the effect of  
74 evaluations on their future purchases (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004). These behaviours are  
75 influenced by the environment to which the consumer belongs and it also affects how the  
76 consumers feel, consider and act. The environmental features for instance are, comments taken  
77 from other customers, advertising, packaging, price, and product appearance (Kotler & Keller,  
78 2016).

79 Usually, consumer behavior is strongly influenced by the culture in which they were raised.  
80 Though, Njigua, (2018) opined that consumer behaviors are influenced by other factors apart  
81 from culture. These are the social, personal and psychological factors. Social factors are the  
82 consumer's wants, learning, motives which are influenced by opinion leaders, person's family,  
83 reference groups, social class and culture. Furthermore, a \_buyer's decisions can be influenced  
84 by personal characteristics such as the buyer's age, occupation, personality, lifestyle, economic  
85 situation and so on (Kotler & Armstrong, 1991). Jeddi, Atefi, Jalali, Poureisa, and Haghi, (2013),  
86 concluded that consumer behavior is motivated, it involves a lot of activities, is a process, it is  
87 different in terms of time and complexity, the roles it play differs in context.

88 Based on the above therefore, there are so many factors that influences the behaviour of a  
89 consumer and their switching behaviour. What the consumer considers important when making a  
90 purchase determines whether the consumer will continue purchasing the product or switch to  
91 another product/brand.

92

## 93 **2.2.Brand switching**

94 Brand switching is a situation where a brand loses once loyal customer to a competitor. In  
95 other words, a shopper changes his/her buying behaviour, choosing deliberately to purchase  
96 another brand instead of their usual choice. Brand switching is a situation in which someone  
97 changes from buying one brand of a product to buying a different brand. Brand switching which  
98 is sometimes known as brand jumping is the process of choosing to switch from routine use of  
99 one brand of a product to steady usage of a different but similar product (Rajkumar & Charlas

100 2012). Brand switching as ascertained by Kumar and Charles (2011) is the process in which  
101 consumers switch from the use of one product to another of the same category.

102 Furthermore, brand switching is when a consumer or group of consumers switches their  
103 allegiance from one brand of a certain type of product to another. This brand switching may be  
104 temporary, or it may be long lasting, especially for products that last longer or from which  
105 switching away is harder (Rajkumar & Charlas 2012). After analyzing these definitions one can  
106 conclude whether switching is a process or decision, it is certain that switching behavior includes  
107 ending relationship with one product by stopping purchasing the products and establishing same  
108 relationship with another manufacturer of same category.

109

### 110 **2.3. Reference Group/Social Factors and Consumer Brand Switching Behaviour**

111 Social factors are societal norms, values that affect the buying behavior of customers like  
112 the family members, the role and status of each member in society. It may be noted that family,  
113 friends and relatives have positive impact on customer satisfaction thus increasing customer  
114 retention. Adamu, (2011) confirms that customers always keep in mind their family members,  
115 friends and co-workers when choosing a smartphone. Adamu (2011) sees reference groups as all  
116 group of people who have a direct (face-to-face) or indirect influence on a person's attitudes or  
117 behavior. Groups that have a direct influence on a persons' behaviour are called membership  
118 groups which includes family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers, with whom  
119 individual interact fairly continuously and informally. Role consists of the activities that a person  
120 is expected to perform and each role carries a status (Kotler & Armstrong 2010). In general,  
121 people choose products that communicate their role and status in society.

122 Therefore, consumer's behavior is influenced by social factors such as family and friends,  
123 social roles and status. The reasons for switching a brand of smartphone can be because one of  
124 the family members or co-worker has the same brand. Reference group especially friends had the  
125 highest influence on consumers' switching behaviour of smartphones (Rao, VCSMR, &  
126 Gundala, 2016). Family members can also influence the individual buying behavior as while as the  
127 switching behaviour. This is because the family forms the environment for an individual to acquire  
128 values, develop and even shape his/her personality. A family creates first perceptions about brands of a  
129 products for the consumer which subsequently forms a habits (Kotler & Armstrong 2010). For instance,  
130 an individual consumer who has form a brand perceptions when he/she was young, can carry out these  
131 same brand selections in the adult life.

132 Social status reflects the position an individual has in a social groups which can be attributed to  
133 money and wealth, education or occupation. This further influence the consumer buying behaviour and  
134 that can determine whether the consumer will continue with his/her current brand of product or change  
135 that is, switch to another brand that fit his/her role/status in the society. In many societies, status is  
136 important and people want the admiration of others. Brand selection often reflects the social role and  
137 status of the consumer (Lautiainen, 2015).

138

#### 139 **2.4.Product Quality and customer satisfaction**

140 Product quality is the collection of features and characteristics of a product that  
141 contribute to its ability to meet a given requirement by the user. Parasuraman et al., (1985)  
142 defines it as a zero error rate that is, the ability to produce a perfect product on the first try.  
143 Crosby, (1979) further sees quality as the producer's ability to meet expectations. According to  
144 Zeithaml (1988) quality is the actual superiority of product and from the consumer's point of  
145 view, quality is the perceived quality upon which the consumer base his/her decision on the  
146 overall excellence or superiority of the product. Perceived product quality signifies the intangible  
147 and tangible perception of consumers towards a product. Perceived product quality is considered  
148 a prerequisite to consumer behavioural intention in both goods and services markets. Suchánek,  
149 Richter, and Králová, (2014)\_ understands quality as a degree to which satisfaction is met,  
150 measured by a set of inherent signs. The importance of quality is emphasized by many  
151 researchers as the basis on which firms compete, because customers are always searching for  
152 quality, and markets are transformed by quality' (Golder, Mitra, & Moorman, 2012). Producers  
153 have always struggled to produce high quality products in order to create good perception and  
154 experience among their consumers in order to compete with their competitors while maintaining  
155 good reputations among the existing customers, as the cost of retaining the existing customers  
156 can be less costly than the cost of acquiring new customers (Raj & Roy, 2015).

157 Consumer who switch or switchers are customers who have no loyalty to any specific  
158 product (McCarthy et al., 1992). According to Liang, Ma and Qi (2013), switching behaviour  
159 results in 'the loss of the future revenue for a firm. Poorly perceived product quality contributes  
160 to dissatisfied customers who not only would stop being loyal to that product but also entice  
161 other patrons away from the product (Gilbert et al., 2004). On the other hand, high perceived  
162 product quality can retain and attract both current and new customers and even draw customers  
163 of low quality competitors to their own favourite products (Nikhashemi, Valaei & Tarofder,

164 2017). Liang et al. (2013), ascertain that perceived product quality can create customer  
165 satisfaction is considered as a prerequisite for customer loyalty which has a positive impact on  
166 reducing switching behaviour of consumers.

167

## 168 **2.5. Customer Satisfaction.**

169 Customer satisfaction can be seen as the evaluations made by customers based on all the  
170 purchase experiences, disregarding any specific purchase experience made previously. It can be  
171 used to describe the real product experience a customer had whether it has met or exceeded  
172 expectation. The more it exceeds the customer's expectation, the higher the satisfaction. In the  
173 context of consumer switching behaviour, customer satisfaction is the factor that leads to long  
174 term customer retention because unsatisfied customers have very high switching rate (Sabir,  
175 Irfan, Sarwar, Sarwar, & Akhtar 2013). Sabir et al. (2013) ascertained that the feeling of  
176 accomplishment of inner desires is called satisfaction and it has a direct effect on customer  
177 loyalty. If the product fulfills the needs and demand of the customer, customer will become  
178 satisfied and will be converted to loyal customer. Similarly, customer satisfaction is described as  
179 the degree of customer's feeling towards a product or service (Maiyaki, Norzaini & Mokhtar,  
180 2011). Customer satisfaction remain as the core fundamental basis of marketing strategy and act  
181 as a main driving factor for organization success. Aydin, Özer, and Arasil, (2005) concluded that  
182 cumulative customer satisfaction is the evaluation made based on the total purchase and  
183 consumption experience with a product over time which is based on previous transaction-specific  
184 satisfaction. The basis for customer retention is to enhance customer value offers, which leads to  
185 customer delight. It is the delighted customer who is retained (Buttle, 2008).

186 In summary customer satisfaction may be viewed as, an emotion (an effective response to  
187 product offers), meaning the extent to which the customer is happy with the product experience,  
188 how happy the consumers are with certain mobile phone brands. It is also viewed as a fulfilment  
189 of achievement of relevant goals. This entails the extent to which the product offers met or  
190 exceeded customer needs. That is the extent to which customers are able to fulfill their  
191 communication goals by the use of the mobile phone device. Satisfaction may also be viewed as  
192 a state, which is concerned with the level of reinforcement or arousal, the extent to which it  
193 drives the customer towards acceptance or avoidance (Oliver, 1999). That is, an individual  
194 feeling of pleasure or disappointment as a result of comparison between the products perceived

195 performance and expectations after purchase (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Kotler and Keller, (2012)  
196 further added that if the product (mobile phone) performance falls short of expectations, the  
197 customer is dissatisfied. If it matches expectations, the customer is satisfied. Then if the  
198 performance surpasses expectations, the customer is highly satisfied or pleased. Expectations  
199 may come from past buying experience, “friends and associates” advice, and “marketers and  
200 competitors” information and promises (Kotler & Keller, 2012; and Malik, Ghafoor, & Hafiz,  
201 2012). Therefore, a marketer should be very careful to raise the expectations of their customers,  
202 because it will end up with the customer being disappointed or it will not attract enough buyers.

203 Organizations’ success is totally dependent on the customer satisfaction. Customer  
204 satisfaction has positive effects on the customer switching. So mobile phone marketers should  
205 shift focus on building corporate image and analyze more carefully the reason for customers to  
206 switch brands in their industries in order to increase loyalty among these customers. This is  
207 because any bad product feature most probably experienced by a customer, will result into  
208 customer’s dissatisfaction and lead towards brand switching. Thus, customer satisfaction is  
209 considered a positive determinant of how strong is the relationship between the customer and the  
210 product provider. Furthermore, dissatisfied customers are more likely to switch brand in search  
211 for what satisfies them in product provided by other competitors and can influence company’s  
212 revenues more than satisfied customer (Althonayan, Alhabib, Alrasheedi, Alqahtani, & Saleh,  
213 2015). Customer satisfaction in the product sector can be measured by the performance of the  
214 product and more related to the tangible aspects.

215

#### 216 2.5.1. *Customer Satisfaction and Brand Switching*

217 Customer satisfaction has the largest attention when it comes to customer retention and  
218 brand switching. It is a subjective concept and is subject to different interpretations. It is mainly a  
219 mental comparison between expectations and the perceived performance after a specific  
220 purchase (Qi, et al., 2012). A study conducted in Korea concluded that customer satisfaction can  
221 be considered as an attitude and judgment, meaning that the customer will compare the  
222 encounter with the expectations and can have different encounters in different areas of product  
223 leading to dissatisfaction (Lee, 2010). In the same line, Chi, et al., (2008) concluded that  
224 customer satisfaction is vitally important to the success and profitability for any company. It is

225 consider a part of the company assets and heavily involved in determining the revenue and  
226 profits.

227 Customer satisfaction in the product sector can be measured by the performance of the  
228 product which can be related to the product's tangible aspects. Min and Wan (2009) identified  
229 customer satisfaction as one of the major factors of consumers switching brands and described it  
230 as a multidimensional. Therefore, lacking satisfaction in an area of the business could lead to  
231 dissatisfaction with the whole product, hence, brand switching.

232 Based on the previous literature reviewed, customers always compare their expectations  
233 with the actual product performance if the customers are not satisfied they will look for other  
234 alternatives, including switching to the competitive brands. The impact of different variables on  
235 customer satisfaction has been researched and became an important subject when related to  
236 marketing techniques and strategy. In different countries around the world, lacking customer  
237 satisfaction induce the customer to change their brand. Therefore, investigating factors  
238 influencing brand switching behaviour of consumers and the mediating effects of customer  
239 satisfaction is vital.

240

## 241 **2.6.Reasons for Brand switching behaviour**

242 Brand switching can also occur based on extrinsic incentives which are sales promotion,  
243 advertisement, that persuade the consumer to change brand through the promotions made by the  
244 manufacturer especially when the sales promotion alter purchase patterns (Chandon, 1995).  
245 Bruhn and Georgi (2006), concluded that consumer's reasons for switching is attributed to:  
246 customer's characteristics which are more or less directed to the connection with the marketer or  
247 product. Consumers also switched when the manufacturer/marketer concerned failed to provide  
248 the consumer with perceived product quality and customer satisfaction. Shukla (2014; Usman  
249 Haider, Kakakhel, Ihtesham, & Agha, 2012; and Li, Ortiz, Browne, Franklin, Oliver, Geyer, &  
250 Chong 2010) ascertained that, reference group or social factors is considered as a factors that  
251 influence consumer switching most in the mobile phone market.

252 Other reasons as developed or model in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by  
253 Ajzen, includes:

254 *Normative belief*: ones desire for prestige, esteem, popularity or acceptance. Normative beliefs  
255 constitute the major determinants of subjective norms (views of referent group e.g. family and



256 friends or peers) and are concerned with the likelihood that an individual or group of individuals  
257 can be influenced by either family or relation when performing an action or behaviour.  
258 Generally, people are motivated to comply when they perceive social pressure to do so (Ajzen,  
259 1991). For the purpose of this paper family, friends, and co-workers are the reference groups  
260 which are likely to influence consumers' brand switching behaviour.

261 The Perceived Behavioural Control which eventually influences the behaviour of a  
262 consumer is the factor which is within the domain and control of a consumer and thus facilitates  
263 his behaviour. Consumer knowledge of a brand is vital in decision making. Familiarity and  
264 expertise are the components that help the consumer in search for the brand or product. The  
265 attractiveness of the opportunity to inspect and expand number of alternatives is dependent in  
266 part on the consumer's ability to sort efficiency through information search.

267 *The Perceived Behavioural Control* influences behaviour directly or indirectly. Specially,  
268 control relating to individual's perception of the availability of knowledge, resources and  
269 opportunities required to perform the specific behaviour (Venkatesh, 2000).. The theory of  
270 planned behaviour as depicted below, postulates that behavioural intention is the direct  
271 antecedent of the actual behaviour.

272 Behavioural intentions are regarded as a summary of motivation needed to do a particular  
273 action or behaviour and an index of how well or hard people are willing to try and perform the  
274 action (Pookulangara, & Koesler, 2011). Clearly, intentions can be changed over time. The  
275 longer the time interval, the greater the likelihood that unforeseen events will produce changes in  
276 intentions, and it follows that accuracy of predictions that will usually decline with interventions  
277 of time of measurement and observations (Ajzen, 1991). According to the model, a person's  
278 attitude toward performing an act has an indirect relationship to behaviour, and is based on the  
279 summed set underlying salient beliefs associated with the attitude and the evaluation of these  
280 beliefs by consumers.

281 *Subjective Norm*: Subjective norm is the second component of behaviour and it represents the  
282 consumer's perceptions of what he/she thinks about what the referent wants him/her to do. It is a  
283 function of two subcomponents: the associative normative beliefs, which reflects the consumer's  
284 perception of what the referent thinks about whether he/she should or should not perform the  
285 action or behaviour; and the consumer's motivation to comply with the referent which can be the  
286 consumer's or individuals' culture (Pookulangara & Koesler, 2011). Verhoef, Neslin and

287 Vroomen (2005) ascertained that consumers' selection of brand is influenced by the belief that  
288 people in the same group or culture with them use that brand. Subjective norms suggests that  
289 behaviour is instigated by one's desire to act as others act or think and hence will reflect  
290 consumer perception of whether brand-switching behaviour is accepted, encouraged and  
291 implemented by the consumer's circle of influence.

292

## 293 **2.6. Theoretical framework**

### 294 **2.6.1. Theory of Planned Behaviour**

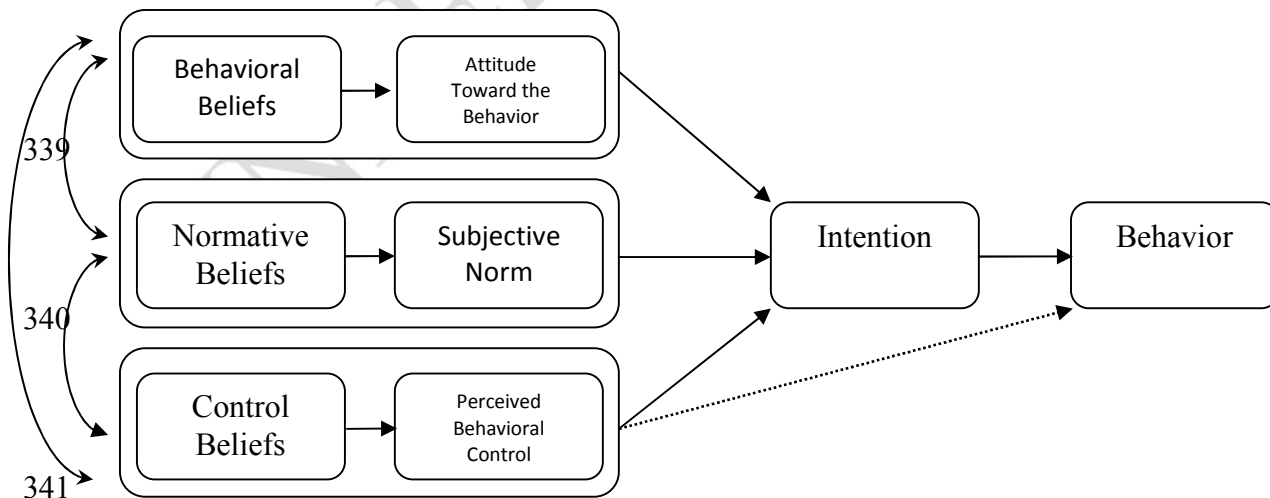
295 Consumers always consider the implications of their actions before they decide to engage  
296 in doing whatever action they feel better to be engaged or not engaged in (Ajzen, 1991). The  
297 theory of planned behaviour states that the behavioural intention is the antecedent of any  
298 behaviour. This intention is determined by three considerations; behavioural beliefs, normative  
299 beliefs and control beliefs (Ajzen, 1991). The behavioural belief is an individual's positive or  
300 negative belief about performing a specific behaviour and the subjective values or evaluations of  
301 these consequences. An individual's intention to perform certain behaviour will be determined  
302 by how he or she evaluates it positively. Attitudes are determined by the individual's beliefs  
303 about the consequences of performing the behaviour (behavioural beliefs), weighted by his or her  
304 evaluation of those consequences (outcome evaluations). The attitude toward the behavior refers  
305 to the degree at which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the  
306 behavior in question.

307 The theory of planned behaviour is an extension of the theory of reasoned action,  
308 suggested by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980). The theory of reasoned action states that the immediate  
309 antecedent of behaviour is the behavioural intention to perform the behaviour. The intention to  
310 perform the specific behaviour is affected by the belief that performing the specific behaviour  
311 will lead to a certain outcome (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992). The beliefs are affected by the  
312 attitude towards the behaviour and subjective norms. While attitude is considered as a function  
313 of the sum of the perceived values of expected outcomes of the behaviour; Subjective Norms  
314 (SN) are a function of the sum of perceived social pressures or beliefs of others and perceived  
315 behavioural control (PBC) represents the collective effects of individuals' perceptions of both  
316 internal and external enabling factors (time, money, knowledge and others) that determine the  
317 ability to actually perform the behaviour. The theory of reasoned action loses application when

318 the theory is applied to behaviors' that are not fully under volitional control. The Theory of  
 319 Planned Behaviour took into account all behaviours that are not under volitional control and that  
 320 behaviours are located at some point along a continuum that extends from total control to a  
 321 complete lack of control (Ajzen, 1991). Control belief refers to perceived presence of factors that  
 322 can influence a person's ability to perform the behaviour. People are not likely to form a strong  
 323 intention to perform an action if they believe that they do not have the resources or opportunities  
 324 to do so.

325 TPB further provides a framework to examine the influence of attitudes on behaviours.  
 326 For example, if an individual believes that the outcome of the behaviour is positive, she/he will  
 327 possess a positive attitude toward performing it. That is when the customer believes that the final  
 328 result of the switching action is positive, he/she will have a positive attitude towards switching.  
 329 The central factor in the TPB model is the individual's intention to perform a given behaviour  
 330 (Ajzen, 1991). Nimako and Winneba (2012), ascertained that, attitude is the most important  
 331 determinant of a customer's switching intention, attitude was influence by subjective norms, and  
 332 switching intention was influenced by satisfaction which in turn influences significantly the  
 333 switching behaviour of customers. The more an individual believes he/she possesses the  
 334 necessary resources, abilities and opportunities necessary to influence behaviour, the more likely  
 335 he/she will intend to and actually perform the behaviour (Pookulangara & Koesler, 2011).  
 336 Consumers are susceptible to interpersonal influences which had been accommodated in the  
 337 theory of planned behaviour.

338 The model is depicted in figure 2.1 below).



342 Figure 2.1. Decomposed Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 2002). Organizational Behaviour  
343 and Human Decision Processes 50(2) pp., 179-211

344

### 345 **3.1. Methodology:**

346 Based on all of the literatures reviewed, the study aims at investigating factors that influence  
347 brand switching behaviour of consumers in mobile phone markets. The study considered  
348 consumer's reference group/social status and product quality with the mediating effects of  
349 customer satisfaction. The logic of this is that each variables that is reference group/social and  
350 product quality affect the customer's overall customer satisfaction. Hence, the customer's overall  
351 customer satisfaction is the variable affecting brand switching. Therefore, the study can be build  
352 using the model below depicting five relationships as shown in figure 3.1.

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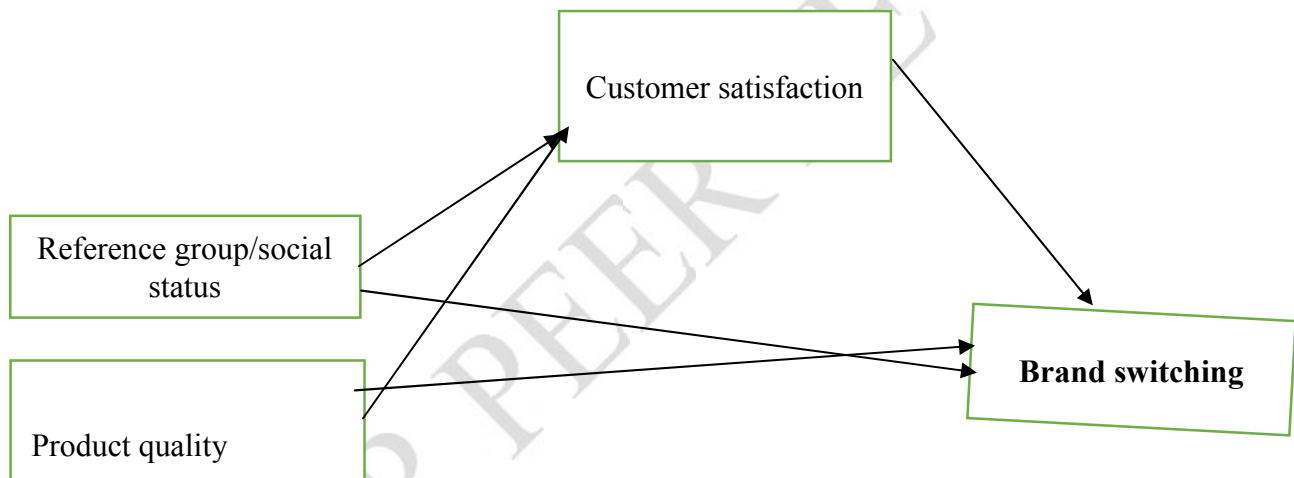
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361 figure 3.1. Model of the study.

### 362 **4.1. Conclusions:**

363 The results of the study indicated that product quality plays a significant role in customer  
364 satisfaction and usage of a product. The literature further reveals that any improvement in  
365 product quality can enhance customer loyalty and hence customer retention. Product quality has  
366 been found to be the most influential predictor of customer satisfaction. The study confirmed that  
367 product quality can increase customer satisfaction both directly and indirectly.

368 The study still confirms that, reference group/social factors, are also considered another  
369 factor that influence consumer brand switching in the mobile phone market. This is because,  
370 people choose products that communicate their role and status in society. Therefore, it can be  
371 concluded that consumer's brand switching is influenced by social factors such as family, friends,

372 co-workers, social roles and status. The reasons for switching a brand of smartphone can be  
373 because one of the family members or co-worker have the same brand.

374 Lastly, the study established based on the literatures reviewed that customer satisfaction is  
375 considered a positive determinant of how strong is the relationship between the customer and the product  
376 provider and is a good mediator. Because dissatisfied customers are more likely to search for what  
377 satisfies them in products provided by other competitors and can influence company's revenues more than  
378 satisfied customer

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