

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



CORPORATE REBRANDING AND CORPORATE BRAND IMAGE: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION

BY

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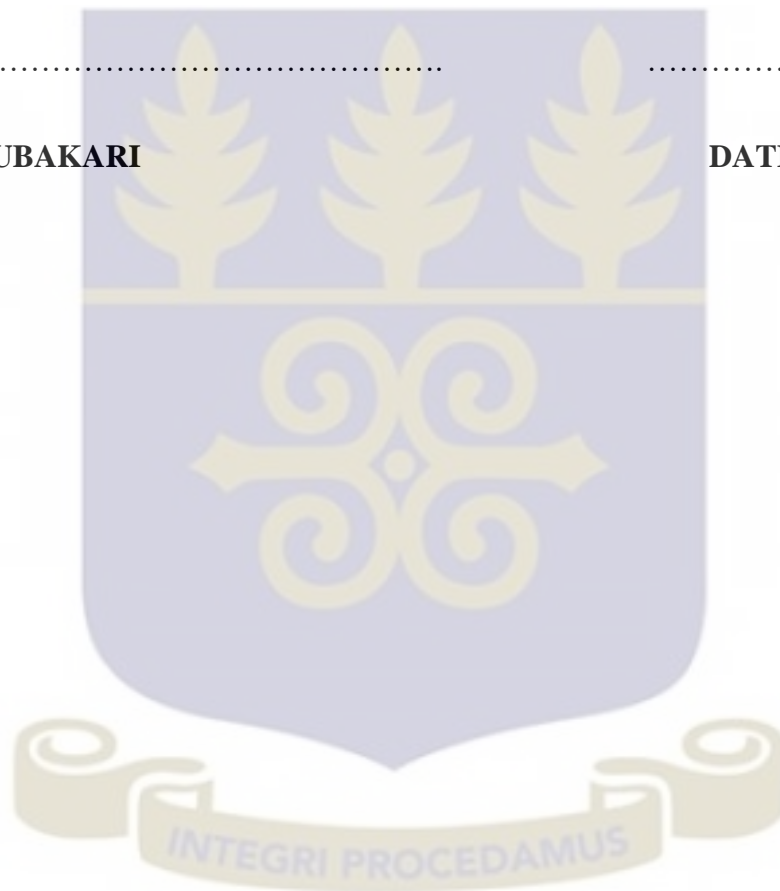
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, this thesis is the result of my own research and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other University. All references used in this work have been fully acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that, this thesis was supervised in accordance with the rules and regulations laid down by the University of Ghana.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my parents, Mr. Abubakari Shuaibu Umar and Hajia Jariah Khalid. To my husband Mr. Ibrahim Osmanu, to my lovely son Furqan and my entire family for their support and encouragement.



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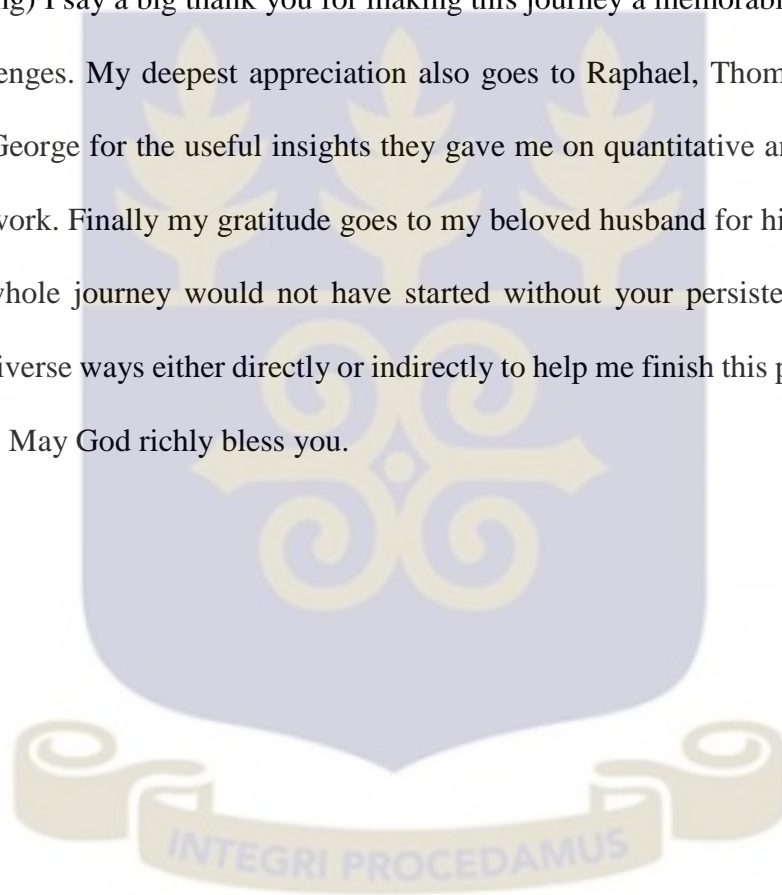


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS



AMOS	–	Analysis of Moment Structures
AT & T	–	American Telephone and Telegraph Company
CDMA	–	Code Division Multiple Access
CFA	–	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	–	Comparative Fit Index
ETACS	–	European Total Access Communication System
FBN	-	First Bank of Nigeria
FTP	–	First Telecommunication Project
GFI	–	Goodness of Fit Index
GSM	–	Global System for Mobile Communication
MHZ	–	Megahertz
MTN	–	Mobile Telecommunication Network
NCA	–	National Communication Authority
PLC	–	Public Limited Company
RMSEA	–	Root Mean Square Error Approximation
SEM	–	Structural Equation Modelling
SPSS	–	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STP	–	Second Telecommunication Project
WESTEL	–	Western Telesystems
WILL	–	Wireless Local Loop

ABSTRACT

Corporate rebranding has become prevalent all around the world despite the fact that it is a risky, costly and time consuming exercise. Companies make changes to their corporate brand elements in order to communicate a change in strategic direction and identity with the expectation that, it will create positive corporate brand image perceptions. However, the failure of a corporate rebranding exercise has been reported to have dire consequences on the corporate brand image and reputation. This research sought to determine the impact of corporate rebranding on customer perception of the corporate brand image in the mobile telecommunications sector in Ghana. It also sought to identify the brand element which had the greatest impact on customer perception of the corporate brand image of rebranded companies. This study also investigated the role communication plays in shaping customer perception of corporate brand image. To achieve the objectives of the study, a quantitative research approach was employed. A structural equation modelling using Amos 21 was used to test the hypotheses and a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to extract variables that best answer each construct in the study. The findings indicated that, corporate rebranding had a positive and significant relationship with customer perception of corporate brand image and the change in the corporate name had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. Marketing communication partially mediated the relationship between corporate rebranding and corporate image. The limitation of the study was that, it considered the perceptions of customers, who are only one group of stakeholders, findings to other stakeholder groups should be done with this in mind. It is recommended that, companies take into account customer's perception of corporate brand elements before and after a corporate rebranding exercise, to ensure that, the new corporate brand elements conveyed the kind of image the company seeks to project. Future research should consider the perceptions of other stakeholders, such as employees of rebranded companies to see if their perceptions differed from customers.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary of the study. This includes the background of the study, the problem statement, research objectives, significance of the study and a summary of the chapter disposition.

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Corporate rebranding has become wide spread around the world though it challenges standard marketing practice (Stuart, 2003). Renewing or changing some or all of an entity's brand elements defies normal marketing practice which is to maintain brand consistency (Stuart, 2003). Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) describe corporate rebranding as a strategic approach used by firms to create a new and distinctive position and image in the minds of customers by adopting new brand elements for an established brand. Though this phenomenon was once predominantly associated with physical products, there has been an increase in corporate brand name changes all over the world over the last decade. In the United Kingdom for example, the "Midland Bank" is now "HSBC"; the mobile telecommunications company "Mannesmann" in Germany has been rebranded "Vodafone"; also in France, the insurance company "AGF" has been renamed "Allianz" (Collange, 2015).

The phenomenon is also prevalent in Africa as there have been several corporate rebranding campaigns over the last decade. In Kenya for instance, "Celtel" became "Zain"; in Nigeria, "Econet" wireless has become "airtel"; in Ghana, "Ghana Commercial Bank" has become "GCB", The International Commercial Bank is now "FBN" Bank. Gotsi and Andriopoulos

(2007) posit that, corporate rebranding modifies brand perceptions, since the new brand elements can create new brand associations and meanings.

In managing a corporate brand, organisations need to manage numerous exchange relationships with diverse stakeholder groups, so as to maintain positive corporate associations in the long run (Balmer & Greyser, 2006). Managing these diverse stakeholder groups means modifications must be made to the corporate brand which challenges the logic of brand consistency which has conventionally been the foundation of brand management (Kay, 2006). Gotsi and Andriopoulos (2007) assert that, it is essential for corporate brands to remain relevant in order to maintain their attractiveness in a constantly changing business setting where customers' demands, industrial standards and strategic priorities are frequently changing. The current increase in corporate rebranding exercises evidently validates the notion that, change is crucial in modern corporate brand management (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004). Studies by Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) revealed four main causes of corporate rebranding. These include change in ownership structure, Change in corporate strategy, Change in competitive position and change in the external environment.

A study conducted by Kaikati and Kaikati (2003) has revealed that, from the beginning of 2000 to 2001, corporate rebranding across the globe increased by 7%. This was equivalent to 1,993 name changes. Kaikati and Kaikati (2003) further assert that, the United States of America topped the list, with a total of 1,761 name changes while the United Kingdom followed with 65 name changes, Canada had 41 name changes, Germany had 29, France had 24, and Japan had 21 (Kaikati & Kaikati 2003). In Africa, though there seem to be no statistics on the actual number of corporate rebranding exercises, the phenomenon seem to be highly prevalent especially in the banking and telecommunications sectors. The corporate rebranding of five

mobile telecommunications companies out of six mobile telecommunications service providers in Ghana confirms the prevalence of the phenomenon in Ghana (Dowuona, 2014).

Despite the fact that corporate rebranding offers businesses several opportunities and it is fast becoming a popular strategy, it can be very risky and challenging (Collange, 2015). There have been reported cases of failure of major rebranding campaigns like the rebranding of United Kingdom's "Royal Mail" to "Consignia" (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006), of "Payless Drug store" into "Rite aid Corporation" in the United States (Haig, 2011) and the rebranding of British Airways tail fins (Cornelissen, 2011). All these major corporate rebranding exercises failed and the organisations had to revert to their old corporate brand elements shortly after the exercise (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). The failure of a rebranding strategy can adversely damage brand loyalty and brand equity (Keller, 1999). It can as well tarnish the reputation of an entity (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Haig (2011) asserts that, a corporate rebranding exercise can make customers feel let down by the brands when essential brand values that customers are familiar with have disappeared after a corporate rebranding exercise.

A core responsibility of management is to protect the value of their corporate brands and brand assets. Aaker (1991) asserts that, the value of the corporate brand represents the collection of brand assets and liabilities linked to a corporate name and other elements of its visual identity. The corporate brand values enhance or diminish the value provided by a product or service. Though minor changes to corporate brand elements in reaction to modifications in the business environment are considered a necessary task of corporate brand management and vital for the survival of corporate brands (Aaker, 1991; Kapferer, 2002), a radical change in brand elements can be disastrous and can indicate a loss of long protected brand equity (Ing, 2012). Brand elements such as the name, logo, slogan and colour function as the most evident elements of a

corporate visual identity system (Margulies, 1997; Melewar & Saunders, 2000). They also serve as a means of carrying corporate association to customers (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Dacin & Brown, 2002). Due to these vital roles corporate brand elements play, a change in brand elements means more than superficial and aesthetical change, it significantly impacts the company's image and reputation (Selnes, 1993).

The visual identity of firms is strategically important in distinguishing companies. Corporate brand elements aid in creating and preserving a company's brand image (Hynes, 2009). The creation of a strong visual identity is important as it evokes favourable attitudes in different target markets (Van Riel & Balmer, 1997). The corporate name, logo, slogan and colour are important constituents of corporate visual identity, as they are the most visible features in corporate brand communications. The corporate brand elements perform a major role in communicating the organisations' characteristics (Henderson & Cote, 1998; Van Riel & Van den Ban; 2001; Melewar & Jenkins, 2002). The success of a corporate rebranding strategy requires the development of a favourable and appealing corporate visual identity (Balmer & Dinnie, 1999; Melewar, 2001). Arguably, a strong and clear corporate visual identity assist in developing and maintaining a strong corporate brand image. Studies have revealed that customers make judgments about the image of the organisation from corporate visual identity elements (Hynes, 2009). According to Machado, De Lencastre, De Carvalho and Costa (2012), it is important to effectively manage corporate identity to enable the smooth implementation of corporate rebranding strategies.

Corporate rebranding has generated heightened concern among practitioners due to the increased adoption of the strategy, the cost involved, the high risk of failure, and the challenges it presents to the corporate brand image and reputation (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Unfortunately, the phenomenon appears to have received little academic attention (Collange, 2015; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Analysing the effects of a corporate rebranding exercise

on corporate brand image, will enable marketers reduce the negative effects of corporate rebranding on the corporate brand image.

1.1 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

Corporate rebranding is about creating a novel corporate image as well as position in the minds of stakeholders (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Corporate rebranding provides a golden opportunity for businesses to completely transform and grow (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2003). It also creates distinctiveness of the corporate brand (Morris & Reyes, 1992). Despite the numerous opportunities that corporate rebranding can offer firms, it is not without challenges. The failure of a corporate rebranding strategy can damage a corporation's image and reputation among consumers, employees and other stakeholders. This can cause a severe decline in sales that cannot be matched by the acquisition of new customers (Collange, 2015; Morris & Reyes, 1992; Kaikati & Kaikati, 2003).

Corporate rebranding involves changes in brand elements, and brand elements are linked to corporate brand image and reputation (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Brand elements aid in the creation of relationships between companies and consumers and they enhance the corporate image (Aaker, 1997). However there have been limited studies to identify which brand element has the greatest impact on the corporate brand image of rebranded companies.

Muzellec and Lambkin (2008) posit that, corporate visual identity helps to create new image associations by projecting the company's distinctiveness through the communication mix to impress external stakeholders. Gray and Balmer (1998) argue that, communication is the means by which companies convey their identities to their multiple stakeholders and it serves as a nexus between identity and image. Gray and Balmer (1998) further argue that, a favourable

corporate image can be created through a harmonised image building program that involves an official communication program. Ind (1998) asserts that, corporate communication involves processes that transforms identity into image. These arguments indicate the vital role communication plays in building a positive corporate image. The works of Daly and Moloney (2004) and Tevi (2013) confirm that, marketing communication registers new brand elements in the minds of consumers. Although the importance of communication in a corporate rebranding exercise has been mentioned (Daly & Moloney, 2004; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006; Tevi 2013) the literature is not clear on whether an organisation can generate a positive corporate brand image by changing its corporate visual identity elements without a formal communication program.

There seem to be a consensus among researchers that improvement in corporate brand image is one of the major goals of corporate rebranding (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006; Collange, 2015; DeFanti & Busch, 2011, Miller, Merrilees, & Yakimova, 2014;). In contrast, there are also signals that indicate corporate rebranding can alienate customers and employees, diminish goodwill and cause consumer confusion (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin, 2003; Edmondson, 2002; Perkins, 1995). For instance, the corporate rebranding of “Eircell” to “vodafone Ireland”, “Guinness” to “Diageo” in Ireland and “Anderson Consulting” to “Accenture” generated positive perceptions (Daly & Moloney, 2004; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). However the rebranding of “Eireann” to “Eircom”, “pricewaterhousecoopers” consulting arm to “Monday” and “Swissair” group to “SAir” group failed to generate positive perceptions for these companies (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2003; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006).

Studies of various corporate rebranding exercises appear to support both sides of the argument that rebranding can generate positive or negative perceptions for a company. Hence, a study of the effect of corporate rebranding on customer perception of corporate brand image, the role

marketing communication plays in shaping customer perception of corporate brand image and the brand element which has the greatest influence on customer perception of corporate brand image will be useful in informing theory and designing effective corporate rebranding strategies.

1.2 RESEARCH PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of corporate rebranding exercise on customer perception of the corporate brand image in the mobile Telecommunications Sector in Ghana. It also aims at identifying which corporate brand element has the greatest impact on the corporate brand image of rebranded companies and the role communication plays in shaping customer perception of corporate brand image.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the impact of corporate rebranding exercise on customer perception of the corporate brand image of mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana.
2. Identify which brand element has the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image of rebranded mobile telecommunications in Ghana.
3. Examine the role marketing communication plays in shaping customer perception of the corporate brand image.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The results of this study will add to the literature on corporate rebranding as there seem to be little empirical research on the impact of corporate rebranding on customer perception of corporate brand image and the role corporate communication plays in transferring image in a corporate rebranding exercise. This study adopts a quantitative approach to examine the relationship between corporate rebranding and customer perceptions of corporate brand image using empirical data from the mobile telecommunications sector in Ghana. Concerning significance to practice, the findings will enable practitioners understand how changes to brand elements during a corporate rebranding exercise affect customer perception of the corporate brand image. The output of this study will also provide guidance that will assist marketers to design suitable and comprehensive corporate rebranding strategies to achieve organisational goals.

1.5 STUDY DELIMITATION

This study examines the impact of corporate rebranding on customer perception of the corporate brand image. For the purposes of this study, corporate rebranding is viewed as the practice of creating new brand elements for an entity. The study focuses on changes in the corporate brand elements only. Other factors such as internal stakeholder buy-in and brand revision will not be considered. For the purpose of measurement, it will be difficult for customers to perceive such changes. This is in line with previous studies which viewed corporate rebranding as a change in the corporate brand elements (Le, Cheng, Kuntjara & Lin, 2014; Muzellec et al., 2003, Muzellec & Lambkin 2006; Stuart & Muzellec, 2004).

1.6 CHAPTER DISPOSITION

This study is divided into six chapters. Chapter one comprises background of the study, the problem statement, research objectives, the significance of the study and the chapter disposition. Chapter two consists of the literature review and conceptual framework. Chapter three deals with the context of the study. Methodology and sources of data is covered in chapter four and chapter five elaborates on data analysis and discussion and finally, chapter six covers summary, conclusions and recommendations. The chapters are briefly explained below.

Chapter One – Introduction and Background of the Study

Chapter one is the first chapter of the study and it presents the introduction and the background of the study, the problem statement, research objectives and hypothesis, the study's significance, research gaps, definition of terms and chapter disposition.

Chapter Two – Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Chapter two covers review of relevant literature that explains existing concepts and theories on the corporate rebranding phenomenon. The chapter will extensively review literature in the study area. The topics to be reviewed in literature include corporate branding, brand elements, corporate rebranding, drivers of corporate rebranding and corporate brand image. The chapter will also present the theoretical and conceptual framework.

Chapter Three – Context of the Study

Chapter three will present the context of the study. It will present the historical background of mobile telecommunications companies and rebranded mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana. It would also explain the rebranding exercise by the telecommunications companies

in Ghana (MTN, Tigo, Vodafone, expresso and airtel) with respect to the selected rebranded elements (name, logo, slogan and colour).

Chapter Four – Research Design and Methodology

The fourth chapter discusses the methodological approaches. The chapter highlights on study area, sources of data, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, data collection instrument and method, data processing and method of analysis, variables, limitations of the study and ethical considerations.

Chapter Five – Data Analysis, Discussions and Findings

The fifth chapter will highlight on data presentation, analysis of results and discussion of findings. The chapter discusses the major findings of the study in line with the hypothesis and extant literature reviewed.

Chapter Six – Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Finally, chapter six comprises the summary, conclusions and recommendations. It reports on previous chapters and summarises major findings. It also covers the conclusion based on research results and contains the recommendations for practitioners. The directions for future research is presented in this chapter.

1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter gave a general background to the study and discussed the corporate rebranding phenomenon in both developed and developing countries. The chapter also outlined some gaps in the literature relating to the impact of corporate rebranding on corporate brand image. The study aims to achieve three main objectives. These objectives were captured in this chapter. An outline of the organisation of the study was also presented.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This research examines the impact of a corporate rebranding exercise on the corporate brand image. To gain answers to the research questions, literature will be reviewed on corporate brands, corporate branding, corporate rebranding process, the drivers of corporate rebranding, corporate brand image and the effects rebranding has on customers. The study will also explore literature on corporate brand elements that are frequently rebranded and the benchmarks for measuring corporate brand image. The theoretical and conceptual framework guiding the study will be outlined.

2.1 CORPORATE BRANDS

Balmer and Gray (2003) refer to the corporate brand as the face of an entity because it encompasses the essence behind the multifaceted constituents of an entity in a simple form. A corporate brand endows an organisation with a sustainable competitive advantage that difficult for competitors to easily imitate (Brown, 1998). Organisations are gradually appreciating the vital role corporate brands play as directional tools for different stakeholders for a variety of purposes including employment, investment and more essentially customer purchasing behaviour (Balmer & Gray, 2003). There is a consensus among corporate branding authors on the relevance and worth of corporate brands (Balmer & Greyser, 2002; Balmer, 1998; King, 1991). Corporate brands serve a useful purpose in evaluating prospective employees, finding venture partners and cushioning the organisation in times of crisis (Balmer & Gray, 2003;

Balmer 1998). The findings of Greyser (1999) suggests that, the corporate brand may be regarded as a contractual agreement, as it enables an organisation to express its agreement with its major stakeholders by signifying persistently that it has kept its corporate brand promise. Therefore the corporate visual identity elements like name, logo, slogan and colour play a vital role in awareness creation and recognition and they further act as symbols of assurance to stakeholders (Balmer & Gray, 2003).

Like product brands, corporate brands make the organisation and its adopted standards simply recognisable and implies a standard of value and stability of performance in the minds of target stakeholders (Greyser, 1999). Subsequently, strong corporate brands generate customer confidence for the company in its product or service line extensions and in diversification into different products and services categories (Balmer & Greyser, 2002). Corporate brands are invaluable intangible properties that can be purchased, sold and transferred, hence they provide a viable competitive advantage for an organisation if they are characterised by value, rarity, durability, imperfect imitability and imperfect substitutability (Balmer and Gray, 2003).

Though corporate brands and product brands share some similarities, there are significant differences between the two. Balmer (1998) argues that, a corporate brand is different from a product brand in that, a product brand is more customer focused whereas a corporate brand focuses on all an organization's stakeholders. Balmer (1998) further argues that, the management of corporate brand is the responsibility of top management whereas a product brand is managed by the marketing department. Keller and Richey (2006) consent that, a corporate brand differs from product brand due to the broader array of associations that a corporate brand covers. Keller and Richey (2006) also posit that, corporate brands can create associations based on staff, relationships, programs, standards, corporate credibility and common products and their features or benefits.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY

The conceptual foundation of this study is based on conceptual models on branding and corporate branding.

2.2.1 Branding

According to Kotler & Keller (2009) branding means endowing products and services with the power of the brand. Keller (2003) asserts that, branding does not just involve creating brand elements for products and services, it also involves building emotional bonds with customers through marketing programs. Keller (2001) is of the view that, consumers create brand associations and develop perceptions through branding, and this appears to be the justification for the huge investments businesses make in their brands.

The idea of branding can be traced from product marketing where manufacturers branded their products to create differentiation and brand preference in the minds of customers (Alizadeh, Hamid, Hoseini, & Naiej, 2014). Alizadeh et al. (2014) also argue that, a brand symbolises a statement, an image or a message which is packaged and conveyed to customers so that they know what the company stands for. According to Goyal and Sharma (2014), brand managers judiciously manage brands to create and maximise shareholder value. In today's business environment, branding is not only used as a means of differentiation of a company's offerings from that of competitors, it is also used as a means of reaching the heart and minds of customers in order to create strong emotional bonds (Keller, 1999).

Branding is a major marketing activity that emphasises an organisation's continual connectedness to its external environment of which customers are a major component, this enables both small and large firms to create, nurture and innovate their market based assets (Abimbola, 2001). The positive perceptions of these market based assets by consumers' enables firms to develop perceived brand value and customer based brand equity, this further

creates profitability (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Effective branding strategies enable firms to build strong brands which enhances the firm's ability to link its internal and external environments successfully (Abimbola, 2001). Studies by De Chernatony and Mc Donald (2005) revealed that, successful brands create sustainable competitive advantage which results in higher profitability and market performance.

2.2.2 CORPORATE BRANDING

The concept of corporate branding is gradually gaining acceptance in the marketing literature (Hatch & Schultz, 2003; Balmer & Gray, 2003). Corporate branding is described as the process of connecting strategic vision, organisational culture and corporate images (Hatch & Schultz, 2003; Gregory, 2007). Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) defined corporate branding as a “systematically planned and implemented process of creating and maintaining a favourable image and consequently a favourable reputation for the company as a whole by sending signals to all stakeholders and by managing behaviour, communication and symbolism”. According to Knox and Bickerton (2003), corporate branding draws on the customs of product branding as both concepts share the similar objective of creating differentiation and preference. The major distinguishing feature between corporate branding and product or service branding is that, the former is managed by top management and manages several stakeholder interactions, whereas the latter is managed at the functional level by marketing managers with customers as its major stakeholders (Knox & Bickerton, 2003).

King (1991) identified the need for corporate branding practices to be multidisciplinary, combining elements of strategy, communication and culture. Hatch and Schultz (2001) assert that, corporate branding involves the interplay of vision, culture and image. Though Knox and Bickerton (2003) support the view that vision, culture and image are the variables involved in

corporate branding, he added a fourth variable which is the competitive land scape for the organisation. According to Knox and Bickerton (2003) the competitive landscape of the corporate brand builds understanding of the current image of the organisation and its future competition and the current culture of the organisation and its vision for the future.

Extant literature on corporate branding support the increasing focus on the role of an entity as a strategic tool in the branding process (Hatch & Schultz, 2001). Some studies also stressed the challenges inherent in managing the wider set of stakeholders associated with the organisation (Knox & Bickerton, 2003). For instance King (1991) argues that, since the audience of corporate branding involves all stakeholders, it elicits a wider range of associations based on both tangible and intangible elements. The findings of Ind (1998) supports King's (1991) findings of intangible elements and complexity in managing corporate branding. However Ind (1998) also introduced the concept of responsibility, arguing that corporate branding involves a broader social responsibility or ethical imperative. Balmer (2001) also supports the view that corporate brands have different characteristics, his studies revealed that, corporate brands are tangible, intricate, cultural and ethereal. According to Balmer (2001) successful corporate branding requires commitment across the organisation.

Corporate branding has been recognised as a tool that can generate and support value creation (Balmer, 1998). The focus of branding has moved from the integrity of the product brand to include the organisation and the people behind the brand (Knox & Bickerton, 2003). Kapferer (1997) argues that, there is a new era of brand identity which covers physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection and self-image. These variables define the brand and outline the boundaries within which it can change and develop (Kapferer 1997). Empirical works by Keller and Aaker (1992) and Ind (1998) support this wider mix of variables and points out the importance of corporate associations. Keller (1999) argues that, the future of marketing success

rests on the development of skills in brand building that harness all organisational assets and competencies to create unique products and services.

2.3 CORPORATE REBRANDING

Corporate rebranding is an emerging area of research with literature mainly made up of descriptive case studies that are usually spread around varied contexts (Miller et al., 2014; Tevi, 2013; Goi & Goi, 2011). Various scholars have provided their understanding of the phenomenon based on their research findings which is gradually shaping up the literature to develop the concept, definition and model for corporate rebranding (Collange, 2015; Gotsi & Andriopoulos, 2007; Kaikati & Kaikati, 2003; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006; Melewar, 2001; Roy & Sarkar, 2015).

There have been various definitions of the term corporate rebranding although there are slight differences among the scholars, all definitions seem to suggest that corporate rebranding involves changes in one or more corporate brand elements. Merrilees and Miller (2008) define corporate rebranding as the disjunction or change between an initially formulated corporate brand and a new formulation. Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) described corporate rebranding as creating a new image and position in consumers mind and establishing a new name, logo and slogan. Muzellec et al., (2003) definition of corporate rebranding is arguably the most commonly used in most literature on corporate rebranding. According to Muzellec et al., (2003) corporate rebranding is the renaming of a whole corporate entity, often signifying a major strategic change or repositioning. Although a change in the name of a corporate body is the main signal for a corporate rebranding exercise, it is usually accompanied by changes in other brand elements such as the slogan, logo and colours (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004).

According to Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) corporate rebranding challenges standard marketing and corporate reputation literature. The main inconsistencies revolve around issues of brand equity, rebranding gestation, means of communication and involvement of personnel. Stakeholder images are shaped by a variety of formal and informal signals coming from the company (Dowling, 2001). Therefore corporate rebranding sends a strong signal to all stakeholders that something about the corporation has changed (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Abandoning old corporate brand elements and adopting new ones invalidates years of branding effort in creating awareness, since brand elements are a key component of corporate brand equity (Daly & Moloney, 2004). Keller (2001) describes corporate brand equity as the differential response by the firm's relevant stakeholders to the words, actions, communications, products or services offered by the company. Hence corporate rebranding damages the corporate brand equity as the corporate visual identity is the anchor of corporate brand equity (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006).

The actual execution of corporate rebranding presents additional contradictions in the way in which the corporate brand has so far been described (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006; Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Corporate brand development is perceived as medium to long term (Balmer & Gray, 2003) whereas corporate rebranding can take place overnight (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2003). All personnel should be involved in corporate branding (Knox & Bickerton, 2003) but the decision to rebrand is taken by a few people, usually top management (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Corporate rebranding involves changes in the corporate visual identity elements and it is normally communicated through the communications mix (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004). However corporate branding encompasses the visual, verbal and behavioural expressions of the organisation's unique model and it is communicated through interaction and stakeholders experience with personnel (Knox & Bickerton, 2003; Balmer & Gray, 2003).

Existing corporate brands develop a knowledge structure in the minds of stakeholders (Keller, 2003). Brand elements such as name, logo, slogan and colour form part of this knowledge structure (Roy & Sarkar, 2015). Changing these brand elements during a corporate rebranding exercise creates discord in the perceived brand equity that has been built over time (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Keller & Lehmann 2006). This can be especially detrimental where the corporate name and other corporate brand elements are applied to all products and services offered (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2008). In such situations, the corporate brand becomes the dominant driver of external images and any negative outcome as a result of a corporate rebranding exercise affects the corporate brand image and the products and services that the company deals in (Saunders & Guoqun, 1997).

Corporate visual identity elements such as name, logo, slogan and colour serve as the most visible elements of visual identity and they act as a means of transferring corporate image to customers (Melewar & Saunders, 2000; Dacin & Brown, 2002). Replacing existing corporate brand elements with new ones goes against marketing theory but this situation is often common among businesses (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). According to Stuart and Muzellec (2004) organisations undertake corporate rebranding because they feel they are misunderstood by their stakeholders, hence changing the corporate visual identity elements sends a strong signal to stakeholders that, something about the organisation has changed for the better.

Major works on corporate rebranding have focused on the corporate rebranding process, the principles of corporate rebranding and the implications of corporate rebranding (Muzellec et al., 2003; Merrilees & Miller 2008; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2008; Kaikati & Kaikati 2003; Boyle 2002). Other researchers examined the pitfalls of the corporate rebranding strategy (Gotsi & Andriopolous 2007). Some authors examined the corporate rebranding phenomenon as a result of mergers and acquisitions (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2008), the barriers and enablers of

corporate rebranding has also been extensively discussed in the extant literature on corporate rebranding (Merrilees et al. 2014; Goi & Goi, 2011; Stuart, 2003; Melewar & Hussey, 2005; Daly & Moloney, 2004; Tevi & Otubanju, 2013). Other major works on corporate rebranding studied the rationale behind the corporate rebranding exercise (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004) their findings reveal that, corporate rebranding occurs as a result of changes in the internal or external environment of the organisation. Most of these studies examined the rebranding phenomenon in developed countries with limited studies in the less developed countries like Sub-Saharan Africa.

There are relatively fewer studies on the consequences of corporate rebranding exercise especially from the consumer's perspective (Ing, 2012). The studies available on corporate rebranding and a firm's performance are mostly from the finance perspective and the findings indicate that a corporate name change enhances market recognition and position (Dursun & Kilic, 2003, DeFanti & Busch, 2011; Petburikul, 2009). Mase (2009) examined the impact of name changes on a company's value and the findings affirm that of earlier studies that, corporate rebranding generates increased returns for organisations. Studies that examined the impact of corporate rebranding on consumers centred on themes like rebranding and brand preference (Le et al. 2014), the perception of rebranding in the banking sector (Chibber & Shah, 2015), the effect of multiple rebranding on brand loyalty (Tevi, 2013), the effects of corporate rebranding on consumer's attitude structure (Ing, 2012), the effect of rebranding on consumers perceptions (Makasi, Govender, & Madzorera (2014)), corporate rebranding, destroying or transferring brand equity (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006) and consumer's reaction to service rebranding (Collange 2015).

The findings of Le et al. (2014) indicate that, an evolutionary rebranding strategy is superior in enhancing brand preference if the brand positioning is preferable, however the findings of Tevi

(2013) indicates that corporate rebranding does not significantly affect customers attitude towards the rebranded company. Tevi (2013) further stated that customers are interested in improved service quality and good customer relations. Ing (2012) contends that, consumer's attitude towards corporate rebranding varied according to brand familiarity. Koku (1997) examined the effect of a corporate rebranding exercise on a firm's performance and his findings indicate that, corporate rebranding is an effective strategy for service firms to communicate their improved standards. The study by Makasi et al. (2014) also indicated that, corporate rebranding generates positive perceptions for organisations. This assertion seem to conflict with the findings of Collange (2015), who discovered that customer's evaluation of a service declined after a corporate rebranding exercise. However, the findings of Collange (2015) seem to be in line with that of Edmondson (2002), whose study revealed that a corporate rebranding exercise can provoke a loss of goodwill and cause consumer confusion.

Improvement in stakeholder perception of corporate image is a key objective that organisations seek to achieve from a corporate rebranding exercise (Muzellec et al. 2003, Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006; Melewar & Hussey, 2005). Although previous studies have made invaluable and creative contributions to the literature on corporate rebranding, they tend to follow planning frameworks and are purely qualitative and exploratory in nature with limited quantitative studies that attempt to understand the impact of corporate rebranding on consumers (Le et al., 2014; Ing, 2012). The extant literature on corporate rebranding takes diverse perspectives with findings that inform only some aspects of corporate rebranding usually from the organisation's perspective, this leaves researchers and practitioners without a comprehensive understanding of the consumer side of corporate rebranding (Miller et al. 2014; Collange, 2015).

Extant literature on corporate rebranding have focused on customer's perceptions of a corporate rebranding exercise (Le et al., 2014; Roy & Sarkar, 2015; Tevi, 2013). Nevertheless, there are limited studies which examine customer perception of the corporate brand image of rebranded companies (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2003; Melewar & Hussey, 2005). Most of the literature on corporate rebranding mostly examined the change in name only, with little attention to other corporate visual identity elements (Collange, 2015; DeFanti & Busch, 2011; Dursun & Kilic, 2003; Ing, 2012; Mase, 2009; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006), others examined the change in name, slogan and logo (Stuart, 2003; Boyle, 2002; Kaikati & Kaikati, 2003; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2008). As far as the researcher's search ability and literature in English language is concerned, none of the earlier studies included the change in corporate colours and how it affects customers' perceptions of rebranded companies in their studies. This study contributes to the existing literature on corporate rebranding by adopting a quantitative approach to examine the impact of changes in name, logo, slogan and colours on customer perception of corporate brand image of rebranded companies. The study will also investigate the mediating role of communication in transferring corporate brand image in a corporate rebranding exercise.

2.3.1 Drivers of Corporate Rebranding

According to Kapferer (1997), a common trigger for revitalising brands is underperformance. Studies by Muzellec et al. (2003) and Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) revealed that a corporate rebranding exercise may occur as a result of change in the ownership structure of the organisation due to mergers, acquisitions, spin-offs and demergers. Change in market dynamics is also a major trigger of corporate rebranding (Goi & Goi, 2011). Change in corporate strategy as a result of diversification, divestment, internationalisation or localisation can trigger a

corporate rebranding (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Change in the competitive position due to erosion of market share, an outdated image or reputational problems also lead to firms undertaking corporate rebranding (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Change in the external environment as result of legal obligations and major crises or catastrophes can also trigger a corporate rebranding exercise (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006).

Goi & Goi (2011), identified drivers of corporate rebranding similar to the classification of Muzellec and Lambkin (2006). They categorised the drivers of corporate rebranding to include external and internal forces (Goi & Goi, 2011). The internal forces identified in their study include, change in the structure of the business organization, the need to craft a new corporate brand image and strategic changes as a result of merger and acquisition. Their studies also identified external forces that may trigger corporate rebranding to include the nature of competition, external stakeholders, macro-economic situation, the regulatory environment and major shifts in the market place. According to Stuart and Muzellec (2004) the main rationale behind a corporate rebranding activity is to signal to stakeholders that something about the organisation has changed. For corporate rebranding to be successful, it is important that the organisation really has something new to say and it is communicated effectively to stakeholders at the time of change (Stuart & Muzellec, 2004).

2.3.2 Types of Corporate Rebranding

Various researchers have provided different typologies of corporate rebranding. Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) classified rebranding according to the degree of change in the marketing aesthetics and the brand position. They used a continuum to characterise corporate rebranding, with evolutionary rebranding at one end and revolutionary rebranding at the other end. They described evolutionary rebranding as minor changes in the company's positioning and

aesthetics that is so gradual that it is hardly noticeable to outside observers, it may involve changes in some corporate branding elements but does not usually involve a change in name. In contrast revolutionary rebranding involves a major identifiable change, usually in the corporate brand, and it relates to change in name, logo, slogan and colour. It also involves changes in the organisation's positioning and it fundamentally redefines the company, it is often symbolized by a change of name (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) further posit that, a corporate rebranding exercise can also be categorised depending on the level of brand hierarchy the rebranding exercise takes place, which is either at the corporate level, product level or business unit level.

Tevi and Otubanjo (2013) affirmed Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) corporate rebranding continuum, and they argue that, corporate rebranding is a continuous process in response to internal and external environment. Daly and Moloney (2004) also confirmed Muzellec and Lambkin's (2006) continuum of corporate rebranding, however they classified corporate rebranding into three categories namely; minor changes, complete changes and intermediate change. Daly and Moloney (2004) argue that minor changes range from a simple facelift to restyling or revitalising some brand elements, while intermediate changes typically involve repositioning and use of communication and customer service to give an existing brand a new image. According to Daly and Moloney (2004), complete change involves changes to the corporate name and other brand elements, and the new brand is usually communicated to all stakeholders through an integrated marketing communication program.

Lomax & Mador (2006) contend that, corporate rebranding can be classified based on two dimensions, the first dimension is based on the brand name (existing or new) and the second is brand values and attributes (existing or new). Based on the two dimensions, they proposed four possibilities of corporate rebranding and described them as; reiterating (existing name, existing

values and attributes), redefining (existing name, new values and attributes), renaming (new name, existing values and attributes) and restarting (new name, new values and attributes). Stuart and Muzellec (2004) argue that, before making major or minor changes to the corporate visual identity elements, consistency and continuity are crucial concepts to consider. They further assert that, research and creativity is important in the selection of new corporate visual identity elements.

2.3.3 The Corporate Rebranding Process

According to Chad (2015) corporate rebranding addresses one to four components. These components include the name, logo, slogan and positioning. Merrilees and Miller (2008), assert that, the corporate rebranding process involves three phases which are, brand revision, internal branding activities and corporate rebranding strategy implementation. The brand revision stage consists of processes to define the revised corporate brand vision (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Designing a new brand vision should be balanced with the need to continue to satisfy the core ideology of the corporate brand and still progress the brand so that it remains relevant to current circumstances (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Merrilees and Miller (2008), further assert that, a successful corporate rebranding exercise should maintain a link between the existing and the revised corporate brand by retaining at least some core brand concepts. The brand vision should be recreated to suit contemporary markets.

According to Merrilees and Miller (2008) the second phase of the corporate rebranding process involves internal branding activities aimed at encouraging stakeholders to buy into the revised brand. Vallaster and de Chernatony (2006) emphasise the importance of the organisation's leadership in facilitating internal branding. The findings of Bergstrom, Blumenthal and Crothers (2002) affirm the importance of internal branding in achieving successful corporate

rebranding outcome. Internal stakeholder buy-in is crucial as it inspires other stakeholders to buy into the revised brand (Merrilees & Miller, 2008).

The final stage in the corporate rebranding process is the implementation of the corporate rebranding strategy (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Merrilees and Miller (2008) argue that, a company that aligns each brand element to the corporate brand concept in its corporate rebranding implementation strategy is more likely to have a successful corporate rebranding exercise. All parts of the implementation strategy, including product or service design, customer service, distribution, pricing and relationship management must be integrated (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Each brand element should be directly linked to the corporate brand concept (Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Promotion is essential to make stakeholders aware of the revised brand. Muzellec et al., (2003) identified four steps in the corporate rebranding process. Muzellec et al., (2003) assert that, the corporate rebranding process entails repositioning, renaming, redesigning and relaunching, each of which must be undertaken carefully by the organisation.

According to Muzellec et al., (2003) repositioning phase of the corporate rebranding process is the objective setting stage. This phase of the corporate rebranding process involves taking a decision to develop a radically new position for the company in the minds of stakeholders (Ries & Trout). Brand positioning is a dynamic incremental process, which is occasionally adjusted over time to meet changing market trends and competitive pressures as well as broader external events (Muzellec et al., 2003). However, circumstances may require a more fundamental change of a company's position in terms of what it is and how it presents itself, which results in a corporate rebranding exercise (Muzellec et al., 2003).

The next stage of the corporate rebranding process is renaming. According to Kapferer (2002) naming holds a crucial position in the relationships between buyers and sellers or in the case

of corporate rebranding between the company and its stakeholders. Renaming an entity sends a powerful signal to stakeholders that the company is shifting its strategy, refocusing its activity or changing ownership (Kapferer, 2002).

The redesign phase of the corporate rebranding process involves applying new brand elements on all the organisations livery such as stationery, brochures, advertisements, annual reports, offices and delivery trucks (Muzellec et al., 2003). This stage represents the visible manifestation of the company's desired position (Muzellec et al., 2003).

The final stage of the corporate rebranding process is relaunching. This involves publicising the new brand to stakeholders. According to Muzellec et al., (2003) the new brand can be introduced to employees through internal brochure or newspaper at an occasion of an annual meeting or through workshops and intranet. The new brand is communicated to the external stakeholders through press releases and advertising to create awareness of the new brand and to facilitate its recognition by stakeholders (Muzellec et al., 2003).

2.4 CORPORATE REBRANDING AND CORPORATE BRAND IMAGE

According to Dobni and Zikhan (1990), brand image is the perceptions and interpretations of the brand the consumer gets from emotional experiences. They further argue that, image is not formed by the technical or physical attributes but rather by the activities done by the brand where the characteristics of the perceiver influences and determines the result. This indicates that the perception of reality is more important than reality when it comes to image. However Bhatt and Reddy (1998) contend that brand image consist of consumers perceptions of both functional and symbolic brand attributes.

According to Stern, Zinkhan and Jaju (2001) corporate brand image refers to the external world's perceptions or impressions that reside in the minds of stakeholders which represents the overall impression of the brand. Unlike product/service brand image, corporate brand image refers more to the corporation as a brand and all its stakeholders including customers (Balmer & Gray, 2003). Alwi and Kitchen (2014) argue that, both corporate brand image and product/service brand image can be described in the same way because both concepts deal with perceptions about the brand and both are driven by functional and emotional brand attributes.

Corporate brand image can be derived from several sources including direct experience with the organisation and exposure to marketing communication (Alwi & Kitchen, 2014). Scholars have also argued that, it is important to understand corporate brand image perceptions in studying consumer's behaviour towards brands (Grimm, 2005; Agrawal & Malhotra, 2005; Da Silva & Alwi, 2008). Nguyen and Le Blanc (2001) argue that, corporate brand image perception is the result of an aggregate process by which stakeholders compare and contrast the various attributes of firms. Previous studies on corporate brand image have revealed that, a company does not project a unique image, rather it possesses various images which differ depending on the stakeholder group, each of whom has different experiences and contact with the company (Nguyen & Le Blanc, 2001).

The growing saturation of markets and the aggressive competition within industries has made it impossible for companies to succeed purely on the basis of products and services they offer (Brady & Cronin, 2001). Although the core activities of producing goods and services is still unquestionably essential in today's business, other aspects such as stakeholders perception of the corporate brand image have increased in relative importance in determining a company's ability to compete (Brown, 1998).

Davies, Chun, Da Silva, and Roper (2004) assert that, the corporate brand image is one of the main sources of brand differentiation and brand strength. The findings of Keller (2001) reveal that, corporate brand image provides valuable sources of brand equity and could serve as important points of difference in terms of positioning with respect to competitive offers. Gray and Balmer (1998) assert that, creation of positive corporate brand image means developing a wide spread recognition of corporate brand elements among target stakeholders. Corporate rebranding involves changes in the corporate brand elements and according to Muzellec and Lambkin (2008) these elements are linked to corporate image and reputation, therefore changes to brand elements affects customer perception of the image of an organisation. Roy and Sarkar (2015) maintain that, brand elements serve as a foundation for corporate brand image, hence changing them influence customer perception of the corporate image. Based on the above discussion of the literature, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 1: Corporate rebranding has a significant and positive impact on customer perception of corporate brand image.

2.5 BRAND ELEMENTS

Brand elements form part of the identity of businesses and as such, should be managed judiciously (Rosson & Brooks, 2004). One of the most challenging times for a corporate brand appears to be when changes have to be made to brand elements as a result of a corporate rebranding exercise. Corporate brand elements such as corporate name, colour, slogan and logo are expected to create awareness, elicit recognition, aid recall and activate an existing image of the company in the minds of customers (Dowling, 2008). Changes made to corporate visual identity elements such as name, logo, slogan and colour during a corporate rebranding exercise affect brand knowledge as well as customer perception of corporate brand image (Keller,

2003). Keller (1993) asserts that brand elements improve brand awareness and assist in the creation of strong, favourable and unique brand associations. According to Keller (2001) an entity's identity and image is defined by its brand elements.

According to Keller (2001) there are six broad criteria for designing and selecting brand elements. Keller (2013) further asserts that, brand elements should be memorable, meaningful, likeable, transferable, adaptable and protectable. The first three criteria (memorability, likeability and meaningfulness) are the marketers offensive strategy and they build brand equity; whereas the latter three criteria (transferability, adaptability and protectability) play a defensive role for leveraging and maintaining brand equity in the face of different opportunities and constraints (Keller, 2013). To achieve offensive strategies, brand elements must be memorable and distinctive, easy to recall and recognise. Furthermore brand elements need to be meaningful to convey descriptive or persuasive content to enhance the organisations offensive strategies (Keller, 2013). The likeability criterion requires brand elements to be aesthetically appealing and rich in visual and verbal imagery (Keller 2013). To achieve defensive strategies, Keller (2013) maintains that, brand elements must be flexible so they can easily be adapted to make them appear modern and relevant. The transferability criterion means brand elements should be able to transcend geographical boundaries and should add to the brand equity for new products and markets (Keller, 2013). According to Keller (2013) brand elements need to be protectable both in a legal and competitive sense.

This study aims at examining the extent to which corporate rebranding affects customers perceptions of the corporate brand image and which brand element significantly impacts customer perception of corporate brand image. The rebranded elements (name, logo, slogan and colour) and the selection criteria according to Keller (2003) are considered in this study. This study focuses on the offensive side (meaningfulness, likability and memorability) of the

criteria for selecting brand elements and how this influences customer's perceptions of corporate brand image of rebranded companies. Keller (2013) posits that, the offensive criteria facilitates the building of brand equity. The selected criteria are explained in detail below:

Memorability: According to Keller (2013) a necessary condition for building brand equity is achieving a high level of brand awareness. Memorable corporate brand elements facilitate easy recall and recognition and aid consumers purchase decision (Dowling, 2008). The interpretations customers draw from advertising and other communication tools are dependent on the information stored in memory and how this information is organised (Dowling, 2008). In a corporate rebranding exercise, the new corporate brand elements selected must be memorable so consumers can easily recognise and recall them. Studies on corporate rebranding have revealed that, customers continue to use the old name of an entity several years after rebranding (Tevi, 2013). Hence the new name adopted must be memorable and communicated consistently to achieve positive corporate brand image perceptions. According to Balmer and Gray and Balmer (1998) consistent communication of an entity's identity creates a positive image.

Meaningfulness: This refers to the ability of corporate brand elements to transfer brand attributes without any verbal interaction with stakeholders (Keller, 2013). Meaningful corporate visual identity elements should be credible and contain a descriptive and persuasive meaning to stakeholders (Keller, 2013). According Melewar et al. (2005), meaningful corporate visual identity elements increase an organisations visibility and serve as a powerful weapon for an entity to gain competitive advantage over competitors. According to Keller (2013) meaningful brand elements are important in creating image.

Likeability: This criterion requires brand elements to be visually and verbally appealing (Keller, 2013). Independent of memorability and meaningfulness, the new corporate brand

elements should be appealing to stakeholders (Keller, 2013). According to Keller (2013) brand elements that are fun and interesting, have rich visual and verbal imagery and are aesthetically appealing are usually liked by customers. Le Roux and Du Plessis (2015) argue that, perceived likeability is a psychological factor that impacts stakeholders reaction to a firm.

These three criteria were selected for this study since they are linked to influencing customer perception and the study looks at customer perceptions only. Furthermore, Keller (2013) asserts that, a set of memorable, meaningful and likeable brand elements offer many advantages to customers and reflect the brand personality.

2.5.1 The Corporate Logo

The logo is a vital brand element and it serves as a means of identification (Dowling, 1994) and mark of quality (Hynes, 2009). Logos play a critical role in brand building because they serve as visual representation of the brands meaning (Henderson & Cote, 1998). For logos to be effective they must clearly be linked to the organisation and what it represents (Hynes, 2009). A change or modification of a logo can dilute brand meaning and affect brand image (Henderson & Cote, 1998). Literature on corporate brand elements outline the benefits of promoting an unambiguous corporate logo to include: positive corporate image and reputation, familiarity and recognisability of the corporate brand (Faroudi, Melewar, & Gupta, 2014). According to Faroudi et al. (2014), today's business environment has become more visually oriented, hence the corporate logo is a language that communicates to consumers independent of verbal information. Huge sums of money are spent on designing favourable logos for businesses because they are regarded as valuable company assets which reflect the organisations identity and moulds the corporate brand image in a positive way (Faroudi et al., 2014).

As an organisation undergoes mergers and acquisitions, special attention is paid to corporate logos as a major component of the corporate visual identity in building a new image (Melewar, 2000). The findings of Faroudi et al. (2014) reveal that, the corporate logo is a vehicle that can lead consumers to form strong perceptions-based bonds with the organisation. According to Stuart (2003) in a corporate rebranding exercise, if there is no apparent reason for the logo change, it will either go unnoticed or be regarded with suspicion. The findings of Faroudi et al. (2014) suggest that, the more favourable a corporate logo, the more favourable the image consumers have of the company. This finding is in line with (Henderson & Cote, 1998; Melewar & Saunders, 2000) whose studies revealed that, the corporate logo is the signature of the company and has essential distinctiveness and communication which reflects the company's image. According to Stuart (2003), in a corporate rebranding exercise, organisations should choose logos that are consistent with the image the organisation intends to create and should evoke strong positive responses from key stakeholders.

Hypothesis 2A: The corporate logo has the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image of rebranded companies.

2.5.2 Corporate Colour

Colour seems to be the most widely used element in brand identity. Colour is sometimes referred to as the silent salesperson as it exerts a persuasive influence at the subconscious level (Hynes, 2009). Colour plays a role in imparting information, creating lasting identity and suggesting imagery and symbolic value (Henderson & Cote, 1998). Colour plays a major role in recognition and recall and it is used to elicit different emotional responses (Hynes, 2009). Changing the colour of a brand during a corporate rebranding exercise affects brand recognition and recall as well as brand image (Keller, 2001).

Previous literature on corporate rebranding exercise examined the change in name, logo and slogan and exclude the change in colour despite the significant role brand colour plays in brand knowledge (Le et al., 2014; Lomax & Mador, 2006; Machado et al., 2012; Makasi et al., 2014; Muzellec et al., 2003). This study examines the impact of name, logo, slogan and colour changes on the customer perception of the corporate brand image. Kaikati and Kaikati (2003) posit that, in a corporate rebranding exercise, it is important to select appropriate colours for the new name. They further argue that colours have symbolic meanings and can be used for brand identification, they can also provide a facelift for an ageing logo. Based on the above discussion of the literature, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 2B: The corporate colour has the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image of rebranded companies.

2.5.3 The Corporate Name

The name of an organisation is the primary means by which it communicates to its stakeholders (Stuart, 2003). According to Stuart (2003) changing the name is the riskiest of all corporate rebranding strategies. In a corporate rebranding exercise, there is the need to be a clear idea on the necessity of the name change and the results expected on such changes (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). Keller (2001) posits that, the selection of a suitable corporate brand name is one of the major marketing decisions that an organisation has to take and it is usually the centrepiece of branding an entity. Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) argue that, the brand name is the anchor of brand equity hence a change in name as part of a corporate rebranding exercise will wipe out the positive mental images that the brand stimulates. According to Stuart (2003) the new name should reflect either the corporate personality or the company's mission.

Morris and Reyes (1992) assert that, a corporate name change is a difficult, costly and time consuming process and should not be undertaken unless the expected benefits exceed the costs. According to Kapferer (1995) a name defines both the corporate identity and its image, it is also a medium by which an organisation sends signals to its consumers and the brand image results from decoding those signals by the receiver. A name forms the basis of the relationship between an organisation and its stakeholders and a strong corporate brand name is a valuable asset as the literature on brand equity demonstrates (Keller, 2001; Aaker, 1991). Changing the name of an organisation is sometimes undertaken in order to send a strong signal to stakeholders that the company is shifting its strategy, refocusing its activity or changing leadership (Muzellec et al., 2003). Based on the above discussion of the literature it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 2C: The corporate name has the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image of rebranded companies.

2.5.4 The Slogan

Slogans reflect the positioning strategy of a corporate brand (Stuart, 2003). According to Roy & Sarkar (2015), consumers expect slogans to bear the responsibility of carrying the brand equity to the extent that “slogan equity” is developed over time (Dahlen & Rosengren, 2005). Keller (2001) defines a slogan as a short phrase that transfers descriptive or persuasive information about the brand. An outstanding slogan can give an organisation a positive image, however, a bad one definitely undermines a company (Stuart, 2003). Aaker (1991) posits that, a slogan can capture the essence of a brand and become a vital part of the equity of the brand. Stuart (2003) argues that a slogan change can be done frequently with less risk unless the new one produced is not meaningful. Based on the above discussion of the literature, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 2D: The corporate slogan has the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image of rebranded companies.

2.6 MARKETING COMMUNICATION

According to Tevi (2013) a corporate rebranding exercise aims at signalling to the external stakeholders that, something about the organisation has changed. Thus, the communication to which external stakeholders are exposed to about the identity of rebranded companies are key factors in creating brand equity (Tevi, 2013). Studies by Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) and Kaikati and Kaikati (2003) also indicate that customer's perceptions of the corporate brand image of rebranded companies is influenced by the communication activities of the companies. These findings indicate that, communication can shape the corporate brand image perceptions of rebranded companies.

Chaloner (1990) defined corporate communication as the management of the perceptions of an organisation and the management of change. According to Chaloner (1990) corporate communications ranges from the efficiency of the switchboard operator, employee relations, financial performance and management style. Schmidt (1995) described corporate communications as the entire internal and external information sources and measures that aim to influence perceptions. It covers the corporate design, the internal and external corporate communication, marketing communication, architecture, interior design and location. Haynes (1990) shares the view of Chaloner (1990) and describes corporate communications as every form, manner and medium by which a company communicates to its various audiences.

However, Gray and Balmer (1998) defined corporate communications as the aggregate of messages from both formal and informal sources through a variety of media by which a

company conveys its identity to its multiple audiences and stakeholders. Gray and Balmer (1998) further argue that, the corporate communication element of the corporate identity construct includes controlled communication, uncontrolled communication, indirect communication. Melewar (2003) asserts that corporate identity is projected to stakeholders through a variety of cues, and it presents how the organisation would like to be perceived. Melewar (2003) postulates that these cues can be orchestrated so that deliberately planned messages are delivered to specific audiences in order to achieve set objectives. Melewar (2003) further asserts that some of these planned cues will constitute an organisation's visual identity, that is, the design and graphics associated with the organisations symbols and elements of self-expression, whereas other cues will focus on behaviour, the actions of the organisation and other forms of communication.

Literature on corporate communication has been divided as to whether corporate communication should be categorised as controlled or uncontrolled (Melewar, 2003; Gray & Balmer, 1998). While scholars like Melewar, (2003); Balmer, (1998); Balmer and Gray, (1998) classify corporate communications as controlled or uncontrolled, authors like Ind (1998) classify corporate communications as always being controlled. This research seeks to examine the role communication plays in shaping customer perceptions of corporate brand image of rebranded mobile telecommunications company in Ghana. The study will rely on Ind (1998) definition of corporate communication. Ind (1998) described corporate communications as the primary linkage between identity and image and it involves the cues that organisations deliberately use for presenting themselves to their stakeholders.

Ind (1998) is of the view that, corporate communication is always being controlled by the organisation. Melewar (2003) identified controlled corporate communications to include management communication, organisational communication and marketing communication.

Melewar (2003) further asserts that, management communication is the means by which top management disseminate the goals and objectives of the organisation. According to Van Riel and Balmer (1997) marketing communication supports the sale of an organisations goods or services. All forms of communications with stakeholders with whom an organisation has an interdependent relationship is considered organisational communication (Van Riel & Balmer, 1997). According to Melewar (2003), organisational communication and marketing communication serve as dominant links between identity and image. The communication construct in this study will involve the marketing communications activities of rebranded mobile telecommunications company, as the study examines the perception of customers only. According to Melewar (2003) marketing communication occurs through a carefully planned and controlled promotional programme and it includes activities such as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing.

According to Juntunen and Jussila (2009) corporate rebranding is a systematically planned and implemented process of creating and maintaining a favourable image and consequently a favourable reputation for a company as a whole by sending signals to all stakeholders and by managing behaviour, communication and symbolism in order to proact or react to change. Based on this definition, Tevi (2013) argues that, the changes in the corporate visual identity elements and the behaviour of internal stakeholders constitute communication. Tevi (2013) further asserts that, communication is a key factor in creating and maintaining brand equity, and according to him to rebrand is to communicate. Muzellec and Lambkin (2008) described communication as the vehicle that transfers brand equity in a corporate rebranding exercise. Although the literature on corporate rebranding suggests that communication aids in generating positive perceptions for the rebranded company, the literature is not clear on whether the changes in the visual identity elements generate a positive corporate image for an organisation without controlled communication such as marketing communication. This study aims at

examining the role marketing communication plays in shaping customers perceptions of corporate brand image of rebranded companies. The marketing communication construct in this study will be based on the various promotional tools used by marketers to communicate with customers, this include advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing and public relations activities of rebranded mobile telecommunications companies. From the above discussion of the literature it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 3: Marketing communication mediates the relationship between corporate rebranding and corporate brand image

2.7 CUSTOMER PERCEPTION

Customer perception encompasses a customer's impression, awareness and consciousness about an entity and its offerings and it is influenced by advertising, public relations, personnel experience, social media, referrals and review (Alwi & Kitchen, 2014). Alwi and Kitchen (2014) argue that customers adjust the signals they get from the organisation to form their own view of the entity. Though perceptions are usually based on incomplete and unreliable information, perception is equated with reality for most practical purposes and guides human behaviour in general (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). Perception does not only involve the passive receipt of signals, it also shaped by learning, expectation, memory and attention (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). To customers who are evaluating the quality of a brand, it is their perception that is important to them not what the organisation thinks it is offering (Lakshmi & Santhi, 2015).

The perceptions of customers about an organisation is their evaluation of what they have experienced, seen or heard about an organisation (Lakshmi & Santhi, 2015). Perception serve

as a basis for knowing and understanding and it motivates a particular action or reaction (Lakshmi & Santhi, 2015). The perceptions consumers have about a corporate brand influences their behaviour towards that brand (Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000). Goldsmith et al., (2000) argue that consumers perceptions are not static but dynamic and sometimes consumers behaviour differ from their perceptions. Keller (1999) asserts that, all the marketing activities of an organisation are designed to positively influence customer perception. Aaker (1991) explains that, customer perception comprises thoughts, feelings, experiences and images consumers have about a particular entity, service or product. Image about an organisation is based on customer perceptions based on the marketing activities of the institution and their experiences with the institution (Alwi & Kitchen, 2014).

There is a consensus among marketing scholars that corporate visual identity elements create positive perceptions among stakeholders, serve as basis for awareness and it assists in forming emotional bonds with customers (Le Roux & Du Plessis, 2015; Balmer & Greyser, 2002). Studies by Narteh, Odoom, Braimah, and Buame (2012) revealed that, emotional connection was a major determinant of consumers choice of car brands. They further assert that personal emotional attachment towards some brands influence consumers in their purchase decision. According to Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) a corporate rebranding exercise aims to link corporate brand image and identity, and consumers perceptions of corporate brand image depends on their experiences and the communication activities of the organisation to which they are exposed (Alwi & Kitchen, 2014). Previous research on customer perception has indicated that, customer perception is deeply influenced by their expectation prior to their experience with a brand (Keller, 2001). Braimah (2002) argues that, the marketing communication activities of the organisation that the consumer is exposed to influence expectation.

Organisations need to understand the concept of customer perception in order to appreciate what influences consumer decision (Braithwaite, 2002). Belch and Belch (1995) assert that marketers should have a keen interest in how consumers sense external information and how they interpret and give meaning to the information. Customers perceptions influences their judgement of their experiences with an organisation (Braithwaite, 2002). It is rare, for all stakeholders to have the same perception about an entity, according to Balmer and Greyser (2006), the perception of different stakeholders must be effectively managed as this affects their behaviour towards an organisation. Stuart and Muzellec(2004) argue that corporate rebranding should not be a solution for all organisational problems and that the perceptions of stakeholders about a corporate rebranding exercise greatly affects its success.

2.8 CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK OF THE STUDY

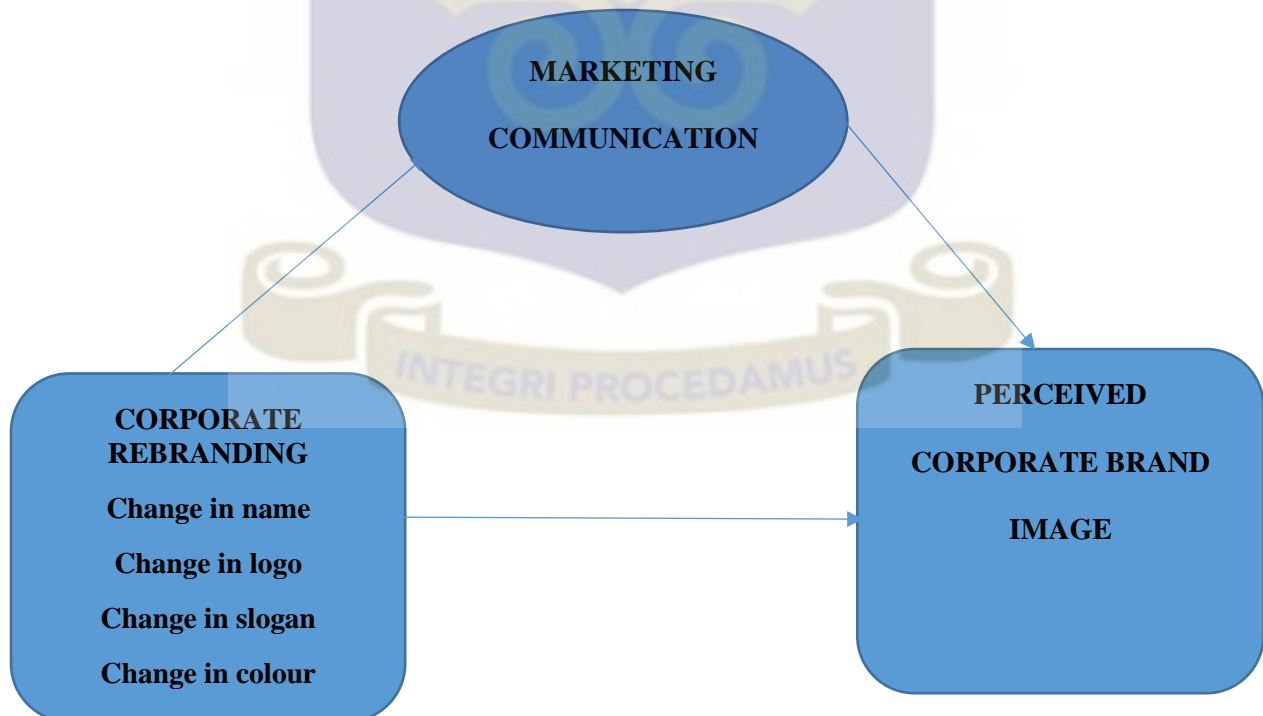


Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework

Adapted from Muzellec et al., (2003), Gray and Balmer (1998)

This conceptual framework was developed from a review of theoretical literature based on works by Muzellec et al., (2003) on corporate rebranding. The conceptual framework further utilised extant literature on corporate branding by Gray and Balmer (1998). According to Muzellec et al., (2003) corporate rebranding involves a change in the company's identity, and it usually involves changes in the corporate visual identity elements such as the name, logo and slogan. The conceptual framework further utilised extant literature on corporate branding, and how corporate communication translates identity into image (Hatch & Schultz, 2003, Balmer & Gray, 1998). Gray and Balmer (1998) are of the view that, corporate image is what comes to mind when consumers are exposed to corporate visual identity elements. They argue that, a strong corporate image can be created through a coordinated communication program and this can create competitive advantage for firms. According to Gray and Balmer (1998) it is important to maintain a consistent image among diverse stakeholders. They further assert that, in addition to understanding an organisation's image, it is crucial to also understand the corporate identity and communication, as maintaining a positive image is vital for survival in today's sensitive business environment.

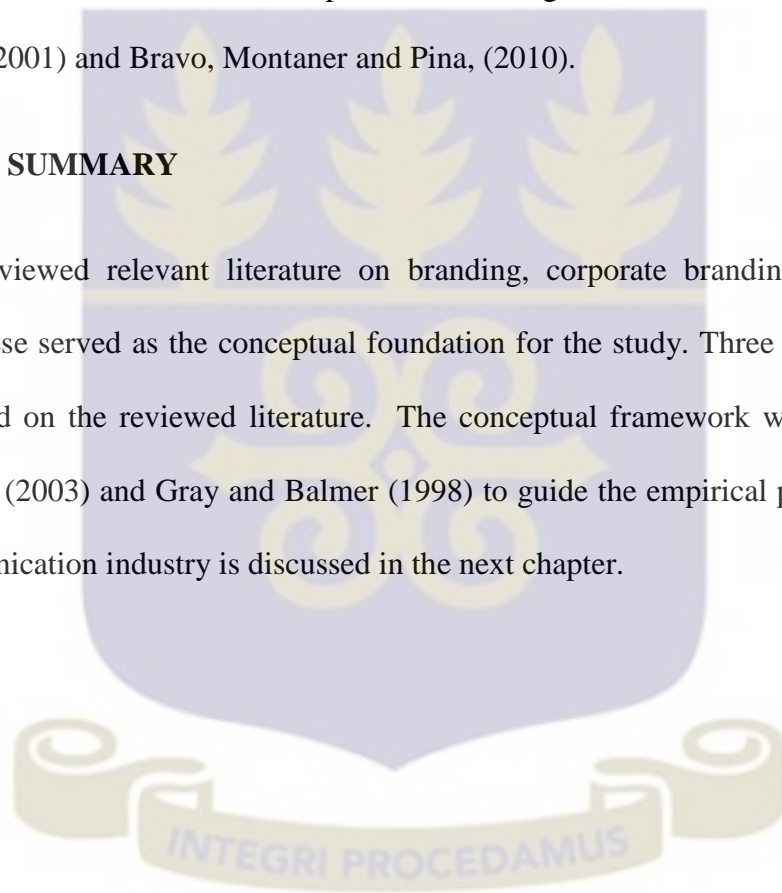
Collange (2015) argues that changing corporate brand elements alters customers perceptions and evaluation of the corporate brand. The works of Merrilees and Miller (2008), Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) and Goi and Goi (2011) indicate that, marketing communications acts as a means of transporting brand equity to the new brand in a corporate rebranding exercise. The findings of Tevi (2013) also indicate that, communication mediates the relationship between corporate rebranding and brand loyalty. According to Ind (1998) marketing communication is the link between identity and image.

Literature on corporate brand image, corporate communications and corporate brand elements and how they affect customers perceptions of corporate image were consulted (Foroudi,

Melewar, & Gupta, 2014; Henderson & Cote, 1998; Hynes, 2009, Melewar 2003; Davies et. al 2004). According to Hynes (2009) corporate brand elements help to create and sustain an entity's image and reputation. The scale of measurement for questions on meaningfulness, memorability and likeability of the brand elements was based on studies by Keller (2013), Henderson and Cote (1998), Stuart (1997) and Hynes (2008). Measures for the marketing communication construct were based on studies by Melewar (2003) and Gray and Balmer (1998). The scale of measurement for corporate brand image was based on studies by Nguyen and Le Blanc, (2001) and Bravo, Montaner and Pina, (2010).

2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter reviewed relevant literature on branding, corporate branding and corporate rebranding. These served as the conceptual foundation for the study. Three hypotheses were developed based on the reviewed literature. The conceptual framework was adapted from Muzellec et al., (2003) and Gray and Balmer (1998) to guide the empirical part of the study. The telecommunication industry is discussed in the next chapter.



CHAPTER THREE

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the telecommunications sector. The chapter outlines historical perspectives of the industry and generally discusses the sector globally. The specific context of the industry in Ghana is also examined and the corporate rebranding activities in the industry is discussed. The chapter finally outlines and discusses the structure of the telecommunication industry in Ghana.

3.1 OVERVIEW OF THE GLOBAL TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY

According to the International Telecommunications Union (2001), “telecommunication is any transmission, emission or reception of signs, signals, writings, images and sounds or intelligence of any nature by wire, radio, optical or other electromagnetic systems”. Transmission facilities carry out these activities. These facilities may be based on a single technology or a combination of technologies (International Telecommunication Union, 2010). The word telecommunications was initially used to refer to wired telephone system (Odlyzko, 2001). Currently the term is used to describe both wired and wireless telephony, mobile services and different forms of voice and data transmissions and Integrated Services Digital Networks (Bhalla & Bhalla, 2010). Formerly, telecommunications technologies included visual signals, for example smoke signals, semaphore telegraphs, signal flags and optical heliographs (Ajisola & Awodun, 2014). Other forms of ancient telecommunications include coded drum beats, lung-blown horns and loud whistles (Ajisola & Awodun, 2014). Modern

telecommunications technologies include electrical and electromagnetic telecommunications technologies like telegraph, telephone, radio, microwave transmission, fibre optics, communication satellites and the internet.

Until the 1980's, the telecommunications sector was viewed as a monopoly due to exceptionally high infrastructure investment (Ajisola & Awodun, 2014). This monopoly enabled service providers to charge exorbitant fees to gain abnormal profits and this raised the need for price regulation (Griffiths, Jensen, & Webster, 2011). This situation necessitated the need for countries to establish state owned monopolies that provide telecommunications services for their citizens (Waverman & Sirel, 1997). However, state owned companies encountered a lot of challenges which led to their reform through restructuring and privatisation (Waverman & Sirel, 1997).

The United States of America pioneered the restructuring of state owned monopolies and the telecommunication giant AT & T was restructured in the 1980s (Bowman, Singh, Useem, & Bhadury, 1999). The restructuring led to division of the company into a number of smaller companies (Bowman et al., 1999). It also led to the liberalisation of the telecommunication sector and this allowed other companies to compete both in the local and international telecommunications (Bowman et al., 1999). Furthermore, private businesses were given the opportunity to start operations in the broadcast and communication market concurrently (Waverman & Sirel, 1997). The United Kingdom followed the trend in the United States of America and its telecommunication giant British Telecom ceased to be a monopoly. Other European countries also started liberalising their telecommunications sector (Bressie, Kende, & Williams, 2005).

In 2008, the worldwide mobile telecommunications service revenue generation stood at US \$912.1 billion, outperforming major sectors such as the pharmaceutical and semi-conductor

sectors (Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority, 2009). Although operators in the software and services sector made more income than the mobile telecommunication sector, the mobile telecommunication segment gained the highest growth. It was the only sector that recorded a double digit growth of 17.4% between 2007 and 2008 (Cagemini, 2011). The telecommunication industry is a major revenue generating sector globally (Mahadevan, 2000). The mobile industry has about seven billion users worldwide, generating over US \$960 billion of service revenue every year (Vodafone Group Plc, 2014). According to the International Telecommunication Union (2014), fixed telephone penetration has been declining for the past five years. However, it is estimated that, the mobile subscribers worldwide will reach 8.5 billion by the end of year 2016. It is also estimated that, Africa and the Middle East will overtake Europe as the second largest region for mobile subscribers, while the Asia Pacific region will maintain the lead as the largest region for mobile subscribers by the end of 2016 (mobithinking, 2014).

3.2 GHANA'S TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY

The history of telecommunications in Ghana can be traced to the precolonial era. The premier telegraph line in the Gold Coast was installed between the Cape Coast and Elmina Castles (Allotey & Akorli, 2000). This telegraph line stretched over a distance of 2.5 miles (Salifu & Yeboah, 2014). It was laid between Christianborg and Accra (Salifu & Yeboah, 2014). Between 1887 and 1889, the telegraph lines were extended to cover major coastal towns like Winneba, Prampram, Accra and all colonial Forts and Castles as well as commercial ports and fishing centres (Allotey & Akorli, 2000). In 1886, telegraph lines were extended to the Southern and Northern parts of Ghana (Huq, 1989). In an attempt to boost communication in the then Gold Coast, the first manual telephone exchange made up of seventy (70) telephone

lines was installed in Accra in the year 1892. Another manual exchange made up of thirteen (13) lines was installed in 1904 in Cape Coast (Salifu & Yeboah, 2014). During the colonial era, the communication infrastructure was expanded to improve social, economic and political administration (Overa, 2006). By the end of 1912, one thousand four hundred and ninety two (1,492) telegraph lines had been constructed to link forty eight (48) telegraph offices throughout the country. Before the beginning of World War 1, there were about one hundred and seventy (170) telephone subscribers in Ghana (Allotey & Akorli, 2000). In 1930, the total number of telephone lines had increased to one thousand five hundred and sixty (1560) which linked the coastal, central and northern parts of the country (Salifu & Yeboah, 2014). The global depression after World War two stagnated the growth of the telecommunications sector in Ghana (Allotey & Akorli, 2000). In 1953, the first automatic telephone exchange with two hundred (200) lines was mounted in Accra. This automatic telephone exchange replaced the manual ones erected sixty three years ago (Allotey & Akorli, 2000).

A seven year development plan was launched after Ghana gained independence in 1957 and this brought innovation in the telecommunication industry (Aryeetey, Harrigan, & Nissanke, 2000). This accelerated the completion of a new automatic exchange in Accra in 1957 (Allotey & Akorli, 2000). As at 1963, there were sixteen thousand (16,000) telephone subscribers and the rapid increase in commercial activities in the agricultural sector led to the introduction of new manual exchanges in Ho, Sunyani, Swedru, Kumasi and Tamale (Allotey & Akorli, 2000). The management of Ghana's telecommunication institutions was initially assigned to the Public Works Department and was later transferred to the Post Office after the enactment of the post office ordinance in 1886 (Falch & Anyimadu, 2003). Administration of Ghana's telecommunications was later assigned to the government's Post and Telecommunications Department. The Post and Telecommunications Department was in charge of telecommunications till 1970 (Falch & Anyimadu, 2003).

The Post and Telecommunications Department was declared a public corporation in 1974 and was placed under the authority of the Ministry of Transport and Communication which was responsible for policy formulation and management of the telecommunications sector (Salifu & Yeboah, 2014). According to Falch and Anyimadu (2003), in 1975, the Post and Telecommunication Department began negotiating loans from multi-lateral and bilateral financial institutions in order to modernise and improve the telecommunication infrastructure and services in Ghana. This project was named the First Telecommunication Project (FTP). The project was intended to last from 1975 to 1979 and it cost seventy six million dollars which came from government of Ghana, the World Bank, Japan, the Africa Development Bank and Canada (Falch & Anyimadu, 2003). This project increased Ghana's telephone line capacity by 50% (Salifu & Yeboah, 2014).

Ghana's vision to have a long term telecommunication development project led to the introduction of the eight years Second Telecommunication Project (STP) in 1987, it was aimed at restructuring the Post and Telecommunication Department (Frempong, 1996). The Second Telecommunication Project cost one hundred and seventy three million dollars. The implementation of the Second Telecommunication Project (STP) led to the reform of the satellite earth station and the cable networks in parts of Accra (Frempong, 1996). The Second Telecommunication Project improved subscriber circuit in the rehabilitated areas and reduced fault rates significantly (Haggarty, Shirley, & Wallsten, 2003). It also increased the number of direct exchange lines from sixty percent in 1987 to eighty nine percent in March 1992 (Haggarty, Shirley, & Wallsten, 2003). The Second Telecommunication Project led to the introduction of the International Direct Dial in twelve exchange areas and promoted international business (Haggarty, Shirley, & Wallsten, 2003). These dramatic changes in the telecommunications sector led to greater usage of satellite technology (Boateng, 2009).

Osiakwan and Foster (2005) assert that, in the late 1990s, Ghana liberalised the telecommunication industry to attract investments from both local and foreign companies and to improve competition. As at 1996, the telephone density for Ghana was 0.26%, which meant, there were 2.6 telephones for every one thousand people (Osiakwan & Foster, 2005). During the same period, there were thirty five pay phones in Ghana, thirty two of these pay phones were located in Accra (Osiakwan & Foster, 2005). According to the National Communications Authority (2009), as at 2009, sixty five percent of Ghanaians had access to voice or data communication. The significant improvement in the telephone density was partly due to the establishment of the National Communication Authority in 1996 and the deregulation of the telecommunication sector which attracted private operators (Alhassan, 2003) and this significantly increased the progress of wireless telephony (Alhassan, 2003).

The implementation of the Accelerated Development Programme led to the restructuring of the telecommunication sector and resulted in massive improvement in the sector (Frempong & Atubra, 2001). The telephone density increased from 0.26 lines per every one thousand inhabitants' in 1996 to 1.16 lines per every one thousand in 2000 (International Telecommunication Union, 2001). The programme also led to other changes such as the partial privatisation of Ghana Telecom, the establishment of the National Communications Authority in 1996 and the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector (Alhassan, 2003). The liberalisation of the telecommunications sector accelerated the growth of the mobile telecommunications sector (Alhassan, 2003).

In 1990, a group of Ghanaians were given a license to operate a mobile cellular company with a brand name Mobitel (Dowuona, 2014). It was the first mobile cellular company in Ghana and the technology was then the ETACS (European Total Access Communication System), which was an analogue network (Dowuona, 2014). It was impossible to even send a text message

under the then analogue network (Zachary, 2004). In 1993, another Ghanaian was given a license to operate a mobile cellular company under a registered company named Celltel Limited (Dowuona, 2014). Celltel limited operated an Advanced Mobile Phone System which was an analogous network on a frequency 850MHZ, but it later converted to CDMA 2000 1X in 2005 within the same frequency (Dowuona, 2014).

In 1995, the first GSM license was given to Scancom Limited and they started the first GSM service under the name Spacefon in 1996 (Dowuona, 2014). In the same year Spacefon launched the first GSM service, Ghana Telecom got a mobile cellular license and they started their GSM network in the year 2000 under the name Onetouch (Dowuona, 2014). In 1998, the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation collaborated with US-based Western Wireless and acquired a license for the Wireless Local Loop (WILL) and International Gateway (Dowuona, 2014). They created a company known as Western Telesystems Limited (Westel) (Brammah & King, 2006). The company operated in the fixed line and International gateway sector (Dowuona, 2014). The government bought the company and obtained a GSM mobile license, but started no GSM service (Dowuona, 2014). Zain acquired 65% shares of the company and started the GSM service in 2008 (Dowuona, 2014). The company was later acquired by Bharti Airtel in 2010. In 2008, another GSM license was issued to Globacom limited and the company launched its GSM operations in Ghana in 2012 (Dowuona, 2014). Currently, the number of mobile telecommunications service providers stand at six.

3.3 CORPORATE REBRANDING IN GHANA'S TELECOMMUNICATION SECTOR

The corporate rebranding phenomenon has been manifest in the telecommunications sector in Ghana for almost two decades. The main trigger for the corporate rebranding activities in this

sector is mergers and acquisitions. For instance, the first mobile cellular network started operating as Mobitel in 1992, it was rebranded to Buzz in 2002 and finally to Tigo in 2006 (Dowuona, 2014). These change in name resulted in changes in brand colours, slogan and logo. Tigo was not the only mobile telecommunications that undertook a revolutionary rebranding exercise. The corporate rebranding also affected other mobile networks that came after Tigo. Tigo had a market share of above 70% in 1998 and as at August 2015, the mobile network had 4,452,988 voice subscribers which represents 13.57% of the total market share (National Communications Authority, 2015).

The mobile telecommunication network “Expresso” started operation in Ghana as Celltel in 1993 (Dowuona, 2014). It was rebranded to Kasapa in 2003 (Dowuona, 2014). In 2008, it rebranded to Expresso as a result of its acquisition by Expresso Telecom Group, which led to changes in other brand elements (Bloomberg business, 2016). The company currently has the lowest subscriber base. As at August 2015, the company’s subscriber base for voice subscriptions stood at 131,666 and it captures 0.40% of the total market share (National Communications Authority, 2015).

The mobile network which is currently known as MTN started as Spacefon in 1996 (Dowuona, 2014). Spacefon was the first mobile network to be issued a GSM license in 1995 (Dowuona, 2014). The network underwent a corporate rebranding exercise and changed its name to Spacefon Areeba and to Areeba in 2005 due to an acquisition (Dowuona, 2014). Finally the company was acquired by MTN and it subsequently rebranded and adopted the name and other brand elements of its new owner. MTN is currently the market leader with 15,211,803 voice subscribers and has captured 46.34% of the market as at August 2015 (National Communications Authority, 2015).

In 1996 Ghana's sole fixed line carrier, Ghana Telecom, obtained a mobile cellular license and started its GSM network in the year 2000 under the name Onetouch (Dowuona, 2014). In August 2008, Vodafone acquired Ghana telecom, and the company has since been renamed Vodafone (Oluniyi, 2009). The renaming also resulted in a change in its logo, slogan and colour. As at August 2015, Vodafone Ghana had a total of 7,353,155 voice subscribers and currently has a market share of 22.4%.

The Kuwaiti Telecoms group Zain purchased sixty five percent stake in Ghana's second national provider Western Telesystems (WESTEL) from the government and started its GSM service in 2008 (Telegeography, 2007; Dowuona, 2014). In 2010, Bharti Airtel bought Zain's Africa operations and started running the GSM services under the new name Airtel in that same year (Ghana News Agency, 2010). The other brand elements of the company like the logo, colours and slogan have also changed since. As at August 2015, the company had 4,279,835 subscribers and it controls 13.4% of the total market share (National Communications Authority, 2015).



Table 3.1 OLD AND NEW BRAND ELEMENTS

OLD BRAND ELEMENTS	NEW BRAND ELEMENTS
	
	
	
	
	

3.4 STRUCTURE OF THE TELECOMMUNICATION MARKET IN GHANA

There are five major segments in the telecommunication industry in Ghana presently. These segments are captured in the National telecommunications Policy (Frempong, 2005). The National Telecommunication Policy identifies the segments to include; international telecommunication, domestic public telephone services, dedicated transmission network, internet services and broadcasting systems. The various segments are discussed below.

3.4.1 The International Telecommunication Segment

The international telecommunications segment consists of telecommunication facilities which carry communication signals across Ghana's international borders (National Communication Authority, 2004). These include licensed gateway operators who have authorisation to maintain physical gateway connections to international destinations. This segment used to be exclusive to the then Ghana Telecom and WESTEL (National Communication Authority, 2004). However since the lapse of their exclusivity clauses, there are no limitations on such gateway licenses (National communication Authority, 2004).

3.4.2 Domestic Public Telephone Services

The market segment for domestic public telephone services includes all facilities and services that connect telephone calls between users within Ghana (Gyamfi, 2005). According to the Telecommunication Policy, this segment of the market comprises fixed wireline networks, wireless mobile networks and public telephones and tele-centres (National Communications Authority, 2004). The fixed wireline networks include traditional wireline telephone networks that connect fixed locations through permanent terrestrial links (Falch & Anyimadu, 2003).

Wireless mobile networks connect calls through wireless radio technologies, traditionally they make use of cellular mobile technology and frequencies as defined by the International telecommunications union standards (Bhalla & Bhalla, 2010). Operators of this network are required to obtain formal authorisation to use a designated frequency band as well as a license to provide public mobile telephone service (National Communication Authority, 2004). Public telephones and telecentres are made up of public access locations that allow consumers to place telephone calls for a onetime charge (Gyamfi, 2005).

3.4.3 Dedicated Transmission Network

This segment of the market includes all point-to-point transmission networks, which connect two or more dedicated locations (Main, 2001). They can be used to provide wholesale capacity for use by other network public operators, for private closed user group communication services or for public signal distribution (National Communication Authority, 2004). It can be categorised as wholesale capacity, private networks and Public distribution network (National Communication Authority, 2004).

3.4.4 Internet Services

This segment includes services that link end users to the internet and its various applications (National Communication Authority, 2004). The internet service itself does not by itself involve installation of physical telecommunication network, but typically relies on use of other existing networks via dial up or other dedicated connections (National Communication Authority, 2004). This segment comprises internet service providers, internet backbone

connectivity and internet cafes and public access points (National Communication Authority, 2004).

3.4.5 Broadcasting Systems

The broadcasting segment include public radio and television stations, commercial radio and television stations and community radio and television stations (National Communication Authority, 2004). Public radio and television stations are operated by a publicly owned statutory body, which may be wholly or partially state funded (National Communication Authority, 2004). They serve the overall public interest and are accountable to all levels of people as represented by an independent board (National Communication Authority, 2004). Commercial radio and television stations are privately owned and operated for a profit and are controlled by independent commercial groups or individuals (National Communication Authority, 2004). Community radio and television stations are those that belong to specific marginalised community and its ownership and management is representative of the community (National Communication Authority, 2004).

3.5 POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY IN GHANA

The telecommunication sector in Ghana is regulated by two major bodies namely; the Ministry of Communication and the National Communication Authority. The National Telecommunication Policy was also formulated in 2004 to provide a framework for the development of the telecommunication sector. The next section discusses the national telecommunication policy and the two major regulatory bodies.

3.5.1 National Telecommunication Policy

Following the liberalisation of the telecommunication sector, the government formulated a national telecommunication policy in 2004 (Participatory Development Associates, 2005). The purpose of this policy document was to define the framework within which Ghana's telecommunications sector will evolve towards its set vision (National Communication Authority, 2004). Some of the objectives the policy aims to promote are.

- “Universal access for all communities and population groups in Ghana to telephone, internet and multimedia services by the year 2010.
- National penetration of universal telecommunication service to reach 25% of the population including at least 10% in rural areas by the year 2010.
- Connection of all schools, medical clinics, government offices, public and community broadcasting stations to advanced telecommunication services.
- Fully open private and competitive markets for all telecommunication services
- Affordable prices for telecommunication services, particularly for low income citizens” (National Communications Authority, 2004).

3.5.2 Ministry Of Communications

The Ministry of Communications is charged with the responsibility of periodically reviewing the effectiveness and success of government's policy on communication (Frempong, 2005). The Ministry is also in charge of updating and amending governments policies on communication as and when appropriate (Frempong, 2005). The Ministry of Communication

participates in consultative capacity in all National Communication Authority public regulatory proceedings in an open and transparent manner (Frempong & Atubra, 2001). The Ministry of Communication is also mandated to monitor the development of the communications sector and to represent the government of the republic of Ghana in all international negotiations and proceedings relating to Ghana's communication policies (Frempong, 2005).

3.5.3 National Communication Authority

The National Communication Act (Act 524) was promulgated in 1996 for the establishment of the National Communication Authority (Heath, 1999). The National Communication Authority has the primary responsibility of implementing the terms of the National Telecommunication Policy (National Communication Authority, 2004). Some of the responsibilities of the National Communication Authority as stated in the National Telecommunication policy include:

- “Issuing of licenses and establishing terms and conditions
- Regulation of competition including interconnection
- Allocation of scarce resources including management of the frequency spectrum
- Implementation of the Universal Access Policy
- Consumer protection
- Tariff regulation consistent with the Ministry of Communication's policies
- Technical standards and quality of service oversight
- Monitoring of operators activities, compliance and standards” (National Communication Authority, 2004).

3.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter gave an overview of the global telecommunication industry. It also highlighted the various transformations that have taken place in the telecommunication industry both locally and internationally. The corporate rebranding activities that have taken place within the telecom industry in Ghana was discussed. The policy and regulatory framework guiding the operations of the industry was also explored. The next chapter discusses the methodology employed in the study.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a description of the methodology employed in the study. It also indicates how the study was conducted to achieve the objectives set at the beginning of the study. The methodological approaches employed to tackle the research hypotheses is also explained. The items discussed in this chapter include the study population, the sample size and sampling technique, sources of data and data analysis methods, data collection instruments and study limitations.

4.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design refers to the researchers plan on how to implement the research in practice (Cresswell , 2012). It provides a detailed outline of how the study is conducted. The research design describes how, when and where data is collected, the data collection instrument and how data is analysed and interpreted (Cresswell, 2009). This research adopted a quantitative approach to explain the relationship between corporate rebranding, marketing communication and customer's perception of the corporate brand image.

4.1.1 Research Purpose

According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006), research can be classified in terms of their purpose. Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) classify the purpose of conducting

research as exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Exploratory research is used where little research has been done either in context or on the research topic in that particular context or when there is little theory available to guide predictions (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). An Exploratory research allows the researcher to gain more information regarding an unknown or poorly understood phenomenon and pose more research gaps or questions for future research (Boateng, 2014).

Descriptive research aims at systematically describing a phenomenon, situation or problem (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006). Descriptive research describes situations by providing measures of an event or an activity (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Descriptive research designs are usually structured, and specifically designed to measure the characteristics described in the research questions (Cresswell, 2013). Hypotheses or propositions derived from theory usually guide the research process and provide a list of what needs to be measured (Hair, Babin, Money, & Samouel, 2003). Descriptive research aims at depicting an accurate profile of events, persons or situations (Cresswell, 2013). It is also vital to have a clear picture of the phenomenon prior to data collection (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

Explanatory research seeks to understand and explain a phenomenon, and it establishes causal relationships between variables. Explanatory research emphasises on studying a situation or problem in order to clarify relationships between variables (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Explanatory research is designed to test whether one event causes another (Hair, Babin, Money, & Samouel, 2003). The purpose of this research is explanatory, as it seeks to explain the extent to which a corporate rebranding exercise affects customers' perception of the corporate brand image. This is in relation to changes in selected corporate visual identity elements (name, logo, slogan and colours) and its influence on customer perception of corporate brand image of these rebranded companies. Previous studies with similar research

objectives adopted explanatory research (Machado et al.; 2012, Balmer & Dinnie, 1999; Hynes, 2009).

4.1.2 Research Approach

According to Bryman (2015), there are three distinct approaches to research namely, the quantitative or structured approach, qualitative or unstructured approach and the mixed method approach.

Qualitative research provides insights and understanding of the problem setting (Malhotra & Dash, 2013). The objective of qualitative research is to gain understanding of the underlying reasons and motivations about a phenomenon and usually involves a small sample size which may or may not be representative of the larger population (Malhotra & Dash, 2013). Qualitative research is unstructured as it starts with general research problems and not by formulating hypotheses. It uses relatively unstructured instruments such as interviews and observations. (Boateng, 2014). The qualitative approach allows flexibility in all activities of the research process (Boateng, 2014).

Quantitative research seeks to determine the extent of a problem or the existence of a relationship between aspects of a phenomenon by quantifying the variation (Boateng, 2014). Quantitative research often seeks to test to support or disprove a proposed relationship between two or more aspects of a phenomenon (Boateng, 2014). The results are presented using statistics and inferences made to the population.

The mixed method approach tends to combine the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to conduct research (Boateng, 2014). Some studies require the researcher to combine both approaches.

This study adopted the quantitative research approach using structured questionnaires with predetermined responses in the data collection and analysis. This approach is in line with previous studies addressing similar research hypothesis (Le et al.; 2014; Collange, 2015).

The quantitative research approach was selected for diverse reasons. Previous studies on customer perception of corporate brand image adopted the quantitative research approach (Alwi & Kitchen, 2014; Davies et al.; 2004; Nguyen & LeBlanc, 2001). Furthermore, a quantitative research approach is appropriate for testing hypothesis and making generalisations (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Another reason for selecting the quantitative research approach was to reduce researcher bias (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

4.2 SOURCE OF DATA

There are two major sources of data, namely primary and secondary sources (Bless, Higson-Smith, & Kagee, 2006). According to Malhotra (2007), secondary data is information that has been collected for purposes other than the current research project. Primary data are obtained for the specific purpose of addressing the problem at hand and could be collected through interviews, questionnaires and other forms (Malhotra N. , 2007). In this study, primary data were collected through self-administered structured questionnaires. Two hundred and sixty (260) questionnaires were self-administered and completed for analysis. It took the researcher two weeks to collect primary data and another one month to analyse and discuss the findings.

4.3 TARGET POPULATION

The target population for a study refers to the total set of units for which the survey findings are meant to generalise (Neuman, 2005). The target population for this study were the customers of rebranded mobile telecommunications companies. However, this study considered the views of customers, specifically, students of the University of Ghana Business School for the purposes of collecting data. The students of University of Ghana Business School were chosen because of their heterogeneity and their understanding of the research area.

4.4 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE

A non-probability sampling technique, specifically, purposive sampling was used to collect data from the customers of the rebranded mobile telecommunication companies. This sample was drawn from the University of Ghana Business School. The students were considered an appropriate sample for the study as they comprised of students who were twenty five years and above who had used their mobile networks before and after the corporate rebranding exercise and were therefore aware of the corporate rebranding exercise. The researcher also considered this group to have a good understanding of the phenomenon under study. The use of students as sample for the study is consistent with earlier studies on corporate rebranding (Ing, 2012; Machado et al., 2012).

This study used a sample size of 260 respondents, representing customers of rebranded mobile telecommunications companies from students of the University of Ghana Business School. This was consistent with studies by Le et al. (2014) who used 220 students from the University of Taiwan as sample for their study. Some other works on the corporate rebranding phenomenon used students as the sample for their studies (Ing, 2012; Machado et al., 2012).

In addition Hair, Babin, Money and Samouel (2003) suggest a sample size range of one hundred fifty (150) to four hundred (400) for structural equation modelling to ensure a stable Maximum Likelihood Estimation solution. This study considered a sample size of two hundred and sixty (260) as adequate for the study.

4.5 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The questionnaire for this study was designed based on review of theoretical literature. The questionnaire for this study contained 46 questions and was in two parts. The first part contained seven questions, which were questions on respondents demographic information, their mobile networks and how long they had used their mobile networks. The questions were close ended, and required respondents to select responses that were applicable to them.

The second part posed statements that required respondents to choose their level of agreement or disagreement using a five point likert scale. The second part included questions on customers perceptions of the corporate rebranding exercise, marketing communication activities and the corporate brand image of the rebranded mobile telecommunications companies. One (1) was the lowest point, representing strongly disagree, two (2) represented disagree, three (3) represented neutral responses, Four (4) represented agree and five (5) was the highest point, representing strongly agree.

4.5.1 Pre-testing

The initial theoretical literature review enabled the researcher to adapt questions to address the research objectives. These questions were later pre-tested with a sample of fifteen (15)

customers of rebranded mobile telecommunications companies. The sample for the pretest consisted of fifteen graduate students from the University of Ghana Business School. In the course of the pre-testing, the researcher detected the difficulty in answering some of the questions, and the views of the participants in the pre-test was noted. The recommendations from the pre-test were taken into consideration in the development of the final questionnaire for the survey. After the pre-testing, the questionnaire was refined accordingly and agreed on with the supervisor for the study.

4.6 ADMINISTRATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

A total of two hundred and sixty (260) self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the selected sample after explaining the purpose of the research to them. All 260 questionnaires were returned. However, only 235 were found useable for analysis. This resulted in a useable response rate of 90.38%. The questionnaires were distributed to selected students from the University of Ghana Business School who were twenty five years and above and had used their mobile networks before and after the rebranding exercise and were willing to participate in the study.

4.7 THE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE SCALE

Reliability and validity methods are used to measure the soundness of the measurement to ensure they are free from bias and distortion (Golafshani, 2003). Questionnaires are considered reliable and valid when the results given are similar when repeated (Hair et al., 2006).

4.7.1 Reliability

Reliability indicates the measurement is accurate, precise and consistent (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Reliability measures the internal consistency of the measurement scale, that is, how well the items measure the same construct or idea (Hair et al., 2006). The internal consistency of the measurement scale was tested using Cronbach's alpha and the composite reliability values. These methods are mostly used to check for internal consistency in structural equation modelling (Hair et al., 2006).

4.7.2 Validity

Validity refers to the accuracy of the measurement or the extent to which a score honestly represents a concept (Zikmund, Babin, Car , & Griffin , 2012). Construct validity includes convergent and discriminant validity. Discriminant validity was used to identify the extent to which a construct is different from other constructs, while convergent validity was used to ensure that the constructs identified are truly reflected by their indicators (Rezaei, 2015). Discriminant validity was assessed using the average variance extracted and the maximum shared variances for each construct while convergent validity was assessed using the factor loadings for each construct.

4.8 Data Analysis

The data collected from this study were analysed with the aid of Structural Equation Modelling software AMOS 21 and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software was used to generate the frequencies for

the demographic profile, descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha values. AMOS 21 was used for confirmatory factor analysis and the full structural model. Data were coded and screened for outliers or variation in the data set. A confirmatory factor analysis was carried out to extract the variables that best answer each construct in the study. Descriptive statistics, multiple regression and structural equation modelling were performed to test the hypothesis. The multiple regression analysis was used to test for mediation effects between the dependent and independent variables, Structural equation modelling was chosen because it allows a researcher to model relationships among multiple independent variables and a dependent variable (Chin, 1998). It also provides flexibility for the interplay between theory and data (Chin, 1998).

4.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study only considered the views of students of the University of Ghana who were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The interpretation and application of the findings of this study must therefore be done with this in mind.

4.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the methodological approaches used to collect and analyse data. The questionnaire design and administration was explained. The chapter also discussed the sampling technique employed in the study and the data analysis techniques were also discussed. Chapter five discusses the findings from the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22 and Amos 21 were used to analyse data from this study. The SPSS was used to generate the demographic profile of respondents, descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha values for the constructs in the study. The conceptual framework of the study was tested using a two-stage approach in structural equation modelling (SEM) (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The analysis was run using Amos 21, the default method – maximum likelihood estimation. First, the multi-item measures were purified and psychometric properties were examined by performing a confirmatory factor analysis to assess the measurement properties of the existing scales validity (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). The Confirmatory factor Analysis was conducted using Amos 21. Amos 21 was further used to test the hypotheses of the proposed theoretical model in the full structural model.

5.1 DATA SCREENING AND CLEANING

To ensure that data were useable, reliable and valid for testing hypothesis, the data were coded, screened and cleaned before conducting further statistical analysis (Pallant, 2010). The coded data were screened for outliers, missing data and wrong inputs. No missing data were found in the 235 useable questionnaires. All the variables were mostly normally distributed and had Kurtosis values of less than 2.2, which is within the acceptable threshold except for the demographic variable “degree programme offered”, which scored a Kurtosis of 3.35.

According to Sposito, Hand and Skarpness (1983), a Kurtosis value of less than 2.2 indicates normal distribution of data. The high Kurtosis value for degree programme is attributed to most of the respondents being students who were offering Masters degree programmes. After data cleaning, 235 questionnaires were valid and were used for further analysis.

5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Respondents were profiled according to their gender, age, nationality, degree programme offered, number of mobile networks used by respondents, their primary mobile network and the number of years they had used their primary mobile networks. The results of the demographic profile are displayed in table 5.1.

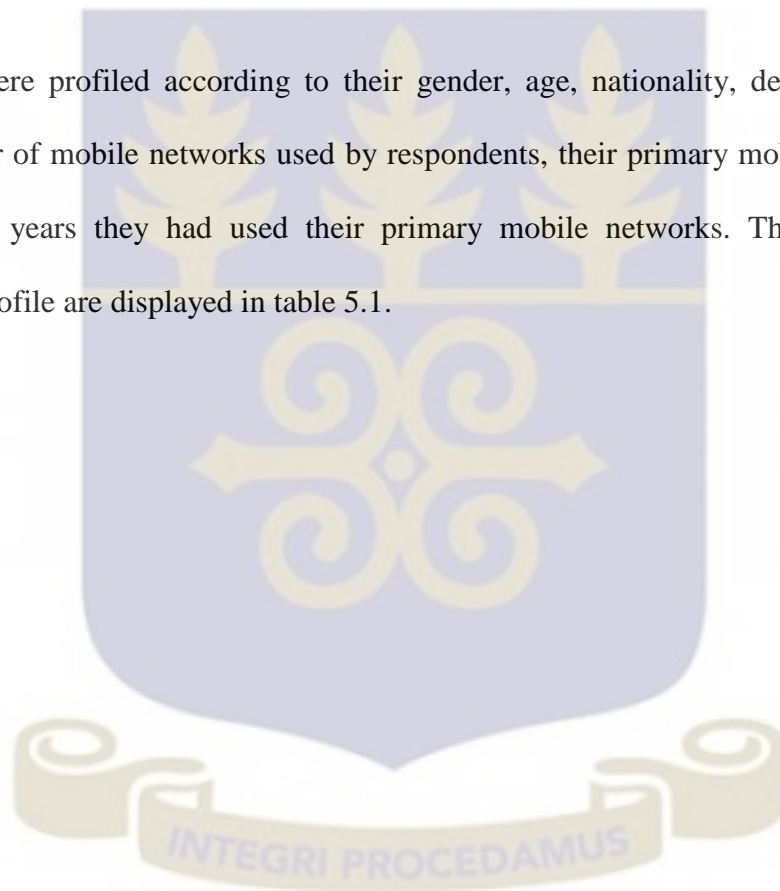


Table 5.1 - DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Profile	Measurement	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	140	59.6
	Female	95	40.4
	Total	235	100
Nationality	Ghanaian	184	78.3
	Non-Ghanaian	51	21.7
	Total	235	100
Age	25-35	68	28.93
	36-45	156	66.37
	Above 45	11	4.7
	Total	235	100
Degree Programme offered	Certificate	13	5.53
	Diploma	29	12.34
	Bachelor's Degree	18	7.66
	Master's Degree	148	62.98
	PhD	17	7.23
	Others	10	4.26
	Total	235	100
Number of Mobile networks used	One	63	26.8
	Two	127	54
	Three	33	14
	Four	10	4.3
	Five	2	0.9
	Total	235	100
	Primary Network	MTN	109
Vodafone		53	22.6
Tigo		43	18.3
Airtel		30	12.8
Total		235	100
Length of usage of primary network	6 years	22	9.4
	7-8 years	43	18.3
	9-10 years	44	18.7
	11- 12 years	46	19.6
	Above 12 years	80	34
	Total	235	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Table 5.1 indicates that, 59.6% of the respondents were male and 40.4% were female. Regarding age, majority of the respondents (66.37%) were between the ages of 36 to 45. The nationality of the respondents revealed that 78.3% of the respondents were Ghanaians while 21.7% were Non-Ghanaians. Majority of the respondents (62.98%) offered Master's degree programmes. A look at the number of mobile networks used by respondents indicated that, more than half of the respondents (54%) used two networks. In terms of primary network used by respondents, the results indicated that, 46.4% of respondents used MTN, 22.6% used vodafone, 18.3% used Tigo and 12.8% used airtel. Concerning the length of usage of primary mobile network, 34% of respondents have used their primary network for more than 12 years, 19.6% have used their network between 11 to 12 years, 18.7% have used their network for 9 to 10 years, 18.3% have used their network for 7 to 8 years and 9.4% have used their network for six years.

5.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR SCALE ITEMS

Table 5.2 displays the means and standard deviations of the various items in the questionnaire. The results indicate moderate to high mean values. From the table the highest mean score was 4.3106 and the lowest mean score was 3.2553. The assumed mean value guiding this study is 3.0 and above for agreement while, any mean value below 3.0 indicates disagreement with a statement. The variable with the highest mean value asked whether the colour of the respondent's mobile network was easy to recall. Conversely, the statement with the lowest agreement from respondents was on whether the logos of their mobile network evoked positive feelings.

5.3.1 Corporate Rebranding

The descriptive statistics in table 5.2 indicates that, customers perception of the current corporate brand elements of their mobile networks are favourable. Most of the variables had mean scores of more than 3.5. The highest mean score for “change in the corporate name” was the easy recognition of the corporate name (4.2936) and the lowest was (3.3745) related to the name evokes positive feelings. The highest mean score for “change in the corporate logo” was (4.1957) related to the easy recognition of the corporate logo and the lowest was (3.2553) related to the logo evokes positive feelings. The highest mean score for “change in the corporate slogan” was (4.0383) related to the easy recall of the corporate slogan and the lowest was (3.5277) related to the slogan evokes positive feelings. The highest mean score for “change in the corporate colour” was (4.3106) related to the easy recall of the corporate colour and the lowest was (3.4809) related to the colour evokes positive feelings. This indicates that, customers largely agree with the easy recognition of the new corporate brand elements of their mobile networks while they do not agree with new corporate brand elements evoking positive feelings.

5.3.2 Marketing Communications

The highest mean score for marketing communications was 4.1745 (my mobile network communicates it new corporate brand elements via advertising), this shows that customers agree that their mobile networks communicate their new corporate brand elements through advertisements. The lowest mean score was 3.4340 (my mobile network communicates its new corporate brand elements via personal selling), this indicates that customers do not agree that their mobile networks communicate their new corporate elements through personal selling.

5.3.3 Corporate Brand Image

The highest mean score for corporate brand image was 3.8766 (my mobile network is socially responsible), this shows that customers agree that the corporate rebranding exercise has made their mobile networks socially responsible. The lowest mean score was 3.5064 (my mobile network provides reliable services), this indicates that customers do not agree that their mobile networks provided reliable services as a result of the corporate rebranding exercise.



Table 5.2 - Descriptive Statistics for Scale Items

Variables	N Statistic	Mean		Std. Deviation Statistic
		Statistic	Std. Error	
Change in name				
The name of my mobile network is easily recognisable	235	4.2936	.07541	1.15607
The name of my mobile network is easy to recall	235	4.2681	.07485	1.14748
The name of my mobile network communicates what the company stands for	235	3.5617	.07057	1.08181
The name of my mobile network evokes positive feelings	235	3.3745	.06730	1.03165
The name of my mobile network is interesting	235	3.5362	.06303	.96619
The name of my mobile network is likeable	235	3.6894	.06444	.98780
Change in Logo				
The logo of my mobile network is easy to recognise	235	4.1957	.06397	.98057
The logo of my mobile network is easy to recall	235	3.9617	.06778	1.03910
The logo of my mobile network communicates what it stands for	235	3.4511	.06691	1.02571
The logo of my mobile network evokes positive feelings	235	3.2553	.06071	.93068
The logo of my mobile network is interesting	235	3.4681	.06069	.93028
The logo of my mobile network is likeable	235	3.5702	.05964	.91425
The logo of my mobile network is visually appealing	235	3.7149	.06295	.96498
Change in Slogan				
The slogan of my mobile network is easy to recognise	235	4.0170	.07286	1.11695
The slogan of my mobile network is easy to recall	235	4.0383	.06858	1.05136
The slogan of my mobile network company communicates what it stands for	235	3.5957	.07369	1.12962
The slogan of my mobile network evokes positive feelings	235	3.5277	.06884	1.05525
The slogan of my mobile network is interesting	235	3.6340	.06962	1.06724
The slogan of my mobile network is likeable	235	3.7702	.06348	.97312
Change in Colour				
The colour of my mobile network is easy to recognise	235	4.2723	.06390	.97964
The colour of my mobile network is easy to recall	235	4.3106	.06272	.96149
The colour of my mobile network communicates what it stands for	235	3.4894	.07042	1.07958
The colour of my mobile network evokes positive feelings	235	3.4809	.06697	1.02670
The colour of my mobile network is visually appealing	235	3.8596	.06801	1.04261
The colour of my mobile network is likeable	235	3.8936	.06416	.98350
Marketing Communications: my mobile network company communicates its new corporate brand elements via:				
Advertisements	235	4.1745	.06874	1.05378
Sales promotions	235	4.0511	.07102	1.08877
Direct marketing	235	3.5191	.07540	1.15593
Publicity/public relations activities	235	3.8298	.06865	1.05245
Personal selling activities	235	3.4340	.07407	1.13553
Sponsorship activities	235	3.8553	.07225	1.10763
Trade shows and fairs	235	3.5404	.07537	1.15538
Corporate brand image				
My mobile network gives me a good impression	235	3.5915	.06780	1.03936
My mobile network is better than its competitors	235	3.6128	.07554	1.15796
my mobile network has a good image	235	3.6851	.06859	1.05145
My mobile network provides reliable services	235	3.5064	.06833	1.04746
My mobile network inspires confidence	235	3.5532	.06717	1.02966
My mobile network is socially responsible	235	3.8766	.06259	.95948
My mobile network has highly professional staff	235	3.6596	.06672	1.02275
Valid N list wise	235			

Source: Field Survey, 2016

5.4 THE MEASUREMENT MODEL - CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

(CFA)

As stated earlier, the analysis of this study was conducted using a confirmatory factor analysis. This approach was chosen because the underlying factors for each dimension has been specified in theory (Bryne, 2001). To evaluate the measurement model's fit, modification indices and large standardised residuals were examined as they are useful indicators of misfit (Cheng, 2001). Items that were cross loaded in more than one dimension were relaxed one at a time as proposed by Long (1983) and non-significant parameters were excluded from the study. The final result retained twenty four (24) items.

This study had three constructs namely, corporate rebranding, marketing communications and corporate brand image. These factors were intended to measure customers' perceptions of change in corporate brand elements with respect to memorability, meaningfulness and likeability and how these influenced corporate image either directly or through the marketing communication activities of mobile telecommunication companies. The factor with the highest number of variables was corporate brand image, it retained all its seven items. The next factor, marketing communications retained 6 variables. With corporate rebranding which was a second order construct, the change in the corporate name retained 3 items, which were related to the likeability and meaningfulness of the new name. The change in corporate logo retained 3 items, which were also related to meaningfulness and likeability. Corporate slogan retained five items and these were related to memorability, meaningfulness and likeability. Corporate colour maintained three items, and these were related to meaningfulness and likeability.

The goodness-of-fit indices indicate the data fits the model reasonably well. The model achieved a chi-square (χ^2) of 543.922, degrees of freedom (d.f) of 313, $\chi^2/d.f$ 1.738. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), $\chi^2/d.f$ of < 2 or 3 indicates an acceptable model fit. Root mean square

error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.056. According to Bryne (2001) RMSEA explains how well the model fits the population's covariance matrix. MacCallum, Browne and Sugawara (1996) assert that, a RMSEA of < 0.08 shows a good fit. Comparative fit index (CFI) was 0.927 and Tucker-Lewis fit index (TLI) was 0.918, these were all within the recommended level of > 0.9 , which represents reasonable fit (Broom, Knight, Joe, Simpson, & Cross, 1997). The re-specified factors were subjected to reliability test to check for internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability coefficients were used as yardsticks to confirm the reliability of the re-specified scales. The Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.84 to 0.89, which was within the minimum threshold of above 0.7, while the composite reliability coefficient for each construct was above 0.8 which indicates reliability of the constructs (Bagozzi & Yi, 1998). These values indicate a strong internal consistency among construct items (Hair, Babin, Money, & Samouel, 2003). Table 5.3 shows the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability scores for the constructs.

5.5 DISCRIMINANT AND CONVERGENT VALIDITY

Using Fornell and Larcker's (1981) procedure, discriminant validity of each construct was assessed by examining whether the average variance extracted (AVE) was greater than the shared variances of each pair of construct. Discriminant validity was demonstrated for each construct as the AVE of each construct was greater than the maximum shared variance (MSV). The correlation covariance among constructs was acceptably low, ranging from 0.47 to 0.55, which falls within the recommended value of less than 0.92 (Kline, 2005), composite reliabilities exceeded the 0.6 benchmark (Bagozzi & Yi, 1998), hence the assessment results support the adequacy of discriminant validity of the measurement model. Factor loadings for each construct was significant at 0.01 which supports convergent validity of the measures

(Bagozzi & Yi, 1998). Table 5.3 shows the average variance extracted (AVE), maximum shared variance (MSV) and composite reliability scores for the constructs as well as the correlation coefficient for each construct.

Table 5.3 Correlations and reliabilities

Correlations and Reliabilities							
	1	2	3	AVE	MSV	CR	CA
1. Corporate rebranding	1			0.62	0.39	0.86	0.89
2. Marketing communication	.470	1		0.5	0.27	0.85	0.84
3. Corporate brand image	.550	.470	1	0.53	0.39	0.89	0.89

Notes: CR, composite reliability, AVE, average variance extracted, MSV, maximum shared variance, CA, Cronbach alpha.

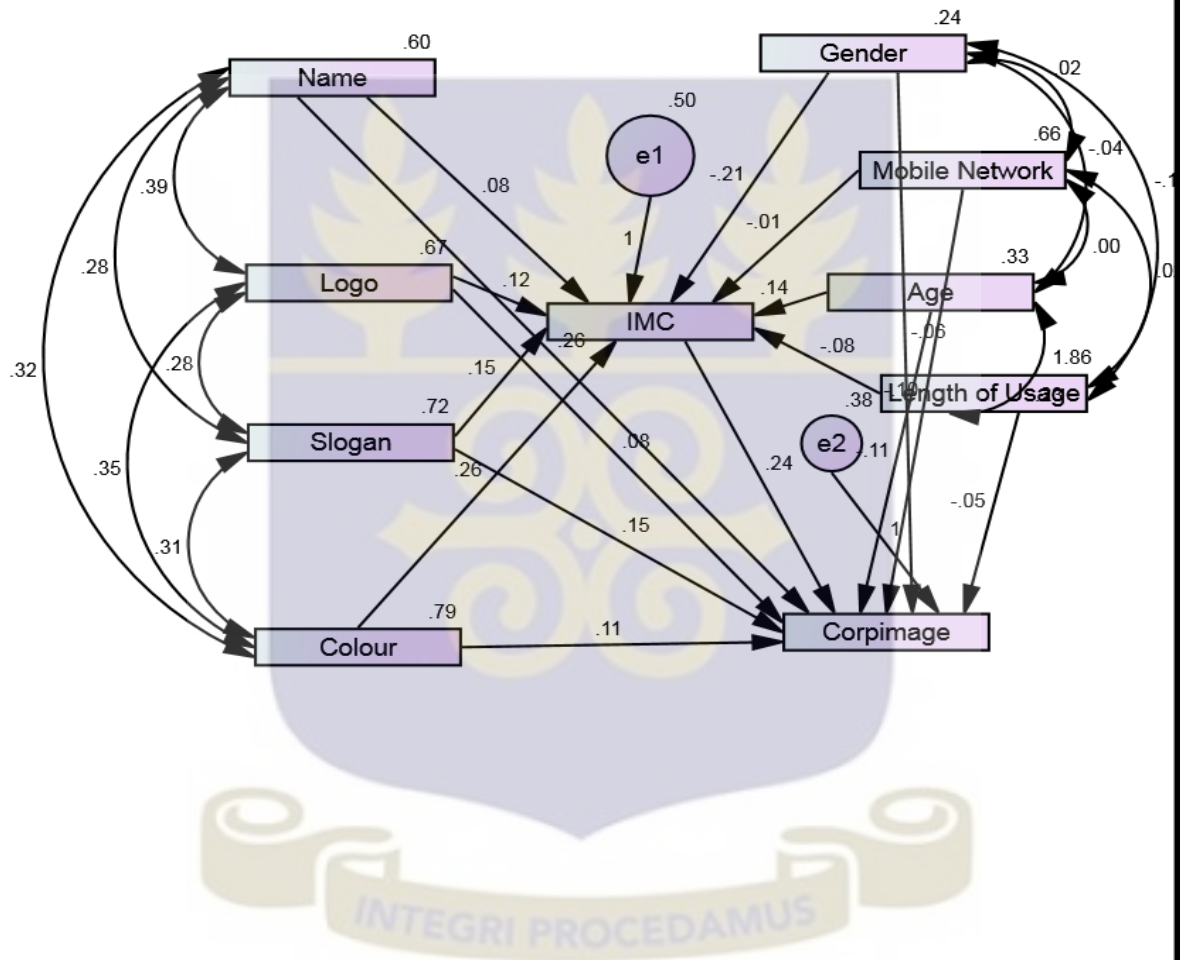
5.6 THE FULL STRUCTURAL MODEL

The concern in the full structural model is to test the study's theoretical models, objectives and hypothesis. Gender, the primary network, age and length of usage of a particular mobile network were used as control variables in the full structural model. Their inclusion as controls is justified by previous research (Olmedo-Cifuentes & Martinez-Leon, 2014). Ou (2007) included in his study of corporate reputation from customer's perspective the variables age, gender, education and job position as control variables. The inclusion of age as a control variable is justified by the diversity of students in a school. Age has been studied in research related to image formation (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999), as image is shaped by personal factors, stimulating factors and consumption patterns. Gender was controlled for since previous studies reveal that image perceptions differ among different gender groups (Caruana &

Chircop, 2000; Davies et al., 2004). The primary network of respondents was also controlled as perceptions of image will vary depending on the quality of service the networks provide (Srivastava & Sharma, 2013). The length of usage of the primary mobile network was also controlled for, as new customers might have different perception from older customers. The summary of the partial and full mediation model results are reported in figure 1 and 2 respectively.



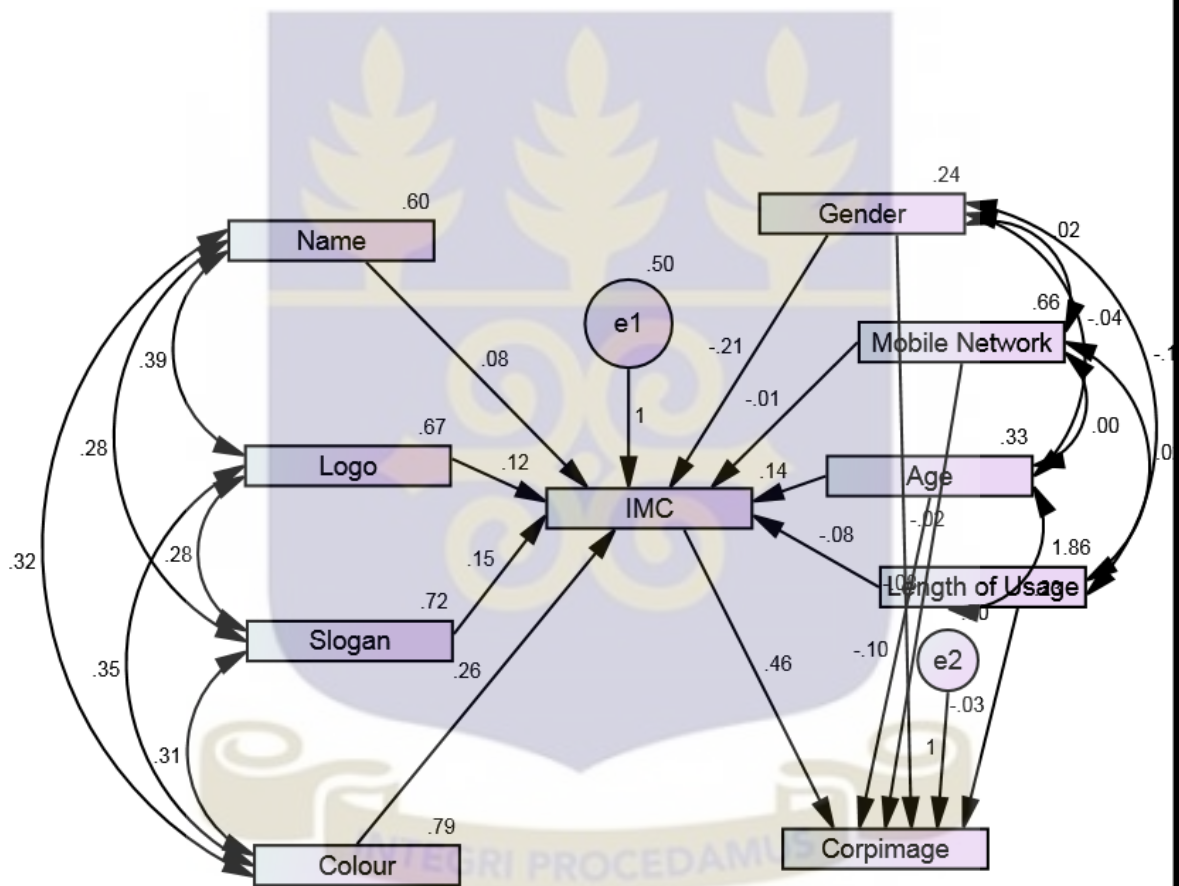
Figure 5.1: Partial mediation (full structural model)



Notes: IMC = marketing communication, corpimage = corporate brand image

Figure 5.2: full mediation (full structural model)

Notes: CL= logo, CS= slogan, CC= colour, IMC= marketing communication, BI= corporate brand image.



5.6.1 Hypotheses Testing

In order to test research hypotheses one to three, the mediation effects of marketing communication on customer perception of the corporate brand image was assessed in the full structural model.

5.6.1.1 Test For Mediation

To establish mediation effects as conceptualised earlier, all significant parameters were tested using guidelines from Baron and Kenny (1986) for partial and full mediation conditions. A number of regression equations were estimated. First, marketing communication (mediator) was regressed on corporate rebranding (independent variable) and it showed a significant effect (corporate rebranding \rightarrow marketing communication, $\beta=0.60$, $p=0.00$). Corporate brand image (dependent variable) was regressed on corporate rebranding (independent variable) and this also showed a significant effect (corporate rebranding \rightarrow corporate brand image, $\beta=0.59$, $p=0.00$). The dependent variable was regressed on the independent variable and the mediator and the effect was significant (corporate rebranding \rightarrow marketing communication \rightarrow corporate brand image, $\beta=0.60$, $p=0.00$ was recorded for the first path, $\beta=0.24$, $p=0.00$ was recorded for the second path).

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), condition for mediation holds if: the independent variable affects the mediator in the first equation; the independent variable affects the dependent variable in the second equation; the mediator affects the dependent variable in the third equation. If all these conditions hold, then the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable must be less in the third equation than in the second. However, perfect mediation holds if the independent variable has no effect when the mediator is controlled

(Baron & Kenny, 1986). However, in this study, the independent variable had an effect on the dependent variable when the mediator was controlled, implying that, marketing communication only partially mediates the relationship between corporate rebranding and corporate brand image.

Two structural models were created, with corporate brand image as the dependent variable and corporate rebranding as the independent variable and marketing communication as a mediator. A partial and a full mediation model were run to identify which better fits the model. The structural model indicated an acceptable fit for partial mediation (χ^2 /d.f 1.43, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) 0.98, comparative fit index (CFI) 0.99, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) 0.96, and RMSEA 0.043) and poor fit for all indices on full mediation. Table 5.4 summarises the fit indices for partial and full mediation models.

Table 5.4 Fit Indices

Fit Indices	Full Mediation	Partial Mediation
(χ^2) /d.f	4.24	1.43
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	0.94	0.98
Comparative fit index	0.86	0.99
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	0.69	0.96
Root mean square error approximation	0.12	0.043

The first objective of this study was to examine the impact of corporate rebranding on customer perception of corporate brand image. The results showed that, corporate rebranding has a significant and positive relationship with customer perception of corporate brand image ($\beta=0.59$, $p=0.00$). This implies that, a change in corporate visual identity elements that is favourably perceived by customers will result in a positive corporate brand image perception. This implies that, memorable, meaningful and likeable new corporate brand elements (name, logo, slogan and colour) have a positive impact on customer perception of the corporate brand image, this provides support for hypothesis one.

The second objective of this study was to identify the corporate brand element which has the greatest impact on customer perception of the corporate brand image. The results indicated that, change in the corporate brand name had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image ($\beta =0.26$, $p=0.00$), this provides support for hypothesis 2C. This indicates that, change in the corporate brand name that is favourably perceived by customers enhances corporate brand image perception. The more likeable, meaningful and memorable the new name is, the better the customer perception of the corporate brand image.

The corporate logo had a positive but insignificant relationship with customer perception of the corporate brand image ($\beta=0.08$, $p=0.23$). This indicates that, the change in corporate logo has no significant influence on customer perception of corporate brand image. Customers do not perceive the corporate logos of their mobile networks to be memorable, meaningful and likeable. Therefore hypothesis 2A was rejected.

The change in corporate slogan had a positive and significant impact on customer perception of corporate brand image ($\beta=0.15$, $p=0.01$). However the change in corporate name had a greater impact ($\beta =0.26$, $p=0.00$) than a slogan change. The corporate colour also had a significant and positive impact on customer perception of corporate brand image ($\beta=0.11$,

$p=0.05$). The results imply that, the change in the slogan and colour significantly influence customer perception of the corporate brand image. However the corporate name had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image, hence hypothesis 2A, 2B, and 2D were rejected.

The third objective of this study was to identify the mediating role of marketing communication. The results indicate that, marketing communication partially mediated the relationship between corporate rebranding and corporate brand image as both the direct path (corporate rebranding \rightarrow corporate brand image, $\beta=0.59$, $p=0.00$) and the indirect path (corporate rebranding \rightarrow marketing communication \rightarrow corporate brand image, path 1 $\beta = 0.60$, $p=0.00$, path 2 $\beta=0.24$, $p=0.00$) were significant. Corporate rebranding influences customer perception of corporate brand image even without marketing communication. However, marketing communication improves customer perception of corporate brand image since it has a significant positive relationship with corporate brand image ($\beta=0.24$, $p=0.000$). This provides support for hypothesis 3. Table 5.5 provides a summary of results for hypotheses testing.



Table 5.5 Summary of hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	Unstandardised Regression Path	β	S.E	C.R.	Pvalue	Hypothesis result
H1	Corporate rebranding → corporate brand image	0.59	0.07	8.16	0.00	Supported
H2A	Logo → corporate brand image	0.079	0.07	1.19	0.23	Rejected
H2B	Colour → corporate brand image	0.11	0.06	1.92	0.05	Rejected
H2C	Name → corporate brand image	0.26	0.07	3.65	0.00	Supported
H2D	Slogan → corporate brand image	0.15	0.06	2.71	0.01	Rejected
H3 (Indirect effect)	Corporate rebranding → Marketing communication Marketing communication → corporate brand image	0.60 0.24	0.07 0.06	8.31 4.21	0.00 0.00	Supported <i>Note: partial mediation, as both direct and indirect paths are significant</i>
H3 (direct effect)	Corporate rebranding → corporate brand image	0.59	0.07	8.16	0.02	
	Gender → corporate brand image	-0.06	0.09	-0.73	0.46	
	Mobile network → corporate brand image	-0.11	0.05	-2.14	0.03	
	Age → corporate brand image	-0.12	0.08	-1.57	0.12	
	Length of usage → corporate brand image	-0.06	0.03	-1.86	0.06	

5.7 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Results from the full structural model indicate that corporate rebranding influences customer perception of the corporate brand image if the new corporate brand elements are perceived by customer's to be meaningful, likeable and memorable. The first objective of the study was to examine the impact of corporate rebranding on customer perception of corporate brand image. It was hypothesised that, corporate rebranding had a significant and positive relationship with customer perceptions of corporate brand image. The results indicated that, corporate rebranding had a significant and positive relationship with customer perception of corporate brand image. This provides support for hypothesis 1. This finding is consistent with previous studies. Koku (1997) asserts that, corporate rebranding was an effective strategy for firms to communicate their improved standards. The findings also support the findings of Makasi et al. (2014) which revealed that, corporate rebranding generated positive perceptions for a company. However this finding conflicts with the findings of Collange (2015) whose study revealed that consumer's evaluation of a brand declined after a corporate rebranding exercise. The findings of Edmondson (2002) also revealed that a corporate rebranding exercise can provoke a loss of goodwill.

The findings of Ing (2012) indicated that, customer's perception of corporate rebranding varied according to brand familiarity, the better the customer's brand familiarity, the better the customer perception. The positive corporate image perceptions among customers in this study could be attributed to the category of customers selected. Only customers who had knowledge of the corporate rebranding and had used the brand before and after the corporate rebranding were selected, this group was more likely to have greater brand familiarity, hence the positive corporate brand image perceptions.

The second objective of this study was to identify the brand element with the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. This study has revealed that, customer perception of corporate brand image is affected by changes in corporate brand elements, as all the corporate brand elements with the exception of the logo had a significant and positive impact on customer's perception of corporate brand image. Keller and Aaker (1992) assert that, organisations should select brand elements that are meaningful, likeable and memorable. Using this criteria to select brand elements generates desired results. This study provides support for Keller (2001) assertion that meaningful, memorable and likeable brand elements aid in shaping customer perception of the corporate brand image.

The change in corporate colour is seldom discussed in the corporate rebranding literature. An interesting finding of this study was that, it has revealed that, the change in the corporate colour also has a significant influence on customer perception of corporate brand image in a corporate rebranding exercise. This affirms Hynes (2009) assertion that, the corporate colour has a significant impact on the customer perception of the corporate brand image. It further affirms the findings of Henderson and Cote (1998), which showed that corporate colours create imagery and symbolic values among stakeholders. It was hypothesised that, the change in corporate colour had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. However, the change in the corporate name had a greater impact on customer perception, than the corporate colour, thus the hypothesis was rejected.

It was hypothesised that, the change in corporate name had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. This hypothesis was supported as the corporate brand name was found to be the corporate brand element with the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. This study has confirmed the findings of Stuart and Muzellec (2004) that the brand name is the anchor of brand equity since it has the most

significant impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. The results have revealed that a memorable, likeable and meaningful corporate brand name has the greatest influence on customer perception of the corporate brand image. This is in line with the findings of Kapferer (1995). Kapferer (1995) stresses that, the corporate name is the means by which an organisation sends signals to its consumers and the corporate brand image arises from decoding these signals. Customers of rebranded mobile telecommunication companies in Ghana had favourable perceptions of the corporate names and this has translated into positive corporate brand image perceptions. Though the change in the corporate name is considered the riskiest of all corporate rebranding strategies, selecting new corporate names that are perceived as memorable, meaningful and likeable by customers generated positive corporate image perception for rebranded companies.

It was hypothesised that, the corporate logo had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. This hypothesis was not supported as the corporate logo was found to have an insignificant impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. However this conflicts with the findings of Faroudi et al. (2014). The study by Faroudi et al. (2014), revealed that, the corporate logo had a significant and positive impact on customer's perception of corporate brand image, however, their study was based on only corporate logos. Stuart (2003) posits that, if there is no reason for a logo change, it may go unnoticed. The insignificant relationship between the change in corporate logo and customer perception of corporate brand image could be due to the fact that, consumers do not deem the logo change necessary. Customers of rebranded mobile telecommunications companies in Ghana do not find the corporate logos of their mobile network companies memorable, meaningful and likeable.

To determine if the corporate slogan was the brand element with the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image, it was hypothesised that, the change in corporate

slogan had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. Though the change in corporate slogan had a positive and significant relationship with customer perception of corporate brand image, the hypothesis was rejected because the change in name had the greatest impact on the perceived corporate brand image than the slogan. This finding supports existing literature. Roy and Sarkar (2015) and Dahlen and Rosengren (2005) assert that, slogans influence customer perception of corporate brand image. Furthermore, Stuart (2003) posits that, an exceptional slogan can give a company a positive image. Thus, an assertion can be made that customer's perception of the corporate slogans of their mobile networks are favourable and this had positively influenced their perceptions of the corporate brand image.

The third objective of this study was to examine the role marketing communication plays in shaping customer perception of corporate brand image. It was hypothesised that, marketing communication mediates the relationship between corporate rebranding and brand image. This hypothesis was supported. The results indicated a partial mediation between corporate rebranding and corporate brand image. Studies by Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) indicate that, communication serves as a means of building corporate image in a corporate rebranding exercise. This finding is also in line with Tevi's (2013) study. According to Tevi (2013), the changes in the corporate brand elements send signals to stakeholders that, something about the organisation has changed. Tevi (2013) further asserts that, the external communication to which stakeholders are exposed about the identity of rebranded companies are crucial elements in building brand equity. This explained why marketing communication partially mediated the relationship between corporate rebranding and corporate brand image. The change in the corporate visual identity elements communicate to external stakeholders without the influence of marketing communication. However marketing communication improves customer perception of the corporate brand image. This study affirms the findings of previous studies on the role of communication in shaping customer's perception of the corporate brand image in a

corporate rebranding exercise (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2003; Tevi 2013; Collange 2015). This study supports Muzellec and Lambkin (2008) assertion that, communication aids in creating a positive corporate brand image for rebranded companies.

The control variables were not the focus of this study and were not expected to have a significant influence on corporate brand image. Age, gender, length of usage of a particular network did not have any significant influence on customer perception of corporate brand image. However the type of mobile network, had a significant relationship with perceived corporate brand image. This implies perceived corporate brand image will vary depending on the network provider. This finding needs further investigation.

5.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter discussed the results from the data analysis. Key findings from the study indicate that corporate rebranding had a positive and significant impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. The corporate name was found to be the brand element with the most significant impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. Marketing communication was also found to partially mediate the relationship between corporate rebranding and corporate brand image.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This study sought to examine the impact of corporate rebranding exercise on customer perception of the corporate brand image in the telecommunications sector in Ghana. The study also examined the role of marketing communication in shaping customer perception of corporate brand image and the corporate brand element which had the greatest impact on customer perception of the corporate brand image. This chapter summarises the research findings, implications, conclusions and recommendations for firms that have rebranded or planning to rebrand. The chapter also proposes directions for future research.

6.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

6.1.1 Corporate Rebranding and Customer Perception of Corporate Brand Image

The first objective of this study was to examine the impact of a corporate rebranding exercise on how customers perceive the corporate brand image of rebranded mobile telecommunication companies in Ghana. It was hypothesised that, corporate rebranding had a significant and positive relationship with customer perception of corporate brand image. This hypothesis was supported. The results revealed that, corporate rebranding involving the change in the corporate name, logo, slogan and colours had a positive and significant relationship on the perceived corporate brand image ($\beta=0.59$, $p=0.00$). This shows that, likeable, memorable and meaningful

corporate brand elements will positively influence customer perception of the corporate brand image.

6.1.2 The Corporate Brand Element with the Greatest Impact on Customer Perception of Corporate Brand Image

The second objective of this study was to identify the corporate brand element with the greatest impact on customer perception of the corporate brand image. Four hypothesis were made with respect to the change in name, logo, slogan and colour. The change in each of the elements was hypothesised to have the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image. Three of the hypothesis were rejected. The results of the full structural model indicated that, the change in the corporate name had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image ($\beta=0.26$, $p=0.00$) compared to the logo, slogan and colours. Hence, the hypothesis that, the name had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image was supported. This showed that, customers had favourable perception about the corporate names of their mobile networks and this had significantly influenced their perception of corporate brand image more than the slogan, logo and colours. Generally, the findings have indicated that, with the exception of the corporate logo, consumers perceived the current corporate brand elements to be meaningful, memorable and likeable and this had translated into favourable corporate brand image perceptions.

6.1.3 The Mediating Role of Marketing Communication in Shaping Customer Perception of Corporate Brand Image

The third research objective was to ascertain the role marketing communication plays in shaping customer perception of corporate brand image of rebranded companies. The results

clearly indicated that, marketing communication partially mediated the relationship between corporate rebranding and corporate brand image. Both the direct ($\beta=0.59$, $p=0.00$) and indirect paths ($\beta=0.24$, $p=0.00$) were found to be significant. Furthermore, the full structural model indicated acceptable model fit and goodness of fit indices for partial mediation ($\chi^2/d.f$ 1.43, GFI 0.98, CFI 0.99, TLI 0.96, RMSEA 0.043) and poor fit for full mediation ($\chi^2/d.f$ 4.24, GFI 0.94, CFI 0.86, TLI 0.69, RMSEA 0.12). Also the model did not meet Baron and Kenny's (1986) guidelines for full mediation condition. According to Baron and Kenny (1986) perfect mediation holds if the independent variable has no effect when the mediator is controlled. However, in this study, the independent variable had an effect on the dependent variable when the mediator was controlled ($\beta=0.59$, $p=0.00$). This provided justification for the fact that, marketing communication partially mediated the relationship between corporate rebranding and corporate brand image. Corporate rebranding still had a significant and positive relationship with corporate brand image without marketing communication.

6.2 IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

6.2.1 Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, the study contributes to the existing literature by identifying the corporate brand element that has the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image in a corporate rebranding exercise. This implies that, customer perception of the new corporate name, slogan and colour should be carefully considered before undertaking a corporate rebranding exercise.

The findings of several researches (Balmer & Gray, 2003; Dowling, 2008; Van Riel & Van den Ban, 2001) suggest that, corporate visual identity leads to corporate image. The current study provides a framework that examines the relationship between corporate rebranding and

customer perception of corporate brand image. The study has also contributed to the literature on corporate rebranding by assessing the longterm impact of a corporate rebranding exercise on customer perception of corporate image with empirical data. Corporate rebranding exercises should focus more on the corporate name, slogan and colour as these were the most significant predictors of corporate brand image.

Essentially, this study has confirmed the direct effect of corporate rebranding on corporate brand image and the indirect effect through marketing communication. This suggests that marketing communication is a key strategic variable in shaping customers perception of corporate brand image. This means that, using formal communication tools like marketing communication to communicate the new corporate brand elements improves perceptions of corporate brand image of rebranded companies among customers. A strong marketing communication programme improves customer's perceptions of the memorability, meaningfulness and likeability of new corporate brand elements and in effect, this positively impact the corporate brand image perceptions.

6.2.2 Managerial Implications

In highly competitive markets such as the mobile telecommunication market, where mergers and acquisitions are very common, effectively managing and communicating the corporate visual identity is vital to the future existence of these companies. The managerial contribution of this study lies in designing effective corporate rebranding strategies. The findings suggest that, effective corporate rebranding exercises should include marketing communication to positively influence customer perception of the corporate brand image. Companies that have rebranded or intending to rebrand should make customer's overall perception of the new corporate visual identity elements paramount, and clearly communicate these elements to

consumers in order to create a strong corporate brand image. A company that is perceived by customers to have a strong corporate brand image will be more likely to retain its customers than a company with a negative corporate brand image. Management can create a strong corporate image by judiciously creating corporate visual identity elements that are likeable, memorable and meaningful in order to enhance their corporate image. Managers should further utilise marketing communication tools to communicate their characteristics and corporate brand identity in order to enhance corporate brand image perceptions.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

The study conceptualised corporate rebranding as a change in corporate brand elements (name, logo, slogan and colours). The study examined customers perception of the memorability, meaningfulness and likeability of these new corporate brand elements and how it influences customer perception directly or through marketing communication.

The findings of this study reveal that, corporate rebranding influenced customer perception of the corporate brand image. The more likeable, meaningful and memorable consumers perceive the new corporate brand elements to be, the more favourable their perception of the corporate brand image. The findings indicate that, corporate brand elements can be used by companies to form strong perception based bonds with their customers. The findings also indicate that, organisations can use corporate rebranding to favourably communicate important characteristics of the corporate identity to their customers.

Furthermore, the results from the full structural model indicate that, customers perception of the corporate rebranding exercise will be more favourable if it is communicated through the marketing communication variables. All the corporate brand elements had a positive impact on

marketing communication. Marketing communication has a positive and significant impact on customer perception of corporate image ($\beta=0.24$, $p=0.00$). The more favourable consumers perceive the marketing communications activities of the organisation, the better their perception of the corporate brand image.

Finally, the results have also revealed that, the change in name had the greatest impact on customer perception of corporate brand image, followed by the slogan and colour. However, this study has shown that, the change in the corporate logo does not significantly impact customers perceptions of the corporate brand image of rebranded mobile telecommunication companies in Ghana.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The telecommunication industry tops the list of industries that frequently rebrand due to the high prevalence of mergers and acquisitions in the sector (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006; Stuart & Muzellec, 2004). After these mergers and acquisitions, these organisations frequently rebrand to signal a change in ownership and to create a new image among stakeholders. Keller (1993) asserts that the power of the brand is what resides in the minds of customers when they think of that brand. Hence customer perceptions about the brand is important in creating a strong and favourable image for an entity. Customer perception about a corporate rebranding exercise is important as this influences their corporate brand image perceptions.

This study recommends that, companies select corporate brand elements that are meaningful, likeable and memorable to enhance customers' perception of the corporate brand image. Ing (2012), asserts that, new visual identity can create new image associations by projecting the company's distinctiveness through the marketing communication mix to impress external

stakeholders. Firms seeking to rebrand should take into account consumer's attitude towards the new visual identity elements. Managers should solicit consumer's views of the new elements before and after the rebranding exercise to ensure the new elements convey the kind of image the organisation desires to project. The comprehension of customer perception of a corporate rebranding exercise is vital for firms to continuously survive and remain desirable in the long run.

It is further recommended that, firms carefully select new names. A name change has the greatest impact on customer perception of the corporate brand image. Hence, a name change that customers perceive to be unfavourable can destroy brand equity. The slogan and colours should also be given priority in a corporate rebranding exercise. Although the logo change was found not to have a significant impact on customer perception, firms should select logos that are visually appealing and likeable to positively influence customer perception of corporate brand image.

Organisations should clearly communicate rebranded elements and what they represent in their marketing communication activities. This study has revealed that, the more favourable consumers perceive the marketing communication activities of the organisation, the better their perceptions of the corporate brand image.

6.5 LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study considered only the perceptions of customers. Thus, future research can consider the perceptions of other stakeholders, such as employees of rebranded companies to see if their perceptions differed from customers. A Study by Davies et al., (2004) has shown that, perceptions of employees about the organisation influence their attitudes towards customers and this in turn influences customer perception of the corporate brand image. The study also

considered the perceptions of customers from one industry. Future research can compare perceptions across industries. This study controlled for demographic variables. However, the type of mobile network used by respondents had a significant effect on customer's corporate brand image perceptions. Future research can examine if perceptions varied depending on the type of network customers used.



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Appendix I – Questionnaire
QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

I am a second year MPhil student with the department of Marketing and Entrepreneurship at the University of Ghana Business School. I am conducting a study on corporate rebranding and customer perception of corporate brand image in the mobile telecommunications sector in Ghana. The outcome of this study will be used solely for academic purposes, specifically in partial fulfilment for the award of the MPhil degree in marketing.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1. Please indicate your gender Male Female
2. Please indicate your nationality:
3. Please indicate your age group 25-35 36-45 more than 45
4. What programme are you enrolled in: Certificate Diploma Bachelor’s degree Master’s degree Doctorate degree others, please specify:
5. How many mobile networks do you subscribe to? 1 2 3 4 5
6. Which mobile network is your primary network? MTN Vodafone Tigo Airtel Expresso
7. How long have you been with your primary network? 6 years 7-8 years 9-10 years 11-12 years Above 12 years

SECTION B: CORPORATE REBRANDING

Please choose your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by ticking the appropriate cell.

Key: Strongly disagree =1 Disagree=2 Neutral=3 Agree=4 Strongly agree=5

Please answer the questions with reference to your primary network

No.		1	2	3	4	5
	Change in Name					
8	The name of my mobile network is easily recognisable					
9	The name of my mobile network is easy to recall					
10	The name of my mobile network communicates what the company stands for					
11	The name of my mobile network evokes positive feelings					
12	The name of my mobile network is interesting					
13	The name of my mobile network is likable					
	Change in Logo					
14	The logo of my mobile network is easy to recognise					
15	The logo of my mobile network is easy to recall					
16	The logo of my mobile network communicates what it stands for					
17	The logo of my mobile network evokes positive feelings					
18	The logo of my mobile network is interesting					
19	The logo of my mobile network is likable					
20	The logo of my mobile network is visually appealing					

Key: Strongly disagree =1 Disagree=2 Neutral=3 Agree=4 Strongly Agree=5						
	Change in Slogan	1	2	3	4	5
21	The slogan of my mobile network is easy to recognise					
22	The slogan of my mobile network is easy to recall					
23	The slogan of my mobile network company communicates what it stands for					
24	The slogan of my mobile network evokes positive feelings					
25	The slogan of my mobile network is interesting					
26	The slogan of my mobile network is likable					
	Change in Colour					
27	The colour of my mobile network is easy to recognise					
28	The colour of my mobile network is easy to recall					
29	The colour of my mobile network communicates what it stands for					
30	The colour of my mobile network evokes positive feelings					
31	The colour of my mobile network is visually appealing					
32	The colour of my mobile network is likable					
	Marketing Communications: my mobile network company communicates its new corporate brand elements via:					
33	Advertisements					
34	Sales promotions					
35	Direct marketing					
36	Publicity/public relations activities					
37	Personal selling activities					
38	Sponsorship activities					
39	Trade shows and fairs					
	Corporate brand image					
40	My mobile network gives me a good impression					
41	My mobile network is better than its competitors					
42	my mobile network has a good image					
43	My mobile network provides reliable services					
44	My mobile network inspires confidence					
45	My mobile network is socially responsible					
46	My mobile network has highly professional staff					

Thank you