

# Effectiveness of Promotional Strategy of Ncell Mobile Service in Nepal

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## Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of promotional strategy of Ncell mobile service in Nepal. Customer preference is the dependent variable. The selected independent variables are offers, TV advertisement, hoarding board, celebrity endorsements, and campaigns. The primary source of data is used to assess the opinions of respondents regarding offers, TV advertisement, hoarding board, celebrity endorsements, campaigns, and customer preference. The study is based on primary data of 125 respondents. To achieve the purpose of the study, structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation and multiple regression models are estimated to test the significance and importance of effectiveness of promotional strategy of Ncell mobile service in Nepal

The study showed a positive impact of TV advertisement on customer preference. It indicates that positive TV advertisements leads to change in customer preference. Similarly, the study showed a positive impact of hoarding board on customer preference. It indicates that an attractive hoarding board leads to change in customer preference. Likewise, the study showed a positive impact of celebrity endorsement on customer preference. It indicates that higher the celebrity branding or celebrity advertising, higher would be the customer preference. Further, the study revealed a positive impact of campaigns on customer preference. It indicates that campaigns enhance the customer preference towards the brand. In addition, the study showed a positive impact of offers on customer preference. It indicates that innovative and attractive offers enhance the customer preference towards the products.

*Keywords:* offers, TV advertisement, hoarding board, celebrity endorsements, campaigns, customer preference

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## 1. Introduction

The telecommunications sector in Nepal has experienced significant growth and transformation over the past decade, largely driven by advancements in technology and a surge in mobile phone penetration. As one of the major players in the Nepalese telecommunications industry, Ncell has played a pivotal role in this evolution, offering a wide array of services to cater to the diverse needs of consumers. Central to Ncell's marketing strategy is its promotional efforts, which are designed to increase brand visibility, attract new customers, and retain existing ones. However, the effectiveness of these promotional strategies in achieving these objectives is not well understood. Promotion is a key component of the marketing mix, encompassing a range of activities aimed at communicating the value of a product or service to customers. Effective promotional strategies not only increase brand awareness but also help in building brand loyalty and driving sales. It is important for companies like Ncell to align their promotional activities with their overall marketing objectives.

Chandon *et al.* (2000) investigated the various consumer benefits of sales promotions and how these benefits influence their effectiveness beyond just monetary savings. The study showed that both hedonic and utilitarian benefits, as well as their congruence with the product, significantly impacted the effectiveness of sales promotions. Similarly, the drivers and outcomes of marketing strategy in a marketplace that includes both physical and electronic environments were examined by Varadarajan *et al.* (2002). The study indicated a

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significant changes from predominantly physical to electronically inclusive marketplaces, emphasizing the importance of strategic adaptation to maintain competitiveness. Likewise, Thackeray *et al.* (2008) examined how Web 2.0 applications can enhance promotional efforts in social marketing campaigns. The study showed that Web 2.0 applications significantly enhanced engagement and facilitated viral marketing, although strategic considerations must be taken into account. Further, Haas *et al.* (2011) investigated the promotion strategies for electricity from renewable energy sources (RES-E) in EU countries. The study indicated that technology-specific financial support measures and well-designed promotion schemes were effective in advancing RES-E technologies, with variations in the effectiveness of feed-in tariffs and quota systems with tradable green certificates. In addition, the impact of congruence between a consumer's perception of a celebrity's personality and the consumer's self-concept on the effectiveness of endorsements was examined by Choi and Rifon (2012). The study indicated that congruence between consumers' self-concept and celebrity image significantly enhanced the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements. Moreover, Yasmin *et al.* (2015) investigated the significance of digital marketing for marketers and consumers, particularly its impact on firms' sales compared to traditional marketing. The study indicated that digital marketing was more effective than traditional marketing in attracting customers and fostering brand interaction, thereby positively impacting firms' sales.

McAlister *et al.* (2016) investigated the intricate relationship between advertising, firm sales, and firm value, particularly focusing on how this dynamic is affected by the firm's strategic positioning as either differentiators or cost leaders. The study indicated that while advertising drove sales for all firms, its impact on firm value was more significant for differentiators than for cost leaders, emphasizing the importance of brand equity in enhancing firm value. Similarly, French *et al.* (2020) examined a strategy for enhancing COVID-19 vaccination uptake by establishing a consensus on vaccination order, alleviating fears and concerns, and addressing the anti-vaccination movement. The study indicated key guidelines for governments and regional bodies, emphasizing the need for clear vaccination orders, communication strategies to reduce fears, combating misinformation, and building public trust. Further, Lahtinen *et al.* (2020) examined the effectiveness of applying a full marketing mix (4Ps) compared to a promotion-only campaign (1P) in increasing fruit and vegetable (FV) intake among 6-13-year-old Finnish children. The study revealed that the full marketing mix (4Ps) was more effective than the promotion-only (1P) campaign in increasing FV intake among children. In addition, the effectiveness of content marketing and its optimal design and implementation within specific organizational contexts was investigated by Koob (2021). The study highlighted that clarity and commitment to the content marketing strategy, alignment of content production with target group needs and journalistic quality criteria, regular measurement of content marketing performance, use of performance data for improving content offerings, and structural specialization are highly associated with content marketing effectiveness.

Li *et al.* (2021) examined the effectiveness of social media marketing in enhancing the performance of casual-dining restaurants. The study indicated that social media engagement metrics vary across different SNSs and promotional activities, and that they have a significant positive impact on the performance of casual-dining restaurants. Similarly, the cost-effectiveness in mental health prevention and promotion interventions was investigated by Le *et al.* (2021). The study showed that most interventions for mental health prevention and promotion were cost-effective or cost-saving, with targeted prevention being more cost-

effective than universal prevention. Likewise, Lee and Charles (2021) examined the impact of consumers' perceptions regarding the ethics of online retailers and promotional strategies on their repurchase intention. The study revealed that when CPEOR was high, consumers repurchase intention was higher for Price Discount-based promotions compared to CRM-based promotions, while the opposite was true when CPEOR was low. Further, the effect of the marketing mixes on purchasing decisions in the context of the Tea Powder business in Bandung was investigated by Yusuf *et al.* (2022). The study indicated a significant influence of product, distribution, and promotion on consumers' decisions, while product and price significantly influenced satisfaction. Moreover, consumers' decisions significantly influenced satisfaction and loyalty, and satisfaction significantly influenced loyalty. In addition, Khan *et al.* (2023) examined the perceptions of digital marketing among marketing professionals in Pakistan. The study revealed four major perception groups: skeptical, enthusiast, utilitarian, and parsimonious, indicating that marketing professionals in Pakistan are generally more skeptical towards digital marketing tools and concepts. Moreover, the intensity of promotion contributes to the improvement of company image and consumer appeal was investigated by Aripin *et al.* (2023). The study indicated that promotions, when done wisely, can positively contribute to improving a company's image and consumer appeal, with key factors including the right frequency of promotions, consistent messaging, and timeliness.

In the context of Nepal, Adhikari (2016) examined the impact of advertising on smartphone purchases in Kathmandu Valley. The study found that different advertising mediums and message content significantly influence consumer decision-making processes. Similarly, Baniya (2017) investigated the dynamics underpinning celebrity endorsements and their impact on brand loyalty among Nepali consumers. The study found that the attributes of celebrity endorsers have differential effects on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Likewise, Sawagvudcharee *et al.* (2018) assessed the determinants of consumer purchase decisions regarding beer brands in Nepal. The study found that brand awareness, perceived quality, pricing strategies, and promotional initiatives differentially impact consumer choice behavior. Further, Parajuli (2019) analyzed the women's attitudes towards advertising in Nepal. The study found that advertising content and messaging have a differential impact on consumer perceptions and societal norms, providing insights into the potential efficacy of gender-sensitive promotional initiatives in resonating with Nepali consumers and fostering brand affinity and engagement.

The above discussion shows that empirical evidences vary greatly across the studies on the effectiveness of promotional strategy on customer preference. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidences in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, in order to support one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The major objective of the study is to examine the effectiveness of promotional strategy of Ncell mobile service in Nepal. Specifically, it examines the relationship of offer, TV advertisement, hoarding board, celebrity endorsements, and campaigns with customer preference.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: section two describes the sample, data, and methodology. Section three presents the empirical results and final section draws the conclusion.

## 2. Methodological aspects

The study is based on the primary data which were collected from 125 respondents through questionnaire. The study employed convenience sampling method. The respondents' views were collected on offer, TV advertisement, hoarding board, celebrity endorsements, campaigns, and customer preference. This study is based on descriptive as well as causal comparative research designs.

### *The model*

The model used in this study assumes that customer preference depends upon effectiveness of promotional strategy. The dependent variable selected for the study is customer preference. Similarly, the selected independent variables are offer, TV advertisement, hoarding board, celebrity endorsements, and campaigns. Therefore, the model takes the following form:

Customer preference =  $f$  (Offers, Tv advertisement, hoarding boards, celebrity endorsements, and campaigns).

More specifically,

$$CP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 TV + \beta_2 HB + \beta_3 CE + \beta_4 C + \beta_5 O + e$$

Where,

EM = Customer preference towards Ncell

TV = TV advertisements

HB = Hoarding boards

CE = Celebrity endorsements

C = Campaigns

O = Offers

Customer preference towards Ncell was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "Ncell provides superior network coverage compared to other telecom providers" "Overall, I prefer Ncell over other telecom providers in Nepal" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.785$ ).

Offers were measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "Ncell's offers and promotions influence my decision to use their services" "I find Ncell's promotional offers attractive and beneficial" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.795$ ).

TV advertisement were measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Ncell’s TV advertisements are memorable and catch my attention”, “I find Ncell’s TV commercials to be creative and engaging” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.789$ ).

Hoarding boards was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Ncell’s hoarding boards are noticeable and impactful”, “I find Ncell’s hoarding board advertisements to be visually appealing” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.768$ ).

Celebrity endorsements were measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I am more likely to trust Ncell due to celebrity endorsements”, “Celebrity endorsements positively influence my perception of Ncell” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.792$ ).

Campaigns was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Ncell’s campaigns are impactful and memorable”, “I am likely to participate in Ncell’s campaigns and promotions” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.763$ ).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this study along with the hypothesis formulation.

### *Offer*

Offers refer to the propositions a company presents to potential customers, detailing the terms under which products or services are sold. Miller *et al.* (2021) examined the advertising, incentives, and the upsell: How advertising differentially moderates customer-vs. Retailer-directed price incentives’ impact on consumers’ preferences for premium products. The study found that offer has a positive impact on customer preference. Similarly, Verma and Thompson (1999) assessed the managing service operations based on customer preferences. The study revealed that offer has a positive impact on customer preferences. Likewise, Verma *et al.* (2004) analyzed the customer choices in e-financial services. The study showed that there is a positive relationship between offer and customer preferences. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive relationship between offers and customer preference.

### *TV advertisement*

A television advertisement, often known as a TV ad, is a form of marketing communication that utilizes the television medium to promote products, services, or brands to a broad audience. Khosravizadeh and Pazoki (2018) examined the dominant advertisement strategies in Iranian TV commercials and their cognitive effect. The study stated that Iranian

TV commercials used a mixture of analytic and effective cognitive strategies among which “elaborating on the reasons to buy”, “explaining the quality appeal” are the most favorite analytic based strategies and use of emotion and mood arising words is the most dominant affective based advertising method. Similarly, Korenkova *et al.* (2020) analyzed the consumer perception of modern and traditional forms of advertising. The study showed that TV advertisement has a positive and significant impact on customer preferences. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between TV advertisements and customer preference.

#### *Hoarding boards*

Hoarding boards, also known as billboards or advertising boards, are large outdoor advertising structures typically found in high-traffic areas such as along highways, major roads, and in urban centers. Solomon (2017) stated that hoarding boards’ ability to create brand awareness and influence consumer attitudes through engaging audiovisual content. Further, Peter and Olson (2010) emphasized that hoarding boards are short, broadcast advertisements designed to promote products or services by creating memorable and persuasive messages that capture viewers’ attention improving customer preference. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive relationship between hoarding boards and customer preference.

#### *Celebrity endorsements*

Celebrity endorsements are a marketing strategy where a celebrity or public figure is enlisted to promote a product, service, or brand. Kotler and Keller (2016) defined celebrity endorsements as a form of paid, non-personal promotion where a celebrity acts as a spokesperson for a brand or product. Similarly, Adedeji (2021) examined the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement on advertisement in achieving consumer brand preference. The study showed celebrity endorsements have positive impact on customer preferences towards the products. Likewise, Shukla and Dubey (2022) analyzed the celebrity selection in social media ecosystems: a flexible and interactive framework. The study stated that there is a positive relationship between celebrity endorsements and customer preferences. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a positive relationship between celebrity endorsements and customer preference.

#### *Campaigns*

Campaigns, in the realm of marketing and advertising, are strategic endeavors comprising a series of coordinated activities and messages with the aim of achieving specific goals and objectives over a defined period. Vinokurova (2019) examined the reshaping demand landscapes: How firms change customer preferences to better fit their products. The study stated that campaigns have positive and significant impact on customer preferences. Similarly, Mare and Annegarn (2017) revealed that campaigns have positive impact on customer preferences. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a positive relationship between campaigns and customer preference.

### 3. Results and discussion

#### *Correlation analysis*

On analysis of data, correlation analysis has been undertaken first and for this purpose, Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients along with mean and standard deviation has been computed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

#### **Kendall's Tau correlation coefficient matrix**

This table presents Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients between dependent variable and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 125 observations. The dependent variable is CP (Customer preference). The independent variables are TV (TV advertisements), HB (Hoarding boards), CE (Celebrity endorsements), C (Campaigns), and O (Offers).

Variables	Mean	S.D.	CP	TV	HB	CE	C	O
CP	4.471	1.408	1					
TV	4.411	1.429	0.071**	1				
HB	4.428	1.402	0.222**	0.024**	1			
CE	4.398	1.453	0.191**	0.100**	0.178**	1		
C	4.480	1.386	0.192**	0.099**	0.319**	0.182**	1	
O	4.595	1.385	0.180**	0.063**	0.130**	0.210**	0.310**	1

Notes: The asterisk signs (\*\*) and (\*) indicate that the result are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 shows that TV advertisement is positively correlated to customer preference indicating that positive TV advertisements leads to change in customer preference. Similarly, hoarding board is positively correlated to customer preference. It indicates that an attractive hoarding board leads to change in customer preference. Likewise, celebrity endorsement is positively correlated to customer preference. It indicates that higher the celebrity branding or celebrity advertising, higher would be the customer preference. Further, campaigns are also positively correlated to customer preference indicating that campaigns enhance the customer preference towards the brand. Moreover, offers are positively correlated to customer preference. It indicates that innovative and attractive offers enhance the customer preference towards the products.

#### *Regression analysis*

Having indicated the Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been carried out and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it shows the regression results of offer, TV advertisement, hoarding board, celebrity endorsement, and campaigns on customer preference.

Table 2

#### **Estimated regression result of offer, TV advertisement, hoarding board, celebrity endorsement, and campaigns on customer preference**



The results are based on 125 observations using linear regression model. The model is  $CP = \beta_0 + \beta_1TV + \beta_2HB + \beta_3CE + \beta_4C + \beta_5O + e$ , where the dependent variable is CP (Customer preference). The independent variables are TV (TV advertisements), HB (Hoarding boards), CE (Celebrity endorsements), C (Campaigns), and O (Offers).

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of					Adj. R <sub>bar</sub> <sup>2</sup>	SEE	F-value
		TV	HB	CE	C	O			
1	2.194 (6.924)**	0.511 (7.521)**					0.302	0.314	52.389
2	2.675 (8.466)**		0.509 (5.735)**				0.211	0.334	32.888
3	2.557 (7.558)**			0.434 (5.700)**			0.209	0.334	32.493
4	2.531 (8.882)**				0.443 (6.870)**		0.282	0.319	47.192
5	1.707 (5.496)**					0.619 (8.959)**	0.428	0.292	80.262
6	1.624 (4.679)**	0.399 (5.303)**	0.243 (3.393)**				0.359	0.301	34.284
7	1.365 (3.733)**	0.34 (4.254)**	0.195 (2.614)**	0.166 (2.018)*			0.375	0.297	24.814
8	1.227 (3.439)**	0.317 (4.078)**	0.09 (1.121)	0.096 (1.154)	0.443 (6.870)**		0.415	0.287	22.145
9	0.842 (2.465)*	0.204 (2.678)**	0.003 (0.032)	0.012 (0.149)	0.219 (3.068)**	0.379 (4.465)**	0.498	0.366	24.621

Notes:

- i. Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- ii. The asterisk signs (\*\*) and (\*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- iii. Customer preference is dependent variable.

The regression results show that the beta coefficients for TV advertisements are positive with customer preference. It indicates that TV advertisements has a positive impact on customer preference. This finding is consistent with the findings of Khosravizadeh and Pazoki (2018). Similarly, the beta coefficients for hoarding board are positive with customer preference. It indicates that hoarding board has a positive impact on customer preference. This finding is consistent with the findings of Solomon (2017). Likewise, the beta coefficients for celebrity endorsements are positive with customer preference. It indicates that celebrity endorsements have positive impact on customer preference. This finding is consistent with the findings of Adedeji (2021). Further, the beta coefficients for campaigns are positive with customer preference. It indicates that campaigns have positive impact on customer preference. This finding is consistent with the findings of Vinokurova (2019). In addition, the beta coefficients for offers are positive with customer preference. It indicates that offers have positive impact on customer preference. This finding is similar to the findings of Verma *et al.* (2004).

### 4. Summary and conclusion

Customer preference towards Ncell is influenced by various factors, including offers, TV advertisements, hoarding boards, campaigns, and celebrity endorsements. In the context of the Nepalese market, understanding the factors that drive customer preference is essential for enhancing Ncell’s market position and achieving greater customer loyalty. One of the key factors contributing to customer preference is the attractiveness of offers. Attractive offers can include discounts, data packages, and other value-added services that appeal to customers. Similarly, TV advertisements play a significant role in shaping



customer preferences. Effective TV advertisements can increase brand visibility and create a positive perception of the brand. Hoarding boards are another influential factor. Strategically placed hoarding boards can capture the attention of potential customers and reinforce brand messaging. Campaigns, whether promotional or awareness-driven, are crucial for engaging customers and encouraging them to choose Ncell over competitors. Lastly, celebrity endorsements can significantly boost customer preference. Celebrities who resonate with the target audience can enhance brand credibility and attract a larger customer base. Each of these factors plays a crucial role in shaping customer preference towards Ncell, highlighting the importance of a comprehensive marketing strategy.

This study attempts to examine the effectiveness of promotional strategy of Ncell mobile service in Nepal. The study is based on primary data of 125 respondents.

The major conclusion of the study is that offers, Tv advertisement, hoarding boards, celebrity endorsement, and campaigns have positive impact on customer preference towards Ncell. The study also concludes that offers is the most significant factor followed by TV advertisement that determine the level of customer preference.

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