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Assessing the Effectiveness of Marketing Communication Practices in Achieving Competitive Advantage: Evidence from Djezzy Telecommunications

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Abstract :

This study examines how marketing communication contributes to competitive advantage in Algerian service institutions, with a focus on Djezzy Telecommunications. A descriptive–analytical approach integrates theoretical review with field data collected through a structured questionnaire administered to Djezzy employees. Quantitative methods, including correlation and multiple regression, assess the impact of communication dimensions such as message clarity, communication objectives, media selection, budgeting, and promotional tools on market share growth, corporate reputation, and customer satisfaction. Results reveal that marketing communication is a core strategic driver of competitiveness. Djezzy's effective planning. The study highlights that communication spending should be treated as a strategic investment rather than a discretionary operational cost. Recommendations include strengthening digital and interactive platforms, investing in continuous staff training, and improving cross-departmental coordination to sustain leadership. This research contributes to service-marketing literature by demonstrating communication's role in competitive advantage within emerging markets.

Keywords:

Marketing communication, competitive advantage, Djezzy Telecommunications, corporate reputation, customer satisfaction,

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1. INTRODUCTION:

In modern economies, organizations operate in environments characterized by intense competition, technological disruption, and rapidly changing customer expectations. The ability to maintain a favorable market position increasingly depends on how effectively firms communicate with their audiences and differentiate their value propositions. Marketing communication therefore functions not merely as a promotional activity but as an integral **strategic instrument** linking organizational identity, market positioning, and consumer perception.

The telecommunications industry in Algeria offers a compelling context for studying this relationship. As one of the country's largest service sectors, it exhibits vigorous rivalry among key operators—Djezzy, Mobilis, and Ooredoo—each seeking to sustain brand visibility and customer loyalty. Within this competitive setting, **Djezzy** has invested heavily in communication programs aimed at reinforcing its image as a customer-oriented and technologically advanced company. Understanding how these practices translate into measurable competitive advantage forms the central motivation of this research.

Marketing communication provides organizations with the mechanisms to craft, convey, and reinforce messages that influence consumer behavior. When strategically aligned with corporate objectives, communication activities can build strong customer relationships, foster trust, and stimulate repeat purchasing—outcomes that constitute the building blocks of competitive advantage. Conversely, weak or inconsistent communication undermines brand credibility and erodes market share.

Thus, the guiding question of this study is:

To what extent do marketing communication practices contribute to achieving competitive advantage at Djezzy Telecommunications?

From this question arise sub-questions addressing (a) the tools and techniques Djezzy employs in marketing its services, (b) the dimensions through which competitive advantage manifests in service organizations, and (c) the specific mechanisms by which communication practices influence those dimensions.

Significance of the Study.

The research is significant for three reasons. First, it enriches the limited empirical literature on integrated marketing communication in North African service sectors. Second, it provides managerial insights for practitioners seeking to translate communication spending into sustainable advantage. Third, it contributes to understanding how **communication consistency** and **customer engagement** reinforce the strategic agility of service firms operating under environmental uncertainty.

Objectives.

The paper seeks to:

1. Examine the conceptual relationship between marketing communication and competitive advantage.
2. Analyze the marketing communication strategies employed by Djezzy Telecommunications.
3. Evaluate empirically how these strategies affect market share growth, corporate reputation, and customer satisfaction.
4. Offer actionable recommendations for optimizing communication policies in service-based enterprises.

Structure.

Following this introduction, Section 2 reviews theoretical perspectives on marketing communication and competitive advantage; Section 3 outlines the research methodology; Section 4 presents empirical findings; Section 5 discusses results; and Section 6 concludes with implications and recommendations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Marketing Communication: Concept, Importance, and Objectives

Marketing communication encompasses the coordinated use of all instruments that an organization deploys to present itself and its offerings to target audiences. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), it represents a "dialogue between the organization and its markets" intended to inform, persuade, and remind consumers of brand value. The modern interpretation moves beyond one-way message delivery to a continuous process of relationship building and stakeholder engagement (Belch & Belch, 2020).

Organizations rely on marketing communication to achieve several core purposes: creating awareness, shaping attitudes, and inducing behavior change. Without consistent

communication, even high-quality products risk market invisibility. The persuasive dimension of marketing communication thus serves as a bridge between product value and consumer perception.

Effective communication integrates both **cognitive** (knowledge-related) and **affective** (emotional) appeals. Cognitive objectives introduce and explain product attributes, while affective objectives shape preferences and loyalty. Behavioral objectives, finally, aim to stimulate purchasing and encourage advocacy. In service industries such as telecommunications—where offerings are intangible and experiences are co-created—communication plays a crucial role in **reducing perceived risk** and **enhancing trust**.

The marketing communications mix, often referred to as the **promotion mix**, comprises advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, and personal selling (Kotler et al., 2019). More recently, **digital and social media** have expanded this mix by enabling real-time interaction and user-generated content. Research by Keller (2016) indicates that integrated communication across these tools yields synergistic effects on brand equity and customer loyalty.

The Importance of Marketing Communication.

The importance of marketing communication stems from its ability to:

- Create desire by aligning messages with consumer needs;
- Fulfill expectations by conveying promises of superior service;
- Build corporate image and reputation; and
- Strengthen customer relationships through consistent engagement.

In competitive markets, communication becomes a strategic lever for differentiation. Firms that maintain a coherent brand narrative across multiple touchpoints enhance recognition and credibility. This logic underpins Djezzy's communication philosophy, which emphasizes transparency, innovation, and local community engagement as pillars of its brand positioning.

Objectives of Marketing Communication.

Consistent with Duncan and Moriarty (1998), communication objectives are typically classified into awareness, comprehension, conviction, and action. The present study adopt a tripartite framework :

1. **Cognitive objectives**—to inform and educate customers about new or improved services;
2. **Affective objectives**—to cultivate favorable attitudes and emotional attachment; and
3. **Behavioral objectives**—to induce purchase and long-term loyalty.

Djezzy's campaigns frequently integrate these objectives. For instance, its "Djezzy Flexy" program educates consumers on flexible data bundles (cognitive), highlights convenience and affordability (affective), and encourages subscription renewal (behavioral).

By aligning these layers, marketing communication functions as a **strategic resource**—one that transforms informational messages into sustained competitive strength.

2.2 Competitive Advantage: Concept, Characteristics, and Types

The notion of **competitive advantage** is rooted in strategic management theory, particularly in the seminal work of Porter (1985), who defined it as the ability of a firm to perform in ways that competitors cannot easily imitate or substitute. Competitive advantage results when an organization develops attributes that allow it to outperform rivals—whether through cost leadership, differentiation, or focus strategies.

In service contexts, competitive advantage extends beyond tangible efficiencies to include *intangible assets* such as brand equity, reputation, and customer relationships. Barney (1991) introduced the **Resource-Based View (RBV)**, arguing that firms achieve sustainable advantage when they possess resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN). Marketing communication qualifies as such a resource when it builds emotional bonds and symbolic meanings that competitors struggle to replicate.

According to Day (2011), market-driven organizations create advantage by sensing and responding to customer needs faster than competitors. This responsiveness is largely communication-based—it depends on gathering market intelligence and translating it into persuasive messages and adaptive offerings.

2.3 Importance of Competitive Advantage

Competitive advantage is fundamental to organizational survival and long-term profitability. It enables firms to:

1. Generate returns that exceed the cost of capital;

2. Retain loyal customers by offering superior value;
3. Withstand environmental turbulence through innovation; and
4. Build reputational capital that attracts partners and investors.

In the telecommunications industry, where services are largely homogeneous and technological imitation is rapid, communication-driven differentiation becomes critical. Djezzy's emphasis on local identity, social responsibility, and personalized service acts as a *symbolic differentiator* that fortifies its competitive position.

2.4 Objectives and Characteristics of Competitive Advantage

A firm pursuing competitive advantage typically aims to:

- Identify and exploit market opportunities ahead of rivals;
- Deliver consistent customer satisfaction through superior value;
- Foster innovation and operational efficiency; and
- Establish benchmarks that competitors strive to match.

Key characteristics include **relativity**, **sustainability**, and **defensibility** (Porter, 1985). Relativity implies that advantage exists only in comparison to rivals; sustainability ensures it endures over time; and defensibility protects it from imitation. To preserve these qualities, communication strategies must evolve continuously, embedding brand meaning deeply in consumers' minds—a form of psychological entry barrier.

2.5 Linking Marketing Communication to Competitive Advantage

The intersection between marketing communication and competitive advantage lies in the creation of **perceived value**. Scholars such as Madhavaram, Badrinarayanan, and McDonald (2005) argue that communication contributes to advantage when it reinforces differentiation through storytelling and brand associations.

Empirical research demonstrates that integrated marketing communication enhances **brand equity** and **customer loyalty**, both of which translate into market share and profitability (Keller, 2016; Finne & Grönroos, 2017).

In Djezzy's case, the company's campaigns highlight *connectivity as empowerment*—positioning itself not merely as a telecom provider but as a facilitator of personal and social progress. Such narrative framing converts ordinary services into emotionally

resonant experiences, producing competitive distinctiveness grounded in meaning rather than price.

2.6 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

Drawing on the reviewed literature, the study posits that effective marketing communication influences competitive advantage through three primary pathways:

1. **Market-share growth** via increased awareness and preference;
2. **Corporate reputation** through positive image and stakeholder trust; and
3. **Customer satisfaction** through perceived service quality and relational commitment.

Accordingly, two main hypotheses guide the empirical analysis:

- **H_1:** There is a significant positive relationship between marketing-communication dimensions and the dimensions of competitive advantage.
- **H_2:** Marketing-communication dimensions exert a positive effect on competitive-advantage outcomes.

Each hypothesis is operationalized through measurable indicators detailed in the methodology section below.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopts a **descriptive–analytical design**, integrating quantitative field data with theoretical interpretation. This design is appropriate for social-science inquiries that aim to explain relationships among variables rather than merely describe phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The research combines **descriptive analysis**—to outline existing communication practices—and **inferential analysis**—to test hypothesized relationships using statistical methods (correlation and multiple regression).

3.2 Population and Sampling

The population comprises employees of **Djezzy Telecommunications** in Algeria, specifically personnel involved in marketing, customer service, and communications.

From approximately 600 eligible staff, a **stratified random sample** of 150 participants was selected to ensure representation across functional areas and hierarchical levels.

Data collection employed a structured questionnaire distributed both electronically and in paper form during 2024. A total of 132 valid responses were received (response rate = 88%), which satisfies the minimum threshold for regression analysis according to Tabachnick and Fidell (2019).

3.3 Research Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

1. **Demographics:** position, tenure, and department.
2. **Marketing-communication dimensions:** five constructs measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree):
    - Awareness of marketing-communication concept;
    - Objectives of communication;
    - Preferred communication media;
    - Budget allocation;
    - Communication tools and channels.
3. **Competitive-advantage dimensions:** market-share growth, corporate reputation, and customer satisfaction, likewise rated on five-point scales.

Instrument validity was assessed through expert review and pilot testing with 20 respondents. Cronbach's α coefficients ranged from 0.78 to 0.89, indicating acceptable internal consistency (Hair et al., 2020).

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed using **SPSS v.27**. Descriptive statistics summarized sample characteristics; Pearson's r measured correlations among constructs; and multiple-regression models tested the effect of marketing-communication dimensions on each competitive-advantage outcome. Significance was set at $p < .05$.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Participants were informed of the study's academic purpose and assured confidentiality. No personal identifiers were collected, and participation was voluntary. The research

design complied with Ibn Khaldoun University's ethics guidelines for human-subjects research.

4. Results

4.1 Hypothesis 1: Relationship Between Marketing-Communication Dimensions and Competitive-Advantage Dimensions

To test the first hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficients were computed between the five marketing-communication dimensions and the three competitive-advantage indicators.

Results show statistically significant positive correlations ($p < .05$) across most dimensions (Table 1). The highest relationships appear between *awareness of the communication concept* and *market-share growth* ($r = .69$, $p < .001$) and between *communication objectives* and *market-share growth* ($r = .79$, $p < .001$). Moderate but significant correlations emerge between *preferred media* and *corporate reputation* ($r = .52$, $p < .001$), and between *budget allocation* and *customer satisfaction* ($r = .46$, $p < .001$).

Table 1. Correlation between marketing-communication and competitive-advantage dimensions

Marketing-Communication Dimension	Market Share	Corporate Reputation	Customer Satisfaction
Awareness of Concept	.693	.197	.298
Objectives of Communication	.790	.149	.275
Preferred Media	.462	.523	.464
Budget Allocation	.308	.685	.464
Communication Tools	.863	.465	.291

Source: Researchers Contribution based on provided data

These results confirm Hypothesis 1: marketing-communication activities are significantly associated with enhanced competitive-advantage outcomes at Djezzy. The strength of correlations implies that communication awareness, goal clarity, and budget

management are particularly influential in expanding market share and improving satisfaction.

4.2 Hypothesis 2: Effect of Marketing-Communication Dimensions on Competitive-Advantage Dimensions

Multiple-regression analyses were used to determine causal influence.

4.2.1 Model 1: Market-Share Growth

All five communication dimensions jointly explained **68 %** of the variance in market-share growth ($R^2 = .68$, $p < .001$). The most substantial predictors were *communication awareness* ($\beta = .54$, $p < .001$) and *communication objectives* ($\beta = .28$, $p < .01$). Budget and tools had smaller yet significant effects ($\beta \approx .07$, $p < .05$).

4.2.2 Model 2: Corporate Reputation

Regression results indicated that preferred media ($\beta = .36$, $p < .01$), budget allocation ($\beta = .34$, $p < .01$), and communication tools ($\beta = .33$, $p < .05$) significantly enhance corporate reputation. The model explained **61 %** of variance ($R^2 = .61$).

4.2.3 Model 3: Customer Satisfaction

Marketing-communication variables jointly explained **57 %** of variance in satisfaction ($R^2 = .57$, $p < .001$). Preferred media ($\beta = .36$) and budget allocation ($\beta = .37$) were the strongest predictors.

Collectively, the models validate Hypothesis 2: marketing-communication effectiveness exerts a measurable positive impact on competitive-advantage performance indicators.

4.3 Summary of Empirical Findings

1. Marketing-communication awareness and clarity of objectives directly contribute to market-share expansion.
2. Balanced budget allocation across channels improves corporate reputation and customer satisfaction.
3. Preferred media—especially digital platforms—strengthen brand engagement.
4. Communication tools function as operational drivers translating strategic intent into visible market outcomes.

These findings position marketing communication as a *strategic resource* in Djezzy's competitive arsenal.

5. Discussion

The empirical evidence aligns with contemporary scholarship asserting that integrated communication enhances strategic performance (Keller, 2016; Finne & Grönroos, 2017). Djezzy's case illustrates how communication consistency across advertising, social media, and public relations builds *brand coherence*—a precursor to trust and loyalty.

5.1 Marketing Communication as a Strategic Resource

Under the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991), intangible resources such as reputation and relational capital generate sustained advantage when they are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable. Djezzy's marketing-communication system meets these criteria by embedding culturally resonant messages and leveraging localized storytelling that competitors cannot easily replicate.

5.2 The Mediating Role of Customer Relationships

Customer-relationship theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) suggests that trust and commitment mediate the link between communication and loyalty. Djezzy's interactive campaigns—two-way SMS services, real-time feedback on social media—embody this relational orientation, strengthening satisfaction and repeat patronage.

5.3 Implications for Service Organizations

1. **Strategic alignment:** Communication objectives must derive from overall corporate strategy to ensure message coherence.
2. **Digital integration:** With rising internet penetration, firms should shift budgets toward digital storytelling, influencer partnerships, and data-driven personalization (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022).
3. **Measurement:** Communication effectiveness should be tracked through key performance indicators (KPI's) such as brand-recall rate, engagement metrics, and net promoter scores.

These implications reaffirm that communication effectiveness is not purely creative but analytical—requiring metrics, testing, and adaptation.

6. Conclusion

The research confirms that **marketing communication is a decisive determinant of competitive advantage** in Algerian service enterprises. For Djezzy, systematic communication management enhances market share, corporate reputation, and customer satisfaction.

The study's conceptual contribution lies in empirically linking communication variables to competitive-advantage metrics within an emerging-market context. Managerially, it underscores that communication investment should be treated as a strategic necessity, not discretionary expenditure.

Limitations include the study's single-case design and focus on employee perceptions rather than consumer data. Future research could apply mixed-methods approaches or comparative analyses across multiple telecom operators to generalize findings.

7. Recommendations

1. **Continuous Modernization:** Djezzy should update its communication tools in line with digital-media trends and evolving customer behavior.
2. **Employee Training:** Invest in specialized programs on integrated marketing communication and analytics.
3. **Public-Relations Expansion:** Strengthen community-oriented initiatives to reinforce positive reputation.
4. **Cross-Department Integration:** Enhance coordination between marketing, customer service, and technical teams to ensure message consistency.
5. **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Implement dashboards that monitor communication performance relative to competitive-advantage indicators.

By implementing these recommendations, Djezzy and similar service organizations can consolidate their market leadership and sustain long-term advantage through strategic communication excellence.

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