

Telecom Outcasts? Exploring Women Airtime Hawking and Mobile Telephony in Southwest Nigeria

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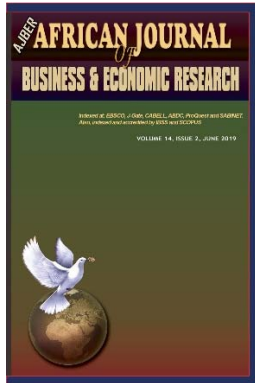
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Abstract

Women are considered vital and indispensable to the economic growth and sustainable development of any nation, but their subordinate position in the workplace in Africa is a concern. This study investigates the motivations behind airtime hawking by Nigerian women who operate at the bottom end of their country's mobile telephony business and are confined to the informal segment of the industry. A total of 625 respondents attended to questionnaire items about the factors that predisposed them to sell airtime on the streets. Results show they hawked to avoid being disturbed by the local revenue collectors and for quick and steady patronage, albeit small profits. The least contributory is that airtime hawking does not require a selling technique. These indicators are useful for industry captains, policymakers, and multilateral organisations interested in improving the conditions of women and their absorption into the mainstream economy.

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