

CUSTOMER COMPLAINT BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS MOBILE TELEPHONY SERVICES– CASES OF MTN AND TIGO GHANA

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines customer satisfaction and complaint responses towards Mobile telephony services. The study was a cross-sectional survey involving customers from two mobile telephony industries. A self-administered structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data and it was analysed using SPSS (version 16.0). The findings are that customer satisfaction rating differed according to the mobile network, and that previous dissatisfaction significantly influences complaining behaviour. Again, complaining behaviour is more prevalent among dissatisfied customers than satisfied ones. Moreover, it was found that dissatisfaction is not a necessary condition for complaining and that some customers may complain for several reasons even though they are satisfied. Implications and limitations are discussed. This paper contributes to providing empirical evidence on the much limited needed area of consumer complaining behaviour in the context of telephony industry in developing economies.

Keywords: Complaints, consumer behaviour, complaining responses, mobile telephony services, Ghana, overall customer satisfaction, previous dissatisfaction.

Paper type – Research paper

Introduction

The customer-centric marketing philosophy is undoubtedly found to be an important drive for business organizations that seek to establish long-term business relationship with profitable customers (Kotler & Keller, 2006; Gronroos, 1994; Stone, Woodcock, & Machtynger, 2000). This has resulted in development and implementation of business strategies that seek to understand customers better in order to satisfy and retain them for the organization (Kotler & Keller, 2006; Gronroos, 1994). Such strategies focus on areas such as customer relationship management, customer complaint management, customer satisfaction surveys, among others.

Customer complaint behaviour (CCB) is one area that has received great deal of attention from practitioners and scholars in the marketing literature. Many past studies have found that CCB is significantly caused by customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction, and that dissatisfied customers are more likely to complain than satisfied customers (Heung & Lam, 2003; Maute & Forrester, 1993; Mowen, 1993).

In spite of the effort mobile telephony operators may put forth towards satisfying and retaining profitable customers, Wysocki, Kepner, & Glasser (2001) noted that “No organization is so perfect in the delivery of superior customer performance that significant levels of dissatisfaction (the source of complaints) do not exist” (p.1). Since CCB is, therefore, inevitable, it is crucial for management of mobile telephony operators to understand customer complaining behaviour in order to effectively

manage it. What makes matters worse is that even some satisfied customers may still complain in order to provide useful feedback to product/service providers on service quality (Liu, Kang, Bai, & Zhang 2006). Again, some dissatisfied customers may not voice their complaint to the product/service provider, but may use other avenues to complain such as negative word-of-mouth, aggression, taking the business to a competitor elsewhere, among others (Cheng, Lam, & Hsu, 2006; Cho, Im, Hiltz, & Fjermestad, 2002; Wysocki, Kepner, & Glasser 2001). Thus, customer complaint behaviour appears to be a complex phenomenon that needs to be empirically studied.

In an emerging economy like Ghana, where most people are becoming more enlightened through education and becoming more informed of their rights as consumers, they are able to complain through various channels to mobile telephony companies through their sales personnel, management and the media. The problems of this study anchors on two main issues.

On one hand, many past studies in CCB in the African context in general and Ghana in particular are very scanty. Much of the empirical research on CCB focused on American, European, and Asian consumers (Bunker & Bradley, 2007; Heung & Lam, 2003; Huefner & Hunt, 2000; Johnston, 1998; Lerman, 2006; Liu & McClure, 2001; Stephens & Gwinner, 1998). Therefore, a study on consumer complaining behaviour in Ghana would increase the body of knowledge in consumer complaining behaviour within the African and Ghanaian context.

On the other hand, given the widespread customer dissatisfaction in the Ghana's mobile telephony industry (GMTI) (Nimako & Azumah, 2009; Frempong & Henten, 2004), and the bad consequences of ineffective management of CCB such as losing customers, customer aggression, negative word-of-mouth and tarnishing the reputation of the service provider in media, it becomes critically important for mobile telephony operators to understand CCB in mobile telephony services, and the complaining responses/channels that consumers use in their complaining behaviour.

Therefore, the objectives of the study are twofold:

1. To examine customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction among complainers and non-complaints in Tigo Ghana and MTN Ghana mobile telephony companies.
2. To examine the channels through which customer complaint responses are expressed in Tigo Ghana and MTN Ghana mobile telephony companies.

The paper continues with detailed review of existing literature on CCB. It follows with the methodology of the empirical investigation after which the results of the study are presented and discussed. The theoretical, strategic and policy implications are discussed for management.

Literature Review

The Concept of Customer Complaining Behaviour (CCB)

The concept of CCB has received considerable attention among scholars in the literature. Jacoby & Jaccard (1981) define it as "An action taken by an individual which involves communicating something negative regarding a product or service either to the firm manufacturing or marketing that product or service or to some third-party organizational entity." According to Mowen (1993), complaint behaviour is any one of a number of actions that is triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase episode. It is a process which "constitutes a subset of all possible responses to perceived dissatisfaction around a purchase episode, during consumption or during possession of the goods or services" Crie' (2003 p. 62).

These definitions suggest that complaint may arise as a result of defective or poor product or service quality, unfulfilled expectations in the service encounter, or some unfulfilled promises given by the product manufacturer or service provider. Customers may complain about some attribute of a product or dimension of service quality that is perceived as dissatisfactory. Complaint may also result from dissatisfaction during the purchase, possession or consumption of a product/service. Thus, in mobile telephony context complaint may be made by customers about the high call charge per minute/seconds, poor network quality, unreliable services, not keeping promises, among other things.

Value of Customer Complaints

Plymire (1991) notes that, “the surest road to a customer-focused culture is through increased complaints”. Companies could benefit in many ways from purposefully encouraging customer complaint. First, appropriate responses to complaints can prevent customers from switching to competitors (Fornell & Wernerfelt, 1987). Second, it gives dissatisfied consumers the chance to vent their unhappiness (Aleong & Kolodinsky, 1990; Kowalski, 1996; Richins, 1980). Third, CCB is crucial for the development of effective service recovery strategies by firms that have the potency of fixing the unresolved customer complaints and winning the confidence of once dissatisfied customers (Tax & Brown, 1998). Fourth complaints may provide service/product providers to re-design products/services that are of high quality in terms of meeting customers’ exact expectations and requirements. Furthermore, effectively handled complaining behaviours is a kind of service recovery that could culminate into satisfaction, trust, positive Word-of-Mouth communication, and future re-purchases (Kau & Loh, 2006). Unresolved customer complaints, on the other hand, could lead to negative WOM communication about the service provider to other customers or family (Blodgett, Wakefield, & Barnes, 1995), among others. In view of these benefits, many authors agree that companies should not only seek to address and welcome complaints but also make purposeful attempt to encourage complaints from their customers, particularly the dissatisfied ones (Heung & Lam, 2003).

Customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and complaining behaviour

Again, the concept of CCB strongly linked to customer dissatisfaction. Many studies confirm that dissatisfaction is the main cause of complaining (Liu & McClure, 2001; Williams, Drake & Moran, 1993). This view has its roots in the expectancy disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1980), that argues that dissatisfaction results from a discrepancy between customer expectation and perceived product/service performance. Since consumers’ expectation is found to be a major factor affecting consumers’ evaluation of their purchase experiences (Day, 1977), it follows that, generally, consumers become dissatisfied when their expectations are not met by the current performance of a product or service. Consequently, they become disappointed and engage in complaining behaviour. However, the term customer satisfaction (CS) may be viewed as Transactional or Cumulative. It is transactional-specific where CS is based on a one time, specific post-purchase evaluative judgement of a service encounter (Hunt, 1977; Oliver, 1977, 1980, 1993 cited in Yonggui Wang & Hing-Po Lo, 2002). Conversely, it is cumulative where it involves an overall customer evaluation of a product or service based on purchase and consumption experiences over a time period (Fornell, 1992; Johnson & Fornell, 1991). A previous transactional satisfaction/dissatisfaction experience can result in complaining behaviour which could in turn influence the cumulative, overall satisfaction rating of a service provider (Dacin & Davidow, 1997; Kau, Richmond & Han, 1995). Again, the frequency of complaining may also influence the overall satisfaction of the customer with the service provider. Therefore, the study would specifically examine the relationship between previous transactional dissatisfaction experience among complainers and non-complainers.

It has been empirically argued by Jacoby & Jaccard (1981) that dissatisfaction may not even be a necessary condition for complaining to occur, and that satisfied consumers who perceive that there are benefits to complaining to a manufacturer may still complain about minor issues, particularly if the organisation has a reputation for responding quickly or fairly to consumer problems (Day & Landon, 1976). Thus, it is possible for satisfied customers to complain either for better services or to very much satisfied (Liu *et al.*, 2006). In view of this, the study seeks to examine customer satisfaction among non-complainers in Ghana's Mobile Telephony industry.

Complaining responses

Previous studies suggest that dissatisfied customer may complain or choose not to complain at all (Day & Landon, 1976; Singh, 1990). Dissatisfied consumers can decide or feel not to take any actions after a bad buying or consumption experiences. These are non-complainers who may walk away and never complain. It is generally found that some dissatisfied customers may not complain directly to the service provider, primarily because it is not worth the time and effort, or they do not know where or how to complain, and where they believe that nothing will be done even if they do complain (Day *et al.*, 1981; Gursoy, McCleary, & Lepisto, 2007; Richins, 1983). Singh (1990) classifies such consumers as "passives".

Customers who communicate their complaining behaviour may be grouped into several distinct categories. One of the useful conceptualisation of customer complaining responses was postulated by Singh (1988; 1990). According to Singh (1988) customer complaining responses (Figure 1) could be conceptualised into three taxonomies: voice responses, private responses or third-party responses. Voice responses refer to complaining behaviour directed toward the offending party. A customer who confronts a retailer or manufacturer; whether in person, by writing or by telephone would be exhibiting voice responses. Such complainers are likely to seek redress, apology, request corrective action or seek for explanation (Heung & Lam, 2003).

Private responses refer to behaviour demonstrated within a customer's own close social relations such as warning or discouraging friends and families not to use the services of the firm, and deciding not to purchase from there again. Consumers have various alternatives to express their dissatisfaction (Singh, 1988; Krishnan & Valle, 1979). This group, classified as "voicers" (Singh, 1990), are a kind of non-complainers who later could spread negative word of mouth (WOM) which is invisible to the service provider and not easily influenced (Singh & Wilkes, 1996). According to Blodgett *et al.* (1995), 77% of all non-complainers engaged in negative WOM, whereas only 48% of complainers engaged in negative WOM. The likely reasons for not complaining directly to the service provider, primarily are that they do not know where or how to complain, and where they believe that nothing will be done even if they do complain (Day, *et al.*, 1981; Gursoy *et al.* 2007).

Third-party responses refer to complaints expressed through taking legal actions from an external party not directly involved with the offending service provider but who may have some authority to influence the service provider. This group, classified as "irates" (Singh, 1990), may complain to consumer protection agencies, lawyers or newspapers as a result of a dissatisfying experience with a retailer or service provider in order to "recover economic loss by getting an exchange or a refund and rebuild self-image" (Krapfel, 1985; p. 2) or expressing emotional anger (Day, *et al.*, 1981).

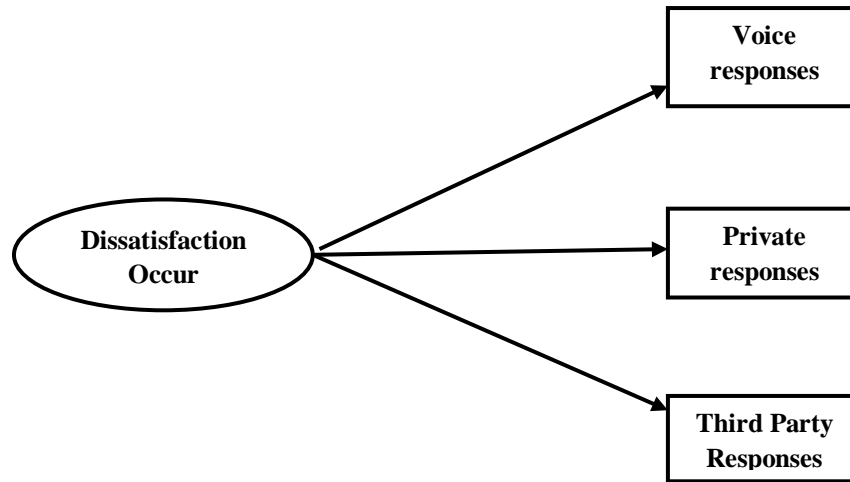


Figure 1 Singh's (1990) Taxonomy of Consumer Complaint Behaviour Responses
Source: Singh's (1990) in Jones, McCleary & Lepisto (2002).

Recent studies suggest that consumers may take a variety of different private and third-party actions, may choose to blame sellers and manufacturers for their unsatisfactory product or service, or choose to boycott sellers and manufacturers by ceasing to use their products or services and spread negative information about their products or services (Singh & Wilkes, 1996). This last group is classified as "activists" (Singh, 1990).

In view of the above discussion in this section, the study would attempt to describe complaining responses among complainers and non-complainers in the light of the framework of consumer complaining responses by Singh (1990).

Mobile Telephony Industry in Ghana
Brief Historical Overview of the Industry

Until 1994, Ghana's telephony industry was monopolised by government controlled, Ghana Post, Telephone and Telegraph (PTT) (Frempong and Henten, 2004). The PTT was transformed by an Act of Parliament to Ghana Post and Telecommunication (GPandT) services, and in 1995 it was separated into two, being Ghana Post and Ghana Telecom (GT). Ghana Telecom was privatised and a second network operator Western Telesystems (Westel) Ltd was licensed. A licence was also issued to Capital Telecom Ltd, a private indigenous telecommunication company, to provide rural telephony to some villages and towns in the southern parts of Ghana.

Between 1994 and 2000, as a result of the deregulation of the sector in 1994 under the Accelerated Development Programme (ADP) 1994-2000 (Addy-Nayo, 2001), Ghana moved from a government controlled PTT to a privatised telecom era in which service providers were permitted to provide private internet and mobile telecom network.

The number of operators increased to four in 2007, namely: Millicom Ghana Ltd, Onetouch -Ghana Telecom, MTN Ghana – Scancom Ghana Ltd and Kasapa Telecom Limited. On July 3, 2008 the Ghana government announced the sale of Ghana Telecom and its mobile telephony wing, Onetouch to Vodafone. Zain Ghana and Globacom Ghana have added to the number of cellular network operators

in Ghana to increase the number to six (6) by 2010. As of the time of the present study there were six cellular (mobile) phone networks in Ghana, namely: Millicom Ghana Ltd, Vodafone – Ghana, MTN Ghana – Scancom Ghana Ltd and Kasapa Telecom Limited, Zain Ghana and Globacom Ghana. Vodafone Ghana and Zain are the only operators of additional services in fixed-line telephone.

Research Context

The following gives a brief background of the companies used in the study.

Millicom Ghana Ltd

Millicom Ghana Limited, operators of Tigo cellular phone network, is a subsidiary of Millicom International Cellular S.A. (“MIC”) UK/Luxembourg, a leading global operator of cellular telephony services with several investments across the world. The company started its operations in Ghana in 1991 and was the first cellular network operator in the country. The company expanded and in 2002 Millicom Ghana introduced its GSM service under the brand name MOBITEL/Buzz GSM. Buzz GSM and in 2006, Tigo was launched in Ghana to replace the old national brand *MOBITEL* with a new international brand. Currently Tigo network coverage reaches all the ten regions in Ghana and it is fast expanding to rural areas (www.tigo.com.gh).

MTN Ghana – Scancom Ghana Ltd

Scancom Ghana Ltd started operating in October 1996 using GSM 900 technology as Spacefone, with 15 sites and equipment from Ericsson. Initially, the network provided new services and coverage in Greater Accra, Kumasi and Obuasi, with ongoing developments in other regional capitals. The company operated as areeba and in 2006 it was taken over by Mobile Telecommunication Network Group (MTN) and now its name is MTN Ghana; it has expanded greatly its network coverage countrywide (www.mtn.com.gh).

Methodology

The main objective of the research was to examine satisfaction/dissatisfaction and complaining behaviour of customers of the mobile telephony industry. The study population was individual mobile telecom customers across two networks in Ghana: MTN and Tigo. These companies were chosen purposively because they were two leading companies in market share, and also it was easy reaching their customers for the study. A convenient sampling technique was used to select a sample of 120 customers from each company, totalling a sample of 240 customers. In selecting the sample of 240 respondents, conscious effort was made to include only subscribers/customers who have used the services of the companies for the past twelve months.

A self-administered, structured questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents. The questionnaire had only closed-ended question items and consisted of sections for customer satisfaction and complaining attitudes, complaining channels, and the respondents’ characteristics. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they have ever complained or not, whether they have ever been dissatisfied with the services of their companies or not using “Yes” and “No” responses. Satisfaction was measured on a five-point Likert scale from very dissatisfied to very satisfied (1-5). Again, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement to statements about the channels for complaining and non-complaining behaviour based on the work of Heung and Lam (2003). The questionnaire was pre- tested, refined and finally administered to the target sample through personal contact by the researcher. Informed Consent information was attached to each questionnaire. A response rate of 90% (108) and 78.3% (94) were obtained for MTN and Tigo

networks respectively. Data were analysed using SPSS (version 16.0) for descriptive statistics, cross tabulation, and Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA that is more robust and suitable for analyzing differences between sub-groups involving categorical dependent variables.

Analysis and Discussion

Respondents' characteristics

The characteristics of the respondents for the study are presented in Table 1 for each sub-group of the population. Generally, it shows that, in terms of gender, there were more males than females. Most of them were below the ages of 35, followed by those in the ages between 36 and 45 years and few were above 45 years. In terms of education, most of them had tertiary education, followed by those with pre-tertiary (SHS and Post-SHS) while few had other types of education. For income, most of the respondents earned up to GH¢500, followed by those who earned between GH¢500 and GH¢1000, about 3% earned above GH¢1,500, while about 13% were non-income earners. In term of marital status, about 65% of them were single, about 32% were married while the rest were in other marital categories.

Table 1 Respondents' characteristics

Demographic variable	Category	MTN n = 108		Tigo n = 94	
		No.	%	No.	%
Gender	Male	56	51.9	56	59.6
	Female	52	48.1	38	40.4
Age	Below 25	31	28.7	32	34
	25-35	49	45.4	44	46.8
	36-45	23	21.3	14	14.9
	46-55	5	4.6	4	4.3
Education Level	SHS	15	13.9	15	18
	Post SHS	6	5.6	2	2.1
	Tertiary	85	78.8	72	76.6
	Other	2	1.9	2	2.1
Income (GH¢)	Below 100	24	22.2	14	14.9
	101-500	47	43.5	50	53.2
	501-1000	20	18.5	10	10.6
	1001-1500	2	1.9	4	4.3
	Above 1500	4	3.7	2	2.1
	Non-income earners	11	10.2	14	14.9
Marital Status	Married	41	38	26	27.7
	Single	64	59.3	67	71.3
	Other	3	2.8	1	1.1

Customer satisfaction and Complaining Behaviour

First of all, from Table 2, a preliminary analysis showed that overall satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 58.017$, $df=1$, $p = 0.000$) and previous dissatisfaction ($\chi^2 = 47.092$, $df=1$, $p = 0.000$), differed between the networks, thus, the two groups could not be taken for one population and needs separate analysis regarding the complainers and non-complainers for each of the mobile companies.

An examination of complainers and non-complainers and previous dissatisfaction (Table 2) shows that 89.7% and 65.8% of customers complained for their previous dissatisfaction for MTN and Tigo respectively. This implies that complaining behaviour was a result of dissatisfaction. Further analysis using Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA confirmed that generally, previous dissatisfaction differed between complainers and non-complainers ($\chi^2 = 10.561$, $df=1$, $p = 0.001$); even though, within each network; specifically, more non-complainers (mean = 112.48) were previously dissatisfied than complainers (mean = 91.56). This result is similar to analysis of responses from Tigo network ($\chi^2 = 8.118$, $df=1$, $p = 0.004$), but different in the case of MTN ($\chi^2 = 0.924$, $df=1$, $p = 0.339$). This confirms what has been found in some previous studies that, generally, dissatisfaction causes customer complaints (e.g. Heung & Lam, 2003; Maute & Forrester, 1993), and that some dissatisfied customers may not necessarily complain since more non-complainers were previously dissatisfied than complainers (Heung and Lam, 2003; Maute & Forrester, 1993). Such dissatisfied customers who do not complain are likely to switch to competitors and engage in negative Word-of-Mouth (WOM) Communication to their immediate social groups. This has well been documented in previous studies such as Blodgett *et al.* (1995) and Singh & Wilkes (1996).

Again, the analysis from Table 2 shows that overall satisfaction differs according to the type of service provider (mobile network) ($\chi^2 = 58.017$, $df=1$, $p = 0.000$), specifically, customers of Tigo network rated their satisfaction (mean = 133.91) higher than customers of MTN (mean = 73.29). This means that a company may be able to satisfy their customers better than competitors. This is likely to be a source of competitive advantage. Thus satisfaction may differ according to the performance of each service provider in meeting customer requirements. On the other hand, the analysis from Table 2 also shows that previous dissatisfaction significantly differs according to the networks ($\chi^2 = 47.092$, $df=1$, $p = 0.000$), and specifically, customers of Tigo network were previously more dissatisfied than their counterparts in MTN (Means: MTN = 80.92, Tigo = 125.15). Interestingly, comparing the overall satisfaction and previous dissatisfaction ratings, the analysis shows that customers of Tigo network were worse dissatisfied and better in terms of overall satisfaction than their MTN competitor. This implies that Tigo network might have been able to resolve and manage their customer previous dissatisfaction and complaints better than their MTN competitor. Thus, though previous dissatisfaction could affect customer overall satisfaction of a service provider, it may not always negatively affect overall satisfaction if it is properly managed by the service provider.

Moreover, from the cross tabulation analysis (Table 2), it is evidenced that 10.3% and 34.2% of customers who were not previously dissatisfied still made complaints in MTN and Tigo networks respectively, and also 13.3% and 50.0% of customers who were overall satisfied also complained in MTN and Tigo networks respectively. This simply implies that some satisfied customers and previously non-dissatisfied customers may complain. Statistically, this is confirmed by the significant difference between complainers and non-complainers in their overall satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 30.54$, $df=1$, $p = 0.000$), specifically, more non-complainers (mean = 124.55) rated their overall satisfaction higher than complainers (mean = 80.62). This result is similar to the analysis within Tigo network ($\chi^2 = 13.413$, $df=4$, $p = 0.000$), and in MTN ($\chi^2 = 9.399$, $df=4$, $p = 0.002$). This finding is also consistent with previous findings that dissatisfaction is not a necessary condition for complaining and that even satisfied customer may make complaints for various reasons such as to provide feedback for service improvement and as an indication of their loyalty (Jacoby & Jaccard, 1998; Mowen, 1993). Again, the results also suggest that complaining behaviour could be influenced by overall satisfaction of

customers, and that customers who are overall satisfied are likely not to complain than dissatisfied ones (Heung & Lam, 2003; Singh, 1998).

Complaining Response and Channels

Table 3 shows the responses/channels used by customers in making complaints. First of all, it shows that the ratings of customers did not show any significant difference in the type of complaining channels the customers use between the two mobile networks. For each of the type of complaining channels presented, all p-values were greater than 0.05. This implies that typically, the customers exhibit similar characteristics in the use of complaining responses/channels and for that matter the two sub-groups could be analysed as one sample.

Therefore, taking the overall analysis of the rankings of the complaining channels used by the customers, irrespective of network, the highest ranked complaining response is stop using company's mobile network services with a mean of 3.42 and SD of 1.30; this is a type of private response. This is followed by complain in person to companies customer service centre with mean of 3.19 and SD of 1.22; this is a type of voice response (Singh, 1990). This is followed by discourage family and friends from using the services of the network, which is also a private response (Singh, 1990). The fourth ranked is complaining to consumer group and associations, which is a third-party type of channel. The next is to complain by writing on a complaint card, the sixth is to writing complaint letters to the management of the company; the fifth and sixth are voiced responses (Singh, 1990). The least ranked is to complain to the mass media, which is a third party response (Singh, 1990).

Table 2 Customer satisfaction among complainers and non-complainers

Overall satisfaction	MTN		Tigo				Significant difference between networks (*p<0.05)				
	Complainers Mean = 47.72		Non-complainers Mean = 66.02		Complainers Mean =36.05		Non-complainers Mean =55.27		Value (X ²)	df	Asymp. Sig*
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%			
Very dissatisfied	27	39.7	9	22.5	2	5.3	2	3.6			
Dissatisfied	28	41.2	9	22.5	13	34.2	4	7.1			
Neutral	4	5.9	10	25.0	4	10.5	2	3.6			
Satisfied	8	11.8	11	27.5	16	42.1	34	60.7			
Very satisfied	1	1.5	1	2.5	3	7.9	14	25.0			
Total	68	100	40	100	38	100	56	100			
Previous Dissatisfaction	Complainers Mean = 55.56		Non-complainers Mean =52.70		Complainers Mean =39.05		Non-complainers Mean =53.21				
Yes	61	89.7	38	95	25	65.8	20	47.9			
No	7	10.3	2	5	13	34.2	36	52.1			
Total	68	100	40	100	38	100	56	100			
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (Overall satisfaction (OS) among complainers and non-complainers, MTN)									9.399	1	0.002*
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (Overall satisfaction among complainers and non-complainers, Tigo)									13.413	1	0.000*
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (Previous dissatisfaction (PD) among complainers and non-complainers, MTN)									.916	1	0.339
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (Previous dissatisfaction among complainers and non-complainers, Tigo)									8.118	1	0.004*
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (Satisfaction between MTN and Tigo; Means – MTN =73.29, Tigo = 133.91)									58.017	1	0.000*
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (Previous dissatisfaction between MTN and Tigo; Means – MTN = 80.92, Tigo = 125.15)									47.092	1	0.000*
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (OS among complainers (mean = 80.62 and non-complainers (mean = 124.55); both networks									30.541	1	0.000*
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (PD among complainers (mean = 91.56) and non-complainers(mean = 112.48); both networks									10.509	1	0.001*

Table 3 Complaining behaviour responses

Complaining Responses	All respondents n = 202			MTN n = 108			Tigo n = 94			Differences among MTN and Tigo				
	R	\bar{X}	SD	R	\bar{X}	SD	R	\bar{X}	SD	X ²	Df	Sig.(0.05)	\bar{X}	\bar{X}
Stop using company's mobile network services	1	3.42	1.3	1	3.49	1.43	1	3.34	1.14	1.725	1	0.189	106.41	95.86
Complain in person to Company's customer service centre	2	3.19	1.22	3	3.21	1.27	3	3.16	1.17	0.297	1	0.586	103.53	99.17
Discourage family and friends from using the services	3	3.13	1.35	2	3.31	1.33	6	2.93	1.37	3.77	1	0.052	108.79	93.12
Complain to a consumer group or association.	4	3.11	1.33	6	2.99	1.41	2	3.26	1.23	2.035	1	0.154	96.15	107.65
Complain by writing my complaint on a card	5	3.04	1.22	4	3.11	1.29	5	2.95	1.12	1.036	1	0.309	105.3	97.13
Complain by writing complaint letters to management of the company.	6	3.03	1.23	5	3.06	1.29	4	3	1.18	0.02	1	0.888	102.03	100.89
Complaint to the mass media	7	2.85	1.29	7	2.8	1.36	7	2.92	1.22	0.605	1	0.437	98.59	104.85

R - Rankings, \bar{X} – mean, sd – standard deviation, scale: 1- strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neutral, 4 – agree, 5 – strongly agree

Within each network, the rankings of the complaining responses are the same for the highest and least response channels as well as the third. The rest slightly differ but not significantly according to the test (Table 3). Generally it could be deduced that the first three type of responses are those that are characterized by more easy-to-use, informal approaches while the rest of the next four complaining response are characterized by more formal, seemingly difficult-to-use channels. These results might be influenced by the socio-cultural nature aspect of consumer behaviour in Ghana. It appears that Ghanaian customers are more reserved when it comes to making their complaints public. People in Ghana appear to be those who do not want their names to be mentioned in the media or in public for having reported a service provider on certain issues.

Implications of Research Findings

This paper offers some implications for marketing theory and practice. First, it found that customer satisfaction rating differed according to the network, which could be a source of competitive advantage. It has been established in previous studies that companies no longer compete on cost but on how they are able to satisfy customers (Kotler & Keller, 2006). This implies that the management of MTN network has to improve upon delivery of service quality to customers. The management of Tigo network needs to continuously sustain satisfying and delighting their customers in order to achieve their customers' long-term loyalty. The ability of Tigo to satisfy their customers better than MTN in the research context could be a great source of competitive advantage.

Also, this study confirms previous studies that dissatisfaction causes complaints (Heung & Lam, 2003; Maute & Forrester, 1993), but that dissatisfaction is not a necessary condition for complaining. Some customers may complain for several reasons even though they are satisfied (Blodgett et al., 1995; Singh & Wilkes, 1996). More research is needed to unearth the reasons why satisfied customers may still complain in developing country context, and in particular in mobile telecommunication services.

Moreover, this study provides empirical evidence that complaining behaviour is more prevalent among dissatisfied customers than satisfied ones. This implies that service providers need to develop effective customer-centred strategies to improve service quality and customer satisfaction in order to reduce complaints. Service providers would also need to design effective customer relationship management systems to help identify problematic areas of service delivery and improve upon them.

Again, the study found that though complaining behaviour is influenced by previous dissatisfaction, if handled effectively may not have adverse effect on customer overall satisfaction. This means the management has to develop strategies to handle dissatisfaction and complaints so that they do not lead to overall customer dissatisfaction. It is recommended that management should encourage customer complaints when they are dissatisfied in order to understand customer feelings and how to address them. Management should also train staff in effective complaint handling and how to provide immediate and prompt service recovery in service encounter failures or core service failures that have been found in previous studies as determinants of customer switching (Keaveney, 1999).

The findings also provide support for the framework of Singh (1990) and indicate that complaining response of customers of the two firms could be conceptualized within the framework of voiced, private and third party responses. To management of the firms it is important for them to understand that since the highest rated complaining response is stop using the service of the firm, they will put in effective measures not only to ensure customer loyalty but also to prevent customer switching. In addition to this, the study suggests that most customers are eager to discourage family and friends from using the services. Thus, management should put in avenues through which customers can easily voice out their complaints, instead of complaining privately to their social groups that could be detrimental to the firm.

Limitations and Future Research

The study used a self-administered structured questionnaire in a survey. Future research should examine the phenomenon using qualitative approach like interviews, focus group discussions and other projective techniques, and compare the results. Again, the study is limited to only two mobile firms in the telecommunication industry in developing country context. Future research should extend the study of satisfaction among complainers and non-complainers and their complaining responses in other industry contexts, and compare the results to provide more empirical support to the findings in this study.

Furthermore, this study found that the least complaining response/channel used by the respondents was complaining to the mass media and that customers tend to exhibit similar characteristics regarding their complaining response/channel. This may have been influenced by cultural factors in the research environment or the culture of the respondents. Thus, future research is needed to examine the impact of cultural characteristics of respondents on their complaining response/channel.

Conclusion

In conclusion, dissatisfaction influences complaining, however dissatisfaction is not a necessary condition for complaining behaviour and that in some cases satisfied customers may complain for several reasons. Complainers and non-complainers differ in their satisfaction of the service provider and that overall satisfaction is higher among non-complainers than complainers. The most highly rated complaining response is to stop using the network services of the service provider and the least rated is to make complain to the mass media. The study is relevant to marketing theory and practices and it offers suggestions to management and marketing practitioners, especially in the mobile telecommunication industry. Generalizations based on the findings of this study are limited and might not be applicable to every firm and industry context. Future research is recommended in the area of examining the impact of cultural factors on consumer complaining responses as well as the effects of service recovery on the relationship between previous dissatisfaction and overall satisfaction of a service provider.

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