

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**BRAND POSITIONING AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN THE
GHANAIAN UNIVERSAL BANKING SECTOR: THE MODERATING
EFFECT OF SWITCHING COST**

BY

**EMMANUEL NTSIFUL
(STUDENT ID: 10508031)**

**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
THE AWARD OF MPhil MARKETING DEGREE**

JULY, 2016

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this 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 the work have been fully acknowledged.

I bear sole responsibility for any shortcomings.

.....
EMMANUEL NTSIFUL

STUDENT

.....
DATE



CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this thesis was supervised in accordance with procedures laid down by the University of Ghana.

.....

.....

DR. ADELAIDE KASTNER

DATE

(SUPERVISOR)



.....

.....

DR. MAHMOUD A. MAHMOUD

DATE

(CO-SUPERVISOR)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of academic work to my wife Mrs. Cecilia Ntsiful and my two daughters

Zipporah Amadwo Ntsiful and Natasha Ama Ntsiful.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first invaluable thanks and appreciation go to the Almighty God, Jehovah, for the knowledge, wisdom, guidance and protection during all these years of my education. My second special thanks go to my lovely wife, Mrs. Cecilia Ntsiful whose support has brought me this far. Also, I deeply thank my supervisors Dr. Adelaide Kastner and Dr. Mahmoud A. Mahmoud for the unyielding supports and corrections they gave to me in order to produce this write-up. Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to John Paul Kosiba and Adjoa Ocran for their supports and guidelines to bring this piece of work to a successful end.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION.....	i
CERTIFICATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xiii
ABSTRACT	xv
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 Research Gaps.....	6
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	8

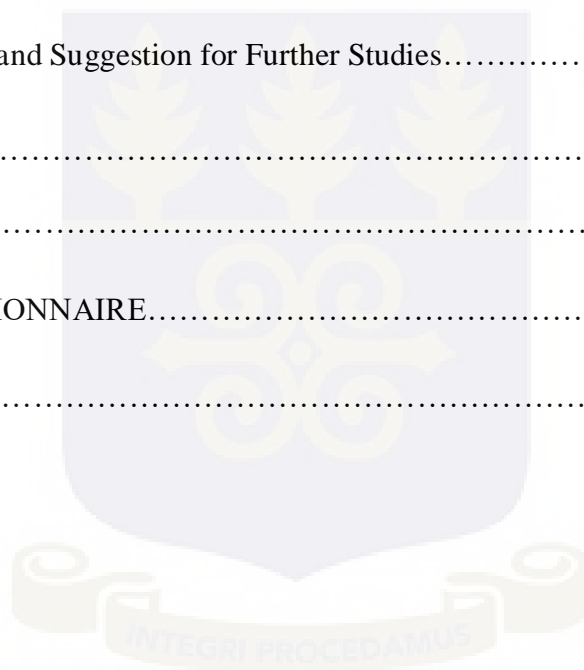
1.5 Research Questions.....	8
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	9
1.7 Scope of the Study.....	9
1.8 Chapter Deposition.....	10
CHAPTER TWO.....	12
CONTEXT OF THE STUDY.....	12
2.0. Introduction.....	12
2.1. History of Ghanaian Universal Banking Sector.....	12
2.2 Current Information in Ghanaian Universal Banking Sector.....	13
2.3 Some Challenges Facing Ghanaian Universal Banking Sector.....	16
2.4 What Does The Future Hold For The Sector?.....	18
CHAPTER THREE.....	20
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	20
3.0. Introduction.....	20
3.1 Positioning Theory.....	20
3.2 The Concept of Brands.....	21
3.3 Strategic Positioning and Brand Positioning.....	21
3.4.0 Brand Positioning Dimensions.....	24

3.4.1 Image.....	24
3.4.2 Trust.....	25
3.4.3 Tangibles Cues.....	26
3.4.4 Customer Intimacy.....	28
3.4.5 Country of Origin.....	28
3.4.6 Core Services.....	30
3.4.7 Price.....	31
3.4.8 Distance.....	31
3.5 Customer Satisfaction.....	32
3.6 Customer Loyalty.....	33
3.7 Switching Cost, Moderating Effect of the Customer Loyalty.....	35
3.8 The Relationship Between Brand Positioning, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty and Switching Cost	37
3.9 Demographic Characteristics.....	38
3.10 Empirical Evidence.....	39
3.11.0 Conceptual Framework/Model and Hypotheses.....	42
3.11.1 Price Relationship With Customer Loyalty.....	42
3.11.2 Trust Relationship With Customer Loyalty.....	44
3.11.3 Core Service Relationship With Customer Loyalty.....	45
3.11.4 Switching Cost as a Moderating Effect.....	46
3.11.5 Conceptual Framework of the Study.....	47

CHAPTER FOUR.....	49
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	49
4.0 Introduction.....	49
4.1 Research Approach.....	49
4.2 Research Design.....	50
4.3 Population.....	51
4.4. Sampling Technique and Sample Size Determination.....	52
4.5 Instruments Used To Collect Data.....	52
4.6 Reliability of Data Collected.....	53
4.7 Data Analysis Procedure.....	54
4.8 Limitation of the Study.....	55
CHAPTER FIVE.....	56
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.....	56
5. 0 Introduction.....	56
5.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents.....	56
5. 2 Descriptive Statistics.....	59
5.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).....	60
5.4 Re-specification and Reliability of the CFA.....	63

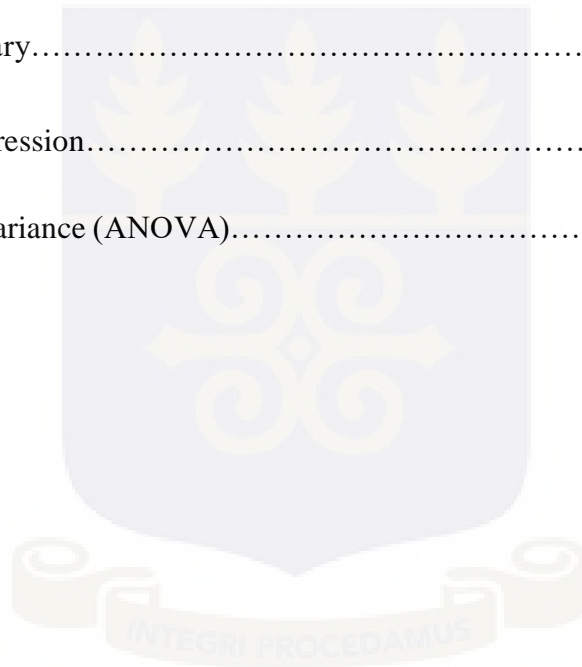
5.5: Correlation Matrix.....	66
5.6 Stepwise Regression Analysis.....	67
5.8 The Relationship Between Switching Cost Groups, Brand Positioning and Customer Loyalty.....	68
.9.0 Discussion of Results.....	69
5.9.1 Core Service Relationship with Customer Loyalty.....	70
5.9.2 Trust Relationship with Customer Loyalty.....	70
5.9.3 Price Relationship with Customer Loyalty.....	71
5.9.4 Additional Analysis: Adjustment Effect of Switching Cost.....	72
5.9.5 Relationship Between Levels of Switching Cost and Trust.....	73
5.9.6 Relationship Between Levels of Switching Cost and Core Service.....	74
5.9.7 Relationship Between Levels of Switching Cost and Price.....	76
5.9.8 Relationship Between Levels of Switching Cost and Customer Loyalty.....	78
CHAPTER SIX.....	80
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	80
6.0: Introduction.....	80
6.1.0 Summary.....	80
6.1.1 Major Findings.....	81
6.1.2 Objective 1.....	81

6.1.3 Objective 2.....	81
6.2.0 Conclusions.....	84
6.2.1 Objective 1.....	84
6.2.2 Objective 2.....	85
6.3 Contribution to Literature.....	86
6.4 Recommendation to the Banking Industry for Practice.....	86
6.4.1 Industry Regulators.....	89
6.4.2 Recommendation and Suggestion for Further Studies.....	90
REFERENCES.....	91
APPENDICES.....	109
APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE.....	109
APPENDIX 2.....	112



LIST OF TABLES

Table 5.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents.....	57
Table 5.2 Descriptive Statistics.....	59
Table 5.3 Index of fit of the Model.....	61
Table 5.4 Internal Consistency and Final Revised Structure.....	64
Table 5.5 Variable Correlation Matrix.....	66
Table 5.6 Model Summary.....	67
Table 5.7 Stepwise Regression.....	67
Table 5.8 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).....	68



LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 2 The results of the empirical causal model (SEM).....65



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

POP - Point of Parity

POD - Point of Difference

SSA - Sub-Sahara Africa

MBA - Masters of Business Administration

BoG - Bank of Ghana

BGC - Bank of Gold Coast

IMF - International Monetary Fund

ERP - Economic Recovery Programme

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

VAT - Value Added Tax

GRA - Ghana Revenue Authority

FEA - Foreign Exchange Accounts

FCA - Foreign Currency Accounts

FATCA- Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act

GhIPSS - Ghana Integrated Payments and Settlement Systems

ACH - Automated Clearing House

ATM - Automated Teller Machine

POS - Point of Sale

GCB - Ghana Commercial Bank

CFA - Confirmatory Factor Analysis

KMO - Kaiser –Meyer Olkin

SPSS - Statistical Packages for Social Science

ANOVA - Analysis of Variance

HND - Higher National Diploma

BECE - Basic Education Certificate Examination

SSCE - Senior Secondary Certificate Examination

WASSCE - West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination

RMSEA - Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

GFI - Goodness-of-fit Index

AGFI - Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit-Index

SRMR - Standardised Root Mean Square Residual.

CFI - Comparative Fit Index

NNFI - Non-Normed Fit Index

SEM - Structural Equation Model

ABSTRACT

The liberalization of universal banking sector in Ghana, has intensified competition within the industry. To withstand this competition by banks and differentiate their services from competitors, has generated interest in understanding the brand positioning which seeks to design a firm's offering and image or reputation to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target consumers to become loyal to the service provider. The introduction of switching cost as a moderator ensures that customers do not defect to a competitor because of keen competition but rather remain loyal to the current service provider for a longer period of time. The major objectives of this study was to assess the relationship between brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty, and also to examine the effect of switching cost on the relationship between brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian banking sector. Data was collected using questionnaires from 272 customers of universal banks within the Greater Accra Metropolis. The study found that price, trust, and core service as the brand positioning dimensions had a significant positive effect on customer loyalty. Core service was found to be the most important influence of customer loyalty, followed by trust and price in the sector. Similarly, the study revealed that some universal bank customers are loyal to their banks because of high switching costs and not because they are satisfied with the banks' performance. The study recommends that if banks desire to achieve high customer loyalty, managers must endeavour to understand the special needs of their customers and design the core service to offer more value to customers. Banks' managers should strive to establish a clear and strong corporate image focused on the bank's integrity, credibility and benevolence to enhance trust. Banks should set fees or charges that are reasonable and affordable, and also increase the switching cost to minimize customers' defection.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

This Chapter of the study consists of the following: background of the study, research gaps, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study scope of the study and chapter disposition.

1.1 Background of the Study

Companies in this era compete in markets that are saturated with many offerings. Thus, strong brands are confronted with challenges of making differential advantages among competitors (Clancy & Trout, 2002). Manhas (2010) argues that, as a result of the increasingly competitive industrial scenario, a key challenge for marketers is to cut through the noise of competing and substitute products to attract the attention of the consumer. With thousands of companies both local and international now competing for attention, brands are becoming substitutable. From the demand perspective, the outburst in brand choice and brand publicity material has increased the confusion among potential consumers (Manhas, 2010). According to Kotler and Keller (2012), no company can gain competitive advantage if its products and services resemble every other product and service. For companies to compete effectively in the market place, marketing managers must seek to establish appropriate brand associations in the mind of target markets or consumers to differentiate their brand from competitors (Keller & Lehmann, 2006).

Positioning is perceived by academics (Blankson & Kalafatis, 2004; Hooley, Greenley, Fahy & Cadogan, 2001; Kotler, 1997; Trout & Rivkin, 1996; Porter, 1996) to be one of the key

elements of modern marketing management. The intent is to identify dimensions of brand attractiveness representing positions that could be developed by firms to differentiate their brand in a meaningful way to consumers (Blankson & Kalafatis, 2004). The key assumption supporting this discussion is that effective positioning is a mutually beneficial process to both the marketer and the consumer (Manhas, 2010). This is because positioning is underpinned by the ideas of understanding and meeting unique consumer needs. Effective positioning offers the customer benefits tailored to solve a problem related to their needs, in a way that is different to competitors (Chacko, 1997). For the organization, the value of positioning lies in the link it provides between the analyses of the internal corporate and external competitive environments. This is fundamental to the definitions of strategic marketing, which point to the matching of internal resources with environmental opportunities (Pike & Ryan 2004).

There is general agreement that the concept of positioning has been one of the fundamental components of modern marketing management (Hooley et al., 2001). Its importance is further supported by evidence that indicates a positive relationship between company performance (in terms of profitability and/or efficiency) and well-formulated and clearly-defined positioning activities (Porter, 1996; Devlin, Ennew & Mirza, 1995; Brooksbank, 1994). Dovel (1990) asserts that positioning shouldn't be just a part of the strategy, but should be the backbone of any business plan.

The banking industry in Ghana has seen a considerable increase in the past two decades, resulting from the liberalization of the financial services sector in 1988 and gradual changes in the financial system over the years through legal, financial and institutional reforms (Aryeetey, 2008). The banking sector in Ghana forms about 70% of the financial services sector (Owusu-

Frimpong, Omar, & Mmieh, 2011). The number of major banks with universal banking license as of December 2014 stood at twenty-seven (27); (increasing from 8 in 1990) with a total of 904 branches across the country (Ghana Banking Survey, 2014). In addition, there are also a number of financial service institutions such as insurance companies, investment houses, rural banks, stock exchange, co-operative credit unions, savings-and-loans institutions, mutual funds and other microfinance institutions set up in Ghana.

The liberalization of the banking industry in Ghana has fueled competition within Ghanaian markets such that the sustenance of individual banks has come under serious threat (Anabila, Narteh & Tweneboah-Kodua, 2012). To overcome this problem, banks must adopt brand positioning strategies which seek to design a firm's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the minds of the target market (Kolter & Keller, 2012). The final result of positioning is the successful creation of a customer-focused value proposition; a convincing reason why the target market should patronize the product or service of a firm (Kolter, 2003). Keller, (1993) and Wind, (1982) argue that a well-positioned brand should appeal to the specific needs of a customer segment due to the differential advantage or value proposition it seeks to create. Some authors also contend that brand positioning is expected to shape the desires of customers, lead to customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Kalra & Goodstein, 1998), consumer-derived brand equity (Keller, 2003) and customers' readiness to look for the brand (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007).

Brand positioning seeks to draw closer relationship or intimacy between the firm and the target segment in order to deliver superior value to satisfy the customers and gain their loyalty (Keller; 2009). Banks are now building closer relationships with their customers in order to increase loyalty and retain them as a result of fierce competition, changing trends of customer demand

and progress in information technology (Chen & Popovich, 2003; Gonroos, 1997). The basic idea underpinning this move is that it costs more to attract new customers than to nurture and develop existing ones (Reichheld & Kenny, 1990). According to Ndubisi, (2003); Rosenberg and Czepiel, (1983) the cost of maintaining or serving one loyal customer is five to six times less than the cost of attracting and serving one new customer. Again Reichheld and Sasser (1990) argue that, when a company retains just 5% more of its customers, profits could increase by 25% to 125%. Furthermore, Kim and Cha (2002) contend that, by reducing customer defection by 15% firms can improve their profitability by 25% to 85%. Kim, Park & Jeong, (2004) posit that no business organization can survive under keen competition if it does not have loyal customers who buy its products or services.

Customers experiencing high level of satisfaction are likely to remain loyal with their current providers and continue with their subscription (Jones, Mothersbaugh, & Betty, 2002). However, some studies have shown that as the intensity of competition become fierce within the financial sector (banking sector), the inclination of customers shifting from one bank to another or having two banks could increase (Aurier & N'Goala, 2010;Woldie, 2003; Owusu-Frimpong, 2001). It is in this context that the idea of the switching cost is proposed (Jones, et al, 2002). Switching cost seeks to establish a cost penalty for a customer changing to another service provider, making that a comparatively unattractive option (Fornell, 1992). Aydin and Arasil (2005) assert that it is a crucial factor, because it fosters customer loyalty and enables the firm to be less influenced by fluctuations in the level of service quality in the short term. In fact, both theoretical and empirical studies show that switching cost plays crucial role in protecting firms' existing customer bases and gaining competitive advantage (Klemperer, 1995; Farrell & Shapiro, 1988; Klemperer, 1987a).

Brand positioning requires that marketers define and communicate point of parity (POP) and point of difference (POD) between their brand and their competitors (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Some scholars assert that advertising is the main communication tool used in building brand positioning (Lilien & Rangaswamy, 2003; Krishnan, 1996). Advertising serves as a means of transport (vessel) of positioning such that any advertisement normally comprised of a creative or artwork part and a positioning part containing brand information (Dillion, Domzal & Madden, 1986; Seggev, 1982). According to Easingwood and Mahajan (1989) the attention of the consumer is drawn and directed to the positioning of the brand through the creative element of the advert. Trout and Rivkin (1996) argue that advertising with imagery alone and no positioning claim gives consumers no reason to patronize the product or service. Thus, the purpose of this study is to assess the relationship between brand positioning, and customer loyalty from customers' perspective in the Ghanaian universal banking industry with switching cost serving as a moderating factor.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The implementation of brand positioning dimensions efficiently and effectively has the potential to build a powerful brand and customer loyalty (Haig, 2005). According to Keller (2009), positioning a brand provide basis for which customers can hold a firm accountable for providing good products or rendering bad services. Coffie and Owusu-Frimpong (2014) argue that most of the service firms in sub-Saharan Africa and for that matter banking sector in Ghana do not have clear positioning strategies. In view of this that the study seeks to use trust, core service and price as brand positioning dimensions to influence customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal sector. However, Kim, Park and Jeong (2004) argue that customer satisfaction does not necessary lead to customer loyalty and hence the need to introduce switching cost. Switching cost impose some monetary and non-monetary cost on

customers who wish to change current service provider (Mathews & Murray, 2007). This cost or price is not regulated by Bank of Ghana and it varies from one bank to another.

Anabila, Narteh and Tweneboah-Koduah, (2012) posit that competition within the Ghanaian universal banking sector has assumed such intensity that the very survival of individual banks has come under serious threat. Anabila et al., (2012) explain further that the increase of mergers and acquisition over the last two years attest to this fact. Further evidence from the Ghana Banking Survey (2014) shows that there has been a fall in the market shares of some existing banks as well as the frequent defection of customers from one bank to another. For universal banks in Ghana to achieve competitive advantage, there is the need to adopt brand positioning which seeks to shape the preferences of customers. This would lead to customer satisfaction which would in turn lead to customer loyalty, consumer-brand equity and a willingness to search for the brand (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007; Keller, 2003). In addition, the introduction of switching cost seeks to minimize the rampant defection of customers from one service provider to another (Jones, Mothersbaugh & Betty, 2002). It is against this backdrop that the topic was selected to investigate the relationship between brand positioning and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector using switching cost as a moderating factor.

1.3. Research Gaps

Research into market orientation and marketing practices in general has received relatively good attention in some parts of Africa including Ghana, in the past two decades, the case of positioning is an exception (Blankson, 2007; Blankson, Owusu-Frempong & Mbah, 2004). Prior research on brand positioning in Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) has encompassed themes like Vodacom and MTN's brand positioning based on the perceptions; Vodacom and MTN's brand positioning based on the brand associations; impact of celebrities' endorsement on brand

positioning on mobile telecommunication (Martey & Frimpong, 2014); competitive advantage for brand positioning (Ezeuduji, Lete, Correia & Taylor, 2014); and brand positioning through corporate social responsibility (Ali, 2014). Nonetheless, these studies highlight the need for more research to be conducted in the area of brand positioning and also its influence.

In other parts of the world, research on brand positioning has covered, brand positioning and religious organisations (Abreu, 2006); brand positioning in the context of Indian insurance (Ray & Pathak, 2007); brand positioning of MBA programs; brand positioning as an effective tool for small and medium enterprises (Tudor, & Negricea, 2012); brand positioning and sporting goods market (Lebrun, Souchet, & Bouchet, 2013); Indian shampoo and brand positioning (Mohanty, 2012); brand positioning and fairness cream (Sahoo, & Das, 2013); brand positioning and fashion (Nobbs, Foong, & Baker, 2015); brand positioning and airlines (Erguven, 2015). Although there have been a number of studies conducted on brand positioning in relation to the service sector, there is still the need for to be examined in relation to other industries within this sector as some authors (such as Amonini, McCol-Kennedy, Soutar & Sweeney, 2010; Zeithaml & Batner, 1996; Bateson, 1995) contend that the intangibility and variability of service require different positioning dimensions. In view of this assertion, there is a need for study on brand positioning (in relation to trust, price, and core service,) in the Ghanaian universal banking sector.

Traditionally, positioning strategies have been mainly discussed from an organizational perspective (example: Amonini, McColl-Kennedy, Soutar & Sweeney, 2010; Blankson & Kalafatis, 2004; Dibb & Simkin, 1993). Dibb, Simkin, Pride & Ferrel, (1997) argue that positioning dimensions from the organization's perspective may not be able to reflect customer

value and customer satisfaction. However, some scholars argue that competitive positioning strategies expect a clear view of the customer requirement or customer perspective (Hooley & Greenley, 2005; Bhat & Reddy, 1998; Dibb & Simkin, 1993). Yet, in recent review on brand positioning, the authors investigated how brand positioning is achieved, evaluated brand positioning and approaches for brand positioning, without examining its influence on customer satisfaction or customer loyalty (eg. MacIntosh & Crow, 2011; Anana & Nique, 2010; Muruganantham & Kaliyamoorthy 2009). Therefore, this study seeks to assess the customer perspective of brand positioning and examine its influence on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To investigate the relationship between brand positioning and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector.
2. To examine the effect of the switching cost on the relationship between brand positioning and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector.

1.5. Research Questions

The following are the research questions of the study:

1. What is the relationship between brand positioning and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector?
2. What is the effect of switching cost on the relationship between brand positioning and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector?

1.6. Significance of the Study

The significance of the study can be seen along three dimensions: research, practice and policy.

Concerning research, this study seeks to contribute to the stock of knowledge about assessing the relationship between brand positioning and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector; with the effect of switching cost as a moderator, could help anyone working towards this area of study in future research.

Concerning practice, the report seeks to send a signal to the players in the marketing fields especially the bank managers in Ghana and the world at large about the best brand positioning strategies that can be used to position their bank services that would yield to bring about customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Concerning significance to policy, the study seeks to provide feedback which could be used as guidelines for government policies in order to position Ghana well to take advantage of numerous business opportunities.

1.7. Scope of the Study

This study seeks to focus on assessing the relationship between brand positioning and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector using switching cost as the moderating factor.

The scope of the study is limited to the perception of customers only, though brand positioning, customer loyalty and switching cost are issues that deserve the involvement of both the service providers and customers. All the 27 universal banks in Ghana were included in the study and all the branches that were selected were in Accra, the capital city, due to the concentration of major economic activities there and the presence of many bank branches in the capital. The

research sample was selected within Greater Accra Metropolis, the capital city for customers who have bank accounts and also patronize various services of universal banks. The target group was chosen because they perceived they had the requisite literacy to understand, interpret and respond to the questionnaires appropriately (Ghana Statistical Survey, 2012; Winer, 1999; Spector; 1992).

1.8. Chapter Disposition

This study was organized into six chapters. Chapter one consisted of introduction, background of the study, the statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, significance, scope of the study and chapter disposition.

Chapter two presented context of the study. This consists of history, current information and some challenges faced by the banking sector in Ghana.

In chapter three, the relevant literature is reviewed. It discusses what some writers or authors have said about the relationship brand positioning between and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector with switching cost as a moderating factor. Theory, empirical evidence and conceptual framework/model were also outlined here.

Chapter four highlighted research methodology which covered the research approach, sampling technique, instruments that was used to collect data, the data analysis method and limitation of the study.

Chapter five covered the presentation and analysis of the data collected from the respondents in the Ghanaian universal banking sector.

Finally, summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research were presented in chapter six.



CHAPTER TWO

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.0. Introduction

This chapter or section of the study presents the overview of the Ghanaian universal banking sector which covers the following: brief history of Ghanaian universal banking sector, current information on Ghanaian universal banking sector, some challenges facing the Ghanaian universal banking sector and what does the future hold for the sector?

2.1. History of Ghanaian Universal Banking Sector

Ghanaian universal banking sector is governed by the state-owned Central Bank or the Bank of Ghana (BoG). The Bank of Ghana emanated from the Bank of the Gold Coast (BGC), where it started operation. The commencement of the bank began from the time of Ghana's political struggle for independence, in the middle of the 1950s. Presently, the Bank of Ghana has overall supervisory and regulatory authority in all matters relating to banking and non-banking financial business with the purpose of achieving an effective and efficient banking system in the interest of customers and the economy as a whole.

Ghana, like other African countries, experienced drastic economic decline and high rates of inflation and unemployment in the 1970s (Loxley, 1988). To address this situation, in the early 1980s, the government of Ghana accepted to carry out an Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) under the supervision and support from World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In line with this, the Financial Sector Adjustment Programme was introduced in

1983 (Mmieh & Owusu-Frimpong, 2004). The aim of this programme was to revamp Ghana's financial sector which had suffered from undue political influence, weak management, inadequate capital, backward information and accounting systems, poor internal controls, inefficiency, lack of competition and a large portfolio of non-performing loans (Hinson, Owusu-Frimpong & Dasah, 2009). According to Owusu-Frimpong (2008), the Financial Sector Adjustment Programme targeted rehabilitation of financial markets through improvements in regulatory framework, restructuring of financially distressed banks, and injection of more domestic and foreign capital into the sector. As at the beginning of the 1990s, Ghana could boast of only eight (8) licensed commercial banks and was acclaimed by the World Bank and other international economic monitors to be at the threshold of economic lift-off (Hutchful, 2002).

2.2. Current Information in Ghanaian Universal Banking Sector

The policy transformation within the financial sector has resulted in the dramatic growth of the universal banking sector in Ghana (Narteh & Kuada, 2014). These reforms have brought about the entry of ten of Nigeria's biggest banks into Ghana's banking industry (Hinson, Owusu-Frimpong & Dasah, 2009). Hinson et al (2009) explain that, the reasons these international banks extended their operations into Ghana are that the country enjoys political stability, consistency in implementing political and economic policies and commercial production of crude oil. Initially banking sector was regulated in Ghana where banks are established either as a commercial, development and merchant bank, and it was termed as a three tiered structure (Narteh & Owusu-Frimpong, 2011). In 2006, the Bank of Ghana deregularised the banking sector by phasing-out its three tiered structure of commercial, development and merchant banks in support of a universal banking license (Narteh & Owusu-Frimpong, 2011). According to Narteh and Owusu-Frimpong, (2011), this policy allows banks to do business in all sectors of

the economy, depending on their risk appetite. At the end of the year 2014, the number of banks that had acquired universal banking licenses stood at twenty-seven (27) traditional banks with a total of 904 branches across the country, 137 rural and community banks, and 58 non-banking financial institutions including savings and loans, leasing and mortgage firms (Ghana Banking Survey, 2014). This clearly shows the keen competition in the financial sector in Ghana. During the year 2014, the Bank of Ghana tightened its supervision and regulation on non-bank financial institutions which led to the closure of those which did not meet the regulatory requirements. Furthermore, the minimum capital for the deposit and non-deposit taken by micro-finance institutions was increased to three hundred thousand Ghana Cedi (GH¢300,000) and five hundred thousand Ghana Cedi (GH¢500,000) respectively in August, 2013. And, the capital requirement was increased to an upward adjustment of two hundred thousand (GH¢200,000) for institutions with five branches. Primary liquidity reserves have also been set at 10% of total deposits.

Bank of Ghana in 2006 raised the minimum capital requirements for universal banks to sixty million Ghana Cedi (GH¢ 60m) and the banks were expected to meet this directive by the end of 2012 (Narteh & Owusu-Frimpong, 2011). In 2011, the Bank of Ghana further increased the minimum capital requirement to one hundred and twenty million Ghana Cedi (GH¢120m) with the provision that the existing banks only needed to maintain a stated capital of GH¢60m it had previously set. The idea was that existing banks would gradually increase their capital to GH¢120m in line with their business. However, the underwriting capacity of banks has eroded because of the negative impact of inflation and depreciation of the Ghana Cedi. The Bank of Ghana gave a directive that with effect from July 2, 2013 cash payments in honour of cheques to third parties at bank counters shall not be more than ten thousand Ghana Cedi (GH¢10,000.00) or ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) (Ghana Banking Survey, 2014). The

survey explain that the limit does not apply to third party cheques that are presented for the credit of an amount through clearing as well as instances where the payee is the drawer of the cheque. This formed part of measures by the regulator to encourage the use of non-cash modes of transaction settlements and greater scrutiny of money laundering activities.

Banks measure their operating abilities by the resources available to earn a returns for the shareholders, lenders and the depositors. Together, these resources with earning capacity make up the operating assets which are the key business performance indicators as well as the bases from which stakeholders' value is derived. Operating assets are usually defined to include all assets that are directly deployed to generate interest, income or related fee income. These include cash and liquid assets such as investments, loans and advances. It excludes investments in property, plant and equipment that provide a platform to facilitate a bank business. Despite economic challenges facing the banking sector, the sector grew by 32% from GH¢25,755m in 2012 to GH¢43,296m in 2013. The growth can be attributed to 30% increase in deposit and borrowings. Loans and advances are the main important part of the industry's operating assets accounting for 43% of these assets (Ghana Banking Survey, 2014).

The industry's profit before tax margin persistently improved from 37.3% in 2012 to 45.3% in 2013 (Ghana Banking Survey, 2014). The survey indicates that during the global financial crisis between 2008 and 2011, the banking industry did not suffer much losses but it appears that the sector's profitability was reduced due to the slowdown in the global economy. The improvement in profit before tax is attributable to the increase in total income by 38% from GH¢3,346m in 2012 to GH¢4,591m in 2013 with less than proportionate increase in expenses. Interest income from loans raised by 32% from GH¢1,993m in 2012 to GH¢2,623m in 2013.

The industry's cost grew by 20% from GH¢1,800m in 2012 to GH¢2,145m in 2013 but cost income ratio which took a dip in 2011 has improved from 54% in 2012 to 47% in 2013. As part of the service sector, employee emoluments or remuneration is the largest part in the cost structure as it constitutes 48% of the total sector's selling general and administrative cost. Employee numbers did not change much due to slowdown in branch expansion in 2013, but staff cost raised from GH¢642m in 2012 to GH¢741m in 2013. The increment of cost can be linked to pension and provident fund costs upward adjustment in allowances relative to inflation and the exchange rates. The banking sector's return on asset has consistently improved over the last three years (2011 to 2013). Return on asset raised from 2.4% in 2011 to 3.5% in 2012 and is now at 4.2% in 2013. During periods total assets grew by 33% from GH¢27,100m in 2012 to GH¢36,100m in 2013 but the steeper growth in net profits by 64% from GH¢940m in 2012 to GH¢1,530m in 2013 accounted to the favourable returned.

2.3. Some Challenges Facing Ghanaian Banking Sector

According to the Ghana Banking Survey (2014) one of the challenges facing the Ghanaian universal banking sector is the introduction of Value Added Tax (VAT) on certain financial transactions and services by the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA). The directive is feared to negatively impact banking in the country. A large proportion of the Ghanaian population is already unbanked and the new tax is simple aggravating the situation. Many people are opting to keep their monies at home and avoid banking services as much as possible especially majority of the newly introduced e-banking services which are becoming key sources of non-interest income for the banks. Apart from the fact that some people in Ghana would usually not want to pay any additional tax, the issue is worsened by the lack of clarity in the mind of the ordinary Ghanaian about what is to be taxed and what will not be taxed.

Another challenge facing the banking sector in Ghana are the existing rules on the operations of Foreign Exchange Accounts (FEA) and Foreign Currency Accounts (FCA), Foreign Currency Denominated Loans and introduced a Margin Account for Imports Bills. As explained by the Bank of Ghana, these were to help reduce the depreciation of the cedi. The bankers in principle supported the measures, however, there are currently concerns over “unintended consequences” with the regulator having to revise some of these directives. The call now is for the total withdrawal of these new directives on FEA and FCA. Furthermore, a unified formula for the calculation of the base rates quoted by universal banks was also introduced in the year 2013 and is considered to be a challenge facing Ghanaian universal banking sector. Many expected the new formula to bring some sanity in the base rates quoted by universal banks and perhaps assist in reducing lending rates given the transparency to be associated with the new formula. The formula highlights the cost of funds to the banks but many now wonder whether reference should be made to the money market interest rates at which Government borrows which are arguably better determinants of the base rates of these universal banks. (Ghana Banking Survey, 2014).

Ghanaian banks also registered to help enforce the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), an initiative of the tax authorities in the United States of America (USA) and this has added to the challenges facing universal banks in Ghana. The obligation of the Ghanaian universal banks is to provide information on citizens of United States with a certain minimum bank account balance to the US tax authorities. Ghanaian universal banks are already considering using this minimum balance as a requirement for US citizens interested in opening accounts. There are concerns about whether the corresponding banks and tax authorities in the United States will reciprocate and provide similar information on Ghanaians in the United States (Ghana Banking Survey, 2014). Again, frequent power outages is considered to be

another challenge confronting the sector. Persistent power outages means a universal bank has to spend thousands of Ghana Cedis on fuel to ensure uninterrupted power supply. This has increased the operational cost and reduced profit levels of firms that are doing business in Ghana specifically in the universal banking sector.

2.4. What Does The Future Hold For The Sector?

There is a persistent financial deepening of the Ghanaian universal banking sector with the industry always rising to the occasion regarding new developments in the global financial markets. Majority of the universal banks in Ghana are now venturing into complex financial products including swaps and derivatives and are supporting many trade related services associated with the new found oil production sector of the economy.

For universal banks in Ghana to realise their full potential, then the sector must embrace certain types of technology in the future. It is in view of this that the Bank of Ghana has introduced Ghana Integrated Payments and Settlement Systems (GhIPSS) and its various platforms, systems, and products such as the national switch (e-Zwich) and related biometric card (e-Zwich card), and Automated Clearing House (ACH). All of these platforms and systems have been introduced to promote the increased use of electronic banking and payment methods. This requires increased public education in the banking industry which would deepen the banking customers' awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the operations of these electronic platforms and systems.

The future certainly looks bright for those universal banks who are able to positioning their services well in the customers' minds and grab the opportunities to come. The regulation will continue to play a key role in shaping the destiny of the Ghanaian universal banking sector and help the regulator in enforcing and achieving its monetary policy objectives (Ghana Banking Survey, 2014).



CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0. Introduction

Under this section relevant literature is reviewed. The chapter consists of the following: positioning theory, the concept of brands, differences between brand positioning and strategic positioning, discussion of brand positioning dimensions, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, switching cost, relationship between brand positioning, customer loyalty and switching cost, demographic characteristics, empirical evidence and the conceptual framework/model.

3.1. Positioning Theory

Positioning theory is based on three propositions (Ries & Trout, 1986). First, we live in an over communicated society, that is bombarded with information on a daily basis. Second, the mind has developed a defense system against the mess. Third, the only way to cut through the clutter to reach the mind is through simplified and focused messages.

Marketing battles are not fought in the customer's office or in supermarkets (Manhas, 2010). These are only distribution points for the merchandise whose brand selection is decided elsewhere. Manhas (2010) argues that, marketing battles are fought in a mean and ugly place. A place that is dark and dump with much unexplored territory and deep pitfalls to trap the innocent. Marketing battles are fought inside the mind (Ries & Trout, 1986). The brand positioning strategies are considered to be important for the operationalization of the concept. Fill (1999) states that the successful positioning can only be achieved by adopting a customer's perspective and by understanding how customers perceive products and services in the class,

and how they attach importance to particular attributes that can be grouped under a construct (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). In marketing, in order not to succumb to marketing myopia (Levitt, 1986), and to benefit from long-term survival, there is a growing need for firms to assess their offerings (Bernstein, 1992; Park, Jaworski, & MacInnis, 1986) and manage their organizations in relation to their competitors (Wright, 1997; McKenna, 1986; Ries & Trout, 1986).

3.2. The Concept of Brands

The concept of brand and branding have been discussed by several contemporary marketing scholars (Bertilsson, 2009; De Chernatony & McDonald, 2003; Jones & Slater, 2003). A brand is defined as a name, term, sign, symbol, design or a combination of these that identifies the maker or seller of a product or services (Kotler & Keller, 2009; Aaker, 1991). Brands have also been viewed to go beyond the physical components of what they stand for to encompass additional attributes which are important considerations for consumers' buying decisions (De Chernatony & McDonald, 2003). In modern times, brands function as symbols that enable consumers to identify and separate one producer from another; empowering consumers with the ability to trace one product back to the manufacturer and hold them responsible for its quality (Bertilsson, 2009). Moreover, today, brands are ascribed with almost divine characteristics that serve as strategic business assets essential for firms to develop if they are to compete successfully (Bertilsson, 2009).

3.3. Strategic Positioning and Brand Positioning

To make clear the meaning of the positioning concept, it is necessary to differentiate between brand positioning and strategic positioning (Ellson, 2004; DiMingo, 1988). Strategic (market) positioning according to Evans, Moutinho and Vaan Raaij (1996) and Porter (1979) is related

to the market standing of a firm against its competitors. It is the process in which firms seek to ascertain ways for mobilizing specific resources and assets to build positional advantages in product-markets or service-markets. Another role of strategic positioning is to help drive the communication program. If done effectively, it should help the organization to achieve congruence between its achieved or intended positioning and the communication message (Blankson & Kalafatis, 2007). Coffie and Owusu-Frimpong (2014) argue that, strategic positioning of a firm also helps to express the values and culture of the organization to its customers and other stakeholders as to what the organization stands for. A well-positioned brand, for example, will resonate with customers, differentiate the organization from its competitors, and represent the public face of the adopted business strategy (Aaker, 2011). The implication is that organizations need to understand both customers and competitors on the perceived values of products and alternatives in the market (Coffie & Owusu-Frimpong, 2014).

Brand positioning, which is the subject of this study, focuses on the perception of consumers about a company's products or brands (Crawford, 1985). Hooley, Piercy and Nicoulaud (2007) assert that, strategic positioning normally gives direction for the development of the brand positioning. Brand positioning is also known as perceived positioning or consumer-generated positioning which is referred to as a complex set of beliefs, thoughts, feelings and impressions that consumers hold for the brand as against competitors' brand (Ellson, 2004; Ries & Trout, 1986). Ries and Trout (1970) contend that, brand positioning is not what you do to a product or service but what a firm does to the mind of the consumers. That is, a firm places the product or service in the mind of the customers. Brand positioning refers to the place the brand occupies in the consumer's mind (Trout & Ries, 2001). Keller (2009) argues that positioning a product or service in the mind of target customers, enables consumers to recognize point of parity and point of difference about a product or service which also influences their perceptions.

Positioning does not refer to the way in which the seller wants to be remembered by the target market but what the consumer understands about the respective brand of a service provider or bank. A brand must have something special in order to be remembered by the target market. This objective can be achieved by offering a specific market benefit or offering better conditions than the competitors (Tudor & Negericea 2012). Kotler and Keller (2006) contend that brand positioning has the same weight as the 4Ps as resources for the company and state that an offer can be positioned in the prospect's mind as being better and/or different through the use of points of parity and points of difference.

Urban and Hauser (1993) also contend that, positioning is crucial for new products and services. Not only must a new product deliver the benefits the customer needs, but it must do so better than competition (Manhas, 2010). Manhas (2010) further argues that, in developing a positioning strategy, the marketer must consider four things:

1. The target market
2. How the product or service is different or better than competitors
3. The value of this difference to the target market
4. The ability to demonstrate or communicate this difference to the target market

These elements roughly relate to the components of a brand's positioning as described by Aaker (1996); they are target audience, subset of identity/value proposition, create advantage, and actively communicate. Brand also represents an investment which creates an incentive to maintain quality and customer satisfaction (Grant, 2005). This may give the potential customer some assurance when selecting a product. Furthermore, Kotler and Keller (2006) specified that

brand image is the different perceptions and beliefs consumers hold, as reflected in the associations consumers' memory may grasp.

3.4. Brand Positioning Dimensions

The special features of services compared to those of physical goods make it difficult for consumers to compare competing services, thus posing challenges in their positioning (Bitner, 1997; Zeithaml & Bitner 1996; Fisher, 1991.). In view of this, Batson (1995) and Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) contend that, specific brand positioning dimensions should be applied in a particular service sector. It is in this direction that the following brand positioning typologies have been chosen for the banking sector in Ghana: image, trust, tangible cues, customer intimacy, country of origin, core services, price and distance. These dimensions are discussed below:

3.4.1. Image

Keller (2009) described brand image as the perceptions and beliefs held by consumers about the brand. Brand image depends on the external properties of the product or service, such as the ways in which the brand attempts to meet customer's psychological or social needs (Keller, 2009). Keller (2009) argues that it is the way people think about a brand generally rather than what they think the brand actually does. Normally, the image of the service company has been shown to have a positive impact on consumer responses toward the firm, including their loyalty in such sectors as telecommunications and education (Nguyen & Leblanc, 2001), food retailing (Juhl, Kristensen & Ostergaard, 2002) as well as banking and financial services (Nguyen & Lablanc, 1998). Corporate based brand associations can engender positive replies from consumers in the banking industry for three main reasons;

The first reason relates to the complexity of the offering. Banks regularly offer various types of services, many of which can be highly technical and, as such difficult to assess and compare by customers (Phan & Ghantous, 2013). Devlin (2004) posits that the banks overall image can act as an authority that helps customers save time and effort in assessing the bank's offering particularly under high complexity. The second reason has to do with the risk perceptions associated with banking services (Phan & Ghantous, 2013). Corporate image has been shown to play a vital role in achieving consumers trust both in traditional and internet banking (Flavian, Guinalı & Torres, 2005). This comes about as a result of the fact that corporate reputation on the market shows service quality at the level of credence attributes and the firm's ability and willingness to keep the promises made to its customers (Dall'Olmo Riley & Chernatony, 2000).

The third reason relates to the difficulty confronting many banks and financial service providers particularly in highly competitive markets, in differentiating themselves with features that can be easily copied by competitors in many instance (O'Lolighlin & Szmigin, 2005). Chun and Davies (2006) assert that, strong corporate image associations can positively affect customer's perceived differentiation and drive customer satisfaction and customer loyalty to the services brand (Davies, Chun, da Silva & Roper, 2003).

3.4.2. Trust

According to Morgan and Hunt (1994) trust exists when one party has confidence in an exchange partner's reliability and integrity. Dalziel, Harris and Laing, (2011) argue that, trust has to do with the confidence that a party's word or promise is reliable and that the party will fulfill his or her duties in an exchange relationship. Cognitive trust is a customer's confidence

or willingness to rely on a service provider's competence and reliability (Moorman, Deshpande & Zaltman, 1993). DuPlessis (2010) asserts that, before customers conduct business with an organization, they must be able to trust the service provider. Phan and Ghantous (2013) posit that, the banking sector has suffered from several important financial crises in the last decade that could add to consumer perceived uncertainty. Some scholars argue that brand trust acts as a risk-reducing device. (De Chernatony & Cottam, 2006; De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1999). A recent study in a retailing context conducted by Ghantous (2012) discovered that customers' interaction with frontline employees directly affects their perception of the services brand trustworthiness in keeping its promises, and indirectly affects loyalty through the brand's perceived trustworthiness and expertise.

Brand trust plays a vital role in building long-term relationships between consumers and goods/services providers in the presence of high perceived risk (Sichtmann, 2007; Fischer, Meffert & Perrey, 2004). More specifically, brand trust acts as a major antecedent of customer's commitment toward a brand and subsequently of customer loyalty. Some authors argue that, trust has been found to play a significant role in maintaining service relationship with one's bank (Ndubisi, Wah & Ndubisi, 2007; Lewis & Soureli, 2006). Ndubisi and Wah, (2005) assert that, an abuse of this trust by a service provider will result in customer dissatisfaction and defection.

3.4.3. Tangible Cues

Some scholars argue that, customers associate quality service with tangible cues provided by banks (Al-Eisa & Alhemoud, 2009; Jamal & Naser, 2002). In view of the perceived importance of the physical evidence dimension of service delivery, some authors have designed specific

scales to measure the construct. TANGSERV (Raajpoot, 2002) and DINESCAPE (Ryu & Jang, 2008) were designed to enhance the measurement of physical evidence dimension in service delivery. Tangible cues in the commercial banking sector may be shown in physical attractiveness of the bank's servicescape, the degree of modernity of its equipment and technology, and the appearance of its employees (i.e. dress codes) (Tuzovic, 2008; Jabnoun & Al-Tamimi, 2003). Tangible cues may also include the ambient conditions such as temperature, ventilation, noise, and scent prevailing in the bank's premises, extent of the physical layout of equipment, beautiful buildings, nice vehicles and visually appealing signs and symbols (Barber & Scarelli, 2010; Jamal & Naser, 2002). These tangible cues provide some satisfaction to customers and this may also retain their loyalty.

The introduction of information technology into the banking sector has implications for customers' perception of the service provider's activities and core dimensions of the bank services (Reimer & Kuehn, 2005). It is now accepted that e-banking in particular has provided additional channels for providing banking services to customers (Al-Eisa & Alhamoud, 2009) and has put some influence on how service providers interact with their customers (Lallmahamood, 2007). Narteh and Kuada (2014) assert that with installations of Automated Teller Machines (ATM), electronic funds transfers, credit-cards, debit cards and point of sale (POS) terminals banks have increased the ability to offer their customers fast and efficient products or services 24 hours a day in Ghana. This has increased the tangible cues of the banks as well as the degree of complexity with which commercial banks render their services (Almossawi, 2001). The research work of Al-Eisa and Alhemoud (2009) shows that the introduction of self-banking services has a positive effect on customer satisfaction which may lead to customer loyalty.

3.4.4. Customer Intimacy

Customer intimacy has to do with the long term relationship a firm seeks to develop with its customers. Gronroos (1994b) defines customer intimacy as a firm's ability to “identify and establish, maintain and enhance, and when necessary, terminate relationship with customers and other stakeholders, at a profit so that the objectives of all parties involved are met; and this is done by mutual exchange and fulfillment of promises”. Some scholars observe that within the banking industry, specifically, there is clear indication that banks have been using relationship marketing or customer intimacy strategy to attract, satisfy and retain customers (Molina, Martin-Consuegra & Estabeban, 2007; Levergin & Lilijander, 2006; O’Loughlin, Szinigin & Turnbull, 2004). It has been contended that customer relationship helps firms to differentiate their bank service offerings (Aurier & N’Goala, 2010), facilitates cross-and up-selling (Molina et al, 2007), and enhances customer lifetime value (Gupta, Lehmann; & Stuart, 2005; Gustafsson, Johnson & Roos, 2005). This is therefore seen as a more effective means to sustainable competitive advantage for banks (Dimitriadis, 2010). Frontline employees have been seen as important in implementing customer intimacy concept in bank services (Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner & Gremler, 2008). The skills and competence (Ndubisi, 2007), friendliness and willingness to help customers (Al-Eisa & Alhemoud, 2009), and service recovery effectiveness (Priluck & Lala, 2009) have all been found to positively impact customer loyalty.

3.4.5. Country of Origin

In today’s era of globalization, country of origin of the manufacturing or service brands is increasingly becoming more important than the actual country of manufacture. Country of origin refers to the country that a manufacturer’s or service’s product or brand is associated with (Blankson & Kalafatis, 2004). Traditionally, this country is called the Home-Country or the country from which the brand or service brand initially originated. Coffie and Owusu-

Frimpong's (2014, page 539) work on alternative positioning of services in Ghana revealed that, sometimes customers feel some kinship with banks from the home country. This is evident from the comments of the marketing director of a bank: "... consumers perceive the bank as the property of Ghanaians for which reason it has to go all out to serve the populace. For this reason, they resisted fiercely when the government proposed to sell the bank. Ghana Commercial Bank (GCB) also put in every effort to meet customer needs." In a study by Wang and Yang (2008), the country of origin of a car was found to be a positive moderator in the relationship between brand personality of a car and consumers' purchase intention. Specifically, they affirmed that, a positive country of origin image could enhance brand personality's positive impact on purchase intention, whereas a negative country of origin image could significantly decrease the positive brand personality effect on purchase intention.

However, researchers have suggested that the effect varies from one product category to another (Wu & Lo, 2009; Pappu, Quester & Cooksey, 2005). Andaleeb (1995) hinted earlier that consumers, in some instances, have had perceptions about products and services brands based on their country of origin and might thus have a positive or negative connotation towards them when it comes to purchasing brands from stereotyped countries. The concept of country of origin effects on consumer purchase decisions have also been studied by several scholars (Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch, & Palihawadana, 2011; Samiee, 2010; Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2008; Usunier, 2006; Samiee, Shimp & Sharma, 2005). Other studies have also reported external factors such as consumer's family, reference groups and the consumer's role and status as major influencers of product or service selection (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2009) and these influence customers' loyalty to a particular service provider or bank.

3.4.6. Core Services

Sureshchandar, Rajendran and Anantharaman (2002) contend that, core service denotes the main product or service being rendered by the bank to its target customers. According to Brogowicz, Delene and Lyth (1990), a core service denotes the “what” of a service offering. Al-Eisa and Alhemoud (2009) implore firms to intentionally adopt various strategies that highlight the core benefits of their services to both current and prospective customers. This enables customers to form realistic expectations concerning the services and their role in the co-creation process (Garry, 2008). Some work in retail banking has shown that the complexity of core service delivery impacts positively on customer satisfaction (Al-Eisa & Alhemoud, 2009; Jamal & Naser, 2002). Sophistication in this context includes the difference types of services provided as well as the competence and accuracy with which the services are rendered, how the bank branches are networked, the hours within which the services are provided, how fast the services are delivered, and the price at which the services are offered (Jamal & Naser, 2002).

The introduction of electronic banking systems such as automated teller machines (ATMs) and internet banking has added extended dimensions to how the core service is rendered by universal banks. Electronic banking assists banks to standardize service delivery, lower the cost of services, ensure improved customer relationship management, and above all, achieve higher levels of customer participation in the service delivery process (Bauer, Hammerschmidt, & Falk, 2005; Chen, 2005). The core service is so important that the banks’ failure to deliver on it could cause customer switching to other competitive providers. Keaveney (1995) observes that core service failure as the dominant factor, accounting for 44% of the reasons for customers switching service providers.

3.4.7. Price

Price is an attribute that must be given up or sacrificed in order to get certain types of products or services (Zeithaml, 1998). Some authors assert that customers are usually price sensitive or conscious in their purchasing behaviour (Beckett, Hower & Howcroft, 2000; Levesque & McDougall, 1996). Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) argue that price is a significant element in choice situations as a consumer's choice normally relies heavily on the price of alternatives. Furthermore, Varki and Colgate (2001) discovered that the role of price, as an attribute of performance, may have a direct effect on customers' satisfaction and behavioural intentions. In Keaveney's (1995) seminal research, the pricing factor involved all critical switching behaviours that include prices, rates, fees, charges, surcharges, service changes, penalties, price deals, coupons, and or price promotions.

In the financial service industry, price has a wider implication than in many other services industry (Gerrard & Cunningham, 2004). According to Gerrard and Cunningham (2004), price in the financial service sector includes fee implementation, bank charges, and interest rates and paid. Some studies have shown that the concept of perceived price has been introduced by taking into account time, effort, search costs and psychic costs involved in the buying process as well as the monetary price (Grewal, Baker, Levy & Voss, 2003; Zeithaml, 1988). This implies that price must be properly controlled to impact positively on customers' satisfaction and customers' loyalty.

3.4.8. Distance

One area that has been of immense interest with regard to literature on consumer brand decision making is the convenience with which consumers are able to obtain their choice of brands (brand strategy, 2010). Lin and Chang (2003) assert that convenience of a brand has an

important impact on consumers' brand choice. According to Levesque and McDougall (1996), a convenient location is a significant factor influencing customers' assessment of a firm's performance. Levesque and McDougall (1996) argue that, convenience to a bank location is a vital factor influencing customers' switching behaviour because location directly determines whether the customers can access their banks on a regular basis.

Keaveney (1995) posits that, under the inconvenient category, a service provider's location is a significant factor that may trigger switching. Clemes, Gan and Zhang (2010), explain that customers may defect to a new provider if the new provider is closer to their workplace or home. Kiser (2002) concludes that location is a crucial matter for household's choosing depositor institution due to the limited geographical accessibility of alternatives banks. Gerrard and Cunningham (2000) studied the bank switching behaviour of Singapore graduates and ascertained that inconvenience location has an impact on those graduates who prefer face-to-face communication. In a nutshell, a convenient location can encourage customer's retention at their existing bank and postpone switching (Lee & Cunningham, 2001).

3.5. Customer Satisfaction

Oliver (1997) defines customer satisfaction as customer reaction to the state of fulfillment, and customer judgment of the fulfilled state. Narteh and Kuada (2014) explain that customer satisfaction is a post consumption experience. Olorunniwo, Husu and Udo (2006) posit that customer satisfaction is a fulfillment response following the consumption experience. More precisely, customer satisfaction is an individual's perception of the performance of the product or service compared to expectation (Torres & Kline, 2006). Meng, Tepanon and Uysal (2008)

contend that the differences in definition could be linked to the diverse opinions authors have applied to model of customer satisfaction.

Some research has proved that a firm's ability to satisfy customer needs in retail banks is crucial to their long-term business success (Gursoy & Swanger, 2007; Day, 2003). Again, studies have also shown that when customers are satisfied, they remain loyal to their bank (Ndubisi, 2007), communicate or recommend their bank to prospective customers (Chi & Grusoy, 2009), less price sensitive and reduces operating costs (Fornell; 1992). This imply that when a firm is able to position its service from the perspective of customers, the firm's services are differentiated, and increases its ability to render better service to customers which will in turn result in customer satisfaction (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2010).

3.6. Customer Loyalty

According to Oliver (1999), customer loyalty is referred to as a deeply held commitment to re-purchase or re-buy a preferred product/service continuously in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set buying despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour. Lovelock, Lewise, and Vandermerve (1999) argue that in a business context, loyalty can be used to describe the willingness of a customer to consistently purchase a firm's goods and services over a long period of time and on the free will of the customer referring the firm's products or services to friends and associates. In their opinion, customers will continue to be loyal to a specific firm if they believe that better value is being rendered. Kotler (2000) argues that the most important or vital consideration in attaining high customer loyalty is for the firm to deliver higher customer value.

Customer loyalty is seen as the key driver or indicator of success (Anabila, Narteh & Tweneboah-Koduah, 2012).

Customers experiencing a high level of satisfaction are likely to remain with their current service providers and maintain their accounts (Kim, Park & Jeong, 2004). Kim et al., (2004) assert that, the importance of customer loyalty is its close link to the firm's continued survival and future growth. Loyalty can be seen as both an attitudinal and behavioural dimension (Dick & Basu, 1994). Customers who are behaviourally loyal to a firm show more favourable disposition towards the firm relative to competitors (Leverin & Liljander, 2006). However, some authors like Aldlaigan and Buttle, (2005); Liljander and Roos, (2002); Reinartz and Kumar, (2002) have displayed that in some cases behavioural loyalty like repeat purchase does not always denote attitudinal loyalty, due to other underpinning limiting factors such as distance and monopoly powers that might serve as barriers to customer switching. Loyal customers are less likely to defect as a result of price of the product or service and buy more than non-loyal customers (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990).

Raman (1999) argues that loyal customers provide strong recommendation, create business referrals, provide references, and serve as an advisory boards. Raman (1999) said that loyal customers serve as a fantastic marketing force by providing recommendations and disseminating positive word-of-mouth; increasing sales by patronizing various types of the bank's products: making more frequent purchases; and costing less to serve, in part, because they are aware of the product or service and need less attention. According to the literature, positioning is expected to shape the needs and wants of consumers, lead to customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Kalra & Goodstein, 1998), customer derived brand equity (Keller, 2003) and willingness to look for the brand (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007).

3.7. Switching Cost, Moderating Effect of the Customer Loyalty

Some authors argue that a well-positioned brand should appeal to the specific needs of a target segment or market because when differential advantage/value proposition is created (Keller, 1993; Wind, 1982), consumers' needs are more specifically satisfied (Day, 19984). This means that customers experiencing high levels of satisfaction are likely to stay with their current service providers and maintain their subscriptions (Kim, Park & Jeong, 2004). However, research has also shown that customer satisfaction, whilst positively influencing customer loyalty is not always a sufficient condition, and in most cases fails to produce the expected effect (Jones, Mothersbaugh & Betty, 2002). Furthermore, these authors have proposed that it is imperative to look at other potentially influential factors. It is in this direction that the idea of the switching cost was introduced (Jones et al, 2002).

Mathew and Murray (2007) define switching costs as various kinds of financial and non-financial costs occurred in changing suppliers. Lee and Cunningham (2001) assert that switching costs can be measured by the cost that comes from defecting to another provider. Switching cost is also defined as the cost involved in changing from one service provider to another by a customer (Porter, 1998). According to Jackson (1985), it is the sum of economic, psychological and physical costs. These perceived penalties for disloyalty deter customers from switching to a competing brand (Aydin & Arasil, 2005). In the banking sector, switching costs can be explained in terms of money, time, risk, emotion and effort required for activities such as transferring funds, opening a new account, and registering for online banking systems (Clemes, Gand & Zhang, 2010).

The monetary cost has to do with financial penalties customer pays to the bank for defecting to another bank. It can also be loss of rewards or status gained through relationship longevity.

Monetary or financial switching cost can be thought of as a “sunk cost”, which appears when a customer changes his/her brand (Aydin & Arasil, 2005). Klemperer (1987b) gives examples of financial switching cost to be the costs of closing an account with one bank and opening another with a competitor, the costs of changing one’s long-distance telephone service.

Time cost means time and energy the customer spent in searching for alternative service provider or bank to do business (Egan, 2004). Aydin and Arasil (2005) posit that time cost is also known as procedural switching cost stems from the process of customer decision-making and the buyer’s implementation of the decision. The five-stage process entails; need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and post-purchase behaviour. Aydin and Arasil (2005) contend that a customer contemplating switching should ideally evaluate alternative operators with regard to different criteria, such as, fees charges, customer complaint handling procedures, customer service or added value, and purchase a new service.

Risk involves a customer switching to new service provider of whom he or she has no experience. Emotional cost refers to loss of emotional ties the bank has with the customer for many years of relationship due to the defecting to another bank. (Egan, 2004). Risk and emotional cost are also referred to as psychological cost which is perceived cost stemming from social bonds that form in the course of time (for example, staff-customer relations) (Patterson & Sharma, 2000) and the uncertainty and risk associated with switching to an unfamiliar brand or service provider (Sharma, 2003). The degree of perceived risk is highest when the consumer cannot evaluate service quality before purchasing (Sharma, Patterson, Cicic, & Dawes, 1997).

Research has shown that the switching cost plays the role of an adjustment element in the interrelationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Kim, Park & Jeong 2004). Some scholars argue that when the level of customer satisfaction is identical, the level of customer loyalty can vary depending on the magnitude of the switching cost (Jones et al 2002; Colgate & Lang, 2001; Lee & Cunningham, 2001). This means that switching cost could have positive impact on customer loyalty and also negative influence on customer loyalty. Lee, Garland and Wright, (2007) argue that the direct and opportunity costs of switching may discourage customers from leaving the current organization because customers may perceive switching costs to be higher than the expected benefits of changing banks or service providers.

According to Lee and Cunningham (2001) when customers perceive high financial cost, availability of alternatives is not in their evoked set, and a good relationship investment as well as good service recovery deter them from defecting to competitors and this constitutes high switching cost. This is a positive influence of switching cost because it has retains the customers in the organization for continue business. However, switching cost could also have no direct or positive influence on customer loyalty when customers perceive low financial cost, availability of alternatives, poor service recovery and poor relationship investment (Colgate & Lang, 2001). This implies that customers perceive switching cost to be low and therefore could defect to alternative service provider.

3.8. The Relationship Between Brand Positioning, Customer Satisfaction, Customer

Loyalty and Switching Cost

A well-crafted brand position is expected to bring about customer satisfaction which in turn results in customer loyalty (Kotler & Keller, 2012). As a general rule, customer satisfaction

and customer loyalty are closely related (Kim et al., 2004). Kim et al (2004) argue that customer satisfaction functions as an antecedent of customer loyalty. It prevents customer churn or defection and brings about retention, thereby constituting a vital cause of customer loyalty (Reichheld, 1996; Fornell, 1992). Furthermore, whilst affected by market structure, customer type and customer's individual ways of solving problems, the connection between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are not always a linear relation, even though they have a positive relationship (Soderlund, 1998; Fornell, 1992). When customers defect, they tend to perceive a burden or risk which becomes the switching cost which can influence customer loyalty (Kim, Park & Jeong, 2004).

3.9. Demographic Characteristics

Studies show that customers' demographic characteristics can be utilized to differentiate the behaviour of one target segment from another segment (Quester, McGuiggen, Perrault & McCarthy, 2007; Siles, Robinson, & Hanson, 1994). Customers' demographic can be grouped as age, income, education, gender and experience (Strombeck & Wakefield, 2008; Quester et al., 2007). According to Mittal and Kamakura (2001), these characteristics can contribute to various kinds of customers' thresholds or tolerance levels which can affect customers' repeat purchase and behaviour. The demographic characteristics of customers can also influence their choice of product or service (Clemes, Gan & Zhang, 2010). Clemes, Gan and Kao (2007b) explained that in New Zealand, younger customers are the most likely segment to switch banks. Colgate and Hedge (2001) further argue that bank switching is more common among younger, high income earners and highly educated group of customers than those customers' older, low-income earners and less educated demographic groups. In China, people who act as business professionals have gained particular social prestige and can be categorized as holders of white-color jobs (Duthie, 2005). Generally, the white-colour group tends to switch banks because

they receive high incomes and have a higher educational background (Duthie, 2005). However, Siles et al., (1994) depict that bank customers in the USA with different educational backgrounds share the some behaviour in switching banks.

3.10. Empirical Evidence

Positioning of an organization can significantly affect its financial fortunes, as evidenced by internationally well-known brands such as Virgin Atlantic Airlines and IBM. The positioning by Virgin—quality of service and value for money—has been used extensively through the establishment of about 100 companies in different product and service lines around the world (Aaker, 2005).

Research work conducted by Brooksbank (1994) between higher and lower performing United Kingdom (UK) companies in terms of their marketing practices, has discovered that to be successful over the long term, a firm's offering must be well positioned in the market place. This is confirmed by authors like Clement and Werner-Grotemeyer (1990) and Devlin, Ennew and Mirza, (1995) who discovered that just as marketing has become an increasingly important element of strategic management process, so has the positioning concept become fundamental to the success of the firm. This position is reinforced by Fisher (1991) who contends that a differentiated position generates high return on profits. The above assertion is further supported by empirical research, conducted by McAlexander, Becker, and Kaldenberg (1993) in the United States, who declare that the selection of appropriate positioning strategy correlates significantly with financial performance.

Tudor and Negricea (2012) found out in their research work that branding and positioning are interrelated. Tudor and Negricea (2012) discovered that a brand cannot be built and/or preserved without a proper positioning in the minds of the target market. A positioning on the other hand cannot be a long-lasting one without a strong brand. A strong brand and an enduring positioning dimensions should be the most important long-term marketing goals of any firm because these two can differentiate the survivors from the perished, the winners from the losers and the leaders from the pursuers.

Siebers, Zhan and Li (2013) conducted research work on retail stores in China and the results show that different retail formats achieve success through the implementation of similar positioning strategies leading to customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

Amonini , McColl-Kennedy, Soutar & Sweeney (2010) conducted a study in Australia on how professional service firms compete in the market and the findings shows that professional service firms seek to differentiate themselves by implementing brand positioning dimensions such as developing long term relationships, providing better service quality and greater value, and developing brands with strong reputations. The findings indicate that generating positive perceptions of long-term relationships, service quality, value, and the brand reduces clients' perceived risk, retains customers, and helps spread positive word of mouth. The results also suggest service quality and value-added services, as well as a strong brand, can differentiate professional service firms and helps to establish and maintain relationships.

Again Fuchs and Diamantopoulos (2010) conducted a research titled evaluating the effectiveness of brand-positioning strategies from a consumer perspective on compact cars in

Denmark. The outcome of the study depicts that the type of positioning strategy used affects the positioning success of a brand. More specifically, the study confirms normative assertion about the overall relative efficacy of main positioning strategies by revealing that benefit-based positioning and surrogate (user) positioning generally outperform feature-based positioning strategies along the three effectiveness dimensions. The findings also demonstrate that no single strategy outperforms all the others on all dimensions. Some authors recommend that in order to be successful, companies only need to be outstanding in one of these brand positioning dimensions and at average or pass levels in the remaining aspects (Matear, Gray, & Garrett, 2004; Kalafatis, Tsogas, & Blankson, 2000). These scholars imply that firms may compete by offering more than one competitive positioning element.

In the United Kingdom, Ryanair achieved a steep growth with price advantage to mirror than what Direct Line did in distribution (Coffie & Owusu-Frimpong, 2014). The price advantage came from the airline's ability to keep cost low through a number of initiatives: operating from smaller airports, shorter flights within the United Kingdom and Europe mostly requiring little or no food service, quick and effective turnaround of flights (capacity utilization), and making customers feel that everyone can fly (Coffie & Owusu-Frimpong, 2014). In general, low-price positioning advantage is possible only by keeping cost low, while premium price advantage often has to work in conjunction with the high perceived quality and differentiation (Hooley, Saunders, & Piercy, 2004).

Aydin and Arasil (2005) conducted a study on the customer loyalty and the effect of switching costs as a moderator variable: a case in the Turkish mobile phone market. The findings of this study show that the switching cost factor directly affects loyalty, and has a moderating effect

on both customer satisfaction and trust. Therefore, it plays a crucial role in winning customer loyalty.

Jones, Mothersbaugh and Betty (2002) research into the relationships between switching costs and outcomes like customer retention by using correlation analysis. The author's results show that switching costs are positively and significantly related to repurchase intention. Colgate and Lang (2001) studied switching barriers in the New Zealand financial industry and ascertained that switching costs play a vital role in forcing customers not to defect, though they have seriously thought of switching providers.

3.11.0. Conceptual Framework/Model and Hypotheses

Shields and Rangarajan (2013) define conceptual framework as the way ideas are organised to achieve a research project's objective. Shields and Rangarajan (2013) note that conceptual framework has to do with how ideas are connected to the research project's objective that direct the collection and analysis of data. Haug (2013) asserts that it is the framework that hypotheses are formulated to accomplish the objective of the research project. In this study the variables that are used to form conceptual framework are brand positioning dimensions (price, trust, core service), switching cost and customer loyalty. Narteh and Kuada (2014) conducted a study on customer satisfaction with retail banking services in Ghana using three elements and were able to achieve customer satisfaction among retail bank customers in Ghana. Base on this the three typologies were chosen for the Ghanaian universal banking sector. This study uses these variables to achieve the stated objectives. The variables have been discussed below:

3.11.1. Price Relationship with Customer Loyalty

Zeithaml (1988) define price as something that must be sacrificed to obtain certain kinds of products or services from customers' cognitive conception. According to Rothschild (1979) price is the most common indicator of customer involvement in the purchasing of a product or service. In real sense, customers do not always know or recall the actual price of products or services but they do usually code prices in ways that are important to them such as a normal or 'expensive' or 'cheap' (Dickson & Sawyer, 1990). In the banking sector, the concept of perceived price has been introduced by taking into consideration time, efforts, search costs and psychic costs involved in the purchase process as well as the monetary price (Grewal, Baker, Levy & Voss, 2003). Schmitz (2009) states that in the European market price is the key reason for customers to shop in discount stores, for instance in Germany, but in the US market, price is not classified in the top five attractive attributes.

According to Gerrard and Cunningham (2004), price in financial service sector includes fee implementation, bank charges, and interest rates and paid. Siebers, Zhang and Li (2013) conducted a study on retail positioning through customer satisfaction and discovered that price is one of the positioning dimensions that influence customers' satisfaction and customers' loyalty. Martin-Consuegra, Molina and Esteban (2007) conducted a study on an integrated model of price, satisfaction and loyalty in the service sector in Spain and the results from the study provide practical support, signifying that perceived price fairness influences customer satisfaction and loyalty. The analysis also suggests that customer satisfaction and loyalty are two important antecedents of price acceptance. It is perceived that banks' customers expect bank fees and other charges to be affordable or reasonable. Base on this, the study hypothesises that:

H1: Price has a positive relationship with customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector.

3.11.2. Trust Relationship with Customer Loyalty

Moorman Deshpande and Zaltman, (1993) defined trust as a readiness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence. More specifically, Anderson and Narus (1990) defined trust in manufacturer-distributor relationships as a firm's belief that another company will perform actions that will result in positive outcomes, and that the other company will not take unexpected actions that end in negative outcomes for the firm. Ganesan (1994) found that long-term orientation is affected by the extent to which customers and service providers trust each other. Caceres and Paparoidamis (2007) state that each partner's ability to provide positive outcomes to the other determines commitment to the relationship.

Morgan and Hunt (1994) argue that trust is a major element of relationship commitment and exists when there is confidence in a partner's reliability and integrity. Also, Ganesan (1994) suggested that a vital component of trust is the extent to which the customer believes that the service provider has intentions and motives beneficial to the customer and is concerned with creating positive customer outcomes. Service providers who are perceived as being concerned with positive customer outcomes will therefore be trusted to a greater extent than service providers who appear interested only in their own welfare (Caceres & Paparoidamis, 2007). The banking sector is potentially associated with high perceived risk and trust acts as a risk-reducing device by reassuring customers' security and safety of their funds (DeChernatony & Cottam, 2006). Sweeney and Swait (2008) conducted a study on trust in retail banking and report that trust brings about brand credibility which has significant impact on customer

satisfaction and customer loyalty. Phan and Ghantous (2013) also conducted a study on managing brand associations to drive customers' trust and loyalty in Vietnamese banking and the empirical findings show that trust is by far the strongest antecedent of brand loyalty among the different antecedents included in the study. Base on this the study hypothesises that:

H2: Trust has a positive relationship with customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector.

3.11.3. Core Service Relationship with Customer Loyalty

The core service refers to all the components of a service (Sureshchander, Rajendran, & Anantharaman, 2002) and signifies the basic product or service being rendered by the service provider. Marketing researchers encourage firms to consciously embrace strategies that stress the core benefits of their services to existing and prospective customers (Al-Eisa & Alhemoud, 2009). Garry (2008) argue that highlighting the core benefits by a service provider helps customers to form realistic expectations about the services and their role in the co-creation process. Core service here includes the variety of services provided as well as the competence and accurateness with which the services are delivered, how the bank branches are networked, the hours within which the services are delivered, how fast the services are delivered, and the price at which the services are offered (Jamal & Naser, 2002). Furthermore, Chen (2005) contend that the introduction of electronic and internet banking systems have assisted banks to standardize service delivery, lower the cost of services, ensure improved customer relationship management, and, above all, achieve higher levels of customer participation in the service delivery process. All these core services are perceived to have some impact on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the bank sector. Al-Eisa and Alhemoud (2009) conducted a study using a multiple-attribute approach for measuring customer satisfaction with retail

banking services in Kuwait and found that core service like speed with banking service delivery is one of the major indicator of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in Kuwait retail banking. Base on this the study hypothesises that:

H3: Core service has a positive relationship with customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector.

3.11.4. Switching Cost as a Moderating Effect

Switching costs may be referred to as the sacrifices or fines consumers feel they may incur in moving from one service provider to the next (Jones, Reynolds, Mothersbaugh & Beatty, 2007). Clemes, Gan and Zhang (2010) argue that in order to reduce the numbers of customers switching banks, banks managers should endeavour to increase switching barriers or switching cost to make the switching process more involved and less attractive to customers. Berry and Parasuraman (1991) state that switching costs can be adjusted upward once customers raise their dependency on the firm for a long-term relationship. Burnham, Frels, and Mahajan (2003) assert that, even if only impassive loyalty is created by switching costs, such behavioural restrictions can prompt relationship-improving investments by encouraging voice over exit.

Fornell (1992) argues that high switching costs can reduce frequent defection by making it expensive for customers to change service providers. Gronhaug and Gilly (1991) posit that a customer who is dissatisfied may continue to be with the existing service provider because customers may perceive defecting costs to be higher than cost of remaining with the current service provider. This presupposes that mercenary customers who are satisfied but still want to switch would remain with their existing service provider. Colgate and Lang (2001) studied switching barriers in the New Zealand financial industry and ascertained that switching costs

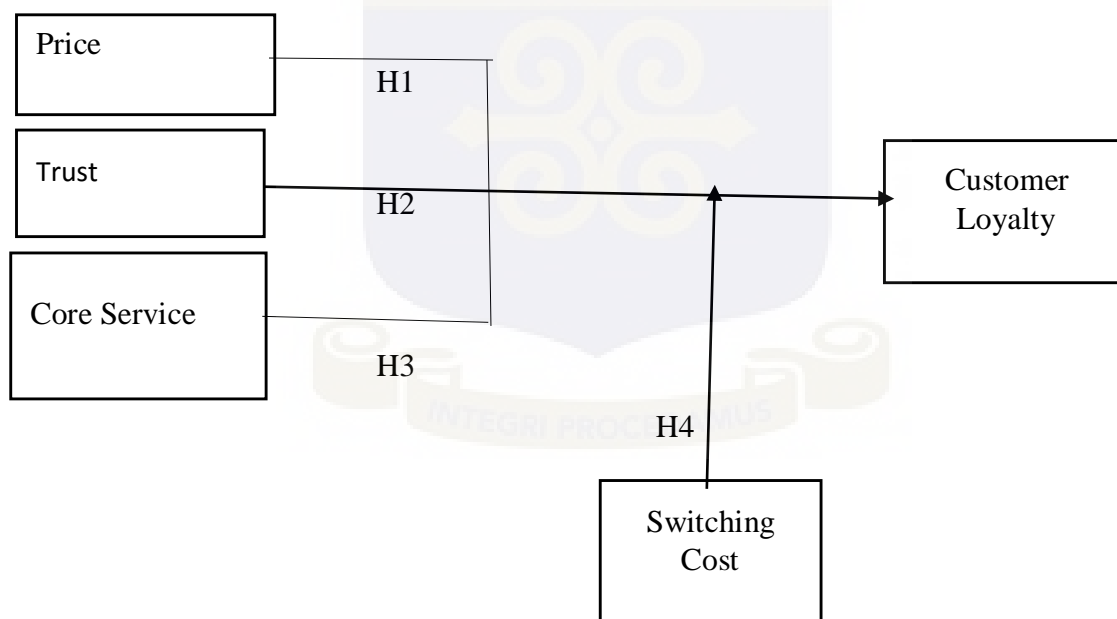
play a vital role in forcing customers not to defect, though they have seriously thought of switching providers. Jones et al. (2002) research into the relationships between switching costs and outcomes like customer retention by using correlation analysis. The authors' results show that switching costs are positively and significantly related to repurchase intention. Base on this the study hypothesis that:

H4: Switching cost has a positive effect on the relationship between brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector

Conceptual Framework/Model

Adapted from: (Siebers, Zhang & Li, 2013)

Brand Positioning Dimensions



Deriving from the literature so far reviewed, the conceptual framework has been adapted from Siebers, Zhang and Li (2013). The framework depicts brand positioning dimensions deemed relevant for ensuring customer satisfaction, which if sustained should generate customer

loyalty. However, perceived switching costs can influence the achievement of customer loyalty. These switching costs have been depicted as moderators in the framework.

Some authors contend that in order to be successful, firms only need to be outstanding in one of these aspects of brand positioning dimensions and at average or pass levels in the remaining aspects (Matear et al., 2004; Kalafatis, Tsogas, & Blankson, 2000). These authors also suggest that companies may compete by offering more than one competitive positioning element. Based on this assertion that three brand positioning dimensions were selected out of the eight discussed.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0. Introduction

In this chapter, the study discusses the following: research approach, research design, population sample size, sample technique, instrument used to collect data, reliability of data collected, data analysis procedure and limitation of the study.

4.1. Research Approach

The research approach for this study is positivist which normally uses the quantitative method of analysing data (Boateng, 2014). The quantitative method was used for this study because it is normally perceived as more reliable and objective. Quantitative method is often employed when the variables are clearly defined and the study is focused on the ability to generalise results to the larger population. This method looks at relationships between variables and can establish cause and effect in highly controlled circumstances. Again, the quantitative method assumes the sample is representative of the population and the subjectivity of researcher in methodology is less recognised (Boateng, 2014). The study used cross-sectional data which was collected from respondents who were customers of the 27 universal banks licensed in Ghana. This approach has been chosen for this research design because it has been found to be suitable for analysing issues about cross-section of the population at a particular point in time (Robson, 1993).

4.2. Research Design

One reason for using quantitative method was to obtain a large data set suitable for this study. Primary data was collected from respondents by using questionnaires which were administered to the targeted customers of banks within the Greater Accra Metropolis. The questionnaire was influenced by the work of Coffie and Owusu-Frimpong (2014) in the area of positioning strategies for services in Ghana. The questionnaire used a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). Again, the questionnaire was designed using the elements in the conceptual framework and were self-administered to the respondents (target customers) by the researcher and two assistants.

Conceptual framework was adapted from Siebers, Zhang and Li (2013). The elements in the conceptual framework were as follows: brand positioning dimensions, customer loyalty and switching cost as a moderating factor. The brand positioning dimensions consisted of three elements or variables namely: price, core service and trust. Each of these elements has sub-variables under them. The element ‘price’ consists of: reasonable fees, value for money, affordability and attractive promotion and were tapped from (Blankson & Kalafatis, 2004; Siebers, Zhang and Li, 2013). The factor ‘core services’ comprises: accurate services, fast services, reliability and skills and competence adapted from (Narteh & Kuada, 2014; Al-Eisa & Alhemoud, 2009). The factor ‘trust’ was tapped through five items adapted from Phan and Ghanteous, (2013) and this scale covers the three conventionally accepted aspects of trust that are the brand’s integrity, benevolence and credibility. The three (3) brand positioning dimensions constituted an independent variables and one dependent variable was customer loyalty with switching cost serving as moderating factor.

The customer loyalty was adapted from Phan and Ghanteous (2013) which measured five statements which were as follows: “I intend to continue using my bank’s services in upcoming years”, “I recommend my bank to friends and relatives”, “I prefer my bank to other banks”, “I will continue to be a customer of my bank even if it moderately increases its fee” and “this bank is my first choice when I need to use banking services”. The last item in the conceptual framework was the switching cost which was also adapted from Aydin and Arasil (2005) measured with four statements which were as follows: “Switching to a new operator is financially costly”, “I will not defect because of the expenditure of time and energy in looking for alternative bank”, “I will not defect because I have enough experience with my bank”, and “I will not defect because I have a good long-term relationship with my bank”.

4.3. Population

The researcher carried out the study in the Greater Accra Metropolis and the population chosen was heterogeneous in nature. The researcher considered Greater Accra Metropolis because of the concentration of major economic activities there and the presence of many banks branches in the capital. Furthermore, majority of the population in Greater Accra City were perceived to own bank accounts because of trading activities and members of the public who patronized variety of services of the universal banks the study was concerned with (Spector, 1992). The majority of the target group was also perceived to have the requisite literacy ability and understanding to interpret and respond to the questionnaires more appropriately (Ghana Statistical Survey, 2012; Spector, 1992; Winer, 1999).

4.4. Sampling Technique and Sample Size Determination

In the absence of sample frame from which sample size would be drawn, the sampling technique used was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where respondents are chosen to be part of the sample with a specific purpose in mind (Investopedia). With this study, the researcher selects only those respondents who have bank accounts and also patronize various services of universal banks within the capital city Accra. Again this method was used because it would be difficult to know the total number of all the universal banks' customers in Accra. The choice of this method was principally influenced by works done by Narteh and Kuada, (2014); Anabila, Narteh and Tweneboah-Koduah, (2012); and Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, (2010).

The study is a cross sectional survey which considered a large number of population unknown. In determining sample size where population size is unknown, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) recommended a sample size of three hundred and eighty (380) and above, and this was also confirmed by Cochran (1977). A total of three hundred and eighty-four (384) questionnaires were self-administered to the target respondents by the researcher and two assistants. Also respondents were sampled on the streets of Accra Metropolis. The questionnaires were first pretested with twenty (20) Ghanaian universal bank customers within Greater Accra Metropolis.

4.5. Instruments Used To Collect Data

The only instrument the researcher used to collect data for the study was questionnaire, copies of which were administered to target respondents within Greater Accra Metropolis by the researcher and two assistants. Both open and close ended questions were used and this allowed

respondents to express their views. The closed-end questions require less effort from respondents in completing the questionnaires and they are easy used for analysis. The open-ended question was incorporated to give an opportunity for the customers to express their opinions regarding the service delivery. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section was to solicit data on implementation of brand positioning dimensions which may lead to customer loyalty. The second section was designed to address data regarding customer loyalty and the cost a customer might pay in defecting to a competitor called switching cost. The third section was included to uncover data on demographic characteristics of the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of twenty-seven (27) items split between the variables that measures price, core service, trust, customer loyalty, switching cost and five demographic characteristics questions. The completion of the questionnaires were entirely on a voluntary basis.

4.6. Reliability of Data Collected

The data was first subjected to descriptive analysis before validation and further analysis (Pallant, 2003). The descriptive statistics used the mean and standard deviation to display the reliability of the individual elements which were used in the research instrument. In statistics, reliability is the consistency of a set of measurements or measuring instrument, often used to describe a test. Reliability is inversely related to a random error (Coakes & Steed, 2007). There are several different reliability coefficients. One of the most commonly used is called Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach's α). Cronbach's Alpha is based on the average correlation of items within a test if the items are standardized. It has an important use as a measure of the reliability of a psychometric instrument. It was first named as alpha by Cronbach (1951), as he had intended to continue with further instruments. This is usually used as a measure of the internal consistency or reliability of the psychometric test score for a sample of variables. As a

general rule, a coefficient greater than or equal to 0.7 is considered acceptable and a good indication of construct reliability (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2010). All the variables price, core service, trust, customer loyalty and switching cost were tested for their reliability (referred to page 64 for Cronbach Alpha product)

Furthermore, a correlation matrix was constructed to ascertain the relationship among the elements used (Blankson et al., 2009). Again, as a result of the number of variables which were used for the survey, a data reduction strategy (Malhotra & Birks, 2007) using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was deemed appropriate. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used because the constructs or scales were adapted from previous studies. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a statistical technique used to verify the factor structure of a set of observed variables (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2006). Confirmatory factor analysis allows the researcher to test the hypothesis that, a relationship between observed variables and their underlying latent constructs exists (Hair et al, 2006). The common underlying dimensions were referred to as factors (Hair, et al, 2006). In addition, factors have to get an eigenvalue of at least 0.5 for them to be retained (Hair et al., 2006; Malhotra & Birks, 2007).

4.7. Data Analysis Procedure

Furthermore, through Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22 stepwise regressions was used to analyze the data set. Stepwise regression is the step-by-step iterative construction of a regression model that involves automatic selection of independent variables (Investopedia). To provide many explanatory variables utilized in the current study, it was perceived that a stepwise regression analysis would be suitable to establish the relationship between the brand positioning dimensions of the banks and customer loyalty (Narteh & Kuada,

2014). The purpose of a stepwise regression is to select from a large number of predictor variables, a subset of variables that explains most of the variation in the dependent variable (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). Moreover, to analyse the moderating role of switching cost, a multi group analysis with ANOVA, was conducted (Tweneboah-Koduah, 2014). The ANOVA refers to analysis of variance and is a statistical procedure used to test the degree to which two or more groups vary or differ in an experiment (Investopedia). ANOVA allows comparison of two or more groups at the same time to determine whether a relationship exists between them. This was also done to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between individuals with low, medium and high switching cost (Garee, 1997). In order words, ANOVA was conducted to ascertain the independent variables (price, trust and core service) and levels of switching cost effect on the dependent variable (customer loyalty) (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

4.8. Limitation of the Study

The following are the limitation of the study:

- The study is only limited to the banking industry, which does not cover other financial sectors like insurance, rural and community banks, savings and loans firms, regulatory banks like ARB Apex Bank and Bank of Ghana.
- The study was conducted in Accra, the capital city of Ghana, and therefore did not cover the whole country.
- Respondents feel reluctant in answering the questionnaire and as a result some respondents did not even return the questionnaire given to them.
- The researcher was not able to get access to every information needed for the completion of the study.
- Time constraint militated against the study did not permit the researcher to widen the scope of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.0. Introduction

This section of the chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study conducted using 272 customers of universal banks in Accra to assess the relationship between brand positioning and customer loyalty with moderating effect of switching cost. Under this section, the study considers the following: demographic characteristics of the respondents, descriptive statistics or analysis, reliability test or Cronbach alpha, variable correlation matrix, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), stepwise regression and ANOVA. All these were used to analyse the data collected from the respondents.

5.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This has to do with the background information of the respondents of the study. Here, the study concentrates on customers of universal banks within Greater Accra Metropolis. Demographic characteristics considered consist of the following: gender, age, years of doing business with the bank, academic qualification and annual salary or income.

Table 5.1a. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Profile of respondents	n	%
Gender		
Male	131	48
Female	141	52
Total	272	100
Age (in years)		
Below 19	16	5.9
20-29	82	30.1
30-39	87	32.0
40-49	44	16.2
50-59	33	12.1
60 above	10	3.7
Total	272	100
Academic Qualification		
BECE/ SSCE/WASSCE	96	35
Technician/Post-Secondary	26	9.6
Diploma/HND	61	22.4
Bachelor's Degree	58	21.3
Master's Degree	22	8.1
PhD	9	3.3
Total	272	100

Table 5.1b: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Profile of respondents	n	%
Annual Income/salary (in GH¢)		
Below 10,000	64	23.5
10,000-15,000	87	32.00
16,000-20,000	75	27.6
21,000-25,000	22	8.1
26,000-30,000	13	4.8
Above 30,000	11	4.00
Total	272	100
Transaction of Business (in years)		
Less than 5	78	28.7
5-10	86	31.6
11-15	63	23.2
16-20	23	8.5
21-25	17	6.3
26 above	5	1.8
Total	272	100

Source: Field Study 2015/2016

The descriptive analysis from Table 5.1a revealed that 48% representing 131 of the respondents were male and 52% representing 141 of the respondents were female. From the results presented in Table 5.1a majority (32%) of the respondents were between 30 and 39 years of age. This is followed by those who were between 20 and 29 years (30.1%), 40 and 49 years (16.2%), 50 and 59 years (12.1%), below 19 years (5.9%) and 60 years above (3.7%) respectively. In general 84.2% of the respondents fall in the youthful age (19-49 years). Furthermore, the respondents had varied educational backgrounds. Majority of the respondents representing 35% had BECE/SSCE/WASSCE, 22.4% of them had Diploma/Higher National

Diploma (HND), followed by 21.3% of them had bachelor's degree, while 9.6% of the respondents had technician/post-secondary, 8.1% of them had master's degree and 3.3% remaining of the respondents had PhD degree. These qualifications are in various disciplines. With respect to income/salary, the respondents had wide variations in income/salary due to the fact that some were workers while others were self-employed. From Table 5.1b, the annual income/salary ranges of the respondents revealed that, 23.5% percent earned less than GHC 10,000 annually, 32% percent earned between GHC 10,000 to GHC 15,000 annually, 27.6% percent earned from GHC 16,000 to GHC 20,000 annually, 8.1% percent earned from GHC 21,000 up to GHC 25,000 annually, 4.8% percent earned between GHC 26,000 and 30,000 annually whilst 4% percent remaining of the respondents have annual earnings of above GHC 30,000. Subsequently, a look at the number of years the customers have been patronizing banks services within Greater Accra Metropolis. 28.7% of the respondents have patronized bank services for less than 5 years, between 5 to 10years years is 31.6%, 23.2% is between 11 to 15 years, 8.5% is between 16 to 20 years, 6.3% is between 21 up to 25 years whereas the rest 1.8% is between 26 years and above.

5. 2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 5.2 provides the descriptive statistics of the variables. The table displays the means and standard deviations of the various variables used in the questionnaire. The results indicate moderate to high mean values. From Table 5.2, the highest mean was 3.5460 (core service) whilst the lowest was 3.0248 (switching cost).

Table 5.2: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	Df	P
Trust	3.5349	0.80655	72.282	271	0.000
Price	3.2923	0.84721	64.090	271	0.000
Core Service	3.5460	0.82271	71.084	271	0.000
Customer Loyalty	3.3559	0.92913	59.568	271	0.000
Switching Cost	3.0248	0.98680	50.554	271	0.000

Source: Field Study 2015/2016

5.3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The scales used in this study were all adopted from the literature and presumed that exploratory factor analysis has been done already. The study, therefore proceeded to perform a confirmatory factor analysis, in order to analyse the constructs' validity on units adopted from the literature to indicate that they generally satisfied validity evaluation standards. Adopting the structural equation modelling method (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993), the study verified the five-item model for the banking sector respectively, and scrutinize the construct reliability by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as suggested by Blankson and Kalafatis (2004). The general model's chi-squared, the CFA standards, the Cronbach's alpha (α), item-total correlation and the item regression loadings have been used to assess the model fit. The outcomes of the verification of the scale analyses are shown in Table 5.3. From Table 5.3, all the construct values for the brand positioning dimensions, switching cost and customer loyalty were within the recommended criteria.

The recommended criteria are : root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) < 0.06 (Hu & Bentler, 1999); the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) value 0.95 (Miles & Shevlin, 1998), adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) 0.90 value (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008), standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) is valid at less than 0.05 (Byrne, 1998); the comparative fit index (CFI) is least affected by sample size (Fan, Thompson, & Wang, 1999) and a value greater than 0.90 is acceptable to ensure specified models (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Stanford, Singh & Magnusson, 2012); the non-normed fit index (NNFI) value 0.90 (Hooper et al. (2008).

After the confirmative factor analysis of the study, one construct was removed because it was not loading well to enhance model fitness. The study had: RMSEA (0.05), GFI (0.91), AGFI (0.88), SRMR (0.07), CFI (0.95), NNFI (0.89), Df (176), Chi-square (1.66) and these satisfied the validity evaluation standards. The study model does satisfy all the indexes, hence it can be recommended as the optimal model.

Table 5.3:

Index of fit of the model

Index of fit	Chi-Square	(df)	P	GFI	AGFI	NNFI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA
Value	1.66	(176)	0.000	0.91	0.88	0.89	0.95	0.07	0.05

Source: Field Study 2015/2016

The index of fit for the study model is shown in Table 5.3. Taking degrees of freedom (176) into consideration, all index values meet the general standards for index of fit. The results of hypothesis tests of the relationship between constructs, including brand positioning dimensions (trust, price, and core service), switching cost and customer loyalty are shown in Table 5.3, Table 5.4 and Figure 1. The test of hypothesis 1, which shows that factors establishing price

positively relate to customer loyalty, revealed that reasonable fees, value of money, attractive promotion and service affordability are significant. This reinforces the fact that price of bank service is one of the top issues that enable a customer to become loyal to a bank. It also highlights the importance of value-added services including internet and electronic banking, free charges on ATM card users and discounts in creating customer loyalty.

The test of hypothesis 2 shows that factors creating trust positively affect customer loyalty. The factors forming trust are (as represented on the questionnaire): shows interest in customers, continuously seeking to better answer customers' needs, assuring customers' security, quality services and these factors were found to be significant. With these variables, quality services were deemed to be most significant in the banking service (refer to Table 5.4).

Tests of hypotheses 3 also indicates that factors establishing core service have a positive effect on customer loyalty. The factors forming core service are: reliable services, skills and competence, fast services and accurate services. They were all found to have a significant positive effect on customer loyalty. From Table 5.4, reliable service creates the most significant positive effect on customer loyalty in the universal banking service in Ghana.

Finally, the test of hypothesis 4 indicates that factors creating switching costs positively affect customer loyalty. Financially costly, expenditure of time and energy, enough experience with my bank and good long-term relationship were all significant in this regard. Tests of these hypotheses confirmed that interpersonal relationships between universal banks in Ghana and customers have a significantly positive effect on the switching cost. This shows that the factors creating the switching costs are closely connected to bring about customer loyalty.

5.4. Re-specification and Reliability of the CFA

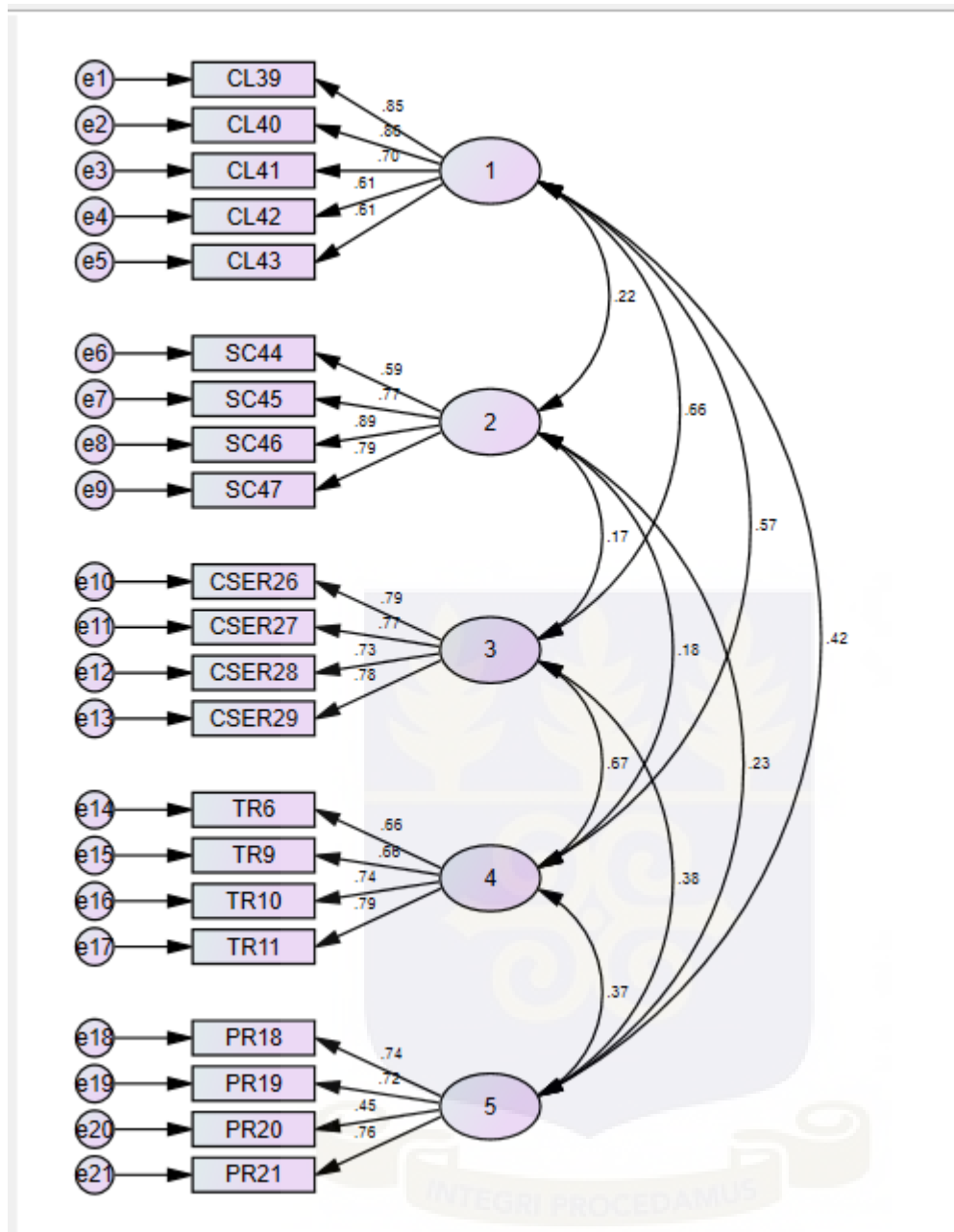
The internal reliability of the five factors were analysed through Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Only factors that met the minimum value of 0.7 as suggested by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, (2010) were accepted for further analysis. Also, in order to test the value of the variables that loaded onto the factors, item-to total correlation was set above 0.3 (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988). One construct was subsequently dropped on the basis of conceptual fitness. The result is illustrated in Table 5.4. Consequently, the brand positioning dimensions that determine customer loyalty in universal banking industry in Ghana are labelled as price, trust and core service. The initial factors and the final revised factors are presented in Table 5.4. As a result of the respecification, a three-factor solution appeared as the major brand positioning dimensions effecting customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector. Factor 3 covers the core service dimension, and has four items; factor 4 covers trust dimension and has four items; and factor 5 relates to the price dimension and has four items. Reliability estimates for the factors were further determined using Cronbach's alpha, and based on the recommendations of Hair et al. (2006), a cutoff value of 0.7 was adopted. The results indicated that all the factors exceeded the reliability threshold of 0.7 with reliabilities of 0.848 for core service dimension, 0.805 for trust dimension, and 0.758 for price dimension.

The variables measuring switching cost and customer loyalty were also checked for their loadings and Cronbach's alpha. Results showed that all the variables used had high loadings between 0.641 and 0.827 for switching cost, 0.854 and 0.590 for customer loyalty with a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha values of 0.844 and 0.850 respectively, giving an indication that the variables used also represent a complete structure measuring switching cost and customer loyalty in Ghanaian universal banking sector.

Table 5.4: Internal Consistency and Final Revised Structure

Factors and Items	Number of Items	Loadings	Item-total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
Factor 1: Customer loyalty	5			0.850
Enjoy this bank's services		0.854	0.733	
Recommendation		0.870	0.738	
Prefer my bank		0.694	0.642	
Continue to be a customer		0.592	0.592	
My first choice		0.590	0.603	
Factor 2: Switching cost	4			0.844
Financially costly		0.641	0.542	
Expenditure of time and energy		0.772	0.718	
Enough experience with my bank		0.864	0.788	
Good long-term relationship		0.824	0.684	
Factor 3: Core service	4			0.848
Bank services are reliable		0.818	0.692	
Skills and competence		0.787	0.692	
Delivers fast services		0.680	0.666	
Accurate service		0.735	0.714	
Factor 4: Trust	4			0.805
Interest in its customers		0.659	0.582	
Better answer customers' needs		0.660	0.582	
Assure me security		0.740	0.647	
Quality services		0.792	0.660	
Factor 5: Price	4			0.758
Reasonable fees		0.742	0.605	
Value of money		0.714	0.600	
Attractive promotion		0.453	0.392	
Affordable service		0.758	0.542	

Source: Field Study 2015/2016



Source: Field Study, 2015/2016

Figure 1. The results of the empirical causal model (SEM)

5.5. Correlation Matrix

Table 5.5 depicts the correlation matrix for the variables used in the study, which indicates that the variables are highly correlated.

Table 5.5: Variable Correlation Matrix

VARIABLES		TRUST	PRICE	CORE SERVICE	CUSTOMER LOYALTY	SWITCHING COST
TRUST	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
PRICE	N	272				
	Pearson Correlation	.302**	1			
CORE SERVICE	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
	N	272	272			
CUSTOMER LOYALTY	Pearson Correlation	.544**	.321**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000			
SWITCHING COST	N	272	272	272		
	Pearson Correlation	.459**	.343**	.555**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		
	N	272	272	272	272	
	Pearson Correlation	.128*	.200**	.158**	.187**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	.001	.009	.002	
	N	272	272	272	272	272

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Study, 2015/2016

The variables under brand positioning dimensions implementation (trust, price and core service) and the moderating variable (switching cost) all have significant positive correlations with customer loyalty ($P < 0.01$ for all). This means, an improvement in their practices would lead to an improvement in customer loyalty. Note all correlation is significant at the 0.01 level of significance.

5.6: Stepwise Regression Analysis

In order to assess the relationship between the brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector with moderating effect of switching cost, an initial stepwise regression analysis was used. Customer loyalty was used as the dependent variable whilst brand positioning dimensions (price, trust and core service) were used as the independent variables. Table 5.6 presents a summary of the regression whilst Table 5.7 shows detailed results for the dependent variable and independent variables.

Below is the stepwise regression analysis for brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector.

Table 5.6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.555 ^a	.308	.306	.77423
2	.586 ^b	.343	.338	.75578
3	.604 ^c	.365	.358	.74472

Dependent Variable:

Table 5.7: Stepwise Regression

Customer Loyalty

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.133	.208		5.444	.000
	Core service	.627	.057	.555	10.967	.000
2	(Constant)	.710	.232		3.065	.002
	Core services	.490	.067	.434	7.367	.000
	Trust	.257	.068	.223	3.788	.000
3	(Constant)	.399	.251		1.594	.112
	Core service	.451	.067	.399	6.742	.000
	Trust	.224	.068	.195	3.313	.001
	Price	.172	.057	.157	3.009	.003

Source: Field Study 2015/2016

The results of the initial stepwise regression presented in Table 5.7 show that the model, consists of price, trust, and core service as the brand positioning dimensions of the universal banks were highly significant and explains 36.5% of the differences in customer loyalty. On the individual brand positioning dimensions, core service was found to be the most important influence of customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector (Beta=0.399, T=6.742 and P=0.000<0.05). This is followed by trust with Beta=0.195, T=3.313 and P=0.001<0.05, and price (Beta=0.157, T=3.009, and P=0.003<0.05). The result therefore, provide support for hypotheses 1, 2, and 3.

Table 5.8: The relationship between switching cost groups, brand positioning and customer loyalty

Table 5.8: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	Switching Costs	N	Mean	F	Sig.
TRUST	Low	76	3.4178	1.766	.173
	Medium	121	3.5289		
	High	75	3.6633		
PRICE	Low	76	3.0329	6.274	.002
	Medium	121	3.3223		
	High	75	3.5067		
CORE SERVICE	Low	76	3.4079	3.492	.032
	Medium	121	3.5083		
	High	75	3.7467		
CUSTOMER LOYALTY	Low	76	3.2658	6.646	.002
	Medium	121	3.2116		
	High	75	3.6800		

Source: Field Study 2015/2016

To analyse the moderating role of switching costs, a multi group analysis with ANOVA, was conducted. This was done to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between

individuals with low, medium and high switching cost. The result of the analysis indicated that the difference between switching groups is statistically significant of price ($F = 6.274$, sig. = 0.002), core service ($F = 3.492$, sig. = 0.032) and customer loyalty ($F = 6.646$, sig. = 0.002). The level of switching costs did not significantly affect trust ($F = 1.766$, sig. = 0.173). From Table 5.8, the independent variables are trust, price and core service serving as the brand positioning dimensions. The dependent variable is customer loyalty and the variable playing moderation role is the switching cost. The multi group analysis in Table 5.8 revealed that, price was the highest determinant of customer loyalty when group moderation was conducted with the switching cost and followed by core service, and this provide support for hypothesis 4. However, level of switching cost with trust did not produce any significantly different effect on customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector. Again with this analysis, switching cost was ascertained to have a direct positive relationship with the customer loyalty ($F = 6.646$, sig = 0.002).

5.9.0: Discussion of Results

The findings from this study are consistent with results from previous studies by authors such as Phan and Ghantous, (2013); Siebers, Zhan and Li (2013); Al-Eisa and Alhemoud, (2009); Blankson and Kalafatis, (2004); Colgate and Lang (2001). Leverin and Liljander, (2006) state that customer loyalty in universal banks is determined by many factors. The results show that Ghanaian universal banks' customers attach much importance to price, trust and core service of brand positioning dimensions of banking services rendered by universal banks just as their counterparts in Western societies do. The three brand positioning dimensions presented in this study have different degrees of influence on customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector. The levels of switching cost with price and core service have a direct positive

influence on customer loyalty in universal banking sector in Ghana but trust with levels of switching cost did not produce any significant effect on customer loyalty.

5.9.1: Core Service Relationship with Customer Loyalty

From the results of the study, core service variables emerged as the most significant brand positioning dimension which bring about customer loyalty in universal banking sector in Ghana. The competence and accuracy with which the services are rendered, how the bank branches are networked, the hours within which the services are provided, how fast the services are delivered, and reliability of service offered are essential core service factors that determine customer loyalty in the universal banks in Ghana. The study likewise discovered that the introduction of internet and e-banking systems as part of the core service has impacted positively on customer loyalty. The outcomes of the study also support the views of scholars who argue that core service delivery impacts on customer loyalty (Al-Eisa & Alhemoud, 2009; Jamal & Naser, 2002; Keaveney, 1995; Levesque & McDougall, 1996). For example, the study confirmed the work of Al-Eisa and Alhemoud (2009), who discovered that fast service delivery advances customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in retail banks in Kuwait. Again, the study found that some of the Ghanaian universal banks serve their customers after normal banking hours and that is one of the reasons these customers are loyal to the bank.

5.9.2: Trust Relationship with Customer Loyalty

Apart from the core service, the study also discovered that trust is another brand positioning dimension that influences customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector. The interest banks show in their customers, quick response to customers' problems, the willingness of the bank to satisfy customers' needs and quality services delivered are important trust variables that determine customer loyalty in the universal banks in Ghana. From the study, it

was found that many customers have been with their banks for a long period of time and do not want to change banks for fear of risk. These findings support the opinions of researchers who contend that high perceived risk associated with banking services highlights the important role trust play in reassuring the consumers by acting as a risk-reducing device (De Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1999; De Chernatony & Cottam, 2006). This implies that brand trust plays a particularly vital role in building long-term relationships between consumers and their service providers in the presence of high perceived risk (Fischer et al., 2004; Sichtmann, 2007). It was revealed from the study that customers are willing to rely on their bank. This willingness came about as a result of the service provider intention of fulfilling its promises to the consumers (Dalziel et al., 2011). More precisely, brand trust acts as a major antecedent of customers' commitment toward a brand and subsequently of customers' loyalty. For instance the study confirmed the work of Moulins, Phan & Philippe (2012) who found that trust has a strong impact on customers' commitment toward their bank in the Vietnamese banking sector. The study also support the work of Phan and Ghantous (2013) who conducted a research on managing brand associations to drive customers' trust and loyalty in Vietnamese banking and the empirical findings show that trust is by far the strongest antecedent of brand loyalty among the different antecedents included in the study.

5.9.3: Price Relationship with Customer Loyalty

Finally, price was also a significant determinant of customer loyalty in the universal banking sector in Ghana. The reasonable fees, value for money, attractive promotion and affordability of service have an impact on how customers view banks service delivery which subsequently influence customer loyalty with universal banks in Ghana. From Table 5.7 the p-value of price is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) and it is considered as one of the brand positioning dimensions which influences customer loyalty in universal banks in Ghana. In Ghana, universal banks' customers

are careful when it comes to price charge for bank service delivery. This support the views of researchers who argue that customers are usually price sensitive or conscious in their purchasing behaviour (Beckett, Hewer & Howcroft, 2000; Levesque & McDougall, 1996). It was revealed from the study that customers compare prices of their service providers to those of competitors in order to make a choice. This is the reason why Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) argue that price is a significant element in choice situations as a consumer's choice normally relies heavily on the price of alternatives. Customers do not want to spend much time and effort at banking hall as time and effort are recognise as the price they are paying for the services of the bank. Some researchers have shown the concept of perceived price by taking into account time, effort, search costs and psychic costs involved in the buying process in addition to the monetary price (Grewal et al., 2003; Zeithaml, 1988). These findings are confirmed by Varki and Colgate (2001) who discovered that the role of price, as an attribute of performance, may have a direct effect on customers' satisfaction and behavioural intentions.

5.9.4. Additional Analysis: Adjustment Effect of Switching Cost

In addition, the study analysed the adjustment effect produced by the switching cost on brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty. The result of the multi group analysis with ANOVA is summarized in Table 8. This reveals that the switching cost is a factor directly affecting customer loyalty, and its influence on customer loyalty is produced through multi groups' analysis of switching cost with brand positioning dimensions. The four main results are discussed below:

5.9.5. Relationship Between Levels of Switching Cost and Trust

First, a multi group analysis of switching cost was done and the result revealed that there is no significant relationship between switching cost and trust. That is, the levels of switching costs did not significantly affect trust ($F= 1.766$, sig. = 0.173). From the Table 8, there are three levels of switchers namely low, medium and high, there is no statistically significant difference taking their means into consideration. This indicates that combining switching cost with trust would not be able to prevent customers from defecting to a competing bank. That is, the various levels of switchers view trust as insignificant and for that matter upon switching, they would not lose any value. One reason for this could be that the customers perceived all the universal banks in Ghana to be trustworthy and therefore leaving their current bank, they could easily establish new relationship with another bank. This implies that the regulator of the sector, Bank of Ghana has played its role very well to the extent that customers believe no bank can defraud any customer. The customers in this case have the luxury of joining any bank without having cause to worry about the credibility and integrity of that bank. It presupposes that switching cost's relationship with trust is low. This supports the views of Colgate and Lang (2001) who assert that when customers perceived switching cost to be low and perceived alternative to be equally good, customers would certainly switch.

Furthermore, services delivered by some universal banks in Ghana do not meet customers' expectation. This is due to the fact that some of the universal banks are not able to deliver promised services made to customers and this has made customers to lose confidence and credibility in their service provider. The study revealed that some of the banks frequently experienced networked challenges getting to the end of the month where workers both private and public would be coming for their salaries. The Automated Teller Machines (ATM) of some banks which are expected to deliver speedy services to customers 24hours, more often

than not experience network problems and frequent breakdowns. These frequent service failures have motivated some customers to switch to a competitor they perceived to be doing relatively better. This supports the work of Gerrard and Cunningham (2000) who investigated the Asian banking market and found that service failure is one of the factors accounted for bank switching by customers.

From the study some customers thought they had been taken hostage and they could not get out of the relationship with their respective banks. A situation like this has negative consequence for the service provider. This confirmed what Huefner and Hunt (2000) posit that customers who find themselves locked into relationships that they would prefer to not be in may become resigned, hostile, or even aggressive, and may engage in behaviours that have undesirable long-term results for the firm, such as negative word of mouth or sabotage. In this case the relationship must be terminated amicably to preserve the good name of the service provider.

5.9.6. Relationship Between Levels of Switching Cost and Core Service

Secondly, a multi group analysis of switching cost with core service was conducted and did produce significant difference. The result of the analysis indicated that the difference between switching groups is statistically significant to core service ($F = 3.492$, sig. = 0.032). Here it presumes that all the three levels of switchers namely low, medium and high recognize core service as important brand positioning dimension considering their 'means' and therefore do not have any intention to switch. It suggests that when these customers defect to an alternative bank, they perceived they would not be able to receive the same services currently being received from their service provider, and it would be a great loss or cost to them. One reason

could be that customers perceived their bank to be delivering good customer services and right communications compared to what competing banks are providing. This supports the views of Colgate and Lang (2001) who argue that good customer service and the right communications are the first line of defense against customers leaving. The core services in this context includes the difference types of services provided as well as the competence and accuracy with which the services are rendered, how the bank branches are networked, the hours within which the services are provided, how fast the services are delivered, and the price at which the services are offered (Jamal & Naser, 2002). Some universal banks in Ghana render these core services better than others.

Another reason is that some banks have introduced electronic and internet banking system which have assisted them to standardize service delivery, lower the cost of services, ensure improved customer relationship management, effective service recovery, and, above all, help to achieve higher levels of customer participation in the service delivery process. This outcome of the study supports the view of Berry and Parasuraman (1991) who suggest that effective customer relationship management increase customers' dependency because they raise the costs of switching to competitors. For instance, consumers may stay with a service provider they have experienced a problem with before because they were satisfied with the service recovery process after they had complained (Zemke, 1993). A service recovery strategy and fast service delivery are recognised as a crucial elements in achieving long-term customer repurchase intention (Tax, Brown & Chandrashekar, 1998; Al-Eisa & Alhemoud, 2009).

The study revealed that some banks employees communicate well both on phone and face-to-face encounter with their customers than others. The three levels of switchers view these core

services as very vital to their dealings with the current service provider which they are not sure they would get the same services from competing bank. This indicate that all these core services have increased the switching cost and have deter customers from switching banks. This is in line with the work of Mavri and Ioannou (2008) who investigated customers' switching behaviour in Greek banking services and revealed that the quality of the banking products and services on offer had a positive effect on decreasing switching behaviour.

5.9.7. Relationship Between Levels of Switching Cost and Price

In the third place, a multi group analysis of switching cost with price was done and produced significant difference. The result of the analysis revealed that the difference between switching groups is statistically significant to price ($F = 6.274$, sig. = 0.002). Considering the 'means' of all the three levels of switchers, it suggests that customers see price as essential brand positioning dimension and hence do not have any intention to defect. The customers perceive that they would incur some cost and therefore do not want to switch to a competitor. One reason is that, the charges or fees being paid by the customers for receiving services from some of the universal banks are affordable and reasonable. This supports the views expressed by Campbell, (1999) who contend that imposing affordable or lower prices on customers in a banking sector discourage them from switching banks. That is favourable price perceptions can influence customers not to switch bank (Clemes, Gan & Zhang, 2007a).

Some banks have introduced internet and electronic banking system which have reduced the cost being paid by customers in transacting business with their banks. This is consistent with what Gan, Clemes, Limsombunchai and Weng (2006) argue that electronic banking plays a key role in reducing service costs. Customers using electronic banking can experience lower fixed

and variable costs that are connected with banking operations, due to decreases in human error and savings in labour costs.

Another reason is that most of the banks give their customers enough information about why there has been an increase in banks' charges or fees and this is referred to as perceived price fairness. It is believed that when customers become aware of the price they are supposed to pay for a service, they do so without raising any questions. This supports the opinion of Campbell (1999) who asserts that customers tend to focus on the fairness of price, especially on price increases and any price increases that customers perceive as fair may result in discouraging switching actions. That is favourable price perceptions can influence customers not to switch bank (Clemes, Gan & Zheng, 2007a).

In banking sector, the concept of perceived price has been introduced by taking into consideration the monetary price as well as time, efforts, search costs and psychic costs involved in the purchase process (Grewal, Baker, Levy & Voss, 2003). The study found that most of the universal banks branches have been established close to their target customers. The intent was that customers need not to travel far distances to get access to banking services. For instance, Levesque and McDougall (1996) argue that, a convenience to a bank location is a vital factor influencing customers' not to switch because location directly determines whether the customers can access their banks on a regular basis.

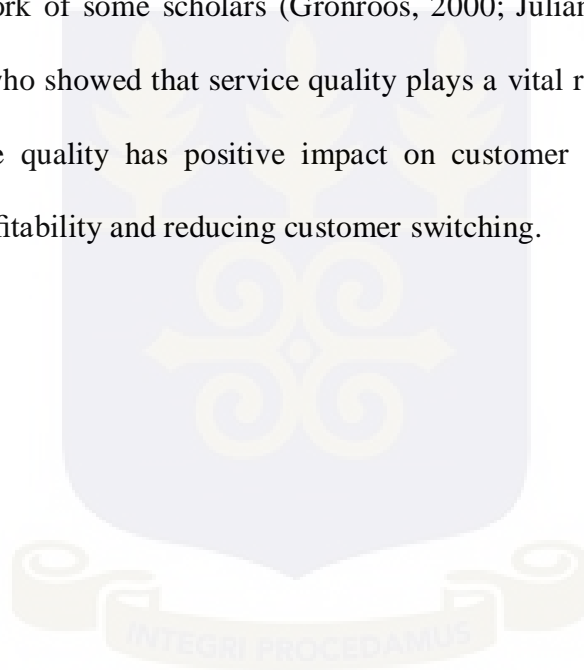
The study also revealed that most of the customers have patronized varieties of banking services such as insurance, savings and current accounts, fixed deposit accounts, borrowed money from their bank and bought government treasury bills from their respective bank. Other

banks in turn have been given some financial rewards like free monthly charges on the use of ATM cards, discounts on some bank transactions and instant gifts to the customers on regular basis. This did not pertain to all the banks, it varied from one bank to another. The implication here is that should a customer switch to alternative bank, the customer would incur high financial cost. This supported the views of Gronghaug and Gilly (1991) who argue that a dissatisfied customer may remain “loyal” because of high switching costs. From the study it was revealed that some of the customers were not satisfied with their bank, but switching would also have high financial implication on them. Looking at the three levels of switchers (namely low, medium and high), high financial switching cost which involved loss of financial benefits from the existing bank have discouraged them from defecting. Thus, the study confirmed the opinion of Colgate and Lang (2001) who posit that whenever a customer is intended to switch but perceived high financial cost, it discourages them from defecting.

5.9.8 Relationship Between Levels of Switching Cost and Customer Loyalty

Finally, a multi group analysis of switching cost with customer loyalty was done and it produced significant difference. The result of the analysis showed that the difference between switching groups is statistically significant to customer loyalty ($F = 6.646$, sig. = 0.002). Here too, all the three levels of switchers perceived customer loyalty as an important factor considering their ‘means’ which have significant difference. This assumes that the three levels of switchers suggest cost of switching to be high which emanate from core service and price. For example, the study is consistent with the work of Colgate and Lang (2001) who conducted a study on switching barriers in the New Zealand financial industry and ascertained that high switching costs play a vital role in forcing customers to remain loyal though they have serious intentions of switching services. This also confirmed the work of Ping (1993) who looked at the relationship between switching cost and customer loyalty, and discovered that when

customers perceived the switching cost associated with leaving the current relationship and establishing the alternative to be high they tend to be loyal. Perceived price fairness is another reason that increases customer loyalty and reduced customer switching in the banking sector. This is consistent with the study conducted by Martin-Consuegra, Molina and Esteban (2007) on an integrated model of price, satisfaction and loyalty in the service sector in Spain. The results from the study provide practical support, signifying that perceived price fairness influences customer satisfaction and loyalty. Quality service is also another variable that positively influences customer loyalty and decrease customer switching. For instance, the study confirmed the work of some scholars (Gronroos, 2000; Julian & Ramaseshan, 1994; Zeithaml et al., 1996) who showed that service quality plays a vital role in assisting business development as service quality has positive impact on customer satisfaction, repurchase behaviour, business profitability and reducing customer switching.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0. Introduction

This study employs quantitative research methods to explain the extent of relationship between brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector with moderating effect of switching cost. The study identifies a set of three brand positioning dimensions strategies and switching cost as constructs in the Ghanaian universal banking sector that potentially influence the level of customer loyalty. This last chapter summarizes the major findings and implications of the study and also highlights striking revelations and lessons drawn from the study which will guide the conclusions drawn based on the interpretation of output results of the study and related literature reviewed. This chapter concludes by offering suggestions and recommendations for further research.

6.1.0. Summary

In today's increasingly competitive and volatile business environment, developing and maintaining a loyal customer base is viewed as the single most important driver of long-term financial performance (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). It is therefore of prime importance for bank managers to identify and understand the strategies that drive customer loyalty and implement them in order to prevent customers from switching to competitors. This research drew from existing literature to develop a conceptual framework intended to identify the extent of association and relationship that exist between the three independent variables (price, trust and core service) name as brand positioning dimensions constructs and customer loyalty as the dependent variable with switching cost serving as moderating variable.

6.1.1. Major Findings

6.1.2. Objective 1

The first and foremost objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector. A stepwise regression model was employed to test how the three variables found in the brand positioning dimensions construct influence customers continual patronage of universal banking services in Ghana. The result of the analysis clearly revealed that there is positive significant relationship between brand positioning dimensions (price, trust, core service) and customer loyalty. From the analysis, core service emerged as the most significant determinant of customer loyalty followed by trust and price. The meaning here is that loyalty strategies such as long term relationship, service recovery, value of money and service reliability through core service, trust and price all determine the tendency of the customer to be retained.

6.1.3. Objective 2

The second objective of this study sought to examine the effect of the switching cost on the relationship between brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector. A multi group analysis with ANOVA, was conducted for each of the three brand positioning dimensions serving as an independent variables and resulted in three outcomes.

First, a multi group analysis with ANOVA was conducted for trust, and found that the level of switching costs did not significantly affect trust ($F= 1.766$, sig. = 0.173). From Table 8, the ANOVA results show that the levels of switching cost and trust is not statistically significant difference taken the ‘means’ into consideration. What this means is that when switching cost

is attach to trust, customers may still defect to alternative service provider. One reason could be that some customers thought they have been taken hostage and they could not get out of the relationship. Some customers considered the alternative service providers in the banking industry in Ghana to be trustworthy and delivering superior service to customers. Low switching cost, frequent service failure and customers not perceiving any form of risk when they switch are some of the reasons. Another reason could be that Bank of Ghana as a regulator in the banking industry has played its role very well to the extent that costumers believe that no universal bank in Ghana can defraud any customer. Therefore, customers of universal banks in Ghana see all the banks to be trustworthy.

Secondly, a multi group analysis with ANOVA was conducted for core service and it was ascertained that the level of switching costs significantly affect core service. That is, the result of the ANOVA analysis indicated that the difference between switching groups is statistically significant of core service ($F = 3.492$, sig. = 0.032). This implies that combining core service and switching cost produced positive significant effect and customers may not switch to alternative service providers. The study revealed that some of the universal banks in Ghana provide speedy services to their customers through the use of internet and electronic banking systems. Another reason could be that most of the universal banks in Ghana have networked their branches, and with the use of ATM cards the customers could get access to their accounts in whichever regions they may find themselves.

Good customer relationship service was another reason some customers would not switch to a competitor. The research found that some customers received best wishes from their banks on their special days like birthdays. In addition, some of the banks officials attended funeral rites

of their valued customers. Furthermore, some of the banks' employees willingly approached customers to offer help. All these services provided by the universal banks in Ghana made switching to a competitor less attractive.

In the third place, another multi group analysis with ANOVA was conducted for price, and the result of the analysis indicated that the difference between switching groups is statistically significant of price ($F = 6.274$, sig. = 0.002). That is the analysis of price and levels of switching cost clearly shows a positive significant difference. Considering the 'means' of all the three levels of switchers, it suggests that customers see price as essential brand positioning dimension and hence do not have any intention to defect. The study found out that the charges or fees being paid by the customers for receiving services from some of the universal banks are affordable and reasonable. Again it was revealed in the study that some banks gave financial incentives such as free charge on the use of ATM cards, and discounts on some bank transactions.

Another reason customers would not defect was that, some of the universal banks gave instant rewards like mobile phones, phone credit, some gallons of petrol and many others to customers who deposited or left a specified amount of money in their account for three to six month periods. This attractive promotion was ran by some banks for the purposes of retaining their existing customers and also attracting new ones. Moreover, the study ascertained that some customers have multiple transactions such as saving, current and fixed deposit accounts with their banks and other customers have also borrowed money, bought shares, bought government treasury bills and patronized insurance from their respective banks. These activities have increased the switching barriers making switching process more involving and unattractive.

This implies that it would be financially costly for a customer to switch to alternative service provider.

Finally, the result of the analysis showed that the difference between switching groups is statistically significant to customer loyalty ($F = 6.646$, sig. = 0.002). Here too, all the three levels of switchers perceive customer loyalty as an important factor considering their 'means' which have significant difference. This assumes that the three levels of switchers' perceive cost of switching to be high which emanate from core service and price.

6.2:0. Conclusions

The research was conducted with overall objective to ascertain the relationship between brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector with switching cost serving as a moderating effect. This general objective has two specific objectives with conclusions drawn on each one of them as outlined below:

6.2.1. Objective 1

The first objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector. The brand positioning dimensions used in this were price, core service and trust, the results depicted that these dimensions significantly relate to customer loyalty. In order words, the study, showed that the price, core service and trust dimensions of brand positioning were the important drivers of customer loyalty. Furthermore, the study established that trust, core service and price dimensions of banking service design, which were ascertained to be the brand positioning

dimensions of customer loyalty in the Western societies as well as other emerging markets such as China, also drive customer loyalty among universal banks customers in a developing country like Ghana. In conclusion, the study found that the implementation of brand positioning dimensions price, trust, and core service effectively has influenced customer loyalty in the universal banks in Ghana.

6.2.2. Objective 2

The second and last objective of the study has to do with examining the effect of switching cost on the relationship between brand positioning dimensions and customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking industry. The high competition in the sector could be perceived that customers who are satisfied with their current service provider can still defect to alternative service provider. In view of this notion, that switching cost was introduced as a moderation factor to curtail frequent defection of customers from one service provider to another.

To analyse the moderating role of switching costs, a multi group analysis with ANOVA, was done to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between individuals with low, medium and high switching cost. The result of the analysis indicated that the difference between switching groups are statistically significant to price and core service but trust is not significant. In other words, switching groups working together with price and core service positively influence customer loyalty but trust was found not having any significant impact on customer loyalty in the universal banking sector in Ghana. With respect to this objective, the study concludes that some universal bank customers are loyal to their banks because of high switching costs and not because they are satisfied with the banks' overall performance.

6.3. Contribution to Literature

The study makes a modest contribution to the literature on bank marketing in Ghana in terms of universal banks positioning their offerings in the minds of target customers using price, trust and core service. These dimensions have led to customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the banking sector in Ghana. Another contribution to the literature is that price (reasonable, affordable, value of money and attractive promotion) and core service (reliable service, skills and competence, fast service and accurate service) working together with the levels of switching cost have positive influence on customer loyalty on bank marketing in Ghana.

6.4.1. Recommendations to the Banking Industry for Practice

The findings of this study carry some useful implications for managing universal bank customers in Ghana. The increasing level of competition within the universal banking sector in Ghana suggests that brand positioning strategies must be highlighted to offer custom-made services to customers and raise their overall level of loyalty with their banks. For managers in the universal banks sector to achieve customer loyalty, their offerings must be positioned from the perspective of customers (Ries & Trout, 1986).

Another recommendation is that Ghanaian universal banks must endeavour to understand the special needs of their customers and design the core service to offer more value to customers. Increased service portfolios to meet customers' ever changing needs, offered in a timely manner and also with minimal service failure, are likely to be cherished by the customers. The banks must also develop effective service recovery strategies to remedy occasional service failures. Although some customers appear loyal to their banks, the intensity of competitive pressures within the universal banking sector suggests that frequent service failures

experienced in any particular bank can seriously wear away customers' image of the bank and inspire them to switch to other universal banks. Furthermore, the bank services must be executed with some level of competence and accuracy, and banks branches being networked for the customers to get access to their account wherever they may find themselves in Ghana. The banks' managers must establish easy complaint procedures and must ensure that complaints made by customers are promptly resolved. In addition, the automated teller machine (ATM) should be regularly serviced and checked to provide 24-hour service to customers. This encourages self-banking and prevent customers from crowding at the banking hall, and also minimizes time wastage.

Bank management needs a strategic focus on delivering high service quality as a competitive differentiation method. Service product creativities such as ease of access to accounts, provision of financial information, and presenting innovative products, can enhance customer loyalty (Moutinho & Smith, 2000; Nguyen & Leblanc, 1998). Bank staff should have good banking knowledge, act professionally, and have a courteous attitude towards all customers. An appropriate people management strategy is necessary in order for professional service staff to consistently deliver high-quality services (Gronroos, 2000).

Universal bank managers in Ghana should strive to establish a clear and strong corporate image focused on the bank's integrity, credibility and benevolence to enhance customer trust. More precisely, brand trust acts as a major antecedent of customers' commitment toward a brand and subsequently of customers' loyalty. This implies that the managers of universal banks in Ghana should assure customers of their security in this era of cyber fraud. Again, the bank managers must ensure that competent and skilful employees are recruited to deliver quality services to

customers. The bank employees must be trained to be friendly, willingly approach customers to help when the need arises and communicate well with the customers. The employees must also learn to say thank you to customers after successful execution of every bank transaction.

The study revealed that price is considered to be one of the most important brand positioning strategy considered by customers in the Ghanaian universal banking sector. Customers or consumers are generally considered to be price sensitive, hence banks should set fees or charges that are reasonable and affordable. This can be done by encouraging customers to use the internet and electronic banking systems in order to reduce the service cost. The banks service delivered should commensurate with the amount of money customers pay.

Ghanaian universal banks could give some financial rewards to their customers. For instance, they can give discount on some bank transactions, free ATM charge, coupons, scratch and win promotion. The valued customers who have been with the bank for a long period of time could be rewarded with a token of money or any valuable item annually. For customers especially those who own businesses, free consultancy service at some point could be rendered to them on how to manage their work and finances for the long term survival of the business. They could also be advised to invest in the bank by way of buying shares, fixed deposit account, insurance and buy government treasury bills. This would increase the switching cost of the customer making it relatively difficult to switch to alternative bank.

From the study, levels of switching cost, price and core service have a positive effect on customer loyalty. This presupposes that combining switching cost with price and core service are important factors that determine customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking sector.

Bank managers must henceforth devote much attention and resources on these to ensure that customers are retained in the bank for a long period of time. However, the study revealed that levels of switching cost and trust did not produce significant effect on customer loyalty in the Ghanaian universal banking industry. What this means is that customers do not recognise switching cost combined with trust as potent factors to determine customer loyalty. However, the combination switching cost and trust should serve as ‘hygiene’ factor (a factor which is not readily recognised by customers but the absence of which could be disastrous).

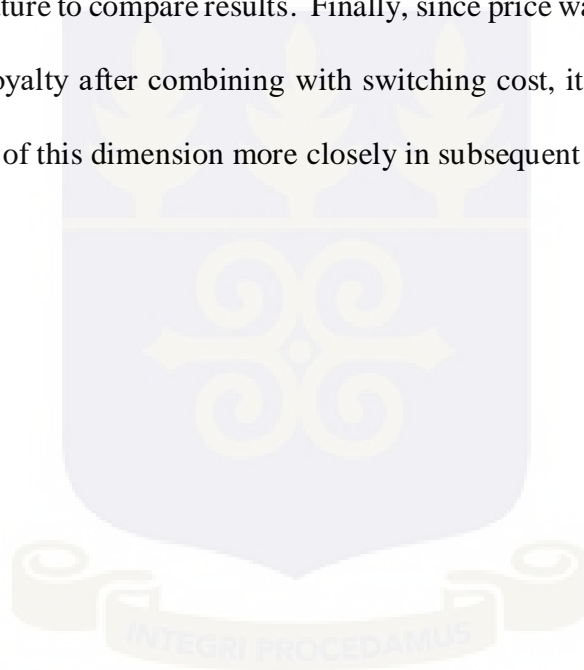
The bank managers in Ghana must make it a point to communicate their adopted brand positioning strategy to the target customers in order to create awareness. This will enable the bank to promote point of parity (POP) and point of difference (POD) between their brand and competitors’ brand to customers as indicated by Kotler and Keller (2012). The communication of brand positioning strategies through advertising affords the service provider the opportunity to point out some unique attribute of the bank services to customers.

6.4.2. Industry Regulators

It is recommended that in spite of the level of loyalty conveyed by customers of universal banks in Ghana, industry regulators such as the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Ghana should be aroused to take practical measures to ensure that customers get value for their money.. This can be done by encouraging and sensitizing universal banks to focus their attention and resources on service quality dimensions, avoiding activities that leads to defrauding customers and charging high bank fees. This would enable the universal banks to build on their goodwill and gain loyalty from customers in Ghana.

6.4.3. Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

In terms of future research, the study suggests that future work should consider other service industries like airlines industry, private healthcare industry and insurance industry. The study covered respondents staying in Greater Accra the capital city of Ghana. A further study covering respondents from the other major cities such as Kumasi, Tema, and Sekondi-Takoradi, as well as other municipal and rural communities, would help reinforce the validity of this research results. This study could be replicated in other Africa countries to see if it produces similar effect. Future research could consider other brand positioning dimensions discussed in extant literature to compare results. Finally, since price was found to have a strong impact on customers' loyalty after combining with switching cost, it would be interesting to explore the constituents of this dimension more closely in subsequent studies.



REFERENCES

- Aaker, D. A. (2011). *Strategic market management*. (9th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Aaker, D. A. (2005). *Strategic market management*. (7th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Aaker, D. A. (1996). *Building strong brands*. New York: The Free Press.
- Aaker, D.A. (1991). *Managing Brand Equity*. The Free Press. New York, NY.
- Abreu, M. (2006). The brand positioning and image of a religious organisation: an empirical analysis. *International Journal of Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 11(2), 139-146.
- Aldlaign, A., & Buttle, F. (2005). Beyond satisfaction: Customer attachment to retail banks. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*. 23(4), 349-59.
- Al-Esia, A., & Alhemoud, A. M. (2009). Using a multiple attribute approach for measuring customers satisfaction with retail banking. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 27(1), 294-314.
- Ali, I. (2014). Brand positioning through corporate social responsibility . *International Journal of Research*, 1(6), 294-302.
- Almossawi, M. (2001). Banking selection criteria employed by college students in Bahrain: An empirical analysis. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 19(3), 115-125.
- Amonini, C., McCol-Kennedy, J. R., Soutar, G. N., & Sweeney, J. C. (2010). How professional service firms compete in the market: An exploratory study. *Journal of marketing Management*, 26, 28-55.
- Anabila, P., Narteh, B., & Tweneboah.Koduah, E. Y. (2012). Relationship Marketing practices and customer loyalty: Evidence from the banking industry in Ghana. *Journal of Business Management*, 14, 222-1905.
- Anana, E., & Nique, W. (2010). Perception-based analysis: An innovative approach for brand positioning assessment. *Journal of Database Marketing and customer strategy Management*, 17(1), 6-18.
- Andaleeb, S.S. (1995). Country-of-origin effects: a country category effect hypothesis. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*. 7(3), 29-52.
- Anderson, J. C., & Narus, J. A. (1990). A model of distributor firm and manufacturer firm working partnerships. *the Journal of Marketing*, 42-58.
- Aryeetey, E. B. (2008). From informal finance to formal finance in Sub-Sahara Africa: Lesson from linkage efforts, paper presented at the high level seminar Africa finance for the 21st century. *IMF and Joint Africa Institute* . Tunsia, Tunis.
- Aurier, P., & N'Goala, G. (2010). The differing and mediating roles of trust and relationship commitment in service relationship maintenance and development. *Academy of Marketing Science*, 38, 303-325.

- Aydin, S. & Arasil, O.O.G. (2005). Customer loyalty and the effect of switching costs as a moderator variable. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 23(1), 89 - 103
- Balabanis, G. & Diamantopoulos, A. (2008). Brand origin identification by consumers: a classification perspective. *Journal of International Marketing*, 16 (1), 39-71.
- Barber, N., & Scarcelli, J. M. (2010). Enhancing the assessment of tangible service quality through the creating of a cleanliness measurement scale. *Managing Service Quality*, 20, 70-80.
- Baron, R.M & Kenny, D.A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51 (6) 1173-8.
- Bateson, J. (1995). *Managing services marketing*, (3rded). London: The Dryden Press.
- Bauer, H. H., Hammerschmidt, M., & Falk, T. (2005). Measuring the quality of e-banking portals. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 23(2), 153-175.
- Beckett, A., Hewer, P., & Howcroft, B. (2000). An exposition of consumer behaviour in the financial services industry. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 18, 15-26.
- Bertilsson, J. (2009). *The Way Brands Work; Consumers' Understanding of the Creation and Usage of Brands*. Lund Business Press, Lund.
- Berry, L.L. & Parasuraman, A. (1991). *Marketing Service: Competing through Quality*. The Free Press. New York, NY
- Bernstein, C. (1992). *A poetics*. Harvard University Press.
- Bhat, S., & Reddy, S. K. (1998). Symbolic and functional positioning of brands. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 15, 32-43.
- Bitner, M. J. (1997). Service marketing perspective on service excellence. *Journal of Retailing*, 73(1), 3-6.
- Blankson, C., Omar, O. E., & Cheng, J. M. (2009). Retail bank selection in developed and developing countries: A cross-national study of students' bank selection criteria. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 51(2), 183-198.
- Blankson, C. (2007). Testing a newly developed typology of positioning strategies in South Africa. *Journal of Africa Business*, 8(1), 67-97.
- Blankson, C., & Kalafatis, S. P. (2007). Congruence between positioning and brand advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 47(1), 79-94.
- Blankson, C., & Kalafatis, S. P. (2004). The development and validation of a scale measuring consumer-derived generic typology of positioning strategies. *Journal of marketing management*, 20, 5-43.
- Blankson, C., Owusu-Frimpong, Y., & Mbah, C. N. (2004). An investigation of Ghana's tourism positioning. *Journal of African Business*, 5(2), 113-136.
- Boateng, R., (2014). *Research made easy*. PearlRichard Foundation. Accra, Ghana.

- Burnham, T. A., Frels, J. K., & Mahajan, V. (2003). Consumer switching costs: a typology, antecedents, and consequences. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 31(2), 109-126.
- Branding Strategy (2010). *The Blake Project*. available at: www.brandingstrategyinsider.com(accessed 1October, 2015).
- Brooksbank, R. (1994). The anatomy of marketing positioning strategy. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 12(4), 1014.
- Brogowicz, A., Delene, L., & Lyth, D. (1990). A synthesised service quality model with managerial implication. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 1(1), 27-45.
- Byrne, B. M. (1998). *Structural equation modelling with LISREL, PRELIS and SIMPLIS: Basic concepts, applications and programming*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Caceres, C. R., & Paparoidamis, N. G. (2004). Service quality and marketing performance in business-to-business markets: exploring the mediating role of client satisfaction. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 14(2/3), 235-248.
- Campbell, M. C. (1999). Perceptions of price unfairness: antecedents and consequences. *Journal of marketing research*, 187-199.
- Chacko, H. E. (1997). Positioning a tourism destination to gain a competitive edge. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 1(2), 69-75.
- Chen, I. J., & Popovich, K. (2003). Understanding customer relationship and technology. *Business Management Journal*, 7(5), 374-386.
- Chen, K-J. (2005). Technology-based service and customer satisfaction in developing countries. *International Journal of Management*, 22(2), 307.
- Chi, C. G., & Gursor, D. (2009). Employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction and financial performance: An empirical examination. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28, 245-253.
- Chun, R., & Davies, G. (2006). The influence of corporate characters on customers and employees: exploring similarities and differences. *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science*, 34, 138-146.
- Clancy, K. J., & Trout, J. (2002). Brand positioning. *Harvard Business Review*, 80(3), 22.
- Clemes, M.D., Gan, C. & Zhang, L.Y. (2007a). Customer switching behaviour in the New Zealand banking industry. *Banks and Banks System*, 2, 50-66.
- Clemes, M. D., Gan, C., & Kao, T. H. (2007b). University satisfaction: an empirical analysis. *Journal of Marketing for High Education*, 17, 292-325.
- Clemes, M. D., Gan, C., & Zhang, D. (2010). Customer switching behaviour in the Chinese retail banking industry. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 7, 519-546.

- Clement, M., & Werner-Grotemeyer, H. (1990). The iterative positioning process: An international approach from the pharmaceutical industry. *Marketing and Research Today*, 85-96.
- Coffie, S., & Owusu-Frimpong, N. (2014). Alternative positioning strategies for services in Ghana. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 56(6), 531-542.
- Colgate, M., & Hedge, R. (2001). An investigation into the switching process in retail banking services. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 19, 201-13.
- Colgate, M., & Lang, B. (2001). Switching barriers in consumers markets: an investigation of the financial services industry. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 18, 332-48.
- Cochran, W.G., (1977), *Sample techniques*, (3rd ed.). New York: John Wily & Sons.
- Coakes, S.J. & Steed, L. (2007), *SPSS Version 14.0 for Windows: Analysis With out Anguish*, JohnWiley & Sons Australia Ltd., Australia.
- Cronbach, L. J., (1951). *Coefficient Alpha and The Internal Structure of Tests*. Psychometrika,
- Crawford, M. C. (1985). A new positioning typology. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 2, 243-53.
- Dall'OlmoRiley, F., & DeChernatony, L. (2000). The service brand as relationships builder. *Bristish Journal of Management*, 11, 137-150.
- Dalziel, N., Harris, F. & Laing, A. (2011). A multidimensional typology of customer relationships: from faltering to affective. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 29 (5), 398-432.
- Day, G. S. (2006). Achieving competitive advantage. *The Service Dominant Logic of Marketing: Dialog, debate and direction*, 85-90.
- Day, R. L. (1984). Modeling choices among alternative responses to dissatisfaction. *Advances in consumer research*, 11(1).
- DeChernatony, L., & Cottam, S. (2006). Why are all financial services brands not great? *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 5, 88-97.
- De Chernatony, L. & McDonald, M. (2003). *Creating Powerful Brands*. 3rd ed., Elsevier, Amsterdam.
- De Chernatony, L. & Dall'Olmo Riley, F. (1999). Experts' views about defining services brands and the principles of services branding. *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 46 (2), 181-192
- Devies, G., Chun, R., daSilvia, R., & Roper, S. (2003). *Corporate reputation and competitiveness*. London: Routledge.
- Devlin, J. (2004). Choice criteria in banking: an analysis of trends. *Journal of strategic Marketing*, 12, 13-28.
- Devlin, J., Ennew, C., & Mirza, M., (1995). Organizational positioning in retail financial services. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 14, 117-25.

- Diamantopoulos, A., Schlegelmilch, B. & Paliawadana, D. (2011). The relationship between country-of-origin image and brand image as drivers of purchase intentions: a test of alternative perspectives. *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 28 No. 5, pp. 508-24.
- Dibb, S., & Simkin, L. (1993). The strength of branding and positioning in services. *International journal of service Industry Management*, 25-35.
- Dibb, S., Simkin, L., & Pride, W. (1997). *Marketing: concepts and strategies* (3rd ed.). Boston MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Dick, A. S., & Basu, K. (1994). Customer loyalty: Toward an integrated conceptual framework. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22(2), 99-113.
- Dickson, P. R., & Sawyer, A. G. (1990). The price knowledge and search of supermarket shoppers. *The Journal of Marketing*, 42-53.
- Dillion, W., Domzal, T., & Madden, T. J. (1986). Evaluating alternative product-positioning strategies. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 26, 29-35.
- DiMingo, E. (1988). The fine art of positioning. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 19, 34-8.
- Dimitriadis, S. (2010). Testing perceived relational benefits as satisfaction and behavioural outcomes drivers. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 28, 297-313.
- Dovel, G. P. (1990). Stake it out; positioning success, step by step. *Business Marketing*, 43-51
- Du Plessis, L. (2010). *Customer relationship management and its influence on customer loyalty at Liberty Life in South Africa* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Johannesburg).
- Duthie, L. (2005). *Anthropology of work review*. Retrieved August 26, 2015, from www.aaanet.org/sections/saw/awr/awr263.pdf
- Easingwood, C. J., & Mahajan, V. (1989). Positioning of financial services for competitive advantage. *Journal of Product of Innovation Management*, 6, 207-19.
- Egan, J. (2004). *Relationship Marketing: exploring relational strategies in marketing*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 71-72.
- Ellson, T. (2004). *Culture and positioning as determinants of strategy*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Engel, J. F., Blackwell, R. D., & Miniard, P. W. (1995). *Consumer Behaviour* (8th ed.). Fort Worth, TX: Dryden.
- Erguven, M. S. (2015). *Flying Dutchman vs. Flying Chef: How National Cultures Shape the Brand Positioning of Flagship Carriers? The Cases of Royal Dutch Airlines and Turkish Airlines* (No. 2503405). International Institute of Social and Economic Sciences.
- Evans, M. J., Moutinho, L., & Vaan Raaij, W. F. (1996). *Applied consumer behaviour*. London: Addison Wesley.

- Ezeuduji, I. O., Lete, P. M., Correia, M., & Taylor, A. M. (2014). Competitive advantage for brand positioning: The Case of Sun City in South Africa. *Tourism Review International*, 17(4), 299-306.
- Fan, X., Thompson, B., & Wang, L. (1999). Effects of sample size, estimation methods, and model specification on structural equation modelling fit indexes. *Structural Equation Modelling*, 6, 56–83.
- Farrell, J. & Shapiro, C. (1988). Dynamic competition with switching costs. *Rand Journal of Economics*. 19 (1), 123-37.
- Fill, C. (1999). *Marketing communications, context, contents and strategies*. (2nd ed.). Hemel Hempstead, UK: Prentice-Hall.
- Fisher, R. J. (1991). Durable differentiation strategies for services. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 5, 19-28.
- Fischer, M., Meffert, H. & Perrey, J. (2004). Markenpolitik: Ist sie für jedes Unternehmen gleichermaßen relevant?. *Die Betriebswirtschaft*, 64 (3) 333-356.
- Flavian, C., Guinaliu, M., & Torres, E. (2005). The influence of corporate image on consumer trust: a comparative analysis in traditional versus internet banking. *Internet Research*, 15, 447-470.
- Fornell, C. (1992). A national customer barometer: the Swedish experience. *Journal of Marketing*. 56, 6-21.
- Fuchs, C., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2010). Evaluating the effectiveness of brand-positioning strategies from a consumer perspective. *European Journal of Marketing*, 44, 1763-1786.
- Gan, C., Clemes, M., Limsombunchai, V. & Weng, A. (2006). A logit analysis of electronic banking in New Zealand. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 24(6), 360-83.
- Ganesan, S. (1994). Determinants of long-term orientation in buyer-seller relationships. *The Journal of Marketing*, 1-19.
- Garry, T. (2008). Affect and the role of corporate customer expertise within legal services. *Journal of Service Marketing*, 22(4), 292-302.
- Garee, M. L. (1997). Statistics don't lie if you know what they're really saying. *Marketing News*, 31(19), 11.
- Gerrard, P., & Cunningham, J. B. (2004). Consumer switching behaviour in the Asia banking market. *Journal of Service Marketing*, 18, 215.
- Gerrard, P., & Cunningham, J. B. (2000). The bank switching behaviour of Singapore's graduates. *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, 5, 118-28.
- Ghana Banking Survey. (2014). *The future of Banking in Ghana: What's next?* Accra: PricewaterhouseCoopers and Association of Ghanaian Bankers.
- Ghana Statistical Survey. (2012). 2010 Population and housing census: Final results, Accra,

Ghana.

- Ghantous, N. (2012). An investigation of the antecedents and role of services brand credibility. *Paper presented at the European Marketing Academy Conference (EMAC), Lisbon, 22-25 May.*
- Grant, R. M. (2005). *Contemporary strategy analysis*. (5th ed.). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Graham, J. L., Mintu, A. T. & Rodgers, W. (1994). Explorations of negotiation behaviours in ten foreign cultures using a model developed in the United State. *Management Science*, 40(1), 72-95.
- Grewal, D., Baker, J., Levy, M., & Voss, G. (2003). The effects intentions in service-intensive retail stores. *Journal of Retailing*, 174, 331-352.
- Gronghaug, K., & Gilly, M. C. (1991). A transaction cost approach to customer dissatisfaction and complaint actions. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 12, 165-83.
- Gronroos, C. (1994b). From marketing mix to relationship marketing: towards a paradigm shift in marketing. *Management Decision*, 32, 4-20.
- Gronroos, C. (1997). From marketing mix to relationship marketing: Towards a paradigm shift in marketing management. *Journal of Management Decision*, 35, 322-339.
- Gronroos, C. (2000), *Service Management and Marketing*, 2nd ed., Wiley, Chichester.
- Gupta, S., Lehmann, D. R., & Stuart, T. A. (2005). Valuing customers. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 41, 7-18.
- Gursoy, D., & Swanger, N. (2007). Performance enhancing internal factors: Impacts on financial success. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 26, 213-227.
- Gustafsson, A., Johnson, M. D., & Roos, I. (2005). The effects of customer satisfaction, relationship commitment dimensions and triggers on customer retention. *Journal of Marketing*, 69(4), 210-218.
- Hair, J.F., Black, W.C., Babin, B.J., Anderson, R.E. & Tatham, R.L. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. Pearson Education, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2006). *Multivariate data analysis: A global perspective*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Haig, M. (2005). *Brand failures: the truth about the 100 biggest branding mistakes of all time*. Kogan Page Publishers.
- Hinson, R., Owusu-Frimpong, N., & Dasah, J. (2009). Key motivations for bank patronage in Ghana. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 27(5), 381-399.
- Hooley, G. J., Piercy, N. F., & Nicoulaud, B. (2007). *Marketing strategy and competitive positioning*, (4th ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education.

- Hooley, G. J., & Greenley, G. (2005). The resource underpinnings of competitive positions. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 13, 93–116.
- Hooley, G., Saunders, J., & Piercy, N. (2004). *Marketing strategy and competitive positioning*. (3rd ed.). London, England: Prentice Hall.
- Hooley, G., Greenley, G., Fahy, J., & Cadogan, J. (2001). Market-focused resources, competitive positioning and firm performance. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 17(5-6), 503-20.
- Hooper, D., Coughlan, J., & Mullen, M. R. (2008). Structural equation modelling: Guidance for determining model fit. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 6, 53–60.
- Huefner, J., & Hunt, H. K. (2000). Consumer retaliation as a response to dissatisfaction. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction & Complaining Behavior*, 13.
- Hutchful, E. (2002). *Ghana's adjustment experience: The paradox of reform*. Geneva, Switzerland : Institute for Social Development.
- Huang, K. (2009). Population and building factors that impact residential fire rates in large US cities.
- Hu, L., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modelling*, 6(1), 1–55.
- IMF. (2008). *Ghana reforms its financial sector*. IMF Magazine: Countries and Regions. Retrieved August 16, 2015, from <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/Survey/so/2008/CAR052208>
- Inkpen, A. C. & Birkenshaw, J. (1994). International joint ventures and performance: An interorganisational perspective . *International Business Review*, 3(3), 201-217.
- Investopedia. (2016). *Stepwise Regression Definition*, Retrieved March 8, 2016, from <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/stepwise-regression.asp#ixzz47QPqhrB7>
- Jones, M. A., Reynolds, K. E., Mothersbaugh, D. L., & Beatty, S. E. (2007). The positive and negative effects of switching costs on relational outcomes. *Journal of Service Research*, 9(4), 335-355.
- Jabnoun, N., & Al-Tamini, H. A. (2003). Measuring perceive service quality at UAE Commercial Banks. *International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management*, 20, 458-472.
- Jackson, B.B. (1985). *Winning and Keeping Industrial Customers*. Lexington Books. Lexington, MA.

- Jamal, A., & Naser, K. (2002). Customer satisfaction and retail banking: An assessment of some of the key antecedent of customer satisfaction in retail banking. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 20, 146-161.
- Jones, M. A., Mothersbaugh, D. L., & Betty, S. E. (2002). Why customer stay: Measuring the underlying dimensions of services switching costs and managing their differential strategic outcomes. *Journal of Business Research*, 55, 441-450.
- Jones, J. & Slater, J.S. (2003). *What's in a Name? – Advertising and the Concept of Brands*, 2nd ed., M.E. Sharpe, New York, NY.
- Joreskog, K., & Sorbom, D. (1993). *LISREL 8: Structural equation modelling with the SIMPLIS command language*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum: Scientific Software International.
- Juhl, H. J., Kristensen, K., & Ostergaard, P. (2002). Consumer satisfaction in European food retailing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 9, 327-334.
- Julian, C. C., & Ramaseshan, B. (1994). The role of customer-contact personnel in the marketing of a retail bank's services. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 22(5), 29-34.
- Kalafatis, S. P., Tsogas, M., & Blankson, C. (2000). Positioning strategies in business markets. *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 15, 416-437.
- Kalra, A., & Goodstein, R. C. (1998). The impact of advertising positioning strategies on consumer price sensitivity. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 35, 210-24.
- Keaveney, S. M. (1995). Customer switching behaviour in service industries: an exploratory study. *Journal of Marketing*, 59, 71-83.
- Kotler, P. & Keller, K.L. (2009), *Marketing Management*, 13th ed., Pearson Education, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2006). *Marketing management*. (12th ed.). New Jersey, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Keller, K.L. (2009). *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity*. 4rd ed., Prentice Hall, New York, NY
- Kotler, P. (1997). *Marketing management: analysis, planning, implementation and control*. Upper Saddle River, N. J.: Prentice-Hall International.
- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57, 1-22.
- Keller, K. L. (2003). *Strategic brands management*. Engelwood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Keller, K. L., & Lehmann, D. R. (2006). Brands and branding; research findings and future priorities. *Journal of Marketing Science*, 25, 740-59.

- Kim, M. K., Park, M. C., & Jeong, D. H. (2004). The effects of customer satisfaction and switching barrier on customer loyalty in Korean Mobile Telecommunication Services. *Telecommunication Policy*, 28, 145-159.
- Kim, W. G., & Cha, Y. (2002). Antecedents and consequences of relationship quality in hotel industry. *Journal of Hospitality Management*, 321-338.
- Kiser, E. K. (2002). Household switching behaviour at depository institutions: evidence from survey data. *Antitrust Bulletin*, 47, 619-41.
- Klemperer, P. (1995). Competition when consumers have switching costs: an overview with applications to industrial organization, macroeconomics and international trade. *Review of Economic Studies*. 62, 515-39.
- Klemperer, P. (1987a). Entry deterrence in markets with consumer switching costs. *Economic Journal*. 97, 99-117.
- Klemperer, P. (1987b). The competitiveness of markets with switching costs. *Rand Journal of Economics*. 18 (1), 138-50.
- Kotler, P. (2000). *Marketing Management* (The Millennium ed.). New Jersey, NJ: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Kotler, P. (2003). *Marketing Management*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2012). *Marketing Management*. USA: Pearson Education Limited.
- Krishnan, S. (1996). Characteristics of memory associations; a customer-based brand equity perspective. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 13, 389-405.
- Krejcie, V. R. & Morgan, W. D., (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607-610
- Lallmahamood, M. (2007). An examination individuals perceived security and privacy of the internet in Malaysia and the influence of this on their intention to use an extension of the technology Acceptance Model. *Journal of Internet-Banking and Commerce*, 12, 1-26.
- Lebrun, A. M., Souchet, L., & Bouchet, P. (2013). Social representation and brand positioning in the sporting goods market. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 13(3), 358-379.
- Lee, M., & Cunningham, L. F. (2001). A cost/benefit approach to understanding service loyalty. *The Journal of Services Marketing*, 15, 113-20.
- Lee, G., Garland, R., & Wright, M. (2007). Switching banks: old bank gone but not forgotten. *Journal of Service Marketing*, 22(2), 146-57.
- Leverin, A., & Liljander, V. (2006). Does relationship marketing improve customer relationship satisfaction and loyalty? *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 24(4), 232-251.
- Levesque, T. J., & McDougall, G. (1996). Determinants of customer satisfaction in retail banking. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 14, 12-20.

- Levitt, T. (1986). *The marketing imagination*. New York: Simon & Schuster Inc.
- Lewise, B., & Soureli, M. (2006). The antecedents consumer loyalty in retail banking. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 5, 15-31.
- Liljander, V., & Roos, I. (2002). Customer-relationship levels-from spurious to true relationships. *Journal of services marketing*, 16(7), 593-614.
- Lilien, G. L., & Rangaswamy, A. (2003). *Marketing Engineering*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Lin, M. Y., & Chang, L. H. (2003). Determinants of habitual behaviour for national and leading brands in China. *Journal of Products and Brand Management*, 12, 94-107.
- Lovelock, C., Lewis, B., & Vandermerve, S. (1999). *Service Marketing: a European perspective*, Upper Saddle River. New Jersey: Prentice Hall
- Loxley, J. (1988). *Ghana Economic Crisis and the long road to recovery*. Ottawa, Canada: North-South Institute.
- MacIntosh, E. W., & Crow, B. (2011). Positioning a brand within the controversial sport of mixed martial arts. *Journal of Sponsorship*, 4(2).
- Malhotra, N., & Birks, D. F. (2007). *Marketing research: An applied approach* (updated secondary European ed ed.). Harlow, UK: Pearson Education.
- Manhas, S. P. (2010). Strategic brand positioning analysis through comparison of cognitive and conative perceptions. *Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Science*. 15(29), 1-19
- Martey, E. M., & Frimpong, J. (2014). The impacts of celebrities' endorsement on brand positioning on mobile telecommunication users in the Eastern of Ghana. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 3(7), 397-412.
- Matear, S., Gray, B., & Garrett, T. (2004). Market orientation, brand investment, new service development, market position and performance for service organization. *International Journal of service Industry Management*, 15, 284-301.
- Mathews, C., & Murray, D. (2007). Helping banking customers switch: a case study. *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, 11, 360-70.
- Mavri, M., & Ioannou, G. (2008). Customer switching behaviour in Greek banking services using survival analysis. *Managerial Finance*, 34(3), 186.
- McKenna, R. (1986). *The Regis Touch: New marketing strategies for uncertain times*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- McAlexander, J. B., Becker, D., & Kaldenberg, D. (1993). Positioning health care services: Yellow Pages advertising and dental practice performance. *Journal of Health Care Marketing*, 13, 54-57.

- Meng, F., Tepanon, Y., & Uysal, M. (2006). Measuring tourist satisfaction by attribute and motivation: The case of a nature-base resort. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 11, 41-56.
- Miles, J., & Shevlin, M. (1998). Effects of sample size, model specification and factor loadings on the GFI in confirmatory factor analysis. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25, 85-90.
- Mmieh, F., & Owusu-Frimpong, N. (2004). State policies and challenges in attracting foreign direct investment: A review of the Ghana experience. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 46(5), 575-579.
- Mittal, V., & Kamakura, W. A. (2001). Satisfaction repurchase intent and repurchase behaviour: investigating the moderating effect of customer characteristics. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38, 131-43.
- Mohanty, S. (2012). Indian Shampoo Brand Positioning: Multi-Dimensional Scaling Approach. *International Journal of Computing and Corporate Research*, 2(5).
- Martin-Consuegra, D., Molina, A., & Estabeban, A. (2007). Relational benefits and customer satisfaction in retail banking. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 25(4), 253-271.
- Moorman, C., Deshpande, R., & Zaltman, G. (1993). Factors affecting trust in marketing research relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, 57, 81-102.
- Morgan, R. M., & Hunts, S. D. (1994). The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 58, 20-38.
- Moulins, J.L., Phan, K. & Philippe, J. (2012). De la qualite ´ de service a ` la fide ´lite ´ des clients. Une investigation surle secteur bancaire au Vietnam. *Economie et Gestion des Services*, 46 (4), 815-836.
- Moutinho, L., & Smith, A. (2000). Modelling bank customer satisfaction through mediation of attitudes towards human and automated banking. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 18(3), 124-134.
- Muruganantham, G., & Kaliyamoorthy, S. (2009). Celebrity endorsement, a competitive tool for brand positioning. *International Journal of Value Chain Management*, 3(4), 386-400.
- Narteh, B., & Kuada, J. (2014). Customer satisfaction with retail banking services in Ghana. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 56(4), 353-371.
- Narteh, B., & Owusu-Frimpong, N. (2011). An analysis of students' knowledge and choice criteria in retail bank selection in Sub-Saharan Africa : The case of Ghana. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 29, 373-397.
- Ndubisi, N. O., Wah, C. K., & Ndubisi, G. C. (2007). Supplier-customer relationship management and customer loyalty: the banking industry perspective. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management*, 16, 52-65.
- Ndubisi, N. O. (2007). Relationship marketing and customer loyalty. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 25(1), 98-106.

- Ndubisi, N. O., & Wah, K. W. (2005). Factorial and discriminant of the underpinning of relationship marketing and customer. *Internal Journal of Bank Marketing*, 23(3), 542-57.
- Ndubisi, N. O. (2003). Service quality: Understanding customer perception and reaction, and its impact on business. *International Journal of Business*, 5(2), 207-19.
- Nguyen, N., & LeBlanc, G. (1998). The mediating role of corporate image on customers' retention decision : an investigation in financial service . *International Journal of Bank Marketing* ,16, 52-65.
- Nguyen, N., & LeBlanc, G. (2001). Corporate image and corporate reputation in customers retention decisions in services. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 8, 227-236.
- Nobbs, K., Foong, K. M., & Baker, J. (2015). An exploration of fashion visual merchandising and its role as a brand positioning device. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 6(1), 4-19.
- Oliver, R. L. (1997). *Satisfaction: A behavioural perspective on the consumer*. Boston: Irwin McGraw-Hill.
- Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence customer loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, 33-44.
- Olorunniwo, F., Hsu, M., & Udo, G. (2006). Service quality, customer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions in the service factory. *Journal of Service Marketing*, 20(1), 59-73.
- O'Loughlin, D., & Szmigin, I. (2005). Customer perspective on the role and importance of branding in Irish retail financial service. *International Journal Bank Marketing*, 23, 8-27.
- Owusu-Frimpong, N. (2001). An evaluation of marketing practices in banks in Ghana. *Journal of Africa Business*, 2(3), 75-91.
- Owusu-Frimpong, N., Omar, O. E., & Mmieh, F. (2011). An understanding of baby boomers' attitudes toward financial services products in Ghana. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 53(1), 69-78.
- Owusu-Frimpong, N. (2008). An evaluation of customers' perception and usage of rural community banks (RCBs) in Ghana. *Journal of Emerging Markets*, 3(2), 181-196
- Pallant, J. (2003). *SPSS survival manual, A step-by-step guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows (versions 10 and 11)*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University press.
- Pappu, R., Quester, P. & Cooksey, R.W. (2005). Consumer-based brand equity: improving the measurement and empirical evidence. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*. 14 (3), 143-154.
- Patterson, P.G. & Sharma, N. (2000). Switching costs, alternative attractiveness and experience as moderators of relationship commitment in professional consumer services. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 11 (5), 470-490.

- Park, C. W., Jaworski, B. J., & MacInnis, D. J. (1986). Strategic brand concept – Image management. *Journal of Marketing*, 50, 621-635.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A. & Berry, L.L. (1988). A multi item scale for measuring consumer perception of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64, 12-40.
- Phan, K. N., & Ghanteous, N. (2013). Managing brand associations to drive customers trust and loyalty in Vietnamese. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 31, 456-480.
- Ping, R. A. (1993). The effects of satisfaction and structural constraints on retailer exiting, voice, loyalty, opportunism, and neglect. *Journal of retailing*, 69(3), 320-352.
- Pike, S., & Ryan, C. (2004). Destination positioning analysis through a comparison of cognitive, affective, and conative perceptions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 42, 333-42.
- Porter, M. (1998). *Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors*. The Free Press, New York, NY.
- Porter, M. E. (1996). What is strategy? *Harvard Business Review*, 74, 61-78.
- Porter, M. E. (1979). How competitive forces shape strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 57(2), 137-45
- Priluck, R., & Lala, V. (2009). The impact of the recovery paradox on retailer-customer relationship. *Managing Service Quality*, 19(1), 42-59.
- Qester, P. G., McGuiggan, R. I., Perrault, W. D., & McCarthy, E. J. (2007). *Marketing: Creating and Developing values*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
- Raajpoot, N. (2002). TANGSERV: A Multiple item scale for measuring tangible quality in food service industry. *Journal of food Service Business Research*, 5(2), 109-127.
- Raman, P. (1999). *Way to create loyalty*. Kuala Lumpur: New Straits Times.
- Ray, S., & Pathak, A. (2007). Strategizing brand positioning in the context of Indian Insurance Industry. *The IUP Journal of Brand Management*.
- Reichheld, F. E., & Sasser, W. E. (1990). Zero defections: quality comes to service. *Harvard Business Review*, 68(9), 105-11.
- Reichheld, F. F., & Kenny, D. W. (1990). The hidden advantages of customer retention. *Journal of Retail Banking*, 12(4), 19-24.
- Reimer, A., & Kuehu, R. (2005). The impact of servicescape on quality perception. *European Journal of Marketing*, 39, 785-808.
- Reinartz, W., & Kumar, V. (2002). The mismanagement of customer loyalty. *Harvard business review*, 80(7), 86-95.
- Ries, A., & Trout, J. (2001). *The Marketing Classic Positioning: how to be seen and heard in the overcrowded marketplace*. London: Ajay K. Merchant.
- Ries, A., & Trout, J. (1970). *Positioning: The battle for your mind*. London: Ajay K. Merchant.

- Ries, A., & Trout, J. (1986). *Positioning: The battle for your mind*. New York, NY: Warner Book.
- Robson, C., (1993). *Real World Research*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Rothschild, M. L. (1977). *Advertising strategies for high and low involvement situations*. Graduate School of Business, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Rosenberg, L., & Czepiel, J. (1983). A marketing approach for consumer retention. *Journal of consumer Marketing*, 1(1), 45-51.
- Ryu, K., & Jang, S. (2008). DINESCAPE: A scale for customers perception of dining environment. *Journal of Food Service Business Research*, 11(1), 2-22.
- Sahoo, K. K., & Das, M. S. (2013). A study on Fairness Cream Brand Positioning in Odisha with Multi-Dimensional Scaling Approach. *Circulation in more than 70 countries*, 24.
- Samiee, S. (2010). Advancing the country image construct – a commentary essay. *Journal of Business Research*. 63 (4), 442-445.
- Samiee, S., Shimp, T.A. & Sharma, S. (2005). Brand origin recognition accuracy: its antecedents and consumers' cognitive limitations. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 36 (4), 379-397.
- Sharma, N. (2003). The role pure and quasi-moderators in services: an empirical investigation of ongoing customer-service-provider relationships. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 10 (4), 253-262.
- Sharma, N., Patterson, P. G., Cicic, M., & Dawes, P. (1997). A contingency model of relationship commitment for professional consumer services. In *Proceedings of the 24th European Marketing Academy Conference* (Vol. 2026, p. 37).
- Schiffman, L. G., & Kanuk, L. L. (2007). *Consumer Behaviour*. Engelwood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Schiffman, G.L. & Kanuk, L.L. (2009). *Consumer Behavior*. 9thed., Pearson Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Schmitz, G. (2009). The effects of acquisition and transaction shopping value perceptions on retail format usage intentions: an illustration from discount stores. *The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 19(2), 81-101.
- Shields, P. M., & Rangarajan, N. (2013). *A playbook for research methods: Integrating conceptual frameworks and project management*. New Forums Press.
- Seggev, E. (1982). Testing persuasion by strategic positioning. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 22, 37-42.
- Sichtmann, C. (2007). An analysis of antecedents and consequences of trust in a corporate brand. *European Journal of Marketing*, 41(9/10), 999-1015.
- Siebers, L. Q. (2012). Foreign retailers in China: The first ten years. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 33, 27-38.

- Siebers, Q. L., Zhang, T. & Li, F. (2013). Retail positioning through customer satisfaction: an alternative explanation to the resource-based view. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 21(7), 559-587
- Siles, M., Robinson, L. J., & Hanson, S. D. (1994). Does friendly service retain customers? *Journal of Bank Marketing*, 26, 47-50.
- Soderlund, M. (1998). Customer satisfaction and its consequences on customer behaviour revisited. *International Journal of Services Industries Management*, 9(2), 169-188.
- Spector, P. E. (1992). *Summated rating scale construction*. London, England: Sage University Papers.
- Stanford, A. W., Singh, N., & Magnusson, P. (2012). Responsiveness to global and local consumer culture positioning: A personality and collective identity perspective. *Journal of International Marketing*, 20, 58–73.
- Strombeck, S. D., & Wakefield, K. L. (2008). Situational influences on service quality evaluations. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 22(5), 409-419.
- Sureshchandar, G. S., Rajendran, C., & Anantharaman, R. N. (2002). The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction: A factor specific approach. *Journal of Service Marketing*, 16(4), 363-379.
- Sweeney, J., & Swait, J. (2008). The effect of brand credibility on customer loyalty. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 15, 179-193.
- Sweeney, J. C., & Soutar, G. N. (2001). Consumer perceived value: the development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 77, 203-20.
- Tax, S. S., Brown, S. W., & Chandrashekar, M. (1998). Customer evaluations of service complaint experiences: implications for relationship marketing. *The Journal of Marketing*, 60-76.
- Torres, N. E., & Kline, S. (2006). From satisfaction to delight: A model for the hotel industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 8(4), 290-301.
- Treacy, M., & Wiersema, F. (1994). *The discipline of market leader*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley.
- Trout, J., & Rivkin, S. (1996). *The New Positioning: the latest on the World's number 1 business strategy*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Tudor, E. D., & Negricea, I. C. (2012). Brand positioning- a marketing resource and an effective tool for Small and Medium Enterprises. *Journal of Knowledge Management Economics and Information Technology*, 2(1).
- Tuzovic, S. (2008). Investigating the concept of potential quality: An exploratory study in the real estate industry. *Managing Service Quality*, 18(3), 255-271.
- Tweneboah-Koduah, E. Y. (2014). Social Marketing: Using Stages of Change Model to Assess HIV/AIDS Testing Intentions Among University Students in Ghana. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 26(3), 208-225.

- Urban, L. G., & Hauser, R. J. (1993). *Design and marketing of new products*. (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Usunier, J.C. (2006). Relevance in business research: the case of country-of-origin research in marketing”, *European Management Review*, 3(1), 60-73.
- Varki, S., & Colgate, M. (2001). The role of price perception in an integrated model behavioural intention. *Journal of Service Research*, 3, 232-41.
- Wang, X. and Yang, Z. (2008). “Does country-of-origin matter in the relationship between brand personality and purchase intention in emerging economies? Evidence from China’s auto industry”. *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 25 No. 4, pp. 458-74.
- Wind, Y. (1982). *Product policies, concepts, methods and strategies*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Winer, R. E. (1999). Experimentation in the 21st century, the importance of external validity. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 27, 349-358.
- Woldie, A. (2003). Nigerian banks: Quality of services. *Journal of African Business*, 4(2), 75-91.
- Wright, M. (1997). *When Strength Means Death*. *Brand Strategy*, 107, 3-5.
- Wu, S.I. & Lo, C. (2009). The influence of core-brand attitude and consumer perception on purchase intention towards extended product. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 21 (1), 174-194.
- Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52, 2-22.
- Zeithaml, V. A., & Bitner, M. J. (1996). *Services Marketing*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Zemke, R. (1993). The art of service recovery: fixing broken customers and keeping them on your side. *The service quality handbook*, 463-76.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO RESPONDENTS (CUSTOMERS) OF THE UNIVERSAL BANKS IN GHANA

Dear Sir/Madam,

The researcher is an MPhil student of the University of Ghana Business School and Department of Marketing and Entrepreneurship. This questionnaire has been designed to solicit information from you as a customer of any universal bank in Ghana. Please you assured of the confidentiality of your responses and your identity. The information you provide will be used for only academic purposes. Please use this scale in answering the questions.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

Please indicate you are loyal to your bank because of the following:

SECTION A		TICK ONLY ONE				
BRAND POSITIONING DIMENSIONS		OPTION (1-5)				
TRUST						
1.	This bank is shows interest in its customers	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I think this continuously seeks to better answer customers' needs.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	This banks' services assure me security	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I trust the quality of this banks' services	1	2	3	4	5
5.	This bank is always sincere with its customers.	1	2	3	4	5
PRICE						
6.	This bank charges reasonable fees	1	2	3	4	5
7.	This bank's service merits the value of money	1	2	3	4	5
8.	This bank runs attractive promotion	1	2	3	4	5
9.	This bank's service is affordable	1	2	3	4	5
CORE SERVICE						
10.	This bank's service are reliable	1	2	3	4	5
11.	This bank's employees have exquisite skills and competence to service customers	1	2	3	4	5
12.	This bank delivers fast services to its customers	1	2	3	4	5
13.	This provides accurate services	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION B						
CUSTOMER LOYALTY						
14.	I intend to continue to enjoy this bank's services in the upcoming years	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I recommend this bank to my friends and relatives	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I prefer my main bank to other banks	1	2	3	4	5
17.	I will continue to be a customer of this bank even if it moderately raises its fees	1	2	3	4	5
18.	This bank is my first choice when I need to use banking services	1	2	3	4	5
SWITCHING COST						
19	Switching to a new operator is financially costly	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I will not defect because of the expenditure of time and energy in looking for alternative bank.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	I will not defect because I have enough experience with my bank	1	2	3	4	5
22.	I will not defect because I have a good long-term relations with my bank.	1	2	3	4	5

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

SECTION C

1. Please indicate your sex

Male Female

2. Please indicate your age group

Below 19 years 20-29 years 30-39 years
 40-49 years 50-59 years 60 years and above

3. Please write the number of years you have been transacting business with your bank

Less than 5 years 5-10years 11-15years
 16-20years 21-25years 26years and above

4. Please indicate your highest academic qualification

BECE/SSCE/WASSCE Technician/Post-Secondary
 Diploma/HND Bachelor's Degree Post-graduate
 Diploma/Master's Degree PhD

5. Please indicate your annual income or salary (GH¢)

Below 10,000 10,000-15,000 16,000-20,000

21,000-25,000 26,000-30,000 Above 30,000

Any further comment.....



APPENDIX 2

STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING (SEM) RESULTS

Model Fit Summary

CMIN

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	55	292.115	176	.000	1.660
Saturated model	231	.000	0		
Independence model	21	2722.204	210	.000	12.963

RMR, GFI

Model	RMR	GFI	AGFI	PGFI
Default model	.066	.910	.882	.694
Saturated model	.000	1.000		
Independence model	.353	.343	.278	.312

Baseline Comparisons

Model	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	.893	.872	.954	.945	.954
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Parsimony-Adjusted Measures

Model	PRATIO	PNFI	PCFI
Default model	.838	.748	.799
Saturated model	.000	.000	.000
Independence model	1.000	.000	.000

NCP

Model	NCP	LO 90	HI 90
Default model	116.115	73.019	167.106
Saturated model	.000	.000	.000
Independence model	2512.204	2347.533	2684.239

FMIN

Model	FMIN	F0	LO 90	HI 90
Default model	1.078	.428	.269	.617
Saturated model	.000	.000	.000	.000
Independence model	10.045	9.270	8.662	9.905

RMSEA

Model	RMSEA	LO 90	HI 90	PCLOSE
Default model	.049	.039	.059	.531
Independence model	.210	.203	.217	.000

AIC

Model	AIC	BCC	BIC	CAIC
Default model	402.115	411.834	600.434	655.434
Saturated model	462.000	502.819	1294.940	1525.940
Independence model	2764.204	2767.915	2839.926	2860.926

ECVI

Model	ECVI	LO 90	HI 90	MECVI
Default model	1.484	1.325	1.672	1.520
Saturated model	1.705	1.705	1.705	1.855
Independence model	10.200	9.592	10.835	10.214

HOELTER

Model	HOELTER .05	HOELTER .01
Default model	193	207
Independence model	25	26

Minimization: .016

Miscellaneous: 1.403

Bootstrap: .000

Total: 1.419