



PREDICTORS OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH BANK SERVICES AMONG SELECTED DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS IN SOUTH-WESTERN NIGERIA

Obisesan, Francis Oludare, Ph.D; FCIB

Department of Accounting and Finance,
Bowen University, Iwo, Osun State, Nigeria
darbol2001@yahoo.com

Adegoke, Asimiyu Kolawole, FCIB 

Department of Banking and Finance,
Achievers University, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria
kolaadegoke@achievers.edu.ng

Abstract

In the current banking industry, there is high level of competition, ranging from meeting with the set target by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to making increased profit and significant business growth. For every bank institution to function appropriately and record high level of effectiveness, the employees must be up and doing. Apart from the employees, there is the need to get more customers in order to sustain the longevity of the banks. This among other reasons spurred the researchers to investigate factors that contribute to customer satisfaction with banks services among selected Deposit Money Banks in South Western Nigeria. The study adopted cross-sectional research design and gathered data from 1,505 bank customers from South-Western Nigeria. Findings revealed that when combined, age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking had significant joint influence on tangibles of banks [$R = .25$; $R^2 = .06$; $F(4, 1500) = 24.47$; $P < .01$], reliability [$R = .32$; $R^2 = .10$; $F(4, 1500) = 41.62$; $P < .01$], responsiveness [$R = .18$; $R^2 = .03$; $F(4, 1500) = 13.04$; $P < .05$], empathy [$R = .11$; $R^2 = .01$; $F(4, 1500) = 4.78$; $P < .05$] and customer satisfaction [$R = .28$; $R^2 = .08$; $F(4, 1500) = 32.27$; $P < .01$]. It was therefore recommended that banks intensify more effort towards

enhancing customer satisfaction through courtesy platform, staff attitude to customers, training of staff on customer relation, respect customers and adjust welfare unit and let the customer feel emotionally attached to the banks. Also, every possible method should be explored by the banks to meet customer expectations so as to strengthen customer loyalty and retention.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Customer Expectations, Quality Services, Competition, Bank Services, Deposit Money Banks (DMBs)

INTRODUCTION

A state of satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a subjective feeling and is a result of specific experiences of individual perceptions and emotions. This satisfaction or dissatisfaction reflects a feeling connected with the completed or unfulfilled expectations in relation to a particular product or service (Baruk, 2008). The satisfaction felt by the client, is associated with the experience of his positive impressions, and conversely will be linked to dissatisfaction with the lack of positive incentives. In today's competitive market, business entities including the banking industry need to develop and give to their customers goods and services that will make the customer/client experience high level of satisfaction. This is because a satisfied customer is more than often likely to re-patronize than a dissatisfied customer. As a working definition, customer satisfaction is defined as "the number of customer, or percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with a firm, its products, or its services (ratings) exceeds specified satisfaction goals".

In general, customer satisfaction is seen as an indicator of the future financial success of the company (Kotler 2000). Companies use customer satisfaction more and more as a criterion when assessing the quality of products and services. It is commonly used as a part of personnel bonus systems. Customer satisfaction also affects the future cash flows, enhances profitability and increases profits, thus also having strategic implications. Customer satisfaction has gained a vast amount of interest particularly in consumer marketing, and its scientific foundation is rather well documented, although there are varying opinions on the role of expectations in customer satisfaction. The benefits of customer satisfaction are often associated with high customer loyalty, future purchases, and positive verbal communication (Molinari, Abratt and Dion, 2008). The more loyal the customers are, the more often they use the company's services or make purchases from the same supplier. Establishing the circle of customers also creates a basis for steady cash flow. Along with strengthened co-operative relations, customer satisfaction leads to long-term customer relationships that have been found to be profitable for the company (Tuomi & Sarajarvi, 2009). Satisfied customers also tolerate the rise in service and product

prices (Tuomi & Sarajarvi, 2009). Additionally, it has been observed that there is a significant difference between the customer loyalty of a “very satisfied” and “satisfied” customer (Jennrich, 2004).

There is sufficient evidence to suggest that customer satisfaction can and should be viewed as an attitude (McMillan, 2012). For example, in banking there is an ongoing relationship between the service provider and the customer. Here, customer satisfaction is based on an evaluation of multiple interactions. For this investigation, satisfaction is considered as a composite of overall customer attitudes towards the service provider that incorporates a number of measures. To protect/gain market shares, organizations need to outperform competitors by offering high quality product service to ensure satisfaction of customers (Tsoukatos & Rand, 2006). With better understanding of customers' perceptions, companies can determine the actions required to meet the customers' needs. They can identify their own strengths and weaknesses, where they stand in comparison to their competitors, chart out paths for future progress and improvement (Magesh, 2010).

In the current banking industry, there is high level of competition, ranging from meeting with the set target by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to making increased profit and significant business growth. For every bank institution to function appropriately and record high level of effectiveness, the employees must be up and doing. Apart from the employees, there is the need to get more customers in order to sustain the longevity of the banks. This among other reasons spurred the researchers to investigate factors that contribute to customer satisfaction. In line with this objective, the paper is structured into literature review in section two, section three outlines the methodology adopted for the study, data analysis and discussion were presented in section four while section five concludes the paper and proffer recommendations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Among the many studies in literature dedicated to customer satisfaction in banks, Albro's (1999) study in the context of Washington, U.S., utilized a benchmark involving bank customers from all geographic areas and bank assets. The study involved asking customers various questions concerning their satisfaction with the banks. Data collected was utilized to benchmark customer satisfaction scores of banks participating in the financial client satisfaction index. The findings revealed that the most significant attributes that results in satisfaction include human interaction issues like 'correcting errors promptly', 'courteous employees' and 'professional behavior'. Moreover, the findings also revealed that the provision of good, personal service is considered by the clients as more important more than convenience or products. These findings were consistent with Wan, Luk and Chow (2005) findings. The latter study was also conducted

in Washington and it revealed that customers taking the customer satisfaction survey bought more products compared to the control group that were not participants to the survey. According to the authors, survey participation is what led the customers to develop more positive perceptions towards the company and it convinced them that the firm values and cares about its customers and their feedback.

In another study, Molinari, Abratt and Dion (2008) claimed that the key to obtaining competitive advantage in the banking business is to be customer-driven. In other words, the entire aspects of the institution should concentrate on the factors that the customers hold dear and it should be willing to exceed customer expectations. Several studies evidenced that by concentrating on and delivering excellent customer satisfaction outcome, firms achieve superior profitability. Hence, improving customer service may entail training procedure or enhancement of computer information systems of the bank. While improving customer service may lead to increased tangible accounting costs, it may also steer clear of the occurrence of intangible costs. Bankers can develop quantitative data through researching customer satisfaction, in the hopes of stressing that the emphasis and delivery of exceptional customer satisfaction can lead to improved revenues that are higher than increased costs.

Also, Mothey (1994) revealed that in order to achieve customer satisfaction, it is imperative for banks to make use of different tools that varies from re-engineering of service to focusing on specific tasks. In addition, Albro's (1999) study involved a national survey of the customers patronizing 814 banks in an attempt to determine customer satisfaction. He revealed that cross selling hinges on high level of customer satisfaction. The study also revealed a very high correlation between satisfaction scores and customer's predisposition to repurchase. In short, for happy customers to provide recommendations through word-of-mouth to others, they must be satisfied. On the contrary, if the firm is derelict in serving the customer, they will not hesitate to switch to another financial institution.

According to Aldisert (2012), customer satisfaction is not becoming significant in a way that some banks view it as a main element in their marketing strategies. The term 'after marketing' has also been commonly utilized to reflect the concentration on expending effort to cater for current customers in an attempt to increase their satisfaction and to retain them (Hazra & Srivastava, 2009). This section stressed on the importance of customer satisfaction which is considered to be the basis of banks' development of strategies. As such, it is important for current financial institutions to shift towards customer management for their satisfaction of the services provided. It is also imperative for banks to develop a system that continuously measures customer satisfaction (Hazra & Srivastava, 2009).

Bryant and Cha (1996) conducted a study on 400 companies using the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) and demonstrated that there is significant relationship and consistent differences in the levels of satisfaction among demographic groups: Sex – positively related to satisfaction and female customers are more satisfied than the male customers. Female of all ages are more satisfied than the male. Women are more involved with the process of purchase and possibly use the mobile phone more for relational purposes (social network device) while men use it for functional purposes (businesses, sales, etc). Age – positively related to satisfaction but the relationship is not a straight line. Satisfaction increases with age. The major increase in satisfaction is seen within the age 55 and over. Income – the higher the income, the lower the satisfaction level. Location (type of area) – positively related to satisfaction. Customers living within metropolitan areas (central city and suburban areas) are less satisfied than those customers in non-metropolitan areas.

Palvia and Palvia (1999) found out that age is a significant determinant of satisfaction with information technology industry. Homburg and Giering (2001) conducted a study on German car manufacturers using LISREL notation and demonstrated that it is important to study demographic variables as determinants of customer behaviours. The results of their study showed that gender has significant moderating effect on satisfaction- loyalty relationship. Women are satisfied with sales process while men are satisfied with the impact of the product. Age showed a positive moderating effect and income had moderating influence with high income showing weaker effect and low income, high effect. Jessie and Sheila (2001) in their empirical work on patients' assessment of satisfaction and quality using factor analysis and regression, reported that age, beneficiary group, location, rank, service affiliation, education, marital status, race, gender, health status and number of visits (socio-demographic variables) have minimal influence on satisfaction.

Following from the review of related studies, the study will investigate factors that predict customer satisfaction among bank customers in South-Western Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted cross-sectional survey, through ex-post factor design. The study investigated the predictors of customer satisfaction with bank services in selected banks in South-Western Nigeria. The independent variable includes; educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking with the brand, while the dependent variable was customer satisfaction.

Study Area

This study covered the five biggest deposit money banks in Nigeria. The banks are: Zenith Bank Plc, Ecobank Plc, First Bank Plc, Guaranty Trust Bank Plc and Access Bank Plc. The banks were drawn from South West geo-political zone of Nigeria. The South West geo-political zone of Nigeria consists of six states which includes Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti States. Capital cities of these six states will be used as study population. The South Western geopolitical zone of Nigeria represents a geographical area spreading between Latitude 60 N and 40S and Longitude 40W and 60E. It has a land area of 114,27km² representing 12% of the country's landmass. The zone also has a population of 27,722,432 (NPC 2006). South western Nigeria has been chosen because it ranks second among the six geo-political zones in terms of total number of local governments which total 137.

Sampling Method

Purposive sampling criteria was used because the regional branches of these banks in each state capital in the South Western geo-political zone was be selected from the five biggest banks to be used as case study. The regional branches were selected because they afforded the researcher to get in contact with various classes of customers ranging from the most sophisticated to the not-too-literate ones. Fifty questionnaires were administered on customers of each of these branches to achieve the objectives of this research work. This was a total of one thousand five hundred and five (1,505) questionnaires in all. This study covered five biggest Deposit Money Banks in Nigeria, i.e. Zenith Bank Plc; Ecobank Plc; First Bank Plc; Guaranty Trust Bank Plc; and Access Bank Plc. The selection of the five biggest banks in Nigeria was based on the classification arising from the table below:

Table 1: 10 Biggest Deposit Money Banks ranking in Nigeria by Tier 1 Capital

BANKS	Tier 1 Capital (\$) Bn *	Profit Be4 Tax N (Bn)	Shareholders' Funds N (Bn)	Gross Earnings N(Bn)	Deposit N (Tr)	World 1000 Ranking	Africa Ranking	Ranking in Nigeria
Zenith Bank Plc	3.162	119.79	153.1	314	97	322 nd	6 th	1 st
ECO Bank Plc	3.030	118.21	61	177	118	338 th	7 th	2 nd
FBN Plc	2.327	117.92	71	244	75	371 st	10 th	3 rd

GTBank Plc	1.781	116.38	80.9	242	64	449 th	13 th	4 th
Access bank Plc	1.389	52.03	75	207	83	553 rd	15 th	5 th
Diamond Bank Plc	0.104	28.10	85	181	206	579 th	16 th	6 th
UBA Plc	1.341	35.23	74	264	81	710 th	17 th	7 th
Fidelity Bank Plc	0.168	15.51	167	127	806	759 th	21 st	8 th
FCMB Plc	0.167	23.94	144	131	705	814 th	24 th	9 th
Sterling Bank Plc	0.165	10.71	66	106	121	821 st	28 th	10 th

Table 1...

Source: Researcher's Extractions from: The Banker Magazine, London and The FitchRating International as at 29th June, 2018

Tier 1 Capital as defined by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) includes the following elements, Paid-Up Share Capital, Irredeemable Preference Shares, Share Premiums, General Reserves (Retained Profit), SMEEIS Reserves, Statutory Reserves and Other Reserves as may be determined by the CBN.

Data Collection Instrument

Section A: Demographic information

Section A contained the demographic variables of gender, age, educational level, type of customer, number of banks maintained and how long the customer have being banking.

Section B: Customer satisfaction

A 13-item questionnaire was designed for the purpose of the study. The items were designed in such a way that it covered five (5) domains of services offered by the banks. This includes; tangibles, reliability of the bank, bank responsiveness, assurances and empathy. Response format for all of the five (5) domains ranged on a 5-point likert response. After a pilot study, the questionnaire was found to have adequate internal consistency of 0.79.

Data Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was used in analyzing the gathered data. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analyzing the data.

Descriptive statistics was used in analyzing the demographic factors, while multiple regression analysis was used in analyzing the objective of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 2 presents the demographic distribution of the 1505 respondents;

Socio-Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 2: Socio-Demographic Information of Participants

SN	Variables	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	812	54
		Female	693	46
2	Employment status	Unemployed	355	23.6
		Public sector	734	48.8
		Private sector	416	27.6
3	Age	18-35 years	496	33
		36-50 years	487	32.4
		51-65 years	307	20.4
		66 years and above	215	14.3
4	Educational level	Primary	7	0.5
		SSCE	433	28.8
		Tertiary	732	48.6
		Postgraduate	333	22.1
5	How many banks do you maintain?	One	724	48.1
		Two	697	46.3
		Three	48	3.2
		Four	36	2.4
6	Length of banking?	10 years and above	1136	75.5
		5- 10 years	133	8.8
		Less than 5 years	236	15.7
Total			1505	100

Table 2 presents results on the socio-demographic information of respondents. According to gender distribution, it is shown that more of the respondents 54% were males, while the other 46% were females. Employment status distribution revealed that more of the respondents 48.8% works with the government, 27.6% works in a private sector, while the

other 23.6% were unemployed. Further, age distribution revealed that more of the respondents 33% were between 18 and 35 years, 32.4% were between 36 and 50 years old, 20.4% were between 51 and 65 years old, while the other 14.3% were 66 years and above. Further, educational level distribution revealed that more of the respondents 48.6% were tertiary certificate holders, 28.8% were SSCE holders, 22.1% were postgraduate certificate holders, while the other 0.5% indicated to be primary school leaving certificate holders. When asked how many banks respondents maintains, more of them 48.1% indicated maintaining just one bank, 46.3% maintains two banks, 3.2% maintains three banks, while the other 2.4% maintains four banks. Finally, when asked how long respondents have being banking, more of the respondents 75.5% indicated 10 years and above, 15.7% indicated less than 5 years ago, while the other 8.8% signified between 5 and 10 years ago.

Predictors of Customer Satisfaction

Table 3: Summary of Multiple Regression Showing the Predictors of Customer Satisfaction

Criterion	Predictors	B	t	P	R	R ²	F	P
Tangible	Age	-.16	-6.31	<.01				
	Educational level	.01	.32	>.05	.25	.06	24.47	<.01
	Number of banks	.06	2.28	<.05				
	Length of banking	-.13	-5.22	<.01				
Reliability	Age	-.15	-6.10	<.01				
	Educational level	-.06	-2.27	<.05	.32	.10	41.62	<.01
	Number of banks	.02	.68	>.05				
	Length of banking	-.24	-9.56	<.01				
Responsiveness	Age	-.10	-3.85	<.01				
	Educational level	-.15	-5.96	<.01	.18	.03	13.04	<.01
	Number of banks	-.04	-1.54	>.05				
	Length of banking	-.00	-.05	>.05				
Assurance	Age	-.03	-1.21	>.05				
	Educational level	.02	.87	>.05	.04	.00	.71	>.05
	Number of banks	-.02	-.89	>.05				
	Length of banking	.02	.61	>.05				

Empathy	Age	-0.06	-2.07	<.05				
	Educational level	-0.08	-3.26	<.05	.11	.01	4.78	<.05
	Number of banks	-0.05	-2.06	<.05				
	Length of banking	-0.03	-1.01	>.05				
Customer satisfaction	Age	-0.19	-7.42	<.01				
	Educational level	-0.02	-0.71	>.05	.28	.08	32.27	<.01
	Number of banks	.04	1.70	>.05				
	Length of banking	-0.16	-6.25	<.01				

Table 3...

Table 3 presents results on the predictors of customer satisfaction among bank customers in South-Western Nigeria. It is shown that when combined, age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking had significant joint influence on tangibles of banks [$R = .25$; $R^2 = .06$; $F(4, 1500) = 24.47$; $P < .01$]. Collectively, age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking accounted for about 6% variance in tangibles of banks. However, only age ($\beta = -.16$; $t = -6.31$; $P < .01$), number of banks in use ($\beta = .06$; $t = 2.28$; $P < .05$) and length of banking ($\beta = -.13$; $t = -5.22$; $P < .01$) had independent influence on tangibles dimension of customer satisfaction. The direction of the beta value for age (-.16) and length of banking (-.13) connotes that the older the respondents and the lengthy the years of using a bank, the lower the satisfaction with tangibility dimension of customer satisfaction. However, the beta direction of number of banks (.06) signifies that the more the banks in use, the higher the perceived tangibility dimension of customer satisfaction.

As regards reliability dimension of customer satisfaction, it is shown that age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking jointly predicted reliability [$R = .32$; $R^2 = .10$; $F(4, 1500) = 41.62$; $P < .01$]. Collectively, age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking accounted for about 3% variance in reliability. However, only age ($\beta = -.15$; $t = -6.10$; $P < .01$), educational level ($\beta = -.06$; $t = -2.27$; $P < .05$) and length of banking ($\beta = -.24$; $t = -9.56$; $P < .01$) had independent influence on reliability dimension of customer satisfaction. The direction of the beta value for age (-.15), educational qualification (-.06) and length of banking (-.24) connotes that the older the respondents, the higher the educational qualification and higher more the years of banking, the lower the satisfaction with reliability dimension of customer satisfaction.

Pertaining to responsiveness of dimension of customer satisfaction, it is shown that age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking jointly predicted responsiveness [$R = .18$; $R^2 = .03$; $F(4, 1500) = 13.04$; $P < .05$]. Collectively, age, educational

qualification, number of banks and length of banking accounted for about 3% variance in responsiveness. However, only age ($\beta = -.10$; $t = -3.85$; $P < .01$) and educational qualification ($\beta = -.06$; $t = -2.27$; $P < .05$) had independent influence on responsiveness dimension of customer satisfaction. The direction of the beta value for age (-.10) and educational qualification (-.06) connotes that the older the respondents and the higher the educational qualification, the lower the satisfaction with responsiveness dimension of customer satisfaction. Regarding assurance dimension of customer satisfaction, it is shown that age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking had neither joint nor independent influence on assurance dimension of customer satisfaction [$R = .04$; $R^2 = .00$; $F(4, 1500) = .71$]; $P > .05$].

Coming to empathy dimension of customer satisfaction, it is shown that age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking jointly predicted empathy [$R = .11$; $R^2 = .01$; $F(4, 1500) = 4.78$]; $P < .05$]. Collectively, age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking accounted for about 1% variance in empathy. However, only age ($\beta = -.06$; $t = -2.07$; $P < .01$), educational qualification ($\beta = -.08$; $t = -3.26$; $P < .05$) and number of banks in use ($\beta = -.05$; $t = -2.06$; $P < .05$) had independent influence on empathy dimension of customer satisfaction. The direction of the beta value for age (-.06), educational qualification (-.08) and number of banks in use (-.05) connotes that the older the bank customer, educational qualification and the more the number of banks in use, the lower the satisfaction with the perceived empathy.

Pertaining to customer satisfaction as a whole, it is shown that age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking jointly predicted customer satisfaction [$R = .28$; $R^2 = .08$; $F(4, 1500) = 32.27$]; $P < .01$]. Collectively, age, educational qualification, number of banks and length of banking accounted for about 8% variance in customer satisfaction. However, only age ($\beta = -.19$; $t = -7.42$; $P < .01$), and length of banking ($\beta = -.16$; $t = -6.25$; $P < .01$) had independent influence on customer satisfaction. The direction of the beta value for age (-.19) and length of banking (-.16) connotes that the older the respondents and the higher the years of bank usage, the lower the satisfaction with the perceived empathy.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated the predictors of customer satisfaction among bank customers in South-Western Nigeria. Customer satisfaction was measured in five domains; tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Although, not all of the predictors had independent influence on the domains, it was found that when combined, age, educational qualification, number of banks in use and length of banking had significant influence on tangible, reliability, responsiveness and empathy domain of customer satisfaction. However, age,

educational qualification, number of banks in use and length of banking had no joint influence on assurance domain. Also, when the factors were tested against customer satisfaction as a whole, it was discovered that age, educational qualification number of banks in use and length of banking had joint influence on customer satisfaction. The Results of the study is consistent with that of Bryant and Cha (1996) and Palvia and Palvia (1999). It is also similar to the findings of Sandip Gosh Hasra and BL Srivastava (2009) in their study which indicated that bank should pay attention to these dimensions of service quality and pay more attention to dimension of assurance-empathy to increase loyalty to a company, willingness to pay, customer commitment and customer trust. The study was however limited to the Zonal Offices of the five biggest Deposit Money Banks in Nigeria drawn from the capital cities of Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti states. It is noteworthy that the data collection methods used in assessing customer satisfaction allowed for tolerable percentage of marginal error. The primary data was collected from customers of these respondent banks, who were selected purposively as representative of the whole. The research can be replicated wholesomely on a larger scale by future researchers where and when time and finance would not be a constraint. Lagos, Abeokuta, Ibadan, Osogbo, Akure and Ado-Ekiti have a representation of all the banks in Nigeria and also have a significant number of bank customers. They are also more cosmopolitan than other metropolises. This study therefore, recommends that banks intensify more effort towards enhancing customer satisfaction through courtesy platform, staff attitude to customers, training of staff on customer relation, respect customers and adjust welfare unit and let the customer feel emotionally attached to the banks. Also, every possible method should be explored by banks to meet customer expectations so as to strengthen customer loyalty and retention.

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